

IMPROVING ORAL PARTICIPATION THROUGH ORAL ACTIVITIES

**Improving Oral Participation in High School EFL Classes Through Oral Activities That
Tap On Interpersonal Intelligence (I I)**

By

Johana R. Basante and Gisell E. Chapal

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences

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

Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French Program

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Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este Proyecto de Trabajo de Grado son responsabilidad exclusiva de los autores.

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Resumen

El desarrollo de esta investigación se basó en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera y se centró especialmente en la participación oral el cual es un problema común en los estudiantes de idiomas extranjeros debido a muchos factores psicológicos y lingüísticos. Esta investigación trató de mejorar la participación oral en los estudiantes de secundaria proporcionando algunas actividades orales como la lluvia de ideas, la enseñanza por pares y grupos cooperativos que activan de cierta manera la inteligencia interpersonal en los estudiantes haciéndolos interactuar entre sí a fin de mejorar la participación oral. Además, este estudio utilizó una metodología específica teniendo en cuenta el papel de los estudiantes y profesores y el contexto en el que se desarrolló utilizando algunas técnicas de investigación para recopilar datos que pudieran ser clasificados y analizados en detalle.

Palabras clave: Inteligencia Múltiple (MI), Participación, Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (EFL):

Actividades orales, Aprendizaje y enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras:

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Abstract

The development of this research was based on learning English as a foreign language and specially focused on the oral participation which is a common problem in foreign language learners due to many psychological and linguistic factors. This research attempted to improve the oral participation in high school learners providing some oral activities such as brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative groups that tap on the interpersonal intelligence in students making them interact each other in order to improve oral participation. In addition, this study used a specific methodology taking into account the students and teachers role and the context where it was developed using some research techniques to collect data which could be classified and analyzed in detail.

Key words: Multiple Intelligence (MI), Participation, English as a Foreign Language (EFL): Oral Activities, Foreign Language Learning and teaching:

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Glossary

Multiple intelligence (MI): According to Gardner (1993, cited Richards & Rogers, 2001), “MI refers to a learner-based philosophy that characterizes human intelligences as having multiple dimensions that must be acknowledged and developed in education.” p. 230

Participation: According to Wright () “participation involves being vocal and active within the classroom by answering and asking questions and by participating in class discussions and activities” Vol. 4

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): According to Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill & Pincas (1980) “English as a foreign language is taught in schools, often widely, but it does not play an essential role in national or social life.... English, as a world language, is taught among others in schools, but there is no regional variety of English which embodies a Spanish, Brazilian or Japanese cultural identity” p. 6.

Oral activities: According to a blog of the University of Pittsburgh Oral activities are: “Possibilities and opportunities for oral expression in the classroom include much more than just individual podium speeches and group presentations.”

Foreign Language Learning and teaching: According to Kramer & Catalano (2015) “Foreign language teaching and learning have changed from teacher-centered to learner/learning-centered environments. Relying on language theories, research findings, and experiences, educators developed teaching strategies and learning environments that engaged learners in interactive communicative language tasks” Vol. 9

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As it is known that learning a foreign language is a difficult process, there are many factors that make this process challenging. In fact, learning a new language also means that foreign language learners have weaknesses and strengths. Therefore, it can be said that one of the most common problems in students of foreign languages is developing oral communication. Some weaknesses could include what Loubazid (2012) claims as psychological and linguistic factors, that hinder the development of the oral participation in FL students such as lack of vocabulary, grammar mistakes, anxiety, lack of motivation, shyness, lack of interest in the subject, and fear of making mistakes. However, in an EFL context, practice outside the classroom is limited. Hence, what is necessary is to implement practice inside the classroom by means of oral participation. However, oral participation can be limited by personal factors such as interpersonal intelligence (I I). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to improve oral participation in EFL classes through oral activities such as brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative groups that tap on interpersonal intelligence in learners.

In chapter I, this study presents the problem description, the objectives, the importance of this study, and the limitations. Then, in chapter II, the variables of the study, the theoretical framework and some related research which supports this study are presented. Finally, in chapter III, the research paradigm, the research design, the population, sample and setting, the research techniques, the research procedure and the techniques of analysis and interpretation are explained.

Chapter I

The Research Problem

This chapter describes the main problem on which this study is based. In this way, the description of the problem will be presented as well as the problem statement, general objectives, specific objectives, significance of the study and some limitations.

