

The Development of Speaking Skills by Facilitating Interaction at the Language

Center of the University of Nariño

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NOTA DE RESPONSABILIDAD

“Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en el trabajo son responsabilidad exclusiva de sus autores”.

Artículo 1 del Acuerdo número 324 de octubre de 1966 emanado por el Honorable Consejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

Nota de aceptación

Firma del presidente de Tesis.

Jurado.

Jurado.

San Juan de Pasto, Mayo de 2016

Resumen

Lograr la comunicación oral se ha convertido en el centro y el objetivo final del proceso de aprendizaje y enseñanza de una segunda lengua. Sin embargo, los estudiantes no tienen suficientes oportunidades de interactuar en el aula de clase lo cual puede ayudarles a desarrollar sus habilidades orales en gran medida. Para dirigirse a esta situación, un estudio será conducido con el fin de analizar el efecto de facilitar la interacción para desarrollar las habilidades orales con los estudiantes de quinto nivel en el centro de Idiomas de la Universidad de Nariño. Para llevar a cabo este proyecto, la metodología cualitativa será usada para recolectar información por medio de observaciones de aula y el uso de actividades orales tales simulaciones, jigsaw y “story completion”. Las conclusiones de esta investigación proporcionarían información valiosa con respecto al efecto del uso de actividades orales que involucran interacción con el objetivo de desarrollar las habilidades orales de los estudiantes.

Palabras claves: comunicación oral, interacción, habilidades orales, simulaciones, jigsaw, “story completion”

Abstract

Achieving oral communication has become the focus and ultimate goal of the second language learning and teaching process. However, students do not have enough opportunities to interact in the classroom which can greatly help them develop their speaking skills. To address this situation, a study will be conducted to analyze the effect of facilitating interaction to develop the speaking skills with students of fifth level at the language center of the University of Nariño. In order to carry out this project, the qualitative methodology will be used to gather data through classroom observations and the use of oral activities such as simulations, jigsaw and story completion activities. The findings of this research should provide valuable information regarding the effect of using oral activities that involve interaction to develop student's speaking skills.

Key words: Oral communication, interaction, speaking skills, story completion, jigsaw, simulations.

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Introduction

The development of the communicative approach caused a big impact in the analysis of foreign language teaching goals leading to changes in language teaching worldwide within which the attention to oral interaction is of utmost importance. Nevertheless, as ESL students with pedagogical experience at schools and English language academies, we have seen that learners usually have difficulties with their speaking skills. Some of the reasons are that teachers are not aware that the idea of classroom interaction is of vital importance to second language learning due to the opportunities it creates to improve knowledge and speaking skills. Also, students do not have enough opportunities in the classroom to be put in real life situations in which they can practice and express their own thoughts. As a result, students cannot develop fluency and improve their overall levels of communication. For this reason, we considered it necessary to incorporate classroom activities that involve interaction to help students develop their speaking skills.

Chapter I. The research problem

In this chapter a problematic situation will be presented regarding some aspects related to the development of learners' speaking skill by facilitating interaction, because it must be present in the learning and teaching process to maximize opportunities for learners to be engaged and competent when learning the foreign language leading to a meaningful learning experience. This chapter contains problem description, problem analysis, problem statement, objectives of the project, delimitations and limitations of the study.

Problem description

According to what we have learned regarding the different methods that a teacher can use in an EFL setting like Pasto, we have noticed certain difficulties in the teaching process since it is evident that most teachers tend to use the same traditional methods developed in the past to teach a foreign language without giving learners the opportunity to develop the speaking skill. This is particularly important because it enables them to communicate in the foreign language, which is one of the most relevant aspects and the ultimate purpose of language learning in which interaction has to be involved.

The principal causes that produce this problem could be because of the following factors. The first one is that some teachers lack the knowledge about the theoretical background and the new Post Method Pedagogy that includes new ways of teaching and the importance of a teachers' role to foster the development of learners' communication in the foreign language in which interaction is considered significant in order to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Another possible cause could be that some teachers are not well prepared to teach a foreign language in an appropriate way, since teachers usually focus on grammar rather than give students the opportunity to interact and develop their speaking skill.

Also, one of the negatives might be that students will not be able to be competent to communicate effectively in the foreign language which is the major aim of the English Language Teaching. In contrast, the possible consequence if we take action on this problem might be that teachers can implement new strategies that involve interaction so students have a better performance to communicate in the foreign language.

Based on the causes already mentioned, we consider that our research could contribute to the solution if teachers embrace the new ways of teaching that involve new strategies, techniques and approaches. Our proposal is to help develop students' speaking skill by facilitating interaction providing students with the opportunity to put into practice what they have been learning with the purpose of encouraging students to be competent using the foreign language in a social context.

Problem analysis

Independent variable

The main independent variable to be studied is the use of traditional methods and strategies by teachers in the English classroom.

Dependent variable

- Student's deficiency to develop their communicative competence and be fluent in the foreign language.

- Lack of student's interest and motivation to learn the target language
- Lack of learning opportunities for student's to participate using the foreign language

Problem statement

The question that we want to answer with this project is the following:

What is the effect of facilitating interaction to develop the speaking skill with students of the fifth level at the language center of the University of Nariño?

