

Dreaming Out Loud: Speaking Skills Through Zine-making

Sara Liliana Hurtado García

Advisor: Viviana Neira Leguizamón

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

Languages Department

Faculty of Humanities

A thesis submitted as a requirement to obtain the degree of B.A. Education Major in

Spanish and Foreign Languages

Bogotá, D.C

2026

Dedicatory

Primero, agradezco a Dios y a la vida por cada oportunidad otorgada, con el sol siempre guiando. Dedico este proyecto a quienes han estado presentes de corazón o físicamente. A mis padres, Miguel y Cecilia y a mi hermano, David, por ser siempre inspiración y apoyo, y por quienes profeso amor y admiración inmensurable. A mis gatos, Míchica y Valiente por abrigarme con su pureza en cada reto asumido, por darme tanta paz y confirmarme que el amor siempre incentiva el crecimiento. A mis amigos, por todos los gestos que me brindaron la calidez de un abrazo honesto, la sonrisa que ayuda a seguir caminando y sorprenderme con su autenticidad. A mi asesora Viviana Neira y a cada docente, que, con conocimiento y calidad humana, han nutrido mi manera de aprender, cuestionar, participar y también, de enseñar. Y con profundo agradecimiento y nostalgia, a la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, pues me ha nutrido con experiencias magistrales, expandiendo mi mente y corazón más allá de lo que hubiera imaginado, invitándome siempre a crecer y soñar alto. Gracias totales.

Abstract

The present action research with qualitative data collection instruments and analysis aimed to establish the possible effects of designing and implementing a zine-making pedagogical strategy to develop speaking skills, mainly pronunciation and getting vocabulary through life-project as a topic of students' interest that allows self-expression in a Colombian EFL high-school classroom with 21 participants of CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza. The data collection instruments were several, for instance surveys, interviews, field notes, artifacts, and recordings. Several results were discovered from the students' participation, the development of their pronunciation and fluency, as well as the interaction through the EFL. Mainly the change in their attitude for developing speaking activities as the growth on vocabulary, pronunciation and non-

verbal performance leading to develop communicative purposes and having EFL as an opportunity to build meaningful knowledge for building students life project and giving a place to students' subjectivity in the classroom.

Keywords: EFL, zine-making, speaking skills, life-project, self-expression.

Resumen

La presente investigación-acción, con instrumentos de recolección y análisis de datos cualitativos, tuvo como objetivo establecer los posibles efectos del diseño e implementación de una estrategia pedagógica de creación de fanzines para desarrollar habilidades orales, principalmente pronunciación y adquisición de vocabulario a través de un proyecto de vida como tema de interés para los estudiantes, que les permite expresarse en un aula colombiana de secundaria de inglés como lengua extranjera con 21 participantes del CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza. Los instrumentos de recolección de datos fueron diversos, como encuestas, entrevistas, notas de campo, artefactos y grabaciones. Se obtuvieron diversos resultados a partir de la participación de los estudiantes; el desarrollo de su pronunciación y fluidez; así como la interacción a través del ILE. Principalmente, se observó un cambio actitudinal hacia el desarrollo de actividades orales, como el crecimiento del vocabulario, la pronunciación y la comunicación no verbal, lo que condujo al desarrollo de propósitos comunicativos y a la oportunidad de utilizar el ILE para construir conocimientos significativos que enriquezcan el proyecto de vida de los estudiantes y den cabida a su subjetividad en el aula.

Palabras clave: inglés como lengua extranjera, creación de fanzines, habilidades orales, proyecto de vida, autoexpresión.

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Chapter 1. Context and Research Problem

The characterization was structured with collected information about the local context, the institution and the class where the project was developed. For this reason, diverse sources were used including its coexistence policy, curriculum mesh, an interview with the teacher, fieldnotes while observing the classes and a survey applied to the students. The data allowed a better understanding of the role of English in the school and how this project faced concrete challenges considering students' realities, as their interest in learning English, the lack of speaking practice and problems around the school that impact their learning.

The school CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza is located in Meissen neighborhood since 1987. According to its Proyecto Educativo Institucional (PEI) it was named CEDID because it was founded under the Plan Ciudad Bolívar that looked for facing several zone problems namely health, education, and security. Later it was modified to CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza, on account of the actions and values that represent his life; punctually, his efforts in favor of freedom of expression and against corruption and drug trafficking considering Colombian's history manifesting values of honesty, respect, and leadership. It is also important to consider the zone in which the school is located: Ciudad Bolívar, on the banks of the Tunjuelo River, that according to the *Regional Environmental and Sustainable Development Observatory of the Bogotá River* (ORARBO, 2024) in 2023 had spills of *Total Suspended Solids Pollutant Load* for the zone of Meissen. This means the Tunjuelo River has a considerable level of contamination near the school and sometimes due to this fact classes have been cancelled.

Thereafter, in 1993 some technology classrooms, trade and mechanical laboratories were established, where later technical emphasis was developed with three specialties: Commerce in

Accounting and Finance Specialty; Industry in Food Agribusiness Specialty; and Industry in Electromechanical and Design Specialty. Technical modality presents certified agreements with SENA and the Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, guiding students to job and professional education opportunities. It commences from the ninth to eleventh grade and the intensity of the classes during the morning and project or job experience increase their amount of time every grade; as a consequence, its PEI is under the idea “Comunidad Guillermita, un Proyecto de Vida” since 1992 and interrelated with the purposes of the technical emphasis. Now, regarding the class, its curriculum mesh is divided into four terms, the teacher considered this project for developing life project and 0 and 1 conditionals including speaking activities with everyday vocabulary. The second term focused on instructions, passive voice, and phrasal verbs, with speaking activities as well. The third term included modal verbs through debate activities where students needed to take a position (agree or disagree); finally, for the fourth term focused in direct and indirect questions linked to *fake news* topic. In addition, there were annual projects as the English Day with a contest where students can sing and dance, also a *Spelling Bee* contest.

It is essential to recognize that after the present proposal started to be applied (observation and diagnosis), there were changes in the English classes. This due to teachers’ decision of mixing the eleventh and tenth grades based on English proficiency evidenced in a general test considering the four main language skills. It was designed following British Council’s resources and teachers’ considerations; therefore, the head teacher decided the participants of the project were assigned including only the students with lower results in that test, meaning A1 or lower.

Suddenly, the observed classes showed to be taught in Spanish, and students’ oral participations were only in their mother tongue. Therefore, the teacher translated students’ ideas

on the table, and most of them forgot the meaning if they did not write them in both languages. It could be inferred that most of the vocabulary they used was due to copying and reading information, but not because of applying it in real contexts.

Additionally, during the classes the teacher was constantly using multimedia and technology including TV, computers, and images with the purpose of asking them to follow instructions. Students occasionally used their cellphones for social networks, translators and to listen to music when copying. These kinds of practices showed the relationship teacher-student, student-student and attitudes in English class since the use of technology was not always use to motivate students EFL learning. In contrast, considering their preferences in projects for English class based on the described observations and the applied survey, they were more interested in handmade projects and improving pronunciation, fluency and writing, establishing conversations with their partners and including game elements when learning. Based on their preferences and the multiple ways for building self-expression in a multimodal (visual, written, flexible) and handmade way, fanzines were preferred.

Punctually, this project was developed with 21 students of tenth grade (16 girls and 5 boys) among 13 and 17 years old. Additionally, based on the survey data collected, these students had similar conditions to the ones presented in general in the school, where the population belongs to stratum one and two. Then, about students' English perceptions, they expressed it is important for their future and that they were excited when in English class; however, only few students practiced it during free time. On one hand, most of them recognized strengths in reading, writing and listening. On the other hand, they considered the most difficult aspects to learn EFL for them were the general skills also the teacher considers speaking as the main challenge.

Most of them expressed to feel nervous or shy when having an oral presentation in front of their partners and showed insecure when asked to speak, conversely, they manifested preference in improving speaking and writing, to get vocabulary and strengthen pronunciation. Furthermore, they were constantly working with others, occasionally they asked their partners for help; a possibility to be explored since speaking promote interaction and communication.

To sum up, relevant data about the school, its community and the tenth graders were analyzed. The PEI is linked to the personal development of the students considering life project, so economic and social contexts needed to be considered in the proposal, especially for their relationship with EFL and economic barriers. Third, according to the students and teacher, speaking, grammar, listening, reading and pronunciation are the main challenges, however students expressed interest and need for developing speaking skills in which this project focused.

Diagnosis

Several instruments were applied to determine the English proficiency level. Namely a survey, observations, a teacher's interview, and a diagnostic test designed based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and standards designed by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) as *Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* and the *Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje* to evaluate the four communicative skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

For the evaluative process, a rubric was constructed considering the development in each skill, where comprehension, coherence and cohesion, grammatical aspects, and following instructions were considered. Also, observation was essential in the test application for analyzing their willingness, emotions and self-perception of their knowledge in English.

In detail, in the reading section a short text was written by the researcher with vocabulary and grammatical tenses in accordance with the regulations (see annex B), There were questions for literal and inferential comprehension, where they needed to propose solutions or bring ideas for the protagonist. In the listening part, they needed to follow instructions linked with speaking or with distribution of the classroom, to take turns, among others. By other side, for speaking they were organized in groups and individually to answer questions about personal information, interests and opinions.

Students' English Proficiency Level:

First, regarding reading skills they recognized the main idea of short texts, making possible to say they know basic vocabulary, especially the one written in a similar way in Spanish. They wanted to use translators as it was common during the classes, however as it was not allowed, they stated they wanted the text in Spanish, and some not understanding anything. However, answers exhibited they identified the information and included text vocabulary. When asked about the global idea most of them expressed it in their own words, some expressed e.g. “I am not sure if it is about the dreams and questions of the character, because it happens to me, but is it?” (in Spanish), showing as the text was about similar situations some of them understood it, even feeling identified. However, when more specific as *What title would you give to the story?* Some did not follow the instructions and put “I liked the story”. Then, as the rubric follows CEFR and MEN standards, it is possible to say in general they have A1 level¹ in this skill.

Second, about writing skills, in addition to the rubric, a bar chart was created based on additional characteristics that were found (See **Bar Chart 1**) most of the students answered both

¹ Based on CEFR standards, the A1 performance in reading includes recognizing simple and familiar words, sometimes including images or with the possibility of rereading. Also, short texts are key for recognizing simple phrases.

questions, followed by the ones with only one, some of them expressed the reason was not knowing much vocabulary to respond. Following the rubric, on one hand, most of them used English, but only some showed to write following grammatical rules; additionally, some students included words in Spanish, as “She not sabe”, one of them wrote in Spanish, and one student wrote “Honestly, I tried several times, but I only know some phrases” in Spanish.

Moreover, some students used vocabulary only regarding nouns, verbs and some auxiliary verbs, sometimes using grammatical tenses inappropriately, for instance “she a like mathematics”, “He is nervous” (referring to a girl). It is important to mention that some of them used translators for writing specific words or copied the answers of their partners, not following the instructions. Also, when they needed to express their own ideas, most of them expressed their thoughts following the instruction, but some others did not answer².

Third, regarding listening skills, they recognized few words and constantly asked the meaning of them when there were questions or even said “yes” when an open question about personal information. However, when they received examples of how to follow the instruction, most of them expressed to better understand in that way. As *Spoken English* was not commonly used in the classroom by the teacher, they felt uncomfortable when only listening English and expressed to feel nervous or even stated “I prefer to do nothing if it is in English”, showing it is a challenge for them; however, repetition showed good results, showing A1 level³.

Fourth, regarding speaking skills, most of them have pronunciation based on the sounds in Spanish. They prefer to read aloud their ideas because they feel more comfortable having the time for writing before answering, and they feel more nervous when asked to express their

² Following CEFR standards this level includes being able to express basic personal information using dictionary, or as in this case the translators use in some cases. It also includes only isolated words or phrases.

³ According to the CEFR, this performance includes the comprehension of concrete information including simple words, numbers that are in a slow and short recording with simple language use.

thoughts directly speaking. Moreover, some of them answered with only one word and not using the structures. They only used some common and basic vocabulary and connectors, but they do not include others such as modal verbs, several prepositions, perfect tenses, among others. Instead, they commonly use simple present tense or answer yes/no when they are asked to provide descriptions and opinions, some said “I understand the question, but I do not know how to answer”, expressing lack of vocabulary and performing an A1 level⁴.

Speaking skills were recognized as one of the main challenges since it was almost never practiced. Three aspects were evaluated: Grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation and interactive communication for a better understanding of students’ performance. Of the 21 respondents, more than half preferred to write their answers and then read them, when they were asked to answer without reading, they omitted grammar elements, especially connectors and structures for the grammatical tenses (simple past, simple present, simple future) or mixed them, namely when asked about *What do you like to do in your free time?* “I like, no I liking... sleeping”. Then, fifteen students raised questions about pronunciation of some words that are commonly used, And when they were asked to repeat their answers, they changed the pronunciation, mixed sounds, or used words in Spanish, making it difficult to understand their ideas.

Subsequently when they were orally asked to answer simple questions, for instance: *what is your name? do you like English class?* most of them asked for repetition or Spanish version, sometimes to the teachers, or to their partners. Also, with written questions, they demanded for the meaning of several words, especially the ones that are very different from Spanish forms, and they tended to omit those words when answering or completely changed the meaning of the

⁴ Following Cambridge bands for speaking performance, A1 includes knowledge of few vocabulary and isolated phrases, where sometimes the production is unintelligible and the oral exchanges represent a considerable level of difficulty where prompting and support is always needed (Cambridge, 2019)

questions. Consequently, it can be inferred that the reason of insecurity when they are asked to speak is because they are unaware of the grammatical structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

The diagnostic test and observation during the classes and application of the test allowed to recognize more strengths and weakness in the four skills, placing more barriers in the productive ones (writing and speaking) where speaking is almost never practiced. Also, the students' own perception in their performance highlighted the need to practice speaking to rich vocabulary, construct self-confidence when expressing and guiding interactions using EFL for better understanding other's ideas and expressing their owns.

They performed to be at an A1 level based on the use of basic vocabulary, mixing simple tenses, not following grammar rules, mixing both languages, however some of them have a little more advanced performance. For this project, difficulties in speaking skills are highlighted since they were essential to define the problem and the pedagogical strategy proposal which also considered possibilities for students to practice productive skills, express their thoughts and interact with pairs and teachers. It was found that the students' main problems are in productive skills writing and speaking. For defining the problem, international CEFR standard for EFL are contemplated, also national ones stablished by MEN and institutional.

First, according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR): Learning, teaching, assessment (2021), they have characteristics in writing of A1 level, they "can produce simple isolated phrases and sentences" (p. 180). About speaking, following CEFR, their abilities link with A1 speakers as well, for instance "Has a very basic repertoire of words/signs and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations" (p. 185) and develop with a "pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learned words and phrases can be understood with some effort by interlocutor" (p. 185).

Second, when asked to manifest their ideas or comprehension of a short text by writing, they use common vocabulary written in a similar way in Spanish and sometimes use Spanish and only in short sentences or isolated words, when according to the *DBA* (2016), they should “write narrative, descriptive and expository texts related to topics of interest or that are familiar to him/her” (p. 27). In general terms, following MEN in the *Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* (2006), they are supposed to have a level of performance B1.

Third, considering the institutional curriculum mesh, students were supposed to be engaged in dialogues in which they used common vocabulary and to recognize social problems and to express possible actions (CEDID GCI, 2024) linked to MEN standards. However, when interacting, students do not practice EFL and they ask for repetitions and information only in Spanish, also vocabulary is a barrier for them to express. Students frequently participate orally (in Spanish), additionally they express interest for improving some skills and recognize strengths and weakness in their own learning process.