Description of the problem

Considering that EFL students present some difficulties when they speak in classes, this study is focused on oral participation. According to Lanfont (2007), who studied the factors that affect oral participation in students of a public school in Colombia, this problem is due to psychological and linguistic factors. Lanfont stated that “personal experiences as teachers show us there are many factors involved in students’ difficulties, especially in relation to oral production activities” (p. 14).

Furthermore, some other features like pronunciation or fluency could be affected when learning a foreign language, which are developed by using oral activities based on students’ oral participation. Gilakjani (2012) claimed that pronunciation is an important factor in the foreign language learning which could affect the learners’ communicative competence and performance.

Another important aspect is the lack of interaction in some English classes where students are not motivated to speak or share their ideas, thoughts, beliefs or opinions with their classmates due to the psychological and linguistic factors mentioned above according to Lanfont (2007) who stated that “Language teaching must be focused on communicating, interacting, sharing ideas, situations, thoughts and beliefs according to their context” (p. 13). Moreover, interaction is a key element to learn a FL, and the principal feature to improve oral participation. Interaction

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might be reached through the strengthening of the interpersonal intelligence which allows students to develop communicative skills.

Consequently, the importance to help students with those factors is to develop some intelligible communication through oral activities that allow students to interact with each other in order to strengthen their Interpersonal Intelligence (II).

In this way, the objective of this study is to improve oral participation in students of ninth grade at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto through some oral activities that tap on the interpersonal intelligence.

Problem statement

After studying the research in this area, it has been discovered that students of a foreign language context have some problems and limitations such as lack of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation mistakes, anxiety, lack of motivation, shyness, among others, which limit the ability to develop the oral competence in the language.

The research question for this study is: How do oral activities that tap on interpersonal intelligence improve oral participation in ninth graders at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto?

Objectives of the Study

General objective

To improve oral participation in class based on the use of oral activities that tap on interpersonal intelligence in students of ninth grade at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto.

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Specific objectives

- To describe the oral participation activity of EFL learners in ninth graders at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto.
- To propose some oral activities such as brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative groups that tap on interpersonal intelligence to improve students' oral participation.
- To explain the impact of the oral activities such as brainstorming, peer teaching, and cooperative groups on the students' oral participation.

Significance of the Study

This study is designed to increase oral participation in the foreign language learning in order to contribute to the development of oral skills which are considered to be the most difficult ones for foreign language learners. In this way, this research is important for some reasons. First, this study intends to help learners to improve oral participation in real contexts through oral activities that strengthen the interpersonal intelligence since this is one of the main factors in interaction. Second, this study hopes to provide teachers and learners with useful activities as a guide to overcome their possible weaknesses through more interactive classes. Finally, this study will determine the effectiveness of oral activities that will be applied to FL learners.

Limitations

This research could present some difficulties in the development of the process. Thus, it is necessary to take into account the possible solutions to these inconveniences.

- Students could be introverted or could have a weak Interpersonal intelligence, and they may not want to participate in the activities, or they may not want to contribute with the

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study. A possible solution could be to motivate students initially with activities that they like to do.

- The students' lack of vocabulary is an inconvenience to develop oral activities in class. A solution for this problem would be that teachers provide students with a vocabulary worksheet related to each topic in advance for letting them know what the topic is about.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Contextual Framework

This study will be developed in a Public School called I. E. M. Normal Superior de Pasto located in Nariño, Colombia, characterized by giving quality education to the community. This institution fulfills the parameters stipulated by the Ministry of Education in Colombia, in which the bilingual program called “Colombia bilingüe” is carried out in a foreign language context where students learn a new language inside a classroom. According to an article found in the portal of Colombia Aprende (Aprende.colombiaaprende.edu.co, 2017) the Ministry of National Education and the “Colombia bilingüe” program offer a series of English textbooks for an integral, intercultural, transversal and communicative education of children and young people in grades 9th to 11th, in order to contribute with the English teaching and learning process in Public Schools. As the context of this study is to work with ninth graders, it is based on the 8th and 9th basic standards stipulated by the Bilingual Program and this study focuses more specifically on the English conversation standards.

Theoretical Framework

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Foreign language learning and teaching

According to Moeller and Catalano (2015), “Foreign language learning and teaching refer to the teaching or learning of a nonnative language outside of the environment where it is commonly spoken” (p. 327). Thus, improving oral participation through oral activities, as it is suggested in this research, requires the teaching and learning process development in teachers and learners, taking into account the context in which it will be developed. In this way, the English teaching and learning process in Colombia takes place in a context where it is not generally spoken outside of the classroom.

