

ANXIETY REDUCTION THROUGH AUDIOVISUAL AIDS

**Anxiety Reduction through the Use of Audiovisual Aids: Sixth Grade Students'
Perceptions at Marco Fidel Suarez High School**

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Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en el siguiente trabajo son responsabilidad exclusiva del autor.

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NOTA DE ACEPTACIÓN

Firma del Presidente de Jurado

Diana Ibarra Santacruz

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Resumen

La ansiedad ha demostrado tener un gran impacto en el desarrollo de las habilidades de los estudiantes en un campo tan complejo como lo es el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. Las consecuencias negativas de este sentimiento pueden desarrollar fuertes limitaciones en las habilidades de los aprendices. El miedo de ser juzgado, burlado o incluso castigado limita mucho el desempeño de los estudiantes, bloqueando las conexiones en el cerebro y evitan que el estudiante pueda continuar con el proceso. La percepción de los estudiantes acerca de la educación que ellos están recibiendo es realmente importante debido a que ellos pueden proporcionar su punto de vista para mejorar la educación desde su propia experiencia. A través de los años muchas alternativas han tenido lugar en el salón de clase tradicional haciendo las lecciones más agradables para los estudiantes, entre estas, destacan las ayudas audiovisuales que pueden desencadenar resultados positivos, pero que aún no se incluyen en todas las aulas de los colegios públicos. Los estudiantes, teniendo la oportunidad de establecer una comparación entre una clase dictada de la forma tradicional y una dictada con la ayuda de materiales audiovisuales están completamente preparados para decidir cual es mejor y como se sienten en cada una de las experiencias, proporcionando retroalimentación que puede ser usada con el fin de mejorar la perspectiva de la educación hacia el bienestar de los estudiantes para evitar sentimientos negativos como la ansiedad, y promover la motivación y la disposición para aprender una lengua extranjera.

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Abstract

Anxiety has been proved to have a great impact in the development of students' skills in such a complex field as it is the learning of a foreign language. The negative consequences of this feeling can develop strong limitations in students' abilities. The fear of being judged, mocked, or even punished limits a lot the performance of learners, blocking the connections in the brain and preventing the student from carrying with the process. The students' perception about the education they are receiving is really important due to the fact that they can provide their point of view to improve the education system from their own experience. Through the years, many alternatives have taken place in the traditional classroom to make the lessons more pleasant for the students, among these alternatives, audiovisual aids could be representative and may also yield positive results. Then students having the opportunity of making a comparison between a lesson taught in the traditional way and a lesson taught using audiovisual aids are completely prepared to decide which one is better and how they feel in each one of the experiences, providing feedback that can be used in order to improve the perspective of education towards the wellness of the students to avoid negative feelings like the anxiety and foster the motivation and the willing for learning a foreign language.

Key words: language, foreign, anxiety, audiovisual, learning

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Introduction

Learning a language is not an easy process as it implies coping with many challenges; one of these is anxiety, and every learner has experienced it at some point. Colombia is not a bilingual country, and there is not so much interaction with people from other countries, which makes it harder to acquire a foreign language; however, it is mandatory that students get a certain level in English as a requirement for most universities in the country, but students should be motivated from their childhood. To start secondary school, they have too little knowledge about the language, and they have six years to improve. Then it is the teachers' task to look for the best and most efficient ways to teach the students, keep their attention, increase their motivation, and lower their anxiety.

Many alternatives have been included in the search for providing a great experience for students in the learning of a new language process. For instance, audiovisual aids, which can be used as teaching devices that take into account several learning styles and may represent a great benefit for everyone in the classroom. The use of videos, songs, games and other materials help students to relate concepts more easily, which results in a more efficient learning.

When it comes to anxiety, based on the observations made in Marco Fidel Suarez high school with the sixth-grade students, it was found that this factor led students to not participate actively when the teacher asked questions since they felt nervous and anxious. Clement (1980) defined foreign language anxiety as a complex construct that deals with learners' psychology in terms of their feelings, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Nonetheless, as the use of audiovisual aids increased, students' levels of anxiety seemed to decrease, and they started to participate and to be more interactive in the class, facilitating group learning.

