

**Syllabus For Improving Verbal Fluency In English As A Foreign Language In The  
PLLMEIF Sixth Semester Students Through Total Immersion Camps.**



Camacho Meneses Nicole Valeria

Clavijo Osorio Ana María

University Of Cauca

School Of Human And Social Sciences

Bachelor's Degree Program In Modern Languages English-French

Popayán, Colombia

March 2023

**Syllabus For Improving Verbal Fluency In English As A Foreign Language In  
PLLMEIF Sixth Semester Students Through Total Immersion Camps.**



Camacho Meneses Nicole Valeria

Clavijo Osorio Ana María

**Director:**

**Ruby Esperanza Ulchur Chilma**

University Of Cauca

School Of Human And Social Sciences

Bachelor's Degree Program In Modern Languages English-French

Popayán, Colombia

March 2023

**Acceptance note**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

President's signature

---

Examinator's signature

---

Examinator's signature

Popayán, March 15, 2023

## Acknowledgments

*To the most important people in my life, my deepest gratitude. First of all, thanks to my parents for their patience and unconditional love that motivated me to keep going. To my grandmothers, for their constant support and wise advice. To my brother Juan José, for seeing me as his role model and thereby motivating me to strive for more. To Marcita, for believing in me more than I do and listening to me doing my oral speech again and again. And last but not least, to my best friend Labrita, who has always been by my side, offering sincere friendship and support at all times. This achievement is also for you, because it wouldn't have been the same without you in my life.*

*Valeria Camacho.*

*I want to express my deepest gratitude to my parents for being always my unconditional support and for motivating me to keep going. To my siblings, for being my biggest motivation and for being a constant source of inspiration. To my cousin Bernardo, thank you for always being there and giving me words of encouragement in the toughest moments. And to my uncle Juan Pablo, who made one of my biggest dreams possible, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. This achievement is yours too. Thank you for being a part of my life and helping me achieve my goals.*

*Ana Clavijo.*

## Content

1. Introduction .....	9
2. Problem Statement.....	11
3. Research Question .....	13
4. Objectives .....	13
4.1. General Objective.....	13
4.2. Specific Objectives .....	13
5. Rationale.....	14
6. Referential Framework .....	16
6.1. Contextual Framework.....	16
6.2. State of the Art.....	19
6.3. Conceptual Framework .....	28
6.4. Theoretical Framework.....	30
6.4.1. Syllabus.....	30
6.4.2. Curriculum.....	31
6.4.3. Foreign Language Learning Theory.....	33
6.4.4. Communicative Approach.....	34
6.4.5. Experiential Learning .....	37
6.4.6. Linguistic Immersion .....	39
6.4.7. Verbal Fluency .....	41
7. Methodology.....	43
8. Data Analysis.....	48

8.1. Survey .....	48
8.2. Interviews .....	55
9. Conclusions .....	60
10. Recommendations for Syllabus Implementation.....	61
11. Limitations.....	63
12. References .....	63
13. Annexes .....	67
13.1. Survey.....	67
13.2. Interview.....	70

## Resumen

La fluidez verbal es una de las habilidades fundamentales para lograr la comunicación verbal de manera eficaz; sin embargo, se le da menor énfasis en el Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con Énfasis en Inglés y Francés (PLLMEI-F). Este proyecto busca dar solución a dicho problema por medio de la creación de un sílabo de inmersión total en la lengua extranjera que complemente este programa y de igual manera ayude a los estudiantes de sexto semestre a desarrollar la fluidez verbal de una manera dinámica y significativa. Este consta de actividades seleccionadas con base en las necesidades expuestas por algunos de los estudiantes y egresados del PLLMEI-F. Los datos obtenidos fueron recolectados de sus experiencias personales relatadas en entrevistas y encuestas, teniendo como resultado la inconformidad de muchos con respecto al poco énfasis en la habilidad oral y el escaso desarrollo de la fluidez verbal dentro del programa. Estos participantes, con su experiencia en espacios de inmersión lingüística, dan cuenta de la importancia que ésta tiene en el proceso de aprendizaje de un idioma. Por lo tanto, la incorporación de estos escenarios, como lo propone este sílabo, son necesarios para desarrollar la expresión oral en los estudiantes de una manera natural, fluida y acertada, de forma que sientan seguridad y, por ende, motivación y satisfacción.

*Palabras clave:* fluidez verbal, inmersión lingüística, adquisición de una segunda lengua, aprendizaje experiencial, sílabo.

### **Abstract**

Verbal fluency is one of the fundamental skills to achieve effective verbal communication; however, it is emphasized less in the Bachelor's Degree Program in Modern Languages with Emphasis on English and French (PLLMEI-F). This project seeks to solve this problem by creating a total immersion syllabus in a foreign language that complements this program and helps sixth-semester students to develop verbal fluency in a dynamic and meaningful way. This consists of activities selected based on the needs expressed by some of the PLLMEI-F students and graduates. The data obtained were collected from their personal experiences related in interviews and surveys, resulting in the disagreement, of many of them, regarding the little emphasis on oral skills and the scarce development of verbal fluency within the program. These participants, with their experience in linguistic immersion spaces, realize the importance that this has in the process of learning a language. Therefore, the incorporation of this scenarios, as proposed by this syllabus, are necessary to develop students' oral expression in a natural, fluent, and accurate way, in order that they can feel confident and, therefore, motivated and satisfied.

*Key words:* verbal fluency, linguistic immersion, foreign language acquisition, experiential learning, syllabus.



## 1. Introduction

This research proposal arose from the need to achieve effective oral communication in L2 in the students of the bachelor's degree Program in Modern Languages with Emphasis on English and French of the University of Cauca (PLLMEIF). This skill is one of the main competencies that a foreign language learner hopes to acquire throughout his or her learning process; however, to develop it, spaces and opportunities are needed where it can be practiced in a more natural way, and the PLLMEI-F curriculum does not propose the need for these spaces for interaction in L2 as part of the activities to be carried out during each semester. In addition to this, with the last curricular reform of this program, the hourly intensity in the area of foreign languages (English and French) decreased considerably, which makes it difficult for students to develop their oral skills, since they are less exposed to practice.

Considering the above, the main objective of this project was to create a syllabus for the improvement of verbal fluency in English as a foreign language in sixth semester students, through the implementation of total immersion camps in L2, by means of the components of the PLLMEI-F curricular plan. The implementation of this methodology, as part of the activities to be programmed during the sixth semester, offers dynamics that promote a contextualized interaction in the L2, which are carried out in spaces other than the classroom, which would allow the generation of an environment that is better adapted to the needs of the learners, in other words a favorable environment, since by not perceiving the pressure felt in traditional spaces, it will provide them with the necessary security to achieve effective and accurate communication in real contexts. This in turn will allow students to feel more motivated and willing to participate dynamically in the activities proposed, resulting in a better disposition on their part, which would help in this learning process that aims to mitigate one of the shortcomings that occur within the program.

In order to carry out this study, the following criteria were taken into account: the needs of the students in the program, through the experiences of those who have participated in summer camps in the United States or immersion activities, and on relevant theoretical criteria that guided the concepts applied in the methodological and evaluative proposal. Among the concepts that were the theoretical support of this research, some important authors were taken into account: Krashen (1980), who proposes a theory of foreign language learning, where it is stated that language acquisition is a process that occurs unconsciously as a result of natural interaction in the language; Sierra (1994), from whom we took the concept of linguistic immersion in which it is proposed that linguistic immersion consist of the partial or total second language exposition, Horche (2006), who in his definition of verbal fluency argues that this is the ability to overcome obstacles by means of strategies that are presented in the discourse and that interrupt the continuity of the same, and Gutiérrez Fernández, et al (2022), who define the theory of experiential learning as the learning process that is developed through previous experiences.

On the other hand, research works regarding linguistic immersion, verbal fluency and personal experiences related to English immersion activities and their influence on oral skills were considered. These works carried out both within the PLLMI-F of the university of Cauca, and in programs of other universities opened diverse perspectives through their theories and experiences, which provided us with the necessary elements for the approach and creation of the syllabus.

The development of the project was carried out under a qualitative approach, and an action-research methodology, which allowed us to address the problem by conducting interviews and surveys to the students of the program. This permitted us to establish the needs, in this specific case, of the learners regarding the level of verbal fluency and thus be able to design a proposal to develop within linguistic immersion camp spaces that promote

the improvement of this. Therefore, provide a possible solution to the difficulty raised in accordance with the curricular plan of the Program. At the same time, it was proposed to be implemented in the curriculum of the Modern Languages Program in order to attenuate this issue that affects students.

This syllabus takes place in a space different from the classroom, where the teacher takes the role of "camp counselor", and the student takes the role of "camper". The activities are divided into warm-ups, oral activities, and devotions. The first ones focus on preparing and motivating the camper for L2 use; the second ones stimulate the development and improvement of oral skills and verbal fluency in a dynamic way; and the third ones encourage individual and group reflection on L2 learning.

Finally, through data collection, it became evident that language immersion spaces are necessary for the development of oral skills in students, since these spaces generate conditions that encourage continuous communication in L2 and help this to occur in a natural and spontaneous way. Therefore, it is essential to implement this type of spaces within the program, as it aids to attenuate the difficulty that is presented within the program.

## **2. Problem Statement**

In the study of a foreign language, the level of verbal fluency is one of the fundamental skills to achieve the main purpose of language, which is communication. In this sense, foreign tongue programs should offer a work plan with practices that focus on the development of the skills and abilities to be achieved, such as oral expression, written expression, listening, and reading comprehension. However, in the Modern Languages Program with Emphasis on English and French at the Universidad del Cauca there are gaps in

terms of methodological strategies and immersion spaces in L2 that promote an effective work in the communicative ability that strengthens the oral component.

As PLLMEI-F students, we identified that this program does not have such immersion spaces within its curricular plan, which encourage interaction in L2 for the improvement of the various skills involved in learning a foreign language, which represents an obstacle in the development of the oral skills of students and that it is reflected in the professional development. These skills, which we consider essential, are negatively affected when teaching is limited to the classroom, because in these spaces it is not possible to create scenarios close to reality, where students can express themselves in different ways and with the confidence and motivation that these open environments can provide.

Therefore, as evidenced in the survey and the interviews carried out, the lack of adequate spaces that promote learning, improvement and practice of skills such as oral expression, in addition to the little interaction with native speakers or teachers in the L2 that promote the practice of such expression, are presented as an impediment to the development of this skill, causing a low level of fluency that becomes noticeable in situations such as spontaneous conversations, presentations, improvisations or activities that require a degree of verbal interaction when communicating, as it was in our case, and in the case of many of our classmates, which remains the same situations for many students in the program, where the objective in developing these activities is to transmit a clear, fluent and natural message.

For this reason, the need to create a syllabus for the implementation of total immersion camps in English within the PLLMEIF came up. This syllabus will provide teaching alternatives to supply the lack of implementation of diverse, dynamic, participatory activities, in other words, meaningful activities that contribute to the improvement of verbal fluency and counteract the shortcomings and difficulties in the learning process of the target language.

### **3. Research Question**

How to design a syllabus for the improvement of verbal fluency in English as a foreign language in sixth semester students, through the implementation of total immersion camps in English within the PLLMEIF curriculum?

### **4. Objectives**

#### **4.1. General Objective**

To design a syllabus for the improvement of verbal fluency in English in sixth semester students of PLLMEIF, through the implementation of total immersion camps in English as a methodological strategy within the curricular plan.

#### **4.2. Specific Objectives**

- To establish the needs of students in relation to oral production within the program to determine the methodology of total immersion activities.
- To analyze experiences related to participation in immersion camps, either as campers <sup>1</sup>or counselors<sup>2</sup>.
- To define the theoretical principles that will guide the concepts in the design of the proposal of a syllabus of total immersion camps in English for the improvement of verbal fluency of the PLLMIEF students at the University of Cauca.
- To design the syllabus guide that includes objectives, strategies, and methodological and evaluative techniques.

---

<sup>1</sup> Those participants who receive instructions to carry out the immersion activities.

<sup>2</sup> Those participants who direct the campers in the activities to be carried out.

