



Departamento Lenguas Extranjeras

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Título del trabajo: Una propuesta de clases para mejorar el vocabulario en tercer grado.

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Thank You.

Abstract

During the present academic year (2018-2019), the author of this paper carried out his practicum as an English teacher, at Viet Nam Heróico Elementary School in Santa Clara. After the implementation of several research methods, it could be corroborated that the main difficulty in third grade students was the lack of vocabulary. Consequently, the author set as goal to build up a proposal of lessons to contribute to enhance vocabulary in these students. In order to achieve the goal proposed, the researcher revised the necessary bibliographical sources in order to back up the scientific problem stated. After a building up process, in which the suggestions given by the discussion group were all taken into account, the final scientific result that emerged was a proposal of six active skill lessons to contribute to the enhancement of the vocabulary in the subjects of research. Numerous positive transformations were attained in the students' performance after the teacher's intervention; however, this Major Paper constitutes a contribution to the enhancement of the third grade students' vocabulary and it can be a good consulting material for teachers who may face a similar situation with his/her students.

Résumé

Durant cette année académique (2018-2019), l'auteur de ce rapport a fait ses stages en tant que professeur d'anglais à l'École Primaire Viet Nam Heróico à Santa Clara. Après implémenter quelques méthodes de recherche, il a pu remarquer que les faiblesses principales des apprenants du troisième grade, sont liées à la carence de vocabulaire en langue anglaise. Ensuite, le professeur a fixé comme but la construction d'une proposition des leçons pour contribuer au développement du vocabulaire en langue anglaise chez les apprenants. Dans le but d'atteindre l'objectif fixé, le chercheur a consulté les sources bibliographiques nécessaires afin de soutenir le problème scientifique. Après le processus de construction, dans lequel les suggestions du groupe de discussion scientifique ont été prises en compte, le résultat scientifique final qui a émergé est une proposition de six leçons de compétences actives visées à contribuer au développement du vocabulaire en langue anglaise chez les sujets de recherche. Nombreux transformations positives ont été atteintes par rapport à l'actionner chez les apprenants, néanmoins cette recherche est juste une contribution au développement du vocabulaire en langue anglaise et il peut être un bon matériel à consulter pour les professeures qui sont à une situation similaire avec ses élèves.

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Introduction

English is a Germanic occidental language. It is the third native language expanded around the world, after Chinese and Spanish. It constitutes the second most-learned language and it is the official language in almost sixty three states. English has also become the principal language in international speech and lingua franca in many regions where different languages are spoken. It is taught as a second language in several educational systems, due to its importance and the influence of English speaking countries in world's marketplace.

In Cuba, multiple efforts have been done to improve its educational system and give a bigger role to the teaching-learning process of English in all levels. This is why this country is involved in a process of perfecting the use of English as a foreign language for Cubans, either professionals or not in order to achieve high standards of general culture in the Cuban population.

Cuba has developed a number of cooperation programs with third world countries in fields like medicine, sports, science, technology and education, demanding the mastery of foreign languages, especially English, on the part of Cuban professionals. This is why, among the foreign languages that are taught in Cuba, English is a priority.

English is nowadays taught in all levels of education in Cuba, from primary or elementary school to the upper levels. It has acquired a relevance for all Cuban professionals since it became an undoubtedly requirement to be graduated in university level. It is also in plans of to extend the teaching of English even in day-care centers (for children).

Since English is taught in elementary level, it becomes essential to take advantage of the abilities children have for learning a foreign language, as it has been proved in many parts of the world, they can acquire the language easier than adults. The English program in elementary school constitutes the basis for the learning of English the students will have in future levels of education.

In "Viet Nam Heróico" elementary school, in third graders, Class C, the author of this research have noticed, through many observations, that this group is

widely motivated towards the English language learning; at least a 60% of the class are very demanding students. However, during the development of lessons, the students have demonstrated that they have had problems to assimilate the vocabulary well. Nevertheless, and depending on the vocabulary area that is being studied, the students are frequently asking about new words that they want to learn. Each time the teacher presents the new vocabulary, they want to receive more, showing that they are very motivated towards the learning of English.

The primary observation has brought that the students present several mistakes in pronunciation with those vowel and consonant sounds that do not exist in Spanish. In addition, some students have problems in spelling, mainly in combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue. They have shown lack of vocabulary in determined lexical sets that causes that they did not build up the required framework to express ideas for this level.

As the world is now in the age of communication, most of students have expressed that they would like to speak English in order to communicate with some relatives and people from different cultures.

Therefore, it is important to take into account that Third Grade constitutes their first contact with a foreign language, and then it is difficult for children who are still learning and perfecting their mother language.

Some previous research papers carried out at “Félix Varela Morales” Campus, by students majoring in English language, were consulted to know what had been researched about the topic in relation to difficulties identified, level and grade, scientific results implemented, meaningful achievements, etc. It was corroborated that vocabulary of English language had been the object of research of different major papers since 2012 onward: Keyla Anagua Yarari (2012-2013) proposed communicative activities to expand vocabulary in 4th graders, Wilfredo Artilles Díaz (2012-2013) made a Proposal for the Enrichment of Vocabulary in seventh graders, Orestes Ynfiesta González (2015-2016) worked on the expansion of vocabulary in English language in 9th graders , Daysi Beatriz González Naranjo (2015-2016) worked the use of teaching aids for the teaching of vocabulary. All of them properly referred to the development

of communicative skills in English at different educational levels and offered practical solutions through proposals of activities and lessons. Although, none of them have dealt with the third grade, which is the first time that students face English as foreign language.

Based on the problematic situation previously described the following scientific problem was derived:

Scientific Problem:

How to contribute to the enhancement of vocabulary in third graders, Class C from “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School.

With the purpose of giving a solution, the **object of research** is the enhancement of English vocabulary in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school.

Objective: to build up a scientific result to enhance vocabulary in third graders, Class C from “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School.

The following **scientific questions** have guided this research:

- 1- What theoretical and methodological backgrounds support the enhancement of vocabulary in English language?
- 2- What is the current situation of the teaching-learning process of vocabulary in third graders, Class C from “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School?
- 3- What changes could be introduced to enhance vocabulary, in third graders, Class C from “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School?
- 4- What went well and what did not go well during the teacher’s intervention to enhance vocabulary, in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school?
- 5- What transformations may occur in third graders, class C, at “Viet Nam Heróico” elementary school after the building up process?
- 6- What scientific result emerges from the building up process?

Scientific Tasks:

- 1- Determination of the theoretical-methodological foundations that back up the enhancement of vocabulary in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school.
- 2- Diagnosis of the current situation of the teaching-learning process related vocabulary in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school.
- 3- Determination of the different changes to introduce to enhance vocabulary in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school.
- 4- Evaluation of the building up process of the scientific result to contribute to the enhancement of vocabulary in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school
- 5- Evaluation of the transformations occurred in the students during the building up process.
- 6- Proposal of the final scientific result, that emerges from the building up process.

The subjects of research:

The subjects of research are the 23 students in third graders, Class C from Viet Nam Heróico elementary school. Most of them show interest to the learning of English language, although it constitutes the first time they face a foreign language. They are willing to work in teams or pairs because they get along well with their classmates. They also like to divide the tasks among the members of the teams. This kind of behavior has to do with young learners' characteristics in terms of learning a foreign language.

From the academic point of view, students show a great interest in learning vocabulary, they would like to go beyond and learn more than the set of vocabulary established for their level.

This research was supported by the following methods and techniques:

From the Theoretical level:

Historic-logical: to describe the antecedents, evolution and tendencies of the scientific problem emerged from this study.

Systemic approach: To unsure the systemic character followed during the building up process of the final scientific result of the research process.

The analytic-synthetic: It was used to obtain the necessary information from the different primary sources consulted to back up the scientific problem described in the introduction of this major paper.

The inductive-deductive: To identify regularities derived from the main data which were obtained by the administration of different empirical instruments, and during the building up process.

