

Developing Listening through the Use of Authentic Material

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This research study explored listening through the use of authentic materials at a technological institution in Bogotá. It mainly looked for the causes why students of the International Business program had a low listening comprehension level and which were the most suitable authentic material and criteria selection to be adopted and applied for this purpose. This action research study indicated learners did not understand any spoken language accurately. A progressive use of different materials, based on six Morley's principles about teaching listening comprehension and Dumitrescu's theories, provided students with tools to communicate more effectively. Students' needs and teachers' uncertainties about the selection and implementation of this kind of material are the path to reach a higher listening proficiency in this kind of population.

Key words: Authentic material, listening comprehension principles, listening teaching techniques

Este proyecto de investigación exploró la habilidad de escucha a través del uso de material auténtico en una institución tecnológica en Bogotá. Este estudio principalmente buscó las causas por las cuales los estudiantes de Negocios Internacionales tenían un nivel de comprensión de escucha bajo y cuál era el material y el criterio más apropiado para la selección del mismo, para así ser adoptado y aplicado con este propósito. Esta investigación acción indicó que los estudiantes no entendían de manera precisa ningún tipo de lenguaje oral. El uso progresivo de diferentes materiales con base en las teorías de Morley y Dumitrescu, proporcionó a los estudiantes herramientas para comunicarse de una manera más efectiva. Las necesidades de los estudiantes y los interrogantes de los profesores con respecto a la selección e implementación de esta clase de material son el camino para obtener una mejor proficiencia en escucha en esta clase de población.

Palabras claves: Material auténtico, comprensión de escucha, principios en la enseñanza de la comprensión de escucha, técnicas de enseñanza de escucha

Introduction

Due to the fact that in Colombia the academic and professional world is more demanding every day, there exists the necessity of improving foreign language learning; this means, a good development of the four skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) when learning English. However, this activity is not being well done by a significant amount of teachers. An example of this is the low level of listening comprehension some students have of the English language. Besides, when communicating with native speakers the problem increases due to the fact that students rarely face authentic communicative materials. They get used to a certain type of pronunciation and leave the native one relegated. In other words, when students get a mid listening comprehension level of the language, they are able to understand their teacher, and some levelled textbook materials, but in most cases they have huge difficulties understanding native pronunciation that is found in authentic materials such as news, songs and movies. Besides, listening is one of the most applied skills in class but people have a lot of difficulties when developing it which is why it is necessary to work harder to improve it.

Literature review

Listening, definition and purposes

According to Buck, (2000) “Listening is a form of comprehension where the listener is trying to get some meaning from the language”. This statement really made teachers wonder about the procedures they were carrying out in the English language classroom and the real purpose the development of this skill had for learners. As Allen (1966) remarks in Robinett (1978), “The goal of the listening skill is to enable the learner to perceive the second language in the way native speakers perceive it”. This is the ideal goal that teachers want to reach with their students, but in some cases it is not possible because there are many causes that do not allow students to reach this goal, including the activities of the class that are not always sufficient to accomplish it with. An example of this is the lack of material which helps students to get used to real speech and the lack of some specific criteria to choose it. This way, teachers will know how to teach students not only to deal with real language but also to face real situations. That is why the necessity exists of implementing some clear steps to follow in order to improve

listening comprehension in students and, thus, to obtain a closer native speaker likeness of the listening skill.

In the same way, Dick Lee and Delmar Hatesohl (1999) also say: “Even though listening is the communication skill we use most frequently, it is also the skill in which we have had the less training”. With these statements it is clearly seen that listening can be the birth of the learning of any language; in other words, if a person is able to understand what he/she hears, he/she gets easily familiar with the sounds and rhythms of the language and, as such, the other skills can be developed faster and better, because as Lee and Hatesohl signaled from their own experience, “We have had much more formal training in other major communication skills – writing, reading, speaking”. It means that very few people have had any extended formal training in listening.