## 5. Rationale

In response to the above, the project seeks to promote the implementation of a methodological strategy by using a syllabus proposal for the improvement of verbal fluency through camps with spaces in which students can carry out activities that develop their oral expression skills. This work dynamic allows for constant communication and interaction in L2 in environments close to the reality of learning a language in a natural way, which motivates the learner and generates the confidence to feel freedom to express herself/himself without the pressure generated in a classroom.

Additionally, on the one hand, foreign language is no longer given the same prominence in the new PLLMEIF, reflected in the considerable decrease of hours of English and French in the 2017 curricular reform; on the other hand, direct contact with the foreign language within the curriculum, that is, everything related to language learning and its use, is developed until sixth semester. Therefore, from seventh semester contact with L2 will depend exclusively on the use given to it from the students' autonomy.

Considering these difficulties, it is pertinent to place greater emphasis on the foreign language use and teaching during the first six semesters; however, this project only focused on the last semester in which there is direct contact with the language, seeking to complement the learning process. This is why this syllabus proposal is an alternative solution to the lack of these spaces, as it includes immersion activities such as role changes with improvisations, games and songs, which are intended to solve fluency problems by means of interaction and practice of the language through this type of activities; it also provides a solution to the interruption of the complete development of the language<sup>3</sup>, contrary to what is proposed in the program description, which "*contemplates the study and analysis of language in all its*

---

<sup>3</sup> The complete development of the language includes the study and analysis of the language in all its dimensions, modes of use and functioning in concrete spaces or situations of interaction.

*dimensions... modes of use and functioning in concrete spaces or situations of interaction";*

however, this is not reflected in the improvement of the language in an effective way in verbal fluency.

Another positive factor of the development of this work is the fact that the future implementation of the design of a syllabus for the improvement of verbal fluency through the methodology of immersion camps will give the PLLMEIF a particular dynamism and interest that responds to the recommendations and demands of the MEN, through the process of high-quality accreditation of the Program. This process evaluates as positive the flexible and innovative dynamics that motivate students to express themselves in trusting environments, in other words, good practices. The above reasons justify the implementation of this proposal because the camps are a methodological tool that makes it possible to develop good practices, effective in the process of learning a foreign language. This is due to the fact that in a camp several communication and oral expression skills are developed, which are positively affected in immersion spaces, as supported by personal experiences of some of the participants of summer camps in the United States. These experiences have helped to improve many aspects of the foreign language, including motivational, attitudinal, communicative and, in many cases, confidence in the language that is being learned. Similarly, this positive impact was already reflected in the research project "*The influence of English immersion spaces in the lexical competence of first semester students of the modern languages program English - French of the Universidad del Cauca*" conducted by graduates of the program. This project consisted in the development of a total immersion camp in English with students of the same program.

In relation to the teaching work oriented by the program, this project offers an option of didactic and dynamic tools that can be used according to the teaching level that is being taught. This would have an undeniable positive impact on the professional profile,

demonstrating the language level, the confidence for communication, and finally the didactic variety for the teaching of L2.

Having described all the positive factors that this project would bring to modern language students, we perceive that the permanent incorporation of our proposal is valuable to develop strategies by the communicative approach, among others, to improve verbal fluency through the camp syllabus proposal, as well as to contribute to the implementation of dynamic strategies that benefit the development of the methodological and didactic processes of the Program.

## **6. Referential Framework**

### **6.1. Contextual Framework<sup>4</sup>**

The Bachelor's Degree Program in Modern Languages English-French began on February 28, 1972 under the name of Philology and Languages, attached to the Faculty of Education (FACENED), today the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Education (FACNED). Since then, this Program has had a series of reforms aimed at consolidating the work with languages and its pedagogical, linguistic and socio-humanistic components (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional Resolución n° 25122, 2017, p. 8*). In 1991, the Superior Council of the University of Cauca issued Resolution number 026 of February 06, with which the name of the Program was modified to "Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages English - French", responding to the need for language teachers by secondary education institutions; in 1993, this Program is administratively attached to the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences of the Universidad del Cauca. Subsequently, it was submitted to the demands of the MEN, and obtained prior accreditation by Resolution No. 2251, dated August 17, 2000. Likewise, in 2010, it was

---

<sup>4</sup> All translations in this section are made by the authors of this research project.



granted the renewal of the Qualified Registration by Resolution No. 10209 of November 2010. Subsequently, the Program obtained the High-Quality Accreditation by Resolution No. 12458 of December 2011. (*Condiciones de Calidad del PLLMIF, p. 8*).

After the reforms of Agreement 2450 of 2015, which is still enforce to this day, and Resolution N° 2041 of 2016 that ruled the quality standards for bachelor's degrees, the Program proposed a restructuring to strengthen the pedagogical constituents and technological components of the curriculum, as mentioned, reinforcing also "... *its pedagogical practice components, balanced in their linguistic and modern component in the implementation of an evident human social component and the strengthening of the information technology component and the research component.*" (*PEP Reforma Curricular, 2017, p. 9*). In such curricular reform proposal, the change of the name of the Program to "*Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages with Emphasis in English and French*" was also included. This reform was approved under Resolution N°25122 of November 17, 2017. Subsequently, "*by Resolution N° 27245 of December 4, 2017, this Program received the renewal of High-Quality Accreditation for a period of 4 years.*" (*MEN Resolución No. 27245, 2017, p. 9*). Finally, "*By Resolution No. 29142 of December 26, 2017, it was granted the renewal of Qualified Registration for a period of 7 years*". (*MEN Resolución n° 29142, 2017, p. 2*). This new proposal was structured under parameters oriented by concepts, methodologies and experiences that lead to the knowledge of culture and interculturalism, thus contributing to the development of education and language educator. (*Registro Calificado 2016, p. 16*).

The Modern Languages Program since its beginning until today has been subjected to reforms for its improvement, seeking to get closer to a work in which "*both the mother tongue and the foreign language are recognized as constituent elements to stimulate their acquisition and use*", in addition to "*strengthening the work with languages and their*

*articulation with the pedagogical, linguistic and socio-humanistic components" (Proyecto Educativo del Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con Énfasis en Inglés y Francés, p. 10).*

Based on the above, the professional is expected to be competent not only nationally but also internationally, in such a way that he/she is able to follow the guidelines and requirements to develop successfully in the world of languages today, at a pedagogical, socio-humanistic, research and linguistic level, which encourages the integral formation of students so that they can adapt to the context. (*Registro Calificado 2016, p. 17*).

Likewise, the Program through its mission, which focuses on "*the professional, social and human development of the student, through research and practice*" (*Proyecto Educativo del Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con Énfasis en Inglés y Francés, p. 10*), recognizes the link between culture and language, which complements the formative development at the pedagogical and professional level, in order to train an educator committed to "*reflection and scientific knowledge of the different aspects of pedagogy, as well as to socio-linguistic and cultural reality*" (*Proyecto Educativo del Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con Énfasis en Inglés y Francés, p. 10*).

With respect to the vision, the Program "*has the commitment to contributing to the educational development of the community by training language educators with integrity, competence, critical mind and solidarity.*" (*Proyecto Educativo del Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con Énfasis en Inglés y Francés, p. 10*), encouraging the understanding of the socio-cultural reality in which the formative work is inscribed, in addition to offering "*flexibility in the face of linguistic and pedagogical advances and therefore the basic foundations of social commitment.*" (*Registro calificado 2016, p. 29*)

## 6.2. State of the Art

In order to give validity to our project, it was carried out a search of documents and research works at international, national, and local level, which have been developed so far about similar topics to ours, related to immersion camps and verbal fluency, or another modality that has dealt with these variables. The results of this search are presented below, organized first at the international, followed by the national, and finally, the local level; in turn, each category has been organized by date, from the oldest to the most recent:

At the international level, as the first reference we have the research project "*The Complexity of Immersion Education: Teachers Address the Issues*" that was completed in 2000 by Constance L. Walker and Diane J. Tedick. This project addressed total L2 immersion for teachers and was carried out in three elementary schools in the United States by six teachers, including three Spanish speakers and three English speakers.

The objective was to "*identify advantages and disadvantages of being immersed in L2 for both Spanish and English speakers*". It was shown that some teachers at the beginning of the project presented some problems when speaking in the L2 in joint activities with students. The immersion activities were carried out inside the classroom, but in different ways; in two of them the immersion was total and in the other one it was partial immersion.

The teachers found several important points in which they had to strengthen the balance between language and content, when evaluating and when putting the students in context. The immersion sessions lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. During the school year, periodic interviews were conducted with the teachers, and it was observed that those teachers who were in charge of full immersion were improving more rapidly, compared to those who had partial immersion. This showed that the teachers had a greater impact when they were in charge of a classroom and directed the groups in the L2, since their methodology changed

and impacted the student in a positive way, being also of great help for those students whose mother tongue was English or Spanish.

This investigation was a good reference point for our project, since it showed us that we need more in-depth help with respect to immersion and this was reflected in the results of the project. In addition to the fact that learning does not only take place in the classroom, spaces are also required, in which both students and teachers can express themselves in a natural way, causing in the students an advance in the acquisition of vocabulary and an improvement in the fluency of the participants of the project. That is why we consider it as necessary that this type of activities be implemented within the curriculum and thus achieve an advance in this skill in the students of PLLMEIF.

Another project that focuses on L2 immersion is "*Effects of Language Immersion versus Classroom Exposure on Advanced French Learners: An ERP Study*", carried out by Alexandra Claire Brito in 2017. This had the aimed to "*determine to what extent advanced French learners are sensitive to the presence of phonological cues when processing subject-verb agreement errors*", in addition to studying by means of empirical neuro linguistic techniques in French learners, the effects of language immersion compared to the learning experience within the classroom.

The research took place at the University of Tennessee and was conducted with 17 native English speakers, volunteers, of whom 5 were male and 12 were female, aged 18-34 (age range for late learners). The learners were upper-intermediate to advance in French, and none had been exposed to a language other than the native language in their daily lives until the age of 18. Participants were divided into 3 groups according to the degree of immersion experience they had: none (N=5), low (less than one semester, N = 5), or a lot (more than one semester, N = 7), through study abroad in a French-speaking country.

The research was conducted in two sessions: the first consisted of participants' completion of an informed consent, a language background questionnaire, a CEFR self-assessment, a cloze test and an EIT; the second consisted of taking Electroencephalography (EEG) recordings, by means of a Wave Guard 64-electrode cap placed on the scalp with a sampling rate of 512 Hz, while participants read sentences silently in French.

In the data analysis, it was found that on the *Cloze Test* there was no variation between groups in mean proficiency scores. However, in the oral proficiency level scores of the low and high immersion groups, they turned out to be higher (EIT 49.0% and 56.2% respectively), compared to the scores of the non-immersion group (EIT 32.8%). Regarding the judgment task, it was found that the non-immersion group (85.5%) was outperformed by the low immersion group (87.9%); finally and as expected, the high immersion group obtained the highest results (91.8%).

Finally, in this study it was found that by spending more time in immersion environments in the L2, the student would obtain a higher degree of language processing similar to that of a native speaker. This was demonstrated in the ERP, which compared the high immersion group with the low immersion group, leaving out the non-immersion group since it did not apply.

This study differs from ours in that the main focus of the study was directed on the impact of immersion on neural processing, it means, how the brain processes language when learners are exposed to different environments, and not on the verbal fluency of the learners as such. However, its contribution to our project was valuable, since it showed us that language immersion does have a positive impact, since within the immersion spaces there is significant learning that is difficult to develop in a traditional classroom.

A third research project entitled "*Promotion of oral fluency and accuracy in English through role play*", was developed in 2019 by Jocelyn Cuitiño Ojeda - Claudio Díaz Larenas - José Luis Otarola, in which the main objective was to promote both fluency and accuracy in oral expression in English through the implementation of didactic sequences based on the dramatic technique of role play, applied to 34 fourth grade students of a semi-public school in Chile.

For methodological development, this was based on action research to reflect on the students' problem of fluency and oral precision, and through the research cycles to give the answer to this problem to finish with the evaluation of the perceptions and pedagogical knowledge of it. It was developed with an experimental group of 34 children to whom a pre-test was applied at the beginning, and then they were submitted to the treatment that consisted of the dynamic activities with the "role plays", and finally a post-test was applied to obtain the final results.

