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## Trabajo Fin de Grado

# THE USE OF GAMES IN CLASS

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**Introduction**

Throughout these years, I have learnt the importance of games when learning a foreign language. The idea of relying on fun to learn a language led me to analyse in depth different approaches to games and their role in the primary class. The study focuses on how games can help children to learn a foreign language, why some scholars feel suspicious about their use, what aspects of games teachers consider that do not contribute to the students' learning and improvement of a second language and how this could be solved.

The current dissertation presents a study of the use of games in teaching a foreign language (TFL). This research is divided into 7 main sections. Firstly, a definition of game is provided together with the characteristics that a game has to have in order to be regarded as a type of game useful for the improvement of the students' language skills. Secondly, one way of how games can be classified in order to their nature is presented. Then appear the advantages that children can reach by means of games, concentrating on different aspects that are useful to develop learning in children. In the fourth section, the focus of attention is in the drawbacks that some scholars and teachers can see when introducing games in lessons. Besides this, some tips about how these disadvantages could be solved in classes are included after this section. Then, two different games, which were carried out in different primary classes with the aim of showing if they worked, are studied. The analysis will pay attention to the problems that were found, the learners' attitudes towards the game and the success of the linguistic objectives of the game. Finally, some conclusions drawn from the analysis and future proposals will be included.

### **1. What is a game?**

Games are a form of play governed by rules that should be enjoyable and fun. Some scholars like Byrne (1995) agree with this idea and insists on the fact that games are not just an entertainment or a break from routine activities. Thus, games become a way of getting the learner to use the language in the course of the game. So if we follow Byrne's definition, a game is much more than a simple break. It is important by itself because it allows the learner to use the language during the game in a natural way.

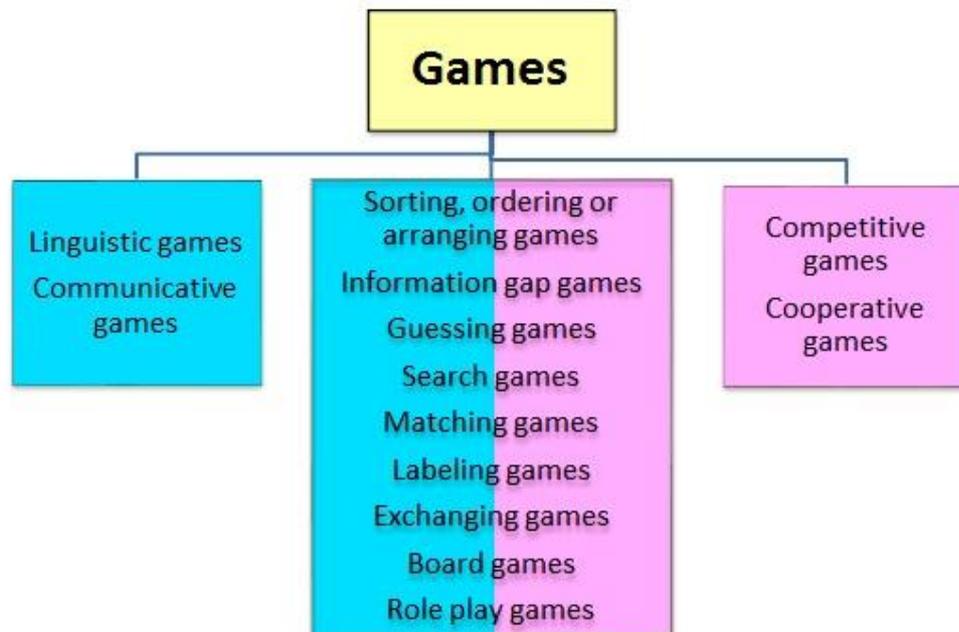
On the other hand, other scholars claim that games are not a breaking of the class routines or just time-fillers. For instance, Lee (1987) asserts that a game should not be an independent activity, but it should be the centre of teaching a foreign language. As a result, other scholars highlight the importance of making a game useful, in other words, a game has to have a specific goal. This approach is supported by Hadfield (1990) who defined games as "an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun". Similarly, Martin (1995: 1), considers that games are "any fun activity which gives young learners the opportunity to practise the foreign language in a relaxed and enjoyable way." These three scholars agree that games are used to have an objective inside the lesson; however, they differ in some aspects. For instance, Lee sees games as the principal point of teaching a second language, whereas Hadfield talks about games in a general way without specifying the final goal of them, and Martin maintains that games are a good resource that let children use the second language in a natural game, highlighting the listening and speaking skills.

