

USING LEARNING STYLES TO TEACH ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Using VAK Learning Styles to Teach English Vocabulary to Mentally Disable Learners

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University of Nariño

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of B.A. in English and French

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NOTA DE RESPONSABILIDAD

“Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en el trabajo de grado, son responsabilidad del autor”

Artículo 1 del acuerdo N° 324 de octubre 11 de 1966, emanado del Honorable Consejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

Nota de aceptación

Firma del Presidente del jurado

Firma del Jurado

Firma del Jurado

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Abstract

This research was a result of the practice, observation, and the analysis of how learners with mental retardation learnt English vocabulary through the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles model. This research was based on the following research categories: Learning styles effectiveness, learning style preference, vocabulary acquisition and the analysis of the learning styles in context. Making a selection of the information of those categories, different fragments were collected from the survey applied to different professionals and also from the observation made through the practice. The final results demonstrated that the learning styles were a complete contribution focused on the improvement and development of a pedagogical methodology used for the acquisition of English vocabulary related to the learning process and the learning context of a learner with mental retardation.

Resumen

Esta investigación fue un resultado de la práctica, Observación y análisis de como estudiantes con retardo mental aprenden vocabulario en Ingles a través del modelo de estilos de aprendizaje visual, auditivo y kinestésico. Esta investigación fue basada sobre las siguientes categorías de investigación: Efectividad en los estilos de aprendizaje, preferencia en los estilos de aprendizaje, adquisición de vocabulario y el análisis de los estilos de aprendizaje en contexto. Haciendo una selección de información en estas categorías, fragmentos diferentes fueron recolectados de las investigaciones a través de las encuestas aplicadas a diferentes profesionales relacionados con el estudio y de las observaciones hechas durante la práctica. Los resultados finales de esta investigación demostraron que los estilos de aprendizaje fueron una completa contribución enfocada en el mejoramiento y desarrollo de una pedagogía metodológica utilizada para la adquisición de vocabulario en ingles relacionada directamente con el proceso de aprendizaje y el contexto de aprendizaje de un estudiante con retardo mental.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This research is based on the experience of learning vocabulary through the practice of the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles in learners with “mental retardation”. Some researchers in special education have discovered methods and models to improve the learning process in this group of people. Among those models and methods, it is significant the work of Howard Gardner (1983) on learning styles theory as a contribution to the education but more specifically, to the special education; the visual, auditory, kinesthetic learning styles is one of the purposes to fulfill the needs found in this research. For the practicing of the learning styles it was necessary to know about the role of education in this field, the necessities of this population and its different features such as the learning process of learners in mental retardation and the different needs according to the different level of mental retardation. So, this research opens the door to other researches focused on finding solutions to the educational problems around this population. In other words this research is practically another one added to call the attention of the total work into the special education field that we, as teachers, could use as a footprint of previous investigations.

For the practice of this model, I was presented to a group of young learners with different cognitive levels or Intellectual coefficients, who presented a development on artistic abilities, in this case painting. This research is focused on a combination of those students’ skills with the activities made through the practice of the learning styles to acquire English vocabulary. At the same moment, they were practicing and enhancing their techniques in arts, I was trying to put in practice activities in relation to their learning process. While they were being part of this study, I was continually observing and taking notes on their behaviors and reaction in the construction of each stage, I realized that this research could be an opportunity to demonstrate how vocabulary

could be better acquired in those kinds of learners taking advantage of this model and their learning process.

Statement of the Problem

Are learners with mental retardation affected by using the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles?

Research Questions

¿Are the learning styles effective to acquire Basic English vocabulary in learners with mental retardation?

¿Does the learning styles help learners with mental retardation to understand Basic English vocabulary?

Research Objectives

To purpose a better functioning of the VAK learning styles to teach English vocabulary to mentally disabled learners.

To demonstrate the acquisition of English vocabulary through the VAK learning styles in learners with mental retardation.

To analyze the influence of the learning context over the learning of English vocabulary through the practice of the VAK learning styles in learners with mental retardation.

Justification

Chaulet's (1998) paper mentioned that "nowadays, there are several necessities in around 75% of the population with special needs. Amount those necessities; there is the improvement of the learning process through the practice of models, methods and approaches". (p.232) Taking advantage of all the knowledge of past investigations in this field, Davis (1982) explained that "the Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic learning styles model has evolved since the 1920s and been adapted to suit a wide range of learning, behavior and assessment situations". (p. 7), and the

recent researches like the project zero of Howard Gardner (2005) which promotes “not only a better description on the function of the learning styles into the learning process of learners with mental retardation, but also an analysis of learning in connection with the context to a better learning of English vocabulary” (p 147). This research is also an important contribution to those investigations focused on the development and searching of solutions to the needs not only in the learning process of English vocabulary but also in the whole learning process of a foreign language in learners with mental retardation.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Here I present the information related to the learning of vocabulary, the learning of special education, and also, the model of study. In this chapter I show the necessary information for a better understanding of the whole project.

Special Education

Gomez (2002) explained the following:

That education is a process of socialization where the individual acquires and assimilates different types of knowledge. It consists on a process of cultural and conductible consciousness that is materialized in a set of abilities and values. When a person suffers any kind of intellectual or physic incapacity with necessities that cannot be satisfied by the educational system, the concept of special education appears. As its name indicates, it presents different features (special features), it provides different tools depending on the different necessities in each case. Special education in other words means that students might solve and facilitate their lives due to the received instruction. (p. 254)

Mental Retardation

Introducing the concept, According to Davison & Neale (1990) mental retardation, “is significantly a general sub-average in intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period” (p. 443). With the years, it is important to relate the “mental age” with the “chronological age”, this relation gives a measure as a result, which is called intellectual quotient (IQ). “A final definition mandates that mental retardation manifests before adulthood that means, before age eighteen. Those rules classify mental retardation as any deficits in intelligence and adaptive behavior form; traumatic accidents or illnesses occurring later in life”. (Davison & Neale, 1990, p. 444).

Classification of Mental Retardations

Each mental retardation case is different. Each one has its own features and it cannot be included in a general diagnosis. For this reason we should talk about mental retardations and not only a single mental retardation (Neale & Davison, 1990, p.445). Gomez (2002) specifies into the mental retardation that is called “Functioning levels” (p. 156). It is just classified for practical work knowing that those functioning levels are not indications that bring us the possibility to give a judgment to begin a treatment. It is also mention the following levels of mental retardations that are described by (Robinson & Robinson, 1976, p. 273).

Mild Mental Retardation

According to Gomez (2002) people with mild mental retardation act in a natural way. “A big part of this population diagnosed with mild mental retardations, with an intellectual coefficient between 0.56 and 0.70, belongs to this level and acts as normal people”. (p. 175)

He also asserted the following:

“85% to 95% of mental retardations can be included into a slight level, for this reason a higher importance is given to the study of this level. Many individuals with mild mental retardation do not have a diagnosis after having attended two or three years of their schooling” (p. 175).

Moderate Mental Retardation

In this study Davison & Neal (1990) found that: Moderately retarded individuals may have physical defects and neurological dysfunctions that hinder fine motor skills such as grasping and coloring within lines, gross motor skills or running and climbing. During childhood those individuals are eligible for special classes in which the development of self care skills is more emphasized rather than academic achievement. The moderately retarded are unlikely to progress beyond the second-grade level in academic subjects and can manage this learning only in later

childhood or as adults. They may however, learn to travel alone in a familiar locality, many are institutionalized and almost all of them can do useful work. (p. 445)

Severe Mental Retardation

The research made by Neale & Davison (1990) supported the following: Learners with severe mental retardation constitute three or four percent of the total population of mental retarded people. In general, those patients suffer of organic anomalies like occasional convulsions to serious problems with paralysis or equivalents. Many of these people almost cannot speak, eat alone or dress, and with frequency they are incontinent. (p. 445)

Learning Process of Learners with Mental Disabilities

Chaulet (1988) supported that “the field of learners with mental retardation is a deep observation related to the mental process of learners with mental disabilities. Those learners use their body as a receptacle of creation and analysis of information” (p. 173). Chaulet (1988) also explains that “the neuro-sensory process of those learners is based on a deep study into the sensorial responses of the body in relation to the brain”. (p.173)