As a conclusion, the use of zine-making as a pedagogical strategy to foster the practice of speaking recognizes and faces the need of using all the skills during EFL classes, and fostering speaking through audio creations included with QR codes, that in the same way as the *Currículo Sugerido* (2016) exposes “focusing the curriculum on language skills was a pertinent decision since it is only through these that communicative competence is achieved” (p. 24). Keeping on mind the purpose of this research, developing the life project as a topic of interest for the students to develop self-expression regards the relevance of considering real contexts of the students to promote meaningful learning to achieve a comprehensive training and not limiting nor excluding linguistic knowledge as the MEN establishes to overcome the diverse challenges for learning EFL in Colombia.

Rationale of the Study

Learning English is relevant in Colombia since there are many advantages in doing it in professional, academical, social and cultural domains. However, the national contexts present many challenges to achieving the goal of learning English. As it is stated in *Colombia Very Well*, that is one of the governmental projects to improve English levels created by MEN (2015), less than 10% of high school students have B1 level or higher. Moreover, MEN argues that the problem is also with the teachers because not all of them have B2 level or higher.

Furthermore, according to the MEN the importance of learning a foreign language has been recognized since 1994 and nowadays it is evident because more bilingual communication is used. It is also of high value because there are many opportunities, for instance from the fact that much information is published in English, and because it allows to know and understand different cultures, increase job opportunities, among many other possibilities (MEN, 2018).

Finally, this project considered strengths and weaknesses of tenth grade students in EFL classroom based on the evidence collected during the observations and instruments application and linked them with real EFL standards in education from general (international) to more specific (national - institutional). Allowing the students real possibilities of communicating using a foreign language while adopting topics of their interest represents a view of English as something useful and valuable which is represented through the development of the current proposal. Furthermore, constructing its relevance for students' lives is necessary, that way they will be more interested in learning, asking questions and being challenged. Giving them spaces and guidance for developing their life-project while using speaking skills is a way of using English in real contexts and not limiting it only to linguistic aspects.

Research Question

What is the development of speaking skills in EFL tenth graders implementing a zine-making strategy about life- project?

Research Objectives

General Objective:

To determine the development of speaking skills (pronunciation and rich vocabulary) implementing zine-making centered on life project in an EFL classroom of tenth-grade students from the CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza.

Specific Objectives:

- To characterize social, local and academic contexts of students of EFL tenth grade classroom in the CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza.
- To implement workshops to develop life-project with zine-making strategy to improve speaking skills.
- To analyze the effect of zine-making on the development of speaking skills of students.

Chapter 2. State of Art and Theoretical Framework

The present chapter aims to present the three main categories, and their subcategories developed in the current project through its state of art and its theoretical framework aiming to analyze their contributions and differences based on the strategy, development and findings on their contexts. This by means of a total of five research projects present in a relevant way the use of fanzine to foster several skills, improving skills through life project as a topic or speaking skill development. The references are from other continents and countries (Spain and Chile) to local ones, produced by students from the Universidad Pedagógica de Colombia and were produced in

the years from 2019 to 2023. It is relevant to mention that finding a research project regarding zine-making to foster speaking skills was a difficult process.

The first research, *FanzinESO: Didactic possibilities of the fanzine in the linguistic field* by Jara de Tomás Martín (2021) from Spain and the Universitat de Barcelona aims to expose the potential of zine-making specially for linguistic and literary experience for high school students in two ways: production (creative writing) and comprehension (reading). This project deeply analyzes theoretical framework with existing bibliography and applies some surveys (to teachers) and interviews (to experts on zine in pedagogy). This research discloses the versatility of fanzine as a tool to construct meaningful learning and linguistic knowledge when focusing on students developing critical thinking, including artistic elements presented in zines.

Additionally, the positive and rich results of applying zines to make creative expressions without requiring difficult, nor expensive resources. In contrast, the author evidenced the need to increase research about fanzine in education because there are few explorations in the case of linguistic skills. As evidence, Jara found that only a few high-school teachers have seen or applied the zines for linguistic learning. This research results on a big relevance for the project since it analyses previous projects applying zines and its positive results in the high school classrooms, especially when focusing on the students, the role of independent study, the impact of emotional education and the challenges of globalized spaces, and more directly it is focused as a powerful tool that allows the development of linguistic and expressive skills that are key through this project that found challenges in speaking abilities.

The second research is *Use of fanzines as a teaching resource for motivating vocabulary acquisition in the English subsector in secondary school students* by Deina Flores Sepúlveda (2020) from Chile and the Universidad del Bío Bío. This research with mixed methods, the

author aspires to increase the motivation of the students to acquire new vocabulary in EFL. Fanzine is used as a tool for creative expressions and for each student to make one as a final product, connecting its content with new vocabulary. This is of an enormous significance because fanzine is applied in the Latin American context where English is learned as a foreign language, and also considering vocabulary not as isolated words, but as a need for communicative purposes. Moreover, the results show a relevant increase in students' motivation, even when they had to make their zine in the context of virtual classes because of COVID-19 pandemic. Also, its relevance emerges in the acceptance and participation that students had as they started to express more orally, including and asking for new vocabulary and including new knowledge in zines as well as interacting with pairs to achieve communicative goals

The third product of a research exercise is from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional of Colombia (UPN), written by Laura Gil and Alison Rincón (2022) and named *PBL: Enhancing Situated Productive Skills Through Reflections upon the Life Project*. This action research sought to identify the impact of the use of activities about life project reflections of seventh graders. The results show that most of the students had a big interest in developing the activities about their thoughts and preferences, while when those were about the community, they were less interested.

This research is pertinent considering the emphasis on productive skills and the motivation that students demonstrate when they are asked to reflect on their life project. For this study is also relevant the analysis made by the authors about how the opportunity and guidance to the students about personal information, for instance dreams, feelings, ideas, that are key elements when developing life project impacted on them in their motivation for expressing themselves and for improving their productive skills in EFL, showing that it is a good strategy and more specifically in high school students.

The fourth is action research from the UPN, by Jeimy Linares Rivera (2023) called *The Creation of Audio Stories to Improve Oral Production* a PBL work that consisted of oral short stories created by fifth graders from the CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza. Furthermore, one of the aims was recognizing more English sounds and phonemes, mainly the ones absent in students' mother tongue. The results demonstrated great advances in speaking skills, they comprehended new phonemes and started to use some of them, they improved their pronunciation and fluency, also they were remarkably more self-confident regarding motivation and confidence.

It explores the use of audio to improve speaking skills, e.g., pronunciation that is relevant through this project. Additionally, the development of self-confidence when making oral productions, that as the students mentioned, it related to the improvement of speaking in English, besides they developed a greater sense of the importance of learning English in its productive skills. Moreover, the findings regarding the way the students started to change and expand their own concept of learning languages, since they accept there are sounds in foreign languages that do not exist in their mother tongue, and this allowed them to know another way of expressing, to practice more speaking skills and considering different ways to speak including those phonemes.

The fifth research is also from the UPN, written by María Paula Cárdenas (2019) and named *Promoting EFL speaking skills and community in a cooperative and artistic classroom*. This action research developed with third-grade students shows the great relevance of using visual art activities connected with the speaking skills, since they were able to advance in linguistic aspects, especially accuracy and fluency, while working with their pairs. This study presents relevant aspects, for instance the lack of speaking skills practice speaking skills and trying to face it by leaving the comfort zone. Furthermore, using visual artistic as support

materials to develop the topics and activities, as well as cooperative roles to success in each one of them, guiding conversations asking/answering questions, drawing, describing, among others.

Finally, these projects were essential to see how the use of zine-making as a way of expressing the self creatively, the goal of developing speaking skills for nurturing communicative goals and the use of life project as a topic of students' interest are of high value and that need to be further studied in the field of research for educative processes, allowing not only an advance in acquiring a foreign language, but using it as a powerful tool to interact with their pairs, to express themselves in a creative and diverse way. Additionally, these documents helped in the process of defining the constructions, providing references to have a deeper understatement of them. It is also important to highlight that this project sought to link the three main skills and that it was not found through the consulting process, also that the participants share some characteristics but have particularities that, are essential for the proposal as well.

Theoretical Framework

The aim of this section is to define the three concepts that are the basis of this research: speaking skills, the use of fanzine and the sense of life project. For defining the first several referents were used as *The Council of Europe* with the CEFR (2020), Crystal (1984), Šolcová (2011), Harmer (1988), Harris (1974), Nation (2001) and Kenworthy (1988) that leads it for social and educational purposes and also highlight some of its characteristics of high relevance for is project. For the second one, Duncombe (2008), Desyllas and Sinclair (2013) and Moon (2020) are considered to understand its origins and uses for pedagogical, personal and social purposes and to develop the understanding of characteristics as self-expression and creation of visual elements. For the third construct, Freire (1968), Casassus (2007), Goleman (2006) and Vaca (2016) allow a multidisciplinary view focusing on education and personal development.

Speaking Skills in EFL

According to the CEFR (2020) speaking refers to a productive skill that requires several abilities and competences and that vary according to the contexts where produced. Additionally, Crystal (1984) highlights as a relevant difference with writing skill that “speech is moving all the time” (p.12) referring to its flexible uses in every context of production, epoch, purpose, exposing its complexity in the moment of studying it, also arguing that it does not always obey the grammar rules, unlike writing demands. But it requires other aspects that also lead to communication, for instance corporal expression, tone, facial gestures, and rhythm, natural ways of interacting and communicating.

Moreover, as Šolcová (2011) establishes, when teaching the speaking of a foreign language it is indispensable to practice it (teachers and students), meaning the responsibility and challenge for the teachers to include speaking practice in their classes. As the same author explains, there are different approaches that construct conceptions of “speaking skills”, however most of them share the view of its communicative purpose while using verbal and non-verbal (Šolcová, 2011) including linguistic, semantic and pragmatic competences. Specifically, in the case of the participants of the project, it was evidenced that they do not use speaking skills during the sessions limiting their participation and therefore EFL learning process.

As Harmer established (1998), the kind of speaking that students should learn is through tasks using “any and all the language at their command” (p.87) and they should want to complete it (motivation). Then, during this research, speaking was focused on some main skills or components that as Harris (1974) purposes, the main ones include vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and nonverbal aspects (kinesics and proxemics).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is key when pretending to learn languages to better express and understand others. According to August, Carlo Dressler and Snow (2005) vocabulary is essential since knowing different words allows expressing and comprehending more ideas in the EFL, also to have more flexibility to communicate thoughts and in speaking skills it allows to be more involved in conversations. For Paul Nation (2001), when teaching how to learn vocabulary, it is important to determine short-term purposes according to how long the teaching practice is. He establishes the need to learn high-frequency words to have a useful repertoire according to students' needs and the possibilities of the classes; vocabulary is key when pretending to learn languages to better express and understand others.

In this research, vocabulary is focused on the main topic that will be carried out and with zine-making, which is a life project. Students constantly will be encouraged to participate including new words in order to practice and memorize new concepts and words that will be useful in every skill English in order to develop communicative and comprehensive skills, facing the identified challenges in the classroom as the low participations in the foreign language and the feelings of being nervous because they express, they do not know how to say something.

Pronunciation

Joanne Kenworthy (1988) establishes that for most EFL learners, the purpose of pronunciation is practical; having a native pronunciation is not relevant. Instead of it, she intends to focus on the main challenges that EFL students usually have, for instance the sounds (phonemes) that do not exist in their native language, and that represent a point of teaching, making feedback and creating strategies and activities. Pronunciation is not for isolated words only, but for the way an entire message is sent according to the intentions from whom produce it.

In this view, contextualized activities are relevant to motivate students to improve speaking, additionally, to apply their knowledge in topics of interest. In this case, getting vocabulary and enhancing pronunciation is a way of developing speaking in students that based on the instruments do not know much vocabulary making hard to communicate their ideas in the oral way, and that show to feel insecure to speak because they do not know nor practice English sounds. In the project students recorded several audios regarding the life project and their zines, then pronunciation is essential since sometimes only voice was used to express themselves.

For this study, speaking skills refer to productive skills that allow students to express themselves orally and to communicate with others more effectively. It has a strong correlation with the other language skills and facilitates the learning process making English closer to their interactions. It also needs diverse skills as getting new vocabulary and developing pronunciation. Vocabulary was essential for better communicating and during the learning and teaching processes of EFL. Pronunciation is relevant as it is directly connected with meaning and effectiveness for communicative purposes and represents a challenge for the students to improve in the use of English sounds, especially those that do not exist in Spanish intonation.

Fluency

Fluency is important in speaking skills, mainly for communicative purposes, to manage interactions and facilitating speaker and listener roles. As Segalowitz (2010) analyses, it has variations when referring to the acquisition of a foreign language. Based on the complexity and diversity of meaning for this construction, the international standards were essential to interpret this concept. As defined by the Council of Europe (2020) in the CEFR, fluency refers to the ability to produce utterances without unnecessary pauses, maintaining the communicative situations and creating speech with coherence and spontaneity when necessary.

Then, speaking skills are not only in the act of making oral productions, but making them understandable in an easier way, including aspects as the ones that are defined in the present subcategories. It is also relevant to consider nonverbal cues as part of communicative production.

Nonverbal elements (Kinesics and Proxemics):

Speaking skills do not only refer to verbal elements, but also the ones that are produced by using the body. Mainly, there are two categories that allow a better comprehension of them: kinesics and proxemics. According to Hall and Knapp (2010), the first one refers to body gestures and facial expressions that can be produced consciously or unconsciously, while the second one is about the use of personal and social space and how it is understood.

Also, they explain there are several kinesics cues related with body parts, for instance arms, hands, legs, feet, and face in which eyes and mouth are key. They develop the gestures relevance that can be independent (showing confidence when having oral productions or comprehension) or connected to speech (e.g. to illustrate what is told, to emphasize), also the posture, facial expressions and eye behavior can express emotions and communicate. And in general, the authors show all kinesics and proxemics cues can be used to repeat a message, complement, replace and moderate speech. Proxemics, as Galloway (1970) exposes, respond to the elements that compose the space, for instance the light, time, participants.

For this project, nonverbal elements represent, as for Hall and Knapp (2010) resources that can express confidence, emotions and communicate messages connected with oral productions and not in a detached way. For this reason, several speaking activities developed during the classes considered nonverbal cues for better expressing and understanding, searching for the analysis of the way in which students included those in their performance.

Finally, the construct of speaking skills is understood as a productive skill that requires the development of other abilities, that include linguistic, pragmatic elements adapted to the context to have constant practices to achieve communicative goals according to their current grade, local, national and institutional standards. Also, those activities allow each student to have the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings and to understand others' oral productions.

Fanzine (Zine) as a Way of Personal Expression

According to fanzine history, there is not an exact date of its existence due to the difficulty of concretely knowing its origins. However, according to Stephen Duncombe (2008) they emerged in the 1930s in the United States as a way to share science fiction stories, later in the 1970s they were produced for fans of punk rock music and later in the 1980s there were produced to go against politic, especially capitalism ideas to conform a "culture of resistance" meaning to allow other voices that are not listened in the conventional media.

