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**VOCABULARY TEACHING IN A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS:
GAMES, AN EFFECTIVE TOOL**

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ABSTRACT

English subject is in the curriculum of every level of education and hence, in Secondary Schools. Its objective is to develop an elementary level of communicative competence. However, teachers frequently discover that this goal has not been achieved at the end of Secondary School. During the academic year 2015-2016, the authoress carried out a research in order to find out the main problems in the teaching learning process of English at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School. She realized that the students' vocabulary was one of the main troublesome areas when speaking and that the students were not motivated towards learning English. In the current academic year, the authoress continued with the idea of developing the students' vocabulary. At that point, she decided to use games as activities that would link vocabulary and motivation. The idea was presented to an informal group of discussion who agreed that it is a very important research topic.

In this paper, the authoress searches for ways to address this problem. Therefore, it was necessary to carry out an action-research study. During the process, qualitative and quantitative procedures were combined in order to get a reliable data that permitted the authoress to assess the real situation regarding students' vocabulary.

This paper provides teachers of English with a useful booklet of games as a tool to help them develop the students' vocabulary. The main transformations were not only in the students' vocabulary but also in the students' interests toward English.

THOUGHT

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn ".

Benjamin Franklin

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, languages have been linked to the development of civilizations. English language has been gaining place since the Industrial Revolution and the subsequent English colonial expansion during XVII and XIX centuries. This flourishing was intensified with the economic and military dominance of United States after World War I. Nowadays, modern English is the leading international language in communication, science, business, aviation, entertainment, radio and diplomacy. As a result, over a billion people speak English at least at an elementary level.

Because of its importance, in Cuba, the teaching of English has undergone several transformations after the Revolutionary triumph. Since then, many methods and approaches have been used. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been the approach that best fits the purposes of Cuban learners of English as a foreign language. Its primary focus is to help learners to create meaning, rather than to help them develop perfect grammatical structure or acquire native-like pronunciation.

The teaching of English has been included in the curriculum at every level of education starting on 3rd grade in Primary Schools because the need of learning languages is more and more relevant each day. In Secondary Education, its objective is to develop an elementary level of communicative competence, which implies the command of basic structures in the foreign language, a correct pronunciation, vocabulary and the transmission of ideas with relative fluency.

During the academic year 2015-2016, the authoress carried out a research in order to find out the main problems in the teaching learning process of English at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School. She realized that the students' vocabulary was one of the main troublesome areas when speaking. The authoress also noticed that the students were not motivated towards learning English. As a result, some ideas emerged in order to provide a solution to the situation.

In the current academic year, the authoress continued with the idea of developing the students' vocabulary in order to improve their communicative competence and heighten motivation toward the English subject. At that point, she decided to use games as activities that would link vocabulary and motivation. The idea was

presented to an informal group of discussion. It was supported by a description of the context and of the sample, and by a summary of the available antecedents.

First, the authoress explained that it was necessary to take into account that at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School, students from class 9.1 had problems with vocabulary. Second, the fact that in the initial survey administered to them, the authoress could realize there was a lack of motivation in the students; and finally, that games were not used in the lessons. After some discussion, the group agreed that it is a very important research topic and that the problematic situation demands action research by the teachers of English.

The authoress deepened into the causes of the problems by means of the diagnosis of the students' strengths and weaknesses, in which she used the observation of lessons, surveys, and the analysis of documents such as the teacher's lesson plan and the syllabus for ninth grade. She realized that the causes might be varied. There is a lack of variety in the exercise system that makes lessons boring and classroom activities do not help to assimilate and practice the vocabulary in the limited time allowed. Teachers mainly focus on teaching the communicative functions rather than the vocabulary, and deliver most of the lesson in Spanish; therefore, the students do not feel the need of learning or understanding the foreign language. Students do not pay attention to the teacher and get easily distracted. Thus, students say that they are not interested in learning. Consequently, they need activities that motivate them and make them feel that vocabulary is important and that learning could be fun.

This reality shows that the teaching of vocabulary needs improvement. Then, it is the authoress task to deepen into the problem and find out a solution, which might contribute to the development of students' vocabulary in order to have them communicate efficiently in English, because oral language development goes hand in hand with vocabulary development.

Different articles, specialized bibliography and websites have been consulted in order to provide a scientific solution to the current situation. Some of them are: *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* by J. C Richards and T. S. Rodgers (1986), *Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary* by V. F. Allen (1983), *Vocabulary Teaching: Effective Methodologies* by N. Kumar Mehta (2009), *The Underestimated Importance*

of *Vocabulary in the Foreign Language Classroom* by K. S Folse (2004), *10 Vocabulary Games to Get your Students Seriously Engaged* in www.fluentu.com, and *How to Teach English Vocabulary* by Derek Hughes in <https://study.com>.

Some previous investigations that deal with the topic of the teaching and learning process of vocabulary development through games were also consulted, such as Keyla Anagua's report (2013) on the teaching of vocabulary through games and Jose Alejandro Concepcion Pacheco's (2004) PhD report on the use of games in the teaching of English. However, these researches were carried out in different contexts and levels. The existent problematic situation leads the authoress to the following **scientific problem**:

How should teachers contribute to the development of students' vocabulary in the teaching learning process of English in 9th grade?

Object of research: The teaching learning process of English vocabulary in 9th grade.

Field of research: The use of games in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary in 9th grade

Objective:

To propose a scientific result that contributes to the development of students' vocabulary by using games in the teaching learning process of English in ninth grade at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School.

In order to carry out this research the following **scientific questions** were elaborated:

1. What theoretical and methodological foundations back up the use of games in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary in 9th grade in the Cuban Secondary School?
2. What is the current situation in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary to 9th grade students from class 9.1 at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School?
3. What games should be proposed in order to help students develop their vocabulary in the teaching learning process of English in 9th grade at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School?
4. What transformations occur in the teaching learning process of English

vocabulary after implementing the changes at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School?

5. What are the criteria of the informal group of discussion?
6. What scientific result emerges from the research process that might contribute to the development of students' vocabulary in the teaching learning process of English in 9th grade in Secondary School?

The answers to those questions are covered throughout the following **scientific tasks**:

1. Determination of the theoretical and methodological foundations that back up the use of games in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary in 9th grade in the Cuban Secondary School.
2. Diagnosis of the current situation in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary to 9th grade students from class 9.1 at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School.
3. Design and application of a proposal of games to help students develop their vocabulary in the teaching learning process of English in 9th grade at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School.
4. Analysis of the transformations in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary after implementing the changes at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School.
5. Assessment of the proposal by the criteria of the informal group of discussion.
6. Determination of the scientific result that emerged from the research process.

Subjects of research

This research was carried out in a group of thirty students from 9th grade at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School. This group was selected intentionally, because it is the group where the authoress has the necessary support for implementing her proposal.

Scientific methods

The current research was carried out through action - research. During the process, qualitative and quantitative procedures were used. Theoretical and empirical methods were utilized in order to gather, organize and process information.

The theoretical methods used were the logical-historical, the analytic-synthetic, the inductive-deductive and the systemic approach. The logical-historical one permitted to

understand the evolution and development of the teaching learning process of vocabulary to reveal its history, its tendencies and its major historical connections. The analytic-synthetic was used to understand and analyze the underlying principles of psychology and language teaching, and specifically in the process of vocabulary development. The inductive-deductive was used in the establishment of general and particular theoretical considerations expressed by different specialists on the teaching learning process of English vocabulary and in the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained through different instruments. Moreover, the systemic approach was used to explain the systemic character of the whole process.

From the empirical level, different methods and techniques were used, which provided the direct practical contact with the research object, the reflection on the process of implementation of the proposal, and the assessment of the transformations. These methods and techniques were document analysis, observation, surveys, pedagogical tests and triangulation, which are explained in 2.2.

The considerations and opinions of the informal group of discussion were taking into account along the whole process of research in order to improve the investigation and choose the best ways of developing this study.

Practical contributions

This research provides a different perspective in the teaching learning process of English in Secondary School, because games were not included in this level to teach vocabulary since they are conceived as activities for younger children. A booklet of motivating games is proposed as a complementary material that could be helpful for teachers when dealing with vocabulary.

Structure of the paper

This paper is structured into three parts: introduction, discussion and conclusion. The discussion is subdivided into two headings. The first heading is the theoretical and methodological foundations and the second one is the process of building up the proposal in an action research process. After the conclusions, some suggestions, the bibliography and annexes are included.

DISCUSSION

1. Theoretical and methodological foundations that back up the use of games in the teaching learning process of English vocabulary in 9th grade in the Cuban Secondary School

1.1. A brief historical overview on the teaching of vocabulary in approaches and methods in language teaching

Teaching vocabulary is an important area worthy of effort and investigation. Recently, language teachers and linguists have emphasized on the teaching of vocabulary because of its importance in language teaching. Vocabulary is needed for expressing meaning and in using the receptive (listening and reading) and the productive (speaking and writing) skills. As Harmer (1991) expressed “If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh”.

The role of vocabulary was one of the first aspects of method design to receive attention. In the 1920s and 1930s, several large-scale investigations on foreign language vocabulary were undertaken. Then, the analysis of some of these methods applied through the history of the teaching of English as a foreign language and the current methods and approaches will help us understand how the treatment of vocabulary have developed.

According to Richard and Rogers (1986) in the book *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*; in the *Grammar Translation Method*, which was used at the beginning of the twentieth century, vocabulary selection was based solely on the reading texts used, and words were taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study and memorization. Those lists were presented with their translation equivalents, and translation exercises were prescribed. This resulted in a tedious experience of memorizing endless lists of unusable vocabulary. A few years later, people realized that translation was not the optimal way to teach, and thus, *The Direct Method* appeared. This new method focused mainly on the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom. Concrete new vocabulary was taught through mime,

demonstration and pictures while abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas. That way, known words were the basis to learn new ones. In the 1949s and 1950s then Audiolingual courses started to be used. In the *Audiolingual Method* the structure was important and unique so, practice should be focused on mastery the phonological and grammatical structures rather than on mastery of vocabulary. The teaching of vocabulary should be minimized until all common structures were learned. *Total Physical Response* attempted to teach language through physical (motor) activity and vocabulary items were selected not according to their frequency of need, or use in target language situations, but according to the situations in which they could be used in the classroom and the ease with which they could be learned. *The Silent Way* was based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the classroom and the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible. Therefore, vocabulary was seen as a central dimension of language learning and the choice of vocabulary was crucial.

If in traditional methods the role of vocabulary was very explicit and well established, on the contrary, *Communicative Language Teaching* emphasizes the indirect, implicit, incidental learning of vocabulary. This means that learners' attention is usually focused on the message, but vocabulary is not disregarded. Its direct learning is not apart in the communicative approach; it is a helpful adjunct to natural indirect learning in context. According to Johnson and Littlewood (1984), the acquisition of communicative competence is an example of skill development that involves cognitive and behavioral aspects including grammatical rules, procedures of selecting vocabulary and social conventions governing speech. Based on that idea, developing students' vocabulary is also an important implicit part of the teaching process within the scope of CLT.