During the development of the research it could be observed that a large number of students experienced negative emotions regarding concern and/or embarrassment when speaking in the L2, reflected on how they felt when expressing themselves during the didactic sequence. This changed notably after the experimental phase, in which the students felt more confident and motivated to participate in the activities, even proposing new scenarios; they also became a bit more spontaneous and self-confident. Likewise, the results showed that oral fluency and accuracy improved significantly at the end of the intervention.

In summary, this research project made it possible to demonstrate that the didactic sequence implemented had positive effects on the improvement of oral expression accuracy and fluency in fourth grade students. That is, the sessions developed based on the needs and context of the students were adequate to promote oral expression. Likewise, it allowed

students to enjoy more participatory and dynamic spaces through interaction and the possibility of speaking in an environment close to their daily lives.

Now, for the syllabus approach, this research address fluency from the exclusive use of "role play" activities, to demonstrate its positive impact not only on oral production and verbal fluency, but also on the motivation and confidence of students when speaking in L2, which reinforced our perception that verbal fluency improves thanks to total immersion spaces with playful activities, developed in a non-conventional environment.

At the national level, we found that a thesis entitled "A Topic-Based-Functional Syllabus Proposal to Promote Students' Conversation Through Outdoor Games" was developed by María J. Rangel Agamez and Jessica P. Pernet Velasquez, students at the University of Córdoba, and carried out at the Escuela Normal Superior de Montería. Its main objective was to create a "topic-based-functional syllabus" grounded on outdoor games to promote conversations among eighth grade students in oral interaction during English classes.

For the development of this research, the descriptive qualitative approach was the methodology used to collect the information that provided the necessary elements for the creation of the syllabus. For this data collection they had the help of the 8th grade English teacher and a sample of 19 students between 11 and 13 years of age in the same grade. For this data collection, one observation of these students during the development of the English classes was carried out in the first instance, to get an idea of the level, interaction, participation and motivation during the English classes. Following this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 19 eighth grade students via WhatsApp to identify tastes, preferences and how they could make sessions or classes much more fun and entertaining that focus on communication in the foreign language. Finally, both the students and the teacher

were asked to fill out google questionnaires in which the needs, desires, shortcomings and/or absences within this learning process focused on conversations could be evidenced.

In the data analysis, it became evident that the students' shortcomings were quite significant considering the grade they were in and the time intensity of the subject; in addition, these interviews yielded data about the students' motivation and interests regarding oral production. Many expressed that they would like to learn through games and more interaction in English. Others stated that the classes were boring and focused on reading and writing, which did not allow for spontaneous and real conversations among students.

Considering the information collected and the analysis of this, it was concluded that 8th grade students are in need of a syllabus that helps them to manage short conversations with their peers". Therefore, the syllabus was made considering all the necessary characteristics, which led to present the proposal based on outdoor games for the real interaction of students forming a reliable, fun and contextualized environment. This, based on the multiple studies conducted on learning through games, as they are a great tool that can be adjusted to various learning objectives, and which stimulates the oral production of learners giving more confidence, excitement, motivation even gets to lose the fear of participating and / or making mistakes.

This project presented the characteristics of a syllabus for teaching English in an environment other than the classroom focused on conversations, which enriched our research, since this study addressed many theories similar to ours and it served as a starting point for the formulation of the syllabus of English immersion camps, since this one addresses conversations through games and what we sought in our project is to improve verbal fluency through immersion activities carried out in environments outside the conventional classroom, which are closely linked.



At the local level, the research work entitled "*INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH IMMERSION CAMPS ON FIRST SEMESTER MODERN LANGUAGES STUDENTS' LEXICAL COMPETENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF CAUCA*" (2017) was carried out by Astudillo Mosquera Andres Felipe, Borrero Sotelo John Styd, Puyo Quibano Ana María, Saavedra Daza Miguel Santiago, Samboni Uribe Jonhy Hadid, Vallejo Cortés Karina, Vargas Martinez William Jovany, students of the Bachelor's Degree Program in Modern Languages English - French of the Universidad del Cauca, in which they sought to "*Determine the influence of total immersion camps in the development of lexical competence of first semester students of PLLMI-F of the Universidad del Cauca*".

For the development of this project, a quantitative experimental method was used with two groups, one experimental and one control, which were formed by students of the bachelor's degree Program in Modern Languages English-French of the Universidad del Cauca. First, a pre-test was applied to assess the initial state of the lexical component level of both groups. Next, training sessions were held prior to the immersion camp, exclusively with the experimental group. Subsequently, the immersion camp was carried out, in which various didactic activities were performed to demonstrate the influence of this space on the lexical component of the participants. Finally, a post-test was administered to both, the experimental group, and the sample group, to establish the relationship in terms of the improvement of the lexical component of the two groups.

This project allowed the group members to develop bonds of friendship, fraternity, and camaraderie due to the immersion activities such as games, songs and integration dynamics that required working together, which also led to the generation of an atmosphere of trust that contributed to the attenuation of shyness on the part of the participants to put into practice their previous knowledge for the interaction and use of the L2.

After having carried out the entire research process regarding the influence of immersion spaces in a second language on the lexical component, it was concluded that it enabled a significant increase in the level of lexical competence in students who were part of the immersion project, since the analysis of the data showed that *"spaces of total immersion in a second language, in this case English, positively influence the development of the CL of the participants"* (p.45); this happens because *"By exposing students to environments where the use of an L2 is continuous, the need to interact in that language arises, which generates the necessary conditions for the acquisition and practice of new vocabulary."* (p.69).

Having participated in the previous project and having witnessed its success, we consider it appropriate to take it as a reference, since our project aims at developing a syllabus of total immersion camps in L2 for the sixth semester but taking as a central element the improvement of verbal fluency, instead of the lexical component, which gives us a perspective and a starting point for the planning of activities to be carried out within the camps.

Another research of great value for our work was the one carried out by Ángela Liliana Ariza Ruales and Mónica Mopán Rodríguez as a degree project in 2017 at the University of Cauca (Popayán), which is entitled *"Design of a language immersion leader training syllabus for Modern Languages Program with emphasis on English and French Students at University of Cauca"* and which arose due to the lack of leadership training and immersion spaces within the Bachelor's Degree Program in Modern Languages with Emphasis on English and French (PLLMEI-F). Its main objective was to design a syllabus to train leaders in L2 immersion to contribute to the PLLMEI-F, as well as to future proposals related to immersion, such as the current project. In terms of its methodology, this was a mixed nature project that was carried out with a sample of 14 people in total, including

students, graduates, and directors of immersion schools in the State of Minnesota (US), who were given a series of interviews and tests for data collection and analysis.

For the development of this research work there was a sample of 14 people in total: 10 active students of the English-French Modern Language Program, 2 graduates of the same program and 2 directors of immersion schools. Interviews and tests were conducted, among them, interviews of experiences and experiences of students, analysis of needs and gaps within the program, Multifactorial Leadership test and the Cattell 16-factor personality test. The above in order to establish common factors in people with experience in immersion as leaders, and those who did not have it. Likewise, we sought to identify the influential elements in immersion and leadership development, activities and relevant elements for the formation of leaders in immersion within the information collected through these interviews. Likewise, the identification of essential theoretical elements for the approach and elaboration of the syllabus was made.

It was evidenced that the previous experience in the students' immersion spaces allowed understanding the needs and requirements for the development of the syllabus to be adequate. Thus, after the analysis of the data collected, the results showed that it is important to develop communicative competence, lexical competence, body expression and timely use of the voice in order to form leaders in immersion. These results provided the essential data for the syllabus content to counteract the needs evidenced in the PLLMEIF, in terms of leadership training and immersion spaces, and that this in turn would strengthen future teaching tasks.

The contribution that this research work has for our project was of vital importance, since it is closely linked to the topics that are being developed in the project. The main one was the development of the syllabus in immersion, with the difference that in our case it was not focused on leadership training but on the improvement of verbal fluency. It is also important

to highlight that one of the reasons why the authors of this research aimed at the creation of a syllabus for the training of leaders through immersion in L2 was because the lack of these types of spaces was already evident within the Modern Languages Program, the same one to which we belong. This reflects that this situation has been presented for a long time, and no solution or alternative has been provided.

### **6.3. Conceptual Framework**

For the development and understanding of this project, fundamental concepts were taken into account, such as syllabus defined by Zabalza (2004) as "a tool oriented to the development of formative projects, to organize our performance not as a set of unpredictable and disconnected actions, but as the implementation of a well thought out and articulated plan". (Quoted in Barros et al. 2018, p.3).

Similarly, it is important to consider the concept of curriculum, since there is a tendency to confuse the latter with the former. To make such clarification, we took the definition given by the Ministry of National Education, which states that the curriculum *"is the set of criteria, study plans, programs, methodologies, and processes that contribute to comprehensive training (...) also including human, academic, and physical resources to implement policies and carry out the institutional educational project"*.

For the concept of language acquisition, we considered Krashen who defines this as a process that occurs unconsciously, which is the "result of contact in natural communication, as would happen in the street, where the emphasis is on meaning; what matters is not the structure of the language, but what is meant." (1980, p. 163).

For the communicative approach, we opted for the construction of our own concept based on the contributions made by Richards and Rogers (2012) about it, defining it as an effective

form of language teaching that promotes constant, real, and contextualized interaction in the L2, which implements communicative strategies in which the learner acquires the language since it is approached according to the context and the needs of the learner. In addition, it is an approach that promotes the ability to use various strategies that appropriately allow communication in the L2, depending on the context in which it is found, i.e., it develops the ability to know what to say and how to say it in a given environment. Another important factor considered was the fact that learners acquire the foreign language without the need to put grammatical structures first, since these are learned implicitly through the use of the language, without neglecting the possibility of resorting to an explanation of these structures if necessary.

We also considered the concept of verbal fluency, for which we took as a reference Horche, who defines it as *"the ability to articulate a speech rhythmically and without interruptions, using the necessary strategies to maintain the speech in the face of the obstacles that may arise"*, which would imply for a fluent speaker *"to speak continuously and with a certain rhythm, which does not mean that he has to speak quickly, and in addition, he has to establish certain pauses in his speech, which should not be confused with interruptions"*.

To conclude, we took the definition of linguistic immersion given by Cammarata and Tedick, in which it is determined that this is *"communicative interaction in a given environment, producing the natural or intentional acquisition of a second language"* (2012, p 74). Diane J. Tedick in company with Constance L. Walker (2000, pp 11,12) mention as another important factor two modalities of immersion: total and/or partial, of which we took total linguistic immersion as our unique approach since this demands the continuous and uninterrupted use of the L2 in a contextual space.

The concepts discussed above clarified the theoretical approach that guided us throughout our research and helped us to analyze, understand and discern the findings in order to draw conclusions with the validity that gave it theoretical support.

#### **6.4. Theoretical Framework**

After analyzing different concepts related to the subject matter of this project, the theories that best support its validity and that are closest to our perception of each of the concepts were adopted.

##### **6.4.1. Syllabus**

The concept of syllabus has evolved over the years thanks to the needs of language teaching. Different authors propose various theories, from which we decided to take those that are closest to the methodology we developed, such as Breen's theory, who proposes that the syllabus *"is a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning"* (1984, p.54). He presents a list of steps to follow, in addition to offering the freedom to focus on certain content and/or skills that are developed in the curriculum, as proposed by Nunan (1993, p.8), who states that the syllabus *"focuses more narrowly on the selection and grading of content"*, which facilitates the development of specific skills.

Likewise, Barros et al. (2018), in their article *Syllabus universitario actuante en ciencias pedagógicas potencialidades y limitaciones en la Universidad de Guayaquil*, talk about the importance of the syllabus in an academic group, since this is also *"a support tool"* with which it is possible to make an evaluation of *"compliance with the graduate profile of each career through the development of the learning outcomes proposed by their curricular meshes"*(p.335), in addition to *"verifying the relevance of the subjects and learning outcomes according to the profile of each career"*(p.335). These same authors speak of this tool

(syllabus) as a structure that "*contains all the necessary information about the subject: objectives, topics to be covered, contents, activities, didactic sequence, methodologies, evaluation mechanisms and bibliographic references*"(p.335); this with the purpose that "*the student can reach the desired learning results or achievements*" (p. 335). "*The objective is defined from the perspective of the teaching process and, in order to set it, the question is answered: Why and for what is it important what is going to be taught in this course?*" (p.335).

