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Abstract

Grammar seems to be the less enjoyable topic in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) subject. Secondary school students tend to associate it to complicated theoretical explanations and boring notebook exercises, which is what they are used to doing. Even though grammatical explanations and written exercises are also important and should not be forgotten, teachers should also incorporate innovative resources in the classroom. As regards English grammar, a pertinent tool to engage teenage pupils would be the teaching of grammar through games. However, secondary school teachers do not seem familiarized with these new resources. Instead, they tend to use games as time fillers or as useful tools only to practise vocabulary. For this reason, in this paper I provide a compilation of relevant games that secondary school teachers can use to teach the grammar covered in the 3rd of ESO grammar.

Key words

English as a Foreign Language, Games, Grammar, Secondary Education, Teaching.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Justification

According to my observation in the secondary school IES Sant Marçal located in Marratxí, “English as a Foreign Language” seems to be one of the favourite subjects amongst students. It appears that they appreciate the dynamic lessons that language classes allow, such as watching videos, listening to songs or participating in competitions. However, there is one skill which is probably the less enjoyable for the vast majority: grammar.

Students do not seem to be fond of grammar because they associate it to tough theoretical explanations and long difficult exercises. Indeed, this is the way grammar is taught in most secondary schools. Students do not go beyond learning grammatical rules and doing written exercises in their notebooks. Although explanations and exercises are also important and should not be forgotten, innovative teaching resources should also be incorporated.

It is true that the subject of EFL has evolved during the last few decades. A pertinent example of this would be the current increase in the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the classrooms. My observation in IES Sant Marçal has proved that teachers take advantage of the Internet resources to make English lessons more enjoyable. The use of *youtube*, *lyricstraining.com* or blogs hosted by the same teachers are just some examples of it. Nonetheless, the instruction of grammar seems not to have changed in a long time.

This stagnation with regards to the teaching of grammar is most likely due to the inefficient use of new resources. Among these resources, games are a perfect tool to teach a huge variety of skills. Nevertheless, teachers seem to associate games only to the teaching of vocabulary or as nothing more than a fun activity. Consequently, research should be done in order to have the necessary tools to make the learning of grammar as interesting for the students as the learning of other disciplines.

1.2. Objectives

After the observation done in IES Sant Marçal, the main objective of my TFM is to create a compilation of appropriate grammar games to use in the EFL subject. This compilation is aimed at helping teachers be familiarized with the innovative tools they can benefit from when teaching grammar. It will include already existing resources as well as games created by myself. In the games invented by myself, I propose mixing grammar together with some vocabulary, since my experience in IES Sant Marçal has proved that students do not have a huge range of vocabulary either. Hopefully, I will try some of these resources - either developed by or adapting already existing ones- with the students in IES Sant Marçal. Finally, I will analyze the advantages -by research and if possible by experience- of learning English with games. This last objective is to see if games are a relevant tool to make students engage with English grammar.

2. Background information / Literature review

2.1. “English as a Second Language” (ESL) in the Balearic Islands: Importance and implementation

In our current society it is well-known that English has been given the status of *lingua franca*, and it has become the vehicular language to facilitate communication between people of different nationalities. As Konopelkina and Bezrodnykh state, it is “the language of international cross-cultural communication” (Konopelkina & Bezrodnykh, 2013, p. 2). English is also crucial to understand the ICT and to facilitate commercial relationships and negotiations between countries. Finally, it is a requirement to find a job, especially in the Balearic Islands, where the role of tourism is essential.

Therefore, there seems to be a growing concern in the Balearic Islands about the importance of learning English and the way ESL is taught. This is demonstrated by the introduction of programmes such as *Seccions Europees*, Erasmus Plus, EOIES, or working with projects. All these approaches are aimed

at helping students to improve their communicative skills and eventually achieving mastery in the English language.

Furthermore, one of the most remarkable pros of how English is implemented in the Balearic Islands is the decrease in the number of students per classroom (fifteen as a maximum). This change allows the teachers in secondary schools to practise more dynamic activities during their lessons. At the same time, students have more opportunities to speak in the foreign language and to ask their doubts. The teacher has fewer students to help and, therefore, pupils can learn better.

2.2. The teaching of grammar: Traditional methods

Grammar has traditionally been explained through a series of methods that have changed and innovated all over the years. In some cases, new methods substituted the available ones. Other times, a combination of some methods has resulted in a new method. The purpose of this section is to try to overview the main methods that have been traditionally used to teach English grammar.

2.2.1. The Grammar-Translation method.

The Grammar-Translation Method was previously known as the Classical Method because it was used to teach Latin and Greek. Its main aim was to help students have the tools to read and appreciate literature written in a foreign language. At the same time, it was expected that studying the grammar of the target language would be useful for students to achieve proficiency in their native language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.13).

This method considered the literary language to be superior to the spoken language. As Tetzner (2004) states, the access to the literature of a foreign language was seen as an opportunity “to develop the learner’s minds mentally”. Translation was given a major role, as the name of the method suggests, and reading and writing were the principal skills to be worked with.

On the other hand, the ability to communicate in the target language was not given any importance. Instead, it was pursued to find similarities between the target language and the native language in order to improve the skills in the second one.

Regarding the roles of the teacher and the students, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explain that in this method the teacher is considered to be the authority and the students are seen as followers. Students' errors are corrected by the teacher, since to get the correct answer is very important, and students are evaluated through texts that they have to translate from the native language into the target language. Memorizing is also very important to make students get the right answers, and it is given a maximum priority.

2.2.2. The Direct method.

The Direct Method became popular when it was seen that the Grammar-Translation Method did not prepare students for communicating in the target language. To find a solution to this problem, this new method was based on the principle that translation was not allowed any longer. Instead, direct communication in the target language was pursued. Translation could be substituted by an explanation in the target language -which also involved the learning of new vocabulary- or by a simple demonstration showing students pictures or real objects (Krause, 1916, p.17).

By the same token, it differs from the previous method in the importance given to speech, which is now granted the maximum priority. Furthermore, neither memorization nor the use of the native languages were allowed, since this method pursued to achieve real communication in the target language. Therefore, as Larsen-Freeman and Anderson explain (2011), the lessons were based on situations or topics that foster conversational activities and promote pronunciation skills. Before that, however, it was important to give proper input to the students. That is to say, to "give the pupils a solid foundation of practical

phonetics [for example] to insure good and intelligent pronunciation” (Krause, 1916, p.24).

Regarding the teacher-students role, in this method the teacher still directs the lessons, but in a more closely relationship with the students. The errors, for example, are not corrected by immediately giving the right answer to the pupils. Instead, the teacher tries to help them notice their mistakes and be able to correct themselves, since it was believed that self-correction promoted the learning of a new language (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.30-31).

2.2.3. The Audio-Lingual method.

The Audio-Lingual Method is an oral-based approach which defines language as a series of structures. That is to say, it focuses on grammatical sentence patterns, and it is based on drilling. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explain that the main aim of this method is that students overcome the native language bad habits when learning the target language. It is pursued, by the same token, that pupils succeed in using the target language automatically; without thinking. To carry it out, they have to keep on imitating the teacher, who is still seen as the model.

This approach gives a lot of importance to the formation of new habits in the target language. Therefore, repetition of sentence patterns has a major role. As Larsen-Freeman and Anderson state, this is a method which defends that “the more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning” (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.42). For this reason, these authors explain that drilling of structural patterns is what leads these lessons, and the acquisition of vocabulary is given a secondary role.

As regards to correction, this method believes that errors should be avoided because they create bad habits on the learners. Consequently, the teacher has to immediately correct a student’s mistake. Likewise, positive reinforcement is taken into account, since it helps to create good habits.

2.2.4. The Silent Way.

This method developed when the Audio-Lingual Method principles about habit formation were challenged by the new Cognitive Code Approach at the beginning of the 1960s (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.51). From this moment onwards, different methods emerged, and one of them was Caleb Gattegno's Silent Way. This new approach was no longer based on repetition neither were the errors seen as something negative for the process of learning. Instead, it was sought that students discovered the rules of the target language by themselves and could be able to make their own hypothesis (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.60-61).

The name of this method is due to the importance that silence has in this new way of understanding the process of learning. Contrary to previous techniques such as the Audio-Lingual one, in the Silent Way the teacher is not the centre of the attention any more. As Caleb Gattegno (1963) explained, the major role is now given to the students, who are provided with the proper tools to self-correct and provide alternative hypothesis to their answers. Therefore, teachers have neither to transmit knowledge nor to correct their students; this method allows teachers to observe their students' progress (Gattegno, 1963, p.108).

