

Running head: EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING METALINGUISTIC FEEDBACK

Effects of implementing metalinguistic feedback in the students' oral production

by:

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Las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en este Trabajo de Grado son Responsabilidad de los
autores.

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Nota de aceptacion

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Firma Del Jurado

Firma Del Jurado

Acknowledgments

I dedicate all my effort and work put to the completion of this thesis to my mother with much love and affection for having supporting me throughout all my career.

German Bolaños Ceron

Thanks to my parents and my sister for their support in this process and for having taught me that all goals in life are reached only by working hard, that even in the difficulties we can find things to be thankful for and that there is nothing more important in life than family.

Angela Madroñero Ruales

Resumen

Este proyecto se llevó a cabo en una academia de idiomas con un grupo de 20 estudiantes de nivel intermedio. El grupo se dividió en dos grupos de 10, por lo que resultó un grupo de control que no recibió ningún tipo de tratamiento y un grupo experimental a quien se aplicó el tratamiento con el fin de hacer una comparación al final. El estudio se basó en la aplicación de la retroalimentación metalingüística (metalinguistic feedback) como una técnica de corrección durante un lapso de 3 semanas. Con el fin de obtener los resultados los profesores aplicaron un plan de clase que consistió en 3 actividades y materiales diferentes (un juego de mesa, una tarea de dibujo y expresión oral o speaking, y un juego de "adivinar" con flash cards) para el pre-test, y otro plan de clase con otras actividades (el "triki" mezclado con una actividad de speaking y otro juego de "adivinar" que consiste en la descripción de personajes famosos) pero con el mismo contenido, y finalmente se contaron el número de errores en el pre y el post-test para diferenciar y para concluir si la aplicación de este tratamiento fue o no efectiva.

Palabras clave: Correction metalingüística, producción oral.

Abstract

This project was carried out in an academy of languages with a group of 20 students in intermediate level. The group was divided in two groups of 10, so one was the control group that did not receive any treatment and the other was the experimental group that took the treatment in order to make a comparison in the end. The study was based on the implementation of metalinguistic feedback as a correction technique during a lapse of 3 weeks. In order to get the results the teachers applied a lesson plan consisting in 3 different activities and materials (a board game, a drawing and speaking task, and a “guess” game with flash cards) for the pre-test and another lesson plan with other activities (the “tic tac toe” mixed with a speaking activity and another “guess” game consisting on descriptions of famous characters), but with the same contents, and finally they counted the number of mistakes in pre and post-test to differentiate and to conclude if the application of this treatment was or not effective.

Key words: Metalinguistic Feedback, oral production.

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Chapter I: The Problem

The process of teaching and learning English has always been an issue of different research. When teaching, it is important to consider not only the student's performance but also their feelings so their willingness to learn is higher. As we are in a context in which the contact with the target language is not direct as for the native speakers, in our case is more necessary to do corrections frequently, (Saville-Troike, 2006) and so we can facilitate the learning process for the students or on the contrary this may interfere in a negative way in the English level they are trying to reach.

Another issue to be considered in this research is the avoidance of fossilization, which is according to Vigil and Oller (1976) the incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person. Although, for some researches such as Lasagabaster & Sierra (2005) the use of feedback may influence the learner's attitude towards learning, for example they may feel frustrated or anxious when they are corrected, so it is important to know when to do feedback and on which types of errors.

Problem description

The problematic situation we observe in our experience is that sometimes students do not reach the level of proficiency expected by the teachers, this might happen owing to the different variables (Stern, 1983) such as, sociolinguistic, sociocultural and socioeconomic factors, besides the individual students characteristics (age, personality, gender) and also

the learning conditions (materials, contents, environment and methodology wherein we find the use of feedback). So, this study will be focused on the incidence of mistakes. Some of these mistakes are not corrected by students, for that reason they do not improve their proficiency.

As we said before, this study will be focused on the correction of errors through metalinguistic feedback in order to avoid the internalization of wrong structures made by students, which is called fossilization (Vigil and Oller, 1976). Because it is known that in contexts like English academies the students usually have a good level in English proficiency in terms of fluency and vocabulary. On the other hand, the grammar part is not taken into account as for the students it is more important to make themselves understood rather than speaking with perfect grammar structures, that is the reason why this study is concentrated in analyzing the effect of metalinguistic feedback since for Lyster and Ranta (1997) this is the most effective technique for students to reformulate their output through correction of mistakes.

Problem analysis

This section contains the variables involved in the research problem.

Identification of variables. There are two types of variables: dependent and independent

Dependent variable. Oral Production.

Independent variable. Metalinguistic feedback.

Relationship between variables. In the figure below, it is described how the dependent and independent variable are related.

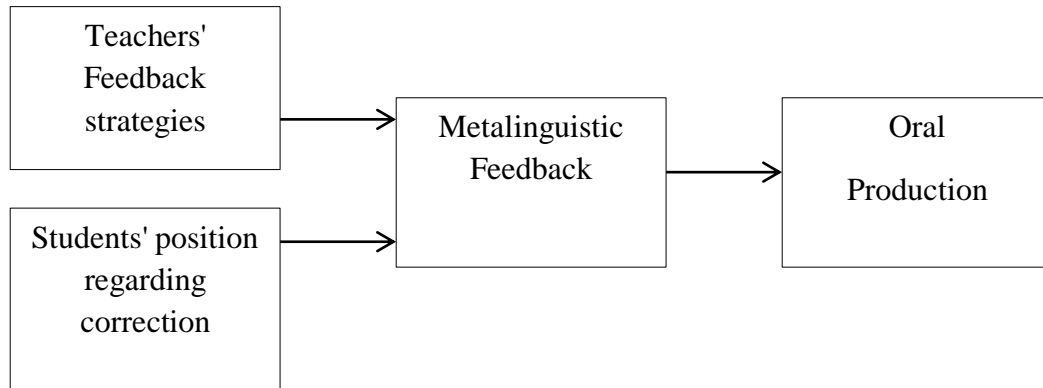


Figure 1.1: Relationship between variables.

In the figure above, It is shown that the two variables (teachers’ feedback strategies and position regarding correction) can affect the use of metalinguistic feedback and this type of feedback affects directly the students’ oral production.

Problem formulation

Which are the effects of implementing metalinguistic feedback in the students’ oral production?

Problem delimitation

Conceptual delimitations

Error. For Corder (1976) quoted by Ellis (2008: 961,971) an error is a deviation in learner language which results from lack of knowledge of the correct rule.

Norrish (1993), states that an error is a systematic deviation from the accepted code and also a misunderstanding of a structure.

Metalinguistic Feedback. It can be conceptualized as the type of feedback that gives extra explanations on erroneous structures followed by further examples of target-like forms (Heift, 2004).

Oral production. According to O'Maley & Valdez (1996). Oral production is “The way two people share knowledge about what they know taking in account the context of the conversation”.

Brown and Yule (1983), say “oral production is an interactive process where you can construct a meaning that you can produce in every situation, at least at the moment, taking into account those aspects which are participants, context, experiences and the purpose of the communication”.

