UNIVERSITY OF PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES
CAPTAIN, ¨ SILVERIO BLANCO NÚÑEZ ¨
SANCTI SPIRITUS

**MAJOR PAPER PRESENTED IN OPTION TO THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE
IN EDUCATION. FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**TASKS USING RAINBOW EDUCATIVE SOFTWARE TO DEVELOP
SPEAKING SKILLS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.**

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TASKS USING RAINBOW EDUCATIVE SOFTWARE TO DEVELOP SPEAKING SKILLS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

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2012

TOUGHT

"Así queremos que los niños de América sean: hombres que digan lo que piensan, y lo digan bien: hombres elocuentes y sinceros".

José Martí (1870:90)

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research report was to apply tasks using software to develop speaking in the English lesson of eighth graders, class seven from Ernesto Valdes Muñoz junior high school. For carrying out this research report several methods from the theoretical, empirical and statistical-mathematical processing level were used. The main results accomplished were:

A conceptual approach to the topic of the study object, regularity that made research appropriate, a brief grounding of the results and the qualitative and quantitative description derived from the application of these results during the teaching training period. The application of tasks will permit the students assuming a responsible attitude for their own learning,

ABSTRAIT

La recherche qui se présente a pour objectif principal l'application de tâches logicielles visées au développement de l'expression orale en classe d'anglais chez les élèves de la huitième année de l'école secondaire Erenesto Valddez Muñoz. Dans la conception du travail on a employé des méthodes au niveau théorique, empirique et statistiques – traitement mathématique. Entre les résultats principaux dont on a achevé pendant l'étude, on a une approximation conceptuelle à la thématique étudiée, quelques régularités qui rendent la pertinence à cette recherche, un bref bassement du résultat et la description qualitative et quantitative dérivée de l'application de tel résultat dans la pratique.

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INTRODUCTION

From Elementary Education the students learn not only the knowledge of the mother tongue but also the English language with the use of video lessons and others teaching aids that the teachers create, to contribute to the development of their students vocabulary.   In high school the syllabus is taught from seventh grade and it is conceived to delve into the simple tenses of this language.

However, the diagnostic test done, to assess the development of communication, specially   the oral expression, applied in the seventh grade from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz school has demonstrated that the students do not expresses their ideas with a good coherence and intonation and they are not able to practice short dialogues among them.

Besides, they demonstrate a great motivation for the subject and its contents.

The pedagogical training period of this author allowed her to confirm that there are other difficulties detected during the lessons that manifest in the following way:

- The students do not express their ideas with fluency

- They do not have a wide vocabulary

   -They do not have a good diction while speaking.

All this allows the author of this research work to identify the following scientific problem.

Scientific Problem:

How to develop speaking skills in the English language in seventh graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school?

The objective of this work consists in applying tasks using Rainbow

Educative Software to develop speaking skills in the English language on seventh Graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school.

The Scientific Questions are:

1. What theoretical and methodological basis supports the development of speaking skills in the English language using Rainbow Educative Software?

2. What is the state of speaking skills in the English language on seventh graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school?

3. What characteristics should tasks using Rainbow Educative Software have, to develop speaking skills in the English language on seventh graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school?

4. What results would be obtained with the application of the elaborated tasks using Rainbow Educative Software to develop speaking skills in the English language?

Scientific tasks:

1. Determination of the theoretical and methodological basis that support the development of speaking skills in the English language using Rainbow Educative Software.

2. Diagnosis of the state of speaking skills in the English language on seventh graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school.

3. Elaboration of tasks using Rainbow Educative Software, to develop speaking skills in the English language on seventh graders from Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school.

4. *Practical evaluation of the elaborated tasks using Rainbow Educative Software to develop speaking skills in the English language.*

METHODS

THEORETICAL

Analysis – Synthesis

This method is used in different moments of the investigation, when it was done the analysis of theoretical and methodological basis, related to the development of the speaking skills in the English language in seventh graders to increase fluency in their communication, and then it was possibled to synthesize the results of this analysis.

Inductive-Deductive

It is used for reaching generalizations around the particular cases study. It is present in theoretical basis test. The mutual complementation among the inductive and deductive makes the understanding of theoretic examined budgets easy. When going from the particular to the general in a deductive process

Historical -logical

It allows describing the historical evolution of the speaking skills in English learning process in high school.

