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Effect of the Bloomfield Program on English as Foreign Language Skills

Abstract

The objective of the research carried out was to determine the effect of the Bloomfield program on the competences of English as a foreign language in the students of a language center-2020. The research had an applied study, experimental design and a quasi-experimental class. The sample was non-probabilistic, in which a pre-test and post-test of level A1 were applied within the Common European Framework of References. The total population was 317, and the selected sample of 174 students. The results were tabulated from the collection of test results. Then the results in the post test showed that 100% were at the beginning level, 0% achieved, and 0% outstanding. On the other hand, the post test showed that 0% in the beginning, 1% in the process level, and 99% in the outstanding level in the competence of English as a foreign language. Concluding in this way that the applied program significantly improves the competences of English as a foreign language in Peruvian students in Bloomfield Idiomas, 2020.

Keywords: Competences, Foreign Language, Communication, Reading, Writing.

Introduction

Currently, the English language has become an official language (Rosenberg, 2019), so teachers have to emphasize the importance of its acquisition. The mastery of a foreign language offers a series of benefits such as its effects on intelligence, improvements in attention, training of the mind in the strengthening of the personality and a greater possibility to opt for future employment (Boix and Ortega, 2020). Without the development of English skills, students would continue with pure memorization of a language without adequate competence and the possibility of being able to interact in the real world of English (Vaughan Group, 2021).

In Peru, the English language is taught in the educational system (schools, colleges and universities); this means that students, from school, develop English language learning for

more than 11 years (Minedu, 2016). Therefore, the Ministry of Education, at the national curriculum level, incorporated English as a second language under the educational policy of the "English Doors to the World by 2021" program (Minedu, 2016).

There are several causes that can explain the low English proficiency. Therefore, several studies highlight the benefits of English language learning and motivation in order to make its teaching effective and meaningful (Junco, 2008). In spite of the above, some teachers only dedicate themselves to teaching class sessions, relegating processes that allow them to know if students are learning the language adequately (International Bureau of Education, 2020). On the other hand, it is worrying to perceive that, when they finish secondary school, students only achieve very elementary to almost null knowledge of English

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language learning (Cambridge Language Assessment, 2017). Regarding the university environment, it is a fact that English language skills are only required in oral and/or written form. For that reason, the mastery of a foreign or native language has been emphasized to all students as a requirement to acquire the respective academic degree (El Peruano, 2016).

The English language is a competence part of the graduate's profile; for this, there are emotional factors in the learning process and psychological factors that crucially influence the acquisition of this new knowledge (De la Puente, 2015). The student manifests some fears regarding the learning of a new language. These fears dissipate when the teacher uses a positive filter, which leads the student to generate confidence in his teacher, showing on the part of the teacher all the desire to teach and, on the part of the student, all the desire to learn (Nava and Pedrazzini, 2018). On the other hand, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure good language acquisition through methodological delivery at the classroom level (Minedu, 2016). Thus, this paramount detail will make teaching and learning more effective. Due to this, it has been posed as a general problem what is the effect of the Bloomfield program on English as foreign language competencies?

A proposal to improve the learning of English that helps the learner to become bilingual is essential. In this regard, the Bloomfield Language Institute is located in the district of Chorrillos, which seeks the most efficient way to achieve results in English language acquisition skills. The students of this language institute need to achieve level A1 as stipulated by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in order to have better opportunities and, once consolidated, to continue to level A2. In this context, the need arises to use an effective program that achieves the step-by-step improvement of English skills to A1 level. In order to achieve the requirements of the CEFR, it has been decided to apply a methodology developed by the author called "Bloomfield Program" that seeks the development of the competences of English as a foreign language in the students of the mentioned institute. Therefore, the present study is relevant due to its design, didactic sequence, evaluation, and accompaniment, which will serve as a reference point for future researchers for further studies related to the competence of English as a foreign language. From the social perspective, it allows to deepen in the study of the variable competences of English as a foreign language; it allows to strengthen the student's comprehension and production skills in different contexts, especially in a foreign country.

