

## **Building Education Together (BET):**

*Decreasing dropout intension rates in English as a Foreign Language programmes through enhanced collaboration and motivation towards learning.*

**MAGISTER IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

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## ***Abstract***

In Chile, the dropout of English Programmes continues to be a problem, and the country is still being ranked among the nations with the lowest level in the world with regard to managing such language, lagging behind some other nations in Latin America. The main goal of this study is to decrease dropout rates in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programmes based on enhanced collaboration and motivation for learning. To achieve such objective, effective/high-quality material based on gamification, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and collaborative work were designed/adapted for the classes, and lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' *Future-self* were implemented. The end was to strengthen students' participation, motivation, and collaborative work so that students could experience enhanced self-confidence and *Future-self* image. To this end, an intervention was designed following the Logical Framework Matrix, which was an EFL programme called Building Education Together (BET), and both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed. The results of this study show that the implementation of gamification and ICT in class fostered students' motivation, promoted their participation, yield collaborative work, and facilitated language acquisition. Additionally, the task concerning students' *Future-self* were found to be important not only to strengthen students' current learning process and motivation but also to underpin collaborative work among them. In the same fashion, the results also show that students' dropout intentions were drastically reduced. Hence, students' lack of motivation appears to be highly linked to their intention to drop out. Hopefully, this study can contribute to enrich and expand knowledge concerning teaching EFL, and highlight the importance of implementing games and technologies to potentialize students' apprenticeship, and enlighten teachers and directors of languages programmes with reference to the leading causes for students' demotivation and consequent drop out, and strategies to mitigate those phenomena.

Key words: Dropout, motivation, EFL, ESL, gamification, ICT, Future-self

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# 1. Introduction

Being bilingual has educational advantages and also impacts positively on people's mental health. However, the English Proficiency Index (EF, 2018) has recently placed Chile at the 48th position in a ranking of 88 countries, which sets our active population among the nations with the Lowest Level of Aptitude regarding this skill. When compared to other countries in Latin America, Chile is at the 5th place, lagging behind Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, and Uruguay.

In this context, the mission of BET is to be an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programme that aims at building a learning environment that encourages students' learning hand in hand with their cultural, social and psychological background. BET's goal is to promote a collaborative, inclusive, and motivational education environment, which meets every students' educational needs.

The BET programme was delivered to SIC Languages, a new institute focused on second language (L2) learning in Santiago (Chile). A group of 8 adult learners volunteered to participate in the programme. The students were all starter learners; that is, they had little or almost null knowledge of the English Language. Their ages varied from 20 to 42 years old, and they represented different nationalities: one Costa Rican, two Venezuelan, one Brazilian, one Chilean and 3 Chilean-Brazilian.

The two components of BET aimed at developing students' skills and motivation for learning EFL. For the first component—*High-quality material and resources designed for BET lessons*—, the project developed two gameboards and two Apps\* especially selected for BET instructional purposes, namely, to foster students' participation and involvement in class. The second component—*Lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language*—aimed at implementing tasks that could make students think about their possible future Self, both positively and negatively, and reflect about how their current behaviour concerning the L2 apprenticeship could directly impact in their future outcomes.

Two activities were carried out to deliver the first and second component. In Activity 1—BET's New Material—material based on collaborative work was implemented during classroom time and as homework activities. Since this component involved using internet-based technology, students installed resources on their mobile phones or tablets. In addition, for every unit from the book *American Headway 1A, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*, students had two new videos encompassed grammar and some of the vocabulary expected to be learned.

Activity 2–Empowering students’ L2 future self–aimed at generating motivation in students by strengthening their *future-selves* with regard to their learning process of a second language. This activity encompassed a series of 10 cycles of exercises to foster students' future-selves, which were delivered in 10 of the classes throughout the programme.

It was expected that by implementing both activities the students’ intention to drop out of the programme would decrease when compared to previous experiences they had already had in other language institutes. Data were collected using both qualitative and quantitative techniques to monitor the implementation and results of the intervention. With regard to the qualitative strategy, data were collected from a fieldwork notebook and a focus group with students, and analysed thematically. Concerning quantitative evidence, students answered a Likert-type questionnaire. Data were analysed based on descriptive-exploratory design and split into the following dimensions: *Fidelity*, *Involvement*, *Quality*, and *Social Validity*. The dimension on Social Validity was split into two other subdimensions: *Feasibility*, and *Utility*.

The results of this study showed that the insertion of *Gamification*, ICT and *future-self* tasks in the class were found to be helpful regarding the comprehension of grammar structures, vocabulary acquisition, and enhancement of a collaborative environment, which boosted students' motivation towards learning EFL. Furthermore, the evaluation showed a sharp decrease in the dropout rate intention in the language programme when compared to previous experiences of students in other language institutes. In addition, students’ lack of motivation was highly linked to their intention to drop out.

This study is structured as it follows: first, the institution where this study was carried out (chapter 2) and their explicit and implicit demand (chapter 3) are described. Next, it will be found the theoretical framework (chapter 4) on which the students' dropout problem and possible strategies to mitigate it are based. Then, chapter 5 shows how the diagnosis was carried out and which instruments were used to understand the nature of the central problem and its consequences, followed by a description of the central problem (chapter 6). The following chapters (7, 8, and 9) describes the intervention design based on the Logical Matrix Framework, the evaluation of the implementation, and the evaluation of the objectives of the intervention, respectively. Finally, chapter 10 presents conclusions and chapter 11 final considerations.

## 2. The Institution

BET was implemented in SIC Languages, a new EFL institute located in Chile that offers classes for companies from all around Latin America, North America, and Europe. Its mission is to be a language school focused on cultivating autonomous and proactive leaders of the future. Along with teaching the competencies necessary to learn a new language successfully, SIC Languages students are expected to build a learning environment that goes hand in hand with cultural, social, and psychological aspects. Hence, the institution looks forward to promoting a collaborative, inclusive, and motivational educational methodology, aiming at the needs of each of their students. They long to have a new methodology designed with high-quality standards, with which students would feel more engaged, and consequently foster students' motivation towards learning English.

The vision of SIC Languages is to be the first language centre in Chile with a methodology based on collaborative, motivational, and inclusive education. In this sense, the institute expects to be renowned for its service quality, as well as for being an educational institution that promotes a change of perspective in second language learning. Moreover, they aim at being a Second Language School with a unique methodology and flexible teaching materials, adapted to the needs of each student.

SIC Language was established in 2018. So far, the staff is composed of only 2 teachers, who are currently lecturing adolescents and adults whose ages range from 13 to 45 years old. The Institute main focus is teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), yet they also offer other languages like Portuguese, French, Italian, Chinese, and Spanish for foreigners. Now, there are 12 courses ongoing: 4 group classes and 8 private students. None of the classes are held in Sic Languages premises but in the companies where students work, or even where they live. The courses levels range from Elementary-A1 to C2, which covers the Common European Framework (CEFR<sup>1</sup>). All the modules are based on a book called American Headway (AHW), and they are split as follows:

- Basic 1–(A1): AHW 1A
- Basic 2–(A1/A2) AHW 1B
- Pre-intermediate–(A2/B1) AHW 2A

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<sup>1</sup> CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages - <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/cefr/>



- Intermediate–(B1) *AHW 2B*
- High-intermediate (B1/B2) *AHW 3A*

Regarding how meetings, teachers support and feedback are organised, once a month, the board of directors of the institution meets the teachers in order to understand how the classes are being delivered and if they are facing any issues with their students. Interestingly, there are no available instances to discuss methodology and ways to improve the classes. Although the institute wants to improve collaborative work in class, so far there is not collaborative work among the directors and teachers, which could be a key aspect to improve the quality of the final product they deliver to their clients.

### **3. Description of the Demand**

Based on previous experience in teaching foreign languages, I have observed that the problem in Chile regarding learning English affects not only the ones who need it as a skill at work but also those who decided to pursue English pedagogy as their undergraduate programme. Regardless of the language is being learned in a private institute or at a University program, the high dropout rate of EFL programmes is a critical difficulty faced by both learners and institutions.

After meeting the owner of SIC Languages, the idea of creating a consulting company arose as an attempt to propose a solution for the problem in Chile. Indeed, the declared demand was explicitly to create strategies orientated for students keeping on learning the language, and not giving in.

Hence, the diagnoses focused on the possible causes for the dropout that SIC Languages had been facing. Although external facts that can trigger students' dropout are not under the control of the Institution or teachers, like work pressure, tiredness, family problems, health issues, and lack of money, experience tells that the way classes are conveyed represents a crucial feature that can boost students' motivation towards learning any given subject, and, consequently, reduce their dropout intention.

Thus, both the institute and their teachers coming up with strategies to yield students' motivation seems to be a proper way to mitigate the high dropout rate that the Institution has been facing. The deployment of such strategies would possibly lead to creating a new approach or methodology that could solve such inconvenient.

Therefore, although the reduction of the dropout rate is the explicit demand, the implicit demand was to provide the institute a better instructional methodology, by which students could feel more enthusiastic towards learning a language, and that this new approach could meet their different individual needs.

## 4. Theoretical Framework

The following literature review discusses some relevant research in the area of dropout rate with regard to educational systems, particularly to EFL programs. It is an attempt to describe how the deployment of gamification, enhanced motivation strategies, and tasks that promote a collaborative environment in class can potentially diminish students' dropout rate.

### 4.1. Dropout theories in education

The term dropout has some discrepant interpretations, and it also varies according to the context (Cambuzzi, Rigo, & Barbosa, 2015). For instance, Budiman (2018) and Powell (2009) pose that the term dropout is not the same when it comes to an online institution because, generally, students can resume their studies whenever they want. The authors say that the term must be used when the students confirm that they will not continue their studies. Another term used is school-completion, due to its positive orientation and focus on the development of student competencies (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004).

However, hereinafter, the term used will be dropout, as in a Language Institute, the final objectives could differ from student to student—which makes it be different from the school completion concept, and it is not an online course as well. Moreover, although the goals from each student shall differ, this new language programme does not offer a self-paced system, as the online courses do.

It is important to notice that the dropout is composed of an intricate set of elements such as the students themselves, family, educational institution and their community. **Push-, Pull-, and Fall-out** theories attempt to provide educators a more parsimonious perception of the dropout phenomenon.

Research has revealed the presence of adverse consequences linked to school dropout and how they affect students, their families and neighbourhoods (Edmonson & White, 1998; Levin, Belfield, & Rouse, 2006; Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Moretti, 2007; Muennig, 2007). For example, Mitra (2011) reports that, in 2009, the average income was higher for the ones who did not drop of school and could reach a level of undergraduate education. This author also states that the rate of unemployment was higher for the students that dropped out of high school. Likewise, the results

found on a research carried out by Lansford, Dodge, Petit & Bates (2016) show that students who had dropped out of school were up to four times more prone to face negative results by age 27 years, like being arrested or unemployed, using illicit substances, as well as suffering from poor health. Although such negative concerns, students remain to drop out of school. Thus, it is necessary to understand the phenomenon in order to mitigate the number of educational programs dropout rate.

To this end, Jordan, Lara, and McPartland (1994) together with Watt and Roessingh (1994) (cited in Ecker-Lyster & Niileksela (2016)) designed a framework which depicts in what ways students are either Pushed, Pulled, or Fall out of school. "Pull- out" theories assert that the school or institution is only one part of the students' context (Stearns & Glennie, 2006), thus students are actually motivated to leave the school due to a range of external factors as illness, monetary concerns, childbirth, employment or unemployment, and family necessities (Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013). In this sense, students would analyse the cost-benefit of the different variables that are affecting their life and then decide to remain or drop out. If the external variables are more relevant than the benefits of remaining in school, the most probable choice is that they will drop out (Ecker-Lyster & Niileksela, 2016).