To make this student's progress possible, Gattegno (1963) suggested using a series of worksheets which would work for the pupils to be aware of what they knew about the unit at any time, and what they needed to improve. These worksheets could also be used as a tool for students to set goals about their learning of the target language. As an example, the author explains using worksheets along with a set of word-cards. The worksheets contain a series of sentences, and the aim of the exercise is that students discover the grammatical structure of the sentences by answering some questions given by the teacher. Other questions are asked to the students to help them notice the word-class of the different words. For example, they are requested to replace one word of the sentence with another one that fits in. In such a way, the pupils discover that there are words that have characteristics in common.

2.2.5. Desuggestopedia.

The creator of this method, Georgi Lozanov, begins his book by making the reader wonder about this question: why there are teachers whose lessons are easier to remember and to understand than others. Lozanov (1978) states that the answer to this question must have to do with psychology and the influence that teachers have on their students. This influence is not only due to what they say, but also to “the intonation of their voices, their smiles, gestures, clothes, movements and their whole attitude toward the pupils” (Lozanov, 1978, p.2).

Therefore, this method is based on the idea that creating a positive environment has an importance in the process of learning a new language. According to Lozanov, students have fears that impede them to learn the target language properly, and as Ludger Schiffler explains, these barriers have to be eliminated through “harmonization” (Schiffler, 1992, p.6). That is to say, teachers have to do their best to facilitate a confident and joyful atmosphere in the classroom in order to help students feel receptive towards the new language. In other words, this method pays attention for the first time to “those perceptions unnoticed by man” (Lozanov, 1978, p.34).

To mention some examples of these perceptions, Richards and Rodgers talk about the decoration of the classroom, the musical background, or even the shape of the chairs. The personality of the teacher is equally important, as well as the changes in rhythm and intonation that they carry out during the lesson. These varieties help to avoid boredom in the classroom and to create a proper atmosphere for students to learn and memorize contents (Richards and Rodgers, 2000, p.102).

2.2.6. Community Language Learning.

This method, which has its bases on the Counseling-Learning approach by Charles A. Curran, is built on the idea that teachers have to act as counsellors and take into account their students’ feelings when learning the new language. According to this method, the fears and sensations that students have towards

the new language are a decisive point to succeed or fail in its learning. For this reason, the teacher has to help them have positive reactions.

This approach, therefore, puts a lot of emphasis on teachers having a nice relationship with their students. They have to understand the difficulty that most adult learners have in learning a new language, and give them support and confidence to facilitate the process (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.94). This relationship must change during the process of learning, and students have to move from more dependency on the teacher to gaining more autonomy and maturity.

This method also defends not to explain too many contents to students in the same lesson in order not to overwhelm them. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) state that to tell students beforehand what they will do during the lesson is also advisable according to this method, as well as to use the native language now and then in order to make them feel more confident and relaxed. By the same token, each lesson gives pupils the opportunity to express their feelings about the new language, which helps to create “a sense of intimacy and commitment among the members” (Baker and Jones, 1998, p.681).

Regarding the teacher’s response to errors, this is a method which believes in correcting the students’ errors by rightly repeating what they said wrong. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) indicate that it is important only to repeat it, without giving much emphasis on the error. This way, students’ confidence towards the target language is not threatened and they do not feel anxious.

2.2.7. Total Physical Response.

This method was developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology in California, and its main characteristic is that it pursues to teach a language through physical activity. As Richards and Rogers (2000) explain, the author believes that the learning of a second language is comparable to the learning of

the first language. That is to say, adults must recapitulate their acquisition of the mother tongue, which was first with physical and afterwards with verbal responses (Richards and Rogers, 2000, p. 277).

Therefore, this approach organizes the learning process into different phases; it goes from more to less direction of the teacher. That is to say, the teacher begins giving commands to the students and modelling their responses. After that, when the students have already understood the utterances, it is expected that they are the ones who make the commands. Regarding errors, it is advised that teachers are tolerant and only correct the major ones (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.111).

Furthermore, this approach is similar to other methods previously exposed in the sense that it also pursues to lower the students' stress when learning the new language. What is more, it seeks to make the learning process an enjoyable experience. To achieve it, it is advisable to use humour (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.109).

2.2.8. Communicative Language Teaching.

This method responds to the new concerns in the late 1970s and early 1980s about the importance that communicative competence should have when learning a new language. Indeed, for the majority of Communicative Language Teaching instructors this is a method in which “the emphasis is on the comprehension and production of messages, not the teaching or correction of language form” (Spada, 2007, p. 272). For this reason, students have to be able -and this is the main objective- to communicate in the target language in an effective and understandable way. The role of the teacher is, thus, to provide situations in the classroom that can allow this communication.

According to this method, it does not matter if the students' knowledge of the second language is not quite extensive. The crucial point is that they perform their best to be understood. Meanwhile, the teacher can guide and advise them about the conversation, but it has not to be forgotten that this is a

“learner-centred approach” (Spada, 2007, p. 272). Larsen-Freeman and Anderson insist on the idea that the major role of the teacher is to facilitate communication between students because, this way, they are responsible of their own learning (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.122).

Consequently, what is intended to be accomplished with this method is that students feel that they can communicate in the foreign language and, therefore, they are more motivated to learn it. For this reason, the native language is not totally prohibited. However, it is advised that the target language should be given priority in order to facilitate that students see it as a means of communication.

Regarding errors, this method accepts that they are part of communication in a foreign language, and that “students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators” (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.125). Hence, errors are tolerated, and it is suggested that the teacher comments on them later on in order to help their students to improve.

It is also interesting to mention that this technique gives suggestions about how to achieve communication amongst students. The use of authentic materials and language games during the lessons are some of the examples. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson explain that to use a newspaper in the classroom, for instance, helps to overcome “the problem that students cannot transfer what they learn in the classroom to the outside world” (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.126). By the same token, games usually make students have fun and, consequently, feel more motivated to use the target language. Therefore, games are a good tool to foster communication.

2.2.9. Content-based Instruction.

Content-based Instruction is the name that has been given to a new method that consists of studying contents in the target language. These contents can be informal, such as hobbies, or more formal, like academic subjects. Therefore, as Larsen-Freeman and Anderson expose, in this kind of instruction “both the content and the language are targets for learning” (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.138). The teacher has to prepare activities and material that can be useful to learn both aspects, and use one to teach the other.

The goal of this approach is to make students see that it is meaningful to learn a new language since they are exposed to it in a context and with real material. This way, they can understand the relevance of the target language and, consequently, feel more motivated to enrol in it (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.138). Therefore, the teacher has to guide the students' learning by showing them that they are learning a language to convey specific content. Students have to be assessed both in content and in language, and the errors can be dealt with either by the teacher giving the students the correct form or by letting them self-correct.

With respect to this method's benefits, Richards and Rodgers (2000) indicate some of them. To begin with, the authors talk about the influence that this approach has in achieving immersion in education. As an example, they mention the case of English-speaking Canadians who study the content subjects in French. What this allows is, according to the authors, to gain proficiency in the foreign language as well as to develop a positive attitude towards the speakers of this language. These authors defend, furthermore, that Content-based instruction facilitates the learning process, since students see that it has significance: to use the language in order to understand content. Moreover, they affirm that “a focus on the comprehension and expression of meaningful and engaging content is believed to activate a range of cognitive skills that are basic to learning” (Richards and Rodgers, 2000, p.119).

2.2.10. Task-based Language Teaching.

The goal of the Task-based Language Teaching approach is to make students learn the target language while doing specific tasks which have a clear outcome (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.146). Therefore, the main role of the teacher in this method is to prepare tasks for students to practice the target language, as well as to help them during the performance. Whenever possible, this method advises to choose tasks that students will see as useful for their real lives. Moreover, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explain that it is advisable that teachers prepare a pre-task, a task, and a post-task. The pre-task phase is useful to give the students the specific language they will need to do the task, whereas in the post-task the teacher can comment on students' errors or simply reinforce what has been learnt during the lesson.

