

Didactic strategies for teaching English in elementary education

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Abstract: This article investigated different didactic strategies, based on the four skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing –, that can contribute to the improvement of the process of teaching and learning the English language in Elementary School. The research is characterized as a descriptive, exploratory case study with a qualitative approach. After administering a pre-test, didactic strategies were developed in the storytelling of the fairy tale *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*. After the strategies were developed, a post-test was administered. The analysis performed in the pre-test, post-test and in the corpus, made up of the reports produced in each class, evidenced that different didactic strategies used in the teaching of English can contribute to the improvement not only of the students' learning process, but also of the teaching process.

Keywords: Teaching, learning, didactic strategies, English language, four skills.

Resumo: O presente artigo investigou diferentes estratégias didáticas baseadas nas quatro habilidades – ouvir, falar, ler e escrever –, que podem contribuir para a melhoria do processo de ensino e aprendizagem da língua inglesa no Ensino Fundamental. A pesquisa caracterizou-se por um estudo de caso, de caráter exploratório descritivo e abordagem qualitativa. Após a realização do pré-teste, estratégias didáticas foram desenvolvidas na narração da história de *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*. Após o desenvolvimento das estratégias aplicou-se o pós-teste. A análise realizada no pré-teste, pós-teste e no corpus constituído pelos relatórios realizados em cada aula evidenciaram que diferentes estratégias didáticas usadas no ensino do inglês podem contribuir para a melhoria não somente do processo de aprendizagem dos alunos, mas também do processo de ensino.

Palavras-chave: ensino; aprendizagem; estratégias didáticas; língua inglesa; quatro habilidades.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The English language has become the global language of contemporary times because of its wide use in several countries. Increasingly, people use the English language in technology, tourism, science, sports, aviation, and business, among others. Those who learn English, therefore, can increase their access to knowledge through information obtained from other countries.

According to Paiva¹, studying English has become a worldwide phenomenon, and teaching and learning English as a foreign language has social and political implications. Currently, students have contact with the English language through various means of communication, such as radio, the Internet, television, international news agencies, communication systems, games and computers. The English language is also present in music, cinema, movies, clothing and car brands, etc.

The status of the English language can be seen in the great number of newspapers, business names and magazines that are full of English expressions or are published in English in countries whose official language is not English. Learning the English language today is as important as learning a profession. According to a study of the British Council², this perception is shared by English teachers of Brazilian public schools, who believe that the main reasons for the need to learn English are: (1) to make students citizens of the world; (2) to equip students with a language widely used in the labor market; and (3) to broaden students' general culture.

In Brazil, until September 2016, foreign language teaching was compulsory from the 5th year, without specifying which language though, leaving this choice to the school community, according to Law 9394 of December 20, 1996³, which establishes the guidelines and bases of national education (LDB). Thus, the English language is not present in all Brazilian schools, a reality that may change in case of approval of Provisional Measure 746 of September 22, 2016, which changes LDB and establishes the obligation to teach the English language from the 6th year of elementary school and in high school⁴. The non-mandatory model may be one of the causes that contributed to Brazilians' low level of proficiency, as perceived by the British Council⁵.

Even so, the Brazilian law does not establish regulations regarding the workload of English teaching. Decisions of this scope come from the responsible bodies (Secretariats of Education) of both the states and the municipalities. Thus, it can be stated that English teaching has been little regulated so far and there is no standardization for it. According to the British Council⁶, this is one of the causes that prevent a national evaluation of English teaching in Brazilian schools, as there are no indicators that could allow a better understanding of the scenario. The teachers participating in

1. PAIVA, Vera Lúcia Meneses de Oliveira e. A língua inglesa no Brasil e no mundo. In: PAIVA, Vera Lúcia Meneses de Oliveira (org.). *Ensino de língua inglesa – reflexões e experiências*. Campinas: Pontes, 1996. p. 9-29.

2. BRITISH COUNCIL. *O ensino de inglês na educação pública brasileira*. São Paulo: British Council, 2015. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org.br/sites/default/files/estudo_oensinodoinglesnaeducacaopublicabrasileira.pdf. Acesso em: 9 jan. 2016.

3. BRASIL. Lei nº 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996. Estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, DF, 23 dez. 1996. Seção 1, p. 27833.