Duncombe establishes that defining fanzines is complex since the purpose of them is to be an alternative to express the several perspectives, voices, and thoughts that people have in an individual way or making part of a community. However, he describes fanzines as "noncommercial, nonprofessional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves" (p.10), also they may include different creative expressions like hand-drawn illustrations, collage or comic. They are mostly constructed through *Do It Yourself* (DIY) to reinforce not consuming the common commercial productive ways.

In education, they have been studied in social sciences to explore the communities or movements that created them, for instance LGBTQ, feminism, among many others, usually ignored by commercial media. They allow expressing voices without the restrictions of the giant

editorial industry. They challenge the inequity that exists in society of every era, allowing deconstructing stereotypes and relations of power reproduced by common media.

In accordance with Capous Desyllas and Sinclair (2013) “Zines can be used as a pedagogical tool for awareness, education, empowerment, and transformation” (p. 296) and have shown to be successful when used in classrooms, especially in the interest of the students for learning. Additionally, Moon (2020) establishes their relevance in teacher’s role since they become guide and participant in zine-making, and students increase their creativity and voice.

Nevertheless, as was seen with the research presented in the State of Art of the present project, there is a lack of knowledge in language education and the need to explore the possibilities of using zines and zine-making is huge. Zines represent the opportunity of linking some knowledge and even learning styles since they allow creative expressions based on a topic of interest for the individuals or students, in this case the development of reflection about the life project of tenth graders and the development of some speaking skills (pronunciation and vocabulary mainly). During this project, the main characteristics that are going to be considered regarding zine-making are the kind of zine called perzine and the use of self-made images.

Perzine

There are multiple types of zines. According to Duncombe (2008) and Grushka, Goodlad (2013) a perzine is a zine focused on providing and sharing information referring to the author, as personal interests, daily reality, feelings, emotions requiring self-knowledge and reflection. Through this project, students were pretending to share and construct information about themselves as individuals and members of society with the purpose of constructing a life project. When pedagogical purposes, perzine is a guided and reflexive process that seeks for “self-reflection and expression through opportunities to re-represent the teacher/learner self” (p. 275),

in this case, students need to reflect about their own identity and to express it in the zine with visual and linguistic elements, they also need to establish a plan for their own future where their personal interests and characteristics take a relevant role.

Self-made images

Images are the visual elements that allow the author to express his or her ideas in a creative and symbolic way. Moon (2020) describes their potential as transmitters of meaning based on author's thoughts and creativity, a means of expression different to the linguistic one, but correlated. Zine-making requires to think and create the visual elements, drawings, paintings, collages and pop up. They can use images from other authors, but editing them to express their own ideas; through this project, students need to create images for every page of the zine, and they need to be related to the stages considered in the life-project and the speaking productions.

Semiotic Harmony

Zines are multimodal texts since they do not only include verbal expressions, but also images to produce meaning. In this case, images and oral productions act as signs that share a common topic and that are developed in different subtopics. As Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) explain, the ones that create a visual production make it with an intention that is developed as a sign, with a 'signifier' (the figures that are visually perceived) and allow the 'signified' (meaning). At the same time, the authors explain these creations change to each creator, since they are influenced by their own ideas, previous experiences creating. Also, the authors establish that the creators need to be able to explain the reasons for the visual elements (content) used, in any technique, and their meaning in a global and specific visualization.

In this sense, students need to make the visual content with a purpose, giving it a meaning and as the Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional (MEFP) of Spain expresses in the

project *La Aventura de Aprender* (2023), the visual content need to be linked with the linguistic content, in this case mainly the audio recordings, that is present in every section of the zine, as the visual content is. Moreover, as the MEFP establishes, for this purpose, following a structure is essential, and it consists of a general topic (life project), subtopics (stages for life project creation), main ideas (based on the personal reflections that students make in each stage) and considering the public, in this case other students and teachers. For this, instructions and previous activities were developed to guide the zine-making process of the participants. For this reason, the students were able to produce their own visual content with originality but following the structure mentioned to develop the semiotic harmony for readers and listeners to have an experience in which the zines can be understood.

To sum up, in this project fanzines (zines) are understood as Duncombe (2008) points out, as a type of magazine created and edited by the authors in which their own thoughts are expressed by using linguistic and visual elements that allow the development of creativity. Zines represent a creative way for students to construct their life project including spoken productions (audios) and self-made images, where both present semiotic harmonies. It is relevant to mention that audios will replace text in the zines since the main purpose is to develop speaking skills, but some written words were present as well. Specifically, the kind of zines that will be produced are perzines since they refer to zines focused on personal information, from their own thoughts, feelings and in this case dreams, plans and self-knowledge through reflection process.

Life Project to Enhance Self-Expression

Constructing a life project implies constantly reflecting in a deep way, and when developed in class, it is an opportunity to explore self-expression. As Freire (1968) strongly argues, freedom is possible in pedagogy only when the *Oppressed* have the real possibility to

discover themselves in a reflective way as the own constructor of his history. In this sense, freedom requires having tools, strategies and all the conditions to guide the process of responsibility and opportunity of making decisions, knowing oneself, to others and reflecting on future plans. Regarding life project, it is important to give to the students the space and conditions to carry out the process of constructing it, recognizing the complexity first, as human beings, for instance ethical, psychological, academical, personal; and second as society in which we all are involved and acting trying to overcome the challenges that are constantly changing.

Making decisions about the future requires understanding the past and the present of each self. As Freire (1968) explained, it is important to know and recognize history to construct ourselves, and it is only possible for human beings since we have the possibility of making *praxis*: reflect and act over our reality and the reality surrounding us, representing a “source of knowledge and creation” (p. 83). Moreover, Juan Casassus establishes the enormous relevance of including emotional aspects to develop plans, not only limiting the academical nor professional part. Instead, he argues that including subjective, objective, and multidisciplinary perspectives assists the development of comprehensive education (2007). Moreover, as the psychologist Daniel Goleman (2006) argues regarding the relevance of developing emotional intelligence since emotions significantly influence people’s decisions making for their future and emotional intelligence makes them “pursuit their goals [...] and have fewer emotional distresses” (p. 109).

Furthermore, allowing these reflections and sharing insights help to develop speaking skills. As Vaca (2016) found in an AR with high-school EFL, when implementing tasks that required expressing and exchanging students’ subjectivity (dreams, vision of world, personality) they acquired more vocabulary and felt more comfortable when expressing their thoughts in English. It allowed us to construct knowledge through speaking with richer vocabulary;

additionally, students were able to improve their pronunciation due to the repetition of new words, facing what they viewed as one of the biggest challenges: English is written in a different way than it is spoken and has different sounds (phonemes) to the ones presented in Spanish.

Self-knowledge

When considering the construction of a life-project, it is necessary to understand everyone in their subjectivity which requires being conscious about their own self. As Christiansen (2000) strongly argues, people need to be conscious about their own particularities in terms of their personality, values, emotions, feelings in order to establish goals, and at the same time to develop the ability of adaptability that is required in the several life spheres when humans develop their own self. Also, as the Fundación Meniños (2021) highlights, self-knowledge is not only constructed in an individual way, but requires reflection regarding our interactions with other people in the several spheres that has taken a role in life, for instance family, friends, school members, among others, allowing reflection about their influences in the self-development, the aspirations and the own concept of who we are and make us unique.

Planning goals

Taking decisions regarding the future with short term or long term requires knowing one's own self, and planning actions to achieve goals. As Christiansen (2000) defends, goals respond to consciousness of personal assumptions of what is life progress for the own life, at the same time must respond to additional abilities as adaptability which is required for facing unexpected facts when developing the life project. Thus, defining goals and establishing a flexible plan require reflection and consciousness about the own context in which the self is developed, linking the own personality, dreams, emotions, feelings and values to face the unexpected changes and act based on concrete possibilities for achieving the goals. As the same author

develops, planning requires one to know who wants to be in the future, recognizing the contexts in which goals are going to start to be developed and point out clear objectives that are flexible.

To sum up, developing a life project as a process in which not only academic or professional future is considered, but subjectivity, allowing students to express themselves orally, motivating them in the EFL classroom while developing some speaking skills is of high value. In this research, life projects considering self-knowledge and planning goals is considered as a topic of interest and relevance for the participants since they are close to facing diverse realities after getting graduated as well as an opportunity to construct knowledge through reflection.

Chapter 3. Methodological Design

This action research presents a qualitative paradigm that describes and analyses the problem by constant interaction with the participants where the problem emerges. As Creswell (2017) defines, in qualitative view the researcher looks for “exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 22) and “focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation” (p. 22). This research aims to answer an open question with objectives focused on the participants experiences, and cognitive processes when learning based on the existing problem in that EFL classroom. Additionally, the analysis is descriptive and flexible considering the complexity and several experiences of the participants, that means a social view in educational phenomena.

Type of Research:

This project is Action Research (AR) for better understanding a specific problem in a particular EFL classroom from the experiences of the participants to transform and, in the future improve pedagogical actions through research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) define it as “a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the

effects of such an intervention” (p. 297) meaning that it is developed in a very concrete situation and limited way. In this case the project was developed with tenth graders in public school with the challenge of developing speaking skills due to the observations and diagnostic that allowed to discover the problematic and opportunity of improvement in this ambit.

Furthermore, as Bell (2005) explains, it aims to “arrive at recommendations for good practice that will tackle a problem or enhance the performance of the organization and individuals through changes to the rules and procedure” (p. 8), the role of the teachers in AR demands reflection, analysis, and actions as praxis to improve its actions and the processes of the educative community. In this sense, AR considers a big importance to all people and facts that are involved in educational action, including them on different processes or steps. It is important to consider the AR cycle proposed by Kemmis (1988), this model presents the different moments to make AR in the form of a spiral; each one is linked and occurs in various moments.

The plan is the first stage and refers to the action that is constructed with order and that will be developed during the AR. It must be flexible at certain levels regarding the possible real circumstances that can challenge its application. In this project, the plan was developed from before the assistance to the school, defining the type of research, considering general aspects, for instance the grade, curricular particularities and purposes in order to start the recognition of the population and the instruments that suddenly were applied.

Suddenly, the second stage is acting, which refers to the ideas in action in a controlled and flexible way, recognizing the risks of change. In this study, the act took two main moments, the first one, developed during the assistance to the school in 2024 and consisted in the interaction carried out with the main teacher and the students by applying the different instruments that were designed and modified according to the educative standards and for the

purpose demanded in the planning, to define the problem. Later, in the second step of the spiral, action was reflected in the implementation of the pedagogical strategy in order to face the defined problem and also experimented modifications according to the needs and conditions, for instance, time, quantity of students, students' proposals, etc.

Moreover, the third stage is observation, referring to the critical analysis that will guide the AR results. It must be open-minded and contribute to the other processes, also analyzing the different data collection instruments. The observation was reflected through every attendance at the school, to define the problem, to better understand the grade and their particularities for educational purposes and was essential to develop the plan of the second cycle. Not only English performance was observed, but also interactions, feelings, interests and barriers to overcome the EFL purposes. In the spiral's second cycle, observation was essential during the implementations to guide the learning process of the students and to analyze the development of the objectives.

Finally, the fourth stage is reflection, leading to act based on observation with an evaluative view to modify. AR connects every aspect in a dynamic form; developing the entire research with a critical perspective; as a matter of fact, reflection was essential for developing the entire project, initially to position the tenth grade EFL classroom in their contexts, from schools' goals and conditions to EFL opportunities, knowledge and challenges, as well as students' interests and barriers. This step was needed for defining the problem, designing the intervention proposals, and evaluating results focusing on the main and specific objectives and as Bell (2005) highlights modifications pursuing improvements in teaching and learning processes.

Data Collection Instruments:

During this project, several data collection instruments were applied and analyzed from a qualitative perspective. As Creswell (2017) points out, qualitative data collection is about

“multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents [...]. Then the researchers review all the data, make sense of it, and organize it into categories or themes that cut across all the data sources” (p. 164). In this case, the data collected was analyzed through methodological triangulation considering the aspects described by Creswell regarding specific categories. Additionally, as Creswell describes, the data collected for qualitative research is holistic; to develop a complex view of the problem and the context surrounding it.

Surveys: As Bell (2005) explains, defining surveys is complex, since everyone may have different structures and purposes. However, this project is defined as a way of collecting data through open or closed questions in which the participants can express their thoughts, information and ideas in a confidential way. Furthermore, surveys result in a big relevance because the students are asked to share different information, personal, demographic, knowledge, experiences, among others, sometimes also they are supposed to justify their answers.

Field notes: They are a way to shape what happens in the observations in an objective way, and also have a space for the perceptions, thoughts, reflections of the researcher based on what was noticed from a particular interest. Furthermore, as Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) defend “writing field notes is not simply the product of innate sensibilities and insights but also involves skills learned and sharpened over time” (pp. 42-43), this means that researches must write their perceptions considering the previous experiences, it results were important during the analysis while maintaining a complex view of the situations analyzed in the triangulation.

The design of the selected template integrated into four parts: Observation (description/narration); topic, concept, category; analysis (causes/ consequences); and contribution to the project (Questions/ decisions). The first one allowed the researcher to write a detailed description of what happened in every session. The second one sought to establish the

focus of every session in order to be more precise in data analysis, connecting them with the objectives of the research. Suddenly, the analysis was for the interpretations made by the researcher based on the evidence observed and their own insights.

Tests: As part of the assessment, tests are applied to the students in this current research. First, a diagnosis test was applied to Quenette (2014) states, “uncover individual students’ specific misconceptions and developmental level for a particular topic” (p. 6). This diagnostic test included the four abilities (speaking, listening, writing and reading) and followed and adapted one KET sample from Cambridge designed for A2 speaking, considering topics related to students’ interests as school, hobbies, family, dreams, among others.

Interview: As Burns (1999) explains, they are a way of exploring high information about the topics the researcher is keen to explore, also for individual interviews, represents the advantage of having answers with more particular data, while in group, having richer details while the participants may add more information by listening to other answers (p. 119). Interviews were applied to the English teacher to know in a more in-depth way experiences when teaching EFL in the classroom and to better understand the complexity of the problem.

Workshops: As Rodríguez (2015) explains, they facilitate the learning and teaching processes and lead to active participation of the students, recognizing that the construction of knowledge requires actions linked to theory and common reality. In qualitative research, they represent a resource for observation to register data about interactions and goals for development to be analyzed. Workshops center on specific activities where students can express their thoughts and interact with others, that means, according to him, they promote dialogue. Also, as they are design intentional activities, they help in the development and improvement of language skills.

In this project, workshops were designed for the implementations carried out in 2025 with the purpose of developing speaking skills and zine-making under life project topics. The used format has five main moments: Opening, development, exercise, closing, and assessment. During the exercise they need to achieve some goals in order to advance in the zine-making project, where some activities are individual or in teams, however interactions are important in every stage. For the closing part, students need to integrate the constructed knowledge based on the previous parts and the teacher-students and students-students' interactions that are essential for speaking skills development.

Artifacts: They are tangible products resulting from a process, as Leavy (2017) argues, they can show the results of educational processes through the meaning of the participant gives to those objects that can show cultural aspects as well, and that some other instruments cannot show easily. In this study, the artifacts are the zines produced by the students because of zine-making strategy in which they will show their own creative expression based on the subtopics developed about life projects. They require expressing their thoughts, feelings, reflections, and analysis through the whole process; furthermore, artifacts result of a high value as creative expressions handmade by the participants regarding their styles and ideas.

Recordings: Burns (1999) presents recordings as a valuable instrument for data collection “for capturing in detail naturalistic interactions and verbatim utterances” (p. 94) that may not be evident during the classes or with general observation. In this AR, recordings are of high value since they will be the products of the students to analyze their performance in developing speaking skills through the different moments of zine-making. They will have the opportunity to listen to their recordings, listen to others, and receive feedback.