Contrarily, "Push-out" theories are based on internal school factors that influence the students' decision to remain in school. According to this perspective, the hurdle was set by the school, including hindrances such as are poor academic support, a mismatch between instruction and student ability level, transport resources, and disciplinary policies (Doll, et al., 2013; Stearns & Glennie, 2006; Rotermund, 2007). It is possible that students face not only one setback but a combination of them, and without the right intervention, the school could make students feel that they are not supported by the institution and feel discouraged to pursue their academic goals.

Lastly, theories concerning "Fall-out" assert that students drop out is due to their poor academic development, causing students to feel disengaged. Poor study habits, lack of parental interest or support, negative student attitude towards school, and overall dissatisfaction with the school have all been cited in the literature as Fall-out factors (Doll et al., 2013). Watt and Roessingh (1994) even conjecture that low grades generate a feeling of disillusion considering school completion, which negatively impacts on academic engagement.

Considering the overall approach of Fall out theories on school dropout, a crucial aspect that could directly affect students is motivation. Budiman (2018) suggests that motivation depends on intrinsic and extrinsic interrelated components. Intrinsic is related to personal commitment or positive spirit, whilst extrinsic motivation can be influenced by other people, family, employer/employment,

peers and partners. This author rightly claims that during the learning process students' motivation often disrupt, which could be related to family and employment responsibilities, or low or null interaction with peers and teachers, which eventually affects students' grade and performance. However, motivation is finally the triggering factor for student dropout (Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr, & Godber, 2001). Additionally, being motivated and continue being motivated contributes to successfully learning English (Xiao, 2012), and Rashid, Jahan, Islam, and Ratna, (2015) showed that students with low grades and who slowly progress in writing skills are more prone to drop out of the English Programme.

There is a robust body of research on dropout associated with student background and behaviour (Allensworth & Easton, 2007; Balfanz, Herzog, & Mac Iver, 2007; Curran Neild, 2009; Curran Neild, Stoner-Eby, & Furstenberg, 2008). Such researches usually encompass both social and academic risk factors, which are part of early warning signs (Lee & Burkam, 2003). However, some researchers have claimed that when the focus is on the students' behaviour and background characteristics, the organizational implications of the programmes are not considered (Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2007; Lee & Burkam, 2003). On the other hand, the current tendency points to a more school-level perspective of research (Fall & Roberts, 2012). Lee and Burkam (2003) recommend extending the investigation to institutional characteristics that could be changed through an intervention programme.

Dropout-preventions program should focus on student engagement, mainly concerning students' interests, enthusiasm for studying in a given institution, sense of belonging, motivation to learn, progress (Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr, & Godber, 2001). Engagement is multidimensional (Sinclair, Lehr, & Anderson, 2003). Christenson & Thurlow (2004) describe two types of engagement, which are *Academic and behavioural engagement* and *Cognitive and psychological engagement*. *Academic and behavioural engagement* is associated with observable indicators, such as attendance, classroom participation, while *Cognitive and psychological engagement* is related with thinking about how to learn, and positive relations with peers, to name a few. Furthermore, Marković, Radišić, Jovanović, & Ranković (2017) sustain that, although drop out could be triggered by individual aspects, it could be potentialized if, within a teacher-student relationship, there are discrimination, disrespect, and mistreatment.

Based on these perspectives about dropout in EFL programs, it would be plausible to think of an educational institution that not only strives to mitigate the dropout apropos of students' context,

but fosters a respectful relationship between peers, educators and also empowers students' self-perception.

Nowadays, teachers who continue lecturing with the only purpose of transmitting knowledge are more likely to have their students disinterested, inattentive and unmotivated, because eventually they do not see the purpose of attending classes (Tardif, 2011). Furthermore, students most considerable difficulty is knowing how to evaluate available information critically, select what is useful, and understand how to apply such knowledge (Mitre, et al., 2008). Therefore, the focus of education should suit better the students' need.

## **4.2. Collaborative Learning**

Regarding building relationships based on respect, an effective intervention to reduce dropout in EFL programs should be based on a learning experience grounded on a collaborative environment. Collaborative learning is a teaching methodology based on the interaction, cooperation and active participation of students. It is a methodology that continually emphasizes the exchange of experiences and the promotion of engagement, involvement, and motivation of the participants (Chiu, 2008; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991). Johnson and Johnson (1990) mention that students exposed to collaborative lessons get more significant achievements, compared to students involved in individualistic or competitive tasks.

The benefits that a collaborative learning environment can foster are numerous. Brown (2008) reported that by promoting collaborative tasks in class, where students cooperate with their peers and work on the same project, not only do students experience an education process that is successfully and lively perceived, but also teachers deliver contents that strengthen their students' academic performance. For example, Chen (2018) explains that activities based on collaborative language teaching enhance students' progression and motivation towards learning a foreign language. Furthermore, it generates encouraging learning while students become engaged in the class. Even for the shyest students, the outcomes are positive as they improve their participation by expressing their ideas and opinions while using the foreign language.

Nowadays classes tend to foster collaborative tasks by making use of different modern digital tools available in the market. Currently, a learning setting can be underpinned by digital web technologies (DWT), which ease collaborative work as they promote students' participation, yielding

not only their creativity but the construction of knowledge among students (Cress & Kimmerle, 2008). In this context, the interaction with another person does not represent a backwash, but an opportunity to successfully move forward. According to Minocha and Roberts (2008), DWT apps can boost participation through freely cooperation tasks which involve sharing and transferring contents. By the same token, Correa (2013) indicates that the outcome of such social interaction represents a common understanding of a group about a given content. Korucu and Çakir (2018) state that DWT are potent tools that provide excellent support towards the elaboration of collaborative classes. All in all, results from a range of studies (Chen, 2018; Kwon, Hong, & M., 2013; Ferdig, 2008; Razon, Mendenhall, Yesiltas, Johnson, & Tenenbaum, 2012; Tambouris, et al., 2012) have showed that students obtained higher scores when the interventions were based on a collaborative learning environment using DWT. Hence, as Korucu and Çakir (2018) recommend, such powerful tools (e.g. collaboration and DWT) should be massively used in EFL classes.

Current research has highlighted the potential of games to enhance the contribution of collaboration and DWT in this context. Alves (2014) declares that games yield group motivation since they can be pleasant for all people who are involved in the process. According to Sande & Sande (2018) gamification can be a tool to nurture collaboration. Gamification means using games in a non-game context, for example, in education (Werbach, 2015; Coil, Ettinger, & Eisen, 2017). There is an increasing body of research that revealed how teaching a foreign language—as English—can be enhanced through games. For instance, Gazotti-Vallim, Gomes & Fischer (2017) investigated about learning English by using online games. This study suggests that the use of the online platform fostered significative learning as the students declared to feel involved with the tasks and they perceived the experience of learning English as engaging. Moreover, Kwok & Yang (2017) show in their study that students perceived the use of ICT in class to be useful when they perceive ease of use, which is also congruent to other previous researches (Cheung & Vogel , 2013; Schroff, Deneen, & Ng, 2011).

Kahoot, for example, is one of the most popular game applications used for educational purposes. *Kahoot!* is an editable learning platform where questions can be added by the teacher (Dellos, 2015; Costa, Dantas Filho, & Moita, 2009). Plump and LaRosa (2017) found that the use of this platform in class brought optimistic energy and fun to class, allowing cooperative learning, and, consequently, increasing students' motivation. Moreover, Del Cerro (2015) found that attendance, which before his intervention used to range from 20% to 30%, was increased to 60% to 80% after the implementation of the gamification activities in class. Moreover, he states that *Kahoot!* Impacted

positively in the students' apprenticeship due to the fact they felt more involved in the development of more theoretical classes.

Albeit the vast literature setting out the effective outcomes DWT can bring to class, both digital and analogical games can also enrich cognitive, social and affective processes. During game performance, some impasses and problems may arise (Rebeiro, 2012). To illustrate, the results of an intervention program by Lopes & Oliveira (2014) showed that the use of an analogical gameboard highlighted gaps in knowledge and reinforced well-elaborated productions from the communicative interactions among the players, promoting the discussion on their own utterances in order to improve the accuracy when using certain grammatical structures. Finally, the subjects were encouraged to use what they knew about the second language. Students were invited to establish correlations between content and form, establishing relationships of meaning, while learning a new language.

With respect to the promising findings on collaboration, DWT and gamification to reduce students' dropout from EFL programs, one may well suggest that classes should move from a traditional school-based structure to a more game-based environment, since it impacts on motivation. Game-based classes would possibly meet the needs of nowadays learners' demands.

### **4.3. Future-self and motivation**

It has been more than 50 years of research regarding motivation in Second Language (L2). For example, Gardner and Lambert (1959) stated that attitude and motivation are intrinsically related to students' L2 goals. Also, as reported by Gardner (1985) there exist two types of motivation: *integrative* motivation—when students try to connect to the people and culture of the language being studied, that is, it is an authentic inner interest in learning the foreign language. According to Gardner (2001), attitudes toward the learning could be related to one's classmates, teacher, the course as a whole, or even to the kind of materials implemented in class. *Instrumental* motivation—when students' willingness to pursue a given language is linked to a practical goal such as getting promoted, that is to say, learn a language for pragmatic reasons. According to last model, the greater the chance of success in performing the task, the greater the motivation of the students. Thus, in order to foster students' motivation, a foreign language programme should promote both integrative and instrumental motivation in class, as a strategy to yield students' bonding to their learning process.



Some other researches have promoted the emergence of the Possible Selves Theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and Self-Discrepancy Theory (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, Klein, & Strauman, 1985), from which the Possible Selves were originated. Possible Selves refers to future situations regarding what one is likely to become, dream about becoming as well as what the person is afraid of becoming. Three elements compose a parsimonious motivation construct suggested by Dörnyei and Chan (2013):

1. *Ideal L2 self*, which is comprised of what one would like to become in the future. It is related to the students own longing for becoming fluent in a given L2.
2. *Ought-to L2 self*, which is based on what one's beliefs about themselves and can be used against possible negative results. It is related to the social pressure that the student might be facing while learning a given L2.
3. *L2 Learning experience*, which depicts one's motivation towards an immediate apprenticeship. It is related to the current involvement in learning a new language.

Education must prepare students for their future, hence developing and exercising the imagination should be elements that would help students keep themselves attained to their goal. There is an inexorable relationship between motivation, imagination, and self, making necessary to comprehend how people's past can impact on their present conducts, and the synergic interaction between people's desired future and fears are believed to influence their behaviours (Stibi, 2017).

Moreover, a comprehensive research carried out by Dörnyei and Chan (2013) linked learners' capability of generating mental images (mental simulation) to the intensity of their motivation and grades. That is, the future-self mental representation influences students' motivation and it is intrinsically related to goal pursuit in a given L2. The results of this research suggest that there is a salient relationship between future mental representation, effort, and grade, which should encourage teachers to generate opportunities in EFL class to promote inspiring mental images concerning the benefits of studying an L2 as it can be used as a critical pedagogical tool.

Mental and physical health, current view and motivation, as well as people's decision and productivity can be highly impacted by the way people envision their future (Klein & Zajac, 2009; Perunovic & Wilson, 2009). Mental simulation has also been identified in other studies to foster goal attainment (Escalas & Luce, 2004; Phillips & Baumgarter, 2002) and it has been reported that when simulating the future there was an important hippocampal activity (Addis, Wong, & Schacter, 2007) as well as the posterior cerebellum, medial posterior parietal cortex, and lateral premotor cortex

(Szpunar & McDermott, 2007), which suggests that it promotes a learning with a complex stable neural net (Ortiz, 2009).

Magid and Chan (2011) developed an intervention program focusing on enriching students' perception of their ideal L2 future self. The results revealed that students enhanced their confidence with regard to their skills to use English as a foreign language and that they had sharper goals that were pushing them to continue studying the language.

