LO TENGO, Y TÚ? ¡AHORA SÍ HABLEMOS!

I GOT IT, AND YOU? LET´S SPEAK TOGETHER!

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the outcomes of an action research project aimed at developing English language speaking skill with fourth grade students at IED Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño in Bogotá, Colombia, through digitized fables with multimedia resources, as an innovative strategy offering meaningful input to students in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Instruments such as field notes, audio recordings, and students' logs after each digitized fable presentation were applied to follow the process and assess progress through students' interaction, reactions to new material, and oral performance. The findings revealed that, despite some oral mistakes, students could increase their number of original utterances as opposed to repetitive speaking; on the other hand, the attitudes towards learning English were improved because of the material implemented.

KEYWORDS: oral interaction and production, Digitized fables, Multimedia Resources, Cooperative work.

Este artículo presenta los resultados obtenidos de una investigación acción que intentó desarrollar habilidades de habla en lengua inglesa, con estudiantes de cuarto grado de la institución educativa Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, a través de fábulas digitalizadas y recursos multimedia como estrategia innovadora en la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera. La información se recogió a través de diarios de campo realizados en cada sesión, grabaciones de audio-video y encuestas a las estudiantes al culminar la presentación de las fabulas digitalizadas. Posteriormente, los resultados obtenidos revelaron que a pesar de los errores

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orales de las estudiantes, ellas lograron interactuar y producir oraciones que iban más allá de la repetición en clase. Además, sus actitudes fueron positivas frente al aprendizaje del inglés gracias al material implementado en la propuesta.

Palabras clave: interacción y producción oral, fábulas digitalizadas, recursos multimedia, trabajo cooperativo.

INTRODUCTION

This research reported and characterized the process of improving the oral skill in English language learners of a public school in the south of Bogotá, Colombia. Therefore, classroom observations were needed not only to identify the problem, but also to think of strategies that could help to overcome those difficulties and promote significant and motivated learning in a population of students who need to be taught as well as encouraged to learn English to facilitate communication and interaction (Vaca Torres & Gómez Rodríguez, 2017).

The student population's linguistic scope was considered at the outset, to identify students' language learning needs. The first aspect observed was their level of active participation in classes. However, their oral responses and word choices showed some repetitive and mechanical qualities, which meant that students were not engaging in much depth with the meaning of what they were learning. Students were asked to color or to draw pictures, activities that did not invite them to explore the language. With that in mind, this project, supported by existing scholarly literature, provided insights into how stories for children (Pérez-Gómez & Rodríguez-Cáceres, 2017), specifically fables presented through multimedia resources, might help them in terms of vocabulary while, at the same time, pointing up the advantages of employing technology in the language classroom to address deficiencies in students' speaking. In other words, digitizing

some stories, taking into consideration the students' needs in terms of values, level of English-language proficiency, and interests might allow them to receive more motivational input, and later demonstrate meaningful output.

In 2004, the *Plan Bogotá Bilingüe* project stated as an objective the implementing of new methodologies and learning environments for learners to acquire and practice the language (Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2004). However, that objective has not been reached on any large scale, because English teachers are not fully oriented toward implementing dynamic material to approach and involve students in a foreign language environment according to the observations done along this research.

Consequently, the current project was expected to contribute to the improvement of language teaching, providing strategies in terms of material and activities that engage the teaching and learning process. This carries vital importance, considering that digital material is nowadays recognized as a needful tool for teachers to develop the learners' participation and close relationship with language, both in the classroom and outside of it.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Nowadays, it is undeniable that the educational sector has been permeated by the arrival of technological resources such as computers, tablets, and smart phones, among others. As Andersen and Van Den Brink (2013) state, "Multimedia is one of the powerful tools that assists teachers to enhance their professional capacity and helps students to achieve their educational goals" (p. 4). However, the significant teaching and learning process in the target language is not ensured; it is necessary to create and apply multimedia material to involve students in class (García-Sánchez & Santos-Espino, 2017; Romaña Correa, 2015); Genc Ilter (2009) adds

that multimedia resources promote meaningful processes in EFL classrooms due to students' engagement and motivation. Being cognizant that technological resources are important in the educational field, it is also remarkable the impact those gadgets can have in developing students' speaking skill through cooperative learning as it is developed in the following sections.