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Chapter I: Problem

In the field of education, specifically in English teaching, there are different problems that affect the appropriate learning of the foreign language. This research focuses on the importance that audiovisual aids have for the students at Marco Fidel Suarez high school in the management of anxiety inside the classroom. Thus, this chapter presents the description of the problem developed throughout this paper with its justification and the different objectives that lead this research.

Description of the Problem

Learning English is an important goal for many professionals, and nowadays, their purpose is to develop the four skills equally. From the beginning of the academic life, students face English classes in which they are expected to control the basic aspects of the language to be prepared for their professional lives

However, many students find learning English to be a difficult activity, especially when they have to perform orally. For instance, they start feeling nervous, forgetting what they want to say, and feeling unable to speak. Then in order to ameliorate these feelings, teachers resort to multiple resources, being audiovisual aids one of the most common ones.

It is evident that audiovisual materials are really useful to enhance the understanding of the students. Specifically, some studies have demonstrated that the use of songs highly reduces the anxiety levels as it is shown by a research carried out in Malaysia by Anak et al. (2020), in a country which has similar linguistic characteristics to ours, meaning that students are not exposed to the English as a second language, and they do not feel so confident nor motivated to learn the language. The conclusion of the research states that: "Language anxiety will reduce

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when using songs because songs effectively increase students' motivation and also interest in learning languages (...). Low proficiency students also show interest and increase in motivation. This shows that they are learning in a more fun and stress-free way". Songs are one of the most powerful audiovisual aids since they can be used to interact with all the students: those who are better auditory learners, visual learners and even kinesthetic learners. According to the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning which states that meaningful learning happens when learners are exposed to visual and audio input rather than to aural input alone. Therefore, this theory supports the use of media (videos) as they present both aural and visual aids (Mayer & Moreno, 2003). In this sense, songs can be a really useful tool to connect visually with the video and auditorily with the lyrics. In this way, videos are an excellent tool to enhance the speaking skills of the ESL learners and at the same time help to minimize the level of anxiety of students when speaking and learning English. Then these audiovisual aids should be implemented in a stricter way in all classrooms of the public high schools, and their use could be more controlled and supported by the entities of education.

Research Question

What are the perceptions sixth grade students at Marco Fidel Suarez high school have about the reduction of anxiety through the use of audiovisual aids?

Objectives

General Objective

To analyze students' perceptions about how anxiety is reduced after the application of some audiovisual aids during English lessons.

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Specific Objectives

- To identify the aspects that cause anxiety and those that make students feel more comfortable to learn the foreign language.
- To identify the perceptions of students in relation to the reduction of anxiety through the use of audiovisual aids.

Significance of the Study

As cited in the study *Psychology Factors That Hinder Students from Speaking in English Class (A Case Study in a Senior High School in South Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia)* carried out by the Journal of Education and Practice (2012), “Fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students’ reluctance to speak in English in the classroom” (Tsui, in Nunan, 1999, p. 101). They think only about the negative consequences that could happen to them if they make a mistake in front of all of the students. Thanks to the development of this study, it will be possible to understand what activities students enjoy at the moment of learning the foreign language and what motivates them to participate during the class. Similarly, this research gives the teachers the possibility to create an interesting lesson through the use of audiovisual aids since they help to introduce the topic, catching the attention of the student and giving better illustrations. Making an appropriate use of the audiovisual aids can facilitate the learning for the students and allow the teacher to advance in the explanation of the different topics on the subject.

Furthermore, the development of this research seeks to promote and encourage the use of audiovisual aids not only in sixth grade students but in all grades that have the subject of English in order to create an appropriate environment for learning the foreign language.

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Definition of Terms

Audiovisual aids

Audiovisual aids are any device which can be used to make the learning more effective, more concrete, more realistic and more dynamic (Klinder, 1959).

Anxiety

Anxiety in second language learning is related to the psychological tension that a learner experiences in completing a learning task and is situation-specific (Hilleson, 1996).

Language learning

Language learning is a conscious process, is the product of either formal learning situation or a self-study programme (Kramina, 2000: 27).

Motivation

Motivation is generally understood to denote the strength of a person's desire to attain a goal (Schmidt, Palminteri, Lafargue, & Pessiglione, 2010).

