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Major paper

***TITLE: THE EXPANSION OF VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN 9TH
GRADE STUDENTS FROM "ANTONIO GUITERAS HOLMES" SECONDARY
SCHOOL***

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ABSTRACT

After a long process of research, it was corroborated that one of the main language components which affects ninth graders the most is vocabulary. Thus, the main goal of this paper is to build up a system of communicative activities to expand vocabulary in English language in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School. To achieve the objective of this study, it was necessary to use several methods of research. Some empirical methods such as participant observation, pedagogical test, interview to students, analysis of students’ outcomes, teacher’s diary, discussion group and triangulation were used to gather the necessary data about the current situation of the subject of research, as well as for the constructing process of the proposal. The proposal is the result of a building up process in which the suggestions given by the discussion group and the experiences recorded in the teacher’s diary were taken into account to obtain the final scientific result. It is a system of communicative activities aimed at attaining the goals of five communicative functions regarding the expansion of vocabulary. It is composed of eleven communicative activities which were designed and/or adapted by the author.

RÉSUMÉE

Après un processus de recherche, Il a été identifié que l'usage du vocabulaire c'est le problème principal qui affecte les apprenants de la neuvième année. L'objectif principal du travail c'est construire un système d'activités communicatifs pour répandre le vocabulaire dans la langue Anglaise aux étudiants à la neuvième année du groupe 4 à l'école des études secondaires "Antonio Guiteras Holmes". Beaucoup de méthodes empiriques ont été employé pour réussir l'objectif de l'ouvrage et obtenir l'information nécessaire pour le processus de construction. La propose final c'est un résultat du processus de construction, les suggestions du groupe de discussion et les expériences accumulé dans le journal du professeur. C'est un système d'activités communicatives adressées à développer le vocabulaire des cinq fonctions communicatives qui ont été adapté et créé pour l'auteur du travail.

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Introduction

The English language which has its origin in Ancient England is nowadays the most widely spoken by many countries of the world and it is used as the official speech language. Besides, it is the language of internet, science, technology, international trade, telecommunications and medicine. That is why almost all countries around the world, have included the teaching of English in all educational levels; that is, from the elementary level to the upper ones.

The educational process that is taking place nowadays in Cuba aims at improving the teaching learning process of English language from 3rd grade to university level due to its vital importance in the development of the Cuban economy, formation of prepared professionals and furthers relations with other countries. In the English classes the main transformation has taken place in the adoption of the Communicative Approach to Language Teaching.

The **speaking ability** is the main communicative ability to be developed in those levels which is the most difficult one for students, since “it is a two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners) and involves the productive skills of speaking and the receptive skills of understanding.” (Byrne D. 1989:8) Even though, writing is also practiced as an instrumental skill.

Thus, it has been stated by some linguistics such as Harmer, Tracey Terrell and Rosa Antich the significance of vocabulary as one of the main components of speaking ability.

Vocabulary is commonly defined as all the words known and used by a particular person in a language. It includes how words are written and their pronunciation.

In the previous course (2014-2015), the author of the research taught English language to group 6th D at “David Perez Garcia” Primary School. He observed through the administration of several empirical methods such as the interview and the participant observation that students had many difficulties in English language and that one of the main causes of the problem was the use of vocabulary. Students had problems in using, writing and pronouncing the

vocabulary taught in the lessons. This brought about the decision of carrying out a research to find a solution to meet such problem. The term paper had as a main objective to propose a system of communicative activities to expand English language vocabulary in 6th grade. Consequently, a proposal of activities was designed during the regular course 2014-15, and it was partially implemented to help solve the problem that had been detected.

The partial implementation of the proposal contributed to obtain systematic feedback from students and from the self evaluation and reflections of the author of this paper. Thanks to the use of different Empirical methods: observation, pedagogical test, the teacher's diary and interviews a surplus of information was gathered.

This time, the author is making his practicum in group 9th 4 at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School. In secondary level, English is taught from seventh to ninth grade as part of the curriculum. In this level, the teaching of English has as main goal to use the English language through several communicative functions, and contributing with the subject to develop other ones. At the same time the students are able to acquire knowledge, develop communicative abilities in the foreign language and increase their cultural level.

The author has observed through several participant observations that students have many difficulties in speaking, and it was corroborated by means of numerous participant observations and interviews administered to students that the most affected component of speaking was vocabulary.

Consequently, it was detected that students do not master the vocabulary of the different language areas studied in previous lessons. They make many mistakes when pronouncing and writing these words and do not know the context in which a given word can be used. As a result of the difficulties stated before, students hesitate when participating in class and they feel uncomfortable. When the teacher forces them to participate; they are not able to code the message. Some of the possible causes of this could be that teachers did not potentiate practice to fix the

vocabulary studied and the lack of activities in the workbook that encourage the training of the speaking ability and the expansion of vocabulary.

In an attempt to find a solution, revisions of some previous researches about vocabulary teaching were carried out. Major Papers written by Keyla Anagua (2013), Yisel C. Anoceto Morales (2014), Wilfredo Artilles Diaz (2015) and Andrey Ruíz Ramírez (2015) dealt with the topic of vocabulary teaching. They all contributed in one way or another to the expansion and acquisition of English language vocabulary, but none of them dealt with the Teaching Learning Process of English language in 9th grade.

After the previous analysis, the following **scientific problem** has been stated:

How to contribute to expand vocabulary in the English language in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School?

Object of Research

The Teaching-Learning Process of the speaking ability in English language in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School.

Field of Action

The expansion of vocabulary in English language in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School.

Objective

To build up a system of communicative activities to expand vocabulary in English language in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School.

In order to guide the research, the following **scientific questions** are formulated.

1. What theoretical and methodological judgments support the expansion of vocabulary in the Teaching Learning Process of English language?

2. What is the current situation regarding the expansion of English language vocabulary in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School?
3. What transformations could be introduced in the teaching learning process of English language vocabulary in 9th grade?
4. What transformations are seen in the subjects after the building up process of the proposal?
5. What scientific result emerges from the process of transformation done during the research?

To answer the previous scientific questions, the following **scientific tasks** are stated.

1. Determination of the theoretical and methodological judgments that support the expansion of vocabulary in the Teaching Learning Process of English language.
2. Assessment of the current situation regarding the expansion of English language vocabulary in students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School.
3. Determination of the transformations in the teaching learning process of English language vocabulary and in the subjects’ transformations.
4. Evaluation of the achievements that have been accomplished after the building up process of the proposal in group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School.
5. Presentation of the final scientific result emerged from the constructing process of the research.

Subjects of research

The subjects of research are all students from group 9th 4 at “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School with a total of 23 students. This group was taken as subject of research because it is the group in which the author of this research makes his practicum.

Methods

In order to verify the problematic situation declared in the introduction and evaluate the students' weaknesses and strengths regarding the expansion of English language vocabulary, several methods were applied:

Theoretical level:

Historic-Logical: To know the evolution and development of the studied object and the theoretical analysis of the problem according to the criteria of different researches and pedagogic authors about the object of research and the field of action.

Analytic-Synthetic: For the prosecution of all the accumulated theoretical information about the speaking ability and the expansion of vocabulary also to ease the arrival at conclusions about the data obtained through the implementation of different instruments.

Inductive-Deductive: For the analysis of data obtained through the application of the different instruments derived from empiric methods and in order to identify the regularities

Systemic Approach: It was used to establish the relationship between the different actions derived from the system of activities built up in each unit to potentiate the expansion of English language vocabulary and among the exercises suggested in each unit and in each class.

From the empirical level:

1. Analysis of documents
2. Observation
3. Pedagogical test
4. Interview to students
5. Analysis of the students' outcomes
6. Teacher's diary

7. Discussion Group

8. Triangulation

From the mathematical level:

. Percentage analysis

All these methods were applied to obtain the necessary data to verify the problematic situation described in the introduction.

Scientific contribution: A system of communicative activities to expand English language vocabulary in 9th grade students.

1-Theoretical and methodological judgments that support the teaching of English vocabulary

1.1 A brief historical overview about the teaching of English vocabulary.

Teaching English vocabulary has been through history an important area worthy of effort and study. Methodologists and linguistics stress and suggest increasing the teaching of vocabulary because of its significance in language teaching. Harmer stated that “If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh” (Harmer, 2010: 51)

The following methods have being applied all over the world in foreign language teaching. All of them have treated the teaching of vocabulary for the development of the speaking ability differently.

The Grammar Translation Method

The principal characteristics of the Grammar-Translation Method were this:

- The goal of the foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign-language study. Grammar translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and to the target language. It hence views language learning as constant and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. “The first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language”(Stern;1983:455)
- Vocabulary selection is based only on the reading texts used, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization. In typical Grammar-Translation text, the grammar rules are presented and illustrated, a list of vocabulary items are presented with their translation equivalents, and translation exercises are prescribed. (Howatt;1984:131)

Undoubtedly, the Grammar Translation Method improved the teaching of grammar, but vocabulary teaching did not receive the necessary attention. The new vocabulary to be presented was that which appeared in the reading texts used. The key strategies to learn it were poor and they based on memorization, dictionary study and bilingual word lists.

Cognitive Approach (1940s-1950s)

This approach introduced the four principle language skills for the first time: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Oral communicative competence became the focus. Pronunciation is one of the components of speaking and though it may not have the necessary practice, it should have been given some emphasis.

In this approach, language learning is viewed as a rule-acquisition, not habit-formation. Vocabulary is important, especially at intermediate and advanced levels. In this method, a distinction is made between several classes of vocabulary items. As cited in Richards and Rodgers (1986), the first class consists of common expressions in the daily life, the second class consists of words used in communicating more specialized ideas such as politics and the last class consists of more functional words of language.

The Direct Method

The Direct Method, also called the Natural Approach, developed towards the end of the 19th century. The general goal of the Direct Method is to provide learners with a practically useful knowledge of language. They should learn to speak and understand the target language in everyday situations.