1.1.1 Communicative Language Teaching

The origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) date from late 1960s, and it was a product of development in several fields, including linguistics, sociology, psychology, philosophy and educational research (Garcia, 2010). Nowadays, it is best considered an approach rather than a method that intends to make communicative

competence the goal of language teaching and develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication (Richard & Rogers, 1986)

In *Fundamentals for Language Teaching* (2010), Sirelda Garcia states that CLT is characterized by:

- A focus on meaning, including communicative functions,
- Concern with appropriacy of language for the particular context,
- A focus on language in discourse rather than in isolated sentences,
- A focus on meaning tasks rather than on language per se,
- Efforts to make tasks and language relevant to particular groups of learners through analysis of real life situations,
- The use of authentic materials, language and tasks,
- Interaction in pair and group activities,
- The attempt to create a secure, non-threatening atmosphere,
- Tolerance of errors, seen as evidence of risk-taking and experimentation,
- Encouragement of learner choice and learner autonomy.

Different authors have written about the principles that characterize CLT. Neil Naiman (1989), for instance, suggested the following principles:

1. Meaningful practice beyond the sentence level

This principle instructs us that language operates at levels higher than isolated words or sentences. That language acquires meaning in context; that practice in the classroom should provide for the students to experiment with whatever bits of language they know in order to convey real communicative purposes (orally or in writing); and to process stretches of language as they occur in real life (listening and reading). This principle also has implications in terms of students' motivation since it implies asking them to communicate and to process real meanings of language.

2. Student-centered class

This principle claims that if students are expected to develop skills they should be given many opportunities to participate in pairs, in groups, and for the whole class. In

other words, this principle implies that teachers should be leaving the stage for the students to act.

3. Task orientation of classroom activities

This principle is related to problem-solving teaching. It states that students should learn by solving close-to-real life tasks and problems. In real life one does not watch the news for the sake of doing it, but rather to follow up on a current issue.

4. Development of strategies for learning beyond the classroom

This principle acknowledges the need for students to develop skills and modes of learning on their own. In other words, they should not only acquire knowledge and habits but also develop abilities, since it is impossible to teach people everything that they need to know; rather, people should be helped to be able to learn on their own.

5. Peer correction and group work

It considers that, to help the students to develop accuracy, teachers should use feedback correction techniques. By using these techniques, students develop self-correction and self-monitoring skills. If they are able to correct their own mistakes, they will certainly have the ability to correct their partners' mistakes while working in groups or pairs, and even in situations beyond the classroom.

In order to accomplish the curricula demands for our specific context Professor Alfredo Camacho Delgado (2002) adapted the methodological principles given above and the ones given by K. Morrow (1983) and R. Antich (1989), and suggested the following ones:

- Classes should be active and centered on students' educative needs, interests and experiences.
- Materials, tasks, activities and resources should be chosen on the basis of educative and linguistic criteria, and should provide for learning and acquisition.
- Practice should be carried out through meaningful tasks, which engage students in thinking and activity.
- Practice should provide for strategy development.

- Students should be engaged in monitoring, self-correction and self-evaluation tasks; they must as well be asked to question and reflect on what they have learned and how they have learned it.
- Opportunities should be given to learn content from other areas of the curriculum through the medium of English.
- Practice should engage students in cross-cultural comparison.
- Classes should foster an atmosphere of co-operation and open communication among students and teacher

All these principles should be borne in mind when teaching the different skills. However, in order to find out if lessons are taught in a successful way, it is also necessary to test different aspects of the language such as vocabulary.

1.2. Testing vocabulary

Teachers will always be interested in vocabulary size and how many words students learn from a course or unit of study. For this reason, tests which measure vocabulary size remain important.

Standardize test of vocabulary became available to teachers of English as a mother tongue in the 1920s and 1930s. But, it was not until the 1950s that began to filter through the English as a foreign language world (Abbot, Greenwood, McKeating, Wingard, 1989). This kind of test is useful not only to exam vocabulary but different areas of the language such as grammar, particularly in diagnostic and progress testing, to see if previous teaching has been successful (Abbot et al., 1989).

Teachers may want to test grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or other isolated items, or may want to test the capacity to communicate orally or in writing, or the capacity to process oral or written information. Depending on what teachers test, evaluation way be classified into two types:

- Discrete-point test: traditionally we test individual language and cultural items.
- Integrative or holistic test: In communicative language teaching we test communicative competence, interactions, fluency, and appropriateness of what is social. (Garcia, 2010)

According to Finocchiaro & Brumfit (1989) there are several types of test:

- Aptitude tests: before a person starts a program, to determine whether or not he/she will be successful in language study.
- Proficiency tests: to measure what a person already knows in the target language.
- Achievement tests: to be used daily; weekly; after the completion of a unit, module; or at the end of the academic year to determine the degree to which the various enabling skills or terminal goals have been attained.
- Diagnostic tests: to note the strengths, weaknesses or problems in some area of knowledge or skill

Garcia (2010) includes also two more types of tests:

- Placement tests: used to place students in appropriate level within a language program. It is normally on relation to some defined standards.
- Selection tests: used to select as fairly as possible the best candidates for a limited number of places and jobs (Competitive assessment).

The most important reason to test is to give a learner a report on the progress he/she has made toward the attainment of goals. Other reasons for testing are: to set realistic standards for the students and schools; and to measure the effect of experimentation (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1989).

According to Norbert Schmitt (2000) to design and develop a vocabulary test, it is important to establish four important questions.

1. Why do you want to test?

In order to diagnose the situation object of research it is necessary to administer a diagnostic test. The purpose is to find where the students' vocabulary has gaps, so that specific attention is given to those knowledge areas the teacher is interested in evaluate. Alternatively, a teacher may want to find out if students have learned the words which were taught, or which they were expected to learn (achievement test).

2. What words do you want to test?

If the teacher wants to test the students' class achievement, then the words tested should obviously be drawn from the ones covered in class. It is better to avoid standardized tests in this case, because unless an instructor teaches solely from a

single book, any general-purpose test is unlikely to be as suitable to a particular classroom and set of students as one the instructor could custom-make.

3. What aspects of these words do you want to test?

After the words to be tested have been chosen, the next step is to decide which aspects of those words will be tested. Perhaps the first decision to be made is whether to measure the size of a student's vocabulary (breadth of knowledge) or test how well he knows individual words (depth of knowledge). In the classroom, vocabulary achievement tests usually try to measure how many words students know from the subset of words they studied. Placement and diagnostic tests have also commonly measured vocabulary size. Teachers interested in finding out how many words their students know may decide to test only the conceptual meaning of words, since vocabulary size tests have traditionally measured only that aspect of word knowledge.

4. How will you elicit students' knowledge of these words?

This question involves decisions about constructing the testing instrument, based on the answers to the preceding questions. The most important decision is what kind of test format will be used. It may be a good idea to create a test combining several test formats, since different students may have different preferences and different strengths in testing.

The best vocabulary test is one in which a student who knows a word is able to answer the test item easily, while a student who does not know the word will find it impossible or very difficult to provide the correct answer. While tests should have no obvious clues to help the test-taker guess, it is important to make sure there is enough context in receptive tests to help students understand which meaning of a word is being tested.

According to Hughes (1989), there are several techniques to vocabulary testing.

- Multiple-choice: Multiple-choice questions are tricky and time-consuming to compose, but if the answers are clear, they are very quick and easy to mark. Note that a testee who does not know the answer has a 25 per cent chance of being right by guessing!

- Matching: Matching items are quicker and easier to compose than multiple-choice; but note that the last option - if the learner has all the others right - becomes obvious. This problem can be corrected by the provision of more items in Column B than in A.
- Odd one out: Only meaning is being tested, and teachers have no way of being sure that all the items are known. However, this is at least more interesting to do, and usually easy to mark.
- Writing sentences: Spelling and pronunciation of the items are not tested, but most other aspects are. This is a bit boring to do, and difficult to mark objectively, but does check the testee's knowledge fairly well.
- Dictation: Dictation tests aural recognition and spelling only. However, if learners can recognize and spell an item correctly they probably also know what it means: it is extremely difficult to perceive, let alone spell, words you do not know. This is a relatively easy test to administer and check.
- Dictation-translation: This technique checks if students know meaning and spelling only. There is the problem that the mother-tongue translation may be inexact or misleading. However, if it is a reasonable equivalent, then this is a very quick, easy and convenient test to administer and check.
- Gap filling: This technique tests meaning, spelling, to some extent grammar and collocation. However, testees may write down possibly acceptable items that are not those ones what teachers intended.
- Gap filling with a 'pool' of answers: Meaning is tested here, also to some extent grammar and collocation.
- Translation: Translation can test all aspects of an item, but there are better ways of testing.
- Sentence complete: This tests meaning only; but is "personalized" and interesting to do and read!
- Words and phrases: Words in context. To make it a bit more challenging for the students the words on the right might be listed in a different order.

As stated before, testing vocabulary is important. However, the role of vocabulary constitutes an essential part within the teaching learning process of English.

1.3. The role of vocabulary in the teaching learning process (TLP) of English

Vocabulary, as one of the knowledge areas in language, plays an important role while learning a language. The more words someone knows, the easier she/he understands what she/he is hearing and reading; and the better she/he will be able to speaking or writing. As it could be seen, vocabulary is an element that links the four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing all together (Mofareh Alqahtani, 2015)

A good mastery of vocabulary helps learners to express their ideas precisely. By having many stocks of words, learners will be able to comprehend the reading materials, catch others' talking, give response, speak fluently and write some kind of topics. On the contrary, if the learners do not recognize the meaning of the words used by those who address them, they will be unable to participate in the conversation, unable to express some ideas, or unable to ask for information. (Saya, 2008)

Considering the importance of vocabulary in learning a foreign language, the mastery of this component should be ensured and developed. As Wilkins (1972) wrote "... while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp. 111–112). Thus, this work cannot go forward without presenting some definitions of vocabulary.

Different authors have defined the term *vocabulary*. Neuman & Dwyer, (2009) defines it as "...words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary) (p. 385). Harnby (1995) said that the total number of words in a language; vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings. While Ur (1998) states that vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language. In addition, Burns (1972) established that vocabulary is the stock of words that is used by a person, class or profession. Zimmerman (cited in Coady and Huckin, 1998) affirms that vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to the typical language learning. Furthermore, Diamond and Gutlohn (2006) state that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings.

From the above definitions, the authoress can conclude that vocabulary is the total number of words that are needed to communicate ideas and express the speakers' meaning. That is the reason why it is important to learn vocabulary.

According to Krashen (1982), students need to understand what they are hearing and reading in order to progress in learning a foreign language. Then, if learners do not understand a sizable portion of the vocabulary in the language that they are reading or hearing, then this language is not comprehensible and therefore cannot be useful for acquisition.

Accordingly, the authoress of this paper believes that Cuban students need to learn words, phrases, and idioms. They need a great amount of explicit vocabulary instruction in a relatively short time, because they only take language lessons twice a week, forty-five minutes each; although, most learners believe that they could master the language by only learning a certain number of English words, along with the equivalents in their mother tongue.

