



PROCEEDINGS BOOK 2024

Escuela de Ciencias de la Educación
Maestría en Mediación Pedagógica en el Aprendizaje del Inglés
Grupo de Investigación VIRTUALEX.





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3rd International Congress on Pedagogical Mediation in Language Learning

“Cultural sensitivity and technological innovation
for language learning and acquisition”

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Lisbeth Tatiana Camacho Bueno

Introduction

The 3rd International Congress on Pedagogical Mediation in Language Learning, held virtually on June 11, 12, and 13, 2024, served as a dynamic and inclusive platform for academic dialogue and the exchange of innovative pedagogical and research experiences. With the theme “Cultural Sensitivity and Technological Innovation for Language Learning and Acquisition”, the congress aimed to explore how cultural awareness and technological advancements can transform language teaching and learning. This event brought together researchers, educators, and students from nine countries—USA, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Argentina, Ecuador, Spain, Ukraine, and Morocco—, which demonstrates its global reach and commitment to fostering collaboration across diverse educational and cultural contexts.

The congress was made possible through the collective efforts of four organizing committees. These committees included students from the Master’s Program in Pedagogical Mediation for English Learning at UNAD, professors from the VIRTUALEX research group, and collaborators from the Master’s in “Formación del Profesorado”

at Universidad Isabel I (Spain) and the Master’s in Maestría en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, Mención, Enseñanza de Inglés at Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (Ecuador).

The congress unfolded over three days with a well-structured program that combined plenary sessions, concurrent presentations, one workshop, and poster exhibitions. On Day 1 (June 11), the event opened with a series of plenary sessions featuring expert speakers who provided a broad overview of the central theme. A highlight of the day was the keynote lecture delivered by Dr. Jack Richards, a globally renowned figure in language education, who set the tone for the discussions that followed.

On Days 2 and 3 (June 12 and 13), the mornings were dedicated to additional plenary sessions, addressing key topics and facilitating debates on critical issues related to pedagogical mediation, cultural sensitivity, and technology in language learning. Additionally, in the afternoons, concurrent sessions allowed national and international researchers to present their studies and share innovative practices.

These sessions were complemented by contributions from students of the Master's Program in Pedagogical Mediation for English Learning, who showcased their academic work, enriching the event with diverse perspectives. A dedicated research poster room was available on both days, creating opportunities for participants to display their projects and engage in meaningful exchanges with peers working in similar areas.

The congress focused on five thematic axes, each addressing critical areas of interest:

- Pedagogical Mediation in Language Learning: Examining the benefits and challenges of mediation as a tool to enhance language acquisition and support learner autonomy.
- Assessment and Curriculum in Language Teaching: Exploring advances in curriculum design, assessment strategies, and didactics for foreign language education, bilingual programs, and native language instruction.
- Linguistic Research in Educational Contexts: Investigating practical applications of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and literary research to improve language teaching and learning practices.
- Cultural Sensitivity in Language Teaching: Highlighting the integration of cultural

awareness into educational practices to promote diversity and a deeper understanding of different cultures.

- Technological Innovation for Language Acquisition: Focusing on digital literacy, artificial intelligence, and other technological tools that support language learning in diverse and multicultural contexts.

This congress offered a unique opportunity for participants to engage in reflective discussions, share best practices, and collaborate on cutting-edge research. Its virtual format enabled broad accessibility, allowing educators, researchers, and students from across the globe to connect and contribute to the evolving fields of pedagogical mediation and language education.

The proceedings presented in this volume capture the richness and diversity of the ideas and strategies shared during the event. They represent the collective efforts of contributors to address the complexities of modern education, offering insights into how cultural sensitivity and technological innovation can shape inclusive, effective, and transformative approaches to language teaching and learning. The conferences, oral presentations, and posters were conducted virtually on ZOOM and the SIMULEL platform and were broadcast on TV UNAD.

Welcome Speech

Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed colleagues, honored guests, and distinguished speakers, on behalf of the organizing committee, it is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome you all to the 3rd International Congress on Pedagogical Mediation in Language Learning. As the General Chair of the organizing committee, I am thrilled to see such a diverse and esteemed gathering of educators, researchers, and practitioners from around the world.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all the individuals and teams who have worked tirelessly to make this event possible. The scientific committee, the themes and guest committee, the marketing and publicity committee, and the committee responsible for compiling the proceedings book have all played pivotal roles. Your dedication and hard work have been invaluable, and this congress would not be possible without your efforts.

I would also like to offer special thanks to Dr. Liceth Martinez, the Director of the Master's in Pedagogical Mediation in English Learning, for her visionary leadership and unwavering support. A heartfelt acknowledgment goes to

Professor Cenaida Gomez, who served as the General Chair for the previous editions of this event. Your guidance and experience have been instrumental in shaping the success of this congress. Furthermore, our appreciation also goes to our colleagues from Universidad Isabel I, Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja in Ecuador, and the Department of Linguistics and Languages at Universidad de Nariño. Your collaboration has been pivotal in assembling this prestigious event.

Can you all believe we're here for the 3rd version of the International Congress already? It feels like just yesterday we were brainstorming ideas for the first one. The time has flown by in a whirlwind of planning sessions, late nights fueled by coffee, and maybe a little too much passion! and countless emails exchanged across continents. Speaking of continents, putting this congress together has been a masterclass in cultural sensitivity! Let me tell you that time zones and preferred communication styles can be a fascinating dance. But throughout the process, technology has been our saving grace. Video conferencing platforms have bridged the physical distance, and communication tools have helped us navigate the

nuances of language. Isn't that what we're all about here – using technology to enhance communication and understanding?

This very act of bringing all of you together, from Colombia to Casablanca in Morocco and Pasay City in the Philippines, serves as a testament to the power of pedagogical mediation in language learning. The world is getting smaller, and the need for effective cross-cultural communication has never been greater. And guess what? We, as educators and researchers, are right at the forefront of this exciting transformation!

Pedagogical mediation in language learning is not just a theoretical concept; it is a practical necessity that can transform the educational experiences of countless students across our country. By embracing cultural sensitivity, we can create learning environments that respect and celebrate the diverse backgrounds of our students. By leveraging technological innovation, we can overcome barriers and provide high-quality education to even the most remote areas.

Think about it. Just a few decades ago, language learning might have meant dusty textbooks and rote memorization. Today, we're talking about immersive virtual reality experiences, interactive online platforms, and mobile apps that gamify the learning process. The presentations you'll see over the next few days showcase the incredible innovation happening in our field. We have seasoned

researchers sharing groundbreaking theories alongside enthusiastic graduate students brimming with fresh ideas. It's this dynamic exchange that propels the field forward.

As we come together for this congress, the theme of "Cultural Sensitivity and Technological Innovation" stands out as particularly relevant and pressing. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, the ability to navigate and respect cultural differences is essential. This is especially true in the field of language learning, where understanding cultural contexts can significantly enhance the educational experience. In Colombia, and Latin America as a whole, these issues are of paramount importance. Our region's diverse cultural landscapes and rapid technological advancements present both challenges, opportunities, and deep transformations for educators.

At Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD), we are at the forefront of this transformative journey. Our metasystem, grounded in the curricular evolution of an innovative distance learning model, exemplifies our commitment to innovation and inclusiveness. We are dedicated to reaching every corner of our country and expanding our presence internationally through UNAD Florida and our headquarters in Spain. Our mission is to leverage teaching and learning experiences to focus on communities and diverse contexts, thereby advancing cultural sensitivity in the language classroom.

This commitment is reflected in our efforts to integrate technological tools and platforms that enhance the teaching and learning process. By doing so, we are not only making education more accessible but also ensuring that it is relevant and responsive to the needs of our students. Our approach places teachers, curricular transformation, and local contexts at the center of the educational experience, ensuring sustainability and accessibility for all.

Today, as we officially open this congress, I am excited to share the layout of our event. Day 1 will feature plenary sessions, including a keynote address by Dr. Jack Richards, whom I profoundly admire. On Days 2 and 3, we will have plenary sessions in the mornings and concurrent sessions in the afternoons. These concurrent sessions will take place in three different rooms, featuring oral presentations of completed and innovative research, as well as research posters showcasing ongoing studies. We

received numerous proposals, but only the most innovative were selected for presentation. I am particularly proud that students from our Master's Program in Pedagogical Mediation in English Learning will also be presenting their research.

I want to thank each of you for your participation and engagement. Your presence here today underscores the importance of our collective efforts to advance language education. Together, we are shaping the future of pedagogical mediation in language learning, making it more inclusive, innovative, and impactful.

Welcome to the 3rd International Congress on Pedagogical Mediation in Language Learning. Let us embark on this journey of knowledge, discovery, and collaboration. Thank you!

Mgtr. Juan Carlos Acosta

*Escuela de Ciencias de la Educación
Organizing Committee Chair*

Keynote speaker 2024

The future of the past in language teaching

Classroom-based teaching has traditionally played a central role in how learners develop their abilities in a second language. However, the learning environment of today's learners has changed due to the advent of the World Wide Web and as a consequence of the advent of mobile technology and Artificial Intelligence, or AI. In this presentation, I want to look back to the past, to review how language teaching was carried out prior to the digital age, and then to consider how the new affordances provided by technology, internet, and AI are influencing both present and future practices in language teaching.



Jack C. Richards



Introduction

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AI in language learning: opportunities and threats

La IA en el aprendizaje de idiomas: oportunidades y amenazas



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Abstract

This paper discusses the benefits of generative AI such as *ChatGPT* for language learning and teaching. Those include the availability of conversation practice with an always-available chatbot who can be instructed to use a specific proficiency level, even particular vocabulary or grammatical structures. Chatbots can take on particular roles or identities, as well as provide corrective feedback. For both learners and teachers, AI systems provide the ability to generate second language (L2) learning materials, such as stories, exercises, and games. AI systems are of substantial potential use in assisting in L2 writing in a variety of ways. But there are as well a good many downsides to AI systems. Those include their cultural inauthenticity and their built-in linguistic and social biases. AI systems use a statistical model of language which limits their understanding of the texts they create as well as of the real world inhabited by humans. That can lead to misinformation as well as to limitations in dealing with pragmatic aspects of language use. Therefore, students and teachers will need to use AI with their eyes wide open to both the opportunities and threats. Critical AI literacy is required.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; language learning; chatbots; L2 writing; digital literacy

Resumen

Esta ponencia analiza los beneficios de la IA generativa como ChatGPT para el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de idiomas. Estos incluyen la disponibilidad de práctica de conversación

con un chatbot siempre disponible, que puede ser instruido para usar un nivel de competencia específico, incluso un vocabulario o estructuras gramaticales particulares. Los chatbots pueden asumir roles o identidades particulares, así como proporcionar retroalimentación correctiva. Tanto para los alumnos como para los maestros, los sistemas de IA ofrecen la capacidad de generar materiales de aprendizaje de segunda lengua (L2), como historias, ejercicios y juegos. Los sistemas de IA tienen un potencial sustancial en la asistencia a la escritura en L2 de varias maneras. Pero también hay muchas desventajas en los sistemas de IA. Estas incluyen su falta de autenticidad cultural y sus sesgos lingüísticos y sociales incorporados. Los sistemas de IA usan un modelo estadístico del lenguaje que limita su comprensión de los textos que crean, así como del mundo real habitado por humanos. Eso puede llevar a desinformación y limitaciones al tratar con aspectos pragmáticos del uso del lenguaje. Por lo tanto, los estudiantes y maestros necesitarán usar la IA con los ojos bien abiertos tanto a las oportunidades como a las amenazas. Se requiere una alfabetización crítica en IA.

Palabras clave: inteligencia artificial, aprendizaje de idiomas, chatbots, escritura en L2.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence itself is not new, but generative AI represents a sharp break from earlier efforts. While AI was initially designed to function as an “expert system” within a narrow range of functionality, *ChatGPT* and other generative AI are general use systems that work within a broad range of contexts and can generate language in a wide variety of genres. Additionally, natural language processing was developed in traditional AI by training systems in the rules of how language works (i.e., syntax, morphology, etc.) as well as programming them with knowledge about the social and natural world in which humans live (something akin to humans’ common sense). Early AI systems met with only limited success.

It turns out to be too complex and vast a task to program computers with enough rules and facts to deal adequately with realities as complex as human language and human society.

A different approach has yielded incredibly better results, namely that used in generative AI. Generative AI is based on “large language models,” built from feeding the system with a huge amount of data (digital texts taken from online sources) and having the system look for patterns and regularities to be able to predict next items in a text string (Godwin-Jones, 2021). That results not in a linguistic model of language, but a mathematical one, as the machine learning

process converts text into mathematical symbols (see Wolfram, 2023, for a detailed account of the process).

This is very different from how humans acquire language, through a gradual process of socialization. The statistical model of language in AI is very effective at generating output that seems in its fluency, flow, and idiomaticity to have come from a human source. Yet, because AI has no real understanding of the texts it generates and no lived experience in our world to go by, it can “hallucinate”, producing statements that are false.

The way that generative AI produces output is different from rule-based AI, and it is also radically different from how computer software is created in traditional programming. Programmers use symbolic reasoning, writing code that features sequencing, loops, and conditional logic; they understand what each line of code is intended to do and have a clear understanding of how a program’s output results from the written code. Code can be edited and compiled to change the behavior of the program.

The machine learning process in large language models does not have the same level of transparency. While AI engineers understand the broad outlines of how AI systems work, that is, their basic architecture, they do not comprehend just how the output comes about. In fact, the creators of *ChatGPT* were surprised by

some of its capabilities, which they had not expected, much less “programmed”. Some adjustments are possible to guide AI output in particular directions, particularly through human reinforcement training. Fundamentally, however, generative AI remains largely a “black box,” whose performance seems mysterious, almost magical. Tweaking AI systems is more a matter of trial and error than it is of software engineering (Heaven, 2024).

Likewise, writing prompts for AI systems is an unpredictable process, with sometimes quite different outputs resulting from the same or very similar prompts. From that perspective, “prompt engineering” is a misleading formulation; the process can be better described as “incantation”, with users finding by iterative prompting just the write sequence of words to generate the desired output.

While AI output seems genuine (as if written by a human), and is certainly grammatically correct, studies have shown that the texts it produces tend to be bland and uninspired (Kramsch, 2023). They lack the spark of human creativity, representing as they do a repackaging of their textual training data. AI output is form without substance.

Studies have shown also that, unsurprisingly, AI systems lack social and cultural sensitivity (Cao et al., 2023). That derives in part from their training data, that represents the largely Western, “first

world”, male-oriented cultural orientation of the Internet, its principal training source (Atari et al., 2023). That training data is also overwhelmingly in English, resulting in inferior performance in other languages (Lai et al., 2023). Because AI systems have no lived social experience, their output is often pragmatically challenged (Barattieri di San Pietro et al., 2023). From the dialogues in their dataset, they can learn appropriate sociolinguistic practices (politeness formulas, for example), but studies have shown that they have difficulty dealing with the social nuances in speech acts and other socially determined language use (Lee & Wang, 2023).

One approach that has been used in analyzing AI’s pragmatic abilities is to test the systems for alignment with Grice’s cooperative principle (Grice, 1989), a frequently used concept in applied linguistics. The principle asserts that for conversational exchanges in social settings, human interlocutors strive to cooperate to be able to communicate effectively. Grice outlined four maxims used to evaluate the degree of cooperation. Those point to the degree to which speakers are truthful, informative, relevant, and clear. Studies of *ChatGPT* from this perspective have shown shortcomings in adhering to those maxims, showing obvious discrepancies with the maxim of truthfulness (Chen et al., 2024). Particularly troublesome as well is informativeness, as that maxim stipulates the speakers use just enough language to

be informative and no more. *ChatGPT* tends to be overly verbose (Thorne, 2024) as well as repetitive and excessively apologetic (Harnad, 2024).

If AI systems are linguistically and culturally deficient in authenticity that limits their usefulness as a substitute for humans in practicing a second language, contrary to studies that have advocated the integration of AI as an “authentic” language partner in L2 education (Chiu et al., 2023), actual experimentation with AI (and studies on AI pragmatics) demonstrates the infelicity of that idea. That, however, by no means translates into AI being unusable in language learning. On the contrary, AI can be a highly useful addition or complement to other L2 learning activities and practices – if implemented with an awareness of its limitations (Godwin-Jones, 2024). In that process, the role of the teacher is essential, in guiding learners through the use and discussion of AI’s benefits and limitations.

The development of critical AI literacy is needed to gain a “calibrated trust” (Ranalli, 2021, p. 14) in AI output. That includes, as indicated above, an understanding of how the process used in creating AI systems limits substantially their ability to use language in socially and culturally appropriate ways. At the same time, AI systems are evolving rapidly with improved functionality arriving on a regular basis, so that current limitations may change in the future. However efficient

AI systems become, it will still be important in instructed language learning that any AI use be complemented by human-to-human interactions, such as participation in virtual exchange, which builds interactional and pragmatic competence, not achievable through AI.

Despite limitations, there have been many ways explored in which AI systems can be integrated into second language (L2) learning and teaching. Indeed, since the release of *ChatGPT* in late 2022 there have been a multitude of blog posts, conference papers, and journal articles on AI and language learning. Many have suggested using AI as a chat partner to practice language use (Godwin-Jones et al., 2024). AI chatbots can serve as a conversation partner for practicing the target language in written or spoken form, an especially useful feature for learners in foreign language settings who may not have good access to L2 conversational opportunities.

In contrast to scripted, rule-based chatbots, AI systems are fully capable of conversing coherently on a wide range of subjects. An AI chatbot can take on different identities, fulfilling, for example, the role of language tutor, or taking on the persona of the user's favorite singer. It can be instructed to use the targeted language at a particular level of proficiency (novice, intermediate, advanced), matching that of the learner. Before initiating a conversation with *ChatGPT*, the learner can direct the AI to correct errors

and provide explanations for particular language constructions.

In contrast to traditional voice assistants like *Siri*, *ChatGPT* remembers conversations and thus builds a personal profile of the user. That allows AI chatbots potentially to be pro-active in introducing topics of interest to the learner based on previous encounters. That means that an AI system could function as a personal learning and living companion, adapting to the student's interests and abilities progressing up the educational and professional ladder (Dans, 2024). The customizability of AI systems can be used as well to target particular areas of language, as demonstrated in a tailored GPT tutor for L2 storytelling (Lan & Chen, 2024).

AI could supply a study plan for learners, providing suggested topics and timetables as well as creating learning materials including texts for reading or listening practice, exercises and explanations for learning grammar, and corrective feedback on writing. Those materials could be valuable for teachers as well as for learners. Teachers have the additional option of using AI systems to assist in evaluating student written work, something that is likely of considerable interest to instructors with large numbers of students, as providing corrective feedback individually is a time-consuming process. One of the important ways in which AI can benefit language learning is in L2 writing. In fact, AI-powered tools have been available

for some time (see Godwin-Jones, 2022, for an overview). Those include automated writing evaluation systems, like *Criterion*, and interactive text editors like *Grammarly*. These “narrow” AI tools (Schmidt & Stras-ser, 2022), some of which can be quite expensive, can potentially be replaced with systems like *ChatGPT*. A recent study found that *ChatGPT* was more effective than *Grammarly* in providing helpful feedback (Mizumoto et al., 2024). Another found that providing graded examples of student writing along with directions in the prompt improved the quality of feedback (Poole & Coss, 2023).

Using AI will involve learning how to write prompts appropriately throughout the writing process. Discussing that dynamic with students can be helpful in moving views on writing from product to process. Jacob et al. (2023) describe how *ChatGPT* was used in multiple phases of L2 writing, from idea generation to evaluating a first draft, to suggesting improvements in grammar and style. The student writer in the case study critically examined AI output, accepting some, rejecting others, and insisting that the final version reflect her voice and persona. Many teachers will likely be concerned that students will simply have AI complete writing assignments for them. That certainly can happen, although it is not new that students find means to avoid assigned work through cheating or plagiarism. Part of training for students in the use of AI — a necessary practice in education today —

should involve discussion of ethics in AI use. Optimally, guidelines for AI are developed cooperatively with students, so that there is a degree of student buy-in. While some students are likely to use AI inappropriately, it is helpful to look at studies of learner use of machine translation to anticipate how AI might be used. Those have shown that students mostly use machine translation to look up words and phrases and to check on the accuracy of individual sentences (Vinall & Hellmich, 2022). Early studies of AI suggest that patterns may hold for its use as well (Baek et al., 2023).

One of the options for integrating AI into L2 writing that can be beneficial is to assign written tasks to connect AI use to real-world contexts. Poole and Polio (2023) point out that doing that accords with the use of AI for “functional authenticity” (Buendgens-Kosten, 2014) in that it aligns with actual use outside of educational settings. Suggestions from that article include assigning students to write blog posts, online reviews, or professionally oriented emails. The tasks could include comparing AI text versions with those written by students and then analyzing and discussing differences. That can lead to greater awareness of the nature of AI output, contributing to AI literacy. Such tasks emphasize the importance of audience in writing, something often lost sight of in classroom emphasis on academic writing. Tasks that show real-world integration also demonstrate that AI skills will be useful

not only for students' academic careers, but in the workplace as well.

There have been many different reactions to the use of AI in education, ranging from asserting that AI has "no place in education" (Caplan, 2023, April 30), to instructors fully integrating AI use in all assigned work. For

language learning, it is too early to tell what the learning benefits will be. However, it is clear that AI will play a significant role in our students' current and future lives. Therefore, it behooves us to not ignore AI but to discuss and model its ethical and effective use, as preparation for life after graduation.

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Designing for complexity: curricular strategies that can deepen cultural understanding

Diseñando para la complejidad: Estrategias curriculares para facilitar la comprensión cultural



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Abstract

One of the main ways that foreign language instruction differs from instruction in other academic disciplines is that instructors are expected not only to teach the language itself but also. Two main problems with such an expectation are: 1) it assumes “culture” is monolithic (it is not), and 2) that because culture is ubiquitous, it is assumed language instructors will know how to teach it without explicit instruction on how to do so (we do not, any more than we would know how to teach language). Further complications arise when the topics introduced (sometimes with the best intentions) perpetuate harmful stereotypes or downplay important differences that can have real-world impact. For these reasons, instructors may be tempted to skirt lightly around culture or to avoid content that could be polarizing. And yet, it is vitally important that students learn about the cultural underpinnings of the language they are studying. Crucially, students need to develop language to talk about cultural differences in a respectful way. This short paper on praxis discusses concrete design strategies that can strengthen the integration of culture and language in the foreign language classroom.

Keywords: Content-Based Instruction, Foreign Language Instruction, Action Research, Cultural Topics

Resumen

Una de las principales maneras en las que la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera se diferencia de la docencia de otras disciplinas académicas se debe a la doble expectativa de enseñar conjuntamente la lengua y la cultura. De dicha expectativa surgen dos problemas; por un lado, se asume que la 'cultura' es monolítica (no lo es) y que los instructores sabrán enseñar temas culturales sin entrenamiento previo (no lo sabemos, del mismo modo que no sabríamos cómo enseñar clases de lengua sin instrucción).

Surgen complicaciones adicionales cuando los temas que se introducen perpetúan estereotipos dañinos o cuando se menosprecian diferencias importantes que sí repercuten en la sociedad de manera impactante. Todo ello puede desencadenar una tendencia por parte del docente de tratar temas culturales a la ligera o de evitar cualquier contenido que pueda resultar polémico. Sin embargo, es preciso que los alumnos aprendan sobre el tejido cultural del idioma que estudian y es de suma importancia que desarrollen un lenguaje que les permita hablar sobre diferencias culturales de manera respetuosa. En este breve trabajo se introducen estrategias concretas para un diseño curricular que se presta a la integración de cultura y lengua en la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: Instrucción basada en contenidos, enseñanza de una lengua extranjera, investigación-acción, temas culturales.

Introduction

While Saussurean notions of language famously encompassed the duality of “form” and “function”, today’s conceptualizations recognize a third tenet: the importance of cultural context. We know that language does not take place in a vacuum, but rather is spoken in the context of a community and that even within the same language, there lies an astonishing amount of cultural diversity.

This places a unique burden on foreign language instructors, who are expected to

incorporate cultural content into their lessons. Unfortunately, language methodology as it applies to culture is often unaddressed or underaddressed in teacher-training programs. Many textbook treatments of culture focus on sweeping topics that gloss over nuance or present content that is already familiar to the audience, thus cutting off possibilities for learning. With overly broad topics, it is hard for students to establish a personal connection to the material. However, being able to relate

content back to one's own experiences is an essential component of learning (Abrams, 2016; Brooks & Brooks, 2001). The current paper seeks to address this

problem, using an action research focus to highlight strategies for instructors as they design curricula that thoughtfully explore aspects of culture.

Methods

Action research is a practicum-oriented research protocol that has been employed across a wide range of disciplines. In educational action research settings, it is typically used to try out and evaluate aspects of classroom practice for the purposes of fostering teacher learning (Crookes & Chandler, 2001; McDonough, 2006) and increasing teacher ownership of curriculum design (Banegas et al., 2013; Nunan, 1990).

One key way in which action research sets itself apart from other research paradigms is that in action research, the researcher and experimental participant are one and the same. That is, action research is conducted for the purpose of syste-

matically examining *one's own practice*. However, the aims of action research go beyond the individual participant(s). As a research paradigm, it is intended both to enact change at a local level and to contribute to knowledge creation in the field (Cook, 2009; Crookes, 1993; Crookes & Chandler, 2001).

In the next section, I will describe my process of incorporating cultural topics into my Spanish language curricula using an action research framework. It is my hope that the strategies I enumerate, and the action research methodology itself will be helpful to instructors as they navigate the process of blending language and culture in the classroom.

Action cycles

Action research is characterized by cycles of inquiry, action, and reflection (Crookes & Chandler, 2001; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Lewin, 1946). In a typical action research project, the researcher or researchers identify a problem, develop a

solution, implement it, and then evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. This process is repeated as necessary, with each iteration refining the design based on feedback from previous cycles.

Cycle #1- Establishing a local focus

As a graduate student, I had the opportunity to work on a team with other students and staff on a digital media project intended to highlight the varieties of Spanish spoken in our local community. To this end, we conducted, filmed, and edited interviews with local people on many different topics. The idea was that the videos would then be housed on a website and made accessible to instructors for use in our Spanish language program. The video “¿Qué comida te gusta mucho y qué comida te da asco?” (Stroehle, et al., 2009) is an example of one of our more successful videos that I still use in my classes today.

Critique

We went into the project with the intention of producing videos that would be both relatable to the students and usable for instructional purposes. In my assessment, the videos scored high on relatability, but the quality was inconsistent. Only a few members of our team had experience in filmmaking and our lack of experience showed. Despite a lot of work and good will, the value in terms of usability of the materials did not match up to the investments of time and money dedicated to the project.

Takeaways

Although the project was of mixed success, the idea of recording and using local

content was a good one. The tools for recording original audiovisual content have improved greatly since the time when this project took place. Furthermore, anyone can now easily record video on their smartphone and a culture has grown up around creating and sharing content. I still value maintaining a local focus, but I have replaced the filmmaking strategy with using content created by others whose talents lie more in this direction- for example, influencers. This adjustment has also shifted the power of the storytelling back to the people who live in the communities they are reporting on. As a companion piece, students can be asked to create their own videos highlighting aspects of the culture of the place where we live. This enables us to talk about contrast while toggling back and forth between a global and local focus (see also Brooks & Brooks, 2001).

Cycle #2- Becoming a curator of quality content

Thinking about the problem of video quality led me to focus more on becoming a curator of high-quality authentic language materials. I looked for materials that were not originally intended for language instruction but could be re-purposed for use in the classroom. As mentioned in the previous section, there has been an explosion of such content in recent years. In 2018, I created the Language and Applied Linguistics (LAAL) Videoteca (Lain, 2018a) for instructors in our program at the

University of California Santa Cruz with the idea of housing and making easily accessible high quality audiovisual materials that were publically available: short videos, podcasts, and film trailers. This Creative-Commons Licensed Open Educational Resource originally began as a way for instructors in our program to share materials amongst ourselves. However, it has become a useful resource for students, many of whom enjoy receiving suggestions for music or films. In addition to instructor recommendations, the site now includes many recommendations I have received from students. In this way, students are able to contribute back to the program. The resources in the LAAL Videoteca are grouped by topic, allowing the user to explore and choose content based on their interests. Materials are also searchable by theme and content on the site is regularly updated.

Critique

The creation of the LAAL Videoteca helped solve the problem of recruiting high quality audiovisual content for use in the classroom, especially with the contributions from my colleagues and former students. However, with the solving of one problem, I began to notice another problem. I realized that I had been treating cultural topics or materials as add-ons to help facilitate instruction on linguistic objectives rather integrating them into the curriculum. In essence, the materials were being underutilized and up to this point I had failed to recognize their true value.

Takeaways

The LAAL Videoteca has proven to be an important resource. However, the fact of its existence did not help integrate cultural themes into the curriculum. Therefore, further strategies were needed.

Cycle #3- Bending course objectives around the cultural content

The previous two strategies addressed ways that cultural materials can be added to enrich existing content. However, with this kind of “drop in” approach, the materials remain somewhat disembodied from the rest of the course. With our Medical Spanish curriculum at UCSC, my aim was to shape a course that not only provided students with basic vocabulary but also prepared them to interact with patients who had different cultural orientations, especially with regard to the practice of medicine. With the help of funding from the UCSC Center for Innovations in Teaching and Learning, I was able to hire an undergraduate research assistant (a former student) to record interviews for use in the course. One of these was with a faculty member who is a Medical Anthropologist. Another was with a practitioner of traditional medicine from Mexico. Additionally, students taking the course received training in the use of cameras, external microphones, and video editing software. As part of their final project, they recorded video interviews with local healthcare practitioners, asking about

the interviewees' job training, professional responsibilities, and how they use Spanish in their work.

I created a separate site for the Medical Spanish course (Lain, 2018b) based on the model of the LAAL Videoteca. However, one key difference between the LAAL Videoteca site and the Medical Spanish site is that the section of the course that deals with traditional medicine and natural remedies has been greatly expanded as a result of the inclusion of these videos. Classroom assessments now include discussion sessions in which the students explore the topics in depth. The student-created work has been looped in to become part of the curriculum.

Critique

The addition of student-created videos and interviews with specialists that speak directly to the cultural practice of medicine has changed the course for the better and allowed students to come away with a more nuanced understanding of the variety of beliefs within our local community. The hope is that this will be of tangible benefit to them as they begin (or continue) their healthcare careers and work with patients.

Takeaways

With the success of the experiment on bending curricula around cultural content in the Medical Spanish course, it occurred

to me to look for other courses that could benefit from a similar approach.

Cycle #4- Using film to tie course objectives together

The Spanish 4 course seemed like a good candidate for incorporating a stronger cultural component. This course covers topics related to nutrition, wellbeing, and the environment, and introduces language related to expressing opinions and giving commands- in other words, the language of activism. I decided to introduce the documentary film "Dolores" (Bratt, 2017), about the labor activist and co-founder of the United Farmworkers Movement, Dolores Huerta. There are several local connections to the film, which led me to believe the students would find it relevant.

Critique

The incorporation of the film "Dolores" gave the Spanish 4 course an internal cohesion and meaningfulness that it was lacking before. In addition to situating the vocabulary and grammar objectives in a real-world context, the film depicts aspects of history that are unfamiliar to many Gen Z students. In addition, the language of the film is bilingual Spanish/English, reflecting the reality of many Spanish speakers in California. While showing a bilingual film may be a controversial choice in some language pedagogy circles, I believe the benefit of authentic language use outweighs

any potential detriment (see also Salaberry, 2020). In class, I have taken examples of mixed language use as an opportunity to comment on the phenomenon of co-switching.

Takeaways

As occurred with the previous cycle, the success of using a cultural “set piece” (in this case, a film) to connect course concepts made me wonder if the idea could be extended even further.

Cycle #5- Drawing on the power of interpersonal connections

A few years ago, I decided to propose a “Spanish in the professions” course called Society and Sustainability in Latin America. This Spanish language course (which focuses on the language around environmental issues) uses a series of films to address topics related to biodiversity, environmental stewardship, and indigenous communities, among others. The curriculum has been enhanced by the inclusion of guest speakers- friends who are writers, cinematographers, and composers, all involved in some way with environmental issues in Latin America. It has been very exciting to have them Zoom in and speak to the classes not only about their work, but also about how they became interested in their projects and were able to carry them through to fruition.

In the last weeks of the course, for the final project, the students participated in a Reacting to the Past (RTTP) game. RTTP is an active learning pedagogy where students reenact elements of a past event through role play (Carnes, 2014). The central conflicts presented in “Negotiating a Rainforest’s Ransom: Ecuador 2007-2013” (Lain, 2017) are familiar variations on the course themes but in this case, the students themselves determine the outcome of events through their words and actions in the game.

Critique

Bringing guest speakers in to talk about their work, especially as it relates to topics we have discussed in class, has been fun. I hope that, in addition to solidifying their knowledge around language and concepts, students can begin to see the different pathways that bridge undergraduate experience and professional endeavors. The structure of the course (and especially the final project) is less linear than what students are used to, and they are asked to fill in more of the content themselves. Such a structure has potential benefits in terms of student agency (see also Brooks & Brooks, 2001; Carnes, 2014; Grabe & Stoller, 1997). However, for students who have a lower tolerance for ambiguity, this curricular approach can present a challenge.

Takeaways

Given that the course has only been taught twice, it is still very much a work in progress. In *Society and Sustainability in Latin America*, I extended the strategy described in *Cycle #4* by using films to illustrate the

course themes. The role-playing game in the final project solidifies concepts and invites students to try their hand at problem-solving through language. The final project involves active learning and requires scaffolding on the part of the instructor for students to feel comfortable engaging.

Discussion

Action research provides a way for instructors and/or researchers to explore pedagogical innovations. The particular strategies discussed here (listed as cycles of inquiry/action) addressed the stated problem of how to integrate cultural topics in a way that is specific enough to account for the wide range of diversity yet is relatable and stimulates critical thinking. The strategies may be recapped as follows:

- *Cycle #1*- Establish a local focus
- *Cycle #2*- Become a curator of quality content
- *Cycle #3*- Bend course objectives around the cultural content
- *Cycle #4*- Use film to tie course objectives together
- *Cycle #5*- Draw on the power of interpersonal connections.

Most of the strategies relate to the use of audiovisual materials and stories to illus-

trate concepts (see also Fuentes-George, 2023, and Zambrano & Zambrano, 2022). I have selected audiovisual media as the primary source of cultural content by virtue of its ubiquity and ease of access, both for creators and consumers. By presenting culture in an authentic milieu, audiovisual materials also serve as excellent models for pragmatic appropriateness (see also Abrams, 2016 and Sawin, forthcoming). Lastly, incorporating materials from a wide variety of sources helps ensure the representation of both linguistic and cultural diversity (see also Sawin, forthcoming). As language instructors, we are in a unique position to further inter-cultural understanding. The strategies presented here are not intended to be exhaustive or universally applicable. They merely serve as a launching pad for further discussion and an invitation to re-mix and reuse ideas that may be of interest.

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Interrupting the coloniality of English instruction— putting ELT at the center of imagining alternative futures

Interrumpiendo la colonialidad de la enseñanza del inglés: situando la enseñanza del inglés en el centro de la imaginación de futuros alternativos



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Abstract

Of the institutional educational spaces in the Global South, the English classroom has become like no other a highly active contact zone where global and local educational ideologies and practices meet, clash, and grapple with each other. Building on my work as co-editor of a journal issue on decoloniality in the ELT field in Latin America (Ikala Revista de Arte y Cultura, 27.3 (2022), and the increasing attention paid to my understanding of the ‘coloniality of language’ and its historical and contemporary impact on the various aspects of English instruction reflected in that literature, in my presentation I credit the English classroom with a spatial and epistemic advantage for the construction of new modes of social relations and greater democracy in our continent.

Keywords: Coloniality of language, Decolonial pedagogy, Linguistic justice, Social justice.

Introduction

The coloniality embedded in English language education has become a focal point in ELT theory and practice from the

Global South. The English classroom has become a highly active “contact zone” where global and local educational ideologies

and practices “meet, clash, and grapple with each other” (Pratt, 34). Knowing that education is political, many ELT Latin American researchers have taken back the classroom as site from where to propose new modes of social relations and greater democracy.

For the last ten years, I have worked at various universities in the Americas teaching and developing research to address multifaceted preoccupations with the coloniality of language and how language is mobilized in the reproduction of colonial power relations and social inequalities (Veronelli 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022). What follows encapsulates my reflection as coeditor for the issue on *Decoloniality in the English Language Teaching field in Latin America* published in Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura in 2022.

When Carmen Helena Guerrero Nieto and Clarissa Menezes Jordão invited me to co-edit this special number I was honored by the invitation but also puzzled. I had no expertise in the ELT field. However, as submissions began to arrive, I was pleasantly surprised to see how my reflections on the coloniality of language had proven useful to ELT practitioners across the Global South in framing the importance of questioning the persistence of colonial legacies in the field and making their voices, concerns, anger, and alternative visions heard.

The frameworks used in Íkala 27 include decoloniality, engaged pedagogy (hooks), critical pedagogy and critical literacy (Freire), translanguaging (García & Wei), critical interculturality (Walsh), epistemologies of the South (Sousa Santos), critical applied linguistics (Pennycook), raciolinguistics (Rosa-Flores), and critical discourse analysis, among others.

What they all have in common is, on the one hand, that they conceive knowledge as a social practice of meaning-making where every subject is actively producing meaning. And, as a practice, knowledge is embodied, interactional, procedural, and fluid. On the other hand, the authors consistently point to the need for fundamental changes in the global discourse of English towards reevaluating the foundational conditions by which we have come to understand English language and English language teaching. Such a shift requires more than a focus on pedagogical techniques. Instead, it entails a reconceptualization of language and power at its very base. Concretely, it involves demystifying positivistic approaches that presume English to be neutral and objective. And, attending to the complex dynamic of power English is imbued with as it intersects with extensive colonial histories, racism, and the current phenomena of globalization and neoliberalism.