Sub- questions

- What kind of interactive activities do teachers use to enable students to develop their speaking skill?
- Do teachers give students opportunities to communicate orally in the classroom?

Objectives of the study

General Objective

The principal aim of this project is to analyze the effect of facilitating interaction to develop the speaking skills with students of fifth level at the language center of the University of Nariño.

Specific Objectives.

To describe if teachers use interactive activities to enable students to foster their speaking skill.

To apply speaking activities that involve interaction between students and teachers.

Problem delimitations

Conceptual Delimitations

✓ **Affective Filter:** This is an imaginary wall that is placed between a learner and language input. If the filter is on, the learner is blocking out input. The filter turns on when anxiety is high, self-esteem is low or motivation is low. Hence, low anxiety classes are better for language acquisition. Another implication is that too much correction will also raise the affective filter as self-esteem in using the language drops.

✓ **Comprehensible Input:** spoken language that can be understood by the listener even though some structures and vocabulary may not be known. According to Krashen's theory of language acquisition, comprehensible input is a necessary condition for second language acquisition.

✓ **Comprehensible Output:** For Swain (1995 cited in Lantolf 2013) the comprehensible output hypothesis claims that language learners are aware of what they know when there is a gap that impedes them to communicate, thus they try to transfer what they want to say but they fail at doing it, then they have to modify their output until they express the correct form of the language acquiring the new form of it that they have produced.

✓ **Feedback:** According to Nicol and Macfarlane (2006, p. 205) feedback refers to what teachers do in order to encourage students to practice what they know about a language so they are able to control what they produce and correct their own

mistakes while they are expressing their ideas and thoughts orally and in this way they can reflect about their learning process and feel motivated to continue learning.

✓ **Input Hypothesis:** According to Krashen the only way we can acquire language is by receiving comprehensible input. That is, we have to receive input that is just beyond our competence but not beyond our understanding. Learners have to also have the right environment and circumstances to allow comprehensible input to work. A learner's affective filter has to be low; they have to be free of stress and motivated.

✓ **Interaction:** According to Brown (2000, p. 165) "interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other". In this sense, through the use of interaction, students have the opportunity to express their own views, opinions, thoughts and feelings in real communicative situations.

✓ **Interactive Activities:** These activities provide students with opportunities to expand their learning by building new knowledge. Also they provide students with the feedback given by the teacher.

✓ **Jigsaw:** According to Richards and Schmidt (2002) jigsaw is an information gap activity which consists on exchanging different parts of text information assigned to groups of learners but related to the same topic in order to complete a task through interaction.

✓ **Negotiation of Meaning:** Gass and Selinker (2008) claim that negotiation of meaning refers to the effort and strategies learners use when interacting in a conversation to clarify a lack of understanding.

✓ **Output:** According to Swain (1985 cited in Zhang 2009), Output enables learners to use the knowledge they have of the target language in order to reach accurate

oral or written production. She also points out that output has an important role for the development of morphology and syntax since there is no a better to way to test what learners have learned than use it to produce something.

✓ **Speaking Skill:** Nunan (2003, p.48) claims that “speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning.” Speaking is the ability that enables us to communicate and to exchange our ideas effectively.

✓ **Simulations:** According to Harmer (2001) a simulation is to act out a pretend real-life encounter between learners as though it were actually happening. For example acting out a job interview, a meeting on an airplane or a business conference. This encourages oral fluency as the learners would behave as those characters would, probably expressing thoughts and feelings that they don't necessarily agree with.

✓ **Story completion:** According to Harbottle (2004), story completion is “a verbal stimulus containing words that represent either the beginning of a story or a sentence”. In this sense, this is an activity in which all the students have to participate creating a story since they are asked to continue the story adding more details starting from the part the previous student mentioned until they finish the story.

✓ **Technique:** Brown (2000, p. 129-130) says that technique refers to a wide variety of planned activities and tasks as a result of a selection a teacher makes and it is performed by teachers or learners in the classroom.

Delimitation of population

In order to carry out this project, we have decided to work with students of fifth level at the language center of the University of Nariño. The students' ages are between

14 and 18 years old. This University is a public institution and the students belong to the middle social class.

Geographical Delimitation

This research will take place in a public University located in La Aurora neighborhood which is near Unicentro mall. This sector belongs to the middle social class.

Significance of the study

According to our experience learning English as a foreign language, we have realized that students do indeed have difficulties communicating and they struggle when it comes to expressing their thoughts and opinions in the foreign language.

This project has a methodological and practical importance. In terms of methodological importance, we propose to implement communicative activities that involve interaction in order to foster students' speaking skill. In terms of practical importance, we intend to contribute to the solution of the problem that students experience since they do not have enough opportunities to interact in the language they are learning.

This research has a relevant importance for teachers and students. For teachers because it can provide them with new techniques, strategies and communicative activities that involve social interaction to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, our research can help students produce and understand language more effectively.

Limitations

Methodological Limitations

Through the use of observations and activities used to gather the information we might find problems related to the lack of interest and reluctance on the part of the students and teachers to collaborate with us, which can make it difficult to obtain satisfying results when analyzing the information.

In addition, some teachers can resist being questioned about the way they are teaching and some parents may not allow us to observe their children's behavior.

Logistic Limitations

The limited amount of time given to teachers to teach can have a negative impact on our ability to carry out our study.