From the empirical level:

- Analysis of documents: to obtain information about what is established in the official documents, related to the teaching of vocabulary and its importance in the syllabus and the workbook.
- Participant observation: to corroborate the teaching of vocabulary, mainly their weaknesses and strengths in the lessons observed, and the motivation of the group towards the English language learning.
- Pedagogical test: To measure the level of the students in their speaking skills, their strengths and weaknesses when dealing with vocabulary.
- Interview to the students: to gather information directly from the students about possible causes of their motivation towards the English Language.
- Triangulation.

From the mathematical level:

Percent analysis: It was used to process the information obtained in each instrument applied.

Scientific contribution of the term paper:

This paper offers a variety of motivating activities to contribute to the enhancement of vocabulary in 3rd graders in “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School so as to contribute to the development of speaking ability.

Structure of the term paper

This paper was structured in the following way: Introduction, Main Part, Conclusions, Recommendations, Bibliography and Annexes. The first part of the development was focused on a brief historical background about the treatment of the speaking ability focusing on vocabulary, and on the methodological and theoretical foundations that back up this ability from a communicative perspective.

The second part of the development was destined to the analysis of the results obtained through different empirical methods administered during the realization of this major paper. The conclusions, recommendations, bibliography and annexes were added for more information.

Main Part

1. Needs Assessment:

To corroborate the problematic situation previously described, several empirical methods has been administered to the subjects of research, following some categories and sub-categories with the purpose of obtaining as much information as possible about the students’ weaknesses and strengths, regarding their use of English vocabulary.

1.1 Characterization of the subjects of research:

The subjects of research are the 23 students in third grade, Class C from “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School. Most of them show interest to the learning of English language, although it constitutes the first time they face a foreign language. They are willing to work in teams or pairs because they get along well

with their classmates. They also like to divide the tasks among the members of the teams.

This kind of behavior has to do with young learners' characteristics in terms of learning a foreign language because almost without exception, they have learned their native language with apparent ease, and by the time they are 6 years old they have brought it to a level of fluency that is the envy of non-native speakers. Parents who bring their children into a second-language setting and immerse them in a new situation (for example, an elementary school taught in the foreign language). After around 6 months, their child begins to function successfully in the new setting and at a linguistic level to which the parents cannot hope to aspire, even when they have been studying the language seriously for a similar period.

From the academic point of view, students show a great interest in learning vocabulary, they would like to go beyond and learn more than the set of vocabulary established for their level.

1.2 Categories and subcategories.

The selected categories revealed the ways to operate with vocabulary during the research and covered the elements that were prominent for the objective of this paper.

Categories	Subcategories
I. Pronunciation of the vocabulary studied:	1. Pronunciation of vowels 2. Pronunciation of consonants
II. Spelling of the vocabulary studied:	1. Spelling of words with sounds that do not exist in Spanish, vowels and consonants 2. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
III. Meaning relationships:	1. Synonyms 2. Antonyms

	3. Translation
IV. Students' knowledge about the different lexical sets previously studied:	1. School objects 2. Family members 3. People's description

1.3 Methods used for Needs Assessment:

- Analysis of documents: The analysis of documents was used to obtain information about what is officially established in the official documents of the subject in relation to the teaching of vocabulary. The syllabus and the workbook were analyzed.
- Participant observation: It was used to check the use of vocabulary by the students, the most common students' mistakes during a lesson and the students' motivation toward the English language.
- Pedagogical test: This method was administered with the objective of measuring the level of the students in speaking, their strengths and weaknesses related to the use of vocabulary studied in previous lessons.
- Interview to the students: This interview was applied to the students to get information about reasons for their great interest towards the learning of new vocabulary in English. The causes of their intrinsic motivation.
- Analysis of students' outcomes (students' notebooks): This method was administered in order to know if the students use and spell the vocabulary correctly
- Triangulation: This method was aimed at identifying the regularities about the situation detected, using the data obtained through the administration of different empirical methods and then to build up a proposal of lessons which could fulfill the students' needs.

1.4 Analysis of the results of the diagnosis.

Analysis of documents (See Annex 1)

Syllabus for the English teaching of 3rd grade.

The objectives of the Third Grade English Syllabus are the following:

By the end of 3rd grade, the students should be able to:

- Respond verbally or nonverbally, or by using words and simple phrases, to greetings, farewells, and basic questions about themselves and their families. - Write about themselves by completing simple sentences.
- Follow instructions in the classroom.
- Imitate their teacher or TV instructor, or in recordings when they recite or sing.
- Understand narrations appropriate for their age by using visual aids, through nonverbal answers, or in Spanish.
- Recognize cultural elements related to the content studied in other areas of their curriculum by carrying out or performing simple tasks.
- Develop and use different language-learning strategies that favor comprehension, for example:
 - To imitate words and sounds in English.
 - To repeat sounds and words after the teacher.
 - To recognize cognate words.
 - To use gestures, actions, etc. to infer meaning.
 - To listen carefully and participate actively in the activities assigned.
 - To practice the reading of easy rhymes and sing easy songs.
 - To seek help through repetition.
- Demonstrate moral values and an appropriate social behavior in the classroom when participating in activities and interacting in a foreign language.

The syllabus of the subject includes educative and instructive objectives. Its goal is to make students practice and use the English language by means of several communicative functions that appear in different lessons. The program is organized taking into account the communicative functions, the grammar points of the grade, the pronunciation and the different vocabulary areas in the grade. The syllabus is mainly focused on developing the speaking skill.

The students' workbook:

The workbook has 56 exercises, from which 35 (63%) are aimed at practicing vocabulary. It has also some illustrations to practice the vocabulary in every unit. The contents of the workbook are in correspondence with the students' age and interests and they are organized in relation to the lexical sets that belong to each unit. There is a good variety of exercises. The 49% (27) of them are communicative and are designed for practicing speaking skill and expanding vocabulary.

Category 1: Pronunciation of the vocabulary studied.

-Participant Observation: (See Annex 2)

It was shown that fifteen students (65%) pronounce the words as they are written using the mother tongue pronunciation pattern, presenting difficulties in the phoneme-grapheme correspondence. The most common mistakes are in sounds that do not exist in Spanish, for example: mother, how, name, thank you, I.

The researcher could notice the good relations among the student since they love working with their classmates, they love to compete and doing pair work.

-Pedagogical Test: (See Annex 3)

The most common students' mistakes in the oral performance were in the pronunciation of the combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish (th, wh, ou). In the phoneme grapheme correspondence of English vowels such as pretty, like, I, you (students pronounced words as they do in their mother

tongue), and in sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue, for example: /J/ in what, where; /u/ in good; /i/ in feel; /ʃ/ in mother. Fifteen students (65%) presented these difficulties.

- Interview to students: (See Annex 4)

The 23 (100%) of the students that were interviewed confirmed that the combinations of letters in some English words are different from that of Spanish (th, oo, wh) and as they do not have enough practice, they are not able to pronounce the words correctly. Besides, the students recognized that they always try to pronounce as if it were in Spanish. This fact makes them feel disappointed sometimes although they keep motivated towards the English language. They were also asked about the kind of exercise they would think would help them and they answered they liked to draw, to compete among them, to watch videos and do funny activities.

Category 2: Spelling of the vocabulary studied.

-Participant Observation:

It revealed that thirteen students (57%) present problems in the combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish (th, wh, ou,) and they usually write words as they are pronounced, disrespecting the phoneme-grapheme correspondence. After this analysis, six students (26%) can be considered with a high level of proficiency in the spelling of words, four (17%) with a medium level and the rest with a low level in the spelling of the vocabulary studied.

-The Pedagogical Test:

It showed that students have problems in the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of words related to the lexical sets studied; writing them as they are pronounced. The students present problems in different combination of letters (th, wh, ou, ee), which do not exist in Spanish. 11(48%) students show difficulties in this category and they can be considered with a low level of proficiency towards the spelling of words of the lexical sets studied, 6 (26%) with a medium level while the resting 6(26%) with a high level.

-The analysis of the students' outcomes (students' notebooks):

It revealed that thirteen students (57%) have problems with the spelling in combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue (th, ee, wh, oo...) and they always try to write the words as they are pronounced presenting problems with phoneme-grapheme correspondence of the vocabulary.