DIGITIZED FABLES AS INPUT

In this study, fables offered through multimedia elements as *input*, provided a stimulus to students' senses to create a nexus linking utterances, images, and sounds. They became a powerful source to help students in their language learning process, since the technological tool by itself did not develop the oral skill, but needed to be combined with the content, students and teachers' roles, and the proposed communicative cycles (Pérez-Gómez & Rodríguez-Cáceres, 2017). Both Krashen (1985) and Van Patten (2003) define *input* as the language that is presented to a person either orally or visually with a communicative intent. This input influences the learners positively, because they recognize and differentiate information when two specific conditions are met: the information presented in the target language is understandable (Krashen, 1985), and it serves a real communicative purpose (Van Patten, 2003).

These notions give an idea of the importance of *input* in the language classroom, where the target language must be used in a comprehensible way to foster students' ability to speak actively. Krashen (1985), in his input hypothesis, mentions reading and visual aids as among the best ways to receive comprehensible input.

Hence, fables were selected as input to work with because of their shortness, easy language, and values message. Taylor (2000) proposes some characteristics which support the use of those stories in the English classes: *the time*

ordered story structure, which makes the story easier to understand and remember; *simple grammar*, presentation of stories with simple linguistic constructions to place the emphasis on the content rather than on form; *repetition and redundancy*, allowing students to retain vocabulary; and finally, *illustrations*, which clarify important events in the story.

Nevertheless, such input must be complemented with the teacher's role, since he/she acts "as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.76) to motivate learners to speak in English. If the teacher elicits *speaking*, pupils will be more exposed to vocabulary, expressions, and pronunciation, at which point they may participate more actively, having acquired a greater stock of words and related abilities that can enhance the communication (Taylor, 1990; Pérez-Gómez & Rodríguez-Cáceres, 2017).

Consequently, the teacher's speaking as part of input will allow students to have a greater facility to speak in the target language both inside and outside the classroom. The object is to elicit a linguistic response, although this response may be a non-verbal substitute such as giving a nod or raising one's hand (Sinclair & Cloudthard, 1975).

SPEAKING (OUTPUT)

Speaking is a process of interacting that involves processing and producing information (Herrera Díaz & González, 2017; Vaca Torres & Gómez Rodríguez, 2017). Brown and Yule (1983) affirm that any information given through speaking is less dense, and implies the use of certain elements: *interaction*, *turn-talking*, *paraphrasing, paralinguistic elements, chunks*, and *social formulas*.

The main functions of language are *transactional* and *interactional*. In the written code, the

fundamental function is the transmission of information, whereas the spoken language focuses more on the interactional: establishing and maintaining social relationships.

Regarding the interactional function, Bygate (1987) stresses two points that are involved in speech: processing and reciprocity conditions. The latter refers to the dimension of interpersonal interaction in conversation. Concerning the processing condition, the author states a difference between "whether a piece of communication is carefully prepared or whether it is composed on the spur of the moment" (p. 7). These can affect people's choice of words and style in speaking.

Bygate (1987) also establishes the difference between knowledge and skill. He affirms that *knowing* how to speak represents the different aspects a student can consider, such as grammar while having the *skill* represents the ability students develop using those aspects to produce speech and adapt it to different circumstances.

Hence, Bygate (1987) proposes to develop students' skills by giving them facilitation devices, either the use of less complex structures, the use of fixed and conventional phrases or speeches drawing upon the learners' previous knowledge. That strategy is supported by Thurnbury (2005), who states that "the lexical knowledge that a proficient speaker has access to, consists not just of a few thousand words, but of a much greater number of chunks" (p. 24). It means that rather than giving an endless list of words to learners, teachers must encourage them to use *chunks*, which are the combination of words that occur together as a meaningful whole; children learn and use complete phrases of language that they pick up from someone's speech, e.g., *I don´t know*, *come on*, *goodbye* (Moon, 2000; VanPatten, 2003).

Additionally, Wells (1981) explains that the speaker must know when it is his/her turn to speak to demonstrate the comprehension of pragmatic verbal and non-verbal communication, and should also be aware of the coherent relation to the previous interlocutors' utterances in order to have a logical position in the conversation, despite the possible lack of knowledge about the language.