Active participation

Active participation is the consistent and simultaneous engagement of the minds of all the learners with the content of the lesson. Such participation increases the rate and degree of learning (George, 2011).

Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the researchers provide the background information about the three main topics related to this research which are anxiety, audiovisual aids, and oral production. This section takes into account several points of view that different authors have discussed regarding the influence of audiovisual aids in the context of Foreign Language Learning. These authors agree on the fact that anxiety is the main factor that obstructs the success in learning English as a foreign language, especially in the oral production.

In addition, this literature review presents information on the different and appropriate ways to use the audiovisual aids to help the students to overcome anxiety and its consequences that can impact negatively on the students' academic competence.

Previous Research

Visual aids and multimedia in second language acquisition

This research was developed by Noha Halawani to know if students improve their reading and writing skills in the foreign language through the use of visual aids. She established that "The visual aids are so important for second language acquisition; they can be a tool to link words and their meanings" (Halawani, 2017, p.53). Taking into account that technology has had a great impact on education because it facilitates the learning process and makes it more effective, audiovisual aids including multimedia tools were used to help students overcome the obstacles they face in learning. Thus, the main objective of this research was to know if visual aids, presented as multimedia tools also, improve English language acquisition in reading and writing for a beginner ESL. The reason why the researcher chose this topic was that he considered that schools did not have the appropriate equipment to teach English, and he wanted

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to know the possibilities of improving the assimilation of students integrating multimedia. To carry out this research, a group of students from 7th to 12th grade was chosen to form classes with 72 students. Subsequently, for the study, data collection tools, time log observation sheet and survey were used to indicate if students enjoyed the lesson and if the audiovisual aids improved their understanding of the material. As a result, it was observed that these tools helped ESL students to speak, read, write and follow the teacher's instructions. Also, it was noticed that at the beginning of the investigation, students were quiet and copied what the teacher wrote on the board, but then they became more interactive each time the teacher integrated audiovisual aids. In this line, this research allowed us to know that audiovisual aids are very helpful for students because they gained self-confidence gradually, became much more interactive, and voluntarily spoke and read. In this way, the research question "Can audiovisual aids improve English in reading and writing for ESL high school students?" was answered affirmatively.

The significant role of multimedia audiovisual aids in motivating EFL learner's interest in English language learning

Thanks to the fact that audiovisual aids present information through texts, graphics, audios, images and videos, the teaching and learning of a foreign language are more significant. Therefore, the objective of this research developed by Abbas Pourhosein was to discuss the impact of multimedia as part of the audiovisual aids in a learning environment, taking into account the role of teachers and students, and the strength of multimedia English teaching in detail (Pourhosein, 2012). The researcher wanted to analyze the relationship between multimedia tools and learning, and he wanted to show that teachers need to use audiovisual aids through multimedia to create an authentic environment for teaching and learning languages in which

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students can acquire the language effectively. For these reasons, the development of the research is based on different studies carried out in previous researches and theories that analyzed the data. As a result, it is observed that audiovisual aids create the opportunity for learners to improve their learning, since their incorporation inside the classroom may cater to the learning styles of each of their students. In this way, learners become attentive, motivated and participatory, increasing the success in the learning process. Finally, this research analyzed that the purpose of using multimedia tools is to find the best ways for students to learn effectively and teachers to teach efficiently.

Using play activities and audiovisual aids to develop speaking skills

Foreign language learning is a complex process that involves a lot of work and motivation since it requires the improvement of certain skills such as listening, writing, reading and speaking. Fortunately, some findings demonstrate that teaching based on audiovisual aids develops the students' skills and helps them to feel motivated throughout the learning process.

Considering that audiovisual aids have a great impact on education, this research developed by Nidia Mutis and Marta Londoño focused on the usefulness of audiovisual aids and play activities for English language learning. They conducted a study that described resources that helped students use the target language and improve their oral production. First of all, the classes were developed by means of audiovisual aids and play activities dealing with reading, grammar and speaking. Subsequently, the analysis of data was done through teacher's observations with checklists. Those checklists were meant to collect information about commands, self-confidence, pronunciation and class participation. Moreover, it was announced that "students did not hesitate at the beginning of the study" and over time "They improved their

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pronunciation, self-confidence and chorus-work participation” (Casallas & Londoño, 2014, p.32). Finally, the authors concluded that “Learners prefer colorful visual aids and a confident classroom environment which emphasized real communicative contexts” (Casallas & Londoño, 2014, p.33).

