

**DESIGNING A LESSON PLAN USING MULTIMODAL DIGITAL COMPOSING  
TO FOSTER ORAL PARTICIPATION TO A STUDENT WITH ASD**

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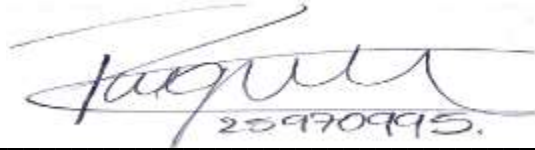
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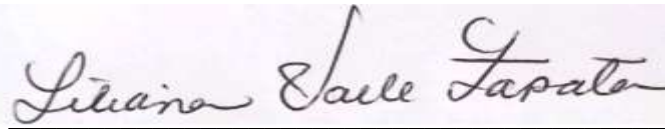
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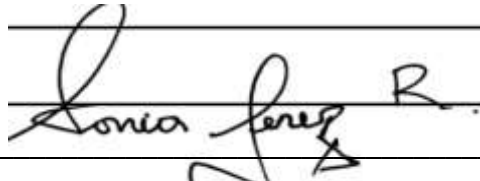
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### **María Paula Lizarralde Ángel**

## **Abstract**

Inclusion is one of the most challenging aspects in education, especially when teaching English as a second language to autistic students. This research aims to identify the elements, stages, steps, differentiations and adaptations that a multimodal digital composing lesson should have to foster oral participation in a student with ASD in a regular school in Montería. Data was collected through a questionnaire, an interview and document analysis. Findings of this study describes a lesson plan built on theories and perspectives concerning designing of Multimodal Digital Texts and guided by the students' needs analysis. Finally, this study suggests teaching English through the content and the text from the general to the specific.

*Keywords: autism, multimodal digital composing, oral participation.*



## Resumen

La inclusión es uno de los aspectos más desafiantes en la educación, especialmente al enseñar inglés como segunda lengua a estudiantes con autismo. Esta investigación se propone identificar los elementos, etapas, pasos, diferenciaciones y adaptaciones que un plan de clase de composición digital multimodal debería incluir para promover la participación oral en estudiantes con autismo a través de la creación de textos digitales multimodales en una escuela regular en Montería. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de un cuestionario, entrevista y análisis de documentos. Los resultados de este estudio muestran y describen un modelo de planeación (o plan de clase) basado en teorías y perspectivas sobre la creación de textos digitales multimodales y orientado por el análisis de necesidades de los estudiantes. Finalmente, este estudio sugiere enseñar inglés a través del contenido y texto de lo general a lo específico.

Conceptos claves: *Autismo, composición digital multimodal, participación oral*

## **1. Introduction**

Inclusion is one of the most discussed topics in education settings around the world in recent years. Many efforts have been made to create friendly environments for inclusion in regular schools, yet students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (henceforth ASD) are not fully included in regular schools; since, there is a misinterpretation in what inclusion actually means. For instance, including students with special needs is not just about placing them in the regular classrooms but assuring that they fully participate and achieve learning. According to Ainscow (2005) inclusion is a process in which diversity is accepted as a positive stimulus for learning, and steps are taken to identify and remove barriers that may exclude the presence, participation and achievement of all students, emphasizing those who are likely to be marginalized. In this sense, it is important to understand that inclusive education does not focus on disabilities but on the abilities of all students, and it is not directed to a special education field but to general education. Besides attempting to contribute to an effective inclusion of students with ASD who are considered as students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, few researchers have carried out different studies to suggest inclusive practices to foster ASD students' communication and participation in class (Pandya et.al., 2016).

In this sense, inclusion should be a priority in all educational settings. For this reason, the Colombian government legislated on this matter, first, by the Law 1618 of 2013 which stated that disabled people's rights must be guaranteed by the effort of public entities, and

introduced some new terms to the education law such as social inclusion, access, accessibility, barriers, rehabilitation, and differentiated approach. According to the cited Law the Colombian government issued the decree 1421 of 2017 which focuses on inclusive education and ordains its implementation in all the education system of the country, yet there are still some teachers who are not sufficiently prepared for assisting and teaching students with special educational needs and disabilities (henceforth SEND), especially in public schools (Bryant, 2018). Moreover, pre-service teachers neither have proper training regarding this area. This aspect can also be noticed in some English teaching programs where there is little preparation to teach students with SEND. Therefore, there is an urgent need to revise this topic to learn how to plan lessons and units to include all learners in our classes. Particularly, learning how to differentiate students' needs, talents and likes to design lessons that meet students' weaknesses and potentials.

This study was conducted with 10 second graders students from a regular school in Monteria. One of the learners was a high -functioning autistic student participating in a regular class with other children without additional support needs. Regarding the teacher of English, she had no experience at teaching students with autism. In consequence, she did not feel confident when teaching this student. According to her reports, she had used some teaching strategies in her class to help this student boost his participation but without positive outcomes. Thus, this qualitative study aims at describing the main characteristics and adaptations of an English lesson plan using multimodal digital composing to foster oral participation in an autistic student at a regular school in Monteria. In this regard, the study answered the following question:

- What characteristics, and adaptations should an English teacher consider when designing a Multimodal Digital Composing lesson in order to foster oral participation in a student with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who is fully included in a regular classroom? The following chapters present the theoretical framework, which defines the principal concepts in this research such as inclusion, autistic students, oral participation and multimodality, and the literature review regarding the topic of this study. The next chapter explains the methodology used to collect all the data required in this research.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The following are the main constructs used to support this research: Autistic student learning, multimodality and multimodal digital composing, oral communication, and lesson planning.

### **2.1 Conceptual Framework**

Inclusion has been the main concern in education settings these years. The academic community is rethinking the way inclusion should be integrated into regular school curriculums and everyday lessons. However, inclusion is not an option; it is a mandate for all education settings all over the country (Law 1618, 2013, p.2). Even though most regular schools usually do not fully understand what inclusion is and what it involves in the education system.

Inclusion differs from exclusion, segregation, and integration. Firstly, educators started to use the word exclusion which “occurs when students are directly or indirectly prevented from or denied access to education in any form.” (Unicef, 2012). Then, they realized that some children were not accepted in regular schools because they were different in one way or

another, so they were separated from their peers. Thus, once educators noticed this exclusion, they considered that those learners had the right to receive education in special education settings that suit students' special education needs or disabilities (henceforth SEND). For this reason, some special schools were built for those students.

Later on, the education community became aware that this type of education was a way of segregation in which “children are classified according to their impairment and allocated a school designed to respond to that particular impairment” (UNICEF, 2012, p.10). This means that although students with disabilities were given education services they needed to be set aside from regular peers, so they were segregated. Therefore, educators started to talk about the negative influence that segregation may have on these students and the society as a whole and the need of integrating them to mainstream schools. This integration process has to do with placing students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms (UNICEF, 2012). Yet educators found out this did not guarantee an effective education for students with special educational needs.

Thus, the word inclusion appeared, and its meaning in the education field aims to a “recognition of a need to transform the cultures, policies and practices in schools to accommodate the differing needs of individual students, and an obligation to remove the barriers that impede that possibility.” (UNICEF, 2012, p.10). In other words, inclusion is not only about accepting students with SEND into regular education and having them sitting in the classroom with other pupils. It is also about changing the educational policies and the instructional material in a lesson to provide students with SEND the needed opportunities to learn along with their peers.

Furthermore, as Booth and Ainscow (2002) state, inclusion is about “...minimizing all barriers in education for all students. Inclusion starts from the recognition of the differences between students” (p. 3). In this sense, all kinds of students have the right to be educated; above all, to receive schooling that adapts to their individual needs. In order to fully include students with disabilities, teachers need to know each condition of those learners to be aware of their particular needs. Then, teachers adjust the subject-matter to make it more suitable for them to access the educational system without any form of inequality. For the reasons previously mentioned, students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) need to be included in the Colombian education system, and learn a foreign language with methodologies adapted to their abilities and necessities within a regular school with non-disabled peers. Therefore designing a lesson that pre-service teachers can effectively include in their classes and use with students who have special needs or a disability, to foster oral participation in the English class through a methodology known as Multimodal Digital Composing (henceforth MDC.) It is a step forward to overcome the gap that has existed regarding the importance of fulfilling the needs of this population.

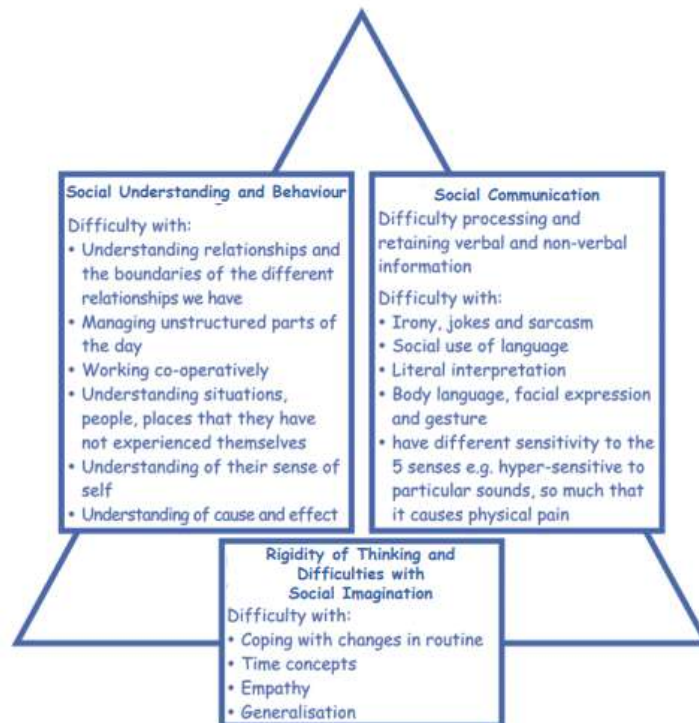
### **2.1.1 Autistic Student.**

The American Psychiatric Association defines Autism Spectrum Disorder (henceforth ASD) as “a complex developmental condition” that affects people's social skills, speech, communication, and restricted or repetitive behaviors. People with ASD have difficulties with three main aspects: social understanding and behavior, social communication, and rigidity of thinking and difficulties with social imagination (Haddad, 2009) as can be seen in figure 1 all the impairments it implies; they vary from person to person, this means that not all the autistics have the same difficulties. In other words, having a problem with these 3

areas is a clue to recognize someone with autism and because of this they usually have some struggles connecting with people, things and events.

**Figure 1**

*The Triad of Impairments- Autistic Spectrum Disorder*



Usually, ASD can be diagnosed during the first life-years. Some symptoms may be seen in children when they are between 2 or 3 years old (American Psychiatric Association, 2018). This means that ASD is a disability evidenced in children's behavior. Moreover, there are different types of autism: there are high-functioning and low-functioning autistics, so American Psychiatric Association (2018) effects of ASD and its symptoms may differ in each person. Additionally, it is a lifelong condition. However, many autistic children can have autonomous, productive, and fulfilling lives.

Furthermore, autistic students have outstanding skills such as hyperlexia, iconic memory and as a result, they “may test higher than originally expected” (Pandya et. al., 2016, p. 416). Additionally, they are usually good at painting, drawing, learning languages, music, and arts (Kanner, 1987, as cited in Vargas & Mendioroz, 2016). Their disabilities should not shadow the distinctive capabilities students possess. However, not all students with ASD have the same skills, yet they will have at least one ability to be notable in an area.

In a classroom, teachers may find autistic students but with dissimilar characteristics that need to be considered when designing an ELF class. Teachers should identify autistics’ potential learning barriers as figure 1 shows. The principal goal must be to help them overcome some of their limitations to live better, rather than intending to change their condition. Students with ASD can learn, yet they assimilate more when the activities include movements. In this sense, the traditional “book and pencil” classes are not suitable for them, ELF classes must contain audiovisual materials (Haryudin and Jamilah, 2018, p. 108) due to their challenges to interpreting what surrounds them and the meanings of some words; and their difficulty to keep quiet listening to the teacher for a long time. In addition, Padmadewi and Artini (2017) affirm that “the ASD student showed a quick understanding for things presented visually and amazingly had an ability to copy perfectly things he saw visually” (p. 164). They are able to recall events or words when they can relate it to an image. Nonetheless, giving the first step to start a conversation in English is hardly seen in a natural scenario.

