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Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance oral communication skill of EFL learners with autism

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to describe the benefits of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance oral communication of EFL learners with autism. This is mixed (quantitative and qualitative) research about the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism. First, an interview will be conducted to obtain information about each student who was characterized with autism or those who were clinically diagnosed and to learn about the teaching methodology of the English teacher. In addition, a pre-test will be conducted to diagnose the level of vocabulary related to the parts of the house and then a post-test will be conducted to determine the level of vocabulary related to the parts of the house of English learners with autism after being exposed to the Waldorf methodology.

Furthermore, it would be of vital importance to carry out this research because it would provide information that would help educational centers to implement new methodological strategies that would facilitate the teaching and learning process with children characterized and clinically diagnosed with autism at the Mexico experimental institute. In addition to that, the Waldorf methodology is a good method to improve the teaching of the English language in educational centers in Nicaragua, where learners with autism will have a better education that will help them develop speaking skills in the classroom.

1. Research scope

1.2. Introduction

This research is preliminary because neither tools nor technique could be employed, nevertheless it contains the principles to be applied later or even finished for a master's degree. It has been observed a need for educational support surrounding autistic student's children among learning English since they lack sufficient vocabulary to develop their speaking skills. Indeed, taking into account that autism affects social communications and somehow language, for autistic students is more complicated learn English like the rest of the students.

So, another key consideration is the lack of appropriate teaching methodologies for these types of students while teaching English, which makes the job of both the teacher and students more difficult. This is why we decided to carry out this research to see whether Waldorf methodology is effective in teaching English to autistic children in order to provide a teaching tool for children who suffer from this syndrome.

On this research the Waldorf methodology will be examined in order to incorporate its activities into English classes because the method's focused is on helping each student develop their artistic talent through hands-on activities and creative pursuits. In addition, these activities will also be used to help students improve their speaking abilities describing what they made while teaching vocabulary. For this reason, the research will take place in Experimental Mexico school for students of 5th grade, in the ages from 9 to 10 for middle intermediate English level.

We choose this topic because there are not many studies interested in this educational situation, we know that it is important like teachers to be prepared to handle with different student's disabilities in learning, especially English that is a new language. As well as, many people overlook students with autism because it can be challenging to work with them because of their syndrome, but this is a problem that needs to be addressed because it is so prevalent in Nicaragua. In brief, Teachers should include these students by using the tools and methodologies that are most appropriate for each student This methodology is focused on teaching accompanied with art in order to develop learning in students with this autistic spectrum since it helps improve speaking ability.

1.2. Problem statement

The problem that arises in Nicaraguan elementary schools is that they do not have a special strategy to improve and teach the ability to speak in children with autism, which is a factor of difficulty in the development of each child with this condition. In addition, teachers have difficulty in the teaching process because they do not have a pedagogical strategy that involves children with autism in the English language learning environment. In our country, there are few English teachers prepared enough with information related to instructions about dealing with autistic children during class and this is an impediment when trying to fulfill the demand of including all the kids in education, and one of the reasons is that the education ministry has not designed a strategy or even shared information about dealing with autistic children. That is why we see English teachers improvising strategies during the class without having success with this student.

1.3. Background

Autism, also called autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is a complicated condition that includes problems with communication and behavior and people with autism have trouble with communication. They have trouble understanding what other people think and feel. This makes it hard for them to express themselves, either with words or through gestures, facial expressions, and touch (Pathank 2021). It means that children with autism have difficulties in the learning in some areas or subjects.

Montessori Method It is a specific child-centered method of education that involves child-led activities (referred to as “work”), classrooms with children of varying ages and teachers who encourage independence among their pupils. This method is focused in different activities when students develop skills doing activities in the classroom. Also with this method, the classroom continuity can also help students with special needs form close connections within their classroom, making for a safe and stable environment in which to learn, explained (Meinke 2019).

The Waldorf system was created by Rudolph Steiner who was a scientist and philosopher and is based on seven-year cycles of spiritual development. It delays any formal learning such as reading, writing, or math until the age of seven and instead focuses on the arts and

make-believe, said (Robin 2020) and also Waldorf method implements cooperative work and art in many areas, and games as well.

Waldorf believes children are naturally imaginative and teachings are based around storytelling and fantasy; there have been some prior research on autistic kids adopting the Waldorf approach. The following research: **Learning Environments for children with autism** “The aim of the Learning Environments research project is to develop an environment which provides optimal support towards meeting the needs of children with profound autistic spectrum disorder in order to assist them in engaging as effective learners” Brooks (2007) in this research author took some Waldorf activities when students had to work with their own. Also, author explained the design of the classroom it is important as Waldorf methodology suggest a design to support the needs of the autistic students.

Another important study is: **Imagination, Waldorf, and critical literacies: Possibilities for transformative education in mainstream schools.**

This study works with students' imaginations to help them learn at the same time, with a connection to information transfer and student skill improvement. It explores the relationships between imagination, literacies and transformative education. Based on the work of integrating Waldorf-inspired imaginative approaches in mainstream schools in Kenya, this study explores how imagination can enhance the teaching-learning process of the government curriculum. while infusing early childhood learning experiences with a transformative orientation. Also, author explained that teachers with Waldorf methodology accept students' freedom to make their work as their imagination comes. “The Waldorf curriculum emerges from a deep understanding of child development and seeks to support the particular developmental tasks (physical, emotional and intellectual) children face at any given stage. Children aged 3–5, for example, are developing a keen interest in the world, supported to a large extent by freedom of movement and must be supported to follow and deepen their curiosity through the encouragement of their sometimes endless asking of questions” Shank, M., (2016). It is important like teachers to understand the students' needs according their disabilities, working with their imagination it is essential to go deep in the students' mind.

The next research is in Spanish from Ecuador, **METODOLOGÍA WALDORF EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUA EXTRANJERA INGLÉS EN NIÑOS AUTISTAS DE 1ro a 7mo AÑO DE E.G.B., CENTRO EDUCATIVO “EI PUENTE DE STEINER”, MIRASIERRA, QUITO, PICHINCHA, PERIÓDO 2014 – 2015**. This study is looking the effectiveness of using Waldorf methodology to teach English to autistic children “the importance in the application of this methodology for teaching English to the autistic children is to look for an effective way to reach students. It was carried out socio-educational research by the evaluation of everyday practices, environmental care and all about man; quantitative, qualitative and field research was also done because the data used and that receptions respectively, the population constituted the entire educational community of El Centro Educativo El Puente de Steiner” Although, the research is focused in the translation of the grammar, the author wants to develop this skill using the methodology.

1.4. Rationale

English has become an important subject in Nicaragua. As a result, the main reason for this research is the absence of methodological strategies that facilitate the learning process in children with autism. On the other hand, the Waldorf methodology will help teachers to develop an effective strategy to improve the speech skills of children with autism, which will not only help the students or the educational system, but society as a whole by making future professionals more competent. Therefore, it is important to describe the benefits of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance EFL acquisition in autistic children.

This topic for this research was chosen because of an interest in solving an educational problem. Autism is a topic of little importance given to the educative system in Nicaragua. In fact, the education system does not provide teachers of twits curated instructions for them to intervene in the learning process of autistic children. In other words, the lack of preparation provided by the education system to the teachers makes them find it difficult to create a class plan in which children with autism are included together with the other kids.

It is therefore that in this research, related to ELT with autistic kids, we have taken the purpose to help the English teachers of primary schools understand the learning needs of these children by providing them with information about this topic and how to deal with autistic children in the class.

1.3. Objectives

General Objective

- To describe the benefits of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.

Specific Objectives

- To diagnose the English-speaking proficiency level of EFL learners with autism.
- To describe the behavior of learners characterized with autism to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.
- To identify the possible outcomes of using Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.
- To propose the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.

