

Teaching students with intellectual disability to use English through pragmatics.

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Abstract: The current investigation focuses on helping students with intellectual disability to use English through language pragmatics. After investigating about English as a foreign language (EFL) acquirement of these students, it was discovered that they are not acquiring the language with the methods that are commonly implemented in the regular English classrooms. By using the action-research method and by consulting appropriate literature, some specific problems of language acquirement were identified in these students. By analyzing the problems, speech acts in Role-plays were proposed as strategies to teach them in order to help them to acquire EFL. After implementing the proposal based on speech acts it could be observed that students were using English in the Role-plays, but it is still difficult for them to apply those strategies in the everyday situations.

Keywords: Special educational needs, Intellectual disability, Language pragmatics, Speech acts, Role-play.

Introduction

One of the most recent challenges that teachers encounter in the modern educational system is: inclusive education. Nowadays, integrating a child with special needs to the classrooms has become a law, for example in Mexico the 3rd article of the “Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos” was changed to obligate regular schools to accept children with special educational needs. The article in Spanish dictates that “todo individuo tiene derecho a recibir educación.” In this investigation the focus is primarily on students with a specific special educational need: intellectual disability.

Talking about special educational needs becomes a really wide variety of different necessities, but it is important to specify that the present script is focused just in one: intellectual disability. Intellectual disability can be found sometimes on a child who presents dawn syndrome as well as in a child with mental retardation, but this does not mean that there are different types of intellectual disability, but that there are different special educational needs that can present intellectual disability. Students with intellectual disability present problems acquiring a language; that is why English teachers should be aware of the areas that affect a foreign language acquisition in a student with intellectual disability, but problems for these children are not reduced only to language problems,

another important difficulty in which the current research centers too is: the social issue, just as Carr et al (2016) mentions in his definition of the concept: Students with intellectual disability present difficulties to understand social rules, interact and communicate in an acceptable way to other people. The problems mentioned above are the reasons of the main goal for this investigation: Designing strategies based on language pragmatics that can be helpful to teach children with intellectual disability to understand how to use a foreign language in different scenarios of the everyday life. In order to provide effective strategies for English teachers the investigation considers different acts of speech (speech acts are part of language pragmatics) in different situations that can be used to teach children with intellectual disability about how to ask, react and respond in an acceptable way in their foreign language, English in this case.

Theoretical framework

Special Educational needs

Children have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Halliwell, 2003). A very simple definition that works for the research in terms of second language acquisition. If there is someone who presents real language learning difficulties and needs special language educational provision is a child with special educational needs.

Intellectual disability.

Carr et. al (2016) present other two definitions by The World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases:

Intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) is a disorder with onset during the developmental period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social

and practical domains. The following three criteria must be met:

a) Deficit in intellectual functions, such as reasoning, problem-solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing.

b) Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.

c) For a definite diagnosis of mental retardation there should be a reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment. (p.6)

Another simple but important definition is provided by Harris (2010) who states that intellectual disability results from impairment in brain function. "It is called a neurodevelopmental condition that impairs cognition, learning, and adaptive functioning in the everyday world."(p.5). A simple description that can be very useful for any teacher who is trying to understand the kind of disabilities of a student who was diagnosed with intellectual disability.

As an English teacher it is necessary to know what problems can be presented in a student with intellectual disability. In his book, Harris (2010) presents some medical and social problems that affect their learning: "Seizures, language disorder, changing behaviors" (p.6). As it is seen students with intellectual disability present language problems, thus English teachers should be aware of the areas that can affect a foreign language acquisition in a student with intellectual disability.

Carr et. al (2016) provide a description of the lan-

guage disorder that can be presented on students with intellectual disability:

Persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language across modalities (spoken, written, sign language, or other) due to deficits in comprehension or production that include the following:

- a) Reduced vocabulary (word knowledge and use)
- b) Limited sentence structured.
- c) Impairment in discourse.
- d) Language abilities are substantially and quantifiably below those expected for age, resulting in functional limitations in effective communication, social participation, academic achievement, or occupational performance, individually or in any combination. (p.32)

The second important concept refers to limitations in adapting environmental demands, this refers to behavior. Language and behavior are complementary concepts, people express what they are, according to social rules, culture, stereotypes, ideologies, etc. Children with intellectual disability cannot fulfilled the environmental demands because of the lack of comprehension of the rules of the society where they are living. Such a statement presents another big challenge for an English as a foreign language teacher, since it has been demonstrated that language cannot be taught without its culture and a culture without its language, teaching EFL in the area of intellectual disability becomes a really difficult task for the teacher.

