



*Acciones para el desarrollo de la Competencia Comunicativa
en Inglés*
*Actions for the development of Communicative Competence in
English*

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Resumen

La investigación aborda la relación entre la Innovación tecnológica y el desarrollo de la Competencia Comunicativa del idioma inglés. Se emplearon los métodos de observación, encuesta, entrevista; los cuales arrojaron insuficiente desarrollo de la Competencia Comunicativa en los estudiantes de Medicina. Se proponen acciones para un mejor desarrollo de esta temática. Para evaluar la propuesta se aplica el test de Shi cuadrado de Mac Nema que corrobora el desempeño del docente y la calidad del aprendizaje en la búsqueda de información, y la competencia comunicativa.

Palabras clave: Tecnologías, Comunicaciones; Habilidades, Competencias.

Abstract:

The investigation is about the relation of Technological innovation with the development of the English Communicative Competition on Medicine students. The method sussed was observation, inquiry and interview. An insufficient development of the English communicative competition was revealed. Actions are proposed for training this aspect. To evaluate the proposal, the Shi square of Mac Nema test and other methods were used to corroborate the teaching learning quality on finding information, and communicative competence.

Keywords: Technologies; Communications; Abilities, Competencies

Introduction

In recent years, education has undergone significant changes as a result of the development of technologies that show new ways of accessing and disseminating information and communication.

One of the forms of presentation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are computers and digital devices: cell phones, tablets, smart phones and others. ICTs are a valuable medium for the interactive transmission of information that allows to enhance the fulfillment of the objectives and functions of teaching in different disciplines.

New technologies encourage students and teachers to find and use updated information; images, documents, sounds or programs of interest can be searched and retrieved almost instantaneously. Research work has also benefited from using the Internet.

The dissemination of information through electronic media has contributed to the increased presence of the English language on the Internet. "Half of the content on the Internet is in English" (Moreno, 2017).

The learning of English is part of the educational curriculum from basic education levels; along with the development of technological skills, today's students face the need to learn and apply in their area a language in addition to their mother tongue, mainly English, as it has become an intercultural communication tool. (Vera, 2012, p.10).

In our country English is taught as a foreign language, it is a means of culturalization and professional growth. Currently, with the development of information technology, materials can be used in English classes that not only contain information, but also image and sound, which facilitates the integration of the four language skills.

The implementation of the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) from an integrated approach develops communicative competence. The student gradually incorporates them into his or her daily production in diverse communicative situations. This should not be assumed as a long term objective but as a closer and more attainable objective in pedagogical terms.

Methodology. At the University Of Medical Sciences Of Guantanamo, the development of communicative competence in the learning of English is still insufficient due, among other reasons, to the lack of integration of technological resources, which influences the process of acquiring this language. In order to determine the scientific problem, 8 observations were made in

English classes of the fourth year of the Medicine career. It was found in 90% of them that when students use the available technological means (whether digital devices or others), they do not always use them in a way that responds to the educational objectives foreseen.

86% of teachers maintain their traditional teaching methods,

They show few skills in the use of digital devices and in the integration of these with other media available in the classrooms, they disagree as to the effectiveness of these for the development of competencies in the students.

Surveys are applied to a universe of 218 fourth year students; the result obtained illustrates that 88% of the respondents do not take full advantage of the available technological means and in particular the installed applications to develop autonomously the learning of the English language. Twelve percent use English dictionaries on their cell phones and 25% use websites for self-learning English.

Interviews were conducted with the head of the department, main professors of the subject of the different years of the course (5) and methodologists (2). It is stated that there are difficulties in the preparation of the teachers for the use of ICT in the classes; as well as the little integration of these in the development of the skills inherent to the English language.

Ninety-one percent of the respondents are of the opinion that there is a certain evasion on the part of the teachers in the use of digital devices in their pedagogical practice. Eighty-five percent say that teachers mostly use them as a means of communication and entertainment, without taking advantage of their benefits in the classroom. Fifteen percent of the teachers use the English Spanish and Oxford dictionary applications to search for information quickly, but do not integrate other applications.

The above allowed corroborating the relationship between the poor integration of current technological means and the insufficient development of communicative competence in students. Therefore, in order to contribute to a better development of the English language communicative competence of medical students, some actions are proposed.