This chapter described different aspects that will be developed throughout the project taking into account the elements related to the research problem. We have identified some of the components and we will give a wider explanation with more references and concepts with the respective authors that are part of this study having in mind that they will complement and clarify the development of this project.

In the next chapter, we will focus on the theoretical explanation of the problem.

Chapter II. Literature review

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language has been the object of several studies during the past decade. In the past, the teaching and learning process of a foreign language was focused on the teacher's role rather than the students' role. Teachers played the main role of the class because they were the authority and students did not have the opportunity to develop the four skills efficiently. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to explain the different competences involved when learning a foreign language to develop the students 'speaking skill. Also, different concepts will be explained in order to comprehend clearly the aspects involved in the development of the speaking skill by fostering interaction.

Communicative Language Teaching

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.153) "they saw the need to focus in language teaching on communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastery of structures". The communicative approach has had a big influence since new methods emerged creating a significant change in the teaching and learning process. This has led to new perspectives concerning the traditional education, considering as a main objective the communicative proficiency instead of focusing on grammar structures in language teaching.

Communicative Competence

Savignon (1971) claims that "Communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning. The central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is communicative competence". Savignon used this term

to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers to make meaning.

In this sense, it is necessary to underline that communicative competence plays an important role in the teaching and learning process considering that its major goal is to provide students with opportunities in the classroom to engage them in real life communication in the foreign language and communicating appropriately.

In addition, Hymes (1966 cited in Kojima, 2007 p. 24) introduced the concept of communicative competence and argues that “speakers of a language have more than grammatical competence in order to be able communicate effectively in a language; they also need to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes”.

Learning a language not only implies knowing the grammatical rules but also knowing how to use the language as a vehicle to communicate and interact in real life situations using the foreign language.

Types of Communicative Competence

Grammatical Competence

According to Canale and Swain, (1980-1981 p. 97 cited in Mihaljević 2007) grammatical competence refers to the recognition and use of different grammatical structures such as lexical, morphological, syntactical and phonological structures that belong to a language in order to let the speaker communicate efficiently.

Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence have been proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). In regards to sociolinguistic competence they state that sociolinguistic competence refers to “sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse. Knowledge of these rules will be crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning”. In other words, this component involves the knowledge each person has of how to produce and understand appropriately the message conveyed by the speaker recognizing the purpose and the social situation such as an everyday conversation, asking a question or persuading. It is not only about conveying messages but also understanding and interpreting social meanings considering the audience, the character of the situation, the purpose and convention.

Learning a language implies the ability to comprehend the message that the interlocutor or interlocutors want to express and the intentions that they have when conveying information taking into account the context in which the communication process takes place.

Discourse Competence

It is the ability to use the spoken and written language in a meaningful way, to actually communicate ideas and understand what is being communicated in response. It is the ability to use elements of coherence and cohesion to organize meaningful chunks of language beyond the sentence level.

When learners use the discourse competence, they make relationships which connect the meanings of the words they have in their minds. They organize ideas or concepts, therefore making sense when communicating in oral or written form.

Strategic Competence

Strategic competence involves using both verbal and non-verbal methods of communication to compensate for communication barriers or to enhance meaning. This competence allows learners to utilize specific strategies to facilitate communication and try to be more competent when expressing their ideas, since learners can face different situations in which they feel they lack the elements regarding vocabulary so they tend to find alternative ways to communicate.

Considering the competences mentioned above, we can see that the speaking skill is involved in all of them since we use it in a variety of situations to express ourselves sharing our ideas with others in a meaningful way.

Speaking

Speaking in a second language has always had an important place through the history of language teaching and learning and in the last decades it has become the focus of the teaching process leaving aside the conventional methods that only had a structural focus. In addition, a lot has been written about the speaking skill, and several authors have provided different definitions about it.

According to Chaney (1997, p.13) speaking is a mechanism of constructing and sharing meaning by using verbal and non-verbal symbols in different situations.

In relation to Chaney, Brown (2001) states that, “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information”. In this sense, speaking is a way to interact with other people exchanging information and

alternating the role as listener as well as speaker in order to express ideas and transmit meaning.

Additionally, Bailey and Nunan (2004) claim that Speaking is the productive aural/oral skill produced by the learner that consists of creating systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning from one person to another.

Also, Burns and Joyce (1997) rightly point out that speaking is an interactive process of building meaning that includes producing, receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning depend on the context in which it takes place including the interlocutors, their experiences, the place and the purpose of the oral communication.

Based on the suggested definitions above, it could be concluded that speaking is a complex productive skill that plays an essential role in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language because it demonstrates the ability that a learner has in order to use the language appropriately and it is also a challenge for teachers to help students develop oral communication and become fluent using the target language.

Martin Bygate's Theory of Speaking

According to Bygate (1987, p. 3), there are two aspects to be considered with the purpose of achieving real communication through speaking. The first one implies the tacit knowledge of the language and the second one is the ability to use this knowledge in different situations. Also, he points out that "We do not merely know how to assemble sentences in the abstract: we have to produce them and adopt to the circumstances. This means making decisions rapidly, implementing them smoothly, and adjusting our conversation as unexpected problems appear in our path.

