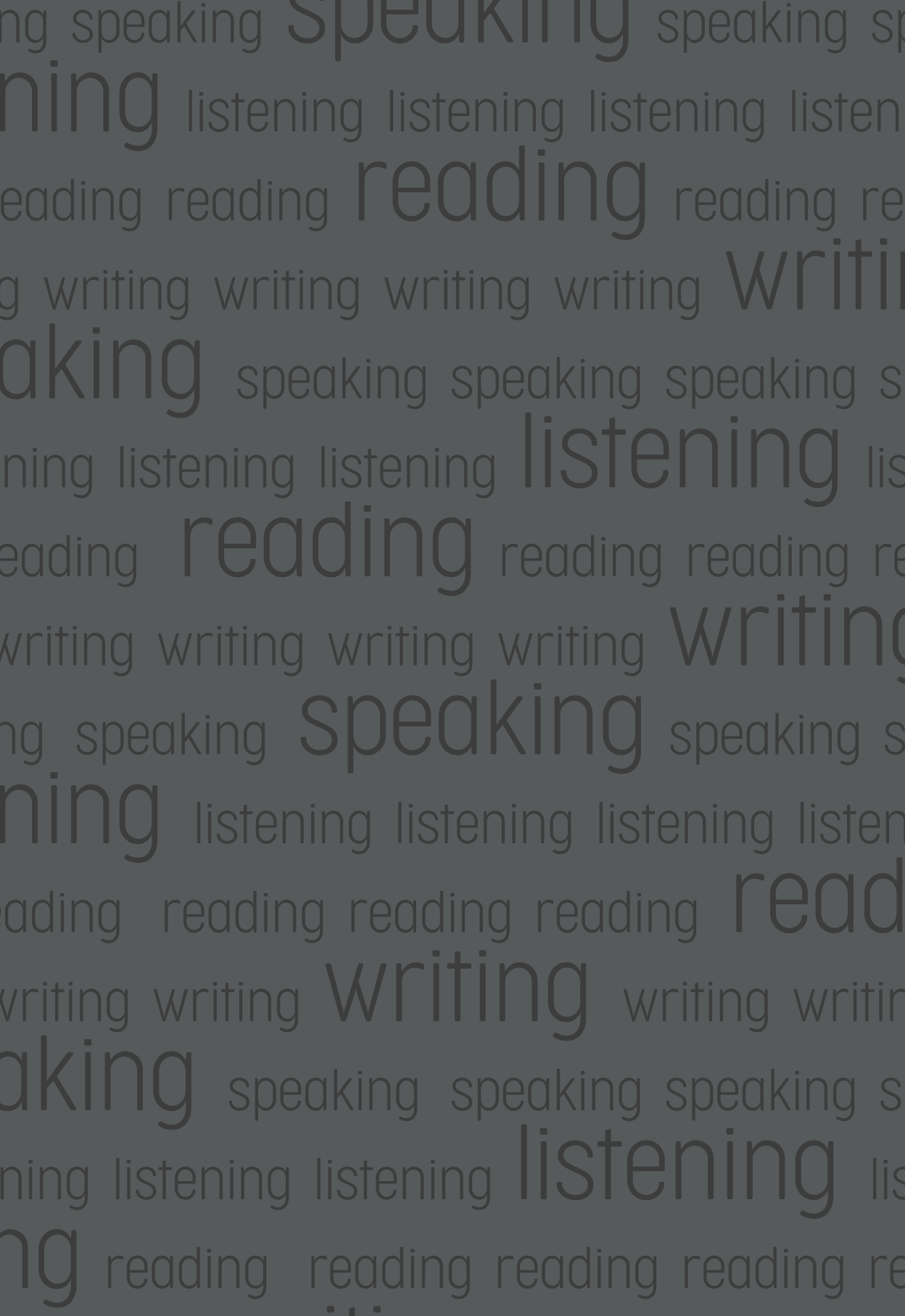
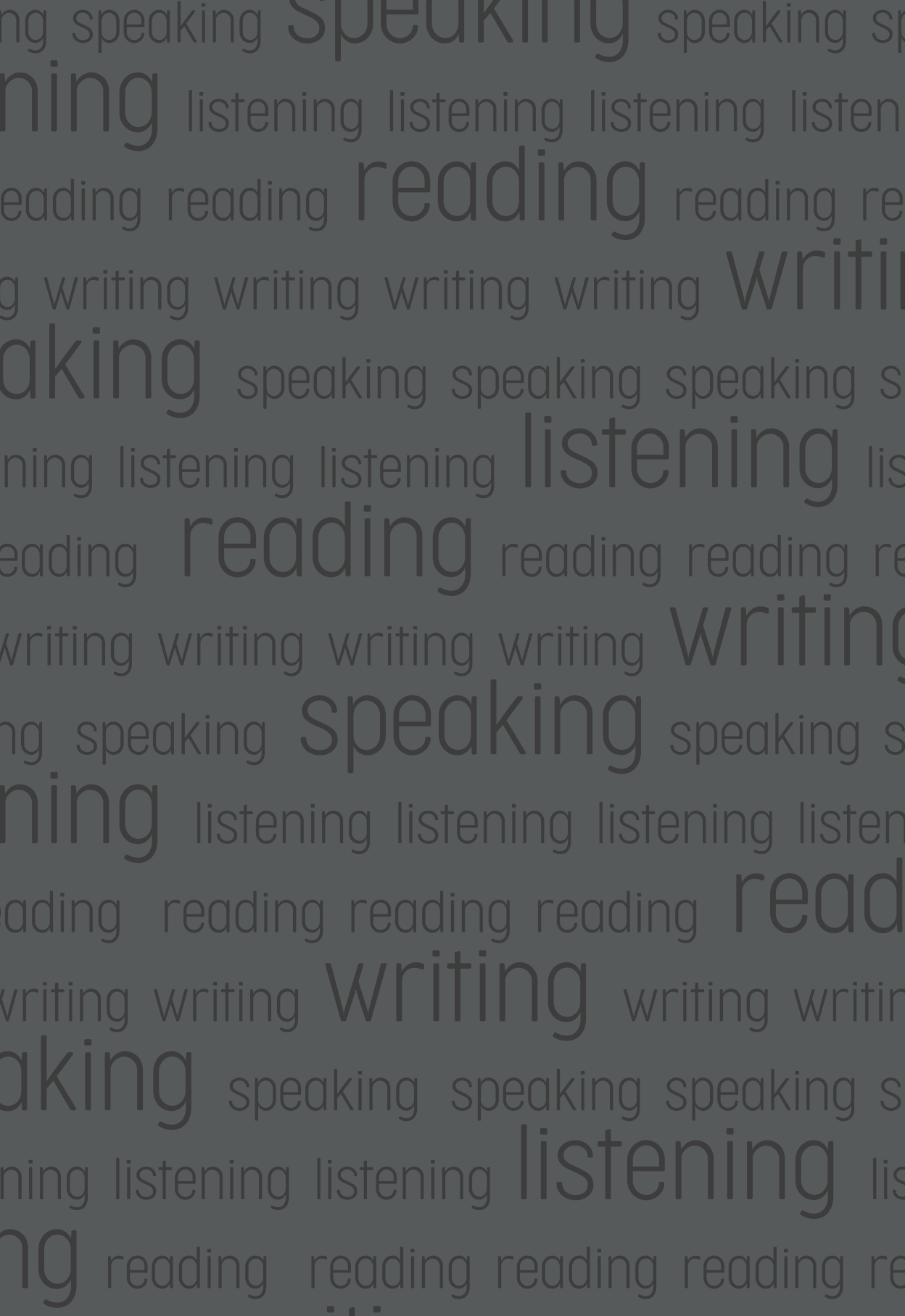
CREATIVE WAYS

TO TEACH ENGLISH



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CREATIVE WAYS

TO TEACH ENGLISH

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CREATIVE WAYS

TO TEACH ENGLISH

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This book is dedicated to those who inspire and motivate us to pursue teaching with passion and determination. We thank every teacher who demonstrates an unwavering desire to expand their knowledge in and outside the classroom and generously share their expertise. We also express our heartfelt appreciation to our students, whose curiosity and eagerness to learn challenge us daily. It is with great pleasure that we offer these words of dedication.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to Toa Tripaldi, Director of UDA Casa Editora, for all the support given to the elaboration of this book. Our most profound appreciation goes to Dr. Francisco Salgado, president of the university, for his commitment to leading professors in reaching their goals.

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FOREWORD

As a teacher-educator and researcher interested in practicing teaching English as a foreign language, I am pleased and honored to write the Foreword to this book. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Publisher, Universidad del Azuay, and the Editors, Magali Arteaga, Grace Mogollón, and Maria de Lourdes Moscoso, on their initiative in bringing together – for the first time – between the covers of this book a treasure trove of information and expertise across creativity on the ways of getting the English language into class.

As the 21st century dawns, the need for skilled communicators is more significant than ever. Educators and students seek innovative strategies and techniques to bridge the gap between theory and practice to meet this need. With its valuable insight and guidance, this book provides many ways to improve the teaching and learning of language skills. Central to these efforts is the genesis of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a teaching approach emphasizing communication as the primary goal of language learning. The ideas of luminaries such as Stephen Krashen and Vygotsky are woven throughout these teaching and learning moments, revealing the cognitive processes underlying language acquisition in varied social settings.

However, in this book, you will discover visible learning through practical, adaptable, and learner-centered strategies that educators and learners in diverse Ecuadorian contexts can apply. Each strategy is a carefully curated combination of methodology, caveats, and anecdotes, ensuring that you can tailor your approach to your specific needs, the unique characteristics of your learners, and the transformative power of effective language teaching and learning.

As you embark on your journey of sharing and learning through the pages of this book, I encourage you to welcome the spirit of curiosity and adaptability. The world of language learning is a rich landscape where we can unlock the potential of our learners through a combination of tested theories and innovative practices. Whether you are an in-service teacher looking to improve your teaching techniques or a pre-service teacher hoping to master the art of effective communication, this book will be your trusted companion.

This book inspires and empowers educators to embark on a lifelong learning journey and embrace the transformative power of language and communication. Browse these pages to find strategies that meet your unique needs and desires and serve as a stepping stone into the thriving world of writing and speaking. Welcome to a world where language is not just a tool but a gateway to understanding, connection, and endless possibilities. Let the journey begin.

Martha Castillo Noriega
Universidad de Guayaquil

Guayaquil, October 2023

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is an art, especially when teaching a foreign language (EFL). Many aspects play a role in the arena of EFL. One of the crucial ones is knowing when to apply the right strategy at the right moment. The Internet offers a significant number of strategies for the teaching of English. However, only some of them have been tested worthy of trying in monolingual classes or in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in our country. For this reason, this book seeks to cover the gap in gathering strategies that have been applied in the Ecuadorian context with successful results so that teachers can use them in the different class settings in the country.

In this evolving world, the appearance of strategies in other contexts, different from the Ecuadorian, may look attractive to the teacher but may be frustrating to students. Instead of gathering students' attention, they may end up annoying and frightening the process of learning English. Whatever the situation, having a book that compiles strategies and activities proven worthy by many experienced teachers is of great help.

Additionally, we pretended to make the roles of English teachers in Ecuador visible by allowing teachers to signify the tremendous effort they put into their everyday classes by publishing a small part of the considerable work they carry out day by day. As Nuthall (2007) mentions in his book The Hidden Lives of Learners, learning does require motivation, but motivation does not necessarily lead to understanding. It is indeed the commitment of teachers and the passion they have for their jobs that ensure a good teaching process. Thus, the most motivating, eye-catching, and successful strategies were carefully selected to make up this book. We thank all who took the time to share their knowledge with us and accepted the challenge of sharing their creativity with other teachers around Ecuador.

The strategies and activities included in this book belong to two categories: teacher-oriented strategies and learner-oriented strategies. Any experienced teacher knows perfectly well that in teaching English as a foreign language, no strategy should be demeaned for being teacher-centered. The wise teacher knows when it is best to apply one or the other. Teachers, then, can select the strategy or the combination of strategies they consider attainable to achieve the goal of a lesson.

As the English teaching and learning processes involve knowing not only the language, the book offers a set of dynamic strategies, which can vary from one context to the other. Other strategies consider the connection students can make between what they know and what they will learn to trigger meaningful learning.

Finally, with its array of engaging activities, we expect that this book written by teachers for teachers helps novice and experienced teachers lead the class to success.

GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES

The activities listed on the pages suggest that the skill should be enhanced. They are all organized in alphabetical order. Each activity provides a short description of each. Additionally, they show some caveats for the teacher to expand their creativity and include some information about anecdotes as a source of motivation to apply the activity to students.

As it is the teachers who know their students, context, class environment, age, and level of English, it is strongly recommended for each of the activities a careful preview to adapt the tasks to the class.

This book assumes that teachers wanting to apply these strategies have access to at least a board, paper and pencil, and the Internet.

To our readers, the usage of this book enhances collaborative work among teachers and supports the English teaching process in many new forms, so expect some noise in the class!