From these two lines of coincidences, a third is derived. In their shared view, English

teaching practice in the Global South is, consciously or unconsciously, a political act. To the authors, ELT should not be limited to the utilitarian transmission of scientific and academic knowledge; but chiseled as a mechanism for reflection and interpretation of the educational reality they and their students live in, so as to recognize power relations and hierarchies within and outside educational settings and making space for these to be questioned.

The voiced suggestions for interrupting the coloniality of English and building alternative and liberatory practices were broad and varied. They spanned multiple areas and levels of change. These include, broadly: language policies (and their implications for underserved communities), curriculum and methods of teaching and assessing, teaching materials; professional development, and theoretical reconceptualization of English. This presentation won't delve into each review. Instead, I'll focus on a singular topic: the dilemma surrounding the identity of English teachers.

*

I am not a teacher of English, but I am a teacher. Like the authors in the *Ikala* issue, I teach from a situated and embodied sense of my endeavor, and with a preoccupation with questions and problems rooted in the social-historical conditions and colonial legacies we inherited. A central preoccupation is that of the ongoing corporatization

of higher education as universities in the Global North and the Global South have been gradually moving toward market-driven models. Here is where the dilemma shows its face. I've come to understand that this dilemma is not only *not* strange to you but even more abrasive.

In ascribing one's professional identity construction to the fact of responding to neoliberal practices of individualism, assimilation, meritocracy, and competition, rooted on colonial notions of who one is meant to be, English teachers face self-colonialism and fragmentation. Awareness of our related positionality within the modernity/coloniality construct, and the implications of our doings within the broader racialized capitalist enterprise.

How does one comply with neoliberal agendas that require all students to learn English to access education while attempting to protect the very same ancestral languages English is oppressing? How does one traverse the precarious paths of English instruction given the histories and realities of global empire and capitalist colonial conquest fundamentally entrenched within the field?

The practice of teaching English exists within an educational domain that serves the real and varied needs of students while also reproducing ideologies that have marginalized many of the very students it caters to.

Just as English can be a mechanism of empowerment, so can it be the instruction of oppressive relations of power.

To experience a colonial language, such as English, as alienating, lacking, oppressive and limiting appears to be a common experience across the literature on ELT. Needless to say, this is an experience not exclusive of ELT agents.

Historically, in the colonial and post-colonial domains, the strongly oppressive nature of language –of the violently imposed colonial language– has been most keenly felt. The colonial language dominates not only in the school system and the administration, but it is also the language through which the colonized have been presented to themselves, interpellated, and stripped of their humanity.

What would it be to teach and learn English motivated by an urgency to “dominate it”, “force it”, “agonize it”, and destroy its coloniality (Arguedas)? To use English against English’s hegemony? What would it be to be that teacher, to be that student? These are not meant as rhetorical questions. They express visceral concerns explicitly or implicitly addressed in the reviewed literature. As teachers “there is more responsibility and emotion involved in the creative use of a language over which we know we have ownership, than in the supposed application of structures

built by others in a language that we believe does not belong to us” (Haus & Schmicheck, 772).

In the following sections, I delve into the question of identity while examining epistemic and ontological dimensions of language coloniality at work in ELT, and some of the reconceptualizations of identity that challenge coloniality found in the literature.

Reflections on how “coloniality manifests in various ways in ELT through philosophies, discourses, and principles that tend to homogenize individuals and practices” populated the *Íkala* issue (Carvajal-Medina et al., 599).

Homogenization is a tricky word or even a myth. Its dictionary meaning conveys a process of making things uniform or similar. However, when one looks at the homogenizing project of modernity from the perspective of coloniality, one sees that making things *uniform* is at the expense of the colonized. From the receiving ends of modern/colonial enterprises, homogenization means rendering invisible and worthless histories and cultures that are fundamentals in the construction of peoples’ identities and without which they are censured. Hence, this myth of homogenization veils the colonizing character of neoliberal standards of English instruction. Generating a *blind* discourse

that normalizes a denial of the existence and presence of colonized communities in the classroom.

Faced with neoliberal standards rooted in a colonial ideology of education that perpetuates idealized imaginaries of the English language and English speakers, the teacher's professional identity is reduced to reproducing colonial knowledge mechanically, blindly, and unquestionably (Mosquera-Pérez). A technician, who executes predetermined recipes; and, importantly, who is not supposed to think by herself but comply with the teaching of a powerful high-market language without any consideration of its implications in rendering invisible the linguistic and epistemic capital of Global South subjects. If she doesn't do so, she is labeled as a bad teacher (Granados, 636; 632).

An example of the manifestation of coloniality of knowledge in ELT occurs when students who do not conform to the dominant norm or fail to meet idealized expectations of behavior are subordinated, inferiorized, and pathologized by an English teacher, who herself is subordinated to the role of language police.

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A second dimension of coloniality in ELT is ontological. It revolves around the loyalty to the idea of a native speaker as reference to legitimize best models, norms, and

goals, and also to define the qualification of teachers.

The unquestioned assumption that native speakers provide the best linguistic models and therefore the best quality of teaching, generates in the non-native English teacher a sense of inferiority, which I believe can be understood in terms of what social justice theory calls "internalized oppression" (Pheterson). A recognized understanding in which the colonized accepts the methods and incorporates the oppressive message of the colonizer against their own best interest. Such is the case when pursuing native-like status and becoming a language expert blocks any possibility of thinking communally or enhancing local social justice agendas.

In his ground-breaking book *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* Alastair Pennycook (1988) points out that the Native/Non-native distinction constitutes a translation of the civic/savage dichotomy of the colonial period and hence it is an instrument of reproduction of unequal relations between metropolitan centers and postcolonial peripheries (19; 156). The framework of coloniality has further problematized Pennycook's understanding of the relationship between colonialism and ELT by centering the realities of colonial conquest fundamentally entrenched within the field through persisting structures of coloniality. That is, rather than translating or echoing social categorizations of the past

(evolutionary conception), native-speakerism is fundamentally implicated in the continuous mobilization of race and racial inequality in contemporary capitalism.

The literature I reviewed highlights that the discussions about native and non-native speakers have focused mostly on linguistic aspects, disregarding the racialized aspect of the issue. By placing the non-native deficit framing within the broad logic of colonial power—at the center of which is the invention of race as a key category of social classification, control, and hierarchization—the framework of coloniality has allowed ELT researchers to criticize the mechanism that sustains the invisibility of race in ELT and explore possibilities for agency. A major contribution I found is precisely an urgency to examine how racialization, white norms, and other racial meanings are reproduced in ELT Global South educational practices (Granados; Costa Rosa & Duboc, Bonilla & Finardi).

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Another identity aspect considered in the literature departs from analyses of the mutual formation of race, conquest, and language instruction (Núñez Pardo, Mosquera-Pérez, Gutiérrez & Aguirre-Ortega, Castañeda-Peña & Méndez-Rivera, Granados; Costa Rosa & Duboc, Bonilla & Finardi).

In retheorizing the dominant position of the white speaker/listening subject,

ELT agents from the Global South are opening new subjectivities for how we can conceive of English teachers. In particular, there is an expressed urgency to call into question the validity of dualistic and deterministic language identities such as Native/Non-native, expose the fictive narrative of these dichotomies, and challenge the polarization they reproduce (Costa Rosa & Dúbo, 852; Núñez Pardo, 713-715; 720).

Ideas and actions interrupting colonial traditions in Global South ELT also concentrate on *unlearning* instrumental and uncritical language instruction as it blocks connections with social and cultural dimensions. Against the grain of the normative epistemology that constructs English language teachers as technician and consumer of knowledge, researchers Claudia Gutiérrez and Maure Aguirre Ortega who work on Afro-Colombian and indigenous students of English, advocate for socially, politically, ethically, and historically engaged teachers (789; 791-793).

There is an onto-epistemic shift at work here, in line with Freire's critical pedagogy (1987), away from the language teacher whose professional identity revolves around becoming a native-like speaker, a goal that is necessarily doomed to fail, and towards a pedagogue who creates spaces in their classroom and curriculum to critically analyze the power enacted through neoliberal languages policies, and

ELT practices that are mystified as neutral, colorblind, and meritocratic.

Indeed, teachers are local players who understand local conditions. Therefore, they have a central role in determining what the teaching and learning of English means for multicultural and multilingual countries such as Colombia and the ways how English should be taught in response to these multicultural and multilingual realities that exist in their classrooms. Neither the 'what' nor the 'how' can be generalized or made universal.

Changing the terms of the conversation on ELT requires going beyond the controversies and conflicts of interpretations within the field (Mignolo, 4). As long as these controversies and interpretations remain within the same rules of the game, the control over knowledge regarding what a Global South English teacher is supposed to be is not called into question. To challenge the modern/colonial foundation that controls ELT knowledge, it is necessary to focus on the 'knower'. In my view, this is what is at stake in facing the dilemmatic identity of the English teacher trapped between teaching for capitalism and teaching for social justice, and constituted by her devalued position of non-native speaker: A change in the geo- and body-politics of knowledge that both interrupts the one-way flow of prescriptive knowledge from Global North institutions to English classrooms in the

Global South. As Lynn Mario Menezes de Sousa puts it, this shift "brings back the body into our pedagogies, with its memory, experiences, history, and conflicts" (10-11).

Geo- and bodypolitics highlight the local body of instruction and the local context of instruction as legitimate spaces of knowledge production for her own needs and desires and not merely in service of capital. In giving more "centralidad a lo propio" (Ortiz Medina et al.) al cuerpo propio, la comunidad propia, la cultura propia, las condiciones historicas propias, these ELT pedagogies are owning and dominating English, taking control of it, and, thus, interrupting its coloniality.

¿Por qué enseñamos? Because English teachers, like all humanities teachers, have responsibility in the disruption of colonial power dynamics.

We teach to contribute to the betterment of communities, yes, but most importantly we teach to problematize how and from where "betterment" ("success", etc.) is understood, and sought.

Imagining alternative futures happens in the present, in the classrooms where and when linguistic agenda enters in conversation with other dimensions of life. When and where English, the object, is dominated and forced into English, the vehicle for the construction of humanizing

practices of knowledge and recognition. When and where English, the gatekeeper, is agonized and transformed into English,

the mediation to know the diverse other and to recognize oneself as a diverse individual (Granados, 640.)

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Harnessing technology to build cultural sensitivity in language education

Aprovechamiento de tecnologías para fomentar la sensibilidad cultural en la educación de idiomas



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Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected world, the role of technology in language education extends beyond mere tools for instruction to pivotal bridges connecting students with global cultures. This document explores innovative technological strategies that bring authentic cultural experiences into the classroom, enhancing language learning and fostering cultural sensitivity. By leveraging digital platforms, virtual experiences, and multimedia resources, educators can immerse students in the everyday realities of different cultures, thereby enriching their understanding and appreciation of the world.

The insights shared in this paper aim to guide educators in integrating these technologies into their curricula to create a more engaging, effective, and culturally sensitive language learning experience. This approach not only supports the development of language skills but also prepares students to be competent global citizens in a multicultural world. The discussion highlights the importance of adapting pedagogical practices to harness the full potential of technology, ultimately transforming language education into a dynamic and immersive experience.

Keywords: language education, technology integration, cultural sensitivity, pedagogical strategies, authentic learning environments, global citizenship.

Resumen

En un mundo cada vez más interconectado, la tecnología en la educación de idiomas va más allá de ser simples herramientas de instrucción, convirtiéndose en puentes que conectan a los estudiantes con culturas globales. Este documento explora estrategias tecnológicas innovadoras que traen experiencias culturales auténticas al aula, mejorando el aprendizaje de idiomas y fomentando la sensibilidad cultural. Al utilizar plataformas digitales, experiencias virtuales y recursos multimedia, los educadores pueden sumergir a los estudiantes en las realidades cotidianas de diferentes culturas, enriqueciendo así su comprensión y apreciación del mundo.

Las ideas compartidas aquí guían a los educadores en la integración de estas tecnologías en sus currículos para crear una experiencia de aprendizaje más atractiva, efectiva y culturalmente sensible. Este enfoque apoya el desarrollo de habilidades lingüísticas y prepara a los estudiantes para ser ciudadanos globales competentes en un mundo multicultural.

Palabras clave: educación de idiomas, integración tecnológica, sensibilidad cultural, estrategias pedagógicas, ambientes auténticos de aprendizaje, ciudadanía global

Development of the paper

In an increasingly interconnected world, the relevance of language education is undeniable. While in the past, students interacted with the target language only through teacher mediation, today, they have unprecedented access to authentic contexts through music, video games, and social media, just to name a few. While technology can partially bridge content access, language learning can enable students to actively participate and benefit from a globalized society.

The advent of the internet and global interaction makes a communicative approach to language learning more essential than ever. Between 2010 and 2015, the demand for multilingual workers in the United States increased from around 240,000 to 630,000 (New American Economy, 2017). In 2020, 70% of the job opportunities in Germany required the command of a language other than German (Brandt & Lagemann, 2022). With similar trends in other regions of the world, the need to

develop multilingual communicative skills is increasingly evident.

For students to reap the benefits of multilingualism in the global context, language learning must go beyond the traditional methods. The language education of this century requires learners to develop not only language skills but also cultural awareness and critical thinking. This in turn transforms the role of pedagogical mediation; while in the past, teachers were silos of knowledge working in isolation as the point of access to the language, now that learners can access the language and culture in authentic contexts, educators must act as lighthouses, guiding students to their language goals and helping them develop the skills needed to navigate authentic situations.

By leveraging current technologies, educators can create an environment where students are not only learning a language but also engaging in the everyday realities of different cultures. In doing so, they can develop cultural sensitivity and deepen their understanding of the world through critical thinking. The insights shared in this article seek to empower educators to implement some of these tools into their own curricula to create an engaging, effective, and culturally sensitive language learning experience.

Language education has undergone significant transformations over the past

century, reflecting broader changes in educational philosophies, methodologies, and technological advancements. In the early 1900s, the dominant method of language instruction was the Grammar-Translation Method. Rooted in studies of classical languages, this approach emphasized the rote memorization of vocabulary and grammatical rules (Piantaggini, L. 2020). Language learning was largely a theoretical exercise, with students translating texts between the target language and their native language. While this method provided a strong foundation in grammar, it often lacked practical application and failed to develop communicative competence.

The mid-20th century saw the rise of the Audiolingual Method, influenced by behaviorist theories of learning and the needs of the military during World War II. This method focused on repetition and drills; aiming to create automatic language responses, students practiced listening and speaking skills through recorded dialogues and pattern drills (Brooks, 1960). Despite its emphasis on oral skills, the Audiolingual Method was criticized for its lack of emphasis on meaningful communication and cultural context.

By the 1970s and 1980s, the Audiolingual Method led to the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This approach prioritized meaningful communication and practical language

use. The goal was to develop students' ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations. CLT introduced activities like role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks, promoting interaction and fluency over accuracy. It also began to integrate cultural learning, although often in a limited and stereotypical manner (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The introduction of personal computers in the 1980s brought about Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Early CALL programs offered interactive exercises, grammar tutorials, and vocabulary games. These tools provided immediate feedback and allowed for self-paced learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Despite these innovations, early CALL was often criticized for replicating traditional teaching methods in a digital format without fully leveraging the potential of technology.

The proliferation of the internet in the 2000s transformed the language education landscape. Online learning platforms and resources became widely accessible; websites and software like Rosetta Stone, Duolingo, and Babbel used multimedia elements to enhance learning experiences. In the classrooms, teachers were using platforms like Quizlet and Conjuguemos for the same purpose.

By now, language learners could also access a vast array of authentic materials, including

news articles, videos, and podcasts in their target language, facilitating exposure to real-world usage and cultural nuances. The following decade saw the rise of mobile technologies, further adding opportunities for language learning. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram provided new avenues for language practice and cultural exchange. Learners could engage in real-time conversations with native speakers, participate in language learning communities, and access user-generated content in various languages.

Although the new millennium provided the environment for a language learning revolution, many classrooms remain largely the same. Despite decades of research on contextualized language learning and learning through social activities (Stryker & Leaver, Eds, 2001; Byram & Grundy, 2003), practical implementation has been slow. Today, too many classrooms still plan their language curricula around isolated vocabulary and grammar topics.

To transform language education, we must consider what this transformation should look like and how to implement it effectively. Given students' access to technology, educators must plan learning experiences that harness their potential, anticipating that students will use technological tools to complete their tasks. This means educators need to be more purposeful in their planning, creating activities where students use the

language in context and for real purposes, and where they interact critically with the culture to develop cultural understanding.

In other words, teachers need to challenge students to learn with, not in spite of, the resources available to them.

Practical strategies for technology integration

Several strategies can help achieve this. Below are examples to inspire teachers' own ideas.

First, language learning experiences should be designed to push students to use the language in context. For instance, when learning about food, students can visit restaurant websites in the target language to see what is sold and how it is presented to customers. This activity exposes students to different currencies, ingredients, and other cultural elements naturally integrated into the site. Since many of these websites offer multilingual versions, rather than discouraging students from using their first language, educators can encourage them to use bilingual versions as needed to accomplish tasks in the target language. This approach views the first language as an asset rather than a liability in the language-learning classroom.

Another effective strategy is to leverage students' own online activities to enhance their second language skills. For example, students can be asked to find videos in the target language on topics of personal interest, turning these into comprehension activities or opportunities to analyze

content through a cultural lens. They can also follow social media influencers from the target culture, paying attention to cultural aspects of their interactions. These activities place students in the driver's seat of their education, enabling them to expand their knowledge through language and culture, kindling their curiosity, and encouraging them to continue learning beyond the classroom.

Other related uses of technology include the use of blogs, video clips, and other authentic materials for reading and listening activities. Because teachers also want students to develop critical thinking and research skills, learners can be asked to research their own authentic resources on assigned topics to bring to class. Even if students use their first language to support their research, the fact that they must locate and evaluate resources pushes them to develop skills that will serve them well in other areas of their lives.

While technology provides authentic contexts and scenarios, language learning is incomplete without human interaction. Many learners experience language anxiety when using their second language, particu-

larly when interacting with native speakers or people from the culture (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). It is crucial to use the target language in the classroom to provide students with authentic contexts and get them used to using the language. Furthermore, teachers can enhance immersion by regularly inviting native speakers or locals into the classroom. This practice helps students develop communicative strategies that can only be learned through real-life interactions.

In addition to using the language for communication in the classroom, teachers can leverage technology to introduce diverse voices and perspectives into the learning experience. Videoconferencing enables educators to invite guest speakers from around the world, offering students exposure to different cultures and dialects. Group interactions through these platforms allow students to engage in low-stakes communicative situations, helping them develop strategies to manage or reduce language anxiety. Individual sessions further enhance learning by highlighting the human elements behind the language and culture. While teachers can use their networks to find guest speakers, companies like *Lenguas Club* now offer virtual guest services for schools, facilitating these valuable cultural exchanges.

One common thread in the ideas proposed here is that students have some freedom and flexibility in their learning journey.

Educators will find themselves learning alongside the students, doing their own research to keep up with students' progress. This creates a dynamic classroom environment where the learning process is as valuable as the end product.

In addition to providing access to authentic content, technology can help teachers enhance their practice by offering tools to diversify their methods, strategies, and perspectives.

Current Language Learning Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT and Gemini provide teachers with robust tools for various teaching-related tasks. For instance, when developing a lesson based on a text, teachers can use LLMs to create vocabulary lists tailored to different language levels, scaffold versions of the text, or generate comprehension and critical thinking questions. The flexibility of these tools allows teachers to tailor their materials to meet the specific needs of their learners.

LLMs also help teachers expand their perspectives and access a wider range of resources for their students. When developing a unit on any given topic, educators can use LLMs to explore cultural aspects, brainstorm content delivery methods, assess students, and locate authentic materials for classroom use.

Moreover, LLMs are valuable tools for students as well. Teachers can ask stu-

dents to use LLMs for critical feedback on specific aspects of their work. For example, students tasked with writing a paragraph in a specific style or practicing particular language features can submit their work to an LLM and receive detailed feedback. However, it is crucial that students understand the value of the learning process and not rely solely on these tools to complete assignments. Teachers must ensure that students see these tools as aids in their learning journey.

LLMs have countless applications, helping both teachers and students accomplish tasks efficiently and effectively. Instead of viewing them as taboos, we should integrate them into the classroom to explore their potential and determine their role in future generations' lives. It is important to remember that these tools are meant to enhance, not replace, our abilities.

Language and communication intersect with most life experiences. Knowing that students can now access languages and cultures through technology, it is vital to help them develop not only linguistic skills but also cultural understanding and critical thinking. The ability to communicate ideas or understand messages is insufficient. To effectively engage with global society, students need the knowledge and skills to continually evaluate and learn.

The integration of technology in language education has the potential to revolutionize how students learn and engage with new languages and cultures. By incorporating digital platforms, virtual experiences, and multimedia resources, educators can create immersive and authentic learning environments that go beyond traditional methods. This approach not only enhances language skills but also fosters cultural sensitivity, critical thinking, and global awareness.

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El humor como herramienta pedagógica en la enseñanza de idiomas

Humor as a pedagogical tool in language teaching



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Abstract

The teacher's work is not only based on transmitting knowledge but must ensure that students internalize knowledge and obtain meaningful learning. Likewise, in the current technological era, we must aspire to achieve the T-Pack model, which seeks to integrate technology in education. Focusing on the teaching of second languages, a few decades ago, this area acquired a pragmatic-communicative approach in which "its ultimate goal is for the student to learn to function in all communicative situations in which he is involved, both linguistically and socially. culturally (Aliaga-Aguza, 2000, p. 637), since on many occasions there are errors in understanding that are linked to socio-cultural aspects, instead of to grammatical problems (Galera and Galera, 2000). This becomes complicated in the digital era, because not only the in-person context must be taken into account, but the virtual context that new technologies bring with them must be considered (Aliaga and Fernández, 2021). Currently, there are various pedagogical tools that accompany the teacher, among them, humor. The use of humor in the language classroom as a pedagogical tool is not something new. However, it has not yet been exploited.

Keywords: Humor, Pedagogical tool, Language class.

Resumen

La labor del docente no solo se basa en transmitir conocimientos, sino que ha de conseguir que el alumnado interiorice conocimientos y obtenga un aprendizaje significativo. Asimismo, en la era tecnológica actual, se ha de aspirar a alcanzar el modelo T-Pack, que busca integrar la tecnología en educación. Centrándonos en la enseñanza de segundas lenguas, desde hace unas décadas, esta área adquirió un enfoque pragmático-comunicativo en el que “su último fin es que el estudiante aprenda a desenvolverse en todas las situaciones comunicativas en las que se vea involucrado tanto lingüística como socio-culturalmente (Aliaga-Aguza, 2000, p. 637), ya que en muchas ocasiones hay errores de comprensión que se vinculan a aspectos socio-culturales, en lugar de a problemas gramaticales (Galera y Galera, 2000). Esto se complica en la era digital, porque no solo se ha de tener en cuenta el contexto presencial, sino que se ha de considerar el contexto virtual que trae consigo las nuevas tecnologías (Aliaga y Fernández, 2021). Actualmente, existen diversas herramientas pedagógicas que acompañan al docente, entre ellas, el humor. El uso del humor en el aula de idiomas como herramienta pedagógica no es algo nuevo; sin embargo, actualmente aún no se ha explotado.

Palabras clave: humor, herramienta pedagógica, aula de idiomas.

Introducción

La labor de un docente se basa tanto en transmitir conocimientos como en conseguir que el alumnado interiorice dichos conocimientos. Lo que se espera de un docente es que sepa transmitir conocimientos de forma efectiva, de tal forma que el alumnado obtenga un aprendizaje significativo.

Asimismo, en la era tecnológica en la que nos hallamos, un docente ha de aspirar a alcanzar el modelo T-Pack (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge, en inglés;

Conocimiento Técnico Pedagógico del Contenido), desarrollado por Punya Mishra y Matthew J. Koehler entre 2006 y 2009, en el que se busca integrar la tecnología en la educación, es decir, junto al conocimiento de contenidos y al conocimiento pedagógico, se ha de integrar el conocimiento tecnológico. En palabras de Blanco “la configuración del saber docente [se sustenta en] el conocimiento disciplinar, los contenidos curriculares, el conocimiento pedagógico y el conocimiento tecnológico” (2013, p. 151).

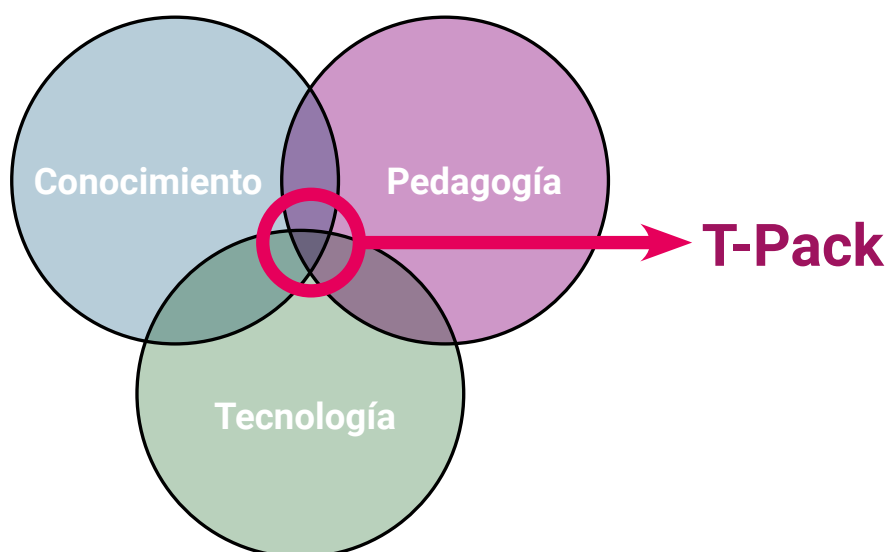
Este modelo establece trabajar las tres áreas de conocimiento mencionadas de manera interrelacionada. De este modo, se consiguen siete conocimientos específicos que no solo integran las nuevas tecnologías en el aula, sino que lo hace de manera efectiva, esto es, este modelo facilita la creación de espacios innovadores y creativos para el aprendizaje y la enseñanza (Salas-Rueda, 2019). De este modo, se usan las herramientas adecuadas para que el alumnado alcance los resultados de aprendizaje deseados.

A través de este modelo, por un lado, encontramos los tres conocimientos base: (1) los contenidos que cada docente imparte en su aula, (2) la pedagogía, es decir, el modo en que cada docente lleva esos conocimientos al aula (metodología, métodos, etc.) y (3) la tecnología, las herramientas tecnológicas que se usan para tal fin.

Por otro lado, tenemos la combinación de dichos conocimientos: (4) conocimiento pedagógico del contenido, en el que el docente adapta el contenido que ha de llevar al aula con unas bases pedagógicas para que sea acorde al nivel de enseñanza, (5) conocimiento tecnológico del contenido, en el que se buscan las tecnologías más adecuadas para llevar ese contenido al aula, (6) conocimiento tecnológico pedagógico, a través del cual el docente sabe si esas herramientas tecnológicas son las más adecuadas para el fin que se está buscando.

Por último, la conjugación de todos estos conocimientos nos lleva al modelo T-Pack, en el que el docente transmite contenido a través de la metodología y de las herramientas más adecuadas para que el alumnado consiga un aprendizaje significativo.

Figura 1. Modelo T-Pack.



Si nos centramos en la enseñanza de segundas lenguas, desde hace unas décadas, esta área adquirió un enfoque pragmático–comunicativo en el que “su último fin es que el estudiante aprenda a desenvolverse en todas las situaciones comunicativas en las que se vea involucrado tanto lingüística como socio-culturalmente (Aliaga-Aguza, 2000, p. 637), ya que en muchas ocasiones hay errores de comprensión que se vinculan a aspectos socio-culturales, en lugar de a problemas con el sistema lingüístico (Galera y Galera, 2000). Este enfoque comunicativo surgió en los años 70, cuando, desde la Etnografía de la Comunicación, se empezó a considerar la enseñanza de idiomas como un fenómeno social en el que se debe “saber cuándo hablar y cuándo permanecer en silencio, qué código utilizar, cuándo, dónde y respecto a quién” (Hymes, 1967, p. 13). Gracias al componente pragmático, se consiguen hablantes competentes, puesto que, ya sea desde la perspectiva de la pragmática como comunicación lingüística o como estudio del lenguaje en uso, esta disciplina se fundamenta en el enfoque comunicativo, en el que se entiende el habla como actuación. De este modo, en el aula

se han de crear situaciones comunicativas reales en la que se cree “una interacción activa entre el componente gramatical de la lengua, el sociolingüístico, el discursivo y las estrategias comunicativas” (Vez, 1988, p. 44).

Asimismo, desde un punto de vista cognitivo, se puede entender la lengua como una faceta integral de cognición, en la que se refleja la interacción entre condiciones sociales, culturales, psicológicas, comunicativas y funcionales que solo puede entenderse en el contexto de una visión realista de la adquisición, el desarrollo cognitivo y el proceso mental (Brône *et al.*, 2006). Esta idea vuelve a reflejar la importancia del componente pragmático (entendido como instrumento de comunicación) a la hora de aprender una lengua. Este hecho se complica en la era digital, puesto que ya no solo se ha de tener en cuenta (y enseñar) en un contexto presencial, sino que se ha de considerar el contexto virtual que trae consigo las nuevas tecnologías (Aliaga y Fernández, 2021). Actualmente, existen diversas herramientas pedagógicas que acompañan al docente. Una de ellas es el humor.

El humor como herramienta pedagógica en el aula

El humor es un fenómeno metapragmático intrínseco al ser humano, que le acompaña a lo largo de la vida, bien para atenuar mo-

mentos difíciles o bien para establecer relaciones sociales. De hecho, dicho fenómeno permite establecer diferentes vínculos con

otras personas, independientemente de la edad o cultura, al mismo tiempo que nos acerca y nos descubre como personas (Francia y Fernández, 2009). Además, se ha de considerar también que el humor cambia dependiendo de la época, del lugar y de la cultura en el que se dé y no solo eso, sino también puede cambiar dentro de un mismo grupo, puesto que un enunciado humorístico puede resultar ofensivo en otro contexto, ya que la hilaridad se vincula a las creencias de las personas (Vorhaus, 2005).

Dentro del aula, el humor presenta varios beneficios; por un lado, este fenómeno metapragmático fomenta la relación existente entre el alumnado y el profesorado dentro y fuera del aula (Morales, 1998, Fernández 2003, 2009). Por otro lado, el humor promueve el buen desarrollo del proceso de enseñanza–aprendizaje (Fernández, 2012, 2016, 2017; Fernández y García, 2010; Tamblyn, 2006) y, además, rompe “los paradigmas tradicionales de la educación, y crea el ambiente agradable de aprendizaje y comprensión de los temas propios de la educación formal” (Rodríguez y León, 2011, p. 139). Asimismo, por medio del humor, se consigue llevar al aula de idiomas ejercicios prácticos y dinámicos para que el alumnado desarrolle las competencias que estemos trabajando en ese momento, puesto que este fenómeno estimula al alumnado, enriquece el proceso de enseñanza–aprendizaje (Droin, 1993), mejora

el entorno de clase, fomenta el aprendizaje y favorece la evaluación del profesorado (Weems, 2015). Al mismo tiempo que genera emociones positivas que benefician tanto al proceso de enseñanza–aprendizaje, como a la salud. Además, el humor motiva al alumnado para estar más predispuesto a asumir los contenidos curriculares (Aliaga y Morán, 2022).

Si se presta atención al valor pedagógico del humor, se puede comprobar que en los últimos años están proliferando las propuestas didácticas que usan como herramienta pedagógica el humor no solo en el área de la enseñanza de lenguas, sino en otras áreas de conocimiento, por citar un ejemplo, en la propuesta de Vargas y Ruiz (2020) se fomentó el rendimiento académico en el aula de historia, concretamente, a través del meme humorístico, el alumnado aprendió diferentes acontecimientos históricos.

Ya en el aula de la enseñanza de idiomas, Aliaga–Aguza (2022) hizo una prueba con dos grupos de B2 de español para extranjeros. Uno de los grupos, aprendió diferentes figuras retóricas de forma tradicional, mientras que el otro analizó estas mismas figuras retóricas por medio de publicidad humorística impresa. Como resultado, se comprobó que el grupo que había utilizado el humor como herramienta pedagógica interiorizó de forma más efectiva dichos recursos retóricos.

Centrándonos en el área de lengua castellana, ya sea en su modalidad de lengua materna, como segunda lengua o lengua extranjera, merece la pena mencionar diferentes trabajos en los que se ha utilizado el humor como herramienta pedagógica.

1. El trabajo de Aliaga–Aguza y López Pena (2021) en el que se utiliza la publicidad humorística para enseñar diferentes contenidos en el aula de Lengua Castellana.
2. El trabajo de Horno–Chéliz (2022) propone actividades para trabajar la morfología de forma inductiva.
3. El trabajo de Aliaga–Aguza y Morán (2022) se centra en la comedia de situación para trabajar diferentes aspectos culturales y sociales divergentes en diferentes culturas como pueden ser la moneda, el deporte, la comida o el juego para integrar al alumnado inmigrante en el aula.
4. El trabajo de Aliaga–Aguza y Morán (2023) ofrece herramientas didácticas con el humor como herramienta pedagógica al futuro profesor del aula de Lengua Castellana.
5. El trabajo de Aliaga–Aguza (2024) enseña la formación de palabras por medio de recursos humorísticos.

Desde un punto de vista lingüístico–pragmático podemos definir el humor como un proceso inferencial (Ruiz-Gurillo, 2012,

2019) en el que se produce una incongruencia ya sea lingüística o contextual, que hace que se tenga que reinterpretar el enunciado desde un modo humorístico para que se genere risa en el oyente. Dicha incongruencia se entiende como aquel aspecto social o cultural que sobrepasa los límites establecidos socialmente y se usa para generar risa en el oyente (Aliaga-Aguza, 2020).

El humor se apoya en mecanismos humorísticos como marcas (lingüísticas y no lingüísticas), indicadores lingüísticos (Ruiz-Gurillo y Padilla, 2009) y estrategias propias (Aliaga-Aguza, 2020) que guían al oyente hacia una reinterpretación del enunciado de forma humorística. Dichos mecanismos, en palabras de Ruiz-Gurillo “son recursos lingüísticos comunes que aceptan, por lo general, una interpretación recta, pero en contextos irónicos se convierten en pistas fiables que ayudan al oyente/lector en la interpretación” (2012, p. 117). En otras palabras, estos recursos poseen una doble función, pueden ser componentes lingüísticos propios de la lengua que se quiera enseñar o pueden tener una función humorística, como pueden ser las relaciones semánticas, la formación de palabras o las figuras retóricas, entre otros. Esta idiosincrasia es la que se puede explotar en el aula de idiomas como herramienta pedagógica.

Conclusiones

El uso del humor en el aula de idiomas como herramienta pedagógica efectiva no es algo nuevo. Sin embargo, a pesar de las diferentes propuestas que se han presentado con el humor como herramienta didáctica, actualmente no se ha explotado esta herramienta metapragmática. Como se ha intentado demostrar, el humor no solo tiene valor pedagógico, sino que también posee una función motivadora, ya que despierta el interés y el entusiasmo entre los estudiantes (Barrio y Fernández, 2010). Asimismo, utilizar el humor en el aula de idiomas favorece el clima de aula, rompe con los paradigmas pedagógicos tradicionales y crea un ambiente el cual favorece la comprensión de los contenidos (Rodríguez y León, 2011). Además, el uso de material humorístico permite la adaptación a las necesidades de cada momento y consigue que el alumnado se implique más e, incluso, pierda esa timidez que se puede tener cuando se practica una lengua (Iglesias-Casal, 2000).

El humor posee múltiples funciones. No solo sirve para divertir, sino que también “puede servir para transmitir ideas de manera diferente, de modo que estas sean aceptadas y entendidas por el colectivo” (González, 2011, p. 244); además, consigue que el estudiante reflexione sobre el funcionamiento de la lengua, ya que, por medio de la incongruencia generada,

se ha de comprender el funcionamiento del recurso lingüístico que interviene en el humor. Además, “relacionar el humor con el material aprendido resulta clave porque mantiene la mente centrada. El humor obliga a nuestra mente a trabajar más que si las ideas se presentaran de una manera directa” (Weems, 2015, p. 217). Y no solo eso, sino que también “al ilustrar las nociones teóricas del lenguaje mediante ejemplos humorísticos superamos las dificultades experimentadas en clase, donde estos conceptos suelen aparecer arduos e intrincados de entender a los ojos de los estudiantes” (Mura y Timofeeva, 2015, p. 825).

Con el uso del humor como herramienta pedagógica en el aula de idiomas, el alumnado experimenta placer al mismo tiempo que aprende, por lo que adquiere un aprendizaje significativo (González, 2011), “y es que el humor es un ejercicio del cerebro, e igual que el ejercicio físico beneficia el cuerpo; el humor hace lo propio con la masa cerebral, la cual se utiliza, por cierto, para el proceso educativo” (Fernández, 2017, p. 4). Por todo lo expuesto hasta el momento, el humor se convierte en una herramienta útil y necesaria en el aula de idiomas, pues por medio del humor se consigue que los estudiantes de idiomas interioricen y aprendan de manera significativa la lengua meta.