Of course, this students' belief is wrong. If foreign language learners are not appropriately taught in vocabulary, they will not use grammar effectively; but if they do not learn grammar along with vocabulary, they will not be able to use the language for communication. This is because good choice of words leads to good use of grammar and the decontextualized way of teaching vocabulary does not help students learn how to choose words for their specific communicative purposes in different situations.

According to Keith S. Folse (2004), many myths have restricted the role of vocabulary in foreign language curricula over the years. Some of these myths are:

- Vocabulary is not as important in learning a foreign language as grammar *or* other areas.
- It is not good to use lists of words when learning vocabulary.
- Vocabulary should be presented in semantic sets.
- The use of translations is a poor way to learn new vocabulary.
- Guessing words from context is as productive for foreign language learners as it is for first language learners.

- The best vocabulary learners make use of one or two good specific vocabulary learning styles.
- Foreign language learners should use a monolingual dictionary

According to Mofareh Alqahtani (2015), recent research indicates that teaching vocabulary may be still problematic because many teachers are not confident about the best practice in vocabulary teaching. They have problems of how to teach students in order to gain satisfying results. Therefore, teachers should prepare and find out the appropriate classroom techniques.

Thus, it is necessary to explain some techniques and strategies that may aid to an effective vocabulary teaching within the CLT approach.

1.3.1 Strategies and techniques in teaching vocabulary

There are several strategies and techniques concerning the teaching of' vocabulary. Next are explained the criteria of some outstanding specialists on the field.

In *Key Strategies in Teaching Vocabulary*, Naveen Kumar Mehta (2009) summarizes some of the best strategies to explain the information and meaning of new vocabulary items to a class.

Definitions: Definitions in the target language may be very handy if they are expressed in terms that are better known or more easily guessed than the word that is defined. In this direction, teachers and students can refer to authentic and reliable dictionaries.

Self-defining Context: The context makes the situation clear, and this in turn illuminates the meaning of the new word. This practice saves time and develops an intensive reading habit and better understanding.

Antonyms: When one member of a pair of opposites is understood, the meaning of the other can be easily comprehended. This helps the student to understand the different shades of meanings of a word.

Synonyms: A synonym may be used to help the student to understand the different shades of meaning if the synonym is better known than the word being taught.

Synonyms help to enrich a student's vocabulary bank and provide alternative words instantly.

Dramatization: This method can be practiced at ease. It can win the favor of the students as learners like dramatizations and can easily learn through them. Many situations can be dramatized or demonstrated (Sing [Sing a song], Open [Open a book], Close [Close the book]).

Pictures and Drawings: Pictures of many types and colors can be used successfully to show the meaning of words and sentence. Handmade pictures can also be used as there is no need to be very artistic. Drawings can be used to explain the meaning of things, actions, qualities, and relations. A line drawing of a head, for example, provides many useful nouns and verbs.

Realia: Real objects or models of real objects are very effective and meaningful in showing meanings but in handling of real objects, a teacher must be practical and should not be superfluous.

Series, Scales, Systems: The meaning of words such as the months of the year, the days of the week, the parts of the day, seasons of the year, ordinal numbers, cardinal numbers, etc. that form part of well-known series can be made clear by placing them in their natural order in the series.

Parts of Words: The parts of complex and compound words may be more common than the words themselves. Separating such words into their component parts generally elaborates the meaning.

Illustrative Sentences: Most words have a variety of restrictions on their use. Systematic descriptions of these restrictions and idiomatic uses would be laborious and not very effective in teaching. It is better to give appropriate examples that elucidate the range and variation of usage.

Practice from Meaning to Expression: This is controlled practice, in which the class does not create new uses or new contexts but simply recalls the ones presented. There are many types of practices for this purpose. Pictures, realia, context, and dramatization can be used. Series and systems can also be used.

Reading the Word: Reading words aloud is also very beneficial. It makes a learner familiar with the word and improves pronunciation of the learners.

Writing the Word: It will enable the class to write the new word while the auditory memory is fresh, even if the objective is only to read. Writing or copying the word from the blackboard will give the student a chance to understand the grammatical aspect of the word such as noun, verb, adverb, adjective etc.

Shift of Attention: Under this practice, the teacher provides a context by description or through reading which elicits the use of the word. Learners should be asked to pay attention to and develop an attitude or a point of view, which he defends, or attacks.

Strategy for Special Types of Words: Specific techniques or special combinations of the above techniques may be applicable for particular groups of words.

Words That Are Easy to Learn: It has been seen that the words that are similar in form and meaning to the first language are easy to understand and comprehend. They should be taught for listening and reading rather than for speaking and writing.

Words of Normal Difficulty: Words of normal difficulty are best taught in contextual realms, such as food, clothing, sports, work, and so on. There are advantages to using a connected context illustrating the words that are to be taught. Additional words can be taught as alternatives to those chosen in the connected context. Practice can be controlled in varying situations by changing a key word or phrase.

Difficult Words: Some words and sets of words are especially difficult to understand. They have to be taught as special problems with the strategy determined by the particular problem in each case.

According to Virginia French Allen (1983) in *Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary*, when thinking about and planning vocabulary lessons, teachers should be aware of the following:

- Foreign words are important to teach, but cannot be expected that it will be easy for all students.
- Teaching words requires special skills because students often feel their native language words are all they really need.

- Students are very likely to feel that foreign words are not really needed when the foreign language is not used for communication outside the language class –and sometimes neither in the language class-.
- Students feel no real need to learn something; the teacher must create that need.
- Teachers should create in students' minds a sense of personal need for foreign words.

Techniques administered by teachers depend on some factors, such as the content, time availability, and their value for learners. Here are some techniques in teaching vocabulary as stated by Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (1992).

1. Using Objects

Using this technique includes the use of realia, visual aids, and demonstration. They can function to help learners in remembering vocabulary better, because their memory for objects and pictures is very reliable and visual techniques can act as clues for remembering words. Real objects technique is appropriately administered for beginners or young learners when presenting concrete vocabulary. Introducing a new word by showing the real object often helps learners to memorize the word through visualization. Objects in the classroom or things brought to the classroom can be used.

2. Drawing

Objects can either be drawn on the blackboard or drawn on flash cards. The latter can be used repeatedly in different contexts if they are made with cards and covered in plastic. They can help young learners easily understand and realize the main points that they have learned in the classroom.

3. Using Illustrations and Pictures

Pictures connect students' prior knowledge to a new story, and in the process, help them learn new words. There are plenty of words that can be introduced by using illustrations or pictures. They are excellent means of making the meaning of unknown words clear. They should be used as often as possible. The list of pictures includes posters, flashcards, wall charts, magazine pictures, board drawings, stick figures and photographs. Pictures for vocabulary teaching come from many sources. Pictures cut

out of newspapers and magazines are very useful as well. Nowadays many readers, vocabulary books and course books contain a vast number of attractive pictures that present the meaning of basic words. The teacher can make their own visual aids or use pictures from magazines. Visual support helps learners understand the meaning and helps to make the word more memorable.

4. Contrast

Some words are easily explained to learners by contrasting them with their opposites, for instance, the word “good” contrasted with the word “bad”. However, some words are not. It is almost impossible to contrast the words whose opposite is the gradable one. When the word “white” is contrasted with the word “black”, there is an "in between" word “grey”.

5. Enumeration

An enumeration is a collection of items that is a complete, ordered listing of all of the items in that collection. It can be used to present meaning. In other words, this technique helps when any word is difficult to explain visually. We can say "clothes" and explain this by enumerating or listing various items. Teacher may list a number of clothes e.g. a dress, a skirt, trousers etc., and then the meaning of the word "clothes" will become clear.

6. Mime, Expressions and Gestures

Many words can be introduced through mime, expressions, and gestures. For example, adjectives: “sad”, “happy”, mime and taking a hat off your head to teach hat and so on. It is commonly acknowledged that “teaching gestures” capture attention and make the lesson more dynamic. Teaching gestures appear in various shapes: hand gestures, facial expressions, pantomime, body movements, etc. They can either mime or symbolize something and they help learners to infer the meaning of a spoken word or expression, providing that they are unambiguous and easy to understand.

7. Guessing from Context

Guessing from context is a way of dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary. This technique encourages learners to take risks and guess the meanings of words they do not know. This will help them build up their self-confidence so that they can work out the meanings of words when they are on their own.

8. Eliciting

This technique is more motivating and memorable than simply giving pupils a list of words to learn.

9. Translation

Even though translation does not create a need or motivation of the learners to think about word meaning, in some situations translation could be effective for teachers. Such as when dealing with incidental vocabulary, checking students' comprehension, and pointing out similarities or differences between first and second language, when these are likely to cause errors. There are always some words that need to be translated and this technique can save a lot of time.

There exist numerous strategies and techniques to teach vocabulary; however, there is not an accurate answer in this study about what the best way to teach vocabulary is. Nevertheless, ESA Regions (2006) states playing games is an innovative way to engage students in learning vocabulary.

1.4. The use of games when teaching vocabulary

There is a common perception that all learning should be serious and solemn in nature and that if one is having fun and there is amusement and laughter, then it is not really learning. This is a misconception. It is possible to learn a language as well as enjoy oneself at the same time. One of the best ways of doing this is through games (Saya, 2008).

A *game* is an activity that you do to have some fun (Harnby, 1995, p.486), a form of play governed by rules (Deesri, 2002). Games are a form of teaching which may be used in circumstances where ordinary approaches are not well tolerated, when attention is hard to get and harder to keep. (Minoo Alemi, 2010, cited in Nicolson and Williams, 1975). That is, games should be enjoyable and fun, but they are not just a diversion or a break from routine activities. They are a way of getting the learner to use the language and the classroom is an ideal place to incorporate them in order to introduce and review the language skills including grammar, word development, creative writing and vocabulary, just to name a few.

Games, in general, are seen as useful classroom materials, since "games by their very nature, focus the student on what it is they are doing and use the language as a tool for reaching the goal rather than as a goal in itself" (Terrell 1982: 121). With the use of games, the teacher adds variation to a lesson and can create various contexts in which students have to use the language to communicate, exchange information and express their own opinions (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 1984); even shy students can participate positively.

According to the research of Virginia French Allen (1983), games are helpful in a foreign language class because they can make students feel that certain words are important and necessary to achieve the objective of the game. Guessing games, for instance, create conditions in which the use of the target language is necessary for leading the players to the correct guess.

Ghada Sari (---) lists several main advantages when games are used in the classroom, including:

- Games bring in relaxation and fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more easily.
- Games usually involve friendly competition, and they keep learners interested.
- Games are highly motivating and they give students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings.
- Vocabulary games bring real word context into the classroom

Students love playing, and they need to communicate to play the game. Clare Lavery's research (2001) shows that games are a must-have tool in a teacher's repertoire as they:

- Permit learners to acquire new experiences within a foreign language, which are not always possible during a typical lesson while they are actively involved in the learning process,
- Provide a challenge that encourages learners to stretch themselves (in order to win).
- Involve learners in reactivating the language they have studied and in trying to use it meaningfully.