Population

The students belong to upper intermediate strata and they are between the ages of 14 and 22 years. The English level in which they are is intermediate.

Geography

The study will be carried out in an academy of English which is located by “Los Estudiantes” Avenue, an area belonging to a high economic level.

Objectives

General objective. To analyze the effect of applying metalinguistic feedback on the students' oral performance when correcting them.

Specific objectives. To apply the metalinguistic feedback as error correction technique to students' oral performance in an academy of English

To determine if the effect of metalinguistic feedback is effective or ineffective on the students' oral performance.

Limitations

The students' cooperation with this research might be negative or null because some of them do not like to be corrected or just do not accept the corrections made by the teacher so the treatment could be affected due to this.

It is probable that in some circumstances the students do not understand the corrections that we are trying to provide, or it is possible that the students do not understand where their errors exactly are, so maybe the Spanish language should be used to make it clearer.

Justification

This study is important because the correction of mistakes is an issue that teachers do every day and we consider relevant to know if metalinguistic feedback is an effective correction technique to be apply in contexts like Pasto, it can also be useful for further research that could be carried out in similar contexts.

We also consider it is important in the teaching-learning process because feedback makes part of facilitating conditions which can help teachers determine which types of mistakes are more frequent and strategies to use. So, in that way it might help students progress in the process of learning a foreign language.

Having formulated, described, analyzed and justified the research problem, we will mention the different theories and authors who support this research and by which we can state the importance of metalinguistic feedback in oral production.

Chapter II: Literature Review

In this chapter we described the main concepts included in this research, such as error correction, types of errors, fossilization, the different types of feedback and specifically the metalinguistic feedback.

Errors

Human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes. Learning involves a process in which success comes by profiting from mistakes, by using mistakes to obtain feedback from the environment and with that feedback to make new attempts which successively more closely approximate desired goals (Brown, 1987).

Through the years, there has been a gap between error and mistake. According to Corder (1967) quoted by Ellis (2008: 961,971) a ‘mistake’ is a deviation in learners’ language that occurs when learners fail to perform their competence. It is a lapse that reflects processing problems. An error, on the other hand, is a deviation in learner language which results from lack of knowledge of the correct rule. The making of mistakes usually happens owing to external factors like pressure or speed when speaking, but they don’t affect the communication between two or more speakers. But when someone has an error it is possible that the message of what he or she wants to say is not clear enough for the other speakers, in other words the communication is affected or interrupted.

When we talk about errors and correction, we as teachers think we should be concerned with learners’ feelings and emotions when being corrected. Sometimes teachers

are mainly concerned about not overcorrecting their students for fear of inducing language anxiety (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005). That is, they frequently worry about hurting the learners' feelings and damaging their self-esteem but in general the usefulness of teachers' corrections is perceived and accepted by most learners. Nevertheless, Lyster et al. (2013) made clear that research on corrective feedback preferences reveals "a tendency for learners to prefer receiving corrective feedback more than teachers feel they should provide it". To some extent, Lyster, et al. (2013) pointed out that "the degree to which learners want to be corrected is generally greater than teachers' wish to provide correction".

Error correction

The main idea of this work is to make clear the importance of error correction in EFL settings, and to understand that errors are something normal in students. Consequently we can find that there are different types of errors which will be described later. According to Ellis (1995) there are two types of errors: Comprehension and Productive.

Comprehension Errors. They are considered the misunderstanding of a sentence which happens commonly in oral compositions, for example:

- When the teacher says: "I've finished"
- The students may listen: "I finished" or "I finish"

In this case there is a phonological misunderstanding because of the student's inability to recognize the sound /v/ in: *I've* (which doesn't exist in Spanish) and /t/ in *finished*

(because it is not common to find words in Spanish ending in /t/ and as it is the last sound of the word the students tend to pay less attention to it.)

Productive errors. They are those that the students make in their output, being grammatical, lexical or phonological. Ellis (1996) explains that grammar comprehension may also happen because of the interference of L1 on the learning of L2.

Types of productive errors. The learners' linguistic errors were classified into four main types based on Lyster and Ranta's (1997) categorization. The classification of error types was based on the following operational definitions:

Grammatical errors. They include determiners, prepositions, pronouns, word order, tense, auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, plurals, negation, question formation. Examples:

- The marker is in the table.
- When I am a children.
- The car red is beautiful.
- You have cold?
- He don't know.

Lexical errors. They include inaccurate choices and non-target derivations of lexical items in open classes-namely, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives, and incorrect use of prefixes and suffixes. Examples:

- I am very responsable in the school.
- I received a called from Carl.

- I am doing it greatly.
- It's important the understandment of this.
- My brother is inquiet.

Phonological errors. They include suprasegmental and segmental aspects of the phonological system. Examples:

- PRIVATE. / p r i v é i t / instead of / p r á I v ə t /
- I AM. / á I a n / instead of / á I ə m /
- DISCIPLE. / d Í s I p ə l / or / d á I s I p ə l / instead of / d I s á I p ə l /
- APPLE. / é I p ə l / instead of / á p ə l /
- CALLED. / k á l e d / or / k ə ' l e d / instead of / k ə ' l d /

Showing Incorrectness

This phenomenon occurs when the learner is indicated to have a mistake in what he or she is saying, so if the learner realizes that he or she needs to change something he or she will do it, and this self-correction will be part of the learning process. There are several ways of showing the learners the incorrectness described below.

Repeating. Show the students that there is a mistake and ask them to repeat by using the word “Again” with a questioning intonation.

Echoing. Repeat the student’s mistake with a questioning intonation so he can realize that something is not correct.

Denial. Tell the students that the response is unsatisfactory and ask for it to be repeated, though it may be a bit discouraging.

Questioning. Say “is that correct?” asking any student in the class to answer that question. The advantage is to focus everyone’s mind on the problem. However, the student who made the mistake may seem exposed.

Expression. Show gestures or expressions when there is something incorrect (this may be very funny, but may be also dangerous if the student thinks that it is a way of mockery).

Showing incorrectness is a useful tool in the self-correction process but it is also necessary to use some correction techniques.

According to Saville-Troike (2006), L2 learners need a series of facilitating conditions in order to improve the rate and level of foreign language development. Among these conditions we find: the instruction, students’ motivation and aptitude and of course the possibility to be corrected when it is needed. All these conditions are especially important as they might determine how successful the learner is in the acquisition of the target language.

Correction Techniques

Feedback can be made by a teacher, a native speaker or another L2 proficient learner in order for learners who make mistakes to realize that something in his or her production is wrong.

If students are unable to correct themselves we can use either of the following techniques:

Peer Feedback. (Student corrects student): when the teacher asks if another student is able to give the correct response or pronunciation. If another student supplies the correct information this will be good for that student's self-esteem. However, the student who originally made the mistake may feel humiliated if this technique is used intensively.

