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PRESENCIAL

DIDACTIC UNIT TALK A BLUE STREAK

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Summary: Talk a blue streak! (American idiom that could be understood as "talking non-stop") whose general objective is to strengthen oral communication skills in English in last-grade students at public schools in Bogota, through the analysis of the film Mr. Nobody. Therefore, to achieve the proposed objective, an interactive website was created where students can establish sub-themes not only academic but scientific such as the various theories of causality, semiotic analysis in cinema and advertising, and social memory.

However, the contents already mentioned are only an excuse to reach the specific objectives proposed to successfully complete the purpose illustrated above. These include employing functional language to discuss alternatives, making recommendations, and negotiating agreements in debates; having strategies that allow students to naturally initiate, maintain and close a simple conversation on



topics of interest and, finally, applying techniques such as paraphrasing to compensate for communication difficulties.

Thus, an experimental methodology would be implemented in which a diagnostic test would be carried out, to establish an idea of the previous knowledge against the topics alluding to the language as the types of conditionals and their respective grammar, the difference between connotation and denotation, dissimilarities between the types of past, among others. After the completion of this, the content of the website would be worked with the respective evaluation grid and the diagnostic test would be performed again to make evident the possible acquisition of theoretical knowledge and discursive progress of the student.

Keywords: Didactic unit, communication skills, causality, semiotic analysis, social memory.

Introduction to theoretical references

English learners are constantly discouraged after realizing that despite years of grammar, lexicon, and photocopying they are unable to have a minimum of five minutes of conversation. "I can read it; I understand it when I hear it and I can even write it but talking is tough" is the common multiple of apprentices. It is precisely for this reason that the specific objectives of this project are focused on giving tools and strengthening the oral production of students since, learning English goes far beyond a command of the verb to be, of grammar, and the number of isolated words that can be learned, to be able to speak English it is necessary to develop a speech with a good level of intelligibility.

"So the intelligibility of a sentence does not depend so much on the individual sounds of words but on all the other features that accompany these segmental sounds (stress, rhythm, intonation and juncture) from which the message of a sentence depends on [...] Most students of English



who have been to an English speaking country usually have problems understanding native English people, regarding English a succession of incomprehensible sounds, with no spaces at all between words. Actually, there are so many factors that take place in casual conversation which affect pronunciation to make the language sound fluent and not mechanical. This is due to the existence of weak forms in their language that leads to reduction, assimilation, and elision which are features of the connected speech in English.” (Barros Y, 2013)

Nevertheless, the discourse must be supported using kinetic and paralinguistic elements such as gestures and intonation to make what is said more understandable, not for nothing, it is this component that carries 80% of the assertiveness in the communication of people with deafness. Given this, the human body has an important role in learning English to the point that there are specific functions of nonverbal communication which are:

- “1. Delivery of additional information. The high and low tone of the tone in expressing one's opinion represents the communication in a colorful way and serves to increase the effectiveness of the process. In addition to intonation, the use of gestures or facial expressions plays an important role in shaping the essence of the conversation.
2. To replace verbal components in communication. Expressing anger, skepticism, affirmation (hand gestures, shrugs, eyebrows) through nonverbal means and ending the thought through incomplete intonation or gestures in the process of communication.
3. Use in combination with verbal means. The participation of paralinguistic means in the communication process allows you to fully understand the essence of the conversation. For example, if the conversation continues, a melody is selected that matches the question being asked. But the specificity of the timbre remains unknown. Therefore, the type of melody



is the main factor of speech, and the type of timbre chosen is the paralinguistic factor.” (Temirova, F. 2020)

Now, learning a language brings with it a certain responsibility because even if it is learned by tourism subjects it is understood that the speaker is part of a society and therefore must take part in it. So, learning English must be supported by the argumentation skill that the learner must constantly make use of, whether for his academic life, the development of his writing competence, as well as for daily discussions.

However, teaching how to argue has its science. For this reason, the present work was based on two lines of debate that complement each other: the formalist approach of the Socratic forum and the dialogic approach: the argument as a conversational turn. Where the first is developed based on:

“The assignment sheet offered five steps for generating essay material: Students read a pro/con article, decide on their position (pro or con), “pick” support for the position from the article, “pick” a counterargument to refute, and write it all up. On balance, however, the assignment text directs students to focus on the form of the argument more so than on its content.” (Juzwik, VanDerHeide, & Dunn, 2016)

On the other hand, the dialogic approach is based on the previous construction of arguments that can be used during a conversation to support an established thesis. In that vein, this is a collaborative method of argumentation in which the priority is not to prove who is right but to persuade the other. Therefore:

“The dialogic approach to argument writing—what I say depends on what you said—can help energize students to see the significance of their writing. They come to see that, through writing, they may take action in the world, as individuals and as collaborators.” (Juzwik, VanDerHeide, & Dunn, 2016)



Thus, the competencies mentioned above have been called the speech-wise of this work, which will be developed through content-wise, which are the three main themes taken as an excuse to promote dialogue throughout the entire didactic unit. They are shown in image 1. with their respective condensed subtopics as follows:

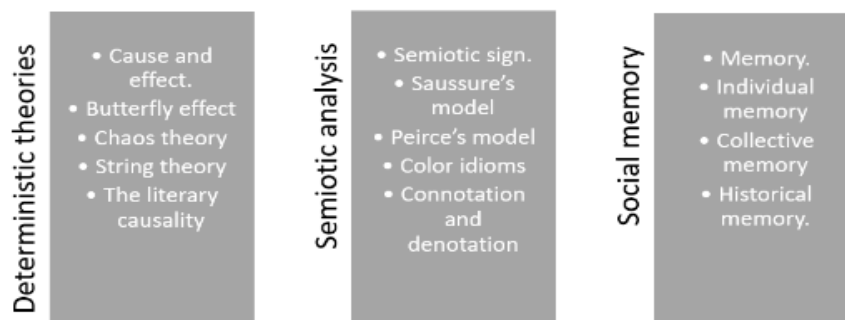


Image 1. Content-wise.

