

**PROMOTING ORAL COMPREHENSION ACROSS AUDIO STORYTELLING IN 6<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE STUDENTS AT CRISTO REY SCHOOL IN PAMPLONA, COLOMBIA**

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**FOREIGN LANGUAGES ENGLISH-FRENCH PROGRAM**

**PRACTICUM**

**PAMPLONA**

**2018**

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**PRACTICUM**

**PAMPLONA**

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**APPROVAL NOTE**

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**Practicum Committee Signature**

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**Cooperative Teacher Signature**

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## **General presentation**

The following qualitative investigation is broken down in four chapters that which are the followings: pedagogical component, research component, outreach component and administrative component. Initially, in the pedagogical component is described in detail an action research project that had place in a sixth-grade class at Cristo Rey school, which aimed to promote students' listening skills by means of the unfolding of six oral comprehension workshops.

In the second chapter, some strategies and instruments that served to obtain meaningful information from the pre- service teacher's reflective process along her teaching practicum at a public school in Pamplona are described. Subsequently, the third segment presents the social service work that the teacher in training carried out in fourth and fifth grades at Cristo Rey School.

Finally, the administrative component comprises the guidelines that the pre-service teacher followed and the events where she took part as an essential aspect of her engagement with the educative institution Cristo Rey in Pamplona, Colombia.

## Introduction

According to the requirements of current professional life, English listening skill has important utility values in all spheres because it tends to be more important in human communication and daily life. As a fact, for an individual to successfully acquire a second language, it is necessary to be enrolled in an early and active language learning process, that will begin in the English classes at school. Having that in mind, the Ministry of education of Colombia launched in 2014 an English program named English for Colombian (ECO), which aims at developing progressively the four communicative skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing in A1 level students across the use of audiovisual material. This with the purpose of smoothing the learning process and overcome the monotonous classes by means of catching learners' attention with the implementation of technology and didactic material.

Concerning the previous information, it is important to have in mind the role of audiovisual materials to enhance a communicative skill, specially the major impact that those may have on listening comprehension, which is stimulated by sounds, rhythms, rhymes, dialogues, etc. Ramirez (2016), support this statement by affirming, "Audio visual aids have been considered a useful tool for teachers in almost every trend of second language teaching." Nevertheless, in the process learners may have preferences for TICS inside the classroom to achieve their academic goals. "Students like making use of various audio-visual apparatuses to obtain their language learning resources ... they are all excellent language learning materials." Liang (2013).

The current project attempted to improve the sixth graders' listening skills through the implementation of six listening comprehension workshops at Cristo Rey high school in Pamplona, Colombia.

Moreover, this qualitative investigation encompasses each activity that was developed along the practicum process with the purpose of enhancing English listening habits on the focal group. With regards to the general and specific objectives, the implementation of this action research allowed the pre-service teacher to accomplish most of the goals previously established and approached learners to adopt useful strategies to improve their English comprehension.



## **Justification**

Nowadays, most advanced teachers have adopted a wrong idea related to the goals their professions should achieve, that idea concerns to limit their work to teach only content without taking into account the encouragement of the students' human part, spirit and personal skills. For this reason, part of the research community has focused on analyzing the formation of pre-service teachers. Omarov et al (2016) mentions that "A student's professional competence is a dynamic category; it develops, it is determined by a definite situation, and in this situation professional activities are going on."

Bearing in mind such an important fact, the foreign language students were required to develop three additional components in their thesis work. Those components allowed that the practitioners not only spent their ten weeks practicum in explaining grammar rules but also increase their students' academic skills, explore their perceptions of the classes, taking into account their suggestions and offering a supportive voice when they were in trouble.

In view of the impact that the teacher's practices have on the enhancement of her students' English skills, the educator realized that it was essential to design some didactic strategies that approaches her to achieve her objectives in the classroom such as to turn learners into active listeners and to enroll them in the study of grammar content. In other words, "The teaching of listening skills, may not be effective because teachers do not know enough about the listening process to be able to specify which aspects of it are teachable and what are the most effective methods of improving it." Frunză (2013) Therefore, the necessity for raising up the level of learners' oral comprehension is an evident issue that in most of the schools is been observed, particularly at Cristo Rey educative institution.

## **Objectives**

### **General objective**

- To develop English listening skills through childhood audio stories in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Cristo Rey school, Pamplona.

### **Specific objectives**

- To adopt a reflective attitude as a transforming tool of the pedagogical processes of the integral practice.
- To fulfill the English learning needs at the Cristo Rey primary school in Pamplona.
- To enroll in the administrative activities proposed by the Cristo Rey school.

## **Institutional Observation**

### **Topographical location of the school**

The “INSTITUTO TÉCNICO ARQUIDIOCESANO SAN FRANCISCO DE ASÍS” (ITASFA) is an official educational institution located in Pamplona, Norte de Santander. It offers mixed-gender education and it was created by “Decreto Departamental 000132” of January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003 to provide formal education in the levels of preschool, primary and high school as well as technical and adult education.

ITASFA has four centers in different locations of the city:

- a. *Sede José Antonio Galán*: carrera 6ª Nº 1B-71. Barrio Galán – Sede Principal
- b. *Sede Cuatro de Julio*: Calle 1ª Nº 6-19. Barrio Galán
- c. *Sede Santa Martha*: Barrio Santa Martha
- d. *Sede Cristo Rey*: Barrio Cristo Rey.

The Cristo Rey High school located in the 5<sup>th</sup> n street #12-3660 will be the institution where the present action research will have place. This educative center was founded in February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1963 and it only provided primary school. By the 8<sup>th</sup> February of 2000, high school was approved. And finally, technical school was established by 2013.

### **Institutional authorities**

The institution's board of authorities is composed by: a) Bernardo Wilches Gelves, head of the institution; b) Olga L. Barajas, Mario A. Castellanos, and José Joaquín Rincón as the coordinators of the mentioned centers; c) the representatives of the different committees

including teachers, students, parents and administrative staff; and finally, Carmen Rosa Daza Montes, as the pre-service teacher supervisor.

### **Fundamentals of “Proyecto Educativo Institucional” (PEI)**

Taking into account the institution's principle of inclusion, in terms of coexistence, curricular and historical factors, the educational institution ITASFA has systematically improved its PEI, by not only assuming it as a document required by law, but as a proposal of life in which all the educative community actively participates in its discussion and adoption.

Due to the large number of students, ITASFA has the duty to guarantee the appropriate conditions of its students to receive educational instruction without any discrimination of race, culture, gender, ideology, creed, sexual preference, disabilities, displacement and illiteracy, among others.

Finally, the construction of the PEI is a permanent, dynamic and participative process, in which adjustments, changes and innovations must be made in terms of legal, pedagogical and technological nature in order to strengthen the institution's identity regarding quality, efficacy, efficiency and autonomy.

### **Mission**

To provide our students with training spaces that ensure them, their families, the city, the region and Colombia, meaningful learning and life experiences to be applied as alternatives to employment in the solution of their economic problems, so that they can build their life project with responsibility. To achieve this purpose, our institution will promote projects towards skills

enhancement and professional development, community engagement and inclusion in a framework of tolerance and respect for men, women and the environment.

### **Vision**

By the end of the year 2020, this educational institution should demonstrate competitiveness in social, cultural, and academic aspects as well as in sports, so that recognition can be achieved at local, regional and national level.

### **Philosophy**

Our educational institution aims at the development of its pedagogical and social proposals of coexistence in order to focus its efforts on the integral formation of its students with the objective and concrete criteria such as the respect for the Social State of Law (Estado Social de Derecho), the recognition of the individuality proclaimed in the Constitutional principle of the primacy of the general interest, the competitive training in the academic field and the emphasis on job training as an alternative to individual and collective development, as well as the inclusion of all our students with any limitations and/or special needs or vulnerability; by educating young people that are capable of becoming agents of change in their environment under the principles of community organization, job training, sense of appreciation, conservation and love for nature and the environment.

## Symbols of the institution

### *Institutional anthem*

#### **CORO**

Paz y bien, es el lema de mi Institución,

que convierte mi ser en semilla,

de esperanza, justicia y amor.

Que convierte mi ser en semilla,

de esperanza, justicia y amor.

#### **ESTROFA**

En mi mente siempre presente, el

amor siempre a Dios debe estar,

para así al que sufre ayudar,

con alegre actitud fraternal.

Para así al que sufre ayudar,

con alegre actitud fraternal.

#### **ESTROFA**

Siento orgullo de ser Franciscano

y a la patria poder aportar:

“la verdad, la virtud y el honor

que construye el sol de la paz”.

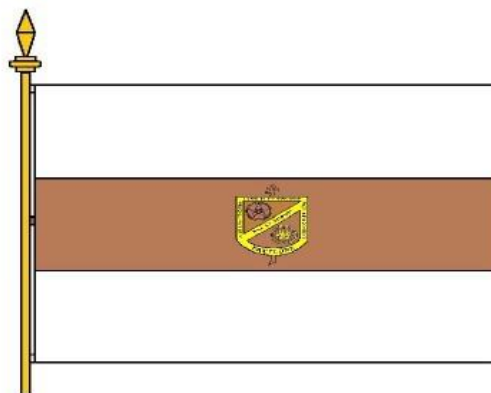
“la verdad, la virtud y el honor

que construye el sol de la paz”

**Letra:** Mons. Rafael Tarazona Mora

**Música:** Daniel Solano Ortiz

### *ITASFA's institutional flag*



*Figure 1: Institutional flag*

The flag of ITASFA is a bi-color one featuring three horizontal bands. First, the upper and lower colored in white, which symbolizes peace, as it is built from the heart of our institution; and second, the central band, smaller in size, colored in brown. This color, which characterizes the Franciscan community, is not only perceived as a symbol of poverty and humility, but also as a representation of the spirit of service and dedication to others, as illustrated by our founder, St. Francis of Assisi.