Evaluation in this approach is a constant process in which the teacher keeps on paying attention and assessing the task that students are carrying out and the language they are using (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.157). However, it has not to be forgotten that "the real purpose of the task is not that learners should arrive at a successful outcome but that they should use language in ways that will promote language learning" (Ellis, 2003, p.8). As for the errors, grammar explanations or recasts are done in order to make that students do not repeat the same mistakes.

2.3. An innovation: teaching grammar with games

In the last few decades some concern has arisen about finding innovative methods in the teaching of grammar. As an example, games have begun to be seen as a great opportunity to practice and reinforce the previously introduced grammar rules. There are already some authors that have talked about the benefits of using games in the classroom. Furthermore, some advice has been given about how to choose a game, when to play it, or how the teacher should behave during its playing.

2.3.1. What are games?.

To begin with, it is essential to define what are considered to be games to play in the classroom. As prejudices, Lee Su Kim (1995) mentions that the idea of learning that is most commonly accepted is that it has to be something serious which cannot involve fun. The author defends, however, that it is perfectly possible to learn and enjoy at the same time, and one of the best ways to do it is by playing games.

Angkana Deesri (2002), on the other hand, talks about the phenomenon that many teachers consider language games to be a waste of time or activities aimed only for fun or to break the ice between students. However, the point of the author is that games are more than that: they are a great resource to make students use the language in the course of the game.

I-Jung Chen, an author who has already tried to incorporate some games in his lessons, compares them to task-oriented activities because both engage students in using language in a creative way (Chen, 2005, n.p.). The author also mentions the importance that this kind of activities has in achieving the recently important communicative competence. Other authors compare games to problem-solving activities in the sense that both have communicative purposes and a goal to be achieved (Saricoban and Metin, 2000, n.p.).

2.3.2. Advantages of using games.

Some authors have already listed a few advantages of using games in the language classrooms. To begin with, there seems to be agreement about the phenomenon that games make students competitive and, consequently, more participative. This allows teachers, according to Deesri (2002), to introduce new knowledge to them in a more effective way. As students usually love to score points and to beat their classmates in a competition, it is easier to make them engage with the activities and, indirectly, teach new content to them (Deesri, 2002, n.p.). This competition also helps to increase students' motivation. In Chen's words, "throughout the competition, I observed that students were more

engaged in and committed to using English than they would be in the classroom. They were attentive to instructions, which they usually are not in regular class” (Chen, 2005, n.p.).

Another well recognized benefit of using games in the classroom is that they seem to lower students’ stress. As Deesri states, “there is a high level of stress in the classroom because students have to face unfamiliar or unknown grammatical structures” (Deesri, 2002, n.p.). In this sense, games help students to feel more relaxed because they are only concerned about having fun and winning the game, and they do not worry about the mistakes they make using the language nor correct themselves in every single sentence. When this takes place, it is amazing to see how “they can improve their fluency and natural speaking styles” (Deesri, 2002, n.p.).

Similarly, Chen declares that “while playing games, the learners’ attention is on the message, not on the language” (Chen, 2005, n.p.). This phenomenon helps to reduce students’ anxiety, since they are not worried about the language mistakes and do not fear being judged in public. Therefore, as the author explains, their communicative competence can be improved.

Some authors also relate this motivation when playing games with an unconscious learning. Deesri (2002), for example, mentions that games are a perfect tool to make students learn without realizing that they are learning. That is to say, students are so concerned about having fun and winning the game that they do not worry about making language mistakes and, consequently, they use and internalize new grammatical structures without being aware of it.

Furthermore, Deesri defends that games can also help to increase students’ proficiency: They provide situations in which students have to use the language with a purpose (Deesri, 2002, n.p.). Students not only do grammar exercises in their notebooks, but they have an excuse to use the grammatical rules or structures they are asked to learn. As Chen states, games “create a meaningful context for language use” and “encourage creative and spontaneous use of language” (Chen, 2005, n.p.).

Finally, games have proved to increase the use of the target language in the classroom. Chen, who has actually incorporated games in his lessons, declares that his experience showed him that games made students less afraid of using English and sharing their doubts in English, as well as more attentive to instructions (Chen, 2005, n.p.).

2.3.3. How to choose a game.

Lin Hong gives some advice about what teachers should take into account when choosing a game to play in their classroom. This author reminds that “students may wish to play games purely for fun. Teachers, however, need more convincing reasons” (Hong, 2002, n.p.). Therefore, Hong advises that teachers should consider which skills do the game practises, what is the purpose of it, and how much interaction and participation it involves.

Furthermore, the author reminds that teachers should pursue the maximum involvement of students as well as take into account if the game fits them. If the game does not fit the students, the teacher should think how to simplify it or make it more complex. Finally, Hong recommends that the ultimate question that teachers should take into account is if they like the game themselves (Hong, 2002, n.p.).

Deesri also talks about the importance of adapting a game to the students’ level and needs, since it is not easy to find a game that completely fits the teacher’s requirements (Deesri, 2002, n.p.). As a summary of her recommendations, the author states that “the most important factor is that games should be used when they can give students both fun and educational meaning, otherwise they will be a waste of time” (Deesri, 2002, n.p.).

Finally, Su Kim (1995) talks about these factors to bear in mind when deciding which game to use in the classroom: the space we have, the noise the game will make, the amount of time needed for the game, and the interests of our students. It is clear that it is not the same to play a game in the classroom than in the playground, or to play a game which requires shouting than another

which does not. Similarly, teachers will not choose the same game if they have got the whole hour to spend than if they just have ten minutes. By the same token, the teacher should take into account the interests and hobbies of their students, since they could be adapted to the topic of the game. Kim also mentions that it is advisable, when deciding which game to play, to choose one that can complement the contents of the syllabus that are being worked with at the moment (Su Kim, 1995, n.p.).

2.3.4. When to use games.

Regarding the frequency of the use of games in the classroom, the first limitation to be taken into account, as Deesri (2002) points out, are the syllabus restrictions. Teachers have to cover what it is stated in the syllabus that students must learn, and sometimes they find in the course book a great support to be sure that all the content will be taught. However, after having considered the benefits of introducing games in the language lessons, the author adamantly states that they should be incorporated in everyday lessons. Deesri suggests that the teacher could first of all introduce the new grammar forms and then make students play the game to understand these grammar forms (Deesri, 2002, n.p.).

With Deesri's words,

For example, if teachers are going to introduce present tenses or conditionals, instead of teaching them in a traditional way, (by simply telling them the rules, have them do some written exercises, drilling and answering questions), teachers may help students understand these forms of grammar by playing games, which can also meet all the requirements of the traditional classes involving learning rules, drilling and repeating. Moreover, students can take this opportunity to use them in real communication. (Deesri, 2002, n.p.).

Saricoban and Metin (2000) seem to have a similar opinion, since they defend that games should be incorporated after the presentation of the new grammar topics. They reckon that games can only be useful when they are done after students have been exposed to the sufficient grammar points. In other words, it is not advisable, according to these authors, to play grammar games before having explained the grammar to the students. Saricoban and Metin also state that games “are the indispensable parts of a grammar lesson, since they reinforce a form-discourse match” (Saricoban and Metin, 2000, n.p.). That is to say, games are a perfect tool to help students internalize the previously introduced grammar.

In conclusion, there seems to be an agreement that the best moment to make students play a game to study grammar is after having explained the grammar to them. This way, students can understand better the new grammar rules and begin to internalize them. Furthermore, although the syllabus limitations may put restrictions to incorporate new resources, the authors mentioned above insist on the importance of seeing games as an everyday resource.

2.3.5. Teacher’s behaviour during a game.

Many authors have given their advice about what the behaviour of the teacher should be while the game is being played. Aydan Ersöz (2000), for example, states that it is important to give clear instructions before starting a game, otherwise it will not go well and the benefits will not be achieved. This author also advises not to force a student to participate in a game, since a student may not want to take part in it for personal reasons, and to compel them does not usually bring positive results.

Furthermore, Ersöz talks about the significance of not stopping the game to correct the students’ language mistakes. As mentioned above, games are useful to help students improve their communicative skills because during a game they do not worry about making mistakes or being evaluated. Finally, the

author points out that “a game which looks wonderful on the paper may not work in the actual classroom setting. If it is tiring or boring, it should be stopped” (Ersöz, 2000, n.p.).