Listening processes

According to Rivers (1978), there are three basic steps that a listener consciously or unconsciously has to take into account when listening to an oral text. First of all, the author affirms that the individual has to identify the message as a systematic corpus, not as accidental noises. This means that the listener is able to understand that the sounds that he/she is listening to are phonemes of a specific language. For instance, if a person listens to a different kind of text, he/she must identify immediately that the language is French, German or English, without taking into account if he/she knows the language or not. Secondly, the listener has to assimilate the foreign sounds; this recognition is made by means of the distinction of the sounds that are similar to our language. This is seen when learners start imitating what a recorder text says and then they have to work on the correct pronunciation of these words. Finally, the individual starts making an elementary segmentation of the text; in other words, he/she keeps the information in his/her memory and then he/she is able to reflect his/her understanding. In short, this unconscious mental process clearly shows how any kind of individual is able to decode and produce a response in a few seconds.

Rivers also presents a general overview of the listening process that could be complemented by a deeper psycholinguistic analysis established by Van Duzer (1997), who divides the listening process into nine steps that the listener has to follow in order to decode an oral text. First of all, the listener has to determine the reason for listening. The learner has to find an important purpose if the expected result is the

development of a successful listening activity, or a successful decoding process. This means the person has to find consciously or unconsciously a reason or motivation for listening to any kind of text. Then the author mentions the second step, in which the person keeps the raw speech as an image of the information in short-term memory. So far the information has not been processed, but it has been held in reserve as a storing of images that are going to be decoded by the listener when the organization and other processes are done. In short, this means that the information takes place in the memory in order to be used later which confirms that the information has to remain stored in the brain in order to become a concrete message.

Third, the author affirms that the information is organized depending on the type of speech it belongs to. Here, the different speeches are classified into categories such as conversations, lectures, radio, etc. Depending on the verbal communication that is being decoded by the brain, it has to change its organization process. Besides this, the listener has to identify if the message has the function of persuading, giving information or requesting; here, the listener is going to change the management of the message in the brain.

In fourth and fifth place, the individual starts predicting the information about what he/she previously listened to. The listener thinks of the possible information to be included in the message from the speaker. It infers that the human brain has the capacity of making the message a real corpus even without finishing the whole decodification process. The function of the brain changes again and the background information schemata is retaken based on the previous experiences and knowledge that the person has had before starting the comprehension process. After finishing the background information schemata process, a first meaning is assigned to the message by the listener and it is here where the decodification process has almost finished. At this point the message is not concrete, although it must have most of the characteristics of the original message sent by the speaker. This first meaning is assigned in order to be proved in the next step of the process, which consists of checking if the message has been really understood. The receptor compares what the speaker originally said and what he/she understood by means of an examination.

In the next step the receptor keeps the correct message in his/her long term memory in order to use this information when receiving another kind of message. This means that this information becomes part of the background information schemata to be used in a future communicative situation. Finally, the brain erases the

initial message that was kept in the short-term memory and now it passes to the long-term memory as a concrete and real corpus sent by the speaker.

Designing listening comprehension activities

After having analyzed the listening comprehension process, we thought it relevant to check the different ways in which it must be taught. At this point, the focus will be based on some lines of Morley's general principles (in Bratt, 1976) for teaching listening comprehension. It is important to mention that Bratt affirms that "Comprehending the spoken form of the target language is one of the most difficult tasks in language learning, yet it is probably the most neglected skill in second language teaching". In other words, what the author wanted to say is that besides listening comprehension being a hard task for students, teachers sometimes do not help to improve it because maybe they forget to include this skill in the program, because of insufficient information about the nature of the process of listening comprehension. Then the low listening level of L2 is not only a student's problem but mainly a teacher's task.

First of all, listening comprehension lessons (LCL) must have defined goals carefully stated in order to make teachers and students aware of the purpose of the activity. Then, Morley mentions that listening comprehension lessons (LCL) should be constructed with careful step-by-step planning. In other words, it implies that the listening task must progress from simple to more complex as students improve their language proficiency. Students must always know exactly what the task is, such as "what to listen for, where to listen, when and how to listen" (Morley, in Bratt, 1976). As such, the task will be easier for the students.

Based on the third principle, listening comprehension lessons should require active student participation and Morley mentions that the most overt student's participation involves a written or spoken response to the listening comprehension material. This means that teachers should use written material for the listening comprehension, but it is essential to give feedback to the students because it helps to keep students interested and motivated.

