

Interactive methodological strategy in the English language for the development of oral expression and comprehension

Estrategia metodológica interactiva en el idioma ingles para el desarrollo de la expresión y comprensión oral

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ABSTRACT:

Awakening interest in a foreign language in students is not easy, because teachers are traditionally minded. Additionally, students do not have the motivation to learn. For this reason, the design of an interactive methodological guide would contribute to solving these problems. Based on this guide, the teaching-learning process would be entertaining and dynamic. Students will be able to familiarize themselves with the language, conduct debates, video conferences, participating actively with the teacher only through a computer. This strategy changes the paradigms pre-established by the curriculum, in which compulsory attendance in a classroom and the use of books and notebooks was the traditional way of teaching.

Keywords: Students, Teachers, Methodological guide, skills development

RESUMEN:

Despertar el interés por una lengua extranjera en los estudiantes no es fácil, debido a que los docentes son tradicionales y por lo mismo, los estudiantes no tienen la motivación para aprender. Por esta razón es que el diseño de una guía metodológica interactiva solucionaría estos problemas, debido a que con base en ella se aprendería de manera entretenida y dinámica. Los estudiantes podrán familiarizarse con el idioma, realizar debates, video conferencias participando activamente con el docente solo mediante un computador. Esta estrategia cambia los paradigmas preestablecidos por la malla curricular, en la que la asistencia obligatoria a un salón de clases y el uso de libros y cuadernos era la manera tradicional de brindar clases.

Palabras clave: Estudiantes, Docentes, Guía metodológica, Desarrollo de habilidades

1. Introduction

The present research aims to design an interactive methodological strategy in the English language, with a focus on the development of expression, which allows for the enhancing of

cognitive abilities and skills. The design of an interactive methodological guide aims to make learning fun by becoming familiar with the language through the participation of students and teachers in the learning process.

Currently, it is important to know and determine new ways of teaching, tools that provide entertainment and produce motivation to study (Oviedo, 2018). Thanks to technology and new web applications interest in practicing a foreign language will be reached because besides its use as an interactive tool, students will be able to develop their cognitive skills (Ocaña, 2013).

The strategy to be used is an interactive methodological guide, a tool designed to create an interesting and didactic way for students to develop and learn their cognitive skills as well as facilitate the learning and teaching process of teachers and students (Pérez, 2010). Thanks to the presence of technological applications such as virtual classrooms and online classes, students have more motivation to learn. Experiencing new forms of learning is what encourages students to study (Gravini, 2012). Learning through a web page, where there is an interactive chat, online conferences, and development of debates, is an interactive strategy which students can access in order to create motivation for learning (Hernández, 2015). The key of teaching a language is that each student is autonomous in what they want to learn. Likewise, it adapts to real situations which will allow them to experience what they have learned. However, teachers have considered that teaching should be adjusted to a book and grammar. This failure is evidenced in the low performance obtained by students at the beginner level in University" (Garcia, Espinosa and Campillo, 2013).

Teachers face a conflictive situation because of the text. Although, they have the right ones, they do not have a guide that contributes with innovative activities that facilitate the practice of language in the learning process. The use of technology in the life of a teacher and / or student is increasing its importance. Teachers need to use strategies so that students can face the world and solve problems. The traditional methodology is obsolete because, with the use of interactive resources, student motivation has changed substantially. The interactive guide is one of the tools that produce in students the desire to learn.

Currently, strategies are learning procedures used by teachers in class, since they are an interrelated set of functions and resources, capable of generating action plans that make it possible for the student to deal effectively with general and specific situations of his learning. Strategies allow for the incorporation and selectively organization of new information to solve problems of various kinds" (Virginia, 2008). Students, by mastering strategies, organize and direct their own learning process. Teachers become mediators who contribute to the learning process, increasing performance through the connection between the strategy taught and the student's perceptions (Guerra and Guevara, 2017). Interactive methods are indispensable instruments for educational learning, helping to strengthen academical and intellectual the student, since they allow for the solving of an issue or a problem. In this case, it will help to achieve fluency in the language. This method is looking for a solution by providing added value to the teaching, with methods and techniques that provide a maximum potentiation of the mental capacity and enhancing the intellectual skills. It is so the student becomes the center of the activity and the teacher helps and facilitates the process. Likewise, interactive methods are optimized if cooperation is fostered in their implementation, since the interaction that then takes place between the students themselves and between them and the faculty facilitates learning (Badia, et al., 2005). With which there will be a greater understanding and interest in the language, which in turn will help students to improve their academic performance.