In practice it stood for the following principles and procedures:

- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught.
- Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas. General vocabulary and structure of the language were inculcated to a large extent by the teacher and answered by students. (M.Sc. Sirelda Garcia Cabrera et al. 2010)

This method gave more attention to the teaching of vocabulary since it was taught through demonstration, objects, pictures and association of ideas which made more communicative its teaching, but it was only the everyday vocabulary which was considered necessary to be learned.

The Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching (1930s-1960s)

The origins of this approach began with the work of British applied linguists in the 1920s and 1930s. Beginning at this time, a number of outstanding applied linguists developed the basis for a principled approach to methodology in language teaching. Two of the leaders in this movement were Harold Palmer and A. S. Hornby. What they attempted was to develop a more scientific foundation for an oral approach to teaching English that was evidenced in the Direct Method

The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual method had its origins during World War II when it became known as the Army method

The direct method highlighted the teaching of vocabulary while the Audio-Lingual approach focus on grammar drills

Here are some of the objectives:

- *Knowledge of sufficient vocabulary to use with grammar patterns.*
- *The meanings that the words of a language have can be learned only in a linguistic and cultural context and not in isolation.* (Taken from English Curriculum K – 12).

The Natural/Communicative Approach (1960s-2000s)

The Natural Approach was developed by Tracy Terrell and Stephen Krashen, starting in 1977. It came to have a wide influence in language teaching in the United States and around the world.

The importance of the vocabulary is stressed, for example, suggesting the view that a language is essentially its lexicon and only inconsequently the grammar that determines how the lexicon is exploited to produce messages. Terrel quotes Dwight Bolinger to support this view:

“The quantity of information in the lexicon far outweighs that in any other part of the language, and if there is anything to the notion of redundancy it should be easier to reconstruct a message containing just words than one containing just the syntactic relations. The significant fact is the subordinate role of grammar. The most important thing is to get the words in”. (Bolinger, in Terrel 1997:333)

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) claims for the need to focus in language teaching on communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastery of structures. It takes into account two types of meanings: notional categories (concepts such as time, sequence, quantity, location, frequency) and categories of communicative function (request, denials, offers, complaints).

CLT makes communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develops procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. It gives priority to the development of the different components of the language together with the communicative abilities. So the teaching of vocabulary has its priority. (Taken from English Curriculum K – 12).

Vocabulary teaching and learning is a constant challenge for teachers as well as students. Due to this, it is very important to increase the development of vocabulary for English language learners.

In Cuba, the teaching learning process of English language is based on the principles

of the communicative approach and the teaching of vocabulary has certain privileges.

As it can be understood, the methods mentioned above considered the teaching of vocabulary differently. In each of them, the vocabulary was given certain priority or not.

During the author's practicum at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School, some interviews to students and teachers were carried out, especially to the English teacher of the school. It was demonstrated that the teaching learning process of English language did not receive the necessary attention in previous courses. The English lessons were set in a lower rank of priorities compared to other subjects. This is due to the fact that students did not receive this subject in previous courses as it was expected.

One of the consequences of the situation described above is regarding the teaching of English vocabulary. It became evident that English teachers did not potentiate the teaching of English vocabulary and just taught what appeared in the workbook. The teaching of vocabulary was characterized by non-contextualized and non-communicative activities. The most common technique used to introduce the new vocabulary was using the dictionary and bilingual word lists. Frequently, teachers also dictated words directly without using any procedure to explain the meaning relationship.

It was also obvious that pronunciation and spelling were other components of speaking which were very affected. Pronunciation was taught through mechanical repetition of segments in a dialogue and memorization. The teacher did not potentiate the practice of particular sounds (sh, ch, th...). Consequently, the spelling of words was taught by reproducing and memorizing mechanically the new items due to the fact that the ninth grade syllabus does not demand students to have a correct spelling, permitting them to write words as they are pronounced.

1.2. The teaching learning process of the speaking ability.

According to Gurrey the **oral expression** is the ability to use the language

flowingly with interactive communicative purposes; understanding during the conversation; the use of the communication strategy; domain of the system of the language expressed in the productive capacity of the students. (Gurrey, P: 1960)

Donn Byrne defined that “the **oral expression** is a two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners) and involves the *productive* skills of speaking and the receptive skills of understanding.” (Byrne D, 1989:8)

The author of this work affiliates himself to Byrne’s concept of oral expression because it is the one that complements the most his research. On the one hand speaking is a productive skill which demands the speaker vocabulary domain, while on the other hand listening is a receptive one which requires vocabulary management in the process of decoding. The speaker and listener have a positive role to perform in a conversation. The speaker has to *encode* the message he/she wishes to convey in appropriate language, while the listener has to *decode* or interpret the message.

The spoken language may be used for two main purposes:

- a) For **interaction** or **social purposes**: which means that the emphasis is on creating harmonious interactions and not for communicating any information.
- b) For **transactional** purposes: The emphasis is on communicating information, i.e. it is ‘message’ oriented. Coherence and accuracy are important to present the information. (Donn Byrne, Teaching Oral English.1989.)

“The **goal of teaching speaking** is oral fluency; that is, the ability to express oneself intelligibly: reasonably accurately and without too much hesitation. To attain this goal teachers have to bring the students from the **presentation stage** (where the students understand, get familiar with or recognize the new content in a meaningful context) to the **practice stage** (where the students may be given ample

opportunities to manipulate, practice or reproduce the content presented) and then to the **production stage** (where the students can use the language freely to express their own ideas. The transition from one of these stages to another should be smooth". (Garcia S, 2010:73-74)

Developing speaking requires knowledge of the language system skills in the mastery of language (linguistic skills) and skills in its functioning as speech (communicative skills). Thus, in learning a language as communication, the learner must assimilate its components -pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar- and use them in speech, and in order to do this the learners should:

- Talk a lot in class and outside of it
- Get the chance to speak in all lessons
- Be interested in the topic
- Understand and express ideas with acceptable language accuracy
- Work in cooperative activities: group and pair work

Teachers should also teach some indispensable contents to the learning of the language such as:

- Communicative functions in meaningful contexts
- Pronunciation
- Grammar
- Fluency
- Vocabulary

(García S, 2010)

Different authors have written about the communicative language teaching principles that any teacher should follow to teach any of the communicative abilities. Some of these authors are Keith Morrow, Neil Naiman, and Alfredo Camacho. Since Naiman's principles are easier to understand and can be very

well applied in the teaching of English vocabulary to secondary school students, those are the ones that will be used for the purpose of this paper.

1. Meaningful practice beyond the sentence level

This principle instructs us that language operates at levels higher than isolated words or sentences, that language acquires meaning in context; that practice in the classroom should provide for the students to experiment with whatever bits of language they know in order to convey real communicative purposes (orally or in writing); and to process stretches of language as they occur in real life (listening and reading). This principle also has implications in terms of students' motivation since it implies asking them to communicate and to process real meanings of language.

2. Student-centered class

This principle claims that if students are expected to develop skills they should be given lots of opportunities to participate in pairs, in groups, and for the whole class. In other words, this principle implies that teachers should be "leaving the stage for the students to act."

3. Task orientation of classroom activities

This principle is related to problem-solving teaching. It states that students should learn by solving close-to-real life tasks and problems. In real life one does not watch the news for the sake of doing it, but rather to follow up on a current issue.

4. Development of strategies for learning beyond the classroom

This principle acknowledges the need for students to develop skills and modes of learning on their own. In other words, they should not only acquire knowledge and habits but also develop abilities, since it is impossible to teach people everything that they need to know; rather, people should be helped to be able to learn on their own.

5. Peer correction and group work

It considers that, to help the students to develop accuracy, teachers should use feedback correction techniques. By using these techniques, students develop self-correction and self-monitoring skills. If they are able to correct their own mistakes they will certainly have the ability to correct their partners' mistakes while working in groups or pairs, and even in situations beyond the classroom. (Neil Naiman, 1989)

As it has been said, the speaking ability plays an important role in the teaching of English being one of the two productive skills of the language. It is very important to consider the use of steps in its teaching (beginning from presentation lessons, later controlled practice and finally free practice lessons; together with some principles to be followed during this process). This way of developing not only this ability, but also its components: pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

1.3. The teaching of Vocabulary

Paraphrasing Dr Rosa Antich's concept of vocabulary (1986), it can be understood as the easiest aspect to be acquired by students when learning a foreign language, but it demands too much practice to be kept since it is the easiest to forget. The teaching of vocabulary at the secondary level must follow some basic principles. In this level, the number of words should be kept low in order to guarantee that students acquire the sound system and grammar of the new words. Vocabulary always must be taught in context as a way of facilitating its assimilation. The teaching of vocabulary may be more or less easy depending on, the context in which they are presented, form and times the teacher uses the previous and new vocabulary in lessons and their reiteration and practice during the course. When acquiring new vocabulary items enter: listening how words are pronounced, speaking (when repeating and using the words), sight or reading (**when** seeing the written words) and the kinesthetic sensation (when writing the new words).

Vocabulary is commonly defined as "all the words known and used by a particular person". *Knowing* a word, however, is not as simple as simply being able to recognize or use it. There are several aspects of word knowledge which are used to measure word knowledge. (VocabularySize.com)

According to the Oxford Free Dictionary, vocabulary is:

- All the words of a language.
- The sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group.
- A list of words and often phrases, usually arranged alphabetically and defined or translated; a lexicon or glossary.
- A supply of expressive means; a repertoire of communication: a dancer's vocabulary of movement.

The author of this paper argues that the concept that is more complete and concord the most with its research is Dr. Rosa Antich's concept since the teaching of vocabulary should be regulated depending on the students learning skills and speaking abilities. Vocabulary should be taught based on practicing all the language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing; since students must know how words are used in a particular language and in different contexts, as well as their pronunciation and spelling.