Lin Hong (2002) also insists on the idea of giving clear instructions before beginning the game. This author even defends that, for beginners, it is not a bad idea to say a few words in the mother tongue in order to ensure that the instructions of the game are utterly clear. Additionally, Hong states that it is more effective to explain a game by showing it than by a long and complicated explanation. Students understand the game better if they see it played rather than if it is exposed to them only in an oral way. Furthermore, Hong advises not to play a game for a long time, since students begin to lose interest or to get bored. Therefore, it is better to stop at the peak of the game (Hong, 2002, n.p.).

Saricoban and Metin (2000), on the other hand, mention that during the playing of a game the teacher should act as a facilitator, not as a dictator. That is to say, games have to be centred on the students, since their aim is to make them use the target language and improve their communicative skills. Therefore, the teacher must let them be the protagonists, and only intervene to guide the game and to help students if it is necessary.

3. Proposal: third of ESO grammar with games

3.1. Participants

The games collected in this paper are thought to be used in the English lessons of 3rd of ESO in the secondary school IES Sant Marçal, in Marratxí. Therefore, the participants are between fourteen and sixteen years old, and there are a maximum of fifteen pupils per classroom. The total number of classes is four, and there is not a big difference on the level and abilities of each group.

I have chosen students of 3rd of ESO to try out the games for various reasons. To begin with, 3rd of ESO is the largest group I can make use of in my practicum. The fact that they are four different classes allows me to test the

games with more participants than if I did it with another course. This is a phenomenon that has to be taken into account, since the more participants, the more accurate the results. Moreover, a game that works well in a classroom may not function at all in another one. Every single class is different, and it is also the teacher's task to be able to adapt the activities and make the necessary changes for each one.

The second reason why 3rd of ESO has been chosen as the aim of study is that their students have an intermediate level of English, neither very low nor too high. That is to say, they have had time to improve the level they had when they started the secondary school, which was a primary level. They are now able to express themselves in English, and have a broader variety of vocabulary than when they were in 1st of ESO. By the same token, they still need to improve and gain fluency, and games can be a useful tool to do so. Furthermore, they have not the pressure of higher levels, like *Batxillerat*.

Consequently, I will work on four different groups of 3rd of ESO. In general, the English level of these students is rather low. Observation has proved that they struggle in communicating in English orally, and sometimes even in writing. Most of them seem to have been learning the grammar rules by heart, but when it comes to real communication they do not know how to use them. Similarly, their range of vocabulary is very poor; they do not know how to say basic words that a 3rd of ESO class is expected to know.

3.2. Games to teach Past Simple

3.2.1. Description of the games.

Past Simple is the first grammar unit that is dealt with in 3rd of ESO. For this topic, I have chosen two games: "Change seats if" and "Noughts and crosses". Both games have been proposed by the British Council, and do not need previous preparation or extra material apart from the classroom resources.

“Change seats if” is a fun game in which the classroom chairs are arranged in a circle. Each student sits in a chair and the teacher gives a command using Past Simple. As an example, the teacher may say: “Change seats if you went on holiday last year”. Then, all the students who went on holiday last year have to stand up and move quickly to a vacant chair in the circle. At that moment, the teacher removes one of the chairs, and the student who is left without chair has to give the next command using Past Simple.

The second game is the traditional “Noughts and crosses”, but with the variety that students need to make a correct sentence using Past Simple with the verb which is in the square they want. It could be played with two teams, and in every turn one member of the team goes to the blackboard and has to write the sentence.

3.2.2. Justification.

As Past Simple is a grammatical aspect that students have been studying since -at least- 1st of ESO, I have decided to choose two games which do not take too much time. They are both easy to prepare and do not have to last too long, but serve as a reminder of the structure of Past Simple. Both games -but especially “Change seats if”- also give students the opportunity to stand up and move for a while. This is a phenomenon that they highly appreciate, since the pupils are six or seven hours sitting in a chair. This is a problem that can end up affecting their concentration, expressly in those students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Another reason why I have chosen these games is that they involve student’s production. Both “Change seats if” and “Noughts and crosses” make students create sentences using the target grammar, and for me this is the best way for them to internalize it. At the same time, they can learn new vocabulary because they ask the teacher words that they do not know. Furthermore, “Change seats if” also implicates listening and understanding what they hear, and the competition which is involved makes them be more attentive.

3.2.3. Adaptations.

As regards to adaptations, both games could be adapted to any type of grammar and level. Moreover, the teacher can personalize them and make them more fun. For example, when students have to give a command in the game “Change seats if”, the teacher can tell them to use a specific word, for example *pizza*. Then, the student has to give a command such as “Change seats if you ate pizza yesterday”. The same can be done in “Noughts and crosses”, in which even the contrary team could tell the other the words to use.

3.2.4. Teacher’s role.

In “Change seats if”, the teacher directs the game, especially at the beginning, when having to remove a chair and giving the first commands. Then, they have to make sure there is a certain organization during the game. Since it is a game which involves a lot of movement, the teacher has to be sure students do not get too excited and the class does not end up in chaos. They have also to control who has to give the next command.

In “Noughts and crosses”, the teacher can be more relaxed, since their task is not quite extensive. They just have to draw a square in the blackboard with nine different verbs, make two teams, and then make sure there are no incidents, since everything else is done by the pupils. This way, the teacher can closely observe if every student acquires or not the target grammar. The teacher can help students who have more difficulties in the English subject with some words, since it has to be reminded that games are a tool for students to have fun at the same time that they learn, not to make them have a bad time in front of the classroom.

3.3. Games to teach Present Simple and Present Continuous

3.3.1. Description of the games.

The next set of grammar is “Present Simple and Present Continuous”. For this topic, I have chosen one game to review the present simple and a few games to practice the present continuous. The game for the present simple is the well-known “Guess Who”, in which students sit in pairs and they have to ask each other questions in order to know which character their partner is. They have to perform Present Simple questions such as “Are you blond?” or “Do you have a moustache?”. Their partners have to answer with complete utterances using the present simple, for example “Yes, I am blond” and “Yes, I have a moustache”.

As for the present continuous, I have selected some games from TEFL.net: mimes, Pictionary, a brainstorming, and a game called “We are doing a video”. Mimes consist of students coming in front of the classroom, taking a paper from a bag and miming the action written in the paper. The other students have to guess the action. Pictionary is very similar, but instead of miming, the students have to make a drawing. Regarding the brainstorming, students compete to say things that are going on in the classroom or in a picture. Finally, “We are doing a video” is a game in which pupils have a worksheet with sentences in the present continuous. The teacher shows a video, and if something written in the worksheet happens in the video, they have to shout the action using the present continuous.

3.3.2. Justification.

To begin with, I have just chosen one game for the present simple because it is the most basic grammar that students have seen year after year. “Guess Who” is a game, besides, that most students know, hence hardly needs explanation. This is an important point to take into account when teachers want to perform a game not for too long but just to review the target grammar. Furthermore, it is a game that allows the practice of vocabulary, which is another of the objectives

of this paper. It is also a very visual game; therefore the students with dyslexia will not have problems with it.

I have selected mimes and Pictionary because both games give students the opportunity to stand up and move, which helps to fight the boredom and catch the pupil's attention. Besides, my observation in IES Sant Marçal has proved that they usually love to make exhibitions in front of the classroom. I also reckon that both games are useful to make pupils understand that the present continuous is to talk about things that are taking place at the moment. The brainstorming, on the other hand, works perfectly with competition, and this fosters student's attention, since they want to find out things that are going on in the classroom or in a picture in order to score points. As for "We are doing a video", I like this game because it involves many skills: reading the worksheet, listening to the video (which, at the same time, allows the teacher to seek a video about their student's interests), and speaking. It also helps to maintain the student's attention, since they have to notice if something written in the paper occurs in the video.

3.3.3. Adaptations.

The "Guess Who" game to practice the present simple could be combined with the game "Who am I". In the former, a student comes in front of the classroom and the teacher sticks one paper with the name of an animal or a thing in their forehead. Then, the pupil has to ask their classmates questions using the present simple in order to guess the name.

3.3.4. Teacher's role.

In the Present Simple game the teacher only acts as a guide and has to make sure that every partner is playing the game. In the "Who am I" adaptation, they have to control who is coming in front of the classroom and that every pupil has an opportunity to ask a question. The same goes for the Present Continuous games.