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Inclusive teachers: the challenge of interculturality in the language classroom

Docentes inclusivos: el reto de la interculturalidad en aula de idiomas



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Abstract

This paper describes a practical workshop in which the concepts of diversity, equity, and interculturality and their importance in the foreign language classroom were addressed. Tools were offered to develop these competencies as inclusive teachers following the challenges set out in the Inclusive Higher Education Policy Guidelines of the Colombian Ministry of National Education (2013), specifically the second challenge, “having inclusive teachers”. The document Intercultural Competences: Conceptual and Operational Framework of UNESCO (2017), which emphasizes the link between diversity and intercultural dialogues, was also taken into consideration. Finally, based on the Curricular Plan of the Cervantes Institute (2006), the importance of valuing the diversity of learners of Spanish as a foreign language as social agents, intercultural speakers, and autonomous learners is pointed out. During the workshop, the participants first considered the meaning of the term “inclusive education”, then

analyzed critically in groups the description of two teachers of Spanish as a second language to decide whether their pedagogical practices were interculturally inclusive or not, finally they designed an activity or strategy to promote diversity, equity, and interculturality in their classrooms.

Keywords: Diversity; Inclusivity; Intercultural Competence; Foreign Languages; Teaching.

Resumen

Este artículo ofrece la descripción de un taller práctico mediante el cual se abordaron los conceptos de diversidad, equidad e interculturalidad y su importancia en el aula de lengua extranjera. El objetivo del taller fue presentar diferentes herramientas para desarrollar estas competencias como docentes inclusivos siguiendo los retos recogidos en los *Lineamientos de Política de Educación Superior Inclusiva* del Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia (2013), concretamente, el segundo reto: “contar con profesores inclusivos”. Asimismo, se tuvo en consideración el documento *Competencias interculturales: marco conceptual y operativo* de la UNESCO (2017), el cual enfatiza el vínculo entre la diversidad y los diálogos interculturales. Por último, basado en el *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (2006), se señala la importancia de valorar la diversidad de los aprendientes de español como lengua extranjera viéndolos como agentes sociales, hablantes interculturales y aprendientes autónomos. Durante el taller, los participantes primero consideraron el significado del término “educación inclusiva”, luego analizaron críticamente en grupos la descripción de dos docentes de español como segunda lengua para decidir si sus prácticas pedagógicas eran interculturalmente inclusivas o no; finalmente, diseñaron una actividad o estrategia para promover la diversidad, la equidad y la interculturalidad en sus aulas.

Palabras clave: diversidad; inclusividad; competencia intercultural; lenguas extranjeras; docencia.

Introducción

La práctica docente inclusiva en el aula de lenguas extranjeras no es una tarea sencilla de llevar a cabo e incluso puede resultar un

reto para muchos docentes, ya que, como educadores, debemos tener en consideración una serie de realidades sociales existentes

en el siglo XXI, tanto dentro como fuera de nuestras aulas. Como herramienta práctica para el docente principiante o experimentado, el presente artículo ofrece la descripción de un taller de naturaleza online centrado en el concepto de interculturalidad para docentes de ELE, el cual puede extrapolarse a la enseñanza de cualquier otra lengua extranjera. El taller se enfoca en tres áreas pedagógicas principales: el trato a los estudiantes dentro del aula, la presentación de los contenidos lingüísticos y el trabajo con conceptos culturales.

La educación del siglo XXI tiene como objetivo la creación de ambientes más inclusivos en las aulas, tanto desde un punto de vista pedagógico como sociocultural. En consonancia con esto, diferentes organismos, como el Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia (MEN), la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO) o el Instituto Cervantes (IC) señalan la importancia de valorar la diversidad de los estudiantes y tener presente la equidad e interculturalidad en el aula.

De acuerdo con los *Lineamientos de Política de Educación Superior Inclusiva* del Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia, las seis características de la educación inclusiva son “la participación, la diversidad, la interculturalidad, la equidad, la pertinencia y la calidad” (2013, p. 27). Todas relacionadas entre sí sirven como base para crear un sistema educativo que

responda a las necesidades y diferencias de todos los estudiantes.

La participación implica que la educación no solo forma ciudadanos democráticos, sino que también es clave para promover la justicia social. Involucra la interacción social dentro de una comunidad con objetivos comunes y destaca la importancia de la responsabilidad recíproca en el aprendizaje conjunto. La diversidad, considerada una característica innata del ser humano, debe ser valorada sin patologizar las diferencias. La educación inclusiva debe reconocer y proteger la identidad y particularidades de los estudiantes que requieren especial protección debido a factores sociales, económicos, políticos, culturales, lingüísticos, físicos y geográficos.

Más allá de la coexistencia de varias culturas (multiculturalidad), la interculturalidad promueve un diálogo abierto y crítico entre personas de diferentes culturas. Busca aprender del otro y aprovechar la riqueza implícita en la diversidad, fomentando la capacidad transformadora de las instituciones educativas para asegurar una educación de calidad para todos. Por otro lado, *equidad* significa adaptar el sistema educativo a la diversidad estudiantil, proporcionando a cada estudiante lo que necesita según sus diferencias y necesidades individuales; es decir, va más allá de la igualdad, buscando identificar y superar las desigualdades para alcanzar una igualdad sustantiva en oportunidades y resultados.

La pertinencia se refiere a la capacidad del sistema educativo para responder proactivamente a las necesidades concretas de su entorno social, económico, cultural y político. Esto implica que la enseñanza sea relevante y adecuada para favorecer a la comunidad, centrada tanto en los procedimientos como en los fundamentos. Finalmente, y –aunque difícil de definir de manera unánime– la calidad en la educación se relaciona con las condiciones óptimas que permiten el mejoramiento continuo. En la educación superior colombiana, esto incluye la cualificación docente, el desarrollo de la investigación y la relevancia de la proyección social, junto con procesos de aseguramiento de la calidad y la acreditación.

De este modo, en un mundo interconectado y globalizado, “[e]l desarrollo de competencias interculturales facilita las relaciones e interacciones entre personas de varios orígenes y culturas, así como dentro de grupos heterogéneos” (p. 11). Al fomentar el desarrollo de estas competencias en las aulas de lenguas extranjeras, los docentes pueden ayudar a sus estudiantes a desarrollar “una conciencia de mismidad y otredad con mucha más gente, evitando riesgos como la reproducción de estereotipos y la promoción de una perspectiva esencialista de la cultura” (p. 11).

Por otro lado, el *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (2001) –una obra de referencia de

primer orden para cualquier iniciativa relacionada con el diseño y desarrollo curricular en el campo de la enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera– defiende que se debe tener una visión del español como una lengua plural y diversa, cuya diversidad no impide el mutuo entendimiento entre sus hablantes y que su enseñanza y aprendizaje puede llevarse a cabo con el fin de que sea posible una comunicación efectiva con cualquiera de ellos. Además, recomienda aprovechar, en medida de lo posible, la variedad de acentos y procedencias de los hablantes de español para que sus estudiantes puedan conocerlos.

Asimismo, este marco de referencia señala la importancia de que el propio docente, si es nativo de la lengua, atienda y haga referencia a los rasgos lingüísticos de su propia variedad con el fin de que los aprendientes los comprendan. La dimensión cultural de la lengua española también se caracteriza por su amplia variedad tanto dentro de España como fuera, en los países hispanoamericanos. Por ello, el IC subraya la necesidad de incluir esta dimensión en la enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera. Además, teniendo en cuenta al estudiante, se considera necesario tener presente la gran diversidad cultural del mundo contemporáneo y saber reconocer las diferencias desde un punto de vista equitativo, es decir, la necesidad de tratar a cada individuo de la manera más justa de acuerdo con su singularidad.

Tanto el *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (2001) como el marco conceptual y operativo de la UNESCO (2017) subrayan la importancia de desarrollar la competencia intercultural. Además, este segundo en concreto señala que es necesario convertir el propio comportamiento en interculturalmente competente para sobrevivir en la sociedad global actual e indica que esta competencia se obtiene tanto a través de la enseñanza como mediante la interacción con productos culturales.

Por último, cabe mencionar que este taller se ha llevado a cabo tomando como referencia la enseñanza de español como lengua extranjera, pero se puede aplicar a la enseñanza de cualquier idioma. Dentro de Europa, el documento de referencia en este campo es el *Marco común europeo de referencia para las lenguas, volumen complementario* (2020), con el que el Consejo de Europa pretende que se desarrollen áreas como la mediación, la competencia plurilingüe/pluricultural y la competencia en lengua de signos.

Metodología

Esta sección describe los pasos que se llevaron a cabo en un taller de 40 minutos *online* ofrecido en un congreso internacional sobre mediación pedagógica y aprendizaje de lenguas.

Una vez que los participantes se conectaron a la plataforma *online* y tras una cálida bienvenida con saludos y preguntas iniciales, se les pidió que reflexionaran sobre el término “educación inclusiva” y cómo se aplica este concepto dentro del aula de idiomas. En este momento los diferentes docentes expresaron sus ideas a través del chat o de sus micrófonos y los dos facilitadores fueron comentando las respectivas respuestas, resumieron las ideas principales y las conectaron con el tema del taller (5 minutos).

Tras despertar su curiosidad y activar su participación, en la segunda parte del taller, se presentaron dos casos de docentes ficticios de ELE con el fin de que los participantes los analizaran de forma crítica.

Por un lado, se describió a Matilda:

Matilda es una profesora de español como lengua extranjera en un centro para inmigrantes en Sevilla. Ella ha enseñado español a estudiantes adultos durante 25 años y disfruta enseñando su ciudad a sus estudiantes, llevándolos a espectáculos flamencos y excursiones por la ciudad. Dentro del aula de español, se caracteriza por su seriedad y disciplina. Se centra en la cultura de su ciudad, Sevilla, y no conoce las culturas de sus estudiantes. De hecho,

ella espera que sus estudiantes se integren en la sociedad sevillana y abandonen sus culturas de origen. Por ello, no permite a sus estudiantes el uso de sus lenguas maternas porque quiere que practiquen lo máximo posible la lengua que están aprendiendo. No obstante, trata a todos los alumnos por igual, sin tener en cuenta sus diferencias. Sus clases son tradicionales y teóricas, enfocándose principalmente en la gramática y la memorización de vocabulario. Sus lecciones suelen seguir un formato de lección magistral, donde ella es la principal fuente de información y los alumnos son receptores pasivos.

Por otro lado, se describió a Norma:

Norma es una profesora de español como segunda lengua en una universidad de Bogotá. Ella ha enseñado español a estudiantes adolescentes y adultos durante diez años y disfruta hablando sobre diferentes ciudades hispanohablantes a sus estudiantes, les enseña visitas virtuales sobre lugares emblemáticos como Machu Picchu o la Patagonia argentina. Su aula de español está distribuida en diferentes rincones, donde los estudiantes realizan actividades para trabajar la lectura (el rincón de lectura), la escritura multimodal (el rincón digital) o la dramatización (el rincón del teatro). La norma establece con sus estudiantes una relación de confianza entre iguales en la que los estudiantes se apoyan en

ella y ella aprende de sus experiencias personales. Sus alumnos hablan sobre sus diferentes culturas de origen y utilizan las variedades de español u otras lenguas que utilizan en sus casas, además del español como lengua vehicular. De este modo, la norma guía a sus estudiantes a comparar y contrastar las culturas que conocen y las que están adquiriendo. Sus lecciones ponen al alumno en el centro del aprendizaje, con prácticas, la gramática se adquiere de forma inductiva y expone a diferentes tipos de vocabulario a través de vídeos, podcasts, lecturas y actividades culturales externas como visitas al museo o excursiones al mercado.

Tras esta presentación de 5 minutos, los participantes se dividieron en pequeños grupos para analizar cada caso. Se les pidió que identificaran aspectos destacados del trato al alumnado y la metodología seguida por cada docente en la enseñanza de ELE. Una vez transcurrido el tiempo permitido para este análisis (10 minutos), cada grupo presentó sus análisis y se guió una discusión crítica sobre las observaciones y aprendizajes clave, resaltando la importancia de la tolerancia y la empatía por parte de los docentes inclusivos. A través de este trabajo de análisis, se pretendió guiar a los participantes a la asimilación de los conceptos clave de esta presentación: diversidad, discriminación, prejuicio, competencia intercultural, interacción intercultural y comunicación intercultural

inclusiva. De esta manera se buscó, asimismo, sensibilizar a los participantes de la importancia de la tolerancia y empatía dentro del aula.

Por último, los participantes trabajaron de forma colaborativa durante 10 minutos para poner en práctica los conceptos teóricos aprendidos dentro de sus propias aulas. Para ello, en la tercera parte, se propuso una dinámica colaborativa. Los participantes trabajaron en grupos para diseñar una actividad o estrategia que promoviera la diversidad, equidad e interculturalidad en sus aulas de lengua extranjera. Utilizando la herramienta colaborativa de Google Docs en línea, desarrollaron sus propuestas y, posteriormente, cada grupo presentó

su actividad o estrategia, para después recibir retroalimentación constructiva del facilitador y otros participantes (5 minutos).

El taller concluyó con un resumen de los puntos clave abordados, una reflexión final sobre la importancia de aplicar estos conceptos en el aula de lenguas extranjeras y una invitación a seguir explorando y practicando la inclusión (5 minutos). Los facilitadores agradecieron a los participantes por su participación y se despidieron, habiendo ofrecido a los docentes participantes nuevas herramientas para fomentar un ambiente inclusivo y respetuoso en sus aulas.

Conclusión

La práctica docente inclusiva en el aula de lenguas extranjeras, aunque desafiante, es crucial para enfrentar las realidades sociales del siglo XXI. Fomentar competencias interculturales en las aulas de lenguas extranjeras ayuda a evitar estereotipos y promueve una perspectiva amplia y diversa de la cultura. Además, es crucial reconocer y valorar la diversidad lingüística y cultural, tanto en el español como en otras lenguas. El taller *online* descrito en este artículo se centra en la interculturalidad, propor-

cionando herramientas prácticas para docentes de ELE y otros idiomas. Aborda tres áreas pedagógicas fundamentales: trato a los estudiantes, presentación de contenidos lingüísticos y trabajo con conceptos culturales para promover un ambiente educativo inclusivo y equitativo. Este taller, aplicable a cualquier idioma, espera contribuir a una educación inclusiva de calidad, promoviendo el plurilingüismo y el pluriculturalismo, esenciales para la sociedad global actual.

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Flipped learning in L2 acquisition

Aprendizaje invertido en la adquisición de una segunda lengua



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Abstract

Traditionally, education has been seen as knowledge transfer from the instructor to learners within the classroom. The eagerness to change this paradigm exists for some decades. The traditional model has been changed by different domains which urge the need of a shift in the teacher-centered instruction model, especially in the study and acquisition of various languages (Mehring & Leis, 2017). It has been also colloquially described as “the process of flipping what has traditionally been done inside the classroom to independent homework activities preceding the lesson. Thus, the lesson involves problem-solving and higher order thinking tasks traditionally assigned to subsequent homework activities” (Vitta & Al-Hoorie, 2024, p.2). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses are now becoming increasingly under research in the L2 field. Meta-analytic work should be carried out due to the range of skills that underpin an L2 such as writing, reading, listening, speaking, vocabulary and pragmatics, amongst others. There is a multidimensional space to explore into the effectiveness of this methodology and the implications for future research and findings. The aim of this paper is to provide with a practical example for an intermediate level of English lesson.

Palabras clave: Flipped learning, L2 Language Acquisition, Methodological Approach, Different Skills.

Introduction

Flipped Learning is a type of strategy which aims at increasing learners' engagement through problem-solving group tasks in class time and different types of lectures or video instruction at home. In a flipped classroom, those activities traditionally considered homework are moved into the class, and learners watch online videos or participate in debates or do research at home whereas engaging in content in the class under the supervision of the instructor.

In the traditional classroom, the instructor is the main focus and the information communicator and propagator during the in-class time. Learners defer to instructors for feedback and guidance while instructors address the questions that arise. The lecture style is normally used in a traditional approach through the content explanations and, the in-time is devoted to the different tasks designed by the instructor in small groups or independently. The debates are controlled by the instructor (Ryback and Sanders, 1980).

Working on a concept through problem-solving tasks and reading from textbooks are examples of teaching outside the classroom in this model. Flipped learning shifts instruction from the teacher-centered role to the student-centered role in which in-time class is committed to

creating different learning opportunities where new topics are introduced in order for the student to get further subjects in the matter.

With the use of this method, "content delivery" takes a wide range of forms such as video lessons, online collaborative discussions, text reading, and digital research. The ideal flipped classroom may last between 8 to 12 minutes (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015).

In-class activities are also redefined as they may contain innovative or more traditional homework problems to engage students in the content. The type of activities may depend on the subject, for example, in a Math's class, it would be convenient to use emerging mathematical technologies, current debates and discussions, concept practice, and laboratory experiments among others (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

As the higher layers of Bloom's taxonomy, higher-order thinking skills are boosted such as collaboration, work in groups, design, problem-solving, etc. (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

The instructor-learner interaction is less didactic and personalized, and learners are involved in their own learning which leads to self-assessment (Urgiles et al, 2020).

History and origins

The first work seen as an outline of a flipped concept was in *“From Sage on the Stage to Guide on the Side”* published by Alison King in 1993. She first outlined the importance of in-time classes for learning construction rather than information transmission. King’s work is referred to as “an impetus for an inversion to allow for the educational space for active learning” (King, 1993).

Eric Mazur, a Harvard professor played a key role in the development of the methodology as the developer of the “peer-instruction technology”. His book

“Peer Instruction” A User’s Manual emphasizes this method as the information is transferred out of the class and its assimilation is transferred to the class allowing students to acquire higher-order skills (Mazur & Crouch, 2001).

“Inverting the Classroom: A Gateway to Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment” (2000) is a paper published by Lage, Platt, and Treglia, in which they assess the results of flipped classrooms in tertiary education having the students meet their needs through a range of learning styles.

Foreign Language Classes

The magistral classes are taken at home by viewing video-lectures so as to create spare time for practical tasks. This may include debates, writing tasks, and reading

literature in the target language. The videos and online assessment have freed the teacher to undertake engaging activities in the classroom.

The role of the teacher

In their interesting analysis of Raul Santiago and John Bergmann in their book “Flipped Learning” (2018), they distinguish these key features of the teacher’s role and the evolution throughout the years.

With the arrival of the 21st century and its changes, the educational dynamic has been altered. To keep updated, the current

teacher must strengthen and modify their competences. Nowadays, the learning process is claimed not to be reduced to a mere transmission of data but has become an especially creative mission. How to connect knowledge is now key rather than accumulating data. Education professionals are aware of the fact that schools, students, and jobs have changed, and the teacher has

no longer a preeminent role. The current system of schools was built on the notion of a fixed amount of knowledge disclosed by a single teacher in a physical classroom.

However, the traditional teacher's role would remain immutable since good teaching has not changed over the years. When adopting Flipped Learning 3.0 these roles can be improved. The authors Matthew J-Koehler, Punya Mishra, and William Cain (2013) identify these roles in their TPACK model summarized in content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge. The teacher's field of specialization and pedagogical knowledge are in some cases disassociated when they should merge in terms of subject, technology, and pedagogy. It is a unique combination that should be applied depending on multiple factors such as culture, demography, course, etc.

The teacher needs to be a content expert who should dominate the subject. Mastering and updating the knowledge of chemistry, history, languages, literature, mechanics, etc., is necessary. In fact, an effective flipped teacher needs to be more adept at content than a traditional teacher. Since students will often be at different levels of learning during a lesson, and this can happen even at the beginning, the teacher will have to know their syllabus in such depth that it allows them to move from one group to another or from one student to another with agility and decide if a student needs

help or if they are ready to progress, both in the level and the extent of their learning it is also important to know what content could be practiced individually or in a team. The teacher's role becomes more flexible and creative. The pupil is guided to relevant content through the information with tools that facilitate these: social networks, videos, applications, etc.

The teacher should also be a good planner, being able to design attractive material and a strategy is key to good teaching. All teachers must be able to design attractive teaching units, regardless of the type of methodology or strategy they use. But we could say that flipped teachers are even more obliged to do so considering that they will spend time creating content. Designing is the process of filtering, grouping, and selecting the information. Teachers should invest time in creating new content and foresee the things that can function. He should be a good conferee to prepare practical tasks in the individual space.

The teacher should be close and trustworthy as students are claimed to succeed when they feel they have the support of their teachers. Personal abilities are more important for teachers who apply Flipped Learning, this leads to positive relationships and more efficient classrooms. Teachers have more time to interact with students who, in turn, have more opportunities to participate in class. These connections between the student and the teacher could

be cognitive, effective, or social. Personal skills are essential to educators who incorporate flipped learning. The relational aspect acquires greater importance and leads to more efficient classrooms.

The teacher should be a cognitive trainer. When a teacher applies flipped instruction, they have more time to interact cognitively with students and this role is much more amplified. The extra class time available enables teachers to understand the cognitive strengths and individual challenges of each of their students. Teachers claim that using this method allows them to approach the students with greater clarity.

The teacher as a differentiation expert, should be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each student and guide him to the appropriate way of learning. Having more time to assist students gives the teacher the possibility to use the best differentiation strategies. More than training a student, there is an opportunity for teachers to apply the latest differentiation strategies. The good news is that flipped learning is based precisely on differentiation. As teachers free extra time in class, it is possible for them to approach students individually using effective and creative strategies.

As it is essential for teachers to interact with students, they also become experts in questioning them. Effective flipped teachers deepen the quality of interactions with students. Instead of asking a series of

questions in a lecture format, teachers can ask questions as they move around the classroom, in this way, they quickly discover that not all students need the same level of questioning. Asking quality questions becomes vital in this method (Sams & Bergmann, 2013).

The teacher also becomes an active learning expert. Flipped learning does not only consist of showing videos but of rethinking class time. This raises a question for the teacher: "What will I do in class if I am not explaining the subject?" The answers to this question are many and varied. Teachers must incorporate the best possible active learning strategies to make the group space meaningful and attractive.

Although flipped learning is not based on technology, there is an important technical component to this method. Unlike other roles we've handled, we are saying "knowledgeable" and not "expert". Teachers must master the use of some of the technological tools needed to change their classrooms. The good news is that the tools that are created today are mostly simple and intuitive. Some teachers turn their classrooms around using video cameras on their mobile phones and others use more elaborate technological tools. The key is not to let technology become a limiting factor and to use what is available. Make sure the tools you choose are easy to adopt and easily accessible for both faculty and students (Sams & Bergmann, 2014).

The creative function of the teacher is also key in this method. The teaching work encompasses the design, application, and evaluation of each part of the learning process. The educator aims to generate a culture of innovation and at the same time, they are responsible for making knowledge effective for students. Their objective is to prepare students to think

critically and train them to understand, optimize, deepen, and connect information. They need to develop two essential competences: know how to manage coherent methodologies that capture student learning as their essential core. On the other hand, it is essential to develop the technological training required by the level of the course.

The role of the student

The students acquire an active role, they are responsible for their learning in an active, autonomous, communicative, participative, and collaborative way. They can choose the type of material that fits best with the way they learn and at their own pace. In a team, they have the possibility of participating when making decisions, solving problems, and fostering their critical thinking.

The students can build their own thinking by searching and synthesizing the information and integrating it with their communicative skills, reflexive thinking, and problem-solving. It is vital for them to become extremely organized. To achieve the goals, students must struggle with the fact that they have to be prepared for the classes, this is probably one of the most important challenges for teachers who perform the flipped model and for schools or departments that wish to implement the

model in their courses or subjects. Finding balance without overwhelming students requires careful planning, therefore, these roles involve self-regulation, organization, and planning. (Montaner-Villalba, 2019).

This role also implies cooperation and commitment. Most of the students describe the flipped classroom as a space or place where they participate intensely in group work both during class and outside of class. Working with others, teamwork, collaborative learning, etc., make students feel like part of a collective, so they do not want to disappoint their mates. They recognize how much the success of their group depends on their individual success. Flipped does involve teams, but individual work and responsibility will continue to be part of the learning experience.

The students' role also involves knowledge of personal learning styles. As there are

group discussions in this model, it leads to the conclusion that people learn in different ways, so we need to be aware of ourselves as learners. For these reasons, teachers must know the different styles and strategies as part of their present and future teaching experience. The students describe the differences in the way they approach problem-solving, study, processing, and acquisition of content. As soon as they recognize the strengths and challenges within their own learning style, they can quickly explain how this enables

them to support their peers and work together to be successful in the flipped learning environment. (Ozdamli, 2016).

What makes flipped work is the teacher's ability to engage and connect with the students. The teacher knows when the students are struggling, when they need extra time practicing, and when to move to the next topic. This role also implies taking risks, new responsibilities, and connection between the teacher and the students (Yildirim & Kiray, 2016)

A practical example: Planning Sessions

Table 1. Flipped learning in teaching English model.

Week	Instruction	Out-of-class phase (OCP)	Feedback phase (FP)	In-class-phase (ICP)	
		Previous week		Monday	Wednesday
		Submission of materials (Identify theoretical aspects to be delivered before class. Three options: 1. use coursebook materials, 2. find materials online or 3. design new materials if needed)	ICT tool (Choose the most suitable tool in each case)		
1.	Control session week 1		Textbook	Session 1 (140 min): OEF • 1 VOCABULARY (a, b, c, d, e) (p. 6) (15 min). • 3 LISTENING AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d) (pp. 6-7) (30 min). • 4 READING (a, b, c, d, e) (p. 7) (50 min). • 6 GRAMMAR (a, b, c) (p. 8) (30 min). • 7 SPEAKING (a, b) (p. 9) (15 min).	Session 2 (140 min): OEF • 6 GRAMMAR (a, b) (p. 132) (50 min). • 1 VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d) (10 min) (50 min). • 3 PRONUNTIATION AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d, e) (p.11) (40 min)

Week	Instruction	Out-of-class phase (OCP)	Feedback phase (FP)	In-class-phase (ICP)	
		Previous week		Monday	Wednesday
1	Flipped Session Pre-week Week 1	• Flipped Edpuzzle 0. Present simple and present continuous. https://bit.ly/3rMXqBJ. The instructors make instructional videos based on the grammar to be taught for students to download and watch. (session 1 & 2) • Liveworksheets. Vocabulary on food. (session 1)	Textbook and online resources	Session 1 (140 min): OEF • 3 LISTENING AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d) (pp. 6-7) (30 min). • 4 READING (a, b, c, d, e) (p. 7) (50 min). • 7 SPEAKING (a, b) (p. 9) (15 min). Resources • Infographic. (30 min). In groups of four, Ss create an infographic taking this one as a model. The teacher provides with constant feedback. • Gamification. Ss play this food quiz (10 min).	Session 2 (140 min): OCP time Time dedicated to resolving doubts depending on Ss understanding of the grammar (Edpuzzle 0). • 1 VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d) (p. 10) (50 min). • 3 PRONUNTIATION AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d, e) (p. 11) (40 min). Resources • Gamification. Ss play the family game (50 min) and create their own quiz in groups of four. • 1 VOCABULARY AND SPEAKING (a, b, c, d) (p. 10). Adapted textbook material. Refusing to talk about something. In order to create a warmer atmosphere, Ss decide whether to answer the question through a survey or in groups.

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The didactic strategy of the book club: a proposal for educational mediation

La estrategia didáctica del club de lectura: una propuesta de mediación educativa



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Abstract

In this paper, the book club is proposed as a way not only to improve students' linguistic and literary competence but also as a form of linguistic mediation. First of all, we discuss what the book club is and how it is related to the school. It is assumed that it is necessary to plan the readings well and to read collectively with a critical sense. Secondly, co-teaching is proposed as the best way to develop the book club sessions. Thirdly, a list of readings is proposed for a high school course, and the topics for choosing these readings are explained, as well as the relationships that can be established between the texts and how this list can help to remove the school's literary canon. Finally, besides being an educational experience, the book club is understood as a proposal for educational mediation, which will help to solve the daily problems that happen in the classroom. In conclusion, the book club strategy is considered an educational proposal and a way to help teachers improve the learning climate.

Keywords: Book Club; Educational Mediation; Co-Teaching; Literary Competence; Language Competence.

Resumen

En este trabajo, se propone el club de lectura como una forma no solo de reforzar la competencia lingüística y literaria de los alumnos, sino también como una forma de mediación lingüística. En primer lugar, se aborda qué es el club de lectura y cómo se relaciona con la escuela. Se parte de que es necesario una buena planificación de las lecturas y una lectura en común con sentido crítico. En segundo lugar, se propone la coenseñanza como la mejor forma de desarrollar las sesiones del club de lectura.

En tercer lugar, se realiza una propuesta de lecturas para un curso de Bachillerato, y se explican los temas por los que se elige cada una de ellas, qué relaciones pueden establecerse entre las lecturas y cómo dicha lista puede ayudar a remover el canon literario escolar. Por último, además de una experiencia formativa, se entiende el club de lectura como una propuesta de mediación educativa, que ayudará a solucionar los problemas diarios que sucedan en el aula. En definitiva, se reivindica la estrategia del club de lectura como propuesta educativa y como una manera de ayudar al docente a mejorar el clima de su aula.

Palabras clave: club de lectura; mediación educativa; coenseñanza; competencia literaria; competencia lingüística.

Introducción

En este trabajo se aborda la estrategia del club de lectura como un método innovador para mejorar la competencia literaria y lingüística de los alumnos –potencialmente, uno de los dos cursos de bachillerato, según las enseñanzas oficiales de España–, ofrecer un programa de lecturas alternativo al currículo oficial y, además, entender que el club de lectura puede ser una estrategia perfecta de mediación educativa, esto es, una herramienta que también le permita al docente mejorar el clima educativo de su aula.

Como se ha señalado, el grupo destinatario de esta propuesta serían alumnos de bachillerato, esto es, alumnos que cuentan con una edad comprendida entre los 16 y los 18 años. Según el RD 243/2022, de 5 de abril –por el que se establecen la ordenación y las enseñanzas mínimas del bachillerato– entre los objetivos generales que debe pretender el bachillerato se encuentran los siguientes:

1. Afianzar los hábitos de lectura, estudio y disciplina, como condiciones necesi-

rias para el eficaz aprovechamiento del aprendizaje y como medio de desarrollo personal.

2. Dominar, tanto en su expresión oral como escrita, la lengua castellana (p. 46051).

Dominar la lengua vehicular en la educación y ser un lector competente son, ambas, cuestiones de vital importancia no solo para las asignaturas propias de Lengua y Literatura, sino también para poder desarrollar un aprendizaje óptimo en el resto de las materias. Así lo ponen de manifiesto María José González, María José Barba y Alicia González: “el eje del currículo lo constituyen las habilidades y estrategias lectoescritoras” (2010, p. 2).

No obstante, la importancia de esto no radica, únicamente, en las cuestiones educativas referentes a las etapas aludidas, sino que también determinarán el éxito futuro tanto en la enseñanza universitaria posterior como en la inserción en el mercado laboral. El dominio de los registros de la lengua, el conocimiento de la variante estándar de esta y una buena competencia lectora están, todos ellos, indudablemente relacionados, en último término, con la carta de ciudadanía de la persona y con el desenvolvimiento del estudiante dentro de la plaza pública que constituye la *pólis*.

Parece evidente que una persona debe adquirir este dominio al finalizar, cuando menos, la etapa de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, previa al bachillerato.

No obstante, desde hace algún tiempo se está alertando sobre el bajo rendimiento académico relacionado con graves carencias en el aprendizaje de la lectoescritura, deficiencia arrastrada desde la educación primaria (González, Barba y González, 2010, p. 1). En otro espacio, reflexionábamos sobre otra cuestión interesante a la hora de preguntarnos por qué es importante que los alumnos lean y por qué deciden alejarse de la lectura, y es que “no se trata de que los adolescentes no disfruten leyendo, sino de que existen muchas otras alternativas que compiten por ese tiempo que reservarían a la lectura” (Moyano-Arellano, 2024). La reflexión personal del docente sobre el uso de las nuevas tecnologías por parte de su alumnado es esencial.

Una forma interesante de tratar de paliar la situación descrita se encuentra en el club de lectura. Según Silvia Paglieta, un club de lectura es “una experiencia de inclusión para que quienes sean lectores o quieran serlo puedan encontrar allí un espacio para estar con los libros”, pero también el club constituye un foro de discusión donde los participantes puedan aportar distintos sentidos de la lectura –en contra de la interpretación unívoca que se suele dar desde las clases, que emana de la voz autoritaria del maestro–, las variadas estrategias de comprensión que se pueden poner en juego e incluso la propia elección de las obras literarias (Paglieta, 2016, pp. 15-16), algo que entronca con claridad con la cuestión del canon literario.

A modo de conclusión para esta introducción, se destacan, de las palabras de Paglieta algunas ideas relacionadas con el club de lectura. En primer lugar, se trata de un *otro* espacio, distinto de las clases vinculadas al currículo oficial, donde los lectores pueden reconocerse abiertamente como tales, o quienes aún no lo sean puedan acercarse a los libros. Sin embargo, el club también constituye un espacio de debate y discusión en el que los integrantes pueden poner en

diálogo diferentes interpretaciones de las obras leídas. En este sentido, el club de lectura se antoja una herramienta idónea para mejorar la comprensión lectora y las competencias literarias y lingüísticas, pero también como un espacio de libertad en el que no se repitan los mismos conflictos que pueden darse en el aula convencional pero que, a su vez, redunde en la mejora del clima en clase cuando los participantes retomen sus lecciones.

Metodología

La metodología propuesta para esta experiencia del club de lectura se asienta en dos pilares: el papel del docente como guía y acompañante de los participantes y la estrategia educativa de la coenseñanza.

En este trabajo se propone que el organizador sea un docente de los alumnos, presumiblemente, el responsable de la asignatura Lengua castellana y literatura. El espacio en el que se desarrolle la experiencia del club también tiene que estar relacionado preferiblemente con dicha asignatura y el docente tendrá que “ceder” su tiempo oficial. Esto es importante para favorecer la implicación de los alumnos.

No obstante, en el club de lectura no tiene cabida un profesor que se relacione con el modelo de “proveedor”, entendido como aquel que posee los conocimientos y es quien se los proporciona al alumnado, sino

más bien, en el modelo de “tutor” o “guía”, o incluso de “asesor”, siguiendo siempre la terminología de Juan Ignacio Pozo (2011), pues el docente debe acompañar al alumnado en el proceso de su aprendizaje y ellos, los alumnos, se convierten en protagonistas y responsables de su propio aprendizaje. El guía orientará el debate, propondrá temas de reflexión y siempre velará por mantener el buen clima de la sesión.

En relación con la práctica de la coenseñanza (término proveniente de *co-teaching* y este, a su vez, de *cooperative teaching*), que también se ha denominado “enseñanza colaborativa” o “enseñanza en equipo” se ha entendido que podía ser un medio óptimo en el que profesores generales y otros de educación especial se responsabilicen conjuntamente dentro del aula para incentivar una educación de calidad para todos los alumnos (González-Laguillo y Carrascal,

2022, p. 127). No obstante, creemos que no es imprescindible reservar este método pedagógico únicamente a contextos en los que exista algún alumno con necesidades educativas especiales, sino que puede ser una práctica apropiada para otros contextos y que puede beneficiar a todos los alumnos.

En este sentido, se suscribe la definición que aporta Felipe Rodríguez:

[La coenseñanza] se define como dos o más personas que comparten la responsabilidad de la enseñanza de un grupo o de todos los estudiantes de una clase, otorgando ayuda y prestando servicios de forma colaborativa para las necesidades de los estudiantes con y sin discapacidades (2014, pp. 220-221).

Así, la propuesta de este club de lectura implicaría la presencia en las sesiones de dos docentes, que organicen dialógicamente el desarrollo de la sesión, como ilustración, también, de que existen otras voces más allá de la de un único profesor que marca el sentido correcto de la lectura. Como se ha defendido, el papel del docente durante las sesiones debe ser el de un guía. No obstante, el organizador ha cumplido anteriormente un rol importante: elegir y planificar las lecturas que van a trabajarse en el club de lectura. Con esta estrategia, no solo se busca favorecer una relajada experiencia lectora para los integrantes, sino también reflexionar críticamente sobre

algunos temas importantes relacionados con la contemporaneidad y, además, cuestionar el canon literario vigente en las enseñanzas oficiales que protagonizan los alumnos. El club de lectura debe ser una experiencia compaginable y armonizable con el currículo oficial, que supla también las carencias de este, en aras de aportar un panorama literario más completo a los participantes que redunde en la mejora de su competencia literaria.

En esta experiencia concreta, se propone la siguiente lista de obras, con tres claros justificantes: 1) Todas estas obras quedan, habitualmente, fuera de la enseñanza del currículo oficial; 2) Son obras que representan todos los géneros literarios: lírico, narrativo, dramático y ensayístico y 3) Estas obras permiten la relación entre ellas y plantear un recorrido temático-crítico a través de su lectura.

Las obras elegidas son las siguientes: *Las edades de Lulú* (1989), de Almudena Grandes, *Cicatriz* (2015), de Sara Mesa, *El don de la siesta* (2020), de Miguel Ángel Hernández, *Mujer sin Edén* (1947), de Carmen Conde, *El tintero* (1961), de Carlos Muñoz, *Los niños tontos* (1956) de Ana María Matute, *Esperando a Godot* (1952), de Samuel Beckett, *Pedro Páramo* (1955), de Juan Rulfo. Todas ellas resultan pretendidamente breves, o cuando menos, asequibles, sin caer necesariamente en las formas mínimas (microrrelato, poema breve, cuento). La extensión reducida se busca, en todo caso, para que el alumnado

no se sienta sobrepasado con la carga de trabajo del club de lectura, que necesariamente se le solapará con la propia de su etapa educativa oficial. Además, en aras de fomentar la participación y el diálogo con los discentes, se reserva la última sesión para que sean ellos, en comunidad, los que decidan qué libro leer.