In one's individual vocabulary, there is a difference between:

- words that one *understands and uses* (one's **active vocabulary**)
- words that one *understands* but does not or cannot use (one's **passive vocabulary**)

This is true for native speakers as well as for learners. In one's own language, there are many words that one uses regularly when speaking or writing. These words are part of the active vocabulary. And then there are many words that one

understands when they are heard on television for example, but which are not used in everyday speech. These words are part of a person's passive vocabulary.

(<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Mehta-Vocabulary.html>)

The activation of both, active and passive vocabulary is crucial in the teaching of English vocabulary for non-native ninth grade students since they learn the new vocabulary and should continue using and practicing it to widen their communicative competence.

When discussing the teaching of vocabulary, it is crucial to consider a variety of elements that overlap when managing meaning.

When teaching, it is useful to think about the form, the meaning and use of any vocabulary item. In the book *Teaching Practice*, Gower considers the following elements for each of the aspects.

The form

- What part of speech is the word?
- How is it spelled- is it regular or irregular?
- Does it belong to a "family" of words?
- How is the word or combination of words, pronounced?
- How does the word collocate with surrounding words?

Meaning

- What exact meaning(s), in which context do you want to focus on?
- What is the connotation for the item?
- Could the vocabulary item have different meanings for different people?

Use

- How is the vocabulary item used?
- Does it have a restrictive use?
- Does it belong to a particular style or register?

(*Teaching Practice* Gower, 1983)

It is vital to help students know what words mean, what their form is and how they are pronounced, so students are able to use those words effectively.

Throughout history, several techniques or key strategies have been designed in order to unfold the information and facilitate the teaching of new words in English language lessons. Some of the more practical and used techniques are the ones compiled by Sirelda García in her work *Fundamentals for FL Teaching*:

- Concise definition of the item (as in dictionary)
- Detailed description of the item
- Using examples of a general concept (animal: a dog, a cat)
- Illustration using visuals
- Context (putting the item in a sentence)
- Synonyms / antonyms /opposites
- Word – formation
- Associated ideas / collocation (do the homework / make coffee)
- Translation

(García Cabrera, pp. 75)

Ninth grade is the highest level in secondary school, that is why the teacher may use as many techniques as possible to teach vocabulary, especially the ones that involve pictures, videos and miming, also techniques such as realia, synonyms, antonyms/opposites and part of words. Reading and writing the word may be efficient methods for the ninth graders to expand their vocabulary.

2 Needs Assessment

As a way of corroborating the problematic situation described in the introduction of this study, several empirical methods were administered to the subjects of research following some categories and sub-categories which were suggested by the discussion group in order to obtain as much information as possible about the students' weaknesses and strengths regarding their knowledge and abilities on the use of English vocabulary.

Characterization of the subjects of research

The subjects of research are composed of 23 students from group 9th 4 at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School. They show interest in common issues that can be related to adolescent's behavior, such as music, sports, friendship. This fact is good since the use of pair and group work is very helpful in the learning of the English language. The students' motivation towards the subject is sometimes affected by the characteristics of the adolescence.

From the academic point of view, students show difficulties in the use of the English language and the lack of vocabulary.

The selected categories revealed the ways to operate with vocabulary during the research and covered the elements that were prominent for the objective of this paper.

Categories:

I. Students' knowledge about the different vocabulary areas studied:

1. Adjectives describing places
2. Vocabulary for giving directions
3. Leisure activities

4. People's description

II. Spelling of the vocabulary studied:

1. Combination of letters that do not exist in the students' mother tongue (Spanish)
2. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
3. Double consonants
4. Final letters

III. Pronunciation of the vocabulary studied:

1. Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in Spanish
2. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
3. Pronunciation of vowels
4. Pronunciation of final sounds

IV. Students' motivation toward the English language subject:

1. Students' involvement during the lessons

The following scale shows the categories to evaluate the students' performance regarding vocabulary acquisition.

Qualitative measuring rubrics:

1° High level: the students can make mistakes, but those mistakes can not affect the communication; they should speak fluently and have the knowledge of the vocabulary that has been taught.

2° Medium level: the students can make mistakes and use limited vocabulary, but those mistakes and lack of vocabulary should not affect too much the communication.

3° Low level: the students speak with too much hesitation, limited vocabulary and making pronunciation mistakes mixing their mother tongue with English. The communication in this case does not come across.

Methods used for the needs assessment

In correspondence to the empirical methods chosen, the following instruments were applied:

Analysis of documents:

In this case, the analysis of documents was used to obtain information about what was officially established in the official documents of the subject: the syllabus and the workbook in relation to the teaching of vocabulary as a way to express the desired goal in the teaching of vocabulary before stating the real situation detected through the administration of some empirical methods. (See annex 1)

Participant observation: It was used to corroborate the use and pronunciation of the vocabulary studied, the most common students' mistakes during a speaking lesson and the student's motivation toward the English lessons. (Annex 2)

Pedagogical test: This method was administered with the objective of measuring the level of the students in speaking ability, their strengths and weaknesses related to the use of the vocabulary studied in the different units, the spelling and the pronunciation of words. (Annex 3)

Interview to the students:

This interview was applied to the students to get information about reasons for their common and systematic mistakes in using the different areas of vocabulary studied and the pronunciation of these words. Besides, it was used to know about students' motivation towards the English subject... (Annex 4)

Analysis of the students' outcomes

This method was aimed at assessing the students' commonest mistakes in the spelling of the vocabulary studied mainly. (Annex 5)

Teacher's diary:

Through the use of this tool, the author recorded what happened in his classes and his thoughts about them. It included reflections about the results of the other empirical methods.

Discussion Group:

The Discussion Group is constituted by six students and a teacher. The group was conformed with the purpose of debating the different problems aroused from the process of research, and consequently giving suggestions about such difficulties. In the needs assessment, it was suggested by the discussion group the categories and sub-categories to take into account to diagnose the subjects.

Triangulation:

This method is aimed at identifying the regularities about the problem detected using the data obtained through the administration of different empirical methods and then to build up a proposal which could meet the students' needs.

2.1 Analysis of the results of the diagnosis.

Analysis of documents

Syllabus for the English teaching of 9th grade

The syllabus of the subject includes educative and instructive objectives. Its goal is to make students practice and use the English language by means of several communicative functions which appear in every unit. The program is organized taking into account the communicative functions of every unit, the grammar points of the grade, the pronunciation and the different vocabulary areas to be taught in the grade. The objectives of this grade include the practice and use of the contents learned in previous courses and some new ones. The syllabus is focused on developing the speaking skill, mainly.

The students' workbook:

The student's work book is well designed. It has some illustrations to practice the vocabulary in every unit. The contents of the work book are in correspondence with the students' ages and interests and they are organized in relation to the communicative functions. The exercises are varied; however, most of them are not communicative. Most of the activities are designed for developing grammar and writing; the rest are aimed at practicing speaking skill and expanding vocabulary.

Category I: Students' knowledge about the different vocabulary areas studied:

-The participant observations revealed that eight students lacked vocabulary related to the specific communicative functions practiced at this level. Due to the lack of vocabulary they cannot communicate ideas; instead they mix English and Spanish. These students hesitate very much at the time of speaking and frequently they look up for support on their notebooks. For the 69% of the group (16 students), the vocabulary areas of more difficulties are: leisure activities, vocabulary for giving directions (preposition of place) and people's description.

-The pedagogical test proved that they showed lack of vocabulary that affects communication according to the objective of this grade. It was detected that out of 23 students (100%), seven (30.4%) are high level students, nine (39.2%) are medium level students and seven (30.4%) are low level students. In this method, students presented difficulties in all areas of vocabulary, but they had more problems when using prepositions of place to give a direction and the vocabulary related to people's description.

-In the interview that was administered to the subjects, the total expressed that the vocabulary areas which have affected them the most have been the ones related to giving directions, leisure activities and people's description (mainly when describing someone physically).

Category II: Spelling of the vocabulary studied:

- The analysis of the students' outcomes revealed that the students have problems with the spelling in combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue (th, tt, eau, oo...) and they always try to write the words as they are pronounced presenting problems with phoneme-grapheme correspondence of the vocabulary.

So, 4(17.4%) students could be placed in the high level, 9(39.2%) students in the medium level and 10(43.4%) students in the low one.

-The participant observation revealed that students present problems in the combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish and when writing the final letters of words e.g. thinu, acrossu fromu, hard workingu. Then, five students can be placed in the high level, nine in the medium and the rest showed a low level in the spelling of the vocabulary studied.

- The pedagogical test contributed to gather information about this indicator. In spelling, students have problems in the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of words; the words are basically written as they are pronounced. The students present problems in the combination of letters and the double consonants which do not exist in Spanish. 8(34.7%) students show difficulties in this category being placed at low level, 10(43.4%) are placed at medium level while the resting 5(21.7%) are high level's students.

Category III: Pronunciation of the vocabulary studied:

- The participant observation showed that ten students (43.4%) pronounce the words as they are written using the mother tongue pronunciation pattern. Besides that, they present problems with final sounds (/s/, /m/, /k/, -ed -t/, /d/, /id/), combination of letters (th, all, ee, oo, eau...) and pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in Spanish; E.g. (you /ju/, thin /θ/).

- In the pedagogical test there were five students (22%) assessed as high level , eight (33%) medium and ten (45%) as low. The most common students' mistakes

in the oral performance were in the pronunciation of the final sounds /k/ in the word **like**, /id/ in **located**; in the phoneme grapheme correspondence of English vowels that do not exist in Spanish such as **pretty**, **like**, **I**, **you** (students pronounced words using the mother tongue pronunciation patterns), and in sounds derived from combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish, for example: /hw/ in **what**, **where**; /u/ in **good**; /ju/ in **beautiful**; /θ/ in **mother**.

- Interview to students: The whole class confirmed that the combinations of letters in some English words are different from that of Spanish (th, oo, all) and as they do not have enough practice they are not able to pronounce the words correctly. This fact makes them feel disappointed when participating and sometimes it seems that they are not motivated to learn.