This research was related to our topic because it addressed the improvement of oral production through the use of audiovisual aids that allows an easier understanding of the foreign language and helps students to be attentive, motivated and participatory, increasing the success of learning.

After having analyzed the different kinds of audiovisual aids that can be used in the English teaching process and the impact on the oral performance of the students, it is necessary to find out the impact they have on one of the main topics of the research also; one of them is anxiety. As it was noticed audiovisual aids and play activities present countless benefits to develop speaking skills, as it could be inferred from the evidence, and in the same way they may assist in lowering anxiety when speaking in English as it can be observed next.

Anxiety

Anxiety has many implications in second language learning. It occurs specially in our context because we are not surrounded by English speakers. Doubek and Anders (as cited in Králová, 2016) state that:

Anxiety can be defined as a mental and physical state characterized by specific emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral symptoms. It is an adaptive reaction which mobilizes the organism and helps it defend, attract or avoid an anxiety stimulus. The stimulus can be a previous external or internal antecedent or trigger. To state the definite

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causes of anxiety can be rather complicated as it is influenced by many factors: biological, psychological, social or other (p.3).

It can be understood that anxiety negatively influences several aspects and important functions related to the learning process. These aspects are the ones that allow the students to acquire the foreign language more easily. This fact leads the researchers to understand that it is important to find the way to control the students' anxiety and in the same way to manage the use of oral activities in order to find if anxiety has been overcome.

Identifying anxiety in a foreign language classroom

At the moment of learning a language, many students show symptoms of anxiety that prevent them from performing successfully in a foreign language class. Therefore, it is considered by teachers and students that anxiety is a major obstacle to be overcome when learning a foreign language.

Since anxiety can have a profound impact on many aspects of foreign language learning, it is important to identify those students who are anxious in class. For example, a study conducted in 1983 with two groups of fifteen students each identified the behavior of anxious students through activities like students' discussions, didactic presentations and anxiety management exercises. The study indicated that anxious students demonstrated behaviors such as standing outside the door trying to summon up enough courage to enter, going blank prior to tests, trembling and palpitations.

According to Karaman, Paradowski, Dmoska and Czasak (2015), "Certain levels of anxiety can motivate the student and improve her/his performance – anxious individuals can compensate for the increased cognitive demands and reduced processing effectiveness by

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expending more effort in the learning process” (p.35). In this way, it is important that the teacher identifies what kind of activities lead to positive results such as the competition, where some students feel very motivated for the strong desire of becoming winners, but also take into account that it is not true for all the students. The pressure of being judged by their classmates can lead some students to feel terrified about the idea of making a mistake. As a consequence, if they fail and their team loses the competition, they would feel guilty, and it will be more difficult for them to participate in another opportunity. Thus, the teacher must try to find different ways to promote the participation in class through activities that make all the students feel comfortable in doing what they like, it can be hard but if the teacher asks the students about the activities they enjoy, he could design his plan of class in a better way.

Causes of anxiety

As Horwitz and Cope (as cited in Králová, 2016) state, some of the causes for foreign language anxiety are the students’ fear of representing themselves in a wrong way and the fear of getting a negative evaluation. The idea the students’ have of themselves is narrowly connected with their proficiency in language, in which they need to be sure of their abilities.

All these symptoms of anxiety in the foreign language are caused by the evaluation of performance within the academic and social context. One of the most common causes is test anxiety because “It refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” (Horwitz et al, 1986, p. 127). For instance, oral tests have the potential of provoking both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously since students have all the eyes on them, and they feel afraid of being strongly judged if they make a mistake. Finally, the fear of negative evaluation which is the third anxiety related to foreign language learning according to Watson

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and Friend (1969) who define it as, “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations that others would evaluate oneself negatively (p. 449)”, and it occurs in any evaluative situation since learning a foreign language requires continuous evaluation by the teacher.