Language pragmatics

The term pragmatics applied to the ESL context might help students with intellectual disability and their teachers due to the two main problems that they present to acquire a language, (a) language problems acquisition and (b) social interaction problems. Students with intellectual disability have problems to use a language not always because they do not know the words, but because they do not understand how to use them and when. Prag-

matics represents a way to teach language by explaining the social norms around it; that is teaching language by teaching culture.

Pragmatics is defined as "...the ability to deal with meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader) and to interpret people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (e.g., making a request) that they are performing when they speak or write" (Yule, 1996, pp. 3-4). Pragmatics includes among other things politeness/impoliteness, speech acts (greetings, thanks, requests, compliments, apologies, complaints, etc.), conversational style, humor, sarcasm, teasing, cursing, discourse markers, conversational implicature (i.e., the implied meaning as interpreted by listeners based on the context of an utterance and their knowledge of how conversation works), and deixis (i.e., words and phrases that cannot be fully understood without additional contextual information - e.g., nominal pronouns like "she" and demonstrative pronouns like "this").

"Language pragmatics studies how people understand and at the same time produce speech acts depending on the situation in which they are. It also studies the variations that occur from one act of speech to another, always taking into account the context in which they occur" (Levison, 1983, p.10). Pragmatics goes beyond the individual meaning of each word, phrase or sentence; it analyzes the context to understand the intention and meaning given by the sender to what he is saying and how the receiver understands the message and decodes it.

Speech acts

A subfield of language pragmatics is speech acts, which are considered by pragmatics as the minimum units of linguistic conversation. Speech acts are part of linguistics because they are in the conversations of any individual, in any culture.

When greeting, apologizing, complaining or rejecting something, people carry out different actions, hence the word “acts”. People would not commonly relate a complaint with an action, but this branch of linguistics does, and it is based on these actions of speech to study the context in which they are produced.

University of Minnesota’s website offers some very good examples and definitions of some acts of speech in English, for example, the act of speech of Apologize:

In American English, people typically use apologies for a variety of reasons such as:

1. To say that they are sorry
2. To explain why the offense happened
3. To make a repair for the offense and maintain a good relationship with the addressee

Complex speech acts like apologies actually consist of a set of routinized patterns or strategies typically used by native speakers of the language. There are five possible strategies for making an apology (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981. pp. 119-125).

- A. An expression of an apology.
- B. Acknowledgement of responsibility.
- C. An explanation or account.
- D. An offer of repair.

If someone is late for an appointment with a friend s/he might say something like,
“How can I make it up to you -- why don’t I buy you lunch on Friday?”

Or someone who fails to make it to an appointment might say,
“Would you be willing to reschedule the meeting?”

- E. A promise of non-recurrence.

A well-developed description can be very helpful for an EFL learner to understand the pragmatic of the American English apologies and use them in a

correct way, what this investigation seeks for is to adjust an explanation such as this for students with intellectual in order that they can understand how to use the second language. It is clear that they may not understand a very theoretical explanation such as that presented above, but through activities and more simple words they should be able to understand speech acts such as this.

Methodology

The context where the current research is developed is a private school in Guadalupe, Nuevo Leon. This is a private school with no more than 200 students in middle school. The school develops the English classes through a specific bilingual ESL methodology dividing the students in three levels according to their knowledge of English: elemental, intermediate and advanced. During the scholar year 2016-2017 the three grades of middle school incorporated students with intellectual disability.

Subjects of the study

The sample of this proposal are middle school students, between the ages of 12-15. There are 5 students from 2nd grade to 3rd grade of middle school presenting intellectual disability:

- Second grade: There is one student presenting mental disability.
- Second grade: There is one student with mental retardation and another one with epilepsy. Epilepsy has caused mental disability in him.
- Third grade: There is one case of autism (This is the girl in advanced level) and another one of mental retardation.

All of them present different special educational needs, but despite of the differences among the problems of these students they have one characteristic in common: intellectual disability. The issue that they all present intellectual disability

makes them candidates for this study. They all present problems to acquire a foreign language (English in this case) and problems to understand how language is used in different social contexts (problems to acquire the pragmatic of a language).