From the above researches, it could be inferred that by promoting classes grounded on collaborative learning through digital and analogical games as well as empowering imaginary situations, students' motivation could be enriched, which may bring positive effects with respect to an educational institution dropout rate.

## 5. Diagnosis

This section introduces the procedure by which the diagnosis was carried out. The objectives of the diagnosis are described, and for the achievement of the objectives, data were collected through both qualitative and quantitative instruments. Finally, a synthesis of the main diagnostic findings will be presented.

The **main goal** of the diagnosis was **to understand the leading causes that trigger the dropout of English as a Foreign Language Programmes, and its consequences**. For this purpose, it was also crucial to understand other causes that could be underlying this phenomenon. For that sake, it was necessary **to recognise the barriers students' have faced after their dropout of previous English as a Foreign Language Programmes, and to inquire about previous methodologies experienced by students and their evaluation about them**. Alongside, it was essential **to understand the relation between previous Institutions' experiences and students' motivation towards learning English as a Foreign Language as well as to inquire about previous evaluation processes experienced by the students and their perception about them**.

Both collection and data analyses were based on the Grounded Theory framework described by Glaser and Strauss (1979), a qualitative method which allows that data underpins a given theory, which facilitates the guidance through the research process and promotes a broader understanding of the causes that underlie the main problem which is being investigated (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).

For the investigation of the causes of the main problem, the participation of **The Pedagogical Director**, who was an informant with high decision power, and at the same time, was the one who established the guidelines for the teacher to follow. Likewise, information was collected from the **students who participated in BET programme**, who could enlighten the research with valuable information regarding their previous experiences in other programmes, of which they dropped out. They were 8 students, 4 men and 4 women, whose average age was 28 years and 6 months, and represented different nationalities: one Costa Rican, two Venezuelans, one Brazilian, one Chilean and 3 Chilean-Brazilians.

Taking into account the students' dropout problem to be studied, a semi-structured interview was designed with a set of questions to be answered by the interviewee—an instrument that nurtured the understanding of the phenomenon from the point of view of the Pedagogical Director of Sic Languages—, which allowed the understanding of the causes that underlied the high dropout rate of

EFL programmes (Mayán, 2001). Additionally, questions were asked during interviews to clarify, and further expand specific issues.

In order to enhance the understanding of the causes for dropout, not only taking into account the institute but also as a social feature, a focus group was held on the first day of the programme with the eight students who volunteered to participate in the programme of BET. The realization of the focus group allowed the disclosure of valuable different points of view from their contexts, and understand the causes of their dropout, and the consequences they were currently facing. The objective was to collect data throughout the conversation, which provided information regarding their previous experiences concerning other EFL programmes, the characteristics of the Institute where they used to attend classes, their teachers, have a better comprehension of students' profile as well as their future perspective towards learning the language.

Through this type of interview, data could be collected from the Pedagogical Director through a set of different questions, which allowed the emersion of topics that were incorporated along with the interview. The interview was designed considering the objectives and actor who participated. It permitted to disclose valuable points of view from the institute perspective, and understand their structure, mission, and vision, the practices, and attitudes they are performing to tackle the issue of the high students' dropout.

Both the interview and focus group were conducted in a friendly atmosphere, through a relaxed conversation. Additionally, the pedagogical Director showed much interest in the interview, given that she understood the importance and positive effects that the realization of such an interview could bring to the institute. With respect to the students, they showed a lot of enthusiasm towards participating in the focus group as they felt that their opinions were being taken into account.

The interviews and focus group were recorded. The first stage of data processing consisted of the transcription of both the interview and focus group. Subsequently, data were split into categories in a way that it would later convey a structural and/or systemic relationship between the parties and the possible solution for the problem, as proposed by (Mason, 2002). By examining and comparing the data, it could be split into concepts to subsequently generate categories (Strauss & Corbin, 2002). Therefore, data collected from the interview and focus group was analysed based on Grounded Theory.

In the interview, it was noted that, although SIC Languages had established a sharp mission and vision, very few aspects were being accomplished regarding the pursuit of the Institute goals. The

pedagogical director attributed the dropout rate to various causes, some intrinsically related to the institution, for instance, limited resources to be implemented in the class, low use of ICTs, there was a lack of class planning, and the assessment system used was not collaboratively conveyed. It was also noted that the director recognized that the insertion of technology and games in classes could bring a positive impact on students' motivation, even when the students were tired and/or stressed due to work pressure or any other personal issues. The Director declared:

*"Unfortunately, as we are still a pretty new institution, few things have been done thus far so we can offer our clients an UpToDate methodology. Also, as we do not have a physical centre yet, we are not able to have as many meetings as we would like to have. For example, the programme is not planned class by class, we only use one book, and yeah... so we have a lack of extra material. We are trying to talk to our teachers into using ICT in class and also games as it could bring a positive impact on students' motivation. However, right now only one teacher is using it, and it is only on App. Another issue that we would like to change is the evaluations because we are using the ones offered by the platform of the book. What we would like to offer our students is a system which is more based on collaborative work. We do believe that would make a great difference in the service we long to provide as well as in the students' motivation."* [Sic Languages Director]

Moreover, the director stated that there were some external factors that were also related to the high students' dropout, for example, lack of time, work pressure, family issues, and tiredness. The director claimed:

*"I feel that, as an institute, we have a lot more to do, and there are a lot of simple actions that we can perform. However, some external aspects are out of our control, like when students have to cancel classes due to family issues, meeting, extra hours they have to stay in their offices, and ... well... sometimes they arrive here really tired, with a low mood to learn another language, and that's why I believe that the insertion of games, for example, would help them feel motivated, even when the classes are late at night and they are exhausted."* [Sic Languages Director]

Likert-type questionnaires were fashioned in order to broaden the comprehension of the phenomena, and they were sent to students as an instrument from which quantitative data were analysed. Data were split into 7 categories: ***Involvement, Quality, Social Validity, Attitude against Dropout, Self-confidence Enhanced, Self-Future Image, and Perception towards the Institute.***

Table 1 shows the positives results—*Agree (AG)* & *Strongly Agree (SA)*—collected from the Likert type questionnaire regarding aspects that can push students to drop out. The main aspiration of the category *Attitude against Droupout* was to understand some students' behaviours that could reflect their intention for having dropped out of the previous programme they used to attend, for example willingness to study English, time and effort dedicated to study, their interest, level of motivation, and if learning the language remained being one of their main goals. *Self-confidence* showed how, to a certain extent, the students felt when facing some hindrances, for example, the pressure to learn the language, facing jobs interviews, and their level of frustration towards EFL. *Future-self Image* revealed whether the self-image of the students have changed throughout their previous experience, and perceive if they had a clearer idea of how to use English in their future. *Perception towards the Institute* reflected whether the students were satisfied or not with the programme they had attended and if they still felt motivated to continue studying in such programme.

Table 1

*Percentage of agreement with statements of the questionnaire used in the diagnosis*

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS	AG %	General AG %
<b>Attitude against Dropout</b>	The course fostered my motivations towards pursuing a higher fluency level	75.0%	50.0%
	I consider that the time and effort I put into studying English has increased	50.0%	
	My attitude towards learning English has positively changed throughout the classes.	37.5%	
	My self-interest towards learning the language has improved	37.5%	
	Learning has become/continue to be one of my main goals	25.0%	
<b>Self- confidence</b>	I am more confident to face a job interview in English in the near future	25.0%	20.0%
	I feel there are fewer/no barriers to continue studying English	25.0%	
	I did not feel frustrated with my learning process	25.0%	
	I feel less pressure towards learning the language	0.0%	
<b>Future-self Image</b>	I have a clearer idea of the importance of English for my future	100.0%	62.50%
	My image of myself using English has positively changed during the classes	25.0%	
<b>Perception towards their Previous Institute</b>	I feel more motivated to keep on learning in the previous institutions	25.0%	20.83%
	I would enroll myself there to continue studying English	25.0%	
	I would strongly recommend that Language Institute	12.5%	

Source: The Author

The first category–*Attitude against Dropout*–had 50% of agreement. Although 75% of students reported that the previous programme would foster their motivations towards pursuing a higher fluency level, in the focus group it was evidenced that such motivation was always linked to the results. All the students reported that the goal of enhancing their language skills was to increase their grades, that is to say, that they approved the course and moved forward to the next stage. In this sense, only half of the students declared that they considered that the time and effort they devoted to learning English have increased, and fewer affirmed that their attitude and their self-interest towards learning English throughout the classes have positively changed. As a consequence, it could be noticed that their motivation was lowered through time, and to remain to learn the languages was not one of their main goals.

The second category–*Attitude against Dropout*–accounted for 20.00% of agreement. Only two students reported that they felt more confident with their previous classes, for example, to face a job interview in English. Although they did not have enough level to successfully perform an interview in such language yet, they declared that if they had continued studying, they would possibly be able to succeed in it. Notwithstanding, three-fourths of the students claimed that they still perceived that there existed some barriers to continue studying English, for example, lack of time, work pressure, family problems, teachers and parents who pressured them for good grades, and also some financial issues. However, the most important barrier observed was the presence of the feeling of not being good at learning a foreign language. Many students reported having faced difficulties in learning some aspects of the language, for instance, pronunciation, grammar structure, listening skills to name a few, since they are bad at learning the language.

Likewise, the third category–*Future-self image*–had only a 62.5% of agreement. It is important to notice that there were two items, and they had very polarised answers, the first one accounted for 100% of agreement, and the second one for just 12.5%. Albeit the barriers as mentioned earlier, which, eventually, made them feel frustrated with their learning process, and feel more pressure towards learning, they all considered that knowing the language would bring a series of benefits for their lives. Students report the importance of the language to study or travel abroad, meet new people, finding new/better job opportunities, and also to broaden their knowledge and cultural perspective. However, aligned with what they reported regarding the hurdles; three-fourths of the student acknowledged that the classes they attended did not promote a positive image of themselves using English as a foreign language–although all of them understand the importance of English for their future.



The last category—*Perception towards the Institute*—was the one that obtained the lowest percentage, accounting for only 20.83%. Just one-fourth of the students stated that they felt motivated to keep on learning in the previous institute and that they would enrol themselves there to continue studying, which reflected the great discontentment towards the majority part of institutes, and the methodologies deployed. Moreover, seven-eighths of them would not recommend their previous language institute.

Taking into account the results from the interview with the director of SIC Languages, along with the results from the focus group, and the Likert-type questionnaire from the students, it could be concluded that the current methodologies of SIC Languages and of other institutions, presented a lack of crucial aspects such as classes underpinned by Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and collaborative work. Moreover, there was an absence of practices that would have fostered students' motivation towards the learning of a new foreign language. Those were possibly the main reasons why the language centre had been facing a high dropout rate. It could also be inferred that there was a gap in the market concerning the existence of more comprehensive Second Language Programmes, which should embrace different students' needs and their diversity, deliver high standard methodologies, and foster collaborative work in order to counterbalance external hindrances, for example, work pressure, family problems, and lack of time, thus enhancing educational results.

As consequence, English kept being perceived as a difficult subject to master, the dropout rate remained high, and it affected and limited their posterior studies and job perspectives, having as a final outcome frustration from both sides of the story; Students and Institution.

In the following section, these findings will be discussed more detailly. It will present the main problem, its root causes, and the main consequences for the students.

## 6. Problem Description

Based on the diagnosis, it can be said that learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Chile affects not only the ones who need it as a skill at work, but also those who decided to pursue the English pedagogy as their undergraduate programme. Whether the language is being learned in a private institute or at a University, a critical difficulty is commonly faced by institutions, namely, the high **dropout rate** of students.