### **2.1.2 Multimodality.**

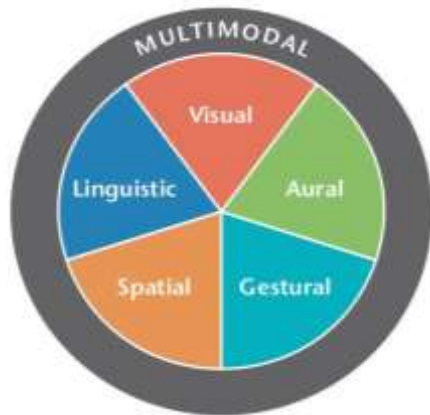
The word multimodal may be divided into two terms: multiple and mode, multiple means various and mode means “a way of communicating” thus the word multimodal refers to the



combination of various ways that people use to make meaning, i.e., to communicate something. (Arola et. al. 2014, p.1)

People may communicate through five modes: a visual mode involving images, a linguistic mode that has to do with written or spoken words, an aural mode concerning sounds, a spatial mode entailing physical arrangement, and a gestural mode implying body language (figure 2). These modes are presented in all texts hence all texts are multimodal. (The New London Group as cited in Arola et. al. 2014)

Figure 2



*The Five Modes of Communication*

The modes of communicating use different channels to deliver the message, they are called media, in singular: medium. “A medium is the way your text reaches your audience”, for instance, the way people use language rather than spoken or written words is considered as a linguistic mode of communication, media to deliver the message in this mode could be a research paper, a WhatsApp message or a voice recording. All that the reader can see in a text refers to a visual mode of communication, media to deliver the message in this mode could be photo, drawing, or even the layout of a written text. The previous examples depict the difference and connection between a mode and media, but it is important to bear in mind that all media mix at least two modes of communication. (Arola et. al. 2014)

### ***2.1.2.1 Multimodal literacy.***

“Multimodal Literacy refers to meaning-making that occurs through the reading, viewing, understanding, responding to and producing and interacting with multimedia and digital texts.” (Walsh, 2010, p. 213). This means that this kind of literacy leads the student to create meaning by either producing or interacting with digital texts that combine different modes of communication thru multimedia, such as words, images, drawings, videos, audio, gestures, etc. In this study, the focus will be on students creating meaning in through a digital multimodal text, particularly in a video, since “Increasingly in digital practices outside of school, adolescent youth actively compose meaning through new kinds of texts in their social worlds” (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005 as cited in Miller, 2010, p.1). For instance, with the new app and social network for creating and sharing videos called TikTok, which is liked by many young people around the world. But it is worth emphasizing the fact that nowadays not only adolescents are creating multimodal texts in digital means yet so are children and adults.

In the same line of ideas, since teaching has to do with preparing students for the real world, especially those that have learning or physical disabilities, the choice for creating multimodal digital texts is based on the current world demands where the digital means have become the principal channels to deliver messages. In order to make the teaching process more meaningful for learners, it is relevant to adapt activities that require the production or composition of multimodal digital texts because they enjoy using technology and spending time on media platforms. Nowadays, these multimodal activities are used more commonly as cultural practices (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006 as cited in Miller, 2010). This means that people are getting information from printable to digital means, for instance, some people

prefer to read or create a digital newspaper, magazine, poster or book. This also means shifts in literacy which is “moving from the conventional sense of reading and writing *only* print text to an expanded sense of reading and writing multiple forms of non-print “texts,” (Miller, 2010, p. 2) and it is worth considering that these new multimodal literacies are purposeful and meaningful for the users to communicate in society (Miller, 2010).

#### **2.1.2.2 *Multimodal Digital Composing (MDC).***

This study will use the term Multimodal Digital Composing (henceforth MDC) refers to the production of texts (videos, posters, slides, podcasts) using diverse modes of communication (words, pictures, images, videos) with different digital devices such as tablets, smartphones, laptops, cameras, and so on. MDC has been proved to be effective in the teaching and learning of students with ASD since it offers them a wide range of opportunities to improve their social skills and academic process (Pandya et. al., 2016). Since the social and academic aspects in children with ASD may be challenging regarding oral communication MDC seems to engage them with different modes and sensory aspects of composition. As a result, it will foster their creativity and learning opportunities (Pandya et. al., 2016).

#### **2.1.2.3 *Short Film Production Assessment.***

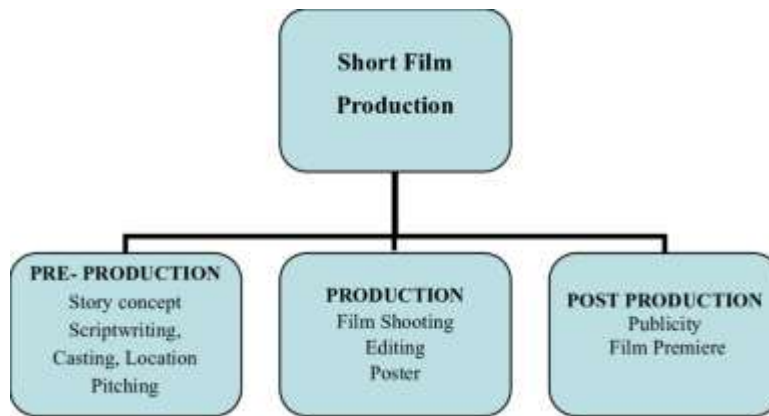
Language teachers have relied on the use of films “to help students learn a language or develop deeper into a literary text” (Hu Xiaoqiong & Jiang Xianxing, 2008 as cited in Perry, 2018, p. 219). This means that language students may do better in their language acquisition process and improve their literacy skills when they are helped by meaningful materials such as films. Nowadays, teachers have ventured to adapt the stages of filmmaking: pre-production, production, post production, and distribution; to assess their student’s digital text

creation process; this process entails “developing ideas, forming plans, filming, editing and presenting” (Theodosakis, 2009 as cited in Perry, 2018, p. 219) to guide student towards the development of language skills, and other abilities such as “interpersonal communication, visual, spatial, and digital literacy, creative and problem solving abilities” (Theodosakis, 2009 as cited in Perry, 2018, p. 219)

Perry (2018) adapted the stages of The Filmmaking production process mentioned above to a university short film project. It includes three stages in the assessment of creating short digital texts: Pre Production, Production, and Postproduction, each stage presents the evaluation criteria to let teacher and students know what they may assess and what they may achieve, respectively. This evaluation criteria drew on the formative approach that considers that “learning occurs throughout the process of the assessment and not purely from the outcome” in other words, it focuses on evaluating the performance of the student’s skills throughout the process instead of exclusively scoring a final product. This assessment “allows students to engage with multimodalities” (Perry, 2018, p. 220) while creating a film, as it is a mixture of different modes of communication, that provide students with a variety of communicating and learning opportunities.

### **Figure 3**

*Short Film Production Assessment.*



From Perry, Melissa. (2018). 21st Century Skills through Film Production in Tertiary Education: A Transformative Assessment in a Literature and Media Course. 3L The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies. 24. 214-232. 10.17576/3L-2018-2404-16.

In the pre-production stage, students think about the story they will tell in their short films, they script it, make decisions about the location, the shoot process, and schedules, also they prepare a presentation to talk about their project. In this stage They also assign roles such as director, actors, cameraperson, editor and props and costume manager. (Perry, 2018) In the production stage, students record their films, make editions and create a poster of it. In the post production, students advertise and showcase their film in a film premiere (Perry, 2018). From this process Perry (2018) set an evaluation criterion to assess the following tasks:

- “Pitching/Presentation”: it worthed “10 marks” and assessed “summary, justification, content, critical thinking, collaboration” skills.
- “Short Film Poster”: it worthed “5 marks” and assessed “creativity, critical thinking, visibility/ publicity” skills.
- “Movie Premiere”: it worthed “5 marks” and assessed “Publicity, event management, collaboration” skills.

- “Short Film”: it worthed “20 marks” and assessed “Script, story, organization, plot, theme, acting, music and sound, editing, originality, creativity, completeness” skills.

#### ***2.1.2.4 Digital Storytelling Process (DSP).***

Moreover, Digital Storytelling has to do with the way information has been passed through generations but rather than in the traditional oral way it uses digital devices to do it, and thanks to the technological development in the 21th century, nowadays anyone may easily create digital stories and share them with the rest of the world. These stories may be considered as multimodal digital texts since they weave together images, music, text, and voice. Within the Digital Storytelling Process to create Multimodal Digital Texts (henceforth MDT) there are 8 steps (see figure 4) that can be followed to create digital texts “in all content areas and at all grade levels while incorporating the 21st century skills of creating, communicating, and collaborating.” (Morra, 2013)

#### **Figure 4**

*Digital storytelling Process*



*Note: From 8 Steps To Great Digital Storytelling, by Samantha Morra, June, 5 2013, Transform Learning ~ written by Samantha Morra Exploring How Digital Tools Transform Learning*

In step one, students “start with an idea” that “could be the topic of a lesson”, and write a proposal where they give information about the topic, it can be reasons why they choose that topic; in the step two, students “research, explore and learn about the topic” and they may create an outline to organize the ideas they gather or just take notes. In step three, students “write or script” what their texts will say. In the step four students plan or storyboard to understand the connection of their script with sounds and images and make decisions about the use of them. In step five, students “gather and create images, audio and video” the media they choose to include in their text will “set impact and set the tone for their digital story”. Also, in this step students “record themselves reading their scripts”. In step six, students “put it all together” they blend images, music, effects to make a single product; also, they may edit their storyboard. In step seven, teachers embrace students to share their digital text online, before doing it the teacher must review their “school or district’s Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)” If they are allowed to do it they may find a way to share their students’ stories

with a “broader audience”. In the last step, number 8, students are given time to reflect and receive feedback about their work. (Morra, 2013)

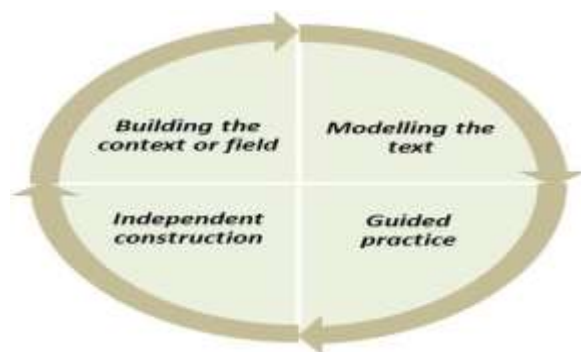
### ***2.1.2.5 Teaching and Learning Cycle.***

Furthermore, the Teaching and Learning Cycle (henceforth TLC) (see figure 5) is an approach that attempts to design activities that increase the students' learning by scaffolding and giving explicit teaching. In other words, the activities students are asked to do must be designed to offer opportunities to learn when interacting with more skilled peers or even when being guided by the teacher, understanding the teacher as a more experienced one. (Derewianka, n.d.)

This approach may support the MDC process since it “focuses on the cyclical nature of the teacher’s role through the various production stages” (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019). This means that the teacher's role is meant to be a guide for the students to achieve learning goals throughout the different moments in the digital texts creating process.

### **Figure 5**

*The Teaching and Learning Cycle*



There are four important stages (see Table. 1) in the TLC that required teachers, partners or



caretaker's support for creating MDTs (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019).

**Table 1**

*Teaching and Learning Cycle stages.*

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1. **“Building the context or field”**; understanding purpose, context or genre, and topic of a MDT. (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019)

**Recommendations:** When students do not have a background knowledge of the language and content to talk about the topic, they “will need to develop both at the same time” for achieving this,

- Teachers should use visual material to brainstorm the vocabulary required,
- Teachers may use their student's first language and encourage students to use it as well, to elicit background knowledge vocabulary.
- Provide material students can use with their families. (Using the teaching and learning cycle with EAL/D learners, August,18, 2020).