Methodological design

According to Elliot quoted by Latorre (2008) action-research is the study of a social situation with the purpose of improving the quality of the action itself. He also says that action research is a “reflexive action of human actions and social situations lived by teachers which objective is to comprehend the teachers’ practical problems in order to modify the situation, once it has been deeply comprehended” (Elliot, 1993 quoted by Latorre, 2008, p.24). The reason of using this type of methodology is that there is a reflexive process that leads to an action step during the research.

Process of action research

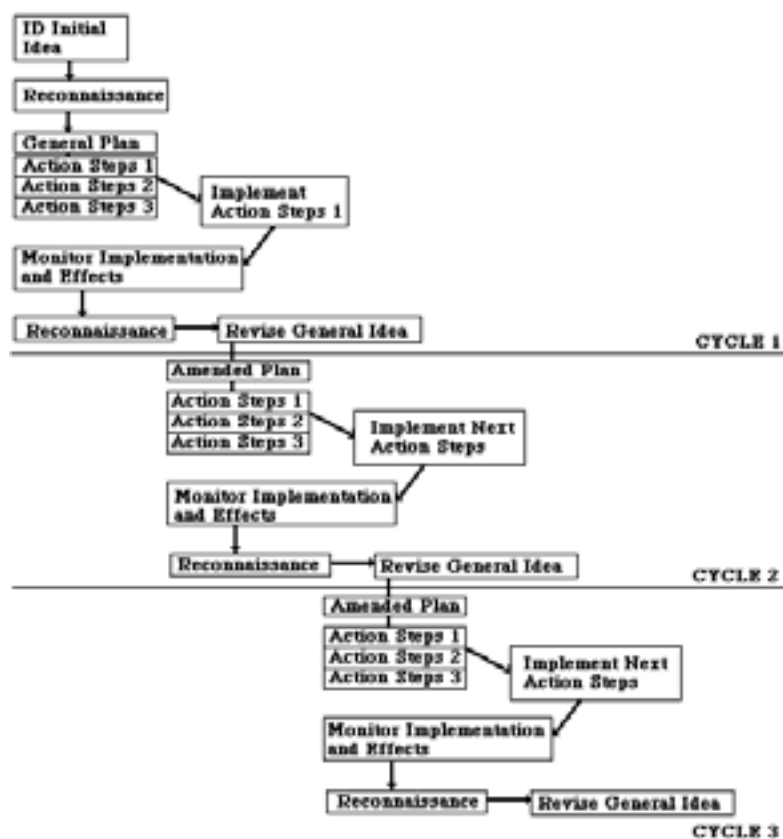


Figure 1. Model of investigation of Elliot (1993).

The current investigation is based on Elliot’s model of investigation quoted by Latorre (2008), but taking just the first cycle of the whole process finishing with the revision of the general and first idea (conclusions).

Latorre (2008) says that it is necessary to recognize a problem and provide evidence of it in order to make a diagnostic. The purpose of this process is to make a description and explanation of the situation, getting evidence and compare it with the results after applying the action plan (in this case, the proposal). After getting the proposal’s results conclusions can be made.

Instruments

The three instruments used for data collection are: a guide-list for observation, a diary of the investigator (Latorre, 2008), and a questionnaire. The guide list and the diary of the investigator are applied as direct observation, while the questionnaire is applied to the teachers.

1. Diary of the investigator. The concept taken from Latorre (2008) is applied in the current research as it is described below:

It required immersion in the research field, three English classes with students that present intellectual disability. Notes about the class were taken, for example, what the observed students were doing, their use and understanding of language, their communication with to the teacher and to other students, etc.

2. Guide-list. The idea was taken from Project Oracle, (Oracle, 2017) a project from Children and youth evidence Hub. This organization created a method to guide an observation, this method is not used in the current research but the idea of creating a guide-list to focus the observation was taken from this project. The guide-list here presented was a special crea-

tion for this investigation and has not been applied before.

It is divided in three main aspects to observe: Language pragmatics in use, foreign language acquisition problems, and lack of basic social skills reflected in their communication. Every aspect contains four items, each one is a description of what is expected during the observation. There are three options as answers: frequently, occasionally, and never, the three of them referring of how often the description of the aspect is observed. (An example of the guide-list can be found in appendix # 1)

3. Questionnaire. The current research uses an adaptation of the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática* (Gallardo 2009) taken from (Maite Fernández Urquiza, 2015). It is used to evaluate the usage of language pragmatics by a Spanish native speaker, but for the purposes of this investigation it has been translated and adapted to evaluate the language pragmatics of English as foreign language speakers.