EMPIRICAL

Documentary analysis

It is used to determinate what kind of contents and skills, students have to develop in this grade.

Scientific observation

It is used for the sake of verifying the level of development of the speaking skills of students during the lesson.

Pedagogic pre-experiment

It is used to obtain scientific knowledge and to transform the educational reality as from the bibliographic and documents revision that they permit, the elaboration and the application of different instruments to check the status of the problem.

MATHEMATICAL

Percentage calculation

It permits processing the data and expressing quantitatively the results through draw and graphics.

The selected population was of 22 students of seventh grade, class seven, from "Ernesto Valdés Munoz" high school; for being this class the one that had the biggest difficulties with the speaking skills in the English lessons, and for being the class where the author worked.

In this research report, were following the controlled variables.

Independent variable: Tasks using the educative software.
Dependent variable: The development of the speaking skills.

Scientific Novelty: The intention of this research is to propose tasks using educative software that contribute to develop of speaking skills in seventh graders, they are characterized by being dynamic, to propitiate a developed learning, putting into practice the students personal effort, studying the English language, using the new information technologies, Thus, they are composed by, oral exercises, using the Educative Software, named Rainbow, corresponding to the English, subject, to develop the fluency, the pronunciation and vocabulary in the language.

The practical contribution consists of different tasks, using educative software, which are conceived from a theoretical point of view and a practical fulfillment, contributing to the development of the speaking skill in the students of" Ernesto Valdés Muñoz high school.

The structure of the research is the following: Introduction, Development, Conclusions, Recommendations, Bibliography and Annexes.

DEVELOPMENT

Communication, like relational human form, is social for its nature. The human being incorporates properly human attributes in his relation to others, as from experiences shared in a social context. However, the XX century has marked the development of universal culture, due to the great inscreasment of the technological aids production, the ones that have done the new means of communication, possible in a sophisticated way among people, starting by the technicians that act as circulation canals, but also as message production tools, what has bring about new challenges and realities according to face to face interpersonal communication.

It deals with the coexistence of communicative, traditional and the new technologies resources that characterize the contemporary culture. From the educational interests, it is essential to consider the place that occupies socialization agents, because this mediate forms of communication reveals the relations in a determined society; It can express social contradictions, conflicts, antagonisms present in a determined historical moment and they seem to propose implicit or explicitly changes in the set of social relation groups.

Listening and speaking are essential communicative skills that a child should develop through school process, and of course they have to develop them by the early ages with the family. The linguistic means influence in this sense: Home, educational institution, community, means of communication, all of them constituted as a system of influences; that is without doubt the systemic work of the school, the work of every worker in general and the teacher in particular are the ones that play the most important roles.

First of all, the teachers require a complete knowledge of the language and besides they should appreciate the importance of its use, which will allow them to transmit feelings of respect and admiration to the language and to the students. One of the main objectives of the school is to make the students to be able to express their ideas about different topics with adequate fluency volume, tune and good pronunciation and also to teach them how to listen.

It was necessary during the study to research in the theory and to consult some concepts.

TASKS USING EDUCATIVE SOFTWARE

The task using educative software: It consists of creating in the students the necessary representation, to teach them how to describe the characteristics; they depend on the contents, the experiences of previous perceptions and the teaching conditions. The teacher's task consists of creating in the students, the necessary representation too, to teach them how to describe the main characteristics and after that, to use gathered performances in the formation of other knowledge, and abilities. Labañino, Or (2007: 16)

The teacher's word is an important resource of representations, although it's of less value than the visual ones. The use of the Educative Software plays an important role at present, by means of computer, since the little boy can have an obvious vision of what he desires to learn. In the school year 1986/87 the information educative program began with massive character in the Minister of Education.
Among its principal purpose it included:

The students get familiar with the computer techniques, they develop habits and abilities for interactive work with computers and they assimilate how-to set basic information procedure that allows them how to solve problems, using computers.

SPEAKING SKILLS

Many authors have studied this thematic and they have given their definitions of speaking skills:

Speaking is one of the language skills to be developed in most: school courses in English at all levels. The skill is either developed independently as a primary goal to be attained at the very end of learning and/or as a means for other skills such as reading. Consequently, as a general rule, speaking is a teaching point and this is reflected in the objectives of such courses.