Methodology

The diagram shown in image 2. presents the step by step followed to create the didactic unit and its website.

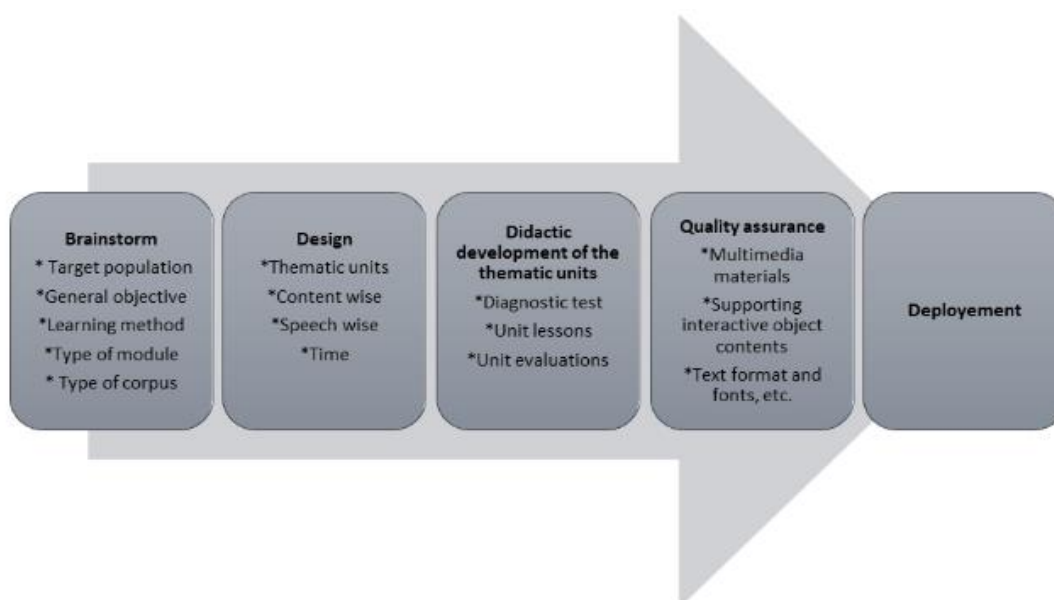


Image 2. Methodology.



Therefore, brainstorming was the first step, to begin with, this work as it was necessary to have a clear idea about the age and gender of the students that the unit would focus on, then the general objective and learning method had to be selected in order to be the most accurate for the target population. After that, the type of module and corpus must be selected being theoretical-practical and Mr nobody film respectively.

Secondly, the design was delimited by the thematic units which were three: causality, the omnipresence of semiotics, and we are memories. These units were selected as the excuses to achieve the objectives based content-wise and speech-wise during a period of time of 4 weeks with 4 hours per week (virtual/face-to-face).

The didactic development of the thematic units was defined by: the diagnostic test of nine questions related to the speech-wise topics; the unit lessons each one composed of four of them that can be remarked in image 1. And, their respective evaluation. Additionally, each lesson was determined by its own lesson plan composed of four steps: warm-up, explanation, exemplification, and the activity.

Subsequently, the quality assurance had to be with the multimedia materials specially selected not only to be directly linked with the topic but understandable to the population. Here the selection of videos, pictures, and tales represented hard work as they play a very important role in the success of the didactic unit. Nevertheless, the multimedia already mentioned was supported by the interactive object's content as they are strongly related to the practical part of this labor. Given this, and having finished the other details such as text format, color, and font, the last step was the deployment of the website on the internet.



Results

After following the mentioned steps this didactic unit was condensed into the website called Talk a blue streak! <https://sites.google.com/view/talkabluestreak/inicio>. This site was created for students from 12 years old, and for that reason, it is easy to manage and navigate. In the very beginning, every person will find an introduction video that will explain to them how to use it, how to move across the units, and lessons that can be found. Also, the general and specific objectives are shown in order to let the students be acknowledged the purpose of the work. It is important to remark that the website is supported by several platforms and devices like tablets, computers, and cell phones. Thus, the probability of being unable to have access to the website is very low.

Now, talking about the evaluation, the activities and products of each lesson will be qualitatively assessed. The assessment will be both among peers and from the teachers, taking into account the approaches proposed: collaborative learning and communicative approach. The evaluation at the end of each unit will be quantitatively assessed and will have a percentage of 20% each. Likewise, the final evaluation of the module, which is a debate, will be quantitatively assessed and will have a percentage of 40%. Finally, the grading scale will go from 1.0 to 5.0 and will follow the criteria specified in the rubric with the purpose of clearly communicating it to students. Thus the quantitative evaluation would be given by the terms mentioned in Image 3. Of course, the diagnostic test would be performed again at the end of the course to make evident the possible acquisition of theoretical knowledge and discursive progress of the student.



1.0 to 2.0: Does not follow instructions or does not develop the activity.

2.1 to 3.0: Relies on memorization to present the dissertation and has difficulties to present the connection between topics.

3.1 to 4.0: Applies communicative strategies to spontaneously discuss topics of interest, but struggles to draw connections between topics.

4.1 to 5.0: Implements communicative strategies to spontaneously discuss topics of interest, and cohesively and coherently presents the relationship between topics.

Image 3. Quantitative evaluation 1.0 - 5.0.

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