2. Theoretical framework

The following framework presents the possible outcomes of using the Waldorf methodology to improve the speaking skills of EFL learners with autism. This will help us diagnose and understand the proficiency level of students characterized or clinically diagnosed with autism in speaking skills. First, we talked about the Waldorf methodology in autistic learners. This means that the Waldorf methodology could be a pedagogical strategy to develop the student's artistic abilities.

Second, autistic learners are a great challenge for teachers in the teaching and learning process, and it can be difficult to find a method that facilitates the teaching process in students who were characterized or clinically diagnosed with autism, this is why the Waldorf methodology offers different pedagogical activities that will help students to better develop speaking skills in the classroom.

The importance of using the Waldorf method for teaching English in educational centers in Nicaragua to children with autism is briefly discussed. In addition, the Waldorf methodology explains the different ways to develop this skill in students with autism with different methodological strategies that facilitate the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Finally, we conclude, that the ability of oral communication in students with autism is possible, It is intended to address the topic of understanding and answering questions orally in English, as long as methodological strategies are developed where these students are included in the classroom, strategies that facilitate the teaching process for the teacher and the learning process of their students.

2.1 English Language Importance

English is appraised as one of the most spoken languages globally. Therefore, when it comes to jobs, English could be a valuable source, since it brings many job opportunities; For instance: English as a foreign language teacher, Interpreter, Call center agent, and so on.

Since the English language is a worldwide spoken language, it is important to learn how to communicate with other people over the world, and also to know about people's cultural backgrounds, so it is necessary to raise awareness in society about the impact of learning this language has in order to develop great communicative skills to reach those standards.

According to D. Flores & D. Gutierrez, (2018) citing Padilla, (2013) say, the teaching of English is a long and slow process. This means that learning a language takes time to perform it in an appropriate way since students have different learning styles and rhythms. As well, it is necessary that there must be institutions that take care of the training of professionals committed to educating students and respecting their different learning styles.

2.2.1 Waldorf methodology

Because of the educational integrity of the Waldorf methodology, it is a generally accepted pedagogical methodology that works in many countries. According to the child's age, the demanding academic work in Waldorf's curriculum also involves a deep immersion in a wide range of artistic fields. With a completely functional approach to education, the whole child is involved in learning in a variety of methods that are suitable for their age. Also, Waldorf education recognizes that much of what makes us human cannot be reduced to numerical facts while simultaneously embracing the qualitative components of our being.

Waldorf is quite peculiar since it proposes a much freer educational system. Some of its most distinctive aspects are: The development of children's artistic skills is promoted as a way to grow and acquire other knowledge since it is considered that it is the most natural expression of the child. The school environment is studied to be an extension of the home. There are warm colors, open spaces with lots of nature, and handmade toys.

Exams are not applied since this pedagogy does not follow the principles of standardization but rather tries to promote children's motivation and protect self-esteem. In this way, children tend to feel less stressed and enjoy learning more, setting their own pace of assimilation according to their level of development and interests. In primary schools there are no textbooks, rather it is the children themselves who make them from their daily work. In addition, Free, spontaneous, and natural teaching is encouraged, where an essential value is given to the relationship that the child establishes with nature and the environment in which he develops.

2.2.2 Waldorf methodology and Autism

For students with autism, it can be difficult to find a methodology that helps to teach, that is why the Waldorf methodology offers different activities for students with special needs.

This methodology proposes an environment according to the needs of the students that is why it is helpful for autistic students. Also, Waldorf gives activities to work individually according to students' likes and interests.

2.2.3 Waldorf and Special Needs Children

Many families come to Waldorf schools when they have found that more traditional education doesn't work well for their children. Special needs parents—whether children with developmental disabilities, children on the autism spectrum, or gifted children—often find the Waldorf model beneficial. The small class size, individualized attention, and emphasis on the “whole child” rather than academic standing are often just what's needed to nurture their child's challenges. (Wisner 2020). This could be implemented in public school to improve public education.

The Waldorf methodology can be used with students with ASD since it works with individual differences and difficulties presented by students. In addition, a Waldorf school can also include augmentative image communication systems and anticipation panels for these students, so this methodology would be ideal for a student with autism.

2.2.4 Waldorf methodology and English language

This methodology encourages the learning of new languages at an early age so that the student adjusts to the new language as they grow.

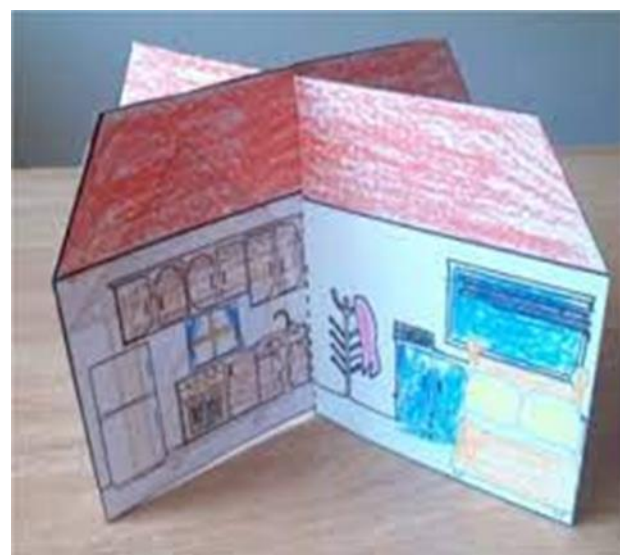
The teaching of foreign languages plays an essential part in the Waldorf curriculum. Rudolf Steiner intended children to be exposed to two contrasting foreign languages, three times a week, from the first through the twelfth grade. The learning of a foreign language greatly depends on imitative musical abilities. Although they are somewhat ebbing from the change of teeth onwards, the language teacher can still make use of them in a most creative way.

2.2.5 Waldorf Crafts

One element of the Waldorf methodology we choose to include in our research is called Waldorf crafts. Even though Waldorf craft is also known as Waldorf hands-on learning or hand work, it is still widely used to teach a wide range of subjects to students of all ages and skill levels. It is a well-known and extremely helpful component of the methodology for teaching English. “These projects provide opportunities to develop dexterity, hand-eye co-

ordination and creativity with a series of tried and tested, age-appropriate projects to gradually build up skills” (Tylor 2023). The teachers must take use of the children's curiosity and imagination and combine it with fun, engaging activities so that the children can develop their oral English communication skills while explaining their manual work. “Whereas little children playfully imitate the activities of adults, from about class three onwards the desire awakens to be using their own hands creatively. The curriculum meets this with the main-lessons on crafts and trades,” (Simpson 2020).

A few examples of waldorf crafts activities where vocabulary can be taught first, then practiced with activities that allow children to comprehend and answer questions and brief responses related to the subject being taught, in this case, home parts.



2.3 English and Autism

Many professors, especially those with none experience with autism, find teaching English to autistic children to be a challenging but rewarding undertaking. It is important to

emphasize that autistic children struggle with verbal communication and self-expression, which poses special difficulties for their language proficiency. It is crucial to devise teaching methods that cater to the demands and requirements of autistic children if you want to teach them English. It will be helpful to employ visual aids, regular explanations, real-world examples, and debates with other professionals. But both optimism and patience have equal significance. (Ford 2021)

2.3.1 Family Genes

The DNA from the family or ancestors show us that diseases can be inherited. Genes are the subject of genetics. Information is handed down through our DNA from one couple of decades to the next. One child, for instance, has blonde hair like their mother, but their sibling has dark hair like their father, thanks to genetics. Additionally, genes influence whether a baby will be a boy or a girl and why some diseases run in families. (Anzilotti, A.2021).