4. BRASIL. "Provisional Measure No. 746, dated September 22, 2016. It establishes the policy to promote the implementation of full-time high schools, amends Law No. 9,394 of December 20, 1996, which establishes the guidelines and bases of education national law, and Law No. 11,494 of June 20, 2007, which regulates the fund for the maintenance and development of basic education and valuation of education professionals, and provides other measures. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, DF, 17 fev. 2017. Seção 1, p. 1. Available at: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2015-2018/2016/Mpv/mpv746.htm? Acesso em: 20 fev. 2016.

5. BRITISH COUNCIL, 2015.

6. *Ibidem*.

7. *Ibidem*, p. 15.

the British Council study⁷ believe, however, that improvements are necessary, and point to the potentialities of language teaching. After all “English is a discipline that requires more playful, collective and interactive activities to generate student engagement and practical involvement with the language”.

Even recognizing the existing potential of teaching the English language, reading, writing and grammar prevail in the classrooms at the expense of oral expression and understanding of speech. This can be verified in a survey conducted from the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), a database whose research evidences writing and reading to the detriment of listening and speaking, as well as from the observations of one of the authors in several public schools of Anápolis, a city in the state of Goiás (GO), as pedagogical supervisor of the English Language area.

Thus, considering the importance of the English language these days and the potential to be explored in its teaching, a descriptive, exploratory case study with a qualitative approach was carried out based on the storytelling of the fairy tale *Snow white and the seven dwarfs*. Our aim was to investigate the possibility of using didactic strategies involving the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

As data collection technique, we used pre- and post-test and class observation, developed through the researcher’s field diary, as well as the application of pedagogical strategies of English teaching based on communicative skills, whereby it was possible to determine students’ performance in the 6th year of Elementary School. The pre-test, post-test and field diary records, resulting from the observations, formed the corpus, which, for authors like Moraes and Galiazzi⁸, corresponds to the material to be analyzed.

In order to analyze pre- and post-test results, this research turned to the identification of correct, wrong and blank answers, which were described throughout the text. As for the records originated in the observations, these were described and interpreted on the basis of interpretive hermeneutics, that is, on hermeneutics as a methodology of interpretation.

2. DIDACTIC STRATEGIES: DEFINING A CONCEPT

About teaching, Santana⁹ admits that a priori the term has a more conservative conception, based on the transmission of knowledge or, also, related to student conditioning (instruction, training), being seen as a one-way movement, from teacher to student, and content-oriented. The author points out, however, the possibility of understanding teaching as something broader, something that became possible from the humanist and cognitive-constructivist currents, which see it as a guiding process, taking into account student needs and seeking to ascribe meaning to knowledge. The expanded concept of teaching proposed by Santana¹⁰ connects with what he considers

8. MORAES, Roque; GALIAZZI, Maria do Carmo. *Análise textual discursiva*. Ijuí: Editora Unijuí, 2007

9. SANTANA, Givaldo Melo de. *Metodologia do ensino-aprendizagem de línguas*. São Cristóvão: Universidade Federal de Sergipe; Cesad, 2009.

10. *Ibidem*.

11. *Ibidem*, p. 24

as learning. Thus, teaching can be perceived as a continuous movement that results in learning.

The author also states that learning places “emphasis on the learner and the process. Here what matter is not how the teacher teaches, but how and for what the student learns”¹¹. Learning, therefore, is a phenomenon that goes beyond knowledge transmission, a complex process that requires interaction between the parties¹². In this sense, Piletti¹³ believes that during learning the contents must be meaningful enough to be relevant to the learners. Learning implies criticality and give meaning to what is proposed as an object of study. Santana¹⁴ exemplifies that, in the case of languages, learning does not take place through knowledge of the structure of the language, but when such knowledge is meaningful in the student’s social context, i.e., when the language learned “changes the practical conduct of life” and when it is “significantly assimilated, in use”¹⁵.

During the process of learning English, each learner develops his own strategies to better learn this language. Some listen to songs from their favorite singers to improve their listening skills and increase their vocabulary, while others prefer movies and reading their favorite books and stories, and there are those who create conversation groups to practice English. Rebecca Oxford defines learning strategies as “actions taken by students to improve their own learning”¹⁶. Strategies are important for learning languages because they act not only in the learning of a new language but also in the use of it. Using appropriate language learning strategies results in greater proficiency, self-confidence and, especially, the development of communicative competence.

