

The American television series as a pedagogical strategy for the Teaching of English idioms in
The Third Semester of Spanish and English Program of the University of Nariño

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“Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en el presente trabajo son responsabilidad exclusiva del autor”

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Jurado

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Resumen

Uno de los aspectos fundamentales para la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera, es conocer las expresiones figurativas que emergen desde un contexto determinado y reflejan aspectos culturales. De allí, se cimienta el deseo de implementar estrategias que permitan al estudiante facilitar su proceso de aprendizaje haciendo uso de las series de televisión americanas como estrategia pedagógica para la enseñanza de modismos del inglés en los estudiantes de tercer semestre de la Licenciatura en Educación básica con énfasis en humanidades lengua castellana e inglés de la Universidad Nariño. En este sentido, la presente investigación propone un abordaje desde el enfoque cuantitativo, mediante una investigación- Cuasi experimental- que permita analizar el efecto de la aplicación de la estrategia propuesta.

Palabras Claves: enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, Modismo, y Series de televisión.

Abstract

One of the fundamental aspects for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language is to know the figurative expressions that emerge from a specific context and reflect cultural aspects. From there, the desire to implement strategies that allow students to facilitate their learning process using the American television series as a pedagogical strategy for the teaching of English idioms in the students of the third semester of the English and Spanish Teaching program of the University of Nariño. Along this lines, the present research proposes an approach from the quantitative paradigm, through a quasi-experimental investigation that allows analyzing the effect of the application of the proposed strategy.

Key words: Teaching English as a Second Language, Idiom, and TV series.

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Chapter I

Technical-Scientific Aspect

Title

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Introduction

Current educational trends have incorporated the management of new mechanisms to strengthen teaching processes, especially in foreign languages. A clear example of this is the new technologies, which, according to González (2000): "are becoming of prime importance in the teaching process not only of languages but also of other fields of knowledge" (pp. 17-18).

Given the importance of audiovisual resources which are available to all and can be used in different areas of life. Audiovisual resources are understood as those in which the audio plus the image prevails. We have focused on these types of resources because they are the most used by young people of this era, who are accustomed to having a constant flow of audiovisual stimuli, so it is natural to incorporate these resources into the area of education, where they have a greater fit every day.

The objective of this research is to develop a pedagogical proposal directed to the teachers of English of third semester of Bachelor in the Spanish and English Teaching of the University of Nariño, supported in the use of the series of television in English to teach idioms considering their meaning in context.

One of the things that must be taken into account in understanding a language is knowing what idioms mean, but it is not a matter of looking for the literal meaning because you probably will not find any meaning to the phrase since we must know or discover its hidden meaning.

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Burke (1998) mentions that "knowledge of slang and idioms is fundamental in non-native speakers for understanding the language that native speakers actually use" (p.5)

In short, figurative expressions such as idioms are often used in everyday situations and therefore need to be directed by teachers. Understanding idioms requires that students go beyond the simple strategy of understanding 'word by word' to integrate the figurative meaning.

Problem

Problem Description

Taking into account that "idioms are figurative expressions that do not mean what they say literally and since their use is frequent in spoken and written speech, understanding and producing idioms causes a problem in learning vocabulary of English as a second language" (Cooper, 1998, p.223). It is evident that the teaching of idioms deserves an important place in the development of a higher level of competence for language students.

Wray (2000) suggests that "mastery of idioms is required for the success of learning with language commands similar to those of natives" (p.463). However, English idioms are often omitted by teachers of English as a foreign language with the intention of making things less complicated for their students. In other words, according to Lazar (1996): "figurative expressions (e.g, idioms) receive less attention than they deserve" (pp. 43-51). The fact is that few native English speakers use Standard English; they often use words and phrases that make little sense when using a literal definition.

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Problem formulation

Research question

What is the effect of the American television series as a pedagogical strategy for the Teaching of English idioms on the Third Semester of Spanish and English program of the University of Nariño?

Objectives

General objective

To analyze the effect of the American television series as a pedagogical strategy for the Teaching of English idioms in the Third Semester of Spanish and English program of the University of Nariño.

Specific objectives

To identify the English idioms that students know.

To apply a pedagogical strategy using the American television series to teach idioms in English.

To describe the positive and negative effects of the use of the American television series in the teaching of English idioms as a foreign language.