In addition, we found that the syllabus is developed jointly between learners and educators, since according to Caballero (2013) "*the main function of the syllabus is to act as a contract between the teacher and the student, where they commit to the teaching and learning process.*" (Cited by Barros et al. 2018, p.7). Similarly, "*A syllabus must meet the objectives of motivating, structuring and establishing the rules where learning is executed*" (Littlefield, 1999, p.7) in order to achieve the learning objectives proposed in the syllabus in a natural way.

Considering the aforementioned theory, it is important to keep in mind that the syllabus, being able to be executed in a specific way, allows or facilitates the development of the main objective of the course, which in this case is the improvement of verbal fluency.

#### **6.4.2. Curriculum**

The definition of curriculum in its historical origin does not have the same meaning as in the educational field, since this term as a pedagogical resource was adopted recently, thus it is considered as a new concept (Herrán, 2012, p.288, cited by Toro, 2017, p.461). For the development of this theory, we took into account only authors who refer to the term as an educational resource.

One of them is Stenhouse (1987), who attributes to the curriculum the characteristic of flexibility, as he defines it as *"an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational purpose, in such a way that it remains open to critical discussion and can be effectively translated into practice"* (p.301, cited by Toro, 2017, p.470).

Furthermore, this same author (1991), in his article *"curriculum research and the teacher's art"*, speaks of curricula not as *"simple instructional means to improve teaching, but rather as the expression of ideas that has as its purpose the improvement of the teacher"* and he says that at the same time the students are those who benefit from the curriculum, since *"there is no perspective to benefit the students more important and significant, than the improvement of the teacher's art of teaching"* (p.11). Stenhouse (1991) stresses the importance of the curriculum because it *"invites the teacher to perfect his or her art through the exercise of the art itself"* (p.11). In addition, Perilla (2018) quotes Sacristán and Pérez (1983) in the book *"curriculum design and transformation of educational contexts from concrete experiences"*, in which they argue that:

*"A curriculum is an integrated and flexible global project that should directly or indirectly provide bases or principles to plan, evaluate and justify the educational project it is an integrated and coherent proposal that does not specify more than general principles to guide school practice."* (p.280)

We also found that the curriculum, unlike the syllabus, is global. That is, it addresses all the subjects, skills, and objectives of a class in a general way as stated by Candlin (1984, p.31), who says that the *"curriculum is concerned with making general statements about language learning, learning purpose, experience, evaluation, and the role and relationships of teachers and learners"* (p.31).



The importance of this concept lies in two fundamental points, the first referring to the differentiation of the terms *syllabus* and *curriculum*, since it is common for them to be confused. The second refers to curricular flexibility, which allows us to propose a modification in the curriculum so that this syllabus can be implemented in the Program.

#### **6.4.3. Foreign Language Learning Theory**

Krashen (1982), an expert and connoisseur in the field of linguistics, in his article "*Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*", exposes 5 hypotheses in the acquisition of a second language, of which the first of them is the one that has had the greatest impact; he refers to the distinction between language acquisition and language learning, defining acquisition as the "*result of contact in natural communication*", that is to say that "*what matters is not the structure of the language, but what is meant.*" (p.163), which indicates that this occurs subconsciously. Learning, on the other hand, occurs consciously, and it is defined as the "*result of studies of structures and meanings. It is usually a formal learning, as would be the case of instruction in school*" (p.163), whereby Krashen states that the importance of acquired language lies in its availability for automatic employment. This is closely related to our conception within the immersion camps, since in the development of these camps the language is acquired through constant interaction in the L2 within a natural context, thus giving more relevance to the message to be transmitted.

The second, called "monitor hypothesis", states the relationship between acquisition and learning, in which according to Krashen "*the Acquisition system is the enunciated indicator, and the learning system is the monitor, the role of the monitor is or should be of minor importance, it is only used to correct speech deviations and to give a more fluent speech*" (p.164).

The third, "natural order hypothesis" which focuses only on acquisition and not on learning, in which he frames the difference between the order of acquisition of *"grammatical structures of a foreign language just as there is an order in the acquisition of rules of the mother tongue. However, this order is not the same in the acquisition of the mother tongue and the second language"* (p.164)

The fourth and fifth hypothesis are related to both acquisition and learning. The "input hypothesis", referring to the fourth one, states that it is necessary for these aspects (acquisition and learning) to take place in a positive environment, which is understood as a space in which there is a higher level of interaction in the L2. Thus, according to Krashen, *"The more positive, secure and motivated the learner is, the easier the acquisition and learning will be"* (p.164). And finally, *"the affective filter hypothesis"* focuses on motivation, self-confidence and anxiety as affective variables. In this sense, Krashen (p.164) argues that a learner with a high level of motivation, confidence and low anxiety levels, presents better conditions that bring him/her closer to L2 acquisition success.

These hypotheses strongly support what was developed in our project, since we consider interaction, motivation and confidence in the acquisition process to be more relevant and effective for L2 learning than grammatical structures or traditional environments.

#### **6.4.4. Communicative Approach**

The communicative approach to language teaching has been at the center of discussions about language teaching (*Savignon and Berns, 1984, p.4*), since its advocates from its inception in 1960, they were clear that having mastered the use of grammatical structures was not sufficient preparation for effective language use in communicating with others. Wilkins, mentioned by Roberts (2004) in the article *"The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching: The King is dead! Long live the King"* proposed a

curriculum that does not focus on grammar but on what the learner needs to communicate effectively, providing learners with communication skills in different scenarios, with less emphasis on grammar and more on verbal fluency. Other authors such as Halliday and D. Hye have centered the Communicative Approach on a much more general perspective of learning which is known as "*learning by doing*" or "*the experiential approach*".

Therefore, students are assessed by level of communicative competence rather than by explicit knowledge.

As its name denotes, the concept of communicative language teaching is "*communicative competence*" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.159), which encompasses both verbal and written, in addition to the two remaining skills of listening and reading. Oxford states that "*the development of communicative competence requires realistic interaction between students using meaningful and contextualized language*" (1990, p.8). According to Richards and Rodgers, the Communicative Approach to language teaching takes into account that language is communication; therefore, the main objective of language teaching is the development of what Hymes calls "*communicative competence*".

On the other hand, in the article "***The communicative approach, a better guide for teaching practice***", Beghadid mentions Bérard (1995), who explains that the fundamental purpose of this approach is to "*establish communication, taking into account the learner's needs that determine the aptitudes that the learner wishes to develop (...) with the use of authentic documents from everyday life for a better and faster acquisition of the language*" which implies that "*the acquired knowledge will be used in real situations, respecting the socio-cultural codes.*" (p.114). The latter favors the good social development of the learners, which generates motivation in them, by using the language on a daily context.

Considering the above, and because according to Morrow *"the best way to learn to communicate is to learn by doing; that is, by actively participating in the communicative activities that are promoted inside and outside the classroom"* (quoted by Bastidas, 1993), this approach includes activities that promote cooperation and negotiation through teamwork, promote language acquisition, and not least, the development of grammar and pronunciation. Therefore, they are activities focused on the acquisition of verbal fluency that in turn help to increase the learners' confidence.

In this sense, Zambrano and Insuasti (2001, p.28) collect and group three aspects to be considered in order to achieve success in communicative language learning. The first refers to *"the quality of opportunities provided to the learner to use the language"* (Littlewood, 1984); the second to *"the existence of a humanistic environment that allows him/her to express him/herself without inhibitions"*; and finally, the third to *"the nature of the input (or linguistic material to which the learner is exposed) that is comprehensible, interesting, interactive, relevant to immediate interests, not too complex and not too strictly graded"* (Ellis, 1986).

Nowadays the communicative approach seeks to *"make communicative competence the goal of language teaching"* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.155). This approach emphasizes group work for constant interaction and the development of problem-solving skills, which is the ultimate goal of learning any foreign language. It also seeks to *"develop procedures for teaching the four language skills that recognize the interdependence of language and communication"* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.155).

Richards and Rogers conclude that communicative teaching is *"a theory of language teaching that advocates a communicative model of language and language use that seeks*

*to apply this model in the teaching system, in materials, in teacher and learner roles and behaviors, and in classroom activities and techniques". (p.155)*

This concept is the basis of the form of teaching that we considered pertinent to employ in our project, since we believe that the main purpose of language is communication and the most significant form of language learning is communicative interaction in the L2.

#### **6.4.5. *Experiential Learning***

It is called experiential learning theory because it emphasizes the central role of experience in the learning process, an emphasis that distinguishes it from other learning theories. Thus, the term is used empirically to distinguish experiential learning theory from cognitive learning theory, which emphasizes cognition over emotion, and behavioral learning theory, which denies any role in learning.

This theory refers to the learning process that is developed through previous experiences; it has long been presented as a teaching methodology that offers a dynamic and significant alternative for the formation of the student. Experiential learning focuses on the learner, on the active and direct participation he/she has with what he/she is learning, on the reflection he/she has from the experiences and on how he/she becomes aware of his/her process, *"the student must actively participate in his/her own learning process in such a way that his/her capacity to learn to learn is enhanced, understanding the way he/she learns and the processes required for it"* (Rivera, 1996 cited by Gutiérrez Fernández, et al. 2022 Pag 91). Similarly, emphasis is placed on experiences, whether precise or abstract, since these *"are transformed into knowledge when we elaborate them in one of these two ways: either by reflecting and thinking about them, or by actively experimenting with the information received"* (Gutiérrez Fernández, et al, 2022 Pag 91). This is why this process depends largely

on how much the student is involved in his/her learning experience, since he/she is the one who will be in charge of examining, testing, reflecting and developing the different activities and thus he/she himself/herself concisely integrates the new knowledge.

Similarly, Smith (2001) mentions that the characteristic aspects of experiential learning are those that involve the learner in a direct and spontaneous interaction with what is being learned; even, this author states that *"experience is not enough to ensure learning, but it is intimately linked to a process of personal reflection, in which meaning is constructed from the lived experience."* (Gutiérrez Fernández, et al. 2022 p. 91). Consequently, reflecting from what is experienced is an elementary part of this process, since they are closely linked, then the lack of any of these elements could obstruct the correct learning. Likewise, authors such as Chisholm et al. (2009) affirm that the experience in everyday environments is favorable in this process, unlike the experience obtained in traditional classrooms, since experiencing situations in real contexts makes learning more meaningful because *"individuals learn continuously outside formal contexts"* (Gutiérrez Fernández, et al. 2022 p. 91), as a result of interaction with an everyday environment, which is why *"other types of learning that develop spontaneously in environments other than classrooms, could allow us to understand and take advantage of their formative potential"*.

On the other hand, according to Kolb's theory, for effective learning to take place, a four-step process must be carried out. This model, known as Kolb's cycle, has the following stages (Gómez, page 3):

1. Something is developed, there is a concrete experience. (Concrete experience)
2. Then, a reflection is made about what was done, with which a connection is established between what was done and the results that were obtained. (Reflective observation)
3. After having reflected, the conclusions are obtained. (Abstract conceptualization)

4. Finally, the conclusions obtained are tested, which are used as an example or guide to act in future situations. (Active experimentation)

Each of the stages has its value, since going through each of them we generate some kind of knowledge. Action, observation and reflection, concept development, generalization, and active experimentation with our ideas are ways of gaining knowledge, thus it is best to go through all four stages of the cycle to learn effectively.

The importance of this theory lies in learning through experiences in spaces other than the classroom as a teaching methodology, because in the development of an immersion camp, this is precisely what is sought, that the student learns by doing, not only in a classroom, but in different and contextualized environments to make learning more meaningful.

#### ***6.4.6. Linguistic Immersion***

Sumonte, et al. (2017) define linguistic immersion as communicative collaboration within a predetermined space for the acquisition of a language in a natural or intentional way, which is also based "*on giving a leading and very active role to the participants*", where grammar "*is reduced to a minimum, there are no grammatical explanations, there is no repetition of structures...*" (Sánchez, 2009, p.66). This is in order that the learner can internalize the foreign language and thus communicate in a natural way, since being exposed to a context where there is only communication in L2 forces the student to think and express him/herself in this language.

Sierra (1994) adds that linguistic immersion consists of partial or total exposure to a second language, which can be affected by factors such as age, given that if one is exposed from an early age, the acquisition of the language will be late, but complete knowledge of both the L2 and the mother tongue will be achieved, since a comparison is made between the two languages at the time of practice. On the other hand, when one is older, the learning of

the L2 will be fast; this is because there is no contrast with the mother tongue; however, it will be late in the grammatical field.