We may say that games increase positive competition among students because they are participants in a language activity that allows children to be excited and motivated facing a competition since the question of who will win or lose remains unanswered until the end of the game. As the studies of Greenall (1990) prove this competition creates a tension in students that provides the best effort of children. This type of competition also improves the cooperation between children, as they frequently have to cooperate to be able to strive for the same goal.

Therefore, we can say that games are a resource that is very useful to provide children with knowledge and fun. However, games have to have a predetermined aim or objective that can be used by teachers to encourage students to learn the second language in a natural way without making children realize of their own learning.

## 2. Classification of games

A specific classification of games into categories can be difficult as many of them can overlap. Hadfield (1999) proposes the following classification:



As can be seen in the graphic, the first division includes linguistic and communicative games. The former are the ones that focus on the accuracy in the linguistic aspects, and the latter refers to those that focus on the success in the exchange of information, the correct use of the language and the achievement of the communicative goal. For instance, a type of a linguistic game could be one in which children have to choose the correct verb to give sense to a sentence or the typical grammar games exercises but presented as an entertainment. On the other hand, an example of a communicative game could be one in which the game's objective is to guess the similarities and the differences between two similar pictures that a couple of children have and they have to make and answer questions in order to guess the differences of the other.

The second category is made up of cooperative and competitive games, which differ in the way the goal is achieved. While in cooperative games the participants, in this case the students, work together to reach the goal, in competitive games the goal consists of trying to be the best beating the others, which may belong to the same group or to a different group. One example of a cooperative game could be the game "beat the teacher" in which pupils have to answer correctly to all the questions that the teacher

asks, and if they are right they get a point and if not, the point goes to the teacher. A competitive game, in turn, could be “the hangman” where the aim is to guess a word by saying different letters and the winner is the first one in figuring out the word. Another example of competitive game is “categories” where students will have to think in words that begin with the same letter and which can be suitable for the different categories proposed. The first student in completing the entire chart will be the winner.

Finally, the last group gathers together the types of games that can be used in class.

These games can also be divided in: Sorting, ordering, or arranging games, Information gap games, Guessing games, Search games, Matching games, Labelling games,

Exchanging games, Board games and Role play games. This classification depends on what is the objective that they try to get, how it is played, what materials you need, etc.

This way of classifying games can be at the same time included in the other two groups mentioned before. Thus, these games can be regarded as linguistic/ communicative or competitive/cooperative which implies that games that belong to this category can be included in the other two as well. For instance, a labelling game could be one in which

students have to match two words that are antonymous. Game, which could be included in the category of labelling games and in the linguistic one. Because it can be a game based on the accuracy in the acquisition of the new vocabulary and the correct use of it.

Although there are numerous taxonomies of games based on different criteria, Hadfield (1999) points out the difficulty of their separation into categories and that is why her proposal divides games into two big categories and then a third one that comprises aspects and characteristics of the other two groups. Therefore, we consider it a good classification as it conveys all the aspects of games considering their flexibility.

### 3. Advantages of the use of games in class

One of the best things of games is the multiple advantages they offer. First of all, games are able to catch the students' attention and they are a source of motivation for the students. As Sharpe (2001: 146-147) states, games are enjoyable and a way of promoting learning. Not only is playing games in a primary class a useful measure for learning foreign languages, but it is also funny, a pleasure for the pupil's mind and a way of enjoyment. Such enjoyment produces in children a wish to practice more and an increase in the levels of **motivation**.

It has to be taken into account that young learners cannot pay attention more than 10-20 minutes and then they become bored and distract their attention to other things. In order to face this problem, Lee (1987) suggests that playing games is a good way to motivate learners. Since games make the material more entertaining and contribute to the improvement of the students' memorization of the structures, students acquire the target language faster. Besides this, games increase children's self-confidence and fluency.

