

Running head: SPECIFIC ORAL SKILLS FOR 7th GRADERS AT GAC

How To Become An Excellent Presenter

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1. Abstract

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The center and heart of this research project was to identify what specific oral skills were needed in order to be taught, reinforced and improved in a group of seventh graders students at Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena. Specifically the project was set in the abilities required in their oral presentations in front of a class. To address this problem, a need analysis was carried out by applying different research techniques and tools such as questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and class observation, which emitted certain research information that lead us to approach our problematic. As a result of this process and after the application of the academic program designed after our research findings set to improve their oral skills, our students showed a high level of improvement as English speakers, an increment in their self-confidence at the moment of standing in front of their class was also noticed and showed themselves more secure when presenting in front of their peers using the techniques they were taught.

Key words: *oral skills, abilities to speak, oral improvement, oral presentations*

2. Introduction

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2.1 Need analysis

Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena has been chosen as the context where my project is going to take place. The school is located in Cartagena at anillo vial km.14, just outside of the touristic area of the city and fifteen minutes away from the airport heading north. Actually I work in this place as the High school coordinator; formerly I used to teach English using the communicative approach. I have been working with this same school over the last ten years. This is a school where a lot of people are well established in society, with an acquisitive power in order to get or to pay for what they want and kids lacks nothing.

On the mission of Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena lays the following statement:

“The Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena is an educational institution founded to provide comprehensive and customized high quality education to young people from Cartagena, region and country. The institution aims to train young people with a high degree of personal maturity; sense of importance and profound ethical and scientific principles; open to genuine universal Colombian cultures”.

According the vision of the Institution we could read the following statement as well:

“The Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena will maintain academic and educational quality that holds, through the continuous improvement of their processes, gradually introducing elements and inputs of information technology, communication and research from the areas of knowledge. It will seek to maintain quality in the country between 2012-2017”.

The school is always trying to improve their pedagogical practice by implementing academics processes that lead to an enhanced acquisition of knowledge of their learners. Gimnasio Altair is a bilingual school that teaches English as a second language approaching the learning according the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Seventh graders were chosen as the target audience of this project that I will work on. These grades in our school are in their earlier adolescence, lacking frequently capacity to focus in their processes of learning a second language due to variables reasons as the environment and high number of students being part of the same class, range of ages, and personal interests among others. Also, at the moment of speaking, even they had acquired certain amount of vocabulary and grammatical features through the years, it is common to see how difficult it is for them to perform orally in front of a class for them. Seventh Grade is divided into two different groups; 7°A has nineteen students and 7°B has seventeen students for a total of thirty six students that are going to be the target audience of this project. Student ages are between 11 and 13 years old, both female and male.

2.2 Problematizing

Seventh grader students at Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena are entering in their adolescence years, as previously mention they are between the ages of 11 and 13 years old, therefore peer pressure is one of the problems they faced individually. This group pressure, will lead them to lack confidence at the moment of oral presentations in front the class or at socialization of class subjects. The feeling of not being able to perform properly will make them retract from oral performances even when they are capable to do it.

A possible plan of action to eliminate or lessen the impact of this problematic within the classroom may be classroom management instructions to teachers and clear rules about respecting other people's opinion for students, work and participations should be encourage through recognition. But more likely, and this is the center and heart of this research project, we will teach them specific abilities and we will train them to become excellent oral presenters.

2.3 Articulating Belief

Language is a means of expression and communication with others. This mean of communication can be used in different ways or forms such us oral, written, signs, and visual. Language is also used to connect people from around the world, as well it is a mean, it is a way, it is a tool that we use to connect with others using words either spoken or written.

The social context where my students are involved as I mention above in defining the context is important in their learning process because it is where they are involved daily.

The foreign language learning process they go into must be relevant to my students in order to be applied in their daily life as a mean of communication. Teaching a foreign language effectively needs to involve real situations in which the learning can be applied. I strongly believe that every lesson must be relevant, must find a truly significance to them, it must provide the tool required to express any need they have or just to simply express any idea or perception of life.

In this teaching process there are certain aspects that are necessary to be effective, such as, good planning from teachers, a positive attitude towards learning from students, keeping in mind any pedagogical implication and finally the social context in which students are involved.

One last belief implies the definition of the learner of English. The learner must be a student who seeks to communicate fluently and effectively in English, who often come from a different background and usually is a non-English Speaker or non-native English speakers. Therefore, the learner develops a positive attitude towards acquiring a second language, due to the necessity of communicating with peers in a different context where they grew up.

2.4 Research Problem

Our Research Problem to be solved and developed with 7th graders students at Gimnasio Altair De Cartagena is this mentioned below:

Given a Spanish Speaking student who is seeking to communicate fluently and effectively in English, while doing an oral presentation in front of their class, what content form the basis for an appropriate short English course?