Speaking is a more complex skill than listening. Here, several interrelated actions - both, mental and psychical- must take place instantaneously. Finocchiaro (1983:

140)

According to Rose Antich (1986: 26) she defines the oral expression as an active relation between the man and the medium and it is characterized by a direct connection with communicative situations and with another extra-linguistic factors and because of having its intention and objective.

Vicente Gonzalez Castro (1988:88) the oral expression is a predominant form of language, from which it can be transmitted with high volumes of information in a short period of time, being precise, and with a coherent structural organization.

Don. Byrne (1989:8) who recognizes the oral expression like a bilateral process between the speaker and the receiver, which includes the productive skill of the speech and the receptive skill of understanding.

For Dr. Migdalia, Porro, (2003:7) the speaking skill is the means of communication by its excellence among men of a certain linguistics community, by means of the system established as a language.
The Speaking skill is a means of communication that people use in multiple and several social contexts to express themselves, to interact with others with an adequate pronunciation, fluency and coherence; Learning about the world that surrounds us and satisfying the individual and collective needs.

The speaking skill constitutes the real root and the first expressive instrument that should be developed and organized for the written language to fulfill exactly its acting occupation.
In relation to this Dr. Herminio Almendros expressed (Enríquez O´Farrill, I, 2004: 1) " Starting by the beginning as it should be, that is to begin for the foundation, keeping on raising the building, firmly placed with materials and solid bridging ".
According to Hirán Castro" is the exclusive capacity of men to show the facts and phenomena of the objective, abstract and generalized reality for the thought" (Camp. H, 1983: 67).
After a wide investigation about the different speaking skills concepts the author assumes the concept given by Mr. Byrne (1989:8).

Initial diagnosis of the sample state

With the objective of answering the second scientific question presented in this investigation, an initial diagnosis was done.

As the instruments for the diagnosis the followings were applied: The lesson observation guide, the documental analysis guide, which permitted obtaining the students' real information.

Now the analysis results will be stated:

The observation guide (Annex 1) Applied with objective of gathering direct and immediate information of the students and the way in which they use the English language during the lesson of the same subject that produced the following results. It was applied in the 22 students of the seven group of seventh grade.

In the first indicator (seven students) express activities with fluency (nine students) express themselves with difficulty in this indicator (six students) present limitations because of they express themselves without fluency.

In indicator two (six students) have a wide vocabulary, (seven students) sometimes are able to use vocabulary in their dialogues (nine students) present limitations because they do not have a wide vocabulary.

In indicator three (five students) are able to pronounce correctly (six students) they know limited pronunciation of word (eleven students) do not have wide knowledge in pronunciation

In the documental analysis already done (Annex two) to verify the results of self-learning as well as the results of systematic evaluations applied on the speaking skills, all this produced the following results:

In indicator one only (six students) use the educational software for the development of the speaking skill, (seven students) they present difficulty when expressing ideas of the software texts because they do not have a wide vocabulary, (nine students) they are not able to accomplish the activities of oral expression with the educational software's texts assigned for the independent study.

In indicator two (seven students) are able to do exercises of oral expression by themselves, (five students) need some supported levels to express themselves orally, (ten students) present limitations because they express themselves without fluency, and without a wide vocabulary, besides they are not able to do the exercises by themselves.

In indicator three (five students) are able to express encouragement states and phrases that correspond with the unit, (nine students) present difficulty with intonation and fluency of the communicative functions of the unit, (eight students) do not know the phrases according to their level of assimilation and are not able to express their encouragement states.

In indicator four (six students) establish little talks with others, using gleaned words, (seven students) need supported levels to establish little dialogues with his classmates, (nine students) they present limitations in the development of the oral expression, because they do not keep conversation with fluency or with an extensive vocabulary.

Valuation of the pre-experiment.

A pre-test and a post-test were done. The interview and the observation were used, after that the measured indicators were immediately declared

1- Vocabulary
2- Fluency.
3- Pronunciation
   Now the present Strength and Difficulties are stated:

Pre-test:
Strength: Ask and answer about personal information.

Difficulties: Places town descriptions, Identify jobs and occupations, ask and answer about directions. House description.

Post-test:
Strength: Places town descriptions, Identify jobs and occupations, ask and answer about directions. House description.

Difficulties: Comprehend short text about different topics

It was verified that the work with the oral expression is insufficient, the potentialities that the class offers do not take advantage to strengthen this skill, they are not systematic in the fulfillment of the suitable tasks, that assure the development of the oral expression, they do not conjugate the verbs sometimes and they do not use the vocabulary.