When we communicate orally, we go into cognitive processes in which the speaker needs to know what to say in a specific social context expressing their ideas clearly and appropriately during a conversation as different situations appear which is the ability to use the knowledge ‘in action’.

Bygate (1987, p. 14, 22) claims that there are two components of the speaking skill: production skills and interaction skills

Production skills

These refer to the speakers’ skills necessary to help themselves in speech production. Since conditions, like time pressure, are always present so the speakers can use certain devices in order to facilitate the oral production. Also, the speakers can use ways of compensating so they can replace or modify the difficult words for easier ones including substitution, rephrasing, reformulating, self-correction, repetition and hesitation. Bygate concludes that incorporation of these features needs to be considered in the teaching and learning experience because it helps students when using oral production.

Interaction skills

In these skills an interlocutor is involved and implies that both speakers and listeners should be good not only at processing spoken words but also at communicating. In other words, good at saying what they intend to say so the listener can understand the intention of the other person’s message.

Harmer's Theory of Speaking

Harmer (2001), when arguing the elements of speaking that are needed for oral production, differentiates between two aspects which are knowledge of language features and the ability to process information or mental/social processing.

Language Features

Language features which are the basis for spoken production involves these features: connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. Connected speech refers to sounds that are modified, omitted, added and weakened. Expressive Devices implies the use of pitch, stress, volume and speed of parts of utterances. These devices enable the speaker to convey meanings by using different shades that express emotions. Lexis and grammar includes the use of phrases for different functions such as agreeing, disagreeing, promising, arguing expressing surprise and approval. Negotiation language looks for clarification in order to have a better understanding of what the speaker intends to say.

Mental/Social Processing

Mental/social processing' includes the following features: language processing, interacting with others, and (on-the-spot) information processing. Language processing is when the speaker processes the language in his/ her mind and organizes it in order to make it comprehensible and convey the meaning that the speaker intends to express. Interacting with others not only includes interaction with other participants for the speaking process to take place but also listening since it allows the speaker to understand what the other speaker is trying to express and to know how to keep a conversation flowing. "On-the-spot"

information processing refers to the ability speakers have to understand the information as soon as he/she receives it.

Types of speaking

According to Brown (2001, p. 271-274) there are six different types of oral production that students should perform in the classroom which are going to be explained directly below.

Imitative: this type of speaking refers to the practice of a word regarding the intonation in order to focus on a specific component of the language form. In other words, this is the repetition of a word or a sentence whose principal aim is pronunciation. Drills are used by the teacher as a way to give students the opportunity to listen and repeat some parts of the language that can result difficult for them.

Intensive: it is used to practice phonological and grammatical aspects of language. It can be carried out through the use of group work for instance story completion in which each student has to give some sentences in order to complete a story. In this type of activities aspects like fluency, grammar and pronunciation on the part of the students are relevant.

Responsive: an important aspect of this type of speaking is interaction between teachers and students or between students using questions or comments as a way to initiate a short conversation but the answers are very limited and do not turn into dialogues. The language that is produced is sometimes meaningful and authentic.

Transactional: this is an extended form of responsive language. The objective is to exchange specific information or to convey meaning through the use of group or pair work activities such as dialogues or interviews.

Interpersonal: the purpose is to maintain social relationships because students can use different factors of the language including styles, feelings or colloquial phrases to keep a conversation flowing.

Extensive: in this point it is important that students have knowledge about grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in order to perform more complex oral discourses for instance reports, summaries and oral presentations that can be assigned by the teacher so the students prepare it in advance and make use of the language in a good way.

It is evident that all the types of speaking mentioned above focus on the development and the improvement of the oral skill. However, teachers should know when to use them considering the learner's level of the second language so they have an enjoyable experience in the teaching and learning process.

Teaching Speaking

For Kayi (2006), speaking has a very important role in the teaching and learning process of a foreign language. In spite of its importance, speaking has been taught using repetition of drills and dialogues. However, today's world requires that learners can communicate effectively in any circumstance pointing out that the main goal of teaching speaking should be the development of learners' speaking skill.

Definition of teaching speaking

According to Nunan (2003) teaching speaking means to teach second language learners the following factors:

- To produce speech sounds and sound patterns in English
- To use word and sentence stress and intonation patterns
- To choose the correct words and sentences depending on the situation, social context and subject matter
- To assemble ideas in a meaningful and coherent order
- To express their ideas and opinions using the target language
- To be confident enough to use the language quickly with hardly any pauses.

In conclusion, teaching speaking should be the emphasis in the English classroom because it enables students exchange information, construct meaning and get practice using the target language. As a result, learners can improve and have a better command of the speaking skills which is the most important aspect of learning a second language.

Principles for teaching speaking

Nunan (2003, p. 54, 55) suggests five principles for teaching speaking which are described below.

Be aware of the differences between second and foreign language learning contexts

Speaking can be learned in a foreign or second language situation. A foreign language context is where the target language is not used as a medium of communication in a region or country. For students, learning speaking in foreign language contexts is challenging

because they do not have many opportunities to use the target language outside the English classroom. A second language is where the target language is the language of communication in the society and plays an important role in a country or region.

Give students practice with both fluency and accuracy

Fluency is a feature of speech that gives speakers the ability to use the language at a good rate, speaking confidently and naturally. Accuracy is the extent to which student's speech matches what people actually say when they use the target language. It is important to underline that teachers need to use different strategies and give learners opportunities in the classroom to help them develop fluency and accuracy.