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2. **Modelling the text**; Building a metalanguage about meaning design choices for analyzing the structure of a model and identifying the modes and the semiotic resources within. (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019)

**Recommendations:**

- The model MDT should deal with “familiar content to the children”,
- “includes the key structural and linguistic features of the genre that students are learning”
- “demonstrates the assessment criteria”.
- **When modeling the language**, it is important to use models of texts that “focus on specific language features, for example imperative in a procedural text.”,
- Teachers may guide students “to identify the topic-specific vocabulary in the model text”.
- Analyze the text with the help of a student's first language semiotic resources. (Using the teaching and learning cycle with EAL/D learners, August,18, 2020)

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3. **Guided practice or joint construction**; Teacher guiding students in the creation of a MDT. (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019)

**Recommendations:**

- During the guided practice teacher should support students in the writing process of the language they need and that they cannot write by themselves.
- The writing activity has to be according to the student's language proficiency, it can be as simple as reordering a sentence or filling the gap. (Using the teaching and learning cycle with EAL/D learners, August,18, 2020)

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4. **Independent construction**; a construction of a new MDT by students working alone. (Derewianka and Jones, 2016; Humphrey, 2017; Humphrey and Feez, 2016 as cited in Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019)

**Recommendations:**

- During the independent practice, teachers should “provide feedback” throughout their student’s independent work.
- “focusing on a limited number of features linked to” each student's individual learning goals and the criteria.
- Some important aspects to bear in mind are planning (ideas), drafting (sentences and vocabulary), editing (spelling and punctuation) (Using the teaching and learning cycle with EAL/D learners, August,18, 2020)

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In other words, the TLC four stages explained above, suggest that first, the teacher contextualizes students in the topic they will be creating multimodal digital texts. After that, the teacher must model MDT, for example, by using a sample video to identify the text structure, the different modes used and so on. Teachers may model language, as well, in our lesson this part is the beginning of the lesson before actually entering to the production stages, however modeling language could be done at any moment if it necessary. Thus, these first two moments may match with the filmmaking pre-production stage and the four first steps in the DSP, “they all having to do with the brainstorming of ideas, the exploration of the topic, the technological devices and the digital resources, the use of metalanguage to understand and be aware of semiotic resources, the scripting and storyboarding of the digital text before creating it. Then, students start to construct digital texts with the teacher monitoring their work. This moment may match with the filmmaking production stage and with steps five and six of the DSP, that involves the creation of the digital text by gathering or creating the images, audios or videos, also it may include the editing moment where students tweak their digital texts as many times as they consider in their self-evaluation process of their work. In the end the final stage is when the students work independently and this might match with the filmmaking post-production stage and with the last two steps of

DSP, seven and eight, that suggest sharing the final version of the student's DMT in a film premier or an online community, as long as the teacher is allowed to do it by their school.

### **2.1.3 Oral Participation**

Alomari (2019) defines oral communication as “speech and conversation skills” (p. 7) but includes the relation with writing skills in the concept. To widen the prior explanation, Dancer and Kamvounias (2005) interpret oral participation as “an active engagement that consists of five elements: participation, contribution to a discussion, group skills, communication skills, and attendance.” (as cited in Frymier and Houser, 2016, p. 4). This offers clear criteria of the sub-skills that teachers must take into consideration when assessing oral participation. Tepfenhart (2011) clarifies that this skill is associated with students' academic success yet EFL teachers struggle to reach self-initiated oral participation in the target language among all the classroom.

Oral participation is part of the speaking skill, and being able to “speaking English is one of the language skills which would give benefit for those who practice it” (Haryudin and Jamilah, 2018, p. 109). However, this is one of the abilities that autistic students struggle the most owing to their difficulties to communicate, even in their mother tongue. Some autistics have nonverbal communication. Thus, it is relevant that English teachers know their students' abilities and then decide how to focus on the particular need to communicate better in order to encourage them to use the target language. This will not only improve their level of English but also their life as a whole, especially in the interpersonal aspect.

#### **2.1.4 Lesson planning**

Milkova (2012) explains "A lesson plan is the instructor's road map of what students need to learn and how it will be done effectively during the class time" (p. 37). Lesson planning is a key part of teaching that every teacher needs to take into consideration to manage time effectively and to help the students reach their learning goals. When teachers dedicate time to plan, it demonstrates their commitment and level of professionalism (Harmer, 2017). Thus, knowing how to plan is an important part of teachers' training that must not be underestimated. This has main elements, such as the purpose of the lesson, substance of the lesson, methods of the lesson and the evaluation of the lesson (Butt, 2008). These are the most essential elements, yet planning for diversity needs a reexamination on the way lessons are designed within the inclusive education approach to assist all students in the classroom and particularly students with SEND (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008).

##### **2.1.4.1 *Planning for diversity.***

Planning for diversity is "an important process in teaching that is relevant to the movement to greater inclusion in schools" (Black et al., 2018, p. 10). Teachers start including students with SEND in the classroom when their needs are taken into consideration since the planning process. Sometimes, teachers see diversity as a difficult issue but actually it is an extraordinary opportunity to leave behind the exclusionary traditional strategies and "go into the classrooms of today where the needs of all students are being considered. We can create learning opportunities that engage all students—by design" (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008 p.389). In this sense, planning for diversity does not only benefit students with SEND but all pupils. In fact, it is more than a good method for teaching, yet it is a new lifestyle. This will

open the door for a new society, one where people can live with tolerance (Inglis, 2008) with others abilities and cultures (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008).

#### **2.1.4.2 Universal Design**

Designing lessons following the Universal Design framework allows teachers to effectively include all students into the regular classroom by making the adaptations needed to do so. This approach “creates learning spaces for all students in the classroom – regardless of ability or disability.” In this sense, students with SEND may benefit from a class where the teacher integrates Universal Design principles to their lessons. Therefore, by using universal designs for learning, a teacher may acknowledge a student's needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses, that will guide him/her to make the proper adaptations to the lesson so as students achieve the lesson goal effectively. (McGhie-Richmond & Sung, 2013. p.51-52)

Universal design proposes three components that aim to include all students and take advantage of their diversity; they are: multiple means of representations, engagement and expression. Teachers should provide multiple means of representation that means they have to present the information or content by different media taking into account the student's multiple intelligences, backgrounds, needs and interests. Also, teachers should provide different means of engagement, by allowing and encouraging students to participate through different means of communication, in addition to this, teachers should bear in mind students' likes to motivate them during the classes, and make use of dynamic techniques that make students active during their learning process. Besides, teachers should encourage students to use different means of expression, this means that the students may respond or act by using different ways to demonstrate their knowledge, and teachers should accept and assess the way students inform their understanding of the content presented. (Metcalf, et. al. 2009)

## 2.2 Literature Review

Few studies have evidenced the effectiveness of multimodality with autistic students in the education system abroad. Doak (2018) revised the different modes of communication in five 6-8 year old students with ASD in a special school in England. The study explored the communication practices by using ethnographic methods to see how these learners talk with their peers and how the environment affects their participation in the classroom. The results recommend admitting students with ASD's individual communication preferences, the necessity of cooperation with parents at home, reinforcing peer interchange, and evaluating the existence of communicative context.

Similar research was carried out by Pandya et al., (2016) to integrate iMovie as a Multimodal Digital Composing (MDC) practice into the mainstream syllabus of a school with small multiracial classes. The study also examined the affordances and limitations for students' creativity and communication. Different data collection methods were used based on ethnographic techniques, such as field notes, semi-structured interviews, surveys, videos. By exploring, they began from scratch to reach an organized series of procedures to apply in the classroom. Findings emphasized on implementing a differentiated course with autistic students in order to encourage their participation through multimodal digital composing.

In another experimental study, Brady et al. (2015) analyzed a Multimodal Intervention for ten 6-10 year old autistic students with restricted expressive vocabulary. These students were taught individually taking into consideration their needs and current level of speech while implementing a "multimodal intervention composed of speech sound practice and augmentative and alternative communication" (p. 438). Then, to evaluate learning outcomes a multiple-probe design was used. The data gathered revealed that half of those children

reached the objective as high responders whereas the other five did not owe to the language abilities they already had. Nevertheless, more research needs to be done to discuss what kind of students with ASD are more benefited from this approach and evaluate general benefits to untaught scenarios.

In the same line of thought, Dougherty (2015) suggests that children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder since they have difficulties in communicating, they use multiple modes of communication and require Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. As she could bear out in a qualitative study where 6 students from grades 6<sup>o</sup> to 8<sup>o</sup> and diagnosed with ASD were observed in their classrooms, lunch/recess, and the speech therapy room. The data was collected through observations when the target students with ASD were given the opportunity to use a certain mode of communication during 10 minutes with a particular partner and a pragmatic function. These observations showed that children with ASD use different modes of communication according to their functionality in a particular situation and with a specific partner.

Finally, Ortiz' monograph (2018) was the only study regarding English teaching to autistic students found in Colombia. The study explored the English teaching methods and strategies for children with Asperger's syndrome which is a type of ASD. This exploration stated that Asperger's children are able to learn, yet the environment needs to be considered and adapted for them. Therefore, English teachers should use activities that include movement as the 'Total Physical Response' approach suggests. Additionally, Ortiz' work suggested that visual aids are relevant tools to help students with this type of condition. However, the study did not include multimodality as such in the strategies that were proposed.

Others have researched the design of lessons that include all kinds of students. Causton-Theoharis, et al. (2008) created a lesson plan template based on the theory of universal

design, multiple intelligence theory and curricular adaptations. This template was used to teach 120 pre-service teachers regarding planning in an inclusive teacher education program across the content areas. Some students were interviewed to know their perceptions about the template before and after using it. In the end, the pre-services teachers found it as a useful tool to engage all students in the classroom since they could finally understand the significance of lesson planning in a successful lesson.

Another significant research was carried out by Liang & Lim (2020) regarding MDC in the ESL classroom which purpose was to create a pedagogical framework to teach and support students' MDC skills. In this study, they developed a lesson package consisting of 4 one-hour lessons with 14-year-old students in a public secondary school. This package focused on three domains: critical, creative and technical. The results showed that students enjoyed the production of the digital activity yet the teacher expressed this task did not help students' writing or speaking skills. The researchers suggested that more time is needed to discuss and create the videos.

The previous studies confirmed that autistic students learn at their own pace and they also benefit from using non-traditional methods in the teaching process. Moreover, the best results are seen after using multimodal techniques, including technological activities. There are few cases which did not have the expected result, thus more research is needed to help those students with their particular needs. Additionally, there are no studies with regard to the use of multimodality to teach children with ASD in Colombia yet. We did not find many studies proposing lessons to teach English to autistic students.

This study will set a new line of inquiry in the EFL teaching field in Colombia using multimodality to propose a lesson in order to help students with ASD to foster their oral interaction.



### **3. Methodology**

This chapter describes the methodology and states the research approach that underpins this inquiry. Then, the section narrates the context and participants to carry out this project. Finally, it explains the elicitation procedures that will be used to gather the data.

#### **3.1 Type of Research**

This research followed a qualitative approach. A qualitative or naturalistic approach assumes that all knowledge is relative, that there is a subjective element to all knowledge and research, and that holistic, ungeneralizable studies are justifiable (an ungeneralizable study is one in which the insights and outcomes generated by the research cannot be applied to contexts or situations beyond those in which the data were collected) (Nunan, 1992). This means that there are subjective features in all phenomena that can be studied and justified by a researcher who follows a naturalistic approach, even though the conclusions cannot be generalized since the subjective aspects studied are particular to the issue inquired. This type of research helped to describe how multimodal digital composing was used in a lesson to integrate activities to promote oral participation to an autistic student learning English in a regular class.

This study is designed based on theories from syllabus, curriculum designed and needs analysis since it focused on the design of lessons to meet the needs of autistic students. A syllabus design is a plan about the units of a subject organized in a sequence to develop through a course (Robinson, 2009). Besides, for the design of a lesson, curriculum, unit, program or unit, it is necessary to identify students' needs (Robinson, 2009). This theory is a significant guideline in the process of looking and adapting teaching strategies in order to include all the students since the planning stage.

### **3.2 Context and Participants**

This lesson was planned for 10 students from second grade studying English at a regular school in Monteria. The participant students were chosen at random since the researchers could not visit the school due to pandemic Covid-19. At the time this study was carried out he was seven-year-old and had already been diagnosed as autistic child. He was observed in classes where he was good at learning vocabulary and remembering information, but he was not able to participate orally, as the other students. Likewise, he usually refused to take part in games or activities that requested movements. He interacted with some of his classmates but avoided loud noises, and he seemed to have difficulties with changes in routines. Moreover, he was identified to have echolalia, and this led him to write in the “air” words or numbers. Henceforth this participant will be called Christian in this study.

### **3.3 Data Collection Techniques**

The following are the elicitation procedures we used for answering the main inquiry of this study. To answer the research question: What characteristics and adaptations should an English teacher consider when designing a multimodal digital composing lesson in order to foster oral participation in a student with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who is fully included in a regular classroom?, document analysis, Google form, and a semi-structured interview with the students was used.

Document analysis is a procedure to review and evaluate data from texts in order to understand the existing theories and concepts, draw conclusions from them and to create empirical knowledge based on them (Bowen, 2009). The corpus for the analysis was theoretical articles about inclusion, differentiated instruction, multimodality and diversity and research articles about related studies from Colombia and abroad. This analysis was

carried out using excel to generate charts and rates about the goals of the lessons, stages, cycle of teaching, assessment, materials, activities and the needed adaptations.

A questionnaire with open and close questions with options was administered to the students in order to identify their needs, likes, wants, and potentials. According to Iwai et al. (1999) needs analysis refers to the “activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum” (p. 6) meaning this, the act of searching data that will guide the planning process to focus on the learners’ needs. This identifies learners’ target needs such as necessities, lacks, and wants (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). This analysis was used to get in touch with students and their wants.