Theoretical Framework

A research proposal to enhance communicative skills in English language learners was released by Ortiz et al. (2016), who implemented a website developed for the purpose of learning English under the precept of a coherent approach of linguistic principles and hypotheses, as well as pedagogical ones that responded to socio-interactionist objectives. In said platform, the student learned through texts of different types and genres under the paradigm of social practice so they concluded that the contents contextualized in the daily life of the students were useful due to digital resources, audio, images and videos instead of questions containing only text. In a similar vein, Morales (2019) investigated, experimentally, the use of technological resources in the English language learning of Colombian students with the aim of empowering them with respect to pragmatic competence. Their results remarked that, by using these technological resources, the aforementioned competence improved significantly, thus proving the effectiveness of technological resources in improving pragmatics in English.

On the other hand, Moya et al. (2018) investigated on the level of students in bilingual and non-bilingual schools, focusing on language proficiency in a locality of Castilla, Spain. In this regard, he found that students varied to a positive condition the negative opinion they had about bilingualism, managing to prove that, by applying a program aimed at improving competencies in English language acquisition, managed to generate an increase in communicative competencies. A similar situation is reported by Cavkaytar and Yasar (2010), who investigated the use of writing in the development of composition skills, finding a significant improvement in written expression, observing a balanced use of writing in written expression.

Research on a methodology developed to be able to increase the oral production of students in a language center of a particular university in Lima was conducted by Sagástegui et al. (2018) who, by applying a program designed towards the aforementioned production, achieved significant improvements in students who increased the levels of oral competence, concluding that the methodologies used in said language center increased oral production. On the other hand, Arbulú (2016) conducted an investigation on linguistic expression in a Lima university; he concluded that didactic type strategies and linguistic expression are significant for both cases.

Regarding the so-called communicative approach theory, Bérard (1995) stated that it is based on the skills that students achieve when they express themselves; he stated the primary

objective of communication. In an academic context, these skills are a priority when teaching a language. Such main objective lies in being able to establish communication, taking into account that it is required to have knowledge of the student's priorities, which should reflect the competencies expected to be acquired; all this mediated by a series of resources that are viable when they are provided with a pleasant and rapid acquisition of the language based on everyday situations. In such a scenario, non-native language acquisition will be based on simulation or contextualization of real, everyday situations in accordance with the sociocultural codes of the language.

According to the analysis developed by Cassany et al. (2011) regarding the different ways of using a language, the various forms of each of them which have a role are inherent to the process of communicating. Communication includes the sender, the receiver and the message itself, which can be oral or written. Therefore, the aforementioned author stated that, for each type of competence, there is the correct use of linguistic competencies, and these competencies are divided between the communicative and the pragmatic.

On the other hand, García et al. (2003) mentioned that communicative competence is made up of a series of skills that are usually applied to contexts wider than the classroom, i.e. in the daily life of students. These competencies can be acquired and developed within a compulsory education system. Therefore, Lomas (1999) proposed that language learning should focus not only on its intrinsic character, but also on the purpose it seeks to achieve; therefore, through the acquisition of a language, the individual will be able to express him/herself correctly, knowing what, how and when to say something in a timely manner.

That is why the so-called communicative approach, within the learning of a foreign language, highlights the fact that the teacher is no longer the almost sole owner of the word, among other things, because of the dialogue, which can be understood as a mechanism oriented to reflection and critical training, and therefore becomes a powerful means for the learning process of a foreign language (Maqueo, 2005).

Communicative competence frames a set of abilities, linguistic and extra-linguistic uses of the language that occur in a communicative act through the correct use of expressions in accordance with the situation that involves the communicative act, making use of the various functions of language, adjusting to the rules that govern the language, in the use that denotes an adequate content and form of the message (Medina, 2006). On the other hand, being competent means interpreting and negotiating meaning in the communicative act on the other

hand, being competent means interpreting and negotiating meaning in the communicative act. For Taguchi (2019), being competent in the communicative act is accurate by taking into account the communicative level of the receiver to keep the communication fluent. For Rosenthal (2017), other abilities or skills count, such as knowing how to start and end a conversation, establishing turns properly. According to Schiefelbusch (1986), to be competent in the use of the English language, knowledge of grammar is not enough; but the function that expressions fulfill within the various forms that occur in a communication. Therefore, a competent speaker must possess effective skills and strategies to convey ideas in concrete situations and also demonstrate knowledge of the social meaning of language forms in order to be socially acceptable.