Using group work and pair work

Pair work and group work activities can be used during the process of learning in order to increase the amount of time that learners get to practise the target language. Teachers should limit the amount of time they talk and act as facilitators asking questions and offering clarification so students have more time to interact themselves using the language.

Plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning

According to research learners can make significant progress by communicating verbally in the target language due to the fact that interaction involves attempting to understand others as well as making yourself understood. This is called negotiation of meaning. The learner needs to try to understand what the other person has said, looking for clarification if necessary, as well as checking that the person they are speaking to has understood what they have said. The process of asking for clarification helps to ensure that the learners are being spoken to at a level at which they are comfortable with and are able

to learn from.

Design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speech

When we speak to people outside of the classroom we usually do this for either interactional or transactional purposes. **Interactional speech** refers to communicating with somebody for social reasons and **transactional speech** involves communicating in order to facilitate a task or accomplishing something. Interactional speech flows more freely and is more unpredictable than transactional speech. In order to develop the learners skills it is important that classroom activities involves both transactional and interactional speech, as they will be required to use the target language in both types of situation.

Interaction

According to Brown (2001, p. 165) “interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other”. In this context, interaction is not only important but also necessary for students to develop their speaking skill which is a priority for most learners that want to learn a foreign language. Moreover, through the use of interaction, students have the opportunity to express their own views, opinions, thoughts and feelings in real communicative situations.

Interaction Hypothesis

According to Long (1996, p.451, 452 cited in Ritchie & Bhatia 1996) the interaction hypothesis is a theory of learning that claims that second language acquisition directly benefits from interaction and negotiation of meaning, which is an event that occurs when

speakers try to overcome problems when they convey meaning in a communicative situation as a result of the input and useful feedback from the learners' production.

Types of Interaction

Student-Student Interaction in the EFL Class

The value of student-student interaction for the development of EFL proficiency has been highlighted with communicative language teaching and with the advent of theories of learning that emphasize the social nature of first and second language acquisition (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Van Lier, 2000, 2004).

Today it is widely known that the most important goal to be reached in the EFL teaching and learning process is communication and interaction plays an essential role in it. In this sense, some theories support the idea that interaction enables the development of first and second language acquisition. Therefore, in order to reach a meaningful learning outcome, students need to be provided with opportunities to interact in the classroom and teachers must encourage them to share ideas, opinions and thoughts because it is a good way to make them active rather than passive participants.

Teacher-Student Interaction in the EFL class

Coulthard (1977, p.13 cited in Khadidja 2010) mentions that "this type of interaction has received a great deal from teachers in a wide range of disciplines. It happens between the teacher and one learner or many other learners, that is to say a teacher takes a part in such interaction. The teacher negotiates with his/her students the content of the course, asks questions, uses students' ideas, lectures, gives directions, criticizes or justifies student talk responses".

It is important to underline that interaction needs more than one participant to engage the learners in their learning experience where the teacher is also involved to facilitate and provide opportunities for learners to exchange information, make comments and answer questions taking into consideration the appropriate output depending on the learners' level. Thus, they can develop their speaking skill.

Input

Gass (2008) argues that “conceptualizations of second language learning were based on a behaviorist view in which the major driving force of language learning was the language to which learners were exposed (the input)”.

According to the behaviorist view, when we are acquiring a second language the exposure to that new language is an essential part of learning where imitation and the surroundings in which learners are involved are vital factors that directly influence the process of acquiring a second language.

The Input Hypothesis

According to Krashen (1981) the input hypothesis is based on the conception that being exposed to comprehensible Input ($i + 1$) which refers to samples of a language that are slightly advanced for learners taking into account their actual English proficiency level is what actually leads to second language acquisition and how it takes place.

Comprehensible input

There are many theories and hypothesis that claim that a second language can be effectively acquired in two ways. One of them is to interact with speakers of the English language and another one is to interact with teachers and learners of the second language

taking into account that the context is an essential part of communication because it enables learners to understand the message provided by the speaker.

Considering what has been mentioned and knowing that the purpose of language learning is to be able to communicate effectively, we should recognize the importance of providing as much comprehensible input as possible in the classroom to create the conditions for learning to take place.

Output

According to Benati and Angelovska (2016), output is the language that the learner produces with a communicative purpose. She also claims that comprehensible output is important in the acquisition of the second language because if learners are not encouraged to produce it, the learning process is neither enough nor meaningful. Moreover, she states that the best way of assessing the learners' proficiency and their knowledge of the language is by giving them the opportunity to produce, elaborate and use the language.

The output hypothesis

Swain questioned Krashen's Input Hypothesis which states that only comprehensible input is necessary and sufficient for second language acquisition and through class observations Swain proposed the output hypothesis. She argues that not only the input but also the output are necessary for the second language acquisition. In addition, she expresses that the output hypothesis or comprehensible output hypothesis refers to the opportunities that are given to the learners in order to facilitate them to practise what they know by communicating and conveying meaning that is understandable to other speakers.

Functions of the Output Hypothesis

Noticing Function

In this function, the learners are aware of the knowledge they have and do not have because they know what they want to express but it is difficult for them to elaborate and communicate it. This function takes place in the classroom when learners practise using the second language.