Significance of the study

At the present, English learning has become a requirement in the training process of people and it is considered as a key element for academic, economic and labor success. Idioms represent linguistic phenomena that present certain difficulties within the level of theories of language. There are many lines of interpretation that emphasize different aspects: semantic, lexical or grammatical, that is, idiomatic expressions are a controversial subject in grammar. The teaching-learning of English implies the knowledge of idiomatic expressions or idioms, which

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should not be left aside as these are important in learning vocabulary and lexicon, leading to a better understanding of the culture and customs of the spoken language.

Therefore, "the teaching of English must adopt didactic and pedagogical strategies in accordance with a social and cultural approach, culture can take different forms in relation to the phrases made" (Piirainen, 2008, p. 209-213). It is not only necessary to know the grammar of a language, but also to take into account the culture, this allows the student to develop in a real context, learning idiomatic expressions, understanding their meaning and frequently using them as native English speakers do. This is why it is interesting and important to carry out this research whose only purpose is to make strictly pedagogical contributions to teach English idioms using the American television series as a strategy, since students are more exposed to American English, in addition, they can have a good time watching series that they like while they become familiar with the language where the real context of the language is evidenced.

Limitations

In the development of all research it is evident that in order to obtain the final results we must overcome the mishaps and limitations that impede the development of the projects, we will describe some of the important limitations that can be presented in this work:

- The lack of audiovisual resources such as TVs, computers or video beam in the institution.
- The lack of collaboration and voluntary participation of the students in the development of the research project, bear in mind that it requires their time and availability for the execution of the presented proposals.
- There are different types of American series, not all students are likely to show interest in the topics presented.

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- Some idioms are difficult to understand because they are rooted in very particular contexts, depending on the region from which they come.

When the limitations are understood clearly, it enables to develop the research effectively. In addition, it is avoided that these are constituted as diversion factors, therefore, the identification of the same for the relevant intervention at the time of execution of the project.

Chapter II

Fundamental Scheme

Background

The following chapter will deal with issues such as the existing background of some studies that have been carried out and which are related to the research topic to be developed.

Huong Quynh Tran (2012) of the National University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam, carried out two questions on his research: How have figurative idiomatic expressions been taught for senior pre-service teachers? What are the teachers' and students' evaluations on their teaching and learning of figurative idiomatic expressions? And the general objective was to answer these two research questions.

The author found that the positive reaches in the learning of idioms are the result of creative activities that have to do with these. The teaching of idioms should focus more on activities that lead to the practice of them, being more effective if teachers used more videos for the teaching of idioms and it concludes that idioms should receive more attention in language teaching to help students in acquiring English in a foreign context.

Bustos, López, Nadia, Meriño, Molina, San Martín (2012) from the University of Bio - Bio Chile. The research question was: Are there significant differences between a group of 8th grade students from a subsidized college who use audiovisual materials and another group of

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students of the same level who do not use audio-visual materials in English language learning?

And its general objective was to determine if the use of audiovisual materials by teachers affects English language learning. The results of the surveys and tests carried out provide relevant and meaningful information on the relationship between the students and the audiovisual materials, which will help the teachers of this subject to improve their dynamics and didactics of their classes in the near future.

The interesting result yielded by this research boots teachers to have a wide view on the use of various types of materials, whether audiovisual or not, and their influence on meaningful learning.

Taking under consideration previous researches it can be said that they are related to the topic proposed in this preliminary project of degree to be developed, therefore, the closest and useful research work is Huong Quynh Tran of the National University of Education, Hanoi (2012), in which Tran asserts that the use of idioms in the right context is primarily a matter for teachers, if students do not understand the appropriate context in which the idiom is embedded, they will use it inappropriately. Without context, language is not fully understood. The idioms, in a similar way, contain for themselves certain values in the contextual dimensions.

Theoretical conceptual framework

This research will focus on the influence of the American television series as a pedagogical tool for the teaching of the idioms of English as a foreign language in the third semester undergraduate students of Spanish and English teaching program of the University Nariño. For this it is necessary to know the main conceptual and theoretical bases that help to define the variables of the problem to investigate. In that order of ideas, we will begin by

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defining the concepts: Teaching English as a second language, idiom, and types of idioms, audiovisual resources and TV series.

Teaching English as a Second Language

The acquisition of the first language takes place naturally and spontaneously, whereas the learning of a second language implies the structuring of a method to teach the code (the language) and a methodology that suits the participants in the process. In the 1980s, the natural method was based on the idea that the understandable input in the target language was the determining factor of acquisition (Krashen 1985: 22). Thus, the importance of the teaching of idioms of English as a foreign language is highlighted, so they are defined below.