Ethical Issues:

This research has only academic purposes, for that reason, personal information of the participants will not be shared to protect their privacy. Additionally, the consent form is part of communicating with both the participants and their parents to let them know the purpose, their rights, and the responsibilities of the researcher and the University according to legal requirements and are crucial for data analysis.

Schedule:

The development of this project started in late 2024 with problem statement including the application of some instruments as fieldnotes, diagnostic test and the consent format. Also, the research design and proposal for intervention were carried out, in early 2025 with lesson plans and workshops design; consequently, those artifacts were analyzed depending on the matrix.

Figure 1.

Schedule																																
Phases	2024												2025																			
	September				October				November				February				March				April				May				June			
	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4	w1	w2	w3	w4				
1. Plan: (Document analysis, diagnostic, characterization).																																
2. Action (C1: Observation. C2: Implementation).																																
3. Observe (data collection and general analysis)																																
4.Reflect. C1: Diagnosis results C 2:Analysis of the interventions' results and evaluation.																																

Note: The figure presents dates and activities that were carried out according to the AR

Kemmis (1989) model.

Conceptual Matrix

For the data analysis, a conceptual matrix was constructed allowing the organization, contrast, and guide to findings based on the main categories, subcategories and some performance indicators. Matrix leads to the structure of the information, facilitating to link the

several categories and the way they are understood, in this case, for analyzing the students' development during the project development.

Table 2. Conceptual Matrix

Category	Subcategory	Performance indicators
Speaking skills	Vocabulary and grammar	To implement relevant and broad vocabulary according to the topics and the communicative purposes using grammatical structures appropriately.
	Pronunciation	To pronounce words and sentences with adequate English sounds and emphasizes according to the emotions.
	Fluency	To produce speech with natural rhythm and tone, including pauses to clearly communicate the ideas and according to their purpose.
	Non-verbal communication	To communicate messages including facial gestures, eye contact, and body movement with confidence in accordance with linguistic content.
Fanzine	Verbal Content	To express clearly the purpose of each topic, organizing the ideas in order to connect visual productions of the pages where it is presented.
	Self-made images	To create original visual elements that support verbal content with creativity, communicating and highlighting key elements to catch the attention, some visual elements can communicate even without verbal content.
	Semiotic harmony	To use visual creations to establish a significative relationship with verbal, expand the ideas beyond verbal content and explain the meaning of the images (colors, lines, etc.) when needed.
Life project	Self-knowledge	To reflect on their particularities and translate it into concrete and clear ideas for specific purposes, recognizing the relevance of feelings, values, interests and personality in personal development.
	Planning goals	-To define objectives according to the agreed deadline, connecting their current reality and personal characteristics with every domain in a clear way. -to assess the impact of their personal actions in the community, expressing ideas about how they can act to contribute positively to the community adapted to their personal goals. -To organize actions to achieve their goals in coherence with reality and the established future term, considering several opportunities and showing flexibility to adjust their plans.

Chapter 4. Pedagogical Intervention

In this chapter, the vision of language, curriculum, learning, and classroom will be presented as part of all the processes since recognizing the problem, planning, acting and observing. It is also relevant to mention that the proposal followed the pedagogical approach of the school which is constructivist, meaning that new knowledge is constructed based on the previous experiences and knowledge of students with strategies that are connected to their contexts, interests and needs, implying their constant participation to achieve integrated and meaningful learning goals.

Vision of Language:

It is considered in this project that language has an enormous value for social interactions and for the development of people as individuals. Vygotsky (1986) presents language constructions, especially words as a tool of thinking with the power of always constructing meaning in society by interactions, for instance considering culture; also, as a resource to develop one's identity (1986). As in this study, speaking skills are the center of the language objectives, they are considered as a complex productive skill that as Hossain (2015) explains “The main function of spoken language is to socialize individuals” (p. 11) and represents one of the most complex skills and one of the most important for every context where communication is needed. Language represents a way in which people have the possibility to meet other people, to understand the world, to express their thoughts, feelings, reflections, among others.

Vision of curriculum:

It is relevant to establish that there are several definitions and types of curriculums that are complex and developed in different ways. In this project, the view of Emancipatory Curriculum is taken, in which Paulo Freire was a pioneer with his proposal of liberating

education. As Giroux (1988) establishes, this vision of curriculum develops that “knowledge should play an emancipatory role by providing students with a unity, logic, and sense of direction that will allow them to consider all the implications of what they are taught, whether in or out of school” (p. 87). In this sense, emancipatory curriculum seeks for meaningful learning in which students participate as the teachers, and where they construct meaning not only for academical purposes, but for understanding, questioning, reflecting and acting to transform their reality, and the complex reality of the society, meaning seeking to construct life project. It is not limited to content but developing critical thinking and acting in and outside the classroom (1988).

Vision of learning:

The vision of learning in this research regards the *Project Based Learning* (PBL) principles, besides *Critical Pedagogy* to develop the activities and achieve the objectives according to the Malaysian Educational Technology Division Ministry of Education (2006) in the PBL, learning centers on activities that are “interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real-world issues and practices” that attempt to “explore complex issues” (p.3) promoting students participation to make their own interpretations, construct meaning and regarding the different learning styles of the students. Additionally, for the Critical Pedagogy, as Freire argues, it consists about constant participation of the students aiming critical understanding that is not about content streaming but transforming the own acts to impact positively in the society, constantly questioning power relationships (1965).

In this sense, the current project achieves constant interactions in different directions: students-students, teacher-students, where a complex and relevant problem is developed: life-project, allowing participation of the students to construct knowledge not only in a linguistic way, but in a social one regarding speaking skills.

Vision of classroom:

Jackson (1990) suggests it is a place that presents in a little way a representation of society and were based on several interactions, there is a development of behaviors that guide learning and teaching processes. Additionally, Chard (1998) describes them as places for discussing problems regarding the needs of the students and where there are high expectations about their learning processes. Taking all these considerations into account, it is important to highlight that it is a place to learn, but not the only place where people learn.

Instructional Design

This section presents the workshops that were designed for achieving objectives and that looked to develop the speaking skills of the students. The workshops were designed based on the main categories and their subcategories that took place through the different lessons linked with their main and specific purposes to contribute and analyze the development of the speaking skills as established in the objectives of this proposal.

Also, in general terms, the project considered three main phases connected to the creation of the fanzines, the strategies to develop speaking skills and the topics around life-project. Those stages were: first, “*Who am I?*”; second, “*my dreams and why*”; third, “*how am I going to make them true?*” all of them considering an A1 level. In addition, as the group does not only include the participants, but also some students of 1101, activities sought developing activities in varied teams. For every workshop, a rubric was developed based on the analyzed constructions that varied among the lessons. Also, rubrics for self-evaluation, co-evaluation and hetero evaluation were constructed to allow students to own perceptions and analysis for the development of each category with specific descriptions and levels of achievement: *Excellent*, *acceptable* and *requires improvement*. Most of the implemented analog and digital material was created by the researcher

Workshop 1. Introduction and Insights.

For this first lesson, the main topics were presented: life-project, expression (in two ways: speaking skills and fanzines) where firstly, the students were encouraged to participate telling their insights about each of them, allowing team and individual participation with the designed activities and material. The lesson first explored their previous knowledge. Second, explanation guided with visual examples of fanzines and personal expressions was given connected to their ideas. Also, short and guided activities lead to practicing speaking skills in EFL and self-knowledge. The main objective was leaded to understand how English allows self-development through life project due to the need of developing speaking skills that was found in the participants' population, also connected to the curriculum in which life-project was considered as a topic of high value, and considering social and local context that was previously presented, then the value of developing expression through oral and visual creations leading to develop not only EFL competencies, but also spaces for self-knowledge and interaction to take decisions related to their interests when getting graduated from high-school. Also, several resources such as cards and images were created by the author.

For the first moment, an activity was designed to practice vocabulary and pronunciation about professions, students had to express their own dreams for the future when they were kids. Later, in teams organized by the researcher, they were asked to express their ideas about the meaning and relevance of the key concepts already mentioned. Then, some students were asked to share their results. Additionally, a physical resource was shared with every student, including vocabulary for some topics that were going to be needed in the whole project, including the word, its meaning and keys for its pronunciation. Also, an additional digital resource that consisted of a *Symbaloo* page as well created by the researcher was shared with the participants

to practice pronunciation and including some pages that were going to be used for the activities linked to the zines. Finally, homework including some questions regarding the second workshop was assigned, in which students needed to answer questions regarding recognizing what values are, emotions, and the ones they consider were more important.

Workshop 2. Who am I? Values and Emotions

For this workshop, firstly the students were asked to answer a self-rubric about their knowledge of values, emotions and feelings in general terms (relevance, differences) and in English (vocabulary, expressing their own, pronunciation). It was used to establish a contrast at the end of the workshop. Also, for the ones who made homework, feedback was provided.

To start applying the main concepts, students were enhanced to identify their own values, feelings and emotions to better know themselves and express in oral and written ways. For this workshop, the main objective was to recognize the meaning of values, feelings, and emotions and their relevance for the life project. So, the first activity consisted on working with aleatory pairs, assigned with a flashcard's activity, that lead to identifying some vocabulary about values, feelings and emotions. Also, they were asked to share their insights about the meaning and differences among the terms to establish a contrast in the whole class and later it was connected to the explanation of the researcher using some slides and graphic material designed by her.

After that, students watched a video about emotional management called *How to manage your emotions* taken from *TedVid* including subtitles. And firstly, they were asked to take notes about what they consider most relevant. Later, they were asked to answer some questions of multiple choice individually. To do it, the questions were explained, key words were emphasized, and then they watched the video again. After it, the answers were checked individually, and then the correct answers were explained.

Next, the template for recognizing their own main emotions, values, their relevance in their lives as individuals and the emotions they want to learn to manage was shared and explained. In this part, keys for pronunciation were constructed, linking their questions and with briefs exercises of pronunciation. If they wanted to know more vocabulary, they had the opportunity to write it on the board, and the researcher put the meaning in English and clues of pronunciation. Then it was checked and they completed a self-evaluation rubric, that way they could share how much and what did they learnt during the workshop.

As homework, they were asked to practice the pronunciation of the whole template as they were told they would share it orally in their fanzines. For this, extra digital sources were shared in the *Padlet* and *Symbaloo* designed by the researcher.

Workshop 3. Who am I? Part 2: Strengths and Weaknesses

For this workshop, students began answering a self-evaluated rubric about their previous knowledge about strengths and weaknesses in English and their relevance. Then a warm-up activity was made to introduce the topic with real-life and common situations to engage students where they had to express to what degree they have a specific adjective (strength or weakness) depending on the context and their personality.

Thereafter, as the general goal of the workshop was to reflect on the own strengths and weaknesses considering adjectives vocabulary and their level of degree, an explanation was carried out and vocabulary was shared for students to have more possibilities to include their own. The explanation includes key aspects about how to include strengths and weaknesses in sentences using some adverbs of degree: *a little*, *very* and *too*. As a way of practicing and asking possible doubts, a short *Wordwall* activity of the way “organize the sentence” was developed.

Suddenly, the main activity was developed including a template for the students to identify and express their own strengths and weaknesses and their intensity, also telling which weakness they would like to change (reflection process). It was completed using the new vocabulary and adverbs of degree, as well as constructing simple sentences for expressing examples of real situations when they experiment it and arguing why to improve. Finally, they had to evaluate their process in pairs, so they answered a co-evaluated rubric regarding their participation, interest and development of constructed knowledge during the workshop.

Workshop 4. Audios and sketches, my first steps.

During this workshop, the general objective aimed to express how self-knowledge leads to defining points of improvement including the studied topics of values, emotions, strengths and weaknesses. Also, the students have designed their zines in terms of preparing the audios individually and making a sketch of the first elements: front cover and section 1: “*Who am I?*”.

For this purpose, every student had a piece of cardboard and instructions from the researcher to make their own fanzine. Next, they were explained about the two activities that they were going to complete: to begin with, making the structure and recording the first audio and the sketch. The audio needed to be made in the platform *Vocaroo* and they needed to submit the link and the QR code in Padlet. They also needed to follow a general structure: template 1 (Emotions and values) and template 2 (strengths and weaknesses). Additionally, for the sketches they needed to: decide the general theme of their zines, decide the first technique according to their creativity and communicative intentions (e.g. drawing, watercolor, collage, pop up) and to make simple drawings of the main elements, their meaning and their graphical position.

The students had the opportunity to submit the final version of their audios for the next class. Also, as a way of assessment, self-evaluation and co-evaluation rubrics were shared, it

considered the visual elements, the constructed audios as well as the life-project in terms of self-knowledge.

Workshop 5. The wheel of my dreams.

This workshop allowed the beginning of section two looking to develop the life project in terms of establishing the main goals or dreams of the participants. To do it, the general objective was structuring main dreams for several life spheres in a medium-term using some expressions that included them into a script. To achieve the goal and considering the possibilities of the implementation time in the school, one class was established to develop the workshop.

Considering that this workshop was implemented during the 2025-2 semester, the first activity consisted of briefly linking the background knowledge and topics that were previously built to introduce the section 2 and its relevance for the life project, the speaking activities and fanzine. Then, the template “wheel of dreams” with five life-spheres (academic, professional, personal, social, health) was shared with each student and the instructions were displayed, when they decided aspects they would prefer to focus their goals on a term of six years, they got some vocabulary that consisted of expressions of preferences: “I would like to...”, “I want to...”, “My dream is to...”(professions, life-habits, economics, among other topics); consequently, they have a template was filled by writing in which they decided the three main goals.

Suddenly, in order to allow more guided interactions linked to the speaking skills, every student needed to share their answers/ their dreams, and ask about their partners’ goals through an oral guided activity, by aleatory couples. They were walking in the classroom space while a song was played, and then when stopped, working with the person in front or next to them. They had the opportunity to share their answers four times, while the researcher checked participation as well as the oral and non-verbal performance, making corrections when necessary.

Finally, a self-evaluation rubric was shared as well as the material to make it. For this workshop, their interest on the proposed activities, their level of effort for developing them and if they considered the topic of dreams relevant in the English class and why.

Workshop 6. Fanzine making to express my dreams.

For this workshop, the objective was to build the dreams section including visual designs. To achieve the goal, the workshop proposal was to develop fanzines in a more practical way than in the previous workshop, punctually by focusing the class on its creation. To do it, students got instructions first, then fanzines of different authors were presented with the purpose of inspiring their creativity and then they were guided to produce it.

Then, they needed to decide the technique to use in this second stage and sketching the two pages of the fanzines assigned to the stage, establishing the communicative purpose, possible colors, images, space and presentation for the QR codes, among other visual and semiotic aspects that are mandatory for sharing a message to the possible readers. Also, they needed to bring some materials as well as the researcher did in order to make their designs in class.

Finally, personalized feedback was shared as well as general recommendations in the case they did not finish the sections of the fanzines in class. Also, a brief self-evaluation rubric was developed by the participants to know if they found differences in the creative process of making the fanzine before (mostly as homework) and making it during the class time, as well as identifying what emotions they perceived when sharing their dreams in a multimodal way.