The questionnaire was designed for the teachers to answer according to what they perceive of their own students during classes. Using the questionnaire provides the investigator with a different perspective of the research problem, the perspective of the own teacher that is facing the problem. (An example of the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática* can be found in the Appendix # 2).
Data analysis

According to Elliot's model (Latorre, 2008) this step of data analysis is part of the recognition of the problem.

For the current investigation data is analyzed item by item of the *Protocolo Rápido de evaluación pragmática* (Gallardo, 2009) taken from (Maite Fernández Urquiza, 2015) answered by the two teachers of the private school, who has students with intellectual disability in their classes. The analysis of the instrument is being accompanied with details

from the other 2 instruments: the guide list and the diary of the investigator.

Conclusions of data analysis

After analyzing the results provided by the applied instruments it can be said that there are some things that were confirmed about the problems of students with intellectual disability on language pragmatics. By applying three different instruments with two different perspectives (teachers' perspectives and the investigator's perspective) it was possible to collect enough data to confirm the existence of a problem.

First of all, some of the things that were confirmed by the teachers and during the observation are some facts mentioned by Carr et al (2016) and Harris (2010). Certainly, as mentioned by Harris (2010) it was clearly observed that students have problems that affect their learning, specifically their language learning, problems of language disorder. Carr et al (2016) provide more details saying that they present difficulties in the acquisition and use of language across modalities (spoken, written, sign language, or other) due to deficits in comprehension or production that include the following:

- a) Reduced vocabulary (word knowledge and use)
- b) Limited sentence structured.
- c) Impairment in discourse.

In addition, they present some behavioral and social adaptation problems that were mentioned in the diary of the investigator and that are also mentioned by Carr et al (2016): "Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home,

schools, work and community.” (p.5)

The behavioral problems are closely connected to the language problems due to language and behavior are complementary concepts, people express what they are, according to social rules, culture, stereotypes, ideologies, etc. Children with intellectual disability cannot fulfilled the socio-cultural communicative demands because of the lack of comprehension of the rules of the society where they are living.

In another hand, it was observed and mentioned by the teachers that students can memorize complete phrases and vocabulary but in an isolated way, that means that they are able to understand the meaning of a word without understanding how to

use it during a conversation or they can memorize a question such as What is your favorite color? And memorize the answer My favorite color is _____. Therefore the problem is not how many words students can memorize, but how to use those words in order to speak English, and that is completely related to language pragmatics.

Didactic proposal

Proposal’s design

In this part the foundations and activities for the proposal are explained. In addition, the development of the activities are explained including the activities of Role-plays.

Name of the research	Teaching children with intelectual disability to understand and to use English through pragmatics.
Proposal’s name	Speech acts in action
Education level	Secondary school (Special education: intelectual disability).
Area	Language pragmatics in use in the foreign language.

Proposal's presentation	<p>According to Cullen (2012) this proposal is designed with the criteria of a learner-centered curriculum due to the activities presented here are centered on the individuals' specific necessities and processes of learning. These activities are presented as roleplays based on speech acts that present situations of the real life that can develop the students' acquisition of the foreign language.</p> <p>According to Carr et al (2016) and the results of the instruments applied in the chapter of Data Collection it was confirmed what Carr et al (2016) say about some problems that students with intellectual disability face: Deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community.</p> <p>Due to these results, roleplays based on speech acts are proposed as activities in order to develop the pragmatic use of the foreign language of these students. Roleplays, according to the communicative approach provide contexts of the real life where language can be perfectly contextualized.</p> <p>Because of the limits of time of the current project it is not possible to apply an exhaustive list of role plays that cover every single speech act or situation that a person</p>
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	<p>face, but the activities centered on role plays have been selected according to a list of speech acts provided by the Centered for Advanced Research of Language Acquisition from the University of Minnesota:</p> <p>"This site provides a collection of descriptions of <u>speech acts</u> as revealed through empirical research. The material is designed to help language teachers and advanced learners to be more aware of the sociocultural use of the language they are teaching or learning."</p> <p>The speech acts used in these activities are:</p> <p>Apologies</p> <p>Introductions</p> <p>Greetings</p> <p>Compliments/Responses</p> <p>Invitations</p> <p>Refusals</p> <p>Requests</p> <p>Thanks</p> <p>It is expected that this contextualization of the language help students with intellectual disability to comprehend better how to use language and not just to memorize it.</p>
Objectives	<p>- General objective</p> <p>To provide activities to students with intellectual disabilities to develop the pragmatic understanding and use of the foreign language.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To select vocabulary and specific grammar structures according to two specific context areas. b) To develop roleplays based on specific speech acts and situations that help students to use vocabulary and grammar in the appropriate ways and contexts.

