The effects of pre-recorded audios and videos on TPR based games as a language learning strategy to improve classroom management and motivation.

Authors:

- Freddy Josué Gómez (gomez.f90@yahoo.com) UNAN Managua - FAREM Estelí
- Doris Michelle Cruz (michelrios92@gmail.com)
- Tania Jahoska Ruíz (jahoruzf@gmail.com) UNAN Managua - FAREM Estelí

I. Key Words
II. Introduction

Our interest in the English language motivated us to become facilitators in order to have the opportunity to share everything we have learned with younger generations. When we started working as teachers, we found out how difficult it can be sometimes to keep our students motivated and focused on the topics developed, and as a consequence of this, our students usually did not get a significant learning experience. This was what marked our path towards this research. It motivated us to propose a strategy where the teacher can use audio-visual material created by himself or herself, in order to develop a Total Physical Response based game in which students can feel motivated and excited to learn, and at the same time, it helps the teacher to keep harmonious classroom management. This research was carried out in the Augusto Calderon Sandino school, where we could identify most of the issues that we wanted to study. Kids were not paying attention because of the lack of dynamism in the strategies usually used, this led them to misbehave and as a consequence, the teacher lost control of the situation.

We started by choosing a topic and a game. In this case, we focused on “The family members” vocabulary and we used a commands game called “The jumping game”. First, we recorded our material, which included an instructional video where we performed the game ourselves in order to show to the students how they were supposed to perform the activity, and the audio where the speaker says random words from the vocabulary. When the moment of applying the strategy came, we first performed a warm-up activity, then we presented the video, so students would know what to do. The second part of the activity was based on sticking images on the board representing the vocabulary, and ask students to make a line. Lastly, we played the audio, and students started jumping according to what the speaker said.

We decided to use this type of audiovisual aids because they promote the motivation among the students, and besides of wake the students’ interest, they also keep them
interested in the whole lesson. Another advantage that this activity brings us is that all of the teachers can create their own material by recording the videos and audios by themselves.

III. Literature Review

This chapter discusses the main variables of this research from the points of view of different issues related to the focus of this study. First, it introduces a general review of the process of teaching English to kids, the challenges and the role that classroom management plays in the teaching-learning process. Next, it mentions an effective method used when teaching English. Lastly, it explains the use of audiovisuals in language teaching and the effects that they have on the education process.

Teaching English to kids

Young children are natural language acquirers. They are self-motivated to pick up a language without conscious learning, unlike adolescents and adults. They have the ability to imitate pronunciation and work the rules for themselves.

As McGlothlin (1997) remarks; Children learn new languages very easily, almost too easily, unlike adults who must toil, struggle and put in long hours of hard work to make even small gains in their ability in a new language.

It is also important to talk about the problems presented in the ESL classrooms in the schools. Many students do not pay enough attention to the English classes because they are not clear of the tasks or they do not see a new language as an opportunity to be successful in the university or in any work field.

Classroom management

For some students, the classroom is the focal point of their English exposure. It is the base of where, when, why, and how they speak English.

The rules of the class form an essential part in the teaching process, students can not get significant knowledge if they do not know what rules to follow. According to Michele
Louwerse (2008), one way to look at rules is as a way of communication between the teacher and the class. In setting and enforcing rules, a teacher can convey expectations and values, while students communicate in turn through how they respond to the rules. The better able to communicate in English the students are, the more the rules can be negotiated among teachers and students.

According to Wilson (2008), a student’s discipline does not have to be a headache for teachers if they can keep a few strategies in mind. Although it is good to want to connect with their students, they have to be the teacher and adult first. Many new teachers make the mistake of trying to be a friend and connect with the students at the beginning of the year because they believe this will help him or her to get a trouble-free classroom.

This is a clear idea of why the teacher must be an authority figure inside the classroom but also a comprehensible person in order to act as a neutral when the class is becoming aggressive among them.

Students’ motivation is indispensable. Mathews Higs, (2008) says that one of the most important aspects of a teacher’s job is to motivate students. In order for a student to be motivated, he or she must possess a desire to learn and be willing to aim this desire toward achieving academic goals. For successful student motivation to occur, a student must want to participate in the learning process.

**Total Physical Response**

There are so many methods and strategies to use when it comes to teaching. One of the most used, interactive and effective is the Total Physical Response or also called TPR,

Rowland (2008) says that the Total Physical Response is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movements to react to verbal input. The process mimics the way that infants learn their first language, and it reduces
student inhibitions and lower stress. The purpose of TPR is to create a brain link between speech and action to boost language and vocabulary learning.