3.4. Games to teach comparative and superlative adjectives

3.4.1. Description of the games.

For this grammar unit I have chosen a game proposed in the Using.English.com website. As it is explained in the site, in this game students have to pick two words from a bag or from a list. Then, they have to make a sentence comparing both words. It would be advisable that this game is played once the grammar about comparative and superlative adjectives has already been explained. This way, the pupils will be able to perform utterances using them, and even expressions such as “as... as” and “not... as”.

3.4.2. Justification.

I have to say that I have not found many games about superlatives and comparatives. Amongst the resources I have encountered, I have chosen this game basically because it involves working also with vocabulary. As I explained in the Objectives section (Section 1.2.), my observation in IES Sant Marçal proved that students should enlarge their English vocabulary. For this reason, I have tried to choose games that serve to teach grammar as well as vocabulary whenever it has been possible. Besides, I think this is a good game to make students work with their imagination, which is an aspect sometimes forgotten in schools. The idea of having to compare two words that may be totally different could be, in addition, a challenge.

3.4.3. Adaptations.

Perhaps I may adapt this game by giving the pupils scores for each right sentence they performed. My practicum in IES Sant Marçal has taught me that students feel more motivated and are far more attentive when there is some kind of prize at stake. This game could also be adapted by joining the pupils in pairs and making each student choose the two words for their partner.

3.4.4. Teacher's role.

As I see it, the main task of the teacher in this game is to observe the production of every student in order to see if they understand the target grammar. The teacher can also help them finding the words they need. It would be advisable, at the end of the game, to make a reminder of this grammar for the whole class.

3.5. Games to teach modals of obligation, necessity and prohibition

3.5.1. Description of the games.

For the modals of obligation, necessity and prohibition I have selected two games, both taken from the TEFLtastic webpage. The first game is called "Prohibitions: guess the place", and it is performed as follows: students take a flashcard about a place, and they have to give clues to their classmates until someone guesses the place. The sentences that they perform have to contain a modal verb of obligation, necessity or prohibition. As an illustration, if they have picked the flashcard containing the word "Zoo", they can give clues such as: "You can't feed the animals", "You mustn't open the gates" or "You have to be respectful to animals".

"Sign prohibitions Pictionary", which is the second resource, is a game in which there is a large list of prohibitions and students have to pick one. In turns, they have to draw the prohibition sign until a classmate guesses it. The list contains fun prohibitions such as "You can't catch insects" or "You have to wear a large sunhat".

3.5.2. Justification.

The point I like about these two games is that they make pupils speculate about something, and my practicum has shown me that they tend to love guessing. As an example, I prepared quizzes in which they had to guess a vocabulary word and I noticed that they really enjoyed them.

On the other hand, Pictionary is a good resource for those students who, amongst the intelligences that Howard Gardner established, have the visual/spatial as the most developed one. It also goes well for the dyslexic pupils, since they do not have to write anything. The same goes for the ones who have ADHD, because this game gives them the opportunity to stand up and draw their picture on the blackboard.

3.5.3. Adaptations.

An adaptation of “Prohibitions: guess the place” could be that students can say a place which is not on the list. This allows them to be creative and think of original spots. It could also be fun to afterwards vote for the most original one. Likewise, “Sign prohibitions Pictionary” could be adapted by letting students draw their own prohibition signs or by making them just draw half of the picture.

3.5.4. Teacher’s role.

Like in other games already explained, the teacher’s role in these two games is to act as a guide. They have to control that every student has the opportunity to come in front of the classroom and perform. Similarly, they have to direct the games in a way that pupils take turns to guess the answers.

3.6. Games to teach modals of advice

3.6.1. Description of the games.

The 3rd of ESO grammar syllabus continues with modal verbs, and in this occasion I have invented one game myself. The game is very simple and does not need previous preparation. First of all, every student is given a controversial situation, like “Your friend wants to be a singer. She thinks she has got a very good talent, but she actually has a horrible voice and everybody laughs at her when she sings.” Then, students sit in pairs and they have to ask each other for advice. Their partner has to give them tips using *should* or *ought to*.

3.6.2. Justification.

I invented this game myself because I did not find adequate games to teach the modals of advice. I wanted to create a game in which students had to work in pairs, since cooperative learning gives them the opportunity to learn from each other. Furthermore, I reckon it to be a game utterly based on communication: they understand that these modal verbs are aimed at giving advice and they learn how to do so in English.

3.6.3. Adaptations.

If teachers want this game to last longer, they can add an extra step: when every pair has finished, they can read the piece of advice out loud (in this case, they should have written it down before), and their classmates have to guess the situation. They can score points and they work as a team formed by two members.

3.6.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role in this game is to keep an eye on the different pairs and helping them in case they have problems.

3.7. Games to teach Past Simple and Past Continuous

3.7.1. Description of the games.

For this grammar unit, I have adopted one game to practice the past continuous and another one to use to combine both the past simple and the past continuous. Both games are provided in a website entitled TEFL.net. Regarding the Past Continuous game, it is an alibi in pairs. Students are told that a murder has taken place in a particular hour and they have to concoct an alibi in pairs about what they were doing at that time. Then, they are asked separately, and if they differ too much from each other, they are told to be guilty.

The second game is also carried out in pairs and it includes mimes. One member of the pair has to come in front of the classroom and mime an action. The action is given to them. When their partner is sure they know the action, they have to shout “Stop!”, and say this sentence: “When I shouted stop, you were playing basketball”, for example.

3.7.2. Justification.

I have chosen the alibi to practice the past continuous because I think it is a really fun game and, as Hong advises, teachers should take into account if they would like to play the game they choose (Hong, 2002, n.p.). It also involves cooperative learning in pairs, movement and the use of imagination. Likewise, it includes the emotion of wanting to trap their classmates in some incoherence, and at the same time not wanting to be trapped by them.

The second game, on the other hand, lets pupils stand up and move. My practicum in IES Sant Marçal has shown me that they usually like miming (We have played *Taboo* many times and they seem to love it), and this is also a game that, from my point of view, helps to understand the Past Continuous use.

3.7.3. Adaptations.

The alibi game could also be played individually instead of in pairs. In this case, every pupil would have to invent their own alibi. Then, students would vote for the alibi they considered the most incredulous one. With regard to the mimes game, it could be prolonged by making the pupils say what their partner was doing plus something their partner was not doing. For example: “When I shouted stop, you were playing football and you were not brushing your teeth”. This way, the game involves both the affirmative and the negative form of the tense.

3.7.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role in the alibi game is to rule the time students have to prepare their alibi as well as to direct the turn in which each pair has to be asked. The teacher can also start asking questions for the other pupils to have an idea of which type of questions they have to perform.

3.8. Games to teach Present Perfect

3.8.1. Description of the games.

To teach the present perfect I have chosen a game which I used to play when I was a student. The game is known as "Find someone who..." and it is performed like this: the teacher writes a list of sentences on the blackboard, such as "Go to Thailand", "Win a prize" or "Have a strange pet". Then, students have to move around the classroom and try to find classmates who have done the different items on the list. Consequently, they have to ask questions using the present perfect, such as "Have you ever won a prize?".

3.8.2. Justification.

I have selected this game because I have the experience of having played it as a student myself. For me, it was a useful tool to internalize how to form Past Perfect questions. Actually, I remember having played it before an exchange with German students and, when I was in the exchange, I asked Past Perfect questions many times to know more about the other pupils. Furthermore, it is a fun game that allows students to stand up and move around the classroom. It is also a game that gives students the opportunity to know their classmates better, which is a crucial point to have a good atmosphere in the classroom.

3.8.3. Adaptations.

Teachers can also use this game as a tool to make pupils practice the vocabulary seen during the unit. For example, if they have been studying

vocabulary about clothes, the teacher could prepare sentences such as “Buy a bargain” or “Wear colourful jeans”. By the same token, the teacher could use this game to make students learn any type of vocabulary. Even the children themselves could propose their own sentences to find someone.

3.8.4. Teacher’s role.

The teacher’s role in this game is, again, to act as a guide. They have to write the sentences on the blackboard, observe the students while they are playing the game, and help them in case they have problems constructing the questions.

3.9. Games to teach Present Perfect and Past Simple

3.9.1. Description of the games.

The next 3rd of ESO set of grammar is once more about the present perfect, but combined with the past simple. To practice it, this time I have selected a board game. The game is taken from a website called ESLGames, and it is a board game in which students work in pairs. They have to throw the dice and move their token to the correct square. In every square there is a question either in the past simple or in the present perfect. Students have to answer the question correctly in order to stay in that square. If they fail answering the question, they have to go back to their previous position. Examples of the questions are “Have you ever eaten scorpions?” or “When did you last eat pizza?”.