### *Institutional shield*



*Figure 2: Institutional shield*

Starting with its border, the shield has the design of the Archdiocese of Nueva Pamplona, as it was Monsignor Rafael Tarazona Mora, the founder and the first principal of this institution.

The shield is framed by the name of our institution -in golden letters- and it is divided into two sections by a diagonal line containing the Franciscan message: PEACE and ALL GOOD as the institutional motto that must lead us to be agents of peace by means of friendship, fraternity and solidarity.

The upper and lower sections have, as background colors, the white and brown colors of the institution's flag. The former, in the shape of a triangle, has a white circle, which frames the five-pointed star that comprises our institutional principles: God, Nation, Study, Discipline and Joy. In the center of the star, there is a circle with the anagram of Jesus Christ, a sign of the Christian orientation of our Institution. The latter section has a pinion framed in a circle, which represents the technical orientation of the institution and its mission to form citizens towards work and productivity. Additionally, inside the pinion, the outline of an atom, with the Greek letter PI in its center, is found as a symbol of science, research and academia.

Our coat of arms has the double-arch Archdiocesan Cross in the background as a symbol of the Catholic origin of our institution.

## **Rulebook**

According to the article 87 of Law 115 of 1994, the institution's rulebook main objective is to define the rights and obligations of students as well as each member of the educational community. It is a tool that is built, evaluated and adjusted by the educational community, with the active participation of students and parents. It is important to highlight that it is mandatory in



public and private institutions and is seen as an essential component of the institutional educational project.

This rulebook will grant the educator the role of counselor and mediator in situations that may threaten school life and the exercise of sexual and reproductive human rights, as well as functions in the early detection of these mentioned situations. Additionally, students are given an active role to participate in the definition of actions in order to manage these situations, within the framework of integrity.

In this case, the rulebook of the school is conceived as a collective agreement which expresses the rights, commitments and responsibilities to be assumed by each member of the educational community, and its main purpose is to create and promote spaces that enable students' full development of their personality as well as the community in general, living in harmonious coexistence, based on the principles of mutual respect, freedom, democracy, equality and equity.

## Physical infrastructure

ITASFA's infrastructure and facilities aim at responding to the requirements and needs of its students, teachers, members of the administrative sector and others. There are 16 classrooms, a computer room as well as a lounge for teachers and the coordinator's office. The institution also has a restaurant, a multifunctional yard and bathrooms for boys, girls and teachers.

## Organizational chart

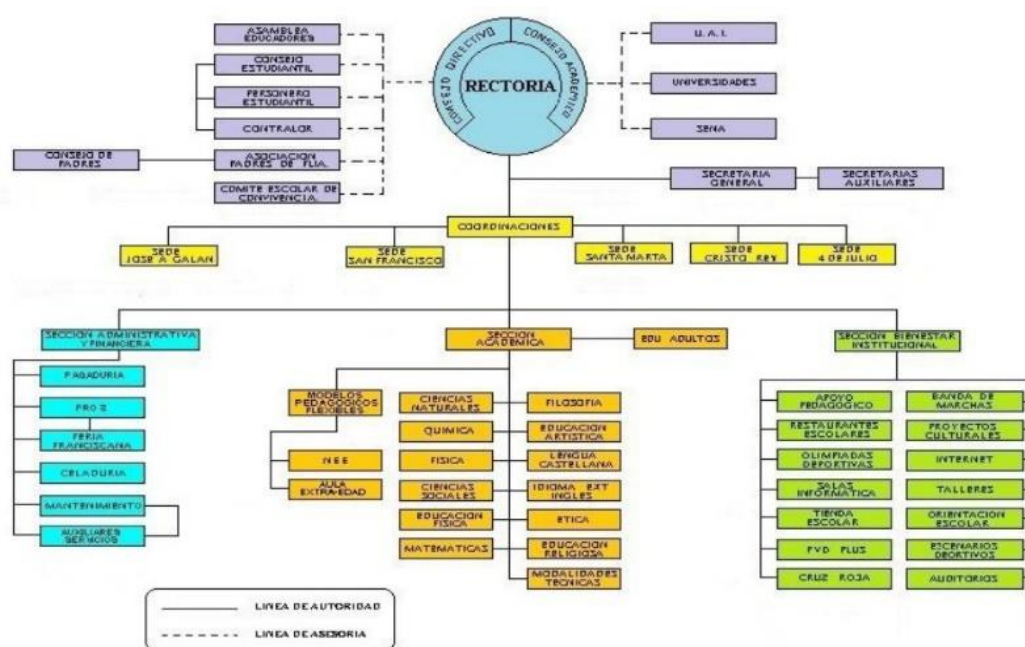


Figure 3: Organizational chart

## School calendar

The following chart displays all the activities to be developed at Cristo Rey High School during the first period of the year.

**Table 1** *Institutional calendar of activities*

<b>CRONOGRAMA DE ACTIVIDADES</b>		
<b>2018-1</b>		
<b>MES</b>	<b>FECHA</b>	<b>ACTIVIDAD</b>
<b>MARZO</b>	1-2	Desarrollo Académico
	2	Elección Personero, Representante Consejo Directivo Y Contralor Estudiantil Organizan docentes sociales y coordinadores.
	5-23	Desarrollo Académico
	23	Segunda actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
	26-30	Desarrollo institucional- Receso escolar (estudiantes)
	28	Bingo Institucional
<b>ABRIL</b>	2-6	Desarrollo de simulaciones 9º, 10º Y 11º
	3	Sesión ordinaria concejo académico
	9-20	Desarrollo Académico
	23	IZADA DE BANDERA – DÍA DEL IDIOMA. Participan todos los grados priorizar manifestaciones artísticas y culturales con los estudiantes.
	24-30	Pruebas de calidad primer periodo – Todos los niveles. 0º a 11º. Acorde a programación realizada por coordinadores.
	30	Tercera actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
<b>MAYO</b>	2-3	Desarrollo académico - Pruebas de calidad primer periodo – Todos los niveles. 0º a 11º. Acorde a programación realizada por coordinadores.
	4	Terminación primer periodo académico – Cierre de plataforma Webcolegios para cargue de calificaciones.
	7	Inicio 2do periodo Académico
	8	Consolidación de reportes académicos por parte de coordinadores.

	7-11	Desarrollo Académico
	15	Celebración institucional día del educador y del personal administrativo franciscano.
	16-18	Desarrollo académico Entrega de informes académicos primer periodo a padres de familia.
	21-25	Desarrollo Académico
	24	Cuarta actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
	25	SIMULACROS 3°, 5°, 9°, 10° y 11°
	28-31	Desarrollo Académico

### **Pedagogical aspects**

At the beginning of the semester, a phase of institutional and pedagogical observation was conducted along two weeks. The main purpose was to observe in detail the courses under study from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade as well as relevant aspects of the institution in which the practicum took place.

By means of the unfolding of non-participant observations, the researcher focused on grasping the major aspects related to the students' attitudes towards the subject's content, the teacher's practices and the learners' English level. Taking into account that those features might contribute to the identification of the students' deficiencies and possible teaching strategies that will gradually intervene positively in the learners' learning process, the previous instrument helped the pre-service teacher to realize which skill would need special attention and which strategies should be implemented in order to achieve successful results.

As previously stated, aspects regarding teacher's methodology, classroom organization, management and environment, along with student's learning difficulties, activities proposed, teacher-student interaction, attitudes and behaviors, and even the development of the English

class itself, among others were taken into account in order to profoundly appreciate and understand the challenges and responsibilities that being a teacher in this institution would bring along. On the other hand, physical facilities and information about the school and its members were also observed and considered of vital importance as a way to become familiar and recognized in the institution.

In conclusion, the observational stage was of crucial interest since, as a practitioner, it was essential for me to be aware of the procedures inside and outside the classroom as well as being capable of getting familiar with the environment by clarifying doubts, looking for information and reducing the impact of my presence as the recently assigned pre-service English teacher.

## **Chapter I**

### **Pedagogical component**

#### **Promoting Listening comprehension across audio storytelling in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Cristo Rey School in Pamplona, Colombia**

##### **Introduction**

Listening is a critical element in a competent communicative performance in any type of language either mother tongue or target language. According to Bororgian, (2012) “listening comprehension is the primary channel of learning a language” Being aware of the difficulties that several students face when learn a second language, this action research attempts to promote the listening comprehension by means of the usage of childhood audio stories in sixth graders at Cristo Rey high school in Pamplona city. The information in this pedagogical component will be presented in six sections such as statement of the problem, justification, objectives, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology and results.

**Statement of Problem**

On the basis of the data gathered during the two initial weeks of the current semester, where the teacher in training observed and analyzed different aspects of sixth, seventh and eighth grades' English classes, she noticed that in one of the courses the necessity for improving the listening skills was vital for a proper development of the subject. Having that in mind, the following question will serve as a guide to obtain significant results.

- What is the impact of childhood audio storytelling on sixth graders' oral comprehension at Cristo Rey School in Pamplona, Colombia?