According to Moeller and Catalano (2015), it is also important that teachers, with the support of different research findings and theories, could develop appropriate teaching strategies and learning environments that could increase interaction in students through communicative language tasks.

Moreover, according to Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas (1980), “English as a foreign language is taught in schools, often widely, but it does not play an essential role in national or social life” (p.6). Thereby, EFL classes are commonly developed in a context where English is learnt in schools but not outside of them. As Tomlinson (as cited in Hinkel, 2005) claimed, “EFL is learned by people who already use at least one other language and who live in a community in which English is not normally used” (p.137). This research will refer to EFL in classes taking into account the context in which it will be taught and trying to increase the students’ interest for learning a new language.

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As this study will be carried out in EFL classes, it is important to take into account some second language acquisition theories as the communicative language approach in order to clarify the importance of developing the communicative competence in FL learners.

Developing oral skills in a foreign language (FL) context

For learners, developing speaking skills in FL contexts could be very demanding. It is because they do not have many chances to use the learnt foreign language outside the classroom. In this manner, Nunan (2003) stated that “FL is one where the target language is not the language of communication in the society” (p. 54). Hence, this study is more focused on English as the target language within a FL context (Colombia) where people speak Spanish. It means this research will refer to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in learners as well as EFL classes. It is also stipulated by Nunan that in some occasions, when FL learners go to other countries where people speak their target language, they find that it is difficult to understand native speakers.

Communicative Language Teaching Approach

Improving oral participation in EFL classes requires a clear understanding by EFL teachers of how communication can be developed. Since this is the Colombian case, the National Ministry of Education has regulated the teaching of English through approaches and methodologies that aim to develop communication. In the next part, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach will be briefly presented.

According to Savignon (2007), CLT has to do with developing in learners the communicative competence in order to involve them into a communication process inside the classroom.

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Hence, the communicative competence in learners is the key element to introduce them into a more conversational and interactive EFL class that could allow teachers to develop their communicative language teaching skills by using different methods or strategies that may help their students to develop their communicative competence skills as well.

Communicative Competence

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), “Hymes’ theory of communicative competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community” (p. 70).

With an appropriate communicative competence, EFL learners could be able to speak in classes by applying the previous knowledge given by teachers. Also, Savignon (2007) supported the definition of communicative competence as the ability that EFL learners have to interact with other speakers, taking into account their differences between the abilities to recite dialogues or to present grammatical tests. In this manner, the development of communicative competence in learners is closely linked with the interaction promoted it inside a classroom. Hence, according to Yu (2008), it is essential to mention classroom interaction as an important teaching technique in order to develop in learners an active oral participation where teachers could be able to generate more learning opportunities and encourage their students to communicate with others by using a proper communicative competence. The development of classroom interaction is important in this research because it allows teachers to involve learners in classroom participation making them feel more capable of speaking and interacting with others.

However, for interaction to take place, activities by themselves are not enough. Interaction requires the students’ disposition to take part in those activities. Consequently, it is

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important to pay attention to linguistic and psychological factors that hinder students' participation. These factors have a significant influence within the communicative competence and the oral participation in EFL students. According to Loubazid (2012), some of these factors are presented below.

Lack of vocabulary

For an appropriate development of oral participation in classes, students need a suitable variety of words that help them to communicate with ease. Accordingly, Loubazid (2012) stated that, "these limitations of vocabulary affect the amount of students' participation in speaking activities" (p. 10).

Grammar and pronunciation mistakes

For learners, participation has to do with producing what they have learnt in class related to the grammatical structure in English. Thus, producing ungrammatical structures is the main issue for learners, and this is probably why students prefer to keep silent and avoid participation in class. Moreover, it is stated by Davies and Pearse (2000, as cited in Loubazid, 2012) that the level of difficulty for having foreign language students speak in front of their classmates is higher when they have to do it in front of large classes. Similarly, when EFL students try to reproduce sounds that are different from their native language, they tend to feel they will fail. For this reason, they prefer to remain silent.

Nevertheless, grammar and pronunciation mistakes are not the only factors that limit learners' participation. Psychological issues are also presented and described next.