The Common European Framework of Reference elaborates language programs, which classify what the students of languages have to learn to do in order to use a language to be able to communicate, adopt new knowledge, and skills that must be developed in order to interact correctly (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 2002). Learning a new language is the focus of all high school students, who should finish school in A1 level, however, the use of inappropriate material cause students to not reach that level. That is why university students must first meet this requirement to continue their learning (Narro and Arredondo, 2013). For this reason, the designing of an interactive guide to develop oral production in a correct way was

done. Moreover, it will achieve a greater connection between students and teachers. That is why the guide is an important resource for learning a language.

1.1. Methodological strategies

A methodological strategy focuses on communicative principles, in which the teaching of pronunciation is an essential component in the correct development of the oral communicative competence of the student. This is because it is a set of articulated decisions (affecting various variables) and that, together, constitute a way of teaching and a system of guidance (Aguilo, 2010). This will allow the student to achieve an intelligible pronunciation that allows him or her to communicate effectively and transmit the knowledge acquired (Solórzano and Geomara, 2017).

Through the SWOT Analysis, it was possible to identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats. This is one of the essential tools that provides the necessary inputs to the strategic planning process, providing necessary information for the implementation of actions and corrective measures as well as the generation of new strategies or the restructuring of existing ones (Orlich, 2010). These can determine better strategies to achieve better learning and fluency in English.

The motivation is the interest that the student has to learn. They are the factors that stimulate listening to the explanations and asking about and clarifying their concerns. Since motivation is an internal state that activates, directs and maintains the behavior, it is also used today to explain the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior, especially that oriented towards specific goals (Barriga Y Hernández, 2002). Since by being motivated, the student puts more interest in, manages to learn faster and improves their academic performance (Olivia, 2016). Good motivation during the teaching-learning process promotes the best development of the students, inside and outside the classroom, as well as a good work environment and the improvement of students' self-esteem (Bolívar, 2014).

2. Methodology

The designing of an Interactive Methodological Strategy in the English Language, for Students with Low Performance in the Beginner Level A1 in the University. Because the evaluation allows for analysis of the environment as it is the performance of the Beginner Level A1 in the University. It has been essential to scrutinize data of students with low academic performance, as well as the teachers of the Technical University of Ambato, who impart their knowledge. Therefore, the population is all the students with low performance in the Beginner Level A1 in the University from the period October 2014 to March 2015 which corresponds to 420 students from which a sample 100 students was taken.

2.1. Applied methods

The Language Center of the Technical University of Ambato, specifically the A1 Beginner level, needed an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses that students have when developing their speaking. In addition to that, the opportunities and threats they have outside the institution so as to be able to take the necessary measures and develop strategies to eliminate the low performance. The strategies that a strategic plan possesses are the following: SO, ST, WO, WT. Each of them is born from the crossing of a strength and a weakness, a strength and a threat, a weakness and an opportunity and a weakness and a threat.

The exploratory method was essential. Therefore, field investigation was conducted with the purpose of discovering the causes in order to identify the strategies and activities that allow the students of the Beginner Level A1 to improve their performance in terms of comprehension and oral expression. This was done by means of a survey aimed precisely at those students with low performance at that level and at the teachers who teach their knowledge at the aforementioned level.

2.2. Instrument

The survey is an instrument that consists of a series of questions that serve to determine the opinions of the respondents through the choice of alternatives in the closed questions (Mayntz, Hübner and Muñoz 1975). The survey that was developed was directed to the students to determine the aspects that affect their low performance.

3. Results

According to the results obtained in the survey carried out on the students of A1 Beginner level of the Language Center of the Technical University of Ambato most students have difficulty in speaking English, in spite of the exercises that are frequently used to develop oral comprehension and expression. The exercises that are used regularly in the classroom are dramatizations and conversations. However, they are exercises that have not allowed for full development. For this reason, students agree that an interactive technological tool such as the guide would be ideal for the development of the skill and ease of study in a dynamic and attractive way. However, the design of a guide to improve speaking has not been established in the country's educational institutions. This is despite the fact that they have used technological tools such as audiovisual resources or virtual classrooms, aimed at creating an attractive environment for student learning.

3.1. Survey directed at students

The survey directed to 100 students, determined the students' opinion in reference to the development of speaking in the classroom.