Another important factor is the type of immersion, which can be total or partial. In total immersion the result is more noticeable because the student does not have the opportunity to be in contact with his or her mother tongue, so he or she is forced to communicate entirely in the foreign language. Therefore, it has been proven that if a language needs to be learned quickly, this is the best option, but there is a risk that small portions of the mother tongue will be lost. On the contrary, in partial immersion, the objective of learning a language is more delayed and may be missed due to the continuous contrast with the mother tongue in the immersion.

On the other hand, Josu Sierra (1994) mentions several theoretical principles concerning linguistic immersion, such as:

- Construction of the "natural imitative environment" in the L2 acquisition-learning process: *"In immersion programs, the idea is that the second language is learned in a similar way as the first language is learned" (p.87)*; this can have a greater impact on the participant, but the process will be more complex and the results can be very good in the long term.
- Contextualized L2 learning: *"The idea is to teach the language in relation to the uses required in the social and institutional context of teaching-learning" (p.88)* through academic content but worked on and guided in L2 by a teacher. The participant will be more exposed to immersion when surrounded by the social context and all the content it entails, giving way to a much more complete exploration and acquisition of the language.



- Communicative strategy: *"The second language is learned by using it in real communicative situations"* (p.88). Applying this principle together with the previous one, the participant begins to use everything acquired and puts it into practice so that the receiver is able to grasp the message and its intention.

For us, this concept is one of the fundamental bases in our project because thanks to immersion, the students have the opportunity to communicate and interact in L2 constantly, which positively influences their verbal fluency. It also helped us to focus on the type of activities proposed in the syllabus to emphasize the improvement of oral skills.

#### **6.4.7. Verbal Fluency**

Over the years, fluency has been studied from different perspectives and defined by different authors. However, each one of them has in common the fact that it is very difficult to reach an exact definition of fluency. That is why for the development of this project we agreed to take references that are close to our perspective, such as Horche who defines fluency as the articulation of a speech with rhythm and without interruptions, which requires the use of strategies that help overcome the obstacles that may arise during the discourse.

Colloquially, it is believed that verbal fluency depends solely and exclusively on the speed with which one speaks, in addition to the greater number of words used during that time. This belief is much stronger when referring to speaking in a foreign language, since it is believed that fluency is achieved if and only if one speaks as a native speaker does, but as Brumfit states, fluency is determined by *"natural language use whether or not it results in native speaker-like language comprehension or production"* (Brumfit, 1984, p.56); in addition, other component factors such as rhythm, pauses, and lexis must be taken into account; in Horche's words *"Fluency will be defined by rhythm and by the relationship*

*between pauses and speech fragments, but not by speed." (Concept of fluency in oral expression, p.374).*

Another important factor to consider are the filled pauses, which contrary to the belief that they are synonymous with dysfluency, are necessary in the development of speech, since they give the speaker a space to be able to give an understandable speech, as it would be done in the mother tongue. Since these are variants of speech, such as "uh" or "hmm", which are shown in the spoken language, they are in turn *"variables of fluency that do not have to be a symptom of dysfluency"* (Horche, p.377), but if they are evidenced very frequently, they would then represent a certain dysfluency in the speaker, since these pauses are used only to organize ideas and develop the discourse clearly, as Fillmore (1979) explains in Pradas Macías (2004, p.78) when he says that *"fluency is the ability to fill time with speech and that a person who is fluent in this sense does not have to stop many times to think about what he wants to say next or how to say it"*, referring to the ability to resort to strategies that help the speaker to overcome obstacles without losing the continuity of the discourse.

Similarly, it should be taken into account that for a learner to achieve fluency in speaking, mechanization is important, i.e., that a speech is delivered naturally and without stopping to think about how to say what is to be communicated, but what is to be said as it would be said in the mother tongue, since it is a spontaneous process that does not require additional effort, since, as Chambers states *"Fluency develops as more production processes become automatic"* (1997, p.537); therefore, in *"second language acquisition, fluency is dependent on automaticity, although it may never reach the high degree achieved by native speakers."* (1997, p.537). Thus, to achieve what is meant by fluency, language must be presented in a contextualized, natural, and constant environment, as emphasized by Lennon (1990) and Schmidt (1992) *"fluency is a performance phenomenon, a skill exercised in real time."*

We considered that achieving verbal fluency is one of the main purposes of foreign language learners; for this reason, this was a concept that enriched our project because its definition helped us to clarify that fluency is achieved when a comprehensible speech is articulated without focusing on the speed with which it is spoken. In the same sense, this concept supported our theory that in order to achieve fluency, spaces of real and constant interaction (immersion) are necessary to automate oral production, understanding by machining the fact that the speaker does not stop to think about structures, vocabulary or order to be able to give the desired message, but that it is a spontaneous process in which there is no need to process any type of extra information to what is wanted to say; these spaces thus contribute to the achievement of verbal fluency.

## 7. Methodology

Responding to the goals previously stated, which the Program has pursued since its inception, this project was developed by a group of two students from the ninth semester of the Bachelor's Degree Program in Modern Languages English-French, and with the collaboration of both active students and graduates of the Program who have had some kind of experience with immersion spaces in the L2, based on a qualitative approach, in view of the fact that we sought to collect data in a way that evidenced the opinion and/or feelings of students and teachers regarding the difficulty already exposed in the problem statement. Several authors such as Punch, 2014; Lichtman, 2013; Morse, 2012, (*Cited by Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2014, p.358*) among others, explain that this approach "*is selected when the purpose is to examine how individuals perceive and experience the phenomena around them, delving into their views, interpretations and meanings.*"

This population for data collection was considered relevant for the successful development of our project, which included both teachers and students of this Program, since

being or having been students of this Program and having already had an experience in it, they could provide sufficient information that revealed the difficulties and shortcomings regarding the lack of immersion spaces in the Program, or otherwise, the absence of these.

The nature of this work corresponds then to an action-research, since its main objective is "*to understand and solve specific problems of a collectivity linked to an environment (group, program, organization or community)*", in addition to making a "*Diagnosis of social, political, labor, economic, etc., problems of a collective nature*" (Adams, 2010; Alvarez-Gayou, 2003; Brydon-Miller, et al, 2003; Elliott, 2004; Merriam, 2009; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013; And *The SAGE Glossary of the Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2009, as cited in Hernandez, et al, 2014, p.496*). Our project likewise pursues to provide a possible solution to the difficulties identified through an analysis of the methodological needs of the sixth semester students of PLLMEI-F.

For the development of this methodology, we carried out a series of steps that allowed us to achieve a structured syllabus in accordance with the needs of the students of the Program identified in the diagnosis:

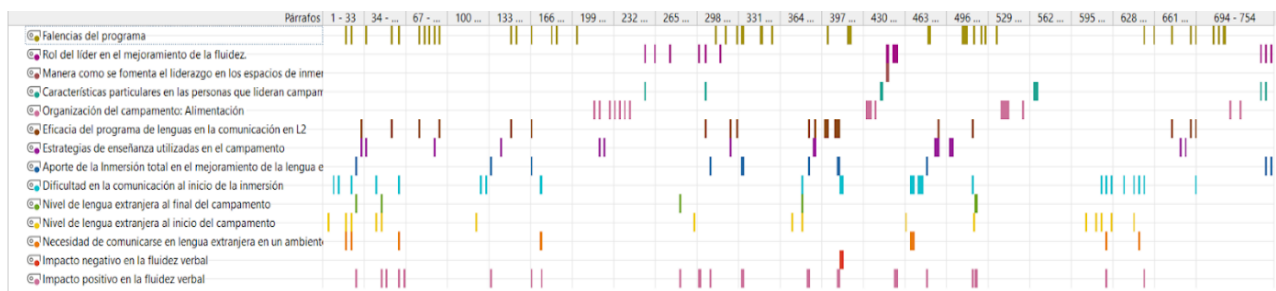
As a first step, we placed the identification of the problem, which was established by means of a survey, to 32 students and 3 graduates, that confirmed the gap that the Program presents in terms of activities that focus on the development and improvement of students' verbal fluency.

As a second step, data was collected through interviews to 10 active students from different semesters and 2 graduates of the Program who have had experiences with spaces or activities of total immersion in the foreign language, in order to establish the positive, negative, or null contribution of these in the improvement of the participants' verbal fluency.

The next step was the analysis of the data collected in the interviews. In the first instance, MAXQDA program was used for the analysis; for this, the first step was to categorize the data collected; the second was to enter the data into the program, and the third was to generate a graph (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Graph obtained from MAXQDA program*



Despite having used the MAXQDA program for qualitative data analysis, the graph it provided was not clear, as there was no direct relationship between the categorization of data and the components of the graph to achieve an analysis and development of all the findings of the interviews; Thus, we finally opted to analyze question by question, looking for common factors among the participants' answers in order to obtain a more faithful analysis of the participants' experiences that would help us both to support our hypothesis and to collect information for the creation of the syllabus, since all the needs mentioned by each participant were taken into account, such as, the implementation of English immersion spaces, interaction with native speakers, activities outside conventional spaces, conversations directed to real contexts, among others.

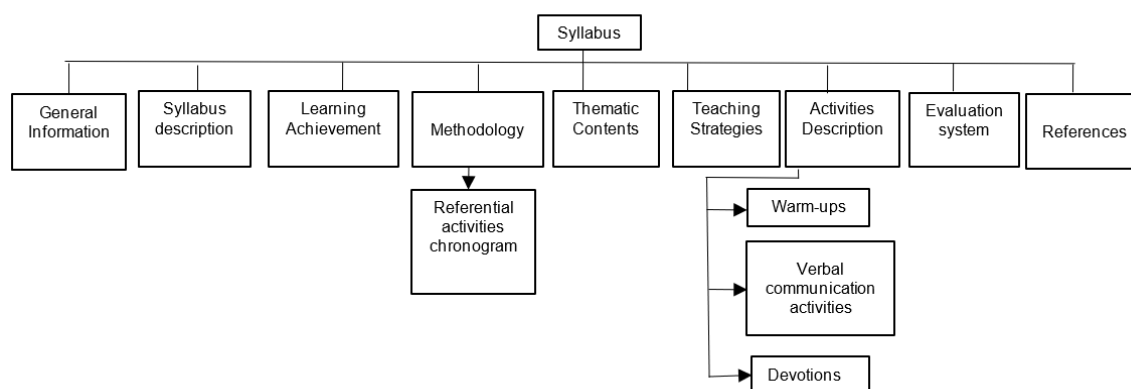
Within this analysis it was found that all participants agree that there is a lack of spaces where oral skills are developed to improve verbal fluency. For which they see as a possible solution the implementation of English immersion spaces, since they also mention that

having participated in this type of spaces, either totally or partially, this helped significantly in improving not only the oral but also the listening component.

The last step was the search, compilation and adaptation of resources and pedagogical tools, based on the theory studied throughout the research, to establish the activities and methodologies that contribute or focus on total immersion in English as an instrument that contributes to the improvement of verbal fluency, for the subsequent development of the syllabus. Dynamic activities<sup>5</sup> such as games, songs, and reflection exercises (some learned in summer camps, and others taken from the internet and books), were the tools and resources chosen, since these types of activities, besides being typical of summer camps in the United States, focus on the development and strengthening of oral skills through experiences. Finally, the syllabus plan was designed, i.e., objectives, methodologies, topics, distribution of activities, and evaluation to be developed for sixth-semester students (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Syllabus outline*



<sup>5</sup> they refer to productive processes that are in continuous change, promoting interpersonal relationships; in addition to being energetic activities that require the student to be in constant movement, where specific tasks are performed, and which are generally carried out in groups, allowing learning and/or acquiring new knowledge by being in contact with L2 in a fun and meaningful way.

The syllabus was designed based on the needs of the PLLMEI-F students and graduates collected through interviews and surveys. Considering that the program already offers a space that focuses primarily on the teaching and learning of English grammar and formal English, with a low emphasis on oral skills, we created a space for total immersion in English that provides both the student and the program the opportunity to explore the daily and informal English that is also required to achieve better performance in situations outside the formative ones that occur in the classroom as well, and at the same time provide the student with security and effectiveness in communication.