Testing Function

It happens when learners express their ideas and thoughts knowing that they are making grammar mistakes and they get feedback from the teacher or their peers with the purpose of improving and it also enables them to correct their mistakes and express their ideas appropriately.

Metalinguistic function

The metalinguistic function consists of reflecting on the knowledge that the learners build which is acquired through learning about the correct structures and grammar rules along the learning process.

Types of interactive activities to develop speaking skills

Taking into consideration that interaction is the key to facilitate the acquisition of the target language, we focused on the most relevant activities that enhance the development of student's speaking skills.

Simulations: One of the most relevant techniques for developing speaking skills through an interactive process is the use of simulations since it is effective in getting students to use the language purposefully within real life situations.

Definition of Simulation: The most popular definition of simulations is that they provide an environment in which students can communicate intensely and become involved in a seemingly real life situation. They are then able to act according to predefined roles in the group. A salient aspect, however, is that a simulation is treated as if it was actual reality. (Crookall & Oxford, 1990, p. 15)

Procedure of simulation activity

Simulations may be either specified or unspecified without formal steps or sequences. However, according to Byrne (1986), we can identify some main stages when developing, presenting and doing a simulation.

- Create the scenario defining the problem and the setting.
- Adapt appropriate supporting materials to enable students to perform their roles meaningfully and provide a real setting to bring the situation to life.
- Define the roles of the participants, taking into account their personalities and skills.
- Ask the students to develop their roles in groups and think of what they will actually say.
- Carry out the simulation

- Review the task through feedback on the simulation. The teacher can discuss and point out any mistakes noted during the task since the aim is to get the students to evaluate the simulation in general, paying particular attention to what they learned from doing it and their own performance.

Principles of simulation

Susikaran, 2014 suggests some principles and advantages of using simulation in the classroom which are described below.

- Students portray real life roles in response to their interpretation of the situation.
- The result of the situation simulated reflects their decisions, their performance and how it would happen in real life.
- The outcome enables students to reflect upon the relationship between the decisions they make and the possible consequences.

Advantages of Instructional Simulation

The use of simulation techniques in teaching has some advantages since it's an effective way to enrich student's speaking skills.

Motivational Advantages: researcher claims that students show great enthusiasm in the classroom when learning through simulation. Additionally, simulation provides an element of novelty and something different from the usual teaching methods.

Removal of Student-Teacher Polarizations

The teacher's role has become more to encourage and motivate, rather than to judge and be dominant in the classroom. Simulations can help to facilitate this in that students are able to monitor themselves and make their own decisions. The process of self-monitoring, recognizing their own progress with the feedback provided by the teacher can reduce anxiety and tension which will help language to develop more easily.

Gains Related to Relevance and Learning

Studies have taken place that show simulation impacts the attitude of students which leads to a better understanding as a deeper level.

Role Awareness

When students play the part of another person they become more aware of that role and as a result students will feel more identified with real-world tasks.

Bridging the Gap to Reality

As simulations are based on real life situations they bridge the gap between reality and make-believe. By putting students in realistic situations the learning becomes less theoretical and more practical and enjoyable. The students can then use what they have learned from their errors in real life situations.

Gestalt Communication

Due to the interaction involved it is easier for students to understand the more complex elements. By including elements of language at different levels, it provides a much more gestalt approach to learning.

In conclusion, the use of simulations can greatly benefit the development of student's speaking skills since they are involved in genuine communication where they have to make decisions and use their problem solving skills in real life situations. Also, it maximizes student's motivation especially in EFL settings and allows teachers to monitor student's progress in relation to how they perform and use the language.

Definition of Jigsaw: according to Aronson (1978 cited in Moskowitz, J. et al 1985) jigsaw is a technique where cooperation is relevant since each student plays an important role in order to achieve a common goal because each student provides each member of the group with information they need to finish their projects.

In addition, McGroarty (1993 cited in Wang, T. 2009) claims that jigsaw increases students' opportunities to practice their speaking skills through the exchange of information as well as develop their active listening when they share what they know with their peers.

To sum up, the term jigsaw is a group activity where each participant plays an important role to obtain the final results of a task being the communication, cooperation and interaction of vital importance to achieve their learning goals.

Importance of the use of jigsaw in the classroom

Lucas (2000 cited in Şahin. 2010) claims that the jigsaw technique enables students to participate in their learning process since they might feel more comfortable with their roles in the group they are. This technique provides that each student is responsible for their group's performance so at the end of the activity they all have good results.

According to Francis (2013 cited in Sunday & Ekima 2014), the jigsaw technique allows students to work together and interact without considering their gender, religious and ethnic backgrounds. It also enables students to be tolerant and respectful with the different points of view they express and take into account others' thoughts and feelings.

Principles of Jigsaw

Johnson and Holubec (1993 cited in Mengduo and Xiaoling 2010) suggest five principles for the jigsaw technique:

a. Positive interdependence

Each member of the group is essential for the success of the group since each one of them makes contributions to the common effort.

b. Face-to-face promotive interaction

Each participant of the group has to explain in an oral way how to solve problems, teach one's knowledge to others, check for understanding, discuss concepts that are learned and connect the present with the past learning.

c. Individual and group accountability

The amount of participants of the group should be small so each participant has the same responsibility to develop the assigned activity.