Teacher Feedback. (Teacher corrects student): Sometimes we may feel that we should take charge of correction because the students are mixed-up about what the correct response should be. In that case we can re-explain the item of language which is causing the trouble. This will be especially appropriate when we realize that most of students are having the same problem. After the re-explanation we can move to choral and individual repetition before moving on

Types of teacher feedback. Lyster and Ranta (1997) propose six different types of feedback used by teachers to correct different types of errors. The first one corresponds to explicit correction and the other six types of feedback correspond to implicit feedback.

Explicit correction

1. Explicit feedback. It consists on providing the right answer and also giving an explanation about the error made by the student.

Example:

Student: I go to the gym yesterday.

Teacher: Oh, you mean... I went to the gym yesterday, because if you are talking about something you did yesterday you must use a verb in past simple.

Implicit correction

2. Recasts: It occurs when the teacher repeats the student utterance but omitting the error made. In this case translation is including because as Lyster and Ranta said (1997) translation does not occur regularly furthermore, it has the same function.

Example:

Student: She have a flat in the north of the city.

Teacher: She has a flat in the north of the city.

3. Clarification requests: In this type of feedback the teacher make noticeable that he or she did not understand an utterance produced by the learner or that he or she made a mistake, this is made through some words of clarification or introduction like “excuse me?” or “what do you mean by...?”.

Example:

Student: I am wearing a uniform every day.

Teacher: Excuse me?

Student: Sorry. I wear a uniform every day.

4. Metalinguistic feedback: Metalinguistic correction was operationalized as teachers' provision of grammatical explanations regarding the target structure. Besides providing grammatical explanation, the correct forms of the participants' ungrammatical utterances were also pointed out. An example of metalinguistic correction used in the study is given:

Example:

Student: Where he is study?

Teacher: Um, can you think about your grammar?...you need to use *-ing* form after auxiliary verbs such as *am, is, are* to indicate present continuous. You also need to reverse the place of auxiliary and subject.

Example:

Student: My mother bought me a sweater blue.

Teacher: Which is the correct order for adjectives in a sentence in English?

5. Elicitation: It refers to the fact that teachers elicit the correct form of an utterance and it is made in three stages. In the first stage the teacher draws out completion of the utterance then teacher elicits correct forms, finally the teacher asks the students to reformulate the comment.

Example:

Student: There are two apple on the table.

Teacher: There are two Which is the plural of apple?

Student: Apples

6. Repetition: It is the repetition of the wrong utterance followed by giving another type of correction as recasts or metalinguistic feedback.

Example:

Student: I haven't money.

Teacher: I haven't money. Which is the auxiliary used in present simple for negative questions?

In the example aforementioned the other type of correction used is metalinguistic feedback.

In the study Lyster and Ranta (1997), found that a recast is the most common correction used by teachers even when they do not elicit the response of learner. They also found that elicitation and metalinguistic feedback were more likely to lead to the correct reformulation of an utterance with mistakes. However, according to Rezaei and Derakhshan (2001), many other researches have shown different results that make difficult generalize about which type of feedback is superior to others.

Responses to Feedback

Apart from the important fact of correcting students when they have errors in their utterances is their responses to that correction that is also called uptake. Lyster and Ranta (1997), stated: “Uptake in our model refers to a student’s utterance that immediately follows the teacher’s feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher’s intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student’s initial utterance”(p. 49). Thus, the feedback provided could lead the student to repair the error or maybe it could be possible need for correction. According to lyster and anta (1997) an utterance that needs repair could be different in six different ways.

Acknowledgment. It occurs when the student only answer with a “yes” or “no” to the feedback made by the teacher.

Same Error. It is when the student repeats the utterance with the same error.

Different Error. It is the kind of uptake that has not been repaired but that is not repeated. As a result there is a new error.

Off Target. It is when the student uptake does not have errors in his or her utterances but it is because he or she has eluded the error made before.

Hesitation. It refers to the hesitation made by the student in response to the feedback received.

Partial Repair. It occurs when the student only corrects one part of the error made.

Is also important to mention that these types of needs – repair could lead the teacher to provide feedback again and elicit in that way a new uptake.

Fossilization

The importance of feedback, in other words is essentially to avoid fossilization which is, in Vigil and Oller’s words (1976) the internalization of certain incorrect structures or forms by the students.

In this attempt to avoid this phenomenon it is important to take into account the two levels of feedback proposed by Vigil and Oller (1976) in the chart below.

Affective Feedback	
Positive:	Keep talking. I’m listening.
Neutral:	I’m sure I want to maintain this conversation.
Negative:	This conversation is over.
Cognitive Feedback	
Positive:	I understand your message; it’s clear.
Neutral:	I’m not sure if I correctly understand you or not.
Negative:	I don’t understand what you are saying; it’s not clear.

Various combinations of these levels are possible. Vigil and Oller (1976) affirm that a positive response is imperative to the learner's desire to continue attempts to communicate.

According to them cognitive feedback determines the degree of Internalization, while neutral and negative feedback will encourage learners try again, to restate, to reformulate or to draw a different hypothesis about a rule.

Fossilization is relevant for this study because one of the aims of applying feedback is to avoid students to make the same mistakes persistently and to help them advance in the correct use of the target language.

Chapter III: The Method

After having stated the research problem and submitted the theories related to this study, we presented the nature of this research, the data collection techniques , the population, the place and the sample to apply these techniques, as well as the variables involved in this study. The procedure to follow in the process of gathering information was also detailed. Finally we introduced the ethical issues considered in the course of this research in order to protect the physical and emotional development of participants.

Design

This research required two groups, the experimental group and the control group. The treatment of metalinguistic feedback was applied to the experimental group meanwhile the control group did not receive any treatment. For this study, we applied a pre-test before the treatment for both groups and also a post-test after the implementation of the before mentioned type of feedback.

Research paradigm

According to Gloria Serrano Perez (1994) two of the main characteristics of qualitative research are: first, describing the event in which the action takes place, correlating and understanding the phenomena from their social and cultural particularity, taking into account the space and time they occur and second, it tries to understand the reality based on their peculiarities and regularities in order to make possible inferences from patterns of meanings in some cases.

Taking into account the characteristics before mentioned, one of the research paradigms used in this study is the qualitative research. Also the quantitative research was applied since it is explicative and use measureable information to describe or explain the phenomena to be studied.

Type of research

According to Briones (1996) the quasi experimental research allows to determine which the effect is that the independent variable or treatment has on the dependent variable. For that reason this is the type of research used in our study. Since our goal is to determine how the use of metalinguistic feedback can affect the English learning.

Research techniques

For this research we used two tests, one before applying the treatment that is metalinguistic feedback and another after this, these tests were done through developing two lesson plans in which we applied 4 different activities that cover the same content. During this stage we developed different activities in order to enhance the students' oral production. Moreover, the students output was recorded in order to facilitate the process of data analysis.

Population, setting and sample

Population. The students who were part of this research are on an intermediate level and they are between the ages of 14 and 22 years, who belong to high economic

strata. Teachers participating in the study are teachers of English as a foreign language. Those teachers belong to middle economic strata and are faculty of the institution.