Listening comprehension lessons should provide a communicative urgency for recall in order to develop concentration. Here concentration is an important part for listening comprehension because as much as students concentrate they are able to answer accurately and will remember better. Then, the idea here is that students must know the written assignment before they listen to the material. As a consequence,

they will be prepared when listening to the text. In the fifth principle, Bratt mentions that listening comprehension lessons should stress conscious memory work because one of the goals of listening is to increase the student's immediate recall or, in Morley's words, "listening is receiving, receiving requires thinking, and thinking requires memory; there is no way to separate listening, thinking, remembering".

In the sixth and last principle listening comprehension lessons should teach not test. Here Bratt remarks on Morley: "The purpose of checking students' answers should be viewed only as feedback". Then, teachers must let students see how they are progressing and how they did on an exercise. It is better if there is no pass/fail attitude associated with the correction of the exercises.

Authentic material

Anderson & Lynch agree with Miller on the fact that sometimes teachers do not pay attention to the listening material. In this respect, the first author says that in preparing material and activities for listening comprehension we do not give enough consideration to differences between edited, constructed messages and the authentic output speech of natural interaction. This statement made teachers think and analyze the way listening texts are being chosen so far. Most of the written texts are usually edited and not authentic. This means that a publishing house creates these texts in order to have students practice listening, but in many of them there does not exist real speed and pronunciation. Also, many of these listening texts are recorded by native speakers but involve the listeners in an unreal and almost perfect language use. Without any doubt, this material helps students to develop listening skills, but the exclusive use of this kind of text causes them to get used to listening to clear language without allowing for misunderstanding. This type of listening creates big problems when learners have to face communicative situations with native speakers because learners are not used to facing this sort of speech. The decodification process will take more time or, in some cases, they will not be able to decode at all.

At this point, a question appears: How can these difficulties be dealt with if it is supposed that the pupil already knows the language and has developed his/her listening skill previously?. The answer to this question is the lack of authentic material for practicing this skill. Underwood (1990) considers that "any text is 'authentic' if it was produced in response to real life communicative needs rather than as an imitation of real life communicative needs. The term can be applied to any sort of text, written or spoken, and in relation to any kind of situation of language use". In addition to

this, Guariento and Morley (in Aguirre, 2004) argue that an authentic text is one “created to fulfill some social purposes in the language community in which it was produced”. On the other hand, Widdowson affirms in Rost (1990) that there exists a difference between the text itself and the learner use of the text. He considers genuineness to be a characteristic of the text itself and authenticity as a characteristic of the relationship between the reader/listener and the text; paradoxically, genuine texts do not always lead to authenticity of purpose for the learners. Besides, Ur (in Rost, 1990) also added the following three advantages of that: Real-life listening allows sufficient access to environmental cues; listening segments come in short sounds; and listening requires reciprocity and frequent listener response. Although Underwoods, Widdowson and Ur clearly explained the concept and characteristics of authentic material, they do not establish clear parameters for making an appropriate selection of the material. Based on these definitions, characteristics and reflections, another question emerges: How can teachers make an appropriate decision when selecting authentic material? Valeriu Dumitrescu (2000) proposed some specific features teachers should take into account when selecting authentic material.

Dumitrescu (2000) affirms that there are some specific criteria when selecting authentic material. First of all, it is necessary to take into account three basic aspects of the learner’s background: linguistic, conceptual and cultural.

Linguistic: Depending on the students’ previous knowledge in terms of vocabulary, grammar and communicative skills, the teacher has to select the tasks, its sequence and way of executing them. This means that, depending on the students’ needs, the teacher will select the most appropriate task (a simple or a more complex one) according to their proficiency level.

Conceptual: Depending on students’ previous knowledge about the concept to work on, the teacher has to determine if the information that is going to be listened to should be general or specific. Keeping this in mind, the teacher will have to take into account if the topic they are working on is wide or narrow enough to fulfill students’ needs.

Cultural: It has to do with student-teacher interaction, the formality or informality of the classroom environment and teacher-student roles. (This aspect depends on the level and kind of population the teacher is working with and their social context).