**Justification**

The learning process of any type of language requires that the learner activate and develop the totality of his/her linguistic skills, nevertheless when a student works on his listening comprehension is actually integrating the other skills, basically because listening provides a foundation for all aspects of language and cognitive development. It plays a life-long role in the processing of learning and communication essential to productive participation in life. The worth of this skill lies precisely on the necessity that a student has to transmit or put into practice the information that he obtained across listening materials and the way to do it is by means of talking to other about it, developing written productions or even reading the scripts of the podcast and audios.

Along the non-participant observations, the pre-service teacher realized that in most cases sixth grade students did not totally comprehend the teacher's instructions at the moment of the tasks implementations, even though the results of the listening quizzes were regularly lower than those obtained in grammar and speaking productions. This evidenced the current need for working on some strategies that foster the English listening comprehension on high school children.



## **Objectives**

### **General Objective:**

- To encourage sixth graders to be active English listeners by means of the comprehension of audio storytelling.

### **Specific objectives:**

- To implement five workshops about oral comprehension in a sixth-grade class at Cristo Rey School.
- To encourage 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners to read and subsequently to pronounce the script of the audio stories.
- To enroll 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in the representation of one of the audio stories previously listened.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The following segment will describe the function and the importance of each key concept related to the current thesis. These definitions played an essential role in the development of this action research and gradually will help the reader to comprehend the nature of the study and to go smoothly over the entire pedagogical component.

#### **English listening skills:**

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Moreover, it is a key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated. According to Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002: 193) traditionally listening was viewed as a passive process in which our ears just received information and the listener passively registered the message. Today listening is considered as an active process, and good listeners are just as active when listening as speakers are when speaking. This statement has lead us to comprehend the magnitude of the issue under study and its impact on learners' language acquisition, bearing in mind that students lack of listening comprehension practice, due to the fact that this is a skill of less priority than reading and writing. According to the necessity that is required to supply, the English listening skills are the core concept of this investigation. Mainly because it is the ability that the pre-service teacher struggled for improving across numerous activities.

**Audio storytelling:**

Audio storytelling is a didactic tool that serves as a useful device to promote the listening improvement of English non-native speakers, based on the reproduction of childhood stories at a beginner level that catch individual's attention by means of the description of fables, problematic situations and stories. This technique organizes events in a logical manner, properly structured and appealing, being the oldest way of transmitting knowledge through generations. The stories told clearly influenced the values and behaviours of individuals. (Cagica and Cibrão 2016)

It has traditionally been used with second-language learners. In many cases, this digital source has proven successful in helping students to access literature and enjoy books. Nevertheless, they have not been widely used with average, mainly because of the lack of technological devices in educative institutions where it is required that learners interact with innovative teaching strategies to help them achieve easier the target language.

## **Literature review**

Involving digital stories in teaching may bring some positive results to the learning population; those positive aspects are related to catch easier the students' attention, uses of the TICS and breaks the common paradigms of traditional teaching. Nevertheless, it was possible to find only four updated studies that support the use of audio storytelling in language skill areas, especially on listening.

The first investigation refers to a Turkish study carried out by Mehmet and Gultekin (2017), which highlights the positive influence of storytelling videos in teaching. The aim of this study was to determine the effect of digital stories on fourth graders' listening skills. During its application process, Turkish lessons were conducted using activities and digital stories. The data gathered from a listening comprehension test, and teacher and student interviews showed that listening activities based on the stories had positive effects on listening comprehension skills in the experimental group mainly because encourage learners to investigate the vocabulary in the story and follow it up.

Sandaran and Lim (2013) conducted a study of the effects of digital stories on listening comprehension skills with 9-year old third grade students in a Malaysian primary school which used instruction in Chinese. Students listened and watched eight fairy tales designed as digital stories. Preliminary findings obtained from observations showed that the students' interest, concentration and motivation increased substantially, and their listening comprehension skills developed during the listening activities. However, they stated that in

order to develop listening comprehension skills, there should be vocabulary teaching activities before the students listened to and watched digital stories.

Similarly, a qualitative inquiry deployed by Gimeno-Sanz (2015), denotes the benefits of using digital storytelling as an element of innovation and motivation with learners of English at the Universitat Politècnica de Valencia, Spain. Learners were led to analyze and describe eight sessions in which the educator used video stories and concludes that DS is a useful and engaging teaching, taking into account that a sequence of video sessions created listening habits on intermediate students.

Likewise, in the study of Kashani et al. (2013), researchers chose audio stories accompanying pictures to encourage students to use their own experience to communicate in English. Findings indicated that picture-before listening showed better performance over the other conditions. In other words, picture-before listening task supports the view that “visual annotations facilitate deeper processing of a proposition better than verbal annotations do”

Besides these studies, other researchers have investigated the effects of digital stories and digital storytelling on other language areas (writing and reading) in mother language or foreign language teaching. These include studies on the development of writing skills in foreign language education (Abou Shaban, 2015; Abdollahpour & Asaszadeh, 2012; Chuang, Kuo, Chiang, Su & Chang, 2013), and studies on the development of writing skills in mother language education (Baki, 2015; Foley, 2013; Çıralı, 2012).

## **Methodology**

The present action research aimed at promoting sixth graders' listening comprehension through the implementation of six listening comprehension workshops which employed storytelling videos to accomplish its objectives. Taking into account that it was essential to collect the teacher and students' insights regarding the development of the workshops and the changes that may appear along the process, a qualitative approach was adopted by this study. Likewise, this investigation counted with 26 students of sixth grade of the Cristo Rey high school as population; In addition, it was necessary the collaboration of the teacher and four students to be part of the project by participating in two interviews. Three different instruments were used along the implementation of this project: Two sessions of semi-structured interviews, two questionnaires and a listening tests to assess the listening level of both groups; the one which was intervened and the other which continued with the normal learning process.

## **Type of Research**

This study was a qualitative research because the researcher was able to explore and interact with people by examining their behaviors, relationships, etc. Creswell (2007) conceived the qualitative research as “the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 37) In here, researchers take into account the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and the description and interpretation of the problem.

## **Developing an action research**

This pedagogical component was developed under the parameters of an Action Research that aims at providing teachers the opportunity to study but also to analyze and to improve their own practices. According to Mills (2000) action research is a systematic inquiry done by teachers to find information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, that means how they teach, and how well their students learn.

Two particular techniques were employed. In the initial workshop it was implemented the Bottom-up technique which allowed that beginners approached gradually to the information stated by a native English speaker. The Bottom-up processing helps students recognize lexicon and pronunciation features to understand a short speech. On the other hand, the pre, while and listening technique served to carry out the rest of the oral comprehension workshops. By means of the implementation of this technique, sixth graders were empowered to associate isolated words said by an English native speaker with the reading of short sentences related to the video script. Depending on the videos' topic and the advances on learners' comprehension of audio texts, it will be decided the type of technique to be developed in each session. In addition, a permission letter was given to four participant-students in which learners will be asked their perception and experiences related to listening skills and the unfolding of five oral comprehension workshop in the English class. ([Appendix 1](#)).

## **Data collection Instruments**

### **Non-participant Observations**

Involves observing participants without actively participating. It is commonly used to comprehend a phenomenon by entering the community while remaining apart from the activities being observed.

The observation process is a three-stage funnel. Spradley (1980), quoted by Liu and Maitlis (2010, p. 610-612), states that it is necessary to begin with a descriptive observation in order to get an overview of the setting, then it is important to focus the observation to pay attention to the activities that interest them, and then select the observation to investigate relations between the elements they have selected.

### **Questionnaire**

This first instrument was applied at the beginning of the project implementation. The questionnaire aimed at obtaining information about students' needs in terms of their perception, beliefs, and necessities regarding listening comprehension.

As a matter of fact, questionnaires are “doubtless one of the primary sources of obtaining data in any research endeavor” as stated by (Richards & Smith, 2002, p.438). In this case, the type of questionnaire selected was the unstructured one as “it provides both, closed-ended and open-ended questions” (Zohrabi, M. 2013, p.255) which results in an efficient way of collecting data.



### **English listening test**

Listening is a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger sociocultural context of the utterance. Co-ordinating all of this involves a great deal of mental activity on the part of the listener. Listening is hard work, and deserves more analysis and support (Hsiao, Chang, Lin, Chen, Wu, & Lin, 2014). These authors and some others denote the importance of involving learners in a frequent evaluation of their listening skill, mostly because it is necessary they are ready to face up any listening comprehension challenge along their professional lives. The role of this tool in the project previously implemented lied on the necessity of find out the English listening level that students had and which topics needed to be reinforce.

### **Research journal**

In addition, this action research project made use of a research journal, in which the researcher described and made comments about the implementation of the workshops. The main target in using it was to allow the researcher to reflect about the sequence of the strategies implemented. Taking into account that a research journal is a systematic record, usually written, that is kept by a researcher for the purpose of observing and reflecting on phenomena relevant to a particular research study.

## **Listening comprehension workshops**

### **Methodology**

In order to accomplish the general and specific objectives presented in this action research, the teacher in service designed a sequence of workshops that at the end of her practicum will evoke a positive impact on learners' English comprehension across the practice of the listening competence. This phenomenon was evidenced due to the fact that few activities focused to improve listening skills in sixth A grade were developed in class. In view of that, the researcher opted for creating a series of workshops aimed to involve learners in a frequent habit of listening short audios in English, get to know the scripts and try to describe the information understood using the second language.