Category IV: Student`s motivation toward the English language subject:

- The participant observation revealed that students' motivation toward the subject sometimes affects the TLP of English language. There are good interpersonal relationships in the class which are seen through the performance of pair and group work activities. Students like pair and group work activities though sometimes they feel uncomfortable when the activities are supposed to be performed orally.

- In the Interview, students expressed that learning a foreign language is important nowadays, but 70% of them think the subject is boring and see its learning as an obligation more than a joy. The whole class believes that pair and group work activities are motivating and help them learn more since they can interact and support each other.

2.2 Regularities

Through the administration of several instruments it was possible to obtain a great number of information for the research, **the following regularities** were identified:

Weaknesses:

- The students have difficulties in using the vocabulary areas: vocabulary for giving directions, leisure activities and people's description.
- The students cannot express ideas fluently according to the level of ability because of the lack of vocabulary.
- The most common mistakes in pronunciation are those sounds derived from combination of letters (Th, tt, eau, oo...), in the phoneme grapheme correspondence of English vowels that do not exist in Spanish (/ju/, /ai/...), and in the pronunciation of final sounds (/k/, /id/...).
- Students have problems in spelling, mainly in combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue (th, tt, eau, oo...), they also have problems in the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of words since they write as they hear.
- The students' motivation to learn English language is weak.

Strength:

- There are good interpersonal relations among the students in the classroom since students enjoy pair and group work activities.

The regularities detected confirm the problematic situation stated in the introduction of this major paper. This state of affairs let the author to build up a system of communicative activities to transform the reality of the class regarding the expansion of vocabulary.

3- Process of building up the proposal of a system of communicative activities for the expansion of English language vocabulary in ninth graders:

At the beginnings of this regular course (2015-2016), it was detected that students from group 9th 4 at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School presented problems in the vocabulary acquisition in English language. Consequently, it was analyzed in the group discussion the goals and different communicative functions

of the grade, and it was suggested to carry out a research aimed at improving the expansion of vocabulary.

Thus, it was designed an initial proposal of activities aimed at expanding and practicing English language vocabulary in group 9th 4. In the system of activities the communicative functions of units two, four, seven and eight were intended to be included. Primarily, it was composed of nine communicative activities; five for controlled practice and the rest were free practice ones. Almost all the activities were organized in pair and groups, but one which required students' individual work.

The discussion group analyzed the initial proposal of activities and recommended that this one must be flexible to any adaptation and should attain the needs of the subjects of research. Furthermore, the system approach to build up the activities should be taken into account, as well as the importance of the design of task orientations of classroom activities. These task orientations should be contextualized, and they should provide students with enough information to understand what they are supposed to do in the activities. It was also suggested that the activities could be taken from authentic sources and these should be adapted to the needs of the group. Besides, it was analyzed that activities could also be created by the author, but these ones should be revised by a specialist.

The author was also advised to pay attention to students' reactions when implementing the activities. Some activities could or not be useful or comprehensible for all students. Moreover, students could have problems when using the vocabulary studied and doing the activities, because they may have also weaknesses in other language components such as grammar, pronunciation..., so it is necessary to be attentive with these aspects and to include in the activities tasks that would attain students' needs whether related to vocabulary or not.

Following these suggestions, the author made an analysis of the results of every activity once implemented by means of several participant observations and unstructured interviews (annexes 7 and 9) that were administered to students.

Notes were taken down about what went well or wrong in the activities, students' reactions, and causes of why the activities did or not work and what needed to be improved or added to the activities to make a further proposal.

Activity one belonged to unit number two "Travel time" and the communicative function "describing places". This activity was implemented in a controlled practice lesson for a time of 15 minutes and students were supposed to complete a gap dialogue by using the vocabulary from a list. At the end they had to practice and perform it.

Students enjoyed doing the activity in pairs. Students showed motivation when they had to play the roles in the gap dialogue and they performed the activity very well. Students expressed they feel comfortable when supporting each other in pairs and getting support through a chart of vocabulary.

Though students did not know the meaning of some words from the chart, the techniques used were efficient and helpful. The activity follows the communicative language teaching principles (CLT principles) and some pedagogical foundations. The activity was contextualized and the work was organized in pairs.

However, students found the dialogue too easy. Besides, the activity was finished before the time expected and students began to get bored. Students began to misbehave, talking aloud and bothering their other partners. The main cause of this phenomenon was that the author did not make a good use of the students' diagnosis.

The level of difficulty in the activity was low for the majority of the students. The dialogue needs to be more complex, one or two more speech acts should be added which will also favor the practice of pronunciation. Furthermore, the students' regularities detected in the needs assessment must be taken into account when designing any activity.

In activity two, things worked differently. It contains the communicative functions of unit two: “describing places” and “asking for and giving directions”. Students were supposed to do almost the same thing they had done in activity one. This time they did not have a vocabulary list, but a map was used as teaching.

The activity was a success. The time devoted to this one was enough and its level of complexity was attainable according to the subjects’ level. The activity was understood by the students and the task orientation was well designed. Students felt motivated to know more about Santa Clara, its streets, places... Students expressed that they felt as if they were in Santa Clara when doing the activity. This was observed when students were eager to perform the activity.

The activity is very close to a real life situation since there is a representation of Santa Clara downtown and placed students in a real context. The activity is organized in pairs and students are the protagonists since they have to complete and practice the pronunciation of a dialogue; and act it out consequently.

Still, it is necessary to increase the practice of the new vocabulary from previous activities, as well as to prioritize the practice of pronunciation and fluency.

Activity three was a role play which summed up the communicative functions of unit two. This free practice activity was implemented in 15 minutes.

Students liked the activity so much since they were supposed to describe places of their town. They used the vocabulary studied to do the activity very well. Besides that, the students had an acceptable pronunciation while doing the activity. The atmosphere in the classroom was good when doing the activity. The students’ performances were full of creativity.

This free practice activity was placed in a real context in which students felt very comfortable and motivated. The orientations were very clear to students and they could support each other in pairs.

Though students performed well, they had some problems in grammar, specifically with WH questions when formulating them. A 40% of students did not know how to ask questions or use the WH questions previously studied. That's why most of them spoke that part in Spanish, or mixed both languages.

The main cause of this problem was that there was not enough practice at using WH questions from previous activities. Only practicing vocabulary did not let students to manipulate and consequently use some aspects in grammar.

Thus, it was suggested in the group discussion to add to previous activities grammatical items which can contribute to practice the formulation and use of WH questions.

After the implementation of activity four, the author also analyzed it. Activity four is designed for controlled practice stage and it belongs to unit four. It is also aimed at attaining the goals of the communicative function "talking about likes, dislikes and preferences"

Students expressed they liked the activity because it contains a good amount of interesting and new vocabulary very close to what they like to do every day such as horseback riding, reading books, rising pigeons..., and they were very creative because they also used vocabulary which did not appear in the list. The activity offers support to the students since it uses an illustration which exemplifies the activity and provides an overview about the needed questions for the communicative function. Furthermore, the subjects were motivated when they were asked about drugs and addictions. They showed having knowledge about the topic, so they liked to share their opinions.

The activity went well due to certain reasons; the most important of all was that the activity was designed following the CLT principles. First of all, the work was organized in pairs. Second, the task was clear and students knew what they were supposed to do. The vocabulary used was very near to real life and the activity dealt with a topic which was of interest for students. The activity not only treated

the expansion of vocabulary, but also it dealt with certain topics of grammar which are very useful to attain the communicative function of the unit and consequently a free practice stage.

Activity five was a free practice one in which students were supposed to reflect, discuss and compare the likes and dislikes of people from other countries with that of the Cuban's.

This activity was a complete success. Students were very excited because they had never done an activity like that. This time they could share ideas, learn about other countries customs and compare their likes and dislikes.

Students talked about different countries, but specifically about Arabian people who have customs which are really different to Cubans. The whole activity was carried out with respect and order.

The activity is different to what students do every day at school. It is not pair or individual work, but the work of the whole group. Though students are the protagonists, the teacher could also share ideas and talk about his own experience.

Activity six and seven belong to unit seven. They deal with the communicative function "describing people physical and morally". In activity six, students were supposed to work in teams to find words from an adjective crossword and consequently to describe a classmate using the adjectives.

Students liked the activity so much. They enjoyed the work in teams and were very excited while doing the activity. Almost all the words from the crossword were found and the others were explained by the teacher. It was easy to identify in students that they like competitions. Expressions like "apurate" and "sí" were heard during the activity.

This activity worked because it followed the communicative language teaching principles stated in this paper, as well as the pedagogical foundations of task orientation and group work. The characteristics of the group and the ages of the

subjects were taken into account when designing the activity, since the class likes competition.

However, time was not enough. One team could not finish their description because they could not find as many adjectives as necessary from the crossword. Also, this team affirmed that they had little time to do the activity.

Though the activity went well, five additional minutes should be added in order to obtain better results.

In activity seven (free practice), the subjects had to make a role play following a communicative situation. The author made a reflection on the activity and the following was detected:

On one hand, students were motivated in this activity because they were supposed to describe some prestigious personalities of Cuba and the world physically and morally. Besides, the subjects used the moral adjectives studied in previous lessons well. The activity was motivating because it was organized in pairs and the personalities to be described were not only historical ones, but also sports and music stars.

On the other hand, students had some problems when describing people physically. They used the same adjectives from previous activity, so their vocabulary was poor. The main cause of this problem was that the previous activity only was focused on moral adjectives, so students were not able to attain the goal of the free practice activity because they lacked vocabulary. Furthermore, it was a fact that in prior lessons practicing adjectives for physical description was not enough. The systemic character of activities six and seven was affected since there was a jump from an easy item to an unattainable one.

In fact, the practice of the adjectives about physical description must be potentiated in order to expand students' vocabulary. As a result, a new activity must be built up in order to link activities six and seven. This new one should be organized in pairs and aimed at expanding the vocabulary related to physical description deeply.