Ramos (1979) also exposed the following: The main source of information of those learners are their senses, due to their limited intellectual capacities the possibilities to learn through the verbal language is very reduced, the messages never will be comprehended if they are not directly supported by the objects in reference or a context of learning. (p. 77)

The Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic Learning Styles Model

The VAK concept, theories and methods (initially also referred to as VAKT, for Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile) were first developed by psychologists and teaching specialists beginning in the 1920's. Probably because of its simplicity and practicality, VAK theory is widely recognized by teachers, particularly those who advocate Accelerated Learning techniques, but the idea that we receive information via different “modalities” has been around considerably longer

than that and can be traced back to the work of Grace Fernald ("Remedial Techniques in Basic School Subjects") who promoted kinesthetic learning techniques; Samuel Orton's work on dyslexia; Anna Gillingham's subsequent work on developing multisensory approaches; and the holistic educational philosophy of Maria Montessori. The VAK Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic multi-sensory approach to learning and teaching was originally concerned with the teaching of dyslexic children and other learners for whom conventional teaching methods were not effective. The early VAK specialists recognized that people learn in different ways: as a very simple example, a child who could not easily learn words and letters by reading (visually) might for instance learn more easily by tracing letter shapes with their finger (kinesthetic). The Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic learning styles model does not overlay Gardner's multiple intelligences; rather the VAK model provides a different perspective for understanding and explaining a person's preferred or dominant thinking and learning style, and strengths. Gardner's theory is just one way of looking at thinking styles. Talavera (2009) explains that in the late 70's was also developed and presented many purposes in the field of the learning styles. (p. 135)

Aguilera (2009) also exposed:

Between those contributions the practical approach also developed by the proponents Rita Dunn and Kenneth Dunn (1978, 1982) is one more added to the field of the learning styles, they purpose teaching students through their individual learning styles, an approach well known as neurolinguistic programming (visual , auditory and kinesthetic), a model that takes into account the neurolinguistic criteria, which consider the main receivers of information and the system of representation like fundamental in the preference for whom learn or teach. (p. 12)

It is also important go farther and know the origin of all the researches in this field. It began in the second half of the twenty century with the influence of the humanist psychology in the process of teaching and learning, a psychological influence sustained in the cultural and historical

theory developed by Vigotsky and their followers. The fundamental value of this author is focused on that he applied the contributions of the materialist dialectical philosophy to the psychology which establish that the superior psychic functions have a social origin, basis that serves as a support to all his theoretical construction. Those bases that we share and assume let us explain the genesis of the individual differences in learning.

Among all those purposes there is one approach about comprehending how the information of the context is received and interpreted. Based on this concept, the idea of individualized "learning styles" was popularized later by Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Model (1993), where is explained that a learning style is a method of educating particularly to a person that is presumed to allow learn best (p. 240). The idea of learning styles is a somewhat unfounded deduction of the observation that most people favor particular types of interactions when it comes to learning.

Most of the models of learning styles include the following types or modalities:

Auditory learning occurs through hearing the spoken word.

Kinesthetic learning occurs through doing and interacting.

Visual learning occurs through looking at images, mind maps, demonstrations and body language.

According to the VAK multi-sensory approach to learning and teaching was originally concerned to the teaching of dyslexic children and other learners for whom conventional teaching methods were not effective. The early VAK specialists recognized that people learn in different ways: as a very simple example, a child who could not easily learn words and letters by reading (visually) might for instance learn more easily by tracing letter shapes with their finger (kinesthetic). The Visual, Auditory and kinesthetic learning styles model does not overlay Gardner's multiple intelligences; rather the VAK model provides a different perspective for

understanding and explaining a person's preferred or dominant thinking and learning style and strengths. Gardner's theory is one way of looking at thinking styles.

According Gardner (1993), most people possess a dominant or preferred learning style; however, some people have a mixed and evenly balanced blend of the three styles. A person's learning style is a reflection of their mixing of intelligences. It is also a reflection of their brain type and dominance. (P. 56). Learners use all those three modalities to receive and learn new information and experiences. However, according to the VAK or modality theory, one or two of these receiving styles is normally dominant. This dominant style defines the best way for a person to learn new information by filtering what is to be learned, this style may not always be the same for some tasks. The learner may prefer one style of learning for one task, and a combination of others for a different task. According to the VAK theorists, we need to present information using the three styles. This allows learners to become involved, no matter what their preferred style may be.

Learning Styles and Learning Context

According to Gardner (2005), this is corroborated when he explained the following: There is a strong influence by the context over the way of learning of a student. One learner can prefer something due to the tools or to the activities joined to the context in which this learner is involved. The learning style in preference is directly related to the work on the activities in context and learners tend to prefer and develop the learning in practice through different activities related to the context. (p.143)

Oxford's paper (1996) underscored the following: The importance strategy researchers are beginning to place on learning context compared to task- and person-dependent strategies; learning context has received only cursory attention. Most studies would either ignore the educational and cultural traditions, the availability of input and output opportunities and the

classroom environment or try to confine the contextual dimension by focusing on one homogeneous group of learners. (p.234)

Ramos said that “the messages never will be comprehended if they are not directly supported by the objects in reference or a context of learning” (p.77).

Ackerman’s (1996) study found the following: Making a focus on the influence of the context over the learning, gives one social constructivist notion which states that with authentic or situated learning, the student takes part in activities directly relevant to the application of learning and that take place within a culture similar to the applied setting. (p.432).

According to Oxford's volume (1996), “the learning context takes place when is focused on a task and a person, and this also shows a relation on the person-task-context and the strategy model”. (p. 587).

According to (Nelson, 1995): A future research should focus on different aspects of learning context as they are related to learners, tasks, and vocabulary learning strategies. Personal styles of learning, for example, have been shown to be very much related to cultural differences. In addition, classroom learning environments should demand different vocabulary learning strategies from informal learning contexts. Likewise, the availability and richness of input/output opportunities should also determine the strategies learners decide to use; a context that provides opportunities to interact with the learning process of vocabulary. (p. 123)

Painting; Artistic Abilities in Mental Retarded Learners

Painting is an artistic ability that promotes the development of the motor abilities into the learner with mental retardation. (Chaulet, 1994, p. 257) This ability according to Gardner (2005) “consists on bringing the individual’s problems into colors, in which each disorder is expressed through the painting”. (p. 221)

According to Chaulet's 1994 paper; This activity let those learners draw and paint freely. In the worst case, their work is lost but with these results, taking into account the researches, it is shown that learners with mental retardation reveal a bigger expression of the pathologies in the physic and in the mental field. (p 258)

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is focused on the qualitative paradigm; MacMillan & Schumacher (1993) defined qualitative research as “primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories.”

(Gall, Borg, and Gall, 1996). Explain the following: The inductive process of this research was carried out through the data analysis and interpretations, when data analysis and conclusions are triangulated subject's perceptions are verified in a systematic manner, and the project's data chain of evidence is established. (p. 479)

Creswell study's paper (1994) also exposed that: Triangulation is the use of multiple data collection devices, sources, analysts, etc, to establish the validity of findings, the logical relationships between research questions, research procedures, review data, and results should be such that a reasonably prudent person would arrive at the same or similar conclusions. (p. 204)