### **Initial phase**

During the initial six weeks, the investigator strove for deploying the first questionnaire and the English listening test to the focal group. (Appendix). At the same time, she gave the details about the listening comprehension workshop to the class and arranged a meeting with the possible participants in order to provide them with the permission letters and establish the interviews' dates. In the third week, students gave back the permission letter already signed by their parents, thus she proceeded to design the first interview. A research chronogram that contains the project progress was designed as a guide. (Appendix 1) equally important, a chart that describes the activities and resources employed during the workshop development is presented in the following appendix. (Appendix 2)

### **Following phase**

In the intermediate phase, the pre-service teacher focused on developing five listening comprehension workshops in which there were deployed three activities per session. Along this period the practitioner gathered data from the listening test that she implemented after each workshop and the research journal in which the teacher in training reflected about the proximity to the project's objectives. Several times the research had to make changes to the workshops' sequence based on the comments jotted down in the research journal, mostly to the English level that students had the grammar content the class had to accomplish.

### **Final phase**

As final stage, the educator handed out the second questioner and interviewed a second time to the participants, in this final interview she aimed at corroborating information observed and data gathered from the activities in class. As core aspect of this phase, there was carried out the final listening comprehension session in which students put into practice the knowledge they grasped during the workshops. Instead of using only the listening skill, learners strove for employing the speaking competence in English projected in five role-plays. This final product served to know how positive the influence of the five listening comprehension workshops in sixth graders was.

#### *Oral comprehension workshop #1: "Chicka Boom"*

The purpose of presenting this type of audio book was besides improving students' listening comprehension, make a review of the topic "Alphabet in English" which was explained in previous classes. In the planning of class, it is described fully the development

of the class joined to the workshop ([Appendix 3](#)). However, a sequence of the first workshop was also designed, which contains its objectives and methodology. ([Appendix 4](#))

*Oral comprehension workshop #2: “You are not small”*

Subsequently, the second workshop focused on analyzing an example of self-esteem and reviewing simple adjectives by means of a book read-aloud video. This session allowed that students were able to comprehend simple events and describe those using isolated words in English. Following, the planning class ([Appendix 5](#)) and the workshop sequence is attached. ([Appendix 6](#))

*Oral comprehension workshop #3: “It’s pumpkin day, Mouse!”*

In the third workshop it was implemented a technique of pre, while and post listening which served to approach sixth graders to a deeper comprehension of an audio book about Halloween and characters’ feelings. Additionally, the planning class also shows the relation of the workshop with the class ([Appendix 7](#)) whereas the sequence describes in detail how each part of the technique was implemented in the third workshop. ([Appendix 8](#))

*Oral comprehension workshop #4: The three little pigs*

In the following workshop, the activities were developed in order to analyze a common childhood story, which approached learners to feel more confident with the story and try to comprehend the script more easily. In this session was employed some images of the characters, the script of the story and a final listening test. The following planning class may help the reader to get more details of the workshop (**Appendix 9**) and the sequence will better explain the procedure employed. (**Appendix 10**)

*Oral comprehension workshop #5: the going to bed book*

This was the final comprehension workshop developed in the focal group, it comprised a pre-listening activity related to some images, a video about a bed story in which students were able to recognize the animals in English and the basic routine before going to sleep. In the following planning class will be describe in detail the workshop (**Appendix 11**) whereas the sequence will explain some other aspects of the implementation (**Appendix 12**).

*Workshop #6: Final product- Oral production.*

Having as a base the previous listening workshops, in this session students were able to perform each tale that was analyzed in the past weeks. The main purpose of this session was to put into practice the information that students heard in the workshops and reproduce it through short role-plays. For more details, the planning class (Appendix 13) and the sequence of the workshop (appendix 14) must be read gradually.

## **Results**

Having collected as much data as possible, the researcher proceeded to organize the information in some purposefully matrixes, which were extremely useful as they allowed the pre-service teacher to give a glance to the perceptions of various participants at the same time and relate them to a single question of each interview (Appendix 15). On the other hand, the teacher created some cake diagrams with the target of better arranging the information obtained from the close questions encompassed in both questionnaires. (Appendix 16) In addition, the comments denoted by the investigator in the research journal were greatly helpful to better shape the results that emerged from the action project

implementation. Unfortunately, the interview with the teacher in charge of the group was not possible to develop due to the lack of time and disinterest in participating in the project, besides she did not sign the permission letter that the investigator required.

The results that emerged from this action research project will be explained systematically by means of describing if the objectives were successfully accomplished.

*Specific objective #1: To implement five workshops about oral comprehension in a sixth-grade class at Cristo Rey School.*

With regards to this objective, it can be stated that the researcher successfully achieved the target of carrying out five video tale analysis, in which students developed a series of activities that along the session encouraged them to better comprehend the speech of the native speaker. Even though, most of the time there was an inconvenient in the use of the projector and the speakers due to the lack of equipment in the institution, it was possible to arrange the workshops in a different schedule. Additionally, every participant stated positive opinions related to the implementation of the listening workshops in the English classes; “*Me gustan porque uno aprende más y entiende más*” (Participant #1). “*Me parece muy bien porque aprendeos a desarrollar más entendimiento en inglés*” (Participant #4).

*Specific objective #2: To encourage 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners to read and subsequently to pronounce the script of the audio stories.*

The second specific objective was completed by means of the oral comprehension workshops #1, #3 and #6 as individuals were required to pay attention to a book read-aloud video, copy the unknown vocabulary and consequently read and analyze its script. In these

workshops the researcher decided to use the script of the stories based on the fact that in some occasions students were confused and lost when they were hearing the audio, for the reason that they did not comprehend what the speaker was saying. (Research Journal)

Specific objective #3: To enroll 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in the representation of one of the audio stories previously listened.

From this objective, it can be said that learners represented effectively each tale that was previously practiced in class. The participant observation shown that students were actively engaged in this activity, considering that they designed their own scenario and masks in order to perform properly each character. The teacher gave them the order of presentations and established some common rules. The perception of one of the participants support this statement *“En ese evento nos divertimos porque no nos dio pena salir a hablar en inglés si no que nos divertimos usando las máscaras”* (Participant#2)

## **Chapter II: Research Component**

### **The Training of Practitioners' Reflexive Spirit of PLEX, A Training Tool to Qualify the Pedagogical Practicum**

#### ***Introduction***

In the context of training in PLEX, the novice teachers' pedagogical practicums are recognized as one of the relevant aspects and updating to document in order to improve the teaching-learning processes and the education assessment.

Evidently, it exists a manifested interest regarding the necessity of comprehending and transform the pedagogical practice also it is certain that the majority of local studies focus merely on learning than teaching issues.

It has been considered relevant to formulate a project that encompass a reflective approach about the practicum as a way to achieve knowledge, behaviors and attitudes that guide the teacher practice; similarly as an exercise of internalization, immersion and a consistent exploration of the teacher's own subjectivity. Across the formulation of questions and searching of information in order to solve problems and self-acknowledge.



### *Statement of the Problem*

At the school it is assumed some medullar aspects of the individuals, the constitutional life without questioning, they are seen as a stamps, permanent and invariable features that are part of the school's identity and culture. When the events are unfolded naturally, the teacher takes a risk of getting used to a regular action that does not allow the pedagogical evolution and the renovation of the academic culture. A practitioner lack of reflection does not promote the evidence of problematic situations; those skills are ignored. Taking that into account, the pedagogical practicum is assumed since repetitive codes that place the teachers in a traditional task, of cultural reproduction, becoming a barrier to the emerging of practices that tend to transform thoughts and knowledge, in order to solve social needs.

As a solution to that situation, it is necessary that the process of forming educators encourage the teachers' reflective spirit that contributes to improve their pedagogical practices that at the same time might be essential elements that transform their job and professional life.

At the bachelor in foreign languages of the University of Pamplona, the reflection is seen as a fundamental exercise to students develop their practicum, self-assessing and being critics about their teaching practices.

### ***Justification***

The formulation of this project in the practicum context of the foreign languages students enrolls the professional conception of the practicum stage as spearhead to improve the educative process at the institutions where PRADO (*Practica docente*) is being implemented. Pay attention to the role of reflection, it is considered the first step to understand the difficulties of the profession, the actions and to be interested in the approaches in order to assist a problematic situation and being analytic about it.

According to the postulation of the educational philosopher Dewey, J. pioneer of the reflective thought field applied to teaching, it is justifiable the project's necessity to empower learners with analytical tools and self-observation that allow them distinguish between the routinely action and the reflective action. We consider that a reflective approach protects individuals from the traditional context and the authority that influent the institution.

## Objectives

### *General objective*

- To implement the reflection as a shifter tool in the pedagogical process of the practicum.
- To promote the development of the reflective spirit in practitioners that allow them to analyze their pedagogical practice.

### *Specific objectives*

- To consolidate a collective of teachers in training with critical spirit that reflect and present proposals and alternative solutions for any problematic in the pedagogical practicum.
- To socialize standards, share ideas and guidelines to assume the pedagogical practicum and fit effectively in the institution.
- To identify and analyze the strategies that the student use in the teaching practice.
- To implement reflective workshops and develop didactic units that guide the reflection of the practitioners.

- To analyze the own beliefs that are held about the teaching job and the students.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The theory about the teaching profession, the reflection and the pedagogical practice, constitute this theoretical framework. In order to have a clearer view about the encompassed concepts, closely related to this research project, an approximation of each one of them is presented hereafter.

#### ***The teaching profession***

One of the main members of the institution is the educator, who has the function of conveying knowledge linked to a particular field, moreover who is in charge of training the students.