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The strategies explained in this book are based on the theories developed by Oxford (2011). Such approaches consider that stimulating memory in the EFL class leads students to learn structures and vocabulary they might struggle with. Just as memory is essential in picking up a language, using it communicatively is also important. Thus, the Communicative Approach, developed by Halliday and Himes (Roberts, 2004), is one of the underpinning theories for developing these strategies. For this reason, some of the strategies described in this book allow students to concentrate on using natural language.

Technology is part of our daily lives, especially with the new generations. This book also includes educational apps to make classes and activities more engaging, especially in EFL classes, which can motivate students to create original content while intrinsically developing their language skills. All this is based on the connectionist framework, which proposed that a second language can be tested by measuring inputs and outputs through networks. Under this umbrella, a good activity in this book fosters the use of Duolingo as a tool that provides a comprehensive and engaging approach to learning English. The platform draws on a range of educational theories and influential authors in the field of second language acquisition, such as Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis. This theory posits that second language acquisition occurs through exposure to comprehensible input or language that is just beyond the learner's current level of understanding (Krashen, 1992) or Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (Muhayimana, 2017), which, emphasizes the importance of social interactions in the learning process and suggests that learning is most effective when learners engage in collaborative activities.

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According to Fakhruldeen (2021), English as a foreign language classes require the organization of peer work activities, group work activities, and individual work activities. Among these, group work and group activities are the best for reading as their collaboration affects student interaction during language teaching processes.

Since the 21st century, there has been a significant increase in interest in promoting students' creative thinking, making it a crucial goal of education. Along with fundamental language skills, creative thinking is essential in EFL instruction. EFL teachers face more significance in creating innovative learning environments that do not solely concentrate on imparting knowledge but instead focus on stimulating students' thinking abilities. By developing learners' creative thinking skills, they can assimilate information in various ways, use their content knowledge in diverse manners, solve problems, overcome learning difficulties, and enhance their language proficiency (Hana & Hacéne, 2017).

Among some of the activities listed, the ones that move away from the typical lecturing type belong to a student-centered approach, which results in numerous positive outcomes for learners, including the development of critical thinking, effective communication, and problem-solving skills, as well as higher levels of engagement with the content (Overby, 2011). Given the activities centered around advancing speaking skills, the Communicative Approach emerges as relevant, particularly when students can learn by doing and engaging with structures and vocabulary relevant to the task.

Another type of strategy is based on the popular TPR: total physical response, which, according to Vélez and Holguín (2021), leads to the tremendous growth of motivation, which directly influences the acquisition of new vocabulary. Students are exposed to more stimuli that, as a result, enhance the retention and retrieval of learned words. A recent study on TPR found that "Total Physical Response generates more participatory learning classes and students feel stimulated and more active. When children funnily practice English, they retain more information in the target language" (Vélez & Holguín, 2021, p. 387).

On the other hand, Herraiz-Martínez (2018) explains that tasks-based activities provide learners with opportunities to experience contexts they would not be able to carry out unless they got involved in the target community; this includes pragmatics. That is, having students get the most of the input they receive in class time so they can produce the language in real situations by lowering stress and applying what helps them learn it.

A critical term worth mentioning is game. Byrne (1995) defined games as a form of play governed by rules. They should be enjoyable. They are not just a diversion or a break from routine activities but a way of getting the learner to use the language during the game. Researchers have been eager to find new strategies to enrich students' learning experiences in education. Thus, this book takes this meaning off and breaks it into many different activities aimed at helping both teachers and learners enjoy the class in many different ways, such as role-play activities, task repetition, and dictation forms under some competitive ways, like in games.

WRITING

ACTIVATING MEMORY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Magali Arteaga
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The activity consists of having students read a short passage the day before class and then have them rewrite what they read. This is a memory-activating strategy.

PROCEDURE:

1. Collect a set of 10 or 15 short reading passages.
2. Give a passage to students the day or night before and encourage the reading of the passage at least three times.
3. The day after, ask students to rewrite what they read using the exact words and structures they spot in each paragraph.
4. Check what students wrote

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher can promote group work by peer-reviewing the written paragraph.
2. The teacher can enhance metacognitive strategies by dictating the paragraph and then having them compared with the one written by the student.

3. For later passages, the teacher can ask the students to use synonyms for vocabulary the students already know.

ANECDOTE:

"We were teaching vocabulary such as breakfast and snacks. There was a student who was doing poorly in the class, so I decided to use this memory strategy. Little by little, this student seemed to be making progress. By the ninth passage, I asked her to write down the paragraph she had read but using the vocabulary learned in class. Instead of using the word snack, the student wrote snake. I asked the student many times if she meant snake. She swore she did until I drew a snake on paper. She nodded and laughed!".

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María Karina Durán Andrade
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Showing the use of the Simple Past Tense through writing a short autobiographical piece.

PROCEDURE:

1. Show students a PowerPoint Presentation (PPT) about a "Timeline of your life" where students will visually appreciate how to guide their writing regarding their autobiography.
2. Instruction (mini-lesson) (10 min.):
3. A PPT to explain the rules for Simple Past Tense and Used to.
4. Students complete the charts that contain usage, auxiliaries, adverbs, and formulas related to Simple Past Tense and Used to.
5. Students will be taken to the University library to check different types of biographies, which the teacher has already preselected.
6. The teacher provides feedback on these exercises.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

This activity is always confidential.

ANECDOTE:

"I have observed how catalytic this activity is. The students analyze their lives from childhood to the present time. What is striking is the proximity that one, as a teacher, gets to experience. Some situations have impacted me and helped me understand the students more. Some stories touch the heart and cause admiration. However, it is comforting to see the strength of resilience that has emerged in each of them, making them stronger, not only in their academic life but also in facing the difficulties of everyday life. Finally, I like this activity because it gives me a holistic view of a human being, my beloved students".

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COMIC STRIPS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Grace Mogollón
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay/Unidad Educativa La Asunción
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Creating comic strips to improve English is an educational and entertaining activity combining language learning and artistic creativity. This activity can benefit English learners and individuals looking to enhance their language skills.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the activity to the students by explaining that they will create a comic strip in English.
2. Provide the students with examples of comic strips to review the format, style, and elements of a comic strip.
3. Review essential vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammar concepts the students will apply to create the comic strip. Provide additional support for any students who need extra help.
4. Assign the students to work individually or in pairs to create their comic strips in English. Provide a theme or prompt to inspire their creativity. For example, they could make a comic strip about a day in the life of a superhero, a humorous encounter in a coffee shop, or a trip to a foreign country.

5. Encourage the students to use the language skills they have learned in class to create their comics. They should focus on using correct grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structures.

6. Have the students present their comic strips to the class. They should read the dialogue and explain the story behind the comic strip.

7. Encourage the class to provide feedback to their peers.

8. This activity improves the students' English language skills, encourages creativity, and allows students to share their work with their peers.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher could facilitate students with a comic strip template so everybody follows the same parameters.

2. There are excellent and friendly-to-use websites to create comic strips; thus, this activity can also be done digitally.

3. A compilation of comic strips can be done to create a book.

4. This activity is suitable for students from elementary to young adults.

5. You can give prizes for the best comics.

ANECDOTE:

"What I realized when students performed this activity was that they enjoyed creating their own stories. Sometimes, they express things they do not usually feel comfortable talking about. However, with this activity, they get things that can surprise you".

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DUOLINGO

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Cecilia Hurtado R.
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Salesiana Maria Auxiliadora
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Duolingo is a language-learning platform that offers a variety of features to help learners improve their English grammar skills. Duolingo provides explanations of different grammatical concepts and structures and uses context to teach grammar. The platform offers a wide range of grammar exercises and quizzes that allow learners to practice and reinforce what they have learned. Duolingo's English courses progress in difficulty as learners advance, gradually introducing more complex grammatical structures; it also provides immediate feedback on exercises, letting learners know if they have made a mistake and providing corrections to help them improve.

PROCEDURE:

1. As a teacher, you should create a Duolingo account for yourself and your students.
2. Set up a class: Create a class on Duolingo and invite your students to join; this will allow you to track your student's progress and assign lessons.
3. Assign grammar lessons to your students. Duolingo offers many grammar lessons, from beginner to advanced levels. The lessons include exercises like matching words to their definitions, translating sentences, and completing fill-in-the-blank activities.

4. Monitor your students' progress by checking their scores on the assigned lessons. You can also see which lessons your students have completed and how long they spent on each lesson.

5. Provide feedback to your students by reviewing their answers and offering suggestions for improvement.

6. Supplement with additional materials: Duolingo is an excellent tool for teaching English grammar, but other resources should be used. Supplement the lessons with additional materials, such as textbooks, worksheets, and videos.

7. Review regularly: It is essential to review the grammar lessons regularly to ensure the students retain the information. You can assign review lessons or incorporate grammar exercises into your regular classroom activities

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Duolingo provides limited context for the grammar rules it teaches. It may provide a partial range of nuances and variations in usage that students may encounter in real-life situations.

2. Duolingo's lessons are standardized and not personalized to individual learners, so students may not receive targeted feedback on their grammar weaknesses.

3. Over-reliance on multiple-choice questions: Duolingo's exercises often rely heavily on multiple-choice questions, limiting students' ability to produce grammatically correct sentences independently.

4. Duolingo is a self-paced learning tool and does not provide opportunities for social interaction or communication practice.

Options.

1. Supplement the lessons with additional materials, such as textbooks, worksheets, and videos, to provide additional context and personalization.

2. Encourage students to practice communicating in English through pair work, group discussions, and role-playing.

3. Customize lessons: Teachers can customize them to suit their students' needs and preferences. They can choose specific grammar topics to focus on and assign additional exercises to reinforce the lessons.

4. Use Duolingo with other language learning tools, such as language learning apps, online dictionaries, and grammar books, to provide a more comprehensive language learning experience.

ANECDOTE:

"I used to have a student who struggled with English grammar. She often needed to improve with verb tenses and word order, which made her communication in English difficult. As her teacher, I recommended that she use Duolingo to supplement her learning.

The student started using Duolingo regularly, and I could see a noticeable improvement in her English grammar skills. She became more confident in her ability to communicate in English and express herself more clearly.

What impressed me the most was how engaged she was with Duolingo. She enjoyed the interactive exercises and the immediate feedback provided by the platform. She even started using Duolingo outside of class as a fun way to practice his English grammar skills".

ESCAPE ROOM

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María Piedad Pulla Guerrero
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The students talk about their last vacation in groups using simple past.

PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher shows the students a photo of people having a picnic in a mountain.
2. The teacher asks the students questions about the photo.
3. The teacher gives the students a color to form groups of three.
4. The students join their group.
5. The teacher gives the students cards with questions in simple past to talk about their last vacations.
6. The students use the cards and ask each other questions about their last vacation.
7. The teacher monitors the students and take notes of simple past grammar mistakes.
8. When the students finish their speaking task, the teacher give them feedback to improve.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Opting for an escape room in school can be a significant challenge. It is more convenient to conduct them as interactive online games. The topics to choose from are endless, depending on the student's age and the content to be addressed.

ANECDOTE:

"In my experience, interactive teaching resources such as escape rooms, breakout activities, word puzzles, quizzes, trivia games, mazes, or challenges developed in digital tools can be used in the classroom and individually at home by all students who wish to reinforce the content covered. These resources are especially beneficial for students with special educational needs (SEN), as they can repeat them as many times as necessary according to their learning pace, without the pressure of completing them within the school context".

MY JOURNAL

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Ana Isabel Ríos
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Students personalize a small notebook using recycled materials and their favorite things (feathers, photos, colors, scrapbooking material). In this notebook, they write a short sentence daily from Monday to Friday. At the end of the week, students have to combine those sentences into a single paragraph using past tenses, linkers, and new vocabulary.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the concept of "a journal" to students.
2. Motivate them to recycle old notebook sheets. Students can personalize the material according to their tastes and needs (size, shape, and decoration).
3. Explain the sentence structure in the past tense to the student. Have them learn the difference between regular and irregular verbs and apply it in their sentences. Emphasize the importance of linkers within a paragraph.
4. Have students write at least five sentences per week. Students can choose their topics and include as much information as possible.
5. Students' mistakes (spelling or grammar) are accepted, and the feedback is individual. The teacher reads the story and writes comments to motivate students' production.

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6. Encourage using dictionaries to expand the vocabulary they need to write sentences.

7. Review the newspaper according to a previously socialized schedule. Give extra credit to students who wrote more than five sentences per week.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Some students use mechanical translators for their sentences. Therefore, it is better to monitor this activity in the classroom. Students may need some spelling or grammar corrections. However, they improve over time. Some students take more time than others to write. Therefore, they can complete the task at home.

ANECDOTE:

"Through this activity, it is possible to learn about the students' personality details. In this way, the contents of future classes can be adapted to the information obtained. Several students started by writing very short subject+verb+complement sentences, but by making periodic corrections each time, they improved their writing and included more details in their stories. Most students could master the past tense of regular and irregular verbs when describing their experiences".

PUZZLES

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Lorena Reinoso
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Create sentences, cut them into pieces, and compete against classmates.