Workshop 7. Expressing Dreams Out Loud

This workshop mainly focused on speaking skills aimed composing an oral production to express interest in the future. To achieve the goal activities were developed, fluency and rhythm were considered fundamental aspects for the oral productions. Initially, the students had the

opportunity to check their individual feedback on *Padlet* based on their first oral production (first stage of the fanzine) and after it, the goals of the workshop were shared. Then, in order to start practicing some speaking skills a challenge of telling a tongue-twister was established during some minutes. Suddenly, in order to be more conscious of the mouth positions/movements and effort in producing EFL sounds and speech a guided activity for improving vocalization through oral productions with a pencil was devised linked to the template they needed to present.

Suddenly, audios production started including researcher's support and self-evaluation through listening and finding mistakes (in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, rhythm, fluency) that allowed to build strategies to improve the productions and generating self-confidence listening the own audios and being listened by others (partners, teachers).

The students showed their drafts and then the final versions with improvements and discuss what changes they made, why and what strategies they considered worked most for them. Also, they were asked to share their thoughts about the tongue-twister and pencil's activity to improve their oral skills and if they consider their pronunciation had been improving with the workshops to better know the perceptions of the class development and their own experiences. They submitted their recordings to *Vocaroo* platform. Also, the designed rubric considered the speaking skills subcategories as well as the one of semiotic harmony.

Workshop 8. Dreaming Big, Strong Planning

The current workshop aimed to outline the key steps in future (simple) to achieve main dreams considering real possibilities in the future term proposed. Initially, general questions about the concept "planning" linked to the life-project topic were asked for the students to share general assumptions. Suddenly, an activity with game elements was played to make the students create a strategy (among the whole group) to achieve the goal and win to the researcher, for this,

the students built different plans/strategies in which they linked verbal and non-verbal communication, physical movement, time management among others. Suddenly, questions about their participation in the game were asked and linked with the main topic. Later, when a meaning and some “planning” elements were built, a template that included three main dreams and steps to achieve each of them was developed, in which they considered the real possibilities on their contexts (social, cultural, economic), to recognize their purposes with each dream, among other elements in order to establish the steps, the abilities they require and some possible obstacles. By the end of the class, the templates were checked, and final feedback was shared.

For this workshop, based on the activities and feedback emphasis, the evaluated subcategories consisted of *planning goals* and *self-knowledge* (from Life-Project), semiotic harmony (from Fanzine construct) and non-verbal communication (from speaking skills).

Workshop 9. Exploring Technology to Improve my Speaking.

This workshop aimed to prepare an oral production related to steps to achieve a goal using several supportive strategies, mainly some web pages, Artificial Intelligence assistants and teacher’s feedback. To achieve the goal, some slides with general information about three platforms were shared: *WordReference*, *GetPronounce* and *How To Pronounce* to discover general and English natives' speakers' pronunciation, possible synonyms and recording audios getting feedback from an AI. The principal functions and instructions to use each platform were provided aiming to fulfill and edit their templates, but also to recognize and practice the sounds of words or phrases they considered the most difficult from their templates' answers. Linked to it, also some questions about their perceptions of using those virtual tools to improve their speaking skills and if they already knew or used them. The activities allowed analyzing the performance on *vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation, fluency and non-verbal*

communication, as *planning goals* subcategory. Next, they started practicing the last audio and submitted it to Padlet or sharing it via Bluetooth in the case of internet failures.

Furthermore, they answered a final survey to know their perceptions considering the project in terms of general experience, interest, and relevance in their learning process. Also, they completed a quantitative diagnosis to determine the way in which the key concepts and skills had been developed. Both questionnaires were designed by the researcher and were essential for further analysis in the triangulation.

Workshop 10. Fanzines' final steps.

This final workshop aimed to present the built life project linking oral with visual productions developed in the fanzines made by the participants, the workshop was developed during two classes. In the first one, the students designed the final stage of the fanzine (visual content) while in the second one they presented their fanzines to other students (from the same grade and another tenth and eleventh grade group), likewise they answered a rubric to evaluate the final presentation in terms of the experience of sharing their visual and oral productions.

To begin with, for this workshop the students were asked to include pop-up in their last design of the fanzine, to do it general instructions were explained and then they had time to finish their designs, and designing a back cover individually.

Second, during the other half of the workshop the students were asked to organize the classroom in order to have enough space for some visitors (another class and their teacher) to show their fanzines as well as telling general information about the purpose of the project, the main topic (life-project), the way they identified some of their feelings, their dreams and main steps of their plan. Also, the participants had to listen to their partners since they were divided into two groups to be first visitors/exhibitors and then change roles. Each student was asked to

fulfill a rubric to evaluate the final presentations of their fanzines in a general level (the results of the entire class) and an individual way (how they felt speaking in English to other students).

Chapter 5. Data Analysis and Findings

The current chapter analyses the designed and applied pedagogical implementation. As previously established, this research presents a qualitative data analysis, that Cresswell (2017) highlights, does not consider the expectation of results, but the development of the strategy based on the problem and the context. Also, it is guided with the categories and subcategories aiming to reach the general objective. It is also relevant to establish that the AR cycle by Kemmis (1988) allowed to adequate the implemented workshops to the observed situations and the own perception of the participants. Every workshop was analyzed and considered specific subcategories depending on the main objectives and the rubric whereas skills and performance, also they were connected by contrast, constructing hypothesis drawing on the authorities that guided the proposal.

It is relevant to underline that time for application was significantly altered due to institutional and local issues. For instance, missing entire school days due to floods or damage to the surrounding areas; additionally, the schedule of the class included having lunch, among others. Each workshop was planned to take one or two sessions.

Workshop 1. Introduction and Insights

The first lesson aimed to understand how English allows self-development through life-project. The main categories were displayed and discussed, so the students could be more engaged. From the first moment, the students activated some vocabulary related to professions and with their memories to answer, “When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?”. They recognized some of the vocabulary (professions), but when constructing a

sentence for answering the questions they asked for a structure, and pronunciation. Related to speaking skills while the *Estándares Básicos* (2006) establishes students should be able to participate spontaneously using basic vocabulary and grammar structures, several difficulties were found from this first lesson when they needed to express their thoughts orally in a spontaneous way, also for the activity of telling their previous knowledges about life-project, expression (speaking-skills, fanzines) where they used a lot of words in Spanish or asked for how to say complete specific sentences in English as stated in the field-diary 1 (annex C).

Based on the rubric, the twenty students that attended, showed a performance in *pronunciation* as follows: 9 (45%) *require improvement*, 11 (55%) *acceptable* and none with *excellent*. Linked to it, for *vocabulary and grammar* 12 (60%) of the students *require improvement*, *acceptable* with 7 (35%) and *excellent* with 1 (5%). Also, it was evidenced in the field-diary 1 that when students had the opportunity to express their previous knowledge and they felt comfortable with their knowledges, they wanted to participate more, and as Harmer (1988) suggests, it is how speaking skills are better learnt, as students are engaged and trying to articulate every skill according to the purpose of the activity and how they express their own interests. It was also noticed that when guiding activities and teacher includes English, they start to try to correct their own pronunciation in some cases, especially for the students that wanted to participate more (orally) showing that the interest on the topic and activities lead.

Also, *non-verbal* skill was analyzed finding that students performed as follow: 1 student (5%) *requires improvement* and 19 with *acceptable*. It is essential to consider that it was the first class in which 1101 students and 1001 students were together, and as expressed in the diary, the students tried to work only with those of the same grade. In this case, kinesics expressions were a high value, for example some students spoke quietly, others moved their arms connecting their

hands, or only crossed their arms, that according to Hall and Knapp (2010) suggest nervousness or discomfort, as a hypothetical cause the researcher it was due to sharing with eleventh grade students and that the class was guided by the researcher and not the head teacher and the lack of speaking practice activities in the EFL. However, when they had the opportunity of asking for words in English or follow a structure, most of them tried it to achieve the goals of the activity, mainly when presenting to the teachers.

Moreover, the rubric facilitated the analysis of *life project* in relation to *self-knowledge*. Overall, participants demonstrated an *acceptable* level of performance, particularly when asked to provide reasons underlying their childhood professional aspirations; however, some participants exhibited a tendency to replicate their peers' responses. Nevertheless, when defining concepts, they showed their perspectives individually or team and some used examples of real life to explain their, reinforcing the findings made by Vaca (2016) of how the opportunity of expressing the subjectivity can enrich English learning and speaking performance.

It is also relevant to highlight that the inclusion of some of the 1001 and 1101 was not expected by the researcher at the moment of designing the proposal (in general), however, it could also be an opportunity to develop communicative skills in a different way, since they do not know much among them, but only among the ones of the same grade.

Finally, during this session it was found the hypothesis of the lack of knowledge in grammar structures was reinforced as students asked for a structure before participating and constantly asked how to say something in EFL. Also, when students can express their knowledge about themselves or linked to their own experiences, they start to participate more and follow instructions. For the general objective, students lead to new knowledge regarding the meaning and relevance of the main concepts linking each of them. However, students show some

nervousness for additional situations (not only due to the lack of grammar knowledge), for instance interacting with 1101 students.

Workshop 2. Who am I? Values and Emotions

For this lesson, the general objective was recognizing the meaning of values, emotions/feelings and its importance for the life-project. First, for the flashcard activity, the groups were established, but as observed in the field-diary, some students expressed nonconformity with their pairs because they were from 1101. For this lesson, many unexpected situations (institutional and local) affected the time for the activities, modifications were made based on time and students' needs. The analysis was made based on the 18 participants.

For the analyzed categories, speaking skills and self-knowledge, were firstly evaluated with a self-rubric in which students expressed they had good (11) knowledge about the topics, but when expressing their own values, emotions and feelings in English they mostly had a regular (12) and inefficient (5) level. This rubric allowed to establish a contrast with the new knowledge constructed and practiced during the lesson from the own students' perception with the aim of recognizing how the self-knowledge activities could contribute to both, English knowledge and expression as a way to interact with others and, as suggested by Nation (2001), achieving short-term goals has a positive impact on specific skills development, in this case the activities developed in class, they needed to include their own knowledges, particularities and activating practiced and key vocabulary regarding specific topics.

So, the first part consisted of getting some basic vocabulary and differentiating each concept considering students' ideas. For this, a written activity was developed, and took much more time as expected due to the lack of grammar, when according to the MEN in the *Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje* (2016) they are supposed to write medium length texts, and they needed

to write only sentences in pairs, putting in evidence a high challenge for communicative proposals. However, it was considered an opportunity to gain more vocabulary and practice pronunciation that helped in oral participation.

Next, for the *speaking-skills* category, the first analyzed subcategory was *vocabulary and grammar*. Students were engaged to express their own perceptions of the relevance and difference of the main topics as well as identifying the ones they felt more frequently, considered more relevant for developing their life-project or want to improve (manage some emotions). Most of the students 10 (56%) performed an *acceptable* level based on the way they included vocabulary and followed instructions in expressing their own emotions and values; 5 (28%) a *needs improvement* level and 3 (16%) an *excellent* one, showing improvement from the first lesson, possibly due to the topic, that as the head teacher expressed it had not been viewed in English classes and possibly either in other subjects. Next, the *pronunciation* was analyzed based on their interventions and participations that were mostly guided. As the field-diary evidenced, there are some students that participate more often and those are the ones that have started to use more English in class as well as helping other students to better develop communicative skills. For this subcategory, 11 (61%) performed an *acceptable* level, 5 (28%) a *needs improvement* level and 2 (11%) *excellent*. It is important to highlight that for this session, pronunciation was more practiced in some specific sounds (e.g: ‘v’, ‘th’) and students started to use them more markedly, helping the pronunciation of some words, as Šolcová (2011) suggested practice is key for developing speaking pronunciation and fluency. Next, in the *non-verbal* subcategory 12 (66%) performed *acceptable* level, 3 (17%) *excellent* and 3 *needs improvement*. In this category, there is change on performance since there were students that performed it excellent due to the facial expression, body movements and eye contact that as Hall and Knapp (2010) argue, can

show confidence and to be comfortable, in this case is connected to the more often practice of speaking skills in classroom, involving teacher-students and student-student interactions, essential to develop the skill and overcoming communicative competences that as highlighted by MEN in the *Curriculum Sugerido* (2016) is key for teaching foreign languages.

Now, regarding the category of *life-project*, the analyzed subcategory was *self-knowledge* in which students performed mostly at *acceptable* level with 9 (50%) of them, followed by 5 (28%) *needs improvement* and 4 (22%) with *excellent*. In this case, there were significant changes in two different ways, first 28% of the participants did not overcome the goals of the session in terms of identifying and expressing the own values and emotions, their relevance and it was found it was harder for them when they needed to give an example of when they put the selected values in practice, probably this is due to the lack of grammatical bases for expressing and understanding because they expressed isolated words or answers without relation to complete ideas of the type “I need them (values) when...”. However, it is also relevant to mention that the instructions were explained and as the results show, most of the participants followed the instructions. Second, there were some students that developed *self-knowledge* in excellent degree, due to the way they connected their ideas including more details and more complex grammar use when giving examples and when they were asked to differentiate values from emotions and feelings. One more time, as Vaca (2016) found, activities integrating new knowledge in EFL with the expression of the subjectivity encourage them to express in EFL including more vocabulary and grammar to communicate their own personality and thoughts.

Also, homework was checked finding only four students developed it. In this case, it is possible to say that English is mostly practiced only when the teacher is checking progress during the class, while outside most of the students do not do it. This fact is considered as

homework could be used mostly for practicing already seen topics, used as essential to develop the following workshops is risky for the researcher since if most of the students do not develop homework.

At the end of the workshop, the self-rubric was applied allowing students to identify their own progress that passed from regular to good level or that maintained at a good level about self-knowledge and the topic. Additionally, regarding English skills and knowledge, where most of them during the first rubric identified a bad or regular level, passed or maintain a regular one, perceiving some changes in terms of expressing their ideas and including more vocabulary. These results enrich the analysis since it confirms the process of developing speaking skills as well as constructing the life-project can present advances in different ways before developed.

Finally, this lesson allowed the researcher to recognize the several difficulties due to external factors that can challenge the implementation of lessons and the students' participation. However, there were changes in the speaking-skills analyzed subcategories and life-project in terms of self-knowledge that indicates the practice of verbal expression as a tool to achieve communicative competences using English as a way of personal expression and practicing different sounds and vocabulary that was mostly unknown before the lesson.

Workshop 3. Who am I? Part 2: Strengths and Weaknesses.

This workshop aimed students reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses considering adjectives of vocabulary and their level of degree. It is relevant to highlight that during this session there were only 1001 students, it means only the participants of the current project, and this allowed some crucial findings. To achieve it, the first activity consisted of sharing some of their own characteristics in particular situations using EFL audiovisual material.

It allowed us to see that students were engaged to the topic and that themselves started to identify key vocabulary and its grammatical functions through sharing their responses with their friends or making examples about their own life and similar situations. From this initial activity, and through the development of the template in which students included examples of real-life situations reflecting their main strengths and weaknesses, it was possible to record in the field notes that, when students are given the opportunity to identify their own particular characteristics, they begin to reflect on potential areas for improvement. In this case, this process was evidenced in their attempts to transform perceived weaknesses into strengths. As Freire (1968) developed, it is possible to develop long-term plans and in education having guidance and key tools is essential. The participants started thinking about their own strengths and weaknesses and the level in which they use to develop them (through some adverbs of degree for adjectives) and explaining why they would like to improve in these aspects, some of them argued, for instance the main reason was for being happier, be a better person, to feel more confident.

