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MUSIC VIDEOS AS DIDACTIC TOOL TO DEVELOP THE LISTENING SKILL WITH SIXTH GRADERS AT “INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA DISTRITAL VILLA ELISA” IN BOGOTÁ



» Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación surge de la necesidad de mejorar las habilidades comunicativas en inglés en los estudiantes de la institución Educativa Distrital Villa Elisa. Las cuatro habilidades a tener en cuenta son: escribir, leer, escuchar y hablar; pero, hoy en día es muy importante saber cómo se expresan y tratar de entenderlos. Los estudiantes se sintieron muy bien cuando hicieron la actividad con videos musicales, en el inicio estaban incómodos pero después disfrutaron de la actividad. Dijeron que la actividad era muy útil, porque les ha permitido mejorar sus cuatro habilidades, puesto que los utilizaron para aprender la gramática inglesa. Por un lado, o que el proyecto buscaba motivar y promover estudiantes para expresar todo el conocimiento del inglés que habían acumulado a través de la escuela y por otro lado para construir y mejorar las relaciones interpersonales entre sí a través de trabajos individuales. Este proyecto fue desarrollado a través de un conjunto de diferentes talleres que ayudó a mejorar sus cuatro habilidades. (Hablando, escuchando, escribiendo y leyendo) y de esta manera ellos podrían sentirse mucho más motivados y seguros de sí mismos cuando estuvieron hablando y interactuando en inglés en sus aulas.

Palabras clave: cuatro habilidades, trabajo individual, motivación, talleres de aprendizaje.

» Abstract

This research project arises from the necessity to improve communicative skills in English among the students at the Institución Educativa Distrital Villa Elisa. The four skills to keep in mind and they are: Writing, Reading, Listening and Speaking; but, nowadays it is very important to know how to express and understand them. Students felt very good when they did the activity with musical videos, at the beginning they were uncomfortable but afterwards they enjoyed the activity. They said that the activity was very useful, because they improved their four skills, since they used to learn just English grammar.

On one hand, what at project looked was to motivate and to promote students to express all the English knowledge; they had accumulated through school, and on the other hand to build and to improve the interpersonal relationships among themselves through individual work. This project was developed through a set of different workshops which helped improving their four skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading) and this way they could feel much more motivated and self-confident when they were speaking and interacting in English in their classrooms.

Keywords: four skills, individual work, motivation, workshops, learning.

Introduction

In this brief introduction, I shall tell about the aim of my project work. Although we are in the 21st century, English is being taught as in the past. Teachers are teaching in a traditional form using the board while students are interested in technology advances such as: audiovisual aids, videos, TV, computers, internet, etc. The teaching of foreign language in high school involves creativity of teachers, and a practical methodology which must be appropriate to the child's age. Thus, it is the teacher's responsibility to create and develop different strategies to obtain the best results in the hard but interesting work of teaching to young learners.

This research project was developed in sixth grade at the Institución Educativa Villa Elisa in Bogotá. This course was selected taking into account the observation and teaching practice that allowed me to discover the lack of motivation in teenagers, and identified some needs of this population: a lack of interest towards English class, especially in the listening and speaking skills. There are a number of new ideas which can stimulate the classes and can prepare children to study English in high school in a funny and easier way. Also, I will attempt to present a different way to teach English as a second language with the help of musical videos. Music videos are an excellent way to teach English for this special reason:

Musical videos have a wonderful combination of sounds and seductive images, so it demands the children's attention. Also through musical videos children learn to incorporate paralinguistic information, such as facial expressions, gestures, social setting and cultural behavior.

One the main objectives of this work is to make people aware that videos can help them to improve their English level and provide new opportunities and experiences to learn a foreign language in active form. Also the present

research project consists of the following parts: The first session is about research problem, research questions, justification and objectives. The second section is about theoretical framework. It involves the following topics: listening and speaking skill, motivation, attitudes, musical videos, literature review, music, lyrics, formal operations stage, paralinguistic and linguistic benefits. In the third one, the methodological design is an action research from a qualitative approach, because it depends on observations, derived from a description and interpretation developed during the classes. In the fourth one, the analysis of the data is presented with the results obtained during the process of musical videos application among sixth graders.

Audiovisual material is becoming popular in many secondary schools and universities in Colombia. This material not only provides comprehensible input to the learners, but also it gives them the opportunity to introduce native English speech into the classroom, hence the need to help the language teacher to select, grade, and use video materials that contribute to a nice attitude in the high school students. English is and will be an important tool for the performance of people in their future lives; it will be used to read the cover of a book, a medicine label, or the user's guide of an electrical appliance. Adolescents through music videos will practice vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, and other concepts used in daily life with vocabulary learned during the activities. As teachers, we must think about how we can facilitate the learning of English in our students, and see how they change when they are listening and learning new vocabulary in English. I think that musical videos are very useful to learning English among the sixth graders.