Just as there exist multiple reasons why people undertake EFL programmes, there are also several causes that prompt students' **dropout**. The causes range from personal likes and dislikes, as **lack of interest in learning the language** or even absence of an evident goal pursuit concerning the use of the language in the future, to external factors as **work pressure**, **family issues**, or programmes that turn out to be **unaffordable**. Notwithstanding, there is another crucial pivot for students' **dropout**: the **institutions** and their **methodologies**.

In the following paragraphs, the main causes, and subsequent consequences that emerged from the diagnoses are detailly described. In pursuance of a more comprehensible interpretation, displays the **Problem tree** (see Appendix 13.1), which depicts the main causes, the central problem of dropout rate, and its consequences graphically.

From the interview, it could be noted that **students' motivation** can be profoundly affected by external factors that underlie this problem, for instance, it has been a real fact that **students' work-life balance** plays a crucial role on deciding whether to continue studying English or not. **Work pressure** and **family issues**, ever so often, is one of the leading causes. Also, the time students can dedicate themselves to take classes, in general, is set in the late part of their daily schedule, ranging from 19:00 - 22:30h. Many students go to classes feeling stressed, having their minds still connected to work issues, and feeling **tired** due to **work pressure**. In addition, students are usually unable to hand in their **homework** activities due to **lack of time**, which can impact negatively on the class flow and the learning process.

If students' lifestyle is also a crucial reason that triggers their dropout, then there is a series of aspects from the Institute that can be negatively impacting on students' motivation towards learning English. One of the main problems is the fact that the institutes have been only using **one book** and

**few extra teaching materials**, which can also be interpreted as **limited resources**. Indeed, some lessons are not personalised at all. There are **few to null use of authentic materials**, and low use of **information communication technology (ICT)**, and there are few classes being taught through **gamification** or based on online platforms or gameboards, as it could be a new resource to foster students' motivation and participation in class. The insertion of technology and games in classes could bring a positive impact on students' motivation, even when they are tired and/or stressed due to work pressure or any other personal issues.

Those difficulties could be related to the low diversity of material used during the course lectures, considering that each student has their best way to acquire knowledge, and almost nothing had been designed to meet the **different students' learning barriers**. Moreover, the primary source of knowledge is usually the teacher. The classes are **not** commonly planned based on a methodology in which the **student is the centre of knowledge creation**, so the topics are always brought up by the teachers, and they were attached to the pace of the book. It also reflects that the classes are not being based on a **UDL**, which also explains, to a certain extent, the lack of **extra and authentic material**, as well as the **low use of ICT**, and the **absence of games** in class.

Besides, when it comes to collaborative learning, nor the class planning, nor the classes themselves used to present a focus on **collaborative tasks**. They were **teacher-centred** and fostered little student interaction, but they did not lead to a collaborative work nor the construction of a collaborative environment. The classes students had been provided theretofore had not been planned according to a more **UpToDate apprenticeship model**, under the assumption that the students are the ones who should adapt themselves to the class plan, and not the contrary, which reflects a lack of a comprehensive class planning, and also the lingering of **old beliefs regarding leaning processes**.

In the same fashion, the **assessment** stage adopted by the institutions were **not commonly tailor-made**. The exams are carried out individually and always during classes. It is not allowed for students to use dictionaries, online resources, or check their books or notebooks. The oral tests are carried out only between the students and the teacher, so they were **not performed collaboratively**, and in general, students faced **stress** during the process. There is a lack of a **rubric** to evaluate the students, and when delivering the result of the tests, the mistakes the students made were highlighted and used as diagnoses for the students' flaws to be corrected, that is to say, the feedback had not been delivered from a **positive perspective**. There did not exist an instance to deliver **feedback** on the students' solutions and strategies to improve their languages skills, nor their studying habits. The feedback is generally focused on the negative aspects.

When it comes to the students' perception, students can realize the **importance of knowing a second language**, and they link this **perception** to a current social demand, not only related to finding a new job or being promoted, but also to pleasure, traveling, and being able to mingle with new people. However, although the apparent relevance of having continued studying, they drop out.

With regard to **the amount of time**, although many of the students try to be as responsible as possible, it can be very frustrating to see that they had not been able to master the language. The frustration can be linked to **lack of interest, family pressure**, and also, surprisingly, to their **scores**, which make them feel obliged to study, reflecting a scarcity of genuine enthusiasm. Moreover, when bethinking of school time, for a great part of the students learning English was not meaningful, as they **cannot foresee the benefits** it would bring to their future longings.

Some of the hurdles that they can face during their studies can be: **affording the Institute** as it can turn out to be expensive; they can have **other priorities** at university, work or family; lack of time to dedicate themselves; English can seem to be a hard subject, and being able to think in another language sometimes is a tough challenge. While this can be considered as social pressure and also **erroneous beliefs** about themselves, the other two critical components for their dropout are **teachers' methodology** and consequent **students' lack of motivation**.

Many of the methodologies offered in the market today are not **dynamic** and **student-centred**. Classes are conveyed through a **set of rules**, and only using **a single book**. The primary goal of the teachers, mainly at school and university, is to have them memorize a set of grammar patterns, vocabulary, and verbs along with their correspondent conjugations. Consequently, both the teachers and the methodologies applied can be the leading cause of dropping out of the programs. If classes yield students' motivation and promote more active participation, they would be possibly more prone to continue with their learning process.

The **direct impact** of students' high dropout rate for a company that had recently started in the market is the imminent risk that the business does not work out as expected, considering that the students are their main capital resource. Moreover, it directly affects the image and reputation of the Institute in the market, which can bring **negative economic results** in the near future.

Taking into account a more extensive social aspect, the acquisition of a foreign language for adults is a cognitively onerous task. There is a large batch of difficulties such as simple word spelling or intricate grammatical arrangements (Shana, 1992). It is noticed that **English is perceived as a difficult subject**. However, the question is: is it a problematic subject *per se*, or is it more related to

the way the classes had been conveyed by the teachers one of the real causes for that perception? When students consider a subject to be difficult to the point that they give in studying it, it could be even harder to resume studying it again since they would possibly return with wrong assumptions of their learning processes, and even of their apprenticeship potential.

Not knowing English represents a setback for some people at the moment to search for new opportunities or when they try to **reintegrate into the labour market**. Knowing English is one of the most requested prerequisites in several jobs today due to the need for interaction in everyday situations related to work or even in social interactions. As a consequence, students can have a **negative job perspective**.

Also, there exists an expressive migration in the XXI century. A significant part of the world economies, societies and cultures cannot be thought without taking into consideration human mobility, and it also is predicted to almost double shortly. Baring that in mind, another negative consequence of not managing properly with this language brings **barriers** for one **to work abroad**, since English is the second most used language in the world.

When it comes to educational issues, it represents **limited access** to some relevant studies that could be important for the students to read, as a significant part of them are not available in other languages, but English. Not only is it a limitation to study in the country where they dwell, but also to **study abroad**. The majority part of international post-graduation programmes is held using English as their official language.

Taking into account the previous consequences mentioned above, **frustration** is as the outcome of the processes. The frustration that starts from the classes, from school teachers who are not encouraging enough their students, schools/institutes that were not investing in extra material with high quality, and classes not being conveyed from a collaborative perspective, which would foster motivation towards an apprenticeship.

By analysing the root causes for the dropout rate with which the institution was struggling, and its consequent repercussions for both the institution and its students enabled the design of this intervention. Since the causes for the central problem are multifactorial, and also to time constraints, this intervention was underpinned from two causes that could bring more positive results. It was observed, from the internal institutions' causes, that providing classes with a greater variety of sources in order to meet the different needs student may have, and enhancing students collaborative work

could be an opportunity to have constructive outcomes, as students would feel better assisted, and also it would boost their motivation towards learning the language.

## 7. Intervention Design

### 7.1. Background

Eager to solve the above-presented problem on students' dropout, *Building Education Together* (BET) was designed following the *Logical Matrix Framework* methodology (Ortegon, Pacheco, & Prieto, 2005). Table 2 shows the corresponding rows for the Goal, the Purpose, as well as the Components 1 and 2, include their Indicators, Means of Verification and Assumptions.

The following Table 2 shows the *Logical Matrix Framework* (LMF) that reflects the design of the intervention. The corresponding rows for the Goal, Purpose, as well as Components 1 and 2, including their Indicators, Means of Verification, and Assumptions.

Table 2

*The Logical Matrix Framework*

	Objectives	Indicators of Achievement	Means of Measurement	Assumptions
<b>GOAL</b>	To strengthen students' participation, motivation and collaborative work, so students can experience enhanced self-confidence and Future-self image.	At least 80% of the students report that their self-confidence and Future-selfimage is enhanced	Focus Group	Students engagement and program fidelity are performed to a high level.
		At least 80% of the students declare that collaborative work yields their participation and motivation in class	Likert-type questionnaires	
		At least 80% of the students feel satisfied with the education process delivered by BET		
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To decrease dropout intention rates in EFL programmes through enhanced collaboration and motivation for learning	At least 80% of the students show an Attitude against Dropout over 80%		Students declare to have their Self-confidence enhanced towards learning/using English.
		At least 80% of the students attest their intentions to keep attending the lessons throughout the program	Likert-type questionnaire	
		At least 80% of the students declare that they would recommend BET as a Foreign Language Program	Focus Group	

<b>COMPONENT 1 COLLABORATIVE WORK</b>	Effective/high-quality material resources are designed/adapted for the courses	At least 80% of the students feel that the gameboards and Apps used in the lessons have a good standard of quality, trigger their involvement and are socially valid	Likert-type questionnaires	Students are more willing to participate and perceive their progression towards learning English
		At least 80% of the students feel that the new material used in the lessons promotes collaborative work	Focus Group	The new material sparks joy in class
<b>COMPONENT 2 MOTIVATION ENHANCEMENT</b>	Lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language	At least 80% of the students consider that the L2-future-self tasks help them keep motivated on studying the language	Likert-type questionnaires	Students are willing to share their thoughts concerning their future-self and are willing to come up with new ideas regarding other students' future-self.
		At least 80% of the students consider that the L2-future-self tasks help them develop collaborative work.	Focus Group	

Source: The Author



A thorough explanation of the design of BET is depicted in the following subsections.

## **7.2. Goal**

BET aspires to enhance students' participation, motivation, and collaborative work in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), so students can successfully face career and personal challenges in an ever-changing global environment.

It was expected that at least 80% of the students would feel satisfied with the education process delivered by BET. Another indicator was that at least 80% of the students would report that their self-confidence and Future-self image were enhanced after the intervention. If those two indicators are achieved, it will evidence that students are more prone to remain to study with this programme as they feel more motivated, hence their dropout intension is decreased.

As means of verification for both indicators, students were sent a Likert-type questionnaire, and a focus group was carried out right after the end of the intervention. By these two instruments, the research was nurtured with both qualitative and quantitative data. To corroborate the effectiveness of the intervention with regard to this aspiration, the Likert type questionnaire was applied twice. The first time at the end of the intervention in November, and 5 months later.

It was possible to envision that students' engagement and programme fidelity would be performed to a higher level given that the conditions for the intervention to be held were optimal.

## **7.3. Purpose**

The *Purpose* of the intervention aims at decreasing dropout intension rates in EFL programmes through enhanced collaboration and motivation for learning. After the implementation of the intervention, it was expected that the students would show more enthusiasm towards learning the language, which was fostered by the tasks implemented throughout the programme.

To validate the effectiveness of the implementation with regard to this objective, three indicators were taken into account. It was expected that at least 80% of the students would declare that they would recommend BET as a Foreign Language Programme, and that at least 80% of the students would attest their intentions to keep attending the lessons throughout the programme. Moreover, it was also estimated that at least 80% of them would At least 80% of the students show an Attitude against Dropout over 80%. If the results were achieved, it would indicate that students'

dropout intentions were decreased and also validate BET as an institute to learn English as a Foreign Language.