En la elección de los libros, se observa otra de las cuestiones importantes que se quiere trabajar con la experiencia del club de lectura y es el cuestionamiento del canon literario. Por poner un ejemplo: en las clases oficiales de literatura, es el de prever que los alumnos estudien, como poesía de posguerra española, *Hijos de la ira* (1944) de Dámaso Alonso y *Sombra en el paraíso* (1944), de Vicente Aleixandre. Sin embargo, en el club se propone la lectura de *Mujer sin Edén*, de Carmen Conde, obra coetánea a las anteriores y, sin embargo, normalmente apartada del canon literario.

Así, el club también ofrece una oportunidad encomiable para que los alumnos debatan sobre por qué se eligen unas obras y no otras, o unos autores y no otros, y, sobre todo, quién lo determina. La propuesta del club de lectura se incardina, así, dentro de la polémica del canon literario, que se

reavivó, como es sabido, debido a la obra de Harold Bloom, *El canon occidental* (1994).

Este intento de cuestionar el canon se ve, también, por la inclusión visible de mujeres dentro de la nómina de obras trabajadas –y es sabido, como bien ha trabajado Ana López-Navajas (2014), que las mujeres constituyen una parte ínfima del currículo de las etapas de educación obligatoria– y la inserción, también, de otros géneros y temáticas nuevas, que suelen ser extracurriculares; hablamos de temas como aquellos que cuestionan las condiciones materiales de los personajes y que, sin duda, harán reflexionar al alumnado sobre cuestiones de relevancia para ellos o de géneros como el ensayo literario.

Más allá de estas cuestiones, el club de lectura se convierte, también, en una herramienta de mediación educativa. El clima distendido que propicia el propio club, favorecido tanto por la coenseñanza, que ofrece desde el principio una guía dialógica y no una imposición autoritaria del criterio del profesor, como por el convencimiento de que ninguna opinión vale más que otra, tendrá su reflejo en las clases del día a día, y con seguridad ayudará a solucionar los problemas que surjan entre los discentes.

Conclusiones

En este trabajo, se propone la formación y organización de un club de lectura con el

objetivo de, en un ambiente más distendido que las clases oficiales, poder ofrecer una

serie de lecturas que permitan al alumnado, protagonista de su propio aprendizaje, entablar debates y discusiones críticas en aras de mejorar su competencia lectora, su competencia literaria y, también, su competencia lingüística, sobre cuyo empeoramiento llevan tiempo llamando la atención algunos especialistas y docentes.

Para ello, se escoge una lista de obras que el profesor –convertido en un guía de los alumnos– entiende que pueden favorecer el surgimiento de interesantes reflexiones sobre la propia actualidad de los participantes, mostrando cómo la

literatura contribuye a formarnos una visión de nuestro mundo. Una literatura que se escapa de los cánones literarios que la educación oficial acostumbra a imponer en los currículos y que también permitirá la reflexión sobre quiénes escogen los libros que leemos.

En último término, la propia metodología del club de lectura, cimentada en la coenseñanza e implicación de los docentes involucrados, favorecerá que mejore el clima en las aulas en el día a día, convirtiendo el propio club en una herramienta interesante para la mediación pedagógica.

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Learning the English language through the application of ICT in the classroom

El aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa mediante la aplicación de las TICs en el aula



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Abstract

Currently there are educational techniques within the field of digitalization that facilitate any area of our academic life. This fact represents a digital revolution that has reached the field of language teaching with force, where the objective is to determine the importance that new information and communication technologies (hereinafter ICTs) acquire in the teaching-learning process of the English language. Educational innovation transforms the way of teaching and learning an L2, so a range of approaches will be used based on the different active methodologies that exist today, where digital plurality will prevail in the classroom. In this sense, we work with secondary school students, through the design of exercises, activities, and projects where the group's creativity and innovation are strengthened. So those students will be provided with heterogeneous instruction from immediacy. However, adolescents show deficiencies in their digital training, so, despite the autonomy that ICTs provide them when working, teacher monitoring is decisive during the total acquisition of English, as demonstrated in the following study.

Keywords: ICTs; Generation Z; Digitalization; Active Methodologies; L2.

Resumen

En la actualidad existen técnicas educativas dentro del campo de la digitalización que facilitan cualquier ámbito de nuestra vida académica. Este hecho supone una revolución

digital que ha llegado con fuerza al terreno de la enseñanza de idiomas, donde el objetivo es determinar la importancia que adquieren las nuevas tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación (en adelante TICs) en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa. La innovación educativa transforma el modo de enseñar y aprender una L2, por lo que se va a emplear una gama de enfoques basados en las distintas metodologías activas que existen hoy en día, donde va a primar la pluralidad digital en el aula. En este sentido, se trabaja con alumnado de secundaria, mediante el diseño de ejercicios, actividades y proyectos donde se fortalezcan la creatividad e innovación del grupo. De manera que se va a proporcionar al alumnado una instrucción heterogénea desde la inmediatez; ahora bien, los adolescentes muestran carencias en su formación digital, por lo que, a pesar de la autonomía que las TICs le proporcionan a la hora de trabajar. El seguimiento del docente es determinante durante la adquisición del inglés, como se demuestra en el siguiente estudio.

Palabras clave: TICs; generación Z; digitalización; metodologías activas; L2.

Introducción

En la actualidad existen técnicas dentro del campo de la información y de la comunicación que transforman cualquier ámbito de nuestra vida a nivel social, académico y profesional. Esta revolución digital ha llegado con fuerza al terreno de la enseñanza de idiomas. Los diversos recursos digitales con los que contamos nos permiten, en muchos casos de manera gratuita, acceder a métodos de aprendizaje personalizados, que fomentan el dominio de las cuatro destrezas de forma equilibrada. Sin embargo, esta innovación pedagógica presenta un reto para docentes y alumnos, lo que nos lleva a plantearnos preguntas como: ¿qué grado de relevancia tiene el estudio del inglés y

por qué es la lengua más utilizada en el campo de la ciencia?, ¿cuántos métodos de enseñanza de una lengua extranjera existen?, ¿qué diferentes fuentes nos permiten construir el conocimiento del inglés a través de las nuevas tecnologías?, ¿qué entendemos por “entorno personal de aprendizaje”?, ¿de qué manera el “aprendizaje combinado” incrementa las aspiraciones de los estudiantes por aprender de forma independiente una lengua extranjera?, ¿son realmente los adolescentes nativos digitales? Estas son algunas de las preguntas que surgen al abordar un asunto de tanta trascendencia educativa como este y a las que vamos a dar respuesta a lo largo de este estudio.

El estudio del inglés como L2

La adquisición del inglés como una segunda lengua es una de las mejores elecciones que una persona puede hacer en su vida. Aprender inglés es útil a cualquier edad, pero es fundamental para el alumnado que pretende alcanzar una formación académica de alto nivel, puesto que dominar esta lengua incrementa sus oportunidades desde un punto de vista educacional y profesional. En este mundo global, el inglés es la clave para acceder a la tecnología y a las ciencias aplicadas. En este sentido, los estudiantes deberían ser conscientes de las ventajas que ofrece controlar las cuatro destrezas del inglés, especialmente aquellos que se decantan por las carreras más prácticas como las ingenierías. En primer lugar, dominar un idioma implica conocer la lengua estándar internacional, al menos, en el mundo occidental donde se utiliza como medio de comunicación. Por esa razón, los alumnos que hablan inglés correctamente pueden entablar una conversación sobre cualquier asunto, siendo capaces de intercambiar información, expresando sus ideas con personas

de cualquier parte del mundo. En segundo lugar, el inglés es la lengua empleada en los negocios, la ciencia y la tecnología. Por ello, los estudiantes que deseen desempeñar su labor en los sectores financieros tendrán que emplear el inglés para desarrollar negociaciones efectivas, tomar parte en reuniones de trabajo y escribir informes de calidad. Es importante mencionar que un alto porcentaje de revistas de ciencia se publican exclusivamente en inglés, como sucede con *Wired*, *Digital Trends*, *Technowise*, *Mashable* y *ReadWrite*. Y, por último, aprender una segunda lengua tiene beneficios en nuestro cerebro, pues saber inglés pospone la aparición de enfermedades mentales como el Alzheimer, al mantener el cerebro activo, luchando contra las consecuencias del envejecimiento. Por tanto, es incuestionable el papel que el inglés desempeña en el campo de la ciencia y, por ende, tanto en el ámbito personal como profesional de la gente, expandiendo sus horizontes culturales y rompiendo las barreras que puedan dificultar su desarrollo personal.

Los métodos de enseñanza de la lengua inglesa

Con el paso del tiempo, se han ido desarrollando distintos baremos para calcular el nivel de un alumno en una determinada lengua. En inglés existen muchos, como son los exámenes oficiales de Cambridge,

Aptis, IELTS, TOEFL, TOEIC y Trinity. La adquisición de estas acreditaciones resulta clave para el desarrollo total de las habilidades de comprensión y producción orales y escritas; las mismas que se alcanzan

con los siete métodos de enseñanza que expondremos a continuación, teniendo, además, en cuenta, como mostramos en el siguiente apartado, la influencia

que las nuevas tecnologías tienen en el aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa. Según el experto Francisco Luis Hernández (2000), los siete métodos de enseñanza son:

Tabla 1. Los siete métodos de enseñanza de una lengua extranjera.

Método	Fecha	Descripción
Gramática-traducción	Surge en Prusia en el siglo XVIII y adopta el sistema utilizado para la enseñanza del Latín y del Griego.	Pasa el contenido de la lengua materna a la meta, focalizando la atención en la gramática, el vocabulario y la traducción.
Directo	Conocido como método natural. Fue establecido en Alemania y Francia en el siglo XX.	Se basa en el desarrollo de las cuatro destrezas, clave en el desarrollo de una conversación en una L2.
Audio-lingual	Surge a finales de los años 50 y está influenciado por el estructuralismo lingüístico.	Se concentra en las habilidades lingüísticas para incrementar la comprensión y producción oral.
Comunicativo	Aparece en los años 70 como consecuencia de un cambio en la enseñanza de una L2.	Se fundamenta en la funcionalidad del lenguaje, prestando la máxima atención a la intención comunicativa.
Sugestopedia	Fechado en 1978 como uno de los métodos más originales de la marea didáctica del siglo XX.	Se centra en aprender sin esfuerzo mediante libros, revistas, documentales y series en versión original.
Silencioso de Gattegno	Fue creado por Caleb Gattegno en 1972 en base a un innovador enfoque humanístico.	Desarrolla la independencia y autonomía del aprendiz, siendo el silencio del profesor el principio de este método.
James Asher	Este método de respuesta física total (TPR) fue presentado por primera vez en 1977.	Se concentra en enseñar mediante respuestas físicas y acciones, apartando las actividades de gramática.

Nota. Adaptado de “Los métodos de enseñanza de lenguas y las teorías de aprendizaje”, por F.L. Hernández, 2000, *Encuentro. Revista de investigación e innovación en la clase de idiomas*, 11, pp.141-153.

Esos métodos de enseñanza de la lengua han ido variando con los años hasta alcanzar los resultados más efectivos en el estudio

del inglés, adaptando los enfoques teóricos y prácticos de la instrucción de un idioma a las necesidades de nuestros estudiantes.

Las nuevas tecnologías en el aprendizaje del inglés

Sabemos que la lengua inglesa ha asumido una posición representativa en las diferentes situaciones comunicativas de nuestro día a día en el mundo actual. En una clase de inglés de un colegio de primaria o de un instituto de secundaria, por ejemplo, los principales componentes son el profesor, el alumnado y los distintos recursos utilizados como el libro de texto y de trabajo, que enfatizan principalmente la enseñanza de contenido gramatical y el vocabulario específico del nivel correspondiente, dejando de lado las habilidades lingüísticas; y, a estos, va unido un material complementario, como son las diversas herramientas de las nuevas tecnologías (De la Cruz y Tejedor, 2003). En este sentido, todas ellas nos permiten elaborar el estudio del inglés a través de fuentes muy variadas como canales de video, películas, documentales, series y videoclips en versión original, videollamadas, chats, foros, correos electrónicos, redes sociales, video podcasts, blogs e instrumentos de trabajo colaborativo. Estas nos posibilitan el análisis crítico de la información que podemos encontrar en ellas, facilitándonos el entendimiento tanto oral como escrito.

Para empezar, nos centramos en el formato video, como canales de YouTube, películas, documentales, series y videoclips en versión original, video podcasts y videollamadas que favorecen la destreza de comprensión auditiva y también la producción oral. En otras palabras, estas herramientas hacen posible que los alumnos de cualquier nivel puedan mejorar su *listening*, al escuchar las letras de canciones y la amplia gama de conversaciones entre hablantes nativos de la lengua inglesa que componen cada una de las herramientas mencionadas, pero también su *speaking*, ya que existen numerosas aplicaciones para hacer videollamadas grupales como Skype, Hangouts, WhatsApp Messenger, Zoom, FaceTime, Snapchat, Gruveo, Discord y Jitsi Meet que hacen posible la comunicación, fomentando, así, la comprensión y producción oral del inglés (Martínez, 2014).

Dicho esto, es importante presentar las herramientas que los estudiantes pueden utilizar para practicar su *reading* y *writing*, y lo cierto es que, mediante chats, blogs o foros, envíos de correos electrónicos y participaciones en plataformas digitales como Facebook, Twitter o Instagram, los

alumnos pueden mejorar sus habilidades de lectura y escritura en inglés, favoreciendo el entendimiento y la creación de nueva información. No nos podemos olvidar de los servicios web educativos y gratuitos como Google Classroom, Edmodo o Moodle, que se utilizan actualmente en los centros de primaria y secundaria para gestionar el aula de forma colaborativa a través de internet. De hecho, estas herramientas fueron fundamentales para llevar a cabo la formación desde casa durante el estado pandémico de COVID-19 (Coromoto, 2020).

Para terminar este apartado, incluimos las diferentes opciones de almacenamiento en la nube que han ido surgiendo en los últimos años, proporcionándonos una manera segura de conservar los datos y compartir todo tipo de archivos rápidamente. Por esa razón, tanto los profesores como los estudiantes utilizan los servicios de Google Drive y Dropbox, pues crean espacios de educación común donde la autonomía del alumno a la hora de trabajar adquiere un papel clave durante el proceso de aprendizaje.

El Entorno Personal de Aprendizaje (EPA)

El desarrollo de las nuevas tecnologías ha convertido nuestros espacios personales de aprendizaje del inglés en entornos más complejos. Un EPA, según Linda Castañeda y Jordi Adell, no es más que el “conjunto de fuentes de información, herramientas, conexiones y actividades que cada persona utiliza de forma asidua para aprender” (2013, p. 388). Dicho de otro modo, el entorno personal de aprendizaje integra las múltiples posibilidades que ofrecen las herramientas digitales para indagar, estructurar, elaborar y distribuir la información. El importante crecimiento de internet ha aumentado las posibilidades de aprender una lengua extranjera. Antes nos servíamos del contenido que hallábamos en las publicaciones en papel, como libros, periódicos y revistas, o a través de medios como la televisión y la radio. Sin embargo, ahora

contamos con plataformas digitales que nos proporcionan fuentes de información lo suficientemente ricas como para aprender inglés al ritmo de cada alumno.

Por ello, los profesores de idiomas se benefician de los muchos recursos que ofrece internet para explicar las cuatro destrezas de la lengua inglesa, alentando a los estudiantes a desarrollar su competencia digital y a explorar todas las herramientas que les brinda la red para adquirir contenidos innovadores, pensados para optimizar su aprendizaje.

El aprendizaje combinado

En palabras del profesor Jaime García, el aprendizaje combinado “es el uso de diferentes metodologías de enseñanza para

aprender idiomas [...] a través del uso de recursos físicos y virtuales” (2012, p. 37). Es decir, combina estrategias de educación tradicional con diferentes herramientas digitales que permiten el soporte dentro y fuera del aula con la enseñanza virtual (semipresencial y a distancia). De manera que integra la enseñanza de clase con el estudio en línea, mediante módulos educativos interactivos, proporcionando una educación más agradable. De hecho, una de las ventajas del aprendizaje combinado es el alto grado de flexibilidad que aporta, pues los estudiantes pueden aprender a su propio ritmo. Por ello, brinda a los aprendices la oportunidad de acceder a una variedad considerable de recursos pedagógicos que la enseñanza tradicional no puede proporcionar (Gómez y Galindo, 2018).

Resultados y discusión

Al abordar un asunto tan complejo y actual como es la presencia de las nuevas tecnologías en la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera, es inevitable cuestionarse las habilidades de los adolescentes con la competencia digital. Es cierto que aquellos pertenecientes a la década de los 80 y los 90 se consideran la generación pionera en la utilización de los recursos digitales. Sin embargo, son los jóvenes nacidos entre 1995 y 2010, los de la llamada Generación Z, los que han crecido con el acceso a Internet más desarrollado. Están etiquetados como “nativos digitales”, una

expresión acuñada por el norteamericano Marc Prensky en su artículo *Digital natives and digital immigrants* escrito en 2001 y publicado en *On the Horizon*.

En efecto, estos adolescentes “digitales” utilizan todas las herramientas digitales que tienen a su disposición y lo hacen de manera natural. Son buenos conocedores del papel que la tecnología juega en el ámbito educativo, personal y laboral hoy en día. No obstante, en contra de lo que podamos imaginar, nuestros jóvenes están lejos de dominar las aplicaciones tecnológicas que tienen a su alcance; y esa es la principal razón por la que reclaman formación digital tanto en los centros de primaria y secundaria como en los hogares, pues las carencias en tecnología de esta generación son especialmente llamativas.

Por todos es conocido el uso de servicios web educativos como Google Classroom, Edmodo o Moodle y, por supuesto, de pizarras digitales y ordenadores en los distintos centros, pero ¿están todos los profesores bien formados en el uso adecuado de los mismos?, ¿son todos los alumnos capaces de utilizar correctamente una herramienta digital para trabajar? La respuesta a ambas preguntas es “no”.

Por tanto, sería adecuado formar al profesorado apropiadamente para que trabajase con mayor confianza, obteniendo el máximo rendimiento de estas herramientas en

sus objetivos didácticos, y también sería conveniente potenciar el aprendizaje digital tanto en el aula como en casa. Algunos estudiantes encuentran numerosos problemas a la hora de utilizar programas de edición de video como Filmora o ActionDirector, de llevar a cabo presentaciones animadas con plataformas online como Powtoon o Make Beliefs Comix, de adjuntar un archivo como documento en un correo electrónico, de hacer una captura de pantalla de la tarea realizada, de trabajar en grupo a través de Google Drive o de realizar una acción tan

sencilla como guardar de manera segura documentos en la nube. De manera que la generación más tecnológica tiene a la mano una amplia gama de recursos que en algunos casos no sabe utilizar y, en otros, ni siquiera sabe que existen. Así que la formación es más que necesaria, tanto en los hogares, por parte de la familia, como en los centros, a través de los profesores para, entre todos, enseñar a nuestros adolescentes las múltiples aplicaciones que tienen a su alcance a la hora de crecer tecnológicamente hablando.

Conclusión

Después de responder rigurosamente a todas las preguntas planteadas al principio de este artículo, podemos concluir que son muchas las ventajas que se obtienen al incorporar las nuevas tecnologías al estudio del inglés, puesto que todas favorecen el planteamiento y la preparación del material utilizado para aprender una lengua extranjera. Y es que la digitalización en la enseñanza de un idioma no solo nos facilita una mayor atención personalizada en el alumnado, sino que también incrementa su nivel de motivación, al contar con un amplio número de recursos digitales que los estudiantes estarán dispuestos a probar activamente, incrementando, así, su

conocimiento lingüístico y cultural de la L2.

Por tanto, el uso adecuado de la tecnología en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés aporta unos beneficios incuestionables que proporcionan al alumnado una instrucción heterogénea a todos los niveles y desde la inmediatez; ahora bien, como hemos demostrado en el último apartado de este análisis, los adolescentes muestran carencias llamativas en su formación digital, de modo que, a pesar de la autonomía que las nuevas tecnologías les proporciona a la hora de trabajar, el seguimiento del docente es fundamental durante el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

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Introduction

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The conversational limit of AI: a critical review of the design of educational chatbots as virtual assistants for language learning

El límite conversacional de la IA: una revisión crítica sobre el diseño de chatbots educativos como asistentes virtuales para el aprendizaje de la lengua

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Abstract

Advances in artificial intelligence have transformed various aspects of education, including language teaching and learning. Conversational agents, also known as chatbots, have emerged as innovative tools that facilitate interactive and personalized learning. This paper explores the benefits and challenges when designing empathetic conversational agents for language learning. Its objective is to evaluate the risks and opportunities involved in redefining the human-machine link in educational practice and the development of linguistic skills.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Communication, Empathy, Language, Learning

Resumen

Los avances en inteligencia artificial han transformado diversos aspectos de la educación, incluyendo la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas. Los agentes conversacionales, también conocidos como chatbots, han emergido como herramientas innovadoras que facilitan el aprendizaje interactivo y personalizado. Esta ponencia explora los beneficios y desafíos a la hora de diseñar agentes conversacionales empáticos para el aprendizaje

de la lengua. Su objetivo es evaluar los riesgos y las oportunidades que conlleva la redefinición del vínculo humano-máquina en la práctica educativa y el desarrollo de competencias lingüísticas.

Palabras clave: inteligencia artificial, comunicación, empatía, lenguaje, aprendizaje

1. Del conversar como límite de las máquinas al límite conversacional de la inteligencia artificial (IA)

La discusión sobre las relaciones entre humanos y máquinas no es un tema novedoso. A lo largo de la historia encontramos diversos ejemplos que pretende representar la posibilidad de crear máquinas capaces de imitar la inteligencia humana. Esto se evidencia desde personajes como Talos –un gigante programado para expulsar extranjeros– de la mitología griega hasta el mito del Gólem de la tradición judía –un gigante de barro programado para defender a la comunidad– o desde personajes literarios como Frankenstein de Mary Shelley (1818) hasta personajes cinematográficos como los replicantes de la película Blade Runner (1982) o Samantha de la película Her (2013).

La pretensión de señalar la existencia de seres no humanos dotados de inteligencia con capacidad de relacionarse con los seres humanos en forma simétrica ha sido una inquietud permanente. Sin embargo, esta posibilidad de establecer una relación simétrica siempre ha sido un tema controversial entorno a la posibilidad de que las máquinas tiendan a emular ciertas capacidades humanas complejas

como la inteligencia. De este modo, se establecía la conversación como límite. Tomás Balmaceda, por su parte, señala que fue el filósofo René Descartes quién estableció la capacidad de dialogar como un atributo humano, que las máquinas no podrían superar (2024, p. 48). De este modo, la conversación se vuelve un límite en tanto implica no solo respuestas automatizadas sino capacidad de organizar discursos de diversas maneras para dar respuestas apropiadas. Pero, desde su perspectiva, creaciones como el test de Turing reabrieron la posibilidad de atravesar estas limitaciones mediante el desarrollo de habilidades como el engaño que, para algunas teorías de la mente, representa un indicio de inteligencia.

En la actualidad, los avances en los chatbots basados en IA están moviendo la investigación están redefiniendo los límites de la comunicación humano-máquina (HMC). “Para sorpresa de Descartes, ChatGPT y hoy sus numerosas inspiraciones y copias (como LLaMA de Meta, Bard de Google, Claude 2 de Antropic y GPT-J de EleutherAi)

se basan en la conversación: plataformas cuya interfaz es la interacción en tiempo real por texto, mediante lenguaje natural” (Balmaceda, 2024, p. 51). Sin duda, este tipo de desarrollos tecnológicos abre dilemas éticos que vienen de la mano de la inteligencia artificial generativa que permite crear entidades con capacidades de interacción empática con resultados impredecibles que oscilan entre el optimismo y el pesimismo. Guzmán y Lewis (2020) sugieren que las interacciones con chatbots sociales no encajan en los paradigmas actuales de la teoría de la comunicación, que se han centrado en la comunicación humano-humano.

Los humanos también pueden formar relaciones parasociales unilaterales con entidades no humanas o con la tecnología en general. Desde la perspectiva de estos autores la motivación para estudiar la comunicación entre personas y máquinas surge de un cambio fundamental en el diseño y función de la tecnología. Las explicaciones del alcance de HMC incluyen la comunicación con interlocutores digitales, agentes virtuales e inteligencias artificiales, y personas tecnológicamente aumentadas en entornos reales o virtuales y aumentados. Definir los límites de HMC implica decidir qué tecnologías y aplicaciones se deben incluir. Si se restringe a interacciones más humanas, se lograría una delimitación clara, pero podría limitar el potencial de investigación antes de comprender su valor total. La definición

de comunicación puede influir en cómo se trazan los límites de HMC.

A medida que la investigación avanza, es crucial entender qué ocurre “detrás de escena” para teorizar sobre la comunicación humano-máquina. No obstante, si los límites se trazan demasiado amplios, el campo podría carecer de identidad coherente, dificultando la teorización más amplia sobre HMC. Por lo tanto, conceptualizar tales límites puede seguir una de dos vías: idear límites duros en los que hay muy poca superposición entre HMC y líneas de investigación existentes, o establecer parámetros porosos que tracen los objetivos principales de la investigación en HMC, permitiendo al mismo tiempo una influencia significativa de y contribución a otras áreas. La investigación sobre tecnología durante el último medio siglo ha necesitado este último enfoque, ya que los cambios sustanciales en la función de la tecnología han desafiado significativamente los ejes fundamentales de la investigación en comunicación, colapsando lo que una vez se consideraron líneas divisorias firmes.

Podemos observar que las IA comunicativas también se están incorporando cada vez más en la educación y cambiando la forma en que interactuamos con la tecnología. Las IA conversacionales enfrentan varios límites que afectan su capacidad para interactuar de manera efectiva y natural. Uno de los mayores desafíos para los chatbots es la comprensión del contexto,

mientras que los humanos sí pueden interpretar el contexto de una conversación y entender las referencias implícitas. Además, la ambigüedad en el lenguaje natural presenta un obstáculo significativo y aunque los modelos de lenguaje como GPT-4 han avanzado considerablemente en la generación de texto coherente y relevante, aún existen limitaciones.

Los agentes conversacionales pueden producir respuestas que, aunque sean gramaticalmente correctas, carecen de sentido común o son inapropiadas en el contexto de la conversación; esto, en parte, debido a la forma en que los modelos son entrenados, utilizando grandes conjuntos de datos textuales que no siempre capturan la complejidad de las interacciones humanas. Por ejemplo, en algunos casos pueden tener dificultades para generar respuestas emocionalmente adecuadas.

Otro problema bien documentado es cómo el entrenamiento de los chatbots –con datos sesgados– pueden reproducir y amplificar

estos sesgos en sus respuestas, lo cual no solo puede llevar a respuestas inapropiadas u ofensivas, sino que también plantea serias preocupaciones éticas. Es crucial que los desarrolladores de IA trabajen para identificar y mitigar estos sesgos en los datos de entrenamiento para garantizar que estos sean justos e inclusivos.

La privacidad y la seguridad son preocupaciones cruciales en la interacción. Los usuarios deben confiar en que sus datos están seguros y que sus conversaciones no serán utilizadas indebidamente; pero, garantizar esta seguridad es un desafío, especialmente cuando los agentes conversacionales manejan información sensible o personal. Consideramos que una revisión crítica sobre el diseño de chatbots educativos como asistentes virtuales para el aprendizaje puede aportar a los desarrolladores herramientas para lograr esquemas de funcionamientos pedagógicos que no reduzcan a un uso instrumental de la tecnología mediante procesos automatizados.

2. De la comunicación automatizada en el aprendizaje a la relación comunicacional educativa en la enseñanza de lenguas

Según el documento elaborado por Centro de Innovación en Tecnología y Pedagogía (Citep) de la Universidad de Buenos Aires, titulado *Inteligencia Artificial y Educación. Un marco para el análisis y la creación de experiencias en el nivel superior (2022)* en

los últimos años se advierte una creciente presencia de la IA en procesos de digitalización y automatización en la enseñanza, en el aprendizaje, la gestión, la investigación y la evaluación educativa. Esto incluye una tendencia internacional hacia el aprendizaje

personalizado, el uso de las tecnologías como la Realidad Virtual (RV) o la Realidad Aumentada (RA) y el auge del metaverso o multiverso.

De otra parte, el devenir de estos avances tecnológicos vinculados con la transformación digital que implica el uso de analíticas de datos, la automatización y datificación de los aprendizajes nos interpelan en relación con las siguientes preguntas: ¿podrán acelerar y transformar las innovaciones ya en curso, en las prácticas de enseñanza?, ¿ofrecerán formas de mejorar la enseñanza en el nivel superior y de enriquecer la experiencia de aprendizaje de las y los estudiantes? La incorporación de la IA en la educación implica desplegar una tensión entre su gran potencial para la resolución de problemas y los riesgos relativos a la vulneración de derechos humanos, el acceso a la educación y la inclusión educativa. Según Kate Crawford (2022), si le preguntamos a los expertos en aprendizaje profundo sobre el significado de la IA, su respuesta técnica giraría en torno a procesos de redes neuronales que se organizan en capas receptoras de datos, etiquetados para clasificarlo de una forma que todavía no podemos explicar del todo.

Desde el punto de vista técnico, la IA se ocupa de la acción racional a partir del uso de un agente inteligente que toma la mejor decisión posible en una situación. Sin embargo, para Crawford la IA no es ni

inteligente ni artificial, tampoco puede reducirse a una explicación puramente técnica, porque abarca dimensiones materiales que dependen de un conjunto más amplio de estructuras políticas y sociales. Esto implica ir más allá de redes neuronales y reconocimiento de patrones estadísticos y preguntarnos: ¿qué se está optimizando, para quién y quién toma las decisiones?

En el campo educativo la incorporación de IA encuentra sus lineamientos a nivel internacional en el marco de la Conferencia Internacional sobre la Inteligencia Artificial y la Educación (16 al 18 de mayo de 2019), organizada por la UNESCO y el gobierno de la República Popular de China (Consenso de Beijing). Virginia Ithurburu (2023), plantea que entre los desafíos que se formularon en el marco del consenso y los documentos complementarios podemos referir una visión de política pública de la Inteligencia Artificial que garantice inclusión y equidad, formación docente en habilidades digitales para el uso de IA en forma pedagógica y el desarrollo de sistema de datos para la gestión de la educación. Otro eje importante refiere al fomento de la investigación sobre IA en educación, concebido tanto para la práctica como para la política y también el abordaje de la ética y la transparencia en la gestión de datos para su democratización (UNESCO, 2021, p. 94).

De otra parte, Silvia Coicaud afirma que definir la inteligencia artificial es una tarea

compleja debido a su constante cambio y su carácter interdisciplinar. Se desarrolla dentro de un campo donde intervienen antropólogos, biólogos, informáticos, lingüistas, filósofos, geógrafos, arqueólogos y neurocientíficos. Desde un punto de vista técnico, puede ser definida como sistemas informáticos diseñados para interactuar con el mundo usando diversas capacidades que van desde percepción visual y reconocimiento del habla hasta comportamientos inteligentes como: evaluar la información, tomar decisiones y realizar acciones a partir de un objetivo específico (2019, p. 31).

Desde la perspectiva de Coicaud, informes como *Inteligencias Artificial y Vida en el 2030*, de la Universidad de Stanford (2016), anticipan una incorporación sustancial de la IA en las actividades educativas. El uso de inteligencia artificial en la educación abarca procesos de asesoramiento sobre la base de datos de aprendizaje y asistentes de inteligencia artificial de acompañamiento de los estudiantes. También abre la posibilidad de plataformas de aprendizaje adaptativo para otorgar experiencias educativas personalizadas y de tutores multifuncionales virtuales capaces de asesorar a los alumnos. Esto permite pensar la posibilidad de diseñar sistemas de tutorías inteligentes, aprendizaje colaborativo a partir de patrones de colaboración y la participación de agentes conversacionales en los procesos de aprendizaje.

Los chatbots, también conocidos como agentes conversacionales, son programas de software diseñados para simular conversaciones humanas, los cuales surgieron en la década de 1960 con la creación de ELIZA y, desde entonces, han evolucionado significativamente gracias a los avances en procesamiento del lenguaje natural (PLN) y machine learning. En el ámbito educativo, los chatbots se utilizan para proporcionar tutorías, responder preguntas frecuentes y facilitar el aprendizaje interactivo. Los agentes conversacionales pueden ser chatbots, orientados a la resolución de trámites, gestión y solicitudes de los estudiantes o agentes virtuales, que operan como un asistente personal inteligente con diversos niveles de autonomía, cooperación y aprendizaje (p. 27).

El documento del Citep indica que los desarrollos de inteligencia artificial en educación podrían agruparse en tres ámbitos: enseñanza y aprendizaje, gestión e investigación. Dentro del primero, podemos encontrar aplicaciones vinculadas con la colaboración en las tareas docentes como el seguimiento de estudiantes, respuestas a demanda, supervisión de foros de debate, automatización de procesos evaluativos, personalización de itinerarios de aprendizaje y acompañamiento a la actividad de estudiantes. Los chatbots pueden hacer contribuciones significativas a la educación de lenguas de varias maneras; por ejemplo, permiten optimizar el apren-

dizaje mediante práctica conversacional en el idioma que están aprendiendo en cualquier momento y lugar, sin necesidad de un interlocutor humano.

Esto es especialmente útil para mejorar la fluidez y la confianza en el uso del idioma. Ofrecen disponibilidad de atención en cualquier momento del día, lo que permite a los estudiantes practicar y aprender según su propio horario, sin restricciones de tiempo. Producen una retroalimentación inmediata sobre el uso del idioma, corrigiendo errores y ofreciendo sugerencias para mejorar, lo que facilita un aprendizaje continuo y personalizado. También permiten incorporar una variedad de materiales de aprendizaje, como ejercicios de gramática, vocabulario y comprensión lectora, adaptándose a las necesidades específicas de cada estudiante. Desde el punto de vista de la motivación y el compromiso estas tecnologías interactivas y personalizadas pueden hacer que el aprendizaje de idiomas sea más atractivo y motivador para los estudiantes, manteniendo su interés y compromiso. Esto lo podríamos ver en la posibilidad de simular conversaciones y situaciones de la vida real, lo que ayuda a los estudiantes a prepararse para interacciones auténticas en el idioma que están aprendiendo.

Del mismo modo se pueden adaptar sus respuestas y recomendaciones basadas en el nivel de habilidad y las áreas de interés del estudiante, proporcionando una experiencia de aprendizaje más personalizada. Las tecnologías de “IA comunicativa” plantean la cuestión de si la comunicación debe redefinirse para acomodar a las máquinas en el rol previamente reservado para los humanos. Algunos estudios operan desde un modelo en el que la tecnología, incluida la IA, sigue siendo un mediador de la interacción humana, aunque con mayor agencia. Desde esta perspectiva, la IA puede intercambiar mensajes con personas, pero sus acciones están situadas dentro del contexto más amplio de mediación de interacciones humanas. Algunas aproximaciones proponen una definición general de la comunicación que no depende de quién o qué esté comunicando. La comunicación se define como un proceso de “creación de significado” logrado a través del intercambio de mensajes con implicaciones para el individuo y la sociedad. La comunicación puede ocurrir entre humanos y entre humanos y máquinas, o comunicación humano-máquina. Reconociendo que las máquinas pueden ocupar roles de comunicadores y mediadores, se evita calificar la comunicación humano-máquina como inferior a la humana.

Conclusión

Esta revisión crítica sobre el diseño de chatbots educativos como asistentes virtuales para el aprendizaje de la lengua nos permitió evaluar los riesgos y las oportunidades que conlleva la redefinición del vínculo humano-máquina en la práctica educativa. Aunque los chatbots y las IA conversacionales han recorrido un largo camino y ofrecen muchas ventajas, todavía enfrentan límites significativos. Superar estos desafíos es crucial para el futuro de

la interacción humano-IA. A medida que la tecnología avanza, es importante que los desarrolladores para crear chatbots que no solo sean técnicamente competentes, sino también éticamente responsables y centrados en el usuario. Solo entonces podremos aprovechar plenamente el potencial de las IA conversacionales y mejorar la calidad de nuestras interacciones diarias con la tecnología.

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Enhancing language learning through multimodal integration: a proposal for curriculum development and evaluation

Mejorando el aprendizaje de idiomas a través de la integración multimodal: una propuesta para el desarrollo y evaluación del currículo

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Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected world, communicating effectively in multiple languages is paramount. This paper puts forward a comprehensive and innovative approach to enhancing language learning by integrating multimodal techniques into curriculum

development and evaluation processes. This approach, which is unique in its focus on diverse sensory modalities and its potential to optimize language acquisition and retention, has the potential to advance language education practices significantly.

This proposal advocates for a holistic curriculum design that leverages various multimodal resources, including digital media, interactive activities, and real-world simulations. These simulations could include virtual language exchanges, role-playing scenarios, and immersion experiences. This approach aims to engage learners more profoundly and sustainably by catering to diverse learning styles and preferences. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of these multimodal strategies through rigorous assessment methods, such as pre-and and post-tests, learner feedback, and performance assessments.

This proposal offers educators and curriculum developers a roadmap to create dynamic and adaptive language learning programs through a combination of theoretical frameworks, such as Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and the Cognitive Load Theory, empirical research, and practical insights. By embracing multimodal integration, educators can foster a more immersive and experiential learning environment, empowering learners to become proficient communicators in diverse linguistic contexts.

Keywords: Language Learning, Multimodal Integration, Curriculum, Development, Evaluation.

Introduction

Integrating Multimodal Resources into Language Curriculum: Examine how multimedia resources, such as videos, podcasts, and interactive simulations, can be incorporated into language curricula to enhance comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence.

Language acquisition is a complex process that involves various learning modalities. With the advent of multimedia resources,

there is a growing interest in exploring how these resources can be effectively integrated into language curricula to enhance learners' comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence. This research proposal investigates the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating multimedia resources, including videos, podcasts, and interactive simulations, into language teaching and learning.