Regarding the strategy for teaching English, Souza¹⁷ reports that the teachers observed in her research preferred the traditional approach, i.e., the teaching of grammatical rules, reading and writing. Speaking and listening were not practiced in the classroom. Thus, the pedagogical practices developed by the teachers did not offer teaching and learning focused on the communicative approach. For the author, this gap may be related to teacher training, and she believes that pedagogical practices of language college courses should be reviewed so as to include communicative approaches in the process of teaching and learning English.

Krashen¹⁸ adds that an environment conducive to communication and supported by students’ real needs leads to effective language teaching. Thus, the author argues that there is no single and definitive strategy, as they should stimulate interaction and be adjusted to the needs of each student or group of students. By taking into account the particularities of the public and the cultural interactions established in the classroom, the author gives less emphasis to the medium used (books, technology, etc.) and ascribes a personal and psychological character to language teaching, instead of the still predominant technical-didactic character.

12. PILETTI, Claudino. *Didática geral*. 11. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 2007.

13. *Ibidem*.

14. SANTANA, op. cit.

15. SANTANA, op. cit., p. 24.

16. OXFORD, Rebecca. *Language learning strategies: what every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinleand Heinle, p. 1, 1990.

17. SOUZA, Maria Gleide Macêdo. *A prática pedagógica do professor de língua inglesa nas escolas públicas do Ensino Médio*. 2005. 150 f. Thesis (Master degree in Education) – Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, 2005.

18. KRASHEN, Stephen D. *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon, 1987.

3. THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

According to the National Curriculum Parameters, teaching approaches are based on principles of varied nature, such as: (1) socio-interactional classroom learning; (2) cognitive, regarding the way linguistic knowledge is constituted through the involvement in the negotiation of meaning and also as student pre-knowledge is concerned (mother tongue and others); (3) effective, in view of the experience of becoming a discursive being in a foreign language; and (4) pedagogical, considering that the use of language is a central part of what the learner has to learn. These principles form the basis for developing a teaching methodology that involves the issue of how to teach certain contents through different methodological procedures¹⁹.

The communicative approach to teaching English began in the 1960s and 1970s with the English linguist Henry G. Widdowson²⁰ and the American Robert Lado²¹. According to these authors, the proposal was to present a communicative approach to English language teaching and learning that worked conjointly with the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), centered on communication and the process of interaction with other students and the teacher.

In classroom practice, the teacher is guided by a series of principles, assumptions and even beliefs, which constitute what is called the teaching approach. Even if the teachers are not aware of the approach that guides them, it implicitly guides them in their practice. Teachers should be aware of their approach so that they can explain why they teach the way they do and why they get the results they do²².

Larsen-Freeman²³ emphasizes that the focus of the communicative approach is the social use of language aimed at communication and at language use, regardless of grammar or correct pronunciation, but rather the execution of tasks in the target language, interacting with the interlocutor, whether by speaking, writing or reading, revising and correcting their communication until it is understood, and using the linguistic resources the language has.

In a communicative approach, language is seen as a system that expresses meaning and whose main objective is the interaction between the subjects²⁴. As Spicer-Escalante and DeJonge-Kannan²⁵ see it, English-language teaching and learning in a communicative approach occurs through activities involving real communication. The introduction of vocabulary and grammatical structure is not done in a mechanistic way, but interactively and functionally, according to the context and the learner's need.

Considering that music, film and storytelling involve important elements in the teaching process, all strategies are explored in the communicative approach to teaching English. Thus, it is understood that the communicative approach

19. BRASIL. Secretaria de Educação Fundamental. **Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais: terceiro e quarto ciclos do Ensino Fundamental: Língua Estrangeira**. Brasília, DF: Ministério da Educação; Secretaria Educação Fundamental, 1998.

20. WIDDOWSON, Henry G. **Aspects of language teaching**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

21. LADO, Robert. **Introdução à linguística aplicada**. 2. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1972.

22. ALMEIDA FILHO, José Carlos P. **Dimensões comunicativas no ensino de línguas estrangeiras**. 8. ed. Campinas: Pontes, 2015.