In a similar way, Sharpe (2001) agrees that games promote learning by the recreation of situations of real language use, as well as confidence and fluency. They are a good method to keep children's attention in the learning process and to motivate children to learn playing without being concerned about they are training their brains. Moreover, another of the advantages that we currently have is that we can make use of most of new technologies to motivate children. The term "technology" in class refers to everything in relationship with technology: cd players, videos, computers, mobile phones, etc. With this technology we can take many advantages like linguistic input and output, students' collaboration, feedback, interactivity and fun. For instance, any game can be designed or downloaded by teachers from the Internet and it can be useful to learn some aspects. Moreover, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now really related to education, due the fact that we are living in a world that is becoming more technologized, being able to do almost everything with technologies. In general terms, the introduction of ICTs in education is a good point because all the children are fascinated by technologies and everything related to them. One of the main resources that is nowadays present in most of the classrooms is the Interactive Whiteboard, and as Cave (2006) expresses, these wise whiteboards are a very useful resource for teaching and practicing a language because they can be used in many ways, for example, for the practice of literacy or for the acquisition of new words. If we want our children to learn new vocabulary, it is advisable to start speaking, and to make children associate the new

word in the second language with the real image of it, in other words, it would be recommended the use of a visual resource and its written form in both languages. These visual resources can be presented either by slides in the whiteboard or by flashcards on the walls of the classroom. Furthermore, we can also design a game in which learners will have to link the word in the first language with the one that means the same thing in the foreign language, and then with the corresponding image, giving children the opportunity of associating the written form with the spoken one. The fact is that children will be motivated by almost any activity that is done by using new technologies. A simple grammar game of choosing the correct option will be funnier for children if they have to do it in the whiteboard or in a laptop than if they had to do it in their notebooks.

Another advantage is competition, as it plays a crucial role for the nature of games. Some scholars, like Cave (2006), support the idea that games are a good way to teach a foreign language highlighting the importance of team games and **competition**. Competition can be seen as something positive since it motivates pupils. It creates a sort of tension among children in their aim to win. Besides, Cave (2006) points out that games are a useful tool if we take into consideration that children learn by **repetition** in a subconscious way. Likewise, Sharpe (2001) agrees that, it is necessary to repeat structures in order to learn a language and with the use of games it is easier to promote these repetitions motivating children with the creation of roles of winners and losers and allowing them to feel the excitement of the game.

Another advantage that promotes the use of the games in class is the possibility of using the **cooperative learning**. According to Johnson and Johnson (1999: 5), cooperative learning “is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning”. This type of learning allows children to be benefited from other students that know the second language better, and it is also a challenge to these pupils that have to explain to the others what they know, taking this task as a way of putting into practice all their knowledge, so both students, those proficient students and those who are not so good at the second language, get benefits. McDonell (1992) underlines that the teacher in cooperative learning, plays a role as supporter, facilitator, observer, etc. In other words, the teacher is who has to provide the students with the resources that they have to use to succeed in the tasks proposed. The teacher has to observe, control, monitor and help, if necessary, to make children achieve their goals. Games are an important part in this type of learning as they promote the

interaction among students in a funny way creating a good learning atmosphere in a natural and subconscious way.

Games are activities that are focused on students and, consequently, they require an active involvement of learners, as Crookall (1990) claims. Besides, by means of games, teachers and learners exchange their roles, students being encouraged to take an active role in their learning process so that they can participate in their own learning. An **active learning** is very important, as it is demonstrated in many studies like the one by Chickering (1987), in which he observes that children learn better, longer and more easily if they learn taking an active role instead of just learning things by heart. One definition of strategies and activities that promote an active learning is for example the one proposed by Bonwell (1991:5) that refers to them as “those instructional activities that involve pupils in doing things and thinking about what they are doing”. Therefore, these types of activities are essential because of the impact that they have on the students. Similarly, Rixon (1981) backs up the idea that the role of the teacher has to be reduced. The teacher will become the person in charge to organize, give the information and the resources that allow children to work. Therefore, the centre of the learning process is the learner, who will have to be actively involved and who will have the freedom to do the tasks to finally be assessed for their progress in the achievement of the final goal. It is precisely for these active learning of children that games have an important value. Games are very useful to promote this type of learning, letting students practice any skills in an active way.