3.9.2. Justification.

I have chosen this game for various reasons. First of all, it is different from the previous ones in the sense that it is a board game. To do something distinct in the classroom is always a positive idea because it breaks the routine which pupils are used to, and this makes them be more attentive. Secondly, it is a

game that perfectly fits what is needed for this grammatical unit: practice both the past simple and the present perfect.

Another positive aspect about it is that this game -contrary to “Find someone who”- serves to practice the affirmative and the negative form of the present perfect, not only the question form. Moreover, it can also be used as a time filler, since it does not need any explanation or previous preparation, and just two students are needed to play it. This means that if the teacher has told the students to do some exercises, when two of them have already finished, they can play this game and do not have to stay without doing anything.

3.9.3. Teacher’s role.

In this game it could be said that the role of the teacher is rather passive. They only have to make sure that everybody has a partner and every pair is playing the game properly.

3.10. Games to teach Subject and Object Questions

3.10.1. Description of the games.

The next grammar aspect that has to be taught in a 3rd of ESO course is the formation of Subject and Object questions. For it, I have selected three games: one was taken from the British Council, another was given to me from a teacher in IES Sant Marçal, and the third one was invented by me. The games have to be played in an order that makes sense according to their scale of difficulty: the first game has to be the easiest one and the last one has to be the most difficult one.

The first game that should be played is Trivial, and this is the game a teacher explained to me. The game consists of making four or five teams and telling students that each team is going to work separately from the other ones. Then, a set of cards with questions is given to each team. Every card has four questions: one about music, one about geography, one about sports, and one

about celebrities. For example, “Who is married to Shakira?”. Students have to take turns and throw the dice. Depending on the number, they will have to ask a question about one of these different topics. Numbers five and six allow pupils to choose the topic. Every member of the team competes against each other and the winner is the one who scores more points.

The second game to be played is the one I invented. I called it “Guess the character” and it is a very simple game which does not need previous preparation. This is the way it is performed: a person -it could be either the teacher or another student- thinks of a famous character, and the other students have to ask them questions in order to guess which character they have thought of. An example could be “Does he or she have blue eyes?”. In this game, all the questions are Object questions.

The third and last game is a quiz, and it is the game I have taken from the Internet. It is not a normal quiz, though, since what is given to students is the answer of a question, and they score points by guessing the correct question for each answer. The game is prepared, as it can be imagined, to make pupils perform Subject and Object questions.

3.10.2. Justification.

I have chosen these three games because I think that if they are carried out in the order explained above, they can help students learn this type of questions in a progressive way. Firstly, they come in touch with Subject and Object questions with the Trivial, in which they still do not have to produce anything. Secondly, maybe once the grammar has already been explained, the pupils start producing questions in “Guess the character”, but they are still only Object questions. Finally, students have to ask questions of both types in the Quiz. They have to know which variety of question they have to ask and how to form them. This game could be used as a reminder at the end of a unit.

3.10.3. Adaptations.

As regards to adaptations, both the Trivial and the Quiz can be used to teach and review vocabulary of the unit.

3.10.4. Teacher's role.

In the Trivial game the teacher's role is to provide the cards with the questions for each team, as well as to move to the different groups and see how they are doing. Regarding "Guess the character", the teacher can help the students by suggesting questions that they can ask. The teacher can also have a Power Point prepared with words -not questions- at which the students can have a look if they get stuck. For example, the Power Point could contain words such as *beard* or *children*, so that students can come out with questions like "Does he have a beard?" or "Does he have children?". With reference to the quiz, the role of the teacher is to make sure that the teams answer the questions when it is their turn. To avoid the lack of respect towards turns, it could be penalized to answer when it is not their turn. In this game, the teacher could also attach an image beside the answer, in order that pupils do not get confused about what they have to answer.

3.10.5. Implementation.

During my practicum in IES Sant Marçal I had the opportunity to implement two of the three games explained above: the Trivial and "Guess the character". The Trivial was played one day that half of the class was on a field trip, and my tutor and I decided to join the half of another 3rd of ESO. Then, the teacher of the other 3rd year told us about the Trivial game, and we decided to carry it out as an introduction to Subject and Object questions.

Students played the game for forty-five minutes, counting the time we spent explaining it to them. The last ten minutes we had to put a song, because we noticed that they were beginning to get bored, and we succeed in catching

their attention again. Therefore, we did what Ersöz advises: if a game is tiring or boring, it should be immediately stopped (Ersöz, 2000, n.p.).

From my point of view, the game went really well, it engaged students, and they spoke in English while playing it. I think that the competition helped to motivate them, since I observed that they made jokes when their classmates said a wrong answer and competed to score more points than their friends. As regards to the behaviour we, as teachers, adopted, I can say that we were observing how the different teams were doing, but that was all.

“Guess the character”, on the other hand, was played a day with the whole group. Students had already been explained Subject and Object questions, but some of them still made mistakes forming them. The most common error was not to change the word order and ask questions such as “He is blond?” instead of “Is he blond?”. For this reason, when I realized that some students had the same difficulty, I wrote this structure on the blackboard: “Is he/she...? Does he/she...?”, to which they could have a look.

We played the game for the whole hour of class. It was not planned like this, but since I saw that they were engaged and they were talking in English, I decided to change the plan. As I see it, the game went really well: at the beginning it was just me thinking of characters and them asking questions, but then they wanted to come in front of the classroom and think of a character themselves too. They spoke in English, they practised the target grammar, and they were interested in the activity, hence their behaviour was excellent.

3.11. Games to teach Past Perfect

3.11.1. Description of the games.

The next grammar topic that the 3rd of ESO syllabus introduces is the past perfect. As this was also part of the unit that I had to teach during my practicum, I decided to create a game by myself, and I called it “A criminal’s story” (See Annex 1). The game is carried out this way: First, the teacher shows the pupils

a Power Point in which a story is narrated. The story begins like this: “John Millan (invented name) was arrested one Monday morning in his house in Birmingham. The police had collected evidence... He had murdered two women.” and so on. The teacher makes a revision of the usage of Past Perfect, and then asks students to sit in groups and create their own criminal’s story using this specific grammatical construction. They are also told that, afterwards, they will read their stories and vote for the best one.

3.11.2. Justification.

I decided to design a game because I did not find any game to teach the past perfect that convinced me. When choosing which type of game to create, I considered a few aspects: To begin with, I wanted a game useful to teach both grammar and vocabulary. I could have worked on any kind of vocabulary, but since the unit was about crime, I found it useful to make students use this vocabulary as well. Furthermore, I opted for a game that also allowed team work because I conceive it as a perfect way for students to learn from each other. The competition aspect was also taken into account, hence the final voting.

3.11.3. Adaptations.

This game could be adapted by making students create any type of story as well as using any type of grammar and vocabulary. Another way to introduce stories in the classroom is making them invent a story altogether. This game was explained to me by another teacher in IES Sant Marçal, and it is very easy to play. All that is needed is a ball, and what students have to do is to pass the ball to each other and say just a word per turn. The word has to make sense, so that they end up having developed a story.

3.11.4. Teacher's role.

As mentioned above, the teacher's role in this game is to narrate a story to the students, better if it is with some images, and to make a reminder of the Past Perfect. Then, all they have to do is to make sure that every team is creating their own story, and help them if they need it.

3.11.5. Implementation.

I implemented this game once the grammatical unit of the past perfect had already been explained and students had practised it with some exercises. I observed that they were very attentive while I was telling them the story about the criminal; not so much when I went through the past perfect. Regarding the creation of their own story, the interest involved depended on every student. Some teams got really engaged, others not so much, but all them worked and ended up with a complete story. We spent the whole hour with this activity, and with some groups we even had to let the voting for the next session. As regards the voting, I think it was what motivated them the most.

3.12. Games to teach Relative Pronouns

3.12.1. Description of the games.

Relative pronouns were the next topic of grammar that I had to teach during my practicum. To do so, I prepared two games: a quiz and a game very similar to the traditional *Taboo*. The quiz is a very short game -it does not last more than ten minutes- which serves as an introduction to relative pronouns. What I did was to design a Power Point presentation with sentences, each one containing a relative pronoun, and students had to guess the answers, as shown by the following examples: "It is the object which is used to eat soup" or "It is the country where Mount Everest is located". Once the quiz was over, I explained the relative pronouns using the same sentences.