Clearly, "Speaking is a result of acquisition and not its cause. Speech cannot be taught directly but emerges on itself as a result of building competence via comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985, p. 80). Therefore, the previous concepts and theories support the development of s*peaking* as an interactive process where language knowledge is activated by appropriate material as input (digitized fables) and language strategies to stimulate students' speaking in EFL.

COOPERATIVE APPROACH

According to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1994), cooperative learning allows teachers to achieve different goals at the same time. Firstly, it helps to enhance students' proficiency as well as establishing positive interactions among learners. The authors define cooperation as working together to achieve some objectives for members of each group, to maximize not just their knowledge but also the others'. In that way, the principles of cooperative work had to be considered: *positive interdependence*, *face-to-face interaction, sense of personal responsibility,* and *interpersonal and collaborative skills.*

Considering those basic principles, it was vital to establish some rules during the project which would permit students to work in an effective way for each activity. The rules were: each member of the group was important; the decisions had to be made by all the members; each member must have the same opportunities to perform the activities; finally, it was not necessary to be friends to work together effectively.

METHODOLOGY

This research was based on the Action Research (AR) approach which involves the reflections of the researcher who is, at the same time, the teacher, in the inquiry process, to define actions and strategies in a specific issue (Burns, 2010). Four phases were involved in this approach.

1. *Planning*: According to the instruments for the needs analysis, a problem related to pupils' oral production was identified, and a plan of action was designed.

2. *Acting*: That plan was put into action.

3. *Observing*: In this phase, the data were read carefully for an understanding of effects in the plan.

4. *Reflecting*: Considering that AR is a cycle, the researcher reflected again on the results gathered, to decide whether the process needed to be started again to overcome any problems.

Regarding the setting, this research was carried out at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, which is part of the public-school system and located in the south of Bogotá, Colombia. It has an English language laboratory, which was an appropriate space to enhance students' learning process, offering the students the possibility to work in different instructional settings. The participants were 36 fourth graders between the ages of 8 and 10. Since students were underage, their parents were asked to sign a consent letter, as the ethics of such research require.

This project was developed in three cycles, as follows: (1) *Meeting the new strategy*, *(2) Now let´s practice together*, and *(3) I got it, and you? Let´s speak together.* Instruments such as field notes, students' logs, and recordings were used to gather the data for this study. For instance, field notes were used during the whole study, both to identify the language issues that arose

and to record the progress of the pedagogical implementation to know the outcomes. In that way, the researcher took notes on verbal and non-verbal communication in the classroom such as behaviors, attitudes, reactions, use of language, participation, and students' development in each activity and interaction.

The other two instruments were utilized only when each digitized fable was concluded. The students' logs provided information about the students' own perception of working with literature such as fables for their learning process and the use of tablets as new material for developing the English classes. They generated knowledge and facilitated comparisons with information also gathered in the field notes. The recordings were useful to identify elements which accompany the speech act, such as use of chunks, interaction, reactions, movements, non-verbal agreements or disagreements, as well as cooperative work.

Finally, the information gathered was analyzed, considering the theoretical triangulation. This method requires multiple sources of information to understand the phenomenon studied and presents four elemental activities for the analysis: *naming*, *grouping*, *finding relationships*, and *displaying data* (Freeman, 1998). In terms of interpretation, Carvajal (2005) emphasizes that analyzing qualitative data requires two significant parts to accomplish the process: describing *what* and *how* the data were collected and connecting the data with three important components: the *researcher*, *theory,* and *reality*.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis, two main categories emerged. The first one refers to the material used in the pedagogical intervention, and the second one on the *speaking skill* as it can be observed in Figure 1.
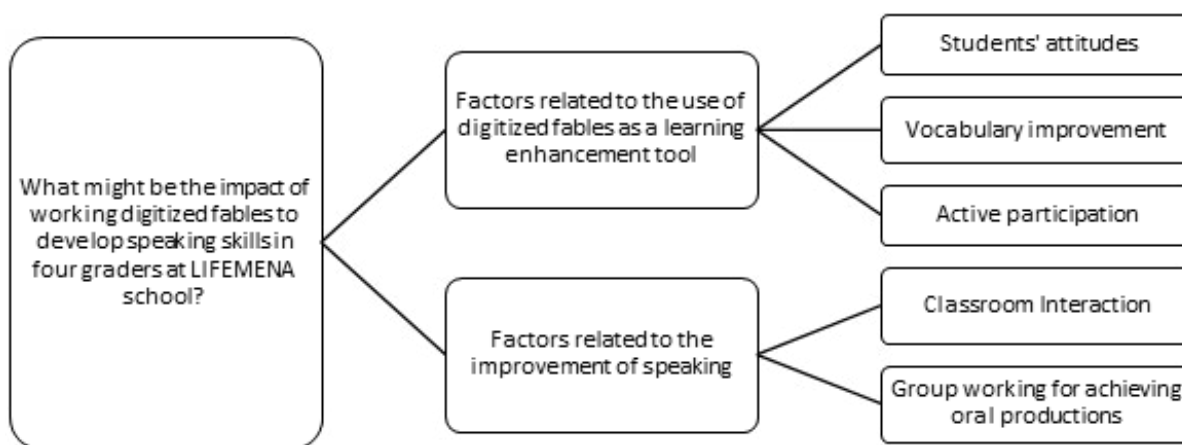
Figure N° 1 Categories and subcategories emergent from data