2.3.2 Types of autism

There are various levels of autism that are categorized according to their underlying pathology. There are levels higher than others with greater severity, and others with levels of impact that are lower. Jaimes 2022 “Experts used to categorize autism spectrum disorder (ASD) into five types. Now the medical community considers the condition a continuum of different signs and symptoms.”

Jaimes 2022, wrote the following types of autism:

1. Kanner’s syndrome
2. Asperger’s syndrome
3. Childhood disintegrative disorder
4. Rett syndrome
5. Pervasive developmental disorder

“According to the Organization for World Health, 1 in every 160 children has a disorder of the autistic spectrum, sometimes known as TEA. This estimate serves as a median figure because the observed prevalence varied widely among the various studies. According to

epidemiological studies conducted in the past 50 years, these disorders appear to be becoming more prevalent globally.” (Ministerio de Salud y Protección Social de Colombia, 2021).

2.5 Teaching Strategies

Professional Development Workshop, (PDW, 2019) states that “strategies are steps taken by teachers to promote the development of learning strategies that lead to effective learning by students”. Furthermore, didactic strategies can be defined as methods teachers employ to improve education’s quality and to enhance in teaching-learning process.

2.5.1 Teaching

The first term comes from the definition of teaching by Wadsworth B., (1978), it is about teaching as the creation of environments where students’ cognitive structures are born and changed. Furthermore, the teacher’s goal is to bring learning experiences where the student plays an active and self-discovery role Cited by J. Moreno et al, (2016).

According to Smith M. K. (2018) “Teaching is the process of attending to people’s needs, experiences and feelings, and intervening so that they learn particular things, and go beyond the given”. Moreover, teaching is the act of sharing what someone knows with another person who does not, it could be verbally, written, or behaved.

2.5.2 Evaluation

Education needs of the evaluation to see the strengths and weaknesses of the students. The practice of evaluating educators, schools, and learners for educational efficiency and the level of knowledge integration and comprehension in their lessons is known as educational evaluation. As a general phrase, it can be used to describe practically any type of evaluation that can be carried out at any stage of the educational process. In actuality, it frequently refers to the process of assessing the quality of the education offered by teachers and institutions or the process of assessing the continuous education of students via testing and other similar techniques. Depending on the context in which it is used, the definition of educational evaluation can vary and refer to many topics. (Wiesen 2022).

2.5.3 Skill

Concerning, Indeed Career Guide, (ICG, 2020) “Skill is a term that encompasses the knowledge, competencies, and abilities to perform operational tasks. Skills are developed through life and work experiences and they can also be learned through study. There are different types of skills and some may be easier to access for some people than others, based on things like dexterity, physical abilities, and intelligence”.

2. 6 Speaking

Speaking is defined as the second stage of students' ability to express themselves orally, coherently, fluently and appropriately in a given meaningful context to serve both transactional and interactional purposes using correct pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary and adopting the pragmatic and discourse rules of the spoken language. (Arab World English Journal, 2013, p. 3).

As for English Club (EC, 1997) “Speaking is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips”.

2.6.1 Speaking Skill

A study made by Banchon S. and Yagual D, (2017) state that speaking requires students not only to know how to produce particular points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary, but also that they understand at what time, where, why, and in what ways to produce language because communication is a vital part of learning a language and of course developing all the skills involved to achieve what the learner is supposed to produce with all the knowledge acquired through the whole process of learning.

Accuracy

It is important accuracy when we teach English, because teacher can see the student's mistakes, and likewise the teacher can improve his teaching strategies.

“Accuracy is often what we think about when we are learning a language. The term refers to how correct learners' use of the language system is, including their use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Accuracy, for example, demonstrates a learner's ability to use the correct verb forms (past tense, present tense, and so on), articles (a, an, the), and prepositions (in, on, from, at)” (Sanako 2022).

Assessing Speaking

Teacher must take into account the abilities and weaknesses of a student with autism. For that, you must also know how to assign and evaluate a speaking activity.

“The first thing to say is that the way in which you assess speaking should reflect the way of assessing students, as long as the criteria are clear and the activity fits these. you teach it. In other words you need to use the same kinds of activities and tasks during the assessment as you do during the lessons, otherwise you are not assessing what you have taught. Many activities we use in class are perfectly good for the purpose” (Tennant 2007).

2.6.2 Communication

Regarding Delbio A., et al (2012) Communication is one of the major techniques involved in acquiring the new language. Through this, the teacher can motivate and convey the prominence of the second language to the learner. Also, communication is understood when the message is delivered and received appropriately. Communication does not necessarily mean that everything is expressed by making any sounds or by speaking verbally, it could be transmitted by gestures, mimics, body language, and so on.

Interview

Concerning Adhabi, E, and Anozie, C. (2017) “Distinct from other methods, interviews have unique features that make them superior”. As regards Fox, N. et al (2009) “the interview is an important data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the subject. Interviews are commonly used in survey designs and exploratory and descriptive studies”.

Pre test

The pre-test is a tool for teachers that help them to evaluate a skill of the students. Likewise, to know about previous knowledge of students. Teachers and researchers use these instruments is to get information about any topic. “Pre-testing a questionnaire can help identify problems in the language, tone, structure, and design of a questionnaire.” Malik, T. (2017, February 1). In short, in this research pre-test helps to evaluate students’ level before apply Waldorf Methodology. The results of this test will be used to compare the progress of the students.

Post test

A post-test is another instrument that helps to get information about the students, it is very common to apply a test after teaching a methodology, because this test collects data information of knowledge. In this research post-test will guide us if the Waldorf methodology is effective to improve speaking in autistic students. “Posttest is where researchers want to monitor the effect of a new teaching method upon groups of children. Other areas include evaluating the effects of counseling, testing medical treatments, and measuring psychological constructs”. Shuttleworth, M (Nov 3, 2009).

❖ Teaching English to Students with Autism: Montessori-Oriented versus Audio-Lingual Method by Mahsa Rezvani, Eastern Mediterranean University of Cyprus, February 2018.

The presented source contains the information recovered by an experiment based on the application of two English teaching methods, the Montessori-oriented method and the Audio-lingual method, in which it tests the effectiveness of the two methods which is the best or the most effective for making the autistic children understand and learn English easier.

During the applying of the experiment, two teachers were involved as the method appliers, where it was assigned four children for the first teacher who applied the Montessori method and three children for the second one who applied the Audio-lingual method and is through interviews that the following information was recovered.

The results indicate that both methods could improve the student’s English language productive skills but is the Montessori oriented that further corroborated for the strengthening of the relationship between students and teacher, in which, students were provided of an environment and a variety of educational material which includes, flashcards, pictures, audios and videos in such away the students might work independently and interact with others students.

On the other hand, teacher B who add the Audio-lingual method on her lesson plan with the students which consists in a huge amount of input and repetition of simple

sentences even knowing that she was aware of the fact that the autistic students cannot learn some spelt of language so easily and the best way for them is through repetition taking the point of other researches that support this same strategy. However, the problem with this method was that the teacher must assured that all students know the correct word and write time were spent with a weaker student which sometimes made the other students feel bored and her class also lack pair and group work.

In conclusion, during the comparison process the result indicate that the Montessori-Oriented was the most effective method for autistic students' language learning in which the students were able to learn English and help each other through interaction with themselves together with their teachers.

Using effective strategies for elementary English language learners with autism spectrum disorder: A curriculum project.

The present source is a master project elaborated by Claire M. Szykwiak which is in look for the best effective for students with ASD (autism spectrum disorder) or those specific for ELLs (English language learners). Claire M. Szykowiak tells that according to Fernández y Díaz, few studies have presented educators with instructional strategies for the English language learners with Autism spectrum.

