

Enhancing fluency and accuracy in speaking through oral activities in VoiceThread

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DEVELOPING FLUENCY AND ACCURACY IN SPEAKING

Dedication

This work is dedicated to all my students at Montessori Cartagena School and my family. They both were essential parts to have this dream come true.

Students showed me the importance of innovation, creation and passion to this wonderful world of teaching; and my family helped me to study hard, to persist and to persevere.

They both gave me the courage to overcome different difficulties and risks; and supported me during the whole process.

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Abstract

This paper describes an action research project that was conducted at Montessori School in Cartagena, Colombia. The study aims to influence students' fluency and accuracy in speaking through the implementation of some oral activities with VoiceThread; moreover, to describe how it contributes to the enhancement in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar and how it promotes the development of coherent and fluent ideas in speaking. VoiceThread is a web-based platform that enables teachers and students to create and share dynamic conversations around documents, pictures, diagrams and videos through a mix of media. The project involves the development of nine tasks over the pedagogical intervention in English, in which students are asked to record their participations in VoiceThread. The project describes in details the process in which the oral activities with VoiceThread improve students' fluency and accuracy; and shows the progress achieved by students who reported difficulties in their speaking skills and who recorded all the proposed tasks. So, it is presented a brief analysis of the videos, surveys, and audios produced by these students before, during and after implementing the tasks in Voice Thread. Findings from this analysis suggest a significant improvement in spoken language and interaction after using technology tools. It is proved that speaking is an essential tool for communicating and technology is available for enhancing any language skill when used wisely. For this reason, it is emphasized the importance of including this type of innovative tasks and the use of technology in the classroom to promote opportunities for oral practice in all possible contexts and strengthen students' confidence and motivation in speaking.

Key words: accuracy, fluency, speaking.

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Introduction

Brown and Yule (1983) stated out that speaking is the skill that the learners will be judged upon most in real-life situations. It is an important part of everyday interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on its ability to speak fluently and comprehensively. (p.25). According to this paragraph, it can be inferred that speaking is an essential tool for interaction, communication and makes part of social relations.

Susikaran (2012) explained that “despite the importance of speaking, researchers have shown that teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues”.(p.1). For this author, it is required that the goal of teaching- speaking should improve students` communicative skills, because it is the only way, learners can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural roles appropriated to each communicative circumstances. (p.1).

In this research study, the development of this ability is highly regarded since its importance in everyday activities and its value when learning a foreign language. Throughout the reading of this project and its evidences, educators and researchers can know the ways and resources of promoting an interactive and interesting teaching -learning environment to have good outcomes in the foreign language with the use of technology tools.

Harmer (2009) stated out that there are three reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom. First, for the rehearsal-opportunities that the speaking activities provide. Second, speaking activities in which students try to use any or all of the language they know provide feedback for both teacher and students; and finally these speaking tasks activate the various

elements of language that learners have stored in their brain and help them become autonomous language users. (p.123).

Dealing with this responsibility, this inquiry presented how media is a useful tool for optimizing opportunities for children's cognitive and language skills development offering opportunities they need to speak in the classroom. According to The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAYC) and Fred Roger Center (2012) technology can support children's learning offering chances to explore, create, think, interact, observe, take turn and view critically. They stated that by using assistive technology, educators can increase the likelihood that children will have the ability to learn, move and communicate; in addition, they explained that since every child needs active practice in the four domains of language and literacy, technology resources should support speaking, listening, reading and writing.

After observing classes and surveying the teachers and students from Montessori School (third grade learners), there are some difficulties they are facing concerning their speaking skills and the need of didactic strategies to foster this ability. This fact is what motivates the development of this research study since it includes improvement and reflections in our performance as teachers and the constant empowering of classroom setting taking advantages of the high technology when learning a foreign language.

This project proposes the implementation of a research activity that includes the application of some communicative and interactive oral activities in the classroom using VoiceThread, which is a useful and didactic tool for oral tasks, in order to improve students' fluency and accuracy in speaking. It is shown how the students struggle with the language to speak better and the way in which the good use of technology allowed pupils to overcome their

difficulties in a meaningful scenario and how it impacted positively in their learning. Motteram (2013) pointed out that:

Times have changed, teachers have evolved, and we now have a new breed of learning technologists.(..) the first changes began in the classroom itself – new technologies such as overhead projectors, interactive whiteboards, laptop computers and wireless internet have opened up the classroom to the outside world. Teachers who spent their lives managing with a textbook, a tape recorder and a blackboard are now adept at using PowerPoint to present grammar, playing podcasts to practice listening skills, pulling texts off the world wide web to introduce reading skills and perhaps most ground-breaking of all – empowering students by giving them access to a wide range of web-based tools that allow them to publish work and engage with live audiences in real contexts. (Motteram, 2013, p.2)

Nowadays, thanks to technological advances, as Marwan & Padmarani (2013) established, “English teaching and learning contexts are equipped with new high-tech tools and techniques that can be used in various ways in the classroom regardless the level of students”. (p.2). such tools and techniques can offer meaningful contexts for language development and interaction. This study is a real sample of how teachers can support English teaching and learning context in terms of didactic tools through the use of technology

NAYC (2012) pointed out that “effective uses of technology and media are active, hands-on, engaging, and empowering; give the child control; provide adaptive scaffolds to ease the accomplishment of tasks; and are used as one of many options to support children’s learning” (p.6). It also explained that “interactions with technology and media should be playful and support creativity, exploration, pretend play, active play, and outdoor activities” (p.7). In other

words, technology tools can be used to stimulate the liveliness of learners and engage them in a variety of scenarios.

This inquiry proved that with the adequate conditions of input and time by using this technology tool in the classroom and if used wisely for struggling the language, learners develop holistically different language skills; among them, accuracy and fluency in speaking. According to Wang (2005) there are many advantages integrating technology in classrooms especially for students who learn English as a foreign language. To be able to improve their language skills, like writing, reading, listening and speaking, English language learners use computers, software programs, to check their work and correct themselves. (p.1)

In chapter I, it is exposed how the problem arises in the classroom and comes up with the research questions and objectives, chapter II shows the benefits of using Voicethread, its impact and its features when working with children and developing a foreign language; chapter III presents the grounded theory about developing fluency and accuracy in speaking and the experiences of many authors using technology tools to improve speaking skills; chapter IV shows the main focus of the research and general design, chapter V presents the way in which the data is collected, registered and analyzed; finally in chapter VI is exposed the conclusions and general assumptions after developing this inquiry.

CHAPTER I

Statement of the problem

This research interests emerge from the experiences I have faced as an English teacher at Montessori Cartagena School with elementary students (third grade students).

During the observations and analysis of the context, it is appreciated that the school provides a lot of materials and resources for successful teaching and learning, the school provides printed and laminated material in English to work in classes, students and teachers have access to internet and there is a computer available and a television for classroom activities

In classes, it was observed that pupils do not speak English among them and most of the time use their mother tongue, even if they are in English classes. Teachers recast them most of the time, telling them phrases, commands and words. It was noticed how teachers make effort and try all the time to help them speak using the vocabulary they already know. Teachers said that students are not being autonomous language users.

Educators expect to listen to thoughts and ideas from learners. It seems the conversations are neither spontaneous nor fluent, and finally pupils seem to be tired of struggling.

Teachers expressed that although they include speaking activities in classes and use drills, chants, repetitions and songs, students need to be provided with more opportunities to practice the target language orally. The situation makes necessary to encounter a meaningful context for oral exposure and practice; in and outside of the classroom.

When surveying and observing students, it is noticed they tend to use much their mother tongue and they do not practice English out of the classroom (during the breaks). Learners expressed that they just practice English with the teacher at School and they sometimes sing in English at home. Learners expressed they find it difficult to participate in listening and

speaking activities, pointing out that speaking is the most difficult ability for them. They also said that it is not easy to understand when someone speaks in English.

Third grade students expressed that they have access to cellphones, tablet and laptops and they use them to play video games and watch videos in YouTube. They use technology just for entertainment. A recent study about the use of technology tools in early childhood carried out by Fred Roger Center (2012) explained that when used wisely, technology and media can support learning and relationships. It states that the use of technology and interactive media can optimize opportunities for young children's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and linguistic development. It also stated out that there has never been a more important time to apply principles of development and learning when considering the use of cutting-edge technologies.

During class observation, it was noticed that there was not a logical organization in their ideas since simple structures for acceptable language were missing in their oral production, moreover, they did not use the available words in speaking situations and made notable mistakes in pronouncing sounds and following stress pattern so their message could be understood. There was not a spontaneous flow according to their level since they took much the time for organizing their ideas and they did not say appropriate things according to the context, finally the conversations stopped and continued in Spanish.

Despite the controlled language forms, vocabulary and pronunciation the teacher explains and practices with learners, they get stuck when expressing simple ideas cause their lack of vocabulary; As a result, they demand to use their mother tongue since it was difficult for them to express their thoughts in the foreign language (English).

Torres (1997) pointed out that there are two main features of language to consider when teaching and testing speaking, accuracy which “is the precision and linguistic acceptability of the language” and fluency which “the ability to develop ideas and the way for expressing”. (p.97).

The author stated that “to do that, students should be aided to understand and to produce correct language. Torres explained that as a hearer or speaker the pupil should be aware of the appropriateness and acceptability of the language she or he uses” (p.97). For this author, there are some components in which teachers can test accuracy such as; pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar; in contrast, there are some elements to test fluency such as; mechanical skills (pauses, length, speed), language use (coherence) and judgment skills (create and develop thoughts). (p.98).

Taking into account the observations and surveys that were carried out among students and teachers and after analyzing the context, it is noticed that learners have some difficulties in their speaking skills regarding fluency and accuracy.

Considering what students have been learning in English up to third grade, the amount of years they have spent to study it, the context in which they learn the foreign language, their eagerness to do speaking activities, their closeness to technology tools and the difficulties they are facing, it is useful to take advantages from technology and to combine it with academic purposes in order to develop sub skills in speaking (fluency and accuracy). “Educators are positioned to improve quality by intentionally leveraging the potential of technology and media for the benefit of every child”. (Fred Roger Center, 2012, p.4)

VoiceThread is the pedagogical and technological tool to deal with the difficulties pupils from Montessori are facing since it enables teachers and students to talk about any topic and around pictures, documents or videos in a very simple way, moreover, it is attractive and accessible for

children. VoiceThread allows the learning of vocabulary, intonation, pronunciation, grammar and the flow of ideas in the same presentation.

The mentioned problem comes up with the following questions:

General Question

How does the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread influence fluency and accuracy in speaking to third grade students at Montessori School?

Specific Questions

- How do the oral activities with VoiceThread contribute in the improvement of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar in speaking?
- How do the oral activities with VoiceThread promote the development of coherent and fluent ideas in speaking?

Those questions intend to accomplish some objectives along the development of the project:

General Objective

To describe how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread influences fluency and accuracy in speaking

Specific Questions

- To describe how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread contribute to the enhancement in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar in speaking
- To describe how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread promote the development of coherent and fluent ideas in speaking.

CHAPTER II

Justification

Brunvand & Byrd (2011) stated out that “innovative technological tools, programs, and software, as VoiceThread, can be used to promote student engagement, motivation, and ultimately enhance the quality of the learning experience for all students” (p.27). With the development of this research, Montessori students encounter positive experiences inside and outside the classroom when interacting among them; they improve their speaking skills in meaningful and diverse contexts. They work with material and activities relevant to the real world and around topics that are familiar for them.

Gillis, Luthin, & Parette (2012) expressed the following:

Development of receptive and expressive language skills is an important foundational skill in early childhood education. Recently, early childhood education professionals have begun using Web-based technology to assist in developing these skills. One Web-based technology that holds potential to support children’s learning is VoiceThread which has unique features that support Universal Design for Learning. (Gillis, Luthin, & Parette, 2012, p.203)

With the implementation of some activities in a VoiceThread, it is possible to work more meaningfully on factors such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary necessary when learning a foreign language. Students take the advantage of the platform to express their ideas more confident and competent, additionally as Marwan & Padmarani (2013) mentioned, “students are motivated to participate in discussions more effectively”. (p.6).

VoiceThread¹ is a web-based platform that enables teachers and students to create and share dynamic conversations around documents, pictures, diagrams and videos. Pupils and tutors can have conversations and make comments using any mix of text, a microphone, a web cam, a telephone, or uploaded audio file. Basically anything there is to talk about. Slaterry & Willis (2001) pointed out that children like to talk about themselves, about their favorite things, hobbies and topics that are familiar for them, moreover, children like to hear their classmates doing the same (p.56). Activities with this tool provide the scenario to talk about topics they like, learners are the main actors when performing their tasks and use their own tablets and laptops to participate in the classroom.

VoiceThread² uses simple commands and icons so children can infer immediately what they are able to do. It also offers opportunities to rehearse, to listen to others, to use different senses for the same activity, to draw right on the screen, and to have the main guide before participating in any activity. With these characteristics, this web creates positive environment so that children do not feel embarrassed and they enjoy what they do in different ways (audio recording, video recording, writing and pointing on the screen). According to Slaterry & Willis (2001) children need to feel successful in using English and to be provided with fun activities. They need to hear clear pronunciation and intonation, and plenty of opportunities to communicate. It is necessary to show them what to do first so they can do it alone or in group. (p55).

Brunvand & Byrd (2011) explained that this tool “is easily accessible, cost-effective, applicable across most subject matter and grade levels, and adaptable to many learning settings”.

¹ VoiceThread LLC (2016) retrieved from: <https://voicethread.com/>

² VoiceThread LLC (2016) retrieved from :<http://voicethread.psu.edu/>

(p.28). Children can access it easily since there is no software to install and it is available to use it in tablets, cellphones, laptops, etc. Montessori students like technology and have knowledge about working on it, developing accuracy and fluency through Voice Thread activities, more than a challenge for them; is another way to use technology and learn how to learn and speak in English more lively.

Brunvand & Byrd (2011) also pointed out that “VoiceThread allows students to participate and collaborate in many ways at their own pace”. (p. 28). Interacting through this technological tool involves students in more natural speech, respond to their interests and give them the benefit of engaging themselves on a personal level, which helps to increase their overall motivation with the subject matter. Learner are provided with opportunities to speak, to practice the language and to develop language forms so they can organize their ideas more logically, fluent and structured.

Voice-Thread is the space where interaction, conversations, listening and speaking activities, classmates’ experiences, cooperative learning, language forms and negotiation of meanings can take place even if they are in the classroom, in the park, at home or wherever they can be. This tool provides a rich environment that contains authentic materials and tasks.

Pacansky (2013) explained that “VoiceThread is versatile, easy-to-navigate, and interactive, beside, it equips teachers to deploy numerous best instructional practices that engage 21st century students in rigorous literacy activities. Current teaching strategies are upgraded with VoiceThread for Digital Education and create an environment where every student learns every day”. This project involves changes in the teacher’s performance since it is necessary the combination among the Montessori methodology and technology. This fact impacts students’

learning, and, of course, the development of something new and critical reflection on its effectiveness. The innovative activities considerably contribute to the development of basic interactive skills necessary for life.

The development of this project deals with the Second Field of Research of the B.Ed. in TEFL at Universidad Santo Tomas, which is “Language Teaching and Learning”. It presents the ways in which educators can promote a collaborative and interesting teaching -learning environment to have good outcomes in the foreign language with the integration of VoiceThread as a technology tool. With this research perspective it can be described how fluency and accuracy in speaking were improved through the use of technology in the classroom, besides, other aspects can be analyzed such as students’ performances, interaction, motivation and innovation with the incorporation of the new technologies.

According to Fleta (2007) children get sufficient scope for oral practice in their daily environment when learning their mother tongue. The children use the language at home, in the park, at school- everywhere. They slowly learn the language without any deliberative effort. But in case of a foreign one like English, these natural resources are not available to the learner. (p.7). Implementing varied tasks in the classroom and using Voice Thread site at Montessori School provided significant experiences for leaning and foster the development of different language skills. Moreover, as Chappelle and Jamieson (2008) indicates, the use of technology will support the pedagogical goals of the classes, allow you to work with different learning styles and will help to accomplish goals in less time.

Through this project, students from Montessori school are provided with adequate conditions for struggling the language and developing holistically accuracy and fluency in speaking. Learning environment at Montessori School is supported by offering pupils chances to explore, create, think and interact through an appropriate and didactic context.

The development of this research study provided Montessori school with innovations in their curriculum so the English program could shift from the knowledge of grammar to oral proficiency and communicative competence in target language, integrating Montessori methodology and technology.