It is undeniable that a typical problem in class of foreign languages is students’ **anxiety towards language** learning. Students feel stressed because they can make some mistakes, as it is an unknown language, and they think that they can be criticized or penalised by teachers or by their own classmates. In order to avoid this, some scholars propose that games are a good resource because “they reduce anxiety, increase positive feelings and improve self-confidence because learners do not afraid of punishment or criticism while practicing the target language freely” (Crookall, 1990: 112). It is a good advantage that children use the second language without feeling anxious because they will use it in a natural way. Games will help children to adapt themselves and integrate the new language in a natural way. Similarly, Kirsch (2008: 83) points out that the best way of achieving language learning is through the use of the target language as a medium of communication in the language class. She suggests that using it in daily

activities or in activities where the structures are repeated such as games, rhythms or songs, is the best way to make children integrate them and learn them without realizing. In a foreign language class it is important that the four language skills will be worked out and learnt by students. Speaking, reading, listening and writing in the second language are the bases for being proficient in a language. Games give teachers the opportunity of working the four of them. It is just needed that teachers plan which skills they have to work and then choose the suitable game that may contribute to their learning. **Communicative skills** (Speaking and listening ones) have always been the most difficult to teach, and consequently, teachers usually focused their lessons on the learning of grammar or vocabulary to improve the writing and reading skills. However, developing communicative skills is very important to learn a second language, and that is why teachers have to encourage pupils to develop it, increasing the student-talk and promoting the interaction between pupils with communicative purposes. Lewis (1999), supports the idea that instructional games are the best way to develop in children this linguistic skill and communication abilities because they can be used as a tool to promote communication and interaction among children. They can give learners the opportunity of being able to express their opinions and feelings, and speak the second language in a determined context. In the same way, Lightbown and Spada (2011) highlight that instructional games give learners the chance of developing a spontaneous use of language. Moreover, this process is adapted by children more quickly through games than through traditional ways of teaching, Thus, if we use games in which spontaneous language is used in real contexts, students will be able to use the foreign language to communicate, interact with classmates, express their opinions and improve their communicative skills in class.

#### **4. Disadvantages of the use of games in the class**

In spite of all the advantages that the use of games offer when learning a foreign language, there are some drawback that have to be taken into consideration. For instance, Brunfit (1991) alludes to the difficulties of integrating games in class when he refers to the question of time. Some games may require a lot of time, for example, if the rules of the game are very complicated children will spend most of the time trying to understand them and trying to follow the game, so consequently there will not be the development in the language's skills that the game pursued.

On the other hand, it could be argued that not all the games can be suitable for the development of language skills. An example of this is colouring a picture, which is an activity that can be taken as a break but which, at first, does not really develop any knowledge about the second language.

Another problem of a game could be that a game can make children concentrate on external elements of the game and not on the use of the language. In this type of games one can include those in which there is much fun but there is not a clear objective in relation to the learning of the language. These types of games are useless in the acquisition of new knowledge and they can be a break of the class or the routines. As a result of their use, a good class' atmosphere can be interrupted by games, breaking the calm up. The class can become a mess, learners may get extremely noisy and it can be very difficult to get the students' attention back. These are the main reasons why teachers are reluctant to the use of some games.

Finally, other disadvantages of the use of games in the learning process are that when a game is very familiar to children, they can get bored and do not involve very much in the game; and the difficulty to follow the work of the students, that is, teacher see games as a lack of time since they are time-consuming and there is not a direct relationship between the time needed for the game and the things learnt.

### **5. How could we cope with these disadvantages?**

The biggest problem that teachers can find in the use of games usually comes from a wrong choice of game for the development of a specific skill. Teachers should choose a game bearing in mind the objective or goal that they want children to get. For instance, if they want that children improve a communicative aspect, they should have to choose a game that allows learners to interact and to express themselves. Thus, the game selected has to have been designed for the aim pursued. The choice of the game ought to be planned with caution, having the purposes and goals clearly identified. If the intentions of a game are not taken into consideration, the game could be mixed and do not produce any development of the second language in children. Scholars like Lee (1979) or Rixon (1981) point out that once the objective is chosen by the teacher, the game has to be explained to children emphasizing its purpose both in the rules and in the explanation in order to ensure that children consider the game as “serious fun”. In this way, children will enjoy the game but they will also regard it as something important for their learning.