It is important to mention that this curriculum is not geared toward any particular school, grade or level and it is written with all English language proficiency (beginners, intermediate, advanced).

This master project consists in a very easy interpretable curriculum that contains lessons that teachers can use in order to provide English language learners with ASD more meaningful instructions allowing them to gain vocabulary and communication skills needed for success in the academic and social world of their lives. In such lessons we can find activities like Simon says, Personal hygiene, my morning routine, let's go to the doctor, what is wearing, and let's talk about feelings/emotions.

❖ **Autism Children and English Vocabulary Learning: A Qualitative Inquiry of the Challenges They Face in Their English Vocabulary Learning Journey.**

This study employed a qualitative methodology of research in which field notes and focus group discussions were used as instruments. The article focuses on teaching

English vocabulary through discussion topics with autistic children to help them develop their vocabulary. This is done alongside various activities in the focus group session. Observations and focus group discussions were conducted with 45 children with autism, 4 autism education teachers, 2 occupational therapists and a parent of children with mild autism children to investigate the challenges autism children face in their vocabulary learning. The findings have gathered that autistic children encounter a few challenges occasionally in their English vocabulary learning journey. The data were gathered and arranged thematically. Further recommendations and suggestions are discussed in this study

❖ **Teacher's difficulties in teaching speaking using Audiovisual media AID for Autistic students.**

This article consists in using audiovisual media-like strategies in teaching English foreign language and how can be helpful for teachers. Furthermore, the research question of this article is: what is the teacher's difficulties in teaching speaking the object is to find out the teacher's difficulties when they are teaching speaking.

The research methodology consists in three methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The writer gathered the information from observation to the respondent in teaching speaking. Also, the difficulties are internal and external.

To sum up, we think that this article is important for teachers because we can find our difficulties at the time of teaching. Moreover, the teachers have to consider different factors in the students, such as the methodology, the process, and how we can improve our methodology to help the students and is an analysis of our way of teaching to choose the best strategy.

❖ **Instructional teaching media to promote Autistic student's learning engagement by L.P Ayu Sari Puspita.**

This research is about the use of instructional media to help teachers to convey instructions as well as students in understanding English. Moreover, the research is descriptive qualitative in form of case study. Also, the teaching and learning process happened during observation.

Additionally, the research was done in two groups when the teacher used four different instructional media such as videos, pictures, matching exercises, and real objects. The teacher combined the media to clarify the topic or lesson because some students were not clear when the teacher showed a video consequently the teacher used some pictures and activities.

In our opinion, the media that the teacher used are very well because the teacher wants to explain and clarify the lesson. Nevertheless, the author wants to help the teacher to use different audio-visual media in a different situation. In brief, we agree with the strategy that the teacher used in the classroom because is effective for the students.

❖ **Metodología Waldorf en la enseñanza de lengua extranjera inglés en niños autistas de 1o a 7o del centro educativo “El Puente de Steiner”, Mirasierra, Quito, Pinchincha, Periodo 2014-2015 by PEÑA CHÁVEZ, Tania Marcela.**

The study of Peña Chávez is based on the analysis of the effectiveness of the Waldorf method as an alternative directed to autistic children.

The Waldorf methodology follows the same steps and principles for English teaching than any other subject, in other words, based on games and oral productions during the class while they listen more without grammar translation.

This methodology defines the Waldorf method as one of the most popular alternative systems that seek the development of each kind in a free and cooperative environment without exams and with very dedicated support on art and handicrafts.

In the case of the English language, how helpful would be this method? The answer is given by Rudolf Steiner on Peña Chavez's research. He says that when contents are taught in a more explicit way (like showing pictures or using realia for example) children tend to understand easier and better.

The Waldorf is a good purpose because when kids (autistics and non-autistics) are taught English language, they experiment a “language invasion” (in the case of non-native English kids speakers), despite they like being taught English, we consider that they shall not be evaluated until certain grade that it is supposed they have the right level to be evaluated, that is why we think that Waldorf method is a good educative

purpose because it does not expose children to exams and the main aim of this method is to develop listening and speaking skills (through audiovisual media) which is the skills we are most determined to reinforce.

- ❖ **Estrategias metodológicas aplicadas por las docentes para la atención de niños(as) con necesidades especiales asociadas a una discapacidad en III grado "A" en la escuela Oscar Arnulfo Romero de la ciudad de Estelí by Nora María Gómez Galeano. Estelí, November 15th 2012.**

This research is about Methodological Strategies that the teacher used in the classroom for special children for academic training; some teacher handles strategies but are not strategies of the educational program to meet inclusive. The author wants to know methodological strategies applied by teachers for the care of children with special educational needs. However, the research purpose is to train the teacher with specific strategies for special children and the use of different materials.

In addition, the material that they used are: workbooks, videos computers, flashcards, and audiovisual media like teaching materials. On the other hand, the school does not have necessary means of an inclusive education.

To sum up, we think that is important to have different strategies to teach English, especially when we talk about special children. Also, we like teachers have to find a way to create a dynamic class using different methods and teachers still need to apply a variety of strategies to address the educational diversity.

- ❖ **Strategies to teach English as a foreign language to Autistic children at a basic level at Saint Mary School by Cristel sterling Vargas Castillo and Delia Fernanda Mendioroz Sánchez. UCA, December 2016.**

The research was an observation at Saint Mary School and it is focused in the strategies that the teacher used in the classroom also the behavior of the students in the class.

Teacher applied a lot of strategies such as mimics and movements, a variety of stimuli in lesson and materials when was possible to assist the kids. The principal said that the teachers are not specially trained to deal with these kinds of children just received talks from the psychologist.

To sum up, the importance of teaching English at a basic level to Autistic children has gained strength since the increase of autistic people in Nicaragua. The need for these people to hear and take into account has pushed schools to adopt an inclusive education.

In brief, this part gathers information on the subject of our investigation from earlier studies as well as information on the Waldorf method and the conduct of autistic students. Several educational and social variables may be present in the disease of these students. Likewise, the collective research all look for a way to address distinct educational needs.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- Would it be effective to apply the Waldorf methodology in primary schools for children with autism?

3. Research methods

3.1 Research approach

This is a mixed study (qualitative and quantitative). As such a qualitative study allows the gathering of data through tools such as the interview and observation guides, among others. We'll use these tools to collect the information which will help us answer our research questions. Likewise, this study is quasi-experimental in nature, specifically a *pretest-posttest with a contrast group* in design as follows:

Quasi-experiment	
<i>Experimental Group</i>	<i>Contrast Group</i>
Pretest of Speaking	Pretest of Speaking
W	X
3 weeks	
Posttest	Posttest
Interview:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to the teacher 	X

As stated above, the aim of our research is to assess the effectiveness of using the Waldorf methodology with autistic children. Thus, by applying a 3-week intervention, we wanted to measure the effects of using such strategies on improving learners' speaking skills.

3.2 Type of the study

This is a descriptive and exploratory study because numerical data will be used to answer our research question. This research follows the qualitative and quantitative approach since according to its features, it gathers data through some instruments such as interviews, test, and post-test which will be used in this research to answer the research questions and get the needed data.

According to McLeod, S. (2019) "Qualitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data, such as language. Qualitative research can

be used to understand how an individual subjectively perceives and gives meaning to their social reality.”

3.3 Population and Sample

This research took place at Experimental Mexico school, and the population taken for this research was small. There were 38 students, 20 students were female and 18 of them were male. So, of the 38 students, only 5 of them will be sampled for this research, 4 students are characterized as having autism and 1 student is clinically diagnosed.