2.5 Research Question

Our Research Question to be driven with 7th graders students at Gimnasio Altair De Cartagena in this research process is stated as followed:

***RQ:** What specific skills students from Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena in 7th grade learn in order to perform in oral presentations in front of their class?*

2.6 Research Objectives

***ROI:** Identify students need, lacks and wants in terms of oral performances*

***RO2:** Generate appropriate lessons and material to be used in learning processes of oral performances*

3. Theoretical Framework

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3.1 Acquisition of Second Language According to Cognitivism and Language

Second language acquisition is a process in which we learn, internalize, practice, make mistakes and communicate using a language different than our first language and it is presented for several authors as a mental process present on language learning activity. According to Singhal (2012) “The definition of second language acquisition and learning is that learning and acquisition of a second language is prone once the mother tongue or first language acquisition is established. Second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning other languages in addition to the native language”. Myles (2013), states that the acquisition of a second language is similar to the acquisition of a complex skill. Continues on saying that researchers would be capable to understand better the process of language acquisition by investigating how our human brain works. Cognitivism psychologist theories compare that the acquisition of a second language is comparable with the acquisition of a complex skill, due to the process of how the learner expands its linguistic knowledge placing it over the existing knowledge system.

The author continues on saying that there is a prime meeting point which is the mind of the learner despite of the environment, which also creates some differences between learners according to their own capacity to learn. Language from the Cognitivism approach, it is not seen as a separate component from the mind or from the mental processes, thus language is understood as part of cognition.

Therefore, the acquisition of a second language process based on Cognitivism is highly focused on the individual capacities to learn reaching higher sphere of knowledge rather than to understand it as the acquisition of a second language through a linguistic approach.

According to Krashen (1982) the process of acquiring a second language it is almost equal to the process children go through when learning their first language. It is a process where the learner is not aware that he is acquiring a language, there not notion of correctness when applying grammatical rules, but it is rather comfortable with the sense of language learning or knowing about the language when being used. It is also stated by some writers that adults are not capable to acquire a second language as kids do, that adults only learn and learning is a conscious process different that acquisition which is subconscious, therefore there is not acquisition but learning.

Krashen (1982) mentions that first language used to be consider as a main source of syntactic errors and interference in the process of second language acquisition and that numerous researches and books were done on the topic. Later on, he explained than that was not completely correct and certain hypothesis proved that first language has little influence in a second language acquisition.

So far, it has been discussed that there are different aspects to take into account when we refer to a process of a second language acquisition. Some authors state that this is a process similar to the kids learning a first language being unaware of process itself (Krashen, 1982), other authors states that the acquisition of a language has to do with

Cognitive processes similar to learning a skill (Myles, 2013), but there is an important part to be covered and worth to be mention in this paper, which it has to do with the cognitive theory as an integrated theory of instructed second language.

3.2 Cognitive Theories in a Language Learning Process

Ellis (1990) states that the cognitive theory is the result of an extensive research into the role that mental processing plays in learning. It continues on mentioning that every learning theory has its own purpose, but it takes into account only two sides of it. Create a report and documented notion about the classroom is the first purpose and the second one is to give every teacher relevant information on how classroom second language learning should be approach. The conditions on which appropriate second language learning should take place are presented as four different factors. These factors are enclosed as follow, (1) knowledge and skills possessed by the learner, (2) ability, (3) personality and motivation and (4) opportunities for learning. According to this, teachers concern will be based on how knowledge and a second language is acquired by learners and how the learner uses its ability to apply the acquired knowledge to the process of learning a second language.

According to Ellis (1990) “cognitive theory seeks to explain three principal aspects of learning: (1) how knowledge is initially represented, (2) how the ability to use this knowledge develops and (3) how the new knowledge is integrated into the learner’s existing cognitive system” (p.176). Continues on explaining that there are two levels on how knowledge is acquired, the selection of the learner to pay attention and how it is transfer the information to a short-term memory and the same ability to transfer the

information to a long-term memory to be permanent storage. Other aspects to take into account are whether knowledge is controlled and when it is an automatic process by the individual being aware of what is been learned and how the new information restructure the existing knowledge system.

Second language learning process based on a cognitive theory depends significantly on the language views of the learner. If this is seen as a general skill or as special ability of the human mind will determine how difficult this process would be. Mainly the acquisition process of a second language will be based on knowing how each individual learn and on the individual capacity to develop strategic competences.

In essence of what has been previously discussed, the acquisition of a second language is a whole mechanism in which different cognitive processes come together to emerge as a communicative tool in each individual that has acquired it completely different language from the mother tongue or the first language. Mental processes, as mentioned before, according to Cognitivism help the learner to internalize, to practice and to gain knowledge of the target language in discussion. All things considered, the acquisition of a second language is a process, in which we acquire a language different from our own first language and this process is also similar to the acquisition of a complex ability or skill.

3.3 Affective filter Hypothesis and peer learning

According to Krashen (1978), affective variables prevent input from reaching the Language acquisition device as Chomsky called the mechanism in which language is acquired.

This is to say, that affective variable affects the language acquisition directly preventing input from reaching the acquisition device in which language is acquired.

Now, the affective filter hypothesis states how affective factors relate to the second language acquisition process. The concept of an affective filter was proposed by Dulay and Burt (1977), and is consistent with the theoretical work done in the area of affective variables and second language acquisition as well Krashen did.