Afterwards, activities eight and nine were implemented. Both belonged to unit eight entitled "The environment" and the communicative function "talking about the environment".

Activity eight was developed satisfactorily. The time was enough for the activity and students could expand their vocabulary. Students found the activity very interesting since the environment is a matter of everyone. They showed their awareness for those global issues and their consequences for nature and human lives.

The pictures used were helpful since they represented the real environmental problems that affect the world. The techniques used to introduce the new vocabulary were efficient, especially the word formation technique since students knew the words *water*, *air* and *pollution*.

However, activity nine did not work as it had been expected. Though the activity was well designed containing old and new vocabulary, as well as important environmental issues studied from previous lessons, students had several difficulties when designing possible solutions for the problems. They did not use the modal verb **should** and its negative form **should not** as it was required.

The cause of this problem was that the practice of grammar from previous lessons was not potentiated. Once more it is seen that activities should be designed for attaining the goals of more than one language component. Though, students' main problems are in vocabulary learning, they also have problems in grammar. They cannot use the vocabulary without knowing the grammar of the communicative functions to be dealt.

Then, a new activity should be included in the system in which students can practice the use of modal verb **should** and its negative form. The new activity should also be aimed at expanding students' vocabulary of the communicative function.

Summing up the building up process of the proposal, it can be stated that most of the activities were well designed and all of them followed the Communicative Language Teaching principles. Still, some activities should be improved in order to obtain a better result in the subjects. It was seen through the implementation of the activities the needs of taking into account the practice of grammar to attain the goals of the communicative functions, and the inclusion of new activities to link controlled and free practice stages.

3.1. Evaluation of the achievements that have been accomplished after the building up process:

The implementation of the system of communicative activities was carried out in order to expand English language vocabulary in ninth grade students from “Antonio Guiteras Holmes” Secondary School. The proposal was implemented in a period of five weeks, during the controlled and free practice lessons of the English subject.

Before the implementation of the activities only seven (30.4%) students were placed in the high rank, they were able to use basic vocabulary related to what they had achieved in the previous grade. Nine (39.1%) students reached a medium rank and seven (30.4%) were placed in a poor one. So taking into account what it is stated in the program of the subject it could be affirmed that the objectives of the previous grade were not fulfilled.

In the results of the pedagogical test described in the Needs Assessment, the students presented problems with pronunciation and the lack of vocabulary which did not allow them to express their ideas. Five students (21.7%) were considered high level, eight (34.8%) medium and ten (43.4%) low. The most common students' mistakes in the oral performance were in the pronunciation of the final sounds /k/ in the word **like**, /id/ in **located**; in the phoneme grapheme correspondence of English vowels that do not exist in Spanish such as **pretty**, **like**, **I**, **you** (students pronounced words using the mother tongue pronunciation patterns), and in sounds derived from combination of letters that do not exist in

Spanish, for example: /hw/ in **what, where**; /u/ in **good**; /ju/ in **beautiful**; /θ/ in **mother**.

Thus, the analysis of students' outcomes revealed that students had problems in spelling, mainly in the combination of letters that do not exist in their mother tongue (th, tt, eau, oo...) and they always try to write the words as they are pronounced presenting problems with phoneme-grapheme correspondence of the vocabulary. So, four (17.4%) students were placed in the high level, nine (39.1%) students in the medium level and ten (43.4%) students in the low one.

Those difficulties detected were confirmed with the participant observations which showed that the students' main problem was the lack of vocabulary.

After the implementation of the system of activities, a pedagogical test (annex 10) was administered to students in order to evaluate the achievements that had been accomplished. With these data and the ones gathered by the participant observations (annex 11) of the activities, it was observed that in category I, which is about the students' knowledge about the vocabulary areas studied, there are still four (17.4%) students with low level because they continue having problems with the following vocabulary areas: vocabulary used to give directions and express location, and adjectives used to describe people physically. There are 11 (47.8%) students placed in a medium rank and eight (34.8%) in the higher level. It is still difficult for them to remember and use the vocabulary of the communicative functions "asking for and giving directions", "talking about important personalities" and "Talking about the environment". It was proved that now they are in better conditions to use the language and be understood.

In category III, which is about the pronunciation of the vocabulary studied, there are still six (26.2%) students placed in a low level. Those students pronounced words using the mother tongue pronunciation patterns, they made many mistakes when pronouncing vowels that do not exist in their mother tongue /ju/, /ou/... and mispronounced sounds derived from combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish, for example: /hw/ in **what, where**; /ju/ in **beautiful**; /θ/ in **thin**. There are

ten students (43.4%) placed in the medium level and seven students (30.4%) assessed as a high level because they showed progress in relation to the pronunciation of the new vocabulary due to the activities used in the proposal. Those activities helped them improve their pronunciation, though they continue having some problems in the pronunciation of vowels and combination of letters that do not exist in Spanish.

In relation to the spelling of vocabulary (category II), it was noticed by means of several participant observations carried out while implementing the proposal, that only five students are still placed at a low level and have problems in that category, ten evaluated in a medium level and eight in the higher one. As one of the remaining mistakes, it can be affirmed that students continue writing the words as they are pronounced.

It could be concluded expressing that even though the students' vocabulary expanded and they were able to have better pronunciation and spelling abilities, there are still some mistakes that require their attention.

3.2 Proposal of a system of communicative activities for the expansion of English language vocabulary in ninth graders:

The proposal is aimed at expanding vocabulary in English language in students from group 9th 4 at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School, as well as awakening their motivation towards the subject.

Philosophical, pedagogical and methodological judgments were taken into account to back up the proposal.

Philosophical foundations

The philosophical foundations of the proposal of the present research are grounded by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, specifically the negation of negation law since the proposal have been designed and improved using as reference the results gathered by a prior system of activities. In addition, the dialectical

materialism studies the nature of human beings and its laws to turn the prior objective laws into method of further knowledge and transformation of reality. The study of the historical antecedents of strategies followed to expand English vocabulary in secondary schools has demonstrated that the previous procedures devoted to vocabulary teaching have not been effective, so this proposal paves the way for the creation of a positive learning environment that will help ninth grade students to expand their English vocabulary.

Pedagogical foundations

The school offers the requirements for the development of an appropriate teaching learning process of English. The proposal suggests activities that are contextualized (task orientation) which contribute to a relaxed atmosphere during the lesson as it is developed through pair and group work and therefore cooperative learning.

Methodological foundations

The proposal is based on the Communicative approach for the teaching of foreign languages. The author affiliates to the Communicative Language Teaching principles defined by Nail Naiman.

After analyzing some definitions of a system, the author of this study has considered that Ph Josefa Laurence's definition of system (1996) can be applied to the proposal. A system is an existing interrelation forming a complex whole, a union of principles or parts which form one entire thing, and the proposal consists of 11 communicative activities, two or three activities for each function. The activities were prepared and organized taking into account their level of complexity. The first activities are easier than the following ones. All of them are aimed at expanding the student's vocabulary.

Thus, the proposal covers five communicative functions belonging to units two, four, seven and eight. The whole system of activities were designed by the author using as reference some previous research and proposals on the topic. Its

flexibility allows the adaptation of some activities and to include new ones depending on students' needs.

Most of the activities are designed for controlled practice stage, one which is a transition from controlled to free practice and four for the free practice stage. The proposal is designed to be included in the English language lessons to contribute to fulfill the goals of every communicative function. It is also intended as a reference material that teachers can consult and find other activities to expand 9th grade students' vocabulary. Through these activities students are supposed to manipulate and use the new vocabulary taught in the English lesson (Category I) as well as practicing the pronunciation (Category II), spelling (Category III) of those words and to increase students motivation towards the subject (Category IV).

The criteria followed to plan the proposal were the level of complexity of the communicative functions studied, the accumulated information in the teachers' diary, the reflection carried out after the implementation of the preliminary system of activities, the suggestions of the discussion group and the subjects' regularities detected in the needs assessment.

3.2.1 Proposal of activities (annex 12)

Example of some activities

Activity 2 (Unit # 2 Travel Time)

Communicative function: Describing places. Giving directions.

Objective: To practice the vocabulary and grammar for describing places and giving directions by working in pairs, reinforcing students' knowledge about the capital of their province while showing respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: controlled practice.

Organization: Pair work

Time: 20 minutes.

Vocabulary: adjectives describing places, prepositions used for giving directions and important places in a city (theatre, hotel, library, restaurant...).

Grammar: WH questions

Teaching aids: The board, a map, a gap dialogue

Techniques: Dramatization, pictures and drawings.

Gap dialogue:

Your friend Tom is once again asked about a certain place in Santa Clara. This time he meets a British boy named Charles who asks him for directions. Help Tom answer Charles' questions by using a picture of Santa Clara downtown. Then, complete the other blank space with the corresponding WH question. Practice the conversation with your partner and be ready to perform it.

Charles: Good afternoon!

Tom: Good afternoon!

Charles: Could you help me please?

Tom: yes of course! How could I help you?

Charles: _____ is Santa Clara Libre Hotel located?

Tom: It is _____ the Vidal Park and _____ the viewpoint.

Charles: What is it like?

Tom: It is _____, _____, _____ and _____.

Charles: By the way, where is La Toscana pizzeria?

Tom: It is _____ the Chocolate Home, _____ La Caridad Theatre and _____ Marta Abreu and Maximo Gomez Streets.

Charles: Thank you. By the way, my name is Charles. What is your name?