We also applied a structured interview in order to talk to students about their likes and dislikes about English learning, particularly speaking. This kind of interview “are well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers” (Barriball and White, 1994, p. 330). Accordingly, this data collection instrument may assist to understand what are those issues that the teacher have to cope with in the scenario described in the research questions above since semi-structured interviews allow the teacher/researcher not only to ask questions about the matter they are interested about but also to ask more questions when the answers suggest more exploration that help to understand better the perception of the target issue and get answers that completely describe the interviewee’s point of view. This tool served in this study to build students’ profile and select activities for the lesson.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

To analyze the data from theoretical and research articles, we used a thematic analysis to obtain data related to diversity, lesson stages, cycle, assessment, results of lessons with multimodal digital composing. Thematic analysis “provides accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from qualitative data” (Braun and Clarke, 2017, p. 297). This means that the results will provide summarized themes from all the data gathered, they are usually a word or short phrases that represent relevant content of the visual or written text (Saldaña, 2015). The results will be analyzed following the inductive method of thematic analysis, this is to say that the coding process will be guided by the collected data from this study, with no former categories. We will follow the six phases suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87):

- Familiarizing yourself with the data.
- Generating initial codes.
- Searching for themes.
- Reviewing themes.
- Defining and naming themes.
- Producing the report.

By using these phases, we came out with different themes to answer the question of our study. For instance, lessons goal, cycle, assessment, adaptations, profile and so forth. The interview was coded using an inductive analysis of the information which is more data-driven than with preconceived categories. This analysis served to plan the lesson which we will describe in detail in the following chapter.

For the google form, we did an analysis of the data by generating percentages from students' and wants. We used descriptive statistics for sharing the results of this elicitation procedure.

## **4. Findings**

This chapter will detail the findings concerning the research questions of this study regarding the adaptations made to MDC lessons in our context which is for the benefit of teachers interested in inclusion and future ESL teachers. The information was collected through document analysis which included the Suggested English Curriculum for primary, research articles about planning, inclusion, and diversity and theoretical sources concerning principles of MDC and inclusion as well as a need analysis applied to 10 students. This chapter is divided into six main sections derived from the categories identified in this study for the design of our MDC lesson to meet the need of an Autistic student studying English in a regular class: learners' profile, lesson goal for planning to diversity, differentiations and adaptations used in the lesson, methodology, activities and materials, and assessment.

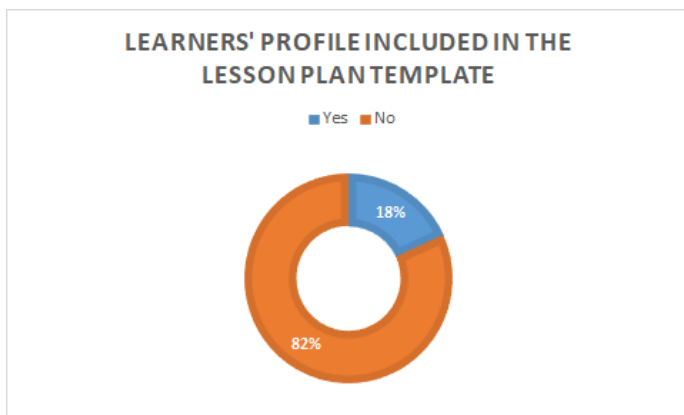
### **4. 1 Lesson adaptation using MDC to promote interaction to an ASD student**

#### **4.1.1 Learner profile**

Analysis of documents, interviews, and need analysis from students revealed that to design a lesson that meets the needs of all students, one important characteristic of a MDC lesson should be knowing the students interests, needs, lacks and wants. This analysis allowed us to understand students' profile, areas to strengthen and weaknesses. The analysis of theoretical underpinnings as documents sources and 11 lesson plans to obtain a more practical lens, were found to strongly emphasis on identifying students' profile before designing lessons, materials and activities as seen in figure 6:

#### **Figure 6**

*Need for Knowing Students' Profile*



Documents from recognized authors and suggested lessons for students with particular learning needs as seen in the table showed that many benefits can be drawn from the identification of the types of students we have in our classes. For instance, 100% of the lessons reviewed considered the learners profile or characteristics to plan more inclusive lessons. In figure 6, two of these lessons included learners' profile as an element in the lesson template. However, the other nine lessons or studies did consider learners' characteristics, needs, abilities, familiar context, and interests as an essential/influential factor and ongoing guide for the planning and implementation of the lesson.

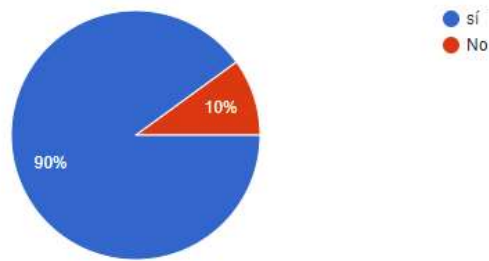
Notwithstanding, we decided this element should appear in the lesson template to make sure activities designed include students' profile. The following figure illustrates students' answers we asked in order to get information about their profile in terms of likes towards English learning and speaking.

**Figure 7**

*Students' Perceptions about the English Class*

¿Te gusta la clase de Inglés?

10 respuestas



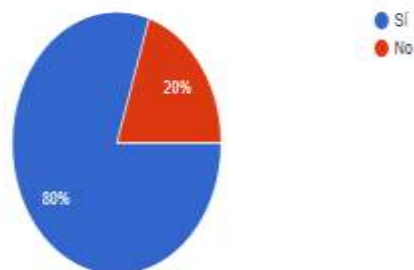
Data collected by surveying and interviewing 10 second graders reported that 90% of them liked their English class whereas 10% expressed their dislike for the subject. Besides, the 80% of the children interviewed said they like participating orally in their English classes but the 20% said they do not (figure 8).

### Figure 8

#### *Perceptions Toward Oral Participation in the English Class*

¿Te gusta participar oralmente en tu clase de Inglés?

10 respuestas



From revision of data analyzed (need analysis, google form survey and interview), we came out with our learners' profile to include their likes and dislikes, interest, and needs. We particularly detailed Christian's strengths and weaknesses to have a clear understanding of his abilities and disabilities as shown below:

**Table 2**

*Students' Profile in a MDC Class*

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**STUDENTS' GENERAL PROFILE:** This 2nd grade course likes English class, except one. Generally, they like participating orally in the class. The majority likes using technology devices and video makers apps like Tiktok. They do not like writing activities. The majority do not like having conversations in English with small groups. They need to feel a comfortable and inclusive environment to be confident when participating orally in class.

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**PARTICULAR STUDENT PROFILE:**

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**STRENGTHS**

- He likes learning English.
- He asks for the equivalent of every word to understand.
- He learns easily.
- He likes listening to songs and watching videos in English.
- He shares with two or three peers.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Christian gets frustrated with certain activities (usually with activities that include drawing, coloring, painting or hand-made objects), he says it is difficult and stops working; in these cases, he may say nonsense sentences, do repetitive movements or hit himself but restart working when someone calms him down and explains to him kindly what he has to do.
  - **In social understanding and behavior,** Christian has difficulty with coping with unscheduled activities during the day, working cooperatively when it is the first time he meets the person, understanding new situations, people, and places.
  - **In social communication,** Christian has difficulty with irony, jokes, and sarcasm, he has hyper-sensitivity to sounds (rain, loud noises) and textures (jelly, clothes' tags, rough fabrics, meat).
  - **In rigidity of thinking and difficulties with social imagination,** Christian has difficulty with coping with changes in routine, and inferring something from a picture or written text.
- 

To design this lesson we met each student of the class to identify three main aspects from their learning process: strengths, weaknesses and needs. This lesson initiates with a description of the specific needs of the autistic student that should be considered while designing and carrying out the lesson in order to make decisions regarding materials, adaptations, activities, classroom management that ensure autistic student's effective achievement of the lesson goals. As we also observed in the need analysis google form



applied to all the students, they selected their likes, and preferences regarding learning English as shown in figure 9). In addition, they talk about the materials and activities they would like to have in the lesson.

**Figure 9**

*Students' Preferences regarding Oral Participation in Class*



Students talk about different options to use English in the classroom. The majority of students, corresponding to (90%) found it necessary to speak in class. They chose Tik toks, role plays, questions and answers, table games, and online games. The least chosen was conversations in small groups. These results allowed us to characterize students' profile by considering likes, dislikes and weaknesses in their learning. None of them showed resistance to choosing speaking activities.

#### **4.1.2 Lesson goal.**

After analyzing the intended goal students should achieve in The Suggested Curriculum and after revising six lessons planned by experts, we could identify the common goal of each of these lessons which in most of the cases highlighted the use of technology as the product of the

lesson since technology is found to favor autistic students' learning process of any skill. Lesson one, three and four used the verb create, while lesson two focused on vocabulary. For our lesson, we took the content and adapted the goal of this lesson by selecting it from the suggested curriculum and basic learning rights. The following table showed the results of six lessons we analyzed to come up with appropriate goals to enhance autistic students' speaking.

**Table 3**

*Lesson Goals in a Multimodal and Diverse Class*

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>LESSON GOAL</b>
1	Creating autobiographies on the iPad (Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2016).
2	The learner will spell high frequency words correctly (Metcalf, Evans, Flynn, & William, 2009)
3	Creating autobiographies on the iPad (Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2018)
4	Students independently create their very own blended digital media about a topic of their interest (Shepherd, Hoban, Dixon, & Jones, 2014)
5	To enhance an autistic student's speaking confidence through tutoring his classmates/ students will match hotel occupations with their function in the hotel (Ting, 2014).
6	To produce a narrative in a video production between one to three minutes in length. (Liang, & Lim, 2020)

As observed in these lessons' goals, students were pushed to create things such as autobiographies and blended digital media as well as to participate in writing, vocabulary and speaking activities. These results demonstrated an expanded repertoire Autistic students

can engage in during English and Spanish lessons. We also noticed the integration of technology as a strategy to mediate autistic students’ learning. We also looked at the national guidance for planning called, The Suggested Curriculum, for selecting the lesson goal as seen below:

**Table 4**

*Goals from 2nd Grade Proposed in the SC*

<p><b>MODULE 2</b> (Peace and living together) “I KNOW MY RIGHT”.</p>	<p>Identify and mention in English the most important rights of boys and girls in their families and school</p>
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This goal is for second graders. It is proposed in The Suggested Curriculum in order to develop students' knowledge regarding rights. It is linked to module two content. However, this goal did not detail the skill students would develop nor the use of digital devices. As a result, we adapted this goal as follows:

**Table 5**

*Lesson Goal to Promote Oral Participation in a Class with an Autistic Student*

<p><b>Lesson goal:</b></p>	<p>By the end of the lesson students will be able to talk about the most important right boys and girls have by designing a multimodal digital text</p>
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This goal is promoting students’ talk time in the classroom as is intended in the purpose of this study. It addresses students’ identified needs from the google form and interview as shown in figure 9 above. The MDT will vary depending on their preferences. For instance, they may talk in different ways such as, acting, recording a narrative, or just listing the children’s rights.

### 4.1.3 Methodology

The methodology associated in the lesson for promoting speaking to students with Autism studying in a regular class is Multimodal Digital Composing. It was chosen to develop communication skills by using different modes for expression, and by increasing their interest and commitment in the classroom. Technological devices and video editor apps were chosen to mediate students' products of the classroom and to model language and show oral texts to students. 6 lessons by other researchers were analyzed in order to identify how multimodal composing was used in the classroom. The following chart showed the analysis we made:

**Table 6.**

*Methodology in a MDC Lesson With a Student With ASD*

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#### DOCUMENT ANALYSIS REGARDING TO METHODOLOGY OF THE LESSONS

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##### 1. STUDY

###### Phases:

**PLANNING:** students discuss which of their interests they want to capture using the iPad, and what media forms they would use to capture data (video, picture, written text)

**MEDIA GATHERING:** Students take an iPad to home over the weekend to capture images and videos they will include in their blended digital media.

**MEDIA IMPORTING AND EDITING:** students import, organize and edit (delete pictures and add text to label them) their pictures and videos in the Explain Everything iPad application.

**NARRATING:** Students plan what they are going to record using a storyboard template, students record their narration.

**SHARING:** Students share and discuss their digital media projects with their peers.

(Shepherd, A., Hoban, G., Dixon, R., & Jones, P. 2014)

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## 2. STUDY

### Stages:

**PLANNING:** teachers and students talk about what they are going to do, design storyboard templates, gather images by drawing pictures or taking photographs with the iPad's camera.