According to this hypothesis of the affective filter, performers and language students with high motivation, generally do better in second language acquisition, this usually happens, but not always. Performers and students with self-confidence and a good self-image of themselves tend to do better in second language acquisition. Another important aspect has to do with the anxiety level. A low anxiety level in performers and students appears to be favorable to second language acquisition. These attitudinal factors relate directly to acquisition and not learning.

The Affective Filter hypothesis captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition by suggesting that acquirers vary with respect to the strength or level of their Affective Filters. Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter, even if they understand the message, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those with attitudes more favorable to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and they will acquire more auspiciously the language in mention.

4. Methodology

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4.1 Pedagogical Intervention

4.2 Participants

In our research project on how to become an excellent presenter, seventh grader students from Gimnasio Altair de Cartagena participated. These groups of students were chosen as the target audience that worked on it. These grades in our school are in their earlier adolescence, lacking frequently capacity to focus in their processes of learning a second language due to variables reasons as the environment and high number of students being part of the same class, range of ages, and personal interests among others. Also, at the moment of speaking, even they had acquired certain amount of vocabulary and grammatical features through the years; it is common to see how difficult it is for them to perform orally in front of a class for them.

Seventh Grade is divided into two different groups; 7°A has nineteen students and 7°B has seventeen students for a total of thirty six students that are the target audience of this project. Student ages are between 11 and 13 years old, both female and male.

4.3 Procedures

In this research on becoming an excellent presenter, seventh graders went through a four phases process in which they learned about the necessary abilities in order to perform properly in front of their class, they also analyzed other people mistakes, do's and don'ts and oral presentations, and some of them also dare to do a presentation in order to be

corrected and to improve in their personal performance after what they learned from the classes. The core of our pedagogical intervention was center in a four lesson plan that aimed to empower and strength student's lacks when performing. This four lesson plan was also support by our e-learning site in which students were able to watch videos, ppt and participate in forums or group discussions. The four main phases or stages that we went through are the following:

- a. *Observation and analysis of their own presentations:* We had a debate on their perceptions and point of views on the topic, being the students the study object of the discussion.
- b. Reinforcement and strengthening their oral skills: Practical application and topics taught by myself on the four lesson course designed after knowing their weaknesses on oral presentations. ICT Based lesson and activities and use of the e- learning platform.
- c. Observe presentations given by others: Students analyzed what others were doing wrong or write when presenting in front of a group of people. Within a class, conference or public speech.
- d. Make presentations to the class: After the classes, topics and course to become an excellent presenter was taught, they practiced oral presentations in front of their class or in a public presentation, trying to apply the knowledge acquired.

4.4 Describing Instruments

In this research process we used three different instruments to gather information or research data about our research questions and problem. The Instruments used were: A Survey applied to students, a personal interview applied to administrative teacher and teachers and class observation format.

4.4.1 A Survey:

An eight question survey was carried out to explore students' needs, wants and lacks. This was set to be done in a piece of paper as conventionally and traditionally a survey is done. But then we changed to an on line survey method. We included the same questions that we had on paper and students enjoyed a different method to answer the survey. (See annex)

4.4.2 Interview:

A ten questions interview was carried out to administrative teachers and bilingual teachers at the school (teachers that taught in seventh grade). These interviews were recorder in audio and they are stored. (See annex)

4.4.3 A Class Observation:

It is a format in which we were able to describe main features of a class observation. It was an open and not structured format. It was mainly to write and write without stopping what was being taught in class at the moment of being there. (See annex)

Now, in order to collect pedagogical data from students in this research process, we used and applied five different instruments to gather information. To collect such information in

order to obtain pedagogical data about our process of pedagogical intervention the following instruments were used: A listing exercise (to show knowledge), an ordering and grouping exercise (to show understanding), A creative task - Creating a poster (to show mastering of the topic), an organization of presentation's information exercise (to apply practically acquired knowledge). Every instrument used to collect pedagogical data can be seen in the annex.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

In conversation with the Principal of the Educational Institution where we carried out our educational research, it was suggested by the fact of working with minors that all participants must submit an authorization or informed consent by their parents, which authorized the student to participate in the research process that would take place in the classroom.

This informed consent should explain step by step what was to take place and what we would do with the information collected and the protection of such information that would be given or collected. Also, we were able to leave the door open to withdraw at any time or not to continue to participate if they were unable or unwilling to continue doing so. In neither case it was mandatory to participate or continue to participate from start to finish.

We further agree that all participants of this research were to sign the informed consent regardless of whether they were adults.

It was explained that this research would be conducted by Johan Pomares as part of their research studies and specialization in teaching English as a second language and consisting of the points raised below.

a. Application of various research tools such as surveys, interview, classroom observation, focus groups, among others of the same type in the same line of research.

b. Teaching several class lessons on the subject of research in the classroom as an action plan for the investigative process. In addition we will develop different activities such as workshops, written work, and poster among others.

c. Video recording of the times when class lessons by the researcher will be held and when they are implementing some research tools. This will support purposes, review, justification, support and shows evidence of finding essential points that must be addressed, discussed and analyzed the effect of improvement in the investigative process. NEVER were going to be used for advertising purposes or for distribution or uploaded on the network. At some point in the thesis oral presentation we might include a video recordings of the classes recorded.