Effects of anxiety in foreign language learning

Over the years, anxiety has been considered as an obstacle to learning a foreign language. For instance, Kleinmann (1977) found that ESL students with high levels of anxiety attempted different types of grammatical construction that did less anxious students.

In this way, this study demonstrated that students with higher levels of anxiety have less effectiveness in learning and producing in the foreign language; for example, they write shorter compositions than their calmer counterparts do.

Moreover, it has been discovered that behavioral responses of the anxious foreign language learner are the same as for any specific anxiety. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), “They experience apprehension, worry, even dread. They have difficulty concentrating, become forgetful, sweat and have palpitations” (p.126). Also, anxious language learners report that they know a certain grammar point, but they forget it during a test or an oral exercise. These effects are explained from the point of view of second language acquisition research, since it argues that the problem of anxiety about language learning represents impediments to the development of second language fluency and performance.

This fact can be better understood through Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis, in which according to Savignon (1972), “Krashen argues that anxiety contributes to an affective filter, which makes the individual unreceptive to language input; thus, the learner fails to “take in” the

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target language messages and long acquisition do not progress” (p.127). It means that learners’ affective factors are just like the adjustable filter, which passes or blocks the acquisition of new information. Hence, learners can acquire the knowledge with high motivation, self-confidence, and low anxiety or on the contrary they have a mental obstacle that does not allow them to acquire the information.

As a conclusion about anxiety in foreign language learning, it is possible to say that its presence can have different consequences for the learning process of the students such as lack of concentration, low results in oral production, and lack of motivation for learning the foreign language.

Audiovisual Aids

Audiovisual aids are a useful tool for seeing and understanding since they allow learners to process what they are being asked to do. It is known that the traditional methodology of learning English was through grammar; therefore, this could not promote communication skills, and it was realized that theory alone was not enough. Thus, learners need to practice to be able to use English in different situations; that is why nowadays teachers use audiovisual aids to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of a language and make it more interesting and enjoyable because they catch the learners’ attention, and they motivate students to be more active in the class allowing them to relate their learning with their real life.

Types of audiovisual aids

There are different types of audiovisual aids used in language teaching. The most used aids are pictures because they are very effective in providing associations to learn new words. Also, photo dictionaries, charts, maps and diagrams are useful to increase vocabulary and

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speaking skills of learners. Some other common audiovisual aids are films, slides, and motion stories, all these help the learner to focus on and pay attention to the pictures, words, and sentence structures giving him/her self-confidence and reducing his/her anxiety. Besides, a great advantage of video is that it provides authentic language input since movies and TV programs are made for native speakers. The teacher can stop, start and rewind to repeat the video several times where necessary, and the learner can concentrate on the language, interpret what has been said, repeat it, predict the replay and so on. In this way, it is considered that different audiovisual aids help the students to understand the ideas of a text, and help in learning the language.

Correct use of audiovisual aids

To create an authentic environment for teaching and learning a foreign language, teachers need to use audiovisual aids effectively. For this reason, it has been observed that audiovisual aids create the opportunity for learners to improve their learning since teachers integrate audiovisual aids into their classrooms by identifying the learning styles of each of their students. Therefore, learners become more attentive, motivated and participatory, increasing the success of learning. For that, the purpose of using audiovisual aids is to find the best ways for students to learn effectively and teachers to teach efficiently.

Role of audiovisual aids in foreign language learning

Daniel (as cited in Ulloa and Diaz, 2018) points out that audio-visual aids:

- Help to avoid excessive, empty, and meaningless verbalization in teaching English.
- Help students to form clear and accurate concepts in English.
- Make teaching and learning effective.
- Provide variety to teaching.

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- Provide interest and inspiration.
- Clarify the subject-matter.
- Save time and energy (p. 3811)

The use of these materials will facilitate the development of the English classes. The lessons will vary, so that the students cannot get tired and bored of doing the same activities. Providing information through pictures and slides is useful for the students to make important connections in their brains to keep information in the long-term memory.

Including audiovisual aids in the lessons will provide the students with clearer information about what they are being taught, and this clarity about the topic will increase the learners' capacity to retain the information taking into account the different learning styles that can be present in a classroom, being the most common the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic and can be perfectly fitted by the good practices with the audiovisual aids.