For the second game that I designed, I prepared four different groups of flashcards (See annex 2): one group was about places, another group was about people, the third one was about periods of time and the last one involved objects. Each student was given a flashcard from the four different categories, hence four cards per pupil. They were also told not to show the flashcards to their classmates. What they had to do, then, was to write a definition for each flashcard using a relative pronoun. As an example, if their card about people was *Traffic warden*, they could write a sentence such as “It is a person who can give you a ticket”. Once every student had written their four sentences, we made teams and they competed to guess the words of the other team.

3.12.2. Justification.

I decided to make a quiz before explaining the relatives because I believed that students would understand it better if they saw its usage first. In addition, I thought that it would be a fun way to start the lesson: it would break the routine for a few minutes and it would help to catch the pupil’s attention from the very beginning.

As regards the second game, I knew that *Taboo* was an adequate game to practice relative pronouns. However, we had already played *Taboo* many times in order to practice vocabulary. Therefore, I decided to adapt it and I came up with this idea, which I like it because it also involves the writing skill as well as working with new vocabulary.

3.12.3. Adaptations.

As I said before, the second game could be adapted by playing *Taboo* in the traditional way, which is taking a word from a bag and describing it without saying the word. It could also be used to practice any type of vocabulary the teacher wanted.

The quiz, on the other hand, can be modified in many ways. It can serve to practise any type of vocabulary and grammar, and it can last any time the teacher wants.

3.12.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role in these games is, again, to act as a guide. They have to say the sentences in the quiz and they have to make sure every student understands what they have to do in the game about the flashcards.

3.12.5. Implementation.

I had the opportunity to implement both games during my practicum. The quiz was carried out as an "excuse" to introduce the relatives, and the flashcards game was performed to practise them. The quiz only lasted about ten minutes, but it served me to notice that students perfectly understood the sentences even though the relatives had not yet been explained. Moreover, when I explained them afterwards, it was quite easy because they had seen them in a context and they already knew their meaning.

The flashcard game, on the other hand, was a bit more complicated. Some of them needed to ask me again what they had to do, so I checked the different desks in order to see that everybody was doing it right. I also helped them with some vocabulary words, and I can clearly state that the final competition of guessing the words was what they enjoyed the most.

3.13. Games to teach modals of deduction

3.13.1. Description of the games.

The 3rd of ESO grammar syllabus continues with more modals, this time modals of deduction. To practise them, I have invented a very simple game, which consists of showing students part of a picture and they have to make guesses

about what the picture might be. They have to use the modals of deduction: *can't*, *could*, *might*, *mustn't*, *may* and *perhaps*. I think this game is better to be played once the modals have been explained.

3.13.2. Justification.

As I see it, this is an adequate game to help students understand when to use this kind of modals. Furthermore, it involves guessing, which is something I have already mentioned that they tend to love. It can also serve to learn new vocabulary. For example, the teacher can use it to make students learn words such as *police station*, *hairdresser* or *butcher's*.

3.13.3. Adaptations.

The teacher can make this game more exciting by establishing, for example, three levels of difficulty. The most difficult level only shows a very small part of the picture, the intermediate level shows half the image, and the easiest shows three fragments of the picture. Pupils can choose which level they want, and the teacher can give them points depending on the difficulty they have picked.

3.13.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher has, in this game, to direct the game. They have to show the different images to the pupils, and control who is answering at every turn.

3.14. Games to teach the present simple passive

3.14.1. Description of the games.

For the present simple passive I have selected a game called "Passives Guess the Country", from TEFLtastic webpage. The game is played in pairs, and it gives each pair a worksheet with the name of different countries and clues to guess the countries. Students have to give clues to their partner until they

guess which country it is. As can be imagined, the clues are in the passive form. As I see it, it would be better to play this game once the passive has been explained; otherwise pupils will struggle understanding the sentences.

3.14.2. Justification.

I have chosen this game because it involves working in pairs -therefore learning from each other-, guessing, and also acquiring new vocabulary. It even promotes the learning of general culture about the different countries.

3.14.3. Adaptations.

This game could be adapted to work on other grammatical tenses. For example, the sentences could be changed to past events that have occurred in that country in order to practise the past simple. Likewise, the passive could be changed to the future with sentences such as: "If you go to this country, you will eat food cooked with lemon grass" (Thailand).

3.14.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher, again, is like a guide, who goes to the different desks and sees how his/her students are doing.

3.15. Games to teach *will* for predictions and promises

3.15.1. Description of the games.

The next grammar unit is the use of *will* both for predictions and for promises. The games I have selected for this unit are a speaking activity to practice promises with *will* and various games about predictions. The promises activity is taken from a website called TEACHTHIS and it is performed this way: every student is given a card with a situation, e.g. "I need to go to the airport". Pupils have to move around the classroom and explain their circumstance to a

classmate, and this classmate has to make them a promise, for example “I’ll call you a taxi”.

Concerning the games to practice *will* for predictions, I have picked two games from TEFL.net. The first one is very easy to set up since it does not need previous preparation: one student closes their eyes while the others make three changes in the classroom. The student with his/her eyes closed has to predict what (s)he will see when (s)he opens his/her eyes, e.g. “When I open my eyes the blinds will be closed”. As for the second game, the teacher needs a video. They put the video and stop it at a certain point. Students have, then, to predict what will happen next.

3.15.2. Justification.

I have chosen the speaking activity to practice promises because it permits students to stand up and move around the classroom, which is something that they always appreciate, and it also helps those pupils with ADHD. Additionally, it makes them interact with each other, which is an aspect that fosters good relationships in the classroom. Furthermore, this game can allow pupils to be creative with their responses.

As regards the video predictions game, my observation in IES Sant Marçal has shown me that students always love watching videos and they always catch their attention. As I have already explained, I have also observed that they like activities that involve guessing. Therefore, I reckon that both games about predictions will succeed in motivating them. Moreover, the classroom predictions allows them to stand up, to think of original changes they can make in the classroom, and all this helps to fight against their boredom and their lack of attention.

3.15.3. Adaptations.

Concerning adaptations, in TEACHTHIS it is explained that in the promises activity, the member of the pair that comes up with the most imaginative promise has to keep the card. At the end, the student with most cards in hand is the winner. This adaptation stimulates even more the pupil's imagination.

The prediction games could also be adapted by awarding students with prizes every time they got the right prediction. This would foster the competitiveness in the game and, hopefully, the pupil's motivation.

3.15.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role is again to act as a guide in all the games. Teachers are expected to provide the cards for the students and make sure everyone is performing promises. They have also to prepare a video for the predictions game, preferably if it is about the pupils' interest, and make sure there is not a chaos in the classroom predictions activity when students begin to change things in the room.

3.16. Games to teach the first conditional

3.16.1. Description of the games.

The 3rd of ESO grammar syllabus introduces, by the end of the course, the conditionals. As regards the first conditional, I have selected one game taken from a blog entitled "A Journey in TEFL", and I have invented another activity myself. The website game is called "Snowball fights" and consists of giving students scrap paper and telling them to write five half conditional sentences on. For example, "If it rains tomorrow" or "If I win the lottery". Then, the teacher tells them to play snowball fights. After a while, the teacher asks them to stop and pick the closest snowballs they have. What they have to do, then, is to complete the conditional sentences.

Concerning the game I invented, I gave it the name of “The election speech”. It is not a complicated game, since it consists of giving students a situation in which they have to imagine they want to be presidents of their town. They have to write, therefore, an election speech to, afterwards, perform it in front of the classroom. They have to use first conditional sentences such as “If you vote for my political party, I will build a cinema in the town”. Afterwards, pupils will vote for the most original speech, for the most convincing one, and for the funniest, and prizes will be given for each winner.

3.16.2. Justification.

To begin with, I have elected the “Snowball fights” game because I consider it to be a truly fun game. I think that pupils will enjoy playing a snowball fight inside the classroom, and it will certainly break their daily routine. The fight is, as I see it, an amusing excuse to, afterwards, practise a grammatical aspect.

“The election speech”, on the other hand, involves the writing skill in a major degree, since students have to write a whole speech. This aspect implicates the searching and learning of new vocabulary, which is something I am very interested in. Moreover, it fosters student’s creativity and imagination. The fact of giving them prizes also helps to motivate them.