If participants wished, they could get the benefits that this academic research would provide and if by any case they would want to abandon their participation in the study, they could do so at any time. Their participation was voluntary and so for the record, the respective informed consent form, which authorized the participation of children and adult participants, was signed.

5. Data Analysis and Results

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According to Penrose and Katz (1998), “Reducing the data, generalizing from the data, and highlighting specific cases are all highly interpretive processes. It should be clear by now that we don’t let the data speak for themselves in research reports; in summarizing our results, we interpret them for the reader.” This is now what we are set to do and to explain in this paper. We are going to interpret our result in order to answer our research question and see how we meet our research objectives.

Our data analysis is the result of the survey applied to students from seventh grade in order to obtain the necessary information about their needs, lacks and wants. These results are also lined to the personal interviews carried out with teachers and the coordinator of the bilingual program at the school and the class observation findings that were set to answered our research question. The following categories or themes resulted from the results of the need analysis tools used to gather and collect information. The categories are:

Category 1 - Level of motivation towards learning the target language

Category 2 - Language Skills

Category 3 – Strategies and Learning Activities

Category 4 - Understanding and use of the language

5.1 Category 1 - Level of motivation towards learning the target language

Te sientes motivado para aprender Ingles?

Tabla



A	Si	31	100%
B	No	0	0%
C	No sabe / No responde	0	0%
En total		31	100%

Table # 1

10. ¿Cuáles son los temas que más disfrutan los estudiantes?

Los temas que más disfrutan son los que tienen que ver con tecnologías, deportes con las comidas. Todo lo que tiene que ver con su entorno. Eso es lo que más disfrutan a esas edades. (Liliana Medina – Coordinadora de Bilinguismo)

De manera general los temas que dominan en cuanto a sus intereses. Si hablan de algo que no les interesa lo logran hacer pero no es su ideal. Pero es muy importante que ellos conozcan vocabulario sobre esos temas. Pero todo lo que genere alrededor de su interés y gusto les va a gustar muchísimo. (María Elida Urrego – Jefa de área)

En estos de ahora que son un poco más inmaduros que el séptimo del año pasado, les gusta mucho lo de los súper héroes, el enamoramiento, la personalidad. Los tips y cosas así (Diamela Acosta – Docente)

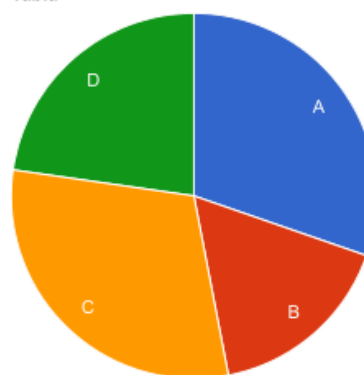
Question #10 from personal Interview

Taking into account the survey, thirty one of the students out of thirty four from seventh grade participated answering this question. It seems they all feel motivated towards the learning of the English language. This motivation it is also expressed and shown by the teachers who indicates that when to topics of their preferences comes, students seems to be always eager in terms of motivation of language learning. There is already a high level of motivations towards the language as it is shown in Table # 1 and Question 10, demonstrating that seventh graders consider English language as a worthy preference for them. This high motivation is also evidenced in the class observation format in which usually students participate in the class when the teacher requires them to do so.

5.2 Category 2 - Language Skills (Level of difficulty)

En cual de las siguientes habilidades crees que te va mejor en clases? Puedes elegir varias opciones

Tabla



A	Listening	20	30.3%
B	Speaking	11	16.7%
C	Reading	20	30.3%
D	Writing	15	22.7%
En total		66	100%

Table # 2

2. ¿En cuál de las habilidades del idioma (escritura, lectura, escucha o habla) detectas mayores fortalezas en tus estudiantes? ¿Porque?

Actualmente pienso que están fortalecidos en la parte de lectura y en la parte de escucha y eso pienso que tiene que ver mucho con todo lo que están viviendo y todo lo que ellos ven en los medios, tanto lo que escuchan como lo que leen de acuerdo a sus intereses. Entonces creo que en esos dos ellos tienen mucho más fortalezas, también teniendo en cuenta el proceso que se ha llevado en el colegio. (Liliana Medina – Coordinadora de Bilingüismo)

Question #2 from personal Interview

According to table # 2, listening and speaking are the abilities and skills in which a 30.3% of the students, who answered the survey, perform better. They seem to consider these skills easier for them in order to learn and execute in the target language. Twenty students selected listening and other twenty selected Reading as the skill in which they do things better. English Language is taught by skills at the school and they were able to select in which skills they perform better. The result in table # 2 also seems to demonstrate that students consider speaking and writing as the more difficult skills in the target language in order to learn and perform. Question #2 from personal Interview and according to the bilingual coordinator, provides also information about Listening and Reading as the skills in which students seem to be more efficient at the moment of performing in the target language.