- Help learners to forget they are studying: they lose themselves in the fun of the game and the activity motivates them,
- Encourage collaborative learning as team games require pooling of knowledge, pair games require co-operation and turn taking, and students can learn from one another.
- Provide variety of pace. They are excellent for motivating pupils whose attention is wandering, filling a dull Friday afternoon lesson, revising in a fun way, saving the day when the video machine breaks down or when the reading you wanted to do has gone down like a lead balloon.
- Give extra practice without inducing boredom. Many games involve repetition of the same language repeatedly. In normal circumstances, this would feel artificial and be demotivating.

Through fun activities and games, students will certainly absorb more information as they learn, since games can make the students more focus on learning, because they do not feel that they are forced to learn. Therefore, the students retain more, when they are actively involved or have “hands on” in the learning process.

However, many teachers acknowledge that the fun in the classroom has been slowly disappearing; instead, pressure and stress for teachers and students have appeared.

Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson. Time passes too quickly in most classes, and the entertainment of students is not a teacher responsibility, but language teachers are responsible for creating suitable conditions, which encourage vocabulary development, and a well-chosen game can be helpful in doing so as the students acquire and practice new English words in a meaningful fun way. (Allen, 1983)

Yet, a game should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do. Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Games are used at all stages of the lesson, if they are suitable and carefully chosen. Even, if games resulted only in noise and entertained students, they are still worth paying attention to and implementing in the classroom

since they motivate learners, promote communicative competence, and generate fluency.

Still, some teachers think that language games are a waste of time and prefer not to use them in classroom. When using games for vocabulary learning, the aim is not to suggest a pleasant way of spending time, it is rather to make vocabulary learning more exciting and memorable through meaningful games to keep students interested and encouraged. To get them actively involved in the process of learning the target language. Which is more than simply memorizing new words as it may be very boring (Allen, 1983)

To implement games in English classes, teachers should consider many factors. One is choosing appropriate games to a group of learners, which depend on number of students in class, level of age, level of language proficiency, duration and the content, and difficulties of language. In addition, teachers should further consider how to implement games to class. (Amonrat Chirandon, Chonlada Laohawiriyanon, Anchana Rakthong, 2010).

In the book *Language Assistant*, Clare Lavery (2001) gives some tips about how teachers should manage when working with games in the classroom.

- The rules have to be as clear as possible. Complicated scoring and long lists of rules can draw the focus of the lesson away from using language. Stick to basic card games, keep to one topic for a game or try to adapt local games to which everyone knows the rules.
- Do not explain the game – demonstrate it. Always have a trial run before starting the game to make it clear to the students.
- Do not let games drag on too long. Set time limits for answering questions (e.g. a buzzer, a bell, a whistle or a slow count down from five when time is up – these theatrical bits also make the game fun for all learners).
- Try to use games where there is more than one winner. If students feel they have a chance of winning they will be more willing to try. Games must seem achievable in order to appeal to learners.

- Assess the learning value of a game. It must involve all the students the way they can all use the language.
- Consider very carefully the language needed to play the game. It is necessary it activate the language you want to practice and that the students got the necessary vocabulary to play it successfully.
- Balance the types of games you use. Vary whole class games with card games in pairs, noisy team games, and quiet concentration games for calming down an over-excited class.
- Do not overuse games. Games are a motivator but lose their challenge and interest if they become an everyday routine. They need to be seen as a special moment.

However, not all games are helpful in language learning, and the core of a lesson is not to have fun, it is to learn. Nevertheless, learning through fun should be present in every classroom. For instance, board games like checkers or chess cannot do much for vocabulary expansion because they do not require the players to communicate but few ideas during the game. On the other hand, games that require physical activities are not suitable, not only for they are too noisy for the classroom, but because in the excitement of the game, the students tend to express their emotions using the native language. Therefore, teachers should decide what games may suit best the lesson and its objective.

In correspondence with the previously stated ideas, the authoress considers that learning English vocabulary using games plays an important role for teachers and students, since games give strong and good motivation to students when learning English language. Then, the purpose of this research is then to assess the probable use of games in developing ninth grade students' vocabulary.

2. Building up the proposal in an action research process

2.1. General research strategy

As it has been declared in the introduction, the current research is carried out through action- research. According to Eileen Ferrance (2000), action- research "... is a reflective process that allows for inquiry and discussion as components of the

'research'. Often, action research is a collaborative activity among colleagues searching for solutions to everyday, real problems experienced in schools, or looking for ways to improve instruction and increase student achievement. Rather than dealing with the theoretical, action research allows practitioners to address those concerns that are closest to them, ones over which they can exhibit some influence and make change". (p.1)

Moreover, "... within second language education, action research has usually been associated with the study of classroom actions rather than addressing social problems associated with language teaching. Bailey (2001: 490) maintains that action research for language teachers is 'an approach to collection and interpreting data which involves a clear, repeated cycle of procedures". (Thomas S. C., 2007, p. 94)

The authoress of this paper following Lucena's scheme, also adopted Thomas S. C. (2007) cycle of investigation in order to conduct an action research project. It included the next steps: (a) identify an issue, (b) review literature on issue and ask questions to narrow focus of issue, (c) select method of data collection, (d) collect, analyze and interpret information, and (e) develop and implement the action plan. The first step entailed defining the purpose and the topic, the focus, the product, the mode, the time and the resources. The second step consisted on reading some background literature on the topic, because reading about what others have discovered before can give teachers more ideas about how to conduct their own action research projects by following similar research methods or adapting the methods used for their own contexts. The third step dealt with planning and deciding on a strategy to collect data. The fourth step involved collecting, analyzing and interpreting information. The main purpose of this stage was to make meaning of data gathered in order to determine the value of the intervention and involved sorting through the data to discover important themes relating to the issue under investigation. Finally, the fifth step was aimed at developing, implementing and monitoring action plan.

2.2. The three first steps

- Identifying the issue

The process of identifying the issue was complex. As the authoress does not work as a teacher in the Secondary School where the research was carried out, it was necessary to visit the class under study during four weeks at the beginning of the school year. Throughout the instruments administered the authoress got to the conclusion that one of the main problems in the students was related to the vocabulary.

- Reviewing the literature on issue and asking questions

The review of the literature on issue and the questions to narrow focus of issue was the second stage to be developed. The authoress found worthy to spend some time collecting and reading several articles, specialized bibliography and websites on vocabulary because it allowed her to reflect and to learn on other authors' experiences and to adapt the methods used for her own context.

- Choose method of data collection

Once the problem had been identified and even read up on, it was time to plan and decide on a strategy to collect data. As Thomas S. C. (2007) points out it is very important to use a variety of data collection tools – quantitative, qualitative, or both, as appropriate – for each topic or issue, helping to ensure the validity of the results.

That is the reason why different methods and techniques were used, which provided the direct practical contact with the subjects of research, the reflection on the process of implementation of the proposal and the assessment of the transformations. These methods and techniques were: document analysis, observation, survey, pedagogical tests, and triangulation.

The first method used was the *analysis of documents* in order to gather the necessary information about the teaching and learning process of vocabulary. There were reviewed the syllabus for 8th and 9th grade, the teacher's lesson plan and the workbook. To accomplish this objective, a guide was elaborated (Annex 1). The observation permitted to diagnose the current state of the teaching of English vocabulary in 9th grade, to notice when vocabulary is dealt with, the ways of teaching and learning vocabulary, the interactions during the lesson, and the way the teacher deals with the students' mistakes; an observation guide was also elaborated (Annex 2). A questionnaire (Annex 3) was designed with the aim of getting information about

the teaching learning process of vocabulary and of determining the students' motivation toward the English lessons. Another questionnaire was administered to teachers in order to diagnose the current state and the teacher's opinions about the teaching of the English vocabulary in 9th grade (Annex 4). The vocabulary tests were used to measure the students' vocabulary before the implementation of the proposal (Annex 5) and the progress made by them after its implementation (Annex 6).

Triangulation permitted to compare, contrast and crosscheck the data collected through the different methods.

2.3. The fourth step

The fourth step consisted on collecting, analyzing and interpreting information. Once the data had been collected, the authoress then analyzed and reflected on it. Next, the authoress explains the procedure followed, taking as a point of departure the analysis of the data obtained from the different instruments administered to the sample during the process of diagnosis.

2.3.1. Characteristics of the subjects of research

As the authoress of this research does not work in a school, it was necessary to find a teacher who does, and who was willing to help in this study. Therefore, the class where that teacher works was selected intentionally. Thirty students from class 9.1 at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School make up this group. The average age of the chosen subjects of research is 15 years old and their behavior corresponds to the psychological characteristics of this age.

2.3.2. Categories used along the research process

Two main categories were established in order to diagnose the current situation regarding students' vocabulary in 9.1 group at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School: students' vocabulary knowledge and motivation. Each category encompasses some key aspects or subcategories that help the analysis and interpretation of data. These two categories were also used to assess the transformations that occurred in the teaching learning process of vocabulary.

- Students' motivation toward the English lessons

- Students' interests towards learning it and while learning it
- Activities that students prefer to perform during the lessons
- Students' attitudes towards the lessons
- Material aids that best motivate students
- Students' vocabulary development
 - Areas of vocabulary
 - Amount of known words according to the vocabulary of the grade
 - Use of the vocabulary of the grade
 - Understanding of the vocabulary of the grade

2.3.3. Analysis of the results of the initial diagnosis

In order to gather the necessary information about the teaching and learning process of vocabulary at Secondary Schools it was necessary to analyze the 8th and 9th grade syllabus, the teacher's lesson plan and the workbook. After having analyzed the documents mentioned above, it is important to state that:

The English 9th grade syllabus has ten units, which should be taught from seven to ten hours each. Some of the hours in each unit should be devoted to the teaching of vocabulary, as this is one of the main areas that should be developed in Secondary School students. The syllabus is organized taking into account the communicative functions and then the pronunciation, grammar and the necessary vocabulary. As it could be noticed, the teaching of vocabulary is declared in the syllabus. There are methodological suggestions to work with communicative functions, grammar, pronunciation patterns, intonation, rhythm, videos, listening, reading, project works. However, there is not any suggestion about how to work with vocabulary. The activities in the lesson plan are not varied; they follow the same type of design: working with a mini dialogue to practice the communicative function. They are mostly directed to the practice of speaking components (intonation, fluency). In the workbook, there is only one game at the end of it, and most of the exercises are aimed at practicing grammar (tenses, modal verbs).

In terms of lesson delivery, it was observed that in general, games are rarely used. Teachers do not use this kind of activities as tools that help the development of

students' vocabulary. There is not any time during the lesson to work with vocabulary. Some techniques, such as working with the dictionary, giving definitions, are not used by teachers; they just translate the word when someone asks. Most teachers declared that using games was losing time because time was not enough to be waste in having fun. They teach vocabulary through the communicative function and if there is time through the exercises in the workbook.