- Interview to students:

The students were asked the cause of them writing words the same way they are pronounced and they answered that they are worried about the lack of practice and they considered that as the main cause. They also said that some exercises are boring.

Category 3: Meaning relationships.

-Participant Observation:

The 65% students did not recognize some synonyms and antonyms, although they do know the meaning of the words. For example: long table, big table, small table / my dad is overweight, my brother is fat and my sister is thin. For that reason they found difficult to infer the meaning of some words by context. They are good at translating because they remember the literal meaning of words that they had written on their notebooks.

The researcher observed that the students get along well among them and they like to do the activities in pairs or teams.

-The Pedagogical Test:

The 57% of the students showed difficulties when recognizing the synonyms and antonyms of certain words such as: small, overweight, slim.

-The analysis of the students' outcomes (students' notebooks):

The 57% of the students found difficult to infer the meaning of some words by context and they did not know the synonyms and antonyms of certain words related to the lexical sets studied.

- Interview to students:

The 100% of the students were asked about the causes of the difficulties when dealing with synonyms and antonyms and they answered that they found difficult to relate synonyms and antonyms because of the lack of practice and that the lessons are once in a week.

Category 4: Students' knowledge about the different lexical sets studied.

-Participant Observation:

It revealed that ten students (43%) lacked vocabulary related to the specific communicative functions practiced at this level. Due to the lack of vocabulary, they cannot communicate ideas correctly; instead, they mix English and Spanish. These students hesitate very much at the time of speaking and frequently they look up for support on their notebooks. For the 78% of the group (18), the vocabulary areas of more difficulties are school objects, family members and people's description.

The researcher could observed that the students have excellent relations among them and they enjoy doing tasks in groups.

-The Pedagogical Test:

It proved that 16 (70%) of the students showed lack of vocabulary that affects communication according to the objective of this grade. The researcher detected that out of 23 students (100%), 4 (17) can be considered with a high level of proficiency towards the lexical sets studied, 3 (13%) with a medium level and 16 (70%) with a low level. In this method, students presented difficulties in all areas of vocabulary selected, but they had more problems when using school objects and the vocabulary related to people's description.

- Interview to students:

-In the interview that was administered by the researcher, the 100% of the students expressed that the vocabulary areas in which they have most of difficulties are the ones related to school objects, family members and people's description.

1.4.1 Regularities:

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

-Weaknesses:

1. The students have difficulties in using the vocabulary related to the lexical sets school objects, family members and people's description.
2. A number of students cannot express ideas fluently according to the level they are because of the lack of vocabulary.
3. Most common mistakes in pronunciation are in those combinations of letters that do not exist in Spanish (wh, th, oo, ee). In the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of English vowels (/ju/, /ai/...) and vowel sounds like / ʌ /, / ə /.
4. The 57% of the students have problems in spelling of words related to the lexical sets studied, mainly in combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue (th, ee, wh, oo...), they also have problems in the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of words since they write the words as they are pronounced.

-Strengths:

1. There are good interpersonal relations among the students in the classroom since students enjoy pair and group work activities.
2. The students' motivation to learn English language is strong.
3. They are very demanding of vocabulary that may be related to the lexical sets studied.
4. They do not have too much problems to translate from English to Spanish or vice versa.

The regularities detected confirm the problematic situation that is present in this scientific investigation. This state of affairs let the author of this study to offer a proposal of lessons to transform the current situation of the class regarding vocabulary.

2. Theoretical and methodological backgrounds of the scientific problem

In order to go on in the evaluation process of the initial proposal, it was necessary to deepen in the theoretical and methodological foundations of the scientific problem.

2.1 Historical antecedents

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.

The teaching of vocabulary have always been a matter of concern for Cuban teachers in all educational levels. Many researches have been carried out by teachers from the Central University, in order to face the difficult situation that English language learning has in our country nowadays.

Researcher Keyla Anagua Yarari (2012-2013) a researcher that made her practicum at "Ramón Pando Ferrer" Primary School found that the students did not build up the required framework to express ideas for this level. After making a deep research, she proposed communicative activities to expand vocabulary in 4th graders.

Researcher Wilfredo Artiles Díaz (2012-2013) made a Proposal for the Enrichment of Vocabulary in seventh graders, group 4 at "José Ramón León Acosta" Secondary School. He confirmed that the students had many difficulties in English mainly because of limitations on the use of vocabulary. This affected their oral and written expression, as well as the interpretation of simple oral and written texts.

Researcher Orestes Ynfiesta González (2015-2016) worked on the expansion of vocabulary in English language in 9th graders, from "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School. He observed through the administration of several

empirical methods such as the interview and the participant observation that students had many difficulties in English language and that one of the main causes of the problem was the use of vocabulary. Students had problems in writing and pronouncing the vocabulary taught in the lessons.

Researcher Daysi Beatriz González Naranjo (2015-2016) worked the use of teaching aids for the teaching of vocabulary with 1st year students-teachers from the foreign language associate degree program at Felix Varela Morales Campus. She found that the students were not able to communicate themselves coherently and with fluency about certain topics. Besides that, they have difficulties in the pronunciation of final –es and –s when forming the third person singular and the sounds which are specific of the English language like /ʒ, æ, ʃ, dʒ, tʃ/. The majority of the students are afraid of participating in class and when they are asked to participate, they are not able to transmit the message or they want to give it in their mother tongue.

2.2 Vocabulary definitions

Paraphrasing Dr. Rosa Antich's concept of vocabulary (1986), it can be understood as the easiest aspect to be acquired by students when learning a foreign language, but it demands too much practice to be kept since it is the easiest to forget. Vocabulary always must be taught in context as a way of facilitating its assimilation. The teaching of vocabulary may be more or less easy depending on, the context in which they are presented, form and times the teacher uses the previous and new vocabulary in lessons and their reiteration and practice during the course. When acquiring new vocabulary it depends on listening how words are pronounced, speaking (when repeating and using the words), sight or reading (when seeing the written words) and the kinesthetic sensation (when writing the new words).

Another definition is given by the Oxford Study Genie Plus Dictionary, which establishes that vocabulary are all the words in a language, or the number of words a person knows.

"Vocabulary can be defined, roughly as the words we teach in the language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than a single word; for example, post office and mother-in-law, which are made up of two or three

words but express a single idea. There are also multi- word idioms such as call it a day, where the meaning of the phrase cannot be deduced from an analysis of the component word. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary 'items' rather than 'words'". (Ur, 1996:6)

Taking into account the concept given by the American Heritage Dictionary (as cited by Pikulski & Templeton, 2004), which defines vocabulary as "the sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group, Pikulski & Templeton (2004) state that, the major way in which we "use" vocabulary is when we speak and write. The term expressive vocabulary is used to refer to both since these are the vocabularies we use to express ourselves. We "understand" vocabulary when we listen to speech and when we read; the term receptive vocabulary is used to refer to listening and reading vocabularies.

According to the Oxford Free Dictionary, vocabulary is:

- All the words of a language.
- The sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group.
- A list of words and often phrases, usually arranged alphabetically and defined or translated; a lexicon or glossary.
- A supply of expressive means; a repertoire of communication: a dancer's vocabulary of movement.

The author of this major paper agrees with Ur's definition since vocabulary must be regarded not only as single words, but also as a whole in a certain context.

This is why the author agrees that: Vocabulary are all the vocabulary items (words, multi-words, idioms) that human beings are able to use, depending on the context in which they develop their lives.

2.3 What needs to be taught regarding vocabulary?

The learner has to know what a word sounds like (its pronunciation) and what it looks like (its spelling). So, when teaching vocabulary teachers should consider the following elements:

Form

- What part of speech is the word?
- How is it spelled- is it regular or irregular?
- Does it belong to a “family” of words?
- How is the word or combination of words, pronounced?
- How does the word collocate with surrounding words?

Meaning

- What exact meaning(s), in which context do you want to focus on?
- What is the connotation for the item?
- Could the vocabulary item have different meanings for different people?

Use

- How is the vocabulary item used?
- Does it have a restrictive use?
- Does it belong to a particular style or register?

(Teaching Practice Gower, 1983)

2.4 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 a better understanding.

Antonyms: When one member of a pair of opposite words 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.