3.4 Operationalization of variables

Operationalization of variables				
Specific objectives	Variables	Sub-variables	Indicators	Instruments
□ To diagnose the English-speaking proficiency level of EFL learners with autism.	Speaking proficiency level	Pronunciation Vocabulary	Description of the speaking level	Knowledge pre-test
□ To describe the behavior of learners characterized with autism to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.	Student behavior Students characterized with Autism	Interaction Learning Symptoms	Description of the Autism level	Interview to the English Teacher
□ To identify the possible outcomes of using	Proposing Waldorf methodology	Speaking activities	Description of the benefits	Knowledge Post-test

Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism.				
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3.5 Data collection tools

For data collection instruments such as quasi-experimental (pretest and post-test) are planned to be used for students to know the English language level of each student with autism and interviewed teachers using a systematic set of questions that teachers asked to provide relevant information to the research, in order to deepen the English level of children with autism in the development of the ability to speak in the English language. With these instruments it is intended to address the subject of understanding and answering questions, to know the vocabulary of the students orally in English.

3.5.1 Interview

Interview to English doctor, The objective of the interview is to obtain medical information about the status of students with autism.

- Interview content

The questions were selected in order to obtain information about the students and to know if they are children clinically diagnosed with autism or if they were only characterized by the tutor or teacher. The eleven questions were divided into sessions: Autism Diagnosis, personal information, English level, English teaching strategies, weaknesses and strengths of autistic learners, medical diagnosis, autistic learner behavior, and Waldorf methodology.

- **Validation**

To validate this interview some experts were selected from the English department: Erasmo Torrez in methodology and didactics for higher education., Daysi Garcia in master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language, and Roberto Villarreal in applied linguistics and TESOL and Bachelor's in TEFL at UNAN Managua.

The experts used the following table as a rubric to validate the interview. In that table, there are four categories that are coherence, clarity, relevance, and sufficiency. Also, they had the option to validate each item from one to four in which number one represents the items does not meet the criterion, number two the item has a low level, number three the item has a moderate level, and number four the item has a high level. In addition to that, it can be seen on the table indicators from one to four for each qualification.

Waldorf crafts activities of this research

It will explain a bit how this methodology is intended to be applied in the future.

1. Teacher should teach the vocabulary (at least 5 new words) using eye-catching flashcards for the children



2. The teacher will repeat the vocabulary and practice pronunciation with the students.

3. The teacher will take a large image of a house, and stick it on the blackboard, on pieces of paper the teacher will write the parts of the house vocabulary. They will move some students to the front so that they can glue the papers on the image of the house. And students will repeat the parts of the house.



4. The teacher will bring a "pop up" house and play the following game. The objective of the game is to find out which room of the house is being described. To play, ask your little one to picture him or herself in a particular room in the house, then, ask him or her to describe that room saying: I see a chair, I see a table, I see a vase, I see a sofa... It's the living-room! As your little one is describing the room, you will have to guess which part of the house is it. In this activity students will be practiced speaking.



5. As homework, the teacher will assign the students to make a pop up house with different parts of the house, the size the students want, and the style they like.

All these activities are from Waldorf schools, where they work with extensive activities according to the age of the children and according to the subject taught. likewise the skills to be developed, not leaving behind the needs of the student.

WALDORF METHODOLOGY FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION

CATEGORY CATEGORY	QUALIFICATION	INDICATOR
<p>COHERENCE</p> <p>The item has a logical relationship with the dimension or indicator you are measuring.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion</p> <p>2. Low level</p> <p>3. Moderate level</p> <p>4. High level</p>	<p>1. The item has no logical relationship with the dimension</p> <p>2. The item has a tangential relationship with the dimension.</p> <p>3. The item has a moderate relationship to the dimension you are measuring.</p> <p>4. The item is completely related to the dimension you are measuring.</p>
<p>CLARITY</p> <p>Degree to which the item is written clearly and precisely, facilitating its understanding by the subjects surveyed.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion</p> <p>2. Low level</p> <p>3. Moderate level</p> <p>4. High level</p>	<p>1. The item is not clear</p> <p>2. The item requires quite a few modifications or a very large modification in the use of the words according to their meaning or by the ordering of them.</p> <p>3. A very specific modification of some of the terms of the item is required.</p>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The item is clear, has semantics and appropriate syntax.
<p>RELEVANCE</p> <p>Importance of the item with respect to the contribution it can provide for a better understanding of the characteristic or situation measured.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does not meet the criterion Low level Moderate level High level 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> It does not meet the criteria. The item can be removed without affecting the measurement of the dimension. The item has some relevance, but another item may be including what this one measures. The item is essential or important, that is, it must be included
<p>SUFFICIENCY</p> <p>The items that belong to the same dimension are enough to obtain the measurement of this.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does not meet the criterion Low level Moderate level High level 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Items are not enough to measure dimension Items measure some aspect of the dimension but do not correspond to the total dimension Some items must be increased in order to fully evaluate the dimension. Items are sufficient

WALDORF METHODOLOGY FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION

Dimension	Sources	Description	Items	Coherence (From 1 to 4)	Clarity (From 1 to 4)	Relevance (From 1 to 4)	Sufficiency (From 1 to 4)
Autism		Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave.	1. what is autism?				32
Medical diagnosis	(Cdc 2022)	Autism Diagnosis	2. How does a doctor diagnose a child with autism?				
General information	(Wicz 2016)	General information	3. What are the signs to suspect that a child may have autism?				
Behavioral characteristics	(Tracktest 2022)	Behavioral Characteristics	4. What behavioral characteristics does a child with autism exhibit?				
Degrees of autism	(Juneja 2015)	Autism level Autism spectrum disorder is diagnosed at a level of 1, 2, or 3, with each indicating a different degree of severity and needs for support	5. What are the degrees of autism that a child can have?				
Weaknesses and strengths of autistic learners in the learning process	(Wicz 2016)	Students' behavior Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner.	6. How can there be a parent-teacher interaction to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a child clinically diagnosed with autism? 7. How can a teacher prevent behavioral crises in a child diagnosed or				

			suspected of having autism?				
Teaching English strategies	(Anzilotti 2021) (Cdc 2022)	Teaching strategies are steps taken by teachers to promote the development of learning strategies	8. How many students clinically diagnosed with autism can a teacher have in the classroom? 9. What methodological measures should the teacher implement to provide quality education to clinically diagnosed children?				
Teaching English strategies	(PDW, 2019)	Teaching strategies are steps taken by teachers to promote the development of learning strategies	10. How can a teacher adapt the classroom for children clinically diagnosed with autism?				
Speaking skills	(Arab World English Journal, 2013, p. 3)	.Speaking is defined as the second stage of students' ability to express themselves orally, coherently and fluently.	11. which are the best ways to determine the level of language proficiency? 12. which speaking skills can this children develop.				
			Alternative commentary/forulation				

Doctor interview with Doctor Ixamara Marlieth García Bellorin

What is autism?

Dr: Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental condition that begins in childhood and lasts a lifetime. It affects how a person behaves, interacts with others, communicates and learns. This disorder includes what used to be known as Asperger's syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified.

What are the signs to suspect that a child may have autism?

Dr: It is called a "spectrum disorder" because different people with ASD may have a wide range of different symptoms. They may have trouble talking to you and may not look you in the eye when you talk to them. They may also have limited interests and repetitive behaviors. They may spend a lot of time ordering things or repeating a phrase over and over. They seem to be in "their own world."

What are the behavioral characteristics of a child with autism?

Dr:

Symptoms

- Lack of contact with the environment.
- Stereotyped body movements.
- Abnormalities in the emission, form and content of language.
- Irrational insistence on following routines.

Within children with autism, there is a wide spectrum of severity, with some symptoms being more severe and others milder.

How many students clinically diagnosed with autism can a teacher have in the classroom?

