



Picture Description Using Power Point to Improve Speaking

Martha Olivia Ogoño Caraguay

Guide: Msc. Rossana Ramirez Avila

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Nowadays, it is motivating and engaging the learning through pictures. They can also be used as a mean to check student's knowledge, in the summative and formative assessment.

Teaching English through pictures has some benefits since the language performance increases as well as the learners' attitude. Bowen (1982, as cited in Nguyen et al., 2015, p. 1) stated that "learning is a complex process and visual aids are a great help in stimulating the learning of a foreign language." Moreover, Wright (1989) claimed the resources must include pictures. After all, verbal language is only a part of the way we usually get meaning from contexts. Phuong (2018) said "the use of pictures has positive impacts not only on learners' language performance but also learners' attitude towards language learning." (p. 33). Working with pictures allow the students to be engaged in the development of the activities, becoming these activities that the teacher plan are incredibly fruitful with the use of visuals.

According to Education First (2020), Ecuador is in the 93rd place out of 100 countries, which means very low in Latin America. Based on my experience as an English teacher, students are afraid of speaking in English due to the lack of vocabulary they have. This makes them feel less confident to interact in class. The Curriculum for First Baccalaureate (Subnivel Bachillerato; Ministerio de Educación, 2016) contains the mandatory skills with the indicators for performance. One of the indicators establishes learners can exhibit an ability to discuss culture, the students should be able to analyze cultural products and referents from Ecuador, communicate effectively using a variety of media including Information and Communication Technology ICT, and apply self-correcting and self-monitoring strategies when needed. These indicators have two purposes: build up the national identity in search of a peaceful world and

value the multi-cultural background. In addition, the students will respect the identity of other people and individuals.

Romero (2020) conducted a study in Guayaquil, and the researcher implemented picture description techniques using photos of real life situations. The author applied a test adapted from the Young Learners Pre-A1 Cambridge Assessment, and an oral performance rubric, the author evidenced that students who were in third or fourth grade had a constant low development in speaking activities. That was the reason that the researcher decided to look for a solution to this problem. On the other hand, there are not many studies at the high school level.

Fauzi and Hanifah (2018) carried out a research in Indonesia, their participants were students majoring in nursing class and pharmacy and they used the application of Power Point to improve the students speaking ability. The majority of students performed their presentation poorly. Some reasons were that the oral presentation was a new activity that they had in English classroom, the students could not design their own slides of Power Point beautifully, and used their native language in English classes. After the implementation of Power Point, students were capable of delivering their topics attractively and innovatively.

At the beginning of the school year, the students had taken a diagnostic test in which they demonstrate a low English level in speaking. Because of this, the participants are unable to take part in speaking activities. Due to this fact, it is essential to change the teaching methods so as to upgrade their oral production. In this case, the use of pictures using Power Point will be applied to motivate students to give their information. It is expected that students will feel confident when they present their slides of Power Point by showing their personal information.

Participants belong to a school in Machala. In this study, 35 students of eleventh grade will take part. They do not have sufficient exposure to the English language. They are 14 to 15 years old.

Literature Review

This section gives some concepts about speaking skills and picture description.

The majority of teachers are looking for resources in order to help the students to promote their participation. Lavallo and Briesmaster (2017), in their research, highlighted they enjoyed incorporating the pictures as they captured their students' attention, developed their imagination, and made the learning process more interesting and entertaining; all at the same time. For many English students, pictures can motivate them to communicate competently. They will understand and use language appropriately to interact in authentic environments. Medina (2008, as cited in Kovačević et al., 2016) stated that "If information is presented orally, people remember about 10 percent, tested 72 hours after exposure. That figure goes up to 65 percent if you add a picture." (p. 234).

In other words, Howard and Major (2004) demonstrated that English Language Teaching materials are necessarily generic and do not aimed at any specific group of learners or any particular cultural or educational context. Taylor (1987, as cited in Celce-Murcia et al., 2015) stated that the teacher presents "activities which are meaningful to students". Teachers can design their tasks for their students' contexts, which are inclusive taken into account that they are paying attention to the students' background and their diversity. Students feel valued and included and develop a sense of pertinence. Holden and Rogers (1998) said that it is essential to let the students add their own personal information. This is something most students enjoy doing:

it brings the language to life! Students gain more confidence; they feel a lot of excitement because the teachers care about their students. Similarly, Brown (2007) mentioned some principles, for instance: to encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts. It takes energy and creativity to devise authentic contexts and meaningful interaction. Additionally, Romero (2020) pointed out that teachers should assume the fact that personal pictures of students' life have to be acquired with the permission of their parents. Parents also have to be carefully when choosing the photos. They should select the pictures that bring good memories to students to avoid emotions that can lead them to negative feelings during the learning process.