Finally, reaching the expected goals in term of speaking skill and maximizing the learners` foreign language abilities with a arrange of activities and resources in the classroom, contributes to the Montessori vision on being the most advantaged institution in Cartagena committed to satisfy the expectations of the community, through the development of continuous improvement.

CHAPTER III

Literature Review

According to Torres (1997) the development of speaking skill is carried out through some processes that teacher must take into account during the teaching-learning process. Torres (1997) explained that communication involves mainly the knowledge both of the linguistic competence and communicative competence to establish effective, appropriate and acceptable communication in an oral way. This author established that the linguistic competence is the ability to manage the rule or grammatical structures of the language (p.95) and that the communicative competence is the ability to use the language. (p.95).

Torres (1997) explained that these competences are related to the process of perception, abstraction, production, construction reception, expression and interaction (p.95).

Torres (1997) pointed out that:

Through the perception the learner keeps in the short-term memories those units, categories and functions which characterize the language while through the abstraction the learner internalizes the rules relating the categories and the functions perceived (...). Production links the articulation of sequences of sounds and construction of meaning through sequences of words as a starting point to communicate orally; on the other side, appears the interaction in which the real communication takes places through the reception of the message and the expression of personal meaning to establish an effective communication. (Torres, 1997, p.95).

Torres (1997) pointed out that there are two main features of language to consider when teaching and testing speaking, accuracy and fluency. As it is presented in the picture below, for

this author, there are some components in which teachers can test accuracy such as; pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar; in contrast, there are some elements to test fluency such as; mechanical skills, language use and judgment skills. (p.98).

Graphic 1. Categories to Evaluate Speaking.

ACCURACY LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE LANGUAGE FORM Ability to master a language as a system	FLUENCY COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE LANGUAGE FUNCTION Ability to use language to communicate
PRONUNCIATION Pupils' ability to pronounce sounds and follow intonation and stress patterns in an acceptable and comprehensible manner.	MECHANICAL SKILLS The ability to use pauses, punctuation, speed, rhythm and sentence length.
VOCABULARY Pupils' ability to produce words in response to an appropriate stimulus, determine whether the learner has certain words available to him to use in speaking situations.	LANGUAGE USE The ability to talk in coherent, reasoned and "semantically dense" sentences, showing a mastery of the semantic and grammatical resources of the language.
GRAMMAR Pupils' ability to produce appropriate morphological and syntactical patterns in a given speech situation.	JUDGEMENT SKILLS The ability to have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts and for a particular audience. Ability to select, organise, order, create and develop thoughts.
COMPREHENSION The ability to transmit, negotiate and share information accurately and fluently.	

Lindsay & Knight (2006), points out that people speak for many reasons and that is what converts the speaking skills so productive. They state that "speaking consists on putting message together, communicating the message and interacting with others. These facts are what make speaking a complex task" (p.57). They stated out that:

Speaking is a complex process, which involves constructing a message in a form that other people can understand, and delivering the message using the correct pronunciation, intonation and stress. Speaking also involves the interaction-communicating with other people. To do this, learners need to be able to respond what

other people say, and use the language appropriate for the situation they are in and the person they are talking to. At the same time, they need to be accurate and fluent enough for the other person to understand and to fit into the flow of conversation. To be able to do all of this learners need lots and lots of practice, encouragement, and corrections.

(Lindsay & Knight, 2006, p.68).

In this order of ideas, it can be inferred the importance and the need of accuracy and fluency to understand the different messages and to keep a conversation. The main problem found in this research study deals with the weakness students have to communicate without pauses and clarity, what makes essential to know how both fluency and accuracy work to produce fairly fluent and comprehensible language.

Brown (2007) explained that fluency is related with the flow of natural language and that in many courses, “it is probably best achieved by allowing the stream of speech to flow and with the riverbanks of instruction on some details of phonology, grammar, or discourse can channel the speech on more purposeful course”. (p.324). in contrast, accuracy is defined as what it is clear and grammatically correct (p. 323). Different to fluency, this “s best achieved by allowing students to focus on elements of phonology, grammar and discourse in their spoken output”.

It is known that classrooms must not be linguistic courses but rather they should promote meaningful language involvement, however, as Brown (2007) explained, if fluency is only emphasized and the pieces of grammar and phonology are less reinforced, learners will probably produce fairly fluent but a hardly understandable language; unlike, it can be inferred that if grammar is only developed, pupils will probably produce an accurate language but not a natural language flow to keep the continuity of a conversation.

In addition, Richards & Rogers (2001) stated that language is a system for the expression of meaning and its primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication; dialogues, if used, center on communicative functions and not normally memorized as occurred in other methods. They pointed out that language learning is learning to communicate and it is not the mere learning of structures, sounds, and words. In addition, they stated that accuracy should be judged not in the abstract but in context. It means, acceptable language for the learners to communicate better. (p. 156,157)

They established that the target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate and not through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system. Online activities focused on CLT³ principles will help students to gain fluency since they allow the pupils to communicate more freely and without the stress of following the grammar rules as a straightjacket. Richards & Rodgers pointed out that the structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses and its primary units of language are categories of functional and communicative meaning. (p.153).

Something relevant to this project is the fact that teachers should know that learners need to do most of the talk if the main goal is to activate their speaking, as any other skill, speaking requires practice and exposure. Lindsay & knight (2006) declared that learners need lots and lots of practice, encouragement, and corrections to speak fluent and accurate. (p.68). Based on these fundamentals, educators must develop new and innovative approaches for the language learners. In contrast to traditional method, teachers need to be ready to facilitate and guide their students

³ Communicative Language Teaching: a method that makes more emphasis in language use and fluency, rather than accuracy or language usage, cited by Richards & Rogers (2001). Approaches and Method in Language Teaching. (p.153).

to be the actors of their own learning. Teachers need to believe that language can be created by the individuals often through trials and errors.

Although CLT focuses more on fluency to develop speaking, Lindsay & Knight (2006), indicated that it is necessary to balance accuracy and fluency. These authors explained that learners need to develop the ability to string sounds and words together and to interact successfully with other speakers, which means to respond appropriately and use the appropriate language for the situation they are in. Even in early stage, learners need to be able to “talk round” words or expressions they do not know so that the conversation does not get stuck while they think of the right word. As it is evident, learners need to practice Speaking in a wide range of contexts and need to be able to understand without too much effort.

To gain fluency and accuracy in a foreign language children need to be exposed and in contact as many time as possible with it, even more, if they depend almost entirely on the school for input. As Fleta (2007) indicated, on child foreign language acquisition within the adequate conditions of input and time, children who are exposed to more than one language at an early age develop the new grammatical systems in a natural manner, only by being exposed to the languages.

Undoubtedly, schools can support this language development in speaking through the incorporation of technology in the classrooms. The amount of linguistic data learners have to access and the amount of exposure time are invaluable. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAYC) and Fred Roger Center (2012) provide guidance to those working in early childhood education programs, serving children from birth through age 8. The study offers a strong support about the effectiveness of using technology tools to develop

language skills (speaking, reading, writing, listening) when children are learning English. The Center explained that technology tools can be effective for dual language learners since digital technologies allow culturally and linguistically appropriate stories, games, music, and activities for every child. Because every child needs active practice in the four domains of language and literacy, technology resources should support active learning, conversation, exploration, and self-expression.

They stated that Technology should be used as a tool to enhance language and literacy, but it should not be used to replace personal interactions. It pointed out that technology can be used to explore the cultures and different environments, and it allows children to communicate with people in their different countries of origin. With technology, children can hear and practice accurate pronunciations so they can learn one another's languages. In contrast to the translation method and traditional practices to develop speaking skills, these centers agreed that language and literacy development are major strengths with technology use, especially when they are young children.

With the implementation of Voice Thread activities young learners can be motivated to participate in discussions more effectively and be able to encounter positive experiences to improve communication skills, in and outside the classroom; they will have the required time and extended exposure to the target language.

As Chanthiramathi (2011) indicates, the 'mechanic learning' of language shall immediately be reassessed, since the inability and incapability of this sort of approach in achieving a standard proficiency of speaking. The repetition of dialogues, large memorizations and grammar as a strait jacket, are not the best ways to develop speaking skills. This researcher

explained that teachers will be able to create the perfect balance in both accuracy and fluency through the implementation of didactic activities on web.

Chanthiramathi (2011) wanted to enhance the speaking skills of foreign language students who were experiencing the immersion into a bilingual context through the use of technology. He pointed out that since the development of the Communicative Language Teaching, speaking is not merely producing correct pronunciations, accurate grammars and vocabularies, but also how to practice fluency, speaking without pauses and the ability to keep going without hesitation.

For this author, classroom interaction plays an important role when developing fluency and accuracy, because it involves the verbal exchanges between learners and teachers and learners themselves. He argued that is very important to experience real communicative situations in which learners can interact among them and with other people and he conceived media as a mediator of message from communicator to communicant or from the teacher to the student.

One of the useful tools found on the internet to foster language skill is the web site Voice Thread. Brunvand & Byrd (2011) explained that this is an interactive, multimedia slide show tool, enables users to hold conversations around images, documents, and videos. Brunvand took into account that not all people learn in the same way because every brain absorbs, processes and retains information differently, that is why he made some researchers with a group of elementary students with special needs implementing some Voice Thread activities. Some of his researchers had to do with the language skills. He proved that learners with special needs, learning problems, disabilities or behavioral disorders can really succeed, can become active learners and can be

engaged and motivated. He stated that students could participate without the pressure of the classroom especially when it is required for the teachers, students think or give a quick answer.

Through Voice Thread tasks, learners that normally had attention problems or that need special treatment could now realize a greater level of success in school. About the speaking skills, the author explained that this program allowed students to express and organize their ideas more natural and spontaneously. (p.36).

Brunvand & Byrd (2011) stated out the following statement:

The prevalence of free or low-cost tools such as VoiceThread has created opportunities for teachers to explore new strategies for providing instruction and new ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts. Maintaining focus and attention, actively participating in the learning process, and being motivated to carry an academic task through to completion are all areas where at-risk students and students with disabilities might struggle. Using a tool such as Voice Thread can help students with special needs realize a greater level of success in school. Such tools can provide a guided learning environment where students can participate in ways that are conducive to their individual learning styles. (Brunvand & Byrd, 2011, p.36).

Appealing to the interests presented in this inquiry, Voice Thread creates opportunities for pupils to make language “on their own”, and it will maintain focus on attention, actively participation and the required motivation to carry out academic tasks. Voice Thread makes itself necessary to address with the needs of a target population in troubles with speaking. The

challenging part for teachers, deals with the management of platform and the demanding time for monitoring and providing feedback through the web.

For this inquiry, the development of the activities in Voice Thread provides the target population opportunities to practice the foreign language and support the learning environment by giving tools for dissertation, communication, negotiations, cooperative work, and interaction. It will work on acceptable language and the ability to use the linguistic system more effectively and appropriately.

In the same line to the above authors, Chappelle & Jamieson (2008), stated out that considering that English teaching and learning contexts are equipped with new techniques and didactic tools to offer meaningful context for language development and interaction, and with the abolition of traditional techniques to teach a foreign language since it failed to give the desired outcome. they explained that speaking covers all the language abilities and that it is a fast-paced mental and physical activity that requires to process linguistic knowledge automatically; for them, CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) is what better helps in that process. They supported that speaking skills, focuses on CALL, can develop pronunciation, sounds, oral practice through interaction with the computer and self-learning, They explained that what once involved embarrassing repetitions in whole-class oral exercises as occurred in other methods, can now be conducted by learners working individually at the computer.

Activities in VoiceThread allows the students to notice language forms from itself and others, to make collaborative projects, have optimal modified input and interact among them in an attractive and integrated space. Bush (2009) stated out that educators can extend their

classrooms beyond the traditional brick-and-mortar walls to communicate with the world. One of the best ways to do so is to introduce VoiceThread into language lessons. In doing so, students can create conversations that extend across the classroom or across the globe.

Another study proved the effectiveness of technology tools in language learning and language skills in young learners. Young (2001) stated that technology can provide an added option for children to learn. She defined learning as the process where learners actively build an understanding of the world based on their experiences and interactions

Computers need to be viewed not as new ways to transmit information, but new ways for children to create, experiment, and explore. Young stated that when used appropriately, technology supports and extends learning in valuable ways to increase educational opportunities for children. I agree with Young that technology empowers language and language empowers interaction because learners can express their feelings, emotions and thoughts.

This useful work proved that computers encourage longer, more complex speech and the development of fluency. Young stated that children interacting at computers, will engage themselves in high levels of spoken communication, language structures and cooperation such as turn taking and collaboration; it also indicated that computers elicits more social interaction than the traditional activities such as puzzle assembly or block building. The author stated that computers, when placed in labs, limit children's access because there is a tendency to use drill as traditional method does, and there is less collaboration and peer tutoring, while more tool-oriented software is used in the classroom. Teachers should ensure the equitable use to every child. Educators will need to purposefully plan for equal access by all children and to continually monitor and manage computer use.

A study made by Abdel-Haq, Abdel-Sadeq, & Aly (2013) about using a multimedia-based program for developing EFL students' speaking fluency skill, revealed a significant advance in their speaking skills after using it and proved the effectiveness of using technology as a tool to enhance fluency. The authors explained that participants started to use the materials for interaction and communication among them and created their own videos and share them via email with their instructor and group members. During the activities students manifested certain number of hesitations, pauses, backtracking and corrections, but finally learners could organize their oral production both cognitively and physically, use gap-fillers correctly, and produce language spontaneously without interlocutors

It is a relevant project since it shows how, by the implementation of a technology tool, speaking difficulties can be overcome and how learning environment can be supported. The program offered tools for dissertation, negotiations, and interactions and provided online support so learners could be aware of their evolving understanding and cognitive growth. The incorporation of a multimedia-based program in traditional EFL learning environments allows teachers use pedagogical activities for developing successfully fluency and the spontaneous production of oral language without hesitation.

Similar to the above research, Baniabdelrahman (2013) investigated about the "Effect of using internet tools on enhancing EFL students' speaking skill". This project aimed to examine the effects of using shared online oral diaries on the EFL students' speaking proficiency in comparison with the traditional method. The study showed that undergraduate students spent years learning English, but their English proficiency was generally unsatisfactory when compared to the amount of time spent in learning it. The most important reasons for

unsatisfactory speaking skills the researcher found, was the lack of usage of these skills outside the classroom. Online oral diaries allowed students to have the opportunity to practice their language skills anywhere and with little prior preparation, which kept them involved in the process. As a result, when the speaking proficiency was evaluated, the grades were favorable.

Evidently, students were provided with socially rich environments through a voice-program so they could improve their fluency and accuracy. The activities were focused on interaction, conversations, listening and speaking activities, classmates' experiences, and cooperative learning and appealed to a wide range of learning types and multiple audience. Language forms and negotiation of meanings were also developed.

The research above, focused on the language use, gave students the chance to practice English more often and more freely, which helps break their hesitation, shyness, and anxiety. (p.26). Baniabdelrahman (2016) pointed out that English teachers should encourage their students to live English in other spaces so they can use it even out of the classroom and he also taught that the planned activities must deal with learners' interests.