Also, as evidenced through the rubric, for the subcategory of *self-knowledge* related to *life-project* main construct, 13 (62%) participants achieved in an *excellent* level, implicating they thoughtfully identified and reflected on strengths and weaknesses as part of personal/unique elements and could share and respect others. Also, they recognized the value of identifying intensity and that they can be improved through life. It is key to mention that this workshop showed the best performance in this sub-category, so seven students (33%) achieved it at an *acceptable* level, and only 1 (5%) *required improvement*.

Subsequently, students participated more actively. Following field notes, it is suggested that it may have been influenced by the absence of 1101 group, as students interacted exclusively with peers with whom they had already established relationships over the past two years. In

relation to the main construct of speaking skills, students not only used the target vocabulary provided but also incorporated additional examples for specific communicative purposes.

Also, non-verbal skills were evaluated and practiced. Students showed to achieve it easier in front of their partners and the researcher, using facial gestures and body language to emphasize on their communicative intention (asking questions, making examples, look for a different way to express ideas avoiding repetition) that according to Hall and Knapp (2010) use of gestures is essential since are not only natural movements, but used as cues full of purposes.

Also, the rubric allowed to identify that in *vocabulary and grammar* the participants developed as follows: 11 (52%) at *excellent*, 9 (43%) at *acceptable* and 1 (5%) at *needs improvement*. Then, the use of guided activities considering common situations of real life and connected to shared experiences in the classroom had a positive impact on students' vocabulary and grammar performance, this was evident orally, and in the templates' answers. In the case of *pronunciation*, 3 (14%) were at an *excellent* level, 15 (72%) at *acceptable* and 3 (14%) at *need improvement*. The fact most of them positioned at an acceptable level was expected from Kenworthy (1988) in two key aspects: it was the first time they included varied vocabulary since the topic name 'strengths and weaknesses'; also, there were contextualized activities in which pronunciation was relevant but was not the only key skills, but a way for expressing their ideas and understand others' particularities in their personal characteristics and the intensity of their main ones; as a result, *fluency*, 1 (5%) developed at *excellent* level, 13 (62%) at *acceptable* level and 7 (33%) at *need improvement*. In this case, acceptable referred to have the ability to express some strengths and weaknesses, but with occasional pauses or hesitations, and correct when asked to do it. Also, linked to what is stated in the CEFR by the Council of Europe (2020), fluency is linked to communicative purposes, and through this workshop, there were several

interactions that needed not only the production of speech, but also required moments of self-knowledge that were more individual, which means that it was linked to other skills. However, fluency was considered for the first time, as a way in which participants had a first meeting with its guided development, following instruction, receiving feedback and adjusting.

Regarding the rubrics, most students self-evaluated their performance at regular level, particularly in relation to their understanding of strengths and weaknesses and their relevance to their life projects. However, in the final co-evaluation rubric, different perceptions emerged. Students tended to identify their peers as stronger in terms of self-knowledge, but with greater difficulties in English-related activities. They acknowledged their peers' efforts to make progress and achieve the proposed goals, while also pointing out the need to improve pronunciation and fluency. These findings reinforce the previous analysis, in which pronunciation and fluency were identified as the subcategories that require greater practice and pedagogical support.

In brief, the third workshop achieved advances in self-knowledge and in some of the speaking skills, also allowed to identify progress in pronunciation and first look of fluency where the students identify challenges that need to be faced by their partners. Also, when being with more familiar students they start to participate more and develop self-confidence which is evident in the use of English as well as non-verbal skills.

Workshop 4. Audios and Sketches my first steps.

This workshop aimed to express how self-knowledge allows the recognition and establishment of points of improvement focused on emotions management, values for living, strengths and weaknesses for developing the life-project. For this, the main activity consisted on the creation of the first audio including the first stage *who am I?* through the guided practice of pronunciation, the use of digital sources as *Padlet* and *Vocaroo* in order to upload the audios,

listen to one's self productions and getting feedback. Also, the creation of the first sketch for the same section that involved participation in class, as well as autonomous work to make it at home. In general aspects, it is key to mention that time represented a big barrier for the workshop development due to academic activities that the students needed to present during the scheduled class, also the fact of lack of internet connection and the noise in class.

It was evident the students participated in class when developing pronunciation practice, especially when focusing on English sounds and key words, that was included in the first part of the workshop. However, most of them expressed to feel uncomfortable when recording and especially listening to their own recordings, some of them pointed out it was due to their own perception of their process, mentioning, for instance "I do not do it as well as you", "I am bad at speaking in English", "I do not want to listen to me because it sounds weird" (expressed in Spanish). As Linares (2023) evidenced, when students do not have previous practice in speaking (referring to past English classes experiences), they have a tendency on judging the results on new speaking activities, as well as avoiding new practices since they consider they "cannot" do it in an appropriate way, but when guiding and making particular corrections they try again modifying and evaluating their own productions.

Upon receiving feedback for the first time, students were asked to make corrections; as a result, they reduced pronunciation errors and implemented strategies to prevent future mistakes. For instance, some students annotated pronunciation features in their notebooks by using letters, colors, highlighting, and capitalization to represent the intensity of specific sounds and stress patterns. Furthermore, as the final audio recording was assigned as homework and submitted via Padlet, it was observed that, in several cases, students demonstrated noticeable improvements, particularly in terms of pronunciation and fluency. Based on the final version of the recordings,

the subcategories showed the following performance: *Vocabulary and grammar* at *excellent* in most of the participants (that uploaded the final version of the audio) with 88%; on the other hand, *pronunciation* showed in the three levels, *excellent* (30%), *acceptable* (35%) and *requires improvement* (35%), where the students that presented first versions during the class (and as a consequence got personalized feedback) presented advances in some words of high and low frequency and in which English sounds that do not exist in Spanish were needed. Linked to it, *fluency* was developed with *acceptable* (53%), *requires improvement* (41%) and *excellent* (6%), it is important to highlight that the students that presented the first versions during the class made modifications that were evidenced in the uploaded versions in which some of them made emphasis on key ideas regarding the self-knowledge rather than maintaining the same tone, rhythm and voice level in the whole audio, showing more consciousness on the told message.

As established by the CEFR (2020) the *fluency* is learnt by practice that leads to experience, also it is presented mostly on higher levels of speaking, but there are key aspects for evidencing a progress, as decreasing in unnatural pauses, as well as emphasizing on the main ideas of the told message, also to modify the tone for emphasizing in some words or ideas in the speech, helping the listener to understand the ideas, constructing a more coherent message. However, it is also evident that most of the students produced unnatural pauses when focusing only on the pronunciation of isolated words or trying to speak faster, making it complex to understand the message.

It could be said that possibly students' insights about how to properly speak are evident in their productions. While some of them tried to speak faster rather than emphasizing on the main ideas, the ones that started to change the tone and rhythm in line with the communicative intention made it when they felt more comfortable with their pronunciation, following the

feedback given by the researcher based on previous practice. Recognizing that fluency is a skill that is developed mainly in higher levels the finding of some students starting to consider the tone voice, speed and use of pauses is of interest for the current project since it shows the impact of practice speaking even when having reduced time and challenges as noise and lack of internet for better practice. It could be concluded as well that practice leads to advances not only in terms of grammar or vocabulary, but in considering the purpose of spoken productions, in this case the ones produced with a planification and practice but that recognize there is a listener that aims to understand author's message and intentions to construct meaning in the recorded production, as the advances in pronunciation and fluency of some students suggest.

Second, regarding the fanzines design with the sketch production, the barrier of time had a big impact on it, since only guidelines were explained during the class time, but no practice was carried out. On the contrary, sketches were assigned as homework, were first, less of half of the students presented it, and second, most of them did not follow the instructions, showing a development of the subcategories as follows: self-made images had mostly acceptable (46%) and requires improvement (36%) degree, and the semiotic harmony developed mainly in regular (36%) and requires improvement (36%).

In this case, some students did not produce a preliminary sketch, but rather proceeded directly to the final version of the first section of their fanzines. Specifically, they designed the pages without using pencil to outline key visual elements, communicative purposes, or intended messages. Additionally, some students printed the QR codes for the audio components at an earlier stage. Finally, in certain cases, students reproduced in written form the same verbal content included in their audio recordings. As Moon (2020) strongly emphasizes, zine making in educative process does not lead merely to the result (product) but considering the design as a

whole process in which the sketch is needed to develop edition and having the possibility to make modifications and adapt content as well as visual elements in order to better communicate with the reader. This workshop resulted on the possibility of considering that most of the students have experiences of creating visual elements without a process with feedback and edition, but as a final result that is shared. Also, that in some cases it was hardly linked to the verbal content, for instance some visual elements were not clearly linked to the topics of the first stage. These findings allow taking decisions in terms of the fanzine's production, for having editing processes during class-time rather than in autonomous work. Also, based on the self-evaluation and co-evaluation rubrics, the students considered they had an acceptable process in understanding fanzines purposes as well as in the instructions during the class, however it was not evidenced in the visual productions. Additionally, as Capous Desyllas and Sinclair (2013) manifest, zine making includes the purpose of developing self-awareness for educative activities, in this case regarding self-knowledge and the life-project design. From this perspective, it is necessary to make it as a guided process that based on the previous evidence is required to consider the use of the classes for its design to better connect the verbal with visual content.

Third, the life-project in this workshop was part of spoken practice and productions as well as in the design of the fanzines. In this case, the students included their own self-knowledge in terms of recognizing own emotions, values, strengths and weaknesses evidencing these elements on both productions. As previously established, in this case the productions considered not only self-knowledge but a public, a listener and a reader, in which some students showed more consciousness on sharing a message, while others considered more the products than the process. In this workshop, life-project was present not in constructing it, but as the message and content that allowed visual and oral productions allowing the previous findings and hypothesis.

Finally, this workshop allowed to construct more evidences in terms of practice contributions in speaking skills, especially in terms of pronunciation, self-confidence and fluency, as well as the relevance of following feedback for making adjustments to speech in the foreign language. Additionally, zine making first productions were essential since allowed to consider modifications for the project implementation in terms of visual productions that require to have a practice space during the classes for better allowing considering it as a process and not only a result, in which students can share their ideas and link them to verbal elements.

Workshop 5. Wheel of my Dreams.

For this workshop the general objective was structuring main dreams for several life spheres in a medium-term using some expressions included them into a script and orally. To analyze the performance of the students, the main categories were *speaking* and *life-project* since the activities were mostly designed to support the participants' learning process in those aspects.

Regarding the *speaking skills*, in *vocabulary and grammar* most of the students (63%) developed it at an *acceptable* level, followed by an *excellent* level (32%). Additionally, in *pronunciation*, they were at an *acceptable* level as well (58%), followed by *excellent* (37%). Also, *fluency* showed an *acceptable* performance (79%) and *excellent* (21%), while *non-verbal* showed *excellent* (53%) and *acceptable* (47%).

These interpretations emerged from diverse attitudes as well as EFL competences achieved during the class, the fact that there were more students actively participating in the oral guided activities in which they needed to interact with partners through aleatory pairs in which not only tenth graders were involved, but also eleventh graders were. The students were engaged with the general topic (dreams) and it was evident since they were actively listening to each other in the foreign language and not avoiding expressing themselves as seen in previous sessions. In

accordance with Nation (2001), this advance in performance also allowed the students to include broader vocabulary in their speech. This observation is key since for this workshop several words as well as expressions were shared with students, for instance defining the five life-spheres and dreams/goals linked to each of them and that most of the students used on their answers (written and oral) and they chose those goals most of them shared personal previous interests, linked with other dreams from diverse spheres, among others. This workshop allowed not only to practice new vocabulary but applying it in short conversations with partners and sometimes with the researcher. Even when sometimes feedback was explained using the mother tongue, the participants made corrections in the foreign language and spoke louder than in previous sessions. This was also key in the non-verbal aspects as evidenced progress in self-confidence speaking in English, one of the challenges found from the diagnosis stage.

Also, hypothesis were made based on students' performance and associated to Galloway (1970) self-confidence can be linked not only to personal or individual aspects, but to the experience of the activity in which the context was produced is relevant. To point out, the use of music, walking on the space of the classroom and picking aleatory partners to work with for some minutes in diverse rounds could have allowed the students to generate a sense of awareness with the activity, the English class and more relevant with themselves expressing orally in another tongue. In this sense, the activity was perceived as an opportunity to exchange personal interests in English and not as previously mostly seen something they did not want to develop.

Suddenly, focused on the *life-project* category, the subcategory of *planning-goals* had a performance mostly at an *excellent* level (53%) and *acceptable* level (47%). It is crucial to point out this workshop allowed students recognize their own interests and explore how to express them in two keyways, From that fact, the contributions Christiansen (2000) could be linked,

especially when he points out how relevant consciousness results in developing a life-project, the time extension considered, the five worked life-spheres (personal, professional, academic, social and health) and the way they are linked to the individual assumptions of what life-progress means for each of the participants, as well as the fact of doing the activity including the development of skills and competences in EFL.

Besides being conscious of several personal characteristics, the activities allowed them to recognize others' dreams. This was perceived in the interactions, that as evidenced in the fieldnotes, made the students ask more questions when sharing goals with partners as well as when some others shared more uncommon goals. At the same time, some of them asked the researcher for more vocabulary in order to develop conversation in a more fluent way in the foreign language. The students' attitude was of great interest in this case since they were trying to include the foreign language rather than avoiding its use during the speaking practice.

Additionally, at the end of the class they manifested to have strong efforts since the topic was relevant for them in order to reflect about their interests, as well as maintaining "more relaxed" conversations (due to the topic) as well as the opportunity of moving the whole body in different spaces to the one of their seats. Second, when asked for the relevance of developing the activity in English, in general they answered it was relevant due to the possibility of recognizing their interest as well, the opportunity of sharing with their partners in a "different space" (since it is EFL), and the opportunity of considering broader academic and professional opportunities.

To sum up, during the current workshop, the students performed in a higher level in some subcategories of speaking skills and life-project, where the topic of dreams was of a big interest and it was manifested in students' attitudes during the activities as well as in their answers in the self-evaluation rubric. English as a Foreign Language was used and perceived as an opportunity

to improve the skills in the foreign language, reflecting about the personal interests, establishing goals for a limited term and interacting with pairs to discover the diverse goals in every one of the life dimensions.

Workshop 6. Fanzine Making to Express my Dreams.

For this workshop, the general objective was to build the life project in the dreams section through the fanzine including visual designs. As the implementation started, the students received general feedback from the previous first section design and creative process in which as mentioned in previous analysis some of them did not make the sketch or did not follow the instructions for its creation. However, for this workshop, fanzine designs with different techniques were shared as well as ways to search for more design in some platforms e.g. *Pinterest, Tumblr, Google Images*. Based on the rubric, the observation and authors contributions, an important contrast between the first fanzine- visual design workshop and the current one emerged.

First, the main category of analysis in this case was *fanzine as a way of personal expression*, in which the subcategories of *verbal content*, *self-made images* and *semiotic harmony* were evaluated through a rubric with the previously mentioned levels. In general, the findings were as follow: students' performance in *self-made images* was *acceptable* (58%) followed by *excellent* (42%); the *verbal content* with *excellent* (53%) and *acceptable* (47%) while *semiotic harmony* was assessed with *regular* (58%) and *excellent* (42%).

Some changes from the workshop four were noticed, finding that the sketches and final visual designs of the second sections showed a stronger process in which sketch was necessarily made in class and questions about symbolic meanings, relation with the topic (dreams) and the

audio were asked and answered by the students linking the use of colors, technique, images they included, and in some cases even the size or position of some elements.