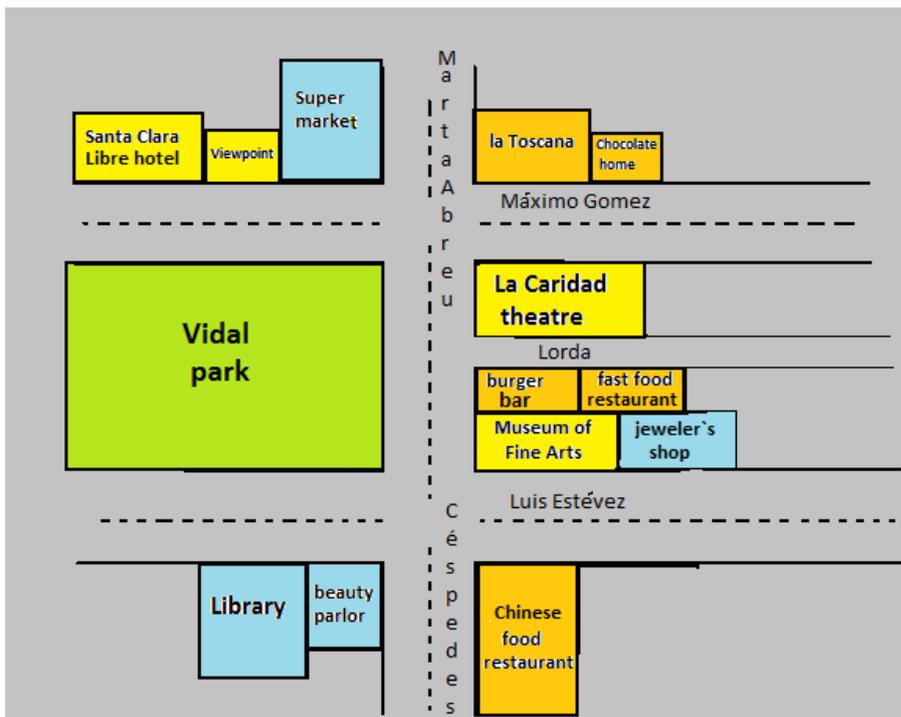
Tom: I am Tom.

Charles: Nice to meet you Tom.

Tom: Nice to meet you too Charles.

Charles: Good bye

Tom: Good bye



Activity 5 (Unit # 4 Hobbies)

Communicative function: Ask and talk about likes, dislikes and preferences.

Objective: To use the grammar and the vocabulary of the communicative function “Ask and talk about likes and dislikes” by doing a group discussion, while showing respect to foreign customs, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Free practice

Organization: group work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Vocabulary: related to people`s likes and dislikes (sports, kind of music, daily activities, hobbies...)

Teaching aids: the board

Procedures:

The teacher begins asking students about their preferences, likes and dislikes. Then, he states some questions;

-What do you think people from other countries have as hobbies?

-Do you think their hobbies are similar to ours?

-What do people from other countries like or do not like to do in their free time?

-Is there any difference between their likes and dislikes compared to ours?

In this activity students are supposed to compare the kind of hobbies people from other countries have with that of the Cubans.

Activity 6 (Unit # 7 Important personalities)

Communicative function: Describing people

Objective: To practice vocabulary of the communicative function “Describing people” through student-teacher interaction and group work to foster values of solidarity, friendship and respect.

Stage: Controlled practice

Time: 15 minutes

Organization: group work.

Vocabulary: adjectives used for people’s physical and moral description.

Teaching aids: the board, a crossword.

Procedures:

1. The teacher organizes the class into teams of five or six students and gives each of them a crossword. Students are supposed to look up as many adjectives as they can.
2. Afterward, students will describe a classmate by using the adjectives they found. They should only use the adjectives that keep up a correspondence to the true description of their partners.
3. At the end, a member of every team will ask another team to describe a classmate by using the question patterns. Students should answer the questions. The other teams will guess who’s being described.
The winner team will be the one which makes the best descriptions and finds more adjectives.

U	V	R	A	A	S	H	Y	D	E	R	I	H
T	H	I	N	G	N	O	A	P	R	D	U	A
R	U	C	S	S	F	N	Y	O	U	N	G	R
L	I	H	A	M	D	E	R	L	D	P	H	D

O	K	G	S	A	E	S	E	I	E	R	A	W
V	L	O	L	L	T	T	F	T	I	E	N	O
I	N	T	E	L	L	I	G	E	N	T	D	R
N	L	A	Z	Y	I	J	H	V	W	T	S	K
G	A	S	F	R	I	E	N	D	L	Y	O	I
O	P	T	I	M	I	S	T	I	C	Y	M	N
Q	D	E	L	I	C	A	T	E	A	D	E	G
A	G	H	K	S	H	O	R	T	C	U	T	E

Activity 9 (Unit # 8The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary needed to talk about environmental problems by student-teacher interaction and independent work, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Controlled practice

Organization: independent work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board, pictures.

Techniques: pictures, word formation.

Procedures:

1. The teacher asks students to mention some environmental problems that affect nature. Then he presents the activity.

2. After words, the teacher shows students some pictures about environmental problems and copies a list of vocabulary on the board related to some environmental issues. Students are supposed to make a correspondence between the vocabulary of the list and the pictures.

Look at the following pictures. Find the words that represent each of the environmental issues by using the vocabulary from the list.



List;

air pollution – garbage – soil degradation – poles` defrost – water pollution – desertification – river – sea – factory – toxic smokes – sewage water.

Activity 10 (Unit # 8 The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary needed to talk about environmental problems by student-teacher interaction and independent work, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Controlled practice

Organization: independent work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Grammar: Modal verb (should/should not)

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board.

Techniques: word formation and using context

Procedures:

The teacher asks students about the environmental issues they have discussed in previous lessons and some possible solutions to these ones.

Match column A with column B depending on the actions we should or should not do in order to protect the environment.

A

B

People should

-throw garbage on rivers and seas

-plant new trees

People shouldn't

-drain toxic liquids into the sea

-cut down trees

-take care of endangered animals

-clean the river and sea's shores

Activity 11 (Unit # 8The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To use the grammar and the vocabulary related to the communicative function "talking about environmental problems" by means of a group discussion, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: free practice

Organization: group work.

Time: 15 minutes.

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board.

Procedures:

1. The teacher divides the class in four groups. Then, he writes some environmental problems on the board.
2. In this activity, the groups are supposed to choose an environmental issue from the ones on the board. They should express their points of view about the causes and consequences of it, and design some possible solutions for them.

Environmental problems:

- Water pollution
- Greenhouse effect
- Poles` defrost
- Desertification
- The ozone layer
- Endangered species

Conclusions:

1. The theoretical and methodological foundations that support the expansion of vocabulary in the English lessons were based on the historical antecedents of the teaching learning process of vocabulary in the English language. The communicative language teaching principles to develop the speaking ability give the necessary theory that will support the actions to improve and expand students' vocabulary.
2. The results of the diagnosis revealed that the main difficulties of group 9th 4 at "Antonio Guiteras Holmes" Secondary School regarding the learning of vocabulary are related to the areas studied in each communicative function, their pronunciation and spelling.
3. During the building up process of the proposal, the need of practicing grammar through the system of activities became evident along with the need to include new activities to link the controlled and the free practice stages in a more natural way. As an outcome, two new activities were included to the system in order to obtain better results during its implementation.
4. The results obtained after the building up process of the proposal, were satisfactory. A growth in the students' vocabulary was corroborated as well as improvements in pronunciation and spelling.
5. The proposal of the system of communicative activities can contribute to the students' expansion of vocabulary because it provides enough practice to expand their lexicon.

Recommendations

It is recommended to improve the system of activities to expand vocabulary, and validate it again. It is also suggested to increase the number of activities, so that they can cover all the communicative functions from units one to ten.

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ANNEX 1

Guide for the analysis of documents.

Objective: to verify the objectives, contents and types of activities recommended for vocabulary within the Teaching Learning Process of English in 9th grade.

Documents: the 9th grade English language teaching Syllabus.

Distribution of contents (Dosificación)

Students' work book

Indicators:

- Objectives and contents to be achieved, according to the program.
- Exercises.
- Quality of the exercises.

ANNEX 2

Participant observation guide for the needs assessment:

Objective: to assess the students' level of vocabulary learning through communicative activities, as well as students' motivation in the English language lessons.

Type: Participant observation.

Categories

- Students' knowledge about the different vocabulary areas studied.
- Spelling of the vocabulary studied (Combination of letters that do not exist in the students' mother tongue, double consonants, final letters).
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue (Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in Spanish, pronunciation of vowels, pronunciation of Final sounds)

- Student's involvement during the lessons and quality of students' answers.

Observation guide:

1. How is the student's level in the following aspects, high, intermediate or low?

- Pronunciation of the new vocabulary.
- Correct use of the vocabulary.
- Spelling of the new vocabulary.

2. How is the students' motivation during the English language lessons?

3. What kind of activities do students' like?

4. How is the students' involvement seeing during the lessons?

5. What is the quality of students' answers; good, regular or poor.

ANNEX 3

Pedagogical test for the needs assessment

Objective: To check the students' vocabulary level related to the communicative functions "describing places", "talking about likes, dislikes and preferences" and "describing people".

Sub-categories:

- Knowledge about the vocabulary related to adjectives describing places, leisure activities and personality traits.
- Spelling of the vocabulary studied (Combination of letters that do not exist in the students' mother tongue, double consonants and final letters).
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue.

Techniques: through teacher-student interaction and a written questionnaire.

Students are given an incomplete piece of dialogue in which they are supposed to fulfill it in a written way and expose it orally.

Task:

A foreigner (F) comes to you (I) and asks you some questions. Complete the following piece of dialogue and report your answers orally.

F: What is your town like?

I: My town is_____.

F: That sounds good! What do you like to do in your free time?

I: I like_____, but I dislike_____. What about you?

F: I like to watch films with my mother. What is your mother like?

I: She is_____.

ANNEX 4

Interview

Objective: to assess students' opinions about strengths and weaknesses regarding the teaching learning process of English language vocabulary.

Indicators:

- Students motivation towards the subject.
- Students opinion about the type of activities they like the most.
- Vocabulary studied
- Pronunciation of English words

Questions:

- ¿Crees que la asignatura de inglés es importante para ti? ¿Por qué?
- ¿Qué tipos de actividades te gustan realizar durante las clases de inglés?
- ¿Cuál de las unidades estudiadas hasta el momento te ha resultado más difícil?
¿Por qué?