Description of the Context

The place this study was developed is the Lunacrearte Foundation located in the downtown of the city of Pasto. In this environment the learners were almost all of the time practicing the development of artistic skills mainly works on painting, in this place there is one room to the practice of painting, there is another room which is used to exercise and another places like the playground in front of the institution used to make different activities, like to practice dancing and other sports, to take a rest, and different uses depending on the activities of the day. Those classrooms, the exercise room and the painting room and the surroundings of this Institution were the places used to the practice of the different activities, making a brief description of this sites, it was found that those rooms were very spacious and comfortable to the classes except in some cases when there was too much work and the learners had not time to the English classes but it happened only at the end of the course when those learners were preparing their materials to be

sold in December. This environment offered the necessary materials to the participation in the different activities by those learners, in this case learners which were part of the different practices of the learning styles. Speaking about Compatibility this site provided with almost all the learners' needs convenient to the learners, and there were adequate spaces and equipments for the expected number of learners. By interviewing instructors, managers, and potential learners, as well as observing the site in use, it was noted that in this building there were good spaces to work on learning vocabulary through the learning styles activities. The context in which those learners were exposed to my instructional materials, and in which they eventually used their skills was appropriate to carried out this study, but it is also necessary to speak about a context making a deep observation in another factors, like social factors, or the state of those learners with their social and familiar lives, in this point it was that those learners shared their social lives with learners with same features and with the people related with the Foundation, like psychologists, teachers, instructors and people outside this place related with different contexts of work like supermarkets and the familiar and relationship context, speaking about the economic factors, most of them were part of a low socioeconomic class and some of them had to work to survive, some of them also work to their families, which made impossible by some of those learners the attendance to the different practices, one of those learner had to abandoned the course due to economic situations, the psychological factor also covers different features of those learners which are a strong influence over the learning process, some of those learners had problems in their homes, in some cases it was presented violence and excess of authority but others in a normal state lived with their families, some of them live with just one parent and others most of them with the complete family, those familiar factors affected the psychology behavior of those learners which was an influence over the emotional state to cooperate with the activities, but in this psychological factor we also involve specific features such us the different problems related

with mental retardation, some of them with mild mental retardation which were the less affected in the cognitive development, the learners with moderate mental retardation which present some psychological problems in their behaviors and their cognitive development and the severe cases which present many difficulties in this factor, which had to abandoned many activities due to their psychological problems and be attended by the instructors in help or by the psychologist in turn. After this deep observation on the different factors associated with those learners it is important to focus this study in the learning of English vocabulary of learners with mental retardation. According to the research made it was found that the learning process of those learners was strongly related with the development of sensory skills, Ramos (1979) also exposed the following:

The main source of information of learners with mental retardation are their senses, due to their limited intellectual capacities the possibilities to learn through the verbal language is very reduced. (p.77)

Seeing a lack of knowledge over these necessities to cover the main needs of those learners this study let us to put in practice a methodology appropriated to those necessities in this case a sensory methodology adapted to the learning process based on the sensory mental process of learners with mental retardation. Taking into account those features we put in practice the learning styles as pedagogical tool to be connected with those necessities. Knowledge over the learning process of learners with mental retardation was the key to understand the function of the methodology in practice.

Population

The study was developed with the help of twelve learners with mental retardation; nine of them with mild mental retardation, two learners with moderate mental retardation and one learner with severe mental retardation. All of these learners are art students in Luna create Foundation, a

foundation specialized in art crafts; the place where this study was developed is the Lunacrearte Foundation in Pasto, Nariño in the year 2010 from September 30 to December 14. Those students were: Carlos Juan Pineda, Mild Mental Retardation, 31 years old; Camilo Jorge Coral, Moderate Mental Retardation, Agenesea Corpus Callum; Andres Perez Areas, Mild Mental Retardation, 19 years old; Luis Miguel Rincon Baez, Mild Mental Retardation, 24 years old, Schooling in Cehani (Centro de Habilitacion del Niño); Milton Alberto Rosero Romero, Disruption in Broca's Area, SMR (severe mental retardation), 23 years old; Juana Maria Sosa Benites, Mild Mental Retardation, 23 years old; Juan Camilo Bernal Oviedo, Moderated Mental Retardation accompanied with Epilepsy, 20 years old; Esteban Folleco Camacho, Mild Mental Retardation and Paranoia – Schizophrenia, 24 years old; Jhon Jairo Moreno Delgado, Mild Mental Retardation, 20 years old; Marta Muñoz Yama, Mild Mental Retardation, 22 Years old; Laydi María Estupiñan Estupiñan, Mild Mental Retardation, 16 years old; Roberto Andres España España with Mild Mental Retardation, 23 years old, Scholaryity in Cehani.

Instruments for the Data Collection

In order to collect data, two different instruments were applied so that the gathered information could be reliable.

Since surveys in research are considered to be one of the most important areas of measurement that describe the characteristics of a certain population and show the results statistically significant that allow the researcher to select a sample of respondents from a population where the application of standardized questions ensures reliability (Overview: Survey Research, 1993), this data collection instrument was used with opened questions so that the teachers answered in a free way, that is, without prescribed alternatives that limited their responses (see appendix B for a sample of the survey).

On the other hand and given that classroom observation details classroom behaviors and events that occur in a classroom and with which frequency they happen (Classroom observation, n.d), this data collection instrument was used in order to collect detailed evidence to be analyzed in its natural setting. For so doing, an observation guide was designed with different items that describe the different happenings that normally occurred in the classrooms (see appendix A sample of the observation).

The first part of the procedure is over the analysis of observation made through the practice of the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. To carry out this part it was necessary to create a set of activities in which we adapted the different learning styles. In each class, I took notes of all the observations during the practice. The second part was made through a systematic registration of the surveys applied to the teachers and psychologists professionals in the field of special education and the respective analysis through the triangulation of this information.

Ethical Issues

Informed consent was obtained at the moment of presenting the practice and the survey to the Institution and participants.

In this study I did not expose the students to any dangerous situation. Students were informed that if one of them had inconvenient to participate in the study he or she had to tell us before starting the survey session. The outcomes of the study were handled and know only by the persons involved in it. The information collected is confidential; nobody except the research can have access to the information, nobody one identifies or relates the information with the participants.

The Researcher's Role

As it has been shown the significant role of the researcher in the qualitative research process seems to unify the barriers the archive will meet. Some procedures used for archiving qualitative

material can be adopted, but others will have to be developed in order to meet demands within the research community.

The researcher conducts the research role, Kvale's paper (1996) present seven stages to split the researcher's role:

Thematising; answer the question of what is going to be studied, why this is going to be studied, and how this is going to be studied. Performing qualitative personal or group interviews is one answer to the question of how to collect data.

Designing; the design stage constitutes the step where the methodological procedure is planned and prepared. Interviews are structured according to an interview guide made by the researcher, which outlines themes to be covered during the interview.

Interviewing; the researcher conducts personal interviews, which are using qualitative techniques. Firstly, the interviews provided us with knowledge of what it means to perform qualitative research in practice, the purpose being to uncover which barriers appear to be the most essential ones. (p.276)

Kvale's paper (1996) also expose the following three steps: Analyzing, Word coding is often used to refer to the first part of the analysis that concerns the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data. Upon coding data the researcher gets to the part of the analysis process where the codes must come together in one overall analysis. The result of the analysis should be that codes connect to each other in what can be conceptualized as a web of meanings.

Verification of the data analysis concerns the generalizability, the reliability, and the validity of findings. Generalizability means that findings can be generalized; reliability refers to the consistency of findings/results, whereas validity questions if the study in fact investigates what was intended.

And finally reporting, it goes without saying that reporting covers the part of the research process where the researcher writes a report to present his findings.

This report is not to be seen solely as a representation the researcher's comments and interpretations: "The interview report is itself a social construction in which the author's choice of writing style and literary devices provide a specific view on the subjects' lived world". (p. 253)

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Research Category: Learning Styles Effectiveness

After making a selection of the information in this category, the next fragments were collected from the surveys applied to teachers, psychologists, students, and a phonoaudiologist; and from the observations made during the practice where the next affirmations were founded. A language teacher said: “Learning styles are appropriate and effective to acquire a Basic English vocabulary in learners with mild and moderate mental retardation except for the cases with severe or profound mental retardation”.

A psychologist said: “The practice of the learning styles model facilitates the learning of English vocabulary in learners with mild or moderate mental retardation except for learners with severe or profound mental retardation”; a learner with mild mental retardation said: “The learning styles are an effective pedagogic tool adapted to our needs apart from the learners with severe or profound mental retardation”.

Unlike the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation, learners with severe or profound mental retardation, who are learners with the most severe differences in learning, have few possibilities to acquire Basic English vocabulary through the practice of learning styles. Learners with mild and moderate mental retardation present less difficulties than severe or profound mental retardation learners in the acquisition of Basic English vocabulary through the practice of the learning styles.

One of the facts with regard to this category that strengthens what was said is found in the following statement, a psychologist said: “According to the use of the learning styles I consider that it is an appropriate pedagogic tool adapted to the learning process and needs of learners with mild and moderate mental retardation, except for learners with severe or profound mental

retardation in which their mental development and functional skills are not prepared to the learning of a second language”.