As stated by Moon (2020) the use of images in fanzines allows connecting the own thoughts of the authors as well as preparing the presentation of those thoughts to a possible public/reader in order to build meaning including images and verbal content in a creative way. Also, as the same author highlights, the process of the sketch is key since it allows making changes according to the assessment process in this case mostly guided by the researcher and as established in fieldnotes allowed to ask to the students for their communicative intention with specific elements (colors, technique, audio content, among others) and allowed the students to express about their own creative perspectives orally as well as making adjustments for achieving the goal and mainly to allow readers to connect visual with verbal content in the future.

Also, as the same author proposes having these moments of designing a fanzine also implies extending the teachers' role (Moon, 2020), by being a participant on the creative process of each author, as well as guiding it through questions emerged from the reader position, incentivizing the creativity and reflection of the participants. This point is key in the engagement of the students with the class and the designs, as they expressed in their answers about the differences with the design of the previous section. For instance, some of them said it was better to do it in class because they could share their ideas with the researcher, the teacher, and other partners and that it allowed them to build more ideas and even make changes while having fun.

However, it was noticed that most of the students decided to use drawings with pencils or colors instead of different techniques and when asked the reason they mentioned they consider good themselves at drawing or that it was easier to create new images in that way. As a hypothesis of this decision, it is key to bear in mind that drawing techniques are generally more

used in school through class exercises. In this sense, it is important to explore other techniques such as painting, watercolor, photography, collage, the use of texture, pop up, that are less considered in general. From this project, the researcher decided to bring several materials to increase students' creative process and action, nevertheless from this evidence an idea about guiding the design of the final section with a specific technique emerged and was considered depending on the possibilities (time mainly). Also, linking this idea to what Capous Desyllas and Sinclair (2013) stated regarding fanzines as a way to explore more ways of creating meaning, transforming the own context and self-perception (as a creative individual, as a EFL learner) it would be relevant to see what other visual elements and how the students would include them to achieve the communicative purposes of the final section.

Suddenly, also the category of *Life-project* was analyzed from the subcategory of *self-knowledge* mainly in the way the students defended their designs as a way to communicate their dreams with the readers. For this category, there was an *excellent* performance (58%) followed by *acceptable* (42%). In this case as already explained, the students defended some images, colors and size through several reasons, for instance if a life-sphere was their priority and shared their answers of the life-wheel, in this case it was evident that the creative process was strongly linked to the previous activities that demanded exploring the own interests, priorities, dreams and challenges. Also, some others argued that they wanted to communicate diversity since they consider their dreams are diverse as well, so they created collages by including symbols of the severe life-spheres and their personal dreams, also included specific colors (neon, black-white and then several colors) in order to communicate how their own perception of progress has been being modified through the several workshops regarding life-project.

The students' answers were strongly connected to their own personalities and interests, and also, they manifested those questions were a difference with the workshop 4 in which they mostly needed to ask it to themselves but without having the opportunity to share their answers while making their sketches. These answers are consistent with Fundación Meniños (2021) statement, from which the self-knowledge demands not only a reflective individual process but also the opportunity of sharing with others in order to express, to understand others' points of view and to consider more options (expanding their mindsets) on their life-projects.

To sum up, the workshop leaded to interesting findings in which developing the sketches and final versions of the section number two of the fanzines allowed the students to feel more comfortable with their creative process while receiving feedback, exchanging ideas with their partners and answering questions regarding their experiences during the activity and how relevant the self-knowledge was in order to build meaning through images (mostly by drawings). Additionally, an idea emerged for exploring how the creative process could change when asked to use a specific design technique that is less common in the high-school classrooms and that allows other elements to build meaning and change the authors and readers experience.

Workshop 7. Expressing Dreams Out Loud.

As the workshop aimed to compose an oral production to express interests in the future the main categories considered in the rubric assessment were speaking skills (vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation, fluency) as well as the one of semiotic harmony from fanzine's category since the recorded audios are essential for its design. Based on the observation described on the fieldnotes, the development of the rubric and students' answers in the classroom, in contrast with previous sessions focused classroom, in contrast with previous sessions focused on speaking.

First, in terms of *vocabulary and grammar*, most of the students (50%) achieved *excellent* performance, followed by *acceptable* (45%), these results match with previous applied workshops that indicate the correct use of grammar tenses and contextualized vocabulary. In this sense, as defended by Nation (2001), building a variety of vocabulary in specific contexts and for achieving punctual goals in every class lead to improvements in every EFL skill, including the productive ones and considering several performance aspects as linguistic, pragmatics as well as self-confidence which had been noticed up to this implementation where the same students manifest (directly or indirectly in a behavioral way) more confidence developing productive skills and sharing with others.

Then, *pronunciation* stage showed *acceptable* (55%) and *excellent* (35%) performance. It is key to mention that while in the workshop four where speaking was essential as well and students performed mostly acceptable level, during this implementation more participants advanced to acceptable level and decreased in requires improvement. Also, it was noticed that some students were more confident about sharing their audio in a higher level, allowing other participants to listen and even make corrections of some EFL sounds showing more confidence in terms of their knowledges and partners' interactivity when English assessing. Similarly, Kenworthy (1988) remarks, the development of pronunciation considering the practice of English sounds leads not only to EFL improvements, but also in terms of self-confidence stablishing interactions oriented to foreign language activities and challenges.

Kenworthy's ideas are consistent with some observations as well as students' answers during the class, because first, the *fluency* was developed with *acceptable* (60%) and *excellent* (30%) level and in which some students demonstrated better intonation in complete sentences, allowing the hypothesis of when they develop self-confidence in speaking productions (in

pronunciation and vocabulary) they start focusing in their communicative intention, making the listener able to notice improvements in fluency. However, it is key to mention that speed is a big challenge that students have as demonstrated in the tongue-twister initial activity as well as in the recorded audios, where most of the students perform slowly and when challenged to produce faster sentences, they start manifesting challenges in sounds, words or even activities.

Suddenly, semiotic harmony was developed mostly at Excellent (60%) followed by acceptable (35%) and requires improvement (5%). From this workshop, the particularities linked the oral productions with the design of section two *What do I Want?* allowed the students to communicate the relevance of some of their life-spheres when speaking about their dreams and general objectives, also as some of them answered, they have been improving some speaking skills when linking personal interests as dreams, priorities with visual and verbal elements, as evidenced in some of their audios or when asking for more ways to express some ideas or punctual vocabulary as professions.

Finally, this workshop allowed the students to build verbal content based on their dreams considering the life-Project in the foreign language, also, they expressed interest in their life-project dreams phase as well as in the oral productions, in which some of them asked questions linked to vocabulary, expressions and pronunciation, mainly.

Workshop 8. Dreaming Big, Strong Planning.

This workshop allowed the analysis of subcategories as follows: *Planning goals* and *Self-knowledge* from *Life-project* construct; *Semiotic Harmony* from *Fanzine* construct and *Non-Verbal elements* from *Speaking Skills* category. As the main objective of establishing key steps for achieving goals considered several activities, the assessment of the subcategories did as well.

Initially, referring to Planning goals, as evidenced in the fieldnotes number eight (see annex) most of the participants were actively participating in the questions to build a meaning of what they consider a plan is and its relevance, as well as aspects to consider when building it. As a result, 57% of them showed an excellent performance from linking previous knowledge and analyzing they development of the game that was the first activity of the class as well as their answers in the proposed template in which some of them added details to clarify what the steps were about. Also, as Casassus (2007) defended, designing a plan for a life-project demands to contemplate several life contexts, as the social, economic and cultural-, to determine the purpose of the goals as well as how the steps are coherent with those contexts. In accordance to it the students were asked about why they decided some of the steps and no others allowing them to reflect their reality and making modifications on some steps, even some of them decided to extend the templates to give a reason explaining in detail some steps, which contributed not only to their life-project design, but also to using more complex vocabulary and English written and oral production.

Linked to that point, the subcategory of self-knowledge allowed the analysis of the mostly acceptable (52%) and excellent (48%) performance up to this final stage. To begin with, it was necessary in some cases to make the students pointed out the purpose and relation of every step since at the beginning some students manifested not knowing which step was key or mixed dreams with the steps; however most of them decided to adjust the initial steps and when asked for the reasons, they developed clear answers of the purpose of the steps as well as specific challenges they were facing with every one of them and how their plans would face specific challenges. As suggested by Vaca (2016), when the students are asked about the reasons beyond personal interests, in this case their goals and planning, they start building stronger answers

based on not only opinions, but including evidences, examples, among others, making them better express and defend their ideas and interacting with others.

Suddenly, linked to the semiotic harmony, it was evidenced how it is pointed by the MEFP (2023), the structure is relevant for developing activities that mix several signifiers, and as shared by some students, the fact of previously focused on the dreams and then the steps to achieve some of them, as well as getting feedback and some questions about the reasons and function of each step allowed the students to reflect more about their preferences, priorities, and sharing some progress using the EFL, in this case by the written template.

Also, these categories were strongly connected to the non-verbal elements since the students showed to build their templates' responses as a process as well as their interactions with the researcher when getting feedback or answering questions since they took some time to answer them by developing a punctual idea to defend their answers or deciding to modify them. Also, it is relevant to consider that the students got feedback mostly in English, however in this case they started to ask punctual questions about the meaning of some parts in English, and not demanding to give the entire feedback in Spanish, also their facial expressions, for instance looking to the face to the researcher and waiting to ask questions or give a response showed as Hall and Knapp (2010) developed, interest and to be comfortable while hearing some speech in the foreign language instead of the initial predisposition.

To sum up, the workshop allowed the student to consider punctual steps to achieve some of their dreams while including English not only in their written answers, but also in the interactions developed in the classrooms, mainly the ones related to getting feedback or shared questions that aimed to make the students reflect about the relevance of planning goals and the objectives of each of them. Also, the lack of vocabulary at this point did not imply that the

students do not develop the activity but allowed them to ask for unknown words and expressions that they decided to include in their templates.

Workshop 9. Exploring Technology to Improve my Speaking.

For this workshop that aimed to prepare an oral production including steps to achieve students' goals, the strategies and tools allowed to discover in which ways the students included the platforms and feedback to improve their speaking skills. Also, as the survey and a final diagnosis were applied, interesting results allowed us to link the students' experiences, built knowledge and perspectives.

First, this workshop mostly focused on evaluating the speaking skills, finding that at the end, when the students prepared their audios, they had a better performance in contrast to the first sessions. For vocabulary and grammar their performance was 71% excellent, followed by 29% acceptable; pronunciation was 62% excellent, 33% acceptable and only 5% with requires improvement; fluency was mostly acceptable (57%) and excellent (43%); and non-verbal skills 57% excellent, 38% acceptable and 5% requires improvement.

Also, the use of technology was of a high relevance not only as perceived for the head teacher and researcher when developing the activities, but as well as most of the students expressed. Particularly, most of the students mentioned before of the class they only knew about ChatGPT AI, but that the platforms that were included made them to be curious because they could listen to native speakers that helped to better practice their pronunciation and discovering new vocabulary that they decided to include in the audios. In this sense, as Goldin and Wagner (2012) defend, the curiosity when developing speaking skills and mostly the non-verbal ones is key and leads to willingness to participate, interact with partners and in this case, include further

vocabulary, making the students even decide to challenge themselves to discover, build and apply new knowledge depending on their own interests, as the life-project allows to.

Conversely, some students mentioned they preferred to use AI and internet platforms to avoid developing the activities by themselves because these tools could make it perfect without any error, while they preferred to avoid making mistakes. In this sense, most of the students decided to use the platforms as supportive tools to be able to build new knowledge with the purpose of expressing themselves in life-project and discovering different ways to develop the skills even when they are not in the English class; while other students considered they would prefer to develop the whole activity with them for avoiding any mistake, showing that first, they do not perceive learning as a process (that includes making mistakes, while challenging to improve the skills) but as a result (to show a result of an activity even if they do not do it).

Second, regarding the survey answers in which students assessed the current project in terms of their experience, progress in the foreign language including life-project and fanzine design and relevance for their holistic educative process most of the students had a meaningful experience, described as follows. First, for 94% of the respondents, the project allowed them to reflect on their future goals and personal interests, as well as considering real possibilities to achieve their personal goals based on their social, economic contexts. Also, the 100% agreed in the use of fanzine was powerful for expressing their emotions and aspirations in a creative way and that they improved their pronunciation and confidence when speaking in English due to the constant practice during the classes. When the questions were regarding how meaningful this project was, they considered it as interesting and defined it as an opportunity to “reflection”, “have fun”, “gain knowledge”, “trust in myself”, “be creative”, “better knowing myself”, “be patient with my process”, “revealing”, “dream” and related concepts (Annex D).

In this sense, the vision of Grushka and Goodlad (2013) is amplified finding the use of life-project and fanzine creation as an opportunity to discover and reflect about the own preferences leading not only to an academic progress, but also a meaningful perception of the developed activities and the topics. Also, it is relevant to consider that when asking about what aspects they would modify of the project, the answers led to: having more time to develop the project, having more tools in the classroom, having more fluency practice and to deepen into each one's dreams. Then, as their answers reflect, as a completely difference from the answers in the initial survey, they did not manifest to modify the English skills use in the activities, on the contrary, they manifested interest on having more practice in specific skills, showing a different perspective of the speaking practice.

To sum up, the virtual tools included for developing speaking skill practice and productions led to knowing different perspectives of the students when using them as a tool allowing them to discover different platforms and ways to include them in the foreign language. Also, most of them showed willingness to participate and decided to explore including further vocabulary and challenging themselves to include it into their oral productions as well as when sharing with their partners. However, also the barrier of the lack of good internet connection and enough computer.

Workshop 10. Fanzines Final Steps.

This final workshop aimed to present the final version of the fanzines including the visual and oral production by sharing them with students and teachers of a different grade (in this case tenth graders and eleventh graders). In this case, all the categories were co-evaluated, self-evaluated and hetero-evaluated based on the students' performance and perceptions. Also, this workshop is analyzed linked to the answers from the final diagnosis that aimed to assess the

comprehension of key concepts that were essential during the whole project to properly develop the activities, evidence can be found in Appendix E.

To begin with, for this workshop the students made a general presentation of about two minutes for each one of the visitors, that included partners of the same class, students and head teacher from another eleventh and tenth grade as well as the researcher in a way of art gallery (in which student had a place on the classroom to show and present their jobs). The oral presentation was fully developed in the FL and the students also shared the fanzines and audios for the visitors to be able to listen to the full content of it.

As a result, all the students made the oral presentation in English. Most of them included concepts that were worked in the project to emphasize in the purpose and particularities of the fanzines, for instance “life-project”, “audios”, “planning dreams”, “sketch”, as well as included vocabulary linked to the main topic: life-project and the five life spheres in which the project was focused on leading to mostly excellent (57%) and acceptable (43%) performance in speaking skills considering the fourth subcategories, also linked to excellent development for the life-project with 76% and in the final fanzine version (62%). In this sense, also the students’ answer regarding the way they felt during their oral participation in the gallery was coherent with the performance, finding that 33% of them manifested to feel proud of their final presentations, some others (33%) felt nervous while 19% manifested to feel excited or surprised (15%). Having in mind these both assessments, as manifested by Kenworthy (1988), the use of contextualized activities, in this case to build the students’ life-project was an enormous value for their EFL skills development, where most of them students felt more confident, motivated than evidenced in the diagnosis phase, as well as expressed willingness to develop the full activity in English.