The Common European Framework of Reference (international standard body for foreign language learning) defined A1 level English competences as seeking the basic skill required by the learner in order to interact in a simple communication (Rosenberg, 2019). The communicative competence is made up of four competencies that allow correct communication within a social context, which could be called sub-competencies which are grammatical, sociolinguistic, discursive, and strategic competencies (Villalta and Martinic, 2020). These competencies allow the learner to develop skills within the framework of the communicative competencies of the language. On the other hand, the British Council (2021), defined English competencies as the nexus or link that allows building contacts, understanding and trust in people from the United Kingdom and other countries. In a similar vein, Anglia (2021) defined English competencies focusing on the evaluation of competencies through the certification of English, which is recognized and validated worldwide according to the CEFR in order to gain access to various higher education studies.

The competencies show the scope that the student achieves in each learning cycle. These competencies are not alone or isolated, they are united to achieve together with other areas, the profile of the basic education graduate. These competencies are described in a progressive manner. According to the National Curriculum for Basic Education, the variable competencies of English as a foreign language is divided into three dimensions known as competency 13, competency 14 and competency 15 (CNEB, 2016).

Communicating orally in English as a foreign language (competence 13), according to the National Curriculum for Basic Education, is a primary competence in communication and interaction, where role-playing is very important by making them listen to each other among each participant. This competence proposes

knowledge and attitudes of the surrounding world within diverse contexts, international, regional or local. This dimension proposes that the student puts into action his achieved skills that are born from oral communication (CNEB, 2016).

Regarding the competence reads various types of written texts in English as a foreign language (competence 14), it is the dynamic by which the reader performs a reading through different comprehension and production techniques, skimming, scanning, reading for gist, among others. Each process converges in reflection and involves the student's previous knowledge. The processes in which the student performs, is concretized with the whole environment in which it is contextualized with various forms of activities in the whole experience of reading (CNEB, 2016).

The competence writes various types of texts in English as a foreign language (competence 15) lies in the importance of the writing competence because it allows the student to write his/her own ideas, views, ways of perceiving the world, generate his/her creativity to be able to transmit an idea or ideas that the student wishes to express (CNEB, 2016). Such competence allows the student to express his ideas and comments. The art of writing is a whole world in order to get started in writing and to achieve future writers in English.

design (pretest - posttest) in order to assess the English language skills of students in a language center. The population consisted of 317 students of both sexes enrolled in the Bloomfield Idiomas institution, who are going to start level A1 for the first time, of which the sample was estimated at 174 students who were selected by non-probabilistic sampling. The Bloomfield Program for English language learning was applied, which consisted of twelve sessions, where each one was executed in a period of five hours, in which activities of listening, pronunciation, writing and conversation in English were developed. At the beginning of the program, a pretest was administered to the participants, and after the sessions were completed, a posttest was administered. It is worth mentioning that the respective tests used to evaluate the developed program were validated. Regarding the descriptive analysis, tables were used for the pretest and posttest; in addition, for the inferential analysis, the normality test for two related samples was applied.

Results

The descriptive results are summarized in Table 1.

Methodology

The research was conducted under a quantitative approach, applied, pre-experimental

Table 1.