The students express the interest and the need to express themselves correctly in the English language, they feel motivated for the vocabulary of the subject of study, and however the activities developed from the educational process do not satisfy all their expectations.

The school and its structure have the high responsibility of specifying the most appropriate and useful moment to present something new to the students in the teaching learning process, the success of the pedagogic activities will depend on that in great measure.

The pedagogic activities are planned on the base of the detected problems and the diagnoses, properly planned taking into account the particularities that characterize them, to fulfill their objectives.

They obey to the insufficiencies the students have in the work with the development of the oral expression, they are good to develop other skills like: the communication, the writing, the understanding, spelling and mainly they elevate the integral general culture of the students.

CONCLUSIONS

- The revision of the pedagogic literature contributed with the author regarding the oral expression in the English's subject in the basic high.

- The diagnosis study revealed that it was necessary to study the oral expression in the English's subject for the following reasons: The work with the oral expression is insufficient. The potentialities that the class offers to strengthen this ability don't take advantage, they are not systematic in the fulfillment of the suitable tasks that assure the development of the oral expression, they do not conjugate the verbs sometimes and they do not use the vocabulary. The students express the interest and the necessity of being expressed correctly in the English language, they are motivated by the vocabulary of the subject, however the activities developed from the educational process do not satisfy all their expectations.

- The elaborated proposal is directed to the students of Basic high school and they are characterized by: Being dynamic, to develop the personal effort, to propitiate a developmental earning.

- The application of the proposal revealed that there was an improvement in: To establish small dialogues with their classmates, to express what people around us are doing in the moment that is spoken (simple present), to describe the house, the school and some places of the town, to ask and to inform where a place or a person is.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To continue deepening on the topic object of study in order to keep their surveillance for post graduate studies.

2. To present the results of the carried out investigation in events.

3. To develop methodological activities in the staff meetings and methodological preparations.

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Annex 1

Seven lessons were observed

Observation guide

Objective: Obtain information about the development of the speaking skills.

Aspects to be observed

- If they express activities with fluency phrases and others.
- If they have a wide vocabulary of the units
- If they diction correctly the words studied.

Annex 2

Guide for documents analysis.

Student's Workbook and Seventh graders English Syllabus.

Objective: To verify if exercises and activities from the workbook propitiate the development of the speaking skills.

To verify the treatment of the speaking skills in the syllabus.

Aspects

- Activities related to speaking skills
- The treatment o the contents, teaching aids, methods, evaluation etc.
- The treatment of the speaking skills in seventh unit.

Annex 3

Guía de entrevista

Objetivo: Constatar el comportamiento del desarrollo de la expresión oral.

Nombre_____ **Grupo**_____

Actividades

-

1. ¿Orienta tu profesor actividades de expresión oral durante las clases de inglés?

_____siempre   _____a veces   _____nunca

2. ¿Te sientes bien trabajando con actividades de expresión oral en las clases de Inglés?

_____siempre   _____a veces   _____nunca.

3. ¿Consideras que estás preparado/a para trabajar actividades de expresión oral utilizando el software educativo?

_____siempre   _____a veces   _____nunca

4. ¿Consideras que los ejercicios del software educativo orientados abarcan todas tus necesidades de conocimiento?

_____siempre   _____a veces   _____nunca

5. ¿Consideras importante el uso de actividades de expresión oral en las clases de inglés?

_____siempre   _____a veces   _____nunca

Annex 4

Pedagogical Test

Objective: Checking real situation of seventh graders in the speaking skills.

Name _____

Read carefully the following text:

Michael is a young and talented Cuban reporter who works for a news agency in Havana. He always gets up at 6 o'clock in the morning on weekdays, and also on Saturday. He exercises from 6:30 to 7 o'clock; then he takes a shower. He always has breakfast at 7:30. At 8 o'clock he takes a bus to his office. His workweek is very long and busy, so from Monday to Saturday he rarely gets home before 6 pm. In the evening, he often plays chess with one of his neighbors, watches TV, or works on his computer. He sometimes prepares specials dishes for dinner. He usually goes to bed at midnight. Michael never gets up early on Sunday. He wakes up just before noon. He sometimes stays home all afternoon surfing the Internet.