Exploring EFL Learners' Metaphorical Conceptions of Language Learning: A Multimodal Analysis, the study explores Iranian EFL learners' metaphors of English language learning experience. It examines verbal and non-verbal metaphorical depictions of the language. The study involved 11 learners at a non-profit language institute. Data was collected through questionnaires and drawings. The results showed that learners shared common perspectives and positive attitudes towards English learning. Most visual and verbal metaphorical depictions depict language learning as a joyful, dynamic, and discovery process. The study concludes with implications for further research (Xu et al., 2022).

Salamanti demonstrated the effectiveness of collaborative and multimodal learning strategies in enhancing English language proficiency among ESL/EFL learners. Secondary school students from three UK schools participated in the study. Half of the students received collaborative and multimodal instruction, while the other half received traditional instruction. The results revealed significant improvement in post-test scores, as well as higher engagement and motivation levels in the experimental group. These findings suggest that integrating these strategies can enhance learning environments (Salamanti et al., 2023).

Methodology

This research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The following techniques were utilised:

- **Surveys:** To gather quantitative data on learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of multimedia resources.
- **Pre and post-tests:** To measure language comprehension and vocabulary acquisition changes.
- **Interviews and focus groups:** To explore in-depth the experiences and perspectives of learners and instructors regarding integrating multimedia resources.
- **Classroom observations:** To observe the implementation of multimedia resources in language teaching and learning.

Expected Outcomes

The findings of this research contributed to understanding how multimedia resources can be effectively integrated into language curricula to enhance language learning out-

comes. The study provided insights into the benefits and challenges of using multimedia resources and practical recommendations for educators and curriculum developers.

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Análisis de estrategias didácticas de enseñanza y aprendizaje usadas en el proceso de la enseñanza del inglés en estudiantes de 3° de la IETAL de Luruaco

Analysis of teaching and learning strategies used in the English teaching process for 3rd grade students at IETAL de Luruaco

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Abstract

The research project, Analysis of didactic teaching and learning strategies used in the process of teaching English to 3rd-grade students of the IETAL of Luruaco, focuses on the didactic strategies used by teachers for teaching English to students. The objective is to analyze these strategies and the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the process of teaching and learning English by inquiring about the pedagogical practices and the strategies used. The concept of didactic strategies is defined and characterized. The guidelines, principles, and orientations for teaching English as a foreign language in Colombia, established by the Ministry of National Education (MEN), are presented. ICT-mediated educational resources for teaching English in elementary school and strengthening communicative skills are analyzed. The study is based on a qualitative approach, using a case study design. Data were collected through characterization surveys, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews with teachers. The data collected were analyzed in three categories of study. The results identified the most common teaching strategies and the role of ICT in the English teaching and learning process. Based on these findings, recommendations are proposed to improve teaching practices and the use of ICTs in ELT within the educational context.

Keywords: Teaching strategies, English language teaching, English language learning, ICTs.

Resumen

El proyecto de investigación *Análisis de estrategias didácticas de enseñanza y aprendizaje usadas en el proceso de la enseñanza del inglés en estudiantes de 3° de la IETAL de Luruaco*, se centra en las estrategias didácticas que utilizan los docentes para enseñar inglés a los estudiantes. El objetivo es analizar estas estrategias y el papel de las Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC) en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés. Indaga sobre las prácticas pedagógicas y las estrategias que se usan. Se define y caracteriza el concepto de estrategias didácticas. Se presentan los lineamientos, principios y orientaciones para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en Colombia, establecidos por el Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN). Se analizan los recursos educativos mediados por TIC para la enseñanza del inglés en la básica primaria y el fortalecimiento de habilidades comunicativas. El estudio se basa en un enfoque cualitativo, utilizando un diseño de estudio de caso. Se recopilieron datos a través de encuestas de caracterización, observaciones en el aula y entrevistas semiestructuradas a los docentes. Se analizaron los datos recogidos en tres categorías de estudio. Los resultados identificaron las estrategias didácticas más comunes y el papel de las TIC en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés. A partir de estos hallazgos, se proponen recomendaciones para mejorar las prácticas docentes y el uso de las TIC en la enseñanza del inglés en este contexto educativo.

Palabras clave: estrategias didácticas, enseñanza del inglés, aprendizaje del inglés, TIC.

Introducción

El aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera es una de las prioridades del sistema educativo colombiano (MEN, 2016). Desde diferentes instrumentos como: los *Derechos Básicos de Aprendizajes* y el *Currículo Sugerido*, se brinda a las y los docentes un marco amplio sobre cómo enseñar inglés en las escuelas públicas y privadas del país. Sin embargo, la realidad le apunta a que el inglés se enseña de una manera insuficiente para alcanzar

los niveles esperados de dominio de un segundo idioma. De ahí que se deben considerar estrategias didácticas que sean propicias para la enseñanza del inglés.

Flores et al. define las estrategias didácticas como herramientas útiles que ayudan al docente a comunicar los contenidos y hacerlos más asequibles a la comprensión del estudiante (2017); sin embargo, pese a disponer de recomendaciones para la

enseñanza del inglés en algunas escuelas de Colombia es común encontrar en las aulas de clases momentos de la enseñanza del inglés donde el rol de los estudiantes es muy pasivo y donde solo se da a conocer el vocabulario que deben memorizar sin un contexto de uso.

Es importante mencionar que los estudiantes de tercer grado tienen en promedio 7 a 9 años y están en un punto del ciclo escolar en el que ya saben leer y escribir en su lengua materna (Jiménez, 2010), hacer distinción de fonemas y grafías en español y diferenciar el inglés como una lengua extranjera. En esta etapa de adquisición del lenguaje se logra un desarrollo fonológico, que permite una

correcta pronunciación de palabras y sonidos. Para el caso de los estudiantes de 3° de la Institución Educativa Técnica Agropecuaria de Luruaco (IETAL) este puede ser un buen momento para fortalecer los aprendizajes en inglés.

Por otro lado, a pesar de los avances tecnológicos y del alto impacto que este ha tenido en la sociedad, muchas escuelas carecen de recursos y algunos de los docentes no se sienten capacitados para proponer innovaciones desde este campo. Desde esta investigación se busca indagar en las estrategias que los docentes, utilizan en su práctica de aula para la enseñanza del inglés y cuáles son los resultados del uso de estas estrategias.

Metodología

Enfoque de la investigación

Este proyecto de investigación es de corte cualitativo, lo cual –de acuerdo con Stake (2005)– se realiza en sus ambientes naturales, de manera que el investigador estudia los fenómenos en el contexto en el que ocurren y, esta, en particular, se realiza en el municipio de Luruaco, Atlántico, en los espacios en que laboran los docentes, quienes permitieron la obtención de datos mediante observaciones y entrevistas para construir las unidades de análisis a partir de los casos. Esta se enmarca en el diseño

de investigación descriptiva con enfoque cualitativo. De acuerdo con Guevara et al. (2020), el objetivo de este tipo de investigación es conocer situaciones, costumbres y actitudes mediante la descripción exacta de las actividades, los elementos que se usan y las personas que participan.

Método de investigación

Para esta investigación se seleccionó el estudio de caso como método. De acuerdo con Durán (2012) el diseño de caso es una forma de abordar un hecho o una situación

de manera profunda y en su contexto. Para el desarrollo de este método de estudio de caso, Soto y Escribano (2019) recomiendan un procedimiento metodológico para ser seguido por los investigadores. Se inicia con un diseño del estudio de caso, después se recopila información teórica, se aplican los instrumentos, se hace un análisis de la información obtenida, se contrasta los resultados con la teoría base mediante procedimientos de triangulación para que se genere un conocimiento sólido y profundo sobre la situación problema y, finalmente, se redacta un informe, que consiste en la publicación de las recomendaciones generalizadas de las temáticas o problemáticas analizadas.

En esta investigación se aplica un estudio de caso único y descriptivo (Yin, 1994). Es único porque se toma el caso de los docentes que enseñan inglés en tercero de primaria en la IETAL, dentro de un mismo

modelo pedagógico y con un contexto de aprendizaje similar; y, es descriptivo, porque se hace una descripción de como ocurre el proceso del uso de estrategias didácticas mediadas por las TIC para la enseñanza de inglés, se apoya en la observación como una de las principales técnicas de recogida de datos y a través de entrevistas con los mismos sujetos observados (Rodríguez, Gil y García, 1999).

Instrumentos de investigación

Para el desarrollo de esta investigación se usaron algunos instrumentos para recopilar datos suficientes y responder a la pregunta de investigación: una encuesta de caracterización, observaciones de las acciones que realizan los docentes en clases de inglés y, finalmente, se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas para conocer las apreciaciones de los docentes frente a las estrategias para la enseñanza del inglés.

Resultados y discusión

En esta investigación se identificaron tres grandes temas mencionados desde la pregunta de investigación, se empezó a clasificar la información y se encontró que las respuestas y acciones de los docentes permiten ampliar el conocimiento sobre el tema. A continuación se abordan cada uno de estos.

Estrategias para desarrollar el proceso de enseñanza del inglés en 3°

En el proceso de enseñanza del inglés por parte de los docentes, se encontraron algunas estrategias que hacen parte del ejercicio pedagógico, el uso de juegos en las clases de inglés, la utilización de

herramientas como las imágenes y los videos, las canciones y las dinámicas o actividades para iniciar las clases, el uso del tablero y la repetición para enseñar nuevo vocabulario en inglés, el uso de materiales como fotocopias con actividades sobre el tema, ejercicios de escritura, páginas de los libros, el uso de los juegos de roles. Se destaca la importancia de la evaluación durante todo el proceso de enseñanza y la preparación para las clases.

Se encuentran que los docentes al no tener la formación para la enseñanza de este segundo idioma tienen la necesidad de auto formarse para impartir la enseñanza de habilidades comunicativas a los estudiantes. Lo anterior responde a lo que Monereo (1997), incluye en su estudio sobre la construcción del conocimiento estratégico, cuando sugiere que la preparación es fundamental para alcanzar objetivos de enseñanza y de aprendizaje y para que las estrategias den resultado y que se hace necesario tener clara la forma en cómo se enseñará, qué materiales son accesibles y qué tipo actividades son los más propicias.

Este análisis deja claro como las estrategias de enseñanza incluyen el uso de materiales como tableros, cuadernos, imágenes y juegos para la enseñanza del vocabulario y de la pronunciación de las nuevas palabras. Chamot y Robbins (2007), hablan de la importancia de vincular contenidos gráficos en el desarrollo y enseñanza del vocabulario,

para ayudar a que el aprendizaje sea activo y estratégico.

Frente al uso de los juegos de roles, Dosso (2009) menciona que las estrategias didácticas de enseñanza permiten una simulación de situaciones o contextos reales que le dan valor y sentido a lo que están aprendiendo, de ahí que se recomienda usarlas con frecuencia cuando se está enseñando un segundo idioma por su flexibilidad y potenciación de oportunidades de aplicación. Se evidencia la repetición y la memorización como aspecto constante en las clases y se resalta el uso de estrategias como el juego de roles para motivar y propiciar la utilización de lo enseñanza en contextos reales y simulados.

Estrategias didácticas para lograr el aprendizaje del inglés

Para lograr el aprendizaje de un nuevo conocimiento en inglés por parte de los estudiantes, se hicieron evidentes algunas acciones y estrategias que usaron los docentes para cumplir con este propósito en sus clases y que mencionaron durante la entrevista. El uso de juegos, acciones repetitivas y secuenciales, el uso de herramientas y recursos impresos y tecnológicos, las actividades de refuerzo y complementarias y el apoyo desde casa, fueron propicias para promover el aprendizaje en sus entornos de enseñanza. Se evidenció en la observación y en la entrevista que los docentes privilegian el juego como una actividad didáctica para

favorecer el aprendizaje, respondiendo así a la idea de Monereo (1997), quien menciona que las actividades didácticas y dinámicas favorecen el desarrollo de las estrategias de aprendizaje y que estas se deben considerar dentro de los aprendizajes a trabajar, siempre que tengan un objetivo pedagógico.

Por otro lado, se analizó que las canciones pueden ser tanto estrategias didácticas como de aprendizaje y que el uso estas permite que en las clases haya una interactividad con el idioma que se está aprendiendo. Quintero (2016) habla de esta estrategia como una forma dinámica y como un recurso que permite el fortalecimiento de la destreza auditiva, además que ayuda a memorizar a través lo que se está enseñando y se hace de forma atractiva, en especial para los niños.

El uso de las preguntas, respaldadas por Bacca (2018), como una estrategia para permitir la comprobación de los aprendizajes fue evidente en algunas de las clases. El uso de materiales complementa el proceso de enseñanza y permite mantener a los estudiantes ocupados y motivados a reforzar el aprendizaje (McDougald, 2009), esto les permite practicar lo que se les va enseñando. Smith menciona que el uso de recursos complementarios, principalmente los gráficos, permiten un mayor alcance del aprendizaje cuando estos materiales están ilustrados con imágenes y dibujos de refuerzo (2006).

Se encontró que los docentes atienden a la recomendación de La malla de aprendizaje de inglés sugerida para por el MEN (2016), en la cual se menciona que, en la ruta metodológica para los grados de primero a tercero, se debe trabajar un aprendizaje basado en tareas, puesto que estas se pueden usar para fortalecer la competencia sea lingüística, pragmática o sociolingüística.

La aplicación del modelo CALLA (2007) se encontró en lo relacionado con el uso de tareas de aprendizaje prácticas que incluye la investigación y las tareas de cooperación, esto aumenta la motivación para aprender y la confianza de los estudiantes para usar las habilidades comunicativas tanto escritas como orales en su contexto. Finalmente, Gancino (2016) menciona que la organización de los contenidos debe ser de acuerdo con los niveles de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Y los docentes organizan parte de los contenidos para que los estudiantes aprendan por niveles y que vaya aumento la complejidad poco a poco, esto permite una mayor comprensión de los contenidos y que el aprendizaje sea más significativo.

Estrategias y recursos mediados por las TIC para el desarrollo de las clases de inglés

Dentro del análisis en esta investigación, se considera necesario involucrar el uso de recursos y estrategias mediadas por

las TIC para el desarrollo de las clases de inglés con los estudiantes de 3°. El uso de algunas estrategias y recursos tecnológicos como las ayudas audiovisuales fortalecer la comprensión, la disposición a la formación y los procesos interactivos con el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma.

Se pudo encontrar algunos elementos mediados por las tecnologías que son usados por los docentes para el desarrollo de sus clases. Se consideró como se pueden trabajar con algunas dinámicas en inglés, gracias a la utilización de recursos tecnológicos, lo que permite que haya un enfoque lúdico interactivo con el idioma mediante algunas ayudas audiovisuales.

Se encontró una situación que afecta de cierta forma la implementación de estrategias medidas por las TIC en las clases y es la carencia de recursos o herramientas tecnológicas en la escuela, los docentes comentan que se hace muy difícil tratar de ser recursivos con pocos recursos, y que esto puede hacer que no puedan hacer tanto como quieran. Se encontró también como algunos docentes implementan estrategias de trabajo en casa, complementarias o sugeridas para trabajar fuera de la escuela

y de esa forma usar recursos o actividades mediadas por las TIC para sus clases.

En este análisis se hace también una referencia los recursos que ofrece el Currículo Sugerido del MEN (2016), donde hay una serie de actividades y recursos para llevar a escuelas con pocos dispositivos. Se encontró que los docentes están dispuestos a mejorar en sus prácticas, pero que es necesaria una formación en uso de tecnologías y la conexión con la enseñanza de una segunda lengua. Y sus propuestas de trabajo se articulan con lo que Bacca (2018) explica al hablar de los procesos interactivos para trabajar con los estudiantes, que se pueda trabajar con ellos de forma dinámica y pensando en su etapa de aprendizaje. Y, además, responde a las sugerencias de Rangel (2015) sobre la importancia de que los docentes posean recursos que les permita diseñar e implementar estrategias con materiales y recursos mediados por las TIC. Todas estas estrategias y recursos encontradas muestran cómo se está haciendo una vinculación de la TIC como vehículo para fortalecer los procesos, que se dinamicen las clases y que se puedan alcanzar los objetivos de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

Conclusiones

En el desarrollo de esta investigación se realizaron diversos procesos que permitieran el alcance del objetivo principal,

de analizar las estrategias didácticas de enseñanza, de aprendizaje, y mediadas por las TIC que usan los docentes de 3°

de la IETAL para desarrollar y fortalecer el aprendizaje del inglés de los estudiantes.

En primera instancia, una caracterización del problema permitió ver que la enseñanza del inglés requiere más acompañamiento y apoyo para alcanzar los objetivos de aprendizaje que propone el MEN y que, aunque los docentes están dispuestos a asumir la enseñanza de un área en el que no son expertos, sienten que faltan cosas por mejorar para que sea más significativo.

Se concluye que al no contar con suficientes recursos o herramientas tecnológicas que garanticen una enseñanza de calidad se convierte en un obstáculo para poder alcanzar las metas, así como para favorecer la integración de la tecnología en el aula. No se encuentran transformaciones significativas en los procesos de enseñanza y que se requiere formar a los docentes en métodos y estrategias para poder desarrollar mejores habilidades comunicativas en un segundo idioma y alcanzar más calidad desde la formación impartida.

Del análisis de los datos, se puede concluir que los docentes son muy recursivos en la enseñanza del inglés a pesar de su habilidad en este, además que entienden la importancia de enseñar un segundo idioma y se esfuerzan porque los estudiantes disfruten el proceso y que aprendan. Los docentes realizan dinámicas, aprovechan algunos recursos mediados por las TIC para que los estudiantes refuercen en casa y con equipos de sus padres algunos contenidos en inglés.

Finalmente, se concluye que los docentes están dispuestos a mejorar si reciben un acompañamiento desde la escuela en recursos tecnológicos y su vinculación de estos en el aula para enseñar inglés. Esto sin duda es algo que se debe aprovechar para empezar a transformar la práctica educativa en la enseñanza de un segundo idioma en la institución. Con lo anterior, se podrá mostrar mejores resultados y un avance en esa formación bilingüe en el contexto educativo de Luruaco.

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Narrative circles in English as a strategy to strengthen civic competencies

Círculos narrativos en inglés como estrategia para fortalecer las competencias ciudadanas

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of narrative circles in improving civic competencies among students at the Better Human Foundation in Bogotá, Colombia. The project employed a qualitative participatory action research (PAR) approach with

four phases: analysis, implementation, reflection, and evaluation. The initial assessments focused on the students' current achievement levels and areas for improvement. Six narrative circles were conducted in Spanish and English to encourage collaborative learning and enhance communication skills. The results showed that students improved in emotional regulation, self-control, empathy, and social engagement. The analysis conducted using the Atlas.ti program, revealed significant findings. Visual and thematic content analysis identified emotional and cognitive development, highlighting the potential of narrative circles for reflective and metacognitive purposes. This research suggests that narrative circles, supported by a bilingual pedagogical approach, provide a platform for developing civic capabilities that are necessary for effective engagement in a democratic society. The findings may contribute to shaping civic education practices based on real-world experiences, showcasing the effectiveness of participatory and reflective pedagogical strategies in fostering civic and intercultural competencies.

Keywords: Civic Competencies, Narrative Circles, Emotional Regulation, Reflective Practices, Bilingual Education.

Resumen

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo evaluar la efectividad de los círculos narrativos en la mejora de las competencias cívicas de los estudiantes de la Fundación Better Human de Bogotá, Colombia. El proyecto utilizó un enfoque de investigación acción participativa (PAR) cualitativa con cuatro fases: análisis, implementación, reflexión y evaluación. Las evaluaciones iniciales se centraron en los niveles de rendimiento actuales del estudiante y las áreas de mejora. Se llevaron a cabo seis círculos narrativos en español e inglés para fomentar el aprendizaje colaborativo y mejorar las habilidades de comunicación. Los resultados mostraron que los estudiantes mejoraron en regulación emocional, autocontrol, empatía y compromiso social.

El análisis, realizado con el programa Atlas ti, arrojó hallazgos importantes. El análisis de contenido visual y temático identificó el desarrollo emocional y cognitivo, destacando el potencial de los círculos narrativos para propósitos reflexivos y metacognitivos. Esta investigación sugiere que los círculos narrativos, respaldados por un enfoque pedagógico bilingüe, brindan una plataforma para desarrollar las capacidades cívicas necesarias para una participación efectiva en una sociedad democrática. Los hallazgos pueden contribuir a dar forma a las prácticas de educación cívica basadas en experiencias del

mundo real, mostrando la efectividad de las estrategias pedagógicas participativas y reflexivas para fomentar competencias cívicas e interculturales.

Palabras clave: competencias cívicas, círculos narrativos, regulación emocional, prácticas reflexivas, educación bilingüe.

Introduction

Nowadays, in a world heavily influenced by media, the internet, and social media, schools play an essential role in fostering principles for healthy living. In this case, schools help shape a generation of ethically aware and critically thinking citizens by promoting quality education that enhances skills. These individuals value fairness, exercise their rights, respect others' rights, fulfill responsibilities, and strive to live harmoniously (Hämäläinen & Nivala, 2023). For this reason, education should go beyond teaching subjects to develop values and attitudes that contribute to a more equal society. Indeed, schools serve as environments for fostering skills that empower students to engage constructively in an interconnected and complex world.

Consequently, civic competencies encompass the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to navigate society effectively across settings such as family life, academia, and the workplace (Lonto, 2020). Developing civic competencies helps students adapt to and overcome challenges while promoting unity and respect. Teaching

values along with skills, such as empathy, conflict resolution, and active democratic participation cultivates engaged and accountable citizens. Schools are tasked with the job of shaping individuals who do not uphold their rights and respect for others while actively contributing to societal well-being (Lonto, 2020). This guarantees performance in life and the establishment of a united community (OECD, 2019). Civic competencies cover a range of abilities and values for individuals to be dedicated citizens. According to Lonto (2020), these competencies offer a framework for comprehension and effective application in different educational and social settings. Lonto (2020) highlights emotional, communicative, and integrative elements as components of civic competencies.

The cognitive aspect implies thinking skills for grasping, analyzing, and assessing information related to civic engagement (OECD, 2019). Emotional competence includes skills, attitudes, and values linked to regulation, empathy, and social responsibility that foster respectful interactions (Tony,

2020). Furthermore, the communicative component encompasses the skills for respectful communication in civic realms, vital for active participation in democracy (Tony, 2020). Indeed, the global element denotes the capability to harmoniously integrate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to enhance unity and collective welfare (UNESCO, 2015).

The OECD model (2019) classifies competencies into knowledge, cognitive abilities, and affective tendencies while underscoring the importance of striking a balance between theoretical understanding and practical proficiencies. It also emphasizes the significance of dialogue and deliberation in processes. Furthermore, the OECD model (2019) categorizes competencies into knowledge, cognitive abilities, and affective tendencies. It emphasizes the importance of balancing theoretical understanding and practical proficiencies, and the significance of dialogue and deliberation in processes. It is crucial to have teaching methods and strategies to enhance skills (Bishop, 2022). Engaging in narrative circles encourages students to think about real-world scenarios, enabling them to gain abilities for

life and cultivate civic competencies in an increasingly digital society. (Bishop, 2022). As a result, engaging in narrative circles encourages students to think about real-world scenarios, enabling them to gain abilities for life and cultivate civic competencies in an increasingly digital society.

Successful educational initiatives and governmental policies have played a role in promoting skills. UNESCO (2016) and the European Union have created resources for educators such as the Manual for the Development of Intercultural Competencies: Narrative Circles. This kind of education focuses on the skills needed for participating in democratic societies. In this case, civic competencies are vital for strengthening democracy, fostering unity, and promoting understanding in today's interconnected society. These competencies enhance thinking skills, effective communication, and ethical decision-making. Embracing diversity and bilingualism also play significant roles in developing intercultural competencies. As a conclusion, promoting these competencies is necessary for shaping individuals who can contribute effectively and responsibly to society in an interrelated world.

Methods

The project "The Use of Conversational Circles Supported by the Use of English as a Foreign Language and Its Effects on

Strengthening Students' Ethnic and Cultural Empowerment at the Better Human Foundation in Engativá, Bogotá, Colombia" uses

a qualitative approach through research-participatory action (PAR). This method is useful for interpreting qualitative data to understand social phenomena. PAR promotes collaboration between researchers and participants, creates a sense of belonging, and helps students become active learners (Eisenhart, 2019). As a result, PAR highlights that this approach improves the student experience and improves participants' engagement.

There are three parts to research: analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Firstly, in the analysis phase, empirical methods such as surveys, photographs, recordings, and student activities were used to identify the nature of students' current abilities and show their interests and characteristics (Visser & Kreemers, 2019). The implementation phase has involved six discussion circles in the Spanish and English sections and promoting collaborative learning among students, teachers, and researchers (Deardorff, 2020). These sessions have encouraged reflection, debate, and exchange of experiences to strengthen students' vocabulary and communication skills in English and improve their citizenship competencies.

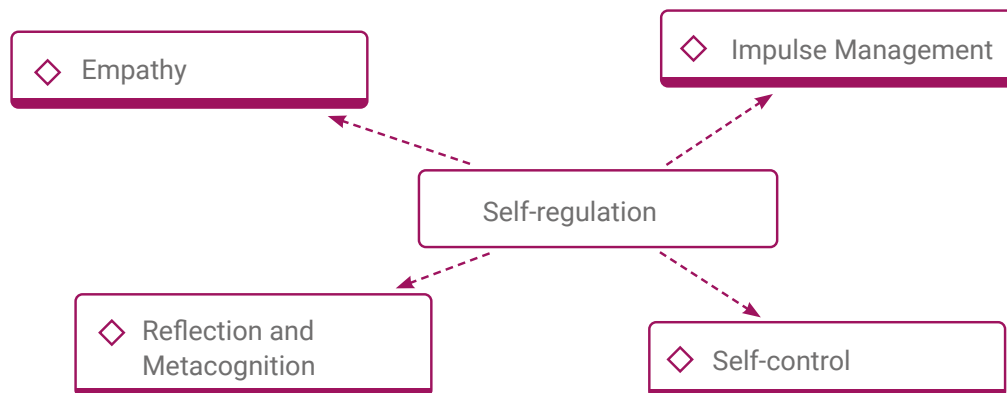
Finally, the last phase emphasizes evaluating the results using qualitative analysis methods, where information content analysis is

included, to evaluate the impact on student skills. Furthermore, reflection is another relevant constituent of PAR (Eisenhart, 2019), enabling teaching strategies to be adapted to research results and community needs. In the evaluation phase, the results are compared with the original study programs to determine the importance and effectiveness of the intervention. Indeed, findings point out greater awareness of emotional and psychological needs and better communication skills in Spanish and English when promoting collaborative awareness and improving students' social and cultural engagement.

The project administration took place in 4 stages such as planning, action, reflection, and evaluation, which began with a diagnostic test about emotional, cognitive, and global integrative competencies assessment of students of primary and secondary education. Furthermore, this evaluation was conducted by two groups of four researcher-teachers. The diagnostic results for secondary students were empathy, emotional self-control, social, and critical thinking skills, diversity, accountability, and participation (Roe, 2020). In the field of primary education, the vast majority of problems were found in the area of cognitive and communicative competencies, especially auditory knowledge and expression.

Results

Figure 1. Self-regulation

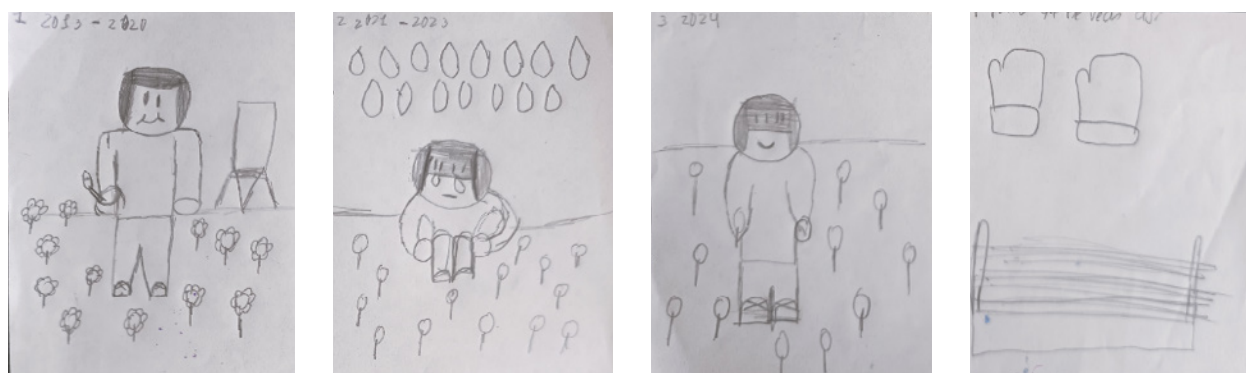


Note: Own elaboration

When applying narrative circles as a didactic means has demonstrated decidedly effective in sponsoring civic and intercultural competencies among participants at the “Better Human” Foundation in Bogotá, Colombia. For this reason, this analysis is based on findings from the Atlas ti program, illustrated in Figure 1, which highlights essential categories in students’ emotional and social development. Key categories identified denote impulse management,

reflection and metacognition, self-control, and empathy, (Carolei,2023). What is more, thematic and visual content analyses were used to assess participant drawings, recordings, and reports written by a student representative. These qualitative methods offer a comprehensive understanding of frequent themes and symbols, which facilitate human experiences and visual representations comprehension (Silverman, 1997).

Figure 2. Self-portrait 5



Note: Student production Narrative Circle 1

Figure 2 depicts a self-portrait of a young boy divided into four scenes of how he has felt the participant before and after COVID-19 surrounded by withered and blooming flowers that symbolize his individuality and emotions. According to Fletcher (2021), the theory of symbolic expression. This self-portrait, drawn in a narrative circle, reflects symbolic functioning: dead flowers in the self-portrait are synonymous with sadness, decline, and loss. Furthermore, they express a feeling of rot, underutilization, or emotional pain while blossoming flowers represent the process of becoming, of your vitality, growth, and the more positive aspects of emotions. Likewise, they are often a symbol of fresh starts, hope, and the thriving parts of an individual (Fletcher, 2021). Indeed, these symbols demonstrate what the student is emotionally going through and experiencing from the inside through his drawings.

Regarding results from the Atlas Ti program, students have learned how to control their emotions when dealing with difficult situations. One student exemplified this by stating, “Stay silent so as not to answer wrong according to the turtle technique” ([Self-control Workshop], 2024, 2:1, ¶3). The turtle technique is another cognitive-behavioral technique that assists children with anger or frustration. In this case, children and teenagers learn to see themselves as turtles drawing up their self-portraits and are taught to pause, take a deep breath, and think before they act impulsively.

This approach increases emotional regulation, decreases stress, and encourages inner-self-thought. For this reason, this target is treated in educational contexts, where the technique is incorporated through explicit instruction and practice, with the belief that it will lead to better social interactions for creating a suitable learning environment (Johnson & Waller, 2021). Consequently, the turtle technique successfully promotes emotional regulation and cognitive development in children which has a supporting role in the welfare of children as a whole as well as their academic success.

Empathy is essential for living together and for healthy interpersonal relationships (Costantini, 2019). Students have been less egotistical or egocentric where narrative circles are concerned and have proven they can perceive and appreciate how among them. One student reflected on the importance of empathy during a workshop; “we have to feel empathy for others and also together, that we must put ourselves in the shoes of others and that no one should exclude others.” (Bus Workshop, 2024, 5:2, ¶5). The power of empathy is instrumental in this progression — empathy that generates care, compassion, and respect — fostering a classroom community that not only learns together but also considers how to be with one another in the world beyond the classroom.

In such circumstances, reflection and metacognition become crucial for students

to understand their feelings and responses (Larkin, 2023). The Atlas program focused on these skills, inviting students to understand their emotional lives and learn how to cope with those feelings. One student reported, for example, “I think we should all imitate what the turtle did” (Self-control Workshop, 2024, 1:1, ¶ 3). Larkin (2023) emphasizes that this metacognitive approach improves emotional self-regulation and fosters a lifelong tendency for self-reflective self-assessment, which is crucial for students to be aware of while learning at their institution.

Reflection and metacognition are critical processes that allow students to evaluate their emotions and reactions (Larkin, 2023). The Atlas program has emphasized these skills by encouraging students to reflect on their emotional experiences and develop strategies for managing them. For instance, a student noted, “Stay silent so as not to answer wrong” (Turtle Workshop, 2024,

2:4, ¶ 3). This metacognitive approach, according to Minguet (2023), enhances emotional self-regulation and fosters a continuous self-assessment attitude that is essential for personal and academic growth among students.

The implementation of narrative circles has shown that students have more developed emotional and social competencies. Narrative circles have opened up avenues of inquiry about thinking, feeling, and self-regulation. Thus it is feasible to create a healthier environment in which to interact. The implementation of this project is structured phases that lead to a full assessment and intervention, allowing for meaningful conversations and self-improvement among the students. Finally, this demonstrated that a narrative circle where qualitative methods and participatory action research are integrated promotes a suitable and real environment for communicating and learning.

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Intercultural communication and the strengthening of English as a foreign language in the BA in communication studies and journalism at UNIMINUTO, Bogotá Calle 80 Campus

comunicación intercultural y fortalecimiento del inglés como lengua extranjera, en el programa comunicación social-periodismo de UNIMINUTO, Bogotá - calle 80

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Abstract

For the past 30 years, the B.A. in Communication Studies and Journalism at Uniminuto has been preparing communicators to engage in social change. However, with the introduction of internationalization plans, quality assurance systems, and new standards, stakeholders have raised concerns about language policy and planning. They fear that they may limit their freedom to teach, conduct research, and participate in social outreach. The leaders of the internationalization plan at the B.A. have addressed the academic community's concerns. They have coherently taken a critical approach to English policy by creating opportunities for intercultural communication to encourage the use of English: they have carried out a COIL course in partnership with Michigan University; they have led a formative research group that creates educational radio content; and they are currently developing an EMI initiative with the journalism faculty.

Over time, the consideration of language policy has become more common in faculty discussions and curriculum planning. However, some stakeholders are still hesitant due to concerns about linguistic imperialism. Others feel disinterested in learning about the English language and/or its associated cultures. Nonetheless, the academic community's mindset is beginning to change by adopting a decolonial approach and using English to understand global issues.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Language Policy and Planning, Bottom-Up Approach, Linguistic Imperialism, COIL, EMI.

Resumen

Durante los últimos 30 años, el programa de Comunicación Social-Periodismo de Uniminuto ha formado profesionales para el cambio social. Sin embargo, con la introducción de los planes de internacionalización y nuevos estándares del sistema de aseguramiento de calidad, los actores han expresado su preocupación por la política y la planificación lingüística. Temen que pueda limitar su libertad para enseñar, investigar y hacer proyección social.

Líderes y lideresas del plan de internacionalización del programa han respondido a estas preocupaciones. Coherentemente, han adoptado un enfoque crítico hacia la política de inglés: realizaron un curso COIL con la Universidad de Michigan; han liderado un semillero de investigación que produce radio educativa y actualmente están desarrollando una iniciativa EMI con las y los profesores de periodismo.

Con el tiempo, la política lingüística ha empezado a ser considerada de forma más habitual en los debates del profesorado y en la planificación curricular. Sin embargo, algunos actores continúan escépticos debido al temor al imperialismo lingüístico. Otros no sienten interés por aprender inglés o sobre las culturas asociadas a esta lengua. No obstante, al adoptar un enfoque decolonial y utilizar el inglés para la comprensión de problemas globales, la mentalidad de la comunidad académica está empezando a cambiar.

Palabras clave: comunicación intercultural, política y planeación lingüísticas, enfoque ascendente, imperialismo lingüístico, COIL, EMI.

The challenge of fostering the English language and cultures in Higher Education

Zwisler (2018) states that the Colombian Language Policy and Language Planning (LPLP) has considered Spanish inferior to English in terms of prestige. Therefore, it has reinforced an inferiority complex and imposed a foreign language on the population. In this context, rules have been established to configure the Colombian corpus LPLP. This contributes to disseminating the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages as the standard for determining rules and boundaries for English teaching/learning in the country. However, LPLP decisions have not been enough to achieve the Colombian Government's goal of becoming the best-educated Latin-American country, nor the objective of getting the highest English level in the region (MEN, 2014).

Based on the above, the CEFR has been guiding curricular design in Higher Education

(HE) through the last decades. However, academic literacy, as an initiative to teach general English to freshman students, has not produced the expected results. This situation makes it necessary for HE Institutions to come up with additional strategies to strengthen English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in educational scenarios. Consequently, the B.A. in Communication Studies and Journalism at Uniminuto, Bogotá's Campus has conducted activities at different levels to encourage the use of the English language. However, some stakeholders have expressed concerns about adopting language policy and planning that undermines their autonomy to teach, conduct research, and participate in social outreach. In this context, a group of professors who have become the leaders of the internationalization plan at the B.A. have sought to respond coherently to the academic community's reluctance.

Formative Research as a scenario to foster intercultural communication

Since 2016, the formative research group Radio Voices in English (RAVEN) has served as the initial platform for these activities. RAVEN was originally established by professors and students from two schools at

Uniminuto Bogotá's Campus: The Education School and The Communication Sciences School. The participants, including three professors and a group of students¹, came together to create bilingual educational

1 RAVEN's number of participants has varied from 3 to 20 during the different stages that this group has experienced.

radio. During the first stage, the B.A. in English Teaching and the B.A. in Communication Studies and Journalism collaborated to develop a communication/education experience, allowing the participants to produce experimental bilingual educational radio. As a result, some prerecorded radio programs were made to broadcast them on Uniminuto Radio (1430 A.M.)². During that period, students' topic choices were related to practices and traditions usually associated with American culture, such as Halloween or San Valentine's Day.