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 employed by teachers depend on some factors, such as the content, time availability, and their value for learners. Here are some techniques in teaching vocabulary for young learners 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 employed 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 young 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 young 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.

2.5 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).

3. Process of building up the proposal of lessons for the enhancement of English language vocabulary in third graders:

During this regular course (2018-2019), it was detected that students from third grade, class C at “Viet Nam Heróico” Elementary School have difficulties in the acquisition of vocabulary in English language. Consequently, it was analyzed the goals and different communicative functions of the grade, and it was suggested to carry out a research aimed at enhancing the vocabulary.

Thus, it was designed an initial proposal of lesson aimed at enhancing and practicing English language vocabulary in third grade, class C. In the lessons, the communicative functions related to the lexical sets in which the students had more difficulties, are all included. It was composed of six lessons; five for controlled practice and one for free practice. Almost all the activities were organized in pair and groups, but some of them required students' individual work. The exercises in the lessons were varied.

Unit 2: At school

Lesson 1: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the communicative function: Talking about school objects. It was composed by two exercises that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences expressed in the interview.

Ex1: This was an exercise of 15 minutes. The students had to complete tasks that were derived from a video. First, the students had to guess what the video would be about by looking at the title. Second, they had to tick the school objects mentioned in the video and write down the ones that did not appear on the list. Third, they had to repeat in a chorus each of the words from the video in order to practice the pronunciation and complete a mini-dialogue by using the words they ticked from the previous activity.

The students were quite impressed with the video, because that was unusual for them, but they liked this activity. They did every task successfully. Their behavior was good, their attitude showed a high motivation towards this kind of activity. They participated actively and at the end they said they would like to watch more videos in future lessons because they found them funny and interesting.

Ex2: The time allotted for this task was 25 minutes. It was a game, in which the students had to remember the vocabulary studied related to school objects. Then they were divided into two groups and they received cards: some with illustrations and others with the correspondent word, so the students of each group had to find their couple from the other group. Finally, they had to perform a mini-dialogue in front of the class, in which they have to use the vocabulary

they already know adding the new one. Their classmates voted for the winner couple.

The instructions were well written and the task was not complex, so the students could do it well and finish it on time. The techniques used were efficient and helpful and the task orientation was well designed. The students enjoyed this game and did a great work with the mini-dialogue. Only two students had little pronunciation mistakes but mainly because of their shyness.

Unit 2: At school

Lesson 2: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the communicative function: Talking about school objects. It consisted of two exercises that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences expressed in the interview.

Ex1: This exercise was designed for 15 minutes of the class. The students had to imagine that they were in a drawing contest and they had to draw the school objects in their notebooks, by following the instructions in each of the items and using their color pencils. After that, the teacher checked every student's work and selected five to be presented in front of the class. These students will present their drawing of the items that were completed by saying: *My ruler is red/ My table is black and brown.* The rest of the group and the teacher had to select what student did the best job by voting.

The students' loved this activity, because it consisted on a drawing exercise where they enjoyed doing this task. Even the shyest children participated actively. It could be seen their motivation towards this kind of activity in which they also had to compete among them. It was suggested to add this exercise to the final proposal.

Ex2: The time for this task was 25 minutes. The students had to remember the vocabulary studied related to school objects, they had to complete the question *what is it?* and write the answer in each item. They had to color the objects too.

After that, the students had to perform the mini-dialogue in front of the class with a chosen partner.

The activity was a success. The time devoted was enough and its level of complexity was attainable according to the subjects' level. The instructions were well understood by the students and the task orientation was well determined. They had a good time while doing this task because they love to color. They made a good effort to be accurate with the pronunciation of those combination of letters that were difficult for them.

Unit 4: My family

Lesson 3: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the communicative function: Talking about family members. Three exercises were applied in this lesson that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences.

Ex1: This was a simple exercise of 5 minutes. The students had to answer two questions about who they live with. They were supposed to participate in a survey made by the local government. They also had to use the drawing they made as homework to present the members of their families. They could also use words from a list given by the teacher as a guide.

The activity did not go completely well. The time devoted to this one was not enough. The level of complexity was attainable according to the subjects' level. The students understood the activity and the task orientation was well determined. The students liked a lot to present their family members using their drawings. They acted as if they were like in a drawing contest that is why they were so interesting that the activity took a few minutes more. The teacher of the grade in the school suggested adding more time to this exercise (10 minutes).

Ex2: This was an exercise of 20 minutes. The students had to complete tasks that were derived from a video. First, the students had to guess what the video would be about by looking at the title. Second, they had to answer how many family members were mentioned in the video and write them down on their notebooks. Third, they had to repeat in chorus each of the words from the video

in order to practice the pronunciation. The students also had to spell some of the words on the blackboard.

The students loved the video. They did the every task on time and were very accurate. Their behavior was good, this kind of activity kept their high motivation towards the learning of English Language. They participated actively and at the end, they said again that they would like more videos for future.

Ex3: The time for this task was 10 minutes. The students had to identify the family members in a picture given by the teacher. They also had to complete sentences with the colors of the clothes of the family members from the picture in each character.

This exercise went well. The time was enough. The students could finish the task without having any problem. They were motivated by working with pictures and they were entertained. They also had to practice the pronunciation of the combination of letters that were difficult for them (cousin, father, aunt) at the end of the task.

Unit 4: My family

Lesson 4: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the communicative function: Talking about family members. It was constituted by two exercises that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences.

Ex1: This was an exercise of 25 minutes. Every student received a picture and had to fix it putting back all the missing pieces. It was a picture of a family tree. Then, based on the picture and using the photos they brought as homework, the students had to create their own family tree in their notebooks. They also had to present it by saying their names.

The students' loved this activity, because they enjoyed creating the family tree. All of them were eager to go home and show their work to their parents and families. It could be seen their motivation towards this kind of activity. The exercise was a complete success because it was meaningful to the students.

Ex2: The time for this task was 10 minutes. It was a letter soup, in which the students had to find six words related to family members and after that, the teacher wrote the letter soup on the blackboard and marked a word as model for the students: A U N T. Then he asked the students to come one by one to find the rest of the words on the blackboard.

The exercise was a success. The students were motivated. The instructions were correctly designed. The students finished on time. They demonstrated a better command of the lexical set involved in this exercise either in spelling or in pronunciation.

Unit 4: My family

Lesson 5: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the communicative function: Describing people physically. The lesson had three exercises that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences.

Ex1: This was an exercise of 15 minutes. The students had to complete tasks that were derived from a video. First, the students had to guess what the video would be about by looking at the title. Second, they had to practice pronunciation of those vowels and consonant sounds that they found difficult (/N /Θ/ /a/) while watching the video, doing what the video orders. Third, they had to tick on a list the adjectives mentioned in the video and write down the ones that did not appear on the list. At the end, they had to perform a mini-dialogue using the words from the video.

The students enjoyed the video. They followed the orders of the voice from the video and practiced the pronunciation. They behaved well and were very motivated. It was a complete task because they had to practice spelling and pronunciation. They were very happy because they have a strong preference for this kind of exercise.

Ex2: It was a 10 minutes task. The students had to match column A with column B. Column A had pictures that represented different people and column B had physical adjectives. Each picture went with its antonym.

This was a very simple task for the students. They finished on time because they could identify well the antonyms of each illustration. The pictures used were very helpful because the students were motivated. The less advanced students expressed that the exercise was good for them, because they did not remember the antonyms.

Ex3: The time for this activity was 15 minutes. The students had to complete a dialogue by using a synonym of the word in parenthesis. After that, the teacher selected volunteers to practice the dialogue, but making a game in which the students had to express different feelings when talking.

The exercise was a success. The time devoted was enough and its level of complexity was attainable according to the subjects' level. The instructions were well understood by the students and the task orientation was well designed. They had a good time while playing this little pronunciation game because they love to compete among them.

Lesson 6: It was a controlled practice lesson aimed at practicing the three communicative functions: Talking about school objects, talking about family members and describing people. It was constituted by two exercises that were made according to the diagnosis and the students' preferences.

Ex1: It was a 20 minutes task. The students formed a circle and used a balloon and music to develop the activity in a game. The students had to talk about the people they live with.