To verify the accomplishment of the Purpose, the three indicators were measured by understanding students' perception through data collected from a Likert type questionnaire and also from a focus group, both being held at the beginning and end of the intervention.

If the implementation of the intervention were successful, it would be possible to assume that the same methodology could be applied to teach/learn other languages, even when some adaptations were necessary.

#### **7.4. Components**

*Component 1 - Effective/high-quality resources are designed/selected/adapted to foster collaborative work during the course*

It was expected that new material, both analogical and digital, implemented in BETs programme would empower students' motivation and sense of collaborative work, and be perceived as having been with high quality. For the Purpose of the achievement of component 1, the first indicator expected that at least 80% of the students would feel that the gameboards and Apps used in the lessons had a good standard of Fidelity, Involvement, Quality, and Social Validity. Additionally, it was also predicted that at least 80% of the students would feel that the new material used in the lessons promoted collaborative work.

To support the first and second indicators of achievement, students were sent Likert-type questionnaires and participated in a focus group at the end of the intervention. Both means of measurement would provide evidence enough to confirm if the objective was reached.

The success of the implementation of this component assumed that students would be more willing to participate and perceive their progression towards the acquisition of the language. Moreover, it is also assumed that the new material would spark joy in class.

*Component 2 - Lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language*

In order to achieve the proposed objective, activities were implemented to encourage students to envision their future, positively and negatively, and the consequences that they embraced. They were also encouraged to think about their current life as a student and come up with ideas to reach

their ideal future-self and also to set strategies to deviate from the negative future they envisioned. Then, they were motivated to share their thoughts with their partners.

To verify that the objective of this component was reached, there were two indicators of achievement. First, it was expected that at least 80% of the students would consider that the L2-future-self tasks helped them to develop collaborative work. The second indicator foresaw that at least 80% of the students consider that the L2-future-self tasks helped them to keep them motivated to continue studying the language.

Likewise, to support the first and second indicators of achievement, students were sent Likert-type questionnaires and participated in a focus group at the end of the intervention. Both means of measurement would provide evidence enough to confirm if the objective was reached.

The accomplishment of the objective of this component assumed that students would be more willing to share their thoughts concerning their future-self and would be willing to come up with new ideas regarding other students' future-selves.

## **7.5. Activities**

To introduce the idea and the importance of collaborative work that will be developed throughout the program, on the first day of the intervention, a task based on collaborative experience will be deployed. The task is called *Spaghetti Tower Challenge*. For this activity, students should be split into three groups where they should try to build a Spaghetti tower as high as possible. From the second lesson onwards, two main activities were implemented. Activity 1–BET's New Material–where innovative material based on collaborative work was implemented the, and Activity 2–Empowering students' L2 future self–aimed to yield motivation in students by strengthening their future-selves with regard to their learning process of a second language. Activity 1 is linked to Component 1 - Effective/high-quality material resources are designed/selected/adapted to foster collaborative work throughout the course, while Activity 2 is linked to Component 2 - Lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language.

## - Activity 1

Activity 1 depicts component 1 implemented towards the enhancement of students' collaboration in class and homework by creating and adapting new material for the classes. The goal of Activity 1 is **to implement Effective/High-quality material resources in classes and for homework, which will foster collaborative work**. In favour of this accomplishment, a set of new material will be developed.

To validate the effectiveness of the implementation of such task, three indicators were taken into account. The first one is the existence of **8 extra videos**<sup>2</sup> concerning the unit topics are implemented, fostering collaborative work. Also, there are **2 different Gameboards** used in 2 classes, where there is no competition but collaboration among the students. Additionally, there are four exercises where the use of the Apps **Kahoot**<sup>3</sup> promote collaborative work in the beginning and at the end of each of the four units, and the App. **Padlet**<sup>4</sup> used to foster collaborative work previous to listening tasks in class.

Videos regarding the grammar and vocabulary contents of the units will be accessed before the lessons. Right after watching the video, students discuss together what they understood from the video and expose, in groups, their conclusions and the possible question that may have arisen from the activity through a **Visible Thinking Strategy**–What did I learn? What are my doubts? What did I learn from my mates and teacher? As students have the videos available on the Internet, they can also watch them outside the class time at their own pace. The aim of using the video is to yield not only their creativity but the construction of knowledge among students collaboratively.

To assure that the activity was corrected design and implemented, the teacher's lesson plan should reflect that the 8 videos were used right after the use of the App. Kahoot! to measure students' prior knowledge (regarding grammar and vocabulary) and that the App. Padlet was used prior to the listening activities, where all students should expose their thoughts and doubts together on the App. Additionally, it should also depict the use of the gameboards for unit 2 and unit 4. Moreover, in the focus group, students should assert that the tasks based on the Apps., and also the gameboards and

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<sup>2</sup> [https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1QNI7J6rY3RMfiPSWtZ2\\_tkrj\\_JYJOR17](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1QNI7J6rY3RMfiPSWtZ2_tkrj_JYJOR17)

<sup>3</sup> Kahoot!- <https://kahoot.com/>

<sup>4</sup> Padlet - <https://padlet.com/>

videos were not used individually, but conveyed in the absence of competition but the collaborative environment.

If the activity is successfully implemented, it would be possible to assume that the students enjoy the activity and that it helped to enhance students' motivation and also that they would report having their self-image strengthened at the end of the intervention.

## - Activity 2

Activity 2 is linked to the component 2. The objective here is **to implement tasks regarding future-selves that go towards the enhancement of students' motivation**. In pursuance of such a goal, a set of 10 exercises will be designed and delivered to the students throughout the 20 sessions.

To validate the effectiveness of the implementation of such a task, one indicator was taken into account. It was expected that 10 tasks regarding *Future L2-self* are well/effectively designed and implemented in 10 out of the 20 sessions.

Based on this framework, Dörnyei (2009) asserts six broad categories of strategic implications that would lead students to pursue the Ideal L2 self:

- construction of the ideal L2 self;
- strengthening the vision of this self;
- making the ideal L2 self plausible;
- activating the ideal L2 self;
- developing an action plan (such as goal-setting); and
- counterbalancing the vision of the ideal L2 self with consideration of failure.

So, there should exist 9 cycles focusing on the aforementioned categories:

Cycle 1: Construction of the ideal L2 self;

Cycle 2: Construction of the ideal self L2 self and Strengthening the vision of this self;

Cycle 3: Construction of the ideal self L2 self, Strengthening the vision of this self and Activating the ideal L2 self;

Cycle 4: Construction of the ideal self L2 self, Strengthening the vision of this self, and making the ideal L2 self plausible

Cycle 5: Developing an action plan (such as goal-setting);

Cycle 6: Construction of the ideal L2 self, Making the ideal L2 self plausible, Developing an action plan, and counterbalancing the vision of the ideal L2 self with consideration of failure

Cycle 7: Making the ideal L2 self plausible, and Counterbalancing the vision of the ideal L2 self with consideration of failure

Cycle 8: Strengthening the vision of this self, Making the ideal L2 self plausible, and Activating the ideal L2 self

Cycle 9: Making the ideal L2 self plausible, and developing an action plan;

The last Cycle 10 is a different one—the focus of this task is to make students get together in pairs and reflect upon activities of the semester, writing and presenting in order to know what task they consider were the most beneficial to them. The specific category for each task should be clearly displayed in the sheet delivered to the students.

To assure that the activity was corrected design, teacher's lesson plan should reflect that the 10 cycles are designed and their focus on each category is clearly shown.

If the implementation of the activity is successful, it would be possible to assume that the students enjoy the activity, and also that they would report having their self-image strengthened at the end of the intervention.

## 8. Implementation and Evaluation of the Intervention Process

To ensure that the proposed components and activities of the Intervention were properly delivered, data were collected considering the following dimensions: *Social Validity*, *Involvement*, *Quality*, and *Fidelity*. The dimension on Social Validity was split into two other subdimensions: *Feasibility*, and *Utility*.

These main dimensions are defined by Humphrey et al. (2016) as it follows: *Social Validity* refers to the value and social importance attributed to an intervention by its direct or indirect consumers; *Involvement* is the degree to which participants engage with the Intervention; *Quality* means how well different components of an intervention are delivered; *Fidelity* is the extent to which implementers adhere to the model of the proposed Intervention;

Quantitative data were collected through a Likert-type questionnaire to evaluate components 1 and 2. This instrument was answered by all the 8 students who participated in this Intervention. The questionnaire was comprised of 30 questions, which were split into 3 major categories: *Social Validity*, *Involvement*, and *Quality*. The idea of administering a quantitative instrument was to have an overview of students' perception of the Intervention. The Likert-type questionnaire followed a scale ranging from 1 to 5, 1 being *Strongly Disagree (SD)*, 2 *disagree (DA)*, 3 *indifferent (ID)*, 4 *agree (AG)*, and 5 *Strongly Agree (SA)*. The results are shown in the following Tables 3, 4 and 5. The **Percentage** column represents the SA results, and the **General (SA)%** column represents the total percentage for this category

To have a broader understanding of students' perception of both Activity 1 and 2, **qualitative data** were collected from the fieldwork notebook, where the researcher gathered information throughout the Intervention, and also from a focus group, in which the 8 students participated. These data intended to nurture the research with information concerning *Social Validity*, *Involvement*, and *Quality*, but also enlighten about the *Fidelity* of the intervention deployment.

**Activity 1** depicts the output implemented towards the enhancement of students' collaboration and motivation in class by creating and adapting new material for the classes. **Activity 2** describes the Intervention implemented towards the enhancement of students' motivation and collaborative work by deploying a set of 10 cycles tasks which the goal is to yield students' ideal future L2 selves

The following paragraphs describe further details according to each of the analysed dimensions for both Activity 1 and 2.

### **8.1. Social Validity**

The purpose of evaluating *Social Validity* is to have a more accurate understanding with regard to the *Feasibility* and *Utility* of the Intervention, based on participants' experience in BET. Table 3 shows the results obtained in each item. The **Percentage** column represents the **SA** results, and the **General (SA)%** column represents the total percentage for this category



Table 3

*Questionnaire Used to Assess the achievement of Social Validity*

Subdimensions	Questions	SA%	General (SA) %
Feasibility	The ICT resources are feasible to be implemented in classes	100%	81%
	The gameboards are feasible to be used in the Institution	100%	
	The activities regarding future-self are feasible to be implemented in class	75%	
	The videos used are feasible to be implemented at home	75%	
	The videos used are feasible to be implemented in classes	75%	
	The activities regarding future-self are feasible to be used at home	63%	
Utility	The teacher motivated the students during the classes	100%	84%
	The gameboards used to complement the class were helpful to learn about the subject proposed	100%	
	I consider that the sessions had an excellent contribution to my learning	88%	
	The classes helped me to change my understanding regarding collaborative work	88%	
	ICT resources used to complement the class were helpful to learn about the subject proposed	88%	
	I have found the classes exciting and dynamic	88%	
	The use of ICTs in the sessions has been useful for my learning	88%	
	I felt comfortable to express my doubts	75%	
	The activities regarding my future-self, made me think about new possibilities for my future	75%	
	The collaborative work implemented in classes fostered my learning process	75%	
	The activities regarding my future-self impacted positively on my strategies to study	75%	
	The videos about grammar fully facilitated the comprehension of the subject in each lesson	75%	

Source: The Author

The results show that there were 81% and 84% of acceptance by the students with regard to the categories *Feasibility* and *Utility* respectively. Albeit the positive results, the percentages are lower when it comes to the use of such activities at home. Data from the focus group reveal that students consider that those activities, although they could be carried out at home, they feel it was specially designed to be conveyed collaboratively, and at home, they would be missing this aspect.