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Lack of motivation

Inside a classroom, the atmosphere in which a teacher develops a class is essential for students to get motivated. Loubazid (2012) claimed that a motivating atmosphere helps students by giving them a sense of security and value as individuals. In this manner, teachers need to create a more pleasant and comfortable environment where students could feel secure and capable of participating in classes. Otherwise, students could not feel motivated to participate in class.

Lack of interest in subject

Oral participation in classes requires the students' desire for learning interesting or familiarized topics for them. According to Loubazid (2012), if it is not the case, they could easily stop participating or they could develop a wrong attitude toward the subject and even toward the teacher. Thus, Thornbury (2005) supports that "the greater the familiarity, the easier the speaking task; this is why it is generally easier to talk about your job, or your family, than it is to talk about something very removed from your day-to-day life" (p. 25).

Fear of making mistakes

According to Ur (1991), "speaking requires some degree of real-time exposure to an audience. Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom" (p. 121). The fear of making mistakes and being corrected in front of a class are some determinant factors for the students' low oral participation. These aspects, or the attention that speakers receive for their speech, may cause shyness in them, being reflected in their low oral performance inside the classroom.

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Anxiety

Anxiety is a negative factor that EFL learners usually confront when speaking to an audience. Loubazid (2012) claimed that students who suffer anxiety are not able to learn and communicate successfully in a classroom situation. Hence, Richmond, Wrench and Gorham (2009) stated that students' anxiety is caused by some teachers that use extreme criticism or negative communication. Richmond et al. (2009) hold that "students don't succeed or achieve much when most of the teacher's communication is extreme criticism, negative, or humiliating in nature" (p. 67). Hence, as teachers, it is important to advocate for implementing adequate communication in classes to avoid students' anxiety.

Shyness

One of the main issues in EFL classrooms that affect participation is associated with the psychological part of the students that is shyness. According to Loubazid (2012), shyness is one of the biggest obstacles teachers confront inside a classroom due to the fact that it tends to make students fail, or make them feel they will. Consequently, students make decisions of not participating in class in order to avoid the risk of failing. Therefore, shyness affects negatively the achievement of the established goals that teachers have for their students, lowering their participation in class.

Taking into account that students could present some of these factors that affect their oral participation, this study aims to enhance oral participation as an important factor in oral communication. In order to do that, it is necessary to revise the SLA theories that focus on this aspect. Namely, this research will be based on the Multiple Intelligence (MI) Theory, its types and the description of some activities based on the interpersonal intelligence.

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Intelligence

In 1908, Alfred Binet's introduced the concept of "mental age" based on a series of different tests that could measure the intellectual functions, and later it was taken by Terman Luis on the concept of "Intelligence Quotient" (IQ) which represented the chronological age and the mental age of the person tested. Thus, one of the founders of the idea of measuring people's intellect was Sir Francis Galton who established an anthropometric laboratory where the intellect of people could be measured by taking some tests. According to Henriquez, Herrera and Valle (2012) one of the issues that has relation with all the fields of research has been, for some time, the study of the human intelligence.

However, with this test already implemented in different educational and professional environments, it is noticed that there were very discriminating factors because through them people started to be classified and tagged.

In this manner, in the twentieth century, Gardner (1993, as cited in Richards & Rogers, 2001) proposed the Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory, not only taking into account one general type of intelligence as it was, but based on eight types of intelligences that were developed in each person in a particular way because of biological factors, interaction with the environment, and culture.

Multiple Intelligence (MI) Theory

The concept of intelligence is traditionally defined as the ability to respond to an intelligence test, where the age, gender, training or experience of each individual does not alter the result. In this sense, intelligence is a characteristic of each individual and it could be said that intelligence is unique. Moreover, Gardner (1993, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001) realized

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that the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test measured only language and logic skills, and that the humans had more than one important intelligence which can be strengthened through practice. The MI theory focuses on how learners acquire the knowledge because each one has his/her own way of learning. Gardner insisted on calling them intelligences instead of talents or skills. For him, it did not mean that a musician is less intelligent than a physician or a mathematician just because their intelligences are different. Each intelligence has equal importance, and obviously, it implies different processes and training to be developed.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), this theory was provided to the general education, especially to language teaching. The MI theory had an impact on most of the educators who applied it as an innovating model to give learners a different way of learning. For example, when this model was proposed, schools in the United States designed their educational programs through the MI model. The application of this model to language learning determined some difficulties because of the lack of some useful elements for the language education. One of them is the relation between the model and the existing language. As a consequence, Gardner (1993, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001), also stated that the theory is not limited only to linguistic factors; it is completely culture free, and is addressed to language teaching.