The teacher profession encompasses a number of competences that nowadays constitute a conceptualization and a way to develop the pacification and management of human resources guided to facilitate a linkage between work and education. Thus, every educator must accomplish some competences that allow them to have control over the knowledge and skills of a specific area, since the first intellectual requirement of a professional is the performance level.

Likewise, all the teachers must own some competences regarding the organization of content, in other words the pedagogical practice is not only about arranging the components to provide them to the apprentices but to foresee the conditions of the teaching in an

educational context. The main function that the educators should develop is designing or foreseeing the teaching practicum.

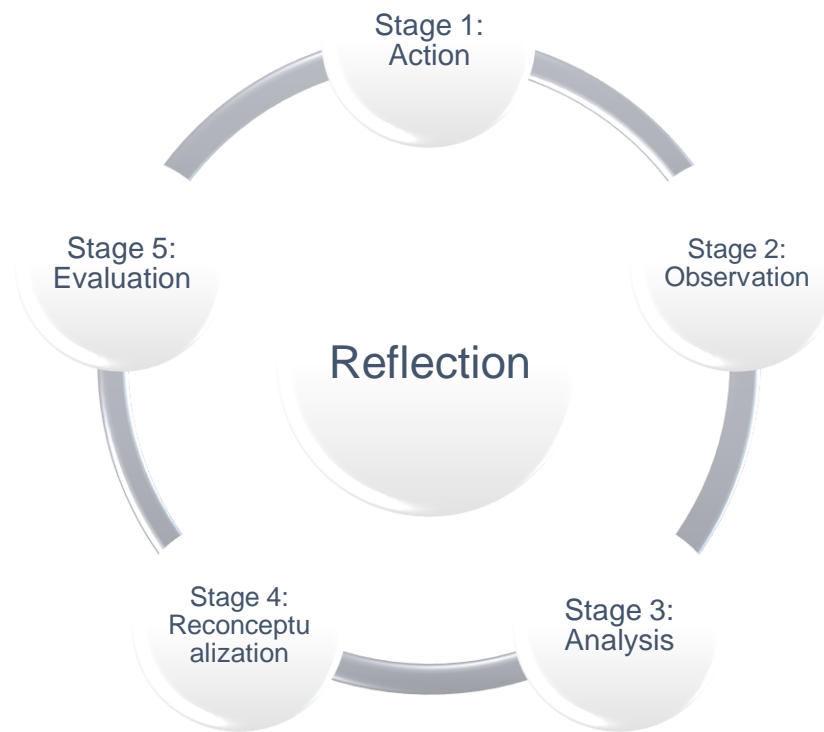
### *The reflection*

Taking about reflection, imply to discuss different conceptions about that notion. For that reason, in order to deepen in its definition, two aspects will be taken into account: The reflection as a process and the reflection as a theme. (Correa Molina et al 2010)

#### *-The reflection as a process*

The reflection is executed from some stages that cyclically obtain as a result a process. According to Correa Molina et al (2010) to reflect about the experience imply “a type of reflective dialogue with the situation, where the language might favor the access to the individual’s experiences, what might permit to extract a new structuration from the situation”.

The stages of the reflection process as process is evidenced in the following scheme:



*-The reflection as a theme*

The conception of reflection is based on a theme that is related with that concept. Having a Grimmet et al. (1999) as a reference cited by Correa Molina et al (2010), the reflection is based on three perspectives: the reflection as an instrumental mediation of the action, the reflection as a deliberation and the reflection as a reconstruction of the experience. Being for the first two perspective, external aspects, the source of the knowledge that allow reflecting; and the contextual aspects, which allow reflecting from a third perspective. Likewise, those perspectives count on mediators to execute that process. Firstly, it is found the action, the context, the colleagues and the person who reflects.

*-The teaching reflection*

To actualize and qualify the academics proposals at the university and guide the students towards new ways of being in contact with the world, it is necessary that the educator question himself about his practice and the impact that it has; to judge the knowledge and assume different roles in a pedagogical relation.

The teacher has a central role in the current educative world; acting in a complex space, submitted to frequent changes determined for the interaction of different factors and conditions. The teaching profession requires that “the teachers develop their professional knowledge related to the changeable circumstances” (Ebutt y EllioT: 1986). In that context, the practice’s issues demand a particular procedure guided to the comprehension and social interaction.

The necessity of linking the evolving social reality to our pedagogical endeavor is evidenced in the number of attempts to explain the academic phenomena and the solutions to avoid them.

This study will serve to the teacher participants to reflect about their methodological processes in light of the reflection as an only rational and ethic way of intervention.  
(Sacristán 1999)

According to Van Manen (1997) it exists different levels of reflexivity, in a first stage inside the classroom occur the application of kills and knowledge; the reflection is applied in the selection and suitable use of didactic strategies that the teacher will employ.

In a second level, the reflection brings implicit budgets in the specific teaching practices. Then, the consequences about the strategies adopted are analyzed, the curriculum, the practices. Thus, it is opted for the application of educative criteria to the practicum of teaching in order to take pedagogical decisions adapted to the institutional reality and its contexts.

Thirdly, Van Manen establishes a reflective exercise, in this level the reflection is more elaborated, a reconsideration of ethic, normative and moral criteria related direct or indirectly with the classroom.

*-The teaching practice.*

To analyze and reflect about the practice it is considered suitable to appeal to a conceptual operation of the practice classification; having that in mind, it assumed the proposal of Zeichner, who has established some modalities of practice:

- *Academic practice*

Aims at preparing capable teachers of reflecting about the subjects they teach, in a way they transform them in comprehensible structures to the students.

- *Social efficiency practice*

Attempts to achieve an efficiency teaching across the application of didactic techniques that are deduced of general principles that the pedagogical research has arrived. In this case,



the reflection consisted on a strategical decision. “Select among the available techniques, the one that best fit”

This is the way, the technical rationality proceeds.

### **Development**

The teaching is based on the interests and the development of the learner and at the same time, it is considered the development of the teacher as educator and person.

### **Social Reconstruction**

The objective of the reflection is the social, economic and political context, in that way that the democratic and equitable relations being encourage inside the classroom.

### **Generic**

The programs allude to the reflection in a generic way, but without specifying the contents that are going to reflect about, neither the strategies to encourage the reflective learning.

### **Trigger of Reflection**

According to Schulman (1987), these activators are the cognitive fundamentals of the teacher about the life inside the classroom; those are essential because constitute the element of the reflective thinking that brings knowledge in the process that an educator needs in order to take decisions in the classes.

### **Critic element of the reflective thinking**

This element of the reflective thinking refers to “The moral and ethical aspects of the compassion and social justice”, this regarding Sparks-Langer y Colton 1991: 39. The interest related to the social justice and the ethic in the education.

Those authors established some classified categories of the knowledge.

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge.
3. Curricular knowledge (materials, programs, etc)
4. Teaching knowledge and own professional configuration.
5. Learners’ knowledge and its characteristics.
6. Knowledge about the educative contexts.
7. Knowledge about foundations: philosophic, historic, axiologique.

According to Georgea Spark-Langer and Amy Colton, the narrative element other of the reflective thinking elements that are included in this study as instrument. This is linked to the teacher’s narrations in order to encourage the report about the experience of the educator in the class, which are presented in many different ways, accomplish diverse functions and contributes to the subjectivity. In this component are located the teacher’s journals, which trigger the reflective thinking in the educators, about their practice experiences.

## ***Methodology***

The methodological strategy proposed has as a central axis of the continuous reflection that additionally contains some meetings to strength the practicum as an initial space to aboard the teaching and labor problematic. The principles of organization are the autonomy, planning and self-observation.

This study is developed under a qualitative approach, from the reflective perspective as a professional space that will contribute widely to the description, identification and analysis of the own pedagogical didactic. This concept is back up by Cottrel 2011, who states that the reflective perspective refers to “the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it”

To collect the data in this study, some instruments will be applied.

### **Reflective workshops**

The reflective workshops aimed at leading the reflective process of the practitioners, but at the same time socialize and share experiences that enriched the process and employed new tools that allow the teacher improve his/her practice. Along the semester, the practitioner attended the two reflective workshops that the practicum directors unfolded which helped her to share her teaching experiences and hear the ones of her classmates.

## **Objectives**

- To consolidate a collective of practitioners with a critic spirit that reflect and present solutions to the issues presented in their teaching practice.
- To socialize criteria, share ideas and guidelines to assume their teaching practice.
- To qualify, facilitate and join effectively to the academic community.

## **Sheet of Self-observation**

The sheet of self- observation had as a main objective to lead the practitioner to get an own view of his/her practice and his role in the classroom and the educative community that she belongs to. Unfortunately, the teacher in service accomplished three of the four sheet of self- observation that were listed in the data collection timetable of this component.

## **Narrative**

The reflective exercise allowed that the student expressed about her practice from the narration of her experience as a way to give sense the everyday life of the teacher. Taking into account that in total were eight written reflections that the practitioner had to send weekly to her tutor, she successfully accomplished to reflect every Friday about her teaching practicum. In this section, the pre-service teacher described how she was able to overcome tough issues that encountered during her practicum.

## Class Records

To have evidences of the practitioners' actions in the classrooms, it was necessary to reflect about different aspects related to the process of foreign languages teaching/learning, which might be take into account for the educator in training in the reflective exercise. Those records allowed teachers to have an external and constructive look to the teaching practice. The teacher in service employed this research tool to analyze the step by step of her class with the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of her teaching strategies and her role as an English teacher.

## Date collection Timetable

Table 5 Timetable for data gathering – Research component.