CATEGORY 1. FACTORS RELATED TO THE USE OF DIGITIZED FABLES AS A LEARNING ENHANCEMENT TOOL

This category allows for interpreting how fables digitized by the researcher according to the student population's English proficiency level had significant changes for being a new tool in the language learning and teaching process. This first category includes three sub-categories.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES

Using digitized fables as new material to develop the English class caught students' attention. The students, mostly visual learners, enjoyed the videos of fables on the smart board. During the second stage, students were asked questions about the technological resource in the English class.

"It seems very practical to me, I learn faster with the tablet, I learn by myself."

(Excerpt from S1, Log 2, Stage 1, "Meeting the new strategy:

Literature and technology come together")

This evidence shows how pupils experienced freedom when they reported that they had learned by themselves. Perhaps they made such a point of that because they did not feel that the teacher was the only source of knowledge, but rather that the technological device supported and helped them to be autonomous in their learning process. In that respect, technology in the EFL classrooms is a way of motivating students to be active and more interested in their own learning, while also providing them with a sense of freedom (Genc Ilter, 2009).

VOCABULARY IMPROVEMENT

Learning vocabulary in another language does not mean reciting a list of words or repeating what the teacher says without knowing what it means. Thus, in this sub-category, more than getting a quantitative outcome, it was possible qualitatively to observe real progress in the students' learning.

During the first stage, students had an excellent attitude, as shown above; however, their vocabulary was quite poor, making them not yet ready to start reading fables. Thus, the teacher started working on vocabulary.

The teacher started asking about the previous vocabulary, they did not remember words such as: "fast, slow, challenge, tortoise and hare" so that, the teacher had to repeat the vocabulary

section using the images, and some movements to show them the difference between fast and slow for example. In that way student could identify and say the words guided by the movements.

(Excerpt from Field Notes, October 22, 2015. Page 1. Lines 4-7)

In terms of language, this quotation reflects firstly that children had not practiced the vocabulary sufficiently, and secondly that they were not able to link what they were watching (a PowerPoint presentation) with what they already knew. Nevertheless, there was an interesting aspect from that extract, where it is mentioned that students learned more with the teacher's movements to represent the word. That finding allowed the teacher to start using *gifts* (the term for such quick, demonstrative movements by the teacher) as key elements to represent what the words meant. It was a striking element, since the population consisted mostly of visual learners, as it has already been mentioned.

That is justified by Andersen and van den Brink (2013), who affirm that "the presentations supported by attractive images or animations are more appealing than static texts, and they can support the appearance of emotions to complement the information presented" (p. 25). In that way, students can address vocabulary easily and connect it to visual information such as slides.

During the second stage, students used tablets to gain control of their learning. This gave them the freedom to listen to and check the vocabulary as many times as they needed to, focusing on those words that were difficult for them.

Having already the digitized fable in the device, and earphones brought by students, girls could practice the vocabulary of "the frog and the ox" fable checking pronunciation and meaning through images, gifts and practicing with the pop quiz.