Gardner (1993, as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001) proposed eight native intelligences as follows:

Types of intelligence

- Linguistic intelligence: it refers to the creative use of language in different ways.

This intelligence is seen in writers, lawyers, editors and interpreters.

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- Logical/mathematical intelligence: it refers to the use of a rational thinking in situations that people find difficult to solve. This intelligence is seen in doctors, engineers, programmers and scientists.
- Spatial intelligence: it refers to the use of the mental models of the world to be creative. It is seen in architects, decorators, sculptors and painters.
- Musical intelligence: it refers to the use of a good ear for some sounds, especially for the music. It is seen in musicians, composers and singers.
- Body/kinesthetic intelligence: it is the ability to have a well-coordinated body. It is seen in dancers, athletes and craftsperson.
- Interpersonal intelligence: it refers to the ability to feel connection with people, to work well with people. It is seen in politicians, salesmen and teachers.
- Intrapersonal intelligence: it refers to the ability to understand oneself. Usually, this kind of people learn individually; they are intuitive and introverted.
- Naturalist intelligence: it refers to the ability to have a narrow feeling for the nature.

The following related research is an evidence of the importance of the MI theory in a foreign language context, and it supports this study to be reliable.

From the eight intelligences mentioned above, the present study focuses on the Interpersonal Intelligence which contains activities that allow students to interact with each other to increase their oral participation.

Interpersonal Intelligence (II)

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Castro and Guamán (2012) have briefly explained in their research that this intelligence is evident in the political, religious, charismatic leaders, and professors because they have the ability to understand people; they perceive differences between moods, motivations, intentions, feelings and temperament of others; and they know how to keep good relationships with those around them. Having a developed II also allows an easy interpretation of facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures and the ability to influence a group of people to follow an idea, thought, belief, and so on. This intelligence is usually easy to be encouraged but somehow complex to show results. This intelligence provides some contributions to education, psychology and educational psychology. Gardner (1993, as cited in Richards & Rogers, 2001) established that interpersonal intelligence teaches how to understand others and how to be aware of people's needs as long as they do not change their ideology.

After having investigated the impact of II in foreign language learning, Pishghadam (2009, as cited in Behjat, 2011) claimed that interpersonal intelligence facilitates the development of productive skills, and also verbal intelligence that strengthens communicative skills of language learners. Taking this into account, Christison (1997, as cited in Richard & Rodgers, 2001), provides some activities for each intelligence which can be developed when learning a language.

Activities to Strengthen Interpersonal Intelligence

Some of the interpersonal activities that could strengthen the oral participation which is at the core of the communicative competence are: brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative group. Consequently, these activities will be described next to better understand how they contribute to the strengthening of Interpersonal Intelligence to positively affect oral participation.

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Brainstorming

According to Cullen (1998), brainstorming is an activity used in the classroom as a way to encourage students to generate ideas about a topic in small groups. The teachers' role facilitates students' knowledge by using a warm-up to remind and organize their previous knowledge. Each learner has some different knowledge, one could know more than others. Brainstorming is a way to activate existing knowledge that learners do not use at all. When students have generated as many ideas as possible, they use the important ones when they have to write or even when they have to speak in oral activities. An advantage of brainstorming is that it can promote autonomous learning, and also, they can learn from others when they work in groups, as Cullen argues in his article:

“As discussed in this section, brainstorming can help our students to become better learners, but equally importantly, students will benefit just by working in groups. They will learn language from each other and by interacting together they will become better communicators” (p. 01).

Brainstorming is an activity which is linked to the II as they are focused on the interaction in which students could find a way to learn from others and facilitate their communicative learning.

Peer teaching

According to Lander (2006), in her article “Using peer teaching in the classroom”, peer teaching is a way to learn from each other. There are some useful activities to work in pairs.

One of them is the think-pair-share, in which the teacher gives students a question. After that, students have five minutes maximum to discuss and think about the question in pairs. Then

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each group has to share the answer or their opinion with the entire class. With this activity, students promote their critical thinking.

Another activity is peer instruction by using clickers. Lander (2006) proposes a model that explains a different activity in which students can work in pairs as well. In this activity, the teacher gives students a text that they have previously read. This activity could be done individually and in groups. The aim of this activity is quizzing the most difficult items that students find hard to solve. Then, each student submits their answer by using a clicker which is similar to a remote control that produce a sound. Consequently, students make groups to think about and analyze the quiz question to submit it by using the clicker again. The teacher receives the answers and realizes immediately when students need a deeper explanation about the topic, and finally, the teacher clarifies all students' doubts.