PROCEDURE:

1. Students must create a sentence using the grammar content checked during class.
2. The teacher determines the number of words in the sentence and motivates students to be competitive.
3. Once students have their sentences, they must cut them into pieces and compete against their classmates.
4. The one who orders the sentence first and correctly gets a point (candies or just points).
5. They must compete against three or four classmates.
6. At the game's end, the one with more points gets a bonus point. This bonus point usually motivates students to speak English and participate with their classmates.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Use this technique sparingly because students tend to get bored.
2. During a course, I suggest using it four times, no more.

ANECDOTE:

"Students get so excited to win! Students get so determined to win the points. They laugh and help each other when they do not understand how a sentence should be structured".

PICTURE DICTIONARY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María José Ochoa Guerrero
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

A Picture Dictionary is a set of cards displaying a word as a drawing. It teaches through pictures rather than telling you the meaning of a word.

PROCEDURE:

1. Choose a category (animals, food, clothes)
2. Prompt students to write each word on a different card
3. Prompt students to draw a picture representing the word
4. Ask students to close their eyes and visualize the word
5. Encourage students to use the new words and create sentences.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Picture dictionaries allow students to make a connection from a new written word to its meaning through an image.
2. Kids are easily able to communicate in writing or orally.
3. Picture Dictionary organizes words by category.

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4. Allow students to create their picture dictionary. They enjoy doing things themselves.

ANECDOTE:

"We were teaching new vocabulary (clothes). We were using repetition drills to fix pronunciation. However, some students did not participate because they felt scared to make mistakes. I decided to play a game (race-four teams) using the personal picture dictionary. I said something in the dictionary, and students searched for it somewhere in the book. "It has six letters and begins with S." Students had to find as many as possible within the time limit. I could see shy students participate and enjoy the game; your picture dictionary gave them a sense of security".

WALKING DICTATION

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Alejandro Mejia
Affiliation: DB Middle School
Skill: Writing

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Walking dictation is a popular ESL/ World Language classroom activity that helps learners develop short-term memory skills while reinforcing spelling, word order, pronunciation, and listening and writing skills. Learners work with partners to dictate words or sentences posted at the front of the room or in the hallway. One partner reads the sentences and reports back to his or her partner. Their partner listens and writes down what he or she hears.

PROCEDURE:

1. Write your facts or events: written or typed.
2. Post the facts or events: post around or outside the room using tape.
3. Divide your class into teams: no more than four students
4. Distribute paper for transcriptions/illustrations (where students will write/ draw the information being shared)
5. Assign initial roles (walker/runner, scribe, artist, and cheerleader)

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Descriptions of the roles. The cheerleader is optional and should be used with larger class groups.

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THE RUNNER runs from where the team is gathered to where the signs are posted. The runner READS one of them and memorizes it, then RUNS back to his or her team. The runner DICTATES the memorized information to his or her team for transcription. If the runner forgets anything (even spelling!), they must run back to the signs to REMIND themselves of what it was before running back to the team to continue transcription.

THE WRITER assigns a letter to the runner ("Go read "A"!"). He or she listens to the runner and transcribes what they want on one of the quarter sheets of paper. The writer should ask clarifying questions to guarantee accuracy–even spelling!

THE ARTIST takes the quarter sheet of paper from the writer once the transcription is finished (notice: this person will not have a job on the first round, so should join the cheerleader!). On the same quarter sheet of paper, the artist should illustrate what the writer transcribed from the runner. Use color if possible! The artist can continue working through two rotations until it is time for him or her to run.

THE CHEERLEADER cheers on all team members and checks for quality.

ANECDOTE:

"I had students create a class story as a whole. I projected the typed story while students contributed. After completing the story, I printed it and cut it into different pieces. Once posted on multiple walls, students began to interact with the text. They were highly engaged with the activity and followed with ease. Some students needed help with pronunciation, for which the student who was writing could not write the correct form of some words. To support these students, I provided one-on-one support by giving out the correct pronunciation".

SPEAKING

MODELING SPEAKING PRACTICE

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Katherine Salvador
Affiliation: Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral - Trinity College Dublin
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Have students watch a video, including speaking activities. Students must elaborate on the rubric to be applied to evaluate the activity.

PROCEDURE:

1. Explanation of the activity students must produce (Introductory video 30 seconds to 1 minute long).
2. Socialization of the rubric to be applied.
3. A video is presented to students, showing them a student carrying out the same activity incorrectly. Students are asked to grade by applying the rubric.
4. A similar video is presented, this time with fewer mistakes. Grading is done again, applying the same rubric.
5. Students carry out the complete exercise, keeping the rubric in mind.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Good internet and audio are required to present the video.

ANECDOTE:

"Students tend to ignore the rubric; however, after this activity, they are more aware of the importance of this guide".

BALANCING THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH THE STATION ROTATION MODEL

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Martha Amelia Castillo Noriega
Affiliation: Universidad de Guayaquil
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Implementing this model comprises students rotating on a settled schedule with discretion between classroom learning modalities (Staker & Horn, 2012). English language teachers design their sessions into four stations: the teacher station, the individual station, the collaborative station, and the individual/collaborative station to balance the four skills of the English language. In this scenario, teachers facilitate the learning process when they design the rotations to simultaneously promote the four skills' fluency. A trusted environment for mistakes, a problem-solving attitude, time management, and clear instructions promote a better rapport that is more visible in a community where everyone actively builds a collaborative bond.

PROCEDURE:

Success in this part depends on familiarity with what students read, listen to, write, or speak, as large amounts of input or output require normal language functions that operate faster than standard:

1. English language teachers review the lesson plan to adapt it to the four stations, each including one language skill. In this balanced lesson plan, the four strands by Nation (2007) are more visible: language-focused learning, meaning-focused input, fluency development, and meaning-focused output. Each strand comprises 25% of the timing for the lesson plan.

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2. The English language teacher divides the sessions' design into four stations of the model: teacher station, individual station, collaborative station, and the individual/collaborative station to balance the four skills of the English language. Then, the activities are designed for each station, and the timing for each is carefully considered so that each station demands the exact timing. Success in the task performance indicates that the student has acquired the target competency.

3. The lesson plan design involves a flipped class where students read or watch specific material before the class; in this scenario, reviewing the topic before the rotation is ideal. Hence, students can activate their knowledge, and their understanding can improve through the rotations and assigned tasks. Another possible scenario for implementing the station rotation model is to review the content learned so that students can practice and reinforce what they have already learned through different tasks.

4. Students are first explained how to rotate (time to rotate, clockwise way). This explanation may take some time since it demands a change in the seating arrangement, and the students could rehearse how to rotate to experiment with what they will do in each station.

5. Instructions are given to each station as a whole group. The materials can be used in each station or on a platform where they can access the resources needed. Confirming the instructions is necessary to reinforce students' autonomy and release of responsibility. In this sense, students can master a speech individually or in groups without depending on the teacher's supervision.

6. Then, they are told to find their assigned station, and timing is also given. In this stage, students can be randomly assigned to any station. In other cases, especially the ones related to inclusive education, some students can work with others as mentors in each station.

7. Depending on the lesson's length and the class's design, a full rotation can be done in one class hour or two (even more depending on the activity's complexity). This design would depend on the complexity of the activities designed. This model offers the flexibility to work on different stations at specific intervals.

8. The speaking station: The teacher stays here and interacts with the students to practice their speaking skills. This is a crucial station where the teacher can interact with 25% of the class in more private but active participation. Corrective feedback is visible when correcting students' spoken production in a trusted environment.

9. At the end of the rotations, the teacher can recall critical elements of the content learned and practice to close the session.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Timing is a crucial factor during the rotations. Students have a set time for each task to find their way to complete it in a specific period. More experienced teachers can monitor the other stations to confirm the timing of the activities planned.

2. Instructions are another crucial factor during the rotations. English language teachers spend more time clarifying the instructions at the beginning of the rotations. When working collaboratively, students tend to confirm instructions. They can give themselves some time to repeat or confirm the instruction. They try to be calm and manage the situation even though this method is to them.

3. Regarding lesson planning, the design of four activities simultaneously takes more time, dedication, concentration, and creativity. However, the extra effort is worth in terms of dynamism and interaction in each station where the students are in a natural student-centered environment, and the release of responsibility lies on them.

ANECDOTE:

I have applied this strategy successfully in all classes and students have always enjoyed the activity.

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BE WHO YOU WANT TO BE!

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Maria Martha Samaniego G
Affiliation: CEDFI
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

During this activity, students are free to choose who they want to be, whether an athlete, an artist, an actor, or a musician. They can even represent a favorite series or movie. The main idea is that once they have chosen who they want to be, the students must explain the content we are reviewing during the week, but students must do so by playing their chosen character; wear costumes and use props. The other students must pay attention to the clues and expressions their partner uses to guess who it is. Students are usually awarded a green pass on some assignments. The idea is that during their explanation of the contents, they cannot say who they are; in the end, we, the spectators, will have to guess who it is. It is an excellent opportunity for the students to practice speaking, express themselves in an out-of-the-ordinary activity, and share what they have learned during the week in a fun way.

PROCEDURE:

1. Randomly choose a student from the class.
2. Ask the student to select an athlete, artist, musician, or actor of his/her choice.
3. Give him/her the content that the student should prepare to teach to his/her classmates. Remember that to teach the class, the student must represent, act, and possibly imitate the character he/she has chosen.

4. Allow the student to arrange the props, costumes, and other items needed for the class.
5. Give the student time to present his class to his classmates.
6. Allow questions from classmates about the content, not the character.
7. Students guess the character being portrayed.
8. After listening to their peers give their choices, the student in charge will reveal who it is. If there is a student who guesses, he/she is declared the winner. Otherwise, the student who prepared the class will be the winner.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Consider it is essential to ensure that students have enough time to present their work in class.
2. Remember, students cannot give names in the middle of the class. They have to wait until the class is over.
3. The student directing the class cannot say or give his/her name. He/She can only use references, voices, or phrases to relate to the character.

ANECDOTE:

"In one of my classes, the student who was to give the class decided to represent a television series instead of a single character. The result impressed us all; the student had dressed up as the main character of the series, and he wore costumes and repeated typical phrases.. The resemblance was incredible, but he also used a video presentation where he was playing the rest of the characters of the series, and each character presented a specific part of the class. The presentation was spectacular because the students used all possible tools to transport us to the series! It was the best class ever."

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BUILDING CONNECTIONS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Steven Sisalima Jara
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Being intentional about making social connections with peers will expand students' horizons and networks and give them opportunities to speak English while interacting with others face-to-face or online. A flawless strategy is to have a trendy topic to discuss in the classroom while taking advantage of the topic and making learners apply the unit's grammar structures and vocabulary. Learners will not only feel more comfortable in the classroom. However, they will also be encouraged to continue expanding their English knowledge, fluency, and phonology of English due to modern topics related to their interests and needs.

PROCEDURE:

1. Research about a trendy topic for teens.
2. Discuss the trendy topic by applying any grammatical tense taught in the unit.
3. Make groups of up to 4 people for the strategy to work.
4. The teacher will give keywords and the grammar tenses to be used for the activity.
5. Depending on the topic, learners can use different tools to enhance their knowledge.

6. At the end of the activity, learners have to express how they felt during the activity and share their thoughts on the topic using the vocabulary and grammar structures in their presentation.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher can promote participation by showing the proper phonology.
2. The teacher can enhance metacognitive strategies by pronouncing specific vocabulary to practice proper pronunciation.

ANECDOTE:

"As a teacher, I had to devise a different approach for my learners because not everyone was participating in the class. For learners who were not in tune, the strategy was more than obvious to apply a topic with everyone speaking, even if there was no common interest with the teacher. This experience has helped learners lose their fear of speaking in English and also helped them realize that English is not only fun but also very useful to be connected in different fields such as technology, music, and social networks".

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CATCHY TUNES

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Alexandra Neira A
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa María Auxiliadora
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Using catchy tunes or songs to teach English to students involves creating simple songs incorporating new English vocabulary and phrases (Yüksel, D (2016). The tunes used are usually well-known and familiar to the students, making it easier for them to learn and remember the new vocabulary. Adding movement to the songs and repeating them can make learning more engaging and fun for the students. This strategy helps young learners develop listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills in a fun and natural way.

PROCEDURE:

1. Select songs appropriate for students' age and language level. Nursery rhymes and simple children's songs are often a good choice.
2. Start by introducing the song and its lyrics to students. The activity can be done by playing a recording of the song, singing it yourself, or using a visual aid such as a picture book or video.
3. Have students listen to the song several times to become familiar with its melody, rhythm, and lyrics. Encourage them to sing along or hum the tune as they listen.
4. Teach vocabulary and grammar: Use the song to teach vocabulary and grammar. Highlight keywords and phrases in the lyrics and discuss their meanings with students.

5. Add movements and gestures that accompany the song's lyrics. This will help students remember the words and meaning of the song while also improving their motor skills.

6. After students have learned the song, reinforce their learning with activities that build on the vocabulary. For example, ask them to draw pictures to illustrate the song's meaning

7. Once students have learned the song, use it as a springboard for conversation. Ask them questions about the lyrics and encourage them to share their experiences related to the song's theme.

8. Once students have mastered one song, introduce them to new songs and repeat the process.

9. Remember that using catchy tunes to teach English to students is a fun and effective way to engage young learners and develop their listening, vocabulary, and grammar skills

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

There are some caveats to keep in mind:

1. Choose songs that are age-appropriate for students. Avoid using songs with complex language or themes that may be difficult for young learners to understand.