-¿Qué sonidos del inglés te son más difíciles de pronunciar?

ANNEX 5

Guide for the analysis of students' outcomes before applying the proposal of activities:

Objective: to assess students' spelling of the vocabulary studied.

Sub-categories:

5. Combination of letters that do not exist in the students' mother tongue (Spanish)
6. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
7. Double consonants
8. Final letters

Guide:

What are the most common students mistakes in the sub-categories of spelling stated above?

What are the students' levels regarding the spelling skills (high, medium or low)?

ANNEX 6

Teacher's diary (Examples of recorded reflections)

Activity 8 (Unit 8 The environment)

What went well and why?

The activity was developed satisfactorily. The time was enough for the activity and students could expand their vocabulary. Students found the activity very interesting

since the environment is a matter of everyone. They showed be aware of those global issues and their consequences for nature and human lives.

The pictures used were helpful since they represent the real environmental problems that affect the world. The techniques to introduce the new vocabulary were efficient, especially the word formation technique since students knew the words water, air and pollution.

Activity 9 (Unit 8 The environment)

What went wrong?

Though the activity was well designed containing old and new vocabulary, as well as important environmental issues studied from previous lessons, students had several difficulties when designing possible solutions for the problems. They did not used well the modal verb **should** and its negative form **should not**.

The cause of this problem was that the practice of grammar from previous lessons was not potentiated. Once more is seen that activities should be designed for attaining the goals of more than one language component. Though, students' main problems are in vocabulary learning they also have problems in grammar, and they cannot use the vocabulary without knowing the grammar of the communicative functions to deal with.

What needs to be improved?

A new activity should be included in which students can practice the use of the modal verb should and its negative form. The new activity will also be aimed at expanding students' vocabulary regarding what people should or should not do to protect the environment.

ANNEX 7

Participant observation guide (during the building up process of the proposal)

Objective: to assess the building up process through the implementation of a preliminary system of activities.

Type: Participant observation.

Indicators

- Time
- Task orientation
- Work distribution
- Techniques used to introduce the new vocabulary
- Level of complexity of the activities
- Effectiveness of teaching aids
- Students' motivation
- Students' reactions and actions during the implementation of the activities

ANNEX 8

Experiences during the building up process.



ANNEX 9

Interview to students (during the building up process of the proposal)

Objective: to know students' opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of the system of activities during the building up process of the proposal.

Type: unstructured interview

Questions:

¿Te gusto la actividad? ¿Por qué?

¿Te alcanzó el tiempo para hacerla?

¿Qué te hizo sentir bien o mal durante esta? ¿Por qué?

¿En qué ocasión te sentiste más cómodo y motivado/incomodo? ¿Por qué?

¿En cuál de los siguientes rangos ubicarías la dificultad de la actividad: muy fácil, asequible, trabajosa o difícil?

¿Qué cambiarías o añadirías a esta para perfeccionarla?

ANNEX 10

Pedagogical test (after the building up process of the proposal)

Objective: To assess the students' vocabulary level related to the communicative functions “describing places and asking for and giving directions”, and “describing people”.

Sub-categories:

- Knowledge about the vocabulary related to adjectives describing places, vocabulary used to give directions and personality traits.
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue.

Role play:

Student A

You are a ninth grade student and you are new in the town. You don't know where is your new school located. Then, you see that one of your neighbors dresses a secondary school uniform. Meet him/her and ask him/her to describe your new school and to give you its direction. Afterward, ask him/her to describe the principal of the school.

Student B

You are coming home from school and you see a new boy/girl in your neighborhood. Then, you notice he/she is coming to ask you some questions. Be ready to answer back some questions about your school.

ANNEX 11

Participant observation guide (during the building up process of the proposal)

Objective: to evaluate the students' transformation through the implementation of the system of activities.

Type: Participant observation.

Categories

- Students' knowledge about the different vocabulary areas studied.
- Spelling of the vocabulary studied (Combination of letters that do not exist in the students' mother tongue, double consonants, final letters).
- Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in the students' mother tongue (Pronunciation of sounds that do not exist in Spanish, pronunciation of vowels, pronunciation of Final sounds)
- Student's involvement during the activities and quality of students' answers.

ANNEX12

Proposal of the system of communicative activities to expand vocabulary in English language in ninth graders

Activity 1 (Unit # 2 Travel Time)

Communicative function: Describing places

Objective: To reproduce the vocabulary needed to describe by means of pair work, while showing respect, solidarity and courtesy; and reinforcing students' knowledge about a historical monument.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: Pair work.

Time: 15 minutes

Vocabulary: adjectives describing places.

Teaching aids: Cards, a gap dialogue

Techniques: Synonyms, antonyms and dramatization

Gap dialogue:

A Canadian girl named Clara meets Tom in Santa Clara. She wants to know something about a place, but Tom doesn't understand her very well. Help Tom to complete the dialogue. You may use some of the adjectives from the cards when necessary. Practice the conversation with your partner and be ready to act it out. You may change the names of the participants with your own.

Clara: Good morning! My name is Clara.

Tom: _____! I am Tom. Could I help you?

Clara: Yes, what is Che's Memorial like, please?

Tom: It is _____, _____, _____ and _____. It is the most important monument of Villa Clara.

Clara: Thank you.

Tom: You're welcome.

Clara: Good bye.

Tom: Good bye.

Card:

Beautiful - interesting - marvelous - charming – glamorous –historical –famous – high – remarkable – colonial – ancient - majestic

Activity 2 (Unit # 2 Travel Time)

Communicative function: Describing places. Giving directions.

Objective: To practice the vocabulary and grammar for describing places and giving directions by working in pairs, reinforcing students' knowledge about the capital of their province while showing respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: controlled practice.

Organization: Pair work

Time: 20 minutes.

Vocabulary: adjectives describing places, prepositions used for giving directions and important places in a city (theatre, hotel, library, restaurant...).

Grammar: WH questions

Teaching aids: The board, a map, a gap dialogue

Techniques: Dramatization, pictures and drawings.

Gap dialogue:

Your friend Tom is once again asked about a certain place in Santa Clara. This time he meets a British boy named Charles who asks him for directions. Help Tom answer Charles' questions by using a picture of Santa Clara downtown. Then, complete the other blank space with the corresponding WH question. Practice the conversation with your partner and be ready to perform it.

Charles: Good afternoon!

Tom: Good afternoon!

Charles: Could you help me please?

Tom: yes of course! How could I help you?

Charles: _____ is Santa Clara Libre Hotel located?

Tom: It is _____ the Vidal Park and _____ the viewpoint.

Charles: What is it like?

Tom: It is _____, _____, _____ and _____.

Charles: By the way, where is La Toscana pizzeria?

Tom: It is _____ the Chocolate Home, _____ La Caridad Theatre and _____ Marta Abreu and Maximo Gomez Streets.

Charles: Thank you. By the way, my name is Charles. What is your name?

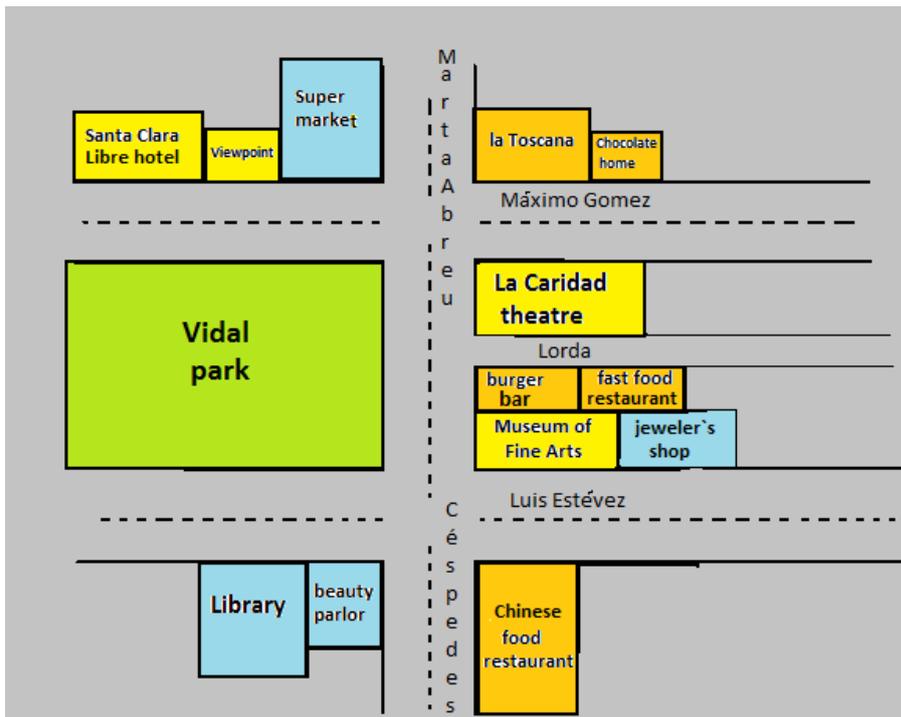
Tom: I am Tom.

Charles: Nice to meet you Tom.

Tom: Nice to meet you too Charles.

Charles: Good bye

Tom: Good bye



Activity 3(Unit # 2 Travel Time)

Communicative function: Talking about important places.

Objective: To use the vocabulary and grammar needed to describe places and giving directions by working in pairs, to continue developing respect, solidarity and courtesy; and contributing to reinforce the students' respect and interest for the places of their town.

Stage: Free practice.

Organization: Pair work

Time: 15 minutes.

Vocabulary: adjectives describing places, prepositions used for giving directions.

Teaching aids: Cards.

Role Play

The teacher gives the students cards with needed information to each member of the pair.