Finally, all these theories and researchers proved the effectiveness of technology in learning and teaching a foreign language; and as Wang (2005) established, there are many advantages integrating technology in classrooms to be able to improve students' language skills, like writing, reading, listening and speaking. (p.1)

CHAPTER IV

Type of research

According to Ellis (2012), descriptive research aims to produce qualitative accounts of classroom processes, the factors that shape these and their implications for language learning. This project follows the descriptive tradition because it deals with the transformation of pedagogical practices that will not only affect teaching but also learning processes. The descriptive tradition allows teachers to be aware of their students and their classroom

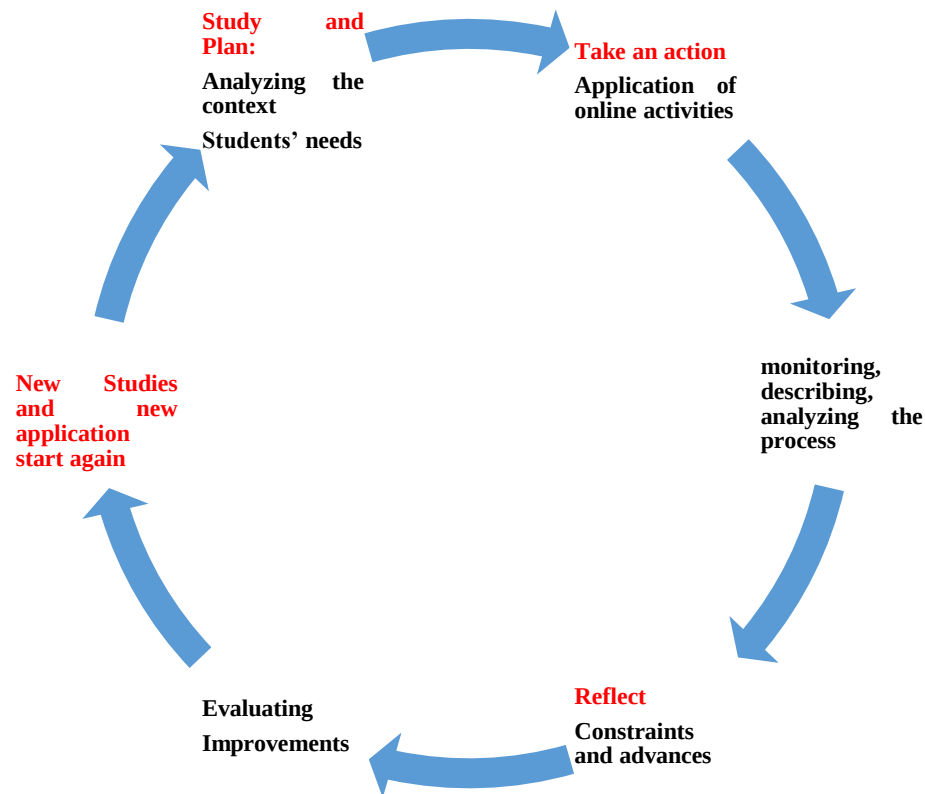
Corbin and Strauss (2008) said that “qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture”. The research design that better appeals to this project is Action Research, as Greenwood & Levin (2007) stated, this design allows to study teachers’ own classroom, instructional method, students and assessments in order to better understand them and to be able to improve their quality or effectiveness. This project focuses specifically on the exclusive characteristics of the population with whom some actions must be taken. As an action research requires, this project will focus on the development of something new and critical reflections on its effectiveness, moreover, it is looking for ways to improve instructional practice and learning processes through a process of observation, revision, and reflection. It will also influence the teacher’s performance and its pedagogical practice.

The Teacher-Researcher implies to design an “instructional design”. Merrill, Drake, Lacy & Pratt (1996) pointed out that “instructional design is the technology of creating learning experiences and learning environments which promote instructional activities”. To carry out this research, it is necessary to create an instructional design as a pedagogical tool to find answers

and solutions to the difficulties faced in the context. The researcher must design procedures to foster speaking skills (fluency and accuracy) and be attentive to some processes that imply monitoring students' performances, constraints and providing feedback. Moreover, it is necessary to promote the new learning environment and responds to the different eventualities presented during the intervention. (p.7). For the qualitative report, it is necessary to analyze and describe the data collected through the recordings students make, surveys and observation through video recording. Aspects such as students' performances, language development, experiences and limitations are describe too.

Finally, the stages of this research will follow as proposed by Riel's models (2008).

Graphic 2. Development of the research methodology.



On stage one, which is Study and Plan, the teacher-researcher must design instruments to collect data from the context and participants in order to identify students' needs and strengths.

The teacher studies the community in which the research is carried out and the context in which the learning and teaching processes take place. To accomplish this, the teacher-researcher makes class observations and surveys teachers and students. See Appendix A, B and C

After the teacher-researcher identifies the necessities, she must think about a plan so it can address them.

Teacher must get the permission from the school to carry out the project and from parents to allow children to participate on the web. See Appendix D

The teacher-researcher makes a practice with the students using VoiceThread and surveys students about their impressions and their dispositions to use the tool. See Appendix E.

Teacher must explain students how to use the technological tool, mails and how to participate in the activities.

On stage two, which is Take an Action, the teacher-researcher develops the pedagogical intervention and collects new data from direct experience. It takes into account the topics and methodology proposed in the didactic unit. This stage lasts two months. See Appendix F

It follows the research design and chronogram of activities. See Appendix G

Teacher must explain again to students how to use the technological tool and how to participate in the activities.

The teacher researcher must collect evidences from videos, surveys and audio recordings to evidence the process and the improvement of accuracy and fluency in speaking.

As a part of the implementation, the teacher-researcher must record oral questionnaires before and after pupils' participation in Voice Thread. But, always, after completing what it was planned in every lesson. It asks the same questions before and after participating on the site; and the conversations must be recorded in the classroom. See Appendix H

After finishing recording each questionnaire, the teacher-researcher will organize and save the data using rubrics. See Appendix I and J.

The teacher-researcher must describe the students' 'performances taking into account the criteria established in Appendix L and M.

The videos will be recorded in different classes and it will facilitate and support the analysis of how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread improve accuracy and fluency in the spoken language. When students complete all their activities in Voice Thread, the teacher researcher will gather and analyze some data relevant to the project. See Appendix K.

During the development of the activities the teacher-researcher must monitor, describe, and analyze the process and the aspects to be taken into account for the research.

With the required information from all the activities, the teacher will describe their progresses and growths before and after using VoiceThread.

On stage three, which is Reflect, after the implementation of the activities, the teacher-researcher will take into account the results obtained in order to evaluate the process (limitations, progress, constraints and advantages), and finally to take new actions

On this stage, the teacher-researcher analyzes data through triangulation. This is a “process of relating multiple sources of data in order to handle on what is happening in reality and to have greater confidence in research findings” (Greenwood and Levin, 2007, p.12). Variety of data helps in getting a more holistic picture of the phenomena which is being investigated in this study. The triangulation process is better described in chapter V.

Context and participants.

The research is carried out at Montessori School in Cartagena, with a group of 13 students aged between 8 and 9 years old. According to the survey, these pupils have been learning English since pre-school, they all have access to technology and internet. They find difficult to participate in listening, reading and speaking activities, however they consider that speaking is the most difficult ability for them. See Appendix. N.

They practice English by doing some homework and listening to music. Students like English and enjoy their classes but they do not have sufficient oral practice out of the classroom (they do not speak among them, other teachers, during the break, at home). See Appendix N.

Students learn English integrated with other subjects like arts, reading, science and social studies; it means that English is planned to be studied around 18 hours per week; these hours are distributed in the mentioned subjects.

In the observations, it is appreciated that students and teachers have enough space to work, the light is clear and properly, the furniture is in a good condition and there is a good environment for learning and teaching purposes. The curriculum and syllabus design follows the Montessori methodology which enrolls some principles of active pedagogy and Maria Montessori thoughts, and it is the mandatory methodology to teach English in primary. The aim of the school with the

English teaching is “to provide the students enough opportunities in terms of study and work, to keep up competence and become acquainted of other cultures so they can have a wide view of the world.” (Montessori School’s PEI, 2004, p.23).

Professors teach English using Montessori material that is already printed, laminate and is available for the students. Following the Montessori Methodology, classes take place in a “circle” that is formed when all the students are seated, the teachers develop their classes through three stages (show me, this is and what is this). Generally, the educator does some listening and oral activities when teaching English, however, they focus more on reading and writing. Students are eager to do more speaking activities and they like the idea of using technology in and outside of the classroom.

Population

Patton (1990) pointed out that qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples selected purposefully. The logic of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. However, total population sampling is the most suitable in this research because the size of the population that has the particular set of characteristics that the researcher is interested in is very small. For better and worthy results, it is important to work with all the units (people), it means that all the thirteen students of third grade are participating in the research study at Montessori School.

Data collection Instruments

Cohen, L, Manion, L & Morrison, K. (2007) explained that surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events. Through the simple questionnaires used in the survey it can be determined what a student perceives or feels about the self, others, situations and activities carried out during the development of the project. The surveys will also help to evidence their constraints and strength during the development of their speaking skills through the implementation with VoiceThread.

Marshall and Rossman (1989) explained that observation is a systematic description of events behaviors and artifacts in the social setting chosen for the study. (p.79). Observation allows the researcher studying people in interaction and describing as precisely as possible some of the events and behaviors of the social setting chosen for this inquiry. In this research study, this technique is used in order to capture aspects that may go unnoticed in the surveys, to analyze students' process in their speaking skills and the relevance and effectiveness of the virtual activities implemented. Video and audio recording are useful for observation.

Garcez (2011) pointed out that the proper use of the moving image, coupled with the audio, allows capturing aspects that may go unnoticed when other resources are used. Such aspects are: body, facial and verbal language used in everyday situations (for a systematic observation, for example); reactions of different subjects in the face of an activity or issue proposed by the

researcher - such as visualization and interpretation of a film and or fixed image (photo, engraving, symbol, icon, etc.); listening to music; reaction to reading a text aloud; individual reading of a text; participating in focus groups; performance of tasks and / or activities in groups or individually etc.

In addition, Torres, A., Vera, A. & Guevara, I (2013) explained that through audio-recording, aspects such as pronunciation and improvements in oral production can be analyzed.

Pedagogical Design

Introduction

The mere act of teaching implies to take into account essential factors like the context, students' needs, methodologies, topics, goals, materials, lesson plans, and so on. Such as factors influence and affect directly both processes of teaching and learning.

According to the Institutional Educational Project of Colegio Montessori Cartagena (Montessori School's PEI):

The development of learning has no limits. Children can learn everything they want and need in a dynamic, entertaining and always with an essential element that is the motivation itself. The learning environment must help to develop self-esteem, habits of order, perseverance, concentration, love of work, autonomy, leadership, among others (...). The classroom is a place where there is permanent movement and creative activity, knowledge is acquired through repetition, manipulation, experimentation, discovery and free choice. (Montessori School's PEI, 2014, p.23).

Through this pedagogical intervention students learn English in active and lively ways through the use of technology and Montessori material. It allows learners to work in group, to enjoy learning a foreign language, to strength their confidence, and to acquire knowledge in English.

“The teaching process must promote, beyond the transmission of knowledge, the ability to develop different skills to learn and understand their world, themselves and others as established in the curriculum” (School's PEI, 2014, p.28).

The didactic unit addresses the difficulties students from Colegio Montessori Cartagena are facing in their speaking skills and also contribute to the school's vision on being "the most advantaged institution in Cartagena committed to satisfy the expectations of the community, through the development of continuous improvement".(School's PEI, 2014, p.48).

The contents are based on the student book KID BOX 3 -Cambridge University Press. The survey shows that the topics are relevant to students' interests. See Appendix P.

These topics are included in the syllabus and are developed during the first and the second term of the year.

Finally, speaking skills and communicative competences will be strengthened in this pedagogical intervention taking into account the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which enrolls the learners to speak and struggle with the foreign language while interacting with others and of course by the integration of technology.

Classes will be taught with the Montessori Method, which enrolls principles from Maria Montessori and Active Pedagogy.

View of Learning

Brown (2007) stated that learning must be meaningful for the learners, and he defined meaningful learning as the process of making meaningful associations between the existing knowledge and new material will lead toward better long-term retention than rote learning of material in isolated pieces. Learning is not the mere act of memorizing things; students need to become associated with something they already know and to appeal with their interests.

During classes the teacher must elicit old vocabulary to activate previous knowledge and require student participation throughout the lessons to keep students more engaged with the new topics. In addition, activities with Voice Thread helps students to put in practice what they learn in class and allows them to make relations with the new topics.

According to Richards & Rogers (2001), learning is associated with habit formation, induction, inferences and can vary depending on the method. It means that students can learn in different ways the same topic. (p.22)

Through the activities, students are conscious of their learning, they know the importance of participating in VoiceThread and in classes.

Students make language on their own, they discover and organize new experiences and understanding with classroom activities and VoiceThread tasks. They learn the same topics in different ways-using Montessori material and technology.

Learning can take place both inside and outside the classroom and can happen without the learner being aware of it, as stated by Lindsay and Knight (2006). We can learn in and from everywhere. Students visited VoiceThread at the school and at home and make more comments on the same task in other places.

View of Teaching

Richards (2011) defined teaching as an act of performance, and for teachers to be able to carry themselves through the lesson; they need to have a repertoire of techniques and routines at their fingertips. Considering this statement, it can be inferred that teachers are responsible for a large amount of what happens in the classroom- what is taught, the resources used, type and order of the activities, management, assessment, feedback, corrections, designing material, and so on-.

For this pedagogical intervention, the teacher must combine Montessori methodology with the use of technology. This implies changes in teacher's performance since it is essential to handle both Montessori Methodology and VoiceThread. Teaching is viewed as innovative and creative. It requires the designing and adaptation of the didactic materials for the presentation of the topics in classes.

It is not enough to have knowledge of a specific subject but pedagogy is necessary for effective teachers and teaching, as Richards (2011) stated, teachers need to be trained (p.9).

Teaching is related with some functions, as established by Lindsay and Knight (2006). (p.3).

- The understanding of learners' language needs and responds to them positively
- Designing lessons regarding students' needs and communicative skills
- Monitoring and correcting sensitively
- Providing feedback and encouragement when appropriate.

Brown (2007) explained that there are functional principles that can form the building blocks of teachers' theoretical rational; such as principles are classified in three general groups:

cognitive principles which are related to mental and intellectual functions, socio-affective principles which enroll emotional involvement and social relations and linguistic principles that center on language itself and on how learners deal with the complex linguistic systems.

During the development of the activities with VoiceThread, the teaching process must deal with the students' needs and interests and with the designing of activities according to students' levels. This process allows to provide feedback and be attentive to learners' progresses in their speaking skills.

View of Learners

Talking about the experiences I have faced as an English teacher and as a student, I can define learners as the main actors of their own learning process that being stimulated investigate, participate and take the initiative to make things, grow up and build their knowledge.

With this didactic unit, learners have the opportunity to take an active part of their learning by performing their own tasks, they are able to learn new topics and to participate in different contexts. Oral activities with VoiceThread also aims to increase in responsibility for their own learning process in order to achieve the expected goals and help them to release their full intellectual potential.

Richards & Rodgers (2001) said that learners were seen as stimulus-response mechanisms whose learning was a direct result of repetitive practice. In other words, it means that learners plan their own learning and assume the responsibility for what they do in the classroom. Students can evaluate and monitor their own process. This author also stated that students are members of a group and that they learn by interacting with others, also they can monitor other learners and learn from different sources.

Activities with VoiceThread allows the interaction among students and offers repetitive practice of the same topic. Students can be conscious of their weakness and strengths every time they have the chance to rehearse themselves and to listen to others. They have to take the initiative to participate on the web and be responsible with the assignments.

I learnt that students can be “active”. Lindsay and Knight (2006) explained that an active learner can develop positive habits that allow them to learn more quickly and efficiently. This kind of students can be prepared to experiment, take the risk and monitor their own language use and self- correct where necessary.

The planned activities for this implementation encourage students to take the risk in participating and in experiencing with a new technological tool. They allow them to become conscious of their responsibilities in doing a good job.

Methodology

Taking into account the results of the needs analysis and based on the speaking difficulties students are facing, it is necessary to combine some elements of the Communicative Language Teaching integrated with technology and the mandatory method of the school which is Montessori Methodology.

Communicative Language Teaching.

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001) it has a rich theoretical base and follows a communicative view of language and communication principle.

Some of the characteristics are:

- Language is considered a system for the expression of meaning.
- The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication
- The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
- The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning.

The topics and the activities in this didactic unit are designed and must be presented with the goal of allowing students to communicate and interact among them. Oral activities with VoiceThread promote the development of ideas around topic that are familiar and concern to learners' interests. Activities focuses on the balance of two language features (accuracy and fluency) allowing students to use acceptable and fluent language.

Montessori Methodology.

Maria Montessori⁴Foundation (2006) explained that the method is characterized by providing a prepared environment: tidy, pleasing in appearance, simple and real, where each element exists for a reason in order to help in the development of the child. The prepared environment offers the child opportunities to commit to interesting and freely chosen work, which brings out long periods of concentration that should not be interrupted. Freedom develops within clear limits, and this allows children to live in harmony with others in the small society they belong to in the classroom.

Children work with concrete materials that were scientifically designed, which provide them the keys to explore our world and develop basic cognitive abilities. The materials are designed to allow the child to recognize the error by him/herself and become responsible for his/her own learning.

Lněničková (2015) explained that “according to Montessori, the child absorbs the language from his/her environment as a whole, human can absorb only through seeing and hearing. For teaching languages, it is necessary to know and understand the development of language” (p. 32).