As it can be observed in Table 3, even when not all of the items were evaluated with a percentage over the expected 80%, the average in every category accounted for more than such percentage, and none of the questions had been evaluated with *Strongly Disagree* or even *Disagree*.

The results were coherent with the observation during the implementation and focus group. In the focus group, students showed great satisfaction and surprise towards the classes, the use of *future-self* tasks, the implementation of **ICTs** in the sessions, and mainly towards the **game boards**, and their subsequent **collaborative tasks**, what made them perceive the class to be more **exciting and dynamic**.

Students declared that the use of ICT before the beginning of the unit allowed them to perceive how much they had to learn. However, the use of the **videos** clarified a great part of the doubts about the content that had arisen with the ICT game *Kahoot!*. According to them, the combination of Kahoot with the video, and sharing their ideas with their partners made them feel more comfortable with the learning process, and generated on them the feeling of being **active learners**, as they were encouraged to explain the teacher the content, and also to **express their doubts** to the teacher and to the other students. Also, the use of Kahoot! at the end of the unit was a key aspect for **both reviewing the content and consolidate knowledge**. Plus, the use of the platform *Padlet* was beneficial as a way of forecasting possible words that could appear, which made listening tasks easier. As the activities were held with the participation of all the students, it also produced an **enhanced collaborative environment**. As per the students, a crucial part of the use of ICTs as a learning tool is that it does not follow the paradigm of "*boring homework*." They declared that they were more excited to do the homework on an App. as they could do it even when they were commuting. Another essential feature of the ICT is that they feel it was **not so time-consuming**.

It was also stated by all the students that they perceived that their **motivation and interest** in learning the language **increased** throughout the classes. One of the main aspects that they discussed was the use of the game boards regarding grammar and vocabulary. The use of such games in class was perceived by the students to be one of the best key aspects that make them **change their**

**understanding regarding collaborative work.** More than just foster fun, and a relaxing environment due to the collaborative work, the **games** were perceived as a **key aspect for their learning.**

Moreover, they felt that the classes brought **positive influence** on how they **envision their future**, which directly affects their self-confidence. Furthermore, it also promoted a reflection concerning their current **strategies to study** a foreign language, and consequently to boost their outcomes in EFL. Notwithstanding, it is essential to discuss the answers regarding *future-self*—the only ones with lower grades—, which were from the same student. The student, who gave the lower evaluation, wrote an extra note stating that she does not consider the activity regarding *future-self* to be bad, but she does not feel comfortable to talk about her private life, future, and intentions with other people. She thinks that more time should be devoted to other activities rather than the *future-self*.

## 8.2. Involvement

This category aims at examining the extent to which participants engaged in the Intervention. Table 4 shows the results obtained according to each item.

Table 4

*Questionnaire Used to Assess the achievement of Students' Involvement Towards BET*

Questions	SA%	General SA%
I understood how to use the ICT Apps	100%	
I have enthusiastically attended the sessions	88%	
I feel that learning EFL based on collaborative work is more motivating than other methodologies	88%	
I have been motivated to participate during the sessions	88%	86%
The activities of my future-self impacted positively on my motivation towards studying EFL	75%	
I understood how to use the gameboards	75%	
I feel that my studying habits have enhanced during the program	75%	
I dedicate more time to study English now	63%	

Source: The Author

The results displayed 86% of agreement regarding students' *Involvement*. All Students reported that the instructions of how to use ICT were understood. Seven-eighths of the students affirm their high positive perception towards collaborative work and their motivation. The lowest percentage was regarding the dedication of time to study the Language. It is worth noticing that none of the items have been scored as *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree* or even as *Indifferent*.

In order to broaden the comprehension with regard to the involvement of the participants, qualitative data were collected from a focus group and a fieldwork notebook.

By analysing the data, it was observed that the **enthusiasm** and **participation** of the attendees were **high**. All the students participated very **actively**, and they demonstrated much interest to **understand** the rules of **the game**. During the game, it could be noticed **active** and **dynamic participation** in the groups. All participants tried to help their partners regarding their doubts, and there was great **teamwork**, and they were excited to participate, talk to each other and ask/answer many questions. When the session was over, the students required to keep that methodology because they found that it was much **more dynamic** and that their sensation was that time passed much faster.

Information gathered during the implementation of activity 1 and 2 showed that almost every session, students showed their **pleasure** and **gratitude** for having the opportunity to study with this new methodology. Furthermore, students were **punctual**, and a **high level of commitment** with the classes, the teacher and their classmates were perceived throughout the classes.

Likewise, students showed much delight towards the activities involving *future-self*. First, they asked more questions about the activity and the purpose of working on strengthening their *future-self* image. After the deployment of the first part of the activity, students were content with the results and were talking among them about the positive outcomes of thinking about their future in order to improve their learning and the subsequent motivation that it brought up towards their learning process. Throughout the courses, some students made comments like:

"Talking about my future, makes me realize that the moment to learn is now."[student]

"When I was telling my classmate about my dreams, I was concomitantly thinking about my present. The beautiful part of that was to see that my future was limited by my perception. My classmate came up with new ideas about what I can become in the future."  
[student]

“Thinking about my *undesired future-self* also makes me strengthen my current learning process. I do not want to become the "bad" version of myself." [student]

They also reported that their studying habits enhanced during the program thanks to this activity that made them realize that part of the barriers for better learning was based on their own dedication and strategies.

As per the information collected, it could be concluded that students' involvement was high.

### 8.3. Quality

The goal of this category is to comprehend to which degree students consider that the different components of the intervention were well-delivered. Students answered 4 questions from the Likert-type questionnaire. Table 5 shows the results obtained according to each item.

Table 5

*Questionnaire Used to Assess the achievement of Quality*

Questions	SA %	General SA%
The teachers showed mastery of the subject matter	100%	
I consider the ICTs of high quality	100%	88%
I consider that the sessions have been delivered high quality	88%	
I consider that the gameboards were high quality designed	75%	

Source: The Author

The dimension *Quality* obtained the highest percentage of all, accounting for 88% of agreement. All the students considered that the teacher had a high level of knowledge concerning the language being learnt. In the same fashion, they all considered the ICT to have excellent quality. As well as in the previous dimension, none of the students had scored the items *Disagreement*, or *Indifferent*.

In order to enrich the interpretation of the dimension on *Quality*, qualitative data collected from a focus group and a fieldwork notebook were also be analysed.

Students reported that they were highly satisfied with the material they have been granted, and also with the way classes were conveyed. They showed high interest regarding the use of the new videos, and mainly regarding the Apps. Also, the use of game boards was reported as having brought joy to the class, and students did not seem to be ashamed to participate. Furthermore, the activities concerning *Ideal future-selves* were considered to be very motivating, and innovative.

The lowest percentage received is related to the design of the gameboards. Although students declared that the gameboards were the activity they liked and enjoyed the most, it was noticed that it could have had better quality, a gameboard that seemed to be professionally designed, and not homemade. ICT, on the other hand, were evaluated as having great quality.

#### 8.4. Fidelity

For this Intervention, there were two components aimed at developing students' skills and motivation for learning EFL. The objective of **Component 1–Collaborative Work**–was to deliver high-quality material and resources designed for BET lessons. The project developed two gameboards and two Apps especially selected for BET instructional purposes, that is to say, to yield students' participation and involvement in class.

Regarding **Component 2–Motivation Enhancement**–, its objective was to deliver lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language. The aim was to implement tasks that could make students think about their possible future-self, both positively and negatively, and reflect about how their current behaviour concerning the L2 apprenticeship could directly impact in their future outcomes.

In order to accomplish successfully both Components 1 and 2, two activities were fashioned:

**Activity 1**–BET's New Material–material based on collaborative work was implemented during classroom time and as homework activities. Since this component involved using internet-based technology, students installed resources on their mobile phones or tablets. In addition, for every unit from the book *American Headway 1A, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*, students had two new videos that encompassed grammar, and some of the vocabulary expected to be learned.

**Activity 2**–Empowering students' L2 future self–aimed at generating motivation in students by strengthening their *future-selves* with regard to their learning process of a second language. This

activity encompassed a series of 10 cycles of exercises to foster students' future-selves, which were delivered in 10 of the classes throughout the programme.

The first indicator for **Activity 1** was the creation of 8 videos concerning the topics in the four units that were worked throughout the classes. The videos were produced using a platform called *Powtown*, and were sent to the students at the beginning of the classes through the Internet, Bluetooth or Airdrop. None of the students had problems dealing with the video transfer, nor with playing them on their mobile phones. After watching those videos, students got together and explained to each other what they understood, and wrote down the doubts they had. This methodology was implemented in the 8 videos. During the video, the students were acquainted with the grammar point that would be stressed in class (see appendix 13.2), and the last part, they were invited to gather and share what they have learned from the video (see appendix 13.3).

The second indicator for this activity was the existence of two different Gameboards used in 2 classes. The first gameboard designed was an adaptation from the game *Jenga*. Different from how the game is played initially, the students had first to create the questions using the pieces, collaboratively, and then they were allowed to build the game, and play it more freely. This game was used to review vocabulary and grammar structure after the end of unit 2. The game was implemented as it was designed to be deployed, and students learned the rules and could deal with the game efficiently (see appendix 13.4).

The second gameboard adapted to BET was a bingo. The bingo was designed to have only odd numbers due to the large number of pieces. For every odd number, there was a pre-selected question or command that the students had to answer or execute. Every time a student had a proper answer/execution they had to explain to the other students the rule which underlay their answers. In case a student did not provide the correct answer or did not execute the command correctly, another student was expected to help them out. The deployment of the game was as expected, and students' participation was high and very collaborative.

The third indicator was the creation of 2 Apps to promote collaborative work. There were 8 designed for the App. Kahoot. The game sessions were used previous to the beginning and end of every unit. The goal was to measure students' knowledge prior to the new unit and right after the unit had been taught. The App Padlet was used before listening activities, and also as homework.

Regarding the Apps, none of the students had problems while using them in class, and they could handle with the Apps successfully also at home. It could be estimated that the activity had total fidelity since all the proposed tasks were carried without any problem, and it followed the proposed design.

The indicator for **Activity 2** is that 10 cycle tasks are developed to be implemented throughout the 20 classes to which the students attended. As aforementioned, Dörnyei (2009) asserts that there are six broad categories of strategic implications that might lead to the Ideal L2 self-fostering motivation:

- construction of the ideal L2 self;
- strengthening the vision of this self;
- making the ideal L2 self-plausible;
- activating the ideal L2 self;
- developing an action plan (such as goal-setting); and
- counterbalancing the vision of the ideal L2 self with consideration of failure.

Thus, the 10 cycles were underpinned according to the previous 6 categories and also following the proposed prompt of the design of the activity in the previous session. Each day only one cycle was applied, and their deployment followed the frequency of every other class.

Each student received one sheet for each cycle. Students understood the target of the tasks, and the activity 1 was carried without problems. Thus, it could be considered 100% fidelity as the activity was designed and implemented as expected.

In order to display the figures more graphically, the following *Chart 1* shows the results obtained in the three evaluated dimensions; *Social Validity*, *Involvement*, and *Quality*.