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Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General objective <p>To provide activities to students with intellectual disabilities to develop the pragmatic understanding and use of the foreign language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To select vocabulary and specific grammar structures according to two specific context areas. b) To develop roleplays based on specific speech acts and situations that help students to use vocabulary and grammar in the appropriate ways and contexts.

new student who introduce himself to the rest of the classmates, both the new student and the classmates (in their roles) have to be interacting. (That is what is going to be evaluated).

Lesson no.2 Asking for help at school.

Activities:

Section 1. Some vocabulary and grammar structures from the last class are reviewed because of the same context (school) and some new are introduced.

Section 2. A role play based on a problem at the classroom is presented to the students. By giving them some options to answer they choose how the conversation will be developed.

Section 3. Two different role plays are given for two different groups where common classroom problems are presented. Students will appropriate their roles in order to respond to the presented problems.

Lesson number 3. Chatter at the dinner table.

Activities:

Section 1. New vocabulary is introduced through realia and by setting the scene of the dinner table.

Section 2. A grammar tense is introduced to be the basis of the conversation in the table (past tense). Some examples are presented by the teacher taking the role of mom or dad (asking how their day was) and the students will use past tense to respond to those questions.

Section 3. Students sit around the table and the teacher assigns each one of them a role in the family members (mom, dad, son, brother, etc). The teacher provides in a printed list some examples of questions and answers for each role and the students should select the more appropriate answer to follow the conversation in a correct pragmatical way.

Lesson 4. Arriving and leaving.

Activities.

Section 1.

Basic vocabulary about greetings is introduced by a video.

Section 2. Vocabulary is separated in two basic areas, phrases and words we use to say hello and goodbye at home and at school. This differentiation is explained and then practice with a game.

Section 3. Students practice greetings by role plays adapted to school (when arriving and leaving) and role plays adapted to home (when arriving and leaving) but in both cases the roleplays present different situations, for example, at school: Greeting a teacher in the morning

	<p>and the difference of greeting a classmate in the morning.</p> <p>Lesson 5. Failing at something. Activities: Section 1. Introducing basic vocabulary for apologizing. Section 2. Presenting some examples of failing at home or at school and asking students for possible responses in the different situations. Section 3. Divide the students in two groups. Every student is provided with a context where they failed at something in home or in school. The teacher also provides a printed list for possible answers to the situations they are facing, after deciding the more appropriate responses every group will represent in front of their classmates the situations they were facing and how they chose to answer.</p>
Lesson plan design	Lesson plans are designed and developed for every lesson.
Criteria for evaluation	The <i>Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado</i> was applied this time as an instrument for observation in order to evaluate and compare the results after applying the Role-plays with the results of data collection in the last chapter.
Bibliography	<p>Budden, Joana (February 15th, 2018). Role-play. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/role-play</p> <p>Carr, Alan. 2016. The handbook of intellectual disability and clinical psychology practice. (Digital PDF Version). (2n^d edition). Routledge.</p> <p>Centered for Advanced Research of Language Acquisition from the University of Minnesota. Retrieved from: http://carla.umn.edu/speechacts/descriptions.html</p> <p>Communicative Approach. (February 15th, 2018). Communicative approach. British Council (BBC). Retrieved from: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach</p> <p>Cullen R. Harris, M. and Hill, R. (2012). <i>The learner-centered curriculum. Design and implementations</i>. USA: Jossey-Bass.</p> <p>Maite Fernández Urquiza, F. D. (2015). <i>Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado</i>. Valencia, España: Guada Impresores, S.L.</p>

**OBSERVATION
GUIDE-LIST**

* School: _____

* Grade: _____

* Date: _____

* Number of
students w/intellectual
disability in the class: _____

*Objective(s):

1. To describe the specific difficulties that students with intellectual disability present on acquiring a language.

2. To describe the social interaction problems that students with intellectual disability present, and how they affect to the learning of a second language.