2. While songs can be a fun and effective teaching tool, overuse can lead to boredom and disengagement. Use songs in moderation and balance them with other teaching strategies.

3. Ensure students understand the lyrics and concepts presented in the songs. Provide visual aids and context to help students comprehend the meaning behind the lyrics.

4. While songs can help with pronunciation, be mindful that students may need proper guidance to learn correct pronunciation if they mimic the song lyrics.

5. Although songs can introduce new vocabulary, they may have limited scope for teaching more complex language structures or vocabulary.

Options:

1. Design fun activities based on songs that students have learned in class. For example, students could act out the lyrics or draw pictures of the song

2. Encourage students to use the correct pronunciation and intonation while singing.

3. Combine songs with other teaching strategies such as games, visual aids, and movement-based activities to create a multimodal learning experience. For example, students could play a game that involves singing and moving to the song's rhythm.

4. Encourage students to work in pairs or small groups to learn and sing songs together.

5. Allow students to choose songs they are interested in or familiar with. This can help motivate students and create a more personalized learning experience.

6. Encourage students to listen to English songs at home and practice singing along. This can help reinforce learning and create a positive attitude towards learning English.

ANECDOTE:

"I can share an anecdote of when I used catchy tunes to teach English to my kindergarten students. I chose a popular children's song with a catchy tune and rewrote the lyrics to include the days of the week. I played the song multiple times during the week and had my students sing along and practice saying the days of the week. To my delight, the students became so engaged and excited about the song that they started singing it outside of class. It was gratifying to see my students using English in a fun and natural way, thanks to the song´s catchy tune".

DISCUSSION

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Diana Gómez
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The students talk about their last vacation in groups using simple past.

PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher shows the students a photo of people having a picnic in a mountain.
2. The teacher asks the students questions about the photo.
3. The teacher gives the students a color to form groups of three.
4. The students join their group.
5. The teacher gives the students cards with questions in simple past to talk about their last vacations.
6. The students use the cards and ask each other questions about their last vacation.
7. The teacher monitors the students and take notes of simple past grammar mistakes.
8. When the students finish their speaking task, the teacher give them feedback to improve.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Teachers have to walk around the groups
2. Less skilled students might not work as hard as more skilled ones.
3. The skilled students could control the activity.

ANECDOTE:

"I make my students practice this activity every day. The best part is seeing them become more confident about making mistakes and start talking about their experiences more fluently despite their imperfections. At the end of the level, they become more fluent in speaking".

EFL JEOPARDY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Melita Vanessa Vega Auquilla
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

EFL Jeopardy is a classroom version of the famous, long-running TV quiz show Jeopardy to test students' knowledge of the skills and concepts learning in the EFL classroom. In this classroom version, students are divided into three teams. They can consult each other to make important critical decisions: answer the question correctly and win prize money or weigh the risks of "stealing" a question from another team and potentially losing their prize money.

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide the class into three groups and ask them to select a name (alternatively, assign a color to each group). Place a bell on a desk or hand each team a bell or some other noise-making device.
2. Project the question board on the whiteboard (programmed in advance on a PowerPoint by the instructor based on the level or website). The board is divided into five categories with five questions each (for example, vocabulary, sense adjectives, and modals of speculation). The questions under each category are hidden vertically behind a digital dollar value ranging from $100 to $500.
3. Flip a coin or draw numbers to decide which group will go first. Instruct the group to choose a category first, then a question (which will get progressively more difficult as the dollar value increases).

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4. Once a question/dollar amount has been chosen, click on the square to show the question. Read it out loud so students understand. Give them 30-45 seconds to confer with each other and answer the question.

5. If the group answers the questions correctly, they are awarded digital money as a prize and can select the next question. If they answer incorrectly, their prize money is deducted by the same amount, and they lose board control.

6. If a question is answered incorrectly or the time runs out, any of the other two groups can decide to steal the question and gain control of the board by hitting the bell (if they answer incorrectly, they also lose their prize money and control of the board).

7. If time has run out or no other team attempts to steal the question, click on the question to read the answer and return to the main menu. They give control of the board to the next team.

8. Repeat the sequence until all answers are selected on the board. The team that accumulates more money wins.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The Jeopardy game is best played with 5-8 students per team to facilitate teamwork and equal participation. Larger groups often mean some students will need help participating (10 students maximum).

2. The game takes about one hour to complete, so class organization is key.

3. Control of the sequence of groups, as they answer questions, requires much concentration, particularly if students become overly competitive with each other. Assigning a student to be a score and timekeeper to assist the instructor can help.

4. Instead of digital money, prizes can be points-based or, for fun, with cryptocurrency.

5. The game is an excellent way for students to reflect on what they have learned after specific units or textbook themes.

ANECDOTE:

"Jeopardy is a game of critical thinking; organizing students into groups allows them to share their knowledge, even with classmates they may have never interacted with. The game also allows for movement - albeit in unexpected ways. University students are just as enthusiastic as children when playing games - all they need is a different kind of incentive. The last time we played this game, the competition became so heated that some students leaped out of their seats to try and prevent other teams from pressing the bell. You would think they were playing for real money!".

HEALTHY RECIPES FOR TEENS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Valery Paz
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Santana
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The main objective is to compile Healthy Recipes for Teens while using creativity and applying the four skills to generate a final product. Listening and discussing ideas with the teacher and peers, writing and proofreading drafts, and Speaking for their final video.

Each recipe has been selected to meet healthy nutritional standards and a balanced diet. The students have prepared, tried, and presented the meals following a previous investigation.

Each recipe will include a list of the ingredients and a video or voice recording explaining how to prepare it. The App that will be used is Book Creator.

PROCEDURE:

This activity aims to identify healthy eating habits by recognizing the importance of a balanced diet using the five food groups as a guide.

1. Choose to make and present ONE of the essential meals of the day: breakfast, lunch, or dinner.
2. Elaborate on a healthy dish with a beverage and explain why that dish was chosen.

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3. Explain the benefits and why it would be recommended that others make and eat it.

4. Your recipe must be included in the class's "Recipe Book" in Book Creator. This page must be creative and include a video or voice explaining how to make the dish.

5. The recipe will be presented and included in the book.

6. When you present the recipe, you must tell us:

Why did you choose that recipe?

How nutritious it is and why the ingredients you have used are important for your diet.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

To make this project collaborative, the App has a cost. Otherwise, it can be used for free for up to 40 books. However, working collaboratively is much more inviting since all the students can see the progress of their peers and be encouraged to put more effort into what they are creating.

ANECDOTE:

"My students always enjoy this activity. They love to post their work and share it with everyone".

INFORMATION GAP ACTIVITIES

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Jonathan Zambrano L.
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The teacher forms pairs or small groups to receive two or more pieces of paper with missing information. Student A possesses the information that student B needs and vice versa, so to fulfill the task, they must work cooperatively to fill those gaps by asking and responding to questions. However, these activities are broader than gap-filling exercises since these can also include drawing, guessing games, and icebreakers. The role of the teacher is to monitor the activity to ensure that students are engaged and assist when needed.

PROCEDURE:

1. The class is divided into pairs or groups depending on the type of information gap activity that will be used.
2. The students are assigned roles: student A and student B. Then, they are given material to work on, which can be a map, a reading, or a picture.
3. Each student's paper has gaps that need to be filled, but student A has the information that student B requires to complete the task and vice versa.
4. The instructor indicates that the students cannot show their paper to the other students and provides models for questions that can be asked during the lesson, e.g., "When did the _____?" so students know how to formulate the questions. Moreover, the students are told to use gestures to convey their ideas.

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5. The students begin to work on the activity while the teacher monitors and assists if needed.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Information gap activities can be challenging to implement in big classrooms because some students may turn to their mother tongue to fulfill the task, and it can be challenging for the teacher to prevent this from happening. To address this issue, the instructor could ask for assistance from a colleague during the development of the task. Another option is to use a different type of information gap activity, such as the 20-question game in which everyone takes turns participating. Hence, the monitoring becomes more straightforward for the instructor.

2. Stronger students often sit together, so when assigned a task like this, they complete it much more quickly than the rest of their classmates. This can lead to discouragement from the other students as they might feel they need to be more proficient, and the stronger students could get distracted with other activities once they finish the task. A possible solution to this could be to pair stronger students with weaker ones so that scaffolding (Lightbown & Spada, 2013) takes place and they help their peers to progress.

3. Using more than one type of information gap activity can result in boredom for the students, who despise the activities. To avoid this, the teacher should apply activities such as drawing 20 questions and guessing games.

ANECDOTE:

"This strategy was applied, but only during a short period in the class, which, of course, affected the outcome. However, it was observed that the students enjoyed working cooperatively in addition to some of their opinions towards the activity. In their opinions, they expressed that they felt more confident and willing to use the language as they did not feel judged or afraid of being made fun of. Moreover, their speaking skill slightly improved based on the pre and post-test results".

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH SONGS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Diana Perez Carchi
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The best learning happens when we have fun. So, it is important to choose music that a child likes.

PROCEDURE:

Singing along can be challenging, even for native speakers. So, help students with these easy steps:

1. Search for the song lyrics online or watch a music video with subtitles.
2. Read the song lyrics out loud. Look up any unknown words in a dictionary.
3. Listen to the song and read the lyrics simultaneously. Encourage students to sing along.
4. When they are ready, try singing along without looking at the lyrics.

Remember, they do not have to get it perfect straight away! Repeating it regularly is more effective.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Some children find it hard to speak English because they are shy or lack confidence. Singing with other people can help. It creates a safe space for children to practice expressing themselves aloud. Ask other family members to join in when they sing at home. They do not have to be musical. They simply need to be enthusiastic!

ANECDOTE:

"I love to use songs in my classes, my students enjoy this activity. I have seen them have fun while learning ".

LUDIC GAME FOR LARGE GROUPS: TIC-TAC-TOE

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Diana Eulalia Vásquez Paredes
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Ludic activity for short or large classes, no matter their age. The teacher divides the class into two groups and presents pictures and flashcards or asks students to look at their books so they know what to describe according to their teacher's aim of the class.

PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher draws a 3x3 tic-tac-toe chart game on the board
2. Each space is defined with a number. This way, we can also practice numbers.
3. The teacher splits up the class into two groups
4. Only one student is allowed to speak.
5. He/she has to choose a square by calling out a number correctly (this is where he/she wants to place their team's symbol).
6. The teacher shows a picture to the class, and the students are asked to describe it or answer a question about it accurately (according to the grammar structure they are practicing).
7. The student gets his/her team's symbol depending on the answer.

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8. It is time to ask the other team to participate.

9. The first group to achieve 3 of their symbols in a row wins a point for the team.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

This game is always challenging for students because they do not know what the teacher will ask them. This develops self-confidence and awareness since they think they can win a symbol for their team. There are many options to apply this game for different structures to be practiced. For example, the teacher can ask questions and ask them to describe things using affirmative or negative sentences, etc. It is possible to practice any verb tense with this activity.

ANECDOTE:

"This game constitutes an excellent eliciting tool for students to apply what they know orally. They self-correct themselves, and it was also possible to see that once they made a mistake (which would leave the team without its symbol), they would try to do it again, and that mistake would not happen anymore. It is very useful when working with large groups of students".

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS-ROLE-PLAY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Marcela Eugenia Mogollón
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Santana
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The role-play scenario is an activity that aims to develop speaking and listening skills and raise awareness about mental health challenges and available support resources. Through role-play, students practice active listening, empathy, and supportive communication skills, essential in building and maintaining positive relationships. By discussing mental health challenges and available resources, students also become more aware of the importance of seeking help when needed and how to support others who may be struggling. The activity encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of mental health and to engage in open and supportive conversations with their peers.

PROCEDURE:

Phase 1: Exploration

1. Introduce the topic of mental health and the importance of seeking help when needed.
2. Assign students to complete a TED-Ed lesson on mental health and read articles on mental health.
3. Discuss the importance of mental health awareness and resources available for support.
4. Encourage students to take notes and discuss any questions or concerns about the topic.

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Phase 2: Guided Research

1. Pair students up to research and write a script for a role-play scenario related to mental health challenges and available resources.
2. Provide a list of suggested scenarios, such as a student experiencing anxiety or depression and seeking help from a friend or counselor.
3. Encourage students to research and include accurate information about mental health resources and support.
4. Provide feedback and guidance as needed to ensure the scripts are appropriate and accurate.

Phase 3: Script Writing and Peer Review

1. Allow time for students to review and revise their scripts with their partners.
2. Encourage students to give constructive feedback to their partners and make suggestions for improvements.
3. Provide guidance and feedback as needed to ensure the scripts are appropriate and accurate.

Phase 4: Application

1. Provide time for students to practice and prepare for their role-play presentations.
2. Encourage students to practice active listening, empathy, and supportive communication skills during the role-play.
3. Invite students to present their role-plays in front of the class.
4. Provide positive feedback and constructive criticism to help students improve their communication skills and deepen their understanding of mental health challenges and resources.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Sensitivity to Mental Health Challenges: As mental health challenges can be a sensitive and personal topic for many individuals, it is essential to approach the topic with sensitivity and respect. Be mindful of any students who may have personal experiences with mental health challenges, and ensure that the activity is presented in a safe and supportive environment.