Cual de las siguientes habilidades se te hace más difícil en tus clases? Puedes elegir varias opciones

Tabla



A	Listening	4	11.1%
B	Speaking	13	36.1%
C	Reading	4	11.1%
D	Writing	15	41.7%
En total		36	100%

Table # 3

3. ¿En cuál de las habilidades del idioma (escritura, lectura, escucha o habla) detectas mayores debilidades en tus estudiantes? ¿Porque?

Claramente en la escritura y en el habla, la escritura porque cada vez están escribiendo menos y eso no solo pasa en inglés si no también pasa en castellano, los estudiantes se están comunicando menos y cuando lo están haciendo, lo hacen de una forma que no es la formal o la tradicional si no que usan muchos slagns o contracciones entonces lo que escriben correctamente cada vez menos. Y el habla porque el único espacio donde se están comunicando en inglés, necesariamente es dentro del aula. Fuera del aula más allá de utilizar un slagn no van más de allá. Entonces pienso que esas son las dos habilidades en las que ellos están más débiles. (Liliana Medina – Coordinadora de Bilinguismo)

Donde noto más dificultades y debilidad es en la parte escrita, como quiera que el estudiante promedio no le guste leer, y generalmente cuando tú no lees no escribes. De pronto yo te pues dar unas pautas de como escribes de diferentes formas para escribir, pero eso es más como buscar en la lectura esas partes del Reading. Pero como no les gusta leer, se le dificulta más si yo les pongo a hacer un párrafo de opinión a veces quieren basarse en la opinión del otro y no contrarrestar su opinión con la del autor. entonces es muy difícil esas etapas de la lectura como el pre Reading, el while Reading o el after Reading se le hace muy difícil, porque no les gusta leer y no tienen ese vasto vocabulario y amplitud para escribir. (María Elida Urrego – Jefa de área)

Question #3 from personal Interview

According to table # 3, Writing with a 42.7 % is the most difficult skill in English for the students, followed by Speaking with a 36.1% of students selecting it as one of the two most difficult skills to perform in. It seems that students' perception is that skills in which they have to produce language are more difficult than the other two skills. Teacher's answer in the personal interview (Question #3 from personal Interview) also reveals the same impression on language production for these two skills (writing and speaking), expressing that nowadays kids produce less and less in these two abilities which makes it harder for them at the moment of use it.

5.3 Category 3 – Strategies and Learning Activities

Como te gustaría aprender Ingles durante las clases? Puedes elegir varias opciones
Otras preguntas

Tabla



A	Por medio de canciones, karaoke y actividades parecidas a estas	12	6.6%
B	Por medio de videos y/o peliculas	26	14.2%
C	Por medio de juegos	21	11.5%
D	Por medio de conversaciones	18	9.8%

E	Por medio de actividades on line	9	4.9%
F	Por medio de lecturas (cuentos, novelas, periódicos, libros, narraciones , etc)	7	3.8%
G	Por medio de talleres	10	5.5%
H	Por medio de dramatizaciones u obras de teatro	9	4.9%
I	Actividades donde interactues más con tus compañeros	21	11.5%
J	Por medio de apps en tu smartphone	12	6.6%
K	Por medio de juego de roles (representaciones)	7	3.8%
L	Por medio de juegos donde memorizas	9	4.9%
M	Usando el Software de tu libro de Ingles	2	1.1%
N	Aprendiendo nuevas palabras o vocabulario	14	7.7%
O	Por medio de actividades tradicionales	6	3.3%
P	¿alguna otra? Escríbela en el espacio debajo	0	0%
En total		183	100%

1. ¿Videojuegos cuenta?

Table # 4

Seventh grader had the chance to answer to this question with sixteen different options to choose from. 183 times they selected from one of these sixteen options.

According to this graphic (Table# 4), it seems that students are keen to learn the language through activities that are fun for them and according to their age range. It is important to notice that many of these selected options point out to activities that are to be done in group or with their peers; therefore the social component is present in their needs. Students want from these percentages shown in the graphic, fun classes that take them to learn new thing in the target language but at the same time to have fun while learning.

Three of the options with the highest percentages are: “by conversations 18 times selected with 9,8 %, by interacting with peers 21 times selected with 11.5% and learning new vocabulary 14 times selected with 7.7%”, all of these options are pointing to speaking language production where the students want to communicate properly with others. Perhaps the deficiency of these kind of activities reinforce in them the distress felt when they are required to speak in public or during presentations, due to the lack of practice and vocabulary as it was expressed in this chart.

De acuerdo a tu nivel de actual de Ingles, ¿Cual de estas actividades te resultan más FÁCILES de realizar?