Secondly, the author refers to two additional aspects that help teachers when doing the selection of their material: applicability and adaptability.

Applicability: The selection of the material must be done taking into account students' needs, keeping in mind a close relation between the learners' reality and interests and the oral text.

Adaptability: It is important to choose an oral text that promotes an easy task design procedure and manipulation for the teacher. The text should have an easy adaptation for production activities and for developing skills.

These five aspects are relevant for the selection and use of authentic material and involve many of the aspects mentioned previously by other authors. Teachers must always take into account students' background and material characteristics when developing listening comprehension lessons based on this sort of material.

Research design

Research questions

This research project had one main question and two sub-questions that will be answered during the data analysis or after implementation.

Main question

- How can listening comprehension in English be developed by the use of authentic material in fourth level English students of International Business at a technological institution?

Sub-questions

- Which are the causes of the low listening comprehension in fourth level English students of International Business at a technological institution?
- What kind of authentic material is most suitable for developing listening comprehension?
- And what are the criteria for choosing such authentic material?

Setting

This project was carried out at a technological university where the researchers were working at that moment. This college has existed twenty years and has always aimed for a highly qualified professional level; this is the reason English has a special

place and importance in the community of the International Business program where the research project was held. The university works hard on students' development of scientific thought making the correct management and command of the English language a requirement for the successful students' professional development; this is because most of the fields in which International Business students are going to work in are almost completely managed in the English language. Although in this institution the English language does not have a special place, an English department is being developed in order to supply the students' necessities, to improve the English language classes and to develop different activities which promote English language learning by getting students involved in all the events.

In the fourth level of the International Business Program, there were ten (10) students who took four hours of English classes per week. Furthermore, there were some aspects that made the teacher worry about her students' performance. First of all, during the classes the teacher had noticed that for the level these students had, they did not even manage the basic grammatical contents and their development of the four skills was very poor when compared with the abilities a learner was supposed to have according to the syllabus. In regards to the listening skill, it is relevant to mention that it seemed to be a skill practiced infrequently not only because the policies of the University did not consider them an important part of the syllabus, but also because students tried to reject its practice. Apparently they were stressed and disappointed when they had to work on listening activities; this fact made researchers think pupils perceived the skill as a set of boring and difficult tasks.

Data collection instruments

There were used two data collection instruments: *classroom observation* and *questionnaires*.

1. *Classroom observations*: This activity attempted to find out what the possible causes and effects of the low listening level were. A special format was designed in order to find specific points in the observations. The format had two parts. The first had to do with the general observations of the class and the second with aspects closely related to the listening activities. With these classroom observations, two categories were worked: The first one was related to the attitudes towards the English language/class and the second with the extent students had of understanding the spoken language.

Eight sequenced classroom observations (from February 8 to May 18 2005) were carried out by a non-participant observer (researcher).

2. *Questionnaires*: These forms were designed in order to find out which was the most difficult skill for students and why, taking into account students' and teacher's points of view. That is why there was one questionnaire for the teacher and one for the students. This questionnaire worked basically two main categories: The first deals with students' difficulties as regards English language skills and the second with their weaknesses in the development of the listening skill with different kinds of material. The teacher and students answered their respective questionnaires at the end of the semester, after all the observations had been analyzed.

Data analysis and findings

All data was collected during eight, 90-minute lessons during the second semester of 2005 using the two aforementioned data collection instruments. Questionnaires and classroom observations helped us to answer the first sub-question helping to direct the results of the research. For analysing these instruments, we used the triangulation technique based on the fact that it is used when two or more methods are employed for the data collection process. The first type of triangulation we worked with was time triangulation; this is because the class observations were carried out using longitudinal studies, meaning that the observer appeared at different points in the time sequence in order to get some relevant information for the implementation; in this case, the same group was observed twice a week. On the other hand, we also worked with methodological triangulation due to the fact that we applied two instruments: class observations (one observer) and two questionnaires to our sample group and teacher. These types of triangulation were used in order to have a wider view about the problem and its possible solutions.

Categorization

To find a possible answer to the research questions, we began wondering about different aspects of the problem.