Also, when asking in the survey what they learnt at the end of the project, some answers highlighted they “I noticed I can improve my pronunciation”, “use further vocabulary to express myself”, “that I can plan my dreams and believe in myself”, “I can make creative visual designs”, “I can maintain conversations in English with my partners”, “I improved my listening” showing that the perception they had regarding their English learning process had significantly changed and allowed them to face classes where the speaking practices are constantly developed and when having to interact with other, even if they feel nervous .

Additionally, based on the final diagnostic answers, the students recognized emotions had a powerful role when practicing speaking, creating visual and oral elements for the fanzine when related with life-project topic as it allowed to better communicate author’s communicative purpose as well as recognizing and expressing personal interests. In this sense, as Christiansen (2000) and Goleman (2006) clearly defend, when recognizing emotions and aiming to generate self-consciousness it is easier for people to specify their goals and developing abilities to create real plans to achieve them as well as facilitating to express themselves in a more natural way than when not giving any place to them.

In this sense, the students also recognized the main concepts and goals from fanzine (sketch, audio and visual content), life project (planning, self-knowledge, goals) and speaking (non-verbal elements, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency) considering that all their elements lead to facilitating both, produce and understand one’s message. Also, when evaluating their performance in the final presentations and asked about the main purpose/topic of the fanzine and why it included both, visual and oral content, the students expressed “they make it is easier to show what I mean when talking about my dreams”, “It felt like I was thinking more about what I like and what I want”, “I enjoyed thinking about the future when creating”, “I like how I speak

about my dreams in English”. Under this lens, students’ comments reveal that the visual, oral and personal view allowed them to better develop the activities as feeling more comfortable when using the foreign language allowing them to build comprehension of the topics and mainly, how English can be powerful to express and discover themselves, especially when it is in challenging activities.

Chapter 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This final chapter aims to present the conclusions based on the results of developing the different stages of the qualitative action research after the design and implementation of the characterization, diagnosis and implementation (including ten workshops, final diagnosis assessment) as well as some recommendations on data analysis, students’ and teachers’ perspectives when developing the current project.

To commence, for characterizing social, local and academical contexts of students from the CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza school and the participants of the current project, it was of a great value finding general challenges in the population, especially regarding to the lack of practice of speaking skills when in EFL class. Additionally, the strong interest in students for developing handmade projects and linking them to speaking because they perceived weaknesses when having to achieve any of the related goals. Additionally, based on the English proficiency level and their grade, deciding life-project as main topic for developing the useful resulted on a great option since it allowed the students to develop both, verbal and non-verbal skills focusing on communicative purposes Suddenly, to implement workshops to develop life-project with zine-making strategy to improve speaking skills and to analyze the effects of on the students’ made it possible to find undeniable advances in the speaking skills. While at the beginning of the project they demonstrated a marked reluctance to develop English spoken activities, especially when

being listened or assessed by their peers or teachers. However, upon completion of the project, all participants decided to deliver their oral presentations and reported feeling capable of further developing their speaking, listening and writing skills. Additionally, they expressed greater levels of comfort, to be proud and satisfied with the progress and outcomes achieved throughout the process. This comments result of great significance since it not only leaded to a positive result on their speaking performance, but also to the interest of the students of continue their EFL learning process feeling capable of achieving communicative and personal goals instead of, as previously, avoiding participating in the activities.

Then, it was discovered that when making emphasis on the communicative purpose of each of the activities, and allowing the students to express their interests, recognizing their own strengths and weaknesses with a topic of big interest and relevance, as the life-project represents, the students performed more naturally and causing them to be interested on improving their speech including further vocabulary, English sounds rather than Spanish ones and focusing on expressing their ideas including non-verbal cues.

It is also important to recognize that some findings also indicated that still there are several lacks grammar structure, for this reason, it was decided to develop templates that allowed explanations in a clearer way. Although the design of each of the workshops considered institutional time available, it is important to recognize several challenges when implementing. Initially, about five class sessions were not possible to be developed due to zone flooding or river damage, impacting the English scheduled activities. Also, lack of internet and enough computers was evident when trying to develop the activities, causing the activities to be altered in time length. It is important to recognize that specially when workshops required to use digital platforms some students manifested interest of knowing more about those options and the

possibilities they have for supporting their learning process with them, then it is relevant for both, the CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza and the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional to include digital learning and teaching since it is one of the four main soft skills in the 21st century and allows other possibilities for the students to be able to practice their EFL skills even when not in the English class.

Also, considering the head teacher perception of the project development as well as the data analysis, implementing topics linked to life-spheres development is of a high relevance since it provoked the students to be more engaged in both, explanations and activities as well as deciding taking the risk of participating in the EFL even recognizing that they could have some mistakes, that meant that the interest of expressing themselves was greater than the discomfort that they might felt. In the same sense, when developing the activities, the students started to share their progress or providing feedback to their partners (even when interacting with the eleventh graders) also helping them in the oral performance showing more disposition for the learning process. The designed rubrics were key for recognizing each student's performance and progress as well as relevant for making adjustments in every workshop.

On the other hand, the use of visual elements resulted, as also recognized by the head teacher and students into a big opportunity to express themselves and exploring their creativity to communicate with the fanzines' reader, also they manifested they enjoyed to link the English classes with handmade projects, which is fundamental when learning in order to motivate students to achieve the goals or even making them deciding to make modifications for being satisfied not only with the results but with the process. Nevertheless, they recognize that when having homework students tented not to develop it, something key to have in mind for future

classes since the homework could be better used to reinforce class topics rather than something needed to achieve next classes goals.

Finally, this project led to relevant findings in EFL learning of tenth graders that participated. Mainly, the development of speaking skills considering verbal and non-verbal elements showed advances from the attitude the students had in developing the activities in contrast with the diagnosis stage. Also, the use of English by the researcher to develop the classes may the students started to develop listening skills since before the class was completely taught in English and did not include speaking activities. Vocabulary, pronunciation and non-verbal skills were the ones that evidenced to have greater advance that is a key first step for the participants to be able to continue learning the foreign language, that as some of them recognized when developing the dreams stage on the life-project they built, is a relevant area for having more opportunities and being able to achieve their personal goals in the future. Considering the feedback they provided to the project, for them it was significant since now they recognize their abilities to developed more competences in English speaking skills, beyond the English time provided by the institution. Also, the use of handmade and digital resources as well as developing life-project as main topic were highly effective tools to build the strategy since made the students to be motivated not only in developing the English activities, but also to cultivate meaningful learning when in EFL class.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teacher's interview

Entrevista al docente CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza.

Respetada docente Johanna Medina, la presente entrevista tiene como propósito conocer variados aspectos referentes a su labor enfocada en el curso 901. Por favor, responda las siguientes preguntas con el detalle que considera necesario.

Al responder esta entrevista **autoriza** el uso de los datos obtenidos en la propuesta investigativa realizada en la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, que cumple con los lineamientos de la [Ley](#) 1581 de 2012, Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013 y el Manual de política interna de la UPN. Adicionalmente, señalamos que las respuestas serán de carácter anónimo y su divulgación será exclusivamente con fines académicos-investigativos, de los cuales eres consciente antes de enviar el formulario.

1. ¿Por qué decidiste convertirte en profesora?
2. ¿Qué experiencias tienes como docente?
3. ¿Cuántos años llevas enseñando inglés?
4. ¿Cuántos años llevas siendo profesora de inglés en el CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza?
5. ¿Cómo te sientes trabajando en el CEDID?
6. ¿Qué tienes en cuenta para diseñar las clases de los estudiantes de noveno?
7. Según tu experiencia, ¿cuáles son las mayores fortalezas de los estudiantes en cuanto al uso del inglés?, ¿Cuáles las mayores dificultades?
8. De acuerdo con las pruebas realizadas y con el desempeño de los estudiantes en las clases, ¿cuál crees que es el nivel de desempeño que tienen en inglés actualmente?
9. ¿Qué balance haces entre el uso de la lengua materna (español) y el inglés durante las clases?
10. Según tu experiencia, ¿qué temas y didácticas son los favoritos de los estudiantes?
11. ¿Los estudiantes prefieren trabajar en grupo o individualmente?

	de reusagite y así aprendí a nances. Yo no sabía nada de francés. Y pues ya tenía un buen nivel en inglés. Yo estudiaba en el Colombo, en el Centro Colombo Americano, estudiaba inglés. Entonces, cuando llegué a la universidad, ya tenía nivel en este momento, A++, llegué a la universidad, perfeccioné mi nivel de inglés con el estudio del Centro Colombo Americano. Aprendí francés, ahí llegué como a un A2. No lo puse en práctica, pero si me gustaría mucho enseñar francés. Sería una muy bonita experiencia. Y, pues nada, quise enseñarles a los chicos lo bonito que es aprender otros idiomas para conocer el mundo, para conocer otras culturas, para poder viajar. Me encanta viajar. Entonces, dije ¿Por qué no? Mi mami es profesora, entonces, pues ella, con su modelo de enseñanza y su forma de ser pues me dio las estrategias para convertirme en profesora. Me dio la idea de que podría ser una bonita profesión y que podría ser algo bueno para la sociedad.
2. ¿Qué experiencias tienes como docente?	- Bueno, experiencias como docente. ..Diferentes, variadas. Tengo experiencia en el sector privado, en el sector público, empezando por allí por las instituciones. En el sector privado siempre hay bastante rigor académico y es muy importante, tal vez necesario, empezar en instituciones privadas donde hay una muy buena formación. Uno sale de la universidad y de pronto no tiene como la idea la magnitud de lo que significa la educación en Colombia o para los chicos

Appendix B: Diagnostic Test.

- What could be a possible ending for the story that begins with "She is nervous and anxious, but..."
- What is a possible connection with real life?

Part 2:

Possible questions for listening, reading and answering through speaking.

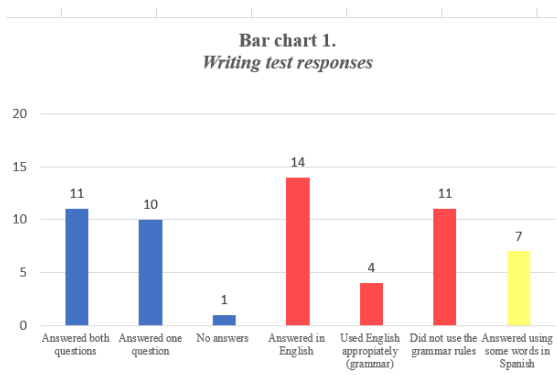
- a. If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be and why?
- b. Do you think that money can buy happiness? Why or why not?
- c. What actions do you take at home to protect the environment and nature?
- d. Do you think that robots will replace human jobs?
- e. Should students be allowed to use their phones during school hours? Why or why not?
- f. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- g. What would you do if you won one hundred million tomorrow?
- h. If you could go back in time, would you change anything?
- i. Why do you think having a pet is having a responsibility?

1. Why do you think having a pet is having a responsibility?
- j. If you had a time machine, would you visit the future or the past? why?
- k. If you were the president, what would you change in the country?
- l. Do you think you will live in Colombia in the future, or will you move to another country?
- m. If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be and why?
- n. Do you think that money can buy happiness? Why or why not?
- o. What actions do you take at home to protect the environment and nature?
- p. Do you think that robots will replace human jobs?
- q. Should students be allowed to use their phones during school hours? Why or why not?
- r. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- s. What would you do if you won one hundred million tomorrow?
- t. If you could go back in time, would you change anything?
- u. Why do you think having a pet is having a responsibility?
- v. If you had a time machine, would you visit the future or the past? why?
- w. If you were the president, what would you change in the country?
- x. Do you think you will live in Colombia in the future, or will you move to another country?
- y. If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be and why?
- z. Do you think that money can buy happiness? Why or why not?
- aa. What actions do you take at home to protect the environment and nature?

Rubric:

Points	Skills			
	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
5 Excellent	Comprehends the entire text and analyzes its literal and implicit ideas.	Clearly expresses the ideas and adding details. Follow all grammar rules.	Communicates with fluency and self-confident with varied vocabulary in adequate way.	Easily comprehends main and specific ideas that are explicit or implicit.
4 Good	Comprehends the text and all of its main ideas.	Writes clear ideas and connect them following grammar rules and vocabulary. Few mistakes.	Expresses with clarity and fluency. Few mistakes that do not affect understanding.	Comprehends most of the ideas with little support and reacts adequately.
3 Acceptable	Has general comprehension of the text. Identify some of the main ideas and details.	Writes clear sentences and connect ideas. Does not use Spanish.	Produces simple sentences with few mistakes (grammar, pronunciation) and understanding is possible.	Comprehends general information with support.
2 Deficient	Understands some isolated word or phrases. Identifies some main ideas.	Constructs some sentences but with mistakes in common vocabulary or included Spanish.	Produces isolated ideas without adequate pronunciation, making understanding difficult.	Understands some isolated words with difficulty.
1 Insufficient	Does not identify main ideas nor details.	Does not use clear sentences, many errors or uses more Spanish than English.	Does not use English to communicate or with isolated words.	Does not understand general nor specific ideas even with examples or support.

Writing Bar chart 1:



Appendix C: Sample of field notes.

Field diary: (Day 3/ English Song Festival)	
Friday September 27th 2024	
CEDID Guillermo Cano Isaza. Auditorium	
English Song Contest	
Better knowing the reality in the school	
Activities	Reflection/Categories
The activities regarding the English Song Contest were produced by the Humanity teachers and the organization of visual elements in the auditorium begun before 1pm. Then at 2 pm the presentations started. The grades: 7th, 10th and 11th arrived and sat down. They were not quiet, constantly talking among them. The teachers, on the other hand were focused on the tools they needed to make everything worked properly. They started the presentation of the contest with two students (one girl and one boy from 11th grade) <u>telling</u> about the grades, the juries, and also added the use of a QR so all the students could vote for the presentation they liked the most. First, the courses of 11th presented some dances, and after that the contest begun. The students were very active when singing, and also as public, by cheering their partners, clapping their hands. Also, the teachers presented dances and songs, and got involved in the presentations of some courses. Most of the students had acceptable pronunciation when presenting the chorus of the song, but in some <u>courses</u> there were only individual or duo presentations. When giving instructions the teachers or the 11th students talked in English. All the participants were wearing different clothes according to the music gender. There was a break of 30 minutes. Then other courses entered to the auditorium (8th and 9th) because in this part the ones that had to participate were them and some 8th grades. Also, there were two students that presented one song, but they were not part of the contest. It is important to mention that one of them had special needs regarding cognitive aspects. Also, in most of the songs and videos, there was a lack of internet connection, provoking the delay of presentations. Related with this, there was no a second plan for this case and the presentations were not finished, and also the last ones had bad quality of audio in the microphones of the singers. Finally, the teachers mentioned they will let the students know when the other presentations will be finished.	The most constant problem for the development of the contest <u>were</u> the internet connection and how did they manage it. This shows that the quality of internet is unstable and that they need to have another plan for avoiding wasting time. Connected with the previous analysis, the mood of the students suffered a big change, only some of them participated with similar big energy after the internet failed, but most of them showed to be tired, confuse and nervous, so it is important to have a second plan in order to allow the best experience, using other kind of formats and not only internet. Another important aspect is the participation of the students, they were always supporting the parents, even when they were from a different course. Also, a teacher danced with several courses which shows she is connected with them and participating as well, even if she is not the teacher in charge of the course. Students showed to treat each other well, to be comfortable in this kind of events. The auditorium is comfortable, but is too small for the quantity of students, this limits the activities there.

Appendix E: Fanzine designs.