Setting. This research took place in an academy of languages, located on “Los Estudiantes” avenue, this academy belongs to high strata and teaches English and other languages such as French, German, Italian and Portuguese as a foreign language, and their students are men and women who belong to different social strata, specially middle and high.

Sample. Considering that groups are not larger than 10 we choose two courses which have similar characteristics as being in the same level or belong to similar ages. One of those was the experimental group and the other was the control group. So the total sample was composed by 20 students.

Variables. In this research, two variables were involved, where the independent variable was the type of feedback used to correct errors that in this case is metalinguistic feedback as this is the variable that generates a change reflected in oral production, which is the dependent variable because as the name suggests is the one whose performance depends on the feedback given.

Procedure. To conduct the research we asked for permission and collaboration of school authorities. After having the permission, we passed to the selection of the sample that in this case was composed by two courses with similar characteristics as English level and students’ age.

Data collection procedure. The experimental study includes three stages. First, we applied a pre-test to the experimental and control group in order to find the kind and

quantity of errors made by them. Secondly, for the stage of treatment, metalinguistic feedback was applied to correct errors made by students on oral production. On the contrary the control group did not receive any type of feedback. Finally, we applied a post test that includes the same contents as the pre-test in order to get how many and what type of errors they made. Then we compared the results to discover if we achieve the aim of this research which is to determine the effect that metalinguistic feedback might have on oral production.

After having the groups of students who were of the research, we asked for their permission, and then we made some explanations needed about the importance of doing this study and the process for applying different collection techniques in order to clarify everything about it. After having the research results we had meeting with the research participants and the people who are going to help in its implementation in order to share the results with them and thank them for their valuable collaboration.

Ethical issues. To successfully complete this research without causing physical or emotional harm to its participants, it was considered the following ethical issues which were taken from Action Research Planner (Kemmis and Mc Taggart, 1981:43-44).

- We requested the necessary permissions to the appropriate authorities to conduct the study.
- For this study, we considered the views and wishes of others regarding research we want to do.
- Our work in progress was made available for those who can give suggestions to improve things where necessary.

- We obtained explicit consent before the observation to which we will ensure that all steps in the process of this study are approved in advance by those involved in it.
- We were sure also to get explicit permission to examine documents or files that are needed to carry out the research.
- We obtained explicit consent for quotation that we have to type in this study and we respected the copyright to prevent fraud.
- To make the respective reports we considered the audience to which are intended to be easy to understand.
- We considered the right to confidentiality of those involved in this project, omitting their names if they desire or require it.

Besides the above we considered the following ethical issues:

Voluntariness. In the research participated those who choose or want to do it.

Reciprocity. To follow out this aspect, at the beginning of the research we offered our collaboration to the institution if required, and finally we submitted our gratitude for the cooperation extended to participants who we shared the results of the study with.

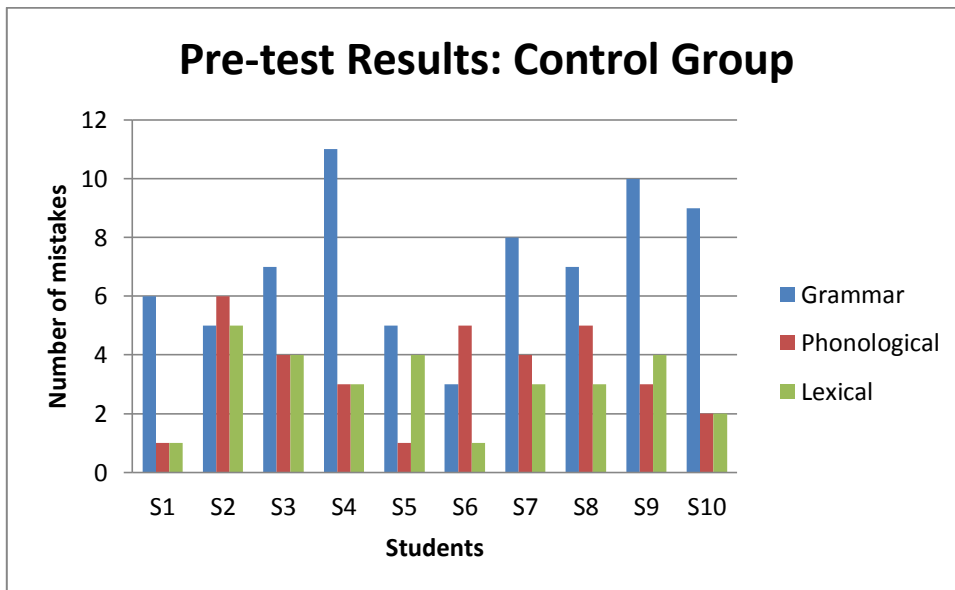
Copyright. About this aspect, we respected the copyright by citing the correct definitions and concepts that were used for the theoretical realization of this project.

Chapter IV: Results

In this section it was analyzed the data obtained from the research after having applied the treatment to the experimental group consisting in one pre-test, then the treatment which was metalinguistic feedback, and finally the post-test with the same contents in the pre-test but different activities; whereas the control group did not receive any treatment. During this process the following results were found:

Pre-test Results: Control Group

Mistakes	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Total
Grammar	6	5	7	11	5	3	8	7	10	9	71
Phonological	1	6	4	3	1	5	4	5	3	2	34
Lexical	1	5	4	3	4	1	3	3	4	2	30
Total	8	16	15	17	10	9	15	15	17	13	135



As Shown in the graphics above, the students of the control group had a total of 135 mistakes in the pre-test. Those mistakes were categorized in the following three different groups.

In the category of grammar students made 71 mistakes which correspond to 53 %.
Some of the mistakes found were:

- Verb Tense: “This machine change the world”
- Word order: “He wears a suit white”
- Omission: “They have taking”

In the category of phonology students made 34 mistakes which correspond to 25 %.
Some of the mistakes found were:

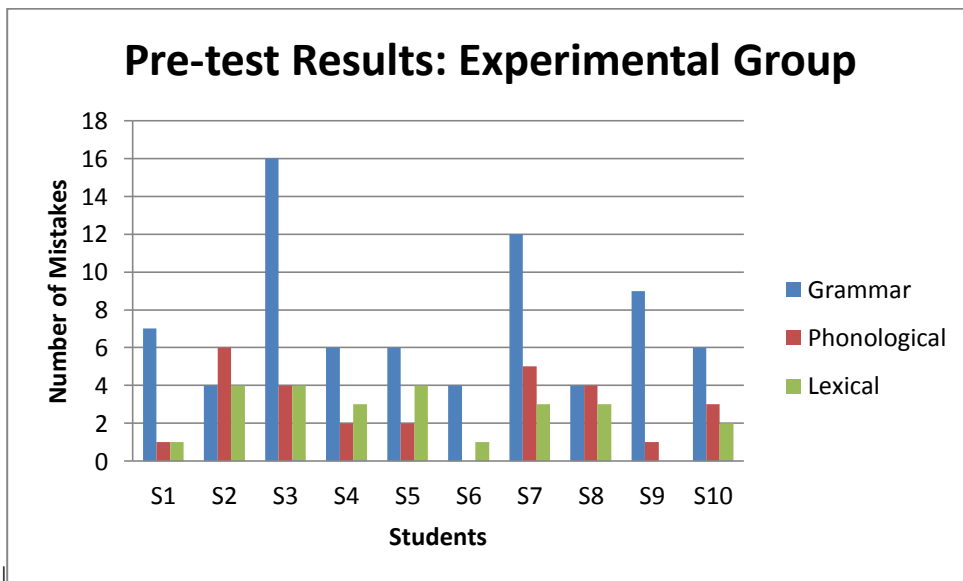
- Best: The student pronounced /**bets**/ instead of /**best**/
- Result: The student pronounced /**re sult**/ instead of /**rɪ 'zʌlt**/