Speaking is known as the productive skill. Bailey (2005) mentioned Speaking consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Utterances are simply things people say. Cook (2016) highlighted that more people are speaking two languages, the acquisition and use of a second language are vital to the everyday lives of millions; monolinguals are nowadays almost an endangered species.

Bailey (2005) stated pictures provide visual support for learning, as they activate mental images that can help learner remember a particular structure or vocabulary item. Learners concentrate on grammatical structures for instance, Present Tense, Present Simple of "to be", Past Tense was/were, past simple of "be", Present Continuous, Modal verbs, articles, nouns, pronouns and determiners, there and it, adjectives and adverbs of frequency, prepositions and conjunctions. In terms of vocabulary, the plan will be focused on these topics, for instance, the days of the week and months, cantons and provinces, personal possessions, family and friends, food and drinks. According to Council of Europe (2018), General Linguistic Range and its level A1: Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete

type. Users can use some structures in one clause sentences with some omission or reduction of elements. The contractions are the most common reductions in this level such as I am = I'm, My name is = My name's.

Fluency and Accuracy

Teachers should bear in mind that they ought to select no more than two subskills per activity. Lackman and Associates (2010) put forward that when the practice is focused on fluency, the students practice speaking with a logical flow without planning or rehearsing. Activities which require students to focus on meaning in communication without immediate concern for accuracy (errors can be corrected afterwards). On the other hand, when the focus is on accuracy, the students practice using words, structures and pronunciation accurately. Students need to be able to use and pronounce words and structures correctly in order to be understood. According to Thornbury (2005), one of the abilities to be fluent is to disguise pauses by filling them. The most common pauses filler are *uh* and *um* and some vagueness expressions, like *sort of* and *I mean* are also used to fill pauses. In this way, Fluency is the flow and efficiency with which learners express their ideas. However, Accuracy is how learners demonstrate ability to use the grammar rules and vocabulary and correct pronunciation.

Monitor Model

Shehadeb (2020) explained the Monitor Model of Stephen Krashen,

The monitor hypothesis states that our fluency in L2 performance is due to what we have acquired, not what we have learned. Learning is only available as a Monitor, or editor.

This acquired competence initiates utterances, and later these are referred to the

conscious rules in the output system. To use the Monitor, three conditions should be met:

(i) time: the learner must have enough time to utilize conscious rules; (ii) focus on form: the learner must be thinking about correctness; and (iii) knowledge of rules. (p. 437).

In other words, to put into practice the theory, the teacher can monitor what students are saying in English and the teacher will correct any mistake or mispronunciation by modeling the proper sounds in the target language. It is fundamental to get into the habit of doing that. Larsen-Freeman (2011) stated that the more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning.

In this sense, providing Feedback is important. Ur (1999) mentioned Feedback is given to students. It has two main distinct components: assessment and correction. In terms of assessment, the student is simply informed how well or badly he or she has performed. In correction, some specific information is provided on aspects of the learner's performance: through explanation, or provision of better or other alternatives, or through elicitation of these from the learner.

The proposal includes the use of PowerPoint, teachers know the potential of this presentation program developed by Microsoft. This software facilitates students to take part in the learning process. During this pandemic time the PowerPoint slides were one of the most used technological tools. It enabled to add text, video, animation, audio, and graphics, among others. Fauzi and Hanifah (2018) asserted that the use of technology in education has come up with a significant impact on the development of learning instruction and methods of communicating information to learners. Samiei (2014) referred that learning a new language in a traditional way is not so enjoyable for today technology-dependent students, for this, the environment of the

classroom has changed. According to her research, the majority of learners who were exposed to the PowerPoint presentations in the classroom, had positive attitudes towards the benefits of them to facilitate learning.

Along with fostering learner's communicative competence, it is worth mentioning that the use of pictures is aligned to the theory of ELT materials design. Howard and Major (2004) asserted when teachers design or adapt their own teaching materials, this enables them to take into account their particular teaching context and to overcome the lack of 'fit' of the course book. Materials need to be contextualized in two key areas: the curriculum and the learners. Folse (2004) concluded in his research that it is time to listen to our students who are all too aware of their lack of L2 vocabulary knowledge. In consequence, the proposal will emphasize on accurate and fluency communication with the use of Picture Description activities, for instance, "All about me in pictures", DITLOIDS, Part and Whole Activity and Hidden Places. These activities can be worked through technological means or paper materials; all of the students have the same topic.

Innovation

The innovation for this study will last 22 hours of class during eleven weeks by virtual classes. The innovation will consist of Picture Description to improve speaking skill facilitated by Power Point. It will apply the use of slides in class where the students will participate through the use of communicative activities. In the proposal, the teacher will introduce the knowledge of the country, self-esteem and being proud of their province or their country where they are living or the place where they were born. The most important thing, the teacher demonstrates

happiness, empathy and caring. It will take place as part of regular learning units in which all four skills will be used.