Dr: In the school environment the maximum number of children clinically diagnosed with autism that a teacher can have is 5, in addition, the teacher must know each one of his students because they usually have different behaviors and must know what type of

autism each child has, must implement methodological strategies in which he can include all of them and condition the school environment, the most convenient is that the child has the same teacher throughout the school cycle since it is very difficult for them to gain confidence in people, and change usually frustrates them.

3.5.2 Test validation

These tests were designed to know speaking vocabulary level of autistic students before and after apply Waldorf methodology.

To validate the speaking pre-test and post-test, some experts were selected from the English department who are: Erasmo Torrez M.A in methodology and didactics for higher education., Daysi Garcia in master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language, Roberto Villarreal M.A in applied linguistics and TESOL and Bachelor in TEFL at UNAN-Managua.

The experts examined the pre-test and post-test, after that, they check the rubric where we use to evaluate the students, and give their approval answering a question below.

English speaking Pre test

Objective: Identify the vocabulary level of students with autism through a speaking (elicitation) activity.

Procedure: The teacher will show different pictures about the parts of the house through flashcards, then ask the students to describe the picture using the following questions:

Instructions to test takers: Look at the picture and answer the questions.

1. Which parts of the house do you identify in the picture?
2. What colors do you see?
3. How many rooms are there?



Table of specifications for speaking pre-test

Content	Items of the speaking pre-test	Vocabulary 40%			Grammar 20%			Speaking vocabulary production 40%		
		Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parts of the house ➤ Colors ➤ Adjectives ➤ Numbers ➤ Mined 2022 	Evaluation									
	<i>1. Which parts of the house do you identify in the picture?</i>									
	<i>2. What colors do you see?</i>									
	<i>3. How many rooms are there?</i>									
Comments:										

Dear Expert,

After having read the specifications above, do you believe this test measure what it intends to measure? If yes, state so _____ If not, tell us how the test could be improved: _____

English Speaking post test

Objective: To test the English level of students with autism after applying the Waldorf methodology.

Procedure: Through a speaking activity the teacher will show the students different pictures about the parts of the house, then the students will orally answer the following questions:

Instructions to test takers: Look at the picture and answer the questions.

What are the parts of a house?

What colors do you see in the picture?

What furniture do you see?

What color is the table?

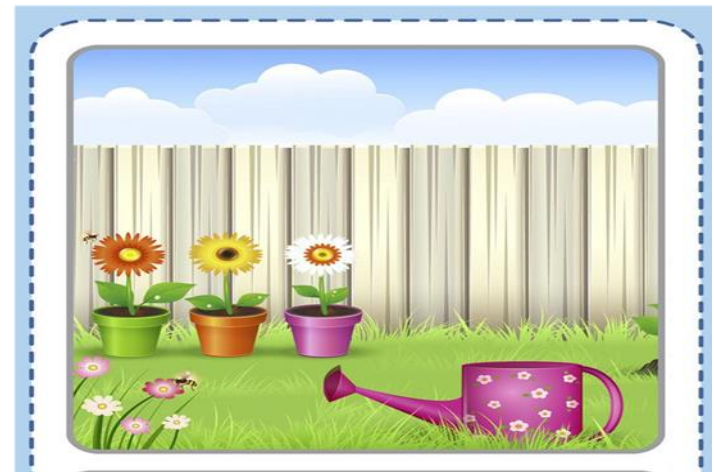
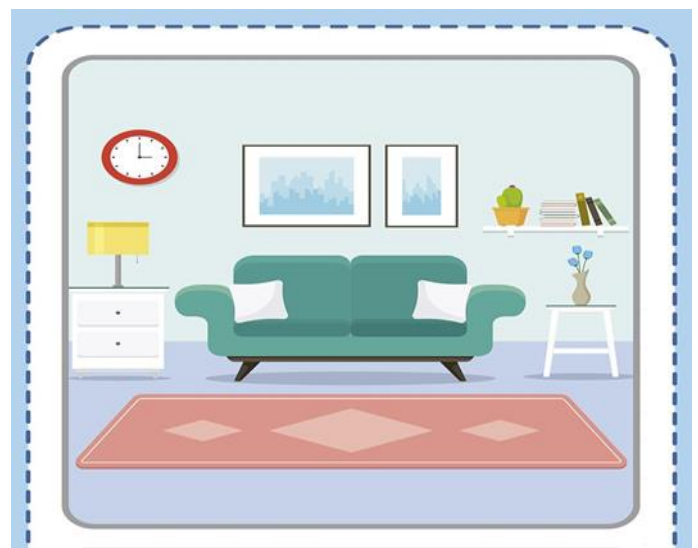


Table of specifications for speaking post-test

Content	Items of the speaking post-test	Vocabulary 40%			Grammar 20%			Speaking vocabulary production 40%		
		Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parts of the house ➤ Colors ➤ Numbers ➤ Mined 2022 	Evaluation									
	<i>What are the parts of the house?</i>									
	<i>What colors do you see in the picture?</i>									
	<i>What furniture do you see?</i>									
	<i>What color is the table?</i>									
Comments:										

Dear Expert,

After having read the specifications above, do you believe this test measures what it intends to measure? If yes, state so _____. If not, tell us how the test could be improved: I have the same observations as in the pre-test.

Waldorf activities From Alabama Waldorf schools (2022)

- Create your own puppet
- Creating a recipe
- Telling stories
- Fables
- Poems (recitations)
- Painting with watercolors
- Drawings
- Your own book
- Songs
- Albums

Content

Grammar

- Verb to be
- simple present
- present progressive
- articles
- prepositions
- adjectives

speaking activities

- spelling names
- introduce someone else
- ask for simple questions
- make request and commands
- respond simple questions
- give simple descriptions of objects, pictures and actions

Analysis and results

For the methodological design, we plan to carry out mixed (quantitative and qualitative) research which is planned to take a population of thirty-eight students of elementary school the ages of 9 to 10 years. of the 38 students, only 5 of them were given the test and post-test, 4 were characterized with autism and 1 was clinically diagnosed. Therefore, with the pretest we intend to diagnose the vocabulary level of each student with a speaking activity about the parts of the house and with the post-test, we intend to determine the vocabulary level of each student, with this we will check if the results obtained using the Waldorf methodology are efficient.

As it is a preliminary study, the possible results would be that each student with autism would develop their speaking skills by applying the Waldorf methodology through methodological strategies such as active learning, integration of art and nature, thus developing their cognitive, emotional and imaginative skills.

SOCIO-CONSTRUCTIVIST PARADIGM

The socio-constructivist paradigm owns the following features; it is naturalistic, phenomenological, hermeneutic, symbolic interaction, ethnographic, and Qualitative, and it presents Participatory action research.

Conforming to (Ntgerty, 2016) Constructivism implies that reality is constructed through human interaction. Knowledge is a human product and is socially and culturally constructed. Individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other and with the environment in which they live. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in the process of knowledge construction and accumulation.

Conclusion

To end up, it is necessary to take into account that most students do not have prior knowledge of the English language, which makes it difficult for them to develop their speaking skill, another key point to consider is that every student has different learning styles or learning rhythm's what means that not all of them are going to learn at the same time, it takes more time for ones than for others to acquire the language properly. Consequently, it has been taken into account the fact that the population of active students with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) is few, it is intended the elaboration of a lesson plan that gives space to any student to provide them flexibility strategically methodological such as way that the said plan coupled in the best way as possible for their special needs of attention respect to their learning development.

First, being this a research protocol, the expected results of applying the Waldorf methodology is that it will be effective in the teaching and learning process in the classroom with students with autism. therefore, by applying the data collection tools such as the doctor interview, we will obtain information that will help us to know each student with autism and the pre-test and post-test to obtain a diagnosis of the student's English level before and after applying the Waldorf methodology through speaking activities.