Data Collection's Timetable										
WEEKS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	March 12 <sup>th</sup> – March 16 <sup>th</sup>	March 19 <sup>th</sup> – March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	March 26 <sup>th</sup> – March 30 <sup>th</sup>	April 2 <sup>nd</sup> – April 6 <sup>th</sup>	April 9 <sup>th</sup> – April 13 <sup>th</sup>	April 16 <sup>th</sup> – April 20 <sup>th</sup>	April 23 <sup>rd</sup> – April 27 <sup>th</sup>	April 30 <sup>th</sup> – May 4 <sup>th</sup>	May 7 <sup>th</sup> – May 11 <sup>th</sup>	May 14 <sup>th</sup> – May 18 <sup>th</sup>
Narrative report	x	X	x	X	X	x	x	x	X	X
Self-observation checklist		X		X		x				X
Reflective workshops				X			x			X
Class recordings						x				

## Conclusions

As a teacher, a crucial aspect of my profession lays on the frequency of practice's reflections, the classes' settings, its quality and how receptive my students are to the knowledge is being taught.

Having that in mind, the process of reflection makes part of the teaching as a whole. Considering that as the educator noticed possible gaps in her methodology or ineffectiveness regarding the goals of the teaching sessions; this tool helped her to detect the fails in the structure and rearrange it in a more suitable form in order to evoke a positive impact on learners learning.

The second chapter of this investigation was guided by some elemental objectives that approached the practitioner to master the reflection since her professional area.

As a matter of fact, during the unfolding of these ten weeks of teaching practicum, the pre-service teacher realized that the general objectives of the Research component. (1) To implement the reflection as a shifter tool in the pedagogical process of the practicum and (2) To promote the development of the reflective spirit in practitioners that allow them to analyze their pedagogical practice, were gradually achieved. As she faced different situations along the classes, she felt motivated to analyze them in detail and search for mechanisms that might be useful in solving them. Nevertheless, it was imperative that the pre-service teacher reflected once a week in order to improve gradually her thinking about the needs that were not taking into account and the knowledge that needed to be strength.

This exercise played an essential role in shaping the practitioner's behavior since it led her to observe closely how her practice was influencing the teaching ambience and students' academic performance.

For instance, in the narrative #3 the teacher in service states *"hay un factor que muchos docentes pasan por alto al momento de desarrollar sus clases y es la educación de niños con necesidades educativas especiales"*. Across this written production, she was able to detect a common difficulty that was observed in most of the grades and that needed to be addressed in order to help and support students with educational needs.

The eight reflective narrative contributed greatly to the way how the pre-service teacher planed her classes, specially the appropriate methodology that each class requires depending of the students' needs and the teaching ambience. In addition, this tool allowed that the educator was able to detect the effectiveness and quality of the activities that she implemented and when it was necessary she made modifications to them in order to approach learners to a meaningful learning.

With regards to the specific objectives, I should affirm that until now fortunately every single of them have been taking into account along the teaching practicum. For instance, the fourth objective (To implement reflective workshops and develop didactic units that guide the reflection of the practitioners) was evidenced as the community of teacher practitioners met twice with the directors of the practicum. In this session was possible to hear about the experiences lived by each one of them and how useful was to know the strategies used by them to get things better. This tool was especially meaningful for the practitioner as she was able to implement her classmates' strategies to control the discipline in sixth grade.

On the other hand, the four online self-evaluations filled in every two weeks helped the pre-service teacher to notice the aspects that she regularly did not take much into account but that she reinforced along the following week. It is imperative that this tool be included in the teaching life of each educator bearing in mind its future positive impact on learners.

In order to go deeper in the analysis of the usefulness of the reflection as a practicum tool, it is important to assess each aspect of the teaching, such as the methodology that is been guided the process, the activities, resources, environment of the classrooms and the relation established by the teacher with her students, among others.

A common mistake that many teachers encounter is to believe that the teaching methodology of a grade is a static and one of a kind, ignoring that the reflection process may help the educator to revise constantly how the lessons have been going on. The reflection component played a significant role on the selection and implementation of different strategies that were adjusted according to the learners' needs. After every class the educator wrote in her research journal how effective was the strategy recently implemented and the possibilities of keeping using it in a different population.

However, the methodology is not the only important aspect that requires assess by the teacher. The strategies, activities and resources implemented are small but essential parts of the whole class and checking that each one of them are developing correctly will exert a positive impact on learners. For instance, sometimes students were tired of listening



to the explanation of grammar content, thus this was a great opportunity to link the grammar content to a game that allow learners to obtain a meaningful learning.

The reflection implementation has contributed positively to my teaching practicum since it has turned me in a more receptive professional. Not ignoring the necessities of every student, treating the group as a whole that needs specific aids taking into account that even though there are several students with special educational needs, some others carry with them personal problems that limit them to improve their learning process. Reflection empowers the educator to better handle difficult situations and not harm learners but supply their needs.

### **Chapter III: Outreach Component**

**Macro Project: English language Sensitization in primary schools of Pamplona city**

**Sub- Project: Promoting the English reading comprehension of fourth graders at the Cristo Rey School**

#### **Introduction**

To participate in the municipal policies at an economic, academic and cultural scope, motivated to the Colombian national government to foster the learning of foreign languages in different institutions around the country. In this sense, the citizens might have the opportunity of participating in cultural exchanges that allow them accede to more equitable conditions regarding the personal and social development of the country.

In pursuit of promoting the learning of the English language in Colombia and make the Colombians more competitive citizens the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) launched in 2004 the National Bilingualism Program, which main objective is “To have capable citizens to communicate in English with international standards that entail the country in universal communicative processes, in the global economy and cultural openness.” Thus, the Ministry has been implemented a wide variety of strategies in different levels of education in order to achieve its target. For example, it was created some standards of quality in English for primary and high school, a system of solid and coherent assessment, the description and the development of training planes.

This program has been developed around the country and have integrated the job of the educational secretary, the public and private universities and languages institutions, nevertheless the results obtained until the moment have not been successful because most of the educative institutions have not adopted the program.

Regarding to the primary school, the national government attempts to expand the coverage of the English teaching to children, taking into account that most of those educative establishments rarely counts on a English teacher that guide the teaching – learning processes and consequently the results of the evaluations applied in a national level are not successful.

The University of Pamplona as a public institution and the program of bachelor in foreign languages has approached to the reality that primary schools face in Pamplona regarding to the policies of bilingualism, having in mind that several educative institutions do not have an English teacher to fulfill the learners' necessities.

Taking into account the reality and the issue originated from it, the present proposal of this social projection attempts to fulfill the necessities of training in English of the child population at the primary school in Pamplona. Moreover, integrate the formation in foreign languages of the students of the bachelor program in foreign languages English- French into the educative reality of that sector, to decrease the average generated between the public and private school at the English field.

The governmental policies identify the problem; nevertheless, the care of those needs are not fulfill properly. It is necessary an effective support, trainers in foreign languages field, in order to get consistency in the exams, the tests and the results of the students with the proposals established in Colombia.

In this specific case, the teacher in service detected a wrong development of the reading comprehension activities, taking into account that many aspects affected the

adequate process that this type of skill requires. During the two weeks observation the pre-service educator noticed three main aspects that hampered the learners' reading comprehension. The first one referred that the primary school teacher was not qualified to teach English bearing in mind that she did not know enough vocabulary, she did not take into account the three steps reading which encompass pre, while and post reading activities. Besides, she was not able to give feedback to her students due to the fact that she did not know how to handle the topic. Secondly, it was noticed that most of the time students were required to complete a soap letter, color drawings or write list of words, instead of dividing the two hours class in the different English skills that each learner should acquire, specially the reading comprehension part.

Having that in mind, the pre-service teacher decided to implement a suitable strategy that later on will improve learners reading comprehension in English, which it was the pre, while and post reading strategy.

## **General objectives**

The setting in motion of this outreach project by the bachelor program in foreign languages English- French of the University of Pamplona, it is led by the following guidelines.

- To fulfill the needs in English training of the child population of the primary schools in Pamplona.
- To integrate the training in foreign languages of the bachelor program in foreign languages' students to the educative reality of the English teaching at the primary schools in Pamplona.

## **Specific Objectives**

In pursuit of a wider comprehension of the aspects previously stated, this proposal will attempt:

- To encourage English reading habits on primary students.
- To familiarize the primary school child of Pamplona with relevant knowledge in English.
- To involve the bachelor program in foreign languages students in the process of English teaching at the primary schools in Pamplona.
- To articulate the training of the bachelor program in foreign languages' students with the social project programs that offers the "Oficina de Interacción social" of Pamplona.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Languages teaching**

#### *International linguistic policies*

“The UNESCO has been worried long time ago for the languages’ role in the worldwide context. In its general conference adopted the term “multilingual education” to refer to the use at least of three languages: the mother tongue, a regional or national tongue and an international one. This resolution departed from the idea that the national and global requirements of participation, also the attention of the particular needs of the communities cultural and linguistically different, only can be address through the multilingual education. Cruz M, Loyo G, & Mendez E, (2011).

The UNSECO (2003) considers that the languages are not only means of communication but that represents the real origin of the cultural expressions; they carry identities, values and worldviews. Thus, it proposes as principle for the cultural diversity, maintain and strength the languages diversity (Including those with nomadic and isolated populations) at the same time to support the learning of international languages that offers access to the worldwide community and the exchange of information. To achieve that, the UNESCO suggests fostering the Multilingualism and the intercultural dialogue, as well as to develop policies for the translation of written and visual material with the purpose of promoting ideas and artistic works.