Through the implementation of oral activities in VoiceThread, students receive two important inputs to develop speaking skills, they have the opportunity to strengthen a visual memory of words and to distinguish the sounds through listening.

This author also pointed out that “Self-esteem and motivation play very important part in the language development. Children can be supported by the prepared environment. If the

⁴ Foundation from Argentina that prepares teachers, parents and schools to develop Montessori methodology. Retrieved from: <http://www.fundacionmontessori.org/metodo-montessori.htm>

children feel well about themselves, it will be reflected in everything they do in their lives” (p. 32).

The design of the activities with VoiceThread and different tasks in the classroom reinforce the children’s understanding and their competency in language.

According to Montessori (cited by Lněničková, 2015):

When the child speaks, he/she learns to express his/her ideas in words. He/she needs the feeling of safety and self-confidence. The role of the teacher is to encourage the child, prepare suitable environment that meets the child’s needs. Teacher supports the child’s language development through asking the questions, discussing, playing various language games. (Lněničková, 2015, p.33).

Professors teach English using Montessori material that is already printed, laminate and is available for the students. This material plays an important part of the suitable environment. Montessori Method is mandatory for classes.

During the presentation of the lessons of this pedagogical implementation, the educator teaches English following these steps. (Lee, 2005, p.125).

- The teacher and students sit down forming a circle and the educator presents the lessons of the topic that students are going to learn.
- The professor divides the lesson in 3 times.

1-“This is”: in this part ONLY the teacher speaks and she/he introduces the topic following the sentences “This is”...

2-“Show me”: in this part teacher invites students to show the picture assigned.

3-“What is it”: in this part teacher asks some questions related to the topic. It is the oral production stage.

Role of the Teacher

As explained Maria Montessori Foundation⁵ (2006), “the adult is an observer and a guide: it helps and stimulates the child with all its effort. This allows children to act, want and think by themselves, and helps them to develop confidence and inner discipline”.

During the development of the tasks, the teacher must plan activities that require a pair or small group of students, the idea is to provide opportunities for interaction. The teachers must encourage students to use the online tool, provide guide and feedback after any speaking activity, and to ensure that students stay focused.

The teacher needs to be attentive to the progress and process of every student when doing the activities with VoiceThread and during the classes.

Role of the Student

Regarding the communicative principles, Richards & Rogers (2011) established that a learner is a negotiator between the self, the learning process and the object of learning. The learner should contribute as much as he/she gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way.

Students develop positive habits that allow them to learn and to reinforce what they already know. When they feel ready to participate in VoiceThread, they can do it at the time they consider. They need to be ready to do, to experiment and to be conscious of the importance of what they are doing.

⁵ Retrieved from: <http://www.fundacionmontessori.org/metodo-montessori.htm>

Students must be responsible in taking advantage of the prepared environment to empower their intellectual potential. Students should enjoy leaning through the activities with VoiceThread and participate as many times as they can do it.

Syllabus Design

This pedagogical intervention assess students' needs regarding fluency and accuracy in speaking and responds appropriately to demands placed on Montessori school in Cartagena. The course starts with an introductory part related with greetings and introducing people and go deep with the development of other topics according to the level (beginners). The teacher follows TCL and Montessori Methodology to carry out the unit. The topics and materials are structured in a flexible way to make it suitable for different teaching and learning situations, however there is a specific oral focus to enhance communicative skills by doing oral activities. See Appendix F.

It follows the standards on level A1 as established by the European Framework. Students can speak around interesting topics relevant to their lives, they will interact in different scenarios and will be able to use simple grammatical structures when communicating their ideas. This syllabus is planned to be developed in 2 months. The pedagogical intervention has one unit and this unit has 10 main lessons. It has been established the main goal and several objectives to reach along the development of the unit and lessons.

Chanthiramathi (2011) pointed out that speaking is not merely producing correct pronunciations, accurate grammars and vocabularies, but also how to practice fluency, speaking without pauses and the ability to keep going without hesitation. (p.2). This syllabus is focused on communicative competences and speaking skills.

The main goal aims to help students to introduce themselves and to express abilities, needs, frequency of doing something, simple descriptions about places and routines. It also aims help students to use language to communicate.

Evaluation

According to the School's PEI:

The evaluation is primarily a pedagogical relationship where cognitive, emotional, and expressive performances are integrated. Evaluation must consider affective and cognitive factors, it is not merely the grades of the different contents. The evaluation will be continuous, dynamic, comprehensive, systematic, flexible, interpretative, participatory, formative, descriptive and qualitative. (Montessori School's PEI, 2004, p.28).

During this implementation, the teacher must observe carefully the whole process and provide feedback that serves as an element to empower the strengths and correct weaknesses of learners. The teacher must support the shortcomings of the process and factors involved in learning.

By the end of this language course, students should be able to express abilities, possessions needs, frequency of doing something, simple descriptions about places and daily routines.

The specific goals are:

- Learners will be able to say greetings and talk about personal information.

- Learners will be able to talk about places to live
- Learners will be able to talk and to write about daily routines
- Learners will be able to talk about their abilities and possessions.

Activities in Voice Thread.

Students must enter to the VoiceThread platform with their usernames and passwords, then they have to be attentive to the example and the guide the teacher gives in it and finally participate orally by audio or video recording themselves. Students have to listen other presentations and give positive comments about others' tasks. They are allowed to correct among them.

Students are asked to give and ask personal information such as name, last name, age, nationality, favorite color, favorite food, direction, etc. They are also invited to talk about the activities they are doing at the moment and talk about what other people are doing in different context. Learners have the chance to talk about the abilities they have and sports, their possessions such as toys and games, their needs, their daily routines and the frequency of actions they do. Students also express the sequences of their actions, what they do after or before another action occurs. They have the chance to talk about their dream house and describe their own actual homes. See Appendix Q.

During these activities students are encouraged to use simple grammar structured and the use of some verbs in different tenses which are necessary for the speaking tasks See Appendix. F.

Oral Activities in the classroom.

Students participate orally during the presentation of the slides, reading activities, drills, dialogues and songs. According to the topics, they have to answer the same oral questionnaires

before and after participating in VoiceThread. Some of these conversations are recorded to evidence their progress.

The questionnaires will be analyzed following the established criteria regarding accuracy and fluency. See Appendix L and M.

Materials

The teacher must design slides for the presentation of the topics in the classrooms and the activities in Voice Thread. Teacher must select videos, songs and printed materials. All these resources are evidenced in the lesson plans and didactic unit. See Appendix F.

CHAPTER V

Data collection and Analysis

This chapter contains the description and analysis of the pedagogical implementation and the categories established for this inquiry.

The analysis and descriptions aim to response to the main question and two connected sub-questions of this research. This descriptive study produces qualitative accounts of the development of some sub skills in speaking (accuracy and fluency). In other words, this qualitative research serves to observe and describe the process in which accuracy and fluency were enhanced in a certain group of students through the implementation of some oral activities with VoiceThread. It analyzes the progress after and before the development of these oral activities.

About the Implementation

The implementation took place at Colegio Montessori Cartagena; during the mornings, 5 hours per week.

Based on the syllabus proposed by the researcher, the implementation was guided by the principles of TCL and Montessori Methodology.

There were ten main lessons in the didactic unit. The lessons integrated the development of the basic skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening), however, there was a strong focus

on the speaking skill. All the lessons required the integration of technology due to the use of songs, soundtracks, videos, slides and pictures.

The lessons were performed following three stages, the first one was the opening where the teacher did an introductory activity or review to activate the previous knowledge, the second one was the development, in this stage the teacher presented the topics following the Montessori methodology (this is, show me, what is this?) with the integration of technology. During the presentation of the topics, the teacher shows some of the slides designed for the VoiceThread activities so students can have previous ideas for their further participation. Students were provided with opportunity to observe, to show, to think and to participate. Finally the third stage was the closing, where the teacher did a short activity in which students were able to show what they learnt during the lesson and students participated in VoiceThread.

The data gathering.

To describe how the implementation of oral activities with Voicethread influences fluency and accuracy in speaking, contribute to the enhancement in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar in speaking and promote the development of coherent and fluent ideas in speaking, it was necessary the usage of instruments such as surveys and observation (audio recordings and videos).

Students were asked to participate in ten activities with VoiceThread.

Observation served to observe participants in action and to describe if their exhibited behaviors belong to what is being studied. Observation through videos and audio recordings helped to gain knowledge, reach understanding and answer research questions.

The videos served to analyze and describe the way the participants work, learn and interact with the platform to develop fluency and accuracy in speaking. Through videos, it is appreciated students' processes and progresses during their performance in speaking activities with VoiceThread.

Videos and audio recording also evidence how the constant participation with VoiceThread influence their speaking and participation during the classes. In other words, videos allow to appreciate students' thoughts and pronunciation, the way they struggled to speak (repetitions, fluency, and coherence), their performances and their interaction.

Every week, at least one video was recorded. The videos were recorded in different classes during the development of the lessons and when students were participating in VoiceThread. Transcripts about videos and audio recordings are data sources to produce reflective and descriptive information on the phenomena being observed. Some of these transcripts are presented in the analysis and results.

The audio recordings allows to appreciate the impact of VoiceThread in students' speaking performances. If participant could finally speak more accurate and fluent.

Considering that VoiceThread is totally new for children, the teacher-researcher uses the surveys to support the observed behaviors. Surveys serve to describe factors such as motivation, feelings, limitation, interaction, challenges, attitude, and learning environment. See Appendix K.

Criteria and Steps to analyze data

The teacher-researcher used Data triangulation for analyzing the data.

According to Hales (n.d.) data triangulation “is the use of a variety of data sources in a study. Findings can be corroborated and any weakness in the data can be compensated for by the strengths of other data, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the results” (p.14).

The teacher researcher used multiple data sources to have an expanded look at the situation and to answer with meaningful insights the main research question.

According to Hales (n.d.) there are three steps for data triangulation. First, the goal of triangulation must be agreed. Second, the data must be collected or aggregated before they can be reviewed, and finally, the data are analyzed and conclusions are drawn. (p.32).

Following this model, the process of the analysis is described as follows:

Step 1: Agree on the goal(s) of the data triangulation.

Hales (n.d.) explains that on this stage it is important “to agree on achievable goals” (p.32). Goals should be appropriate, relevant, actionable and feasible.

For this research study it is important to describe how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread influences fluency and accuracy in speaking. Accuracy is related with pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary; and fluency with skill to talk in coherent, appropriate things to say, use pauses, sentences length and rhythm, and the development of thoughts. Comprehension is involved in these features. (Torres, 1997, p.98).

This relation among fluency and accuracy with other language features makes necessary to describe how the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread contributes to the enhancement in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar in speaking and promotes the development of coherent and fluent ideas in speaking.

How does the implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread influence fluency and accuracy in speaking to third grade students at Montessori School?	
Accuracy	Fluency
Pronunciation	Development of coherent and fluent ideas (Talk in coherence, appropriate things to say, use pauses, sentences length and rhythm).
Grammar	
Vocabulary	
Comprehension	

Data triangulation's goal are to observe and describe how the benefits and features of VoiceThread helps the students to speak more accurate and fluent, and to detail how learners gain vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and the development of fluent and coherent ideas through the use of VoiceThread.

Step 2: Request, collate and aggregate the necessary data.

Hales (n.d.) explains that if the data is not available the researchers must collect them, and when all the data required for triangulation are available, data must be collated, aggregated and then presented in a graphical way, which makes it easy to compare the similarities and differences as well as the strengths and weakness of the inputs. (p.32).

First, the teacher-researcher recorded some videos when students were participating in VoiceThread to observe the particular setting and situations when they were speaking through the platform and took notes of the repetitive and new actions students did when taking advantages that VoiceThread offered. These observations were registered in a chart. See Appendix J and Y. Then the teacher-researcher used the charts to see the trend in the different videos (if the activities are achieving the desired goal in students' speaking).

The pedagogical intervention lasted eight weeks. As the pedagogical implementation must show results and progress in term of students' learning and the expected goals in their speaking skills (accuracy and fluency), the teacher-researcher recorded oral questionnaires after the lesson plans finished every week (One questionnaire before students participate in Voice Thread and the same one after their participations on it).

These audio recordings have a range of questions as it shown in Appendix H. After listening each recording, the teacher researcher described them following the established criteria on Appendix L and M, and registered in a rubric chart on Appendix I. The results are presented in a graphic on Appendix O.

The surveys were carried out at the end. Questions used in the surveys are appreciated on Appendix k.

The aim of doing it at the end is that the more experiences students have with VoiceThread, the stronger will be their answers to complete the survey.

The results of the surveys are represented in graphics. See Appendixes from R to X.

As it is noticed, the teacher-researcher organized, classified and aggregated data through the use of rubric- charts and graphics.

Step 3: Analyze the data and draw conclusions.

Hales (n.d.) pointed out that “there is not fixed rules for the process of analyzing data for triangulation, however, there are several activities at the heart of the process”. (p.34).

This author cited some examples. First, the analyst should make critical observations of the data. Second, the analyst should identify if there is any trend of the data. Third, the analyst should develop working hypothesis related to the goals of data triangulation. Fourth, analyst should work to confirm or refute hypothesis. Fifth, the analyst should use the convergence of data supporting or not supporting the hypothesis to draw reasoned conclusions from the triangulation exercise. (Hales, n.d., p, 34-35)

Taking into account the above examples, the teacher-researcher prioritized the findings most relevant to the goals of triangulation, identified if the behaviors, situations or performances studied during the research were constant in the different data sources, found and supported hypothesis through the different findings and insights, and finally, drew her conclusions.

#1.The implementation of oral activities with VoiceThread influences accuracy in speaking.

To describe how these activities with VoiceThread influences accuracy in speaking, it is essential to mention how the benefits and features of VoiceThread contribute to the enhancement in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar in speaking.

Accuracy: Pronunciation

Voice Thread offered exposure to sounds in an authentic context and provided them opportunities to listen to others' participation and to record their participations as many times as they want which strengthen their own pronunciation , there were voices in the classroom telling "oh no! I made a mistake! I will try again!- Anda! I did not say this word well!. In different occasions they said to their classmates "Hey, you did not say this word well!! Repeat your presentation". They learnt pronunciation by doing, thinking and interacting, children could also learn to pronounce new words by trying to sound them out through VoiceThread. It is proved that "the more children listen, the better. When they are listening they are absorbing pronunciation and intonation, repeat what they hear" (Slattery and Willis, 2011, p, 42)

VoiceThread contributed to the repetitive practice of sounds, they imitate voices and intonations when recording their participation. They corrected mispronounced words of their classmates' presentations.

They repeated their presentations because there were mispronounced words and in the next presentation they did excellent, they showed happiness and feelings of successfulness. In the videos it appreciated when they said " yuju.. Miss, I pronounced everything right", "Yes!! I

said very well! Recording and listening their voices in this platform allowed the students to find themselves making greater strides than they would otherwise.

Feeling that you are pronouncing and speaking well, keeps your motivation in the subject matter. Brown (2007) said that motivation propels students toward improvement of pronunciation and “generally speaking, children under that age of puberty stand an excellent chance of sounding like a native if they have continued exposure in authentic contexts” (p.340).

Students showed good attitude toward the new technology tool in their leaning processes. The survey shows that students recorded their participations more than one time before their final presentations in the same activity. See Appendix W. Mispronounced words, lack of vocabulary and inaccurate language forms were reasons to record themselves more than one time. It makes part of their self-correctness.

Students always listened their own participations before send them to the group, when they did this exercise, some of them said “oh, I said /las/ and not /last/” “I said /mai nei/ and not /mai neim/” (my name).

VoiceThread allowed students to be conscious of their pronunciations, by allowing them to read aloud the words, to get oral inputs, to struggle with the target language in communication, to rehearse and to correct their mistakes. “When children repeat set phrases they are getting used to saying English sounds, practicing the intonation patterns and gaining confidence” (Slaterry and Millis, 2001, p.43).

Constant oral exposure in English through VoiceThread strengthen students’ accent and pronunciation. VoiceThread allowed pupils to listen to all the pronunciations the times they wanted to, as a result, students were able to get familiar with sound system, intonation, stress and

rhythm. The platform allowed to stop the listening and go back to the part of the soundtrack they want to listen to again.

The surveys and videos showed students were careful in pronouncing words and more aware of their talk at the time of speaking when recording their presentation, Slattery & Willis (2001) said that children acquire pronunciation and intonation naturally by listening the teacher. When the teacher talks they absorb the sounds of the language. But it does not mean that they will produce perfect words. Children need to try out the sounds, to play with the sounds and mimic the sounds. (p.52).