**PRODUCTION:** Teachers help students to create a new movie project in iMovie on the iPad, add the images, put images in the order desired, record description of each image, time image duration, add titles, and add music.

**EDITION:** Teacher and students play the videos several times and tweak them if it's necessary.

**SHARING:** Teachers share the movies with the class.

(Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2018).

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## 3. STUDY

**Domains:** package of 4 lessons guided by the three domains to multimodal composition.

**FIRST LESSON (critical domain):** warming up by viewing and discussing various multimodal texts, using meta-language to describe specific features of multimodal texts: FORM (GENRE AND EVENT) ENGAGEMENT (DISTANCE, ADDRESS, ANGLE) MESSAGE (REPRESENTATION) INTEGRATION (VISUAL AND AURAL.) Describe how various semiotic choices express meanings multimodally. Evaluate the effects each choice contributes to achieving the communicative purpose of the video production.

**SECOND LESSON (creative domain: design thinking).** Identify target viewers, and purpose. Draft their ideas on storyboards. Delivered peer-to-peer feedback. Make amendments accordingly.

**THIRD LESSON (technical domain):** Introduce basic editing techniques of digital tools. Film the video following the storyboard. Edit the video.

**FOURTH LESSON (students' presentations and evaluation):** Showcase and presentation of each group's video production Students gave group-to-group feedback with the peer-assessment worksheet. Self-assessment worksheet.

(Liang, & Lim, 2020)

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#### 4. STUDY

**Phases:**

**OPENING:** brainstorming, think about the topic.

**MAIN ACTIVITIES:** Exploration: brainstorming (listing). Elaboration, work in groups to rank the items in the list. Confirmation, report what they did or explain the ideas they gather.

**CLOSING:** Checking understanding (poll)

(Hilyati, 2013)

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#### 5. STUDY

**Stages:**

**INTRODUCTION OF THE UNIT:** Introduce new language.

**EXERCICE PRACTICE:** individual work, students write their answers in the whiteboard

**GAME ACTIVITIES:** play a game to enhance vocabulary (scramble)

**REVIEW AND TEST:** reporting their results from the game and taking a quiz

(Ting, 2014)

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#### 6. STUDY

**Phases:**

**INTRODUCTION:** set up and opening. Focus and review. To hook: student objectives, prior knowledge, advance organizer.

**TEACHER'S INPUT:** presentation of content, examples, demonstration visual supports.

**GUIDED PRACTICE:** observable and measurable activities relevant to the objective. Error-free practice: many opportunities to respond. The teacher monitors, prompts, restates questions, reteaches to errors and gives positive & corrective feedback.

**INDEPENDENT PRACTICE:** observable and measurable activities that provide practice to acquire fluency

**CLOSURE:** Engage all students in a review or summary. Preview next lesson.

(Metcalf, Evans, Flynn, & Williams, 2009)

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From the 1st lesson in table 6, we reviewed the following aspects: a) the need to discuss what students want to show in their video according to their personal interest, and make decisions about the media they will use; in our lesson before this discussion and any other step related to this matters, teacher models the language (vocabulary, simple sentences and its visual representation) pupils will use. During the discussion they will decide the media that better depict the children's rights b) gathering, and importing and editing, the pictures they will use in the videos; in our lesson this part is included in the step five within the production stage. c) drafting storyboards, in our lesson students do this in the step 4 (storyboard/plan) within the preproduction stage d) writing their narration, and record it; in our lesson this is a part of step 5 (creating audio/video) within the production stage of our lesson, and e) sharing, this phase is in step seven (share) within the post-production stage of our lesson where student show their videos in the Rights fair, a space we created where students and school community will share the final MDT.

From the 2nd lesson in the table 6, we considered the following aspects for our lesson: a) talking about what they are going to do is done in the step one (come up with an idea) within the preproduction stage, b) designing storyboards is done in step four (storyboard/plan) c) gathering images is in step five within the production stage of our lesson b) creating the movie project with the teacher's help, this is in step five within production stage of our lesson, where not only the teacher helps the student to record and edit but also their families if they cannot record the video at the school, and c) videos are shared with the class by the teacher, in our lesson the sharing activity is in step seven within the post production stage and is in charge of students instead of the teacher in the Right's fair where may be all the school community and not just the classroom.

The 3th study in the table, is a package of 4 lesson based on three domains to multimodal composition (critical domain, creative domain, and technical domain), from this lessons we evaluated the following aspects for our lesson: a) a discussion over multimodal texts using metalanguage that will help students understand the aspects of MDC and the semiotic supports they can use to convey their message accordingly to their purpose, this domain is depicted in the

step two within the pre-production stage of our lesson where students talk about and analyze, using their first language, features like: topic, audience, purpose, length of the video, media they will use (written texts, pictures, drawings, gestures, etc.) and the appropriate effects so as to understand and set semiotic resources that will let them to effectively communicate their message. b) from the domain, design thinking we consider the importance of drafting a storyboard so we include it in the post-production stage of our lesson and is step 4, peer-to-peer feedback is done after they present their final product, and it is step eight (Feedback and reflect) within the post production stage; beside making amendments accordingly is done within the production stage in step six) from the technical domain we understood the importance of training students on editing techniques of digital tools, in our lesson this part is done within the pre-production stage when teacher present visual instruction (video) where students will understand the way the apps and the devices should be used to create their videos, also they rehearse; filming the video following the storyboard is in the production stage, as well as, editing it. d) From the fourth lesson, showcasing the videos is done in step 7 within the post production stage; also the self-assessing activity is done orally rather than by filling a worksheet in step eight. We did not include the group-to-group feedback since in our lesson the production of the video is an individual activity.

On the other hand, the 4th, 5th, and 6th lessons we found that they did not use MDC methodology to base their planning but they did design the lesson plans following some approaches (direct teaching, universal design, student-centered) they considered effective in teaching English as a foreign language to students with SEND. From these lesson plans we reviewed the methodologies that a lesson plan for inclusive education should follow. For instance, an opening or introduction is included in the pre-production stage (in providing the language and in steps 1, and 2) of our lesson; main activities, exercise practice, game activities, guided practice, independent practice are presented in the production stage. Finally, closing/closure, and closure may be found in our post-production stage, except test, as there is not any test in our lesson.

Finally, from the 1st to the 4th we analyzed the stages MDC lessons usually incorporate. Thus, we noticed a common pattern within them: pre-production, production, and post – production (filmmaking stages) as well as some of the steps of Digital Storytelling Process



that were labeled with other names but referred to the same activities we adapted in each stage of our lesson. Even though, none of them dedicated time to model the language, what has to do with teaching the vocabulary and phrases in the foreign language, students need to create their MDTs, as they have a low level of English; we strongly considered that the stages of MDC lessons identified in the document analysis, and that we adapted in our lesson, were relevant Christian's learning and achievement of the goal because they provided a structured and organized sequence of simple steps to follow which is the way autistic students find it easy to complete a task. In the pre-production stage Christian benefits from the teacher's input and instruction delivered in visual aids since autistic students capture the information more effectively when this is provided in visual supports (images, videos, written text, gestures), in this way Christian has a clear understanding of what he is asked to do. Also in this first stage Christian is provided with the language he will use in the video in simple and short sentences, the teacher will ensure students understand the meaning of the phrases by using visual supports, gestures, or even the students' first language. Besides, the teacher will repeat it several times so they can acquire the correct pronunciation and intonation of the phrases. In the production stage, Christian benefits from the rehearsal of the video with the teacher as he repeats what he has to say in the video several times so when he records it he will know what to do. Once he records the video this may provide a feeling of achievement to him that may have a positive effect on his confidence when participating orally in English. In the post-production stage Christian benefits from having the opportunity to show his video to his peers and express his opinion about his partners' videos, this may develop his social and communicative skills, and with the self-assessment he may express the difficulties he found throughout the process so the teacher can use this information for further MDC projects. Below is the table with the stages we finally decided for our lesson:

**Table 7**

*Stages in a MDC Lesson with an Autistic Student*

**PRE-PRODUCTION**  
**(Let's talk know about children rights in English)**

**Building the context or field**

**Step 0: Modeling the language**

- In a circle teacher and students introduce themselves with the help of a song. Teacher models the language: Hello! My name is Paula. What is your name?... How old are you? I'm \_\_ years old. Students take turns by passing a ball, when the teacher stops the song the child with the ball in their hands will take the turn to present themselves.
- Students will listen to a song where children's rights are mentioned (the song could be in their mother tongue). Sts will number the rights they listened to in the song.
- Last class students were asked to talk with their families about what a right is and what are the rights that children have in Colombia (share the list of rights they discuss with their parents).
- In this lesson, the teacher will present the children's rights by asking what they know or what their families shared with them about children's rights. Sts must raise their hand to participate.
- Students will be asked to watch a video about children's rights. Then, the teacher will check the student's comprehension of the video with questions like: What do you think the video is about? What did it appear in the video? Children or adults? What did you like about the video? What did you not like about the video? (The teacher can create their own video to present the rights)
- First, the teacher will show flashcards about the children's rights in an aleatory way, explaining what they mean. After this, the teacher will paste the flashcards on the wall.
- Secondly, the teacher will show the video again and pause when a right is mentioned, and the students will walk toward the flashcard where the right is depicted until the video is finished.
- Thirdly, the teacher will write all the rights on the board while saying them aloud for students to repeat them, then volunteer students will take turns to match the corresponding flashcard with the right.
- Fourth, the teacher will teach them the expression "I have the right to..." and link them with each right. After this, the teacher will hand in photocopies with drawings of the rights and some sentences to reorder, e.g., (right/I/live/to/have/the) "I have the right to live". Then, they will decorate (color, paint, glitter, modeling clay, among others.) the rights. Once the students finish decorating the children's rights images, they will review the expression "I have the right to..." repeating the sentences after the teacher who will put a melody in each one. Then, the teacher will go to each student's place and ask them to complete the sentence "I have the right to..." with the image that is in the card.

**Step 1: come up with an idea**

- After the vocabulary is learned, the teacher will present a video (30-90 seconds long) (an example of the product wanted) made in Tik Tok or any other video maker tool where a child is depicting the children's rights.

**Step 2: Research/Explore/Learn**

· After watching the video, children will be encouraged to think about the purpose, context/genre, and topic of the video. The teacher leads students in answering these questions: What the video has to do with? / Did the child tell a story? /Did the child explain or present something? /what tool did he/she use to record it? /Does the child act in the video? / What the child had to learn to do the video? / Do you think the child needed help to do the video? They have to be several questions that will guide the creation of a checklist (video outline) on the board of steps to do a similar video. They may use their first language.

#### **Modeling the text (metalinguage)**

- The teacher tells students they will do a similar video, once they are ready to do so. The teacher may show another similar video or use the same to discuss in their first language the following aspects: who is the video for?/ Did the child do the video for children, adults or everybody?/ How long is the video? Is it long or short?/ Did the child use written texts, pictures, drawings, gestures...?/ What do these things mean? Did the child use an effect? (voice effects or images effects)/ Why do you think that knowing the children's rights is important? .

#### **Guided practice or joint construction; teacher guiding students in the creation of an MDT**

- Training the students to use the digital tools they have available: The teacher will present two or three options of video makers apps. The app should be able to be used in smartphones or tablets. Teacher will let the students suggest any other app they know to make videos.
- Then, the teacher will present a video about the way the apps chosen are used so that they practice on the digital devices available.
- Teachers and students may draft a 3 scenes storyboard (teacher introduce what a storyboard is, and encourage them to think why they have to do one for their videos) to create a short video just exploring the app effects or semiotic resources (stickers, transitions, music, and so on) The video will be students introducing themselves: 1st scene: Greeting, 2nd scene: Name, 3rd scene: Age and farewell. They edit the video together.

#### ***Step 3: write/script - Step 4: Storyboard/plan***

After that, students will create a storyboard for their videos, they may work in pairs (previously arranged by the teacher so they can ensure scaffolding) while doing this activity. The teacher will explain the parts the storyboard will have: greeting and introducing themselves (scene 1), each right explained in short and easy sentences and depicted in a drawing or picture either chosen from the internet or taken by them (scenes 2-11), farewell (scene 12) Finally, the teacher will present an example of it.