(Excerpt from Field Notes, March 9, 2016. Page 1, Lines 1-4)

Accordingly, pupils practiced their new vocabulary, using images that they had formed in their minds to retain new information. This indicates how visual aids such as pictures and quick movements (gifts) are the best ways to acquire the comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985).

"After practicing speaking in English based on the digitalized fables, now I can: understand the vocabulary, practice better, to talk about fables in English, participate more."

(Excerpt from S15, Log 2, Stage1,

"Meeting the new strategy: Literature and technology come together")

Some of the students affirmed that they participated more, meaning that the learning process was understood as a reciprocal practice: if the pupil participates, she can learn more vocabulary, and if she knows more vocabulary she will participate more in class.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Participation was measured not only from the student-talk perspective, but also by non-verbal communication. The researcher recorded in her field notes different ways of participating. One of them was when students spoke loudly, answering all together at the same time in a group. Another was when the teacher was explaining something or giving instructions on how to carry out an activity: students nodded their heads and smiled, confirming information, and even made some movements to start doing what was indicated by the teacher.

When they were ready, the teacher made emphasis on the acrostic PARTNERS used and applied when they have to work in groups… The students started reading what each word means

in chorus.

Teacher: do you remember our acrostic to work in group.

Students: yes, partners.

Teacher: "what does letter P stand for?"

Students: "participate actively" ...and so on with the other letters.

(Excerpt from Field Notes, March 9, 2016, Lines 13-19)

This finding of oral and non-oral participation by students may be called *involvement*; it refers to the physical and psychological energy that students take for their learning (Astin, 1999). For this reason, learners were willing to participate in each activity. Despite the scant research and theories about non-oral participation, which could be a passive response, the researcher considered it as an important finding for this reason: the fact that one student does not participate in public does not mean that she is not attentive or engaged in the class while participating in her small group.

CATEGORY 2. FACTORS RELATED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF SPEAKING

The outcomes based on the first three subcategories explained before will be highlighted as another important part of this study. It means that, after working on input through digitized material and activities with pupils, *speaking* as output could be observed in the students' language progress.

CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Developing speaking is a process which is constructed by two or more agents: "most speaking takes the form of face-to-face dialogue and therefore involves interaction" (Thornbury, 2005, p. 8).

The teacher started the class with different

greetings. Students answered in English.

T: Good afternoon class.

Group: Hello teacher!

T: how are you today?

S1 I am fine.

S2 I happy.

S3 I so-so.

S4 Asleep.

The teacher asked S3. Why are you so-so?

S3: Porque estoy enferma.

T: You are sick. What hurts? Qué te duele?

S3: Mi head.

The teacher said, my head.

(Excerpt from Field Notes, March 9, 2016. Page 1, Lines 1-4)

In this extract, the researcher identifies that students answered the teacher's questions in English, coherently and with different feelings. The responses were analyzed, and it was possible to affirm that Student 1's answer was grammatically correct, while the next two answers were not. The students had been taught grammar in the course curriculum. This is what is understood by Moon (2000) as the pieces of language that learners pick up from others in their speech, which in most cases are called chunks (VanPatten, 2003). Hence, the student had to have heard it many times before; the chunk *I'm fine* is the most popular, polite, and repeated reply for the question, *how are you?* This could explain why the other two girls (S2 and S3) did not use *am* in their responses.

Another important aspect analyzed in the fragment was what Schegloff and Sacks (1973), cited in Tsui (1994), described as *adjacency pairs*. The authors classify those pairs as: *greeting-greeting, question-answer,* and *offer-acceptance*. Thus, the first two types were recognized in the fragment above. When the

teacher said *good afternoon class*, students also answered with a greeting as it was expected. Besides, when she asked the question, *how are you today?* It was expected that students would express feelings differently from *I'm fine thank you, and you?* in order that they might expand their vocabulary. Their reactions were positive and coherent, in relation to the question asked, despite some mistakes.

Then, the teacher asked Student 3 in English what the reason for her feeling was. The little girl understood the question because her reply was not *what* or *qué*, as was usual when they did not comprehend what was asked. Her utterance was in Spanish, as she did not know in English any of those words she would use: *porque estoy enferma* ("because I am sick"). That was explained in her next utterance, when she used both languages, and in that case, she did know the English word *head* and used it to follow the conversation. It was seen that the teacher corrected her on her Spanish answers. Therefore, that could be understood as a classroom exchange: the teacher asked a question, it was an initial move which fostered the pupil's response; then, the student's information evoked more questions by the teacher who followed up her answer. That exercise of question and answer could be understood as an adjacency pair; however, Tsui (1994) better defines that situation as a typical classroom exchange, where oral interaction is characterized by the teacher's start and the student's answer, with a third move which the correction of such an answer is.