Development

The interaction between new technologies and the social context are transforming educational processes. In order to improve the quality of the educational sector in Cuba, the Informatization

process also includes the Ministry of Education. It is consistent to believe that ICTs are work tools and are part of educational projects, in addition to integrating them as an element of the teaching-learning process; they constitute a set of elements and techniques used in the processing, storage and transmission of data and information.

Work is being done to expand the infrastructure in educational centers to take advantage of public wifi access points. The scientific information that students need is now not only in their books thanks to the Internet and the use of video classes. There are a multitude of technological tools that can be incorporated into the classroom (Pulido et al., 2016). This is why it is necessary for the teacher to get involved and modify the teaching-learning process.

The teaching aids are part of the didactic components as well as the objectives, contents, methods and evaluation. These intervene in the teaching-learning process and influence the process of transmission and acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities.

All these didactic components have a very close interaction and interdependence, which is why it is wrong to consider the teaching aids as complementary elements of the teaching-learning process (Richards et al., 1998).

From the moment of the preparation of the class, the integration of objectives, methods and means manifests the logical sequence to be followed by the teacher, determining first the objectives and then selecting the content. These two factors provide the decisive criteria to determine the methods to be applied, the means and tools to be used in the classroom (Cataldi et al., 2012).

One of the areas where great progress has been made is in the use of the computer as a working tool in the teaching process with very diverse purposes. Among the most advanced applications in the world of computing is multimedia with images, sound and movement.

Deep and varied scientific information is essential to the quality of the teaching process. It is a source of appropriation of problems, solutions, knowledge, and points of view. Teaching and learning using new information technologies is a process that provides challenges and opportunities, because the communication that takes place in the traditional classroom is different, which necessarily leads to new ways of learning and, consequently, of teaching (Concepción, 2012).

Some types of teaching that make use of new technologies can be named, such as Computer Supported Education (CSE), tele-education, b-Lear Ming or blended-learning (mixed learning).

The latter is blended learning; it combines face-to-face and on-line learning, using virtual platforms within a given space.

In recent years, the emergence of the Internet has contributed to reinforce the panorama of English language proficiency, since many, as a student, translator or researcher, need to use it. The preponderance of English is evident in this type of communication, where it is possible to find all kinds of information (Aguilar et al., 2018).

Google translator programs are available for foreign language learning with both voice and text and allow conversations to be held in different languages. Such applications can be used to create engaging classroom activities. Bluetooth and Zapia can also be included for the exchange of digital material.

52.3% of information on the Internet is in English. Nowadays there are many reasons why English has become an international language, some believe that its knowledge is almost a prerequisite for professional success.

English is among the 10 most spoken languages in the world, ranking third after Chinese (Mandarin) and Spanish (Romero et al., 2014, p.58-59). English is considered as a tool available to access the world of knowledge and research. Its status as an international or global language has boosted its teaching and learning.

Currently, with the development of information technology, materials that not only contain information, but also image and sound can be used in English classes, which facilitates the integration of the four language skills.

Students can use the labs created for these purposes in addition to making use of devices such as tablets or phones to download an application. By using digital media such as tablets, laptops and cell phones in English classes, they are able to use the language successfully when referring to a topic or situation, which positively influences the development of communicative competence.

Many authors since the late 1970s have defined the concept of communicative competence. Previously it was considered as a mastery of linguistic aspects and rules associated with the use of the English language. Later, with the evolution of the language itself, it was concluded that it is more related to the integration of skills for the achievement of communication.

Communicative competence implies knowledge of the rules and uses of the language and the ability to use it effectively. This model goes beyond the consideration of linguistic factors and

considers those related to the cognitive, psychological and sociocultural as rules of language use in social situations of communication (Pila, 2012).

Communicative competence is an essential category in the English language teaching and learning process, based on the Communicative Approach method (in English, CommunicativeAproche). It involves the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning in the interaction between two or more people, or between a person and a written or oral text (Montejano, 2001, p. 32).

The author of the Communicative Approach method (Nunan, 1996, p.22) exposes five of the most well-known characteristics:

- Emphasis on communication in the foreign language through interaction.
- Introduction of real texts into the learning situation.
- Opportunity for learners to think about the learning process and not only about the language.
- Importance of the students' personal experiences as elements that contribute to learning in the classroom.
- Relation of the language learned in the classroom with activities outside the classroom.