Oral Production

As humans, communication is very important for life to gain and share information, to express feelings and to interact with other people. In this way, communication through foreign language, in this case English, involves four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking, and the latter is an important skill especially for high school students.

The importance of speaking in FLL

Learners who have a good ability in speaking will be better at sending and receiving information from others. Thanks to the research carried out by Spratt, Pulverness, and William (2011) it is known that:

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Speaking is a productive skill, like writing it involves using speech to express meanings to other people. When people speak, they use different aspects of speaking depending on the type of speaking they are involved in. That is why speaking is a complex activity (p. 34).

The main function of the language is to communicate, so people who are able to communicate in different languages will have for sure the opportunity to travel and know other countries to learn and share their knowledge and experiences. The interest in teaching and learning a foreign language has grown due to the impact of globalization where the most important skill is speaking for being able to communicate ideas and understand people from other countries.

Influence of anxiety in oral production

Anxiety has a great influence in the oral production of a foreign language since it affects the learner in different ways keeping him/her from producing what he has learned. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) considered that “language learning anxiety is related to how an individual reacts in a nervous manner when speaking in the second language and that the motivated individual is one who devotes considerable effort in activities to achieve his or her goal”. Also, Cohen and Norst (1989) found that:

Students have expressed their fears and anxiety when they are put in situations where they have to perform before their peers and the teacher. These fears and anxiety are reflected not only through the use of such words as “embarrassment”, “trauma”, “unnerving”, “frightening”, “resentment”, “frustration” and so on, but also through their

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physical responses. They tend to blush; their hands are likely to tremble; their hearts tend to pound heavily and they may experience headaches in such conditions (p. 52).

In this kind of situations, the teacher must provide a friendly environment avoiding being extremely critical to students. Teachers must give feedback making the students feel that they are learning and improving every day by highlighting the moments when they develop the activities in a correct manner and not those moments when they make mistakes.

Impact of Audiovisual Aids on Oral Production

It has been stated that the use of audiovisual aids is one of the appropriate techniques to develop students' speaking skills. Kinder (2002) considers that "audio visual aids are any device which can be used to make the learning experience more concrete, more realistic and more dynamic" (p. 29). Also, Supiyati (2011) argues that:

Through audio-visual aids, the students are more enthusiastic, they enjoy the process of teaching and learning more. Teaching speaking using audiovisual aids gives a big chance to the students to speak (p. 33).

Thus, audiovisual aids are very important tools because they facilitate both the learning and the teaching process. Moreover, they provide exposure to spoken English taking into account that we have different kinds of audiovisual aids which can be only visual like posters, slides, blackboard, flashcards; only auditory like tape-recorder, microphones, earphones; or combined like film projector, TV, computer, multimedia etc. Thanks to them, students get different information about grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation through listening. In the same way, they can see how native speakers use body language when they speak.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter describes the way the research will be conducted regarding the materials employed and the methodology applied to accomplish the objectives established at the beginning of this research.

Research Methodology

Design

This research is developed by means of qualitative design because it will be focused on the perceptions the students have about the anxiety reduction through the use of audiovisual aids. This design will be made in accordance with Creswell (2002) who states that qualitative research is the approach to data collection, analysis, and report writing differing from the traditional, quantitative approaches. (p. 65). Thus, this methodology will let the researchers comprehend the different points of view of the students and analyze the effects audiovisual aids have in the meaningful learning of the foreign language.

Method

This qualitative research is of phenomenological type because the researcher will describe the experiences that students have when facing certain situations, in this case, the use of audiovisual aids for learning a foreign language. Leedy and Omrod (2010) revealed that a phenomenological study was one that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and views of a particular situation. Therefore, this phenomenological method will be relevant to the development of this research.

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Population and Setting

This research is developed at Marco Fidel Suarez, a high school located in Anganoy, Pasto-Nariño. The students who attend this public high school belong to the socioeconomic levels: 0, 1, 2 and 3. There are three groups of sixth grade students, each one made up of 24 students for a total of 72 students who attend classes five days a week from Monday to Friday in a schedule from 12:45 pm to 6:45 pm.