Levels of English competencies and their dimensions in students (pre- and post-test) for the Bloomfield program

Cross Table Test			Com. of English as a foreign language			Total
			Beginning	Achieved	Outstanding	
Oral communication in English	Pre test	fi	174	0	0	174
		% fi	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Post test	fi	0	15	159	174
		% fi	0.0%	8.6%	91.4%	100%
Writing of different types of texts	Pre test	fi	174	0	0	174
		% fi	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Post test	fi	0	1	173	174
		% fi	0.0%	0.06%	99.4%	100%
Reading different types of texts	Pre test	fi	174	0	0	174
		% fi	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Post test	fi	0	174	0	174
		% fi	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100%
Total	fi	174	174		348	
	% fi	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	

The results shown in Table 1 represent the percentage data and frequencies of the dimensions of English competencies before and after the pre- and post-test thanks to the Bloomfield program. Regarding the oral communication dimension, 100% of the students were at the beginning level (pretest). After the application of the program, 8.6% were at the achievement level and 91.4% were at an outstanding level in this dimension. Regarding the reading dimension, the results showed that 100%

of the students were at the beginning level (pretest). After the application of the program, 99.4% of the students were at the outstanding level. Finally, for the writing practice dimension, at the beginning of the program, all students (100%) were at the beginning level. After the application of the program, 100% of the students migrated to the achieved level in writing.

Table 2.

Statistical results of the hypothesis test of English as foreign language competencies

Wilcoxon signed-rank test		N	Mean range	Sum of range	Test statistics ^a	
Com. of English as a foreign language pre-post test	Negative ranges	0 ^a	0.00	0.00	Z	-11,442 ^b
	Positive ranges	174 ^b	87.50	15225.00	Asymptotic sig. p_value	0.000
	Ties	0 ^c				
	Total	174				

The results shown in Table 2 refer to the Wilcoxon W hypothesis test, with a comparison between pre-test and post-test, with 147 positive ranges, determining that the application of the

Bloomfield program showed incidence in all units of analysis with an adequate statistical significance value (p_value < 0.000), thus confirming that the program is feasible.

Table 3.

Statistical results of the hypothesis test of the dimensions of the English as foreign language competencies.

Ranges						
Wilcoxon signed-rank test		N	Average range	Sum of range	Test statistics ^a	
Oral communication in English - pre- and post-test	Negative ranges	0 ^a	0.00	0.00	Z	-11,443
	Positive ranges	174 ^b	87.50	15225.00	Asymptotic sig. p_value	0.000
	Ties	0 ^c				
	Total	174				
Reading of various types of texts - pre and post test	Negative ranges	0 ^d	0.00	0.00	Z	11,449
	Positive ranges	174 ^e	87.50	15225.00	Asymptotic sig. p_value	0.000
	Ties	0 ^f				
	Total	174				
Writing of different types of texts - pre and post test	Negative Ranges	0 ^g	0.00	0.00	Z	11,446
	Positive ranges	174 ^h	87.50	15225.00	Asymptotic sig. p_value	0.000
	Ties	0 ⁱ				
	Total	174				

Regarding the results of the comparison of oral communication in English as a foreign language by the application of the Bloomfield program, according to Table 3, there are

favorable results in terms of the ranges; likewise, the value of statistical significance is less than the level of statistical significance, (p_value < 0.05), this allows the rejection of the null hypothesis,

consequently, the application of the Bloomfield program significantly increases oral communication in English as a foreign language.

Likewise, we have the comparative results between the pre and posttest of the application of the Bloomfield program in the reading of different types of texts in English as a foreign language, the results show significant achievements, since the ($p_value < 0.05$) allowing us to reject the null hypothesis; therefore, the application of the Bloomfield program significantly increases the reading of different types of texts in English as a foreign language. Finally, we have the same behavior regarding the writing of various types of texts in English as a foreign language; the results show the existence of significant achievements since the ($p_value < 0.05$), allowing us to affirm that the application of said program significantly increases the writing of various types of texts in English as a foreign language in the students of a language center-2020.

Discussion

It is worth mentioning that the beginning level was predominant in the pretest (100%) and that, after the application of the Bloomfield program, the value obtained in the posttest placed the participants in the outstanding level (99%) followed by a scarce 1% that placed themselves in the achieved level. Said results confirmed that the application of the program is beneficial for the teaching of the English language with respect to the application or on-line modality applied to the students, where it is highlighted that the virtuality has been significant due to the level of participation of students coming from different locations of the country; aspect that in the appreciation of Phungsuk et al. (2017) confirmed that a great participation of students with greater interest is noticeable when they make appropriate use of technology to develop the competencies of a foreign language.