Brown (2007) stated out that “our goal as teachers of English pronunciation should therefore be more realistically focused on clear, comprehensible pronunciation for learners to speak”. (p,340). VoiceThread allowed students to listen the teacher’s example before they participate. They always listened to the teacher’s guide before recording their voices. Clear and comprehensible sounds through VoiceThread allowed students to understand, to speak and to model their pronunciation.

In the audio recordings, it is appreciated that before participating in the activities with VoiceThread, students had many errors in pronouncing words, although it allowed comprehension.

Words like name, last, climb, castle, stairs, bike, tired, shower, fly, kite, breakfast, old, and get dressed were mispronounced. Words with ch, th, sh sounds were difficult to say.

They pronounced climb like /clain/, name like /nei/, last like /las/, bike like /bai/, etc.

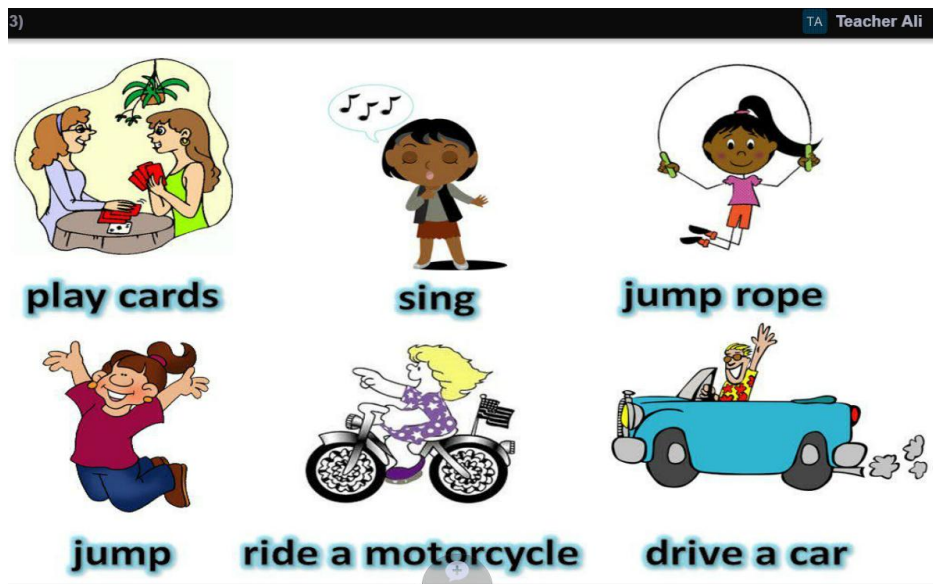
They frequently omitted sounds like the mentioned examples, changed sounds like bathroom /basrum/ shower /chower/or pronounced words by saying all the letters sounds like dressed /dre-sse/, mountain /moun-tain/, Wednesday /we-nes-day/

After participating in VoceThread, students had more accurate pronunciations. The intonation and rhythm of words were very good.

Accuracy: Vocabulary.

VoiceThread allowed learners to express their ideas using varied words and using discourse markers to connect sentences. These words were visible and accessible for them in the pictures. Through the activities with VoiceThread the words were presented several times and in different ways. As Slaterry and Millis established (2001) “children are learning new things all the time so it is easy for them to forget. To help children remember the new words and phrases they need to use them several times and in different ways”. (p.48).

Graphic 1. A slide with vocabulary about the abilities they can do.



VoiceThread provided students with sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, everyday transactions involving familiar situations, needs and topics. Hearing and reading new words, having conversations and questions about interesting topics in VoiceThread helped to get new vocabulary into everyday talk. Chapelle & Jamieson pointed out that:

Programs can teach vocabulary explicitly by presenting new words and then providing learners with practice for learning their meanings. Many techniques-including presentation of images, first-language, translations, synonyms, and contexts in which the words appear-are used to draw learners' attention to the new words and to ensure their understanding. (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008, p.17).

In the videos, it is appreciated that they always read aloud the words and pointed them with their fingers. Through VoiceThread students could reinforce the vocabulary learnt during the classes and they were introduced into new words in a simple and attractive way.

VoiceThread helped students to gain vocabulary in context and see the words and connect them with pictures. It was not necessary to translate the words because learners could relate the meaning (word and image). Brown (2007) said that guessing words encourage students to develop strategies for determining the meaning of words (p, 437). Learners were provided with repeated exposure to the words and phrases so they could use them more actively.

Chapelle & Jamieson established that:

Appropriate vocabulary refers to the words students need and are prepared to learn. The words that students need are those that fit within the topics or subject areas that are useful and of interest to them. Words that students are able to learn are words with an appropriate level of difficulty. These are words that they are most likely to run across in everyday conversation and reading. (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008, p.13).

In the surveys, all of them expressed they could learn new words and liked audio recording, listening to others' opinions, talking and drawing at the same time, and recording videos. See Appendix V.

The audio recordings showed a significant improvement in terms of vocabulary.

Excerpt 1: a conversation in a classroom activity before using VoiceThread with a students who speaks with very limited words about herself.

Teacher: what's your name?
Student: Valeria
Teacher: what's your last name?
Student: este..Garcia
Teacher: Where are you from?
Student: en ..United Sates.
Teacher: What's your favorite color?
Student: mmm blue!

Teacher: what toys do you have?
Student: I have mmmm... a ball
Teacher: What else?
Student: Miss, como es que se dice muñeca?
Teacher: doll
Student: I have doll
Teacher: and no more?
Student: mmm una cuerda y rompecabezas
Teacher. Wao! A Jump rope and a puzzle!! Good!

As in this conversation, in many others, students answered the questions but they could have used more vocabulary at the moment of speaking. They showed a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations. They could

communicate what they wanted to say in a simple and direct exchange of limited information on familiar topics.

However, in the following excerpt the same student included more words.

Excerpt 2: a conversation with a student after participating in VoiceThread.

Teacher: what's your name?
Student: My name is Valeria
Teacher: what's your last name?
Student: My last name is Garcia Torres
Teacher: Where are you from?
Students: I'm from United States. Well, I was born there.

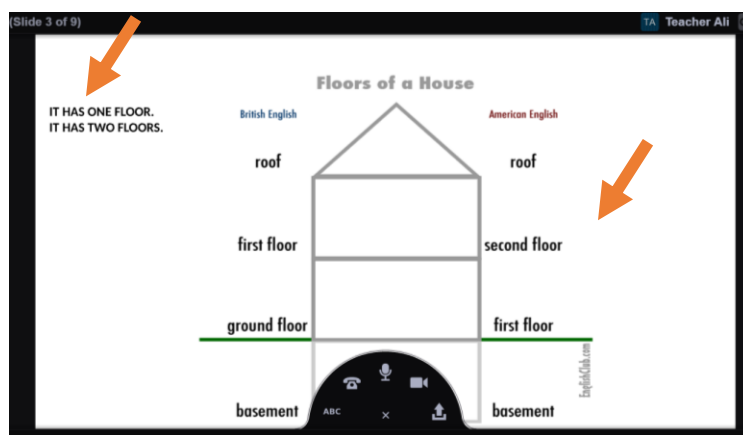
Teacher: what toys do you have?
Student: I have a ball, cards, barbies and Lego.
Teacher: What else?
Student: I have a bike, a tablet, a teddy bear and a big doll
Teacher: Very good!

VoiceThread allowed students to practice with full sentences during the listening and speaking tasks so they could be more familiar and engaged with the subject in matter. Slattery & Willis (2001) said "that new words and phrases need to be used a lot after teachers have introduced them so that the children learn to use them actively". (p.50).

Accuracy: Grammar.

. VoiceThread showed the language forms to be used in their participations. Learners always read and used the language forms evident in the slides and put them into practice to give support to their answers. Children struggled with the sentences and repeated them many times. In the videos are evidenced some examples “It have a ...Ay IT HAS a” , “ I don’t cant... I CANNOT” It is proved that “the target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate” (Richards and Rodgers, 2011, p.156).

Graphic 2. A slide with vocabulary and sentences.



Ellis (1998) points out that regardless of how grammar topics are chosen, grammar learning requires that learners receive a combination of structured input, explicit instruction, production practice and feedback about correctness. VoiceThread provided students with opportunities for learning grammar in all of these ways. In the pictures they could appreciate the simple grammar structures to be used and the vocabulary, the clear instruction and, of course,

they had the chance to put in practice these structures by recording their thoughts and ideas about a topic.

The activities with VoiceThread drew learners' attention to grammatical structures allowing them to see them written in the pictures, and provided opportunities with practice in recognizing and producing those structures through listening and speaking tasks. These activities increased students' strategies for continuing to learn grammar beyond the classroom.

When recording their participation in VoiceThread, students used more accurate language forms when speaking because the grammar explanations were brief and simple. Grammar explanations must be approached with care, sometimes teachers forget that students are so busy just learning the language itself that the added load of complex rules and terms is too much to bear. (p,424).

In the videos it is noticed that when using VoiceThread, there was less confusion in grammar structures and tense. Learners identified better pronouns, verbs and conjugations. There was more order in words and sentences due to the use of visual aids. However, the majority of the students recorded themselves more than two times avoiding grammar mistakes, they wanted to present an excellent participation.

VoiceThread allowed cooperative learning and work. Example:

Excerpt 7. A part of a conversation when students were participating together.

Student A: "no digas I playing, es Im playing"

Student B: "it's ok, but " No es Natalia and Mario is, es are".

“When learners collaborated in conversations about grammar, they assisted each other in getting the correct answer”. (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008, p.50). When learners recorded their participation in the company of other student, it was noticed collaborative work, corrections and explanations among them. The survey shows that the population made effort to pronounce very well when participating. Students were perseverant, they could manage time efficiently to do their tasks and faced every obstacle in class and in the Voice Thread platform.

Continuous voice recording let them know to be conscious of their weakness and difficulties in speaking accurate, but at the same time, they gained the braveness to overcome them. Some of them said “Anda Miss, my talking is a chaos.. I need practice” “Miss I got many tongue twisted”. Activities with VoiceThread allowed learners to have more logical organization in their ideas so they can be easily understood. Students used as much as they could the whole vocabulary and were attentive to grammar structures presented in the pictures so they could express themselves more unmistakably.

In the audio recordings, before using VoiceThread, it was noticed syntactic and linguistics errors in different conversations, there were confusions in the pronouns, wrong conjugations like they am, she are, I is, she can running, I don’t can’t, etc.

Excerpt 3: a conversation with a student in a classroom activity.

Teacher: Where are you from?
 Student: I from Cartagena (omit “am”)
 Teacher: I am from..
 Student: I´m from Cartagena.
 Teacher: how old are you?
 Student: I 8 year old. (Omit “am” and the “s”)
 Teacher: I´m.... years
 Student: I´m 8 years old.

Excerpt 4: a conversation with a student in a classroom activity

Teacher: What toys do you have?
Student: I am (inappropriate verb)
Teacher: I have
Student: I have a kite
Teacher: tell me toys you don't have
Student: I have (lack of negative form)
Teacher: I don't have
Student: I don't have

Excerpt 5: a conversation with a student in a classroom activity

Teacher: What can he do?
Student: I can... (Incorrect pronoun)
Teacher: no, he can
Student: he can sing.
Teacher: What can they do?
Student: I can... (Incorrect pronoun)
Teacher: They can...
Student: They can slide.

In the examples above, there were missing vocabulary and grammar structures to express themselves with more clarity, sense and coherence.

The audio recordings after using VoiceThread showed a significant improvement in accuracy. Students' sentences were with more sense in relation to the context and with the topics. Students frequently used connectors such as but, and, then, before, after.

As Brown (2007) said grammar is contextualized in meaningful uses and integrated into the total curriculum so that students can readily relate grammatical pointers to their other work in English.

#2. VoiceThread influences fluency.

Fluency is related with the ability to communicate, in this analysis is presented how the activities with VoiceThread promote the development of fluent and coherent ideas.

Activities with VoiceThread developed children`s thinking skills by allowing them to organize and create ideas. Harmer (2009) said that speaking should be treated as a skill where there is a task to complete and speaking is the way to complete it. (p,123). VoiceThread offered this kind of activities, where learners are provided with a lot of opportunities to speak and extend their ideas and thoughts. In the activity below, students completed the task by speaking about a possible situation in the park. Everyone shared their personal impressions and personal talk about it.

Graphic 3. A slide about a productive oral activity What are they doing?



With this kind of activities in VoiceThread, students tried to use all of the language they know. As Harmer (2009) said “the more students have opportunities to activate the various elements of the language they have stored, the more automatic their use of these elements become. (p,123). Through videos, it is evidenced that students gradually became autonomous

language users, it means that they were able to use words and phrases fluently without very much conscious thought.

Harmer (2009) stated out that “people need time to assemble their thoughts before any discussion. After all, it is a challenging to have to give immediate and articulate opinions in our own language, let alone in a language we are struggling to learn”.(p,123). Voice Thread allowed children to know with anticipation the topics to be discussed throughout each activity so they could plan and think ahead their ideas before the activities took place. They could listen other classmates` participations before recording their voices and they always had the guide and example of the teacher.

As it is shown in the example below; activities with VoiceThread provided children keys to communicate and to develop basic cognitive abilities.

Graphic 3. A slide of one of the activities in VoiceThread.



Excerpt 7: a student participating in VoiceThread.

Student: Hello boys and girls, I cannot fly, I cannot cook, I cannot dance, I can swim, I cannot surf, I can skate, and I can play cards and jump the rope. I cannot ride a motorcycle, I cannot drive a car, I cannot ski, but I can play basketball and play soccer... bye!

Due the constant exercise, after participating in Voice Thread, there was a significant advance in their language flow. Students were more confident when speaking and their ideas flow naturally and spontaneously. Learners were more autonomous in speaking and

participating, it means they did not struggle much to put their ideas in order. The conversation rarely stopped and answered coherently.

VoiceThread allowed students to record their participation many times before the final presentation, this fact had a positive influence during their participation in classes because they could express themselves at length with a natural, effortless, unhesitating flow. Pauses only to reflect on precisely the right words to express their thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation. See Appendix W.

In relation to the idea of fluency, Richards and Schmidt (2002) claim that in second and foreign language teaching, fluency can be considered as the ability to speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, and grammar, besides, the ability to produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication. In this study it is evidenced that students could balance fluency and accuracy.

Through VoiceThread, students did not speak with a “perfect” grammar and intonation but with a more clear idea of how to pronounce words and with the ability to produce continuous thoughts without causing difficulties in the transmission and building of the messages. They used acceptable language. “It is known that automaticity is not gained overnight, it is a complex task that requires time and patience” (Brown, 2007, p.64)

Thanks to VoiceThread their participation was active and independent. Students who were passive and silent, became active and talkative. They developed autonomous ability to take initiative in the classroom and to continue practicing English out of the classroom. At the beginning, they were somewhat dependent on the teacher, however, they developed a sense of autonomy through guided practice.

Videos evidenced that before participating in VoiceThread, learners required repetitions and slow and carefully articulated questions. They took considerable time thinking before giving answers. There were occasions in which answers were not accurate in relation to the topics. In general, they could understand short, simple speech on familiar matters. The following excerpt shows this fact.

Excerpt 8: a conversation in a classroom activity talking about personal information.

Teacher: what's your address?

Student: My address is Cartagena.

Teacher: how old are you?

Student: I am fine, thanks.

Excerpt 9: a conversation in a classroom activity talking about actions they are doing at the moment.

Teacher: what are you doing now?

Student: Como asi?

Teacher: Que estás haciendo ahora?

What are you doing now?

Student: mmmmm.. aaaa ya. Bueno.. Moving.

Excerpt 10: a conversation in a classroom activity talking about their needs.

Teacher: What do you need when you are tired?

Student: sometimes, I need an x-box 360...

Teacher: what do you need when you are thirsty?

Student: what? Mmm..

Teacher: what do you need when you are thirsty?

Student: I need.... Play?

In contrast, after participating in Voice thread, they were more conscious and able to answer than before. Their answers belonged to what was asked about. They could understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in school and used phrases and expressions learned during the development of VoiceThread activities.

The recordings show that before participating in VoiceThread, students were not as spontaneous as it was expected. There was a few flow of language but generally the conversation stopped. They were a little bit shy and expressed very short answers.

In other words, they made themselves understood in short contributions, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident

Excerpt 6: a conversation with a student in a classroom activity when talking about the actions they can do.

Teacher: What can you do?

Student: I can.... throw a ball..... but I can't... climb.