On the other hand, the students are not capable of communicating efficiently because of the great amount of mistakes they made when they have to create the ideas by themselves. When a student forgets a known word he/she is incapable of expressing the idea by using a synonym or by changing the expression, they just stop talking. Most of them just know only one way to express what they want. This makes them be afraid of talking in front of others and only does it, when the teacher asks them to do it. Therefore, these students lack the necessary vocabulary to express themselves clearly related to the topics declared in the syllabus.

Students were given a questionnaire in order to get information about the current situation regarding the teaching learning process of vocabulary and to determine the students' motivation toward the English lessons. The administration of the questionnaire was carried out in the classroom and students' behavior was good along the whole process. The results showed that many students consider that English is not among the priority subjects. The general tendency is not to feel motivated to learn English. The majority consider that activities are not varied, that they are boring and think that they would be more interesting if games and visuals were used. Others find it difficult to remember the words and ideas taught in classes. Therefore, they do not devote time to study the subject. The results showed in the survey were corroborated by the observation.

To design the vocabulary test, it was necessary to analyze the 8th grade syllabus in order to establish the areas of vocabulary that students should have a very good command. The areas were Occupations and Jobs, Countries and nationalities, Numbers, Colors, Animals, Drinks, Music, Sports, Leisure activities and Food

Forty-five minutes were allowed for students to complete a 10-item test. The test was administered to the participants with the objective of measuring their vocabulary. The exercises use different techniques to evaluate the vocabulary. Each correct answer scores one point if correct. One hundred words were evaluated in the test.

Vocabulary test 1

Table 1 shows the marks obtained by each student before running the study. As it can be seen, the higher marks are around 50 points (from 100), which is the half of the overall mark. Only five students were able to exceed it.

Table 1: Marks obtained by the subjects in the diagnosis test

Student	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Mark	48	20	35	25	21	36	32	53	48	24	7	49	56	32	26
Student	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Mark	17	28	12	51	29	31	27	50	42	40	41	52	58	40	15

The results of the initial diagnosis showed that the objectives of the previous level were not fulfilled. The students' vocabulary is limited because most of them know less than the half of words evaluated in the test. The main troublesome areas were: giving directions and adjectives for physical description. Another problem found was that some students do not recognize the meaning of the word when it is presented in its written form, but they immediately know its meaning as the teacher reads it.

2.3.4. Reflections and regularities of the needs assessment

Taking into account the results previously obtained and analyzed after the administration of different instruments during the diagnosis stage, **the following regularities** were stated:

- The documents analyzed did not contain any methodological suggestion about how to work with vocabulary on a systematic basis.
- Students do not show much interest for English lessons.
- Classroom activities were not varied and followed the same type of design.
- Teachers do not show much creativity to work with vocabulary.
- Games are rarely used for teaching vocabulary.

- Students believe fun activities and games would be more motivating if used for vocabulary learning.
- The pedagogical test show that the students' vocabulary is limited because most of them know less than the half of words evaluated in the test.

The results obtained in this step allowed the authoress to plan new changes that could be introduced in the teaching learning process of vocabulary at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the proposal implemented.

2.4. The fifth step

The fifth step entailed developing, implementing and monitoring the action plan.

2.4.1. Rationale of the proposal

Rationale of the system proposed as scientific result

The current research is based on the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. From this philosophical perspective, practice is the supreme end of the scientific activity, not only because it generates the theoretical activity as a result of the verification of the contradictions manifested on it, but also because it is where the veracity of the hypothesis is proved. The relationship between practice, theory, and improved practice, is appreciated and manifested in the scientific method used in this research.

The psychological precepts are based on the work of L.S. Vygotsky, who proposes that each stage or period is characterized by a social state of human development and that precisely the driving forces of mental development are the contradictions. On this basis, the overall needs of students in Secondary School and their physical characteristics were identified as well as the psychological and socio-cultural features of the context that surrounds them. (Vigotsky, 1981).

Pedagogically, this research is backed up by the Socialist Pedagogy. This pedagogy claims that there is a need of an active and conscious involvement of the students in the teaching learning process so that the students become not only the object of education, but its subject. This kind of participation occurs when there is a goal that

encourages the students to learn because every human action is determined, motivated, and influenced by the need of accomplishing a goal.

This proposal is methodologically based on the communicative approach. The communicative teaching of any foreign language has to work along with the principles of a communicative methodology. The authoress follows those stated by Neil Naiman (1989) and explained by Camacho (2002) as an important basis for the fulfillment of the objectives of the proposal of this work. These principles – as explained in 1.1.1- are meaningful practice beyond the sentence level, student- centered class, task orientation of classroom activities, development of strategies for learning beyond the classroom, and peer correction and group work.

2.4.2. Proposal of games for the development of vocabulary

General Objective

The objective of this proposal is to have 9th grade students develop their vocabulary and thus, their communicative competence, and in this way to support the development of important linguistic skills.

Structure of the proposal

The proposal consists of ten games. Some of them were taken from original sources because they fit with the content to be taught, and the students' characteristics and needs. Others were adapted to the students' level or to the vocabulary needed. These activities focus on the teaching of vocabulary and have been designed to be used either as a support for the 9th grade students' workbook, or to be used on their own, depending on the teacher's strategy, and in order to give room for more practice and thus, students' development regarding vocabulary. The vocabulary in the games is related to different activities people do, expressions and adjectives used to describe places and give directions, current events, learning a language, instructions, personality traits, environmental problems, daily activities and careers. Each game corresponds to a different unit of study in the syllabus during the entire academic year. The structure of the games comprises the stage in which they should be taught, the classroom management, the instructions to teachers and students and the time allowed depending on the characteristics of each game. Most of the activities are to be

used in the controlled practice and free practice stages, though some can be adapted for the presentation stage.

Next, an example of a game is provided. The entire booklet appears in Annex 7.

Activity 1: Chain Game

Unit: 1 Summer Vacation

Objective: the students should be able to use the vocabulary related to daily routine through group work while reinforcing feelings of responsibility and cooperation with their classmates.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 20-25 minutes.

Instructions: The students should be in a circle. The teacher begins by saying: I wake up every Monday at 7 am. After that, student 1 repeats what the teacher said and adds another event. That way every student should participate. In case of making mistakes they should start from the beginning. If class is too large, the teacher could divide it in two or three teams.

Variation: if wanted, the students could help themselves with a table where they write the events. That way the teacher can not only evaluate the vocabulary but the different language skills.

Results and discussion

During the implementation of the proposal the result was good as a whole, because both students' motivation toward the subject and their vocabulary increased. The students showed themselves more excited to play the games as time passed. It was not necessary to force them to participate or to talk. In addition, they remembered the words dealt in games easier than those taught in the rest of the lessons. However, the authoress found some difficulties. Not all exercises fulfilled the students' needs as the authoress first thought. Some passive exercises as word-find puzzle did not motivate the students; on the contrary, they felt distracted and did not concentrate enough. Thus, it was necessary to eliminate this exercise from the proposal and

design another one dealing with the same topic. The authoress got to the conclusion that students prefer group and pair games rather than working alone. Another problem detected during the implementation was that there remained problems with the pronunciation of different words. Therefore, it was necessary to review the proposal and make the games more communicative in order to help the students not only in learning and using vocabulary, but also in pronouncing words correctly. So, complementary instructions were added to some exercises.

Vocabulary test 2

At the end of the implementation of the proposal, another vocabulary test was administered in order to measure the vocabulary development after the study. In this second test, the vocabulary areas correspond to the ninth grade syllabus. Such areas were highlighted in the lessons through the games designed. Table 2 shows the marks obtained by the students after running the study.

Table 2

Student	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Mark	73	55	65	54	61	75	72	83	78	53	32	79	86	59	60
Student	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Mark	47	70	52	71	62	68	70	82	69	90	89	58	74	88	45

As it can be seen in Table 2 the highest mark is 90. On the contrary, in Table 1 the highest mark is 58 points. The comparison of Table 1 and Table 2 shows that there is indeed a development in students' vocabulary. The results of vocabulary test number 2 show an increasing of around 30 and 50 words in the majority of the students. Only two students increased their amount of words in less than 20.

Main transformations in the teaching learning process of vocabulary after implementing the changes

- Students participated actively in most of the lessons
- Students motivation increased
- They remembered words easier than before applying the proposal
- Most words and expressions dealt with in class are clearly used by students.

Thus, in spite of the achievements of the class under study and of the positive transformations, they are some weakness in the process, which to the authoress belief should be taken into consideration in further research. Some of them are the shortage of material to prepare and receive the lessons. There are no textbooks and the workbook is not updated.

At the end of this step, the authoress decided to support her reflections by the criteria of the informal group of discussion as it has been happening during the process. Then, the above-mentioned proposal was taking to a final analysis by the informal group of discussion. The group considered that the proposal is suitable and corresponds with the students' needs, since it is useful and contributes to develop students' vocabulary and students' motivation. They agreed that the proposal is creative and claims for students' active involvement. Finally, they suggest that the exercises should be included in a booklet as a complementary material for teachers. Consequently, the booklet of games that emerged from the building up process becomes the scientific result of this research.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The use of games in the TLP of English in secondary school should be based on the communicative approach, an understanding of games as useful activities for increasing students' motivation and learning in English lessons; and an assumption of vocabulary as an important component that should be chosen according to the aims and communicative contents of each grade.
2. The results of the initial diagnosis revealed weaknesses in the development of vocabulary and motivation for learning it in the students from class 9.1 at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School, as well as the lack of classroom materials and guidelines for developing this language component.
3. Dynamic and communicative games that encourage pair and group work, and an active participation of students are proposed in order to contribute to the development of the vocabulary and motivation in the students from class 9.1 at *Gerardo Abreu* Secondary School.
4. The main transformations that occur in the teaching learning process after implementing the changes were in the students' active participation in most lessons, in their motivation and in their understanding and use of vocabulary items according to the aims of the 9th grade.
5. The informal group of discussion considers the proposal supportive, suitable and necessary in the TLP of English to develop 9th grade students' vocabulary.
6. A booklet of dynamic and communicative games emerged from the action research process and proved to be useful and motivating for the development of students' vocabulary in the teaching learning process of English in 9th grade in Secondary School.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To continue working on this theme in order to enrich and improve the proposal.
- To validate the proposal to be implemented in other 9th grade classes.
- To present the results in scientific events in order to provide a useful material for teachers who need to find activities to work with the vocabulary of 9th grade.

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Annex 1: Guide for the analysis of documents

Objective: to gather the necessary information about the teaching and learning process of vocabulary

Documents:

- 8th and 9th grade syllabus
- Teacher's lesson plan
- English Workbook

Indicators:

- Objectives to be achieved concerning vocabulary.
- Relationship among communicative functions, grammar and vocabulary settled in the syllabus.
- Correspondence between the syllabus and the contents in the lesson plan concerning vocabulary.
- Quality and quantity of the exercises on vocabulary in the workbook and in the lesson plan.
- Methodological guidelines concerning vocabulary.

Annex 2: Observation guide to the English classes

Objective: To diagnose the current state of the teaching of English vocabulary in 9th grade

Objects of observation: Students and teacher.

Class: 9.1

Time of the observation: 45 minutes lesson

Number of lessons observed: 8

Indicators:

1- When is vocabulary dealt with ...?