Tabla



A	La comprension cuando lees en Ingles	21	8.5%
B	La fluidez y confianza al hablar en Ingles	7	2.8%
C	Tu precisión cuando escribes en Ingles	12	4.9%
D	Aprender nuevo vocabulario	18	7.3%
E	Los examenes de Ingles de desarrollo	5	2%

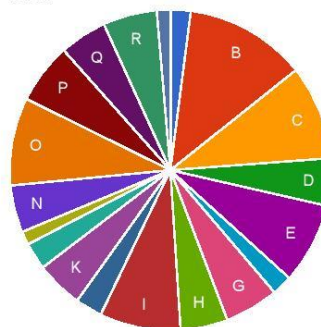
F	Los exámenes de ingles de listening	19	7.7%
G	Relacionarte con tus profesores en Ingles	8	3.2%
H	Tomar notas durante clases en ingles	14	5.7%
I	Las presentaciones orales frente a la clase	8	3.2%
J	Los trabajos en grupo	18	7.3%
K	Los trabajos individuales en el libro o workbook	14	5.7%
L	Las tareas para realizar en casa	17	6.9%
M	Las actividades de listening	21	8.5%
N	Los exámenes de Ingles tipo icfes	13	5.3%
O	Hacer los reportes de lectura en Ingles	5	2%
P	Hablar por telefono en Ingles	9	3.6%
Q	Escribir cartas o emails en Ingles	12	4.9%
R	Hacer amigos en redes sociales de habla Inglesa	8	3.2%
S	Entender a otros cuando hablan en Ingles	18	7.3%
En total		247	100%

Table # 5

According to table # 5 it give the impression to be easier for students to perform actions such as listening activities and reading comprehensions, they both obtain the highest percentages when being asked about it. Students also chose from the options they had other type of activities that are related to listening as the easiest activities to do according to their actual English level. On the other side, it is important to mention that the fluency and confidence when speaking obtained the lowest score with only seven times being chosen representing only the 2.8% percentage of what they consider easy to carry out.

De acuerdo a tu nivel de actual de Ingles, ¿Cual de estas actividades te resultan más DIFICILES de realizar?

Tabla



A	La comprension cuando lees en Ingles	3	2%
B	La fluidez y confianza al hablar en Ingles	18	12.2%
C	Tu precisión cuando escribes en Ingles	14	9.5%
D	Aprender nuevo vocabulario	7	4.8%
E	Los exámenes de Ingles de desarrollo	12	8.2%
F	Los exámenes de ingles de listening	3	2%
G	Relacionarte con tus profesores en Ingles	8	5.4%
H	Tomar notas durante clases en ingles	7	4.8%
I	Las presentaciones orales frente a la clase	12	8.2%
J	Los trabajos en grupo	4	2.7%
K	Los trabajos individuales en el libro o workbook	7	4.8%
L	Las tareas para realizar en casa	4	2.7%
M	Las actividades de listening	2	1.4%
N	Los exámenes de Ingles tipo icfes	7	4.8%
O	Hacer los reportes de lectura en Ingles	13	8.8%
P	Hablar por telefono en Ingles	9	6.1%
Q	Escribir cartas o emails en Ingles	7	4.8%
R	Hacer amigos en redes sociales de habla Inglesa	8	5.4%
S	Entender a otros cuando hablan en Ingles	2	1.4%
En total		147	100%

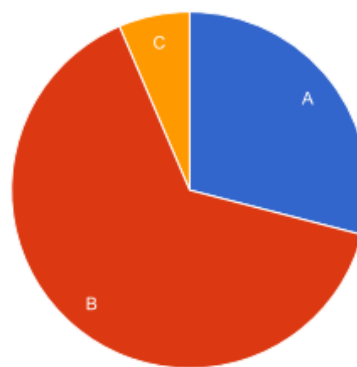
Table # 6

As we can see from Table # 6, the highest scores and percentages that are found in those options, had to do with speaking and writing language production. The highest percentage of difficulty is obtained by “the fluency and confidence when speaking” with 18 times selected out of 147 for a 12.2%, followed directly by the second highest score “oral presentation in front of your class” with 12 times selected for a 8,2%. These results are aligned with Table # 5 in which is very likely to say that students perceive oral or speaking activities as a difficult task to achieve.

5.4 Category 4 - Understanding and use of the language

Cuándo estas en la clase de Ingles, ¿puedes entender lo que tu docente dice en Ingles ?

Tabla



A	Siempre	9	29%
B	Casi Siempre	20	64.5%
C	Algunas veces	2	6.5%
D	Nunca o pocas veces	0	0%
En total		31	100%

Table # 7

It is shown in table # 7 that students have a very high level when understanding teachers in class. This is a very important issue in order to language function and communication. Student seems to have little trouble in terms of understanding their teachers, commands, classes and instructions. It is also important to notice that only a 29% of them (9 out of 31), always understand what the teachers was saying. The major range is found in the almost always category with a 64.5 % which is 20 students out of 31.

¿Se te dificulta comunicarte en Ingles con tus compañeros en la clase de manera oral?

Tabla



A	Si	5	16.1%
B	No	23	74.2%
C	No sabe / No responde	3	9.7%
En total		31	100%

Table # 8

9. ¿Cuáles son los objetivos del curso 7°?