Based on the valuable insights gained from its first phase, RAVEN's second stage led its participants to reflect on their understanding of culture. This resulted in an agreement on parameters for students to choose their topics of interest. Given all that, an interest in what Hall (1976) called hidden culture emerged, permitting participants to approach topics from a more critical perspective. Students were allowed to select any topic but had to approach it critically, leading to a wide range of topics, including the Colombian peace agreement, beauty patterns, comics, and other subjects. This was especially relevant for the team because RAVEN has always been dedicated to student-centered processes and did not want to undermine students' control over the research and production processes,

which switched to podcasting from that moment on.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a setback, slowing down RAVEN's activities, but it also brought a new atmosphere to the formative research group work. The collaboration between the schools ended, and the lockdown made the members come up with ideas to overcome difficult times. For instance, technology became crucial in 2020 when teachers and students accepted an invitation to audit a Journalism and Environment elective course at Michigan University (United States). Professor Emilia Askari's generous invitation led RAVEN's leaders to visualize a new path for their journey. After that experience, they engaged in a new procedure to promote intercultural communication by fostering critical thinking about anglophone cultures. They began producing bilingual radio content to develop intercultural competencies by analyzing global issues from a decolonial perspective.

Currently, the team is still facing challenges in attracting new members. Nevertheless, their methodology is consolidating. It consists of the initial selection of a topic of interest by every student, followed by a session in which they pitch their topic by presenting an audiovisual from which they can explain the rationale of their choice. During that session, they must demonstrate that their

2 One of the main challenges the team faced was the inability to quickly produce the recorded material to match the university radio station's pace.

topic is focused on a global problem and allow the team to learn how this issue works in English-speaking countries. In a second moment, every member must find a research article about the chosen problem, read its abstract, and prepare to socialize the findings with the group³. Finally, an editorial board is conducted to share the research findings and agree on the outline for the podcast episode,

written from an intersectional perspective. This way, everyone contributes to script construction and the development of recording and editing processes. The episodes that have been produced so far are about gender-based economic violence, “bad hair” or discrimination towards afro hair, and sports inequalities in women’s rugby. The content produced is published on Spotify and promoted through Instagram⁴ posts.

International collaboration to analyze global issues

As a result of the experience in which some members of RAVEN were allowed to audit the course at Michigan University in 2020, the Uniminuto faculty team introduced a significant English learning/teaching practice to the B.A. program. Professors from both universities felt encouraged to create a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) experience. This fully online educational course was offered during the fall semesters of 2021 and 2022 and was open to a dozen students from each university. The students collaborated in mixed groups to create informative podcasts about the intersection of environmental

issues and poverty in Colombia and the United States. The radio content produced during both versions of the course has been published on Spotify, and an article on the COIL experience has been published in the Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) Journal in 2022. Both publishing processes were led by Professor Emilia Askari in collaboration with the other faculty participants. Further details on this experience can be found in Askari, Meechan, Ruiz-Rodríguez, and Torres-Sanchez’s (2021) article.

The COIL experience was certainly an asset for all participants. However, it re-vea-

- 3 Although research about England, Canada, and the United States is welcome, students are encouraged to explore studies from non-Western countries and learn about English-speaking cultures. This usually permits the team to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the issue since most of the available audiovisual material is produced by the cultural industry.
- 4 At some point there was an attempt to publish on Facebook and Twitter that did not get a successful response due to the generation gap, which made evident the importance of considering the social network consumer preferences of students’ age band.

led the various management challenges that arise with developing this type of collaboration. For example, successful cooperation among students requires a high level of prior teamwork, and faculty members also need to overcome the challenges of working with two different organizational models. Some areas of discrepancy include credits, session length, time zones, teaching and learning

styles, conceptual frameworks, educational policies, and institutional capacity. It is worth reiterating that negotiating the required meaning to achieve common goals is always possible. This optimistic outlook should inspire scholars to engage in this fulfilling process. However, it is also crucial to remember the importance of maintaining special conditions for the sustainability of such projects.

Learnings reflected on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)

After seven years of working in the activities mentioned, the faculty team has become the leader of the internationalization plan for the B.A. program. Their experience has permitted them to contribute to the creation of institutional language policy and planning and adapt it to the specific needs of the academic community. However, many faculty members are still hesitant due to concerns about linguistic imperialism. Therefore, the plan leaders have been developing a bottom-up proposal to share responsibility for the language curriculum within the undergrad program. To this end, the head of the internationalization plan for the program and the journalism faculty have been collaborating to design an EMI instructional educational experience intended to promote the usage of English among journalists-to-be while developing fact-checking skills.

This initiative is not a course but a cross-curricular proposal that does not intend to replace the direct EFL instruction the university is offering to undergrad students. It is meant to contribute a grain of sand to students' learning processes by allowing them to participate in meaningful educational experiences where they can practice the foreign language while learning why it could be useful in their professional future. In this vein, this design is based on a process approach to language curriculum. This is why the team first started by choosing the methodology (kind of activities, materials, type of instruction, among others), and later, they started to co-create the lessons. This EMI initiative for journalist-to-be acknowledges that "it is not possible to teach a language within the four walls of a classroom, and learners need help to learn how to learn and to keep learning"

(Finney, 2002). That's why this design has been created as a progressive model, which is learner-centered and does not pretend to measure any behavioral changes in students. Furthermore, the purpose of this instruction is not to put together any vocational training to transmit skills. On the contrary, it seeks to focus on the affective aspects of learning by promoting the participation of students despite their English levels. To achieve this, the BOPPPS lesson planning model, proposed by Biggs (in McDonald, 2020), has been the base of the educational experiences designed to foster motivation and critical thinking while engaging students in active learning experiences.

An essential aspect of this instructional design is that it is also guided by Keller's (in Pappas, 2015) ARCS model since its principal objective is to foster a B.A. in Communication Studies and Journalism

students' motivation to learn English while participating in meaningful educational experiences for their professional development. Coherently, an inductive approach guides the creation of the lesson plans to show participant undergrad students the relevance of English as a medium to strengthen their fact-checking skills. It also aims to provide them with hands-on journalism activities that draw their attention to English usage. This way, their confidence is expected to be fostered through multiple and varied opportunities to practice the language despite their performance, as well as enjoyable material and scenarios where they can feel satisfaction while practicing English. All this alignment is possible only by accepting, as Clark (in Richards, 2013) that "Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioral outcomes of the students unpredictable" (p.15).

The growing acceptance of the proposal

The use of the English language and cultures is becoming more common in faculty discussions and curricular planning. However, many faculty members are still hesitant due to concerns about linguistic imperialism. Additionally, many students feel frustrated or uninterested in learning about English-speaking cultures. Nevertheless, adopting a decolonial approach and using English to explore a broader spectrum

of anglophone cultures and understand global issues is starting to change the mindset within the academic community. A point of departure has been the acknowledgment that various stakeholders in the B.A. Program have rejected the top-down implementation of the Colombian educational language policy and planning. No possible agreement will be reached without validating their concerns about

linguistic imperialism as a paramount foundation for the internationalization plan and any institutional initiative to promote the usage of the English Language among the community. Therefore, intercultural communication must be established as the primary objective of English language and culture planning within the B.A. Program.

The English language enables communication between people from different cultural backgrounds, whether native or non-native speakers. This connection is crucial for fostering intercultural communication, helping the academic community combat stereotypes, and promoting cooperation to build knowledge. Enhancing language policy and planning using bottom-up approaches is important to address faculty and students' concerns about linguistic imperialism and explore alternatives encouraging intercultural sensitivity, solidarity, and

English learning/teaching beyond Western interests. This is particularly important in a higher education institution like Uniminuto, where the apparent contradiction between language policy and institutional values has made many teachers hesitant about English language educational policies.

This leads to special complexity when it is recognized that "over the past several decades, research in educational language policy has shown the important role that teachers play as language policy actors" (Hult, 2018, p.5). Therefore, it is accurate to say that no management proposal about language policy will succeed without understanding teachers' beliefs regarding internationalization plans and guidelines, such as using English as a medium of instruction requirements and quality assurance system publishing standards, among others.

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Impact of a practical course with a differential focus on English language teaching to early childhood for Licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras con énfasis en inglés, at Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia

**Impacto de un curso práctico con enfoque diferencial
en la enseñanza del inglés a la primera infancia para la
licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras con énfasis en inglés
en la universidad nacional abierta y a distancia (UNAD)**

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Abstract

This descriptive research studies the effect of a practical course in early childhood English teaching for Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD). The study aims to explore the significance of a specialized course for teaching English in early childhood, examining it from local, regional, and international perspectives. Additionally, it seeks perceptions from tutors and directors of practical route courses in Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés (LiLEI), and information from English programs akin to UNAD in Colombia, all this by contrasting collected data from the official universities websites in Colombia in a contrast matrix, and the SWOT analysis of the perspectives from directors and tutors from the practical route courses in LiLEI at UNAD, concerning the impact of including an early childhood English teaching course in LiLEI. The results indicate a potential for innovation in formally teaching English to young children, along with resource barriers and insufficient research in early childhood English teaching.

In conclusion, implementing a differential practice course in English teaching for early childhood represents a pathway toward innovation, inclusivity, and opportunities for undergraduate students at UNAD. However, it is crucial to analyze the threats that present challenges to the success of the proposal.

Keywords: Early Childhood, Practical Course, Differential, Inclusion.

Resumen

Esta investigación descriptiva estudia el efecto de un curso práctico en la enseñanza del inglés en la primera infancia para la Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD). El estudio tiene como objetivo explorar la importancia de un curso especializado para enseñar inglés en la primera infancia, examinándolo desde perspectivas locales, regionales e internacionales. Además, busca percepciones de tutores y directores de cursos de ruta práctica en Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés (LiLEI), e información de programas de inglés similares a UNAD en Colombia, todo esto contrastando datos recopilados de los sitios web oficiales de las universidades en Colombia en una matriz de contraste, y el análisis FODA de las perspectivas de directores y tutores de los cursos de ruta práctica en LiLEI en UNAD, en relación con el impacto de incluir un curso de enseñanza de inglés en la primera infancia en LiLEI. Los resultados indican un potencial para la innovación en la enseñanza formal del inglés a niños pequeños, junto con barreras de recursos e investigación insuficiente en la enseñanza del inglés en la primera infancia.

En conclusión, implementar un curso de práctica diferencial en la enseñanza del inglés para la primera infancia representa un camino hacia la innovación, la inclusión y oportunidades para los estudiantes de pregrado en UNAD. Sin embargo, es crucial analizar las amenazas que presentan desafíos para el éxito de la propuesta.

Palabras clave: primera infancia, curso práctico, diferencial, inclusión.

Introduction

This research highlights the absence of a specialized preparation course for teaching English to early childhood within the Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras

con énfasis en inglés (LiLEI) program at Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia-UNAD. Despite offering a course on “Teaching English to Children, Adolescents, and Adults,” there is no focused training for instructing very young children. Exploring potential institutional benefits and implications associated with a practical course featuring a differential focus on English teaching for early childhood within the LiLEI program at UNAD requires a clear understanding of the concept of “differential focus.” This tailored approach addresses the unique needs of very young children and requires examining essential skills for future educators in early childhood education. The research aims to fill this gap by exploring the implications of including a practical course specifically targeting the early childhood population in the LiLEI program.

English teaching in early childhood is examined, comparing the LiLEI curriculum at UNAD with similar programs in Colombia. This analysis explores the implications of training LiLEI students in early childhood pedagogy, considering the stages of cognitive development by Piaget (1960) and the definition of UNESCO of early childhood

from birth to eight years. National policies in Colombia emphasize the importance of early childhood in education, focusing on integral development from birth to six years. The study narrows its focus to preschool education “transition” for children aged 4 to 5 in Colombia. Additionally, government initiatives like “Colombia Bilingüe” aim to improve education quality, with suggested curriculum structures supporting English teaching from transition to fifth grade.

The exploration of Early Childhood English teaching within the LiLEI program at UNAD aims to introduce an innovative, practical course and contribute to the pedagogical discourse in Colombia; gathering opinions from UNAD professors, particularly those involved in teaching English immersion courses and obtaining feedback pose challenges due to time constraints and potential biases. While some professors may recognize the innovation, others may question its necessity. Despite efforts to clarify the research purpose, misunderstandings may affect responses. These challenges highlight the need for careful consideration and discussion within the academic community to ensure the success and relevance of the proposed course.

Theoretical Framework

According to Piaget (1960), the development of cognition is a process of adaptation to the world, performed into

four stages: sensorimotor (0-2 years old) exploration of the world through senses, preoperational (2-7 years old), holistic

learning, concrete operational (7-11) logical thinking, and formal operational (11-beyond) concrete operations. However, to delimitate early childhood, UNESCO (2022) considers it as between birth to eight years, and this period represents an opportunity for children to develop their brains, which becomes a “window” for education, which fits into the preoperational stage mentioned by Piaget.

The national development plan in Colombia (2010-2014) stated the called “Comisión intersectorial para la atención integral de primera infancia” (2011), its primary function was to “coordinate and harmonize the policies, plans, programs, and actions necessary for the comprehensive execution of early childhood.” (MEN, 2013, p.21), and more specifically the MEN (2019) states that the initial education is conceived from born to six years. Its purpose is not to prepare children for elementary school but to boost their integral development.

The mentioned curriculum, based on Content and Language integrated learning for the above levels, proposes the methodology

called “Holistic Development in transition” (MEN, 2016, pag. 17) and among other instructions to schools; this methodology makes a difference between teaching English to early childhood “Transition” and teaching English to children from 1st to 5th grades of elementary school.

A suitable methodological design for the early childhood population will ensure that children at this age, 4 to 5, have a better beginning in elementary school with a basis in the target language L2 and an approach to learning strategies that are intended to implement metacognitive strategies and indirect assimilation of similarities and assimilation of the L2 language compared to the L1; and, as Galvão and Kawachi-Furlan (2021) mentioned, teaching English as a second language requires teachers with both language and pedagogical skills essential to this group of learners, which means that undergraduate students can capitalize on this critical period by including the instruction of activities and coursework in an undergraduate program and gaining knowledge and skills in teaching English to young learners.

Research Method

This research has two focuses. On the one hand, as its object is collecting primary data, “opinions from teachers regarding the state of the problem at UNAD,” it is considered under a qualitative methodology. Habib,

Maryam, & Pathik. (2014) describes this type of research as “being more concerned with the individual’s personal experiences of the problem under study.” (p. 9). It refers to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data.

On the other hand, it is considered quantitative and descriptive; according to Habib et al. (2014), a descriptive design “Is used to identify and obtain information on the characteristics of a particular problem or issue.” (p.8). As the data are collected

without biases, this method describes the current situation associated with the English program and Early childhood, and the average of academic credits among the studied programs as the starting point.

Population and Sampling Procedures

Considering the research is focused on the impact of a course to teach English in early childhood at UNAD, the population in this research are the certified Bachelor of English programs in Colombia and the English professors in charge of practice courses “immersion” to prepare students at UNAD. Lakens (2022) states, “The informativeness of the data that is collected depends on the inferential goals a researcher has, or in some cases,

the inferential goals scientific peers will have.” (P.2)

In this research, the sample is organized into two groups:

- Group 1. 41 certified English programs similar to LiLEI in Colombia.
- Group 2. Voluntary directors and tutors from the practice courses stage in LiLEI where the new course is expected to fit.

Data Collection Techniques

The chosen instruments for this primary data collection are a SWOT matrix fed by an online form with the generalities of the research, instructions with an informed consent format that intends to diagnose and posteriorly determine strategies for the final

proposal, and a contrast matrix based on a documental revision regarding the situation in other Colombian universities with English programs (41) and their academic credits, compared to UNAD.

Stages of the Study

The initial phase included designing the Hypothetical construct, which explores the multifaceted impacts of the practical

course, curriculum enhancement, and program innovation within the LiLEI framework (Table 1).

Table 1. Research Hypotheses

Hypotetical Construct	Description
Hypothesis 1	A practical course in teaching English to early childhood will enhance the pedagogical competencies of undergraduate students in LiLEI as they gain practical knowledge and skills relevant to teaching
Hypothesis 2	The design of this course with a differential focus on early childhood will refine the curriculum within the LiLEI program, aligning closely with the evolving needs and demands of English language education.
Hypothesis 3	This course focused on very young learners will contribute to the attractiveness of the LiLEI program, thereby enhancing its appeal to prospective undergraduate students interested in pursuing a career in English language teaching.
Hypothesis 4	The number of credits and a fixed practice route could affect implementing a differential course on early childhood

Note. Own elaboration.

The second stage includes sending the informed consent to the national leader, tutors, and directors from UNAD courses from the immersion practice; after presenting the research in the consent, professors were sent the link to the form with the SWOT matrix components: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, concerning: 1. Training in specific didactics of teaching English in early childhood in practical cour-

ses at UNAD, and 2. Practical scenarios for students from LiLEI-UNAD to experience teaching English in early childhood, as well as the contrast matrix design.

Finally, the third stage includes designing results categories, considering the data collection tools and hypotheses, discussing the results, and drawing the research conclusions.

Results

Miles et al. (2019) state that data analysis involves systematically labeling and categorizing data to show essential patterns. The subsequent paragraphs reveal three distinct categories and their subcategories, contrasting the data analysis with the

empirical data from the SWOT analysis and exposing several key themes. These themes are systematically categorized to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

Discussion of Categories

Once the results and the hypothetical construct are contrasted, three main categories are designed as follows:

1. Perceived Implications of the Differential Practical Course

1. *Fostering inclusivity in language instruction.*

From the SWOT analysis, participants named P and its respective numbers One to Seven expressed the following opinions:

“P2. Students have virtual and face-to-face scenarios to practice with all kinds of populations, including early childhood; the problem is that there are too many students and few practical scenarios, and personalized support is difficult. Regarding opportunities, it would be valuable to have more scenarios for early childhood practice where the students could strengthen their strategies with that specific population; however, it involves redesigning courses”.

“P4. Students have flexible schedules from scenarios, but the implementation of strategies in early childhood requires complex work from students, so they are very young, and reading and writing are not an option. Regarding opportunities, the students can participate in virtual scenarios;

however, these practical courses tend to be boring, and students drop out.”

2. *Perceptions of UNAD as a leader in early childhood English language education.*

P.7” Which means UNAD will contribute to the education of everybody with pedagogical mediation, research, social projection, and pedagogical innovation and didactics.

2. Impact on Qualifications of LiLEI Undergraduate Students

1. *Gaining a competitive edge in the job market.*

“P7. There is a course called Teaching English to children, adolescents, and adults, which leads to strategies for early childhood; the problem is the delay in assigning practical scenarios to students. Regarding opportunities, the course can be designed with a virtual focus and applied; however, the absence of didactics for this population makes the task challenging”.

“P8. Students and teachers have all the support and flexibility for a perfect performance in practice. Regarding opportunities, a course for that population offers more opportunities to students and could affect the competitiveness in the environment.”

2. Ability to apply knowledge and skills in different teaching environments.

“P1. students have personalized support during the practical work in the schools associated with UNAD; however, too many practical courses have increased the load of work in students. Regarding opportunities, it would be better to have just two practical courses to focus on more strategies and didactics for specific populations like early childhood”.

“P2. Students have virtual and face-to-face scenarios to practice with all kinds of populations including early childhood; the problem is that there are too many students, and few practical scenarios, and personalized support is difficult. Regarding opportunities, it would be valuable to have more scenarios for early childhood practice where the students could strengthen their strategies with that specific population; however, it involves redesigning courses”.

3. Challenges and Barriers

1.Resource limitations and constraints.

“P1. students have personalized support during the practical work in the schools associated with UNAD; however, too many practical courses have increased the load of work in students. Regarding opportunities, it would be better to have just two practical courses to focus on more strategies and

didactics for specific populations like early childhood”.

“P2. Students have virtual and face-to-face scenarios to practice with all kinds of population including early childhood; the problem is that there are too many students, and few practical scenarios and personalized support is difficult. Regarding to opportunities, it would be valuable to have more scenarios for early childhood practice where the students could strength their strategies with that specific population; however, it involves redesigning courses”.

2. Concerns voiced by LiLEI tutors regarding the course.

“P4. Students have flexible schedules from scenarios but the implementation of strategies to early childhood requires complex work from students, so they are very young and reading and writing is not an option. Regarding opportunities, the students can participate in virtual scenarios; however, these practical courses tend to be boring, and students drop out”.

“P5. Students have support from directors, and tutors, but more staff are required for more personalized support. Regarding opportunities, students could innovate with this population in virtual environments; however, lack of didactics for early childhood, can create chaos in practical scenarios.”

Discussion: Pedagogical Challenges and Recommendations

As previously mentioned, the Contrast Matrix has underscored an opportunity to contemplate the development of the early childhood course. This assertion finds reinforcement in existing literature and prior research. Nevertheless, the SWOT analysis has highlighted potential obstacles and challenges, as indicated by directors and tutors in the practice courses at UNAD. They emphasize the imperative nature of recognizing the difficulties of the practice route and the associated challenges of integrating a new course into this curricular route.

Despite its potential benefits, this edition introduces a set of variables, including resource allocation, practice scenarios, and the design's engagement factor, which

demand careful consideration. However, Mykhailyshyn et al. (2018) declare that the "Limits of growth of modern civilization are determined by education, its quality, and accessibility", (p. 10); this idea emphasizes the essential of planned challenges in the scope of early childhood language education.

These challenges are indispensable for extending inclusion to very young learners while simultaneously fostering the qualifications of future teachers. In doing so, we shape their pedagogical competence and contribute to developing their professional identities, ensuring they are well-equipped to meet the multifaceted demands of the educational landscape.

Conclusions

This research aiming to explore the impact of a differentiated practical course on English language education for early childhood at UNAD was aligned with the following questions:

What are the potential benefits of introducing a differential practical course for teaching English in early childhood at Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD)?

It was conducted through the collection of primary data from 41 certified Universities

and from voluntary professors from the practice route in LiLEI at UNAD, allowing its analysis into the following categories:

Perceived Implications of the Differentiated Practical Course:

- Fostering inclusivity in language instruction.
- Tutors and directors' perceptions of UNAD as an early childhood English language education leader.

- Tutors and directors' perceptions of the impact on Qualifications of LiLEI Undergraduate Students:
- Gaining a competitive edge in the job market.
- Ability to apply knowledge and skills in different teaching environments.

Challenges and Barriers:

- Resource limitations and constraints.
- Concerns voiced by LiLEI tutors regarding the course.

The findings revealed a promising possibility for cultivating inclusion, leadership and innovation within the professional landscape of Undergraduate studies in teaching English as a foreign language to early childhood. This pertains to the qualifications of undergraduate students who confront a dynamic educational

landscape, requiring the preparation of professionals equipped to tackle contemporary educational challenges. This attempt holds the potential for future institutional accreditation of the English Program at UNAD.

However, the identified challenges and barriers present potential threats. These include resource allocation, the recruitment of new professors, the identification of additional practice scenarios, course design considerations, and the seamless integration into the existing practice route in LiLEI, which deserve a profound analysis of viability and review of options to design and implement a course that can be mandatory, elective, or part of the practice route of both LiLEI and LiPI.

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Exploring the influence of artificial intelligence on students' academic achievements: ChatGPT as a case study

Explorando la influencia de la inteligencia artificial en los logros académicos de los estudiantes: ChatGPT como estudio de caso

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Abstract

The study examines into the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly ChatGPT, on students' academic performance. ChatGPT is an advanced language model known for its ability to engage in human-like conversations and provide educational assistance. The primary objective is to examine how the adoption of ChatGPT affects students' academic outcomes, engagement levels, and overall success in their studies.

To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach is employed, blending a quantitative analysis of academic performance data with a qualitative investigation of student experiences and perceptions. Academic indicators such as grades, test results, and completion rates are compared between students who have used ChatGPT and those who haven't. Additionally, surveys and interviews are conducted to gather insights into students' interactions with ChatGPT, including their perceived benefits, challenges, and preferences. Preliminary results suggest that students who interact with ChatGPT show improvements in their academic performance, including improved grades and better comprehension of course content. The interactive nature of ChatGPT enables students to receive personalized assistance, clarification on difficult topics, and prompt feedback, enhancing their learning journey. Moreover, ChatGPT is a valuable tool for students to complement traditional classroom instruction, providing instant support beyond regular school hours.

Nevertheless, there are certain hurdles such as overreliance on technology and ethical concerns regarding AI's role in education. Ethical considerations encompass issues like privacy, data security, and ensuring equal access to AI-driven educational resources.

In summary, this research contributes to the expanding literature on AI integration in education, shedding light on its implications for student academic performance. The study concludes with recommendations for educators, policymakers, and developers to harness the benefits of AI while mitigating potential challenges within its implementation in educational settings.

Keywords: (AI), chat GPT, education, academic performance.

Introduction

Throughout history, humans have revered their intelligence, often referring to themselves as *Homo sapiens*, or “man the wise.” This reverence stems from our relentless pursuit of comprehending the inner workings of our minds—how a finite collection of matter can grasp, interpret, anticipate, and influence a vast and intricate world. However, the ambition of AI extends beyond mere understanding; it endeavors to create intelligent beings. AI delves into the realm of constructing entities that possess the ability to perceive, reason, and act in ways that mimic or even surpass human intelligence.

AI is a relatively new area in science and engineering. Serious work on AI began shortly after World War II, and the term “artificial intelligence” was first used in 1956. Similar to molecular biology, AI is

often seen by scientists from other fields as an exciting and promising area to work in. For instance, a physics student might think that all the major discoveries have already been made by pioneers like Galileo, Newton, and Einstein. In contrast, AI is still wide open for groundbreaking discoveries, offering opportunities for innovative thinkers like Einstein and Edison.

AI covers a wide range of topics, from broad concepts like learning and perception to specific tasks like playing chess, proving mathematical theorems, writing poetry, driving cars in traffic, and diagnosing diseases. AI applies to any intellectual challenge, making it a truly universal field. In recent years, AI has become a bigger part of our everyday lives, affecting many areas, including education. AI has brought about a lot of changes in education, offering

new ways to transform and improve how teaching and learning happen. AI tools can look at student data and create learning experiences tailored to each student's needs, offering a more customized approach to education. This can potentially improve how well students learn, keep them more engaged, and reduce dropout rates. AI can also make assessments better by giving instant feedback and allowing for more accurate evaluations of student performance. AI programs like ChatGPT offer prompt guidance, bridging gaps in understanding and promoting continuous learning. Moreover, AI facilitates individualization in learning by tailoring materials to suit students' diverse needs and preferences. For instance, ChatGPT can translate content into different languages, adapt materials to varying grade levels, and customize projects to align with students' skills and interests.

Finally, AI-driven tools enable personalized learning experiences by analyzing student performance data to identify areas for improvement and tailor interventions accordingly. Through these capabilities, AI empowers educators and learners alike, revolutionizing education and paving the way for more effective and inclusive learning environments.

While AI holds great promise for enhancing education, it also brings several significant drawbacks. One major concern is bias. AI systems, like ChatGPT, are only as good

as the data they are trained on. If this data is biased, the AI can produce biased responses, perpetuating stereotypes and social inequalities. For instance, biased AI tools used for grading could unfairly affect students based on their race or gender. Additionally, AI can generate errors and misinformation. The data AI relies on may be outdated, incorrect, or misleading, meaning students and teachers cannot always trust the accuracy of AI-provided information. Cheating is another issue; students might use AI to write essays, complete quizzes, or do homework, leading to academic dishonesty. Although there are AI tools designed to detect AI-generated work, they are not foolproof and can sometimes mistakenly label a student's original work as plagiarism. Furthermore, the increased use of AI in education can lead to student isolation. Excessive interaction with AI software instead of human teachers can make students feel disconnected and less motivated, potentially increasing dropout rates. Lastly, the rise of AI in education has raised fears among some educators about job security. They worry that AI could eventually replace teachers, even though AI is meant to be a supplementary tool rather than a replacement.

Ensuring a balanced approach to integrating artificial intelligence into education involves thoughtful deliberation and continuous assessment. While AI can support educators, expedite learning processes, and tailor educational journeys efficiently, it also

presents risks such as bias, dissemination of inaccurate information, and potential isolation among students. Thus, educators

need to thoroughly assess AI's potential, becoming knowledgeable advocates for both their students and them.

Research Objectives and Methodology

Research methodology refers to a systematic and scientific framework utilized for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting either quantitative or qualitative data in order to address research inquiries or examine hypotheses. It functions akin to a roadmap, guiding researchers throughout the research process and ensuring focus by defining the scope of the investigation. Prior to selecting a suitable research methodology, factors like research constraints and ethical considerations must be thoroughly evaluated for their potential impact on the study.

Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods designs are distinct methodological approaches, each defined by their emphasis on either words, numbers, or a combination of both. Qualitative research involves gathering and analyzing verbal (written or spoken), textual, or visual data, often including softer data points like body language or visual elements. This approach is typically used for exploratory research aims and questions, such as understanding people's perceptions of an event or opinions about a political candidate. In contrast, quantitative research focuses on numerical data for measurement and testing purposes. It is

generally used for confirmatory research aims and questions, such as examining the relationship between two variables (e.g., personality type and likelihood to commit a crime) or testing specific hypotheses.

Mixed-methods research combines elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to integrate multiple perspectives and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. This methodology aims to leverage the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data to create a richer and more nuanced picture. The primary objective of this study is to delve into how the adoption of ChatGPT influences various facets of students' educational experiences, particularly focusing on their academic outcomes, engagement levels, and overall success in their studies. With the growing integration of AI into education, it's imperative to understand the specific impact of ChatGPT, a prominent AI-driven conversational agent, on student learning. To achieve this objective, a mixed-methods approach is employed, which combines quantitative analysis of academic performance data with qualitative investigation of student experiences and perceptions. This approach allows for a

comprehensive understanding of the effects of ChatGPT adoption from both numerical metrics and qualitative insights. Ultimately, this approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of the role of ChatGPT in shaping students' educational journeys.

Participants were recruited through an online survey distributed via email and social media platforms. The survey

consisted of several sections aimed at gathering demographic information, and details about the participants' usage of ChatGPT, its impact on academic performance, student engagement, experiences, ethical considerations, and preferences. The survey was anonymous to ensure confidentiality and encourage honest responses. Data collection took place over a two-week period.

Results

1. Demographic Information:

Age: The majority of respondents fell within the age range of 25-34 (10 participants) and 35-44 (10 participants), with smaller numbers in other age brackets.

Gender: There were more male respondents (18 participants) compared to female respondents (9 participants).

Education Level: Most participants held either a B.A. degree (10 participants) or a Master's degree (14 participants).

Field of Study: The largest proportion of participants studied humanities (11 participants), followed by social sciences (6 participants).

2. Usage of ChatGPT:

Frequency: The most common usage frequency was seasonal (8 participants),

followed by weekly (7 participants) and daily (5 participants).

Duration of Use: A significant portion of respondents (11 participants) reported using ChatGPT for more than 6 months.

Purposes: The primary purposes for using ChatGPT were clarification of difficult topics (17 participants), research assistance (15 participants), and study planning (11 participants).

3. Impact on Academic Performance:

Improvement: Most respondents reported either a slight improvement (12 participants) or a significant improvement (9 participants) in their academic performance.

Academic Indicators: The majority of participants reported improvements in understanding of course material (18 participants) and assignment completion rates (6 participants).

4. Student Engagement and Experiences:

Engagement Levels: Responses varied, with the majority of participants reporting either moderate engagement (12 participants) or high engagement (5 participants).

Enjoyment: A significant number of respondents (16 participants) agreed or strongly agreed that ChatGPT made learning more enjoyable for them.

5. Ethical Considerations and Preferences:

Concerns: Participants showed varying degrees of concern regarding ethical considerations related to AI-driven educational resources.

Equal Access: The majority of participants (18 participants) agreed or strongly agreed that all students should have equal access to AI-driven educational resources like ChatGPT.

Discussion

The survey findings indicate that ChatGPT, an AI-driven educational tool, is widely used among individuals of diverse demographic backgrounds, including different age groups, genders, and educational levels. Participants reported various benefits from using ChatGPT, including improved understanding of course material and enhanced assignment completion rates, suggesting its positive impact on academic performance. Moreover, many respondents expressed increased engagement and enjoyment in learning, highlighting the interactive and personalized nature of

ChatGPT. However, alongside its benefits, there are ethical concerns regarding issues such as data privacy and algorithmic bias. Despite these concerns, the majority of participants advocate for equal access to AI-driven educational resources like ChatGPT, recognizing their potential to revolutionize education. Overall, the findings underscore the significance of AI-driven educational tools in enhancing learning experiences but also emphasize the importance of addressing ethical considerations to ensure responsible and equitable use.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

In conclusion, the research findings underscore the significant potential of AI, particularly ChatGPT, to enhance various

aspects of education, including academic support, engagement, and learning outcomes. The data highlights the positive impact

of ChatGPT on students' understanding, engagement levels, and confidence in their studies. However, it's essential to address challenges such as overreliance on technology, ethical concerns regarding privacy and data security, and ensuring equitable access to AI-driven educational resources. To harness the benefits of AI in education while mitigating these challenges, educa-

tors, policymakers, and developers must collaborate to establish clear guidelines for AI usage, provide adequate training for all stakeholders, and prioritize student privacy and equity. By adopting a thoughtful and responsible approach to AI integration, we can create inclusive and effective learning environments that empower all students to succeed.

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Empowering EFL learners: exploring the role of flipped instruction in nurturing metacognitive abilities beyond traditional approaches*

Empoderando a los estudiantes de EFL: explorando el papel de la instrucción invertida en el fomento de las habilidades metacognitivas más allá de los enfoques tradicionales

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Abstract

This action research addresses challenges of technology integration within the Colombian educational context, by investigating the impact of implementing the flipped learning approach on the development of metacognitive skills among sixth-grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in a private bilingual school in Cali, Colombia. This study focuses on delivering instructional content online through the Flipped Learning methodology before class and utilizing in-class time for active learning activities. By leveraging technology, the researcher aims to gain insight into how flipped learning influences metacognitive skills development, offering valuable contributions to educational research. Additionally, aiming to overcome barriers to authentic language exposure and meaningful language practice for 6th-grade students. The study acknowledges limitations in generalizability to other contexts and highlights the importance of future research exploring additional dimensions of flipped learning. The researcher expects the findings could encourage fellow educators to consider integrating flipped learning approaches into their teaching practices, potentially enhancing education quality in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Flipped Learning, Metacognitive Skills, EFL Education, Technology Integration, Active Learning, Student Engagement.

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Resumen

Esta propuesta de investigación acción aborda los desafíos en la integración de la tecnología dentro del contexto educativo colombiano, investigando el impacto de implementar el enfoque de aprendizaje invertido en el desarrollo de habilidades metacognitivas entre estudiantes de sexto grado de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en una escuela bilingüe privada en Cali, Colombia. Este estudio se enfoca en entregar contenido instructivo en línea a través de la metodología de aprendizaje invertido antes de la clase y utilizando el tiempo en clase para actividades de aprendizaje activo. Al aprovechar la tecnología, el investigador tiene como objetivo obtener información sobre cómo el aprendizaje invertido influye en el desarrollo de habilidades metacognitivas, ofreciendo contribuciones valiosas a la investigación educativa. Además, se busca superar las barreras para la exposición auténtica al idioma y la práctica significativa del idioma para estudiantes de sexto grado. El estudio reconoce limitaciones en la generalización a otros contextos y destaca la importancia de futuras investigaciones que exploren dimensiones adicionales del aprendizaje invertido. El investigador espera que los hallazgos puedan alentar a otros educadores a considerar la integración de enfoques de aprendizaje invertido en sus prácticas de enseñanza, potencialmente mejorando la calidad de la educación en aulas de EFL.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje invertido, habilidades metacognitivas, educación de inglés como lengua extranjera, integración de tecnología, aprendizaje activo, participación del estudiante.

Introduction

Educational investigation has been guided by the search for creative pedagogical methods that increase student engagement and encourage deeper learning achievements. One approach that has gained prominence is flipped learning, which aims to restructure the traditional classroom model by providing instructional content online before class and using in-class time for active learning activities.

Though this approach has shown promise in various educational contexts, it faces unique challenges in the Colombian setting, particularly in language teaching classes. By focusing on the nexus between flipped learning and metacognitive development, this research seeks to inform effective instructional strategies and promote deeper learning outcomes in EFL education.

Grounded in constructivist theory, this research proposes that active learning experiences enable students to construct their own knowledge by building upon existing cognitive frameworks. Flipped learning, pioneered by Bergmann and Sams (2012), has revolutionized traditional teaching methodologies by restructuring the learning process.

By shifting instructional content delivery outside the classroom, this approach allows for more interactive and engaging in-class activities. According to Ertmer and Newby (2013), flipped learning provides opportunities for students to create meaningful connections, reflect on their learning processes, and develop metacognitive awareness.

This research proposal aims to answer the question: What are the effects of implementing flipped learning on the development of metacognitive skills in sixth-grade EFL students at a private bilingual school in Cali, Colombia? The general objective is to assess the impact of flipped learning on strengthening metacognitive skills in this specific educational context.

Through specific objectives including the identification of perceptions among students and teachers, the design of a didactic proposal integrating flipped learning principles, and analysis of metacognitive skill transfer to other language domains,

this study aims to contribute valuable insights to EFL pedagogy.

Understanding the role of flipped learning in enhancing students' metacognitive abilities is crucial for teachers seeking innovative strategies to promote deeper learning outcomes and lifelong learning. Therefore, this research holds the potential to inform pedagogical practices in EFL education, ultimately contributing to the advancement of effective language teaching methods and student academic success.