When choosing a game, apart from choosing a game suitable for the aims set, teachers have to be aware of the adequacy of the game to children’s level. In other words, they have to adapt the difficulty of games, because if the challenge is too high, some students that cannot succeed in the game may become demotivated. This adaption has to be seen in the rules of the games, in the understanding of how to play the game (instructions) and in the language level used in the game.

Last but not least, a teacher has to choose the moment in the lesson in which the game could be useful. The game can be played in the beginning of a class, as a warm-up activity, in the middle, to add variety or to relax after some hard activity, or at the end. However, the teacher has to remember that the game is not an independent activity, because it has a specific goal within the unit. As Lee (1987) suggested teachers do not have to see the game as a break or as a filler of time because is the centre of the learning of that moment. Thus, it can be linked to other activities and end up in a more complex activity.

## 6. Case analysis: Implementation of games in class

The following activities were implemented in the semi-private school where I did my school placement. This school became bilingual last year, so just 1<sup>st</sup> year of Primary education has bilingual classes. The purpose of this analysis is to prove if games have contributed to the development of the students' level in English and to see whether the aims of the game are achieved or not.

### 6.1 Game 1: Find your partner. An interaction game

The materials that are needed for this game are some cards about clothes, ones with pictures and others with just the names of different pieces of clothes.

- **Class context**

The class where this game was played was in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Primary education, group B. There were 24 children 12 of whom were boys and the other 12 were girls. Regarding their level, this group is very heterogeneous. Some pupils that attend English extracurricular activities know much more English than the others who do not, so the student's levels are different. There is one student whose level of English is remarkable. He gets the best marks and is always raising his hand to answer all the questions that the teacher makes. By contrast, there are 4 students that never participate in English classes because they are not very good at English, and they have many difficulties to follow the class.

- **Activity organization**

The idea is to play an interaction game in this class, because "through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material" (Wilga Rivers, 1987: 4-5). We will use this game as a reinforcement of the vocabulary and structures learnt in previous lessons: types of clothes, asking questions about what someone is wearing and answers about clothes and their colours. The objective of this game is that children will be able to ask about clothes and explain what someone is wearing emphasising the colours of the piece of cloth.

"**Find your partner**" is the game's name. Each child will have a card, there are some cards with a picture of a type of cloth and others with just the name of them, and they will have to stand up and make their classmates the question: "What are you wearing today?". Then, the classmate will have to answer "Today I am wearing .... (They will have to say what they have in their cards and the colour they like most".

The aim of the game is to find the person that has the same piece of cloth as them in his or her flashcard. The game is thought to last about 10 minutes, but if necessary it can last 15 minutes.

This activity allows us to develop speaking and listening skills, so we can include this game into “search games”, according to Hadfield’s (1999) taxonomy and also into communicative ones, being, therefore, a guessing and communicative game.

During the game only English will be spoken, because if we speak Spanish, children can stop paying attention and the reduction of concentration would lead to a slower language acquisition and a harder retention of new structures, as Satchwell (1997) points out.

- **Activity development**

The game was presented as the second activity of the lesson, after a practice of the basic vocabulary of clothes.

The game was explained to children focusing on the importance of asking correctly the question and the correct word order when answering. Then, in order to be sure all the students understand what they have to do, an example was given with one of the students.

Students stood up and started asking the questions, the role of the teacher was to control the class, how the game was developing and if some learner needed some help, in other words, as Brown (2001) suggests the teacher had to create an atmosphere where children had the freedom of expressing themselves and make spontaneous comments. If there was a problem the teacher tried to help them and encourage them to find the answers. By means of this game the children occupied a central and active role that led them to be the centre of the learning process. However, the teacher was not passive but in a certain way, active, as he has to monitor the session and check couple by couple if they were doing it well. Children’s predisposition was quite good as they did not see it as another activity in which they had to be in their seats writing. This game allowed children to move and communicate and interact with other students, which motivated them because they had the opportunity of speaking with their friends in class. This change of their routine was one of the things that children liked the most.

- **Conclusions and results**

The conclusions that we can draw from this are very positive. Children were very motivated and focused their attention on the game, practicing the vocabulary and developing the communication skills without realising that they were learning English.

However, some problems occurred during the game. First of all, as they have to move around the class it was a bit chaotic at first. Then, the teacher had to say that if they did not obey the game would be over and they would have to write the questions and the answers on their notebooks instead of practicing it in an oral way. This implied a delay, and the activity took 15 minutes.