So, we consider that the articles shown in our analysis are at the top to take them into account for the creation of an inclusive plan that would benefit active English learners with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder), at the same time this plan would be a right example of an educative offer to the public education system that also would guarantee the right of the education to every kid.

In brief, by applying the Waldorf methodology to students with autism, it will help to have a previous diagnosis of the benefits of Waldorf teaching and learning strategies, each student with autism works on the project he/she wants and receives an education according to his/her interests, thus developing cognitive structures and improving his/her social development.

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Annexes

National Autonomous University of Nicaragua

UNAN-Managua

University Campus "Rubén Darío"



Topic of Research

Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with
autism

Validation of the instruments: pre-test

Thesis Adviser: Alber Sanchez Alvarado

Researchers: Sara Cruz & Anieth Garcia

Expert Judgment

The purpose of the pre-test is to gauge the vocabulary level of autistic students through a speaking activity in which they must describe pictures that the teacher shows in order to be evaluated.

Respected judge: You have been selected to evaluate the quality of the content and reliability of the Speaking Pretest and Posttest, both of which are part of the research project: **"Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism"**

The evaluation of these data collection tools is of great importance to ensure that they are valid and that the results obtained from them are used efficiently.

Thank you for your valuable collaboration.

Names and surnames of the judge: Roberto Carlos Villarreal

Academic training TESOL and Linguistics

Areas of professional expertise

TESOL and Linguistics

Years of teaching experience 10 Years

Current position: Full time professor/ Grade coordinator

Institution: UNAN- Managua

Main Research Objective: To describe the advantages of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skills of EFL learners with autism.

Objective of the expert judgment:

Validate the content of the pre-test

Objective of the pretest

- Diagnose the current level of vocabulary related to parts of the house of English learners with autism

Test specifications

Purpose of the pre-test and post-test

The aim of the pre-test and post-test is to diagnose the speaking level of autistic students and to identify difficulties in lack of vocabulary.

Description of the test takers

The test takers are children students with spectrum autism from 8 to 10 years old. They are students in fifth grade from the school “Experimental Mexico” students will be tested individually with a speaking pre-test at the beginning and after applying Waldorf methodology will be tested with a speaking post-test.

Test level

The difficulty level of the test is supposed to encompass level middle intermediate for children according to INATEC 2021. Also, the grammar and vocabulary is from MINED 2022.

Test construct

A test is an essential instrument for teachers and researchers that help us to get information about the behavior, knowledge, and situation of the people we want to know. In this case, pre-test and post-test will be applied to know the English level of the students before and after applying the Waldorf methodology to prove if the methodology was effective in autistic students.

As (Franzen 2011) explained” Test construction is the set of activities involved in developing and evaluating a test of some psychological function. The steps include specifying the construct of interest, deciding the test’s function (diagnosis, description of skill level, prediction of recovery), choosing a method (performance, behavioral observation, self-report), designing item content, evaluating the reliability and validity of the test, and modifying the test to maximize its utility”.

The test is designed for the test taker level which is focused on speaking, students will answer what the teacher asks about a picture shown, what is hopped is that the students answer a giving description of the picture, according to vocabulary, grammar structure, and speaking level that will be evaluated.

English speaking Pre test

Objective: Identify the vocabulary level of students with autism through a speaking (elicitation) activity.

Procedure: The teacher will show different pictures about the parts of the house through flashcards, then ask the students to describe the picture using the following questions

Instructions to test takers: Look at the picture and answer the questions.

4. Which parts of the house do you identify in the picture?
5. What colors do you see?
6. How many rooms are there?





Table of specifications for speaking pre-test

Content	Items of the speaking pre-test	Vocabulary 40%			Grammar 20%			Speaking vocabulary production 40%		
		Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parts of the house ➤ Colors ➤ Adjectives ➤ Numbers ➤ Mind 	Evaluation									
	4. <i>Which parts of the house do you identify in the picture?</i>									
	5. <i>What colors do you see?</i>									
	6. <i>How many rooms are there?</i>									
Comments:										

Dear Expert,

After having read the specifications above, do you believe this test measure what it intends to measure? If yes, state so _____. If not, tell us how the test could be improved: First, there's not clear statement of the speaking skills, vocabulary or grammatical features tested. Then, we need a clear definition of the rating levels in the table; finally, take a look at the level of difficulty of the questions used.

National Autonomous University of Nicaragua

UNAN-Managua

University Campus "Rubén Darío"



Topic of Research

Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism

Validation of the instruments: Post-test

Thesis Adviser: Alber Sanchez Alvarado

Researchers: Sara Cruz & Anieth Garcia

Expert Judgment

After implementing the Waldorf technique, the post-goal test's is to measure the English proficiency of autistic students. when Students describe pictures of different rooms in a house to gauge their progress in speaking English.

Respected judge: You have been selected to evaluate the quality of the content and reliability of the Speaking Pretest and Posttest, both of which are part of the research project: **"Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism"**

The evaluation of these data collection tools is of great importance to ensure that they are valid and that the results obtained from them are used efficiently.

Thank you for your valuable collaboration.

Names and surnames of the judge: Roberto Carlos Villarreal

Academic training: TESOL and Linguistics

Areas of professional expertise

TESOL and Linguistics

Years of teaching experience 10 years

Current position: Full time professor / Grade coordinator

Institution: English department UNAN- Managua

Main Research Objective: To describe the advantages of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skills of EFL learners with autism.

Objective of the expert judgment:

Validate the content of the post-test

Objective of the posttest

- Determine the level of progress in relation to vocabulary about parts of the house of English learners with autism after being exposed to the Waldorf methodology.

Test specifications

Purpose of the pre-test and post-test

The aim of the pre-test and post-test is to diagnose the speaking level of autistic students and to identify difficulties in lack of vocabulary.

Description of the test takers

The test takers are children students with spectrum autism from 8 to 10 years old. They are students in fifth grade from the school “Experimental Mexico” students will be tested individually with a speaking pre-test at the beginning and after applying Waldorf methodology will be tested with a speaking post-test.

Test level

The difficulty level of the test is supposed to encompass level middle intermediate for children according to INATEC 2021. Also, the grammar and vocabulary about simple present, articles, adjectives, parts of the house, numbers, colors, are from MINED 2022.

Test construct

A test is an essential instrument for teachers and researchers that help us to get information about the behavior, knowledge, and situation of the people we want to know. In this case, pre-test and post-test will be applied to know the English level of the students before and after applying the Waldorf methodology to prove if the methodology was effective in autistic students.

As (Franzen 2011) explained” Test construction is the set of activities involved in developing and evaluating a test of some psychological function. The steps include specifying the construct of interest, deciding the test’s function (diagnosis, description of skill level, prediction of recovery), choosing a method (performance, behavioral observation, self-report), designing item content, evaluating the reliability and validity of the test, and modifying the test to maximize its utility”

The test is designed for the test taker level which is focused on speaking, students will answer what the teacher asks about a picture shown, what is hopped is that the students answer a giving description of the picture, according to vocabulary, grammar structure, and speaking level that will be evaluated.

English speaking Post-test

Objective: To test the English level of students with autism after applying the Waldorf methodology.

Procedure: Through a speaking activity the teacher will show the students different pictures about the parts of the house, then the students will orally answer the following questions:

Instructions to test takers: Look at the picture and answer the questions.

What are the parts of a house?

What colors do you see in the picture?

What furniture do you see?

What color is the table?