Based on prior observations, this research is focused on the students, but it is important to know that many of the English teachers are older than 60 years old, so they tend to teach with the traditional methods. These are mainly based on lectures in which students simply receive information, as passive learners. English teachers provide the materials and the exercises for the students to practice, but they do not provide feedback; they focus on the results of the written texts because speaking is not used. Also, it is estimated that the level of English of the students is basic, corresponding to level A1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Sample

From the three sixth-grade groups, the grade 6-1 is chosen to carry out the research. This group is made up of 24 students and consists of male and female learners whose age ranges from eleven to fifteen years old. In addition, there are some students that present cognitive limitations; for instance, in this group there is one student with Down syndrome.

Data Collection Instruments

The instruments that will be employed to gather the necessary qualitative information for this research will be an interview and observations carried out by the researchers. The interview

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will be about how students feel in the traditional class, and how they feel when audiovisual aids are implemented in the classroom. Also, for this research some observations will be developed to determine whether anxiety in students increases or decreases when using audiovisual aids during class.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to gather information for this research, some qualitative instruments will be used since these allow us to know the students' perceptions about anxiety reduction through the use of audiovisual aids during English classes. Thus, the instruments employed to develop this research will be observations and interviews.

The observations will be carried out in grade 6-1 at Marco Fidel Suarez High School to determine the usefulness of audiovisual media in the reduction of anxiety. It will be possible to analyze the students' behavior and their reaction when using audiovisual aids to teach the English class.

The observations will be made to the traditional class performed by the teacher, and to the class with the implementation of audiovisual media performed by the researchers to analyze the behavior of the students when the teaching process changes.

To carry out the observations, it will be necessary to use an observation guide to help the researchers to identify specific aspects and behaviors. The guide that will be used during the observations contains the statements presented in Appendix A to be taken into account.

Regarding the interview, it will be developed with the sixth grade students to analyze the perceptions students have towards the influence of audiovisual media in the reduction of anxiety. This will be a face-to-face interview in which students could give detailed information without

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feeling uncomfortable or judged by their classmates or by their teacher. For this, this interview will help the researchers discover how students feel during English classes and what they think about the implementation of audiovisual aids in the English teaching (See Appendix A, to see the observation guide and the questions in the interview).

Data Analysis Procedure

For the analysis of data of this research, categorization will be used. According to Given (2008), “Categorization is a major component of qualitative data analysis by which investigators attempt to group patterns observed in the data into meaningful units or categories. Through this process, categories are often created by chunking together groups of previously coded data” (p.72). Therefore, this data analysis procedure will be very useful to organize and analyze the qualitative data collected in this research.

Pilot Study

This pilot study was developed with sixth grade students at Marco Fidel Suarez High School in October 2019. As a first step, a letter was presented to the director of the high school in order to ask for permission to test the instruments of this study with the students of sixth grade. As a result, the director gave the researchers the possibility to work with the students of the course 6-1 who attended classes in the afternoon from 12:45 to 2:45.

Two instruments of data collection were used in the pilot study. The first instrument was the observations based on an observation guide which was tested during the traditional classes and the classes taught by the researchers. The second instrument was an interview that was carried out with four students from the group 6-1 who were chosen for the pilot study to prove whether the students understood the questions or they should be changed or modified. First of

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all, the students were taken out of the classroom, and the researchers explained to them how the interview was going to be carried out and which aspects were going to be taken into account.

Then, these students were interviewed one at a time by the researchers for about 5 minutes, and they were expected to answer 6 questions in order to know the perceptions they had about anxiety reduction through the use of audiovisual aids.

Finally, with the permission of the students, the interview was recorded to help the researchers transcribe the different students' opinions and thus facilitate their respective analysis.

Results of the Pilot study

The pilot study included the use of sixth grade classes observations in the traditional English class and the English class using audiovisual aids. Additionally, some interviews were conducted with a sample of four students regarding the contrast between the two classes to get accurate responses and find the usefulness and effectiveness of the research.

For the application of the interview, it was necessary to change some terms to make the questions clearer, so some complex words such as audiovisual aids were replaced for some examples like: flashcards, videos, pictures, movies, so it was easier for the students to understand the questions and to associate the questions with the classes they were receiving from the teacher and from the researchers.