Idiom

The definition of idioms varies in literature. Cooper (1999) takes idioms as "a type of units of several words that have a non-literal meaning" (pp. 233-262). To understand this non-literal meaning there must be a cultural knowledge. Glucksberg (2001) agrees with this statement and mentions that "An idiom is a phrase that is commonly used within a given culture and understood to have a different meaning from its literal meaning" (p.68).

On the other hand, Grant (2007) emphasizes that "there is no grammatical flexibility in idioms" (p.169). Put the idioms in three categories: Pure idioms (get out of hand: when you lose control of things, they get out of hand), semilateral idioms (dig in your heels / stick to your guns: to refuse to compromise or change your Mind) and literal idioms (*How I met your mother*, Season 2, Chapter 3 and 5. Words are combined from the point of view of structural characteristics, according to the rules and the lexicon without taking into account their meaning. As a consequence, the phrases made do not belong to the execution process, but are located in

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the periphery of the language. These appear as individual units in the lexicon without omitting its syntactic characteristics and are classified below:

Proverbs: These are short phrases that are quite familiar in a given community. For example: "Experience is the mother of knowledge" (sayings), and "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" (proverb).

Tourneur Idioms: These idioms are composed of three or more words. For example: A piece of cake: very easy. Get cold feet: be nervous (*How I Met Your Mother*, Season 6, Chapter 2)

Binomials: They are expressions consisting of two words plus a conjunction. For example: bag and baggage, spick and span.

Frozen Similes: These are comparative expressions. For example: as cool as a cucumber, as white as snow. (Gries, 2008, 10-12, 19)

It is important to keep in mind that idioms are expressions that have a certain degree of formality and informality. This means that a person can find them in written production or in oral competition according to the context and what someone needs to communicate. In order to achieve the objective, television series have been proposed as a pedagogical strategy for the teaching of idioms.

Television series

It consists of the serial narration of different stories of fiction, fragmented in different chapters. It is a television product of great complexity and heterogeneity to welcome different forms of narrative structure, production strategies and aesthetic resources. However, as a feature common to all existing television series formats. Angel (2010) states:

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"The television series are a sub-genre of fiction of clear commercial purpose destined to the entertainment, consisting of stories invented and structured in a large number (open or closed) of chapters, whose duration is defined by the own structure of the grill of the chain (The schedule for which it is intended) and the consumption habits of the spectators (the audiences to which it is directed) "(p.183).

Chapter III

Methodological Aspects

This chapter will outline methodological aspects such as: the research paradigm, the design, the type of research, the context, the population and the sample that is considered necessary for this preliminary project.

Research Paradigm

The project includes the quantitative paradigm, represented by the verification of its hypothesis, in which the data are subject to measurement and statistical evaluation. As stated by Rubio and Varas (2004, p.239): "the quantitative method measures social facts, for which it uses numbers and the count of frequencies (algebraic calculations). In this way, social phenomena and situations are described in mathematical terms, as well as the analysis of the data obtained and the testing of their hypotheses ".

Within the quantitative paradigm, quantitative techniques will then be applied since it is a quasi-experimental research in which the degree of relationship between two variables will be measured, using numerical data.

The quantitative paradigm will help in the search and application process of pertinent and feasible solutions to the research problem raised in the teaching of English idioms as a foreign language.

Design and Type of Research

The type of research by which the research project will be developed will be Quasi-experimental.

This study is framed within what the Quasi-experimental research is according to the terms of Campbell and Stanley (1995). It is Experimental because "it involves the intentional manipulation of an action (use of the American television series) to analyze its possible effects" (Hernández, Fernández, Baptista and Casas, 1991, p.109). We will work with an experimental group and a treatment will be applied, comparisons will be established in the process to measure the effect of the independent variable (use of American television series) on the dependent variable (learning of idioms).

The research design will take place with the general objective and the specific objectives. The action will be carried out with the selection of an American series *'How I met your mother'*, a comedy created by Craig Thomas and Carter Bays, released in 2005. A Pedagogical strategy is presented using the American television series and its positive and negative effects in the teaching of idioms of English as a foreign language will be analyzed. Identifying the students' knowledge about idioms, through the recognition of them in some of the chapters of the series. The quasi-experimental design will have a pre-test and a post-test which will be applied to the experimental group to analyze whether the experimental treatment had an effect on the dependent variable or not.

Research Context

The study population with which the preliminary research project will be carried out are students from the University of Nariño, VIPRI headquarters, located in Las Acacias neighborhood in the city of San Juan de Pasto.