ASPECTS TO OBSERVE	F R E Q U E N T L Y	O C C A S I O N A L L Y	N E V E R	NOTES
1. Language Pragmatics in use:				
a) Students are using the second language spontaneously.				
b) Students are using simple English classroom phrases or questions, such as <i>May I go to the bathroom?</i> or <i>I'm done.</i>				
c) Students understand how to apply grammar and vocabulary in a communicative				

activity.				
d) Students understand the appropriate context and time to use those basic phrases and questions.				
2. Second language acquisition problems:				
a) Students seem to understand while the teacher is talking like the others do.				
b) Students are working and following the teacher's instructions in the English class.				
c) Students are answering simple English questions from the teacher.				
d) Students are working in the class.				
3. Lack of basic social skills reflected in their communication:				
a) Students are talking during the class (using second or first language)				

b) Students show any type of communication. (Write down details on the notes box)				
c) Students are expressing opinions, feelings and ideas (in their first or second language) in a different way than their classmates do. (Write down some examples on the notes box.				

This questionnaire aims to know the understanding and use of language pragmatics of students with intellectual disability in their foreign language (English). It is an adaptation of the *Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática* (Gallardo 2008b, 2009).

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

Student: _____

Instructions:

While answering, think about what happens most of the time in your English classroom. There are not correct or incorrect answers. They simply reflect your personal opinion. All questions present two options: YES and NO, in case of choosing YES write an evidence as an example of your answer. Place a check mark (✓) for the chosen option.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your answers will be anonymous and absolutely confidential.

Thank you so much for your cooperation!

Does the verbal use of the student fits with the following observations?	YES	NO	EVIDENCE
ENUNCIATIVE PRAGMATICS			
Sub level of speech acts			
1. Production of speech acts			
1.1 The speaker finds the words he is looking for			

and is able to make use of the grammar of the foreign language to convey meaning.			
2. Compensatory behavior			
2.1 The speaker uses verbal strategies that allow him to gain extra time for the construction of his verbal emissions.			
2.2 The speaker uses gestures that substitute, complete or regulate the verbal production.			
3. Rectification and meta-pragmatic awareness			
3.1 Tries to correct his own sentences when they result problematic			
4. Principle of cooperation: generalized and particularized implicatures.			
4.1. The information he provide is truthful. (Implicature of quality)			
4.2 The information is provided in a clear, orderly and unambiguous way (implicature of manner).			
4.3 Their interventions are related to the topic of conversation (implicature of relationship)			
5. Conventional implicit: lexicalized inferences			
5.1 Understand and / or correctly use lexicalized expressions or idioms.			
TEXTUAL PRAGMATICS			
Sub level of coherence			
6. Textual superstructures			
6.1 When narrating does not omit relevant events, presents the characters appropriately, places their actions temporally, and introduces the information in the logical and chronological order in the development of events (narrative superstructure).			
7. Lexical understanding			
7.1 The speaker can understand a wide range of vocabulary.			
8. Morphology and word formation.			
8.1 His construction of the words is complete, using properly noun completions, adjectives and verbs, respecting the concordances of time, gender or number, as well as articles.			
9. Syntax and grammatical construction			
9.1 His construction of phrases and sentences is conventional and uses complete structure statements, both in sentences (subject +			

predicate) as in minor constituents.			
INTERACTIVE PRAGMATICS			
10. Conversational participation rate.			
10.1 The speaker's level of verbal participation in the conversation (number of shifts and words) is proportional to that of other participants.			
11. Natural gesture			
11.1 His use of gestures, facial expression and non-verbal communication complements and matches language properly, but does not replace it.			
12. Communicative use of sight			
12.1 Uses the sight communicatively, to confirm listening and understanding, to give in or ask for the turn.			

Analysis of proposal's application.

To analyze the effects of implementing the proposal the Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado was applied again, but this time as an instrument for observation in order to compare the results of data collection with the results after implementing the proposal. In order to analyze the results of implementing the Proposal, every item from the Protocolo Rápido de Evaluación Pragmática Revisado was analyzed in a graphic according to the observations of the proposal's application.

Conclusions

During the development of the current research the questions of investigations were answered showing that there is a real problem of investigation. This problem was analyzed during the analysis of data collection, where the theory was seen in the practice. The answers to the two questions of investigations are sustained primarily by Carr et al (2016) who mentioned the problems of acquiring a language in students with intellectual

disability and also related these problems to the social interaction that affect the learning of a second language:

Deficit in intellectual functions, such as ... experiential learning, confirmed by both clinical assessment and individualized standard intelligence testing, deficits in adaptive functioning that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility. Without support, the adaptive deficit limit functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments such as home, schools, work and community and reduced level of intellectual functioning resulting in diminished ability to adapt to the daily demands of the normal social environment.