This space was created as an adaptation of the summer camps in the United States and is not formulated under grammatical rules or learning units proposed in the curriculum of the program; with the objective that the learning of the foreign language takes place in an environment different from the traditional one, that is to say, more didactic and dynamic. If this process is not focused on the academic components that are developed throughout the program, it produces a more natural daily environment that allows students to obtain a broader learning of the language, which is not limited only to the formal aspects of the language. Furthermore, taking into account that in the sixth semester, the program focuses on reinforcing the complex grammatical topics that have been studied, the linguistic immersion would strengthen them through oral skills, putting them into practice from a more informal and everyday English, confronting the student to the daily reality, forcing the need for communication in different situations, motivating the students and developing meaningful activities and exercises that make a difference in the learning process.

The creation of a syllabus as a methodological strategy for the PLLMEI-F will help correct the shortcomings that we, as students of the PLLMEI-F, have perceived and continue perceiving throughout our learning process. It is also relevant to keep in mind that for the execution of this type of camps it is necessary that the teachers, called counselors, should be

qualified to lead this type of activities, because it is necessary not only the knowledge of the language, but precisely the dynamism and leadership in the methodological development of the activities, and of course a good attitude to motivate the students who take part in these activities.

## 8. Data Analysis

### 8.1. Survey

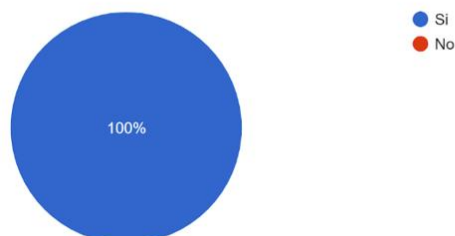
The following are the results of an initial survey conducted to corroborate the hypothesis raised about the lack of immersion spaces within the Modern Languages Program with Emphasis on English-French at the University of Cauca, and the positive or negative impact they have on the improvement of oral skills and verbal fluency of students. This survey was completed by 35 people, among them 32 active students and 3 graduates of this program.

**Figure 3**

*Activities to develop outside the classroom*

1. ¿Considera pertinente que se desarrollen actividades en espacios diferentes al aula de clase para el mejoramiento del nivel de lengua?

35 respuestas



In this figure, it can be observed that all the answers provided by the students demonstrate the need for a space other than the classroom within PLLMEI-F in order to



improve their language level. This, according to participant 28, is because *"the change of learning environments, efficiently managed, generates in students greater motivation for learning the language and therefore a better development of the skills required for it"*; In addition, participant 22 considers relevant to generate learning spaces outside the classroom that also allow the student to feel more open to practicing the L2 orally in a pleasant way, since within the classroom environments of tension and stress can be generated. Participant 8 adds that doing activities outside the traditional classroom, especially foreign language immersion activities, allows for more informal day-to-day topics to be worked on that are only mentioned or learned in contextual language use, and *"...being of great interest to people, they become a very productive tool for improving L2 or L3"* (participant 8). In addition to this, another participant affirms the need to *"get out of the "routine" of the classroom a little bit, and in this way gain the interest of the students in their foreign language learning process"* (participant 10).

#### Figure 4

##### *Program immersion activities*

2. ¿Ha participado alguna vez en actividades de inmersión total realizadas en este programa?

35 respuestas

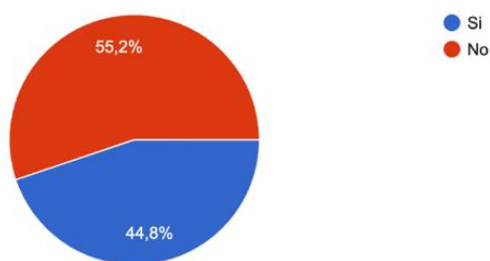


Figure 4 shows that the program has already presented immersion activities in L2 with 44.8% of the participants; however, 55.2% of these students who responded to the survey has not witnessed such activities. Additionally, making an analysis of the participants,

those who responded "yes" are those who participated in the degree work done by graduate students of the program, which focused on an immersion camp to improve the lexical component of the students of the program. It should be noted that this research study, also arose from the need to implement these spaces in the PLLME-IF.

## Figure 5

### *Immersion activities outside the program*

3. ¿Usted ha recurrido a agentes externos al programa, tales como clubes conversacionales y/o campamentos en el extranjero?

35 respuestas

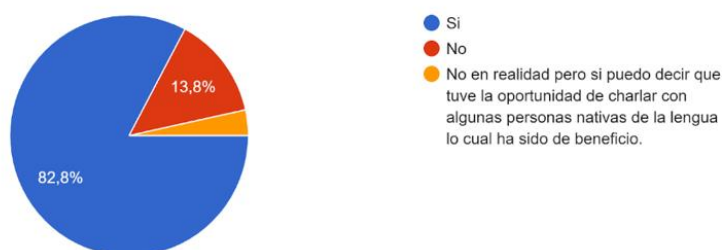


Figure 5 shows that most of the students have turned to external spaces, such as conversation clubs or summer camps, or interaction with native speakers to practice or stimulate their oral component, as mentioned by participant 28, who says that these "*spaces of total immersion in an L2 such as camps abroad allow the learner to put their knowledge into practice in contexts in which they are motivated to a great extent, and at the same time forced to use it*", hinting at the lack of these spaces within the program. And although a low percentage of them (3.4 %) has not participated specifically in this type of spaces, some of them assure that the dialogue with native speakers has been beneficial for their learning of English.

## Figure 6

### *Contribution of L2 immersion spaces to the improvement of oral proficiency*

4. Si su respuesta a la pregunta anterior fue si, ¿cree usted que estos espacios han contribuido en la mejora de su expresión oral?

35 respuestas

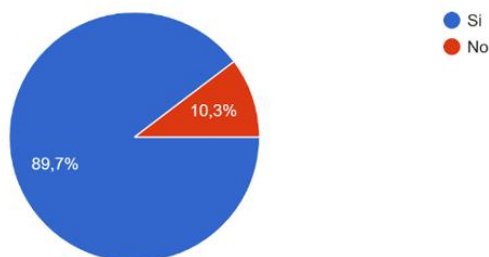


Figure 6 shows that 89.7% of the participants who have used these spaces has had an improvement in their level of oral expression, since *"exposure to environments generates a positive impact that is reflected in their speech and perspective, not only related to fluency and language level, but also to the cultural aspect of the language to be learned"* (participant 28), thus demonstrating that immersion spaces are a fundamental tool in the development of oral skills in L2, without ignoring that there are other immersion spaces different from camps, such as conversational clubs, which also provide a *"useful space, since it encourages oral expression in a way in which the student does not feel judged and can express him/herself in a freer and more spontaneous way"* (participant 22).

Other arguments of students who have been part of total immersion camps in the foreign language, also allowed us to verify that within these spaces there is not only improvement in oral skills, but also in other components of language, since they assure that when they are in environments in which the mother tongue is not the main language, this *"facilitates the opportunities to have conversations and encounters with the foreign language, thus improving listening skills by paying attention and speaking by giving answers"* (participant 19); likewise, this participant emphasizes that the foreign language immersion

camps allow the learner to lose the fear of speaking in a foreign language, thus achieving confidence and fluency when using it.

Moreover, to be in a totally immersive environment, the need to communicate is imperative, as participant 10 assures when mentioning that thanks to this environment he got to know the use of English in context in L2, besides the need to be in permanent contact with the environment allowed him to make greater use of English, which in turn helped him to progressively improve his fluency (*participant 10*), thus generating *"a positive impact that is reflected in the speech and perspective, not only related to the part of fluency and language level, but also with the cultural aspect of the language to be learned"* (*participant 28*).

Being constantly exposed to this second language *"makes students internalize expressions that eventually begin to come out more naturally when speaking and the conversation flows without so many hitches"* (*participant 12*), acquiring the use of the foreign language, just as it happens with our mother tongue. Similarly, another participant affirms that *"in these spaces learners work on what is not usually done academically (...), that is, in an environment like the everyday one, with expressions and words that are not typical of the classroom"* (*participant 15*), This shows the real and contextualized use of the language in the development or within these totally immersive spaces.

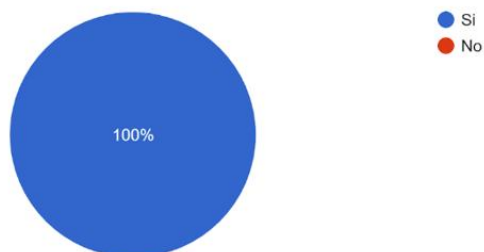
Finally, despite the fact that 10.3% of the students has not participated in immersion spaces, some of them state that *"... this type of immersion programs are important for the development of communicative skills and to achieve meaningful learning"* (*participant 13*), showing that these students are aware of the importance of immersion in learning a foreign language, and as mentioned by participant 23 *"Practice makes perfect and in languages the only way to improve our language skills is to be in direct and daily contact with the L2"*, implying that real and direct contact with the foreign language is vital for the development and learning of this language.

## Figure 7

### *Implementation of total immersion spaces in L2 for the development of oral skills*

5. ¿Considera necesaria la implementación de espacios de inmersión total en L2 para el desarrollo de la habilidad oral dentro del currículo del pro...por ejemplo, campamentos o sesiones de inmersión?

35 respuestas



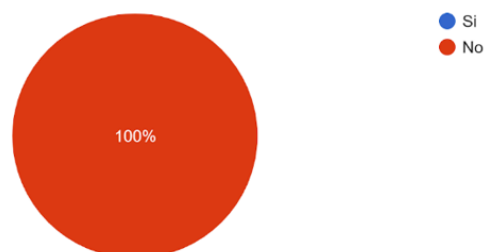
Reinforcing the above, figure 7 suggests the need on the part of the PLLMEI-F students of the Universidad del Cauca for the implementation of total immersion spaces in L2 for the development and improvement of oral skills, and in turn of verbal fluency. The above is supported by what participant 9 mentions, since he considers that as *"language students it is pertinent to have total immersion spaces to be able to take the knowledge acquired, inside and outside the classroom, to another level"*. Moreover, some of the students see the need to *"interact with the outside world, either with people or places different from the usual ones"* (participant 21), which leads to a change of environment for the L2 learner, which in turn *"helps to strengthen and energize learning, expanding the possibilities of conversation and activities"*, as mentioned by participant 19. Considering the above, total immersion spaces offer the L2 learner a completely new environment and context, more dynamic and closer to the use of the language in real contexts and everyday use.

## Figure 8

### *Interaction with native speakers*

6. ¿Cree que hay suficiente interacción con hablantes nativos o profesores en L2 dentro del programa?

35 respuestas



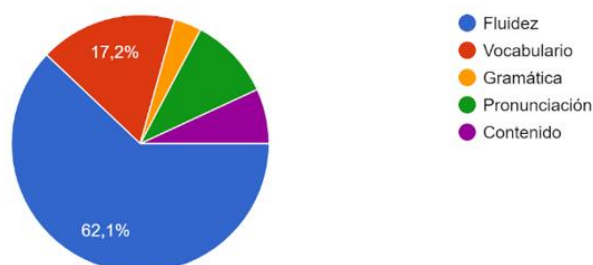
Furthermore, to the fact that the lack of immersion spaces within the program is already an evident problem, there is little or no interaction between students and native teachers to stimulate the need to use L2, as shown in figure 8.

## Figure 9

### *Difficulty giving an oral opinion*

7. Cuando da una opinión de manera oral, ¿Cuál cree que sea su mayor dificultad: la fluidez, el vocabulario, la gramática, la pronunciación, el contenido?

35 respuestas



Referring to Figure 9, it is shown that 62.1% affirms that their greatest difficulty in orality is in verbal fluency, followed by 17.2% that affirms that it is in vocabulary, which added together would be 79.3%. We unite these two components based on the logic that the lexicon is an essential point to be able to communicate, not only verbally but in all L2 skills.

All the information collected above supports our project, as it is evident that within the program there is a lack of spaces for immersion and/or interaction with native speakers in L2 that promote oral skills, in addition to showing that students have greater difficulty in verbal fluency when expressing themselves orally, so it is essential that immersion be included in the program curriculum, as this would help mitigate the shortcomings raised at the beginning.