1. **Students' difficulties as regards English language skills**: This category concerns the first two questions of the questionnaires in which it was found that most of the students had problems basically with speaking

and listening (8 of 10 students). This fact, encouraged us to work on the listening skill due to the fact that Brown (1996) affirms that in the early days of the listening skill development, “students would simply acquire the ability to understand the spoken form of the language if they occasionally heard their teacher speak it or to listen to a type if it is being spoken”. This statement helped us to make the decision of working on listening to promote speaking development too.

2. **Weaknesses in the development of the listening skill with different kinds of material:** Based on the last four questions, it was found that the listening activities related to real speech such as films, news, and cartoons were the most difficult for students (10 out of 10 students had problems).
3. **Attitudes towards the English language and class:** Two of the aspects analyzed in the classroom observation showed that most of the students (9) took their English classes because it was a requirement for their studies program but not because they really enjoyed or liked it. These aspects gave us an idea about the first sub-question: Which are the causes of the low listening comprehension? To be sure, one of the causes is the lack of interest and motivation of the learners.
4. **The extent of students’ understanding the spoken language:** Based on the other seven features analysed, it was possible to see that the ten students had difficulties when understanding the teacher and when developing the listening activities. Besides, it was seen that they constantly asked the teacher or some classmates for repetition and explanation.

With these four categories, it was clearly seen that two of the sub-questions were answered successfully: Which are the causes of the low listening comprehension? What kind of authentic material is most suitable for improving listening comprehension? With the instrument there were three main findings. First of all, students needed more listening training when taking into account that in the past students did not have frequent ear training. Second, students needed to be motivated to participate actively and develop self confidence when using the language. Finally, learners had problems when facing real speech. For this reason we decided to focus our implementation on the use of authentic material.

Pedagogical intervention

Via the classroom observations, questionnaires and the theoretical framework, it was possible to see that clear parameters are needed in order to solve the listening comprehension problems in the sample group. For this purpose we applied eight lesson plans, taking into account Morley's six general principles which fit the most relevant items of our sample population. Some common parameters were added to each one of the lesson plans designed. Although there were more than one criterion used when choosing the authentic material, we focused our attention on Dumitrescu (2000) because this author presents a complete and detailed explanation for choosing the type of material properly. With these criteria we solved our 3rd research sub-question.

All the activities based on the use of authentic material (songs, news, video cartoons, movies) were monitored. Two questionnaires were used for checking the action. The first one was used to know to what extent the listening comprehension skill was developed through songs and the second one to evaluate the use of videos (cartoons, news, movies). In second place, all the lesson plans had clear established goals which were divided into four main sections – warming-up, presentation, practice and production – in order to make learners feel it was a learning experience and not a listening test. Throughout all the intervention process we constantly used ranking, viewing backwards, and deducing dialogues from images to get students to begin developing their skills. At this point of the research process we were at the implementation of the revised plan stage.

In order to carry out this pedagogical intervention and after having read what many authors said about research methods, we found it possible to establish that the action research method is the most suitable for the development of the project. According to Kemmis (1983, in Hopkins, 1993), education action research has been employed in school based curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs, and system planning and policy development. As such, this methodology is very useful because our desire is to reach the development and improvement of the syllabus at the institution in order to give any kind of support possible to other technological institutions with a similar population. Besides the advantages that action research brings to the program and curriculum, it also brings a wider and relevant improvement in professional development; this is because teachers have the possibility of proving new strategies in order to overcome the difficulties presented in the development of listening skills. In short, action

research helps researchers develop and improve not only the syllabus but also provides them with many useful tools to be used along this process. Here, in the diagram, we show how we followed the action research model.