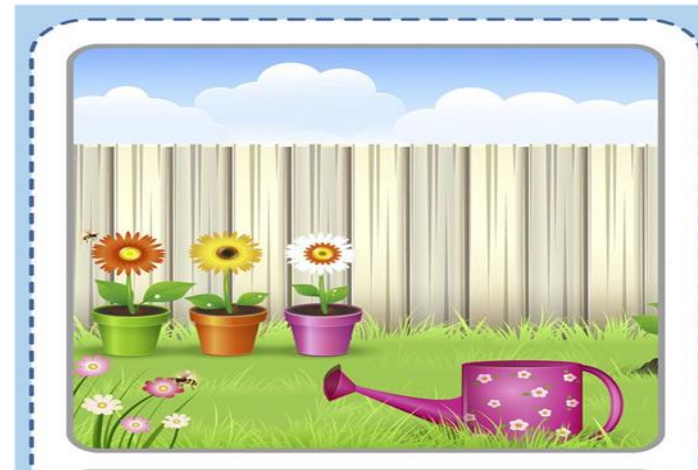
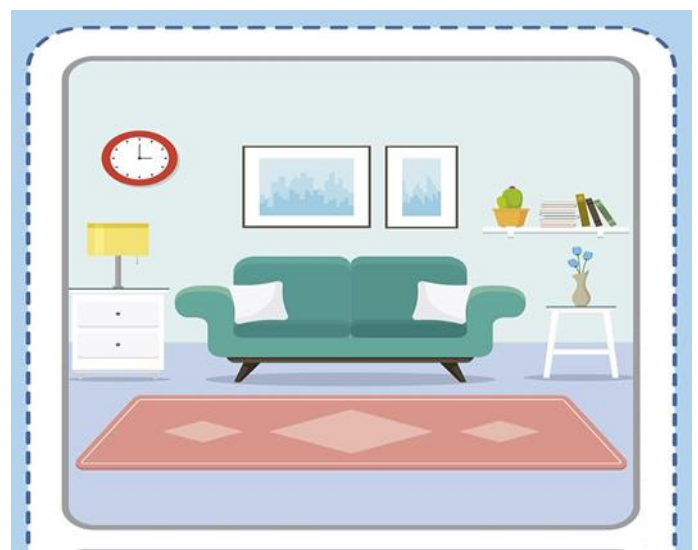


Table of specifications for speaking post-test

Content	Items of the speaking post-test	Vocabulary 40%			Grammar 20%			Speaking vocabulary production 40%		
		Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement	Proficiency	Good	Needs Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parts of the house ➤ Colors ➤ Numbers ➤ Mined 2022 	Evaluation									
	<i>What are the parts of the house?</i>									
	<i>What colors do you see in the picture?</i>									
	<i>What furniture do you see?</i>									
	<i>What color is the table?</i>									
Comments:										

Dear Expert,

After having read the specifications above, do you believe this test measure what it intends to measure? If yes, state so _____. If not, tell us how the test could be improved: First, there's not clear statement of the speaking skills, vocabulary or grammatical features tested. Then, we need a clear definition of the rating levels in the table; finally, take a look at the level of difficulty of the questions used.

National Autonomous University of Nicaragua

UNAN-Managua

University Campus "Rubén Darío"



Topic of Research

Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with
autism

Validation of the instruments: Interview

Thesis adviser: Alber Sanchez

Researches: Anieth Garcia & Sara Cruz

The main objective of the doctor interview is to get information about the educational and health situation of each autistic student with questions that help researchers to know the personal aspects of these children, to know the educational environment in which they have developed different skills, with this information to better methodological proposals to improve the ability of speech in each of them in their process of learning the English language.

Respected judge: You have been selected to evaluate the Instrument “interview, speaking pre-test, speaking post-test” that is part of the research: **“Applying the Waldorf methodology to enhance the speaking skill of EFL learners with autism”**

The evaluation of the instrument is of great importance to ensure that they are valid and that the results obtained from them are used efficiently.

We appreciate your valuable collaboration.

NAMES AND SURNAMES OF THE JUDGE: Erasmio Antonio Torrez Herrera

ACADEMIC TRAINING English Language Learning and Research.

AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

Educational Research, cooperative learning, E learning and Curriculum Design.

TIME 12 years

CURRENT POSITION English Major Coordinator for the virtual modality.

INSTITUTION UNAN-Managua

Objective of the research: To describe the benefits of using the Waldorf methodology to enhance EFL acquisition in autistic children in speaking skills.

Objective of the expert trial:

Validate the content of the interview

Objective of the interview:

To get information about the educative and health situation of the students with autism.

According to the following indicators, rate each of the items as appropriate.

CATEGORY	QUALIFICATION	INDICATOR
<p>COHERENCE The item has a logical relationship with the dimension or indicator you are measuring.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion 2. Low level 3. Moderate level 4. High level</p>	<p>5. The item has no logical relationship with the dimension 6. The item has a tangential relationship with the dimension. 7. The item has a moderate relationship to the dimension you are measuring. 8. The item is completely related to the dimension you are measuring.</p>
<p>CLARITY Degree to which the item is written clearly and precisely, facilitating its understanding by the subjects surveyed.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion 2. Low level 3. Moderate level 4. High level</p>	<p>5. The item is not clear 6. The item requires quite a few modifications or a very large modification in the use of the words according to their meaning or by the ordering of them. 7. A very specific modification of some of the terms of the item is required. 8. The item is clear, has semantics and appropriate syntax.</p>
<p>RELEVANCE Importance of the item with respect to the contribution it can provide for a better understanding of the characteristic or situation measured.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion 2. Low level 3. Moderate level 4. High level</p>	<p>5. It does not meet the criteria. 6. The item can be removed without affecting the measurement of the dimension. 7. The item has some relevance, but another item may be including what this one measures. 8. The item is essential or important, that is, it must be included</p>
<p>SUFFICIENCY The items that belong to the same dimension are enough to obtain the measurement of this.</p>	<p>1. Does not meet the criterion 2. Low level 3. Moderate level 4. High level</p>	<p>5. Items are not enough to measure dimension 6. Items measure some aspect of the dimension but do not correspond to the total dimension 7. Some items must be increased in order to fully evaluate the dimension. 8. Items are sufficient</p>

WALDORF METHODOLOGY FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION

Dimension	Sources	Description	Items	Coherence (From 1 to 4)	Clarity (From 1 to 4)	Relevance (From 1 to 4)	Sufficiency (From 1 to 4)
Autism		Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave.	1. what is autism?				64
Medical diagnosis	(Cdc 2022)	Autism Diagnosis	2. How does a doctor diagnose a child with autism?				
General information	(Wicz 2016)	General information	3. What are the signs to suspect that a child may have autism?				
Behavioral characteristics	(Tracktest 2022)	Behavioral Characteristics	4. What behavioral characteristics does a child with autism exhibit?				
Degrees of autism	(Juneja 2015)	Autism level Autism spectrum disorder is diagnosed at a level of 1, 2, or 3, with each indicating a different degree of severity and needs for support	5. What are the degrees of autism that a child can have?				
Weaknesses and strengths of autistic learners in the learning process	(Wicz 2016)	Students' behavior Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner.	6. How can there be a parent-teacher interaction to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a child clinically diagnosed with autism? 7. How can a teacher prevent behavioral crises in a child diagnosed or suspected of having autism?				

Teaching English strategies	(Anzilotti 2021) (Cdc 2022)	Teaching strategies are steps taken by teachers to promote the development of learning strategies	8. How many students clinically diagnosed with autism can a teacher have in the classroom? 9. What methodological measures should the teacher implement to provide quality education to clinically diagnosed children?				
Teaching English strategies	(PDW, 2019)	Teaching strategies are steps taken by teachers to promote the development of learning strategies	10. How can a teacher adapt the classroom for children clinically diagnosed with autism?				
		.	Alternative commentary/formulation				