Almost all the Learners with severe mental retardation couldn't answered the question of the survey.

In the different activities of the practice, the many fragments were collected through the observation. One of those fragments jotted down was: “Almost all of the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation acquire a specific set of content English vocabulary in an effective way through the practice of the different VAK learning styles”. Another fragment collected in the lottery game activity, a visual, auditory and kinesthetic activity was, “almost all of the learners participate and interact with the words on learning, during the evaluation of this practice they are demonstrating practice in pronunciation, meaning, and recognizing of the different words on learning in this case nouns or content words, except for learners with severe mental retardation who demonstrate few responses to the identification of the words in learning”.

This is corroborated by Davison and Neal (1990), who explain the differences in the mental process of learners with mental retardation, specifically in the cases of severe mental retardation in which there are not possibilities to put in practice the learning of some linguistic codes, like in this case, vocabulary.

Chaulet (1998 p.173), affirmed that the learning process of a mild or moderate mental retarded learner is appropriate for the learning of new structures like new words, which is a difference with the possibilities that have the severe or profound mental retarded learners, with less possibilities to acquire an specific functional vocabulary. Ramos exposed that due to their limited intellectual capacities of those learners the possibilities to learn through the verbal language are very reduced, the messages never will be comprehended if they are not directly supported by the objects in reference or a context of learning (p.77); It demonstrates that the VAK learning styles

are effective to teach English vocabulary to mild and moderate mental disabled learners, but it also demonstrate that the VAK learning styles are not effective in learners with severe mental disable learner due to the limited intellectual capacities and cognitive problems those learners possess.

Each mental retardation case is different. Each one has its own features and it cannot be included in a general diagnosis. According to Gomez (2002) the mental retardations are called “functioning levels”. They are classified just for practical work, nevertheless is important know that those functioning levels are not indicators that bring us the possibility to make a judgment for beginning a treatment.

Neale y Davison (1990) also mentioned that “most of the mildly and moderate retarded don’t show signs of brain pathology, they develop verbal and social skills in contrast to other levels of mental retardation” (p. 446); it also demonstrate that the VAK learning styles are a model that is more effective in learners with less intellectual disabilities in this case in learners with mild and moderate mental retardation.

Research Category: Learning Style Preference

Making a selection of information in this category, I also could collect the next fragments from the surveys applied and the information observed. During the construction of this research the following affirmations from the learners with mental retardation of this research were found, taking into account this research category; the psychologist said: “Learners with mild and moderate mental retardation present a dominant accidental preference to acquire English vocabulary through the visual and the kinaesthetic learning styles model”. Another fragment was; the teacher of art said: “Those learners present a dominant learning style in preference to acquire English vocabulary which is accidentally used with the other learning styles. This accidental dominant learning style is used in connection or interaction with other learning styles”.

Learners tend to develop a learning style as an accidental and dominant preference to acquire English vocabulary according to the activities of the practice and the learning context. Those activities and the relation with their work in context are a strong influence over the learning style in preference. Other information with regard to this category that strengthens what was said is in the next affirmations:

In the different activities in practice, the following information was collected through the observation during the practice: Almost all of the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation learnt English vocabulary in an effective way through the practice of the different learning styles; nevertheless, we observed a dominant preference which varied according to the different activities. In some cases, this dominance was on the side of the visual learning style but in other cases, it was on the kinesthetic or the auditory learning style, it also depends on the activities on learning.

Learners with mild and moderate mental retardation show a high interest towards the different activities and they also show concentration and participation into this practice. A teacher of art says: "Most of these learners present a preference to do something specific, but most of them tend to develop a specific skill according to the context of learning. In this case, most of the learners are familiar with the works on painting, where a learner can tend to develop a sensory pedagogy in relation with the kinesthetic and the visual learning styles". In one of the observations at the end of the course I could collect the subsequent information: "Many of the learners have developed the three learning styles but due to the continuous work on painting, they have developed the visual and the kinesthetic learning styles more than the auditory learning style". See the appendix A in which is presented two activities in which the dominant learning styles are the visual and the kinesthetic ones, working in interaction with the auditory learning style.

Using this advantage, these learners acquired Basic English vocabulary through the practice of the different learning styles in connection to other activities related to their learning context.

Another further observation, found at the end of the course was that “this dominant and circumstantial learning style preference functions in interaction with other learning styles. This dominant preference is not isolated from the other learning styles”.

This is corroborated when Gardner (1993) explained the following: In the process of learning, a learner has a dominant learning style in preference. This learning style is used with other learning styles into the process of learning and in relation to this, the social constructivist paradigm views the context or surrounding in which the learning occurs as central to the learning itself (p. 248).

Ackerman's (1996) study found the following: Making a focus on the influence of the context over the learning, gives one social constructivist notion which states that with authentic or situated learning, the student takes part in activities directly relevant to the application of learning and that take place within a culture similar to the applied setting, Cognitive apprenticeship has been proposed as an effective constructivist model of learning that attempts to acculturate students into authentic practices through activity and social interaction in a similar way to that event, and evidently successful in craft apprenticeship (p. 432).

Research Category: Vocabulary Acquisition

Making a selection of the information in this category, I jotted down the following affirmations from the surveys applied, the information investigated and the observation made during the construction of this research. One of the affirmations is the following; The English teacher said: “Learners with mental retardation specifically learners with mild mental retardation can acquire English vocabulary through the VAK learning styles model”, “The visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles model are a pedagogic tool effectively adapted to the learning

process of learners with mental retardation used to the learning of Basic or content English vocabulary”.

“The learning styles are a sensory pedagogy adapted to the cognitive learning process of learners with mental retardation, in this case, pedagogy of the senses used for the learning and the acquisition of Basic English vocabulary in learners with mental retardation. The availability of a methodology applied to the learning process of learners with mental retardation depends on the opportunities of interaction with their learning process and their individual pedagogical needs”.

Other information with regard to this category that strengthens what was said is in the next affirmations: Learners with severe mental retardation didn’t answered to the questions of the survey.

In the different activities in practice was also collected the next information through the observation, one of the affirmations jotted down were the subsequent: “almost all of the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation acquired a specific set of Basic English vocabulary in an effective way through the practice of the VAK learning styles model”.

Those affirmations are corroborated with the analysis of Chaulet (1994) who presents in her work the learning process of learners with mental retardation through a methodology in practice, in this case, the neurosensory learning process of learners with mental retardation. An important methodology strongly related to the practice of the learning styles (p. 173). She also agrees that it is not as simple as looking for a method in practice, but it is also necessary a deep observation in the complete context and different behaviors of learners with mental retardation.

Ramos’ 1979 paper also explained the following: The main source of information by those learners are their senses, due to their limited intellectual capacities the possibilities to learn through the verbal language are very reduced, the messages never will be comprehended if they are not directly supported by the objects in reference of a context of learning (p.77).

Research Category: The Visual Learning Style and the Learning Context

Making a selection of information in this subcategory, the next fragment from the surveys applied and the observations during the practice was collected where the following affirmation about the group of learners with mental retardation during the practice of this research was found: one of the fragments collected was the following; the language teacher said: “The learning context in which a learner with mental retardation is involved with visual activities is an accidental or circumstantial influence over his/her learning style in preference”.

Another fragment was; the psychologist says: “activities to acquire English vocabulary focused in the visual learning style are a circumstantial influence over the learning style in preference in learners with mental retardation”, “the learning context is an influence over the learning style in preference to learn English vocabulary”.

The context is an influence over the learners of our research. Those learners tend to prefer this learning style which is related to their context to acquire English vocabulary. In this case, the context is related to the development of artistic skills involved with painting. The learning style in preference to acquire English vocabulary of a learner tends to be a direct influence of the context of learning. The context promotes the development of a learning style to acquire specific information as English vocabulary. The context is directly related to the dominant learning style in preference. In this case, the visual learning style and the kinesthetic learning style as dominant learning styles in preference to acquire English vocabulary influenced by the activities in relation with their learning context.