## **8.2. Interviews**

In the analysis of qualitative data taken from the interviews conducted with students and graduates of PLLMEI-F, several relevant points that support the development of our project are evident:

The first is the evidence that throughout the interviews the participants repeatedly mention the shortcomings of the program in terms of spaces for immersion or interaction in L2, since most of the students and graduates interviewed agree that the Modern Languages Program does not have immersion spaces to encourage or develop oral interaction in L2, in addition to the lack of native speakers within the program and the shortage of hours dedicated to oral skills. Participant 30 considers that "*one of the defects of the program as such is that they focus more on grammar than on practice*", referring primarily to the practice of oral production. He also assures that the program has not advanced in methodological issues, since there are teachers who limit themselves to developing classes with traditional methodology, which is reduced to reading and filling out photocopies, and this is not enough to develop communication in L2 in all its components. The participant considers that the true intention of the language is to be able to communicate, to understand others and to transmit a coherent message in L2, and he emphasizes that this is reflected in the written component but not in the oral component. In addition to this, all the participants affirm that interaction in L2 is not presented in a contextualized and daily manner, "*we need to learn more of the informal*

*English that they use on a daily basis (...)* We have a very... *formative, institutional, that is, very formal*" (participant 7), which in many cases does not allow students to achieve the desired or even appropriate verbal fluency to function in contexts that need it. The idea would be to make students feel comfortable using the foreign language, or just as people speaking English in the most possible natural way.

A common factor among the participants interviewed was the positive impact that total immersion in English had on the improvement of their language level, especially in oral (verbal fluency) and listening skills. Many of them explained that these are the two skills that are most developed or emphasized in this type of dynamic, without neglecting the other two skills, which are worked on, but not with the same emphasis as the first two. Likewise, they all agree that the previous process was due to the need to communicate in L2 that arose in them while at the camp, since the foreign language was the only language used in that context, which generated in them the impulse to use it; (participant 1), for example, said that when *"arriving in an environment where in a certain way it is the only language that is going to be heard, let's say that this total immersion immerses you and works you from your subconscious to develop yourself in that language"*; another participant mentions that *"it was necessary to express myself in the other language, because I had to express my ideas"* and adds *"it helped me a lot because I took a giant step, that is, I could express myself in the other language (...)* I could make myself understood in some way or another because I began to practice much more" (participant 26). Other statements made by participants were the following:

*"It helped me with the sense of being able to understand much more. And regarding the oral part, at the end, I felt like I was able to express ideas more fluently, I was able to kind of give my own personal opinions on more complex topics, in a better way. I felt that I could maintain a certain fluency and more than doing it there, I noticed it a lot when I went back to*



*the university and in class, I felt that in a way I stood out much more speaking" (participant 30).*

*"immersion obviously it influences a lot and it was what triggered my level (...) I just took an international exam and I think that if I had not gone to the camp, I would not have reached the level that I obtained in that test, to be honest" (participant 32).*

Likewise, a very strong point that had a positive impact was the fact that immersion reduced their options to only one: the obligation to speak only in English, because *"it was obligatory to use it. That is, you used it or you used it, or you couldn't talk to anyone" (participant 7)*; a fact that was not seen by them as a negative factor, but quite the opposite, was that, according to participant 32, this *"forced him in a positive way to speak"*, while gave him *"the opportunity to be 24/7 connected with the language"*, situation of which he took advantage to express himself in a better way. The same participant commented that this helped him to *"understand and generate a network, information and content in my brain that made it much easier for me to express myself and also helped me to have more confidence in the knowledge I already had"*. And finally, he added *"it was the lever to take my English to a much more advanced level and that allowed me to have the confidence, the knowledge, the vocabulary and also the pronunciation"*.

Just as it is evident that these spaces helped improve speaking and listening skills, self-confidence to communicate, and more effective communication, and their impact was positive, it is also worth mentioning that communication difficulties are experienced in the first instance; several participants agree to achieve this improvement there was a gradual path, that is to say that it did not happen immediately, because the difficulty to communicate at the beginning is latent. The lack of vocabulary, confidence, motivation and other factors reveal that this is not an instantaneous process. However, having experienced all this, they were also aware that all these difficulties that were present at the beginning were no longer present at the end of the journey; difficulties that gradually became points in favor of their L2

learning, since confidence, creativity and leadership emerged as a result of them. Due to the fact that being in these environments and having the need to communicate in an environment and culture totally different from the native one, they began to perform the English language more easily, resulting in a leadership and self-confidence capacity at the end of this immersion that they did not have at the beginning, as well as a higher language level than the one they had at the beginning, according to the interviewees. In other words, immersion helped them overcome many or, in some cases, all of these obstacles that limited them in achieving a better foreign language level.

Another topic discussed in the interviews was related to the strategies used by camp participants to communicate in L2 and improve their verbal fluency and language level. They mentioned that total immersion *"is a good strategy, because what you know is better reinforced if you practice it (...) it is a forced game to speak, understand or improvise (...), because it is by practicing the language"* (participant 30); in this sense, these spaces not only provide direct contact with native speakers that generate in the participants unconscious processes with the foreign language because of the need to be in constant communication with them, but also generate situations that demand that communication be more challenging, since it is vital that in addition to speaking, they are able to listen and understand what they are told, and also to give clear orders in L2. Other students even talk about the use of nonverbal language as a strategy to communicate in L2, but they mention that for this to happen in an assertive way it is important to take into account the cultural approach and contextualization, which are achieved *"only by being in the environment, as in this case with the language level"* (participant 32).

Similarly, they alluded to leadership as another of the many qualities that are encouraged by total immersion activities, and they emphasized that this should be one of the main characteristics that the person in charge of this type of activities in the camps should

possess. These leaders are the ones who help make the learning process more enjoyable, who generate the confidence that the student requires to use L2, and who also manage to capture their attention to obtain their active participation in order to finally achieve the objective of improving verbal fluency getting confidence in the foreign language. They also expressed how this skill helped them to improve their oral expression because assuming leadership positions, as participant 31 said, *"leads you to interact more and improve your language level, because you have to communicate 100% in English, and on a daily basis"*, and adds, *"if you have an English level from 0 to 10, from 6 it will go to an 8 very easily in an experience like this"*.

Last but not least, the data analysis took into account the information provided by the participants for the creation of the syllabus; information that was directed to the structuring, logistics, and the type of activities and methodologies that are developed within a camp; this in conjunction with the experiences of the participants within it. These experiences revealed most of the participants felt both, the songs, and the games, were very practical tools that helped in their confidence and verbal fluency. As well as teamwork was a positive factor in the improvement of their language level. Based on the aforementioned, we began a search for activities that fit the characteristics mentioned by the participants; however, some of them needed to be adapted according to the topics we wanted to focus on, in order to be closer to the use of the language in real contexts. Likewise, information about logistics and essential aspects to be considered in the development of a camp were taken into account, such as the types of food, place of realization, precautions, transportation, etc.

From the above, it was possible to obtain, or conclude, that participatory and dynamic activities provide motivation to learn the language and confidence in students to use it; therefore, they are essential in the development of L2. They also provide a good structure for the order of activities throughout the day that makes sense and complements each other.

Along with this, it is worth mentioning that in group activities values and virtues such as group work, companionship, creativity, leadership, and bonds of friendship are revealed.

## **9. Conclusions**

Thanks to the data collected in the interviews and surveys conducted with students and graduates of the PLLMEI-F, it became evident that within this program there is a lack of attention to oral skills and little interaction in L2 of the students. In addition, it was shown that those who have been exposed to language immersion spaces effectively improved oral communication in the second language, especially in verbal fluency, since in these spaces the need for communication arises in the learner due to the continuous use of the language being learned, and in turn creates the necessary conditions for the improvement of verbal fluency.

Likewise, generating spaces outside the classroom or different from conventional ones helps students feel motivated to learn a foreign language, and to acquire new knowledge; also the development of group activities and games makes the trainees not only learn to work as a team, but also stimulate leadership skills, helping both their personal and collective development. Moreover, the continuous use of the language helps the learner to feel more and more confident to communicate in L2, and to become familiar with its structure, which leads to a natural and spontaneous use of the language.

Something equally important to mention is that in this type of spaces, apprentices increase the development of skills such as quick thinking and problem solving; memory capacity, creativity and multitasking skills are fostered; and cultural understanding and empathy of the learners is also encouraged as they get to know and understand a new culture by being immersed in it.

Finally, it can be concluded that linguistic immersion plays an essential role in the acquisition and learning of a foreign language thanks to the interaction that is generated in it,

since students can put into practice both their previous knowledge and the knowledge they acquire during the activities. Therefore, it is essential that within the Modern Languages Program with Emphasis on English and French, spaces that stimulate the use of L2 constantly and in everyday environments are implemented, through dynamic activities that motivate students to communicate in L2 and at the same time give them the confidence to do it.

### **10. Recommendations for Syllabus Implementation**

After carrying out this whole process of research and creation of a syllabus, we suggest the following recommendations:

The teacher, or group of teachers, who will develop the immersion camp must have a sufficient level of language that allows him/her to carry out all the activities in L2 proposed here. In addition, he/she must recognize the subject of total linguistic immersion and all that this entails, mostly zero interactions in the mother tongue. And last but not least, the attitude of the leader must help motivate the students to participate in all the immersion activities and in turn promote the use of the foreign language all the time.

Considering the budget for the camp, which should include the location, food, transportation, medicine, and materials.

Regarding the location, search in advance for a place that fulfills the needs of the characteristics of summer camps, which means, a place and environment in which the participants feel free and comfortable, the need of using the first language is reduced since they are in an isolated place in the city, the only people with whom they will be able to have contact will be themselves, and they will be under the supervision of the teachers in charge.

About the food, it is important to consider some particularities of the participants to create the appropriate menu, because some of them may be vegetarian, lactose intolerant, allergic to some type of food or there may even be some who do not consume all meats; this will be

reflected equally in the budget, hence the relevance of considering this in advance, in a way that the participants can have an appropriate menu, as much as possible.

For transportation it is important to take into account the space in the vehicle; this can be the university bus or a rented bus with enough seats for all participants and teachers. It is also essential to have an alternate transportation in case of emergency; this can be a private teacher's and/or student's car since there may be an inconvenience in which a student or leader must leave the camp quickly.

Having basic medicines and a first aid kit (containing antiseptics, bandages, hydrogen peroxide, sterile gauze, saline solution, tweezers, gloves, alcohol, analgesics, anti-influenza, anti-diarrhea medicine, thermometer, and sanitary towels) is of vital importance, as these are essential elements in the event of a minor injury, discomfort or symptom of illness, and in the event of serious injury, which will help maintain the patient stable until he/she reaches the nearest medical center. It is important to ask if the person has any contraindications before proceeding to apply or administer any medication.

Finally, for the materials to be used, it is recommended that they be recyclable, that is that they can be used multiple times for the different activities.

The above is recommended so that the linguistic immersion is total, and the students' results are not negatively affected, and the students feel safe in this space and have backup plans in case they need them.

In case the teacher in charge finds it necessary to evaluate the participants, keep in mind that for the evaluation system a series of proposals are given; however, this is subject to modifications and/or preferences of the teacher, taking into account that he/she must have initiated a previous process with the group in order that he/she can choose the system that best adapts to the group.

## 11. Limitations

Due to the situation that arose worldwide because of the spread of Covid-19, we were unable to carry out the total immersion camp with sixth-semester students, which was what we originally wanted to achieve. For this reason, we had to choose to leave only the syllabus so that at some point it could be applied to this population.

We had a difficulty in adapting our camp proposal to a conventional syllabus, since most of the information we found referred to it as the plan to follow in a common subject, which is developed either throughout a university academic semester (6 months) or an academic period (3 months) for a school. On the contrary, what we propose in our syllabus is this as a complement to an existing subject within the curriculum of the Modern Languages Program, thus some characteristics of the syllabus varied. In addition, its development, application time and evaluation are different from what it is established.

## 12. References

Astudillo, A. F., Borrero, J. S., Puyo, A. M., Saavedra, M. S., Samboni, J. H., et al,

(2017). *“La influencia de los espacios de inmersión en inglés en la competencia lexical de los estudiantes de primer semestre del programa de lenguas modernas Inglés - Francés de la Universidad del Cauca.”*. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kX4PZ7J5jCL6kzYZdLSf-DC-beUr3x2Y/view?ths=true>

Barros, R. Tapia, S. Chuchuca, F. Chuchuca, I. (2018). *“Syllabus universitario actuante en ciencias pedagógicas potencialidades y limitaciones en la Universidad de Guayaquil”*.