2. Time Constraints: This activity can take several class periods to complete, from exploring the topic to presenting the role-plays. Be sure to consider the time available and adjust the activity as needed to fit within the class schedule.

3. Research Materials: While there are many articles and resources related to mental health that are available online, it is essential to ensure that the sources are accurate and reliable. Consider providing a list of suggested resources for students to use or review any resources they find independently to ensure they are appropriate and accurate.

4. Pairing Students: While pairing students can be a great way to promote collaboration and peer learning, it is important to ensure students feel comfortable with their partners and promptly address potential conflicts.

5. Role-play Scenarios: Consider providing a list of suggested scenarios for students to choose from or allow students to create their scenarios with guidance and feedback. Be sure to review all scenarios to ensure they are appropriate and accurate.

6. Role-play Presentations: Encourage students to practice their role-plays ahead of time and provide constructive feedback to their peers. Consider recording the presentations to allow students the opportunity to review and reflect on their communication skills.

7. Support Resources: It is essential to provide students with resources for mental health support, such as school counselors, local mental health clinics, and hotlines. Consider providing a list of resources for students to reference during and after the activity.

ANECDOTE:

"During the role-play scripting phase, Maria and Carlos brainstormed scenarios but could not agree on one. Maria suggests a funny scenario, but Carlos feels uneasy about it. They talk it out and decide on a new, respectful scenario they love. This shows how working together and being open to different perspectives can lead to a fun and respectful role-play".

OVERCOMING STUDENTS' FEARS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: José Alberto Correa
Affiliation: Universidad de Cuenca, Colegio Bilingüe
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This strategy aims to boost speaking performance for international certifications by using meaningful materials close to students. By doing so, students will overcome their fears when speaking the target language.

PROCEDURE:

Candidates always try to guess what to say or how to describe a picture. They can have good language knowledge, but a lack of practice and hesitation could affect their desired results.

In the speaking section of most exams, candidates are asked to describe a picture that refers to vocabulary they are familiar with. However, nervousness and fear can affect them. That is why this activity attempts to help them overcome their fear by applying material close to students.

1. For this activity, students must bring their favorite family picture. After that, students will listen to their classmates talking about their memories and why they chose the photo.
2. Then, the class will write down interesting facts about it, for instance, the place, colors, people, etc.
3. Finally, randomly, students will describe the picture of one of their classmates as if it were for international certifications. By doing so, students will realize that they are working on an activity similar to the one from the exam, and it is not as stressful as it looks.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Timid students can face problems when describing a picture in front of their classmates. This problem can be solved by encouraging them to participate meaningfully. This means letting them talk with just the teacher or two or three friends.

2. The audience will increase next time, easing the teaching-learning process.

ANECDOTE:

"The first time I had this activity in my mind, I brought my pictures. Then, students laughed a lot, having seen a younger me. After that, however, I realized how paramount it is for students to be familiar with their teachers to acquire a second language".

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PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION FOR PRONUNCIATION

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Nicole Micaela Espinoza Tenezaca
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Phonetics for pronunciation is an activity that teaches the most common and simple symbols from the phonetic alphabet to help students improve their pronunciation in English by learning how to modulate correctly some of the words that are being mispronounced because of the influence of the mother tongue. This activity mainly works as a warm-up for intermediate courses that present some difficulties with their speaking skills. The transcription of specific words are presented first, and students have to guess which word is being presented just by looking at the symbols.

PROCEDURE:

1. First, it is necessary to identify the words that the students are mispronouncing. These words can be picked out from another activity carried out during classes.
2. Second, we have to look for the transcription of these specific words, ensuring it includes the grammar we are teaching; for example, the transcription must be in American English.
3. Third, the transcription of the words is presented individually to the students.

4. Fourth, students have to guess which word is being presented just by looking at the symbols. It is important to remember that some symbols are similar to the letters, so this activity is not too complicated for students.

5. Fifth, each time a new transcription of a word is presented, the teacher focuses on pronouncing certain symbols so the students know how to pronounce them correctly.

6. Six, each word has to be repeated a few times by the students and the teacher to practice the pronunciation.

7. Finally, it is necessary for students to repeat the words presented by themselves at the end of the activity so the teacher can check their pronunciation.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher can get the attention of the students by applying this activity and motivating them to participate in trying to guess the words.

2. Some transcription of the words includes symbols that are too difficult to guess, so students quit trying easily if they are not motivated to participate.

3. Phonetic transcriptions of short quotes can also be used.

4. Students should be asked not to use electronic devices so they can guess independently and pay more attention to the activity.

ANECDOTE:

"Once when I was teaching teenagers, I realized they had a good English level. However, it was being disrupted by the mispronunciation of cognates or words that have an equivalent in Spanish, so I decided to use this activity that I found interesting because of the phonetic symbols. Most of the students tried to guess the words; all of them were paying attention, and they also found it interesting that each symbol had a sound. They had much fun trying to guess the difference between the words "Tree" and "Three", and when it was explained, they started pronouncing the word three, always funnily showing me their tongue".

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ROLE PLAY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Dayanna Jacqueline Calle Monroy
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

To start, the teacher gathers students together into groups and introduces the topic. Encourage the student to be open to their ideas. Add details if needed to ensure everyone is clear about the assignment. Next, assign roles; they should use their imagination to put themselves inside the minds of the characters they represent. Then, check out their dialogues in case of any mistakes. You could then test and practice different parts that they struggle with so they can be confident in handling situations. Give a deadline for the role play and how it will be graded (rubric). When the role-play finishes, discuss what they have learned so they can learn from the experience. Some students feel threatened or nervous when asked to role-play. To make it less threatening, start with a demonstration. A student and the teacher prepare a short script and act before the class.

PROCEDURE:

1. The class is divided into groups depending on the number of students.
2. The students are assigned a theme, topic, or title.
3. They choose the characters to play.
4. In groups, they create the story and dialogues, ensuring all characters have the same amount of speech.

5. Check their writing to see any grammar mistakes, comprehension, and accuracy

6. Assign a date to present their play.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. If your class has many students, it could take quite a long time to finish grading the role pay.

2. Students might be absent, and we must reassign a date.

3. A student can be anxious in the play. We can encourage them to keep going.

ANECDOTE:

"This strategy was applied during the first term of the school year, which had an excellent approach to my students. I could see evidence of how the students enjoyed working cooperatively. In addition, some of their opinions towards the activity expressed that they felt more confident and willing to use the language even when they were nervous. Moreover, their speaking skills showed a slight improvement".

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ROLE PLAY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María José Santacruz Campos
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

In this activity, students must practice speaking according to what they learned in class. They will use flashcards and word cards related to the topic (vocabulary food) and grammar points (I like, and I do not like).

PROCEDURE:

1. The teacher gives feedback about the learned topic by showing the flashcards and the word cards.
2. The teacher sticks the word cards and flashcards on the board as a guide for the students.
3. The teacher makes some illustrations and practices with some students.
4. The teacher divides the class into students A and B
5. Students A and B mix the cards and put them face down.
6. Student A turns over two cards. It means a word card and a picture card, and form sentences.
7. Student B takes a turn.
8. Students A and B play until they see all the cards.
9. Finally, they will practice and use their information.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher should monitor the students because they can do other activities.
2. The teacher should use the vocabulary words already learned in the class.
3. The teacher should create a reliable atmosphere and encourage students to participate in the activity.
4. The teacher should explain to the students that it does not matter if they make mistakes while practicing; however, the professor must correct them.
5. The teacher should promote pair work.

ANECDOTE:

"In my own experience, I applied this activity to students in third grade. First, they were learning vocabulary about food. So, this activity helped me when I introduced the grammar point related to likes and dislikes, and they had to practice speaking activities. Therefore, they had the cards and talked about the grammar point. In the beginning, they used the cards to speak to each other. Nevertheless, days passed, and they could talk about their likes and dislikes with their personal information".

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ROLE PLAY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Edisson Zhunio S.
Affiliation: Escuela de Educación Básica Nicolás Sojos
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Role play is a teaching technique in language education where students are given specific roles to act out in a scenario or situation. By applying this strategy, students can use language practically and meaningfully, which contributes to developing their oral and listening skills. The beauty of this activity lies in its adaptability to various topics and skill levels, which enables students to cultivate effective communication skills, self-esteem, and cultural awareness. Furthermore, role play can stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving skills while creating a pleasant and immersive classroom environment for learners to practice language skills.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the topic: To begin, present the topic or scenario the students will be role-playing. Ensure that the topic is relevant to their interests and level of proficiency.
2. Assign roles: Assign specific roles to each student and briefly describe their character or role. Encourage students to think about their character's background, personality, emotions, and motivations and how they might respond in the given situation.
3. Provide instructions: Clearly explain the goal of the activity, the time limit, and any rules or guidelines that need to be followed. Emphasize the importance of using the target language and encourage students to stay in character throughout the activity.

4. Model the activity: Demonstrate the activity with a volunteer or colleague to help students understand the expectations. This will teach students a sense of how to approach the scenario and interact with their peers while staying in character.

5. Conduct the role play: Allow students to act out the scenario while staying in character and using the target language as much as possible. Encourage them to engage in realistic and meaningful communication with each other and provide support and guidance as needed.

6. Debrief: Facilitate a reflection period where students discuss their experiences after the activity. Ask them to share what they learned, any challenges they faced, and how they can improve in the future. Additionally, provide feedback on areas where students excelled or could improve.

7. Follow-up activities: To reinforce the learning objectives, assign follow-up activities that build on the language and skills developed during the role play. These could include discussions, writing tasks, or additional role-play scenarios.

8. Assessment: Depending on the learning objectives, assess students' performance in the role play. This could involve evaluating their language use, ability to stay in character, or problem-solving skills. Be sure to provide clear assessment criteria and feedback to students.

9. Overall, role play is a useful strategy for developing speaking skills in language learners. Students can engage in realistic and meaningful communication that promotes language acquisition and socialization by assigning roles, providing clear instructions, and modeling the activity. Teachers can reinforce the learning objectives and assess student performance by facilitating reflection and providing follow-up activities.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Caveats:

1. Time limitations: Role-play activities can be time-consuming, so allocating sufficient time for students to engage without feeling rushed is crucial.

2. Shyness or anxiety: Certain students may feel uneasy with role-play activities, especially if they are shy or have social anxiety. In such cases, providing extra support or alternative activities may help them feel more at ease.

3. Language proficiency: Depending on the level of language proficiency, some students may struggle with the language demands of the role-play activity. Hence, it's essential to offer guidance and support to help them use the target language appropriately and adapt to the complexity of the activity based on their needs.

Options:

1. Diverse scenarios: Role-play activities can be customized to suit various scenarios and topics, ranging from everyday situations, such as ordering food at a restaurant, to more intricate scenarios, like negotiating a business deal. By selecting topics relevant to students' interests and experiences, the activity is more likely to be engaging and meaningful.

2. Varied group sizes: Role-play activities can be conducted in pairs, small groups, or even the entire class, depending on the learning objectives and classroom dynamics. Varying the group size can offer different opportunities for communication and collaboration.

3. Multiple role plays: Teachers can conduct multiple role-play activities throughout the course to provide more opportunities for students to practice their speaking skills. This can help students feel more comfortable with the activity and enhance their language proficiency.

ANECDOTE:

"As a teacher, I have found that role-play activities can be incredibly effective in helping students develop their language skills. One particular anecdote comes to mind when I was teaching a group of 7th-grade EGB students struggling with using modals in English. To help them better understand the function of modals, I created a role-play activity where students had to act out different scenarios where using modals was necessary, such as asking for permission, making suggestions, or giving advice. Not only did the students have fun participating in the activity, but they were able to apply what they learned to real-life situations and improve their use of modals in their speaking and writing".

RAPPORT-BUILDING

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Mónica Guartazaca T.
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Salesiana María Auxiliadora (UEPSMA)
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Rapport is known as the affectionate relationship built between students and the teacher. The practice helps students feel motivated inside classrooms since they feel they are considered. Thanks to it, their willingness to learn and participate can also be affected positively. There is this hideous belief that once you enter your class, you must be completely strict and that by practicing this, students will focus on class. Nevertheless, studies, throughout the years, have shown that improving the class environment and understanding learners' backgrounds and necessities will help us educate better human beings and learners.

PROCEDURE:

1. At the beginning of the school year, introduced yourself and ask students to have a tête-à-tête with you outside the classroom. In five minutes with each, you get to know their preferences as learners and some personal thoughts regarding different matters. At the same time, their preferred names or nicknames should be jotted down. This strategy can make them feel like recognized classroom members.

2. Once teachers know their names, we must memorize them. It is not the same to call them by their last names or just "you, the girl at the back" instead of how they are called at home, by their friends, or even partners.