Es importante tener en cuenta que al finalizar el séptimo grado el estudiante ya debe estar perfilándose a ser B1, entonces tiene que tener un manejo adecuado de la lengua en contexto no formal, debe comunicarse tanto a nivel oral como a nivel escrito. Debe tener conversaciones con vocabulario que se le haga familiar, debe saber escribir historias, párrafos perfectamente estructurados, párrafos largos. Generalmente si observas nuestro plan de asignatura desde abajo estamos empezando a escribir párrafos de cuatro líneas y van subiendo el nivel. En cuanto a Speaking debe comunicarse y sostener una conversación de temas familiares relacionados con su entorno y con lo que está viviendo. Con un vocabulario no básico sino intermedio tanto a nivel oral como escrito. En cuanto a Listening deben entender textos con acento británico y americano, deben empezar en lecturas enfocadas un poco más a lo clásico. (Liliana Medina – Coordinadora de Bilinguismo)

9. ¿Cuáles son los objetivos del curso 7°?

Deber ser capaz de comunicarse por lo menos sobre intereses personales, la familia, sobre experiencias del pasado, de utilizar tiempos como los simples y los continuos. (Diamela Acosta – Docente)

De manera general los temas que dominan en cuanto a sus intereses. Si hablan de algo que no les interesa lo logran hacer pero no es su ideal. Pero es muy importante que ellos conozcan vocabulario sobre esos temas. Pero todo lo que genere alrededor de su interés y gusto les va a gustar muchísimo. (María Elida Urrego – Jefa de área)

Question #9 from personal Interview

Table # 8 represents our students' strengths in the language, it is about the use and understanding they have on the target language. It also seems from their answers, that students do not have problems communicating between peers in a relax environment and in a comfortable setting called classroom. 23 out of 31 students (74.2%) felt that there is not a greater difficulty when it comes to make them understood. Only a small percentage of students 5 out of 31(16.1%) selected the option that shows that it is difficult for them to communicate with peers.

As well in question #9 from the personal interviews with teachers, is being said that students at this age and grade, must be able to communicate about preferences, likes and dislikes or in general to express and communicate properly with peers.

6. Conclusions and implications

How to Become an Excellent Presenter

6.1 Implications

The purpose of this study was to consider what skills seven graders students from Gimnasio Altair needed in order to become excellent presenters in front of their classmates.

At the beginning of this study we found students from our school in a learning process that was set to be done by skills. The English program of our institution is divided in two different set of classes. The first set is compound by the teaching of Speaking and Listening and the other one by Reading and writing. Gimnasio Altair is a bilingual school in which English subject has more than eight dedicates hour per cycle. Next English subject, two more subjects are also taught in English which are mathematics and science, giving more than eight hour together for a total of 17 hours of English language exposition during a school week or cycle.

In this study we wanted to help our students to become more proficient in their oral production within their classes and when they have to perform in any task given not only in English class, but also in the other two subjects mentioned before. The idea was to find information and research data to support our concern on how students were using the language and how they were applying the knowledge acquired through the years. Many of this seventh grader students, have been part of our school for la long period of time and the foundation to use the language was already there. So the question arise, how do we encourage students to become confident when they need to speak in front of others.

Was the master and knowledge of the language the problem, or the ability to use it properly? Do our students have the capacity to give a presentation with the English level they have?

According to Lightbrown and Spada (2014) “Comprehensible input remains the foundation of all language acquisition.” and this was the beginning of understanding that our students already had that foundation in which we were able to build the necessary skills for them to use what they already know.

One of the first implications of our study displayed that students’ motivation towards learning the language was very high. Students feel that English language is a necessary tool for their life and they have assimilated like that. Their motivation level showed that all of the implicated students in the study were keen to learn the language and none of them was reluctant to keep with their learning process. Therefore we did not face a problem in terms of motivation. The first step was over and we were able to continue in our purpose.

The second implication of our study has to do with the difficulty our students face with the skills in which they have to produce language. Being more specific Speaking and Writing were found as the skills in which students perceived they do not do well in class and in which they seem to have more problems in order to use the language. According to Young (1990), “When asked what aspects of foreign language classes are the most anxiety- provoking, students put “talking” at the top of the list”. Thus is to say that when our students face the moment of producing in the second language they face a challenge that sometimes raise their anxiety levels. Therefore we need to construct bridges to lower students anxiety occasioned by the stress of performing as they were expected to do.

Another implication of the research study deals with how our students want to learn the target language. It was expressed in the findings that it has to contain a social aspect or component that correlates with their age interest when to learning and acquiring the target language comes. It seems to be hollow for them and to artificial just learning because they were supposed to learn it.

It was also found that understanding teacher's instruction and lessons given by them was not an issue for seven graders students. Their capacity of understanding what the teacher was saying was very extraordinary; in fact very few of them were not capable at some instants to properly get what the teacher was saying. According to Krashen (1982), "Simply hearing a second language with understanding appears to be necessary but is not sufficient for acquisition to take place. The acquirer must not only understand the input but must also, in a sense, be 'open' to it." And students from Gimnasio Altair seem to be open to not only to understand but also to the acquisition and practice of the target language and to the input of it.

As Terry Waltz the famous Ph. D in foreign language teaching once said, "Peer-to-peer communication is the McDonalds of language teaching." These kind of peer to peer communication activities are not a problem for seventh graders at Gimnasio Altair. The findings showed that students enjoy English learning when they work side by side with their peers in their classes. They seem to enjoy more the activities in which they necessarily have to socialize and exchange information in the target language with their friends.