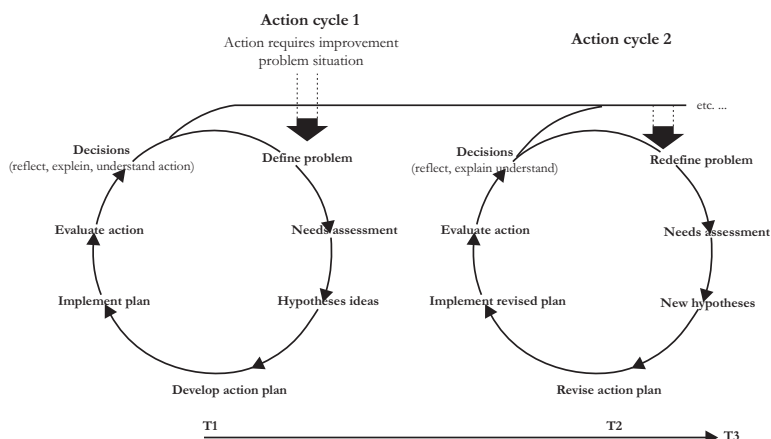


Diagram 1. McKernan's Action Research Model. Taken from McKernan (1991, in Hopkins, 1993).

Conclusions

After having analysed and worked along this research project, we concluded that listening comprehension can be developed based on the correct material selection and systematic and coherent lesson plans. To select the correct authentic material it is necessary to consider linguistic, conceptual and students' cultural background as well as the applicability and adaptability of the chosen texts. In order to do systematic lesson planning, Morley's six principles such as defined and pre-established goals carefully stated for each lesson plan; a careful listening tasks design from the simplest to the most complex; a demand for active, overt students' participation; the demand of a communicative urgency for recall in order to develop concentration; an emphasis on conscious memory work and a teaching not testing purpose providing students with immediate feedback must be taken into account. Finally, it is necessary to develop listening for gist-selective listening and listening for predictions which are the relevant skills when developing listening comprehension.

There were two main causes why students of fourth English level in the International Business career did not have a good listening comprehension development. First of all, these students had not had enough ear training; this means that along the levels they have taken, listening had not had an important place in the language teaching; on the contrary, emphasis had been placed on grammar and vocabulary development. Along this implementation, students were trained specifically on listening through a constant, levelled and systematically designed lesson planning process which was based on Joan Morley's principles, Dumitrescu's criteria for selecting authentic material and the appropriate lesson planning when developing listening for comprehension. With this action plan, students got used to listening to this kind of material attentively several times and to developing high spans of concentration and attention while listening, a fact that made them feel relaxed and comfortable when developing their listening comprehension skills.

The second cause of the low listening comprehension was the speed native speakers employ when they are talking. This is probably the most difficult aspect students had to face when listening to authentic material, maybe because they were always listening to non-native speakers and their proficiency and facing authentic language made them feel embarrassed and disappointed. Via this implementation, we tried to get students familiar with situations where the action of linking words was usually presented. With the constant use of movies and news, students were starting to comprehend this kind of language.

At this point and based on the results of the information gathered, it is possible to say that there are two suitable types of authentic material to develop listening comprehension. In first place, songs are the most suitable ones when developing comprehension in this population. This is because students feel motivated when working with this kind of material; in addition, learners' ages and social contexts really fit with the kind of music we worked with. In second place, cartoons are also appropriate for developing listening comprehension due to the fact that as they are designed for children, their language speed and pronunciation are very slow and clear; hence, it is an appropriate resource to work with in any kind of population.

To employ a careful criteria-oriented selection of the material we have to take into account five main aspects. The first three deal with students' background knowledge. First of all, the linguistic background has to be taken into account due to the fact that it shows us what students already know about the target language. Then the conceptual background, which deals with the knowledge students have about

concepts, contexts and topics to work on. Finally, cultural background, which has to do with student-teacher interaction and the type of environment where they perform their roles. The next aspects are applicability and adaptability. The former determines to what extent the selected material is useful and suitable for the class and for the population, and the latter refers to the way a text can promote an easy task design, procedure and manipulation on the part of the teacher and students.

Based on the criteria to design a lesson plan it is important to state that a degree of development has been evidently reached. During the progress of the last three lesson plans, it was noticed that learners were not misunderstanding what the teacher wanted to mean. At this point, they comprehended and followed instructions in an easier and more efficient way than before. Besides, pupils' concentration spans have significantly increased, today they are able to focus their attention on an authentic spoken text and comprehend its essential meaning; this is probably because the application of the "teach not test" principle provided them with enough self confidence to face this sort of material. In short, it was found that this set of lessons plans really helped students to accomplish a higher listening comprehension.