Theoretical Framework

The lyrics of many of the songs may contain violent, sexually suggestive or disturbing elements (drugs, suicide, death, Satanism). In the United States researchers examined the ability of adolescents to repeat song lyrics, concluding that only 30% of adolescents read the lyrics of their favorite song or 40% if they were fans of heavy music. Its comprehension varies depending on age. If that happens in America, with songs in English, this means that in Latin America the problem is much greater, because adolescents are not fluent in English. You must know that young people often overlook the sexual themes of the lyrics. Adults, on the contrary, capture issues such as sex, drugs, violence and Satanism. Teenagers perform their favorite songs mostly in terms of love, friendship, growth, worries of life, fun, cars, religion and other issues related to their lives. For this reason I related these topics with my research songs, since these speak about different topics such as love, experiences, happiness, etc.

Some teens who prefer songs with themes such as homicide, suicide, and Satanism (usually heavy-metal music) spend more time listening to this music and are more likely to listen to the lyrics, but are less likely to think that music might have negatively influenced their behavior compared with students who prefer other music. Music videos have become a pervasive issue, which affects consumer culture and has changed the habits of teens who are the main audience, regarding what they are watching and listening to. They are used by TV producers to gain audiences and record producers to sell music.

There are two types of music videos. In a "video of action" the group sings the song in a concert or a studio. The "video concept"

develops a parallel story to the song you can add or something to the letter. Despite the fact that "video performances" can occasionally be shocking there is not any proof that such videos have shown a negative impact. Rather, it is the "concept videos" that have been criticized for promoting violence and sexual promiscuity. Music video formats are popular among children and adolescents. When music lyrics are illustrated in music videos, their potential impact is magnified. Teenagers who may not "hear" or understand, especially, rock lyrics cannot avoid the often disturbing images that characterize a growing number of videos. In addition, music videos are self-reinforcing: if viewers hear a song after having seen the video version, they immediately "flash back" to the visual imagery in the video. Music videos may represent a relatively new art form, but it is one that often contains an excess of sexism, violence, substance abuse, suicides, and inappropriate sexual behavior. As with music lyrics, teenagers' ability to comprehend and interpret music videos may vary widely and may represent an important variable in their potential impact. Music is frequently used by teachers to help second language learners acquire a second language. This is not surprising since the literature abounds with positive statements regarding the efficacy of music as a vehicle for first and second language acquisition. It has been reported to help second language learners acquire vocabulary and grammar, improve spelling and develop the linguistic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening (Jalongo and Bromley, 1984, McCartney, 1985; Martin, 1983, Mitchell, 1983, Jolly, 1975).

Videos are very important in the learning and teaching process because the changes in education demand that instinctive and implicit modes of teaching become more planned and explicit. Activities can be much the same as before, but there is the need to plan opportunities to assess and to focus on specific modes of language at various times and to plan for progression.

According to Allan, video materials can aid the teacher in four ways (1985; 19):

- Presenting language - Presenting country and its culture - Telling stories
- Presenting topics

In the case of grammatical competence, the basic aspect of every language is vocabulary and the easiest way to teach it is to present a set of words and tell the students to remember them. It is easy and fast, so it would not take long. But there are methods that can be more interesting and more effective and it is good to use them even if they take longer. Such vocabulary presenting method can involve video material. It can be connected to some other activity where the students can be asked to write down the words they do not know while watching some clip, similar to highlighting words while reading or it can be aimed specifically at some vocabulary aspect. For example, the students can be told that they are going to watch a piece of news on some topic; fashion, an accident, a sporting event or weather forecast and to think of some words that can appear in the clip and then compare them with others. When the clip is played they can see whether they were correct or not, they will see some new words and most importantly they will see the situation and the use of the words in context.

The benefit of using video here is in the variety of voices. In the clip there usually are a number of actors, all with different voices, speaking with different dialects, or using different intonation, which is always good for the learners to distinguish such phenomena and be able to understand it in order to master the language properly. The things that video can add to these "standard" processes are some close-ups on a mouth or some three-dimensional models of the process to explain the mechanics of pronouncing particular sounds to students.

According to Penny Ur (1993:4), listening is not a way street. It is not merely the process

of a unidirectional receiving of stimuli symbols. One facet of listening comprehension is the psychomotor process of receiving sound waves through the ear and transmitting nerve impulses to the brain. But that is just the beginning of what is clearly an interactive process as the brain acts on the impulses bringing to bear a number of different cognitive and affective mechanisms.

Mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success can be seen in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language. In relation to speak in an oral intervention, learners need the ability to articulate the sounds comprehensibly, mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns, and an acceptable degree of fluency, transactional and interpersonal skills, skills in the management of interaction, skill in negotiation meaning, conversational listening skill, using appropriate conversational fillers, etc. (Montes et al. Cited on July 2008 from www.monografias.com).