<p><b>PRODUCTION (Let's do the video)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will review each right with the flashcards.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Independent construction</b></p> <p><i>Step five: Creating Images, audio, or video</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will do some rehearsals for the video/audio in the classroom with the teacher as many times as necessary.</li> <li>Students will do the video in the school, if not they will have to do it with their family's help at home using the storyboard (teacher will send the video explaining how to use the apps).</li> </ul> <p><i>Step six: Put it all together</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will blend text, images, sounds, or effects. Students will edit the videos as many times as they want, they will delete scenes and film them again.</li> </ul>
<p><b>POST-PRODUCTION (Let's share the video)</b></p>	<p><i>Step seven: Share</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will share their videos in a semicircle in the classroom in "the rights' fair", they will greet and might say something like: "this is my video, enjoy it".</li> </ul> <p><i>Step eight: Feedback and Reflect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will talk about what they like about their partners' videos, and what they found difficult while doing the video, and what they found easy.</li> <li>The teacher provides individual feedback about students' performance.</li> </ul>

These stages will provide learning opportunities for learners from the starting point of the lesson to the closure or post-production. In the Pre-production stage, teacher may start building the context, we include a step 0 in the MDC process, which is called, modeling the language, since the target students have a low level of English they need to be provided by the vocabulary they will use in their MDT; this part of the lesson is not devoted to the teaching of single words nor grammar, instead, it is designed with both oral and written texts (chunks of language) to familiarize students with different children's rights and the language to talk about them. The teacher uses the mother tongue in this section, if necessary, to help the students to internalize the meaning of each right. Students will talk,

match, and answer questions regarding rights. After the language is modeled by the teacher and acquired by the students, the first step, “come up with an idea”, of the MDC Process must be taken, here students will watch a video sample of a child that talks about The Children’s Rights in English, then in “step two: Research/Explore/Learn” with the help of the teacher will create a list on the board of things they consider the child needed to create the video, teacher must guide pupils with simple questions, such as ‘Do the child use a cellphone or a tablet?’. After that, students will be encouraged to do a video like the one they just watched and be guided to answer some simple and clear metalanguage questions about the video sample they just watched; in this part the teacher may model the text. It is possible that students answer in Spanish (their first language) as at this stage they are becoming familiar with the language. Besides, in the guided practice students and the teacher will draft a short storyboard to do a video together in order to train the students in using the digital device and the app they choose. In steps 3 and 4, where they have to write/script, and storyboard/plan, where pupils write what they are going to say and draft a storyboard to plan the order and other semiotic resources for their videos.

In the second stage (production) has two main moments: a) provide practice so students use these rights in conversations. b) Model the language students will use for the final product.

Hereinafter, students will enter in the independent practice. In step 5, students will rehearse what they are going to say in the video/audio as many times they need to feel confident.

Then, they start doing their video or recording the audio (if they prefer to have just their voice in the video) using their storyboard. In step 6, students will blend the video with the pictures and effects chosen. Here, they edit their videos as many times as they need until

they like their product. Finally, the third stage is called Post-production where steps 7 and 8

are taken where students share the videos and share orally their perceptions about their peer's videos and their reflections about their own video.

#### 4.1.4 Differentiations and adaptations.

Analysis of documents, interviews, and need analysis from students showed the need to adapt the lesson for inclusive purposes. It is crucial to acknowledge that this process starts in the planning process. For this reason, as shown in table 8 the documents were viewed and revealed what differentiations and adaptations are needed in this type of class regarding the content.

**Table 8**

*Differentiations and Adaptations in MDC and UDL Lessons*

#### **Differentiations and adaptations**

<b>Document analysis</b>	<b>Need analysis</b>	<b>Interview</b>
1. Need to repeat vocabulary through games, several visual materials and in this case, the autistic student was the tutor to enhance his speaking confidence (Ting, 2014).	Lack of speaking in English class.	"Me gusta hacer Tik Toks"
2. Involving students in the creation of their own blended digital media about their personal interests and respect if they do not feel comfortable with any phase of the class (Shepherd, Hoban, Dixon, & Jones, 2014)	Some adaptations are needed in the assessment part to allow students' preferences and to be flexible with the learning styles or disabilities	"Me gusta aprender Inglés lento, no muy rápido"
3. No need to write out a full script but could use shorter notes and write multiple drafts (Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2018)	Different ways of learning English.	

4. Students' profile (diagnosis, communication difficulties, digital interests), creation of a progressive suite of digital media for representing and communicating meaning, adapt elements of the national fellowship to suit the learning needs of high school students with ASD, checking the syllabus course and redesign assignments to include digital media alternatives to written work and teach the necessary skills to create various media by their own (Mason, 2017).

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5. Identifying potential barriers for learning, inclusion of universal design multiple means of representation, engagement and expression, expansion of the typical lesson plan template to include: (a) student characteristics, (b) their potential academic barriers to learning, and (c) appropriate UDL supports for each, offer specific praise for participation, and poster of center rules and transition procedures (Metcalf, Evans, Flynn, & Williams, 2009).

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6. Adaptations for each student with disabilities and customized accommodation checklist for each student with special needs. Consider the arrangement of the room and seating for individual students (Gould, & Vaughn, 2000)

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7. Students with special "need" need more specific guidance and assistance from teachers in understanding English, indicators more simplified, Learn to Talk method, reduce reading in class and vocabulary lessons, supportive learning environment, stages in completing tasks (Hilyati, 2013).

These studies evidenced that each student with Special Educational Needs should have specific educational strategies for them, especially autistic students due to their needs, but also all students with different intelligences or different learning styles. Thus, the importance of knowing students' profile to have a clear idea of what adaptation and differentiations are required such as timing, materials, teaching strategies, or any additional support. In this

sense, the lesson must be flexible to involve all students in this lesson. Most of the articles above suggested using a variety of tools to recognize students' barriers, skills, talents but also their learning process. These studies highlighted three important aspects: assistance, identifying potentials and barriers, and checklists for accommodating students in the lesson. Therefore, the adaptations made to our lesson were mostly in the context and process of the lesson (table 9). First about the content we included: to break down tasks into small ones for the autistic student since they could get overwhelmed with too much input at once, and simple and clear instructions. Besides, we included activities to model the language and present the children's rights in different means of learning such as pictures, audios, videos and movement activities while developing the lesson.

In the same line of thought, in the process of differentiation we include telling or showing the class agenda to the class in order to help the autistic student to prepare himself for the activities of the day and to be calmed down; this could be done as a checklist on the board using keywords. For this student, we needed to be prepared with manipulatives if necessary, to reduce his anxiety and to make him feel secure and comfortable. In addition, we had to consider being flexible in the task time since some students might need more time to finish the activity. Moreover, the texts chosen for the lesson aligned with students' level and abilities. During all the stages, Christian, or any other student who may need help, will work with their peers in order to support each other in the process. Finally, students will receive praise when they participate orally and finish each stage.

## **Table 9**

### *Differentiations in a MDC Class with an Autistic Student*



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## **Content differentiation**

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- Break down tasks into small tasks
  - Presenting and modelling boys' and girls' rights' texts in different means of learning (pictures, audios and videos)
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## **Process Differentiation:**

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- Tell/show the class agenda of the day to the students by writing a checklist of keywords of the activities that will be developed in the class.
  - Developing personal agendas that addresses individual needs of learners
  - Offering manipulatives or other hands-on supports for the autistic student (if necessary)
  - Varying the length of time a student may take to complete a task in order to provide additional support
  - Present texts about the content of the lesson considering: students' strengths and weaknesses, and students' multiple intelligences.
  - Students tutoring their peers
  - Students will receive praise when participating orally and finish each stage.
- 

The differentiations are applied in the lesson plan taking into account students' needs, and recommendations from other lessons such as flexible planning and modelling. For instance, one of the differentiations in the lesson plan is to allow the students to choose the material of their preference to talk about their rights. This was decided since Christian, our autistic student, disliked art tasks, such as coloring and to take advantage of their enthusiasm to participate orally in class.

### **4.1.5 Activities and materials.**

Choosing the appropriate activities may help students to boost their learning process particularly if one of them has autistic disorders. Thus, teachers need to reflect on the interests and needs of them to see what type of activity best fits them. The review of literature (five theoretical underpinnings) helped us to see the variety of activities we can use to have an interactive class in diverse classrooms (table 10).

**Table 10.***Activities and Materials in Multimodal Classrooms*

Document analysis	Need analysis	Interview
1. Interactive whiteboard, a laptop computer, a projector, a conventional whiteboard (Ting, 2014).	Students expressed liking answering questions, talking in small groups, playing board and online games, but some of them preferred not to talk in large groups.	9 I "Pero ¿te gustaría que tú hicieras un video así en inglés?" 10 Christian "Si."
2. iPad application "Explain Everything" to capture images, videos and screencasts that represent their interests." (Shepherd, Hoban, Dixon, & Jones, 2014)	Consider accessible materials, such as smartphones or computers provided by the school or from home.	
3. Creating digital videos (MDC) (Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2018).		
4. Creating podcast, digital story, video, slowmation and blended digital media (Mason, 2017)		
5. Creating a digital video on iPads: drawing iPads such as Doodle Buddy or DrawCast, drawings, internet, images (Pandya, Hansuvadha, & Pagdilao, 2016).		

Documents suggested the need to blend students' lessons with videos, digital stories, post cast, screencasts and whiteboard. This is confirmed in the need analysis made to students who demonstrated their likes towards technology for their participation in oral activities in

the classroom. In the questionnaire, 80% of them were enthusiastic with the idea of recording videos in apps such as Tik Tok as figure 10 shows.

**Figure 10**

*Students' Preferences to Participate Orally in Class*



As seen in the previous picture, the students are familiar with the traditional way of participating orally in class, it is remarkable that they are open to try new methodologies such as video recording and the use of apps. This is a significant advantage to involve all learning styles and intelligences. In our case, the autistic student decided to use technological activities even though he did not know the mentioned app. He expressed in the interview the interest of making videos in the class after understanding the intended purpose and its functionality so he accepted it as an option to learn English as can be evidenced in transcript 1. The interview was in the student' mother tongue to ease the dialogue.

**Transcript 1.** Christian's Preferences for Speaking Activities

- 1 I ¿Te gustaría grabar Tik Toks donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?  
2 **Christian:** ¿Qué es eso?  
3 I Es una aplicación para hacer videos y dónde puedes decir cosas.  
4 **Christian:** No.  
5 I Mira el siguiente video donde la niña presenta a su familia en inglés. ¿Te gustaría hacer videos donde digas cosas en inglés como la niña del video?  
6 **Christian** No.  
7 I ¿Por qué no?  
8 **Christian** Porque no me gusta esa niña.  
9 I Pero, ¿te gustaría que tú hicieras un video así en inglés?  
10 **Christian** Si.

Due to the students' enthusiasm to use Tik Tok in the English class, some activities have been planned to prepare them to reach the lesson goal presented before. These activities are designed considering their age, English level, context and materials available in the school as table 11 shows.

**Table 11**

*Activities and Materials in a MDC Class*

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<b>Activities</b>	<b>Materials and assistive technologies</b>
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- Listening to a song about how to introduce themselves in English and taking turns singing the song but with their own names.
  - Listening to a song about children's rights and listing activity concerning the rights mentioned in the song.
  - Discussion section about children's rights in Colombia.
  - Watching a video about children's rights and questions to check their understanding.
  - Modeling language to students about children's rights in flashcards and explaining their definition.
  - Matching activity: picture of the right and right's name.
  - Reordering the sentence and decorating drawings about the children's rights.
  - Creating the video about children's rights and presenting it in front of the class.
- Video (projector)
  - Flashcards about boys' and girls' rights
  - Tape
  - Pictures to decorate
  - Materials to decorate (colors, paintings, glitter, glue, color, modeling clay, papers)

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These activities are organized in an easy sequence so students can go from a general to a specific understanding of the children's rights by providing them with a model of language and texts they will use in the practice and production sessions. The first two activities will help to activate their prior knowledge regarding the topic of the lesson which is superior to their English level, particularly for the autistic student. The following activities help to create a solid foundation of the topic by practicing the content, its linguistics aspects and grammar associated with the final activity named in this lesson production. Then, the teacher involves them in the digital task inviting students to use technology to create creative videos in Tik Tok or other similar apps of their preference.

#### **4.1.6 Assessment.**

Academic settings require to see students' progress every period. Thus, assessment plays an important role in the learning process. In the classroom, the Suggested Curriculum proposes

two types of assessment: for learning (formative) and of learning (summative) in which the first one focuses more on the process, and the last one on the product to get a grade. Thus, in our document analysis we found some guidelines regarding proper assessment in a diverse classroom as can be seen in table 12.