Another aspect taken from the extract to be analyzed was Student 4's answer. She said *asleep*, expressing the idea of tiredness or desire for sleep. Surely, it was not an answer teacher would like to hear in class. However, for this study it was a significant datum which proved that the student had the skill of speaking using her previous knowledge. The word *asleep* was part of the vocabulary learned in the first

fable, *The Tortoise and the Hare*. Hence, the student associated a word from the fable story with her feeling in that moment. Bygate (1987) differentiates *knowledge* and *skill*. He states that the first one is related to the vocabulary in a specific context, and the second one deals with the ability learners acquire when using that knowledge under different circumstances.

On the other hand, after some role plays performed by students during the project execution, the researcher asked pupils' opinions about *interacting* during the activities. Some of their perceptions were:

"Interacting with my friends in role-playing games about the fables in English helps me to: develop communication skills, converse in English, and fit in better."

(Excerpt from Ss8,10,29, Log 2, Stage 2, "Let's practice together")

In short, interaction in the classroom could be fostered by the teacher's communication as well as by the material itself. Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that language learning is learning to communicate; for that reason, the teacher's role allowed students to start communicating in the target language despite possible mistakes.

GROUP WORKING FOR ACHIEVING ORAL PRODUCTION

When learners work together as a unit, they can maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson et al., 1994). Hence, in this proposal, working in a group was the key step for inducing students to speak about fables. For that reason, in the second and third stages the girls were organized in groups to carry out a role play, engage in dialogues, or just work with the digitized fable on tablets.

The glossary of transcript symbols stated by Jefferson (2004) was used to transcribe students' oral responses. It helped the researcher

to identify elements which accompany the discourse to interpret what speakers do and know when speaking in class.

°word°   Degree signs indicate that sounds are softer than the surrounding talk.

WORD   Upper letters indicate the loud sounds.

°**word**°	Degree signs indicate that sounds are softer than the surrounding talk.	
WORD	Upper letters indicate the loud sounds.	
	Arrows indicate the high or low intonation.	
(0.4)	Numbers in parentheses indicate the time of each pause.	
[	Left bracket indicates an overlap.	
>word<	Right left carats bracketing an utterance that is sped up.	
((word))	Doubled parentheses contain transcriber's descriptions.	

Figure N° 2 Gail Jefferson (2004)

i T: This is the presentation about the hare and the tortoise´s story

ii   S1: in the hare [

iii   T: in the forest [((teacher's correction))

iv   S1: IN THE FOREST TWO ANIMALS↑

((indicated number with her hand)), Monica the tortoise Paula is the hare

v   S2:   I (uhm)- [

vi   S3: I am the hare [((looking at student 2))

vii   S2: °I am the hare°

viii   S3:   I am the hare [

ix   S1: NOT hare, the tortoise. [

x   S3: I am the tortoise [smile]

xi   S1: the tortoise challenge. ((She shook her hand indicating

her partner's turn))

xii   S2: we have °a race° ↓

xiii   T: shall we have a race? (Teacher's correction on intonation)

xiv   S2-S3 >shall we have a race<

xv   S1: the tortoise challenge. (0.5)

xvi   T: and the tortoise said↑

xvii   S1: the tortoise said (she pronounced torshtois, immediately, she

corrected herself))

xviii   S3: YES, ((thumb up)) I accept ((she put her hand on her chest))

(Excerpt from Role Play Transcription 2,

Stage 3, "I got it, and you? Let's speak together")

The extract showed simple grammar, repetition, and redundancy as facilitator elements which allowed students to be able to understand and tell the story to the group in English (Taylor, 2000). In line iii the teacher's intervention was interrupted by S1: the girl had remembered what to say, correcting her false start. The student's upper tone, indicated by capitalization, could be interpreted as a way of recalling information

rather than repetition. In fact, the participant knew what she was saying when, in the next part, she gestured the number 2 with her fingers, keeping the same tone of pitch. In line xvii the same participant also corrected herself when she pronounced the word *tortoise* incorrectly.