The feasibility of the applied program and its highly significant results for learning a foreign language agree with what was referred by Hernandez (2016) who oriented an equivalent program in terms of competencies allows the development of competencies. Similar position is shared by Condori (2018) who applied an English teaching program based on the competency-based approach; it showed a significant effect when used and applied to students.

Another aspect to be taken into account is that due to the way in which the program has been provided (online modality), a negative liability reported by Belford (2017) who, in this regard, has referred to the culture shock in the teaching-learning of a foreign language has been attenuated; but that, in the design of the aforementioned program, this aspect has been

lessened as suggested by (Brown and Holloway, 2008).

Regarding the highly significant results for the aspect referred to oral communication under the competency-based approach structured in the Bloomfield program, it could be established that the aforementioned program significantly increased students' oral communication in English as a foreign language. This aspect covers the spectrum of suggestions established by Junco (2010) who pointed out the importance of oral communication as a process of codification-emission of messages through the spoken word, making oral communication the first and natural source of feedback.

Similarly, the results found with respect to the reading of foreign language texts showed a high effectiveness of the aforementioned program under the on-line modality, since the values shown by the Bloomfield program significantly increased the reading of various types of texts in English. This fact corresponded with what was stated by Sandoval and Casas (2011) who certified that, when applying and validating a program on reading comprehension, this significantly increased in the cognitive and psycholinguistic development in the adequate use of strategies within said program.

The application of the Bloomfield program significantly increased the writing of various types of texts in English as a foreign language ($p < 0.050$). On the other hand, the level that predominated in the pretest was in beginning (100%) and in the posttest it was achieved (100%). In this regard, Morales (2019) stated that the writing of various types of texts is possible through strategies developed by teachers in function of the students, where what is really important is the motivation of the teacher since it is he who executes the strategies aimed at the development of competencies. Therefore, the aspect of teacher motivation was consolidated in the program as part of the strategies to initiate competencies in the acquisition of the English language.

In their theoretical contribution by Sagástegui et al. (2019), it is stated that having a mastery of writing is not an easy task to learn even in the mother tongue, because, despite the many years devoted to the development of this skill, students express discomfort when writing a text. This is how writing becomes for students a linguistic skill that is difficult to acquire. This feeling of difficulty in producing a written text is determined by lexical density. Likewise, the contribution of Minedu (2016) expresses that it is defined as the use of written language to construct meanings in text and communicate them to others. It is a reflective process because it involves adaptation and organization of texts considering the contexts and the communicative purpose, as well as the permanent revision of

what is written in order to improve it. The student brings into play different types of knowledge and resources from his or her experience with written language and the world around him or her. They use the alphabetic system and a set of writing conventions, as well as different strategies to expand ideas, emphasize or qualify meanings in the texts they write. Therefore, these results are in agreement with what is sustained in this research.

Conclusions

The application of the Bloomfield program significantly increases the competencies of English as a foreign language in the students of a language center, generating an acceptance on the part of the students in the formative process, since most of them were facing for the first time the learning of a foreign language and as it was evidenced through previous studies, this aspect usually drags a negative liability that can limit the learning of the language; but that, according to the strategies of the proposed program, a very acceptable results and identification of the students towards it has been achieved. This effect is due, among other things, to prioritizing in the development of the respective sessions, the recommendations of the researchers presented in this study, who recommended the implementation of proposals that try to focus on the daily life of the students, seeking greater interactivity from them, attenuating the classic role of the language teacher of being a mere repeater of words to be transferred to the dialogues, In addition, the implementation of audios and videos of concrete situations so that they can develop the skills considered key to achieve, in the first instance, the learning of the English language, among which stand out those applied by the Bloomfield program, where priority was given to skills such as oral communication, reading and writing of various types of text; which has enriched the learning processes. It should also be noted that, although outstanding results have been obtained, it should be recognized that they have only been restricted to a basic level of language learning, so there is the possibility of being able to extend to more complex levels and evaluate the levels of effectiveness in possible future work.

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