By investigating the principles of peer interaction, task interdependence, and group dynamics, the researcher plans to design a comprehensive research methodology that involves data collection, along with the implementation of a didactic proposal. Data analysis will explore the impact of flipped learning on metacognitive skill development. This analysis will elucidate the broader implications of flipped learning in enhancing students' overall language learning abilities.

Adhering to ethical principles guarantees that this research can provide valuable insights to the educational community and support the advancement of effective language teaching practices while ensuring the well-being and rights of the participants. This research attempts to elucidate effective pedagogical practices in EFL education, specifically focusing on metacognitive skill development.

Literature review

The literature review presented here adopts a thematic organization to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the research panorama surrounding flipped learning and its implications for metacognition in modern language education. The thematic structure assists in exploring various aspects related to flipped learning, integration of ICT strategies for metacognitive skill development, and language acquisition.

As described by Vygotsky, Metacognition plays a key role in active learning through cognitive process reflection. It comprises three components: knowledge, experience, and strategies. According to Negretti (2017), metacognitive knowledge involves an awareness of cognitive processes, while metacognitive experience encompasses cognitive or affective states during tasks, and metacognitive strategies entail planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Also, Lee and Mak (2018), advocate for the integration of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to comprehensively understand metacognitive processes in the flipped classroom.

The flipped classroom, pioneered by Bergmann and Sams (2012), shifts from traditional lecture-centered pedagogies to learner-centered instruction. This approach fosters active learning, supported by empirical evidence showing improved academic

performance and student perceptions. Instructors are crucial in creating dynamic, interactive learning environments conducive to higher-order activities. Additionally, Nagel (2013), suggests that the alignment of the flipped classroom with Bloom's taxonomy fosters higher-order thinking skills, while Chen (2018) argues for its promotion of student self-regulation through independent study and effective resource management.

The research by Lim (2016) investigated the application of flipped learning to enhance the communicative competence of Korean college students, offering practical guidance for teachers in incorporating this approach into language education. Similarly, Bbas et al. (2022), explored the impact of collaborative flipped learning strategies on metacognitive skills in primary school pre-service teachers, emphasizing the positive influence of collaborative activities on metacognitive development.

These findings underscore the potential benefits of flipped learning for language education and highlight the importance of socio-cognitive abilities in metacognitive skill enhancement.

Additionally, research by Benites (2018), focused on the effects of flipped classroom methodology on student competencies in an industrial electricity and electronics

course, indicating favorable outcomes in learning outcomes, engagement, and skill performance compared to traditional lecture-based approaches. Bakke (2019) investigated the relationship between self-assessment, motivation, and language learning, highlighting the role of self-paced online content in increasing student motivation and engagement. The study conducted by Hui-chia and Sheng-hui (2012), examined the development of EFL learners' metacognition in a flipped classroom environment, revealing improvements in metacognitive awareness and skills such as goal-setting and self-evaluation. Similarly, Carter (2019) investigated the connection between metacognition and academic writing skills among pre-service teachers, demonstrating a positive correlation between metacognitive strategies and writing proficiency. Al-Jarrah et al. (2018), explored the impact of metacognitive strategies on the writing performance of Jordanian EFL learners, revealing improvements in overall writing proficiency and metacognitive awareness among participants who received explicit instruction in metacognition. Chapman and Pushpalalitha (2022), investigated the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies in

enhancing reading comprehension among young learners, emphasizing the importance of self-regulated learning and strategic thinking in improving comprehension skills.

Echavarria (2016), employed a quasi-experimental design to examine the development of listening comprehension through metacognitive strategies and podcast materials, highlighting the role of technology-enhanced resources in fostering metacognitive skills and engagement. Also, Prieto (2017) explored the effectiveness of direct instruction in metacognitive strategies within a blended learning environment, demonstrating improvements in reading comprehension skills and metacognitive reflection among eighth-grade students. The thematic organization allows researchers to explore the interconnectedness between flipped learning, metacognition, and other relevant factors such as student engagement, motivation, and ICT integration. In conclusion, by investigating the findings of numerous studies, researchers can gain insights into the potential benefits of flipped learning, its underlying mechanisms, and its implications for student learning and development.

Methodology

As articulated by Kemmis (2009), action research serves to advance theoretical understanding and to carry out positive changes in educational practice. This

approach emphasizes active collaboration with participants, ensuring that research is meaningful and relevant to their needs and challenges. In this study, action research

was considered optimal for empowering students with metacognitive skills and equipping teachers with effective pedagogical strategies tailored to the demands of the 21st-century learning environment. The research design, drawing upon insights from Hernández and Baptista (2014), integrated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to examine the impact of flipped learning on metacognitive skills. Quantitative data was collected through pre and post-assessments, while qualitative information was obtained through interviews, observations, and student reflections. Through statistical and thematic analysis, this research achieved a holistic understanding of the research question, aligning with the study's objectives to investigate the effects of flipped learning on metacognition.

In agreement with Neuman's (2013), approach to exploratory research, this research adopted an exploratory approach to gain insights into the relationship between flipped learning and metacognitive skill development. By identifying patterns and associations, the research evaluated the impact of implementing a Flipped Learning-based didactic proposal on sixth-grade students' metacognitive skills in an EFL course.

According to Patton (2002), purposive sampling is selected to ensure the selection

of participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objective. The population of high school students in the chosen school comprised individuals from medium to high socioeconomic backgrounds, fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence and critical thinking. The sample consisted of 24 sixth-grade students and 2 English teachers, representing the participants dedicated to improving the teaching methodology and enhancing students' metacognitive skills in English.

Aligning with Yin's (1994), categorization of information-gathering methods, data collection techniques for this study, encompassed surveys, class observations, interviews, and document analysis. Likert-type scale surveys measured participants' perceptions, while class observations provided qualitative insights into students' metacognitive behaviors during flipped learning sessions. Pre and post-assessments quantitatively measured metacognitive skill development, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the flipped learning intervention. The success of the study depended on the accuracy and consistency of the data collection tools. Ethical considerations were paramount to safeguarding participants' rights and privacy. Additionally, by addressing validity and reliability concerns, this study provided accurate insights into the impact of flipped learning on metacognitive development.

Data analysis techniques encompassed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, as recommended by Hernández et al. (2014). Triangulation of data sources enhanced the credibility and validity of the findings, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The analysis compared research findings with existing literature and theories, validating the theoretical assumptions regarding flipped learning and metacognition in EFL education.

Positive findings supported the efficacy of flipped learning in enhancing metacognitive awareness, while negative results highlighted areas for improvement or alternative factors influencing metacognitive growth.

To sum it up, the methodological framework outlined in this research provided a systematic approach to investigating the effects of flipped learning on metacognitive skills in an EFL context.

Discussion on the Findings

The results of this research study will be used to improve the teaching methodology of teachers. And, to identify those activities that teachers need to promote and implement in their classes, to strengthen the metacognitive skills of students in English. The researcher carried out this research based on a problematic situation of the educational reality, in order to transform it. To obtain and analyze the results that emerged from this project, the researcher was required to do so by researching from his practices and with the implementation of a pedagogical proposal "Flipped Learning" in the sixth-grade students at a Private Bilingual School in Cali, Colombia, as its main actors.

The research findings were closely related to the proposed objectives, which allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the

impact of flipped learning on metacognitive skill development in sixth-grade EFL students. Data analysis showed a significant improvement in metacognitive skills among sixth-grade EFL students after implementing the flipped learning proposal. This supported the theoretical assumptions that active learning experiences offered in flipped classrooms can enhance metacognitive awareness.

The qualitative analysis showed that students and teachers perceived flipped learning positively and recognized its impact on metacognitive skill development, which provided additional support for the theoretical framework. The research highlighted potential areas of improvement for the flipped learning approach or shed light on other factors that influenced metacognitive growth.

Conclusions

This paper describes the innovative pedagogical approach of Flipped Learning and its potential to enhance metacognitive skills among sixth-grade EFL learners in a private bilingual school in Cali, Colombia. Through a detailed exploration of the research problem, objectives, and rationale, the study elucidated the pressing need to bridge the gap between traditional teaching methods and the evolving demands of 21st-century education.

The methodological framework outlined in the research design underscored the importance of action research in facilitating positive changes in educational practice. As the study progressed, it was prepared to contribute valuable insights to the field of EFL education, particularly in the context of metacognitive skill enhancement. The findings of this study hold promise for empowering learners with essential cognitive tools for academic success and lifelong learning in an increasingly globalized world.

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Promoting assertive communication through communicative language teaching and task-based learning in sixth-grade students at Nuestra Señora del Tránsito Departmental Educational Institution*

Promoción de la comunicación asertiva a través de la enseñanza del lenguaje comunicativo y el aprendizaje basado en tareas en estudiantes de sexto grado de la Institución Educativa Departamental Nuestra Señora del Tránsito

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Abstract

Assertive communication is essential for creating a safe learning environment and expressing their ideas to others. The project aims to identify the effects of applying Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) in sixth graders' Assertive Communication in a Public School. The starting point was the needs analysis, which showed the lack of good communication among students was evident. Based on this, the creation of different communicative activities and tasks were designed and implemented, considering the principles of CLT and TBL. The project was a qualitative action research and data were collected through Triangulation using three different instruments: semi-structured interviews, field notes, and video recordings. Thanks to this, the three main categories of the project were respect, group, work, and confidence when speaking in public.

Keywords: Assertive Communication, Respect, Group Work, Confidence Speaking in Public, Confidence, Communicative Activities, Tasks.

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Resumen

La comunicación asertiva es esencial para crear un ambiente de aprendizaje seguro y expresar sus ideas a los demás. El proyecto tiene como objetivo identificar los efectos de la aplicación de la Enseñanza Comunicativa del Lenguaje (CLT) y el Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas (TBL) en la comunicación asertiva de estudiantes de sexto grado en una escuela pública. El punto de partida fue el análisis de necesidades, el cual demostró que era evidente la falta de buena comunicación entre los estudiantes. Con base en esto, se diseñó e implementó la creación de diferentes actividades y tareas comunicativas, considerando los principios de CLT y TBL. El proyecto fue una investigación acción cualitativa y los datos fueron recolectados mediante triangulación utilizando tres instrumentos diferentes: entrevistas semiestructuradas, notas de campo y grabaciones de video. Gracias a esto, las tres categorías principales del proyecto fueron respeto, grupo, trabajo y confianza al hablar en público.

Palabras clave: comunicación, asertividad, respeto, trabajo en grupo, confianza hablando en público, actividades comunicativas y tareas.

Introduction

Promoting the learning of a second language through assertive communication is a fundamental element of language learning. With this, it is possible to carry out processes of qualification of communicative competence and skills for communicative interaction.

That's why promoting Assertive Communication among sixth-grade students of a non-bilingual public school located in Guacheta Colombia, is an issue that has become very necessary to achieve a solution as soon as possible, Boosting Assertive Communication among sixth graders from a non-bilingual public school located in

Guacheta Colombia is an issue that has become more necessary to get a solution, taking into account the fact that students hardly interact with each other inside the classroom in a respectful way. Hence, fostering an environment where students can talk openly about their opinions as well as respecting and tolerating other points of view has become indispensable for creating a better learning environment. With this situation in mind, this research project attempts to identify the possible effects of Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Learning on sixth graders to foster students' Assertive Communication. Taking into account that

students find it difficult to interact with each other in the classroom in an assertive and respectful way. In this way, fostering a class environment in which students can speak openly about their opinions, as well as respect and tolerate other points of view, has become essential to creating a safe learning environment. With this situation found, this research proposal will try to identify the possible effects of Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based learning in sixth-grade students to promote assertive communication through communicative language teaching and task-based learning to reduce difficulties in English learning in sixth-grade students at the Nuestra Señora del Tránsito Departamental Educational Institution.

Bearing in mind the situation above, it is important to clarify what assertive communication is. Pfeiffer (2010) affirms that: "Assertive communication implies clearly expressing your needs; how you feel and what you want without violating the rights of your partner" (p. 1). In addition, Assertive Communication is part of the social skills that people must acquire through coexistence in society; Hofstadt (2003) explains that social skills are learned as a consequence of experience. Bearing this in mind, they thought about implementing CLT and TBL activities to encourage students' Assertive Communication, since the lack of this skill considerably hinders the learning process of the students and even more complicates the performance of the teacher.

Teachers must take advantage of the resources they have and focus on using various techniques and strategies to foster active interaction, promoting the use of assertive communication in the classroom. For this reason, it is truly important that teachers provide part of their time towards building a safe and interactive environment in which students can actively participate with more confidence. Students can improve assertive communication by using communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL) approaches. As for CLT, its main focus is linguistic competence, which allows students to interact and use the target language in a specific context. According to Banciu and Jireghie "Communicative language teaching places great emphasis on helping students to use the target language in a variety of contexts and on learning language functions" (2012, p.1).

On the other hand, TBL encourages learners to use the language and communicate with each other through tasks, which in most cases are carried out in groups. As a result, students are challenged to use assertive communication to agree and complete the task. Following this, Ellis states that "the work plan requires that learners use cognitive processes such as selecting, classifying, ordering, reasoning and evaluating information to carry out the task" (2003, p.10). Consequently, this proposal establishes; first the context of the problem identified there. Secondly, the

theoretical framework and the literature review are presented. Third, the proposal created for this specific topic is explained in detail. Likewise, the methodology chosen for the implementation of the proposal. Then some possible methods of analysis and collection on the assertive communication of the students. And, finally, possible conclusions of this proposal.

This research project focuses on promoting assertive communication in a group of sixth-grade students. Students present difficulties when it comes to respecting their peers and teachers in the learning environment, which makes it difficult for them to express their ideas, feelings, and opinions. For this reason, this project proposes to identify the effects of two approaches, Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on students' assertive communication. According to this, it is necessary to explain that this proposal is developed through Action Research and Qualitative Research.

The first combines the interaction of two models: Action and Research, where action

focuses on the social context and research on observation and systematic analysis to identify the action plan that requires inquiry (Burns, 2009). Taking into account the approach to the research problem, it can be said that it has been shown that students have difficulties expressing their feelings, ideas, thoughts, and opinions and accept those of others in a respectful way. Based on this, it is possible to recognize that students have a lack of assertiveness and consequently a lack of assertive communication, since they do not have the necessary basic aspects to be able to listen to others and respect the opinions of others. Phillips (2002) stated that assertiveness allows people to take control of the situation, listen, ask questions, accept advice, and then act. According to Bishop "people with good assertiveness will also have greater self-awareness, greater self-confidence and self-esteem, and powerful and effective communication skills" (2013, p. 15). Based on these definitions, assertiveness helps people improve their social skills to develop good relationships.

Methodology

This project is based on the qualitative research paradigm using action research methodology. Action research helps to identify a problem within a specific population and find solutions through a

systematic process. As Herr and Anderson claim: "Action research is oriented to some action or cycle actions that organizational or community members have taken, are taking, or wish to address a particularly

problematic situation" (2005, p. 3). It is important to mention that action research is developed as a cycle, following a process that starts by recognizing a problem, implementing an action research plan to improve the issue, and reflecting on the results. Thus, my project is based on a process, involving the recognition of a problem and the alternative to improve this difficulty inside the classroom.

The project involves practical Action Research design, focusing on a local issue that is assertive communication. As Creswell states, "Practical action research involves a small-scale research project, narrowly focuses on a specific problem or issue, and is undertaken by individual teachers or teams within a school or school district." (2012, p. 580). The purpose of this design is to focus on a problem in the school environment, the description of the problem based on data collection, provide a literature review about the problem, analyze the theories or approaches regarding the issue, and finally make a plan of action to improve the inquiry (Creswell, 2012). According to the above, practical action research is a series of steps to follow, to help me as the researcher to improve my practices and learning from students. Hence, practical action research is the design chosen to follow the project in order to improve assertive communication.

Qualitative research asks the researcher to understand the participants' perspectives. For this project, it is important to understand

the participants' views about the activities and how they may have an impact on their assertive communication. Also, a characteristic of qualitative research is to analyze data and interpret different meanings (Creswell, 2012). Besides, Creswell claims that "Qualitative approaches use more open-ended approaches in which the inquirer asks general questions of participants, and the participants shape the response possibilities" (2012, p. 19). In order to collect data, it is important to use the Qualitative method because it is necessary to understand and analyze the students' insights about the activities and observe their behavior. From this, through the three instruments to collect data explained below, researchers will explain the impact that CLT and TBL have on students' assertive communication. Bearing this in mind, Qualitative research allows the researchers to explore participants' insights and perspectives.

The population selected for the project is sixth graders who present difficulties in their assertive communication. The research project takes place in a non-bilingual public school located in Guachetá; participants are from 10 to 14 years old. The needs analysis revealed a significant problem: a lack of assertive communication among students. Sixth graders struggle to express themselves respectfully in the classroom. Therefore, investigating this issue of assertive communication is essential for understanding and addressing their needs.

This research project used the process of triangulation by applying three instruments to collect data, taking into account ethical matters in order to protect participants' rights. According to Turner and Turner "data triangulation entails obtaining data from different sources, or different times or under different conditions" (2009, p. 2). From this, triangulation is applied in our project, because we use three different instruments to collect data: unstructured interviews, field notes, and video recordings. Moreover, in order to collect data, researchers created two consent forms to ask permission from the school and the participants' parents where the researchers explained to them the project and the type of research in which they were involved to protect students' identities. Hence, triangulation contributes to developing the project in order to gather data using three instruments.

Unstructured interviews allow participants to express their insights into the activities proposed. This allowed participants to answer the questions according to their perspectives and feelings. Bryman states that in qualitative interviews, "the emphasis must be on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events" (2012, p. 471). Bearing this in mind, this instrument helps me to examine if the participants respond in a good way to the activities, the type of activities they prefer, and how they feel during the research sessions, analyzing the activities' impact on participants' assertive communication. Thus, unstructured

interviews help me to analyze the students' perceptions about the activities.

Through field notes, the researcher was able to observe participants' behavior and attitudes and write down their perceptions about the class. According to Bryman, field notes "should be fairly detailed summaries of events and behavior and the researchers' initial reflection on them. The notes need to specify key dimensions of whatever is observed or heard". (2012, p. 447). Therefore, this instrument was applied in each session to collect students' attitudes, the way that they speak in front of the classes, explaining how they interact with others, and how they feel regarding the activities and their partners. With this in mind, field notes allow me to write what was important in the learning environment.

Finally, video recordings are very useful for teachers to have more information about a specific aspect that happens during the application of the investigation. Video recordings allow teachers to have a detailed view of the interaction between student-students and teacher-students. Besides, Hopkins claims that: "three uses of videotape recorders in classroom research are: for obtaining visual material of the total teaching situation; acting as an aid to diagnosis; and as a means of examining in detail a specific teaching episode" (2008, p.116). The transcription of the class videos helped me to identify specific aspects of the project that in the class we were not

able to perceive, for instance: gestures, students' interaction, students' behavior, body language, and their development in the activities, aspects that are captured on the videos. This instrument supports the diagnosis and analyzes specific aspects that the researcher does not perceive during the implementation of the project.

Implementation: Taking into account the main issue that this population has regarding assertive communication, it is necessary to use approaches that allow me to boost interaction and Communication inside the classroom. For this reason, Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) were selected to create a proposal for the project. TBL allows me to promote real communication among interaction in my students through tasks. Also, by applying TBL in an educational environment, language learning becomes more meaningful and natural (Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2010). On the other hand, CLT has an important role in this project, because its focus is on meaning rather than structure and it requires the use of oral communication in the activities. Banciu and Jireghie "emphasize the idea of effective communication between the teacher and students and focus on language as a medium of communication" (2012, p. 97). These approaches also require group work and collaboration among students which fosters their relationships involving respect for each other. Accordingly, CLT and TBL pretend to foster assertive communication

through different activities that involve interaction.

The implementation of 10 lesson plans applied in 20 hours is developed through the four stages of Willis and Willis' Model of Task-Based Learning which are pre-task, task cycle, language focus, and evaluation. The implementation is focused on Willis and Willis model (1996) which has the following stages: the first stage is Pre-task where the teacher gives students instructions and shows them the grammar that must be used in the task development and highlights new vocabulary and phrases. Also, showing an example of the task, at this stage, the teacher can use activities such as brainstorming, listing, memory, and guessing games. The second is called the task cycle, which is divided into three moments: the first one is called the task where students are organized in groups; they have some minutes to think about the vocabulary and brainstorm what they are going to perform, also teachers monitor the process and help students when they need it.

The third stage is called planning where the students prepare to report the task; there are several types of tasks, which are projects, newspapers, posters, storytelling, and anecdotes among others. Besides, the teacher makes sure that everybody is involved with the task, and the final moment is called a report where students decorate, and present the task, and the

teacher gives some feedback to them (as cited Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2010). With this in mind, Willis and Willis suggest that the TBL model allows students to interact and communicate with each other through the stages presented before because it involves moments where students have to prepare and plan their activities and at the end share ideas with their partners respectfully, for these reasons, these type of activities allow the researcher to boost the assertive communication on students.

Following the description of Willis and Willis' model the next stages are Language Focus and Evaluation, from this model, researchers created 10 lesson plans. Language focus takes place when students can

expose their comments to their partners and the teacher. This stage is also divided into two parts; the first is called analysis where students review vocabulary, and the second is called practice, where students practice the words or structures learned in the task. The final stage is Evaluation; in this section, students complete the task and teachers evaluate them based on a rubric where the aspects to assess are; the sequence of tasks, group participation, outcomes, and language target used when they are performing the task (Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2010) Taking this into account, developed the project through 10 lesson plans of 20 hours each one, based on Willis and Willis' model which main focus are Tasks and Communication.

Discussion and results

To present my conclusions based on the results of the project application and answer the research question. The purpose of the investigation was to analyze the impact of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) on sixth-grade students' assertive communication. To achieve this purpose, we managed to implement the project in a non-bilingual public school located in Guacheta Town, Colombia, through activities that allowed me to see how students interacted with each other, and thus gather data based on my instruments: *field notes, interviews, and video recordings*, which helped me

find three main categories in my data analysis process: *respect, group work and self-confidence when speaking in public*. These categories helped the researcher to find the answers to my question based on the data presented above. It is organized based on the answers found in each one of the categories, my reflection about the challenges during the project application, and finally a general conclusion.

Through the implementation of the communicative activities, it was observed that students presented an improvement at the moment of interacting respectfully with

their partners. Along with the sessions, students did some tasks that challenged them to work in groups and collaborate among them. During these activities, the researcher analyzed the learners' attitudes in terms of respecting others. Keeping in mind that at the beginning of the process, the participants presented disrespectful attitudes towards the others, through the communicative activities, they demonstrated an improvement in this aspect; they started respecting their partners' ideas and working with them collaboratively, incrementing the good relationships inside the classroom. Thanks to the implementation of the project, it was possible to notice that the communicative tasks had a positive impact on students' attitudes because they could express and listen to ideas respectfully to get to an agreement. The improvement evidenced through this category was evident in the participants while they interacted with the tasks; respecting others' ideas and collaborating without being rude with their partners. For this reason, this aspect was crucial in answering the research question, as being an assertive communicator involves actively listening to those around them, while also conveying their own ideas with tolerance and respect.

Secondly, the participants were involved in the activities and took different roles in order to present the tasks which made evident the use of assertive communica-

tion. In the first session, observed that students were not interested in working in groups, or with people that they did not know well. For these reasons, the activities proposed had the intention of challenging the participants to organize themselves, take roles, and agree with others to present the tasks, because being an assertive communicator implies giving arguments as well as listening to others and tolerating each other. Along the different sessions implemented, it was observed students started feeling comfortable working with others, learning about their classmates, and creating a kind learning environment. With this in mind, each member of the group had been assigned a role to achieve a main goal. For these reasons, based on the data analysis presented, it was concluded that communicative tasks allowed students to be involved in the classes, they collaborated among themselves and somehow, they changed their perceptions about working with others. Group work was important because being an assertive communicator involves working collaboratively and sharing with people, also it helped create connections among students when they were interacting with others.

After the analysis, students improved their assertive communication skills when speaking in public, expressing their ideas both in their mother tongue and in English. In the beginning, participants showed difficulties

at the moment of expressing ideas and feelings in public in the second language as well as in their mother tongue; they seemed nervous and uncomfortable when they were asked to speak in front of others. Since the first session, students had to perform in front of others, they expressed that they did not feel comfortable speaking in public even more if they had to do it individually. However, through the sessions, they started to participate on their own and expressed their ideas individually thanks to communicative activities; they improved their tone of voice in both languages even though they did not know how to pronounce some words. This category answers the research question because the activities gave the students confidence enough to speak in front of other people, and because they seemed more comfortable at the moment of expressing their ideas and perceptions in front of their classmates and teachers. According to the above, self-confidence when speaking in public is essential to enhance students' assertive communication because participants need to express themselves with security and feel comfortable.

During the project implementation, we faced different challenges which led me to implement some changes regarding the lessons and activities to achieve the project goal. One of the main challenges that had was that students did not have a good English level; for this reason, they did not want to participate in the tasks, in addition, I

did not have access to electronic resources at the school, and had to change some of the lesson plans and activities to suit students' level and create physical material for them. According to this, the challenges presented alongside the project require me to look for different resources and activities more appropriate for the students' level, with the purpose of achieving the aim of the investigation.

The analysis presented highlights an improvement in the population's assertive communication through the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) approaches. Since implementing the program, it has become evident that participants' interpersonal relationships have strengthened. They have started to respect one another while listening and expressing their opinions and ideas. Also, they could discuss their ideas properly, especially in their mother tongue, and it was evident their intention to communicate in English with their limited language appropriation. From this, the researcher could notice that CLT and TBL approaches helped this population's assertive communication. Now it would be interesting to apply this project to other types of participants with different backgrounds such as vulnerable people. This project helped me to reflect on students' needs and create a proposal that benefits their assertive communication through different communicative activities.

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Electrifying English: an action research study about the design and implementation of a virtual learning object (VLO) to enhance the inferential reading comprehension skill*

Inglés electrizante: un estudio de investigación acción sobre el diseño e implementación de un objeto virtual de aprendizaje (OVA) para fortalecer la habilidad de lectura inferencial

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Abstract

This paper reports an Action Research study based on the design and implementation of a VLO based on electricity to strengthen inferential reading comprehension skills in online English classes with 14 undergraduate distance students at a public Colombian University, aged between 18 and 38 years old. The implications of this study include not only the benefits of the student's academic process but due to the reusable nature of the VLO, it will enrich the educational community, especially the distance learning one. In the development of the VLO the teacher-researcher implemented a series of one-hour reading cycles focused on electricity content, based on Solé's (1992) three-phase strategies made up of before, during, and after the reading activities and Barret's Taxonomy's third level of reading comprehension strategies. In each reading cycle with the VLO, data was collected through direct observation, field notes, online qualitative surveys, and pre and post-tests to understand the impact of the pedagogical intervention. The findings suggest an increase in the participants' inferential reading comprehension skills; however, it is recommended that the educational institution holds workshops across various subjects aimed to the development of this specific skill so that students continue to improve in this regard.

Keywords: Virtual Learning Object; Reading; Inferential Reading Comprehension Skills; E-learning; Electricity.

* Este artículo es producto del proceso formativo en el Curso International Congress de la Maestría en Mediación Pedagógica en el Aprendizaje del Inglés de la UNAD. Por lo tanto, se encuentra en el repositorio institucional. Se aclara que este trabajo no constituye autoplágio, ya que es parte del proceso formativo propio del programa.

Resumen

El presente artículo describe un estudio basado en la investigación-acción fundamentado en el diseño e implementación de un OVA basado en la electricidad que busca fortalecer la habilidad de lectura inferencial en las clases virtuales de inglés con 14 estudiantes de pregrado de la facultad de estudios a distancia de una universidad pública colombiana, entre los 18 y 38 años. Las implicaciones de este estudio incluyen no solamente un beneficio al proceso académico del estudiante, sino que, debido a la naturaleza reutilizable del OVA, este enriquecerá a la comunidad educativa, especialmente la comunidad de la educación a distancia. Se implementaron, con este OVA, una serie de ciclos de lectura relacionados con la electricidad, basados en las estrategias de tres fases de Solé (1992), las cuales se conformaban por actividades de antes, durante y después de la lectura y por el tercer nivel de las estrategias de comprensión de lectura de la taxonomía de Barret. En cada ciclo de lectura se recolectó información a través de la observación directa, notas de campo, encuestas cualitativas en línea y pre y post test para así comprender el impacto de la intervención pedagógica. Los resultados sugieren un aumento en la habilidad de lectura inferencial de los estudiantes gracias a la implementación del OVA; sin embargo, se recomienda que la Universidad realice talleres de manera transversal con las otras asignaturas del programa dirigidas al desarrollo de esta habilidad específica para evidenciar más mejoría en los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: objeto virtual de aprendizaje (OVA); lectura; habilidad de lectura inferencial; E-learning; electricidad.

Development of the paper

In the educational context where the observation process was carried out, a group of fourteen male students aged 8 to 38 years old in the Technology in Industrial Electricity program of a public Colombian university who were enrolled in the second level of an English course, showed low levels of reading comprehension skills, especially difficulties in making inferences related to the texts proposed in the synchronous

classes, which directly affected not only the interpretation of the information that they read but the understanding of the target language they seek to learn, thus hindering its direct relationship with reading.

The teacher that conducted this research applied a test at the end of the first half of the semester in the English course where students presented deficiencies in reading

comprehension, especially when making inferences about elements that are not visible and specific in the corresponding text, likewise a digital survey was applied to the students in which they affirmed that they do not have the culture of reading, but they really see the need to improve their performance in this particular skill and read more in English, especially about topics of their interest.

The research question of this study focused on how designing and developing a Virtual Learning Object (VLO) centered on electricity content can enhance inferential reading comprehension skills among undergraduate distance students in online English classes at a public university

in Colombia. The main objective of this project was to design and develop a Virtual Learning Object (VLO) based on electricity content to strengthen inferential reading comprehension skills in online English classes with undergraduate distance students at a public University. The specific objectives were to identify the level of inferential reading comprehension skills among undergraduate distance students at a public university, to develop a VLO based on electricity content that incorporates activities and tasks that promote inferential reading comprehension skills, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the VLO in improving inferential reading comprehension skills among undergraduate distance students at the Public University.

Methods

research (AR), which followed a cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection. During the planning phase, the teacher-researcher meticulously designed the Virtual Learning Object (VLO) focused on electricity content to enhance students' inferential reading comprehension skills. Given that the Technology in Industrial Electricity program at the Faculty of Distance Learning at the public university met once every two weeks, it was decided that the VLO, created using Google Sites, would consist of three reading cycles: "History of Electricity," "Clean Electricity," and "Care in the Use of Electricity." Each of these

reading cycles had a one-hour duration and, based on Sole's (1992) three-phase strategies, they were conducted before, during, and after the reading activities (in addition to a previous knowledge activity that the students completed before starting the reading cycles).

This VLO was divided into an introduction, learning objectives, pre-knowledge activity, guidelines, three reading cycles, their corresponding feedback section, conclusions, references, and credits. In the action and observation sections of the action cycle, the teacher-researcher

implemented the VLO with the students and applied some of the data collection tools (the direct observation process, field notes, the implementation of online qualitative surveys, and a pre and post-test) to further analyze the information collected.

Data Analysis

In the reflection part of the cycle, the researcher analyzed the data collection instruments following the steps proposed by the thematic analysis as can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Thematic Analysis

Research question: How the design and development of a Virtual Learning Object (VLO) based on electricity content can strengthen the inferential reading comprehension skill in online English classes of a group of undergraduate distance students of a Public University?	
Themes	Codes
Read between the lines	VLO Inferential reading strategies.
Electricity and Reading	Motivation, autonomy.
Students inferential reading skills	From the VLO to the practice.

Results

The various inferential reading comprehension strategies suggested in the VLO (Virtual Learning Online) allowed distance learners to gradually enhance their inferential reading skills. However, the success of these strategies relied on the individual student, their learning style, and the context of their learning environment. Additionally, it became clear that students recognized the purpose of implementing the VLO strategies, seeing them as beneficial for their career and

personal interests. This prompted them to engage with the reading cycles diligently and to use the proposed inferential reading comprehension strategies effectively in their VLO activities. Finally, an unexpected finding was that the design of the VLO significantly boosted student motivation and autonomy. This demonstrated their interest not only in their own learning processes but also in actively participating in the learning experiences of their classmates.

Discussion

This study will significantly assist future teachers and researchers interested in the

design and implementation of a Virtual Learning Object (VLO) aimed at enhancing

inferential reading comprehension skills within an English distance learning context. This contribution is valuable to the academic community. The implementation of the VLO not only promoted and strengthened these skills but also helped students recognize the importance of reading and learning English as a means to acquire knowledge relevant to their fields of study and personal

interests. However, to further enhance this skill among students, it is essential to implement more extensive reading cycles using the virtual learning object focused on electricity content in the English curriculum. Additionally, this skill should be developed across other learning areas, and students must be committed to attending distance classes and reviewing the study materials.

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Introduction

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Psychological factors that affect English learning in ninth-grade students at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED in Bogotá*

Factores psicológicos que afectan el aprendizaje del inglés en estudiantes de noveno grado del Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED en Bogotá

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Abstract

English language learning is an aspect of great relevance in a world that demands its use. Thus, in recent years, various strategies have been implemented in public educational policies to improve it. However, to strengthen these strategies, it is necessary to understand which factors affect English learning in adolescents at a public school in Bogotá. To address this need, the present study aimed to identify the psychological factors that affect the learning of English in ninth-grade students of Colegio técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED, Bogotá. This was achieved by analyzing the students' and teachers' perceptions and experiences collected through a mixed approach to develop an explanatory data analysis. Based on this analysis, the study recommends suggestions to consider in the curriculum to implement future strategies in the ninth-grade English curriculum according to the current needs of the context.

Keywords: English Language Learning; Adolescents; Psychological Factors; Motivation; Teacher's Perspective.

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Resumen

El aprendizaje del idioma inglés es un aspecto de gran relevancia para un mundo que demanda su uso; por ello, en las políticas públicas educativas de los últimos años se han implementado diferentes estrategias para su mejoramiento. Sin embargo, para fortalecer estas estrategias es necesario conocer cuáles son los factores que afectan el aprendizaje del inglés en adolescentes de un colegio público de Bogotá. Para responder a esta necesidad, el presente estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar los factores psicológicos que afectan el aprendizaje del inglés en los estudiantes de grado noveno del colegio técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED de Bogotá, mediante el análisis de las percepciones y experiencias de los estudiantes y sus docentes recolectadas a través de un enfoque mixto. Este análisis explicativo de datos permitió recomendar algunas sugerencias a tener en cuenta en el currículo de este colegio para implementar futuras estrategias en el currículo de inglés de grado noveno, de acuerdo a las necesidades actuales del contexto.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje del inglés; adolescentes; factores psicológicos; motivación; perspectiva del profesor.

Introduction

In recent years, the Colombian government has made a significant effort to strengthen English learning at the national level in public institutions through the National Bilingualism Program (PNB) in preschool, elementary, and secondary education, launched by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) in 2004. According to a progress report published in 2021, some of the most recent strategies, implemented between 2020 and 2021 focused on strengthening communicative skills in English among teachers and students. Despite these efforts, additional strategies that consider the factors influencing English learning are still

necessary to fulfill the goals of this national bilingualism plan and reach the anticipated levels in this ambitious proposal. Therefore, it is imperative to continue providing tools to identify improvements according to the needs of each school in the field of English language acquisition.

It is important to highlight that according to the results obtained in external tests at the national level in recent years, public schools have achieved significant advancements. According to the SMECE (Multidimensional Evaluation System for Education Quality) report in 2021, a higher percentage of

students reached a B+ level compared to previous years, which shows a remarkable improvement at the national level.

Considering the Antonio Nariño locality, students at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal in recent years have shown consistent performance on the ICFES tests in English compared to other schools in this sector. An increase in the percentage of students achieving higher proficiency levels in English stands out. These data, also obtained from the SMECE report (2019-2023), suggest that Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal has implemented effective strategies to improve students' performance in English.

The improvement in proficiency levels suggests that educational efforts are having a positive impact. Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal's Humanities project has contributed significantly to the progress made in these tests with constant improvement every year and the identification of diverse needs that arise annually according to these external test results.

Despite these advances, it is evident that there is still a need to improve several aspects of English classes. In daily practice, some situations highlight the need to continue identifying aspects that may be impacting students' performance in English learning to continue improving and supporting students to maintain and increase these proficiency levels.

Thus, this research study intends to identify the main psychological factors that affect English learning in ninth-grade students at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED in Bogotá to contribute to the English learning process and respond to the educational current needs arising from the context. One of these is the development of alternatives that allow students to learn effectively while enabling teachers to create an adequate learning environment considering all factors that are affecting students' learning processes at school.

Additionally, providing teachers with suggestions to design and apply more effective teaching strategies. This research seeks to understand some aspects that affect the English learning process in ninth graders at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED to address the main issues observed during English classes, such as decreasing participation in class, low quality in the development of the proposed activities, and the low and basic results obtained in the English subject during 2023. This may contribute to the educational languages field by identifying the variables affecting students with similar characteristics in public schools. This can be useful for other teachers in the same area in this school to design other alternatives to facilitate students' learning processes in the English subject and to restructure the English study plan.

Literature Review

This section provides a summarized review of existing research on psychological factors affecting English language learning among adolescents, emphasizing both internal and external influences. The analysis integrates cognitive, motivational, and affective dimensions, offering insights from international and Colombian research.

Key studies, such as those by Erlam, Philp, and Feick (2021), and Wang, Abdullah, and Leong (2022), highlight the interplay between adolescent brain development and effective pedagogical strategies, underscoring the need for a supportive learning environment tailored to the cognitive and emotional needs of adolescents.