The teacher must give an individual test to each student and test them by asking one student to present orally his or her group's work to the teacher and the rest of the class, observing how much each student contributes to develop the group's work. Also, the teacher assigns a group leader who is in charge of asking other group members to explain the most underlying answers and control that students teach to others what they have learned.

d. Interpersonal skills

The success of the implementation of the jigsaw technique in the classroom depends on students' social skills including leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, conflict-management skills among others.

e. Group processing

Through the use of discussions, group members analyze how well they are attaining their goals and keeping effective working relationships, describe which actions are useful and which are not, making decisions about what manners need to be changed or which can continue.

These five principles are relevant for the development of this technique in the classroom in an appropriate way because they are explained in a clear way that we know the procedure to follow considering students and teacher's roles and the responsibilities each one has to complete the activity.

Procedure of jigsaw

Aronson (1978) proposes ten steps to apply the jigsaw technique in the classroom which are explained below.

1. Form groups of five or six students. The groups should include students with different gender, ethnicity, race, and ability.

2. Select one student as the leader of the group who must be mature enough to perform this role.
3. Divide the lesson into five or six parts taking as the basis the general topic to develop.
4. Give each member of the group a segment to prepare and learn making sure that the student has access only to his or her assigned part.
5. Provide students with enough time to prepare their part, read and become familiar with it. It is not necessary for students to memorize it.
6. Organize temporary expert groups by joining students who have the same segment of the topic so they can discuss about relevant aspects and prepare their presentations for their jigsaw group.
7. Bring students back to the original jigsaw groups.
8. Ask each student to present her or his segment to their groups. Encourage others in the group to ask questions for clarification.
9. The teacher goes to each group observing the process. If there is any problem the leader of the group must solve it because teachers can train them to do it by whispering an instruction until the leader knows how to do it by him or herself.
10. At the end of the activity, the teacher gives a quiz to the students so they know that this type of activities are not just for fun but also part of their assessment.

The development of the jigsaw technique can be facilitated with the use of this series of steps that explain the procedure to follow, which is helpful for the teacher to organize the activity, and what each student has to do in order to carry out this activity in a good way.

Definition of story completion: according to Makha (2011) story completion is a technique in which people have to complete a story with their own words from a part that is given in order to complete it until it finishes. The participants are expected to add new information including places, characters and events.

Advantages of story completion

- It is useful to obtain more accurate personal information of the participants.
- It helps to identify participants' feelings and emotions.
- It serves as a means for the participants to reveal motivations, beliefs, and attitudes without they notice it.

Story completion is a very effective and enjoyable technique in the teaching process since learners like create stories by themselves. Also, this technique is useful for students because they can improve their vocabulary, listening and speaking skills. In addition, story completion can be more effective than using a story that is already written due to the students are the ones who create their own stories.

This chapter contained some of the topics related to the development of the speaking skill by facilitating interaction. Also, some concepts were explained in order to clarify and have a better understanding of this project. In addition, we included some relevant definitions, theories and hypothesis from some authors that have contributed to the importance of the development of the speaking skill and the role that interaction plays in it. In the next chapter, we will describe the design of our research, the population, the sample and setting, the research procedure, validation criteria, data analysis and ethical issues that are part of our project.

Chapter III. The research method

In order to fulfil the objectives of this project, it is necessary to follow a set of steps which will be developed in this chapter. This chapter includes the design, population, sample and setting and validation criteria. Besides, the instruments used to get the information will be described, as well as the procedure that will be developed in the research process. Finally, we will mention the ethical issues that will be considered to carry out this research.

Research design

Research paradigm

Our research project will be focused on the qualitative paradigm.

Qualitative paradigm

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) “Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self”. In this way, qualitative research requires a process in which an observer attempts to interpret different phenomena occurring in a specific setting in the world. (p. 3).

The objectives of this research method are: to describe facts; to formulate hypothesis, to make a descriptive diagnosis of specific phenomena and to comprehend the relationships and social interactions. We selected this paradigm because we will analyze, interpret and make a detailed description of a situation by applying our techniques to develop learners ‘speaking skill by facilitating interaction.

Research type

For the development of our project we will use action research type which belongs to the qualitative research. Kemmis (1983 as cited in Hopkins, 2014) says “Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) the understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out. In other words action research is a process that involves action, reflection and observation of a social issue aimed at improving the understanding and methods involved in education thus, contributing to the development of the pedagogical practices. In addition, Parsons and Brown (2002) state that action research is designed especially for teachers as a way to obtain information with the purpose of improving teaching practices or giving solution to different problems that can appear in the classroom. It can be carried out through the use of observations and the collection of information that can be useful for the researcher to reflect and decide what strategies are more suitable to apply in the classroom so students have a good experience in their learning process.

Therefore, this type of research will be used to address the problem identified, design a plan to improve our teaching practices by facilitating and fostering interaction to develop the speaking skills, observe the process which will provide new insights and reflect upon the possible constraints and benefits concerning the goals of the teaching and learning environment.

Research techniques

The data collection techniques for our research are the following:

Observation: Marshall and Rossman (2006, p. 98) state that “Observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study”. We consider that this technique is very useful because it will enable us to notice aspects and factors that can interfere and influence in the teaching and learning process in a specific context in real life.