•While presenting the lesson	
•During the practice stage	
•In the production stage	

2- What of the following ways of teaching and learning vocabulary are used in the lessons?

Ways of teaching and learning vocabulary	
A. Associated words together 1. Words with associated meanings together. 2. Words with a grammatical association together. 3. Words based on the same root together.	
B. Using pictures and diagrams	
C. Asking others.	
D. Using dictionary.	
E. Making use of context to decide meaning and guessing from the item itself.	
F. Organizing a vocabulary notebook 1. Organizing words by meaning 2. Using various types of diagram 3. Organizing by word class	
G. Using visual techniques	

1. Mime and gesture	
H. Using verbal techniques 1. Illustrative situations 2. Synonymy and definition 3. Contrast and opposition 4. Scales 5. Examples of the type	
I. Using translation	
J. Any Other? Which?	

3- Are there interactions during the lesson?

a) Between the students and the school teacher?

Yes, many ___ Yes, a few ___ Yes, but very few ___ No ___

b) Among the students?

Yes, many ___ Yes, a few ___ Yes, but very few ___ No ___

c) Both, among the students and between the students and the school teacher?

Yes, many ___ Yes, a few ___ Yes, but very few ___ No ___

d) There are not interactions at all.

4- When students do not know a word, how do they react?

Use a synonym ___ change the expression ___ go around the bushes ___

Other _____

5- Do the students make mistakes in the vocabulary? Yes ___ No ___

5.1- If affirmative answer, take down the following notes.

Mistakes in vocabulary made by the students during the lesson	What did the teacher do?	Then, what was the student's reaction?

Annex 3: Questionnaire to the students

Este cuestionario ha sido preparado para conocer tus opiniones acerca de la enseñanza del vocabulario en las clases de inglés y la importancia que se le atribuye a dicha asignatura. Sus opiniones serán de gran ayuda para esta investigación.

Muchas gracias,

La autora.

Objetivo: recopilar información sobre la realidad educativa en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje del vocabulario y para determinar la motivación de los estudiantes hacia las clases de inglés.

Tipo: individual, integrador e informativo.

Sexo: M___ F___ Edad: ___

1. ¿Te gustan las clases de inglés?

Siempre ____	A veces ____	Casi nunca____	Nunca ____
--------------	--------------	----------------	------------

a) ¿Por qué?

2. ¿Te sientes motivado a aprender en las clases de inglés?

Siempre ____	A veces ____	Casi nunca____	Nunca ____
--------------	--------------	----------------	------------

3. ¿Qué tipo de actividades utiliza tu profesor para enseñar nuevas palabras en las clases de inglés?

4. ¿Qué otras actividades te gustaría que utilizara?

juegos de participación____
utilización de dibujos/ láminas____
utilización de textos____
Otras____
Cuáles?_____

5. Ordene las asignaturas que se le imparten de acuerdo a la importancia que usted le atribuye.

6. Las nuevas palabras y frases que el profesor enseña en clase son:

fáciles de aprender y recordar ____
necesito usarlas varias veces para acordarme____
me cuesta mucho trabajo recordar el vocabulario____

Annex 4: Questionnaire to teachers of English.

Objective: To diagnose the current state of the teaching of the English vocabulary in 9th grade

This questionnaire has been prepared in order to know your beliefs regarding the teaching of English vocabulary in 9th grade. Your sincere opinions will be of great value for our research paper.

Thank you very much,
The authoress

Experience as a teacher: _____

1- Are you teaching English to 9th graders?

Yes _____ No _____

2- Do you teach vocabulary in class?

always _____	sometimes _____	rarely _____	never _____
--------------	-----------------	--------------	-------------

3- In what stages of the lesson do you deal with vocabulary?

Presentation _____	Practice _____	Production _____
--------------------	----------------	------------------

4- What aim should be fulfilled in 9th grade concerning vocabulary?

a) _____

b) None _____

5- Do you correct mistakes in vocabulary in class?

always _____	sometimes _____	rarely _____	never _____
--------------	-----------------	--------------	-------------

Why? _____

b) If affirmative answer, explain how you do it.

6- What are the most common mistakes your students make concerning English vocabulary?

a- _____

b-
c-
I don't know

7- The following are ways of teaching and learning vocabulary. Put a check mark besides the ones you have used.

Ways of teaching and learning vocabulary	
C. Associated words together 4. Words with associated meanings together. 5. Words with a grammatical association together. 6. Words based on the same root together.	
D. Using pictures and diagrams	
C. Asking others.	
F. Using dictionary.	
G. Making use of context to decide meaning and guessing from the item itself.	
F. Organizing a vocabulary notebook 4. Organizing words by meaning 5. Using various types of diagram 6. Organizing by word class	
G. Using visual techniques 1. Mime and gesture	
K. Using verbal techniques 6. Illustrative situations 7. Synonymy and definition	

8. Contrast and opposition	
9. Scales	
10. Examples of the type	
L. Using translation	
M. Any Other? Which?	

8- Do you think that students' motivation is an important element in the lessons?

9- Are your students motivated to learn English? According to you, what are the main causes?

10-Do you think that playing games in class...

___ motivate the students to learn.

___ is a waste of time.

___ have the students entertained and lose the focus of attention.

___ do not help to teach English.

___ help the students remember what have been taught.

11- About playing games

___ I like to use them in class.

___ I do not like to use them in class.

___ I use them, but I do not like them.

___ I do not use them, but I like them.

Annex 5: Vocabulary test # 1

Objective: To measure the students' vocabulary before the implementation of the proposal

Indicators: Vocabulary related to

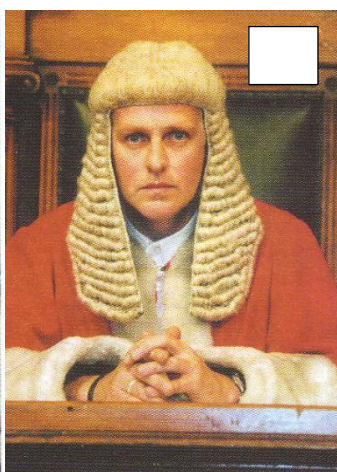
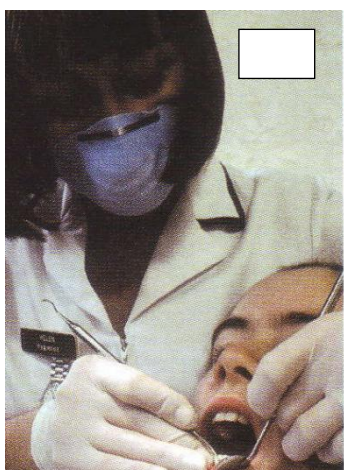
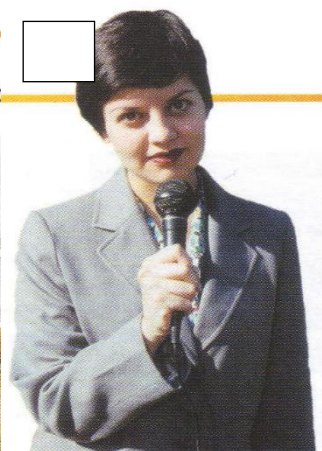
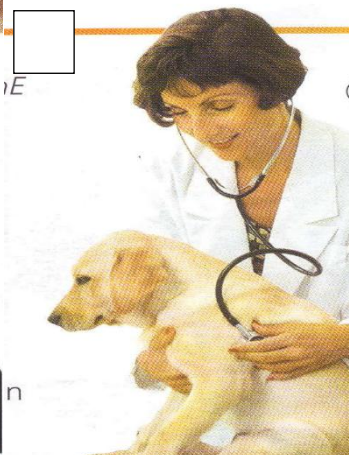
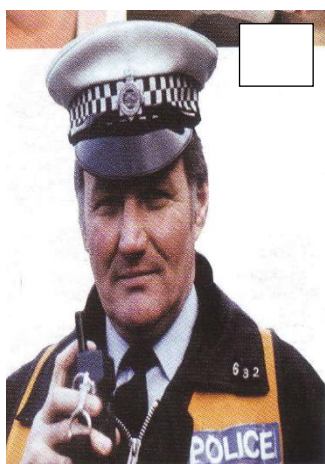
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occupations and Jobs• Countries and nationalities• Numbers• Colors• Animals• Drinks• Music• Sports• Leisure activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greetings• Action verbs• Possessive Adjectives• Prepositions• Adjectives to describe people• Places in the city• Health problems• Food
--	---

1. Draw lines connecting the pairs of opposites.

A	B
Tall	Liar
Hard worker	Rude
Thin	Overweight
Young	Short
Polite	Coward
Bald	Shy
Brave	Lazy
Honest	Old

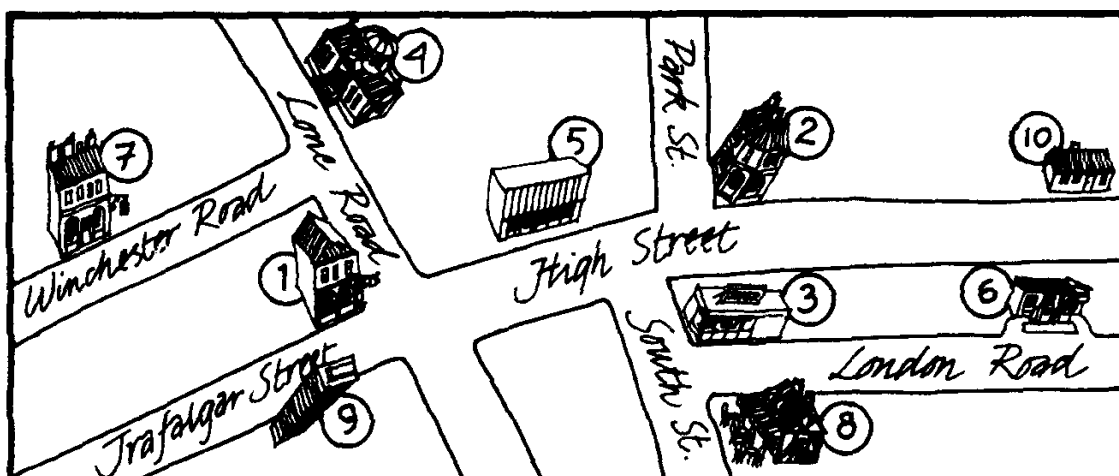
2. Match the occupations and jobs in the box with the pictures below.

1 Veterinarian	2 Fire fighter	3 Optician	4 Lawyer	5 Journalist	6 Hairdresser
7 Designer	8 Judge	9 Dentist	10 Photographer	11 Lecturer	12 Police officer





3. On the following map, there are ten different buildings.



- The building at the corner of Lone Road and Trafalgar Street is where you can go out with your friends to dance. It is a _____
- The building on the corner of Park Street and High Street sells medicine. It is a _____
- Mrs. Brown always shops for food in the building at the corner of South Street and London Road. It is a _____
- Building number 4 has a lot of books in it. Number 4 is a _____
- You can buy stamps at building number 5. It is a _____
- If you want petrol, go to the building in London Road. It is a _____

- People go to the building in Winchester road when are sick. It is a _____
 - If you are hungry, you can always go to South Street. It is a _____
4. Match the country (1-8) with the nationality that corresponds (a-h). One example has been given.