Reciprocal peer tutoring is another activity to be done in pairs. The teacher gives students material to discuss, but they take turns to be the tutor and the tutee. First of all, one of them is the tutor who shares his or her personal point of view with another classmate, while the other listens carefully to what he or she understood about the material. Finally, they change the role and repeat the activity. This kind of activity gives the opportunity to summarize the most important information of the topic, to assess the peer work, and to promote critical thinking in students.

Peer teaching is an activity which strengthens students' interpersonal intelligence due to students' interaction when they are demanded to work in pairs or groups. Thus, students learn how to create an adequate relationship with their classmates and how to support each other when they share their ideas, beliefs, thoughts that develop their critical thinking.

Cooperative groups

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Brane (2015) describes cooperative work as a group of students which is formed by boys and girls. The purpose of this activity is that each member of the group should contribute, help, and encourage to reach an established goal. In that way, students interact with each other and they are motivated to increase their learning as well as their classmates' learning. Likewise, interpersonal intelligence follows the same parameters of this activity when students are able to communicate with others, work in groups and learn altogether to achieve a specific goal.

After having described the oral activities that will be used, it is important to take into account the methodological aspect which will be presented next.

Related Studies

International Study

In 2015, the thesis "Integrating Multiple Intelligences in English Language Classrooms to Enhance Learners' Participation" by Rihani Djamila was presented at the University of Mohamed Kheider Biskra. This study is important because it shares most of the variables stipulated in this research, as well as the purpose of promoting the oral participation in EFL learners by applying some intelligences proposed by Gardner (1995). This study was developed in second year students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra in a sample of forty students in which the main problem is their passive participation. Also the mentioned study has some other variables related with a number of contextual factors that affect students' participation in classes related with some psychological and social reasons, and it also mentioned some useful strategies and techniques applied in EFL classrooms such as observations and interviews carried out by the present research as well. This previous study had as a result evidences that MI theory applied by the researchers can be used in Algeria English language

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classrooms supported by a mix research (qualitative and quantitative) that was focused on participation.

As a conclusion, this related research looked for effective teachers who can contribute to the learning process of EFL students by using appropriate methodologies and techniques in order to find more motivated learners in EFL classes.

National Study

In 2012, Stevens, Lasso, Jimenez and Quintero carried out a study titled “speaking activities and pedagogical strategies to promote oral participation among fifth grade introverted students” at the Technological University of Pereira. The above-mentioned study is a qualitative research that intended to design some useful activities, more exactly, oral activities that can be applied with introverted 5th graders in a public school with the purpose of making them participate inside the classroom.

Stevens, Lasso, Jimenez and Quintero concluded that, “there is evidence that communicative tasks have a positive effect on developing speaking competences: linguistic, pragmatic, discourse and strategic as well as fluency”. It means that communicative activities influence introverted students in different factors, and those activities allowed to achieve the main objective of that study which was to make students participate inside the classroom. To sum up, the previous study is an appropriate example that guarantees the success of this study in improving oral participation in students through oral activities.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

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Research Paradigm

The type of paradigm which will be developed in this research study is the qualitative research paradigm that according to Creswell (2014) “is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p.32). In this manner, this research will intend to understand the complex world of a specific community at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto in order to promote their oral competence as well as the oral participation in FL classes by applying some oral activities designed by teachers such as brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative groups. Hence, teachers will look for getting involved in the context where students are learning a foreign language by supporting it through strategies that could increase their learning process, and taking into account the interaction between participants and investigators as well as the psychological and linguistic factors that could emerge from the process.

This study will be focused on the qualitative paradigm by applying different techniques that could support this process through the application of different questions and procedures, the collected data from the students taking into account the context as well as the analysis of this data which will be done from the particular to the general in order to facilitate the interpretation of the meaning of this data. According to Williams (2007) who claimed that “what constitutes qualitative research involves purposeful use for describing, explaining, and interpreting collected data” (p.67).

Type of Research

The type of research in the present study is nominated as a participatory action-research. It is defined by Celce-Murcia (2001) as “an approach to collecting and interpreting data that

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involves a clear, repeated cycle of procedures. The researcher begins by planning an action to address a problem, issue, or question in his or her own context” (p. 490).