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3. Another strategy that has worked wonders with me is "The wheel of emotions." It is a wheel that is divided into seven colors. Each contains a basic emotion in the inner circle, and the more you progress towards the outer circle, the more advanced adjectives you get to describe the emotion. For instance, if they mention they felt 'happy' over the weekend, in the end, they will need to choose one more specific, such as 'valued,' 'accepted,' 'inquisitive,' and so on. Before starting the class, the usual question "How was your weekend?" is used alongside each Monday. These outside-classroom questions can be a positive pebble to build a stronger rapport and bond with them.

4. If we include all the positive and engaging activities that help us achieve an optimistic environment, we can also state the use of colorful wooden popsicles. Since we know students are shy when talking begins, encouragement is needed. In this case, every Monday, I mix the question 'How was your weekend?' and the wheel of emotions to talk about it. Students who can state their descriptions correctly are given a colorful popsicle called 'Participation in Class.' At the end of each unit, they need to gather 20 of them to get an item in their grading books. It is noteworthy to mention that hidden messages have been found on them. For instance, 'you are the best,' 'you won a stick :D,' and so on are phrases that their other classmates pass on, and they feel excited to receive a stick, besides gathering them for a grade.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Having a tête-à-tête with each student can be time-consuming if not enough English hours are given during the week. While I was with each, the rest worked on a different activity inside the classroom. If not enough hours of classes are given by the institution, an online survey or a sticky note with their thoughts about a question could work. I used to do that before, but it did not have the same outcome.

2. Generally, my students must have a B1+ or B2 English level according to the Common European Framework. Their confidence and willingness to speak can be shattered if they are not at these levels yet. Consequently, teachers must be facilitators, guides, and motivators for them.

3. In our Ecuadorian context, most classrooms tend to have 30 students or above. Therefore, if we have more than 30 students in a class, it is utterly unfeasible to carry out the prepared lesson and to build rapport as desired.

ANECDOTE:

"First of all, our attitude as teachers should be friendly. When I started teaching, I was taught that I could not smile at my students because otherwise, they would take advantage of it. Therefore, I realized that I was too unapproachable; even when my students tried to engage in a conversation, I was too frightened to let myself loose due to the belief I learned. After some years of working as a teacher, I have come to understand how to be friendly while oozing some authority. Nowadays, my students have told me they consider me kind, but at the same time, respect me because of the way I teach and treat them".

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SPEED DATING

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Margarita Reyes Hermida
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

There is an activity called Speed Dating, which lets students practice their speaking skills with their peers. This activity is held only between peers, interacting without being directly observed or graded by their teacher. In Speed Dating is exactly like those kinds of dates where many people gather in a room, and after a sound is heard, one of the people dating moves to another chair and speaks for a couple of minutes with another individual a sound is heard again, and the same person moves to a different chair to meet others in the room.

PROCEDURE:

1. Students must create a list of at least ten questions to be asked later on to their "dates" (classmates). Students are not told how this activity will work yet, and some examples must be written on the board to motivate students to create their lists. The majority of people ask questions about their interests, such as "Do you have pets?", "Do you have a middle name?" or even harder questions like: "What do you think about abortion?" or "Is there anything you cannot stand in the whole world?" Any ideas students will come up with are more than welcome; of course, it will depend on the level of the students.

2. Once the students have a list of questions, the instructor might need to divide the class into two groups. One group will be seated in a row or many rows, but they will stay in their places, while the other group of students will be moving around in an organized way, for example, one place forward. The instructions must be very clear: "Whenever you hear the bell ringing, or the music, or the sound (whatever the instructor uses), you will sit on the next seat, and you will start again with your list of questions, asking and answering the questions."

3. Students must have enough time to ask and answer the questions. Time might be set up according to the number of students in the class. For example, with larger groups such as 38 students, the instructor might need to give them less time, between 5 to 7 minutes, and with smaller classes with 10 or 20 students, the teacher will provide them more time. It all depends on the interest the instructor sees in their students. If they keep talking, they might be provided more time. Otherwise, it is necessary to make the students move to the following "date."

4. This activity is focused on speaking skills, but for further practice of other skills, the teacher could ask students to take notes from all their "dates," and then they could present the most interesting answers in front of the rest of the group.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. It is important to mention that not everyone in the group will be motivated by the activity as many students consider themselves unable to speak in front of others. It is important to encourage students to have many different questions (easier and harder ones to be answered by students of different levels of English).

2. Speaking activities like this can be difficult to implement due to the lack of interest of some students who are used to following the principle of minimum effort. Therefore, students might end up using their mother tongue to do the activity, which teachers have to be very attentive to. The instructor should be moving around the classroom, listening to each "couple" in a way they do not feel observed to give them confidence.

3. As mentioned previously, some students' lists could be too easy compared to other classmates' lists of questions. To prevent that, the teacher should ask students to ask five easy questions (about everyday issues or personal information) and five harder questions (about politics, religion, philosophy).

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ANECDOTE:

"I have applied this strategy for many years in my classes, especially at the beginning of each school year, and it works very well with teenagers and adults. Two consecutive hours of class are necessary for the students to make the list of questions, which is sometimes hard, and then another whole hour to have the speed date. Most students like this activity, even though they have already "known the other people" in their class, as in many cases, they have not gotten the chance to interact so deeply with their peers".

DEBATING

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: David Bermudez
Affiliation: CEDFI
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

It can be used with different topics in which students need to describe and model language scaffolding while interacting with each other and, at certain times, debating and defending their opinions on a subject.

PROCEDURE:

1. Whenever a new topic is discussed in class, all students must answer some questions.
2. These questions are related to their own opinions about each topic. They are also asked about possibly changing their minds regarding certain questions.
3. If working in pairs, students must be ready to debate with the other students. This will allow them to be more fully engaged with one another.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Some topics could be misunderstood, and that would prevent students from getting started.

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2. Students who understand the topic start expressing their positions towards the subject.

3. Therefore, ensuring they completely understand what they will be talking about is essential.

ANECDOTE:

"More than once, students have so much fun that they do not even realize time is up. They love being heard and analyzing little details, and hearing them talk about the same topics even days after the activity is common".

USING SPECIFIC INTERESTS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Jenny Rodas E.
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Salesiana María Auxiliadora (UEPSMA)
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

One frequently overlooked aspect of the teaching-learning process is recognizing students as unique individuals whose specific needs and interests must be considered to motivate them and facilitate the acquisition of a new language.

To address this need, a proven effective strategy is the implementation of reflective, analytical, and perspective-giving activities relevant to the students' contextual realities and personal concerns. Such activities have also served as an introduction to the subject topics and the development of communicative skills.

PROCEDURE:

The activities are normally applied as a lead-in in the lesson plan. The amount of time that it takes will depend on the students' engagement level and the opportunity to develop meaningful language skills.

1. Undoubtedly, planning is the most important aspect of creating a meaningful activity. During the first sessions, students are surveyed about their main interests in both educational and non-academic domains, and such information will be invaluable to align their preferences. The planned activity has to respond to both the topic to be covered and the activities students enjoy the most.

2. The planned activities could have several forms, such as making questions that raise discussion, reaction to statements, analysis of a video or podcast episode, bringing to class an object or image to be

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interpreted, drawing or describing a situation, and sharing emotions about a specific topic.

3. When applying the activity, it is crucial to keep an open mind to students' opinions and reinforce trust and respect with the students and among classmates. A useful exercise is to ask if the students agree or disagree with a given idea; this could also help to improve their listening skills and achieve a collaborative learning experience.

4. It is advisable to consider the grammar structures or vocabulary used by the students when giving feedback or using it as a link to the topic to be covered.

5. Once the activity is done, give general feedback on the ideas recovered during the lead-in, make a short conclusion if necessary, and link it to the topic covered in the lesson.

6. To ensure students' participation, participation points will be given throughout the lead-in activities. Since students have to collect a certain amount of participation points every unit, this encourages them to share and be more receptive to the activity.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Some planned activities might not align with all students' interests.

2. Students might feel uncomfortable expressing their opinions in front of their classmates. Judgment is certainly an aspect they are afraid of, so trust among the class needs to be worked on from the beginning.

3. Some students might not feel confident enough to produce extended oral interventions, especially if they have to do them spontaneously.

4. Applying these activities with beginner classes might be challenging, language-wise.

5. Many students per class might make it difficult for all students to participate equally.

ANECDOTE:

"As a teacher, one of my primary goals has always been to remain attuned to the context and interests of my students while simultaneously imparting a diverse range of skills that transcend the mere teaching of language. By adopting this approach, I have developed a deeper understanding of my student's individual needs and also bonded with them. Nevertheless, being a B2 First preparation teacher has impeded me from fully implementing student-centered strategies throughout the lesson. As a result, the lead-in activities I plan have been crafted to encourage the active engagement of my students".

VIDEO CLIP "DIGITAL FOOTPRINT"

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Marisol Barros Uguña
Affiliation: CEDFI
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This activity can be based on any topic. In this case, it was the topic of a book unit, "Online life." Students have to create a video clip to raise awareness about the dangers of digital footprints. They are organized into three groups and have to record the video clip.

PROCEDURE:

1. Informative video about Digital footprint
2. A short discussion about the topic
3. Present new Vocabulary and Structures
4. Group organization - Choose a group leader
5. Research and collect information
6. Design the video - and create video script
7. Record and edit the video
8. Video - Clip presentation

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The video clip must be at least 1:15 minutes long.
2. All the group members have to participate.
3. The students have to use vocabulary and structures given in class.
4. They have a due date to hand it in.

ANECDOTE:

"The students usually enjoy these kinds of projects. They used our campus to record the video and used 3 class hours. However, when students are recording, some little kids or teachers interrupt them, and they must do it again".

WEEKLY VOICE NOTE

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Maria de Lourdes Moscoso Amador
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Speaking

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Students are asked to record or videotape themselves speaking about any topic they want. This recording is uploaded to an online platform once a week, each week referring to a different topic. The length could vary (1 to 3 minutes).

The teacher listens to the audio and shortly replies in a qualitative (not quantitative way), referring to the topic by agreeing, telling a similar story, or motivating them.

PROCEDURE:

1. Students select a familiar topic or a topic of interest.
2. Students find a recording app.
3. Students record either a video or an audio and upload it to the agreed platform.
4. Teacher listens and provides feedback.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Recording quality.
2. Feedbak quality. Remember, it must be qualitative.
3. Self-criticism: sometimes students can be too harsh on themselves since they lack confidence in their speaking skill.

Options

Students can also benefit from the practice of speaking to themselves in front of a mirror.

Teachers can also motivate students to send voice messages to each other regarding a particular topic being discussed in class.

ANECDOTE:

"I have done this for the last five years in my English courses. Even if students do not find it helpful immediately, they eventually do. Moreover, they start recommending it to friends. When the course was over, students told me they still do it by recording or just speaking in front of a mirror".

LISTENING

WORD WONDERS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Juana Catalina Tinoco
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Latinoamericano
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The teacher evokes new vocabulary through the use of pictograms, songs or reading aloud to practice vocabulary.

PROCEDURE:

1. Repeat the vocabulary constantly using pictures or concrete material.
2. When students listen to a word or command, they can identify it in a picture.
3. Students will recognize a picture and say or name the word.
4. When students listen to the word without a picture or concrete material, they can understand.
5. Listen and sing songs to do choreography and try to understand the meaning of each word or command.
6. After listening to the song several times, students will try to sing along.
7. Explain the instructions or commands. When the game is assimilated, they can start playing.
8. Tell stories, and when they listen to a specific word, they have to do an action.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The students can follow the song and the moves when we sing.
2. Students can react to the petition when we ask for something.
3. As teachers, we must be attentive to the difficulties that we can encounter along the way. We must change the activities as each student constantly has different strengths.

ANECDOTE:

"As an anecdote, I always thought that using games and ludic activities was the best way to learn, and I remember that when I first started working in a school, I brought a game activity to do with the kids. However, the whole game went wrong because of the behavioral part. Playing with a few students is easy, but the games get complicated when you are at the school and have twenty or more kids. Nevertheless, that time and experience help the teacher carry out these activities better".

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PODCASTS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María de Lourdes Molina
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Salesiana María Auxiliadora
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Podcasts are effective for developing listening comprehension skills in English language learning. They offer authentic and engaging content on various topics and difficulty levels to suit learners at different stages. By listening to podcasts, learners can improve their ability to comprehend spoken language, recognize different accents, and enhance their vocabulary and pronunciation. Additionally, learners can practice their listening skills at their own pace by repeating or pausing the content as needed. Furthermore, podcasts are easily accessible and convenient, allowing learners to listen to them anytime, anywhere, using various devices. Incorporating podcasts into language learning can provide learners with an enjoyable and effective way to improve their listening skills while also gaining insight into the culture and society of the target language (Kavaliauskienė,2008).

PROCEDURE:

1. The first step in using podcasts is to identify the learning goals. The objectives should be specific and measurable, such as improving comprehension of spoken English, increasing vocabulary, or developing critical thinking skills.

2. Once the learning goals are identified, the next step is to select appropriate podcasts. It is crucial to choose relevant and interesting podcasts for the learners' appropriate English proficiency level.

Numerous podcast options are available online, such as TED Talks, news podcasts, and educational podcasts. It is essential to listen to the podcasts beforehand to ensure they align with the learning goals and are appropriate for the learners.