Students liked the activity so much since they were supposed to talk about their own families. They used the vocabulary studied to do the activity very well. In addition, the students had an acceptable pronunciation while doing the activity. The atmosphere in the classroom was good when doing the activity. The students' performances were full of creativity. This free practice activity made the students felt very comfortable and motivated. The orientations were very clear.

Ex2: It was a 25 minutes task. The students had to be creative and made a role-play. They had to use the vocabulary studied related to school objects and their families too.

The exercise was not easy but the task orientation was well designed and suited student's level. They could interact with one another and could see their partners' mistakes. They also had fun and showed respect and solidarity to the students that could not accomplish the exercise so well. They did a great work and showed a good command of the lexical sets involved in this activity.

3.1 Transformations that took place in the students' vocabulary after the implementation of the proposal:

The implementation of the proposal of lessons was carried out in order to teach English language vocabulary in in third graders, Class C from "Viet Nam Heróico" Elementary School. The proposal was implemented in a period of six weeks, during controlled and free practice lessons of the English subject.

Before the implementation of the proposal of lessons, six (26%) students could be considered with a high level of proficiency related to the lexical sets studied Four (17%) students with medium level because they could communicate with certain vocabulary in the four abilities. Thirteen students (57%) with a low level because they did not use the required vocabulary to communicate their ideas.

After implementing the proposal, it was observed that there are not students with low level because they stopped having problems when expressing their ideas about school objects, family members and people's description. There are ten (43%) students with a medium level, because they have shown a significant progress but continue having some troubles in the development of the language. There are thirteen (57%) students with a high level because they have demonstrated that they are able to use the vocabulary areas studied and their mistakes do not affect communication.

Before implementing the proposal, eleven (48%) students had problems in the spelling of vocabulary and it was because it resulted very difficult for them to associate the pronunciation and the spelling of the words. However, after the implementation of the proposal of lessons, there are only two (9%) students that still have problems and the rest are able to write with less mistakes.

Regarding the pronunciation of the vocabulary studied, before the application of the proposal, fifteen (65%) students could be considered with a low level. Their most common mistakes were in the pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in

Spanish and in the pronunciation of final sounds. After the implementation of the proposal, only one (4%) student still has problems to pronounce the vocabulary studied. The reminding mistakes are in the words that contain the sounds (th, wh) that differ from the Spanish language.

After evaluating the achievements accomplished during the building up process, it could be concluded that there are significant improvements in the students' vocabulary. Although, there are some minimum reminding mistakes that require attention by the teacher, though it could be confirmed that the proposal contributed to teach more vocabulary and to make the student's pronunciation and spelling abilities better in the different communicative functions.

4. Final scientific result: Proposal of lessons to enhance vocabulary in third grade.

4.1 Philosophical, pedagogical, psychological and methodological foundations that back up the proposal:

Philosophical foundations

The philosophical foundations of the proposal of the present research are grounded by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, specifically the negation of negation law because during the implementation of the proposal the teacher took into consideration the aspects that did not go so well, to improve them next time. In addition, the dialectical materialism studies the nature of human beings and its laws to turn the prior objective laws into method of further knowledge and transformation of reality. The study of the historical antecedents of strategies followed to teach English vocabulary in the associate degree program has demonstrated that the procedures devoted to vocabulary teaching in the previous educational levels have not been effective.

Pedagogical foundations

The school offers the requirements for the development of an appropriate teaching learning process of English. The different class organization that were put into practice facilitated that the implementation of the teaching aids in each lesson, which led to the creation of a good learning atmosphere.

Methodological foundations

The proposal is based on the Communicative approach for the teaching of foreign languages. The author affiliates to the Communicative Language Teaching principles defined by Dr. Alfredo Camacho.

Psychological foundations

The proposal was designed upon psychological foundations that mirror the Socio-cultural-historical theory developed by L. S. Vygotsky, therefore the design of the system of lessons with socio-cultural contents took into account that whatever the students are able to do at present with levels of help, they will be able to do on their own in the near future. The proposal also assumes the links between the cognitive and the emotional aspects of learning, as well as the integration of education and development in the students' personality.

4.2 Characterization of the proposal

This proposal has as a starting point, the results of the assessment carried out after the teacher's intervention.

These activities are designed to meet the goal of contributing to the students' enhancement of their vocabulary.

The proposal consists of six lessons, two activities for lessons 1, 2, 4 and 6, and three exercises for lessons 3 and 5. They are considered as a system because they are inserted in the program of the grade, which constitutes a system. The lessons are aimed at the enhancement of the student's vocabulary. The activities are adapted to the results of the diagnosis and they present a good variety because it has many different types of activities: games, drawing exercises, videos, a letter soup, pictures, etc.

In detail, the proposal covers the lexical sets that correspond to three communicative functions; all the activities were either taken from authentic reference or created by the author. This proposal of lessons is intended as a reference material that teachers can consult and find ways to enhance third grade students' vocabulary.

Most of the activities are designed for controlled stage and some of them for the free practice stage, in which the students are supposed to manipulate and use the new vocabulary taught in the classroom.

4.3 Proposal of lessons to enhance vocabulary in third grade:

Lesson 1: School Objects.

Topic: What is this?

Objective: The students should be able to practice the vocabulary related to the communicative function “Talking about school objects” in integration with pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing individual and pair work, so as to develop companionship and respect.

Stage: controlled practice.

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: School objects, colors.

Teaching aids: pictures, color pencils, video, chalks and blackboard.

Warm up:

- Greeting the students
- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

Video 1



Kids vocabulary - School Supplies - Learn English for kids - English educational.mp4

Before watching the video.

The teacher writes the title (school supplies) of the video on the blackboard and explains the meaning of the word “supplies”. Then, the teacher asks the students to guess what the video is going to be about.

While watching the video.

1-Tick the school objects mentioned in the video.

___ scissors	___ pencil	___ highlighter
___ flag	___ pen	___ eraser
___ pencil case	___ table	___ square
___ notebook	___ compass	___ ruler

1.1- If you saw another word, which is not on the list, write it down in your notebook.

After watching the video.

The teacher will divide the group in teams of seven or eight students to repeat the pronunciation of the words from the video. Then, they will have to complete the following mini-dialogue by using the words they ticked in the previous activity.

A: _____?

B: This is a _____.

A: What color is your _____?

B: My _____ is _____.

2- Let' play a game:

The teacher gives a card to each student. In some cards appear the illustration of the objects and in the others appear only the word that corresponds to each object. The students have walk around the classroom to find the student that has the card that matches with the one he/she has.

After the students find their couples, they have to read aloud the word and show the picture to the whole class. Then, those couples have to perform a mini-dialogue in which they have to use the vocabulary they already know. Finally, they have to perform it in front of the class and their classmates will vote for the winner couple.

They should follow this example:

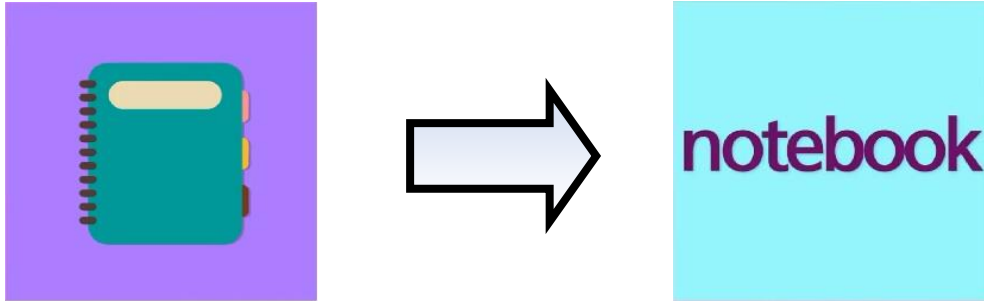
A: Is this your notebook?

B: Yes, it is/ No, it is not.

Example of cards:

The student A has this card:

Therefore, the student B has this one:



Close up:











The teacher asks the students:

- What did you learn in today's lesson?
- What do you think about the video?
- Did you enjoyed playing the game?
- Would you like to play more games in future lessons?
- Did you like it?