- Brito, A.C (2017). "*Effects of Language Immersion versus Classroom Exposure on Advanced French Learners: An ERP Study*" Pursuit - The Journal of Undergraduate Research at the University of Tennessee: Vol. 8 : Iss. 1, Article 4. Available at: <http://trace.tennessee.edu/pursuit/vol8/iss1/4>
- Chambers, F. (1997). "What do we mean by fluency?". System: Volume 2 Issue 4, págs 535-544. Recuperado de: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X\(97\)00046-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(97)00046-8)
- Cuitiño, J. Díaz, C y Otarola, J.L (2019). "Promoción de la fluidez y precisión oral en inglés a través del role play", Cuadernos de Investigación Educativa, 10(1), págs 43-62.
- Giménez, J. (2012). "La enseñanza comunicativa de la lengua de Jack C. Richards y Theodore S. Rodgers". Enfoques y métodos en la enseñanza de idiomas. Madrid: Cambridge University Press, 2.<sup>a</sup> edición actualizada, págs 153-174. Available at: [https://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca\\_ele/antologia\\_didactica/enfoque\\_comunicativo/fruns01.htm](https://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca_ele/antologia_didactica/enfoque_comunicativo/fruns01.htm)
- Gómez, J. "El aprendizaje experiencial". Universidad de Buenos Aires, Facultad de Psicología. Available at: [https://www.ecominga.uqam.ca/ECOMINGA\\_2011/PDF/BIBLIOGRAPHIE/GUIDE\\_DE\\_LECTURE\\_5/1/3.Gomez\\_Pawelek.pdf](https://www.ecominga.uqam.ca/ECOMINGA_2011/PDF/BIBLIOGRAPHIE/GUIDE_DE_LECTURE_5/1/3.Gomez_Pawelek.pdf)
- Gutiérrez Fernández, M., Romero Cuadrado, M. and Solórzano García, M., (2022). "El aprendizaje experiencial como metodología docente: aplicación del método Macbeth." [online] Ve.scielo.org. Available at: [http://ve.scielo.org/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0254-16372011000100006](http://ve.scielo.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0254-16372011000100006)



- Hernández, R. Fernández, C. Baptista, M. (2014). *“Metodología de la investigación”*. Sexta edición, pág 358.
- Horche, L. R., Marco, M. J. (2008). *“El concepto de fluidez en la expresión oral”*. Actas del simposio internacional de didáctica “José Carlos Lisboa”. Instituto Cervantes de Varsovia, Instituto Cervantes de Río de Janeiro, págs 510-522. Available at: [http://www.leffa.pro.br/tela4/Textos/Textos/Anais/Simposio\\_Internacional\\_Didactica%202008.pdf](http://www.leffa.pro.br/tela4/Textos/Textos/Anais/Simposio_Internacional_Didactica%202008.pdf)
- Maati, B. H. (2013). *“El enfoque comunicativo, una mejor guía para la práctica docente”*. Actas del IV Taller «ELE e interculturalidad» del Instituto Cervantes de Orán. Centro Virtual Cervantes. Argelia. Available at: [https://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca\\_ele/publicaciones\\_centros/oran\\_2013.htm](https://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca_ele/publicaciones_centros/oran_2013.htm)
- Martínez, J., Rodríguez, V. (2014). *“Diseño e implementación de un syllabus basado en contenidos y en el aprendizaje significativo para la enseñanza del inglés en el segundo ciclo”*. Pág 25.
- Perilla, J. (2018). *“Diseño curricular y transformación de contextos educativos desde experiencias concretas”*. Pág 280. Available at: <https://repository.usergioarboleda.edu.co/bitstream/handle/11232/1276/Diseño%20curricular%20y%20transformación.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Rahimpoura, M. (2010). *“Current trends on syllabus design in foreign language instruction”*. Pág 1661.
- Rangel Agámez, M. and Pernet Velásquez, J. (2021). *“A topic-based-functional syllabus proposal to promote students’ conversation through outdoor games.”*. [online]

Repositorio.unicordoba.edu.co. Available at:

<https://repositorio.unicordoba.edu.co/handle/ucordoba/2752> [Accessed 3 June 2020].

Roberts, J. (2004). "*The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching:*

*The King is dead! Long live the King!*". University of Murcia, IJES vol. 4.

Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1072195.pdf>

Sánchez M. (2009). "*Historia de la metodología de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras*".

Tejuelo, 5, págs 54-70.

Sierra, J. (1994). "*Metodología y práctica en programas de inmersión.*"; Comunicación,

Lenguaje y Educación, 6(2), págs 85-95. Available at:

<https://doi.org/10.1174/021470394321510297>

Stenhouse, L. (1991). "*Investigación del curriculum y el arte del profesor*".

Investigación en la escuela, n° 15, págs 10-12. Available at:

[https://idus.us.es/bitstream/handle/11441/59432/La%20investigaci%  
c3%b3n%20del%20currículum%20y%20el%20arte%20del%20profesor.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://idus.us.es/bitstream/handle/11441/59432/La%20investigaci%c3%b3n%20del%20currículum%20y%20el%20arte%20del%20profesor.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Sumonte, V., Sanhuenza, S., Friz, M., Morales, K. (2018). "*Inmersión lingüística de*

*comunidades haitianas en Chile*"; Papeles de Trabajo. Centro de Estudios

Interdisciplinarios en Etnolingüística y Antropología Socio-cultural, 35, págs 68-

79. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.35305/revista.v0i35.21>

Walker, C. L., & Tedick, D. J. (2000). "*The complexity of Immersion Education:*

*Teachers Address the Issues.*". The Modern Language Journal, 84(1), págs 5-27.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00049>

Walter, E. (1994). “*La adquisición de una segunda lengua como agente de cambio en la enseñanza*”. Letras: Vol. 2, N°. 29-30, 1993, págs 153-171. Available at:  
<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=5475989>

### 13. Annexes

#### 13.1. Survey

En aras de llevar a cabo el desarrollo del proyecto “*Sílabo para el mejoramiento de la fluidez verbal en inglés como lengua extranjera a través de campamentos de inmersión total*”, hemos elaborado la siguiente encuesta con el fin de buscar la implementación de espacios de inmersión en L2 dentro del programa, ya que como estudiantes percibimos que no se cuenta con los espacios necesarios para el desarrollo de la expresión oral y la fluidez verbal; por consiguiente, no se logra el nivel de lengua esperado. Por esta razón, les solicitamos comedidamente su colaboración contestando las siguientes preguntas. El tratamiento de los datos será exclusivamente para propósitos del desarrollo de nuestro trabajo de grado.

1. ¿Considera pertinente que se desarrollen actividades en espacios diferentes al aula de clase para el mejoramiento del nivel de lengua?
  - si
  - no

Justifique su respuesta:

---

2. ¿Ha participado alguna vez en actividades de inmersión total realizadas en este programa?

- si
- no

3. ¿Usted ha recurrido a agentes externos al programa, tales como clubes conversacionales y/o campamentos en el extranjero?

- si
- no

Mencione cuál: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Si su respuesta a la pregunta anterior fue sí, ¿cree usted que estos espacios han contribuido en la mejora de su expresión oral/fluidez verbal?

- si
- no

Justifique su respuesta: \_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Considera que es necesaria la implementación de espacios de inmersión total en L2 para el desarrollo de la habilidad oral dentro del currículo del programa, por ejemplo, campamentos o sesiones de inmersión?

- si
- no

6. ¿Cree que hay suficiente interacción con hablantes nativos y profesores en la L2 dentro del programa?

- si
- no

7. Cuando da una opinión de manera oral, ¿cuál cree que sea su mayor dificultad?

- Fluidez
- Vocabulario
- Gramática
- Pronunciación
- Contenido

8. En una escala de 1 a 5, siendo 1 el más bajo y 5 el más alto ¿cuál cree usted que era su nivel de fluidez verbal al iniciar la carrera?

1   2   3   4   5

9. En una escala de 1 a 5, siendo 1 el más bajo y 5 el más alto, y basado en su experiencia en clase, ¿cuál cree que será su nivel de fluidez verbal al culminar o finalizar la carrera?

1   2   3   4   5

Link: <https://forms.gle/ay6rZtcqiGhgFvEL8>

### **13.2. Interview**

Para el desarrollo de la recolección de datos en pro de la creación del sílabo, se recopilará información sobre la experiencia vivida en los campamentos de verano en Estados Unidos. Ésta estará dividida en dos partes; en la primera, se hará una encuesta con preguntas de única respuesta con respecto al impacto, positivo o negativo, que tuvo el campamento en su fluidez verbal; en la segunda parte se realizará una entrevista semiestructurada en la que los participantes relatarán su experiencia, evolución, sentimientos y mejoramiento en cuanto a la fluidez verbal a lo largo del verano. De igual manera, proporcionarán información de tipo logístico (horarios, espacios, equipos, implementos...), así como del tipo de actividades que se llevaban a cabo dentro de los

campamentos, además de información sobre los aspectos, situaciones o experiencias que lo ayudaron en su progreso y cuáles de estos tuvieron el efecto contrario.

En aras de llevar a cabo el desarrollo del proyecto *“Sílabo para el mejoramiento de la fluidez verbal en inglés como lengua extranjera en los estudiantes de sexto semestre de PLLMEIF a través de campamentos de inmersión total”*, hemos elaborado la siguiente encuesta con el fin de recolectar información que nos permita identificar la influencia, bien sea positiva o negativa, de los campamentos de verano en los estudiantes de lenguas modernas, para tener una idea de cuán efectiva puede ser la inmersión total, y de igual forma obtener elementos para el desarrollo de nuestro sílabo. Esto con la finalidad de buscar la implementación de espacios de inmersión en L2 dentro del programa. Por esta razón, les solicitamos comedidamente su colaboración contestando las siguientes preguntas. El tratamiento de los datos será exclusivamente para propósitos del desarrollo de nuestro trabajo de grado.

1. Antes de viajar, ¿cuál creía que era su nivel de idioma (básico, intermedio, avanzado) y cuáles eran sus expectativas?
2. ¿Cuál fue la mayor dificultad que encontró al inicio del campamento con respecto a la comunicación? ¿se sintió perdido o por el contrario entendía a cabalidad todo aquello que se le comunicaba?
3. ¿Cómo le ayudó la inmersión total a mejorar su nivel de lengua extranjera, principalmente la parte oral?
4. ¿Cuáles aspectos pedagógicos, tales como metodologías, estrategias, actividades, juegos, entre otras, que presencié dentro del campamento, adoptaría para emplearlos en su proceso de enseñanza, enfocados en la producción oral para estimular la fluidez verbal?

5. Después de haber tenido la experiencia inmersiva en el campamento, ¿cree que todo lo aprendido durante el programa le fue suficiente para poder comunicar de manera eficaz aquello que quería transmitir en L2?
6. Si considera que mejoró, ¿qué situaciones o actividades cree que fueron esenciales en el mejoramiento de su nivel de comunicación verbal, o qué situaciones causaron el efecto contrario, y qué estrategias usó para lograr ese mejoramiento?
7. Teniendo este conocimiento, ¿cuál es la mayor falencia que ha encontrado dentro del Programa de Lenguas o en los profesores en cuanto al desarrollo de la fluidez verbal?
8. Cuéntenos un poco acerca de la organización del campamento en cuanto a qué tipo de actividades se llevaban a cabo, tiempo de duración, tenían un orden específico, un objetivo de aprendizaje o no. ¿Qué cree que se podría mejorar?
9. ¿Qué tipo de alimentos consumían en el campamento? ¿había todas las opciones de comida para las diferentes necesidades? ¿estaba satisfecho con lo que se les ofrecía?
10. ¿Qué características particulares notó en las personas que orientaban las actividades en los campamentos?
11. ¿Cree que este tipo de espacios de inmersión fomenta o impulsa el liderazgo? ¿cómo?
12. ¿Su rol en el campamento tenía que ver con liderazgo? Si fue así, ¿cree usted que este, a su vez le ayudó en el mejoramiento de su fluidez?