Learning English in Adolescence

Adolescence is a critical period for language learning due to significant cognitive, emotional, and social changes. During this stage, adolescents develop abstract thinking and metalinguistic awareness, enhancing their ability to understand and use complex language constructs such as figurative language and sarcasm. Research, including the “Adolescence and Learning – The Teenage Brain” study by Cambridge English (2021), emphasizes the importance of addressing cognitive factors in teaching strategies to improve English learning outcomes in adolescents.

Factors Affecting English Learning

Learning a foreign language involves a combination of internal and external factors.

- **Internal Factors:** Cognitive abilities, motivation, and affective factors like anxiety and self-efficacy play crucial

roles. High levels of motivation and positive self-esteem enhance learning outcomes, while anxiety can hinder performance (Ellis, 1994; Brown, 2007).

- **External Factors:** Teaching strategies, classroom environment, and community support significantly influence learning. Effective teaching methods and a supportive classroom environment facilitate better learning outcomes.

Psychological Factors

The acquisition of English is influenced by psychological factors influencing motivation, attitude, and autonomy. Research highlights the importance of understanding these aspects to improve educational practices. Studies such as those by Wang, Abdullah, and Leong (2022) and Ahmed et al. (2022) provide insights into how factors like motivation and anxiety impact language learning and suggest strategies to

foster autonomous and reflective learning. According to Bastidas and Muñoz G. (2020), the most influential internal factors are cognitive and linguistic; however, internal factors related to attitude, attention, and motivation of students have a significant impact on student learning, as well as other sociocultural factors. According to Figueroa H. M. (2022), motivation affects student learning, and there is a need to implement strategies that contribute to rethinking the curriculum and integrating the needs of students and the context.

Conceptual Framework

- **Motivation and Effort:** Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is critical for engagement in learning tasks. Effective teaching strategies and a supportive learning environment can boost students' motivation and effort.
- **Confidence and Autonomy:** Confidence in language use is often influenced by fear of making mistakes. Promoting

autonomy helps students manage their learning processes independently, enhancing long-term engagement and progress.

Implications for Teaching

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the psychological environment for learning. By understanding the cognitive and emotional needs of adolescents, educators can tailor their teaching strategies to support language acquisition. The research underscores the importance of creating structured yet flexible learning environments that encourage self-regulation and independent learning. Understanding the psychological factors affecting English learning among ninth graders at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED provides valuable insights for developing effective teaching strategies. Addressing these factors can enhance students' language learning experiences and outcomes, contributing significantly to the field of adolescent language education.

Method

This section outlines the methodological design to achieve the research objectives, focusing on understanding the psycholinguistic factors affecting English language learning in ninth-grade students at Colegio Técnico Jaime Pardo Leal IED. A

mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data, is employed to provide a comprehensive understanding and exploratory data analysis of these factors. As suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), this

method combines detailed qualitative data with quantitative statistical analysis for a thorough exploration of the research problem.

The study is conducted in three phases:

1. Quantitative Phase: A questionnaire administered to a representative sample of ninth-grade students gathers data on their motivation, attitudes, and perceptions towards learning English.

2. Qualitative Phase: Semi-structured interviews with two English teachers and a focus group of seven students explore their experiences and perceptions regarding the psychological factors affecting English learning.

3. Data Triangulation and Explanatory Analysis Phase: The integration of qualitative and quantitative data ensures the validity and reliability of the findings by comparing information from various sources.

This research adopts a combined quantitative and qualitative explanatory approach to understand the psycholinguistic factors influencing English learning among ninth-grade students. Structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are used to gather comprehensive data on the participants' experiences and opinions.

The target population consists of ninth graders from socioeconomic strata 1, 2, and

3, aged 13 to 16 years. A stratified sample of 24 students was selected to represent different levels of English performance, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors affecting language learning.

Both qualitative and quantitative data are collected to gain a complete understanding of the psycholinguistic factors influencing English learning. Qualitative data provides detailed insights into participants' experiences, while quantitative data identifies patterns and correlations.

- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** These interviews explore students' and teachers' perceptions, experiences, and opinions about English learning. They are designed to address key issues and provide a rich understanding of the cognitive, effective, and social processes involved.
- **Questionnaires:** Likert scales and multiple-choice questions measure specific variables related to English learning, providing an overview of trends and patterns in participants' responses.

Validation Procedures

- **Informed Consent:** Consent forms are distributed and signed by parents, tutors, and participating teachers, ensuring their understanding and approval of the research procedures.

- **Piloting of Instruments:** Instruments were applied with a small group of students to ensure clarity and accuracy. Adjustments are made based on feedback to optimize the questionnaires and interviews.

Data Management

- **Questionnaire Administration:** The last version of the questionnaire was administered to students digitally at the school, overcoming technical issues to ensure successful completion.
- **Focus Group and Teacher Interviews:** Interviews were conducted and recorded at the school, providing clear and informative responses from participants. This rigorous approach ensured the reliability and validity of the data collected for the research, leading to comprehensive and accurate findings.

Conclusion and Discussion

The triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data revealed key psychological factors affecting English learning among ninth-grade students, specifically motivation, effort, confidence, and autonomy. The interaction between these factors and the learning environment, teaching methods, and available resources highlights the necessity for a multifaceted approach to address the challenges students face.

Research Implications for the Field of Study

The findings emphasize the need to incorporate psychological factors into educational strategies. Addressing issues related to motivation, effort, confidence, and autonomy can help educators create more supportive and effective learning environments. This study enhances the understanding of how psychological factors influence language acquisition and provides practical recommendations for improving English education in secondary schools.

Research Limitations

The study's limitations include a limited sample size and a specific focus on ninth-grade students from a particular educational context. The reliance on self-reported data may also introduce bias. Future research should consider a larger, more diverse sample and include objective measures of language proficiency.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies should examine the long-term effects of the recommended strategies on students' English proficiency. Additionally, research should explore the impact of technological interventions and personalized learning plans to improve motivation, effort, confidence, and autonomy in language learning.

Conclusions

The study identified key psychological factors affecting English language learning among ninth graders such as motivation, effort, confidence, and autonomy. By addressing these factors through specific strategies, educators could improve students' language learning experiences and

outcomes. The findings and recommendations provide a basis for developing more effective English language programs that address students' psychological needs, an aspect of great relevance to the students' learning process.

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Enhancing EFL speaking skills in young learners: a literature review analysis of self-confidence development strategies*

Fortaleciendo las habilidades orales de inglés como lengua extranjera en estudiantes jóvenes: un análisis de revisión de la literatura sobre estrategias de desarrollo de la confianza en uno mismo

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Abstract

This document presents a literature review investigating the development of self-confidence strategies to enhance oral skills in young students. Its primary objective is to analyze studies conducted on this topic from 2000 to 2023 in our context, Colombia. The method employed is documentary analysis, which facilitates exploration of the subject, and inclusion criteria were utilized to manage the data on different databases. The results reveal a substantial body of literature addressing the topic, with a significant contribution from psychology to the teaching field and speaking skills and knowledge about young learners. Nevertheless, further progress is necessary in the quest for authentic learning environments for adolescents, which are crossed by pedagogical elements from the methods and approaches that are the key to developing this type of strategy.

Keywords: Self-esteem; English instruction; Learning methods; Affective strategies; Public speaking, self-confidence.

Resumen

Este documento presenta una revisión de la literatura que investiga el desarrollo de estrategias de confianza en uno mismo para mejorar las habilidades orales en estudiantes jóvenes. Su

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objetivo principal es analizar los estudios realizados sobre este tema desde el año 2000 al 2023 en nuestro contexto, Colombia. El método empleado es el análisis documental, que facilita la exploración del tema y se utilizaron criterios de inclusión para gestionar los datos en diferentes bases de datos. Los resultados revelan un cuerpo sustancial de literatura que aborda el tema, con una contribución significativa de la psicología al campo de la enseñanza y las habilidades y conocimientos del habla sobre los jóvenes estudiantes. Sin embargo, es necesario seguir avanzando en la búsqueda de entornos de aprendizaje auténticos para los adolescentes, que estén atravesados por elementos pedagógicos desde los métodos y enfoques que son la clave para desarrollar este tipo de estrategias.

Palabras clave: autoestima; enseñanza del inglés; métodos de aprendizaje; estrategias afectivas; hablar en público.

Introduction

Nowadays, young learners must learn English for different reasons, such as new realities about interchange culture and globalization. Colombian language institutions have the Common European Framework of Reference of Language for its curricular development to guide curriculums and bilingual programs. According to General Education Law, one of its objectives is acquiring elements of conversation and the capability to express in a foreign language (1994, p. 8). This law started the government's commitment to engage the institutions to teach English as a foreign language.

Therefore, the schools that consider Basic Learning Rights (DBA), as a suggested curriculum, are essentially learning standards that outline the expected English language skills and knowledge students should acquire

at each grade level from elementary to high school in Colombia. These standards aim to ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop a strong foundation in English language proficiency, enabling them to communicate effectively in various contexts and prepare for further education and professional opportunities.

In addition, this document was developed for the national government and distinguishes three essential concepts from linguistic knowledge: bilingualism, second language, and foreign language. It also concluded that, for our context, applying a foreign language. The aim is to improve students' performance when they finish the school cycle. The whole knowledge set, which an individual can create actions in a context, is defined through communicative competence. This included linguistic

competence, sociolinguistic competence, and pragmatic competence (MEN, 2006).

In accordance with the international Context, the Colombian government took steps that Colombian schools needed to intervene in teaching foreign languages, which generated a linguist law called National Bilingual Colombian Program (NBP) (Law 651 of 2013). According to Fandiño-Parra et al. (2012), this law gave institutions significant challenges, starting with its initiative as a strategy for promoting the competitiveness of Colombians. The main objective of the PNB is to have citizens capable of communicating in English, with internationally comparable standards, which insert the country into universal communication processes, the global economy, and cultural openness. Among the specific objectives, the NBP seeks that starting in 2019; all students finish their secondary education at an intermediate level (B1 according to the Basic Foreign Language Proficiency Standards: English. (p. 366)

However, difficulties have arisen regarding developing students' skills in the classroom, especially in oral skills. Some Colombian researchers, such as Roble Ruiz (2021), cite Richards (2008), who explains that speaking skills are a priority for foreign language learners, it becomes a priority. In addition, Barbosa, A.P. (2022) cites as "Colombia very well." It is pointed out that oral competence is a prime concern for innovative education. Nevertheless, teachers have not guided

this process in natural environments with meaningful and functional contexts. For that, teachers in Colombian classrooms interact with students and have seen the need to advance strategies that allow students to feel more confident, especially when communicating in a foreign language.

In embarking on this exploration, I invite readers to delve into the nuanced world of language learning and teaching, uncovering the transformative impact that self-confidence can have on young learners. This propels them towards greater fluency and proficiency in English speaking. By understanding and implementing these insights, we unlock the true potential of young learners, enabling them to confidently navigate the global linguistic landscape.

Brown, H. D. (2001), discusses the main themes and the principles of learning English, such as automation, meaningful learning, anticipation reward, intrinsic motivation, strategic investment, and, affective principles, which are the core of the issue, and they are main tool about self- confidence strategies, and in this document, fundamental elements are discussed to implement these strategies in classrooms.

One of these elements is communicative competence; the classroom must not lose its essence in the pursuit of this type of competence. Therefore, all tasks implemented should focus on this aspect and be as

authentic as possible, enabling students to become independent learners. Therefore, this document aims, first, to analyze the research conducted about the contribution of self-confidence strategies to EFL speaking

skills in young learners, through reviewing papers from 2000 to 2022. (Around 60), and second, to provide recommendations for improving the development of self-confidence in EFL speaking skills.

Methodology

Due to the nature of the research, it has been necessary to use inclusion and selection criteria as search parameters to account for the studies. These criteria have been applied across databases such as EBSCO eBooks, ERIC, Dialnet, Scielo, and Scopus, as well as search engines like Google Scholar. Parameters such as author names and keywords were used during the search process. Consequently, the keywords and descriptors include self-confidence strategies, speaking performance, communicative approach, young learners, and self-esteem.

According to Bowen's method (2009), document analysis is a process of reviewing documents and sources that requires being examined and evaluated to understand a phenomenon to be studied. This can include several studies about the issue which describe and analyze a phenomenon. Another crucial element within this method is triangulation since the issues or phenomena are analyzed from different points of view and theories of the authors. In general, the author concludes that this method provides background about the phenomenon and

helps us not only to contrast information but also to verify findings.

Stern. Et al. (2014) point out that inclusion criteria refer to specific characteristics or attributes that individuals or subjects must possess to be eligible to participate in a study. These criteria are determined by the researchers based on the objectives and requirements of the study. Inclusion criteria help ensure that the study participants are representative of the population being studied and that the results of the research are valid and applicable to the intended target group (p. 54).

In this case, the inclusion is based on research that includes keywords as filters that are within the year range from 2000 to 2023, in addition to having full access to the scientific article, to obtain greater knowledge. Another aspect is reliability. Ahmed et al. (2012) refer to the consistency, stability, and dependability of measurements or findings obtained through a research study. It indicates the extent to which a particular instrument, method, or procedure yields consistent results when applied repeatedly under the same conditions.

Literature review

Self-confidence strategies, through effective methods, can generally be defined as Sisquiarco et al. (2018) cited Oxford (1990), stating, 'Affective strategies are related to the learners' emotional needs such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, or rewarding oneself for a good performance' (p. 38). These strategies contribute significantly to students' emotional well-being and aid in achieving their goals.

Indeed, in Colombia, some researchers have worried about the issues of self-confidence and self-efficacy in their English classrooms, considering some students who try to assimilate English can find some obstacles in themselves. Some of them could be afraid to speak, insecure, or even lacking self-confidence. Many of those suggest the use of the method of project-based learning because it involves students constructing solutions and increasing their creative capacity. Becerra-Posada, T et al. (2022), deny "PBL also promoted the students' self-confidence. Results showed that the PBL lessons created an enjoyable and low-pressure learning environment that helped the students to engage and participate in the different tasks. (p.15).

The speaking skill is one of the most crucial skills in the Communicative Approach. Caceres and Vega (2017) as cited by

Naveed (2015), describe speaking skills as a complex process wherein involves constructing meaning, receiving, and processing information (p.9). However, this research highlights several aspects that limit students, such as nervousness, insecurity, family pressure, academic challenges, and self-doubt. When teachers design activities to encourage speaking, students encounter obstacles, with self-confidence being a significant one due to their discomfort with themselves.

Several studies have focused on this topic over the years. Nunan (2010), as cited by Pinter (2017), distinguishes two stages regarding young learners. He collects viewpoints from various authors who acknowledge two chronological intervals. Therefore, it is revealed that young learners are classified into two categories: young learners and older learners. Thus, there is a field called TELY (Teaching English Language to Young Learners), which emphasizes the main challenges with this type of student: cognitive development, motivation, attention, multi-level groups, and assessment (p. 5).

Undoubtedly, there is an important connection between speaking performance and affective strategies, since it is important to characterize the development of the first one, it has to do with different varia-

bles, including the strategies used by the teacher in the classroom. Some of them, as indicated by Sison, N. R. M. (2022), cited in Fotokian (2015), involve affective learning strategies aimed at managing behavioral aspects such as anxiety and motivation (p. 78).

The implementation of these strategies significantly assists students in taking important steps in developing their skills, making them more easily shared and

breaking down obstacles in learning a second language. Sison (2022) concludes that teachers should strengthen the use of effective strategies in the classroom and incorporate such in all language activities they prepare for their students. They should increase their use of effective strategies in language classrooms to develop students' language skills. Since students use effective strategies in language learning, they must be included in the language course materials. (p.89).

Discussion and conclusion

The search strategy was conducted in the mentioned databases, considering the following keywords from the UNESCO thesaurus in combination with Booleans, as well as descriptors in databases. In this manner, 62 articles were identified, followed by a data-cleaning process involving 20 articles.

The obtained results indicate a wealth of academic works focusing on the relationship between the development of self-confidence strategies and oral skills in English teaching. In fact, thanks to advancements in the field of psychology, considerable progress has been made; many studies have even employed quantitative methods to measure aspects related to this field.

Furthermore, researchers demonstrate a clear concern for creating genuine and positive learning environments conducive to the utilization of such strategies.

Furthermore, some researchers have utilized qualitative research tools such as the self-confidence questionnaire (Horwitz, E.K., 1986), and the Rosenberd Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), to measure aspects of self-confidence and self-esteem. This is exemplified in the research conducted by Arango, H.P. (2015), who combined these tools with interview techniques and a SO-LOM matrix. From his study, he concluded that teachers must foster a framework for building self-confidence among students who are hesitant to speak English.

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Students' learning strategies in online listening comprehension activities*

Estrategias de aprendizaje de los estudiantes en actividades de comprensión auditiva en línea

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Abstract

This research investigates the learning strategies used by A1 English-level students at UNAD in online listening comprehension activities. The primary objective is to categorize the learning strategies used and understand the factors influencing their application. Through qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, the study categorizes strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective domains, as outlined by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990). These strategies incorporate techniques such as prediction, planning, feedback, and collaboration. Significantly, the research revealed that the adoption of these strategies is influenced by factors such as the students' language proficiency level, their prior experience with listening comprehension, and the complexity of the auditory material. These findings corroborate previous studies emphasizing the impact of proficiency (Vandergrift, 2003), and background knowledge (Goh, 2000), on listening strategy use.

Keywords: Learning Strategies, Online Listening Comprehension, Cognitive Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Socio-affective Strategies, Listening Comprehension Experience.

Resumen

Esta investigación examina las estrategias de aprendizaje utilizadas por estudiantes de nivel A1 de inglés en UNAD durante actividades de comprensión oral en línea. El

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objetivo principal es categorizar las estrategias de aprendizaje empleadas y comprender los factores que influyen en su aplicación. A través de métodos cualitativos, incluidas entrevistas semiestructuradas, el estudio clasifica las estrategias en dominios cognitivos, metacognitivos y socio-afectivos, según lo establecido por O'Malley y Chamot (1990) y Oxford (1990). Estas estrategias incorporan técnicas como la predicción, la planificación, la retroalimentación y la colaboración.

De manera significativa, la investigación revela que la adopción de estas estrategias está influenciada por factores como el nivel de competencia lingüística de los estudiantes, su experiencia previa con la comprensión oral y la complejidad del material auditivo. Estos hallazgos respaldan estudios previos que destacan el impacto de la competencia (Vandergrift, 2003) y el conocimiento previo (Goh, 2000) en el uso de estrategias de comprensión oral. Son esenciales para los educadores de inglés, ya que apoyan el diseño de actividades de comprensión oral en línea más personalizadas que se adapten a las diversas necesidades de los estudiantes y promuevan la aplicación de diversas estrategias de aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: estrategias de aprendizaje, comprensión auditiva en línea, estrategias cognitivas, estrategias metacognitivas, estrategias socioafectivas, experiencia en comprensión auditiva.

Introduction

The acquisition of language skills in foreign language learning has evolved alongside technological advances and the adaptation to virtual education. In this context, online listening comprehension remains fundamental for teaching and learning English. For A1-level English students at Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD), it constitutes a crucial component that plays a vital role in their learning process. As emphasized by Hoven (1999) and Cubilo and Winke (2013), listening comprehension

is an essential skill for language learning, particularly in virtual environments where auditory input may be the primary mode of instruction.

Listening comprehension, a complex cognitive skill involving assigning meaning to spoken language, is further defined by its focus on recognizing linguistic units alongside listener expectations, context, and prior knowledge. Unlike other language skills, listening typically occurs

in real-time with limited opportunity to process information, presenting a unique challenge for educators in both virtual and physical environments.

While research suggests that listening comprehension can be developed through practice and learning strategies, virtual environments introduce additional challenges, such as lack of physical contact with instructors and classmates, and the need for self-regulated learning. Metacognitive strategies are essential for effective online learning management.

This study focuses on characterizing the learning strategies used by UNAD's English A1 students during online listening activities, an essential skill to analyze in the context of online learning, where technology introduces new challenges and opportunities. The aim of this study is to answer the question: What learning strategies do students in the English A1 course at UNAD use during online listening comprehension activities? The primary objective is to understand the strategies employed by these students and to identify the factors that influence their choices and application during virtual listening tasks.

Developing and improving listening skills, whether in a digital or face-to-face environment, involves specific strategies that beginner language learners can employ. Listening is an important topic to study because it happens in social situations. In classrooms, educators should look for the best ways to help students learn and get better results. In this context, the use of strategies designed for digital learning becomes essential for effective listening skill acquisition. Understanding how students in a virtual course at UNAD develop their learning exercises is crucial to analyzing and sharing effective learning methods with students who are not aware of these strategies.

Through the identification and description of these strategies, the goal is to provide a comprehensive overview that not only allows us to understand how students develop in this context but also to discern the influence of different contextual and personal factors in their application. This research seeks to provide educators, program designers, and the student body at UNAD with a solid frame of reference that will contribute to the enrichment and optimization of teaching-learning practices in the field of English listening comprehension.

Literature Review

The literature review presented here provides valuable insights into the role of metacognitive strategies in enhancing

listening comprehension skills, particularly in the context of online and distance language learning environments. Several

studies are highly relevant to the on-going research project on characterizing the learning strategies used by UNAD's English A1 students in online listening comprehension activities.

Deregözü's (2021) study investigated the listening comprehension strategies employed by university students taking online English and German courses in Turkey. The findings revealed a moderate use of strategies, with active listening and interpreting nonverbal cues being the most common, and word-oriented strategies being the least employed. Significant gender differences were observed, with females reporting greater strategy use compared to males. Deregözü highlights the importance of strategy instruction, especially when adapting to online learning environments, and provides a point of comparison for the current research project.

Lye and Goh (2018) explored the effects of metacognitive strategy instruction on metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension performance among Malaysian ESL learners. While both instructional approaches (Metacognitive Pedagogical Sequence and Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) led to improvements in listening comprehension, the results for metacognitive awareness were mixed. The study suggests that developing metacognitive awareness through strategy instruction may be challenging, as learners may struggle to transfer the metacognitive

processes experienced during training to other listening tasks.

Campo. J.P., (2016) investigated how implementing a metacognitive pedagogical sequence could improve the listening skills of 9th-grade EFL students in a rural Colombian school. By employing the metacognitive cycle of pre-listening preparation, cyclical practice with comprehension monitoring strategies, and post-listening reflection, the author aimed at scaffolding lower-proficiency learners in developing awareness and using strategies to self-regulate and improve their listening ability.

Barbosa's (2012) study explored the application of the Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (MMSL) to enhance the selective listening comprehension skills of A2-level English learners through online-based activities. The findings suggested that the MMSL helped learners improve their listening comprehension by applying direct attention strategies and following a disciplined listening process. Learners experienced emotional responses, but as they identified and applied effective strategies, they became more comfortable and improved their concentration.

De La Roche (2016) researched the effects of metacognitive strategy instruction on the development of listening comprehension skills in A1-level English students at a private university in Colombia. The didactic

intervention explicitly taught planning, monitoring, and evaluation strategies integrated with regular English lessons. Post-intervention evaluation revealed that the metacognitive strategy instruction had a positive impact on students' listening comprehension performance, motivation, commitment, and confidence.

These studies highlight the potential benefits of metacognitive strategy instruction and online activities for developing listening skills, particularly for lower-level language learners like those in UNAD's online English A1 courses. The findings align with the importance of metacognition in language learning and self-regulation.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional, exploratory, and descriptive design to investigate the learning strategies used by UNAD's English A1 students in online listening comprehension exercises. This methodological approach is consistent with research aimed at describing phenomena and strategies in specific educational contexts (Dörnyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2015).

The research was guided by the question: What learning strategies do UNAD's English A1 students use in online listening comprehension exercises? And the sample for this research were 35 A1-level English students aged between 26 to 33 years, enrolled across different UNAD programs and regions of Colombia. They were selected based on their frequent activity in the English course hosted on the Moodle platform.

Data was collected via a structured virtual survey titled "*Encuesta sobre uso de estrategias para la habilidad de escucha en inglés*". The survey contained closed and open-ended questions designed to elicit quantitative and qualitative data on students' perceptions and practices related to listening strategies in their English course. It was administered electronically, and responses were recorded and tabulated using a spreadsheet tool for organization and analysis. This allowed an exploration of the strategies used by students as well as factors influencing their strategy use during online listening activities.

The methodological approach aligns with the objective of describing students' learning strategy use in a specific educational context without variable manipulation. The cross-sectional design enables a comprehensive view at one point in time.

Findings and Discussions

While the results and discussion sections are pending based on data analysis, some potential findings can be expected. It is expected that the three broad categories of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies will emerge, aligning with established theoretical frameworks. Specific strategies like prediction, planning, monitoring, collaboration, and effective techniques may be identified.

Although students may lack formal knowledge of the theoretical foundations of these strategies, a considerable number are expected to report employing them and provide detailed descriptions. The adoption of metacognitive strategies is likely to be influenced by variables such as students' proficiency levels, prior listening experience, and task characteristics. These factors could play a determining role in learners' strategic approach to online listening. For instance, beginners may rely heavily on cognitive strategies to address linguistic complexities, while more advanced students may employ metacognitive strategies for self-regulation.

In addressing the research question regarding the strategies used by UNAD English students to enhance their listening skills, it is expected that while a significant number of students may describe their strategy use effectively, there may be a prevalent

lack of awareness regarding metacognitive strategies. Nonetheless, students are likely to report employing strategies such as replaying audio for better comprehension, taking notes on understood content and phonetically spelling unfamiliar words, then associating and finding the correct word through audio repetition, listening for keywords, repeated and paced listening to identify familiar words or phrases to comprehend the topic, and word translation while listening. These anticipated findings may serve as evidence suggesting that a significant number of students employ some of the metacognitive strategies described by Vandergrift et al. (2006) in the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ).

Another crucial point expected to arise from the surveys is that students will recognize the necessity for the English program to incorporate strategy instruction to more effectively develop listening exercises, enhance listening skills, and improve other language skills. While students are likely to acknowledge that current course materials and resources aid them in their learning journey, there may be an anticipated need for a curriculum that instructs students in the use of strategies to guide them through the listening process, motivate them, and empower them with control over their online English learning journey.

Conclusion

The present study aims to investigate the learning strategies used by A1 English students at UNAD during online listening comprehension activities. Through a quantitative, non-experimental design utilizing surveys, the research explores strategy use and influencing factors within this particular educational context.

While the results and discussion sections are pending based on data analysis, some potential findings can be anticipated. It is expected that the three broad categories of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies will appear, aligning with established frameworks. Specific strategies like prediction, planning, monitoring, collaboration, and effective techniques may be identified.

Remarkably, the adoption of these strategies is likely influenced by variables such as students' proficiency levels, prior listening experience, and task characteristics. These factors could play a determining role in learners' strategic approach to online listening. For instance, beginners may rely strongly on cognitive strategies to face linguistic complexities, while more advanced students use metacognitive strategies for self-regulation.

The study's insights have significant implications for pedagogical practices in virtual language learning environments, particularly for listening instruction. By understanding students' strategy inventories and the elements that shape strategy choice, educators can design personalized activities, materials, and mediations. Training on specific strategies could empower learners to manage effective techniques, promoting self-regulated, autonomous listening development.

The outcomes could also have an impact on teacher training programs, curriculum development, and material development in the UNAD English program and other distance learning settings. Learning experiences and results could be maximized by adapting methodologies and resources to the strategy profiles of individual students.

In general, this research contributes to the growing group of information on online language learning by highlighting the strategic processes involved in virtual listening comprehension. Its implications extend beyond the immediate context, as knowledge about learner strategies can guide the development of best practices for technology-mediated language instruction in a variety of educational contexts.

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Canva application: an ally in the teaching practice and an innovative tool in the learning process*

Canva aplicación: un aliado en la práctica docente, y una herramienta innovativa en el proceso de aprendizaje

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Abstract

This paper aims to report a qualitative research study within the English language teaching field at a technical and technological institution in Colombia. The main purpose is to identify those perceptions that students have in terms of practicing writing skills with the application Canva to create infographics during face-to-face and online sessions. The possible results are going to be collected through an online survey from a group of apprentices, where the conceptions they have of this technological resource are exposed and analyzed. Anticipated results, discussions, and conclusions are going to be shown as a drawing of the possible findings having in mind the similarities found in the literature review of this study.

Keywords: Canva; writing; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); learning environments; perceptions.

Resumen

Este documento pretende reportar una investigación cualitativa en el campo de la enseñanza del inglés en una institución colombiana que se enfoca en los programas técnicos y tecnológicos. El propósito principal es el de identificar aquellas percepciones que los estudiantes tienen relacionados a la práctica de la habilidad de escritura con la aplicación Canva para crear infografías durante las sesiones presenciales y en línea.

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Los posibles resultados serán recogidos a través de una encuesta en línea de un grupo de aprendices, donde las creencias que ellos tienen de este recurso tecnológico serán presentadas y analizadas. Una anticipación de los resultados, discusiones y conclusiones serán presentados como un bosquejo de los posibles hallazgos teniendo en cuenta las similitudes encontradas en el resumen de la literatura empleada en este estudio.

Palabras clave: Canva; escritura; tecnologías de la información y las comunicaciones; ambientes de aprendizaje; percepciones.

Introduction

Research gives the opportunity to inquire into those gaps that catch our attention or that are considered important to analyze to find solutions that benefit a community or population, that is the reason that after having in mind several research topics; there was one that I wanted to focus: technology but based on what occurred during the COVID-19, and it is here that I proposed to work on learning English pointing the writing skill but with a spotlight that marked the difference, this one to direct the attention into writing activities with a specific ICT tool that is called Canva, and its use during face-to-face and online classes, the main objective is to compare and distinguish the differences and effectiveness of this application in both learning environments, this related to students' perceptions at the moment of using this technological source.

The question to be solved in the development of this study is what are students' perceptions regarding the use of the Canva application when creating infographics during the development of writing skills in face-to-face and online sessions? followed by the main research objective of how to recognize students' conceptions concerning the use of CANVA as a writing strategy during face-to-face and online sessions.

During the literature review several theories are found, such as that today it is more common to get institutions where both learning modes are established, others where just face-to-face or online classes are accepted and preferred not only by students but also by teachers, which some of them claim the lack of knowledge using technological tools, or just state that there is nothing better than having classes in a classroom.

Literature Review

The goal of reviewing the following studies relies on determining the probable findings that will be found along the research, and also recognizing the different perceptions that students will have towards the topic of learning EFL writing skills in two teaching modes, the face-to-face and online classes.

Theoretical concepts are required to create comparisons or establish diffe-

rences among the papers. With these studies, I desire to collect the multiple opinions that authors have pointed out related to basic concepts that will be manipulated alongside the implementation; assumptions such as ICT tools, students' attitudes, preferences about face-to-face and online sessions, or higher education teaching modes.

The Role of the Canva App in Enhancing Writing Skills in English Language Teaching

Today both language teaching modalities, face-to-face and online modes of delivering instructions are present, especially in the distance education department. Here, Ananga and Kofi (2017) want to present an overview of the two modes to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses and how the two can complement each other for effective delivery of instruction to cater to a large number of students. In their review there is mentioned that blended or hybrid modes of teaching and learning should be adopted in higher education, where institutions are faced with many challenges such as inadequate facilities, the choice of mode and use of ICT in distance learning, teaching, and learning strategies and more important, how face to face and online learning modes of instruction are compared.

A correlation between their study and the one I want to pursue gives attention to higher education because this one was conducted in a university and the one, I intend to work with is in the national institution that trains people for working in special technical and technological fields.

Following the review of the literature, Ramírez-Mera et al. (2022) want to identify how educational modality contributes to the development of a Personal Learning Environment (PLE) in higher education. For this, two case studies were carried out in online and face-to-face contexts, based on quantitative methods giving emphasis and analysis on five categories: self-perception, management of information, management of the learning process, communication, and learning experience. The findings

were about differences related to social interaction and learning aims.

Young and Bruce's (2020) study is directed at perceptions and satisfaction regarding several modes of course delivery, among higher education undergraduate students, graduate students, and teachers. The results collected through an online survey say that face-to-face and online courses were the preferred delivery modes, and between these two face-to-face had the most satisfaction. Taking into account the necessity of using online resources during COVID-19 and its impact, Zoom, and hybrid courses are rated as the main tools for distance enrollment.

Consolidating the previous literature review about ICT tools and preferences with both teaching and learning modalities, it is essential to bring into consideration how the acquisition of writing skills works in both environments the face-to-face and online courses, Kulzhova and Rodrigo (2020) affirm that there are several aspects to analyze regarding both methodologies such as that there is not a clear difference that demonstrates both learning modes are not entirely equal, also that the face-to-face courses tend to be more persistent, and the need of determining the online students' needs and responses in deeper depth to suggest new implementations to existing online platforms or propose better teaching solutions.

Now it is significant to mention how a specific application works in the learning of English as a Foreign Language, mainly in the development or improvement of writing skills, in this sense the following authors are brought into context because of their findings about the relation of writing and the CANVA app. Larasati et al. (2022) show the findings of their project, and some of these results recall the importance of why this particular application is analyzed in this research, in one of the instruments they applied they mentioned that 68% of the students agree that writing with Canva as media helps them to remember information better than traditional methods, and based on this the writers assumed that mostly student think that writing on Canva is enjoyable and fun; there is nothing more enriching for a teacher that a learner can learn new concepts while they are having a good experience through meaningful resources.

For some this application may be new or they do not have knowledge of its functions and purposes in use, therefore I want to remark on what this source is, and according to Candra et al. (2022) Canva is a visual design tool that makes it easy to create graphics. Canva is an all-in-one design app that allows for creating and modifying visually appealing visuals. This app is ideal for improving writing skills. Canva is used as a hitch instrument for students, they find it useful, innovative, and easy to work, which lets them explore

their creativity and at the same to put into practice some writing skills, through the

use of entertainment tasks and options that the application offers.

Methodology

The methodological design is intended to mention, explain, and describe the type of research this study will be using, the technique that will be taken into consideration to carry out the research project, the sample instrument, and the population to whom this procedure will be applied.

This research aims to explore students' perceptions of using the application Canva to create infographics while practicing writing skills in both face-to-face and online sessions. Qualitative techniques will be employed in this study to enhance understanding and description, as well as to generate insights and uncover phenomena related to the research topic. Walliman (2011) points out that qualitative data cannot be accurately measured and counted, and are generally expressed in words rather than numbers, that is why the instrument that is going to be analyzed is an online survey (questionnaire) about the perceptions learners have when using

this application in their writing activities, The population that will be considered are two English courses that worked with the application that is the object of this study, these people will be interviewed to gather their perceptions of the moment of using Canva software for their infographic activities. Factors such as expense, time, and accessibility frequently prevent researchers from gaining information from the whole population (Cohen et al., 2007). It is going to be sent to the participants and the most suitable online platform to develop it is through Google form.

Once the applied instrument is collected and organized, an analysis will be held to recognize the different perceptions and beliefs learners have about the components the research is focused on, such as the use of ICT tools, the writing skill, the application Canva and the creation of content, and the learning modes students prefer when practicing a foreign language.

Instrument to collect data

Online Survey

Internet-based surveys have moved from being in the form of emails to emails- plus

attachments of the questionnaire itself, to emails directing potential respondents to a website, or simply to websites (Cohen et al., 2007). The factor why this technique is

adopted is because it is easy to apply, and taking into account that the access to the population is better through online resources; therefore, it is simpler to apply with the learners. Also, when an online survey is implemented, it gives more confidence to the participants because they do not feel the pressure of answering the questions in a limited time or the presence of the researcher or teacher. They can express themselves freely and can think and create answers from their point of view, being honest and concise.

When a survey is conducted, several purposes must be noticed, such as evaluating a person's opinion or gathering specific data with a focal point. According to Tuckman (1972), by providing access to what is 'inside a person's head, it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

To start a survey, it is necessary to know or have in mind what the purpose of the research is, the different theoretical basis that has been found alongside the study, the objectives to develop, and how practical it can be; with these steps, a clear and specific interview is designed to cover every aspect needed in the research, for instance, with this study some concepts that are expected to treat are the ones about how they perceive their learning process with the use of a tool they do not use as often as they should, the

conceptions they have when using an ICT tool, or in general the opinions and beliefs they have about research topic but in terms of their learning process.

The design of the survey is based on some sections that cover the main topics of the research and that are pointed to work with the Likert scale and some open-ended questions, where they can express their perceptions, opinions, or recommendations about every component that will be asked; a number of eleven concrete questions (Likert scale) and four open questions are found in the questionnaire. Hence the survey respondent will need little time; some of the considerations to follow at the moment of creating the online survey is that it could be answered quickly, learners do not have to think what to write since the majority of them is just to choose one of the proposed options, and the open questions are few.

From the whole methodological process at this point, an expert judgment protocol has been realized. The first step to getting the acceptance of the instrument was the creation of a document that contains a participation consent form, and the instructions to take into account at the moment of evaluating the questionnaire, after several corrections it was established a final expert judgment protocol. After this, a research expert was contacted to check and verify that the instrument met the required conditions to advance in the piloting trial.

The research expert remarked on two aspects that caught her attention and that were essential to modify in the questionnaire, they are related to the category that belongs to learning modes; she suggested the necessity not only to provide the following choices: “presencial, virtual, a distancia”, she mentioned the importance of giving a hybrid option for letting participants the possibility of picking the categories that they consider are relevant in terms of their learning modes; the second aspect she noticed it was that the personal information question about name was repeated, both comments were taken and the instrument was improved with these recommendations.

Possible Findings

The most recurrent finding I could track is a positive perception of the use of the application, and it is because, during the learning practices, I have noticed learners enjoy creating infographics on this platform, which is why it is a different learning strategy from the ones they use constantly while working on their tasks, therefore I can anticipate by saying they will mention positive comments about it, and also due to this attitude they will ensure to continue using the application for their following activities, since SENA vision is to prepare people for the working field, infographics are necessary to create resources for their companies or workplace.

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