Another problem was that as students had the freedom of asking whoever they wanted, boys just asked boys and girls just asked girls, and they just asked their friends. At this point the teacher had to intervene to make learners speak and interact with all the class.

At the end of the class children asserted that they had had a very good time and that they had enjoyed the lesson. Moreover, they asked if they could play the game other days. So that, the final conclusion is that besides children had a good time, they were learning the structures and practicing oral skills.

**6.2. Game 2: Which is missing?** : A guessing and competitive game.

To play this game it is needed a ball, and different food flashcards.

- **Class context**

This game was played in 1<sup>st</sup> year of Primary, group A. The class was made up of 25 children, 13 boys and 12 girls, and they have a similar level of English. This class is the first in which the bilingual project has been carried out. This means that children have some subjects like “Conocimiento Del Medio” in English. The science teacher also teaches English and strengthens the links between both subjects, Science and English. In this way, the teacher establish links between curriculum subjects and areas of learning, and by doing this, s/he makes “can deepen children’s understanding by providing opportunities to reinforce and enhance learning” (Maynard, 2012: 41).

- **Activity organization**

For this game, named “**which is missing?**”, we will use flashcards, which are a good method to make the second language acquisition easier, as “flashcards are an excellent way of bypassing the mother tongue and encouraging the use of the target language. They are very versatile and can be used in many activities” (Cave, 2006: 9). Thus, they are one of the best ways to make pupils associate a word in the target language with its visual representation. This resource helps children to remember the vocabulary and that is why the teacher will show the flashcards and will ask students which foodstuff appears in it before beginning the game.

Once learners answer what is in the flashcard, the teacher will put the cards on the blackboard and will ask children to point at the card that matches with the word said aloud. After this, the teacher will take one out while pupils are with their eyes closed. When the students open their eyes, they will have to try to guess which flashcard is missing. The first in guessing it will be the one who will take another flashcard out from the blackboard.

A second step will be when the student guesses what foodstuff is missing, s/he will have to answer some questions about that foodstuff such as: “do you have it for breakfast, lunch, snack or dinner?”, “does it come from animals or from plants?”, “do you like it for breakfast, lunch, snack or dinner?” and “Is it healthy or unhealthy?”. By doing this, students will practice English at the same time that they will remember things from the science subject.

This game, which should last 15 minutes, will allow children to be able to practice in using vocabulary about food and to learn about the things they eat. Besides, it will make children compete against their classmates because the winner is just the first one in guessing the answer. Thus, according to Hadfield's (1999) taxonomy, this game belongs to the third group, within the category of guessing games and competitive games.

The role of the teacher in this game is to control and monitor the class. The teacher has to ensure that all children participate and to avoid that the same children answer all the questions. S/he will also have to explain the game's objectives and provide the students with the instructions in a clear way. In this class we will also use just English to make children integrate the new words and practise the target language. This game is very useful for children to make whole sentences using the new vocabulary and to encourage children to learn and reinforce some grammatical structures.

- **Activity development**

The game had place almost at the end of the lesson because students were practicing other things and completing some exercises from the book. So that, this game was seen by children as a break from those activities, although it was actually a practice of the vocabulary learnt in that lesson.

Children were really excited because of the game and all of them wanted to participate. When they had to close their eyes they pretended they were closing them, but the truth is that almost all the students were seeing what was happening, so they knew perfectly which card was removed. This fact it was not important, because the intention of this game was that children could tell the names of the foodstuff and answer the questions made by the teacher.

- **Conclusions and results**

At the beginning as all the students were so excited, they did not respect the rules and when the teacher asked which food was missing they answered without raising their hands and without respecting turns. Because of this, the teacher had to tell children that if they did not respect the rules the game would be over. After this, children were more respectful and tried to raise their hands.

When the game finished we had some minutes left to do a post-game activity that consisted on trying to hit with a ball the flashcard with the image of the word said by the teacher. If they succeeded they were asked a question about that card.

## 7. Conclusion

This study reveals that games are a useful resource that allows teachers to be able to motivate children and develop children's linguistic skills by learning by playing.