According to Lima M, (2006), “Currently, the foreign languages learning is an unavoidable need as well as the learning of the cultures that they represent. The languages constitute the spirit and the consciousness of the nations. They are the best instrument to accede to other cultures, histories and other ways to see and understand the world, delete the distances and approach us to the science and the technology”. Every type of learning is vital for the sociability of the human being as long as allow it to untangle adequately in different contexts. The learning of one and several foreign languages focus the personal and professional life of an individual allowing him to be successful in his performance.

### **National Program of Bilingualism**

Colombia, as other countries in Latin America and the world, has adopted academic policies directed to spread the English as a foreign language, across the national program of bilingualism launched in 2014 with three specific lines of work: basic elementary institutions, high school, college education, educational programs for working and human development; the ethno-education, and flexible models of education. This program attempts to the formation of the competitive and productive human talent at a global context in different fields of action. (MEN, 2006, pag. 6)

The following chart shows the expected levels for the national bilingualism program to the year 2019:

Chart 1. Expected levels of language in the PNB

Population	Language level target
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade students of basic elementary education	A1 (Beginner)
7 <sup>th</sup> grade students of basic secondary education	A2 (Basic)
11 <sup>th</sup> grade students of basic education	B1 (Pre-intermediate)
College graduated	B2 (Intermediate)
Foreign languages degree graduated students	C1 (Advance)
Current teachers of basic elementary education	A2 (Basic)
English teachers	B2 (Intermediate)

Source: adapted from Altablero (2005)

Took from: Cárdenas, R.; Miranda, N. (2014)



## **Bilingualism**

The bilingualism refers to the different mastery level, which an individual communicates in more than a language and culture. This level mainly depends to the context where the individual is. Therefore, according to how the other language is used, that language is considered a foreign language. MEN (2006).

### **The English teaching at the elementary school**

According to Yesser A, & Chacon C, (2011) “The acquisition of a foreign language is a complex process in which intervene different variables of cognitive and affective feature inherent to the individual like own factors of the sociocultural and educative context such as the curriculum, the methodology employed and the teacher training in the foreign language”. Based on the information written previously, Yesser, A. & Chacon, C. (2011) makes a differentiation between the terms Acquisition and Learning related to the FL. “The language acquisition occurs natural and unconsciously as a comprehensible input, while the Learning implies to learn consciously the grammar rules”

Pre-Production: This is the phase in which the child develops the skill to listen and comprehend the language across gestures and actions, this is a period characterized by the silence. Hence, in this phase is recommended utilize the Total Physical Response method (TPR) proposed by Asher to stimulate the development of the FL through psychomotor activities, without focusing in the oral production.

Extensive speaking: in this period, the child is capable of producing complete sentences and participate in conversations. The teacher must help the students to improve the fluency in the foreign language.

In order to support the information previously mentioned about the process of a foreign language acquisition, it can be said that according to Yessel A & Chacon C, (2011). “The capacity that the children have to learn, comprehend, discover and formulate communicate forms in a foreign language lies mainly on the necessity of establishing new social approaches” (p. 467). In consequence, the children build across the language, meaning of the world that surround them and establish their own criteria of semiotic interpretation to each concept discovered. For this reason, the FL learning should begin from the previous knowledge and the mother tongue schemes, taking into account that the representations developed in previous learning and experience constitute the bases to build through the FL, new mental schemes or to widen the already created”.

Yesser A & Chacon C, (2011) cite Ausubel (1986) who establishes that “From the cognitive psychology’s view point explains that it exists some differences between the child and adult’s cognitive skills regarding the cognition and the affectivity. Which are manifested in the motivation, creativity, spontaneity and flexibility that characterized the children and adults differ, who generally opts for the affective lock at the moment of expressing in a second language”. “Having that in mind, the age is a factor that influence the English learning as a FL, particularly in the pronunciation acquisition. In other words, less age, higher the child’s probability to develop a native’s pronunciation”.

### **Why does a FL should be learned in elementary school?**

Frandiño Y, Bermudez J, & Vasquez V, (2012) cite to Madrid ad McLaren (1981) who affirm that “there are different types of reasons that justify the learning of a foreign language at the school. Highlighting that the real reason is pedagogical and formative. For example, based on different studies, it indicates that:

- The children who begin to learn a FL at the school tend to obtain a more positive performance than others do.
- The kids not only show a special ability to emit sounds and colloquial expressions but a flexibility, spontaneity and audacity that overcome those from the teenagers and adults.
- The children not only are not afraid of making mistakes but tend to acquire and transmit the meaning across gestures.
- The children are in a phase in which their brain’s plasticity facilitates them to learn a foreign language”.

To sum up, it is confirmed that the learning process of the human beings is based on the experiences related to the environment in which they are influenced by other cultures that predominate and identify their autonomy. Especially in the young population, where from a great amount of theories at the psychological and sociological field it is argued that the learning is developed across the observation and the listening of sound that caught the

individuals' attention. Emphasizing that the cognitive process guides to a meaningful learning in the children that begin to study a foreign language.

## **Reading**

Reading skill refers to the ability to understand written text. When students understand written text, and combine their understanding with prior knowledge, they are able to perform a good reading comprehension. According to (Mede, 2010) most ESL/EFL learners have certain difficulties while reading English because they are not aware of the effective ways of reading and understanding a text, which might cause resistance their attitudes towards reading in English. This statement is a perfect example of the issue that primary students face at the Cristo Rey School.

## **Reading comprehension**

On the other side, the reading comprehension is a most precise work, in which people analyze in detail a written form in order to understand information presented in it. Sloat, et al. (2007) states that the reading comprehension skills also might affect one's interpretation of a text meaning. In addition, G. Woolley (2011) emphasizes that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. "The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences". These authors allow to better understanding the importance of improving reading skills in primary students.

## **Pre, while and post reading technique**

One of the things to bear in mind when lesson planning is that classroom reading is not the same as real reading. Classroom reading aims at helping students develop the skills they need to read more effectively in a variety of ways specially in a second language. To enable this, we plan 'pre-reading', 'while-reading', and 'post-reading' stages. These stages can help us make reading more communicative. According to Lopera (2008) in order to enroll learners in a more meaningful reading, it is recommended to design tasks that follow the format of pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and post-reading activities. “These tasks are intended to construct background knowledge. The teacher becomes a bridge builder between what students already know about a concept.”

## **Methodology**

### **Typology of the project**

This is a formative project, disciplinary in the area of the curriculum; opened to the institutions where the practicum is developed and offers training in basic elementary in Pamplona. It makes part of the project in training of the program in foreign languages of the University of Pamplona.

This proposal is linked to the social projection, going beyond the institutional space and enables the articulation of PLEX Bachelor to the community of Pamplona.

The main objective to a pedagogical and communicative level is related to the institutional guidelines of projection and outreach of the university and the Bachelor.

### **Project's Implementation**

From the two hours class, it was selected 45 minutes to only work the reading comprehension part, this strategy was unfolded six times taking into account that some classes were missed up because of the extra activities of the school.

Initially the teacher applied an evaluating reading in which she wanted to assess the students' English level. In the following classes, she opted for employing the reading strategy in the same way. For instance, the pre-reading activity was always a task in which learners had to discuss a specific topic in Spanish and analyze some images related to the characters of the story. On the other hand, the while reading activities were led by the skimming of the text, the acknowledgement of the vocabulary and the prediction of its meaning. As a final stage, learners developed a post- reading task, in which they discussed the text, the learners' understanding of the English words and its coherence.

The material employed in this implementation was mostly worksheets that contained drawings, a short reading no longer than five lines, fill in exercises and a list of short vocabulary that regularly were linked to previous grammar topics such as numbers, colors, verb to-be and others. In addition, some other tools were used such as slides, posters and audios in order to approach learners to a more meaningful comprehension of the topic.

### **Lines of contribution**

- Contribution to the academic formation at the foreign languages area.
- Citizen formation (attendance to the problems of the educative surrounded in order to decrease the inequality of the educative system)
- Projection to the scholar community to the university and program level.

Table 7. Schedule Elementary grade

Hour	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00 – 7:15	<b>Reflection</b>				
7:15 – 8:10			4 <sup>th</sup> grade		
8:10 – 9:00	5 <sup>th</sup> grade		4 <sup>th</sup> grade		
9:00 – 9:45					
9:45 – 10:30	<b>Break</b>				
10:30 – 11:15					
11:15 – 12:00					
12:00 – 12:50					5 <sup>th</sup> grade

## Conclusions

The social service developed in those grades is a suitable space for the teacher in training who takes major advantage in getting to know the population, how handle wide groups and deploying experimental strategies and techniques that later on will give her the experience required to being in charge of a group by herself.

Along the practicum with primary grades, the teacher in training have realized that most of the objectives established in the project have been achieved. Taking into account that she has strove for reinforcing learners' weaknesses and clarify possible doubts and as an important fact, every aspect grasped in previous subjects across the bachelor degree have been incorporating to the classes.

Bearing in mind that the implementation was carried out few times and the students' English level was lower, it was not possible to obtain significant changes in their English reading comprehension. Instead, it is important to highlight that the various implementations of reading comprehension served to empower learners a useful strategy that they may apply by themselves at home and continue the learning process. Among the

positive aspects the pre-service teacher noticed in this final stage were the fact that learners felt motivated of breaking the routine and enroll in new tasks, which required them to work harder and explore unknown topics.