Then, the teacher makes a summary of the content of the lesson and assigns the homework.

Homework

1-Fill the missing vowels for each of the following words:

 sch__lb_g	 sc_ss_rs
 p_nc_l	 sh_rp_n_r
 b__k	 n_t_b__k
 r_l_r	 _r_s_r
 bl_ckb__rd	 p_nc_l c_s_

Lesson 2: Review.

Topic: Review

Objective: The students should be able to practice the vocabulary related to the communicative function “Talking about school objects” in integration with pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing individual and pair work, so as to develop respect, good taste and care for the school objects.

Stage: controlled practice.

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: School objects, colors.

Teaching aids: pictures, color pencils, game, chalks and blackboard.

Warm up:

-Greeting the students

- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

1- You are in a drawing contest representing your school. Complete some of the sentences with the colors of your preference. Then, draw and color according to them.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) The ruler is _____. | d) The table is _____ and _____. |
| b) The square is blue. | e) The pencil is black. |
| c) The book is _____ and _____. | f) The compass is _____. |

1.1- The teacher will check every student's drawing and he will select five to be presented in front of the class. These students will present their drawing of the items that were completed by saying: *My ruler is red/ My table is black and brown*. The rest of the group and the teacher have to select what student did the best job by voting.

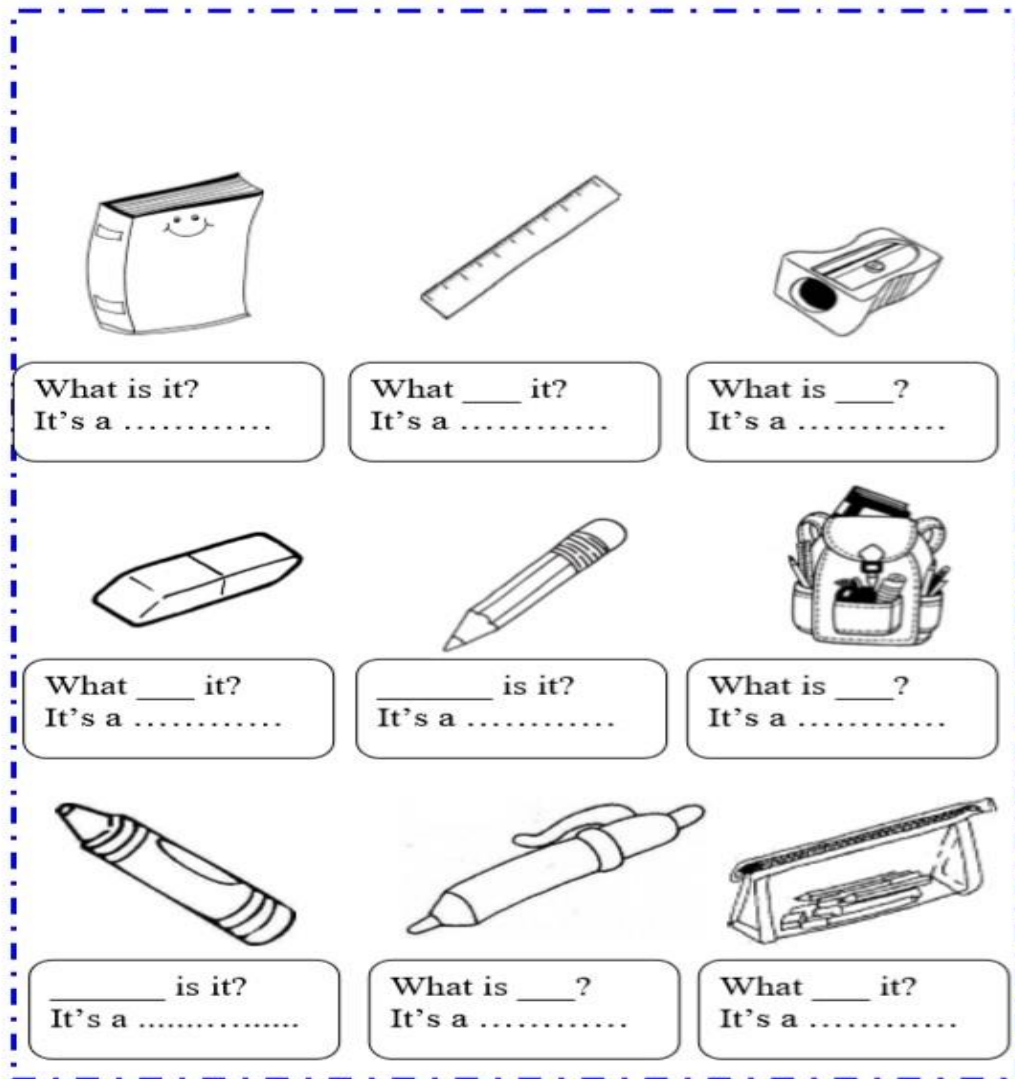
1.2 – After that, the teacher talks to the students about the necessity of looking after the school objects and how important is to appreciate the beautiful things in the classroom.

For example:

- Green que es importante cuidar el material escolar?
- Les gusta que aula este bonita? Los colores que tiene?

2- Read, complete the question and write the answer. You can color the object by using the colors you like the most.

2.1- Each student has to choose a partner from the classroom to act it out the mini-dialogue in front of the class. The students together with the teacher will select the best performance by voting.

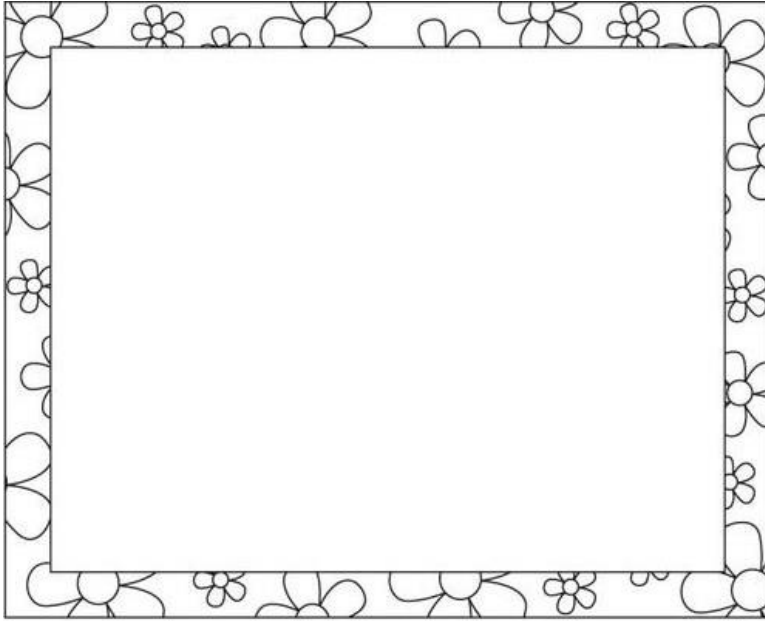


Close up:

The teacher asks the students: In a scale of 1 to 5. How did you like the lesson?
What activity did you like the most?

Homework

1-The teacher will give printed cards with a portrait for the students to draw the people they live with inside. The students can use the colors of their preference and bring it next lesson to show to the whole class.



Lesson 3: Family members.

Topic: My family.

Objective: The students should be able to practice the vocabulary related to the communicative function "Talking about family members" in integration with pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing pair work and individual work, so as to develop the value of love for the family.

Stage: Controlled practice

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: Family members, colors.

Teaching aids: picture, blackboard, chalks.

Warm up:

- Greeting the students
- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

1-The local government of your neighborhood is making a survey about the amount of population in each home for official purposes. People in charge ask

you about who you live with. Please, answer honestly using the portrait with your drawing from the previous homework to present your family members.

a) Who do you live with? _____

b) What are their names? _____

For example. The student should say: I live with my mother, her name is Yamila...

1.2-The teacher talks to the students about the importance of loving our families.

For example:

- Que opinan de la familia?
- Creen que es importante querer y llevarse bien con los miembros de la familia?

Video 2



Canción de la familia en inglés y español - Canciones Infantiles.mp4

Before watching the video:

The teacher copies the title (the family) of the video on the blackboard and asks the students to guess what the video is going to be about.