In the category of lexical students made 30 mistakes which correspond to 22 %.
Some of the mistakes found were:

- “He’s a scientific” instead of “he’s a scientist”
- “I don’t like political” instead of “I don’t like politics”

Pre-test Results: Experimental Group

Mistakes	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Total
Grammar	7	4	16	6	6	4	12	4	9	6	74
Phonological	1	6	4	2	2	0	5	4	1	3	28
Lexical	1	4	4	3	4	1	3	3	0	2	25
Total	9	14	24	11	12	5	20	11	10	11	127



As shown in the graphics above, the students of the experimental group had a total of 127 mistakes in the pre-test. Those mistakes were categorized in the following three different groups.

In the category of grammar students made 74 mistakes which correspond to 55 %. Some of the mistakes found were:

- Verb Tense: “it fly high”

- Word order: “it is a device powerful”

- Omission: “like dancing very much”

In the category of phonology students made 28 mistakes which correspond to 22 %.

Some of the mistakes found were:

- Machine: The student pronounced /mə' tʃi:n/ instead of / mə' ʃi:n /

- Physician: The student pronounced /'fi ʃɪən/ instead of / fi 'zɪ ʃən /

In the category of lexical students made 25 mistakes which correspond to 19 %.

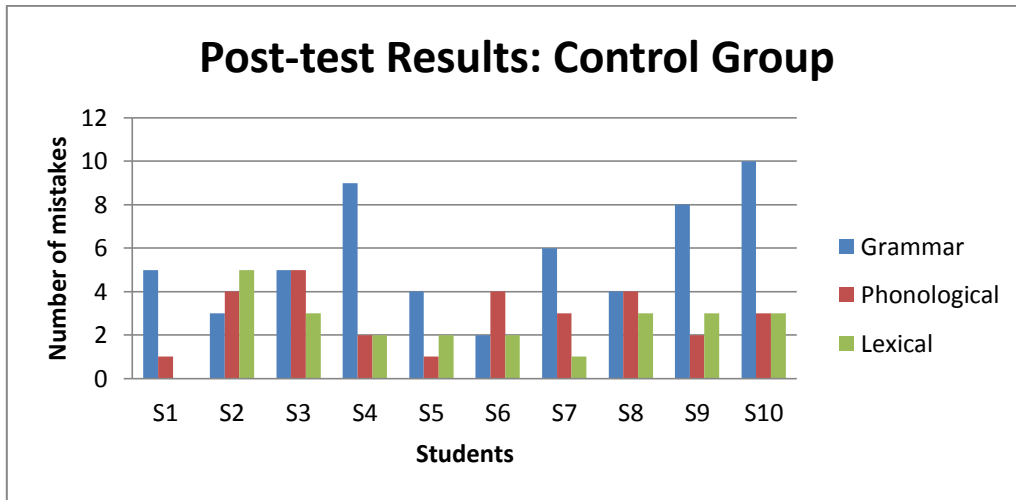
Some of the mistakes found were:

- “it’s a good invent” instead of “it’s a good invention”

- “he’s a shoe-repairing” instead of “he’s a shoemaker”

Post-test Results: Control Group

Mistakes	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Total
Grammar	5	3	5	9	4	2	6	4	8	10	56
Phonological	1	4	5	2	1	4	3	4	2	3	29
Lexical	0	5	3	2	2	2	1	3	3	3	24
Total	6	12	13	13	7	8	10	11	13	16	109



As shown in the graphics above, the students of the control group had a total of 109 mistakes in the post-test.

In the category of grammar students made 56 mistakes which correspond to 51%. Some of the mistakes found were:

- Verb Tense: “I have been cut”
- Word order: “She travels usually to Pasto”
- Omission: “Take to my house” instead of “Take them to my house”

In the category of phonology students made 29 mistakes which correspond to 27%. Some of the mistakes found were:

- Thanks: The student pronounced /**tænks**/ instead of /**θænks**/
- Astronaut: The student pronounced /' **æstronaut**/ instead of /' **æstrə nɔ:t** /

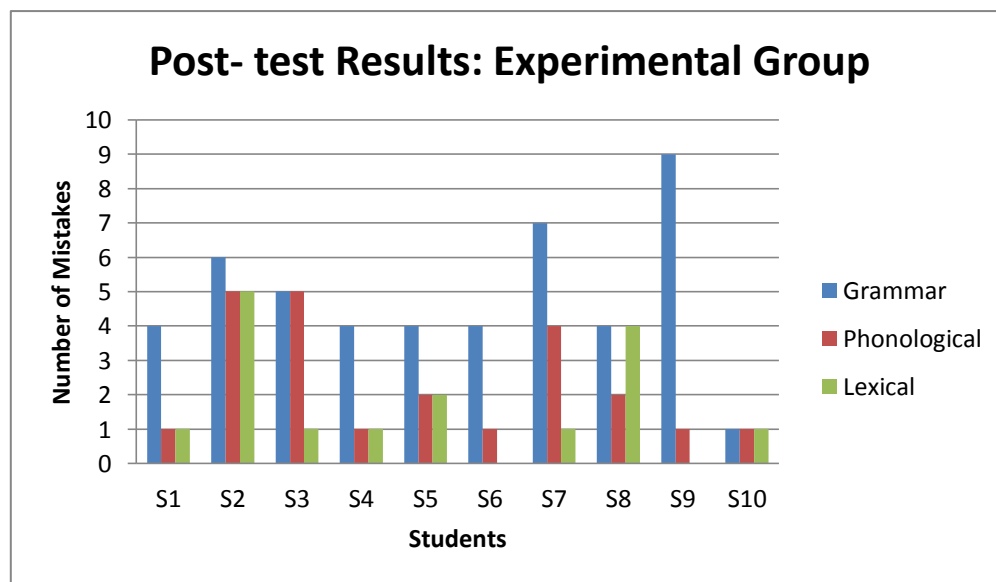
In the category of lexical students made 24 mistakes which correspond to 22 %.

Some of the mistakes found were:

- “We can transportation” instead of “We can transport”
- “They are musics” instead of “They are musicians”

Post-test results: Experimental Group

Mistakes	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	Total
Grammar	4	6	5	4	4	4	7	4	9	1	48
Phonological	1	5	5	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	23
Lexical	1	5	1	1	2	0	1	4	0	1	16
Total	6	16	11	6	8	5	12	10	10	3	87



As shown in the graphics above, the students of the experimental group had a total of 87 mistakes in the post-test.