Table 1
Predominant results of the applied survey

Option	Frequency	Percentage.
Skills in which the most difficulty is found		
Speaking	38	38%
At the moment of speaking English, in your consideration what is your strongest point		
Vocabulary	46	46%
The teacher uses classroom exercises to develop speaking skills		
Always	49	49%
Speaking activities are developed frequently in the classes		
Conversation	70	70%
Teachers work with technological support tools to perform comprehension and oral expression activities		
Always	54	54%
The development of an interactive methodological strategy facilitates the development of oral expression and comprehension		
Yes	94	94%

Activities that help improve your speaking		
Role play games	27	27%
You have used an interactive guide for the development of oral expression and comprehension		
No	51	51%
The teacher should use a guide for English so that classes are more attractive and dynamic		
Yes	87	87%
An interactive tool supported by the internet facilitates the development of expression and oral comprehension		
Yes	86	86%
Would you like to be able to access a virtual site where you can chat with teachers, make inquiries and review the material for the development of speaking		
Yes	90	90%
Access from your home through a computer or similarly continue to attend classes at the university		
Yes	90	90%

Source: Prepared by the authors

The results obtained in the survey given to teachers and students of A1 Beginner level of the Language Center of the Technical University of Ambato found that most students surveyed had difficulty speaking English even though exercises to develop oral comprehension and expression are almost always used. The exercises that are used regularly in the classroom are dramatizations and conversations; however, these are exercises that have not allowed the full development of speaking. For these reasons, both students and teachers agree that an interactive technological tool such as the guide would be ideal for the development of the skill and ease of study in a dynamic and attractive way. This will eradicate their poor performance of oral expression and comprehension.

After having done analysis of the causes that generate low performance in students, such as the use of traditional tools, it was decided to propose a solution for the students with low performance in speaking skills. The design of an interactive methodological guide is the ideal virtual tool to awaken in students the interest to learn in a didactic and motivational way. Through this tool students will be able to know the way in which they should express themselves, the pronunciation of words, when they should use apostrophes, verbs in the past, and the structure of a sentence.

For the aforementioned SWOT analysis was performed

Table N° 2
SWOT of Level A1 Beginner

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>F1: Appropriate age to learn English.</p> <p>F2: High level of socialization.</p> <p>F3: Strategies developed by teachers focused on</p>	<p>D1: Bad pronunciation of words in English.</p> <p>D2: Lack of student's concern about practicing speaking.</p>

improving the understanding of English Language Learners. F4: Taste of students for songs in English.	D3: Ignorance of the failures they had in the development of speaking.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
O1: Travelling to another country where the language is applicable and understand the language. O2: Learning English through a web page. O3: Having foreign friends through social network	A1: Increasing the cost of English books. A2: Environment that does not offer opportunities to practice English.

Source: Prepared by the authors from Level A1 Beginner / Language Center

Table N° 3
Cross strategies Matrix

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	<p>S1: Appropriate age to learn English.</p> <p>S2: High level of socialization.</p> <p>S3: Strategies developed by teachers focused on improving the understanding of English Language Learners.</p> <p>S4: Taste of students for songs in English.</p>	<p>W1: Bad pronunciation of words in English.</p> <p>W2: Lack of student's concern about practicing speaking.</p> <p>W3: Ignorance of the failures they had in the development of speaking.</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	STRATEGY S.O	STRATEGY W.O
<p>O1: Travelling to another country where the language is applicable and understand the language.</p> <p>O2: Learning English through a web page.</p> <p>O3: Having foreign friends through social networks.</p>	<p>S1 + O2: Make a video chat between the students in the class.</p> <p>S2 + O3: Develop an interactive chat between foreigners and students of the A1 Beginner.</p> <p>S3 + O5: Interactive chat between the teacher and students.</p>	<p>W2 + O2: Evaluate speaking through the 4 items (Clarity, Pronunciation, Fluency, Content, Comprehension).</p> <p>W3 + O2: Develop an online voice recorder.</p> <p>W1 + O2: Know the errors made in the speaking by means of an application.</p>
THREATS	STRATEGY S.T	STRATEGY W.T
<p>T1: Increasing the cost of English books.</p> <p>T2: Environment that does not offer opportunities to practice English.</p>	<p>S3 + T1: Create a web page.</p> <p>S4 + T2: Interactivity with foreign people and/ or teachers to develop good speaking.</p>	<p>W2 + T2: Creating an application on the web (Users online).</p>

Source: Prepared by the authors from Level A1 Beginner / Language Center

4. Conclusions

The low performance in speaking skills is one of the shortcomings that students and people in general present when they are learning English. The main reason being the traditional strategies that teachers use for student's learning development. The students present difficulties in speaking despite having a high level of vocabulary. Their main deficiency is when they express themselves.

The techniques commonly used by teachers are conversations and dramatizations, which are used to facilitate comprehension and oral expression by teachers. However, they are not enough to develop speaking skill, because communication established with classmates is not the same as that which should be developed with the teacher at the time of evaluation.

Designing an interactive technological tool is a response to the problems that students present in their speaking performance. Because it is an entertaining tool and easy to use, it will allow students to interact in an easier way when speaking. A high number of students consider that with the use of an interactive guide classes will be more fun, dynamic, and facilitate the development of oral expression and comprehension.

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