Total Physical Response may be used to teach many types of vocabulary connected with action. It is an effective strategy to use with English language learners as well with native speakers when learning new words.

**Audiovisual aids**

According to Gilakjani (2011), the difficulties faced by EFL learners in classrooms are lack of motivation, lack of exposure to the target language, lack of emphasis on pronunciation by teachers and the influence of sounds and rules of learners' first language on English.

When you watch a movie or TV program, superficial and even deep feelings and emotions are elicited, such as excitement, anger, laughter, relaxation, love, whimsy, or even boredom. These emotions are often triggered or heightened by the mood created by specific visual scenes, the actors, and/or the background music. A video can have a strong effect on your mind and senses.

When videos are shown in the classroom; the students are more relaxed and concentrated in the class because it catches the students’ attention, also it allows them to keep a good discipline and a good atmosphere in the classroom.

Most of the EFL teachers are aware that native speakers’ accents, rhythm, and intonation used in the audio materials pose a difficulty to the undergraduate students. In this context, it is important to have an awareness of students’ approach towards audio-visual aids and resources.

**IV. Materials and methods**

The content of this research is based mainly on qualitative design. It is qualitative because it was necessary to make observations to draw conclusions about the effect of the activities carried out. Besides, it has a descriptive design because it involves describing the behavior of the students during this process.

The population of this research is formed by 814 students of Augusto Calderón Sandino in Estelí city. The sample used is the 25 students from 1st grade “C”, chosen
among the 147 students of 1st grade. This sample was chosen randomly among the ten classrooms available.

For the development of the classes was necessary to record two videos and two audios in order to provide a clear explanation of the games and understandable instructions for the students. The topic used in the videos was: The family members. For the audio, we recorded the words: jump to mom, jump to dad, jump to grandma, jump to grandpa, jump to brother and jump to sister. The words were repeated simultaneously and without follow a pattern to control that the students really understood each word of the vocabulary, also, it was necessary to use some pictures related to the topic to teach.

V. Analysis and discussion

We played the video twice; the students understood the activity very well, so it was not necessary to explain by ourselves what the game was about. For the game development, the class was divided into two groups; boys and girls to perform the game as a competition. The game was practiced twice before the competition began. Once the activity started, the students seemed to be very excited and motivated. All of them wanted to be the winners. They did an excellent work following the commands, although three or four of them were cheating at the time of jumping, they were holding their classmate’s shoulders in order to jump with them.

They all did an excellent work following the commands, although three or four of them were cheating at the time of jumping, they were holding their classmate’s shoulders in order to jump with them but besides that, the other students heard the audio and followed each command carefully, they were not cheating and did the activity in a very well behaved way.

In the class evaluation, it could be noticed that the students liked the activity because they marked on the happy face and in the loving face. None of them marked on the sad face, and they said that they wanted to do the activity again.

Plenty of significative differences were spotted when comparing some of the more traditional methods used to teach the target vocabulary such as the classic activity based on writing the words of the vocabulary on the board like the grammar-translation
method in which the main focus is on reading and writing with little attention, instead of speaking or listening. Using the traditional method of grammar-translation, students are expected to memorize an endless list of grammar rules and vocabulary and produce almost perfect translations, this method means a tedious experience and often creates frustration for students.

We found out that using the same set of words, but reinforcing some physical activity, and attractive visuals we used, it was observed that the students learned the words way quicker compared to the traditional method. The next week after this strategy was applied, the teacher wanted to prove the effectiveness of it, by asking the students if they remembered the vocabulary learned. It was evidenced that almost all the students pronounced the vocabulary that they had learned with the game and the visual aids because they answered all the questions that the teacher asked.

VI. Final words

After applying the strategy; we found that videos are the most recommended audio-visual aids to teach English in first grade. They catch the students’ attention, so they can acquire the instructions. Also, they promote classroom management; they keep students focused on the class, this improves the discipline and provides a comfortable environment in the classroom. The results of the observation guide showed that most of the students were very motivated by the elements of the strategy applied. This led them to be totally focused on the topic taught, while they were enjoying the game. At the same time, this was very helpful for us as teachers, because they were so interested in what was happening that they were respecting all our instructions.

We can conclude saying that the elements used in this strategy had a positive influence in the teaching-learning process at the point that students were able to actually learn something and enjoy while doing it in comparison to some of the most used and traditional activities.
VII. Bibliography