While watching the video:

The teacher asks the students the following questions:

How many members of the family are mentioned in the video?

The teacher asks the students to pronounce aloud the words they have seen in the video. (Emphasizing on those sounds that are difficult for them / ʃ /, / ʌ /)

- 1- The teacher repeats the video for the students to write down the family members that appear in the video.

After watching the video:

2- The teacher will write on the blackboard some incomplete words of family members mentioned in the video and some letters between parentheses that the students have to use.

Then he will ask some students to come to the blackboard and complete the words with the letters between parentheses. The students will also have to pronounce the word they spelled. (Emphasizing on the sound / ʃ /)

For example: a) Mo__er (wh,th,d)
b) __cle (un, an, on)
c) C__sin (ou,au,u)

3- Identify the family members in the following picture:



The students have to point out each of the members from the picture and say:
That/ this is the father. That/ this is the daughter.

3.1- Complete the following sentences with the colors of the clothes of the family members from the picture.

For example:



a) *The son is dressed in red and blue.*



b) The grandfather is dressed in ____ and ____.



c) The daughter is dressed in ____.



d) The mother is dressed in ____ and ____.



e) The grandmother is dressed in ____ and ____.



f) The father is dressed in ____ and ____.

3.2- The teacher selects the students more advanced and asks them to pronounce aloud each of the items aloud, but changing the member of the family for the personal pronoun that corresponds.

For example:

a) The son is dressed in red and blue.

The students have to say:

a) He is dressed in red and blue.

Close up:

The teacher asks the students: What did you learn in today's lesson? Did you like the lesson? Did you like the video?

Homework

1-Bring pictures of the members of your family in order to create your family tree in next lesson.

Lesson 4: Review

Topic: Review.

Objective: The students should be able to practice the vocabulary related to the communicative function "Talking about family members" in integration with pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing pair work and individual work, so as to develop the value of love for the family.

Stage: Controlled practice

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: Family members.

Teaching aids: picture, blackboard, chalks, color pencils, glue.

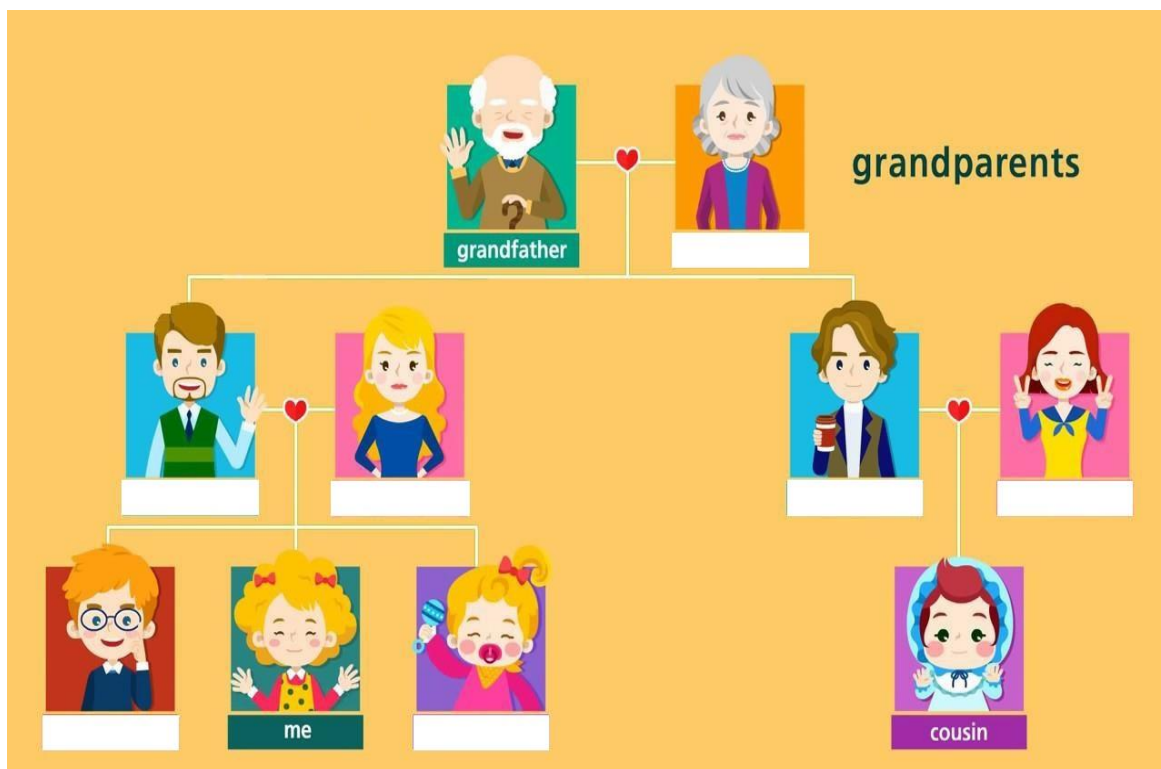
Warm up:

- Greeting the students
- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

1- The following picture is a family tree, it has lost many of its words, and a friend of yours asks you to help him in order to fix the mess. Put every missing word on the right place in the picture.



Missing pieces:



- 1.1- Based on the picture from the previous exercise, create in your notebook your family tree, by using the pictures you brought as homework and color pencils. Present the result to your classmates starting from you and saying the name of your family members.

Example:

Each student have to start saying:

My name is Kevin.

My mother's name is Angélica.

My sister's name is Lauren.

2- In pairs, find six words related to family members in the following letter soup.

A	U	N	T	T	G	J	K	F
S	N	M	H	H	K	X	A	A
I	C	O	U	S	I	N	B	T
S	L	T	H	J	V	Z	Q	H
T	E	H	H	Y	A	W	P	E
E	H	E	Q	B	Z	C	W	R
R	X	R	H	J	L	R	W	X
D	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	N

2.1- The teacher copied the letter soup on the blackboard and marked the first word: A U N T as example for the students. Then he asks the students to come one by one to find the rest of the words. After that, the students have to complete the following statements by using the words found in the letter soup.

- a) Marcos is his sister's brother.
- b) Your mother's sister is your _____.
- c) Your uncle's son is your _____.
- d) María is her son's _____.
- e) Daniela is his brother's _____.

Close up:

The teacher asks the students:

- What did you learn in today's lesson?
- Do you think the lesson help you to better know the members of your family?

Homework:

1-Find three adjectives that best describe physically a member of your family.

Lesson 5: People's description.

Topic: What do they look like?

Objective: The students should be able to practice the vocabulary related to the communicative function "Describing people physically" in integration with

pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing pair work, group work and individual work, so as to develop the value of companionship and respect.

Stage: Controlled practice

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: Adjectives to describe people physically.

Teaching aids: video, blackboard, chalks.

Warm up:

- Greeting the students
- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

Video 3



Adjectives Words for Kids - Adjectives to Descriptive Vocabulary - Elf Kids Vide.mp4

Before watching the video.

The teacher explains that the video will be about the use of adjectives for describing people.

The teacher explains that the students have to follow the orders given by the video.

While watching the video.

The students have to check if the adjectives they brought as homework appear on it.

The teacher verifies if the students are practicing what the video says. (Pronunciation practice) (Emphasizing on the sounds / ʃ /, / ʌ /, / θ /, / ə /)

1-Tick the new adjectives that are mentioned in the video.

___ Thin

___ Weak

___ Big

___ Hairy

___ Ugly

___ Pretty

___ Strong

___ Beautiful

___ Small

___ Fat

___ Handsome

___ Bald

1.2- If you saw another word, which is not on the list, write it down in your notebook.

After viewing activities.

The teacher will ask the students to practice a mini-dialogue in pairs, to practice pronunciation of each of the words from the video. Then they are going to perform it by substituting the underlined words for the new ones.

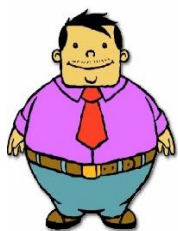
Example:

A: *What does your sister look like?*

B: *My sister is tall and pretty.*

2- Match column A with column B, each picture goes with the word that is opposite to their meaning (antonyms).