This research will allow teachers to understand the psychological and linguistics factors that emerge when students learn a language in an EFL classroom, and that affects increasingly their oral participation. Thus, by implementing observation and semi structured interviews in classes, the different factors mentioned before will be analyzed. Then, the action research takes place in this study when applying the action plan in which some oral activities such as brainstorming, peer teaching and cooperative groups, that could strengthen the interpersonal intelligence in students, will be developed to improve their oral participation. These activities are chosen because of the interaction they could develop in learners as well as the relation they have with the interpersonal intelligence when students enhance the ability to relate with others and communicate with them, understanding that everybody has a different way of thinking. Therefore, the mentioned activities will be implemented by researchers in EFL classes, to the extent that students learn how to interact with others by using their interpersonal intelligence that could make them feel more comfortable when participating in class.

Population, Sample and Setting

Population

This research will take place at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto, a Public High School in Nariño, Colombia, at the secondary section. This high school is located at Carrera 26 No. 9-05, La Aurora neighborhood, in Pasto. The population of Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto is integrated by 2860 students, 65 teachers from different subjects and 30 people working in the

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administrative area, organized by gender with 1405 men representing the 48 % of the total population, and 1550 women representing the 52% of its population.

Sample

The sample of the study will be students from ninth grade whose ages vary between 14 and 16 years old for a total of 34 mixed learners; it means 14 girls representing the 40% of the total sample and 20 boys representing the 60%. These students come from different neighborhoods around Pasto, and belong to different economic stratum that ranges between 1, 2 and 3 where 18 of the students belong to strata 1, 12 of them to strata 2 and 4 students to the strata 3.

Setting

This research project will be developed in Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto, located at Carrera 26 #9-05, La Aurora neighborhood. This is located near San Felipe Church and Instituto Técnico Superior Industrial de Pasto. Neighborhoods around the institution belong to the strata 3, and are considered as safe and quiet for the community. The institution has large green areas and soccer, basketball, volleyball fields, as well as cafeterias where students can practice different activities that contribute to the development of their skills.

Regarding, the infrastructure, the institution has several classrooms suitable for the number of students; some computer rooms, an audio-visual room, an auditorium, a music room and a library. This institution has enough resources to satisfy the students' needs.

Finally, in 2016, Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto received the certification Icontec ISO 9001 version 2008, with two scopes: Design and delivery of the formal education service, in the

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levels of preschool, elementary school and high school; and complementary training for “Normalistas” teachers.

Research Techniques

Observation

Observation is one of the most important requirements in this study to collect information. Taking into account Kothari’s (2004) view, participant observation is the adequate instrument in this study. Kothari claims that,

We often talk about participant and non-participant types of observation in the context of studies, particularly of social sciences. This distinction depends upon the observer’s sharing or not sharing the life of the group he is observing. If the observer observes by making himself, more or less, a member of the group he is observing so that he can experience what the members of the group experience, the observation is called as the participant observation. (p.96).

Once the participant observation concept has been clarified, in this study one of the researcher will be part of the student community developing oral activities as teacher, while the other researcher will be observing all events that take place in the classroom without interrupting the class. The researchers will pay attention to the student’s Interpersonal Intelligence, how often students participate, if they want to participate, if students feel more engaged to speak and if the activities have been suitable to make students participate. If not, researchers will make some changes in order to make students interact and as a result, they could participate in class.

Observation Checklist

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Burke (1994, as cited in North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1999) described an observation checklist as "a strategy to monitor specific skills, behaviors, or dispositions of individual students or all the students in the class."(p. 64) Besides, Burke recommended to use checklist for formative assessments by focusing on specific behaviors, thinking, social skills, writing skills and speaking skills.

In this study, the researcher will use a checklist from the beginning to the end of the process by using some specific criteria and taking notes about what is happening and what had happened inside the classroom. In this way, the information will be collected and the subjective information will be eliminated because the researchers will be concentrated on specific aspects and the observation will be systematized following an observation form.

Semi-structured interviews

This study will apply semi-structured interviews that according to Harrell and Bradley (2009) need to use a guide with the respective questions and topics that researchers will cover during the interview, taking into account the order in which the questions will be asked to the students and collecting in detail the information obtained in a conversational interview. In this manner, this research will implement a semi-structured interview to inquire deeply into the topics that are of a great importance for the study in order to be analyzed and interpreted by the investigators. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are important because they are covered with proofs that support the study with correct materials as Harrell and Bradley (2009) claimed "probes that the researcher might use to ensure that complete and consistent information was received across different interviews" (p.27).