Pedagogical implications

Along this project we worked looking for a better listening comprehension in students, and with the results we obtained, we can say that for these kind of students of International Business program, it is very important to encourage them to communicate, because as it was said before, their work field is demanding them the use of English every day. It is clear that if students do not have a well developed listening skill, communication will be difficult for them, but with a continuous and conscious training on this ability students can improve. After the implementation, it was seen that students understood better the teacher and they were more relaxed when speaking in English.

It was noticed that when applying the lesson plans using authentic material, the contact with a different culture was seen too. As all the topics had to see with English or American news, films and cartoons, students and teacher could see how different is everything in our country, the way to present the news, the way designers make cartoons there, and so on, at the same time students could see what was happening in a different country. Then students have now a vision of a different culture.

Thanks to this project, students realized that English is really important not only for their career, but also for their personal life. They are aware that nowadays most of

the information they need from the Internet is in English, and that most of the enterprises always ask for knowledge of a second language.

The systematic and well designed lesson plans contributed toward motivating students and making English classes more dynamic and active for them. When students had this positive attitude, learning was easier and comfortable, a fact that really encouraged the learners to participate actively and take advantage of their classes even after having worked the whole day.

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Appendix 1: Sample lesson plan

Objectives

1. **General:** Recognizing and acting on the speakers' intentions. Identifying information from a spoken text.
 2. **Specific:**
 - To identify differences between similar sounds.
 - To identify and look for general and specific information.
 - To reflect, critique and defend his/her point of view orally.
- **Topic:** How to change the world
 - **Language focus:** Listening. Movie (*Pay It Forward*)
 - **Material and equipment:** TV, DVD, markers, paper, photocopies.
 - **Previous knowledge:** At this point students know some of the verbal tenses in active voice as well as numbers, some prepositions, and some regular and irregular verbs, etc.
 - **Student organization:** Whole group, individual work, group work and pair work.
 - **Time:** 90 Minutes.

Procedure

♦ **Warming-up: Runners and secretaries**

The group will work in pairs sitting face to face and having enough space around them. A short biography of the actor “Haley Joel Osment”, who acts in the movie to work on will be stuck on the board. One of the students of each group is going to receive the name of “Runner”. He/She is going to be in charge of going to the board, reading and remembering as much as possible in order to dictate to the “Secretary”, who is the person that copies accurately what his/her partner says. Then the teacher is going to read and correct the biography and the group with the best quality and quantity of information will be the winner. This activity will help students to contextualize their knowledge with the new knowledge they are going to receive.

Biography: Haley Joel Osment: He was born in Los Angeles, California, on April 10, 1988. The son of actor Eugene Osment and teacher Theresa Osment, Haley was chosen for a commercial at the age of 4. His comedy skills were manifested very young and he followed “Thunder Alley” with two more sitcoms. He is regarded by many as the finest young actor in the business today after his Academy Award Nominated performance in *The Sixth Sense*. He played 8-year-old Cole Sear, who is tormented because he has the ability to see dead people. After his critical acclaimed performance in *Sixth Sense*, he went on to do *Pay it Forward* again with a great performance and the long awaited *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* by Steven Spielberg. Haley auditioned for the role of Annakin Skywalker in *Phantom Menace* but he did not get the role.

Presentation

- **Activity one: Debate**

In this activity the group is going to be divided into three groups in order to reflect and answer some questions according to their lives and criteria.

Questions

1. Have you ever thought of a way in which you could change the world? If not, think about it.
2. Have you ever done something to change the world? Explain your answer.
3. Do you like or enjoy to do good deeds that help society? Why?

- **Activity two: Silent viewing** (Predicting)

In this activity students are going to predict what is happening in the scene by answering some questions while they see the scene without sound.

Questions

1. What do you think the characters are talking about in this scene? Why do you think so?
2. Are the people in this scene happy, sad, surprised, excited? Why?
3. Based on the images, write the description of the physical appearance and personality of two of the characters that appear in this scene.
4. What is the social environment students have to face?

Practice

- **Activity one: Sound only** (Listening for the gist)

At this point, students are going to listen to the conversations of the scene while they answer some general questions about it.