Evidence which supports this affirmation was found in the observations jotted down during the practice when those learners were learning English vocabulary through the practice of the learning styles. In those observations one of the affirmations were: “Most of the learners tend to prefer working with the visual learning style and the kinesthetic learning style. Such preference is

related to the practice of artistic skills in this case abilities on painting; most of the learners prefer to work on activities related to this artistic skill, activities related with the visual and the kinesthetic learning styles”.

An activity to acquire English vocabulary which involved the practice of the visual learning style was, the activity called “giving a walking”. In this activity the next fragment was collected: “most of the learners learn the different words through the observation and the direct relation of interaction with the objects in learning. Many of the learners presented interest and cooperation in those kinds of activities which involves the practice of the visual and kinesthetic learning style in interaction with their context”. The surveys made to the professionals also show evidence of this high preference of the learners and a big relation between the context and this visual learning style. One of the answers was the following; the teacher of arts said: “learners tend to choose the visual learning style as an accidental preference promoted by their work in context to acquire English vocabulary, in this particular case, a learning style promoted by the work on painting”.

According to Gardner (2005), this is corroborated when he explained the following: There is a strong influence by the context over the way of learning of a student. One learner can prefer the use of an specific learning style due to the tools or to the activities joined to the context in which this learner is involved. The learning style in preference is directly related to the work on the activities in context and learners tend to prefer and develop the learning in practice through different activities related to the context (p.143).

Compared to task- and person-dependent strategies; learning context has received only cursory attention. Most studies would either ignore the educational and cultural traditions, the availability of input and output opportunities and the classroom environment or try to confine the contextual dimension by focusing on one homogeneous group of learners. Oxford's (1996), underscores the importance strategy researchers are beginning to place on learning context

(p.234). Throughout this review, I have repeatedly highlighted the learning context when the focus is on a task or a person. This shows the interrelatedness among the person-task-context-strategy model. In addition, classroom learning environments should demand different vocabulary learning strategies from informal learning contexts. Likewise, the availability and richness of input/output opportunities should also determine the strategies learners decide to use as well as a context that provides opportunities to interact with the learning process of vocabulary (Nelson, 1995, p.136). Ramos also exposes that the messages never will be comprehended if they are not directly supported by the objects in reference or a context of learning (p.77); it means that the context also has an important influence over the way of learning of those learners.

Research Category: The Auditory Learning Style and the Learning Context

Making a selection of the information in this subcategory, the next fragment was collected from the surveys applied and from the observations made during the practice. Some of the affirmations found were the following: a language teacher said: “the learning context in which a learner with mental retardation is involved with auditory activities is an influence over the learning style as an accidental preference”. In this case an accidental preference influenced by the learning context used to learn English vocabulary.

The psychologist said: “those learners tend to work accidentally with the auditory learning style to acquire English vocabulary. The context of the auditory activities let those learners acquire English vocabulary through the auditory learning style. The context in this case is an influence over this learning style in preference”.

“The auditory learning style was not the dominant learning style for those learners; nevertheless, with an appropriate and meaningful amount of activities, those learners participate on the learning of English vocabulary through the auditory learning style”.

“This preference is accidental; a learner may sometimes prefer to work through this learning style, which means that the response or the participation of those learners varies depending on the context”.

“Learners with severe mental retardation didn’t answered the questions of the survey”.

In the observations the next information was collected through the practice o the VAK learning styles. Almost all of the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation learn English vocabulary in an effective way through the practice of the auditory learning styles if there is an exposure of meaningful and appropriate activities”. “Learners with severe and profound mental retardation show a low interest to those kinds of activities, they lost their concentration when facing the different activities in practice and very few times the learning of English vocabulary is understood when it is presented”.

According to Gardner (2005), it is corroborated that there is an influence by the context over the way of learning of a learner. One learner can prefer a learning style due to the tools or to the activities joined to the context in which this learner is involved (p.143).

Taking into account those fragment we can deduce that those learners could learn English vocabulary through the practice of the auditory learning style, this learning style was not their dominant learning style but with the appropriate instruction of the different learning strategies as in this case the metacognitive strategies, making them understand their best way of learning the learning of English vocabulary through the auditory learning style was possible, and we could demonstrate that this learning style was also influenced by the learning context.

Research Category: The kinesthetic Learning Style in Context

Making a selection of the information in this subcategory, the next fragments were collected from the surveys applied and the observations made during the practice, some of those fragments

were: the language teacher said: “the learning context related with kinesthetic activities in learners with mental retardation is an influence over their accidental preference”.

The psychologist said: “in the group of learners from this research the context is a direct influence over the learning style in preference of learners with mental retardation. Almost all of those learners tend to prefer this learning style to learn English vocabulary if there is an exposure to an amount of activities which let the interaction with this learning style”.

Activities focused in the kinesthetic learning style are an influence over the learning style as an accidental preference of the learners with the mental retardation except in learners with severe or profound mental retardation,. The context of those learners is strongly related with the development of kinesthetic activities which let those learners be a part of the activities and cooperates with the learning of English vocabulary through the practice of this learning style.

The learning style in preference to learn English vocabulary, in this case the kinesthetic learning style depends directly on the activity or activities developed in the learning context. Learners with mild or moderate mental retardation participate on those activities if there is an appropriate context of learning.

In the different activities in practice, the next information was collected, some fragments of this information were the following; A teacher of art said: “those learners with mild and moderate mental retardation are better adapted to the learning of English vocabulary through activities which are related to their neurosensory mental process and their learning context like with the kinesthetic activities which are related to a sensory learning and the activities that normally are related with their context of work”; “learners with severe mental retardation do not show interest on those kinds of activities and lost their concentration dealing with the different activities in practice. Very few times they have a response or participation into the different activities presented”. another fragment was; “This group of learners presented cooperation with

these kinesthetic activities but just some of them know and are conscious about what they are learning; the other learners, learners with severe mental retardation, think that this activity is just a game”, “the kinesthetic learning style works in interaction with other learning styles, sometimes this learning style is dominant, but this dominance can change, depending on the different activities, different learning styles are put in practice, and the context becomes a tool to improve the accidental preference”.

According to Gardner (2005), it is corroborated when he said that there is a strong influence by the context over the way of learning of a learner. One learner may prefer something due to the tools or the activities joined to the context in which this learner is involved (p. 143). Compared to task- and person-dependent strategies, the learning context has received only cursory attention. Most studies would either ignore the educational and cultural traditions, the availability of input and output opportunities, and the classroom environment, or try to confine the contextual dimension by focusing on one homogeneous group of learners. Oxford's (1996), even though not specifically on vocabulary learning, underscores the importance strategy researchers are beginning to place on learning context (p. 234). Throughout this review, I have repeatedly highlighted learning context when the focus is on task or person. This shows the interrelatedness of the person-task-context-strategy model. Dunn y Dunn (1984) also supports the purpose of Howard Gardner explaining that an individual's learning style is not static "Learning Style changes over time. It is not static. It changes" (p. 75).

Is important make an analysis to this learning style preference in relation with the learning context to learn English vocabulary, as in the visual and the auditory learning styles, this learning style is also influenced by the activities in relation with the physical experiences, as in the other learning styles an appropriate and meaningful amount of activities in relation with the kinesthetic learning context let those learners learn English vocabulary in an effective way. In the activities

presented in the appendix A we can see that there is exposure to different activities that involves muscular movements connecting the learning process of those learners, their learning context and the learning of English vocabulary through the practice of the VAK learning styles.

Procedures for Data Collection

This study was carried out through the analysis of observations and surveys, in which the researcher had a direct contact with the community with the purpose of taking note of the information from the subjects of study and their context. According this, the description of this study is under a procedure of inductive analysis that involves four stages:

The observations of the VAK learning styles in practice through a planning of a set of activities each lesson planning involved the creation of an activity, the different actors or participant of the activity in this case the special students of the Lunacrearte foundation, a brief explanation of the learning context, the time and the place of the activity, the different exercises in practice in this case the different learning strategies as the metacognitive strategies which involved the self-knowledge of the activities presented in each class, the different objects used to develop each activity, and a sequence of the different facts to carry out each activity in class, it included the actions of the teacher and the learners to develop each activity taking into account each activity, and the content of learning in this case almost all of the activities were focused on the learning of content vocabulary as nouns, verbs, adverbs; in this way it was jotted down the different feelings and reactions which learners presented during the interaction of each activity, registration, analyzing and classification the different facts, and evaluating each student through a format of participation and interaction with the knowledge in practice; finally an inductive derivation process of a generalization and contrast of those different facts was carried out with the contrast of this information into the triangulation of information to respective validation of the different fragments founded as conclusions and results.