Similarly, she realized that in the final weeks students were adapted to develop a reading comprehension task and when this did not happen they asked the teacher why not do it instead of studying grammar. This behavior demonstrates that even though the reading comprehension is a slow and systematic process, learners enjoy doing it and this increase their imagination and approach them to adopt it as a daily habit. Nevertheless, the sub-project encountered some limitations along the practicum stage, those were the followings; the primary teacher insisted in prioritizing the teaching of grammar content and spend less time on reading activities. Secondly, the learners' English level was minimum thus there were troubles on associate the text with previous knowledge taking into account that everything had to be explained and sometimes this hampered the free developing of the reading.

Even though sometimes, the pre-service teacher faced some difficulties at the moment of developing her classes and link them to the implementation of the sub- project. It can be stated that there were more positive results and she is aware that it is impossible to enroll learners in fluent English in such a short time, on the contrary it is meaningful to approach them to useful habits that later on may help them to learn a second language easier.

Regarding the educator's teaching practicum, developing her social work with primary grades was a great advantage for her, considering that she is a novice teacher and it is imperative that she acquires enough experiences in order to be ready to assume a pay



work in which she will encounter tough situations may applied the different teaching strategies she acknowledge during her labor weeks.

Develop part of her practicum in primary grades have given her strength to put on with difficult situations that emerge during the class which involve personal aspects of the learners, besides the number of students was a challenge for her. Due to the fact that, every single student learns in an opposite way and my job focus on supply the educational needs of them no matter the patters presented, neither time and number of learners. Even though sometimes it turned hard, the pre-service teacher assumed her role and acted according to the guidelines she received in y training along the bachelor degree.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Administrative component**

#### **Introduction**

Among the responsibilities that a teacher in training should keep in mind are not only those related to the teaching of academic content to an assigned number of courses, but also to integrate herself and participate in cultural, academic and institutional events.

Having that in mind, the pre-service teacher will involve in the institutional activities that may have place during the teaching practicum period as an important aspect of this administrative component that contributes to a harmonious school environment and strengthens relationships in the educational context.

To sum up, the student-teacher will punctually attend, collaborate and take part in all the extra-curricular events planned for the present school year. By doing it so, she will grasp a deeper understanding on what being a teacher in a real context encompasses inside and outside the classroom.

**Justification**

The main purpose of the administrative component is to have the pre-service teacher involved in the institutional and extra-curricular activities proposed by the educational center where the practicum stage is being developed. In such way, it is affirmed that one of the duties that teachers possess is to being an active member of the educative community by organizing, cooperating and participating enthusiastically in the school dynamics that are often contemplated in the light of the institution and students' interests and needs.

Besides the importance of being part of the different activities; the administrative component provided the pre-service teacher with an exceptional opportunity to familiarize with the system of the school. For instance, how the school functions on a regular basis; how the school's community including the administrative staff, teachers and students develop and deliver tasks so that the goals of the institution are fully accomplished, among others.

**Objectives****General objective**

- To integrate the teaching practices to the academic and administrative activities that will be unfolding in the institution during the practicum stage.

**Specific objectives**

- To identify and familiarize the teaching practices with the administrative guidelines of the school and how they are developed.

- To establish a good relationship with the members of the school community through constant communication and interaction inside the institution.
- To comprehend the importance and the incidence in students' learning process by engaging in the development of the institutional activities.

## **Methodology**

One of the benefits found in the integral practicum stage is the opportunity to enrich and improve the teaching process by having the experience of transmitting knowledge in a real educational context.

Even when this stage may require an enormous amount of effort, dedication and discipline to be accomplish at its fullest with all the given objectives.

Once the pre-service teacher was located in a public institution, she introduced herself to each course and got to know some students and the administrative staff of the school such as the coordinator and the cooperative teacher. During the institutional observation period, the practitioner became familiar with the physical distribution of the school.

Additionally, the pre-service teacher will participate actively on the activities proposed by the institution according to the academic school calendar for the present year. Even though, the academic schedule goes from 07:00 am to 12:50 pm, the pre-service teacher was required to stay at the school as much as possible in order to prepare the lesson plantings and grading the students' work among others.

## School Activities Timetable

Table: Activities Timetable

<b>CRONOGRAMA DE ACTIVIDADES</b>		
<b>2018-1</b>		
<b>MES</b>	<b>FECHA</b>	<b>ACTIVIDAD</b>
<b>MARZO</b>	1-2	Desarrollo Académico
	2	Elección Personero, Representante Consejo Directivo Y Contralor Estudiantil Organizan docentes sociales y coordinadores.
	5-23	Desarrollo Académico
	23	Segunda actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
	26-30	Desarrollo institucional- Receso escolar (estudiantes)
	28	Bingo Institucional
<b>ABRIL</b>	2-6	Desarrollo de simulaciones 9º, 10º Y 11º
	3	Sesión ordinaria concejo académico
	9-20	Desarrollo Académico
	23	IZADA DE BANDERA – DÍA DEL IDIOMA. Participan todos los grados priorizar manifestaciones artísticas y culturales con los estudiantes.
	24-30	Pruebas de calidad primer periodo – Todos los niveles. 0º a 11º. Acorde a programación realizada por coordinadores.
	30	Tercera actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
<b>MAYO</b>	2-3	Desarrollo académico - Pruebas de calidad primer periodo – Todos los niveles. 0º a 11º. Acorde a programación realizada por coordinadores.
	4	Terminación primer periodo académico – Cierre de plataforma Webcolegios para cargue de calificaciones.
	7	Inicio 2do periodo Académico

	8	Consolidación de reportes académicos por parte de coordinadores.
	7-11	Desarrollo Académico
	15	Celebración institucional día del educador y del personal administrativo franciscano.
	16-18	Desarrollo académico Entrega de informes académicos primer periodo a padres de familia.
	21-25	Desarrollo Académico
	24	Cuarta actividad experiencia significativa proyecto pedagógico transversal “senderos de paz y bien”
	25	SIMULACROS 3°, 5°, 9°, 10° y 11°
	28-31	Desarrollo Académico

Even though this has been stated as the last component of this thesis, it carries a huge importance for the teaching practicum, due to the fact that comprises the fundamentals to establish a harmonious working environment. The educator labor is not only links to teach significant content, but to participate actively in the formation of correct human beings and support the institution in any administrative and academic aspect. At this moment, the practicum stage has been successfully finished and the administrative component objectives were completely achieved. Due to the fact that the pre-service teacher developed her practicum closely jointed to the calendar of extra activities that the institution had to accomplish in each term.

In the educative center that she belongs to, there is a policy of cooperative work that is evidenced when educative events are unfolding. For instance, in the initial term there was a day to develop different activities and workshops that encouraged self-esteem in the students. From each area it was worked this theme in creative way, for example, in the

English classes learners created posters, acronyms and speaking productions using phrases in English, draws and decorations.

Following, there will be described some extra activities in which the practitioner made part.

#### *Self-esteem workshop (Appendix 14)*

Taking into account that along the first term it was presented several English quotes linked to the comprehension of self-esteem and its incorporation to the daily life of students, as a final product it was chosen a day to carry out some different artistic creations that could demonstrate the comprehension that learners acquire from the past reflections. The educator achieved a role of guider and adviser, having in mind that she brought English phrases to complement the work and help the groups to correct the written and oral productions.

#### *Holy Week (Appendix 15)*

Another important event in which she was able to participate was the celebration of the Holy week in a general event with the whole institution. This time, eighth grade learners created an acronym that represented their perceptions about the holy week using simple phrases in English. Initially this project was unfolded in an English class where students formed groups of six and using a dictionary looked for the meaning of some quotes stuck on the board, the draws some representative images of holy characters and then rehearse the phrases in order to comprehend them and learn them by heart. The main role of the pre-service teacher was to support learners in their oral productions and supervise their work.

*The language day (Appendix 16)*

Without doubts, the most remarkable event in which the pre-service teacher took part was the commemoration of the language day for both, English and Spanish language. Taking into account that she is in charge of the English area in most of the grades, she, her supervisor and the Spanish teacher made a collaborative work to arrange a special event in which students from the institution developed creative performances in Spanish and English. For instance, regarding the English area, eighth grade students told some tongue twisters, some others participated in a spelling and verbs completion in which a winner from each course received a reward and finally fifth grade kids performed an English song entitle “Hello, hello”.

Before the setting of the event, she was in charge of organizing the program of the event, being attentive to the development of each performance in my courses and consequently, during the event she participated as host and gave the certificates of participation to the winners. The language day celebration approached me more to my students and the administrative stuff, besides she was able to encourage teenagers and kids to go beyond the classes’ tasks in order to perform a work created by them.



## Conclusions

From this component, the pre-service teacher was able to recognize the impact that her role may have on students' academic performance and personal attitude that not only should be increased inside the classrooms but in different events that the institution develop during the year.

Likewise, the practitioner tried to form part of each plan stipulated in the chronogram and strove for participating actively by means of arranging students according to the guidelines of the events, hosting the language day and awarding those learners that stood out in the English classes. The objectives of this component aimed at enrolling the teacher in service in a more solid and reflective work about her role in the institution, taking into account that some aspects are essential in achieving a harmonious environment at the school. Regarding these aspects, the practitioner successfully rooted good relations with her colleagues and promoted the respect in her classes; also, she acted adequately in problematic situations by means of using the rulebook and following the procedure of discipline.

Generally, any negative aspect emerged from the intervention of the pre-service teacher at the Cristo Rey institution, mainly because the pre-service teacher developed an appropriate practicum in which she took into account the guidelines gave by her supervisor at the beginning of the semester.

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