3. Before listening to the podcast, it is vital to engage in pre-listening activities. These activities can include previewing the vocabulary and key concepts in the podcast, predicting the content based on the title and description, or brainstorming questions related to the topic. These activities help learners to focus on the content and improve their comprehension.

4. During the podcast, learners should engage in active listening. They should focus on the content, take notes, and identify key ideas and concepts. Learners should also pay attention to pronunciation and intonation to improve their listening comprehension.

5. Learners should engage in post-listening activities after listening to the podcast. These activities include summarizing the content, discussing the content with classmates or instructors, or writing reflections on the podcast. These activities help learners to solidify their understanding of the content and to connect it to their prior knowledge.

6. The final step in using podcasts to improve listening skills is to provide feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of the activity. Feedback could be provided through self-assessment or peer assessment, where learners evaluate their own or their peers' performance, including reflecting on their listening skills, vocabulary knowledge, or critical thinking skills. Evaluation could be done through quizzes or tests to assess the learners' content retention. This step helps identify areas for improvement and provides opportunities for further development.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

There are some caveats to keep in mind:

1. Quality of content: Not all podcasts have high-quality audio or appropriate content for language learners. Choosing podcasts that are clear, easy to understand, and relevant to the learners' level and interests is essential.

2. Time management: It is easy to get carried away by the plethora of podcast options, leading to an overwhelming amount of content to manage. We must be careful about choosing suitable podcasts and not overloading too many episodes.

3. Technology can sometimes be unreliable, with problems such as buffering or connectivity issues that can disrupt the listening experience.

4. While podcasts can help learners improve their listening skills, they do not allow learners to practice speaking or receive feedback on their language use.

Options:

1. Choose appropriate podcasts. It is essential to select podcasts that are relevant to the learners' interests and language level. Several websites provide recommendations based on topic, level, and genre. For example, NPR, TED Talks, and BBC offer various podcasts catering to different language levels.

2. Learners should develop a listening routine to manage time and avoid becoming overwhelmed.

3. Use technology tools: Technological tools can help learners manage their podcast content. Podcast players like Stitcher allow learners to download episodes, create playlists, and receive recommendations based on their listening history. Language learning Apps like LingQ and FluentU also integrate podcast content with interactive exercises to reinforce listening skills.

4. Even though podcasts alone may not provide opportunities for interaction, learners can supplement their listening experience with other activities such as note-taking, summarizing, and discussing the content with peers.

ANECDOTE:

"As an eighth-grade English teacher, I started incorporating podcasts into my lessons to help students improve their listening skills. One day, I played a podcast episode about a famous singer and noticed my students were more engaged than usual. After the podcast, I gave them a listening comprehension quiz, and to my surprise, all of my students scored higher grades than they used to. When I asked them about it, they said the podcast was more interesting and easier to understand than the usual listening exercises. It was rewarding to see the positive impact that incorporating podcasts had on my students' listening comprehension skills".

LISTENING LOOM

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Cristina Palacios
Affiliation: Universidad del Azuay
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Following a session of listening to a short audio, teachers provide the opportunity to engage students in a dynamic activity designed to strengthen their recognition skills and deepen their understanding of the vocabulary presented.

PROCEDURE:

1. First, students are passed a worksheet with a list of the keywords from the listenings. After the audio is played, students need to write them in the order that they appear on the audio.
2. Then, in groups, students need to act out without speaking the words so the rest of the peers guess the words.
3. Finally, students will need to choose three words from the keywords' list and create an alternative short story and read it out loud in front of the peers, the rest of the students will have to write down the vocabulary from the keywords that they could identify.

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CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. It is essential to choose an up-to-date listening activity that tackles an interesting topic for students.
2. Additional activities could be included through platforms such as Kahoot or Quizizz.

ANECDOTE:

"During a listening comprehension activity with my students, I witnessed growth in my students' language understanding. This resulted from a well-planned activity within a scaffolded framework, providing clear instructions and engaging materials. I began by introducing the topic, followed by a pre-listening task that tapped into the students' prior knowledge. I played an audio recording, pausing to assess comprehension and elicit predictions. I encouraged my students' participation and provided some questions so they could express their thoughts and build confidence. Post-listening activities further solidified their understanding as they answered questions and engaged in dynamic group discussions".

SIMON SAYS "ACTIONS"

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María Piedad Pulla Guerrero
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa La Asunción
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

It involves using physical actions and movements to reinforce language learning. In this approach, the teacher gives commands or instructions in the target language, and the students respond by carrying out the actions. TPR is particularly effective for young learners as it engages their bodies and kinesthetic senses, making language learning more interactive and memorable. TPR activity engages students physically, reinforcing vocabulary through actions and movement. It encourages listening comprehension and provides an interactive and enjoyable way for students to internalize the target language.

PROCEDURE:

1. Begin by introducing and reviewing vocabulary words related to actions, such as "jump," "clap," "run," and "Touch your nose." Make sure students understand the meaning of each word.
2. Explain that they will be given commands, must listen carefully, and perform the actions only when they hear "Simon says" before the command.
3. Model a few examples by saying, "Simon says jump," and demonstrating the action yourself. Encourage students to jump along.
4. Start giving commands, alternating between those with and without, "Simon says." For example, Simon says, "Touch your toes."

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5. Clap your hands and say," Turn around." (Students should not perform this action since "Simon says" was not told before the command given).

6. Continue giving commands, gradually increasing the speed and complexity of the actions.

7. Monitor and support as needed to ensure all students actively participate.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

To make it more challenging, you can also introduce conditional commands, such as "If you are wearing blue, hop on one foot."

Play the game for a suitable duration, allowing students to enjoy and practice the actions.

Conclude the activity by reviewing the vocabulary words and recapping the actions performed. This TPR activity engages students physically, reinforcing vocabulary through actions and movement. It encourages listening comprehension and provides an interactive and enjoyable way for students to internalize the target language.

ANECDOTE:

"I chose to apply the exercise with zero conditional to my seventh-grade students. Although it took them some time to respond, many of them were able to act. Example: Teacher: If Simon eats healthy, he has a healthy body".

STOLEN WORDS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Corina Michelle Arteaga García
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Using audio, students have to identify specific words from a category given by the teacher to create sentences using them.

PROCEDURE:

1. Explain to the students that they will listen to an audio; from that resource, they must write a certain number of words from a specific category. (Ex. Write five verbs that you can hear in the audio).
2. Let the students listen to the audio once or twice.
3. Ask the students to write sentences using these words and the grammar learned (e.g., Write five sentences using the verbs you got in past simple).
4. Let the students share their results.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. According to the level, the audio can be a dialogue, a song, or a story.
2. Tell them the story or dialogue if there is no audio device.
3. According to the level, the sentences can be replaced with pictures (Especially with lower levels).

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ANECDOTE:

"My students were practicing tenses with 13-year-old students. Since we wanted to do different exercises than usual, we looked for a pop song that the students liked. The instruction given was to steal ten verbs from the song and try to write sentences in present simple, present continuous, present perfect, past simple, past continuous, past perfect, future simple, future going to, zero conditional, and first conditional, respectively. As a result, we identified the irregular verbs that were most difficult for students to learn and the grammatical structures we needed to review. They asked me to repeat the activity another time".

THE QUEEN DEMANDS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Priscila Fernanda Calle Monroy
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The activity consists of telling students words of the vocabulary of the unit they are learning and having them mime or execute it.

PROCEDURE:

1. All students have to stand up. If the teacher says, "The queen demands," they have to mime or execute the action or the word, and if they do it wrong or do not do it, they lose and take a seat; if the teacher says another word, and does not say "the queen demands", and the students execute the word, they also lose. The last one standing wins the game.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. Explaining the meaning, pronunciation, and mime of all the vocabulary needed in advance is essential.
2. Videos and audio can also be used to present the vocabulary.

ANECDOTE:

"Children enjoy playing "The Queen Demands." It is an excellent game to start or end the class. We can activate their sensory-motor skills and increase their learning abilities through games".

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MIMICKING

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Patricia Serrano I.
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Salesiana Particular María Auxiliadora
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Instructors have an active role since they model the language for students, deciding the content and how to deliver it, whereas learners have the leading role of receivers acting specifically as producers and listeners.

PROCEDURE:

1. For the students to succeed in TPR, they must first develop listening comprehension skills to follow the teacher's commands.
2. The teacher acts both by demonstrating and saying it. Example: I am brushing my teeth, I am having breakfast.
3. Associate new words and phrases with gestures and movements to help students better understand.
4. Show videos related to a specific topic provided by books and online links.
5. Listen, point, and repeat the new actions using visual aids, such as flashcards or pictures related to the topic.
6. Motivate the students to repeat the action by mimicking.
7. Play the recording with the students; they listen, point, and repeat the new words. The students can sing a song about a specific topic to understand it better.

8. Repeat once more and show pictures of each action. Point and speak.

9. Write the verb/phrase on the board and let the students familiarize themselves with the new action words.

10. Repeat with other verbs and return to them regularly during the semester to check understanding and retention.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The main limitation of this method is that only some things can be explained throught TPR since it mainly focuses on vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation. Grammar structures need different methods to be learned.

2. If this method is used during every class, students can get bored, resulting in lower acquisition.

3. Students' opinions on the topic are limited and sometimes non-existent.

ANECDOTE:

"One day in class, I asked one of my students three things that she wanted to do in the future.

She said:

1. Get a big house near a river with many trees and ponds.

2. Buy every animal and keep them in this big house.

3. Feed them, bathe them, and give them all lots of love!".

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USING SONGS TO TEACH VOCABULARY

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Mónica del Pilar Jerves Hermida
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

I currently teach second-grade students; in other words, I impart classes to children from 6 to 7 years old; for that reason, it is essential to use fun strategies and allow them to develop their receptive skills. At the beginning of each unit, I use a song as a strategy, which allows the introduction of new vocabulary.

It is essential to mention that the song used must not only include the words that will be covered during the unit's development, but it must also have a rhythm that is attractive to the students in a way that captures their attention. This strategy has given me excellent results since the children memorize the words and reinforce their correct pronunciation.

PROCEDURE:

1. Choose a song that includes the vocabulary to be taught.
2. Test the result of the song with students who are similar in age.
3. Use the song at the beginning of the class as a warm-up.
4. Have students listen to the song at the beginning of each class for at least two weeks.
5. Use movements to reinforce the meaning of the words mentioned in the song.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

If the song does not catch the students' attention, rephrase it. If they do not enjoy it, another song should be found that gives better results. The important thing is that the children want to listen to it and repeat it several times for this strategy to work.

ANECDOTE:

"If the song does not catch the students' attention, rephrase it. If they do not enjoy it, another song with better results should be found. The important thing is that the children want to listen to it and repeat it several times for this strategy to work".

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USE TO PICTOGRAMS

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: María Alicia Flores Lucero
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular la Asunción
Skill: Listening

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This strategy involves the use of icons or images as a way of representing a word or a set of information. This technique is mainly applied to young children (first and second grade) since they have yet to wholly acquire their literacy skills related to reading and writing both in their mother tongue (Spanish) and a second language (English). As a result, through pictorial aids, EFL teachers pursue to facilitate the language learning process, promote the acquisition of new vocabulary, and activate prior knowledge regarding personal experiences or memories.

PROCEDURE:

1. Analyze the grammar structure of the unit in terms of form and function. For example, they express food preferences using the simple present tense.
2. Use any website where teachers can get images or icons freely (Google or Canva). To illustrate this step, consider the following statement: I like bananas. It would be ideal to search for a picture for each part of this sentence. In other words, one image for the pronoun "I," another one for the verb "like," and finally, an image for "bananas".
3. Next, paste the pictograms on the whiteboard so students can quickly look at them without any hurdles.

4. Ask the students to guess the hidden meaning or message by looking at the sequence of pictures. This is a straightforward way of activating their prior knowledge.

5. Elicit responses that might be right or wrong. Sometimes, learners use their mother tongue, but this is acceptable.

6. Point to each pictogram and say aloud what it means. For example, indicate verbally that the first picture depicts the word "I" since it is a person pointing to himself/herself. Continue doing this with the other images.

7. Apply choral repetition, a method of drilling. In this case, students must repeat the words or phrases after the English teacher. This technique allows teachers to check whether the students' pronunciation and comprehension are correct.

8. Change the pictograms to incorporate new language items. To exemplify, put away the picture of bananas and replace it with another one of pears.

9. Optional: Teachers might write the words corresponding to each picture, so students' phonemic awareness will be developed in the early stages since English words and sounds are different.

10. Ask the students to discover the new secret sentence by looking at the images. Teachers can use clues such as gestures or short information in this step.

11. Place the pictograms on the table in any order. Ask any student to come to the front, say aloud a sentence, and give him/her enough time to choose the correct pictures. The final result would be that the learner's memory capacity allows him/her to create adequate sentences using pictograms.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. EFL teachers can use visual aids even though their students might have different learning styles (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners).

2. Visual materials allow students to learn and practice new words; the teacher's intervention can help enhance their communicative skills.

3. Picture sequence exercises significantly improve pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, making students' discourse more intelligible.

4. Students need to learn to read images, while EFL teachers should be taught how to select pertinent visuals to teach through them. In other words, training is needed in this area.