**Table 12**

*Assessment in a Diverse Classroom*

Assessment	Document analysis
	<p>1. Assessment of the autistic student was not the product itself but her process. Also, teachers need to help in specific parts of the project (Pandya, Hansuvadha, &amp; Pagdilao, 2016).</p>
	<p>2. Providing several kinds of tests such as speaking, listening and writing which were made similar for the students with autism (simpler than the regular test) with simple instructions (Hilyati, 2013).</p>
	<p>3. Formative Assessment (student participation checklist), provides choices for response/student output (Metcalf, Evans, Flynn, &amp; Williams, 2009).</p>
	<p>4. Provide a shortened version of the test or an alternate format for students with individualized learning objectives, allow extra time to complete the test and provide breaks if needed. (Gould, &amp; Vaughn, 2000).</p>
	<p>5. Teachers are required to brainstorm and write one idea for each of the intelligences. Also, consider using authentic assessment whenever possible (Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, &amp; Trezek, 2008).</p>

Three of the studies suggested flexibility in the assessment process as there are students with different abilities; especially it is almost mandatory in classrooms with autistic children to incorporate flexible assessment procedures. These studies also promote the use of authentic

assessment which is devised by the teacher or in collaboration with the students by engaging their voice, likes, wants and needs. It should be meaningful for the learners; it goes beyond the grades and it is relevant for their learning process. For instance, tasks that focus on the process and the students' participation are inside this category (Frey, et al., 2012). Besides, by knowing students' profile the teachers can know how to adapt the assessment to their needs. Taking this into consideration, we decided the following assessment processes for the lesson (table 13):

**Table 13**

*Assessment in a MDC Class With an Autistic Student*

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<b>AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT</b>	The teacher will use a rubric considering students' oral participation, creativity in the video's design, and understanding about the rights. Although the teacher will not focus on grammar or pronunciation, students will receive verbal feedback about their mistakes. Also, the teacher will take into consideration students' oral participation in all the process, monitoring them while doing the activities and observation in the whole class.
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We designed this assessment to boost oral participation through recording a video about children's rights in the ESL classroom. This follows the approach The Short Filming Assessment. This product is flexible as students can decide whether to use Tik Tok to create their video or the video maker of their preference. If they choose to use Tik Tok, they can choose the design: the filter they like, a video where they appear, voice-over, stickers, written texts, transitions effects, backgrounds, voice effects, and so forth.

In addition, there is a self-assessment in the production stage when they finish their video ( table 7), so the teacher encourages them (or the relative at home supporting them) to reflect about it in order to see if there is any aspect of it to improve or they might did not like much, after this they edit and repeat this cycle until they feel comfortable with their videos. In the

production and post-production, the teacher pays close attention to the process and understanding of the topic of the students, especially to help Christian to achieve the goal of this lesson.

Then, as the students present their video, the teacher uses a rubric for each student where their oral participation and video's design is assessed, as well as feedback about their potentials and mistakes. Additionally, there is a self and peer-assessment time (see table 7) where they share what they found easy or difficult while making the video, and what they liked about their partners' presentations and videos in the production and post-production stage.

## **5. Discussion**

This study dealt with the main characteristics that an inclusive lesson plan using MDC should have to foster oral participation in a student with ASD. Data from, document analysis, an interview and a Google form revealed the adaptations we made to a sample lesson for teaching oral texts to ASD students in a regular class. This lesson was based on various studies, and lessons we analyzed showing some implications for each of the activities, stages and adaptations integrated in the lesson. This chapter will discuss the results and implications we drew from our design.

This study used both multimodal digital composing and adaptations needed for inclusive education lessons that could engage students in the use of language to communicate ideas using technology. When we were concerned about a methodology that may effectively include Christian and any other autistic student in a regular classroom in order to foster their oral participation, we found out that MDC have been proved to be effective in the teaching



and learning of students with ASD in international contexts since it offers them a wide range of opportunities to improve social skills and academic process. Since the social and academic aspects in children with ASD may be challenging regarding oral communication, MDC seems to engage them with different modes and sensory aspects of composition. As a result, it will foster their creativity and learning opportunities (Pandya et. al., 2016; Pandya et. al., 2018; Mason, 2017; Shepherd, et al., 2014). This methodology suggests that students should be encouraged to produce texts (videos, posters, slides, podcasts, and so on) using diverse modes of communication (words, pictures, images, videos, gestures, sounds, and so on) with the help of digital devices such as tablets, smartphones, laptops, camera, and so on. Thus, this lesson incorporated both the student's need for socializing and their enthusiasm towards technology in class. Lessons we studied and evaluated reported the benefits of technology when it comes to the design of lessons for students with ASD.

Moreover, when deciding the stages of our MDC lesson, firstly we based our methodology on a Short Film Production Assessment, although it is an assessment model, it guides us to outline and name our three stages methodology process. It was an adaptation from the filmmaking production process. It includes three stages in the assessment of creating short digital texts: Pre Production, Production, and Postproduction, each stage presents the evaluation criteria to let teacher and students know what they may assess and what they may achieve, respectively. (Theodosakis, 2009 as cited in Perry, 2018, p. 219, Perry, 2018, p. 221) Perry's evaluation criteria (2018) were based on the formative approach, as was our lesson. Since, we relied on an inclusive education approach that suggests us to formatively assess our students, thus we focused on evaluating the observable performance of each student's

unique mixture of skills throughout each production stage in the MDC process instead of exclusively scoring a final product.

Secondly, to define the steps within our three productive stages, we adapted the Digital Storytelling Process to our methodology. It suggests eight steps that students and teachers should take while creating MDT. Even though this process refers to Digital Storytelling Texts, we considered it appropriate for our MDC methodology, bearing in mind that all digital texts composing has to do with blending multiple modes of communication (visual, sound, linguistic, gestural, spatial). In other words, all digital texts are multimodal, as they combine images, words, music, and so on. Yet not all multimodal texts are digital, some of them do not need to be presented on a digital device to combine modes. (Arola. et al. 2014) Therefore, we adapted the following DSP steps in our methodology: Pre-production: “Come up with an idea”, “Research, Explore and Learn about the topic” “Write or script”, “Storyboard and Plan”, Production: “Gather and Create Images, Audio and Video, “Put It All Together”, and Post-production: “Share”, and “Feedback and Reflect” (Morra, 2013).

Thirdly, we found out that the Teaching and Learning Cycle is an approach that attempt to design activities that increase the students learning by scaffolding and giving explicit teaching, in other words, the activities students are asked to do must be designed to offer opportunities to learn when interacting with more skilled peers or even when being guided by the teacher, understanding the teacher as a more experienced one. (Derewianka, 2006). This approach supported the design of the MDC lesson process since it “focuses on the cyclical nature of the teacher’s role through the various production stages.” (Creating Multimodal Texts, 2019) There are four important stages in the TLC that require teachers, partners or families’ support for creating Multimodal Digital Texts, and these are presented

in the instructional path of our lesson. For instance, “Building the context or field”; understanding purpose, context or genre, and topic of a MDT, “Modelling the text”; building a metalanguage about meaning design choices for analyzing the structure of a model MDT, and identifying the modes and the semiotic resources within it, “Guided practice or joint construction”; teacher guiding students in the creation of a MDT, “Independent construction”; a construction of a new MDT by students working alone. (Derewianka and Jones, 2016; Humphrey, 2017; Humphrey and Feez, 2016 as cited in *Creating Multimodal Texts*, 2019)

Therefore, in our lesson plan the teacher ensured that the gathered or created material, as well as the creation of interactions such as working in pairs in the storyboarding activity lead the scaffolding process of Christian’s learning and all students. By providing visual instruction media (videos, flashcards, body language) teachers may build the context of a model MDT or the text they will use for instruction. Furthermore, some authors helped us to be aware of the great importance of metalanguage throughout the MDC of a MDT (*Creating Multimodal Texts*, 2019; Liang, & Lim, 2020) It is primordial, encouraging a think-aloud process (in first language) about semiotic features in the model MDT, teacher may use a simple metalanguage, appropriate to their age thinking abilities, that will make students aware of all the resources they have to make meaning and communicate a message in a specific way. We included metalanguage not only from the content of the lesson and text but also in the modeling of technology to familiarize students with the metalanguage within the technological mean.

One of the most relevant findings of this study is modeling. After analyzing the lessons applied by other teachers, we found teachers usually model both the text and how to use

technology and the text. In the methodology, besides teaching how to use technology for their oral texts, we also proposed activities for explicit teaching of language during and after teaching the text. We included guiding questions the teacher may ask and lead students in the thinking process of the language with the help of visual tools. Besides, by modeling the language students will use in their independent videos (Derewianka and Jones, 2016; Humphrey, 2017; Humphrey and Feez, |2016 as cited in *Creating Multimodal Texts*, 2019). This stage is not a part of the multimodal digital composing cycle. However, we considered its adaptation because our students required explicit teaching of language since they are starters' learners of English as a Foreign Language; they do not have the language proficiency level to get engaged in MDC activities without previously learning the language they will need in such a composing process. This is our main reason for designing activities where the teacher models the language before reaching the creation stage of the video.

Results showed that when modeling the language, it is important to use models of texts that “focus on specific language features, for example imperative in a procedural text.”, and teachers may guide students “to identify the topic-specific vocabulary in the model text”. In our lesson the teacher should develop a text about the rights of students which will be modeled from the text. Students will first deal with context and then content. After that, they will study language choices in activities by analyzing full sentences or chunks or language, for instance, “I have the right to eat healthy food”. The teacher may deconstruct the sentence to depict the meaning of each word, by using visual media (body language, flashcards, videos, among others) or using their student's first language to understand more abstract terms such as ‘right’. Also, teachers should stay still on providing correct intonation and pronunciation.

Once students seem to have the language needed, they will write it in simple activities such as reordering the sentences. Since, the purpose of the lesson was to enhance Christian's oral participation, the previously mentioned endeavors enabled him to feel more confident when trying to participate in English. (Using the teaching and learning cycle with EAL/D learners, August, 18, 2020)

Results of this lesson revealed that we also needed to model technological tools students will use to elaborate a product for the class. Some authors have shown that autistic students may need digital training while they are engaged in designing processes such as MDC. (Mason, 2017; Liang, & Lim, 2020) One of the domains leading Digital Multimodal Composing is the Technical Domain, in this part students are supported by the teacher to know "skills for digital multimodal composing, such as editing, recording, and producing" for instance, how to eliminate a picture, how to add an effect, how to blend a voice recording with a video, how to add sticker or typed text, and so on. However, students in our lesson should be encouraged to explore the digital devices and its editing, recording and producing tools by themselves if it is possible, they can be helped by more skilled partners or the teacher. This can also be facilitated by video tutorials to watch in the class and to watch at home with families if they do the video with them and not at school. (Liang, & Lim, 2020)

Revision of lessons showed that knowing the students to plan lessons is a must when planning for diversity (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008), particularly if you are teaching an ASD student. This is the first step when starting lesson planning since it helps to engage all the students in the classroom (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008) without marginalizing any of them. Thus, knowing the students' profile means to acknowledge their weaknesses, strengths, potentials, interests and abilities. After being aware of their profile, teachers can plan the

lesson with them in mind to make the necessary adaptations, this evidencing their commitment toward student's progress (Harmer, 2017). During our document analysis we found that this profile is not always included in the template, however it is considered in the planning process. We concluded that each lesson plan needs to have this element, at least the students' characteristics that are involved in the specific lesson.

In this lesson, we decided to adapt content and process using differentiated strategies such as using different means of learning (Metcalf, et al., 2009), having personal agendas for individual needs of students (Gould, & Vaughn, 2000; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008), flexibility in the length of time to complete a task in order to provide additional support for learners who may need (Hilyati, 2013), using texts taking into account students' strengths and weaknesses (Hilyati, 2013). It is significant to start leaving behind the traditional method of teaching and planning that has a standard lesson for every student as it omits students' particular needs (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2008). We could plan our lesson after knowing our students' profile through the google form applied and the interview. Moreover, we let the students choose the materials to develop a task in the lesson, thus they could work comfortably with the material they preferred, especially for Christian's preferences. However, to know the student through a google form is not enough, it is suggested to be in continuous discussion and communication with students, parents and friends to get to know them in much detail.

Additionally, the assessment used in the lesson was also adapted in order to be proper for each student' capacity (Pandya, et al., 2016; Metcalf, et al., 2009), especially Christian abilities, so as to make it meaningful for everyone. Even though the majority of students chose Tik Tok to make the video, the teacher gave the option to choose another one to present their final task as it is more important the use of a technological tool and their participation

than using a specific program (Frey, et al., 2012; Pandya, et al., 2016). Assessment follows the approach short filming assessment (Perry, 2018). Students do a self and peer-assessment where they share their feelings and perceptions about their performance in the production and post- production stage (Morra, 2013). Apart from this assessment, the teacher gives feedback regarding students' performance (Morra, 2013) taking into account their effort and process (Pandya, et al., 2016); storyboard, organization, originality, creativity, and completeness (Perry, 2018); and about their mistakes in pronunciation or grammar.