In the category of grammar students made 48 mistakes which correspond to 55 %.

Some of the mistakes found were:

- Verb Tense: “That day my shoes melt”
- Word order: “it is with I or with Y?”
- Omission: “is the most dangerous person in Colombia” instead of “he is the most dangerous person in Colombia”

In the category of phonology students made 23 mistakes which correspond to 27 %.

Some of the mistakes found were:

- Key: The student pronounced / **keI** / instead of / **ki:** /
- Death: The student pronounced / ' **deat** / instead of / **deθ** /

In the category of lexical students made 16 mistakes which correspond to 18 %.

Some of the mistakes found were:

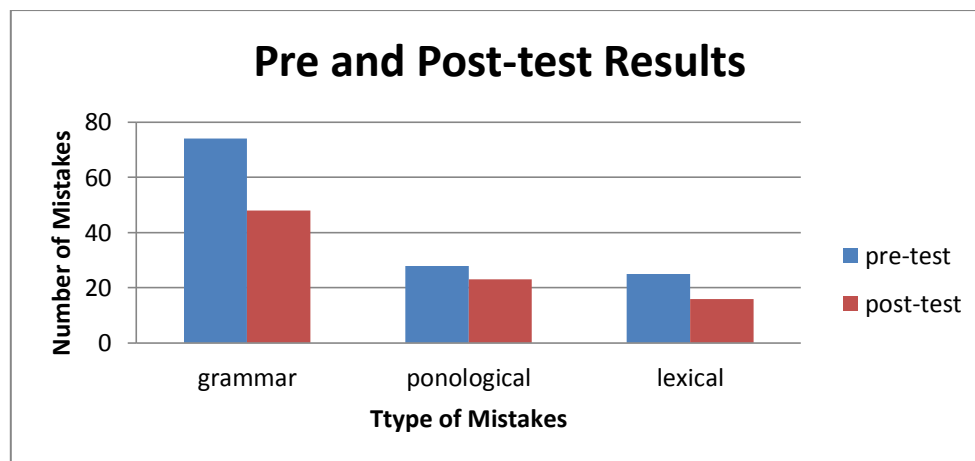
- “Einstein was a physics” instead of “Einstein was a physicist”
- “did you do this in your neighbor?” instead of “did you do this in your neighborhood?”

After having done the analysis of the results we are going to show a comparison between the control and experimental groups, and later the pre and post-test of the experimental group to demonstrate if there is or not a progress after the treatment.

After having analyzed the results in both control and experimental groups, we are going to concentrate on the results found only in the experimental group, since it is the one which received the treatment, comparing the data collected in the pre and post-test.

Pre and Post-tests Results

Group	Grammar	Phonological	Lexical
Pre-test	74	28	25
Post-test	48	23	16



Comparing the data obtained in the pre-test and post-test applied to the experimental group we found the following results.

In the pre-test, the students of the experimental group made 74 mistakes of grammar and in the post-test they made only 48 mistakes what shows a decrease of 26 mistakes (whose equivalent corresponds to 35% of improvement) in this category.

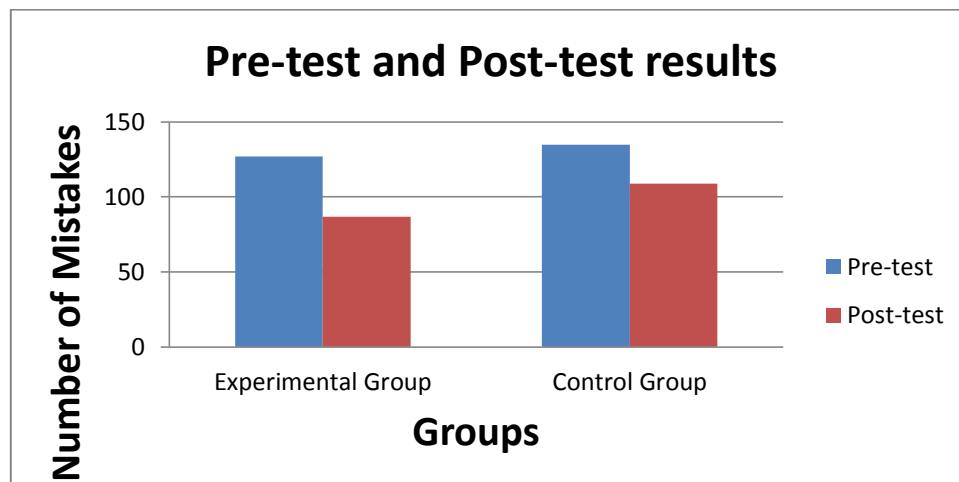
Students of the experimental group made 28 phonological mistakes in the pre-test, while in the post- test, it demonstrated that there was minus 5 mistakes (whose equivalent corresponds to 17% of improvement) since the results in this category were 23 mistakes.

While the pre-test showed 25 mistakes of lexical, the post test showed 16 mistakes of the same type, that means a reduction of 9 mistakes (whose equivalent corresponds to 36% of improvement).

In the pre-test the experimental group had a total of 127 mistakes while the control group had 135, so it means that both groups are homogeneous and they have a similar quantity of mistakes.

Pre-test and Post-test Results

Group	Experimental Group	Control Group
Pre-test	127	135
Post-test	87	109



After the treatment, that is to say in the post-test, the total number of mistakes made by the experimental group was 87 while for the control group was 109. It means that the experimental group had an improvement of 31% which is the equivalent of minus 40 mistakes. On the other hand, the control group only had an improvement of 19% which represents minus 26 mistakes.

After this we can say that there is a difference of 12% progress that benefits the experimental group who was the one that received the metalinguistic feedback as a treatment.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

After having collected and analyzed the information we found the following conclusions and suggest some recommendations.

Conclusions

It must be taken into consideration that, for this research the three main categories to subdivide the mistakes were taken into account, those categories are: lexical, grammar and phonology.

First, It was found that students had a major tendency to reduce the number of mistakes in the Lexical category. In this part students had 25 mistakes in the pre-test and after the treatment the only had 16 mistakes, which shows an improvement of 36%.

Although it is more difficult to provide metalinguistic feedback on lexical mistakes because it is probable that students have never learned some words before, we found a greater progress in this part even with the difficulties we had when developing the treatment. For example, in one of the activities the students had to guess some jobs, and one of the jobs was “shoemaker”, so as the students did not guess it we realized that they were never taught this word, for which we conclude that in the vocabulary it is very difficult to apply metalinguistic feedback since we cannot provide the students with any rules for vocabulary, this is more a matter of memory rather than following patterns.