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5. Children draw before they can read and write; images have metalinguistic features that allow us to interpret them faster than text.

6. Pictograms make reading and writing more accessible by fostering comprehension even when students cannot fully understand a text.

7. This technique provides visual exercise, promotes visual discrimination, and improves memory capacity by allowing the codification of information verbally and nonverbally.

8. Pictorial aids show procedures and routines (e.g., how to play a new game or behave appropriately in the classroom).

ANECDOTE:

"Teaching makes me realize that life might take different paths or directions unexpectedly. I had been working with teens and adults; my experience as an EFL teacher was complete. However, it was not true since I had never taught English to kids. When my boss informed me that I would be working with children from second grade, this news felt like when a person throws you a massive bucket of ice water, I did not know what to do because I had no idea how the learning process at that age was carried out. Well, the first days of class were a complete mess, but I tried to make an effort. Nevertheless, I realized my students were visual beings since they loved watching movies and seeing colorful images. As a result, I took advantage of this situation and used pictograms for my lessons. I remember that one of the topics that I had to teach was food preferences (I like bananas / I do not like pizza), so I surfed on the Internet, and after a while, I found the correct pictures for each word. The next day, I brought these materials to my classroom; all the students were paying attention to what teacher Ali was doing. After that, I told them, "This is a secret code, and you have to tell me the hidden message." I used some gestures because the kids were not native English speakers. Even though I felt slightly skeptical about using visual aids for them, my students got the main idea of expressing their likes and dislikes about food. Next, I wanted to make it more exciting and challenging for them, so I used a different vocabulary (toys). It was a big surprise for me since my kids understood they could use the grammar structures (like and do not like) with other vocabulary and pronouns. Finally, to check their pronunciation, I asked them to say the sentences verbally just by looking at the pictograms; for this activity, I applied the famous game "Hot Potato" so everybody could participate".

READING

USING COGNATES

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Lizbeth Mercedes Robles Sánchez
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular La Asunción
Skill: Reading

SHORT DESCRIPTION

This activity consists of incorporating the use of Spanish-English cognates in the learning of vocabulary in English by Spanish speakers. For this activity, students must think and identify exact or partial cognates from a list of words. Once identified, they should discover its meaning and relate it to their native language.

PROCEDURE:

1. Create a list of exact or partial cognates.
2. Distribute this list in class with students and encourage them to review and read it at least twice.
3. Next, help students identify and match the similar cognates in the list provided.
4. Discuss the possible meanings of the cognates with students.
5. Provide a specific time and ask students to write the cognates they remember the most in their notebooks or on paper.
6. Ask students to share with their classmates the cognates they wrote.
7. Finally, create oral examples of everyday situations in which the revised cognates could be used.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

1. The teacher must develop a list of cognates that include false cognates, that is, words that are identical or similar in form but different in meaning.

2. The teacher can provide examples or show videos before handing out the word list. This is to maximize knowledge about cognates and avoid confusion with false cognates.

ANECDOTE:

"I was teaching vocabulary about emotions. In this lesson, the cognate embarrassed was included. In English, this word means feeling or showing embarrassment. During the development of the class, specifically after the activity of discussing the meaning of this cognate. A student was distracted, and because of this, she did not hear that this word is not a cognate but a false cognate since, in Spanish, this emotion is confused with the word pregnant in English. When asked about an example of this word in our daily actions, the student replied: "My cousin is embarrassed about six months." I asked the student several times if embarrassed was the correct word. She answered yes until a classmate explained the difference in meanings. She apologized and laughed".

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INDEPENDENT READING PROJECT

STRATEGY

Teacher´s name: Marcela Eugenia Mogollón
Affiliation: Unidad Educativa Particular Santana
Skill: Reading

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The Independent Reading Project is a collection of activities designed to encourage students to read and engage with books. The project includes tasks such as writing a letter to the author, creating a character resume, designing a website, and making a scrapbook. Students can explore different aspects of the book and practice their reading comprehension and writing skills through these activities.

PROCEDURE:

Choosing and Reading the Book

1. Students will go to the school library and pick a book.
2. They will have two weeks to read the book and take notes on important events, characters, and themes.

Selecting Activities

1. After finishing the book, students will choose one activity from each category: numbered and lettered.
2. In the numbered category, they can write a letter to the author, create a character resume, imagine what items would be found in a character's life, write a dating ad, or list websites a character would visit.

3. In the lettered category, they can create a comic strip or storyboard, design a website or PowerPoint/Canva/Prezi presentation, make a scrapbook, create a book jacket description, or design a CD cover with a soundtrack.

Presenting Final Products

1. Students will have two weeks to work on their chosen activities.
2. They will present their final products to the class in a showcase, including displaying their scrapbooks, sharing their dating ads, presenting their websites or PowerPoint presentations, and playing their CD soundtracks.
3. The class can ask questions and learn about different books and activities.

CAVEATS AND OPTIONS:

Caveats:

1. Students should be reminded to choose a book appropriate for their reading level and age.
2. Teachers should provide guidelines for the activities to ensure they would be relevant to the book and aligned with the learning objectives.
3. Students should be given enough time to complete the project, and deadlines should be communicated in advance.
4. Teachers should provide support and guidance throughout the project to ensure students are on track and understand the requirements.

Options:

1. Teachers can provide a list of suggested books for students.
2. Students can work together in pairs or small groups to read and analyze the book together.
3. Teachers can incorporate technology by allowing students to create digital versions of their final products, such as websites or podcasts.
4. Students can present their final products to the class or a panel of judges for feedback and evaluation.
5. Teachers can offer extra credit or rewards for outstanding projects or presentations.

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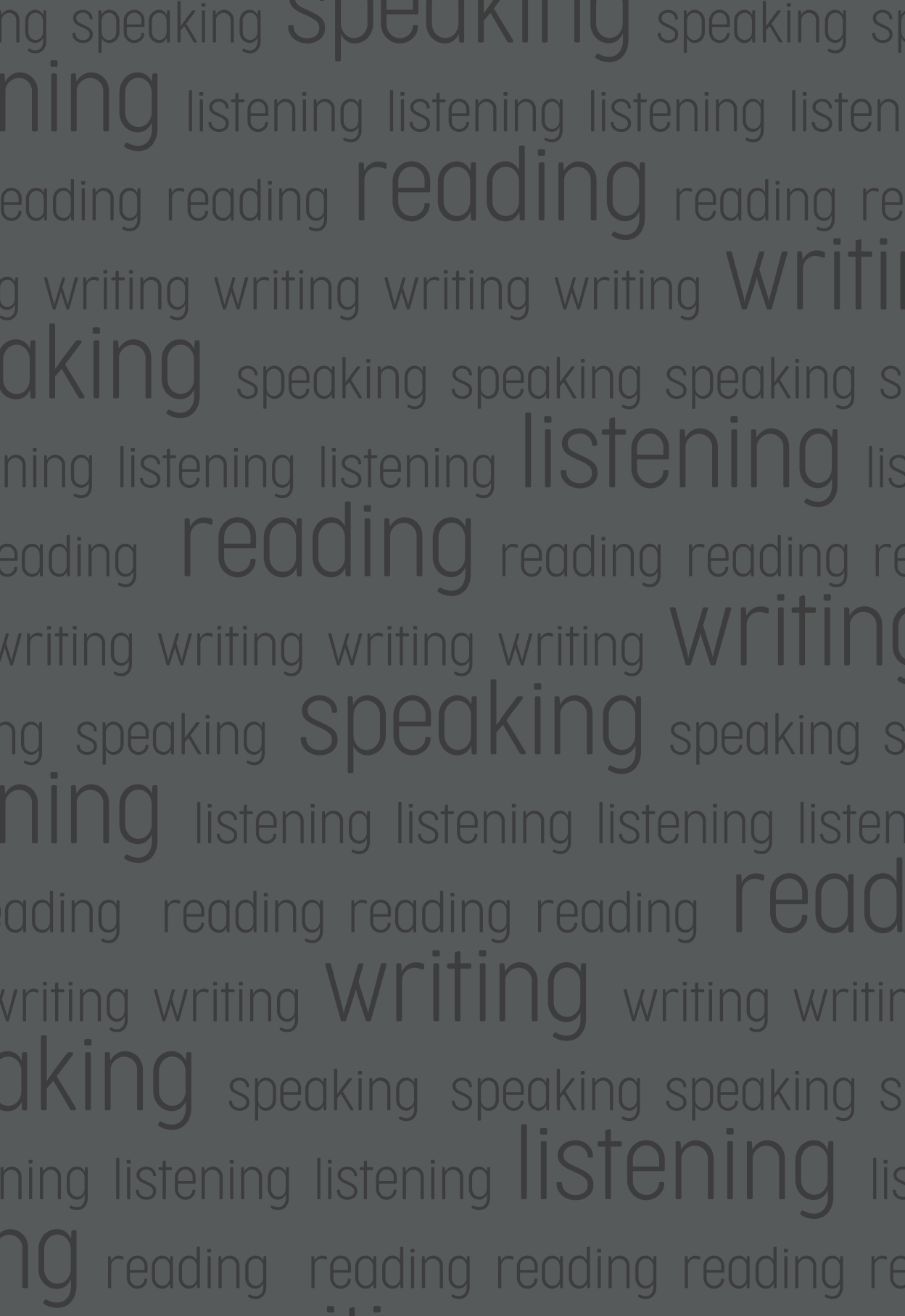
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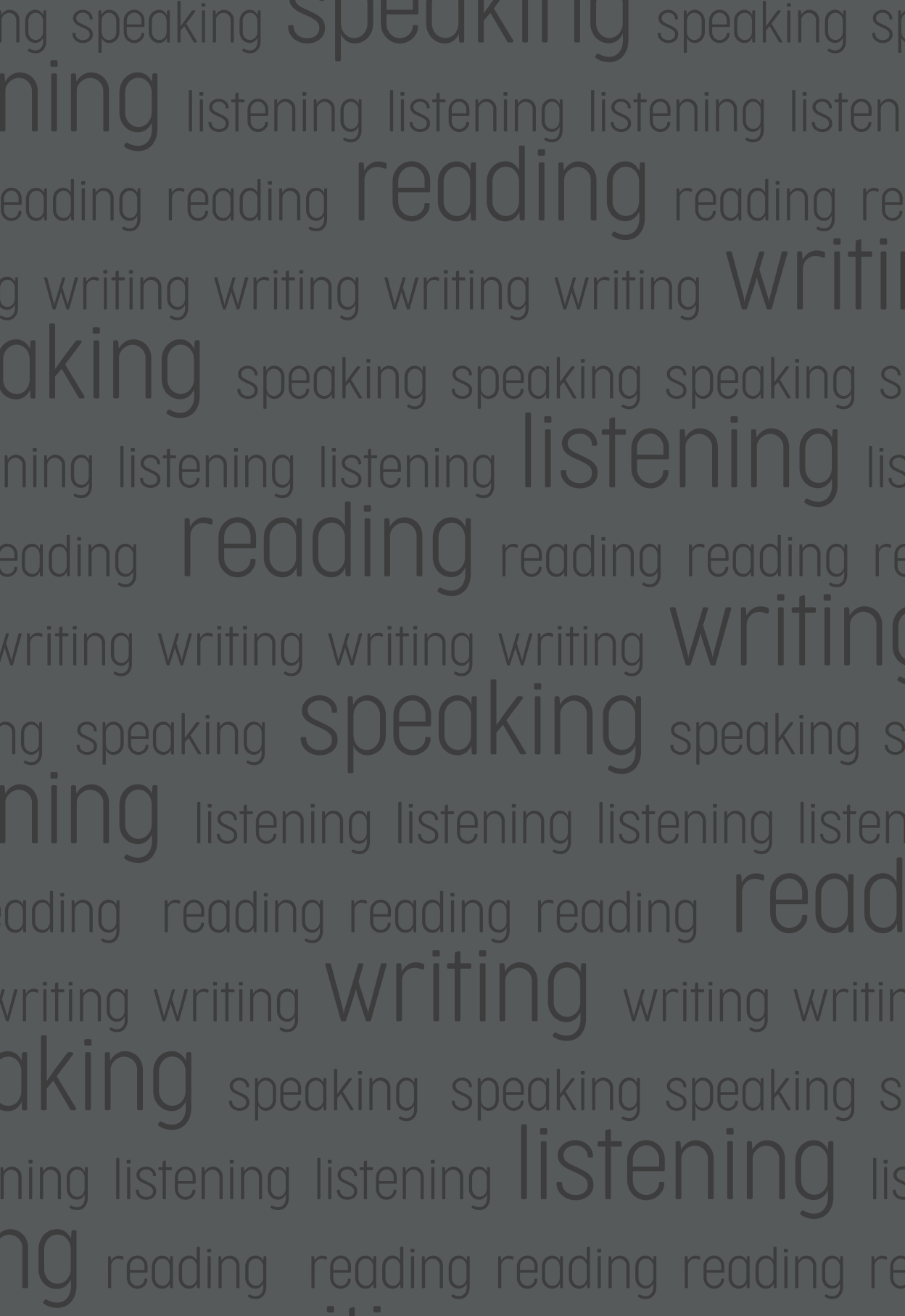
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