Teacher: and no more?

Student: mmmm.. I can... Como es que se dice saltar la cuerda?

Teacher: Jump the rope.

Student: I can jump the rope.

Slattery & Willis (2001) pointed out that “when children are listening to the teacher they often repeat words and phrases naturally and spontaneously”. When teachers are introducing new vocabulary and learners want to speak, teachers can encourage them to repeat the new items, use

pictures, sounds and other senses to support meaning, get children to colorful pictures of the new things they can name. (p.47).

Excerpt 7: some expressions of the students in which they imitated teacher's phrases.

Student A: Hello Boys and Girls! This is my presentation...

Student B: Bye, bye boys and girls... I invite you to participate!

Student C: see you on the next activity!

Student D: Good Job Ms. Ali!... Nice Presentation. Ms. Ali!

VoiceThread allowed children to say and learn many words and have them in phrases and sentences. They had plenty of opportunities to communicate.

Excerpt 8: a conversation after participating in VoiceThread.

Teacher: what can you do?

Student: I can clean but I can't kick a ball. I can slide and I can dance but I can't climb. I can sing, I can skate but I can't catch a ball. I can jump the rope but I can't throw a ball.

Teacher: Excellent!

VoiceThread encouraged pupils to create their points of view in each one of the activities. See appendix R. This means that these activities gave them the opportunity to pick out and reproduce key words and phrases or short sentences from pictures. They could comment and contrast their point of view.

They expressed that the activities were funny and easy to accomplish. See Appendix S. The survey shows that the students consider that it was easy to participate and all of them connected their learning with real world application. It is appreciated that students extended learning beyond the requirement of the task; they always were attentive to self-correcting, self-investigation and self-learning. Slattery & Willis (2001) expressed that "children need to feel

successful when using English, they need to know that they have achieved something worthwhile and to enjoy their efforts at speaking in English”. (p.55).

Undoubtedly, it was easier for them to speak about the same topics of their face-to-face sessions as they were already familiarized with such topics. This way, learners could continue expanding and reinforcing their course contents with a different, fashionable, and attractive technique.

The participants of this study increased their English practice from out-of-class learning environments because as it is appreciated in the activities on the web they recorded videos in other places and comment other partners` tasks.

Nash & Calonico (1996) defined that social interaction is “a process of communication and mutual influence involving contact between two or more minds” (p.68). Providing learners with a computer-driven learning environment enabled them to interact with others while using and communicating in the target language.

As Brown (2007) explained “the communicative purpose of language compels us to create opportunities for genuine interaction in the classroom” (p.53). It is not a secret that those chances to interact have been greatly impacted by the use of new technologies and computer mediated communication tools. Different activities with media resources supported a socially rich environment in classes. It is evidenced in the videos that there is a relevant connection between language and social interaction practices.

Students did not feel fear or nervous when recording their voices and participating on the web. They could learn from their partners and that all of them could express

their ideas better after participating in Voice Thread. Most of them tried to speak as fast as they could to participate in the activities. See Appendix x.

During the activities in Voice Thread, it is noticed the positive feedback and corrections students made among them. Phrases like “good participation” “good job “ and “don’t say... say this..” .

Students invite themselves to participate. “I invite Gialuca” “I invite Samuel Aguilar”.

At the end of the course, the students were able to express abilities, simple descriptions about places and daily routines. Students could exchange information, express their needs, preference and the frequency when doing something. Learners introduced themselves and asked information about others. They could give and perform commands. Students could accomplish every goal for the different lessons and their good grades are the results of good performances in classes. See Appendix O and Y.

As it is shown in Appendix V, every student, even those with special needs, could accomplish the goal of the unit. With this experience, teachers must recognize that if used intelligently, technology can match to each child’s unique needs, learning styles, and individual preferences.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions

The analysis and interpretation of data drew the following conclusions in response to the main objective. It has been revealed by the results that at Montessori School the learning achievement of students and speaking proficiency are affected when the English teaching and learning processes are enhanced by the use of technology tools. With the implementation of the didactic activities on the web, students could organize their ideas cohesively, speak more freely and spontaneously, use simple grammar structures, increase their vocabulary and improve their pronunciation. It is demonstrated that the use of technology in the classroom can promote the collaborative communication and interpersonal skills of students, and, consequently, change their attitude to learning.

Students spoke English more fluent and accurate by being provided with maximum opportunity to try out the target language in a rich environment that contained cooperative work, authentic materials and tasks. Accuracy and fluency were learnt in context, and with the daily use of the target language. It is observed what Susikaran (2012) stated out “whatever activities the students are involved in, if it is genuinely communicative and really promoting language use, the students should have a desire to communicate and use language in some way to achieve the objective” (p.179). Learners’ attention should be centered on content of what is being said not the form that is being used. And the pupils will have to deal with a variety of language rather than just one language item.

The ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner in school and in their lives, when pupils were provided with a lot of input

to enrich their repertoire in vocabulary, expressions and grammatical structures for acceptable language, they were able to communicate, interact and negotiate meanings. They were completely happy. Results showed students fitted the natural flow of conversation and built comprehensible message.

The activities with VoiceThread influenced their proper motivation, drew students' attentions and arouse their interests to learn and to speak. When the teacher asked questions there were always students available to answer. They participated freely and spontaneously.

Brown (2007) stated that "the most powerful rewards are those that are intrinsically motivated within the learner". (p.68). It is observed how the teacher could perform a great service to learners and to the overall learning process by designing classroom tasks that feed into those intrinsic drives and motives. It is noticed how children participate because it was fun, interesting, challenging, playful, and useful; and not because they anticipate some cognitive or affective rewards from the teacher.

The research has demonstrated that effective technology, such as PowerPoint, songs, videos and website like Voice Thread are very enjoyable, help in best utilizing the thought-provoking time, limit disruption by students, provide outstanding methods for presenting the materials, and enhance speaking skills (fluency and accuracy). Different inputs enhanced positively their pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, comprehension and some aspect relate with phonology.

In this research, it is evidenced that the appropriate practices with technology and interactive media get students involved, allow them become active learner and help significantly

to increase students' participation and their motivation in English classes. Students' participation showed their strong motivation toward learning the target language.

The activities presented in the classrooms with the integration of technology supported students' understanding in English. It promoted the language use in a variety of ways and contexts: listening, imitating, singing, speaking, reading, writing and internet website.

The incorporation of different activities using media evidenced the desired output in students' oral production and in their abilities in speaking without pauses, hesitations and with clarity. Technology in the classroom allowed students to go from simple words to complex sentences about different topics and it mixed many elements at the same time to catch students' attention. As Jaflah Al-Ammary⁶ (2012) stated out, technological innovations are providing a range of possible solutions that can support English teaching and learning context. This research showed the effectiveness of using technology wisely to develop speaking skills, allowing students communicate, interact and learn in a didactic way.

⁶ Department of Information Systems, College of IT, University of Bahrain, Kingdom of Bahrain

Pedagogical implication

The findings of this research contribute to the designing of effective strategies with the use of technology to develop language skills in and outside of the classroom. Teachers should use professional perception in selecting, integrating, evaluating and using technology to support learning and teaching environments. They must emphasize active and productive commitment rather than passive, non-interactive or unproductive uses.

It was verified that “for children with special needs, technology has proven to have many potential benefits. Technology can be a tool to augment sensory input or reduce distractions”. NAEYC (2012) (p.9). In the classroom, there are two students with special needs, one with Asperger’s syndrome and the other with selective mutism. Both with problems in social skills. The first one has also a problem with foreign language skills and the second one has the particularity in her speaking skills due to the inability to express and communicate effectively in select social setting, in this case, at the school. According to her diagnostic, this child is able to speak in settings where she is comfortable, secure and relax.

With the implementation of the activities in Voice Thread, they took the risk to participate in public and express their feelings and opinions in every task. They changed their behaviors in the classroom and started to interact with other peers. They were able to produce orally in the target language and to show what they learn. It was appreciated the happiness of their classmates when they noticed that these students could act as any other child can do. It can be inferred that technology can support inclusive practices in childhood settings by providing

adaptations that allow children with disabilities to participate more fully. In these cases, technology provided support for cognitive processing and enhancing memory and recall.

Definitely, in this study, it is proved what NAEYC (2012) established “When used thoughtfully, these technologies can empower young children, increasing their independence and supporting their inclusion in classes with their peers”. With adapted materials, children with disabilities can be included in activities in which they once would have been unable to participate

As it is appreciated in the videos, technology and interactive activities on the web did not replace other beneficial didactic activities such as creative play and social interactions with other children and adults, however, they served as a mean to influence and support this process. English teachers must provide a balance of activities and technology. It is the role and concern of each teacher to make intentional and appropriate choices about how and when technology is used in classrooms.

The accomplishment of the goals in every task allows to recognize technology and media as tools that are valuable when used intentionally and wisely with children to extend and support active and authentic engagement with the knowledge and learning, with people around them and with their reality. This study evidenced that the authentic language and real-world tasks enable students to see the relevance of classroom activity to the long-term communicative goals.

Working with children is not an easy task, but it is an amazing experience. Using technology when teaching children a foreign language will help to stimulate their five senses so they can be ready to acquire and learn the new language system through different inputs, it will

also help to capture their attention and immediate interest to the subject in matter, and to have their natural curiosity and personal engagement.

In order to help children to develop fluency and accuracy in speaking, teachers should call attention to the role of technology tools in acquiring English as a second or foreign language at an early age at school. It is required a deep and serious commitment from teachers. It is necessary to monitor some factors such as affective, cognitive and social to reach the expected outcomes. Technology is ready to use and it is available across age levels, however, children need to be trained, guided and supported with all the possible feedback.

Limitations

Repetitive activities like recording oral questionnaires and videos affected students' natural performances. Some of them felt like being interviewed all the time and were a little bit exhausted, but others, enjoyed every conversation. During the videos some of them covered their faces with the books and others tried to appear as many times as they could.

The camera stopped sometimes while recording the videos and there were precious part of different classes that could not be observed. There were times in which the internet did not work well, and it was necessary to implement a different plan.

The insufficient quantity of computers in the classroom was a challenging part because a lot of children wanted to participate at the same time with their close classmates, and they could not do it.

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Appendix A

Survey for students.

...My English Context...

Grade: _____ Date: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Subject: _____ Teacher's name: _____

Questions	 Yes	 No	 Sometimes
Do you like English?			
Do you like learning English?			
Do you practice yourself English during the week?			
Do you enjoy your English classes?			

Do you practice English in and outside the classroom?			
Is speaking easy for you?			
In your classes, do you do different activities in English?			
Does your teacher teach you songs?			
Do you speak English with your teacher?			
Do you speak English with your classmates ?			

Thank you :)

...My English Context...

Grade: _____ Date: _____ Age: _____ Gender _____ Subject: _____
Teacher's name: _____

What material do you use to practice or learn English?

Do you use technology to practice English? Do you use technology to play?

Are your classes interesting?

What activities do you like to do in class?

Does your teacher use internet, webpages or videos in class?

What do you like most from your English class?

Thank you :)

Appendix B

Survey for students to identify language skills.

Read the phrase and circle the best answer.

When I study English, I find difficult...



The most difficult ability for me, is...



I practice English when I



Watch TV in English



Surf on the web



Listen to music in English



Do my homework



Read stories in English

I understand when someone speaks in English



Yes



no



so-so

I have studied English since



Pre-school



Primary

I speak English in



School



Home



Park (break)

My activities in the school are related with



I speak English with:



Parents



teachers



classmates or friends

Activa
Ve a Cor

Appendix C

Survey for the teachers.

...English Context...

Date: _____

Name: _____

Position held: _____

Institution: _____

Grade: _____

What material as a professor do you use to teach English?-----

Do you consider are there enough resources available to make the best of the classes? -----

Can you provide a short description of the level in terms of motivation and performance? -----

Do you think your students learn English?-----

What method do you use to teach English?

How do you motivate your students in this area?

Do you have any intervention while designing the curriculum and syllabus in this school? -----

What are the difficulties your students face regarding language skills?

What skills do you develop more in classes?

What do you think the school need to improve or implement to make better the English teaching?

Do you use technology in your classes?-----

What does your students need to improve in English?-

What skills do you help to develop in class? -----

Appendix D

Letter for parents` approval.

Estimados Padres de Familia.

Cordial Saludo.

Con el fin de desarrollar la fluidez y la precisión en la lengua extranjera al momento de hablar y contemplando las ventajas que las nuevas tecnologías ofrecen al aprendizaje y enseñanza de un idioma, quisiera contar con su apoyo para que los niñ@s puedan participar en algunas actividades orales que se realizaran en VoiceThread.

VoiceThread es una revolucionaria herramienta en línea que nos permite mantener conversaciones alrededor de contenidos multimedia (fotografías, vídeos, presentaciones.). Esta herramienta permitirá a los niñ@s escuchar las opiniones de sus amiguitos y aprender de ellos, interactuar en otro espacio significativo, dar la opinión propia y trabajar de forma interactiva y didáctica con el tema planteado. Es de muy fácil manejo.

Las actividades realizadas allí son netamente orales y sobre temas que ya los niños conocen y los manejan.

Habrán actividades en las que podrán participar en casa, requerirán de un computador (puede ser portátil, de mesa, tablet) o celular y tener los audífonos con micrófono para que puedan grabar sus voces.

La actividad como tal no requiere la intervención del adulto, el apoyo que necesito de ustedes es mantener la motivación en los niños y que los pongan a participar en la casa cuando se les indique. Cada niño tiene su correo y contraseña.

Los niños recibirán la instrucción de como entrar y participar. Será de mucho beneficio para ellos. Haremos una práctica con ellos.

Agradezco su atención y colaboración en este proyecto que de seguro beneficiara ampliamente a nuestros pequeños. Pasaran como loritos hablando Ingles!!

Atte. Ms. Ali.

Appendix E

Date: _____.

<i>Questions</i>	 <i>Yes</i>	 <i>No</i>	 <i>Maybe</i>
Do you like using VoiceThread?			
Do you feel good recording your voice in VoiceThread?			
Would you like to use VoiceThread in the classroom?			
Would you like to talk about your personal information and needs?			
Would you like to talk about your routine, toys and likes?			
Would you like to talk about your abilities?			
Would you like to describe places and what people do			

UNIT I HOME SWEET HOME

I Term	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
First Week	Introducing yourself	Learners will be able to express personal information and talk about actions that are happening. Learners will be able to write about	Tense Review Verb to be Introducing Wh-words Use of possessive: my-your. <i>Hi, what's your name? See you later!</i> <i>What are they doing?</i>	-Flashcards -Montessori Material -Conversation -Voice-thread -Notebooks and worksheets -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about the topic and will provide opportunities to practice the language. (Montessori Method) -Read and practice greeting phrases with your partner. -Listen to the song - Make a conversation with your mate and present it to the group. -Listen to the Dialogue about	-Greetings Expressions -actions

		personal information and actions that are happening.	<i>Present progressive.</i>		saying hello and good bye, say what you hear. -Find the words and complete some sentences given by the teacher. -Introduce yourself expressing your personal information. -Visit the VoiceThread Web site and introduce yourself and talk about actions are happening.	
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	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and Resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
Second Week	Abilities and possessions	-Learners will be able to talk and write about different abilities and express possessions .	Have/has It is... Big/old/new /small. I can.. What can you do?	-Montessori Material -Conversations -Voice-Thread activity -Notebooks and worksheets -Short interesting texts. -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about the topic and will provide opportunities to practice the language (Montessori Method). -Teacher will ask some information about the toys they have and their descriptions. . --Using the Voice-Thread Web site, students will talk about their abilities and possessions.	- actions -toys

Third Week	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and Resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
	Places to live	Learners will be able to talk about the places they live or see. Learners will be able to express needs.	I live in... It has.... I need ...	Flashcards -Montessori Material -Conversations -Voice-Thread activity -Notebooks and worksheets -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about the topic and will provide opportunities to practice the language (Montessori Method). - Teacher will show the slides to promote speaking. -students will talk about their needs depending on the situation. -students will talk about different places to live and their parts. --Using the Voice-Thread Web site, students will talk describe the place where they live and will talk about their needs.	Places Colors Numbers

Fourth Week	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and Resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
	Types of homes	-Learners will be able to identify and describe some special places.	There is/are It has... I would like to live.	-Flashcards -Montessori Material -Conversations -Voice-Thread activity -Notebooks and worksheets -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about the topic and will provide opportunities to practice the language. Montessori Method. -Teacher will show the slides with the different types of home and students will talk about that. -students will give reasons about the places they would like to live in. -Through the Voice Thread Website, students will talk about their dream house.	City, country, types of homes. .