1	F	United States	A	French
2		China	B	Japanese
3		Greece	C	Spanish
4		Turkey	D	English
5		England	E	Chinese
6		Switzerland	F	North American
7		Spain	G	Greek
8		France	H	Turkish

5. Mark with an X where is correct.

Food	Healthy	Unhealthy
Tomatoes		
Eggs		
Hot dogs		
Ice cream		
Beans		
Fish		
Hamburgers		
Avocado		
Cheese		
French fries		

6. Group the words.

Write the following words under the correct heading.

Jazz	Lemonade	Red	Pink	Football
Eight	Orange	Cold	Instrumental	Beige
Allergy	Baseball	Wine	Purple	Headache
Grey	Fifty	Cough	Water	Beer
Coffee	Asthma	Rock	Milkshake	Reggae
Swimming	Fever	Twenty five	Hip hop	Nineteen
Country	Three	Boxing	Tennis	

Colors	Music
Sports	Drinks
Numbers	Health problems

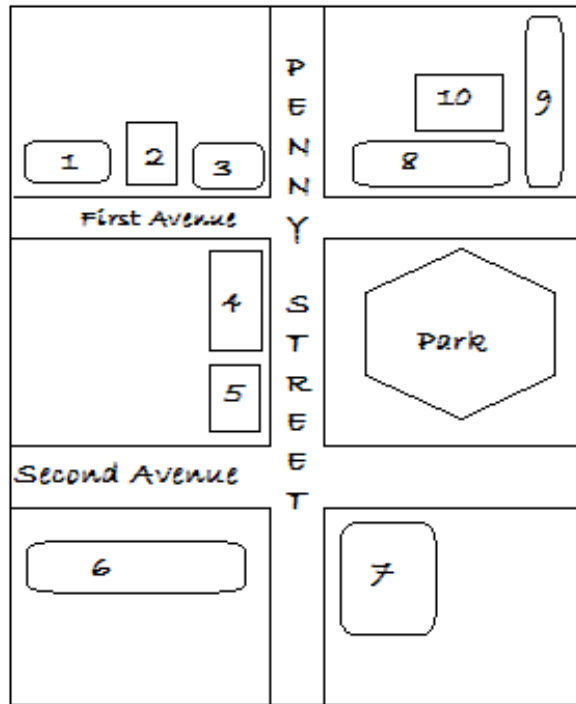
7. Write the missing verb in the following sentences

1. You must _____ for at least to hours a day if you want to play the piano well.

- a. Train b. practice c. touch
2. I wonder if you _____ me to play the guitar.
a. assist b. teach c. learn
3. Would you _____ this letter to the Post Office, please?
a. Send b. take c. bring
4. I _____ to school from Monday to Friday.
a. am B. go c. end
5. I _____ the homework every day.
a. Make b. do c. respond
6. When I travel, I like to _____ photographs.
a. Make b. do c. take
8. Complete the following sentences with the preposition in the chart.

On the corner	On	between	In	Behind
And	Next to	Across from	at	In front of

- 1 Number 2 is _____ number 3 _____ number 1.
- 2 Number 4 is _____ number 5.
- 3 Number 4 and number 5 are _____ the park
- 4 Number 7 is _____ Second Ave. _____ Penny St.
- 5 Number 6 is _____ Second Ave.
- 6 Number 10 is _____ number 9.



9. Underline the odd one out:

- Horse, rabbit, spider, sheep, beef, dog, cat.
- These, there, this, those, that
- Hi, hello, good bye, fine, good morning.
- My, her, their, we, our, his, your.

10. Read the text and fill in the missing words.

A teacher is talking about his class and the activities they do.

"Every day we have Free Activity Hour. The children can do what they like. They _____ books, _____ television. Some of them like _____ to songs or _____ games. Others prefer to _____ in the pool. All the students love the Free Activity Hour. It is a great fun! "

Annex 6: Vocabulary test # 2

Objective: To measure the students' vocabulary after the implementation of the proposal

Indicators: Vocabulary related to

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• environmental problems• current events• personality traits• daily activities• expressions and adjectives used to describe places	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give directions• instructions• learning a language• different activities people do
--	---

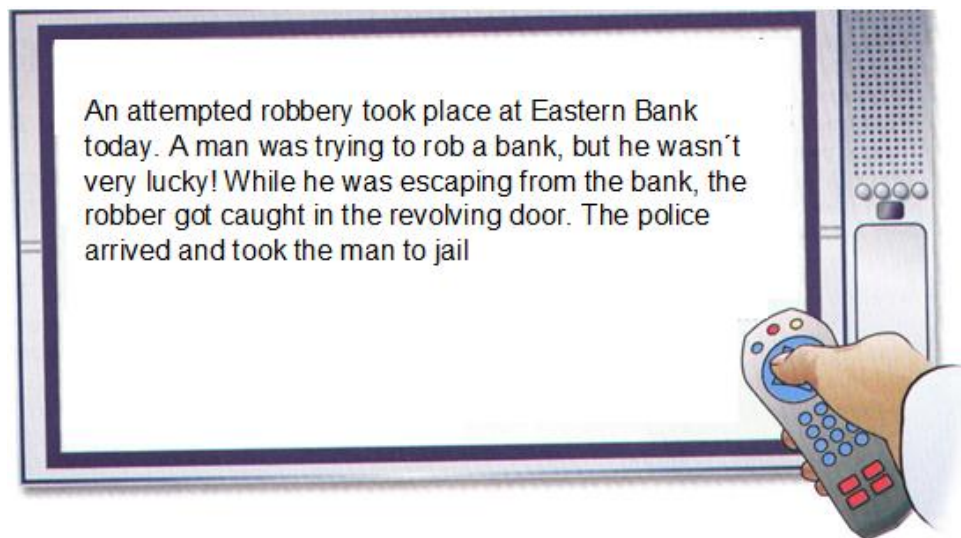
1. What are the causes of these environmental problems? Complete the chart with the phrases in the box.

Overfishing Recycling Destruction of natural habitats Unsafe manufacturing processes Tourism in natural reserves Major accidents at sea	Poor air quality Ozone Layer Growth in the size and number of major cities Heavy traffic in cities Throw waste to the rivers Deforestation
--	---

Problem	Causes
Increase in cancers and allergies	
Extinction of species	

2. Match the words in A with a definition in B

A	B
Witness	The act of getting away from a place
Innocent	The person who is in charge of a court of law
Verdict	Did not commit the crime
Arrest	A person who saw the crime and gives information to a court
Thief	Ask the court for another chance to prove innocence
Jail	The process of deciding if the person accused is innocent or not
Appeal	A person who robs
Trial	The result of the court case
Escape	All the information relating to the trial of one criminal or group of criminals
Case	Take to the police station and accuse of a crime
Judge	Place where people are taken if they are found out guilty



3. Put the following words in the correct sentence.

Friendly	Bad-tempered	shy	Patient
Generous	talkative	lazy	Reliable
Jealous	imaginative	punctual	Funny

- My wife is always _____ in the mornings. She gets angry at the slightest thing.
- The things I like about John is that he is so _____. If he tells you he will do something, then he always does it.
- Frank has never been _____. His wife had to wait for him 30 minutes in the church on their wedding day!
- My husband is so _____. He is always buying me things.
- Paul's new girlfriend is very _____. She hardly says a word and always looks down at the floor when she talks to you.
- John is always making us laugh, even when the jokes are bad. He is so _____!
- Don't ask Janina to dance – at least not if Clive, her husband, is looking. He gets to _____, you know.
- Our new teacher is so _____. If we don't understand something she goes over it again and again until we do.
- I think English people are so _____. They will always talk to you and try to help you even if you've never met them before.
- Pam loves to talk a lot. In fact, I never met anyone quite as _____ as her.
- Paul's wife never does any housework, even though she doesn't go out to work. I really can't understand how anyone can be so _____.
- I wish my husband were as _____ as Janet's. he just makes up stories to read to the children at bedtime without the least effort. He is wonderful.

4. Circle the correct verb.

Do you like going to the pool?

Yes, I do. I love to _____ every day in the pool.

swim	stays	eat
------	-------	-----

Do you like to watch films at home?

No, I don't. I prefer to _____ to the movies.

get go do

Do you wake up early in the mornings?

Yes. I like to _____ in the park before the sun rises.

drive run shop

Do you ever walk to work? -

No, I don't. I prefer to _____. It is very far from home.

stay walk drive

Do you want to go to a disco tonight?

I don't like disco because I don't know how to _____

drink dance drive

What do you do on Saturday' mornings

I usually go to the market to _____ the food

borrow rob buy

Do you practice any sport?

Yes. I _____ tennis

pay put play

Do you wake up early on weekends?

Are you kidding! I love to _____ late in the mornings

stay sleep swim

Do you like doing the housework?

No, I really don't like. But what I hate the most is to _____ out the garbage

find work take

Do you like going camping?

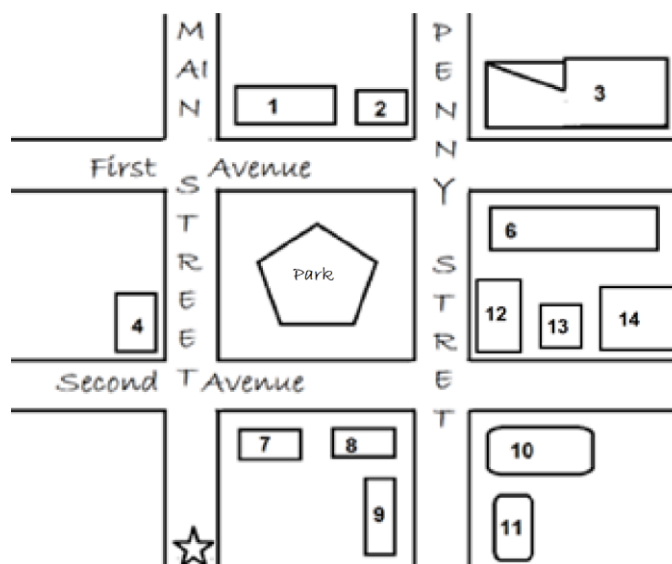
No, I really _____ mosquitoes.

love hate kill

5. Mark with an X the adjective (s) that best fit with every building

Buildings	Church	Bar	Apartment	Theatre	Hotel
Ancient					
Dark					
Impressive					
Small					
Quiet					

6. Look at the map. Then complete the following sentences with the phrases in the chart. You are the star in the map.



Turn right

Turn left

Between

In front of

Across from

Straight ahead

On the corner

On

Block

- How can I get to building number 3?
It is ____ First Ave. _____ building number 6.
- Can you tell me how I can get to building number 1?
Of course. Go _____. It is _____ of First and Main.
- Could you show me the way to building number 6?
Sure! _____ on First Ave, you will find it _____ the right.
- How I can get to building number 13?
_____ on Second Ave, 13 is _____ 12 and 14.
- I really need to get to building number 11. Do you know where it is?
_____ on Second, then _____ again on Penny. It is on the second _____.
- I need to get to building number 12. Do you know where it is?
It is ____ Penny Street, _____ the park
- Where is building number 8?
When you _____ on Second Ave you will find it _____ building number 7.