All in all, we only found 8 lessons planned with multimodality abroad and very few with inclusive purposes, to our knowledge little is known about lesson plans with MDC in Colombia, particularly to meet the needs of students with ASD. For further research, it is necessary to increase studies regarding lesson planning to enrich teachers' teaching practicum in inclusion, especially about autism, to find strategies that fit in our context.

## **6. Conclusions**

In this study, we designed a lesson to foster oral production to ASD students studying English in a regular context. It is expected that the design of this lesson will help the autistic student to feel more confident when speaking to foster his oral participation in the English class. After analyzing various sources of theoretical underpinning and lesson plans, we decided our Multimodal Digital Composing lesson should have four main aspects: Adaptations based on students' profile, learning process proposed in articles, modeling stages to give both knowledge of language and technology, and an authentic assessment.

Results showed that planning a MDC lesson needs the teacher's commitment as he/she needs to spend time planning carefully by following the steps provided to ease the process. Moreover, the teacher must know their students' profile so as to adapt the lesson to their

abilities, skills, interest, and level in the target language. Furthermore, modeling the language and the technological tool is crucial for reaching the goal of this lesson. The assessment should be always authentic (formative) in order to generate a meaningful learning process. Always be flexible as there are students with SEND in the classroom. The teacher should always adapt the lesson to the context and students.

When searching for studies about MDC lesson planning with autistic students, we found few of them. In Colombia, we could not locate lessons teachers designed. This generates a gap in the improvement of teaching strategies to teach English as a Second Language to students with SEND, especially with autism.



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## Appendix 1

### Transcript 1

#### *Christian's interview*

I: ¿te gusta la clase de inglés?

C: si

I: ¿por qué te gusta?

C: porque es divertida

I: ¿Qué te gusta de tu clase de inglés?

C: eh... me gusta hacer las tareas

I: ¿y qué tareas haces en inglés?

C: (no responde)

I: ¿Qué no te gusta de tu clase de inglés?

C: No me gusta... (No sabe)

I: ¿te gusta participar oralmente en la clase de inglés?

C: si

I: ¿por qué?

C: porque es lo más divertido

I: ¿cómo te gusta aprender inglés?

C: (no sabe)

I: ¿Qué habilidades te gustaría mejorar en la clase de inglés?

C: escribir en inglés, hablar en inglés, escuchar y entender, y leer textos en inglés

I: ¿Cuál de estas opciones te gusta más para participar oralmente en inglés? Puedes escoger más de una opción. ¿Te gusta responder en inglés a las preguntas que te hace tu profesora?

C: si

I: ¿te gustaría hacer una exposición en frente de tus compañeros donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿Tener una conversación con uno o dos compañeros donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿Tener una conversación con tres o más compañeros donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿jugar juegos de mesa donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿jugar con un compañero a actuar personaje como médico y paciente, vendedor y cliente, donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿te gustaría grabar Tik Toks donde tengas que decir cosas en inglés?

C: ¿Qué es eso?

I: es hacer videos donde dices cosas en inglés

C: no

I: mira el siguiente video donde la niña presenta a su familia en inglés. ¿Te gustaría hacer videos donde digas cosas en inglés como la niña del video?

C: no

I: ¿Por qué no?

C: porque no me gusta esa niña

I: pero, ¿te gustaría que TÚ puedas hacer un video en inglés?

C: si

I: ¿Por qué?

C: porque hacer un video es lo más importante

I: ¿cómo así?

C: no digas como así...

## Appendix 2

### Children's rights Lesson Plan

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SCHOOL NAME

<b>Subject:</b> English	<b>Grade:</b> 2°	<b>Time:</b> <i>(It should be adapted to particular time conditions)</i>	<b>Teachers:</b> María Paula Lizarralde Ángel, Jully Zaitel Buelvas Gutiérrez
<p><b>Students' general profile:</b> This 2nd grade course likes English class, except one. Generally, they like participating orally in the class. The majority likes using technology devices and video makers apps like Tiktok. They do not like writing activities. The majority do not like having conversations in English with small groups. They need to feel a comfortable and inclusive environment to be confident when participating orally in class.</p> <p>Particular student' profile:</p> <p><b>Christian's strengths:</b> He likes learning English. He asks for the equivalent of every word to understand. He learns easily. He likes listening to songs and watching videos in English. He shares with two or three peers. In social understanding and behavior, Christian has difficulty with coping with unscheduled activities during the day, working cooperatively when it is the first time he meets the person, understanding new situations, people, and places.</p> <p><b>Christian's weaknesses:</b> Christian gets frustrated with certain activities (usually with activities that include drawing, coloring, painting or hand-made objects), he says it is difficult and stops working; in this cases, he may say nonsense sentences, do repetitive movements or hit himself but restart working when someone calms him down and explains to him kindly what he has to do. In social communication, Christian has difficulty with irony, jokes, and sarcasm, he has hyper-sensitivity to particular sounds (rain, near speakers vibrating) and textures (jelly, clothes' tags, rough fabrics, meat). In rigidity of thinking and difficulties with social imagination, Christian has difficulty with coping with changes in routine, and inferring something from a picture or written text.</p>			
<b>Lesson goal:</b> By the end of the lesson students will be able to talk about the most important rights boys and girls have by creating a Multimodal Digital Text in a student's preferred video creator app.	<b>Teaching points:</b> "Expressions related to children's rights: I have the right to live. I have the right to be safe. I have the right to have a doctor. I have the right to eat healthy food. I have the right to have a name and a nationality. I have the right to have a family. I have the right to study. I have the right to be loved and cared for. I have the right to play. I have the right to be accepted.		<b>Content differentiation:</b> -Break down tasks into small tasks -Presenting and modelling boys' and girls' rights' texts in different means of learning (pictures, listenings and videos)
<b>Teaching strategies:</b>  Teaching and Learning Cycle		<b>Systems of Support and Supervision:</b>	

<p><b>Product Differentiation.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A VIDEO</li> <li>-Students can use any digital for videos, or record an audio)</li> <li>-Giving students options of how to express required learning</li> <li>-Using rubrics that match and extend students' varied skills levels</li> <li>-Allowing students to work alone or in pairs on the activities.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Arrangement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quiet place and without distraction</li> <li>- Developing routines that allow students to get help when teachers are busy with other students and cannot help them immediately</li> </ul>	<p><b>Process Differentiation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tell/show the class agenda of the day to the students</li> <li>- Developing personal agendas that addresses individual needs of learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offering manipulatives or other hands-on supports for the autistic student (if necessary)</li> <li>- Varying the length of time a student may take to complete a task in order to provide additional support</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Present texts about the content of the lesson taking into account: students' strengths and weaknesses, and students' multiple intelligences.</li> <li>- students tutoring their peers</li> </ul>
<p><b>LESSON OUTLINE (MULTIMODAL DIGITAL COMPOSING STAGES)</b></p>		<p><b>Materials and assistive technologies</b></p>
<p><b>PRE.PRODUCTION</b></p> <p>(LET'S KNOW ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ENGLISH)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Building the context or field</i></p> <p><b>Step 0: Modeling the language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· In a circle teacher and students introduce themselves with the help of a song. Teacher models the language: Hello! My name is Paula. What is your name?... How old are you? I'm __ years old. Students take turns by passing a ball, when the teacher stops the song the child with the ball in their hands will take the turn to present themselves.</li> <li>· Students will listen to a song where children's rights are mentioned (the song could be in their mother tongue). Sts will number the rights they listened to in the song.</li> <li>· Last class students were asked to talk with their families about what a right is and what are the rights that children have in Colombia (share the list of rights they discuss with their parents).</li> <li>· In this lesson, the teacher will present the children's rights by asking what they know or what their families shared with them about children's rights. Sts have to raise their hand to participate.</li> <li>· Students will be asked to watch a video about children's rights. Then, the teacher will check the student's comprehension about the video with questions like: What do you think the video is about? What did it appear in the video? Children or adults? What did you</li> </ul>	<p>Here the teacher must list the material and digital tools or resources she/he will need to develop the activities.</p>



like about the video? What did you not like about the video?  
(Teachers can create their own video to present the rights)

First, the teacher will show flashcards about the children's rights in an aleatory way, explaining what they mean. After this, the teacher will paste the flashcards on the wall.

· Secondly, the teacher will show the video again and pause when a right is mentioned, and the students will walk toward the flashcard where the right is depicted, until the video is finished.

· Thirdly, the teacher will write all the rights on the board while saying them aloud for students to repeat them, then volunteer students will take turns to match the corresponding flashcard with the right.

· Fourth, the teacher will teach them the expression "I have the right to..." and link them with each right. After this, the teacher will hand in photocopies with drawings of the rights and some sentences to reorder to complete "I have the right to live". Then, they will decorate (color, paint, glitter, modeling clay, among others.) the right. Once the students finish decorating the children's rights imagens, they will review the expression "I have the right to..." repeating the sentences after the teacher who will put a melody in each one. Then, the teacher will go to each student's place and ask them to complete the sentence "I have the right to..." with the image that is in the card.

***Step 1: come up with an idea***

· After the vocabulary is learnt, the teacher will present a video (30-90 seconds long) (an example of the product wanted) made in Tik Tok or any other video maker tool where a child is depicting the children's rights.

***Step 2: Research/Explore/Learn***

· After watching the video, children will be encouraged to think about the purpose, context/genre, and topic of the video. The teacher leads students in answering these questions: What the video has to do with? / Did the child tell a story? /Did the child explain or present something? /what tool did he/she use to record it?/Does the child act in the video? / What did the child have to learn to do the video? / Do you think the child needed help to do the video? There have to be several questions that will guide the creation of a checklist (video outline) on the board of steps to do a similar video. They may use their first language.

**Modeling the text (metalanguage)**

· The teacher tells students they will do a similar video, once they are ready to do so. The teacher may show another similar video or use the same to discuss in their first language the following aspects: who is the video for?/ Did the child do the video for children, adults or everybody?/ how long is the video? is it long or short?/ Did the child use written texts, pictures, drawings, gestures...?/ what does these things mean? Did the child use an effect? (voice effects or images effects) .

**Guided practice or joint construction; teacher guiding students in the creation of a MDT**

· Training the students to use the digital tools they have available: The teacher will present two or three options of video makers apps.

	<p>The app should be able to be used in smartphones or tablets. Teacher will let the students suggest any other app they know to make videos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Then, the teacher will present a video about the way the apps chosen are used so that they practice on the digital devices available.</li> <li>· Teachers and students may draft a 3 scenes storyboard (teacher introduce what a storyboard is, and encourage them to think why they have to do one for their videos) to create a short video just exploring the app effects or semiotic resources (stickers, transitions, music, and so on) The video will be students introducing themselves: 1st scene:Greeting, 2nd scene: Name, 3rd scene: Age and farewell. They edit the video together.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 3: write/script - Step 4: Storyboard/plan</b></p> <p>After that, students will create a storyboard for their videos, they may work in pairs (previously arranged by the teacher so they can ensure scaffolding) while doing this activity. The teacher will explain the parts the storyboard will have: greeting and introducing themselves (scene 1), each right explained in short and easy sentences and depicted in a drawing or picture either chosen from internet or taken by them (scenes 2-11), farewell (scene 12) Finally, the teacher will present an example of it.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Independent construction</u></p> <p>Students will review each right with the flashcards.</p> <p><i>Step five: Creating Images, audio, or video</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will do some rehearsals for the video/audio in the classroom with the teacher as many times as necessary.</li> <li>· Students will do the video in the school, if not they will have to do it with a relative's help at home using the storyboard (teacher will send the video explaining how to use the apps).</li> </ul> <p><b>Step six: Put it all together</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will blend text, images, sounds or effects. Students will edit the videos as many times as they want, they will delete scenes and film them again.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>POST-PRODUCTION</b></p> <p>(Let's share the video)</p>	<p><b>Step seven: Share</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will share their videos in a semicircle in the classroom in “the rights’ fair”, they will greet and might say something like: “this is my video, enjoy it”.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step eight: Feedback and Reflect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Students will talk about what they like about their partners’ videos, and what they found difficult while doing the video and what they found easy.</li> <li>· Teacher provides individual feedback about students’ performance.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT</b></p>	<p>The teacher will use a rubric considering students’ oral participation, creativity in the video’s design, and understanding about the rights. Although the teacher will not focus on grammar or pronunciation, students will receive verbal feedback about their mistakes. Also, the teacher will take into consideration students’ oral participation in all the process, monitoring them while doing the activities and observation in the whole class.</p>	
<p><b>TEACHER'S REFLECTION</b></p>	<p>Here the teacher must write his/her reflections as the lesson is finished, it could be about difficult things, limitations, unexpected events, or situations, and so on.</p>	