Fifth Week	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and Resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
	Routines	-Learners will be able to talk and write about daily routines. -Learners will be able to talk and write about daily routines using before and after.	Simple present	-Flashcards -Montessori Material -Conversations -Voice-Thread activity -Notebooks and worksheets -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about daily activities and will provide opportunities to practice the language. Montessori Method)-Students are going to express what they commonly do every day.-students will describe the situations taking into account the slides. – Through the Voice Thread students will talk about their daily routines.	Daily routines

sixth Week	Topics	Objectives	Language Grammar	Materials and Resources	Activities to be done.	Vocabulary
	Adverbs	-Learners will be able to talk and write about daily routines using the frequency adverbs.	Simple present How often? Never/always/ sometimes.	-Flashcards -Montessori Material -Conversations -Voice-Thread activity -Notebooks and worksheets -computer. Slides Video Song	-Teacher will present an oral exposition in the circle about the topic and will provide opportunities to practice the language. (Montessori Method) -teacher will ask some questions with How often do you...? To elicit answers with adverbs. -Students are going to write some sentences taking into account the questions. . -Through the Voice Thread web site	Always Never Sometimes Daily Routines

Evaluation: after each week the teacher will evaluate oral and written, the different topics studied. It will grade them from 1 to 100 as it established by the curriculum of the school. At the end of the unit students will take a final exam.				
Designed by Alicruz Rojano Pineda				

Appendix G

March 7 Introduce yourself	March 8 Introduce yourself	March 9 Actions people are doing Oral questionnaire about Introducing Yourself (before)	March 10 Actions people are doing.	March 11 Oral questionnaire about Introducing Yourself after participating in Voice Thread.
March 14 Goal: talk about possessions and toys. Oral questionnaire about Actions people are doing Before using Voice Thread.	March 15 Goal: talk about possessions and toys.	March 16 Oral questionnaire about Actions people are doing after participating in Voice Thread	March 17: Goal: Goal: talk about different abilities Oral questionnaire about possessions and toys before participating in Voice Thread.	March 18 Goal: talk about different abilities Oral questionnaire about possessions and toys after participating in Voice Thread
March 28 Goal: to talk about the places they live or see. Oral questionnaire about Abilities before participating in Voice Thread	March 29 Goal: to talk about the places they live or see.	March 30 Oral questionnaire about Abilities after participating in Voice Thread	March 31 Goal: Learners will be able to talk and write about their needs.	April 1 Goal: Learners will be able to talk and write about their needs.
April 4 Goal: Talk about places where people live and exchanging personal information. Oral questionnaire about Needs before participating in Voice Thread	April 5 Goal: talk about situations using the given vocabulary . Oral questionnaire about Needs after participating in Voice Thread	April 6 Goal: able to identify and describe some special places. To give reasons. I would like to live in ... because...	April 7 Oral questionnaire about the dream house before participating in Voice Thread	April 8 Oral questionnaire about the dream house after participating in Voice Thread

April 11/12 Goal: to talk and write about daily routines.	April 13/14 Goal: talk about daily routines	April 15 Oral questionnaire about Daily Routines before participating in Voice Thread April 18 Oral questionnaire about Daily Routines after participating in Voice Thread	April 19/20 Goal: to talk about routines and time. Talk about routines using before/after	April 21/22 Goal: to talk about routines using before/after
April 25/26 Goal: to talk and write about daily routines using the frequency adverbs.	April 27/28 Goal: to talk about actions people frequently do	April 29 Goal: ask questions using How Often. Oral questionnaire about Frequency Adverbs before participating in Voice Thread	May 2/3 Goal: to talk about situations using the learned vocabulary. May 3 Oral questionnaire about Frequency Adverbs before participating in Voice Thread	May 4/5 Goal: interview each other about daily routines.

Appendix H

Questionnaires	
1	What is your name? What is your last name? How old are you? What is your address? What is your nationality? Where are you from? What is your telephone number?
2	What are you doing? What are they doing? What is he doing? What is she doing?
3	What can you do? Can you dance? Can you move? Can you speak in English?
4	What toys do you have? Is it old or new? Is it big or small?
5	What do you need when you are hot? What do you need when you are sick? What do you need when you are cold? What do you need when you are tired? What do you need when you are hungry? What do you need when you are thirsty?
6	Can you describe your dream house?
7	What do you do in the morning? What do you do in the afternoon? What do you do at night?
8	What do you do before you go to school? What do you do after you go to school? Do you take a shower after you eat breakfast? Do you brush your teeth before you go to sleep? Do you do your homework before you go to school?
9	How often do you play soccer? How often do you do your homework? How often do you go to the beach on Mondays? How often do you have dinner at 8:00?

	How often do you eat hamburger at night? How often do you take a shower in the afternoon? How often do you do exercises? How often do you eat pizza on Saturdays? How often do you cry at home? How often do you go swimming on weekends? How often do you play piano on Tuesdays?
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Appendix I

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT: RUBRIC

Students' Performances	Number of students	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Students speak with pauses and gaps.	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				
Students take a considerable time to express their point of view	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				
Students are able to answer immediately when they are asked about familiar topics. (Comprehension) Students' answers belong to what is been asked.	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT: RUBRIC

Teacher directions: Indicate how well students do the following when speaking in the oral activities.

Students' Performances	Number of students	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Student's pronunciation	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				
The student use acceptable language forms	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				
Student expresses clear and coherent ideas	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				
	Student 9				
	Student10				
	Student11				
	Student12				
	Student13				
Spontaneous flow of language when speaking	Student 1				
	Student 2				
	Student 3				
	Student 4				
	Student 5				
	Student 6				
	Student 7				
	Student 8				

	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					
Use of Vocabulary	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					

Appendix J

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT RUBRICS

Teacher directions: Indicate how often students do the following when speaking in the oral activities.

Student's Performance	Number of students	Always If the performance is presented in all the videos	Usually If the performance is presented in 8 of the 10 the videos	Sometimes If the performance is presented in 6 of the 10 the videos	Rarely If the performance is presented in 4 of the 10 the videos	Never If the performance is not presented in any videos
Student is involved in creating their own point of view.	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					
Student connects learning with real-world applications	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					
Student extends learning beyond requirements of task (autocorrecting and self-investigation, self-learning)	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					

Student imitates phrases from others.	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					
Students interact and responds to each other.	Student 1					
	Student 2					
	Student 3					
	Student 4					
	Student 5					
	Student 6					
	Student 7					
	Student 8					
	Student 9					
	Student10					
	Student11					
	Student12					
	Student13					

Appendix K

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT: SURVEY

Student Directions: Answer the questions about what you feel when doing the activities.

1-Te grabaste más de una vez para una realizar las actividades?

SI

NO

2- Hasta cuantas veces te tuviste que grabar para una hacer la actividad?

De 2 a 3

De 4 a 5

Solo una vez

Otro? ____

3- Como te sentiste con las actividades?

Emocionado

Bien

Regular

Normal

4- Que te gustó de las actividades?

Grabar

Escuchar a tus amiguitos

Hablar y dibujar

Hacer videos

Todo

5- Como te pareció la actividad?

Fáciles

Difíciles

Aburridas

Divertidas

6- Como te sentiste al participar en la actividad mientras grababas tu voz?

Emocionado

Bien

Nervioso

Aburrido

7- Sentiste miedo al participar o hablar en las actividades en Voice Thread?

SI

NO

8- Que dificultades tuviste al participar?

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT: SURVEY

Student Directions: answer the questions individually.

1- Te esforzabas por pronunciar bien mientras grababas y hablabas?

Si

No

2- Tratabas de hablar más rápido cuando hablabas?

SI

No

3- Te sentiste motivado para participar?

Si

No

4-Te gustó Voice Thread?

Si

No

5- Fue fácil participar en Voice Thread?

Si

No

6- Piensas que las actividades te ayudaron expresar mejor tus ideas?

Si

No

7- Aprendiste de tus amiguitos?

Si

No

8- Aprendiste nuevas palabras?

SI

NO

9-Sientes que pudiste expresar mejor tus ideas después de participar?

SI

NO

Appendix L

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT #3 RUBRICS/Speaking

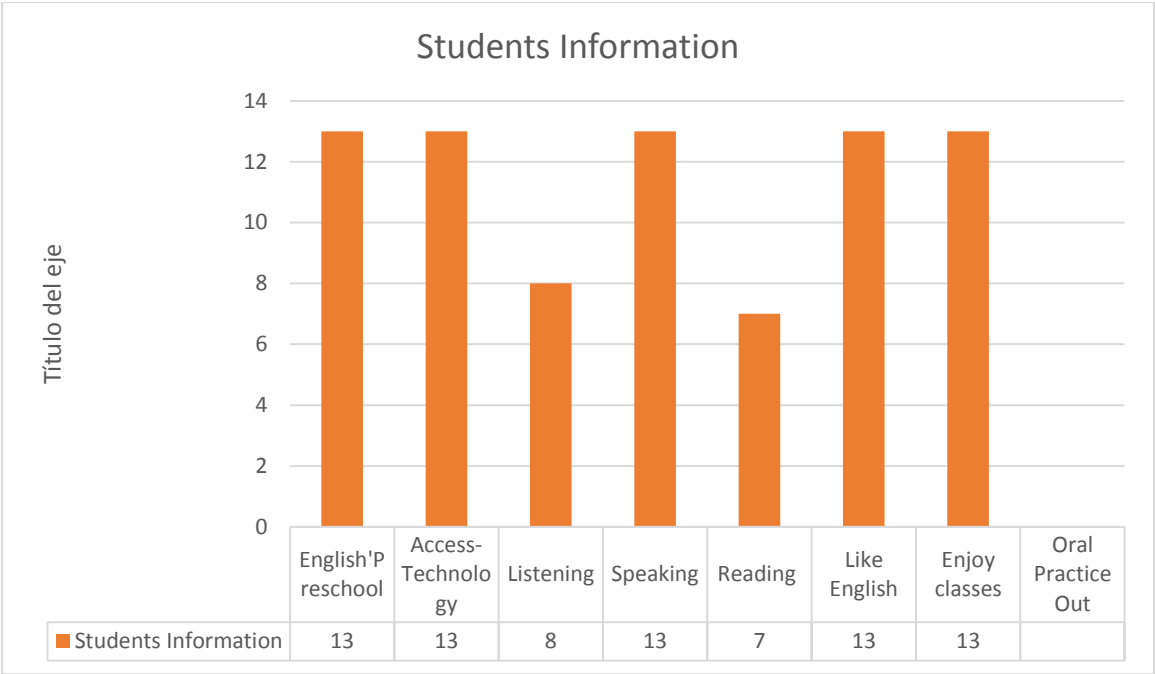
Student's Performance	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Student's pronunciation	accurate pronunciation	Few errors in pronouncing words.	Many errors in pronunciation but it allows comprehension.	Inaccurate pronunciation.
The student use acceptable language forms	Accurate language forms when speaking.	Few mistakes in language forms when speaking.	Errors in language forms when speaking but the ideas can be understood.	Inaccurate use of language forms.
Student expresses clear and coherent ideas	Logical organization in their ideas so they can be easily understood.	Good organization in their ideas so they can be understood.	Suitable organization in their ideas so they can be understood.	Minimal organization in their ideas, hard to understand them.
Spontaneous flow of language when speaking	Natural and autonomous speaking	Show spontaneity when speaking without pauses.	Suitable flow of language	Lack of spontaneity when speaking.
Use of Vocabulary	Awesome use of words when expressing ideas. Varied vocabulary Use a lot of discursive marks to connect ideas. Use all the possible vocabulary	Good use of words when expressing ideas. Varied and basic vocabulary	Use of repetitive words. . Basic vocabulary	Use of limited words when expressing ideas. Minimal vocabulary

Appendix M

SAMPLE INSTRUMENT #2 RUBRIC/speaking

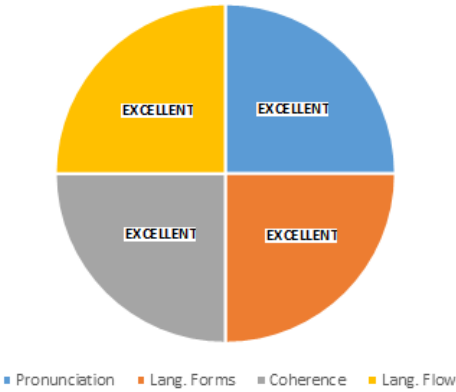
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Student speak with pauses and gaps.	Express their ideas without requiring gaps and pauses.	Express their ideas requiring very little the use of gaps and pauses.	Express their ideas using pauses and gaps when necessary	Express their ideas with the frequently use of gap and pauses.
Students take a considerable time to express their point of view	Express their point of view taking time to expose many ideas. Express what they think as much as they can.	Express their point of view taking advantage of time to express more than one idea.	Late in expressing their point of view to what is required.	The information is very limited.
Student interacts and responds to each other.	Share information among them and correct themselves as many time as possible.	Share information among them and correct themselves.	Share the required information among them and correct themselves when necessary.	Share very little information among them.
Students are able to answer immediately when they are asked about familiar topics. (Comprehension) Students' answers belong to what is been asked.	Answer immediately Full understanding Answers are accurate in relation with the topic.	Take little time to think and then answer Good understanding Few errors in answers	Take considerable time to think and then answer Satisfactory understanding Mostly accurate answers in relation with the topic. Require repetitions.	Take much time thinking about the answers, before expressing their points of view. Partial or limited understanding of the questions. Inaccurate answers in relation with the topic.

Appendix N

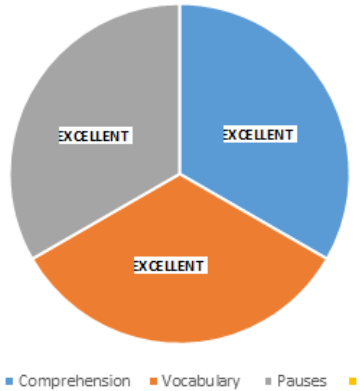


Appendix O

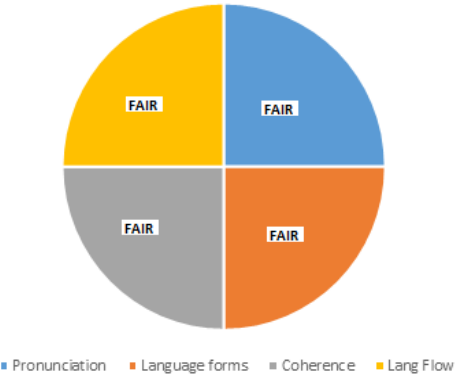
Students Participation After VoiceThread



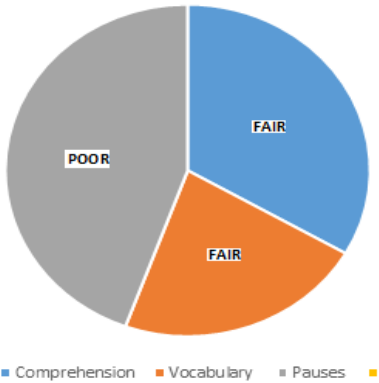
Students Participation After VoiceThread



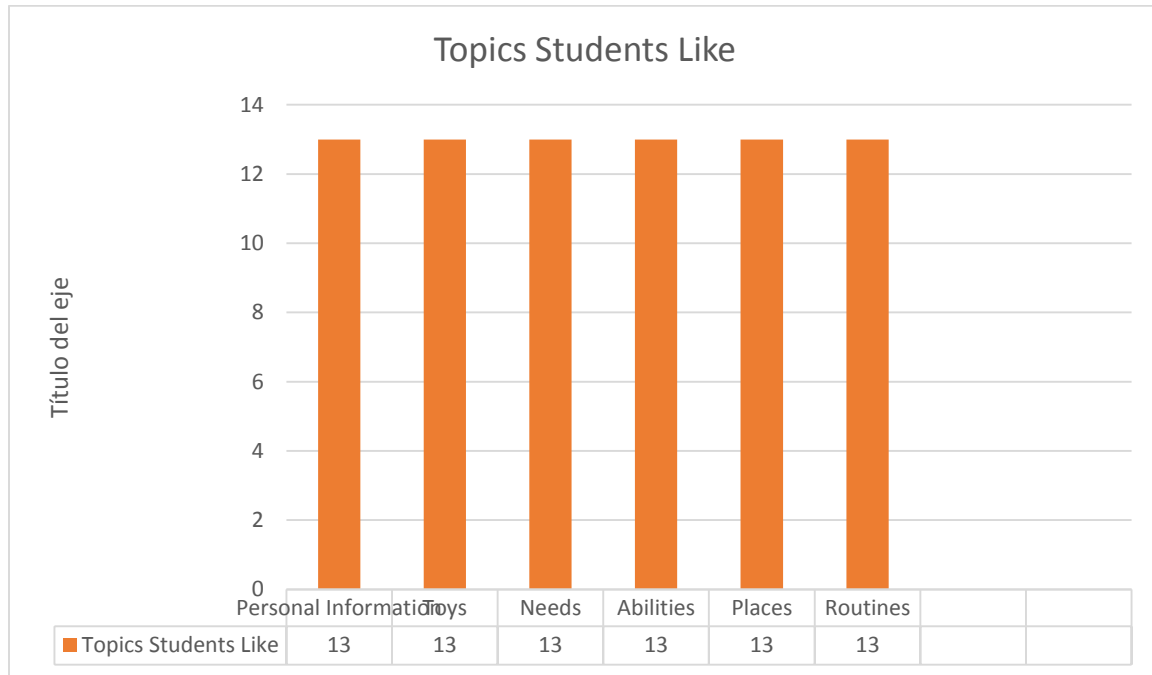
Students Participation Before VoiceThread



Students Participation Before VoiceThread



It shows that all the students like to talk about these topics.