This theory was confirmed by the data analysis in chapter 3 by applying 3 instruments for research: a questionnaire, a rubric for observation and a diary for observation too. While applying the questionnaire to the teachers and observing the students with intellectual disability in their classes the deficits mentioned by Carr et al (2016) were seen in

the inclusive classrooms, where students with intellectual disability were having several difficulties on understanding and using English as a foreign language.

The questions and observation were primarily focused on language pragmatics. By applying the instruments and analyzing the results it was concluded that these students could memorize words or phrases in a foreign language, but had several difficulties at the pragmatic language level. This same problem is shown in the theoretical background of Kasher and Meilijson (1996) where the research is focused on students with autism.

According to the website of the British Council (BBC) the communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning, so the proposal revolves around the idea of providing the teachers with strategies that can develop the communication of real meaning in their foreign language, the development of language pragmatics instead of just a list of words or grammar structures.

According to the theory of the communicative approach and also according to the results obtained in the data analysis activities based on Role-plays were developed in order to see if these activities could help students with the development of their language pragmatics in the foreign language. By designing 5 lessons based on different speech acts Role-plays were the main activity for practicing language pragmatics.

In another hand, some limitations were presented for the implementation limitations of the proposal: the time, it was just possible to develop 5 classes for these students due to their schedules in school and the deliverance date of the current research. In addition, it was not possible to apply them in the inclusive classroom, again because of the school's schedule, but with

them apart of their classmates.

By applying the proposal, it could be seen that students need clear explanations about the context before they can use language in an appropriate way; it could be also observed that even when they have problems on achieving social factors in communication such as using the correct expressions or intonation when saying a specific phrase or question, they are able to copy non-verbal expressions, gestures and even intonation where this is being taught in order to complement the communication.

In addition, another important result was primarily that it is easy for them to use language in an appropriate way (language pragmatics) when the context is explained and limited. This means that when they can understand the context and they have memorized how to act in a situation such as that it would be easy for them to communicate in an appropriate way. Sadly, people cannot be limited to a specific number of responses and this is a fact that affects critically students with intellectual disability due to it is very complicated for them to adapt their language to new situations.

One of the things that is closely related to language development and adaptation is critical thinking, but the activities implemented with the proposal did not help in this aspect, for example, there was not any change on aspects such as "correcting themselves in language errors" or language awareness and those aspects that are related to metacognitive language strategies that are necessary to acquire a foreign language and to use it appropriately in order to develop a meaningful communication.

As a recommendation for future investigations this metacognitive aspect of the language can be included in the study of language pragmatics development in students with intellectual disability, another aspect that can be taken into

account is the influence of the age in the critical thinking and the development of language pragmatics in the acquisition of the foreign language in students that present intellectual disability. A new field to investigate that can provide more meaningful and deep knowledge about the topic could be neuro-linguistics.

Neuro-linguistics can provide more information about how language pragmatics are acquired in order to develop better strategies to help teachers with inclusive classrooms to help students with intellectual disability. Hypothesis based on neuro-linguistics can lead to a deeper investigation and maybe to deeper solutions. Role-plays, as they were implemented in the proposal could be more helpful with more time of implementation and could show better results and better strategies if they would be implemented in an inclusive classroom.

As conclusions for this research it has to be mentioned that certainly it was demonstrated the necessity of the development of language pragmatics on students with intellectual disability, such as Hemilse (2011) revealed in her research, language pragmatics is necessary in order to communicate effectively. Students with intellectual disability need to develop language pragmatics in order to communicate.

It can be also mentioned that using strategies based on language pragmatics facilitates the foreign language acquisition of students with language disability, but this facilitation is reduced just to some aspects of language acquisition. Speech acts and Role-plays can be helpful for students with intellectual disability to better comprehend their world and how to communicate with it, but these activities cannot help them to interpret the world in order to develop by their own an effective communication and this is a necessary skill nowadays.

According to the theory, observations, analysis and results the real contribution of the current research depends on what every teacher seeks to develop in his/her students. If the teacher seeks for a way to explain the immediate contexts that surround the student in the everyday life and tries to help to understand how language is used in those limited contexts, then the strategies presented in the proposal of the current research can facilitate the acquisition and use of certain speech acts in specific situations.

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