Next, the teacher will model “All about me with pictures”. Consequently, the teacher will take into account of students’ context through the use of photos, they will introduce themselves, sharing their likes, their background, and their best achievement, among others. The teacher will monitor and provide feedback of the activities. So that the learners will engage with the topic of the class and will be ready to participate.

This proposal will be aligned to Nguyen’s suggestion (2015) in which all of the activities will include pictures about students’ favorite places, the best holidays, their own gastronomy, their coat of arms, and their flags. In addition, the teacher can practice numbers, colors, and shapes, among others. There will be questions about some details of the pictures. The teacher will make sure that the students acquired the content. Each student will participate at their own pace using pictures to recall the information easier.

Teacher will explain how to insert some images in Power Point slides as well as how to work with animations from this software. Because this is an innovation, students should prepare at least five Power Points slides of different topics during the innovation such as “All About me” (Personal Information), Favorite Local Places, My Patriotic Symbols, My School and Typical Food. Teacher will listen to the presentations and after that, the teacher will provide some feedback according to the Speaking rubric. See Appendix 1, a complete detailed innovation.

Methodology

This study is an action research. According to Hine (2013), Action Research consists of three stages: “look, think and act”. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, as cited in Hine 2013) defined,

Action Research is a form of collective reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out. (p.6).

This action research will include only quantitative data. Matthews and Ross (2010, cited in Goertzen 2017) stated Quantitative research methods are concerned with collecting and analyzing data. It is a procedure and a technique use to analyze data numerically. To obtain this quantitative data, the grades of the pre and posttest will be considered.

Research questions:

1. To what extent does Picture Description using Power Point improve speaking in students from eleventh grade?
2. What are the students' perspectives about the application of Picture Description to improve speaking skill?

Participants

The researcher will look for students who will be in eleventh grade of a public high school located in Machala. The target group are 35 students who are 14 to 15 years old; Regarding their gender, 22 of them are women and 13 of them are men. Only those who are currently studying will be included in the sample. All the participants will be from Ecuador, students are from the Coast especially from Machala. Their mother tongue is Spanish. Their social economic status is low, and a 70% of them come from dysfunctional households in which students just live with their mother or father because some of them are divorced. To measure the

students' level, they will take online *proficiency-test* from Cambridge website

<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/test-your-english/for-schools/>.

Instruments

In order to answer the first question, *To what extent does Picture Description using Power Point improve speaking in students from eleventh grade?* The pretest will be applied to the students. They will consist of a slide in which the students will introduce themselves regarding to their likes, their place of birth, their achievements, their favorite leisure time, and their favorite holiday. On the other hand, the presentation will consist of basic aspects about Favorite Local Places. The presentation will last one minute and it will be grade using the same rubric applied in the placement test. The rubric will consider the following categories: Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Fluency and Organization. Each descriptor is going to be grade out of five points to measure students' outcomes (Appendix 2). Then, the teacher will compare the results from the pretest and posttest and will establish if the students have improved the speaking skill.

On the other hand, to answer the second question *What are the students' perspectives about the application of Picture Description to improve speaking skill?* The teacher will take a survey telling their points of view, which is the perception questionnaire. See Appendix 3. The Likert scale questionnaire will measure students' level of satisfaction of using picture description to improve speaking. It has nine questions on a 1 to 5 scale. One means the students strongly agree with the question and five means the students strongly disagree with the question.

Data Analysis

There will be some steps to collect, analyze, and process data about this research; described as follows: The quantitative results of the test (pretest and the posttest) and survey will be grouped and entered in a spreadsheet in Excel to be exported to the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) in order to get descriptive statistics. The mean and the standard deviation will be put in the online calculator of the University Colorado (<https://lbecker.uccs.edu/>) to get the Effect Size. The data will be displayed through graphs and tables and a statistical commentary.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical Considerations act as a practical reminder that we need to be both mindful and active in protecting our research participants (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). It is a helpful aid in designing a research project that will be ethically acceptable in its broad methodology (Lavalle & Briesmaster, 2017). An important ethical issue has to do with confidentiality. Besides that, the researcher will explain the participants the purpose of the research and will be responsible for using the data only for this study. Due to their age, a consent letter will be sent to their parents in order to obtain formal authorization (Appendix 4). The teacher will inform to the students about the research to use picture description to improve speaking (Appendix 5).

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Appendix 1

Lesson Plan

Available upon request.

Appendix 2

Rubric Speaking

Available upon request.

Appendix 3

Perception Questionnaire, Adapted from Saezhong (2015, as cited Lavallo & Briesmaster, 2017)

Available upon request.

Appendix 4

- **Authorization to record virtual classes**

Available upon request.

Appendix 5

Modelo de Carta de Consentimiento para Participar en Estudio Científico

Available upon request.