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The University of Nariño's mission is to train human beings, citizens and professionals in the different areas of wisdom and knowledge; And its vision is understood as an event in the culture, it wants to be recognized for its contribution, from the creation of human values, to peace, coexistence, social justice and academic research training, committed to regional development in the Intercultural dimension. In addition, in its institutional educational project (PEI), the University of Nariño considers research as *"the process of construction and innovation of knowledge about nature, culture, society and the person."*

Within the professional scope of the Bachelor's program in Basic Education with emphasis in Humanities Spanish and English Language, has a duration of 10 semesters and has more than 12 teachers, about 232 active students, belonging to the areas of linguistics and English, governed For a model of education focused on providing the student with a basic research foundation in education, pedagogy and language.

Population and Sample

The selection of the unit of analysis for this preliminary research project will be the students of the third semester of the program of Bachelor's Degree in Basic Education with Emphasis in Humanities Spanish and English, night shift, who study the subject of Listening and Speaking III, enrolled for the Period B-2018.

The group to be selected is made up of 34 students, 16 men and 18 women, aged between 18 and 22. We will work with this group of analysis due to the previous academic training that they have received during their study plan, having successfully completed the two previous levels of English.

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Collection techniques and instruments

The following are the techniques and instruments that will be used for the collection of information in the preliminary research project, taking into account the population and sample shown in the table below:

Table 1
Techniques and instruments for collecting of the information

Specific Objectives	Unit of analysis and sources	Techniques	Instruments
To identify the English idioms that students know.	Students	Task	Pre-test
To apply a pedagogical strategy using the American television series to teach idioms in English.	Teachers	Surveys	Questionnaire guide
To describe the positive and negative effects of the use of the American television series in the teaching of English idioms as a foreign language.	Students	Task	Post-test

The techniques that will be used in the research project will be the following:

Tasks

Tasks will be conducted as a data collection technique. As mentioned, this is a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test. The objective of the Pre-test is to observe the knowledge base of idioms of English that students have at the time of beginning research; the

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post-test to observe if there are differences in the knowledge of the students from the beginning of the investigation to the date. These two exams will allow us to analyze if the experimental treatment (the use of the American television series) has an effect on the dependent variable (learning idioms) (Hernández, 1991). For this, we will use the statistical test "t" of student.

Bustos (2012), "test t-Student is a test that lets on to decide if two normal random variables (Gaussian) and with the same variance have different mean. Given the ubiquity of the normal or Gaussian distribution, the test can be applied in numerous contexts, to check if the modification in the conditions of a process (human or natural) essentially random produce an increase or decrease of the population mean. The test operates by deciding if a difference in the sample mean between two samples is statistically significant, and then to be able to affirm that the two samples correspond to probability distributions of a different population mean, or on the contrary to affirm that the difference of means can be due to oscillations random statistics". (p.55)

Surveys

To obtain the information from the teachers the survey will be used with a questionnaire elaborated with open questions. One of the most used instruments to collect data is the questionnaire. A questionnaire consists of a set of questions regarding one or more variables to be measured (Hernández, 1991). For the construction of questionnaires that will be applied to teachers, open questions will be designed with the possibility of answers in order to obtain more information regarding the object of study and with the purpose of diagnosing what strategies have been used to teach English idioms and its effectiveness.

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Analysis and interpretation of data

Each of the proposed techniques and instruments will be applied in third semester undergraduate students of Spanish and English Teaching program of the University of Nariño and then analyzed.

The results that will be obtained from it will help to answer the research question. The statistical interpretation will be centered on the main objective proposed in the project, which allows analyzing the effect of the American television series, taking as reference the American series *How I met your mother* as a pedagogic strategy for the teaching of English idioms which shows a large number of idioms that are represented in the different contexts shown in the scenes.

The analysis of the application of the strategy of the American series revolves around the presence of the categories of the positive and negative effect of them in the learning of English idioms, which were objects of study, this information is collected through a pre-test and a post-test that will grant to collect the data and demonstrate its effectiveness.

Chapter IV

Administrative Aspects

Schedule

The following schedule includes a list of relevant activities and/or tasks to the development of the research:

n o	Activity	Year																					
		2017											2018										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Budget

The following is the estimated budget that is necessary to meet the expenses in the development of the research:

Type of implement	Name	Cost per item	N° of items	Total
Audiovisual	Television series in CD	36.000	1	36.000
Of office	Books	40.000	2	80.000
	Copies	50	100	5.000
	paper	12.000	2	24.000
	pens, pencils,	1.000	5	5.000
Total				150.000

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