Questions

1. What are the characters talking about?
2. What is the subject they are studying?
3. What kind of attitudes do students and the teacher have?

- **Activity two:** (Selective listening)

At this point, students are going to see the scene with images and sound using normal viewing techniques while they answer orally some specific questions about it.

Questions

1. What are the names of the main characters in the scene?
2. What is the homework that the teacher gave the learners?
3. What grade are the students in?
4. What's the school's name?
5. How old is Trevor?
6. What disturbs the teacher?
7. According to the conversation, what does the world expect of us?

- **Activity three:** (Selective listening)

In this activity, the learners are going to be given a photocopy with an incomplete part of the script and they will have to pay attention to the dialogue in order to identify which part of the dialogue it is, and to fill in the blanks. Pupils have to see the video and fill it in with the missing words. (See Students' guide). Then they will check the answers with the teacher.

Production

- **Activity one: Role-play**

In this stage the students have to use some clues in order to create a role-play where they show what probably could happen after the scene previously seen.

CLUES: Change the world – Put into action a strategy – Help people.

• **Activity two: Problem solving**

In this stage the pupils have to think about the homework the teacher assigned the students. Then, they will prepare, by using some posters, an oral presentation giving and explaining a solution for the problem presented in the movie.

Students' guide

Teacher: Apparently none of you _____ a new teacher. I'm Mr. Simonet. Welcome to the seventh grade; middle school, hellish, shaky bridge you all _____ before you _____ members of that undyingly enviable high school elite. You _____ you can _____ this bridge fast enough that you'd rather close, your eyes and not think about it's all over. Well, I'm here to tell you that is it not an option in this class. Lateness, tardiness; to be late for your first class on your first day of school. What _____ that _____?

Boy: _____ a bad hair day!

Teacher: Perhaps, what it indicates is a lack of respect. You see, I'm going to be here every day for you, and so I expect you to be here for me on time! No excuses. Put that down!

Boy: Wait!

Teacher: Now, this class is social studies. That is you and the world, yes! There is a world out there and even if you decide you _____ to meet it, it's still going to hit you right in the face. Believe me, so you'd best start thinking about the world now and what it means to you? Come in! A little class participation here! Is it just this class you want to get out of? Your house, your street? Any further, any of you want to go than that? Yes?

Girl: The mall, that's only two miles away from me!

Teacher: Well! Let me ask you another question. How _____ you _____ about things that happen outside of this town? Do you watch the news? Yes? No? All right, so, we're not global thinkers yet, but why aren't we?

Trevor: Because we're 11!

Teacher: Good point! What's your name?

Trevor: Trevor!

Teacher: Maybe Trevor's absolutely right. What should we think about the world? I mean, after all, what does the world expect of us?

Trevor: Expect?

Teacher: Of you? _____ the world expect of you?

Trevor: Nothing!

Teacher: Nothing! Boys and girls! He's absolutely right! Nothing. I mean, here you are. You can't drive, you can't vote, you can't go to the bathroom without a pass from me, you are stuck right here in the seventh grade. But not forever! Because one day you will be free.

- **Script**

Teacher: Apparently none of you have ever seen a new teacher before. I'm Mr. Simonet. Welcome to the seventh grade; middle school, hellish, shaky bridge you all must cross before you become members of that undyingly enviable high school elite. You may think you can cross this bridge fast enough that you'd rather close your eyes and not think about it's all over. Well, I'm here to tell you that is it not an option in this class. Lateness, tardiness; to be late for your first class on your first day of school. What does that indicate?

Boy: I'm having a bad hair day!

Teacher: Perhaps, what it indicates is a lack of respect. You see, I'm going to be here every day for you, and so I expect you to be here for me on time! No excuses. Put that down!

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Girl: The mall, that's only two miles away from me!

Teacher: Well! Let me ask you another question. How often do you think about things that happen outside of this town? Do you watch the news? Yes? No? All right, so, we're not global thinkers yet, but why aren't we?

Trevor: Because we're 11!

Teacher: Good point! What's your name?

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Teacher: Maybe Trevor's absolutely right. What should we think about the world? I mean, after all, what does the world expect of us?

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