23. LARSEN-FREEMAN, Diane. **Teaching and principles in language teaching**. 2. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

24. ELLIS, R. **Task-based language and teaching**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

25. SPICER-ESCALANTE, Maria Luisa; DEJONGE-KANNAN, Karin. Cultural mismatch in pedagogy workshops: training non-native teachers in communicative language Teaching. **Theory and Practice in Language Studies**, [S. l.], v. 4, n. 12, p. 2.437-2.444, 2014.

in English teaching presupposes the integrated use of various strategies and methods, since it assumes a character of integral development of communication. It is also understood from the foregoing that, to this end, students' interests and culture must be embedded in the process of teaching and learning English. Thus, besides facilitating learning, meaning and importance are also attached to the language.

When considering the communicative approach in the teaching and learning of languages, this proposal is reckoned as the most adequate for the development of English-language didactic activities. We thus intend to apply this approach in the development of the present research, using, therefore, strategies that involve listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities.

Such strategies permeated by activities involving film and music, and relying on storytelling, for example, allow the integration of more than one strategy of teaching and learning of languages. Storytelling, in addition to stimulating listening comprehension, also makes it easier to read the same story at a later time. In reading, the reading techniques known as scanning and skimming are usable, after all they allow a more practical understanding of the text. The former refers to the most immediate understanding of the text, when the theme and meaning of its main ideas are quickly recognized²⁶. On the other hand, the skimming technique refers to a more careful reading, though not clinging to the understanding of each particular word²⁷. Both techniques can be used for understanding tales, lyrics, and video subtitles, that is, the various formats a text may have. Therefore, strategies can be stimulated that refer to the communicative approach of teaching and learning English.

The search for a full understanding of the guiding concepts for didactic strategies, as well as for the communicative approach to English language teaching, allowed to form a theoretical basis for developing our research methodology. The way the study is conducted serves as a way of addressing the main doubts and goals that permeate it. After all, methodology is much more than procedures; it encompasses theoretical understandings of the approach, which are the researcher's knowledge and experiences about a particular fact.

4. METHODOLOGY

The present research, therefore, used the qualitative approach, the case study type with an exploratory purpose, since the researcher applied didactic strategies involving the tale *Snow White and the seven dwarfs* for four months to 6th graders as a basis for the teaching and learning process. The data collection techniques consisted of pre-test, post-test, observations recorded in the field diary and an individual performance sheet prepared for each student, in order to follow their learning process in the four skills developed.

26. LINDSAY, Paul. **Teaching English worldwide: a new practical guide to teaching English**. Burlingame: Alta Book Center Publishers, 2000.

27. Ibidem.

28. BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. Secretaria da Educação Básica. **Base Nacional Comum Curricular**. Brasília, DF: MEC, 2016. Available at: <http://basenacionalcomum.mec.gov.br/#/site/inicio>. Acesso em: 10 jan. 2017.

The research was carried out at a public elementary school in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul (RS). The choice to perform the research in a public unit is due to the authors' professional activity being related to such administrative teaching category.

The chosen class was a 6th year of the afternoon group of Elementary School, during a four-month term. The class was composed of 26 students, 13 boys and 13 girls, aged 11 to 13. As already mentioned, the National Curricular Common Base²⁸ provides that English language education is compulsory from the 6th year, which justifies our choice of class level. Didactic strategies directed to the process of teaching and learning English were planned and organized to encompass the four skills. From these activities, we tried to establish a relation between the before and after of the development of didactic strategies based on the telling of *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*. This allowed to determine if the strategies chosen contributed to student learning. In support of the observations, a field diary was written documenting the group's responses to the strategies.

The pre-test, post-test and field diary records formed the corpus of the analysis. Meanings were given and described according to what was observed during the activities that involved didactic strategies. In the description, students were identified with the letter "S", followed by a number and either the letter "F" or "M", indicating female or male, respectively. Thus, S1F through S14F refer to female students and S15M through S24M to male students. This coding was used to protect students' identity. Two students failed to take the pre-test, so their post-test results were not included in this analysis. The group participating in the activities attended ten classes, which were designed to provide them with an understanding of the importance of learning English and to encourage them to speak in English with their classmates, introduce themselves to them, and ask them questions about personal information.

5. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Pre-test results show that students who did not answer the questions or got them wrong did not have any knowledge of the English language. The pre-test showed that students struggled the most with writing and speaking, because to answer most of the questions, they would need the writing ability, for example.

To give the reader an idea, the first question of the pre-test served to evaluate students' ability to read and write in English. In this particular question, we sought to identify the students' knowledge regarding the identification of a character's personal data in a text. A short introduction of this character was presented, with information about his full name, age and place of origin. The totality of the students correctly answered item "a" of the question, and for items "b" and "c", there were 17 correct answers. In activity "b", three students got

29. HARMER, Jeremy. *The practice of English language teaching*. 3. ed. Essex: Longman, 2001

it wrong and four left it blank. In this question, reading and writing strategies were used to answer Monica' surname.

Another example of a question to be considered was the one that aimed to check if the students were able to use interpersonal communication by asking and answering three questions in English. These questions were of the Yes/No type, seeking to evaluate only the student's listening and communicative ability. Of the 24 students who tackled the question, only 16 managed to ask and answer correctly, while the others left it blank.

At the end of the pre-test analysis, we highlight Harmer's speech²⁹, where he highlights some of the reasons why students need to be encouraged to speak English in class. According to the author, the practice of speaking gives students the opportunity to communicate and practice speaking for real and social life. It is thus important for teachers to arouse students' awareness of the importance of oral practice, so that they learn to pronounce and develop speech.

Various activities were carried out during the Tale Time sessions, stimulating the diverse nature of the four skills to be explored. For example, one of the activities developed at the beginning of the Tale Time sessions had been in the second class of the schedule. After explaining about different textual genres, of which the fairy tale was discussed, the first contact with the tale to be worked was introduced to the students. Soon after the exercises that focused on the practice of reading and listening in English, an activity was developed involving the main characters of the story in the form of crosswords. The purpose of this strategy was to enrich the learner's vocabulary and to practice writing and listening in a playful way.

On the other hand, to implement the strategies directed to reading during the Tale Time, a jigsaw had been used, where each student had received a piece of paper, the size of a business card, with texts about the story, numbered from one to nine. The papers were mixed and each student picked out one. After the papers were distributed, students were asked to keep quiet as the text would be read in Portuguese and then in English. Then, the audio of the story, applied in the previous class, was played again so that they could listen and try to solve the story's puzzle. The students listened to the text as the teacher read and paused to ask what was the number of the text matching that paragraph. So whoever was with the number put it in order. The student could leave his group and join another group to solve the puzzle. The group that managed to finish first went to help another group. So, students were engaged with the strategy and stated that they could understand many words.

To develop communicative abilities of the English language, once the necessary linguistic input had been provided during the lessons, students had been asked to dramatize the story. So 11 students were chosen to participate, while the others formed an audience. As soon as the transcribed story of

Snow white and the seven dwarfs was delivered, each of the participants had to read and interpret according to the characters' tone of voice. The audio of the tale was played again to remind them how each character spoke. This activity showed how storytelling affects students' imaginations, activates class participation, improves communication skills, and broadens vocabulary and improves pronunciation of words. Thus, it was possible to develop the four skills.

The practice of conversation and writing skills were both stimulated in the following classes through various storytelling-related activities. In addition, the understanding and listening of English were also addressed, as part of the research proposal. The aforementioned data showed that in the post-test, research participants improved in correct answers, but some questions remained unanswered. However, there were no wrong answers to any of the questions, which indicates that the use of different didactic strategies involving the four skills can contribute to a better learning.

Students' progress was perceived. In the post-test, they excelled, getting more questions right. It was explained to the students that they would take the test to check if there was an advance in their knowledge of English after attending the classes. It had been necessary to clarify to them that they would receive the same test, plus four questions related to storytelling. Regarding the first question, all the students were able to answer it correctly. The same question that assessed students' prior knowledge about oral and speech skills was also asked. The post-test showed that 22 students were successful in the answers, while only two left it blank.