The surveys were also part of this procedure, those were made with the help of the different professionals and learners, different questions that let us found conclusions and result were created taking into account the different research categories, finally all the answers were collected also into a systematic registration of information of the respective triangulation of the information to validate the results and conclusions founded in the contrast of this information.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

English vocabulary can be acquired by learners with mental retardation in different ways, in some learners such as learners with mild and moderate mental retardation the learning of English vocabulary through is possible, and in other cases like learners with severe or profound mental retardation this learning presents more difficulties but is also possible for few cases. Those ways or styles of learning depend on the learner's preference, on the context in which the learner is involved and on the functions over the way of learning of learners with mental retardation which are adapted into the learning process of English vocabulary through the practice of the learning styles. The conditions in which this research was developed demonstrate the relation between the context and the learning style performance of each learner. The preference of the learners by the visual, auditory and the kinesthetic learning styles as a common preference is related to their neurosensory process of learning. Any longer, this learning preference not only depends on the individual way of learning of a learner but also on the complete context in which the learner is involved, a context related to the occupation matter; like in this case, the activities, the motivation, the familiar environment and all of those factors that produce a strong performance in those modalities determined by experts as a dominant preference.

The learning context is a significant influence over the learning style in preference of the mental retarded learners. The learning style in preference is a result of a set of resources used as an influence over the way of learning of a learner with mental retardation and this influence is compounded by meaningful activities and materials called "the context", where learners with mental retardation tend to be attracted to the practice of the three learning styles as a natural tendency related to their learning process; but the learning context also plays an important role. It makes learners define their learning accidental tendency, so those learners tend to work in an

effective way in the different learning styles but depending on the meaningful context in which they are working they can improve and develop a specific learning style.

It is important the focus on this neurosensory learning process which plays an important role into the education of those learners. The neurosensory models, like the learning styles, are adapted in an effective way into the process of learning of a student with mental retardation. In an appropriate practice of this model, learners adapt their neurosensory skills to the acquisition of English vocabulary. Due to their sensory motor skills, there is a preference to work through the learning styles which let learners with mental retardation interact with the use of those neurosensory skills, facilitating the cooperation and participation into the negotiation of vocabulary.

The use of the VAK learning styles model facilitates the learning of English vocabulary in most of the learners with mental retardation and almost all of the learners with mild and moderate mental retardation show a preference to learn vocabulary through the different learning styles; nevertheless, the level of intelligence and mental problems in learners with severe mental retardation incapacitates the language learning and the learning of English language vocabulary is not possible. In some cases, learners with severe mental retardation are auditory learners and it becomes the only one way in which those learners respond.

Motivation provided during the practice of the activities also promotes the cooperation and the effectiveness of the practice of the visual, auditory and the kinesthetic learning styles model. Learners with mental retardation feel confidence because they reduce the levels of anxiety, and the motivation and confidence provided by the practice of the learning styles become positive responses and better performance in the process of learning vocabulary.

Games are also an important material to be used in the activation of memory in learners with mental retardation. The use of games through the practice of the learning styles with those

learners let activate the learning of vocabulary and motivate those learners to a better performance in their participation. It is important to know that the contribution of the power of games is really significant; it involves the concept of implicit learning where learners can acquire English vocabulary in a playful environment surrounded by enjoyable and interesting activities.

The dominant learning style is accidental and individual in each learner and this dominant learning style which is more developed than other learning styles is not used individually, it is used in connection and in interaction with other learning styles; this circumstantial and dominant learning style is in general used as a base of support connected to other learning styles. Most of the learners have a similar preference by the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. In other words, each learner can present a dominant or most developed learning style in different tasks, but this dominant preference is used in connection to other learning styles. Taking into account this pedagogic experience, it is possible to demonstrate that there is effectiveness in the practice of the learning styles model applied to those learners, and also the practice with the learning styles in relation to the neurosensory learning process of learners with mental retardation.

Another important contribution in which we made a deep analysis is the functioning of the learning styles, the learning styles many times function connected and interact as a whole, the learning styles function in interaction and not separately; in many of the activities put in this practice, we could observe that different learning styles were used at same time, the dominant learning style was also part of this study, we can conclude that the dominant learning style change, depending on the activity one learner can change his/her dominant learning style.

Pedagogical Recommendations

One of the most important contributions of this study is involved with the demonstration of the effectiveness of the learning styles in the learning of Basic English vocabulary in learners

with mental retardation, the surveys and the observations let find that learners with mild mental retardation can acquire Basic English vocabulary effectively through the practice of the VAK learning styles model, in some learners with moderate mental retardation the learning of Basic English vocabulary through the learning styles was effective and in most of cases of learners with severe and profound mental retardation the learning of Basic English vocabulary was not possible or it was not effective, in other words learners with mild and moderate mental retardation have more possibilities to put in practice their learning process in the learning of a Basic English vocabulary due to their mental development, their intellectual development is more appropriate and better adapted to the learning of Basic English vocabulary.

Another important contribution of this study is focused on the functioning of the learning styles to improve the learning of Basic English vocabulary in learners with mental retardation. The learning process of learners with mental retardation is a sensory process, this process is strongly related with the practice of the learning styles, and the learning of English Basic English vocabulary was more effective through the use a better functioning of the practice the VAK learning styles model in the learning of English vocabulary.

In a final point of interest in which this study was focused is “the context”, a powerful tool to be used to the learning of Basic English vocabulary in learners with mental retardation, this study found relevant the importance of the influence of the context over the preferences in the way of learning Basic English vocabulary of the learners with mental retardation, specifically the way of learning of learners with mild and moderate mental retardation. Learners with mild and moderate mental retardation have developed a dominant accidental learning preference to acquire English vocabulary according to the context in which they are involved, so those learners use this learning style in connection with other learning styles to improve the learning of Basic English vocabulary.

Another contribution was in the findings about the context, learners tend to develop a learning style as an accidental and dominant preference according to the activities of the practice and the context of learning. Those activities and the relation with their work in context are a strong influence over the learning style in preference. The learning styles is a sensory pedagogy adapted to the cognitive learning process of learners with mental retardation, in this case, a pedagogy used for the learning and the acquisition of a Basic English vocabulary. The availability of a methodology applied to the learning process of learners with mental retardation depends on the opportunities of interaction with their learning process and their individual pedagogical needs. The context is an influence over the learners of our research. Those learners tend to prefer the learning style which is related to their context. In this case, the context is related to the development of artistic skills involved with the painting. The learning style preference of a learner tends to be a direct influence of the context. The context promotes the development of a learning style to acquire specific information as English vocabulary. The context is directly related to the dominant learning style in preference. In this case, the visual learning style as a tool in preference serves to acquire a Basic English vocabulary as a skill promoted by the work on this ability through the development of artistic abilities.

Limitations

The place where this study was developed is the Lunacrearte foundation; there was not a classroom to be used for the practice of the English course. Sometimes we were interrupted by other learners who were involved in other different activities.

Some of the learners got sick and they had to be absent from some practices of the course.

Some of those learners suffered health difficulties like seizures and they had to abandon some activities of the practice.

Further Research

The first issue that has to be considered in order to obtain better results for further research is the limited vocabulary that was studied during the course, in a new investigation it may be appropriate to extend the information gathered in this paper incorporating topics of general communication, any other aspects of the language speaking taking into account the development of the different language skills, students specifically learners with mild and moderate mental retardation may acquire higher levels of understanding and competence.

The second issue is over the complete process of language learning of those learners, it would be important and necessary to analyze and understand completely the learning process of those learners for future researches.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Samples of the Classroom Observations

A Visual Activity

Activity N 1: Body puzzle; learners got a picture of the body and cut it into pieces, their task was to see if the parts were in the right side.

Actors: Special students of the Lunacrearte foundation.

Act: Students dedicated to the Works on painting and arts.