Second, The results showed that students had a major tendency to make mistakes in the part of grammar. As mentioned in the analysis of data, we considered three main subdivisions of the grammar mistakes such as: Word order, Verb tense and Omission (especially of pronouns). In the pre-test both groups (control and experimental) had an incidence of more mistakes in the subdivision Verb Tense, that is to say that students have more difficulties in the conjugation of verbs (-ing, third person -s, use of auxiliaries and the use of the wrong tenses, when for example a student wants to talk about the past but he or she uses the base form of the verb instead of the past form). Although in the pre-test we found more mistakes in this grammar category it is important to mention that this category showed a meaningful progress. The analysis showed that after the treatment the students made a total of minus 26 mistakes what means an improvement of 35%.

Third, regarding the phonological part, this was the category in which there was not a big progress, in other words the students made 28 mistakes in the pre-test while in the post-test they had 23, so in terms of percentage they showed an advance of 18%. Even though this advance is not as significant as the previous ones, it is important to highlight that nevertheless the students were capable to correct some mistakes.

In the phonological category before mentioned it was found a minor incidence to correct mistakes it may happen because there are a lot of English sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue (Spanish), making it more difficult for them to produce the expected utterance(s) and therefore to correct them because even if they know the pronunciation patterns they tend to forget those patterns easily when they speak maybe due

to the pressure, the speed or other variables. For example: the sound of the letter Z, in words like: lizard or zero should be voiced /z/ but even if we have explained this pronunciation rule before, the students will pronounce it as /s/, /'sIrou/ instead of /zIrou/, /'li sard / instead of / 'li zard /.It may be also due to problems in the articulation of the different utterances that students cannot produce easily.

In few words, with the results of this research, it can be said that the implementation of metalinguistic feedback as a treatment was useful to correct any kind of mistakes.

A further conclusion regarding another aspect is that the activities used in this study were useful for the students who participated because we tried to provide them with different materials that make the activity more diverse and enjoyable, such as flash cards, pictures, board games, pieces of paper, drawing and speaking games. These materials and activities made the students feel in a comfortable environment, and they did not feel as if they were going to be evaluated or corrected, on the contrary their reaction was positive and they all agreed to participate and also to be recorded during the activities, also because according to them this kind of games are not popular in the academy where they study, so they were involved into something different than a conventional class. Thus the participants finished very pleased and we are sure that it was a useful and joyful experience for them too.

A fifth conclusion is that this study could be a model for future research on metalinguistic feedback because it shows the implications of applying this type of feedback and this could be important for a teacher who is looking for ways of correcting mistakes

indirectly and thus to avoid students' frustrations or students' fear of being bullied because of their failures specially when speaking.

Another conclusion is, this research is very important since it is made in a way that can be applied in every classroom making of it a useful tool for in service teachers. Taking into account that it is convenient to analyze the progress of our students in all the aspects involved in the language learning process, it is action research that can be used in order to do a permanent and continuous evaluation as in the correction of mistakes, since only in this way we can see how much knowledge of the target language is the student acquiring and thus to apply some different strategies to ensure the student's language proficiency. It is possible because this type of studies allow teachers to develop a series of activities inside the classroom in which the student does not realize that he or she is being evaluated, so the process avoids student's stress and allows the teacher to collect more useful and reliable data.

Finally, we can say that after all, the expectations that we had before implementing the treatment were different, what we mean is that we expected to have a higher percentage of progress in the students' corrections when speaking. We found that in general there was only a difference of 12% of mistakes diminution with our treatment if we compare the control with the experimental group, because the control group showed a reduction of 19% while the experimental showed a reduction of 31% ($31-19 = 12$. To apply this treatment helped the students to correct 12% more mistakes than without any treatment).

In general, we can conclude that metalinguistic feedback is an effective tool to correct mistakes, it is easy to carry out, it is beneficial for both teacher and students and it can be done in any setting and by any teacher, not necessary as a research but as a part of the teacher's methodology.

Recommendations

An important recommendation for teachers is to do constant teaching update in all contexts. It is going to allow them to use different techniques to collect information and solve the problems that can be found inside the classroom, in a way in which students do not feel uncomfortable and teachers can obtain useful data . Another consideration to recommend this is that every aspect in the language learning process is linked with other factors as social, economic, psychological and personal factors that we as teachers cannot control and it is relevant to consider since they can affect the results obtained and as a consequence the results cannot be the ones that we expected with the research applied.

Second, For further research we recommend to adjust an important factor during the treatment which is: Time (more class hours), because our treatment lasted only 3 weeks, so perhaps with more time and more activities the results might be better and the reduction of mistakes might be more successful.

A further recommendation is that teachers implement metalinguistic feedback as a part of the daily teaching process since during the treatment we could realize that students pay more attention to the mistakes the teacher is correcting and they not only wait for the

correct answers, so they get involved in the process as an active part of it and they feel that they are learning by themselves what is better, then they are aware of the language they are using so they get more interested in correct their mistakes and get a higher level in English proficiency.

Fourth, we recommend that for further research teachers might involve other types of feedback if they have problems with applying metalinguistic feedback on vocabulary or other categories, so for example it could be useful to make a comparative study between metalinguistic feedback and other types of feedback in order to know which of those benefits more the students according to their individual characteristics, level of English and needs.

Another suggestion based on one of the conclusions is that teachers should implement different kind of activities in order to collect the information, since in this way they can avoid some stressful situations where students feel uncomfortable or nervous and it can affect the results in a negative way. The use of some materials like board games, flash cards or drawing activities can be useful tools that we can use every day in our classes in order to evaluate the progress of our students, these tools are not expensive and teachers can create and adapt those materials to the needs and likes of students.

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Appendix A

Lesson plan

Time: 90 minutes.

Level: Intermediate

Language focus: Listening and speaking

Topic: Science and technology; Geography.

Previous knowledge: Basic knowledge about comparatives & superlatives, past simple, present perfect & present perfect continuous.

Objectives:

- Students will use present perfect and perfect continuous tenses and basic structures to make comparisons.
- To encourage the interest of students about the topic “Science and Technology”.
- Students will answer questions using comparatives and superlatives into a game involving general knowledge.

Objective 1: Students will use present perfect and perfect continuous tenses.

Context: Student’s previous knowledge.

Aids: board, job cards.

Language: all and any.

Activities:

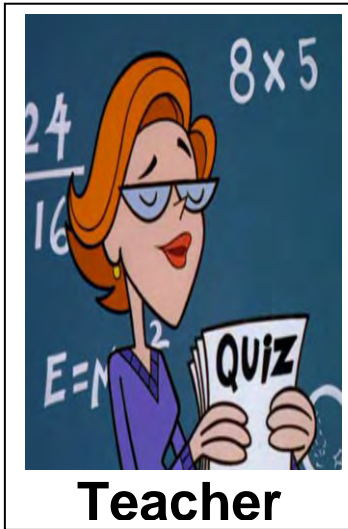
1. Time estimated: 15 min. Students practice present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses through a game called “guess my job”.

Description of the game: students are divided into two groups, one student of each group is given a card in which is written a job. Ss have to think about the different activities ‘their job’ involves. What might a person in the respective job say at the end of a busy day?

Students must use the present perfect continuous. The student has to present one sentence to the class. If nobody knows the answer, they choose the second one. The first group to guess which job is described gets the job card. The group with most job cards at the end is the winner.