The word "Motivation" is formed by two words: (motivate and action) a simple definition is: to motivate to perform. It is an action with the purpose to satisfy necessities. At any moment, when someone is trying to do something, there are some factors which impel him/her to do it better or not, there are some feelings, hunches or thoughts that enable someone to make it right, basically those factors are called motivators; ask any person who is successful in whatever he or she is doing what motivates him/her, and very likely the answer will be "goals". Goal setting is extremely important to motivation and success. So what motivates you? Why are you studying? If you are in college because that is what your parents want, you may find it difficult to motivate yourself. Sure, it is possible to succeed with someone else providing the motivation for you. ("If you graduate from college, I will give you a car!" or worse "If you do not graduate from college, you will not get a car.") Both categories of motivation are important in this work; it has to be this way

because intrinsic motivation is related to the attitude, amusing activities and so on; and after this extrinsic motivation, talking, asking about the activities, to smile, to be social and sharing with each one of them, taking into account one by one, how that they are important for the teacher.

Learning takes place through the different senses. Teaching aids combining sounds and visual have been given the name of audiovisual aids because they are associated with hearing and sight. In language learning, learners receive and perceive information and knowledge, basically through the senses of sight and hearing. It is for this reason that in language teaching there has always been a tendency to use audio-visual aids. Audiovisual aids are defined as any device used to aid in the communication of an idea. Audio-Visual aids are methods of communicating with people. There are a variety of audio-visual aids which can be used- it is important to select aids which are appropriate to the method. The word "aids" is vital to a correct understanding of their use. Once they take the nature of "gimmicks" they have ceased to be "aids". They are not ends in themselves. Audio aids communicate ideas through the ears to the mind. They may take the form of music or tape recordings, television, records, films, etc.

Methodological Framework

Participants

The population of this research is composed of 36 students, a relatively small number; this research was applied to all students at the Villa Elisa School.

Instruments For Data Collection

For this project instruments of data collection were used: 3 surveys for the students. One realizes the preferences of students about learning English, the second refers to the musical preferences of students and the third relates the experiences of students after seeing the music videos in English.

The results of this research indicated the following information Students prefer to learn English through dynamic activities such as music videos. Most students really enjoyed the activities with music videos.

The music videos were a very good teaching tool since they teach English in a dynamic form and not with the traditional method. The students developed much better listening and speaking abilities, because they showed that they captured words and sounds faster when they listen to videos. It means that when videos were used without lyrics, they listen only, and they could fill in gaps easier, then if they watched them, with subtitles. It is a great goal because at the beginning the students did not have this ability, they listened to the song and did not capture the majority of words.

Finally, the students could develop their four skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing more comfortably, they heard and understood the lyrics of the song better, finally they were happy because they already felt comfortable to fill in the lyrics of the songs and understand the songs. After doing different activities with music videos such as puzzles, games with vocabulary, contests, etc. they were very happy with these English classes, were very playful, interested, and enjoyed activities with music videos. The activities developed with the music videos in the classroom were very important in the development and improvement of the four skills of learning English. The students practiced their skills, enjoyed the exercises and workshops done in class about the content of

the music videos and they saw that the English language is much more easy to learn in a fun way.

Conclusions

They worked with a lot of interest, they were organized and they were able to work in several times.

Self-confidence and a sense of security in themselves were perceived and they conquered some fears they had when they were talking in front of a group.

Their improvement had during the whole process showed themselves that if they want to do something they are absolutely capable of doing it, because they have all the “tools”, aptitude, adolescence, all their five senses.

An environment of respect was created in the class, at least one better than the one they had at the beginning of the project, because they did not even respect their classmates when they talked or expressed their ideas in front of the class, and at least they showed improvement.

They also got better in their mother tongue; because they understood some concepts in English that are basically the same in Spanish, so they showed some acknowledgement.

Students also proposed some aspects to keep in mind during the activities; they asked if the classes were with musical videos or dynamic activities, because they were boring with traditional method.

Students enjoyed the activities, they sang, played, shared with their classmates, and practiced the four skills.

Students were very happy because some students changed their way of thinking in English classes, because they thought that these classes

were boring, they always learned the verb to be, or copied on the board.

Finally, the activities done during the project were very useful, since students worked on them with pleasure, they were with afraid at the beginning, but after they began to watch the videos and do the activities, they felt very comfortable, they were able to understand what the videos said and at the same they practiced their four skills.

Implications for further pedagogical and research practice

Teaching to children gives the opportunity to reflect about the way foreign language teachers may build new insight to overcome weakness of teaching English to children and building up new knowledge and insights at these times. This research project wants to capture the readers' attention in order to help foreign teachers to improve their teaching methods in their daily life; thus, teachers could satisfy the children's expectations and they feel motivated to use the goal language from the early stages.

It could become a great opportunity to test if it is possible for future teachers to apply this kind of technique inside and outside the classroom and see how accurate it could be in the learning of a second language. Future teachers must be prepared to facilitate what children need, in this way, it is considered that this project will contribute to the use of the target language with sixth graders.

The development of workshops that this project suggests (and others that could appear in the process such as songs, rhymes, etc.) will allow children to be familiarized with English in an amusing way. Their practice will lead teachers to help sixth graders in the English

acquisition process and to motivate children to communicate themselves spontaneously.

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