3.16.3. Adaptations.

The “Snowball fights” could be adapted, indeed, to other grammatical aspects such as Past Simple, Present Perfect or Past Perfect. It could be played, as well, without students moving from their places: one student could throw a paper ball to another one, this one finishing the answer on the paper.

“The election speech” could be adapted into a larger project. It could be done in groups, making students invent their own political parties. They could also create pamphlets to give to their classmates and to stick on the classroom walls. They could choose one member of their group as the president of the

political party, and there could be a day in which all the teams had to perform their speeches. Then, students could act as citizens and vote for the party they had liked the most. Some prize could be given to the winner team as well.

3.16.4. Teacher's role.

In "Snowball fights" the major role of the teacher is to control that the fight does not end up in a chaos, since it is a fun game in which students throw paper balls to each other and they could get too excited. As regards to "The election speech", the teacher has to help students with their speeches when they need so.

3.17. Games to teach the second conditional

3.17.1. Description of the games.

Concerning the second conditional, I have elected one game known as "What would you do if...?". The activity was told to me by a teacher in IES Sant Marçal, and it consists of giving students different situations and asking them to think of what they would do. Examples of the circumstances are "What would you do if a panther came into the school?" or "What would you do if you could fly?". Then, students can expose their ideas to the classroom and they can vote for the most original ones.

3.17.2. Justification.

The main reason why I have selected this game is because it allows students to use their imagination and to work with new vocabulary. I also like the fact that they have to vote, since it is something that tends to motivate them.

3.17.3. Adaptations.

This game perhaps could be adapted for dyslexic students by accompanying the situations with pictures. It could also be played by pupils asking questions to one another, as well as by allowing them to think of their own situations.

3.17.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role is simply to provide the situations and to help students with their answers.

3.17.5. Implementation.

Even though I did not implement this activity as a game, I did use it as a speaking exam. After some previous practise, I asked students a couple of questions of this type and they had to answer using the second conditional. The activity went quite well and most of the students performed the conditional correctly. They sometimes had problems, however, finding an answer for the question, since some of them required a lot of imagination.

3.18. Games to teach reported statements

3.18.1. Description of the games.

By the end of the course, the 3rd of ESO grammar syllabus introduces the reported statements. To practise them, I have picked three games from Busyteacher website. The three of them are similar and should be played once the grammar has been explained. The first game consists of making students think of people who could ask them questions (their mother/father, a policeman, a teacher, a shop assistant, and so on), and then say what this person told them using reported speech. The other classmates have to guess who the person might be.

The next two games are about famous people. One game is about giving students sentences that famous people said and asking them to guess who the person is and then to change the sentence into reported speech. In the other game the teacher gives pupils magazines and they have to find something interesting that some celebrity has said. Once they have found their sentence, they change it into reported speech and say it to their classmates, who have to guess the person who has said it.

3.18.2. Justification.

I liked these games because all of them involve guessing. Furthermore, the last game is interesting in the sense that it works with real material in the classroom, which is something that does not happen very often. I think that it is positive that pupils get in touch with real material now and then in the classroom since it is a way of learning vocabulary and expressions.

3.18.3. Adaptations.

The three games fit well to give students prizes, since all of them involve guessing. By the same token, it could be established that in the second game students cannot change the sentence into reported speech until they have guessed the person. It could be set up as a chain: the teacher says the sentence and the first student in the chain guesses the person. If they get it right, they can substitute it for the reported speech sentence; otherwise, the next person tries. By the same token, if they get it right but they fail in the reported statement, it is the next pupil's turn. Prizes are given along the chain.

3.18.4. Teacher's role.

The teacher's role is to provide students with the necessary material and to make sure everybody tries to perform the statements. Likewise, if they see that

some students are lost in the use of reported speech, they should go through the corresponding grammatical structure again.

3.19. Games to teach *too* and *enough*

3.19.1. Description of the games.

The final grammar aspect within the 3rd of ESO grammar syllabus is the usage of *too* and *enough*. To practise it, I have found a board game in the webpage iSLCOLLECTIVE which seems quite suitable. The game is played in pairs: they have to throw the dice and move to the different squares. Every square has a question that will oblige them to answer using *too* or *enough*. If they do not use *too* or *enough*, they cannot remain on that square. Examples of the questions are: "Why don't you eat pizza?", -to what students could respond "Because it is not salty *enough*"-, or "Why can't you drive?", and here pupils could answer "Because I am *too* young".

3.19.2. Justification.

I have chosen a board game to end up this compilation because it is a type of game not often used to cover the revised grammatical aspects and I consider it to be an interesting activity. It is a pair based game, which is something that I like because it involves more participation than the whole group games, and it allows students to learn from each other.

3.19.3. Teacher's role.

As I explained in the previous board game in this essay, the teacher's role is again to make sure every student has a partner and every pair is playing the game properly.

4. Results

Concerning the implementation of the games proposed in this project, I have to say that I have only been able to put into practise those activities that dealt with the grammar aspects that I had to teach during my practicum, namely the subject and object questions, the past perfect, and the relative pronouns. I could also use a game about the second conditional to do a speaking exam, even though this was not part of my unit.

The general result I could observe from the implementation of these different games was, first of all, a big increase in student's participation. Even the less participative pupils and the ones who tended to have the worst behaviour were engaged in the games and did what they were asked to do. They also spoke in English because they knew this was one of the rules if they wanted to gain the game. The competition aspect had, therefore, a significant importance for them.

I also observed that games that involve guessing completely catch their attention. The "Guess the character" game (Section 3.10. Games to teach Subject and Object questions), for example, was a full success, as well as the competition to guess the words in the flashcard game (Section 3.12. Games to teach Relative Pronouns). By the same token, with "A criminal's story" (Section 3.11. Games to teach Past Perfect) I noticed that they enjoy voting for each other. It was so that in the group in which we had to let the voting for the next day, the first thing a student said to me that next day was to do the voting.

Another resource that I learnt is to put some kind of prize at stake in order to engage students. If practising grammar can allow them to win a game, they will feel more motivated to do so, but if winning the game also involves winning a prize, they will certainly do their best. Therefore, in the games that I have implemented I have always told them that the winner will have a double-positive, which is something they appreciated because my tutor paid a lot of attention to positives and negatives when putting the marks.

Furthermore, I have observed -with games like the Trivial or “A criminal’s story”- that they love working in small groups. I felt that they were more relaxed and more motivated to create. I listened to them giving ideas to their groups and learning English words from one another. Likewise, in small groups they were not so shy to say sentences in English as they were when they had to say something in front of the whole classroom.

5. Conclusions

As a conclusion, I believe that students in IES Sant Marçal liked the games that I could implement. From the four courses I taught none of the students refused to participate, and even the more disruptive pupils worked and seemed engaged in the activities. Therefore, I have confirmed by my own experience the benefits of introducing games in the classroom that many authors have stated. I have seen how games help to make students feel more relaxed, more motivated and more participative. Similarly, I have noticed that because of the fact that they do not feel evaluated, they are more predisposed to speak in English and less afraid of the errors they may make.

On the other hand, even though I have not had any bad experience with the games that I have implemented, I had to stop a game because it was beginning to get boring or tiring. Therefore, I have also experienced the phenomenon explained by some authors which says that games are a good teaching tool until they are not innovative anymore and students begin to be uninterested. When this happens, games must be stopped and teachers must turn to other resources that can catch their student’s attention again.

As regards working with games that also involve vocabulary, I think that the activities that I have been able to implement have served to make pupils learn new words. Concerning my last objective, which was to see if games are a pertinent tool to engage students with English grammar, taking into account all the positive aspects explained above, I can clearly claim that they definitely are.

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8. Annexes

Annex 1

<p>A criminal's story</p>	<p>John Millan was arrested one Monday morning in his house in Birmingham...</p> 
<p>The police had collected evidence...</p> 	<p>John Millan had murdered two women</p> 
<p>First, he had kidnapped them</p> 	<p>Then, he had blackmailed their families</p> 
<p>When the families paid for the rescue, he had already murdered the victims</p> 	<p>Now is your turn to invent a story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Invented name) was arrested (a date)• The police had collected evidence• He had ... (the crimes he had committed) USE PAST PERFECT!!!

Annex 2



Flashcards about things



Flashcards about time



Flashcards about people



Flashcards about places