For the development of communicative competence in students, work in pairs and groups, role playing, language games, debates or discussions can be used, in addition to the use of audiovisual media and digital devices; since the content is shown in a more novel and updated form, the class becomes more interesting and less traditional and students are more motivated to learn the language.

From the psychological point of view, the use of new technologies leads to more motivated students in English classes and in the search for information as knowledge management. From the technological aspect, the use of these media can teach students to take advantage of the benefits they offer and to make optimal use of time in class or in independent study. In the social context when ICTs are used, listening, reading, writing and speaking skills can be integrated to communicate successfully in the English language.

For a better development of the communicative competence of students, the following actions are proposed

- Promote the preparation of the teaching staff regarding the use of new technologies.
- Select or review the material, videos or type of information to be placed on the digital platform for students.
- Adequately motivate the student towards the subject of the class or activity to be performed.
- Present the student with current or new information that subsequently encourages dialogue and interaction between them.
- Use ICT in class together with other resources according to the content.
- Encourage the search for information taking into account the skills to be developed and the interests of the students.

7) Assignments should encourage the most varied bibliographic search and review of information on the Internet, especially those that show different points of view. This favors the analysis of opposing and diverse points of view and the adoption of one's own positions on a problem.

8) Take advantage of the time allotted for searching for information or for carrying out an activity in class.

9) Use specialized laboratories for the use of multimedia and the development of communication skills.

10) integrate these skills through some applications from different Internet sites, such as:

- Test Your English: Check your English level with the proposed activities. [Http://testyourvocab.com](http://testyourvocab.com).
- Learn English: Grammar, vocabulary, quizzes, lessons, tests, pronunciation and even tips on British culture. [Http://www.learnenglish.de/](http://www.learnenglish.de/)
- Real English: Original videos and interactive classes taught by English teachers always available. [Http:// real- english.com/](http://real-english.com/)
- IELTS Skills: Application that integrates the 4 language skills. It is suggested the use of bibliographies such as English Grammar in use (Raymond Murphy) or any other of the University of Cambridge and Dictionaries such as Oxford and Cambridge.

- All Medical History Taking: Application that allows the integration of knowledge in aspects related to the taking of information in the preparation of the patient's medical history.

Results

To determine the relevance of the proposed actions, the Mac Nema Shi-square test was applied. This test assesses the acquisition of skills in communicative competence. We can affirm with 93% confidence that the proposed objective was met. A tabulation of the results achieved was carried out on a sample of 28 students of the D-2 teaching brigade corresponding to the fourth year of the Medicine career, in the exams before and after the proposal was applied, reaching a 39.8 percentage variation; demonstrating a better performance of the students within the process.

Eight English classes were observed in the fourth year of the medical career. In 98.3% of the classes, the use of digital devices is of great impact; students and teachers simultaneously analyze information and use several applications. In addition to using summary tables, images, videos and other resources; achieving that students acquire skills in information search, digital competence, as well as communicative competence.

Interviews were applied to the head of the Department, main teachers (5), teachers of the year (7), and methodologists (2). The interview showed the relevance of the actions proposed in order to improve the teaching-learning process. 97% are of the opinion that professionals are trained with higher quality, with a high knowledge on the use of new technologies capable of managing their learning. 96.3% say that we will have professionals with a level of communicative competence that will allow them to interact better in their field of action and in different contexts, increasing the efficiency and quality of medical services.

A survey was made to the selected sample of students. 100% of them express that the use of ICT in classes is very motivating; they emphasize the use of videos, applications that help to better understand the patterns of pronunciation and meaning of words. 94.4 % emphasize that the use of these in the classroom is adequate. 95 % use mostly applications such as Oxford Learners, English Dictionary and Chronic Disease Treatment.

99.2% say that by integrating several applications, they have access to a greater amount of new information and perform activities more successfully.

Conclusions

The actions proposed for the development of communicative competence in medical students contribute to improve the quality of the English language teaching and learning process. These actions are of great interest to the teaching and student body, and are intended to respond to the current challenges and demands of a world interconnected by emerging technologies and the mastery of English.

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