Michael's Daily Activities

On weekdays		On weekends	
In the morning	**In the evening**	**On Saturday**	**On Sunday**

1. Say (T) True or (F) False, justify the false ones.

------ Michael is an engineer.

-----He works in Havana.

-----He takes a shower at 6, 30.

------Michael goes to bed at 9.00 o'clock.

-------Michael gets up early on Friday.

2. Answer the following question

What does Michael do on Sunday?

What does he do from Monday to Saturday?

3. Ask a friend and tell about:

What do you do …?

- On weekends
- On school week
- At home

Levels for the analysis of the Pedagogical test.

Without Level: It means that students have a limitedly vocabulary, it does not permit them answering some questions.

Slow learners: The students answer one or more questions because they know some words.

Average learners: They dominate several words and they can create sentences that allow them to answer questions.

Fast learners: They have a vast vocabulary and they establish a fluently communication.

Annex 5

Tasks using educational software (1)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Módulo Imágenes. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.
Successes!
　Activities
1. Pictures 1 and 2 show you some occupations
   - Mechanic
   - Technician
   - Plumber

2. You may observe pictures 3, 4 and 5 then you should prepare a brief dialogue with your partner, interchange the dialogue with your classmates and get ready to act it out as fluently as you can. Underline unknown words.

3. Look for them in the software's dictionary. Read the questions that appears behind the pictures to your classmates. Give answer to each of them using the criteria of every team members.

4. Elaborate an answer among all members of the team for each question. If they are in doubt about what they must accomplish you may read the orders again.

Evaluation

Select the student who has more participation than others, to the one that did not commit any mistakes, to the more solitary …..Reflect in the group: How they can help to lower classmates.

Annex 6

Tasks with educational software (2)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Módulo Imágenes. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.

Successes!

Activities

Accomplish the first game. Write two new rules for this game. Try to explain to your classmates. Use the words:

- Success

- Be careful

Play game 4 about occupations. Look for a synonym:

- **Conductor**

- **Director**

- **Teacher**

Prepare a dialogue using occupations and jobs, incorporate as much words as you can and know. Then interchange the roles among your classmates. Write it in simple present tense.

Evaluation

Select the best one of the group. Express in English, with an idea why it was what you prefer the most.

Annex 7

Tasks with educational software (3)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Módulo Videos. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.
Successes!

Activities

1-Play the video sequence 2. It is related to personal information. Practice the video sequence with your team.

2- Imitate the performance; wear the clothes related to each nationality. Use new words such as:

- Cuban
- English
- French

Then interchange the roles among your classmates. Practice the verb to be as much as possible.

Evaluation

Select the best dressed the student who had more participation and the one that did not commit any mistake.

Annex 8

Tasks with educational software (3)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Modulo imágenes. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.

Successes!

Activities

1- Watch pictures 4, 5 and 6 related to jobs and occupations. Say with an idea what you think about 2 of them.

2- What is your favorite job? Why?

3- Creat a performance for 5 occupation and job. Role play with a partner asking and answering questions about all the information provided.

- Name
- Occupation
- Age
- Place of origin

Evaluation

Select the best pairs who had more participation and the one that did not commit any mistake.

Annex 9

Tasks with educational software (3)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Modulo videos. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.

Successes!

Activities

1-Watch video sequence 4.

2- Be ready for answering orally the following questions:

- Where do they live?

-What are their preferences?

-What do they do everyday?

   3- Ask and answer about this topics with three of your classmates. Act it out.

Evaluation

 Select the best one of the group. Express in English, with an idea why it was what you prefer the most.

Annex 10

Tasks with educational software (3)

Objective: Developing the oral skills in students.

In order to accomplish the following activities you must remit to the software Rainbow of the Future Collection. Remember that the steps to follow are D:/Colección Futuro Rainbow Modulo imágenes. If you are in doubt while navigating in the software you may ask to your informatics teacher. Comment on your partner the answers of each activity.

Successes!

Activities

1- Observe the pictures 8 related to activities doing at the moment of speaking.

2- Follow the example :

A: Is frank busy?

B: Yes, he is. He is cleaning his apartment.

3-Create mini- dialogues to practice with your partner use some of this expressions. Act it out.

-Feeding the cat

-Fixing the TV

-Doing the homework.

Evaluation

Select the best pairs, who had more participation and the one that did not commit any mistake.

ANALYSIS RESULTS