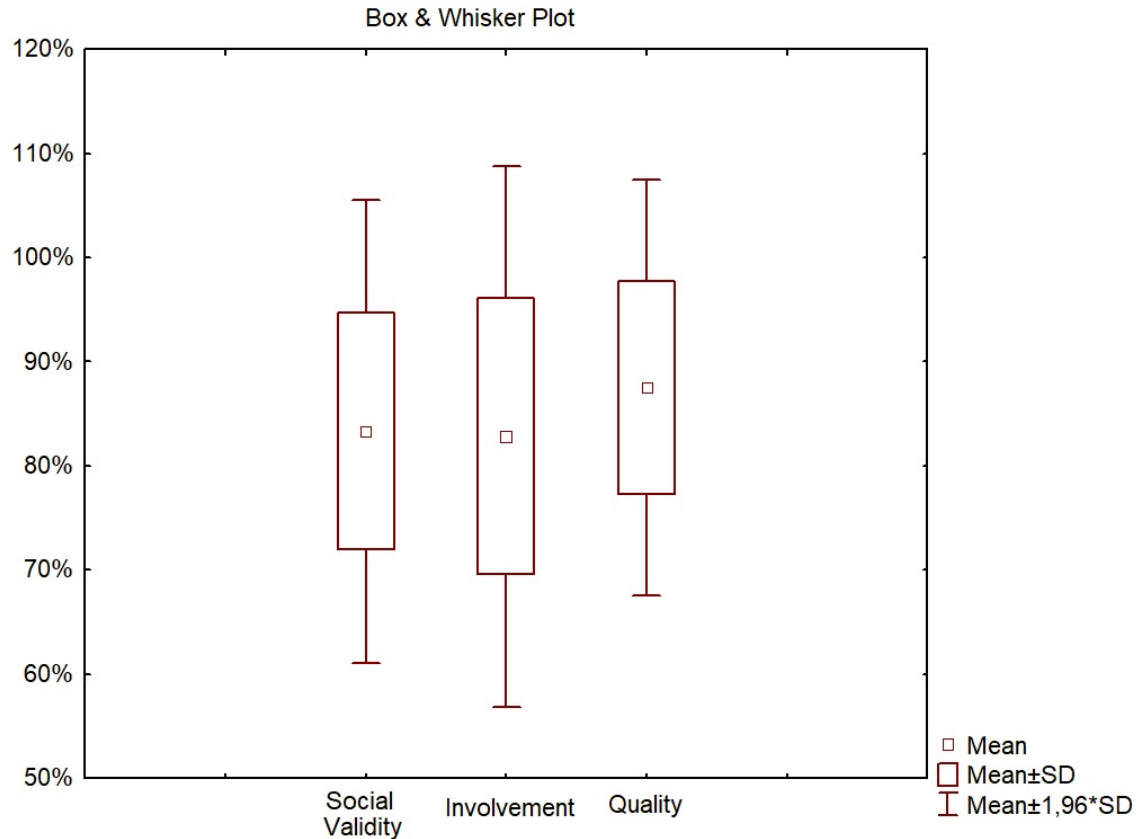


Chart 1 – Results from Social Validity, Involvement, and Quality

The previous chart represents the answers from the 8 subjects who participated in the programme. Mean values and Standard Deviation (SD) for *Social Validity*, *Involvement*, and *Quality* were 83 (SD= 11%), 83% (SD= 13%), and 88% (SD=10%), respectively. It is important to consider that maximum values are 100%.

As it can be observed, the 3 categories had their medians over 80%, that is to say, that half of the items achieved a score higher than the expected percentage, and a quarter of the subjects' answers were also over the median value.

As shown before, **Activity 1** was linked to **Component 1 - COLLABORATIVE WORK**. The target of this component was to provide BET effective/high-quality material resources designed/selected/adapted for the courses. Furthermore, there were two Indicators for this component. The first stated that 80% of the students felt that the gameboards and the Apps used in the lesson had a good standard of social validity, involvement, and quality. The second one expected that at least

80% of the students felt that the new material used in the lessons promoted collaborative work. According to the previous analysis of Activity 1, it could be inferred that the goal of component 1 was achieved.

**Activity 2** was the Activity that supported **Component 2 - *MOTIVATION ENHANCEMENT***. The goal of the component was to provide BET lessons comprised of tasks regarding students' L2-future-self to strengthen students' motivation towards learning a Foreign Language. For this component, there were also two Indicators. The first Indicator assumed that at least 80% of the students thought that the L2-future-self tasks helped them keep motivated studying the language. The second one expected that at least 80% of the students thought that the L2-ideal-future-self tasks helped them develop collaborative work. Likewise, according to the previous analysis of Activity 2, it could be inferred that the goal of component 2 was also achieved.

All in all, the results reflect that the students well-accepted both activities one and two, pointing to the validation of the implementation of both activities in the new methodology for BET. Likewise, the implementation of the intervention itself had 100% fidelity, and were perceived by the students as being of a high-quality. There were no barriers faced during the intervention, and students' feedback after the 20 sessions indicated that they were high motivated and pleased to study with BET's methodology.

From the collected data, it could be affirmed that the activities and components met their objectives.

## 9. Evaluation of the Objectives of the Intervention

The **Purpose** of this intervention was to **decrease dropout rates intension in EFL programmes through enhanced collaboration and motivation for learning**. In pursuance of guaranteeing the achievement of such objective, three **Indicators** were proposed. The first indicator expected that at least 80% of the students declare that they would recommend BET as a Foreign Language Programme. The Second indicator stated that at least 80% of the students attested their intentions to keep attending the lessons throughout the programme. Both indicators were verified with data collected from both the Likert-type questionnaire and the focus group. The third indicator stated that at least 80% of the students would show an Attitude against Dropout over 80%.

The **Goal** of this intervention was **to enhance students' participation, motivation, and collaborative work, which allow BET's clients to successfully face future challenges in an ever-changing global environment**. Accordingly, two indicators were selected. The first pointed towards students' satisfaction, and it was expected that at least 80% of the students would feel satisfied with the education process delivered by BET. The second one stated that at least 80% of the students would report that their self-confidence and Future-self image were enhanced.

In order to ensure that the intervention achieved its **Purpose** and **Goal**, students were asked to fill up Likert-type questionnaires composed of 14 items. The first application (**Pre**) was implemented before the beginning of the intervention, and the second one (**Post**), right after the end of the intervention. To corroborate stability of the results found, a third application (**Follow-up**) was sent to the students 5 months after the intervention. The data were analysed according to 4 categories: **Attitude against Dropout, Self-confidence, Future-self Image, and Perception towards BET**. Table 6 depicts the results from the three Likert-type questionnaires implemented regarding the **Purpose (Pre and Follow-up)** and the **Goal (Post and Follow-up)** of this intervention.

The following table 6 depicts the results of the Likert-type questionnaire, which followed a scale ranging from 1 to 5, 1 being *Strongly Disagree (SD)*, 2 *Disagree (DA)*, 3 *Indifferent (ID)*, 4 *Agree (AG)*, and 5 *Strongly Agree (SA)*. The **Percentage** columns represent the results of the **Pre** stage of data collection, which accounts for the *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* answers. It is important to notice that the **PRE** results considered only *AG* answers due to the null answers accounting for *SA*. However, as the Purpose of this intervention was to deliver a high-quality programme, the **Post 1** and **Follow-up** results only considered the *SA* answers. The collumn **GRs** show the overall results for each category evaluated.

The Purpose of deploying a quantitative instrument is to complement both the fieldwork notebook information gathered throughout the intervention as well as the focus group data.

The main aspiration of category *Attitude against Droupout* was to perceive that students have changed some behaviours that could reflect a possible intention to drop out of the programme, for example, willingness to study English, time and effort dedicated to study, their interest, level of motivation, and if learning the language remained to be one of their main goals. *Self-confidence* showed how, to a certain extent, the students felt when facing some hindrances, for example, the pressure to learn the language, facing jobs interviews, and their level of frustration towards EFL. *Future-self Image* revealed whether the self-image of the students have changed throughout the classes and that they had a clearer idea of how to use English in their future. *Institute Perception* reflected whether the students were satisfied or not with the programme (BET) they received, and if they still felt motivated to continue studying in such programme.

Table 6

*Questionnaire Used to Assess the achievement of Purpose and End of BET (Pre, Post, and Follow-up)*

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS	Pre	GR	Post	GR	Follow-up	GR
<b>Attitude against Dropout</b>	My attitude towards learning English has positively changed throughout the classes.	75.0%		100%		100%	
	I consider that the time and effort I put into studying English has increased	50.0%		75%		63%	
	My self-interest towards learning the language has improved	37.5%	50.0%	100%	93.8%	100%	90.6%
	The course fostered my motivations towards pursuing a higher fluency level	37.5%		100%		100%	
	Learning has become/continue to be one of my main goals	25.0%		100%		100%	
<b>Self-confidence Enhanced</b>	I feel less pressure towards learning the language	25.0%		100%		50%	
	I am more confident to face a job interview in English in the near future	25.0%		50%		63%	
	I feel there are fewer/no barriers to continue studying English	25.0%	20.0%	100%	90.0%	100%	80.0%
	I feel less frustrated with my learning process than in previous experiences	0.0%		100%		100%	
<b>Better Future-self Image</b>	I have a clearer idea of the use of English for my future	100.0%		88%		88%	
	My image of myself using English has positively changed during the classes	25.0%	62.5%	63%	75%	88%	87.5%
<b>Institute Perception</b>	I felt more motivated to keep on learning	25.0%		100%		100%	
	I would strongly recommend this Language Institute	25.0%	20.8%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	I would enroll myself in this Institute to continue studying English	12.5%		100%		100%	

Source: The Author

The figures showed that not only students' *Attitude against Dropout* did sharply increase after the intervention, but also the percentage found in the **Follow-up**, although lower, it just represented a difference of 3.2%. Additionally, the non parametric statistical test Wilcoxon was applied to the sum of the scores for the students, comparing the results from **Pre** against the **Post**, obtaining a p-value of 0,005, which shows that the results obtained after the intervention are statistically different from the pretest, suggesting that after BET intervention students are drastically less prone to drop out. Moreover, the same test was applied to compare the **Post** against the **Follow-up**, obtaining a p-value of 0.617, showing that there is no difference statistically significant. Therefore, there was no evidence of a change at this time.

Concerning the first category—*Attitude against Dropout*—the results showed that there were 93.8% of acceptance by the students in the **Post** and 90.6% in the **Follow-up**. Likewise, the results demonstrated that students' *Self-confidence* increased, ranging from 20% in the **Pre**-stage to 90% and 80% in the **Post** and **Follow-up**, respectively. When comparing the 3 results related to *Future-self Image*, it was also noted that their image of themselves using English was enhanced during the classes. It was interesting to observe that the **Follow-up** results were even higher than the ones obtained right after the intervention.

Concerning the *Institute Perception*, it was worth noting that students consistently stated their motivation to keep on studying with this methodology. Besides, they all would strongly recommend BET as a Language Institute. This category also represents the highest difference in percentage, ranging from 20.8% in the **Pre-stage** to 100% in both **Post** and **Follow-up** stages.

In order to enrich the information about students' perception towards the intervention, qualitative data were collected from the focus group. It could be observed that such data were strongly congruent with the three quantitative results obtained from the Pre, Post, and Follow-up.

All the students made **optimistic comments** regarding how their **attitude towards learning English** had positively changed throughout the classes. They attributed this change to the quality of the classes, and also the implementation of the activities, that is to say, games boards, Apps, and future-self activities. As a consequence, they felt that they were **more interested in learning** than when they had previous experiences studying the language. They declared to feel more motivated and admitted that learning the language until they **reach a higher fluency level** had become one of their **main goals**.

Throughout the focus group, some students made comments like:

"In my opinion, the most valuable aspect of this course as to feel that I can learn it. Before I was bad at languages, but now I truly believe that I can learn it, and I feel really motivated to continue studying." [student]

"The gameboards were awesome. After class, I went home and told my parents about the class and that I felt so comfortable to use the language, although I could make some mistakes. There was laughter, and the things I learn through the game I think I won't forget."  
([student])

Moreover, all the students stated that the classes helped them feel more confident about themselves, and also to have **a clearer idea of the use of English and its importance in their future**. Students argued that in previous experiences, they had had some teachers who would not foster participation, and some of them would even laugh at their mistakes. In **BET**, they said that they felt **less pressure towards learning English** due to the treatment received by the teacher but also due to the **collaborative environment** that was yielded in class by the participation of their partners during the activities. Crucial information observed was that they affirmed to feel that there were **fewer barriers** which would impede them from succeeding in learning, as they felt **less frustrated** with their apprenticeship when compared to previous experiences. When they were asked about the usage of English for a job purpose, for example, participating in an interview, they declared that although they did not feel confident enough due to the low level they still had, they felt that if they **did not give in**, they would be more prepared, and could **face a job interview** in English in a near future.