Example: “I have been receiving a lot of phone calls today” (Secretary)

“My students have annoyed me during all this year” (Teacher)





Objective 2: To arouse the interest of students about the topic “science and technology”

Context: Student’s knowledge about science and technology

Aids: board, pictures, sheets of paper.

Language: all and any.

Activities:

1. Time estimated: 5 minutes. Teacher asks students the difference between science and technology. Teacher shows some inventions which have changed the way of life and students are asked to name other invention they know.



The atomic bomb, invented in 1940.



The airplane, invented in 1903

2. Time estimated: 15 minutes. Students have to work in pairs and they are asked to draw and described a gadget or device that has not been already invented. Then, they have to present the new device to their classmates.
3. Time estimated: 10 min. the teacher and the whole class make comments about the good and bad sides of science in order to contextualize the topic after watching two videos about testing on animals.

Teacher questions:

- Do you know some invention that has been beneficial for people? In what way has it been beneficial?
- DO you think some inventions have been dangerous? In what way have they caused harm to people or other living beings?

Objective 3: Students will answer questions using past simple, comparatives and superlatives into a game involving general knowledge.

Context: Student's general knowledge.

Aids: board game about comparatives and superlatives, a die, chips.

Language: all and any.

Activities:

1. Time estimated: 30 minutes. Students play the board game called "How much do you know". It consists on moving your chip through the board and doing the things you are told on every space (answering questions, moving either forward or behind X spaces). Whoever reaches the "finish" space first is the winner of the game.

The topics on the board game are related to general knowledge and also to personal experiences in which students have to answer using the comparatives and/or superlatives.

Also the students will have to argument their answers giving reasons and some extra information. The topics included are the following:

1. The best book you have ever read
2. The biggest crowd of people you have ever seen
3. The longest you have ever gone without sleeping

4. The most famous building in your country
5. The most expensive hotel you have ever stayed in
6. The hottest place you have ever visited
7. The most expensive article of clothing you have ever bought
8. The happiest day of your life
9. Your most valuable possession
10. Your oldest relative
11. The most embarrassing moment of your life
12. The most famous person you have ever met
13. The funniest TV program in your country
14. The most difficult thing about English
15. The longest you have ever gone without eating
16. The coldest place you have ever been to
17. The richest person you have ever met
18. The best film you have ever seen
19. The most difficult exam you have ever taken
20. The thing you are most frightened of
21. Your youngest relative
22. The best restaurant you have been to
23. The most exciting place you have ever visited
24. The worst day you have ever had

25. The best place to spend your holidays
26. Which city is older: London or New York?
27. Which language do you find more difficult: English, Spanish or Chinese?
28. The most stressful job
29. The most useful invention
30. The most boring subject school
31. The funniest leisure activity



Appendix B

Lesson plan

Time: 60 minutes.

Level: Intermediate

Language focus: Listening and speaking

Topic: life experiences

Previous knowledge: Basic knowledge about comparatives & superlatives, past simple, present perfect & present perfect continuous.

Teachers: Angela Madroñero, Germán Bolaños.

Objectives:

- Students will use present perfect and perfect continuous tenses and basic to talk about life experiences
- Students will answer questions using comparatives and superlatives into a game involving general knowledge.

Objective 1: Students will use present perfect and perfect continuous tenses to talk about life experiences,

Context: Student's previous knowledge.

Aids: board markers, slips of paper with questions.

Language: all and any.

Activities:

2. Time estimated: 15 min. Students practice past simple, present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses through two games called “The yes I have game and tic tac toe”

Description of the game:

The students must be divided into two teams. One team will be designated as X and the other as O. The teacher ask O team to choose a square by saying the number that is written in the square then he or she ask a student from the other group a “Have you ever..?” question. The student must answer the question with “Yes”. The first student can then ask them 3 “Wh” questions in and try to spot from their answers and body language if they are lying, if the O team can guess, then they get an O in the square. If they can’t, then the play goes to the X team. The X team choose another square and follow the same steps , the game continuous until a team wins Tic Tac Toe (three X's or O's in a row: vertical, horizontal, or diagonal).

The questions bellow are those which students are going to choose to answer and try to win.

Have you ever stolen candy from a store?

Have you ever seen a ghost?

Have you ever stuck a bean in your ear?

Have you ever eaten caviar?

Have you ever lied to your mother?

Have you ever broken something in a store?

Have you ever swallowed a coin?

Have you ever knocked on a stranger's door and run away?

Have you ever played with matches and started a fire?

Have you ever thrown a rock through a window?

Have you ever fallen asleep in church?

Have you ever cried in a movie?

Have you ever dressed up like a clown?

Have you ever dyed your hair an unusual color?

Have you ever slept on the subway?

Have you ever worn bright red lipstick?

Have you ever kissed an animal?

Have you ever changed a baby's diapers?

Have you ever written a love letter?

Have you ever posted a video on You Tube?

Have you ever asked a famous person for an autograph?

Have you ever run away from a policeman?

Have you ever danced on a table?

Have you ever fallen in love with your teacher?

Have you ever broken something expensive?

Objective 2: students will answer questions using comparatives and superlatives into a game involving general knowledge.

Context: Student's previous knowledge.

Aids: flash cards with pictures of some famous people

Language: comparative and superlative adjectives

Activities:

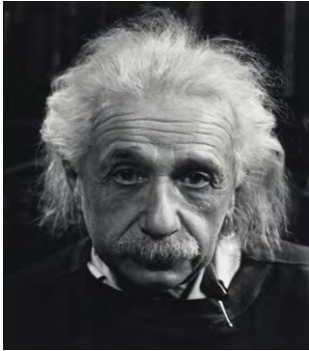
1. Time estimated: 30 min. Students are going to practice comparative and superlative adjectives through a game called "guess who".

Description of the game: students are going to work individually but they have to take turns in order to complete the activity. A student will be given a flash card with the name and a picture of a famous person. The student has to present one sentence to the class using comparatives and superlatives adjectives in order to describe the character. If nobody knows the answer, he or she chooses a second and a third sentence. The first student to guess which the character is gets the card. The student with most cards at the end is the winner.

Example: First sentence He is the best pop singer.

Second sentence: He is one of the most popular artists in the world.

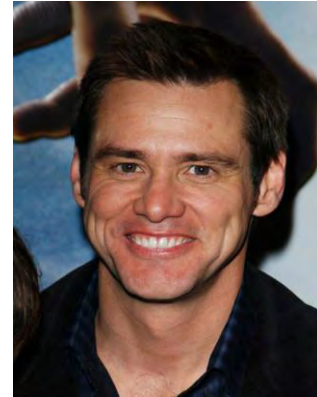
Third sentence: He is the best dancer. Answer (Michael Jackson)



**Albert
Einstein**



Adolf Hitler



Jim Carrey



**Marilyn
Monroe**



**Mahatma
Gandhi**



**Angelina
Jolie**



**Robby
Williams**



Shakira



**Queen
Elizabeth**