A

You are a South African boy/girl who's visiting Cuba. You want to know about a place of the town you're visiting. You meet a boy/girl in the town central park. Greet him/her. Ask him/her his/her name. Ask him/her to describe an important place in town and how to get there. Thank him/her and say good bye.

B

You meet a South African boy/girl in your town's central park. He/she wants to know about an important place of the town and its direction. Greet him/her. Ask him/her his/her name. Be ready to answer his/her questions. Don't forget to be polite.

Activity 4 (Unit # 4 Hobbies)

Communicative function: Ask and talk about likes, dislikes and preferences.

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary used to ask and talk about likes and dislikes by working in pairs, while showing respect, solidarity, courtesy and expressing refusal for wrong habits.

Stage: Controlled practice.

Organization: pair work

Time: 15 minutes.

Grammar: WH questions, question patterns, simple present tense (third person singular).

Vocabulary: related to people`s likes and dislikes (sports, kind of music, daily activities, hobbies, unhealthy addictions)

Techniques: dramatization, using context, parts of words

Teaching aids: the board

In pairs, ask your partner which of the following list of activities he/she likes or dislikes to do on his/her free time. You may also use vocabulary about any other activity or things you like or dislike to do that does not appear in the list. Be ready to report your partner`s answers orally.

List;

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------------|
| -to play soccer | -jogging | -reading books |
| -to clean the house | -rising pigeons | -stamp collecting |
| -to take a nap | -dancing | -horseback riding |
| -to practice sports | -drinking alcohol | |
| -to watch a film | -smoking | |
| -to visit important places
relevant monuments | -swimming | |
| - to take photos | -drinking soft drink | |

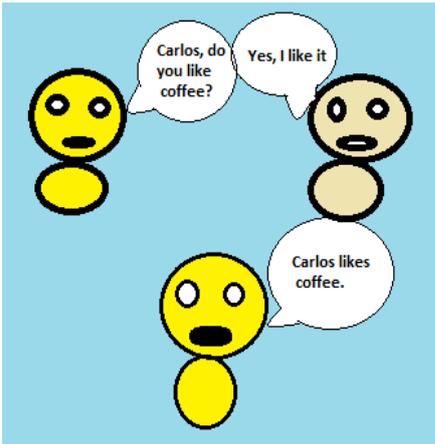
Useful questions:

-Do you like...?

-What do you like or dislike to do in you spare time?

-Do you prefer ... to...?

E.g.



The teacher will ask students to reflect on unhealthy addictions through questions:

E.g. what consequences do you think drugs have for human lives?

Activity 5 (Unit # 4 Hobbies)

Communicative function: Ask and talk about likes, dislikes and preferences.

Objective: To use the grammar and the vocabulary of the communicative function "Ask and talk about likes and dislikes" by doing a group discussion, while showing respect to foreign customs, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Free practice

Organization: group work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Vocabulary: related to people`s likes and dislikes (sports, kind of music, daily activities, hobbies...)

Teaching aids: the board

Procedures:

The teacher begins asking students about their preferences, likes and dislikes. Then, he states some questions;

-What do you think people from other countries have as hobbies?

-Do you think their hobbies are similar to ours?

-What do people from other countries like or do not like to do in their free time?

-Is there any difference between their likes and dislikes compared to ours?

In this activity students are supposed to compare the kind of hobbies people from other countries have with that of the Cubans.

Activity 6 (Unit # 7 Important personalities)

Communicative function: Describing people

Objective: To practice vocabulary of the communicative function “Describing people” through student-teacher interaction and group work to foster values of solidarity, friendship and respect.

Stage: Controlled practice

Time: 15 minutes

Organization: group work.

Vocabulary: adjectives used for people’s physical and moral description.

Teaching aids: the board, a crossword.

Procedures:

4. The teacher organizes the class into teams of five or six students and gives each of them a crossword. Students are supposed to look up as many adjectives as they can.

5. Afterward, students will describe a classmate by using the adjectives they found. They should only use the adjectives that keep up a correspondence to the true description of their partners.

6. At the end, a member of every team will ask another team to describe a classmate by using the question patterns. Students should answer the questions. The other teams will guess who's being described.

The winner team will be the one which makes the best descriptions and finds more adjectives.

U	V	R	A	A	S	H	Y	D	E	R	I	H
T	H	I	N	G	N	O	A	P	R	D	U	A
R	U	C	S	S	F	N	Y	O	U	N	G	R
L	I	H	A	M	D	E	R	L	D	P	H	D
O	K	G	S	A	E	S	E	I	E	R	A	W
V	L	O	L	L	T	T	F	T	I	E	N	O
I	N	T	E	L	L	I	G	E	N	T	D	R
N	L	A	Z	Y	I	J	H	V	W	T	S	K
G	A	S	F	R	I	E	N	D	L	Y	O	I
O	P	T	I	M	I	S	T	I	C	Y	M	N
Q	D	E	L	I	C	A	T	E	A	D	E	G
A	G	H	K	S	H	O	R	T	C	U	T	E

Activity 7 (Unit # 7 Important personalities)

Communicative function: Describing people

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary of the communicative function “Describing people” through student-teacher interaction and pair work to foster values of solidarity, friendship and respect.

Stage: From controlled to free practice stage

Time: 20 minutes

Organization: pair work.

Grammar: Third person singular of the verb *to have*

Vocabulary: adjectives used for people’s physical description.

Teaching aids: the board.

Technique: synonyms and antonyms, realia and mimics.

Task # 1

Get in pairs. Write a physical description of your partner. Remember to include in your descriptions your pair’s height, body shape, skin complexion, hair type and eyes’ color. You may use the vocabulary from the list given below.

List:

Body shape: fat/thin – slim – slender – strong/weak

Skin complexion: Dark/fair – brunet/blond - black

Eyes colors: dark brown/light brown – hazel – blue – green

Hair type: straight/curly – wavy/wooly, kinky

Task # 2

Now, change pairs. Make a dialogue with your new partner asking him/her to describe his/her former pair. Be ready to describe yours and to present your dialogue to the class.

Activity 8 (Unit # 7 Important personalities)

Communicative function: Talking about important personalities

Objective: To use the grammar and the vocabulary of the communicative function "Talking about important personalities" through student-teacher interaction and pair work to foster values of solidarity, friendship and respect for prominent personalities.

Stage: Free practice

Time: 15 minutes

Organization: pair work

Vocabulary: adjectives used for people's physical and moral description.

Teaching aids: Cards, pictures of important personalities.

Role play;

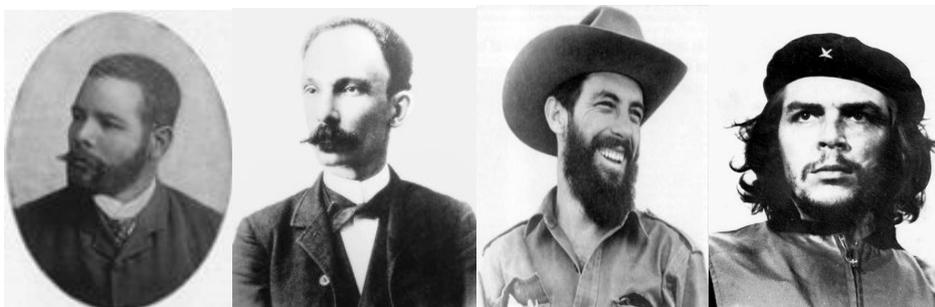
Student A:

You are visiting a museum in Havana when you meet someone who wants to know about one of the important personalities that are exhibited in one of the rooms. Greet him/her and answer his/her questions.

Student B:

You are in an important museum in Havana. You see some pictures about important personalities of Cuba's history and world's culture and sports, but you want to know a bit more about one of them. You see someone in the museum and you decide to ask him/her about that figure. Greet him/her and ask him/her to

describe the personality physical and morally. Ask the person to say something about the personality.



Activity 9 (Unit # 8The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary needed to talk about environmental problems by student-teacher interaction and independent work, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Controlled practice

Organization: independent work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board, pictures.

Techniques: pictures, word formation.

Procedures:

3. The teacher asks students to mention some environmental problems that affect nature. Then he presents the activity.

4. After words, the teacher shows students some pictures about environmental problems and copies a list of vocabulary on the board related to some environmental issues. Students are supposed to make a correspondence between the vocabulary of the list and the pictures.

Look at the following pictures. Find the words that represent each of the environmental issues by using the vocabulary from the list.





List;

air pollution – garbage – soil degradation – poles` defrost – water pollution – desertification – river – sea – factory – toxic smokes – sewage water.

Activity 10 (Unit # 8The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To practice the grammar and the vocabulary needed to talk about environmental problems by student-teacher interaction and independent work, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: Controlled practice

Organization: independent work.

Time: 10 minutes.

Grammar: Modal verb (should/should not)

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board.

Techniques: word formation and using context

Procedures:

The teacher asks students about the environmental issues they have discussed in previous lessons and some possible solutions to these ones.

Match column A with column B depending on the actions we should or should not do in order to protect the environment.

A

People should

People shouldn't

B

-throw garbage on rivers and seas

-plant new trees

-drain toxic liquids into the sea

-cut down trees

-take care of endangered animals

-clean the river and sea's shores

Activity 11 (Unit # 8The environment)

Communicative function: Talking about environmental problems.

Objective: To use the grammar and the vocabulary related to the communicative function "talking about environmental problems" by means of a group discussion, while showing awareness for environmental issues, respect, solidarity and courtesy.

Stage: free practice

Organization: group work.

Time: 15 minutes.

Vocabulary: Related to environmental issues.

Teaching aids: the board.

Procedures:

3. The teacher divides the class in four groups. Then, he writes some environmental problems on the board.

4. In this activity, the groups are supposed to choose an environmental issue from the ones on the board. They should express their points of view about the causes and consequences of it, and design some possible solutions for them.

Environmental problems:

-Water pollution

-The ozone layer

-Greenhouse effect

- Endangered species

-Poles` defrost

-Desertification