Audio tape recording: according to Kemmis (1983), “audio tape recording is one of the most popular teacher research methods. Transcripts are excellent for those situations where teachers require a very specific accurate record of a limited aspect of their teaching, or a particular interaction”. We consider that the use of audio tape recording provides relevant and specific information about the interactions between students and teachers in the classroom.

We think that the techniques that we are going to apply will be useful to determine if the activities that we will develop with the students will have an effect and will show an improvement and progress in their performance when using the foreign language.

Population, setting and sample

Population

This research will take place at the language center of the University of Nariño located in Pasto. The population is composed of 500 students approximately including children and male and female teenagers and adults. These students belong to the middle

social class. Children are between 8 and 11 years old, teenagers are between 13 and 16 and adults are between 25 and 40 years old. It also includes around 75 teachers that work for this institution. The teachers are both male and female and they are between 30 and 50 years old.

Setting

This project will be carried out at the language center of the University of Nariño. This University is located in La Aurora neighborhood which is near Panamericana Avenue and Unicentro. This sector belongs to the middle high social class. In this sector there is a big mall, a supermarket, two parks, some small stores and restaurants which shows that it is a very commercial sector. Regarding the surroundings of this sector, there are some high schools and San Ignacio, Villa Vergel and El bosque neighbourhoods. This sector is busy since there is an important avenue near the University. Also, there is a lot of traffic which can make the entrance to the institution a little bit difficult.

Sample

The sample of this research will involve 20 students of fifth level at the language center of the University of Nariño which is a public University located in Pasto. The students' ages are between 14 and 18 years old. Also, the students are both male and female teenagers and belong to the middle social class.

Procedure

In order to accomplish our research we will follow a set of steps. First of all, we will send a letter to the administrators of the University asking them for the permission to carry out our project with students of fifth level, giving them an explanation about the purpose of

our research in the University and how we would gather the information. Once we have the permission, we will attempt to apply the techniques selected to get the information we need. After that, with a chart of three activities that will be developed in class, one activity per week, we will make different observations and comparisons to determine which activities are more effective than others to develop the speaking skill to the sample that we will select. In the first week, we will carry out an activity called story completion. For its development we will ask the students to sit in a circle, the teacher starts to tell a story about a couple at the beach but after four sentences she stops narrating. Then, each student starts to narrate from the part where the previous person finished adding new characters, events, descriptions and places. A tape recorder will be used to analyze the amount of output they produce. In the second week we will select the jigsaw activity. For its development, we will choose a topic about music and we will divide it into the following parts: history, theories about music, benefits of music and facts about music. Students will have to form four groups of five students and each group will have to do a summary of the assigned part. For the next class two participants of each group have to share the information and explain it to all the groups for five minutes while the rest of the students take notes. Students have to take turns and move to other groups until all of them have the whole information about music. At the end of the task students are asked to say what they found interesting and what they did not know about the topic. Students organize their ideas in their groups before sharing them with their peers. In the third week we will proceed to develop the simulations in which the teacher will give students thirty minutes to prepare and agree about the objects and materials they can use to act out representing a real life situation about a company that has economic difficulties and a decision must be made to close it down or keep it open to resolve the problem. Students can play different roles such as the manager, member of the

committee, an employee or a financial advisor and they can chose them according to their preferences. Next class students do the presentations in front of their peers. They will be assessed with a rubric format taking into account the components of speaking such as comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. After applying our selected techniques, we will proceed to analyze and interpret the results obtained in the language center of the University of Nariño. Finally, we will send a letter of gratitude to the administrators, teachers and all the personnel that helped us to carry out our project showing the results we obtained.

Validation criteria

In this section, we will analyze the information collected during the research process through the application of classroom observation, recordings and the use of oral activities such as simulations, jigsaw, story completion and reporting activities. The techniques used to gather the information will be also described, analyzed and interpreted.

We think that our research is valid since the techniques we selected will measure the factor that we intend to measure that is the effect of interaction to develop the speaking skill. In addition, we consider that our research will be reliable because we will use the pilot study which will give a consistent support to the effectiveness of our instruments. Our techniques will be proved with 10 learners through the pilot study which will help us realize possible difficulties we will face in the development of our research in order to overcome them.

Ethical issues

The ethical issues will be considered with the purpose of carrying out this project. As a first step, we will ask for permission through a formal letter where we will explain the aim of the project and the activities we will perform in order to carry it out. Once we have the permission of the University, we will ask teachers and students to participate and collaborate. Furthermore, we will make sure that the students do not feel obliged to participate and develop the activities that we will present. Also, it is important to mention that we will respect the identity of the institution as well as teachers and students' identity if they do not want it to be revealed. Additionally, we will share the results with the participants so they can tell us if the information we have is correct and really shows what they meant. Finally, we will express gratitude not only to the institution but also to the teachers and students for their collaboration and participation in this project by means of a letter of appreciation and the results obtained with our project will be shared with the University .

In this chapter we have described in detail the research method. We explained the methods that we will apply for our research, the type of research we selected and the techniques we will use. Also, we described the population, the setting and the sample we will work with. Finally, a brief description of the pilot study, procedure, validation criteria and the ethical issues was included.

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