It has been observed that in children's learning development, the impact that games produce on students is intrinsically linked with the improvement of some skills. Games are a crucial source of this development because they allow children to practice any skill by the time that they are improving others. For instance, a game can be designed to practice the communicative skill, but when it is going to be played, one can see that other important aspects like motivation or active learning have also place in that game.

The implementation of the activities during the placement revealed that although games are said to have the advantages shown in Table 1, not all of them have to be present in just one activity.

Table 1. Summary of advantages that can be found in games.

<b>ADVANTAGES. Games are able to...</b>
<b>Motivate children</b> → Make children focus their attention and be more enthusiastic towards learning.
<b>Create competition</b> → Develop tension in students and encourage them to be accurate in the use of the language.
<b>Cooperative learning</b> → Allow learners to work together and be able to share their knowledge.
<b>Active learning</b> → Let children be the centre of their education, learning by doing.
<b>Reduces anxiety</b> → Makes pupils more confident and they participate more
<b>Facility in the practice of communicative skills</b> → Oral and listening activities are crucial for the learning of a foreign language.

In our case, in the first game, "find your partner", we found that the game absolutely motivated children and as it was an intervention game, it allowed to practise communicative skills. In addition, learners' anxiety at the time of speaking was clearly reduced because of the fact that they had just to speak with a partner, and not in front of the whole class. This was a complete success since they tried to speak the better they could and without making a hard effort that could have produced fewer results due to their embarrassment and their fear to be judged.

Regarding competition, this game was not a competitive one but an interaction game, where there is not one winner. It is cooperative since children have to find the person whose card is the same as theirs. Thus, it was proved the initial hypothesis about the advantages of games. It also confirmed that the choice of the game relies on the objective that one wants children to achieve, because not all the games are useful for the same skills' development. For instance, if we want to create a competition in class that puts children in tension until the game ends with the aim of making them answer all the questions that the teacher asks, we would choose a game like the second game proposed and played in our placement. This would be used as pupils were more concentrated on the game as it demands an effort to do the things properly if they want to win. This tension helps to motivate children and, as motivation is one of the principal bases for children's learning, being defined by psychologists as an internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behaviour over time. In other words, "motivation gets you going, keeps you going, and determines where you're trying to go" (Slavin, 2000). Although there are lots of types of motivation according to different authors, in these games the intrinsic motivation is the one worked, which can be defined in the following way:

Intrinsically motivated activities are ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward. (Deci 1975: 23).

As we look for a good learning of the second language, we insist in intrinsic motivation in order that learners have a good attitude towards the learning, having as a reward the best learning of the language and the pride of their success. With games we can get this type of motivation easily as the students' goal during the game will be to do their best and develop languages' skills. However, students will not be totally aware of their learning while playing. It will be extremely important that teachers have a good plan about what aspects are going to be worked. Then, bearing in mind these objectives, teachers will design the lessons in a way that allows children to reach those goals. This analysis of games in education has shown that games are a good resource for teachers if they want to motivate children at the same time that they develop the planned linguistic skills planned. As Hannam and Constantinides (2011: 63) states "encouraging involvement is the key to its success and we should stress it is sometimes not easy to get the ball rolling" and this is the reason why games are also a good resource to use in lessons. Games provide an active learning of the children, making them participate in

their own education, and accelerating the knowledge's acquisition that furthermore, it will be retained by children for more time because they will integrate knowledge

Another issue that is important to be pointed out is the importance of using the target language when teaching a foreign language, because as Kirsch (2008: 83) asserts, listening to the foreign language in context contributes to its learning, improving the listening and pronunciation of the words, sound patterns, rhythm and intonation, as well as providing a development in pupils' attention and listening skills. Besides that, using target language improves pupil's concentration and gives students the opportunity to assimilate the language subconsciously. June de Silva and Satchwell (1995) stress the importance of beginning with relatively small and easily memorable simple phrases in the second language, always accompanied by lots of mime and body language to make children understand easily and begin to respond. That is another reason why games are important, since they provide a clear structure that learners can follow without any problem by the time of improving the students' listening comprehension.

In order to conclude, I would like to highlight that there are a lot of good reasons for using games in a primary class to teach a foreign language. In a nutshell we can say that games provide teachers many methods to integrate a second language in children, developing in children a good learning of the language that started as a game, but fostering the use of new structures in children's knowledge and improving their linguistics skills.

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