A



B

Strong

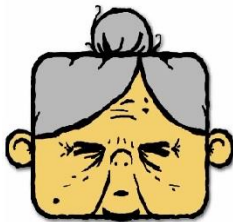
Fat



Thin



Tall



Young

2.1-Complete and practice the next mini-dialogue by using words from the previous activity:

A: Hello Lisa. What does your brother look like?

B: My brother is thin, but he is also _____. What does your brother look like?

A: My brother is _____ and _____.

3- Danny and Angelica are describing their family members. In pairs, complete the following dialogue by using a synonym of the word in parenthesis.

Danny: Hello Angelica, how are you?

Angelica: I am fine, thank you. And you?

Danny: Very well. Who do you live with?

Angelica: I live with my father, my mother and my brother.

Danny: What does your father look like?

Angelica: My father is _____ (fat) and _____ (small).

Danny: What does your mother look like?

Angelica: She is very _____ (thin) and _____ (pretty).

Danny: What does your brother look like?

Angelica: He is _____ (big) and _____ (good-looking).

3.1- The teacher selects volunteers to act it out the dialogue in front of the class. However, to make it fun, the teacher makes a little pronunciation game. The students must try to express different feelings when talking by following some pictures.

The teacher places four cards on his table and one of the two students have to select one card and use it as a guide. They must express the feeling represented in that card.

For example: The student has to be as angry as possible and the angriest student will win.

Cards:





3.2 The teacher talks to the students about respect for classmates and for all people without taking into account their physical appearance.

For example:

- Ustedes creen que la apariencia física es lo mas importante?
- Creen ustedes que todas las personas merecen respecto sin importar como se vea?

Close up:

The teacher asks the students:

- What is your opinion about the lesson?
- Did you like the video?
- Did you like the pronunciation game?

Homework

1-Practice the dialogue of the previous exercise at home.

Lesson 6: Review.

Topic: Review

Communicative functions: Talking about school objects. Talking about family members. Describing people.

Objective: The students should be able to use the communicative functions “talking about school objects”, “talking about family members”, “describing people” in integration with pronunciation, spelling and grammar by doing pair work, so as to show values of courtesy and respect.

Stage: Free practice

Organization: pair work, group work and individual work.

Time: 45 minutes.

Vocabulary: Family members.

Material aids: a balloon, a song, blackboard, chalks.

Warm up:

- Greeting the students
- Calling the roll
- Working with the date
- Checking the homework

Follow up:

The teacher assigns the first activity:

1-The teacher gets a ball and explains what the students are supposed to say, she/he will be the first one who plays this game. The teacher throws the ball to the group, which has formed a circle. Then the teacher plays a song, when the music stops, the person who is with the ball will have to start talking about his/her personal information adding the people they live with and how they look like.

2- In pairs, let's do a **Role Play**:

The role-play will be in pairs, one student will be A and one will be B. Student B will start making questions for student A to answer and then, they will exchange their roles.

A

You are playing in the yard of your school and you meet a foreign kid who wants to know more about Cuban students. Be ready to answer the questions, be polite and show respect.

B

You are a kid from China and you are curious about how is the Cuban student's lives. You go to a schoolyard and you meet one of the students. You are interested in knowing about the school and the materials that Cuban students use every day. Ask questions to obtain information about the school, be polite and show respect.

2.1- At the end, exchange roles with your partner.

Close up:

The teacher asks the students:

- What did you learn in today's lesson?

Then, the teacher summarizes the lesson and assigns the homework.

Homework

The teacher gives a card like the following one with the words: brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers written across the bottom and with numbers from one through ten in ascending order, inside ten blocks stacked above each word.

1-Color the blocks until the number that represents how much you love each of the family members at the bottom of the blocks. You can use your favorite colors.

1.1- Select the three you love the most and describe them using the adjectives studied. Do not forget their names.

10	10	10	10	10	10
9	9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8	8	8
7	7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6	6
5	5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1	1

Brothers

Sisters

Aunts

Uncles

Grandmothers

Grandfathers

Conclusions

1. The theoretical and methodological foundations that support the enhancement of vocabulary in the English lessons were based on the historical antecedents of the teaching learning process of vocabulary in the English language. The teaching of vocabulary seems to be the easiest aspect to acquire in learning a foreign language, but also the easiest to forget. That is why vocabulary is best learnt in context and while using pictures, videos and varied exercises to catch the student's attention making it meaningful.
2. The results of the diagnosis revealed that the main difficulties of third graders, class C at "Viet Nam Heróico" Elementary School regarding vocabulary are related to the lexical sets studied in the different communicative function, their pronunciation, spelling and meaning relationships.
3. Some changes were introduced in the teaching and learning process of English language, through active skill lessons, so as to contribute to the enhancement of vocabulary in English language in third graders.
4. The building up process proved that most of the activities included in the lessons, as well as the variety achieved, were very useful for the teacher to improve the students' learning of vocabulary, as they were motivated.
5. The results obtained after the teacher's intervention, were satisfactory. An enhancement in the students' vocabulary was confirmed as well as improvements in pronunciation and spelling.
6. The final scientific result that emerged from the building up process was a proposal of six lessons to contribute to the enhancement of the vocabulary of English language in the subjects of research. It contributes to the expansion of vocabulary because it provides enough practice in order to grow the students' lexicon.

Recommendations

- 1-The proposal of lessons given can be a consulting material for teachers who need to find ways to enhance the vocabulary of 3rd grade students in classes.
- 2- To continue this study next year with other students from third grade at the same school.
- 3- It is also suggested to increase the number of lessons, so that they can cover all the communicative functions.

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Annexes

Annex 1.

Guide for the analysis of documents.

Objective: to verify the objectives, contents of and types of activities recommended for vocabulary within the Teaching Learning Process of English in 3rd grade.

Documents: Program of the English teaching of 3rd grade.

Distribution of contents (Dosificación)

Students' workbook

Indicators:

- Objectives and contents to be achieved, according to the program.
- Exercises.
- Quality of the exercises.

Annex 2.

Observation guide to the English classes before the application of the proposal.

Objective: to assess the development of vocabulary through communicative activities.

Type: Participant observation.

Indicators

- Procedures to present and fix the vocabulary.
- Procedures used to deal with the pronunciation of the new words.
- Number of the exercises.
- Characteristics of the exercises used.
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue.

Observation Guide:

1. ¿De qué forma presenta el profesor el nuevo vocabulario?
2. ¿Qué técnicas utiliza el profesor para el tratamiento de la pronunciación de las palabras que introduce?
3. ¿Son suficientes los ejercicios que utiliza el profesor para fijar el vocabulario?
4. ¿Cómo son las relaciones interpersonales entre los estudiantes?
5. ¿Cómo es la calidad del desempeño del estudiante- ¿Excelente, ¿Bien, ¿Regular, Mal en los siguientes aspectos?
 - Pronunciación del vocabulario.
 - Uso del vocabulario correctamente.
 - Escritura correcta de las palabras.

Annex 3.

Pedagogical test

Objective: To diagnose the students' strengths and weaknesses in the acquisition of the vocabulary of 3rd grade students from "Viet Nam Heróico" Primary School.

Indicators:

- Knowledge about school objects, family members and people's description.
- Spelling of the vocabulary studied.
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue.

Technique: through teacher-student interaction and a written questionnaire
The students were asked the following questions orally:

Where are you from?

How are you?

What's your name?

How old are you?

Who do you live with?

What do they look like?

What objects do you use at school?

Annex 4.

Interview to the students.

Objective: to assess students' opinions about strengths and weaknesses regarding the teaching learning process of English language vocabulary.

Indicators:

- Student's motivation towards the subject.
- Student's opinion about the type of activities they like the most.
- Vocabulary studied
- Pronunciation of English words questions:
 - ¿Les gusta la asignatura de inglés? ¿Por qué?
 - ¿Qué tipos de actividades les gustaría realizar durante las clases de inglés?
 - ¿Cuál de las unidades estudiadas hasta el momento les ha resultado más difícil? ¿Por qué?
 - ¿Qué sonidos del inglés les son más difíciles de pronunciar?