Date: December 14_2010

Time: 2:00 pm.

Context: The space for this activity is the classroom that those learners use to make their works on painting.

Objects: The objects used were a sheet of paper with the human body, scissors and adhesive.

Sequence of the acts and lesson planning:

There was a previous explanation of the parts of the body, it was made in a visual way, and the teacher explained the learning style to make those learners practice with their metacognitive strategies.

Then there was a last visualization of a picture with the parts of the body.

Learners got the scissors and cut the sheet of papers into pieces.

Then they joined each picture in the right side completing the respective names of the body that had been previously studied.

Then with a kinesthetic activity was explained in a deep way the parts of the body.

Time: Two hours.

Objective: Make those learners put into practice their visual and the kinesthetic learning style, as the dominant learning styles working in interaction with the auditory learning style, to learn the respective content vocabulary in this case nouns, the parts of the body.

Feelings: Almost all of the students were motivated to interact with the vocabulary in learning; almost all of them demonstrated high interest for those kind of visual experiences, learners finally were conscious about what learning style was being used as a dominant learning style to their practice, in this case the visual learning style as their dominant learning style.

Reactions: Here is necessary to remember that one activity could combine or mix the use of another learning styles, due to the reactions of motivation presented by those learners in this activity, it was noted that those learners were influenced by their learning context, in this case as an influence over the visual and the kinesthetic learning style, it was jotted down also that those learners preferred those activities in relation with those actions related with the visual skills and their neurosensory learning process.

■ **Figure 1.1** Activity “Body puzzle”, A Sample of an Activity

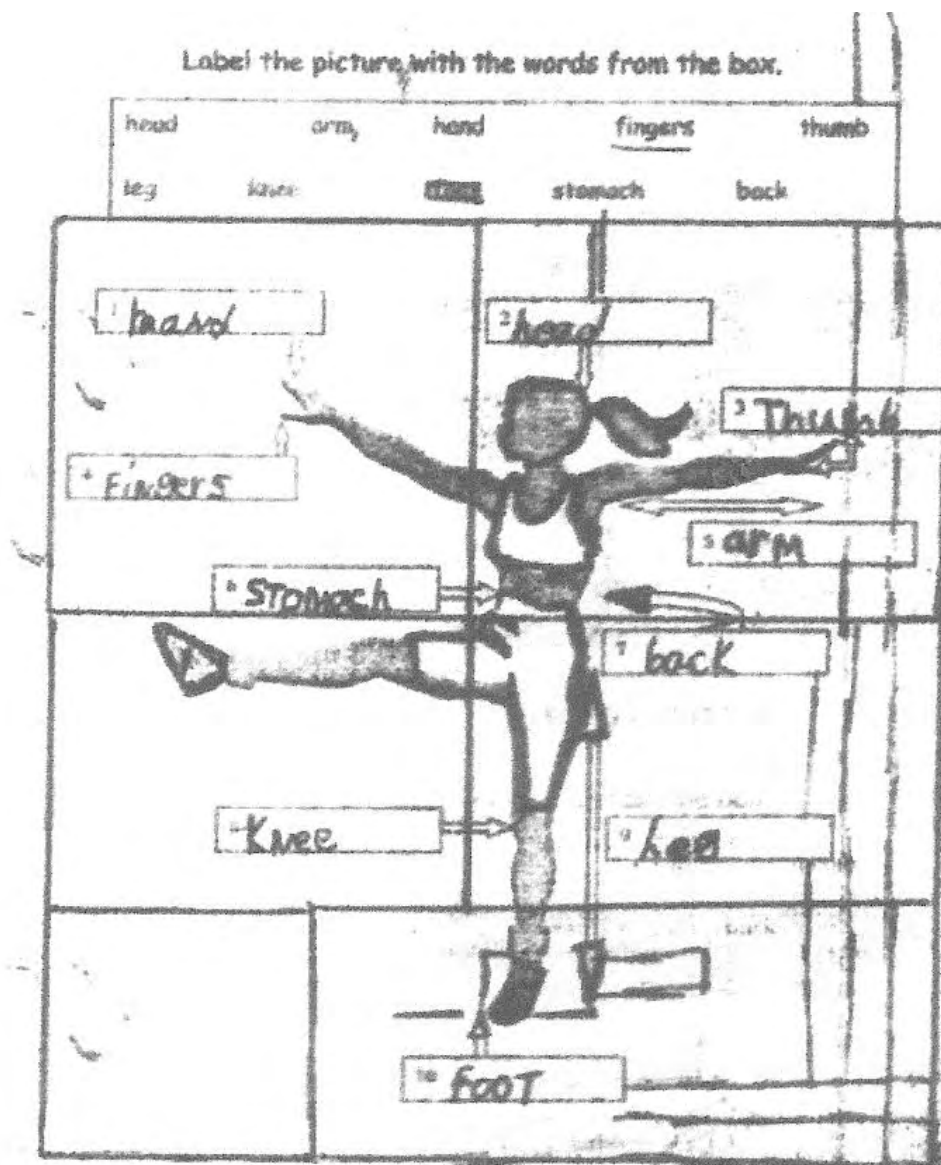


Figure 1.1 “Body Puzzle”. This picture is an example of the learners of this study in a practice with the visual learning styl. The main objective of this activity was making learners recognize the words in the reference with the parts of the body.

■ **Figure 1.2** Activity “Parts of the body”, A Sample of an Activity



Figure 1.2 “Soup of Words Activity”. This picture is an example of the learner of this study in a practice with a kinesthetic activity. The main objective of this activity was making learners recognize the words in the reference with the parts of the body.

An Auditory Activity

Activity N 2: Steve Windwood song; don't you know what the night can do.

Actors: Special students of the Lunacrearte foundation.

Act: Students dedicated to the Works on painting and arts.

Date: October 28_2010

Time: 2:00 pm.

Context: The space for this activity is the classroom where students use to exercise.

Objects: The objects used are only a worksheet of the activity and colors.

Sequence of the acts and lesson planning:

First I made students listen to the complete song without interruptions

Then I gave them a complete explanation of the present progressive tense.

Then I let the learners find the grammatical rules in common, after they underline the examples and complete the activity.

Finally learners sang at time with the rhythm of the music.

Time: Two hours.

Objective: To learn content vocabulary in this case, the present progressive of the verbs through the practice of the auditory learning styles.

Feelings: Some of the learners specifically they with severe mental retardation showed some problems of concentration, nevertheless most of them activated their auditory abilities and participated motivated in each part of this activity.

Reactions: Almost all of the learners enjoyed this song, most of them enjoyed it at time they were learning the use of the verbs in the present progressive tense, the practice of the auditory learning styles help them to recognize the different verbs but they had to use also another learning styles, like the visual learning style. Almost all of them comprehended the implicit meaning of this activity in this case the use of the grammatical form present progressive tense.

■ **Figure 1.3** Activity “Steve Windwood song”, A Sample of an Activity

Steve Winwood song

Don't You Know What the Night Can Do?

Hear the night music play ____? Don't you know what it's say ____?
 We should feel it together forever
 Feel the beat and just hold on to the sweet midnight flow ____
 Feel the music inside you, I'll be there too
 Now's the time that our dreams are finally coming true
 Feels so good we're cry ____
 Now's the time when it's down to me and you
 Spread these wings - we'll be fly ____

Don't you know what the night can do?
 Don't you know when it's touch ____ you?
 Don't you know what the night can do?

Time to show all your feel ____, all the night is reveal ____
 Let the rhythm enfold you, let me hold you
 And we turn into music, now we never will lose it
 When the rhythm and night ride, no heart can hide
 There are times that never ever come again, memories there for mak ____
 When the night comes, we better let it in, all this love for the tak ____

Don't you know what the night can do?
 Don't you know when it's touch ____ you?
 Won't you help me to let it through?
 Don't you know what the night can do?

Figure 1.3 “Steve Windwood Activity”. This picture is an example of a learner with mild mental retardation. The main objective of this activity was making learners recognize the words in reference with a grammatical tense. Those learners acquired this vocabulary through the real interaction with those words through the auditory learning style.

A kinesthetic Activity

Activity N 4: Soup of words (word search) a visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activity.

Actors: Special students of the Lunacrearte foundation.