Thus, it could be affirmed that not only the intervention achieved its *Purpose* but also its *Goal*, even after 5 months of its delivery.

## 10. Conclusion

As the **purpose** of this study was to **decrease dropout intension rates in EFL programmes through enhanced collaboration and motivation for learning**, a remarkable achievement was that students' attitude against dropout increased by 43.8%, shifting from a 50% percent to a 93.8% right after the intervention. In the same fashion, their motivation to remain to study in their previous language institute was low, accounting for only 20.8%. However, the results sharply increased to 100% after BET intervention. Moreover, only 2 out of the 8 students would recommend the EFL institution where they had studied before, and all the 8 students declared that they would strongly recommend BET as a foreign language programme.

The **goal** of the intervention was to **strengthen students' participation, motivation, and collaborative work so that students can experience enhanced self-confidence and Future-self image**. The results showed that their *Self-confidence* in using English and *Future-self images*, right after the end of the intervention, increased by 70% and 12,5% respectively. With regard to collaborative work, data collected from qualitative data revealed that all of the students affirmed the importance of the implementation of collaborative work in class as a mean to foster their participation and motivation throughout the programme. Along with the previous results, both qualitative and quantitative data confirmed that all the students declared to feel highly satisfied with the education process delivered by BET.

Some factors that facilitated the attainment of the purpose and the goal of this intervention were the high attendance observed throughout the programme, and students' willingness to participate. There was not even one class when the number of absent students were more than 2. Throughout the classes it could be observed that the participation of the students was high. All of them asked questions and actively participated in every task that were proposed.

Also, the use of *gamification* and ICT in class were found to be helpful by all the students concerning the comprehension of grammar structures, and it was found to facilitate vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, it fostered collaborative environment (Kwok & Yang, 2017) through enhanced social interaction and joyfulness, which enhanced their motivation to keep on learning (Izquierdo, Simard, & Garza, 2015; Lan, Sung, Cheng, & Chang). Moreover, it promoted opportunities when the students could express themselves in the new language (Plass & Jones, 2005; Piirainen–Marsh & Tainio, 2009).

In accordance with previous researches (Magid, 2011; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013), this study has also found that the deployment of tasks concerning future-self has also strengthened students'



motivation towards learning EFL. The majority of students agreed that BET helped them to keep motivated studying the language, and all the students assured that the L2-future-self tasks helped them to develop collaborative work. A striking finding here was the use of such tasks to intentionally promote collaborative work in class.

In this intervention, the results clearly indicated that, in our context, the introduction of the new material to complement the textbook, not only yielded collaborative work among the students but also boosted their motivation towards learning EFL.

There existed some elements that promoted the accomplishment of the activities, for example, the space available for the 8 students so the classes could be conveyed without any inconvenient, the excellent quality of the Wi-Fi connection, the disposition of a TV, all the students had smartphones with enough space available to install the Apps and enough outlets available. Also, the Apps used were free, which makes the cost of the intervention very low. Another crucial fact to be taken into consideration is the fact that this was a short intervention when compared to students' previous experiences. The main barrier was the creation of the videos, as it was very time-consuming in the beginning, and the platform where it was produced was not for free, which increased the cost of the implementation. Although the existence of such hurdles, the implementation had 100% fidelity.

Despite the positive results, this study presented some limitations. The first one was the roof effect generated by the instrument to measure the goal and the purpose of this intervention, which does not permit accurate analysis of the quantitative data. Likewise, albeit the few numbers of participants can be also considered as a limitation, they represented a great diversity of contexts, cultures, and backgrounds, and yet data collected through different instruments were convergent, which provided a high standard of representativeness with regard to their positive perception and acceptance concerning students perception related to this intervention, even after 5 months.

One of the barriers that could have emerged during the implementation of the videos and the Apps. would be the fact that students did not have a modern mobile phone/tablet, or that the internal space they had available in it prevented them from having the video and watched it by themselves. A possible solution would be that teachers play the video on a full screen, or that students sit in pairs so that the task could be accomplished. Another possible solution would be that the institutions provide their students' tablets for the sake of the task completion.

The main obstacle faced during this intervention was a time constraint, as there were only 20 sessions available to the realization of this intervention, and the number of tasks were pretty high. Another hindrance was that the classes were held in the morning, and sometimes a few students would

be a little late or have family or work issues to solve. As a solution for these barriers, more sessions could be implemented, and they could be allocated at a time students are less busy.

For the replication of this intervention, it would be important to run a pilot version of the quantitative instrument in order to avoid a possible ceiling effect. Additionally, it could be considered to be deployed with more individuals and in different contexts, for example, with high school students and undergraduate programmes.

To sum up, it can be concluded that the programme **BET** successfully achieved the goal of decreasing students' dropout rates through the promotion of collaborative work in class among the students, thus sharply enhancing their participation during the sessions, and their motivation towards learning EFL. Furthermore, **BET** helped students feel more confident in using the language, and have an enriched self-image, which will allow them to successfully face future challenges in an ever-changing global environment.

## 11. Final Considerations

Through the realization of this study, I could perceive how my professional approach towards education and research have drastically changed. Firstly, I must admit that I used to be a bit sceptical concerning qualitative research and its instruments. At the diagnosis phase, I could perceive the importance and the complexity of it, and the valuable results it provides to the design of the intervention. Thus, my interest in the realm of qualitative research was sharpened.

Concerning the design of the intervention, it was a bit complicated at the beginning of the process understanding the logic underlying the Logical Matrix Framework. Right after accomplishing it, I faced the hindrance of being obliged to change the research topic due to labour inconveniences. After carefully rethinking my study, I realised how crucial it was to have the design of the intervention following this methodology. Also, later ahead, this lesson learnt made the process of reporting the result smoother.

I must admit that I was also a bit sceptical as to whether or not adult learners of English would be open to using their imagination in an educational context. However, most of my participants told me that they enjoyed using their imagination to imagine positive and negative situations of themselves using English in the future. Therefore, they don't need to depend on their language teachers as their sole source of motivation, which can genuinely make them autonomous learners.

In my specific case, the implementation process was very comfortable, because I designed and implemented it. The most important take away for me was concerning data collection issues throughout the process, and use them to carry out future analyses. Also, I was a little sceptic that adults would be interested in playing games, and talk about their future projection and perceived it an important part of their learning. However, I was amazed to see how much all of them enjoyed the processes. I also learned a lot from their personal experiences and different cultures and backgrounds.

Notwithstanding, I could envision that if the person who implement the activities in the future only speaks English and not the language of the students, it could be a problem for the communication and the instruction phase, and directly affect the time students realise the activity. Also, as a consequence, students could feel frustrated with the activity, and they would possibly perceive the task as a being boring or even over challenging due to Language limitation. Additionally, students could feel uncomfortable to present their ideas in the foreign language in front of others. A possible adaptation for lower level stages would be considering the option to students carry out the task in

their own language, or also that they send a video directly to the teacher, who later could watch them, and gather the ideas that emerged from the video, and share with the students in the subsequent class.

As mentioned before, to plunge into the qualitative world to first collect data was amusing. So, I could see how important having run a qualitative analysis was, and richness of the information it provides to the results, and also see that qualitative data could be the role of complementing data.

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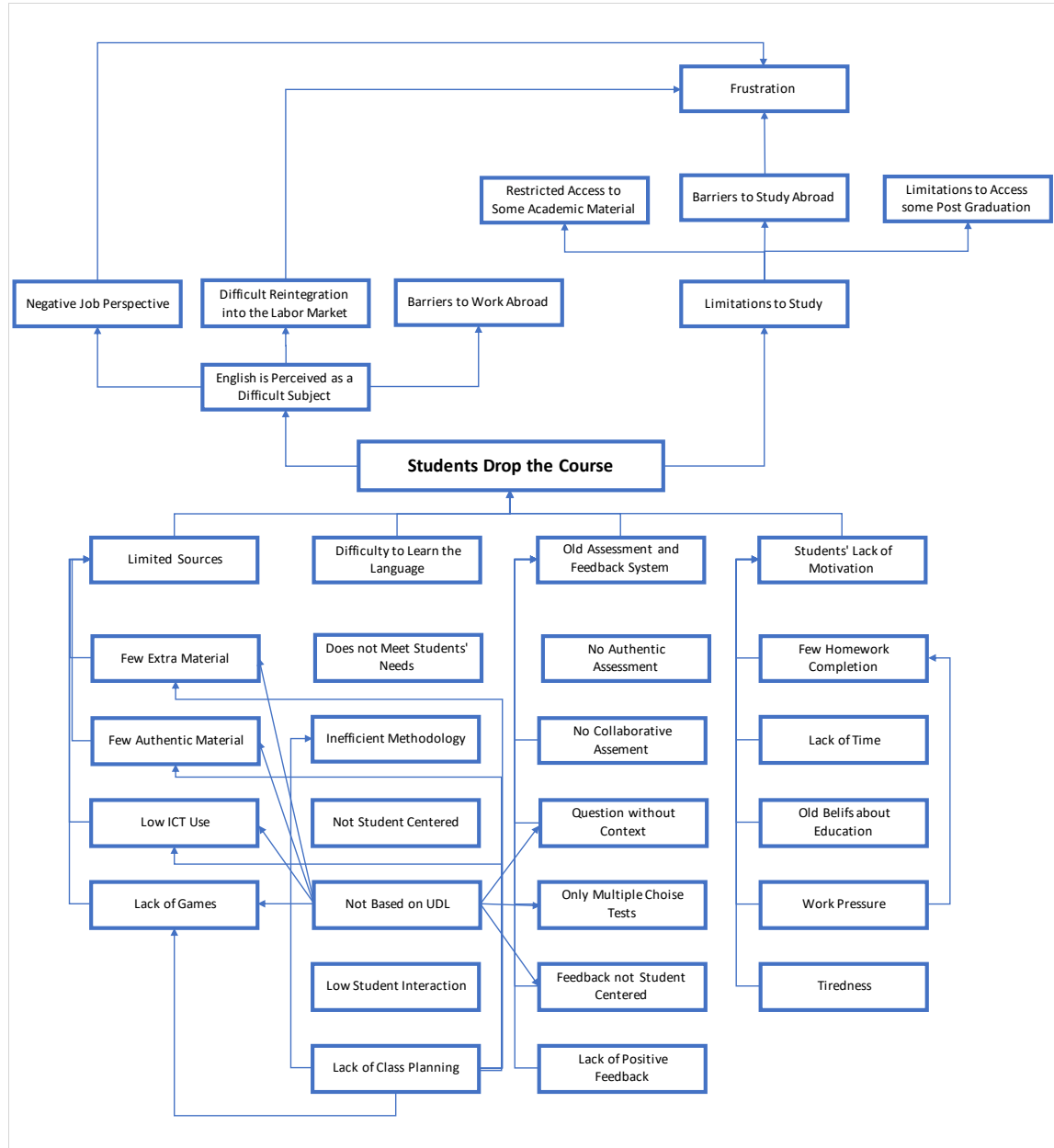


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## 13. APPENDICES

### 13.1. The Problem Tree



### 13.2. BET's video - Content of the Video



### 13.3. Last Slide towards Collaborative Work in Class