From this pilot study, it was possible to conclude that the instruments used were suitable to get the information needed to continue with the purpose of the research. The questions were clear, so the students were able to answer all of them. In addition, as the research was focused on the perceptions, the use of interviews facilitated the open answers from the students that let them provide useful and relevant information.

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It could be concluded from the answers obtained (See Appendix B) that there were some aspects that had to be improved regarding the research process. For instance, as one of the students had not felt more comfortable yet with the use of audiovisual aids during the English class, it was considered that more lessons needed to be implemented since the students had had only two classes including audiovisual materials. Then the application of more lessons using a great variety of audiovisual aids would provide the students a wider vision about the utility of audiovisual aids and would let them make a clear contrast between these classes and the traditional ones.

Conclusions

Audiovisual aids improved the performance of the English class, but they have not been applied in the traditional class at high school yet. This fact was evident since teachers did not know how to use the devices, the TVs in some classrooms which they did not even know if worked or not. On the other hand, anxiety was highly reduced which triggered a more active participation from the students, since they wanted to participate voluntarily.

Audiovisual aids promoted teamwork, students wanted to play games, do competitions, and they felt more comfortable since they forgot about the idea of being in the spotlight. They were more confident since they realized that all in the class were also more engaged.

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Recommendations

After having developed this research it was noticeable that there are some other topics that can be useful for further research regarding the influence of audiovisual aids in the learning of a foreign language. For instance:

- How well qualified are the teachers to use audiovisual aids in public high schools?
- How well equipped are public schools to improve the teaching-learning experience through the use of audiovisual aids?
- How can audiovisual aids influence the way students with learning disorders acquire a new language?

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Appendix A**Observations*****Purpose***

This observation guide has as a purpose to identify specific aspects and behaviors inside the classroom.

Directions

This observation guide is made up of six statements that must be taken into account during the observations of the class. Also, there is a column titled notes in which the researcher can write specific information about the behaviors and actions observed inside the classroom.

Table 1. Directions

Statements	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audiovisual materials inside the classrooms. ● Teacher use of audiovisual materials to develop the class. ● Students' participation during the traditional class. ● Students' attention to the English lesson. ● Students' reaction to the use of audiovisual aids. ● Students' participation during the class developed with audiovisual materials. 	

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Interview

This is a face-to-face interview in which students can give detailed information without feeling uncomfortable or judged by their classmates or their teacher. The purpose of this interview is to know the perception's students have about the use of audiovisual aids in the teaching of English.

Usted va a participar en una entrevista sobre la utilidad de las ayudas audiovisuales (como imágenes, videos, canciones, películas, entre otros) en el aprendizaje del inglés. Por favor sea sincero y claro con sus respuestas. Si tiene alguna pregunta o duda durante la entrevista puede pedir una aclaración a la persona que esté a cargo. Gracias por su participación.

- ¿Cuál es tu nombre?
- ¿Te gusta el inglés?
- ¿Te gusta ver videos y escuchar música para aprender inglés, o que la profesora utilice, imágenes y videos para enseñarte? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de las clases enseñadas con imágenes, videos o canciones? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Cómo te sientes en la clase de inglés?
- ¿Cómo te sientes cuando debes hablar en inglés en frente de tus compañeros?
- ¿Crees que es más fácil participar cuando el profesor usa imágenes, videos o canciones? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Te sientes menos nervioso cuando el profesor te enseña utilizando imágenes, videos o canciones? ¿Crees que tus compañeros se sienten de la misma manera?
- ¿Recomendarías que todos los profesores utilicen imágenes, videos o canciones? ¿Por qué?

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Appendix B**Observation Guide**

Statements	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiovisual materials inside the classrooms. 	There are TVs in the classrooms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher use of audiovisual materials to develop the class. 	Traditional class with use of board and guides.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' participation during the traditional class. 	They seem bored. They seem nervous. Their hands and legs shake.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' attention to the English lesson. 	Some of the students are focused on other activities like painting or using the cellphone.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' reaction to the use of audiovisual aids. 	They participate. They are more attentive to the class. They enjoy songs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' participation during the class developed with audiovisual materials. 	Some shy students participate and seem motivated.

Table 2. Observation Guide