Appendix Q.

Activities in Voice Thread.

Students must participate in some classroom activities and others on the web.

Activity one: Introducing myself.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7703530/>

Activity two: Doing word.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7704194/>

Activity three: Abilities.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7704260/>

Activity four: Toys.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7704283/>

Activity five: Needs.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7704291/>

Activity six: Dream House.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7704298/>

<https://voicethread.com/share/7736003/>

Activity seven: Daily Routines.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7793103/>

Activity eight: Before and after

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7872474>

Activity nine: Frequency Adverbs.

Link: <https://voicethread.com/share/7872474/>

Appendix R

Points of view: students always express their own point of views in the different activities.

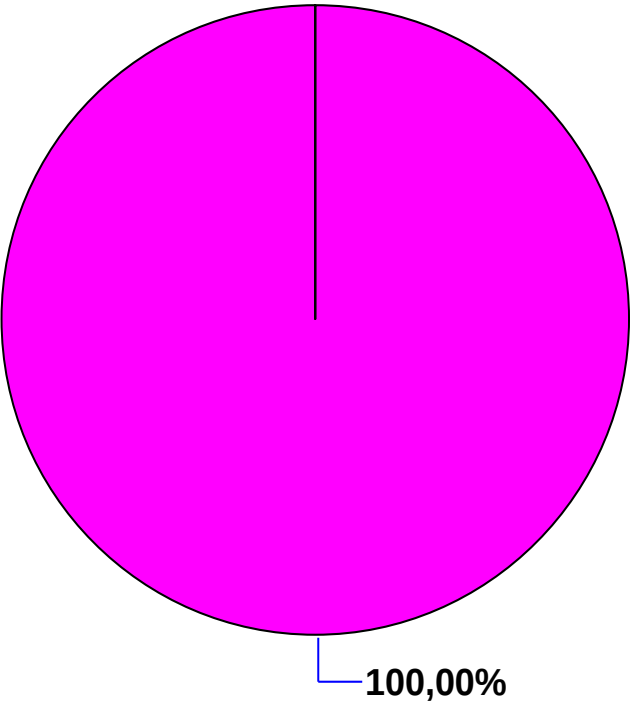


Tabla de Frecuencia para Points of view

			<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>
<i>Clase</i>	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Relativa</i>	<i>Acumulada</i>	<i>Rel. acum.</i>
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix S

Funny and easy activities

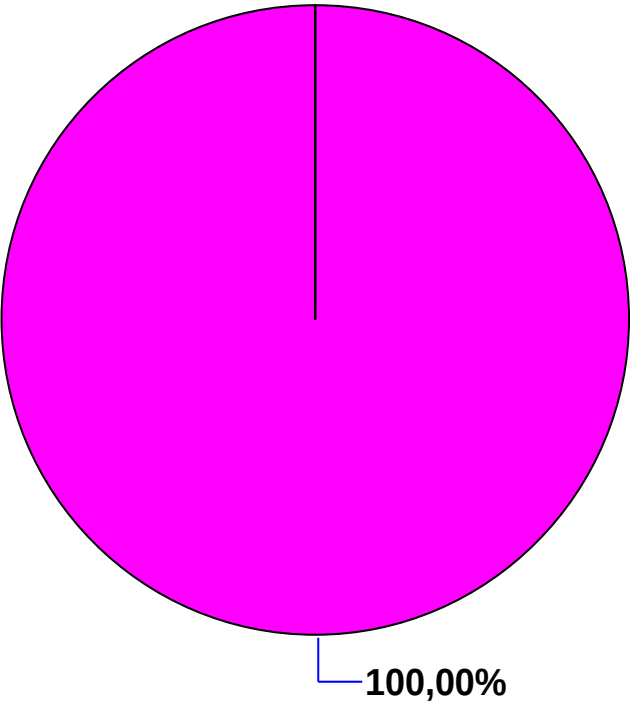


Tabla de Frecuencia para Perception of the activities.

			Frecuencia	Frecuencia	Frecuencia
Clase	Valor	Frecuencia	Relativa	Acumulada	Rel. acum.
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix T

Students' 'Motivation

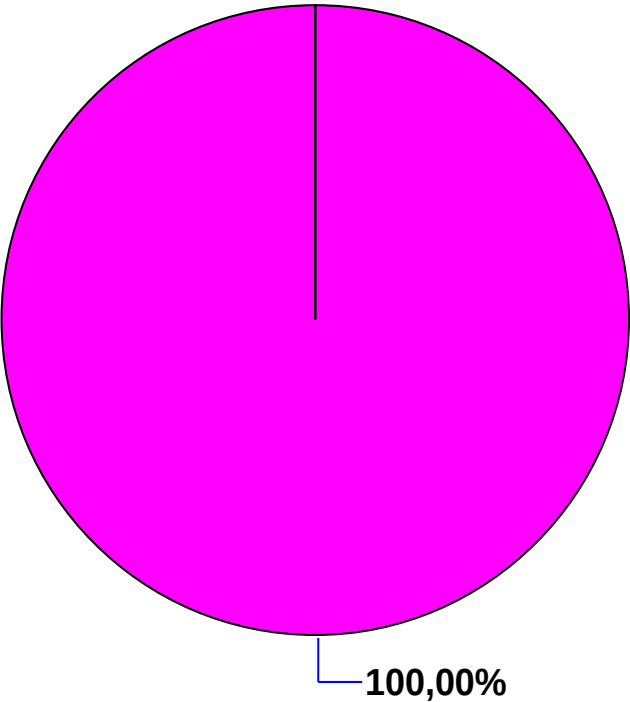


Tabla de Frecuencia para Learning Connection

			Frecuencia	Frecuencia	Frecuencia
Clase	Valor	Frecuencia	Relativa	Acumulada	Rel. acum.
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix U

Students' Participation

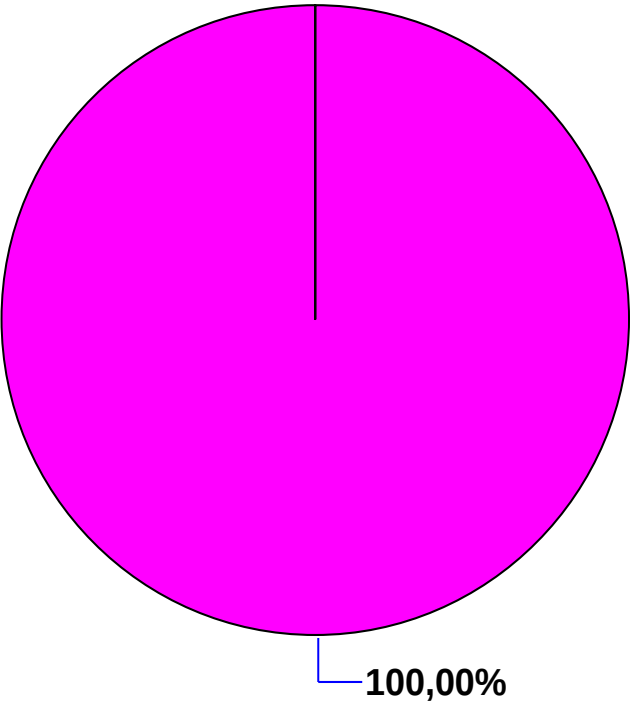


Tabla de Frecuencia para Learning Connection

			<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>
<i>Clase</i>	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Relativa</i>	<i>Acumulada</i>	<i>Rel. acum.</i>
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix V

Students’ appreciation about the activities.

How many students enjoy and like the activities?

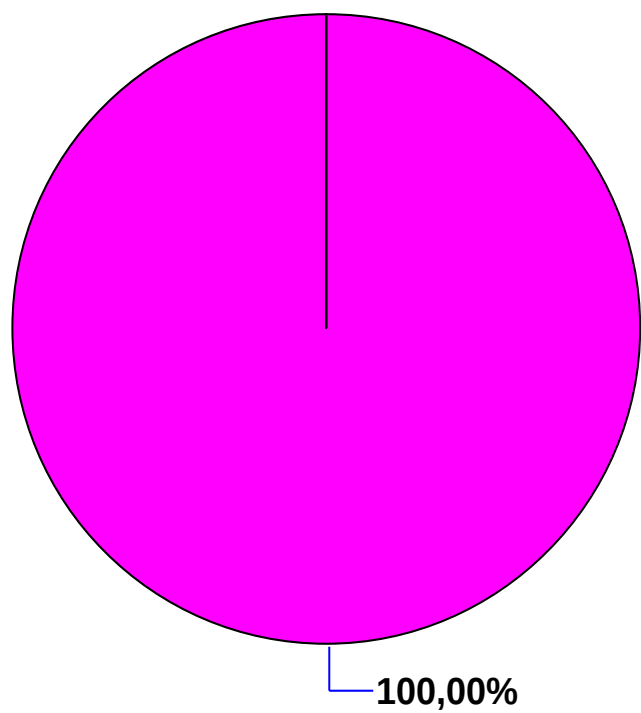
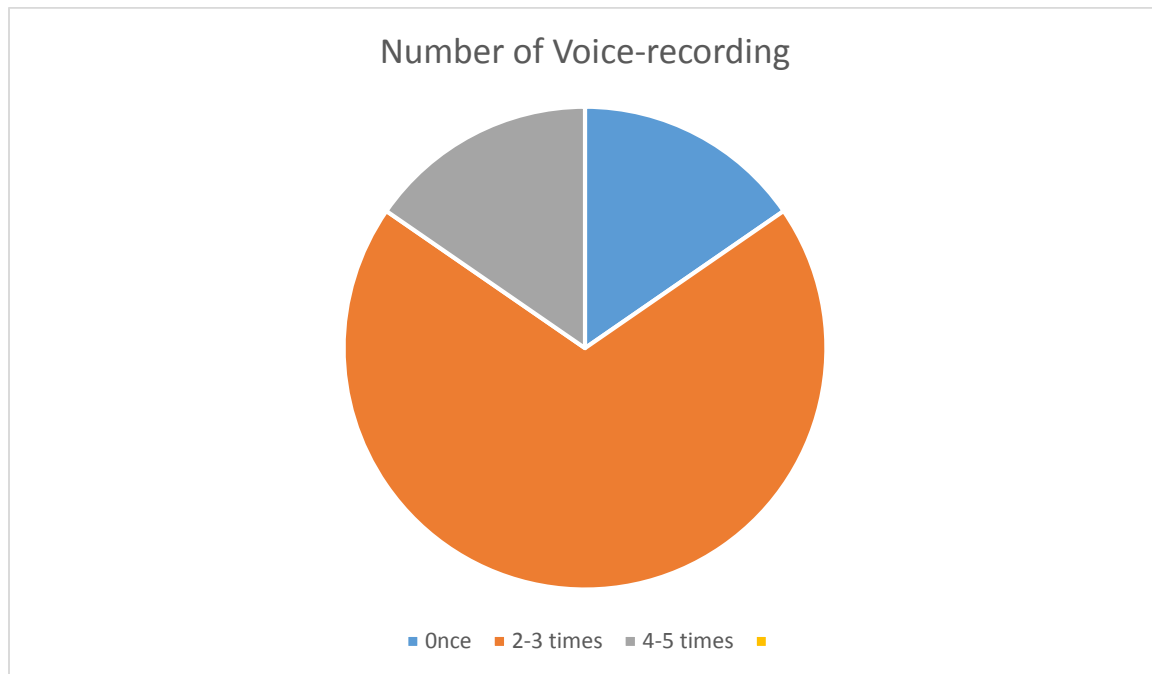


Tabla de Frecuencia para Perception of the activities.

			Frecuencia	Frecuencia	Frecuencia
Clase	Valor	Frecuencia	Relativa	Acumulada	Rel. acum.
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix W



70% of the target population recorded themselves between four and five times, 15% between 2 and 3 times and the other 15% only once.

Appendix x

Students express their ideas better after recording themselves in Voice Thread.

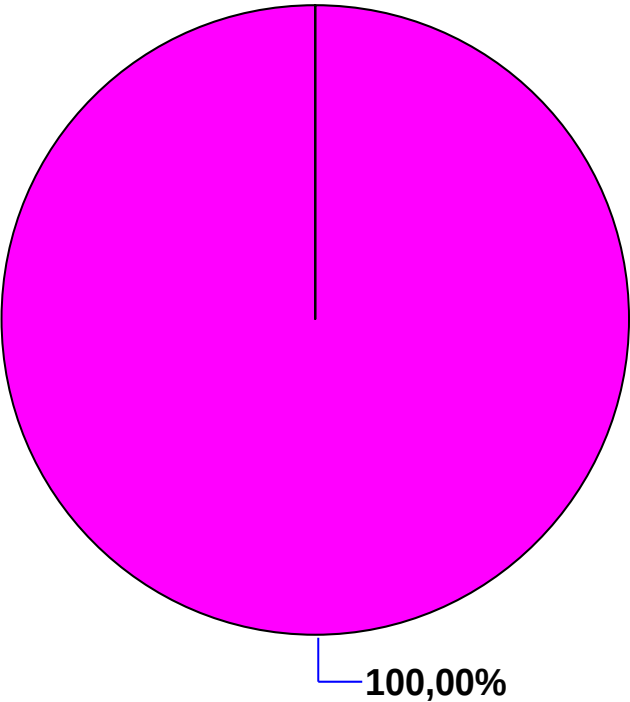


Tabla de Frecuencia para better expression.

			<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>
<i>Clase</i>	<i>Valor</i>	<i>Frecuencia</i>	<i>Relativa</i>	<i>Acumulada</i>	<i>Rel. acum.</i>
1	Always	13	1,0000	13	1,0000

Appendix Y

Videos observations

1. Video about the activity: _____ Date: _____. Observation:	2. Video about the activity: _____ Date: _____. Observation:
3. Video about the activity: _____ Date: _____. Observation:	4. Video about the activity: _____ Date: _____. Observation:

Students	Introducing People/themselves	Present Progressive	Possessions /toys	Abilities	Needs	House	Daily Routines	Before/ after	Frequency Adverbs
Student 1	90%	85%	95%	95%	90%	93%	95%	95%	95%
Student 2	85%	80%	92%	94%	85%	93%	95%	93%	95%
Student 3	90%	85%	90%	94%	90%	90%	94%	90%	94%
Student 4	85%	80%	90%	94%	90%	90%	93%	94%	94%
Student 5	94%	94%	95%	98%	95%	95%	98%	97%	100%
Student 6	97%	95%	95%	100%	95%	95%	98%	97%	100%
Student 7	95%	90%	95%	95%	94%	95%	95%	94%	95%
Student 8	100%	97%	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Student 9	100%	97%	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%	95%	100%
Student 10	100%	95%	95%	95%	94%	100%	98%	97%	100%
Student 11	100%	95%	98%	100%	95%	100%	98%	98%	100%
Student 12	95%	92%	94%	95%	92%	92%	97%	95%	100%
Student 13	100%	98%	100%	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Scale

0-75% :Low

76-80%: Basic

81-94%:High

95-100%: Superior

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Voice Thread LLC (2014). Retrieved on June 15th, 2013, from: <https://voicethread.com>.