Another implication resulting from the research study was that scholars validated that Listening and Reading activities required less effort for them, or these learning activities were easier to prepare in order to perform according to what it was required.

These activities present a very slight barrier to seventh graders and they selected a list of different activities as their favorites such as, reading comprehension activities, listening activities in the classroom, English listening exams and learning new vocabulary.

One last final implication make evident that students are aware that oral speaking and writing activities are more difficult for them. According to Baker & MacIntyre (2000), speaking has been found to be the most anxiety-provoking form of communication. Thus is to say that students struggle with activities such as oral presentations in front of their peers, doing English reports, English exams where they have to elaborate and most important when they are request to speak to people fluently and with confidence.

The problem was not in their language learning process, there seems not to be a problem with the language itself but with the use of it, with the language production, with their anxiety and with the high level required to perform in their academic assignments at school.

6.2 Pedagogical implications and intervention

After analyzing these implications we were set to strengthen, to improve, to expand scholar's communication abilities or skills to perform confidently in front of other. If the layer and foundation of the acquired language was present, what were we able to do in order to make our students excellent oral speakers or presenters.

Taking into account that the language was not the problem and that our students needed some specific skills to feel secure when performing in the language, a course plan was designed to star answered our research problem, which was: Given a Spanish Speaking student who is seeking to communicate fluently and effectively in English, while doing an

oral presentation in front of their class, what content forms the basis for an appropriate short English course?

The problem was address by creating a four lesson plan called “How Become an Excellent Presenter”, the course plan was to address the specific skills the students need when doing presentations in front of their class. The course contained four lesson arranged as followed. Lesson one was meant to teach them about the do’s and the don’ts in oral presentation. In this lesson students found strategies to lower their anxiety when preparing themselves to do a presentation. The use of formal language, taking time to prepare what they were going to say, speaking clearly and at the right volume and having notes were among the things students learnt in order to perform properly. Also, they were taught about what not to do like using informal language, reading the whole presentation and giving the presentation after they learned by heart. This first lesson was supplemented by two different power point presentations and some videos from Youtube about the do’s and the don’ts in oral presentation. As a metacognitive activity to check what was appropriated by them from the lesson, students were required to do a list of the do’s and the don’ts they remember as more important when presenting. Their work evidence showed that this first lesson was a success and their work is kept as pedagogical data of this research study.

The second lesson of our intervention plan for our students consisted of teaching them what were the right and proper expressions to be use in a presentation. Students needed the skills and expressions to express correctly when presenting, and their vocabulary sometimes was to basic for being a extraordinary as a presenter, therefore expressions to order their ideas during the presentation were included in this lesson,

expressions to add more ideas from the same point of view and expressions to introduce an opposite point of view as well.

As a pedagogical intervention to check if students learnt the skills taught, they were given an ordering exercise in which they had to organize the parts of an oral presentation from different sentences arranged in disorder. These sentences contained the expression that they were learning. Also they were asked to recall their last presentation presented in any class and using the language given in the exercises, they were asked to write down the presentation using the new language expression. Their work is kept as pedagogical data of this research study and as evidence of the work done.

The third lesson was about ten simple rules when they need to present in front of their peers. This lesson consist of topic such as talking directly to the audience, less is more, only talking when they have something important to say, making the central and core message of the presentation the most important thing of it, being logical when presenting, practicing the presentation before give it, use of visual effective aids, reviewing the presentation and providing the proper acknowledgements. At this point students were asked to be creative doing a poster in which they have to capture this ten simple rules as a metacognitive activity in which they were going to show the techniques and skills learn during the lesson.

Finally, the last lesson of this course plan was about how to give these same presentations to their classmates in seventh grade. The process was aim to incorporate this skills in their language practice. Students also realized from others presentation, and school activities which ones were doing things appropriately and which ones were not.

As a closure for the course given on “How to Become an Excellent presenter”, some of them were asked to restructure a previous presentation and to apply every skill they learnt. One group was eager to do it, the rest of them still remain a bit shy but there is evidence that they have learnt from the intervention done in this study research.

Every class, every lesson has their pedagogical data collected as evidence of their learning process and the final group was recorded while presenting. There is still a long way to go through with students, but we certainly know that the seed has been planted in them.

As a final thought John Truscott once said “Learning is most successful when it involves only a limited amount of stress, when students are relaxed and confident and enjoying their learning; but the use of correction encourages exactly the opposite condition.”, and during this time spent with our scholar we tried to make fun and enjoyable for them.

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8. Annexes

How to Become an Excellent Presenter

1. Instrumentos
 - 1.1 Encuesta
 - 1.2 Entrevista
 - 1.3 Observación de clase
2. Resultados graficos de la encuesta
3. Entrevista a Coordinadora de Bilinguismo
4. Entrevista a Jefe de area
5. Entrevista a Docente
6. Evidencias de Observación de clase
7. Course plan
 - 7.1 Lesson One – Do's and Don'ts
 - 7.2 Lesson Two – Useful Language for Presentations
 - 7.3 Lesson Three – Ten Simple Rules
 - 7.4 Lesson Four – How to Give a Presentation to 7th Graders