Act: Students dedicated to the Works on painting and arts.

Date: October 12_2010

Time: 2:00 pm.

Context: The space for this activity is the classroom where students use to

Exercise: The classroom is a place with desks and chairs where the desks are located in circle.

Objects: The objects used are only a worksheet of the activity and colors.

Sequence of the acts and lesson planning:

The Teacher presented learners a sheet of paper with the activity (word search) “a soup of words”.

The teacher gave the directions indicating the learners that they should find the word and then painting it according to each color.

Learners proceed finding the missed word and when they have found it they use colors to paint it.

At time they were painting and using their artistic skills on painting they learnt the respective vocabulary in reference to the colors.

Time: One hour

Objective: Make learners recognize the words of the respective vocabulary of the colors.

Feelings: The students feel relaxed enjoying what they were doing.

Reactions: the learners showed interest. Some of them found the activity difficult because they felt confused, specifically some of them with severe mental retardation. The other learners found interesting the interaction with the meaning of the word and this way, it is also important to highlight the deep importance that the motivation provided had during the class.

With the presented activity almost all of those special students responded in an appropriate way. Sometimes the students with severe mental retardation presented some problems with the pronunciation, with the rest of the students we did not have many problems, all of them showed interest on the activities and they looked comfortable and motivated with all those kind of activities. The positive response to those activities let us acquire a significant group of learners to put in practice the learning styles; this practice and the research through the surveys to the different professionals let us see in which cases putting in practice this model was effective. Mild mental retarded learners demonstrated be the best, some of the moderate mental retarded learners have overcome their cognitive problems and the severe mental retarded learners in whom we did not find any positive answer because of their problems in their cognitive area. Their context, in this case the painting, facilitates the learning.

■ **Figure 1.3** Activity “Soup of Words”, A Sample of an Activity

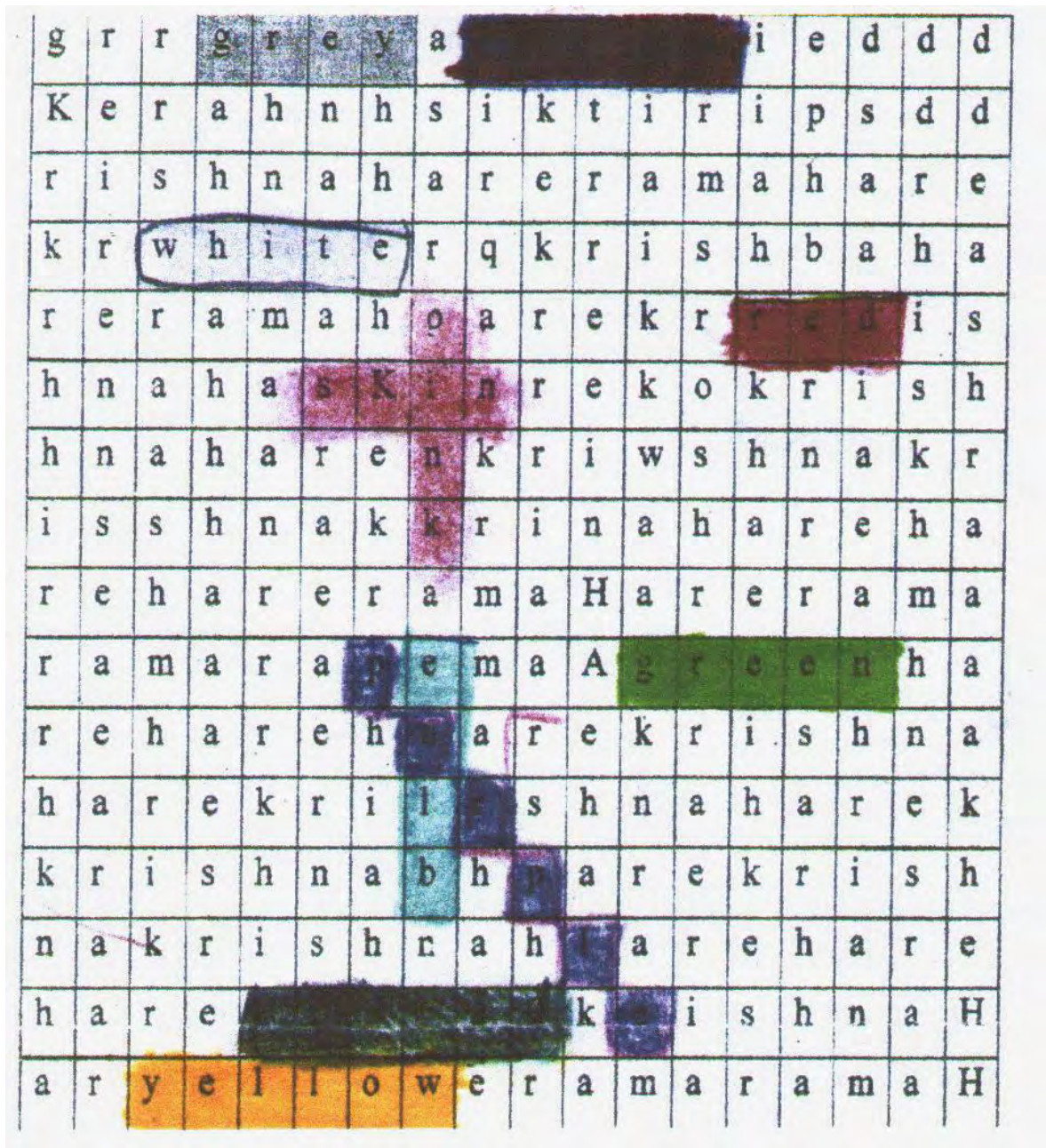


Figure 1.3 “Soup of Words Activity”. This picture is an example of a learner with mild mental retardation, Luis A. Burgos. The main objective of this activity was making learners recognize the words of the respective vocabulary of the colors. Those learners acquired this vocabulary through the real interaction of the colors.

Appendix B

Sample of the Survey Research

The following question was answered taking into account the three level of mental retardation:

¿Are the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles an appropriate tool to acquire a basic vocabulary in learners with mental retardation?

- A. Almost all of the times
- B. Sometimes
- C. Few times
- D. Never

Answer of Mary Soraya España, psychologist student of Neuropsychology in the University of Buenos Aires.

Open answer: I consider that the learning styles are an effective methodology to acquire English Basic vocabulary in some learners mental retardation, like in learners with mild or moderate mental retardation due to the relation that there is between this model and their learning process, a neurosensory process of learning; but the learning styles are not effective to learn English Basic vocabulary in learners with severe or profound mental retardation due to the cognitive development, their intellectual level is prepare to assimilate this information.

Other professionals that offered their help with the inquiry were: Yuly Patricia Pupiales, Psychologist of the University of Nariño, psychologist of the Lunacrearte Foundation, Tania Lopez Morán, from Cauca University, Phonoaudiologist, Edit Muñoz, Teacher of plastic and visual arts through the art therapy, social artist from the University “Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas” of Bogota and all the learners in cooperation who made the enquiry two times, some of the questions were omitted for a creation of a simple survey and other teachers of the Lunacrearte Foundation.

Appendix C

Sample of the Triangular Research

According to the data collected by the different professionals and the observations made during the class, it was made an analysis of all the answers and observations in a triangular format to analyze the information A Sample of the Mild Mental Retarded Learners Study Triangulation

Table B1

Mild Mental Retardation, Triangular Research Analysis

| <i>QUESTION</i> | <i>TEACHERS'</i> | <i>PSYCHOLOGIST</i> | <i>STUDENTS'</i> | <i>TENDENCY</i> |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| | <i>PROPOSITION</i> | <i>PROPOSITION</i> | <i>PROPOSITION</i> | |
| Are the visual auditory kinaesthetic learning styles an appropriate tool to acquire a basic English vocabulary in learners with mild mental retardation? | Teachers said that most of the times are appropriate work with the learning styles in learners with mild mental retardation. | Most of the time learners with mild mental retardation use the learning styles to acquire English vocabulary | Most of the time students agree that the learning styles functioned in an effective way | The learning styles are an appropriate tool to acquire a basic English vocabulary in MR learners |