Thus, Student 1's corrections could be termed as *self-monitoring*, since the speaker was able to reform her utterances. She followed a process of self-monitoring outlined by Thornbury (2005) as an important aspect of what speakers do when "the wrong word pops out or the pronunciation goes awry" (p. 6), in the developing speaking skills. She could modify the pronunciation of the word *tortoise,* being sure of her correction since that word had been said before.

Additionally, the same student did not just correct herself, but also revised her partners' utterances, an example of cooperative work. This was evident in line ix, when S1 interrupted S3. The latter then became confused and repeated what the previous interlocutor had said, "I am the tortoise" (line x). However, S1 was drawing attention to her partner's response: she realized the repetition of characters, and made an intervention saying the correct one. Then, S3 also said it.

From that description, it was possible to affirm that S1 was not only a speaker but also a listener. In most oral exercises in the classroom, students were worried about what they had to say, but not about what others were telling them. Nonetheless, in this role play, one student was entirely engaged in the activity. She made her skills of turn-taking clear, signaling the fact that she was listening to, and thereby correcting, the mistake. As a further illustration of this aspect, in line xi she moved her hand indicating her partner's turn, where S2 (tortoise) had to challenge S3 (hare) to run a race. The movement indicated a turn to speak; the speaker had to know when it was her turn to speak; however, she also needed to be aware of the coherent

relation to the previous interlocutors' utterances to have a logical position in the conversation (Wells, 1981).

Regarding S2, she was a shy student, but her participation in the role play in front of the others was completely willing. For that reason, her responses were recorded with bracketed degree signs (°), because her tone was very soft. That tone could be interpreted as a sign of being afraid to speak in public, but not as a sign of not knowing what to say. For instance, in line xii she lowered the tone when she said the word *race*, as it was a new word for her. She was even the first one who pronounced it in the dialogue, and she spoke it better in the next line (xiii) when she was more confident and said it coupled with S3, who was also a positive participant. As observed in the transcript, S3's non-verbal communication included *smiles*, *thumb up*, and movements which demonstrated her helpful attitude.

As a result, it was a successful speaking activity. Students were entirely engaged with the role play, and all of them interacted, considering *turn-taking*, *fellowship*, *self-monitoring*, and *vocabulary* as elements indirectly involved in the dialogue dealing with the fable. Furthermore, there was a *positive interdependence*: the students could work as a team where each participant had an important role and contributed to reach the goal (Johnson et al., 1994). As mentioned at the beginning of this sub-category, working together allowed them to promote and take advantage of learning with each member in the group.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

According to the results, multimedia resources had an important impact in the language teaching-learning process. Its effects on students' attitudes toward participating and learning new vocabulary in class were positive. In addition, the oral productions were enhanced due to teamwork activities based on digitized fables. It

is essential to mention that the population had a positive attitude toward the digital technology because they were born in a modern era where such technology was familiar to them; hence, teaching children who are *digital natives* requires changes from the earlier strategies in development of classes (Prensky, 2001).

Consequently, the researchers realized how much influence this had on the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the English class and their learning. With animations, colorful images, and voices recorded by the researchers, the material aroused the interest of learners to learn. They felt motivated to speak in class. Thus, the use of *digitized fables* was a significant input for them, since the language given was suitable for their English level; the use of chunks and simple sentences in the fables could help them to learn and put into practice the vocabulary to which they were exposed.

Furthermore, the activities in groups allowed them to interact in English, keeping new words, expressions, and familiar chunks in their memory; through cooperative work, students also could expand their knowledge, because working together helped the students not only to monitor themselves but also to make corrections on each other's utterances.

Finally, it is possible to affirm that speaking was elicited in fourth graders due to the stimulating material inherent in digitized fables*.* Despite making mistakes, their use of language improved, as did the teaching environment of the English class. It is vital to foster the original creation or creative adaptation of material by teachers in classes: these are key aspects of addressing learners' difficulties in terms of language or motivation in class. Otherwise, the language deficits in the EFL classroom cannot be overcome. In other words, the onus is on teachers' creativity and motivational impetus to make their students better speakers.

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