It was found that using different strategies such as storytelling can be a productive way of teaching and learning English. The verification of student performance occurred during all class activities, not only in the pre or post-test, which included activities involving the above-mentioned four skills. The annotations allowed to record participation, interaction and performance in listening, speaking, writing and reading. Besides improving their four skills, students also expanded their vocabulary and mastery. This is a result of the characteristics of test questions, since they covered the four skills.

As for the abilities developed by the participants during the research, the observations indicated that listening was the skill most used by the students, that is, they showed more ease in listening, followed by reading. Although to a smaller extent, students also displayed ability in speaking. Finally, the less developed skill was writing. Both in the pre-test and post-test, the development of speaking and writing in English were the skills in which they struggled the most. We also emphasize that it is necessary to always work on the four skills, as they depend and complement one another. They maintain a constant and gradual interlocution for the construction and development of a language, whether it a mother tongue or not. The use of the four skills contributes to improve the teaching and learning process.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Learning a new language in a school setting presents challenges for both students and teachers. For the student, the difficulty may lie in the total lack of knowledge of the language to be learned, or for such reasons as shyness, speaking or listening difficulties, classmate integration, and cognitive conditions. For teachers, the teaching of a language requires training, willingness and flexibility, since classes tend to be heterogeneous, composed of students who have their particularities and specific learning needs.

In addition to the expected student diversity, the observed school presented a certain fragility, since, the English teacher of the group participating in this research was changed twice in the same term, and the second teacher had no training as such.

The diversification of strategies also requires creativity and willingness of the teacher to prepare classes. As already described here, there are several activities that complement each other from a common subject – in this case, the *Snow white and the seven dwarfs* tale. Therefore, it was necessary to prepare materials for various activities, which prioritized students' playfulness and ease of understanding.

The preparation by the teacher comes from the choice of the story, whose plot must provide the teacher with the contents to be worked in class. The story chosen for the study has a series of publications and can be found in printed (book) and recorded (video) form, besides having a specific soundtrack and representation of the characters in sculptures and toys. This range of versions makes it possible to increase the number of activities and achieve a good content exploitation. From this tale, it is possible to teach colors, adjectives, fruits, mathematical associations and vocabulary expansion.

The teacher therefore needs to be prepared to extract the maximum content from the story and also to plan activities that will meet the need to develop the ability to listen, speak, read and write a new language.

It should be noted that for most of the study participants, the first contact with the English language occurred in this school year, when inclusion of English as a compulsory subject is expected. This situation was reflected in some students' learning difficulties. At this point, there is a critique of the obligatory contents that provide for the teaching of grammar, a stage that should occur after a certain apprehension of the language with respect to listening and speaking (pronunciation and vocabulary). However, even considering that the programmatic content is not the most adequate for language acquisition, didactic strategies, when worked in their diversity so as to encompass the four skills, facilitate teaching and learning.

In this way, students' main difficulties were pronunciation, as expected for beginners, and writing, which is usually the skill that takes longer to develop. In addition, class attendance is also an important factor in language development: low-achievers were the ones who missed class the most. Another opportunity

that opens with the use of didactic strategies for teaching and learning English is the possibility of working with interdisciplinary themes. During the lessons, it was possible to work on topics such as geography and mathematics, in a simple and playful way.

As already explained, storytelling can be well explored in English teaching because it allows to diversify activities that involve the context of the story, that is, it allows the development of different strategies. It was noticed that the communicative approach and the use of didactic strategies were effective. In addition to seeking improvement in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in English, such strategies also helped to create a healthy classroom environment in terms of student-teacher interaction. Some obstacles concerning social interaction were identified, such as fear of exposing oneself and being laughable. Such situations, however, were circumvented, and the number of occurrences decreased along the classes due to the interaction provided by the use of different didactic strategies.

The use of didactic strategies for teaching and learning English in the school environment is a way of encouraging and stimulating the student as regards not only the apprehension of a new language, but also the quality of social relations, expansion of the understanding about the world, and overcoming individual difficulties, such as shyness. In this direction, the aim of this research – to investigate whether different didactic strategies based on the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) can contribute to improve the process of teaching and learning English in the 6th year of Elementary School – was met. And, by extension, the research problem was answered too. In addition, this work indicates new investigative possibilities involving different didactic strategies for other curricular components. It is also noted the need for a teacher training capable of including a set of differentiated didactic strategies that can contribute to a better learning in the classroom setting.

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