7. Match the verbs with the indications on the right to make a crème caramel.

1	First, melt	A	the mixture in the tin when it gets cooler
2	Then, mix	B	the tin inside it
3	Next, pour	C	3 spoons of brown sugar in a tin
4	After that, take	D	Serve.
5	Then, put	E	A glass of milk, 3 eggs and a glass of sugar in the blender
6	Cook	F	It get cold

7	Let	G	A pressure cooker with some water
8	Finally,	h	For 20 minutes

8. Read the letter and fill in the missing languages.

Dear Sue,

My travel to Europe has been amazing.

This week I am visiting France. It has been difficult to be here because I don't speak _____. I never thought to find people from so many different countries here. Yesterday, I met a girl from China in the restaurant.

Fortunately, besides speaking _____ she also spoke _____. That way we could talk for a while.

The Eiffel Tower looks to me like the Babel Tower. Almost every person talk in a different language: _____, _____; _____ How many languages are in the world, Sue?

See you soon

Frank

9. Complete the passage using the professions that matches with the action:

- The _____ is the person who works in an office, prepare letters, and takes the phone calls.
- The _____ is the person whose job is to serve meals in a restaurant
- The _____ is the person who trained in the medical treatment of animals
- The _____ is the person who designs new buildings
- The _____ is the person who teaches in the schools

- The _____ is the person who take cares of children when parents have to work
- The _____ is the person whose job is to stop fire and to save people from being harmed
- The _____ is a member of the police force
- The _____ is the person whose job is to make bread and cakes for sale
- The _____ is the person whose job is making and repairing wooden objects and structures.

Scientific result



VOCABULARY TEACHING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS: GAMES, AN EFFECTIVE TOOL.

Proposal for 9th grade

This booklet of games is the scientific result of a major paper research. After all the literature reviewed the authoress realized that using games would be an effective tool in the teaching learning process of vocabulary in ninth grade students.

The objective of this proposal is to have 9th grade students develop their vocabulary and thus, their communicative competence, and in this way to support the development of important linguistic skills.

The proposal consists of ten games. Some of them were taken from original sources because they fit with the content to be taught, and the students' characteristics and needs. Others were adapted to the students' level or to the vocabulary needed.

The vocabulary in the games is related to different activities people do, expressions and adjectives used to describe places and give directions, current events, learning a language, instructions, personality traits, environmental problems, daily activities and careers. Each game corresponds to a different unit of study in the syllabus during the entire academic year.

In this booklet teachers will find out a proposal of games that perfectly fit in the ninth grade syllabus of Cuban Secondary Schools. It could be used as a complementary material to classroom activities. It is also open to changes and improvements in order to help teachers to work with vocabulary so as to motivate their students toward the English subject.

The Authoress

Activity 1: Chain Game

Unit: 1 Summer Vacation

Objective: the students should be able to use the vocabulary related to daily routine through group work while reinforcing feelings of responsibility and cooperation with their classmates.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 20-25 minutes.

Instructions: The students should be in a circle. The teacher begins by saying: I wake up every Monday at 7 am. After that, student 1 repeats what the teacher said and adds another event. That way every student should participate. In case of making mistakes they should start from the beginning.

If class is too large, the teacher could divide it in two or three groups.

Variation: if wanted, the students could help themselves with a table where they write the events. That way the teacher can not only evaluate the vocabulary but the different language skills.

Activity 2: Word Bingo

Unit: 2 Travel Time

Objective: the students should use the vocabulary studied to give directions through pair work so as to reinforce good manners while talking to others.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Pair work.

Time: 15 – 20 minutes.

Descriptions: for this game it is necessary to do a little preparation. Make bingo sheets with a 4x4 grid and add words to each square. (Each one should be unique in the combination of words)

Instructions: Hand out a bingo sheet (each one should be unique in the combination of words) to every pair of students. Once the teacher calls the word out the students mark the correct word if they have it. The first person to finish marking their entire page wins. These words could be placed in a bag or a hat.

Variations: Use pictures on the Bingo card and call out the words that relate.

With the words in the sheet and after the game, the students could also make a mini dialogue to put the words in context.

e.g.

HOSPITAL	RIGHT	WALK	TRAIN STATION
NEXT TO	LIBRARY	SCHOOL	CORNER
POST OFFICE	DRIVE	BUILDING	MARKET
PARK	TRAFFIC LIGHT	BLOCK	ACROSS FROM

Activity 3: The newspaper

Unit: 3 The news

Objective: the students should be able to narrate current events by building up a story with each player contributing one idea at a time.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 15- 20

Instruction: The students will seat in a circle. Then, the teacher will write a headline of some terrible news on the board. Then, the first student begins by saying: Have you heard the news? Last night ...; the second player adds another idea and so on; gradually they will build up a story that has relation to the headline.

Variation: The teacher may select a student to write the story as far as they build it. Then the students can read it.



Activity4: Puzzle

Unit: 4 Hobbies

Objective: the students should be able to offer and gather information from others about their hobbies through group work while reinforcing the respect the acceptance for other people's preferences and customs.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 15- 20

Instruction: Cut out several pictures of different hobbies (practicing sports, taking photographs) from magazines. Paste each picture on a piece of cardboard or other heavy paper and cut the picture in four or more pieces. Give each student a piece from one of the puzzle and tell the students to walk around the room to find other pieces to make a complete picture. The group that matches their puzzle first wins.

After completing the puzzle they have to talk about the hobby they have in their team whether they like it or not and why? Who they practice it with?



Activity 5: Hidden countries

Unit 5: The English Language

Objective: the students should be able to recognize the countries that speak the English language while understanding the importance of learning it as a foreign language.

Stage: Controlled Practice

Organization: Group work

Time: 15-20 minutes

Instruction: divide the class into groups of four students. Give a piece of paper with a list of countries that speak English to each team. Ask them to guess which language each country speaks. Every team will send a student to share their guessing in order to compare them. The team with more right answers will be the winner.

- Find out the language you think is spoken in each country. Write it next to them.
Be ready to present your results to your classmates.

Australia	
Barbados	
Canada India	
Dominique	
England	
Guyana	
India	
Ireland Uganda	
Jamaica	
Namibia	
Pakistan	
Salomon Islands	
South Africa	
Tanzania	

United States	
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Activity 6: The cooking circle

Unit 6: Pastimes

Objective: the students should be able to describe the process of a recipe by ordering the different actions after recognizing them.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 20-25 minutes

Instruction: **Choose a recipe you like** and copy the verbs and the nouns on different cards. Make two teams, one to each category. The students in team “verb” represent the action through gestures and their partner in team “noun” will complete the whole phrase as the teacher copies it on the board. At the end, the students will order the instructions.

Activity 7: Boticelly (??)

Unit 7: Important Personalities

Objective: the students should be able to make use of the vocabulary related to describing personalities by guessing identities adopted by one player.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 30 minutes.

Instruction: one player thinks of an important personality to represent, and tells the other players the first letter of the person's name. The players try to guess the character by asking questions. Whoever guesses the character correctly becomes the player to ask others to guess. If nobody guesses within a certain time-limit (or asks a specified number of questions), the player in charge can choose a new identity



Activity 8: The Green Puzzle

Unit 8: The Environment

Objective: the students should be able to manipulate the vocabulary related to some environmental problems through pair work so as to reinforce their love and care for nature while being aware of the existence of these problems and consequences to our lives.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: Pair work.

Time: 15 minutes.

Instruction: The students have to complete the sentences given, in order to figure out the words needed to complete the puzzle. The words have a linking theme. It would be helpful if those words would had been taught in previous lessons.

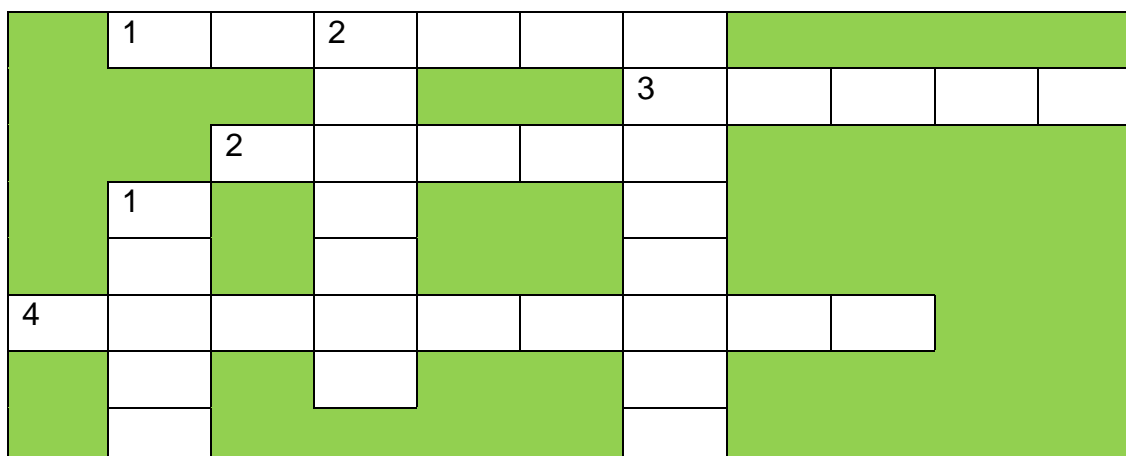
- Complete the sentences below to complete the puzzle given.

ACROSS

1. The destruction of forest is harming rare plants and wildlife.
2. The burning of gas, oil and coal has created acid rain.
3. If we throw solid waste to the rivers, fish will die poisoned.
4. We are trying to protect the environment from pollution.

DOWN

1. The use of CFC's in products like hair spray has created a hole in the ozone layer.
2. We should recycle glass and paper in different containers.
3. The temperature is higher every year because of global warming.



Activity 9: What Am I Thinking Of?

Unit 9: A trip around the country

Objective: the students should be able to use the vocabulary related to describing places through pair work while developing love for their city, their country and the care for social property.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Pair work.

Time: 15 – 20 minutes.

Instructions: the teacher will ask the student to think of a place in the city (library, hospital, museum, beach). Each student should write 5-10 words describing the place they chose on a piece of paper. When teacher calls time, the pairs exchange papers and try to figure out what places the other pairs described. The first team which guesses both places guessed correctly wins.



Activity 10: Scattergories

Unit 10: All in all

Objective: the students should be able to use the vocabulary learned in the last units.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Group work.

Time: 30 minutes.

Instructions: Choose ten categories with your students or before class starts (e.g. daily activities, city names, sports, hobbies, etc.). Use an alphabet die to determine the letter for each round of play. Set a timer for three minutes or less. Students must think of one word for each category that begins with the letter chosen. Students score one point per word, and the person with the most points at the end of three rounds is the winner.

Variations: it could also be play in teams.