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Research Procedure

After having selected the educational institution in which this research will be developed and with the respective permission of the director, this study will implement some research techniques such as observations and interviews that will allow to collect information in a specific group of students. Subsequently, the results of using those research techniques will be analyzed to design and apply some oral activities that help students to promote oral participation in EFL classes. Finally, the effectiveness of these activities will be analyzed by using the previous research techniques to socialize the results as well as the conclusions of this study.

Analysis and Interpretation Techniques

After having collected the data, it is necessary to analyze and interpret them through different qualitative techniques that might allow the investigators to carry out the purpose of the present research plan.

Transcription

Transcription is very connected with the interviews to analyze data. Duranti (2007, as cited in Davidson, 2009) defined transcription as “a translation or transformation of sound/image from recordings to text. The process is a selective one whereby certain phenomena or features of talk and interaction are transcribed” (p. 38). In this study, transcription could be used as a transformation of the students’ answers recorded to a text, but also description of each feature or important event that students could present during the interview. It is complicated to transcribe all the characteristics of the interviews, for that reason, the information needs to be selective and related with the study goals. This qualitative technique is appropriate to select and analyze the

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specific aspects that the researchers seek to make decisions depending on the analysis of the results.

Classification

As most of the research that use different techniques to analyze their results, this study will apply classification as a useful qualitative technique for interpreting the data collected during the research process to reduce them into groups.

Classification according to Khotari (2004) is “the process of arranging data in groups or classes on the basis of common characteristics” (p. 123). Hence, in this research data which have common characteristics will be placed into similar groups for a better understanding and analysis. The classification technique will be carried out once the entire data have been collected from the observations and interviews in order to maintain the data structured and prepared for being analyzed in detail.

Tabulation

Once the data is classified, it is important to apply tabulation in order to organize that classified information into a logic order. Thus, tabulation, according to Khotari (2004), has been defined as “the process of summarizing raw data and displaying the same in compact form for further analysis. In a broader sense, tabulation is an orderly arrangement of data in columns and rows” (p.127). Therefore, Khotari mentioned that tabulation in a qualitative research is essential because it maintains space and reduces general information to a minimum, facilitating also the comparison process as well as the detection of mistakes and omissions.

Hence, this qualitative technique of analysis and interpretation could facilitate this study as it allows the investigators to organize the classified information with the characteristics

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mentioned before by Kothari, reducing the information obtained from the observations and interviews. Consequently, compare the data to detect mistakes that could emerge during the research process.

Triangulation

First, this study will continue with the qualitative techniques of analyzing data such as: transcription, classification and tabulation which are totally connected with observations and interviews. In this manner, the information will be selected and reduced to eliminate the unusable data and avoid misunderstandings. Secondly, it is necessary to apply the triangulation of data which consists on collecting, reviewing and comparing all the results obtained from the observations and interviews. Finally, all the collected data instruments and the techniques of analysis and interpretation provide the validity and reliability in this study as well as the participation of a professional advisor in research methodology who will guide researchers during the development of the research process.

Ethical Issues

For an appropriate development of this study, there are some important features to mention. First of all, this study requires the approval of the principal at Escuela Normal Superior de Pasto that allows researchers to develop the process in a specific setting. Therefore, the students' willingness and the availability of teachers and administrative personnel are an essential part to carry out this study.

Secondly, confidentiality is an important factor that investigators must take into account. Thus, this study provides participants confidence if they want to keep in secret their identity instead of being recognized in this research.

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Finally, once the study has reached the goals in the institution, a gratitude letter will be sent to the principal and the participants belonging to the high school with an attached copy of the study with the results.

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Timetable

ACTIVITIES	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	ABR	MAY
Compilation of information for the researcher proposal								
Elaboration of the problem statement, objectives and justification								
Elaboration of theoretical, conceptual framework and background								
Design and implementation of methodology								
Presentation of the final report								
Preparation for the oral defense								
Oral defense								

BUDGET

ITEM	QUANTITY / CONCEPT	COST
Photocopies	900 copies	\$ 67.000
Bus transportation fares (2 people)	192 tickets	\$ 288.000
Speakers	1	\$ 50.000
TOTAL		\$ 405.000

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