ORIGINAL ARTICLE

SILVA, Ana Lúcia Farias da ^[1], RAMOS, Teresa Cristina Giarolla ^[2], SODRÉ, Rachel Fontes ^[3]

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SUMMARY

This article aims to describe the development of the teaching-learning process of Foreign Language, with the use of the CLIL (Integrated Content and Language Teaching) approach in the teaching of English, within the framework of a Bilingual Program, within an emergency context of Remote Teaching. We also seek to reflect on the adequacy of technological tools in the process of teaching Foreign Language – specifically the English Language – for a certain age group, as well as to evaluate the elaboration and adaptation of materials, activities and pedagogical approaches to the reality of Remote Teaching during the period of isolation. For this reflection, our analysis aims to point out possibilities and limitations, both of the CLIL

(Integrated Teaching of Content and Language) approach, as well as of the modality of distance learning for the age group observed. Thus, in addition to presenting what was accomplished during the research, we intend to reflect on possible paths and contribute with good practices that make the English Language Teaching process more meaningful and proficient, within the Modality Of Distance Education (EaD). We defend in this research the search for strategies in a digital format, for a Foreign Language Teaching, which develops in a more natural and motivating way, as well as the need for public policies aimed at a post-pandemic education of COVID-19, in the sense of ludicity and inclusion, aiming at the development of skills and skills of the student, from elementary school, transforming information into knowledge.

Keywords: Foreign Language Teaching, Foreign Language, Remote Teaching, CLIL Approach.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed sharply, and on a global scale, the performance of routine actions. Work, study, consume culture, relate socially, obtain goods and services are among some of the daily activities that needed to be reinvented during the period of isolation, imposed by the risk of contamination.

Given this context, it will not be an exaggeration to affirm that Education, Information and Communication Technologies (CITs), have never been more essential to the development of culture, society and the economy, since, suddenly, much of the economic, social and cultural activities migrated to the virtual environment, forcing us to rebuild new ways of developing them.

Thus, the ongoing pandemic has resized, at a high level, the phenomenon of globalization, but in an effect not expected: that of threat to life. That said, communities from all over the planet found themselves facing a fatal common enemy, identified as COVID-19. In this scenario, communication and exchange of information between different nations were fundamental for the sharing of data relevant to coping with the disease.

Then, in this scenario, the Teaching of Languages and the importance, not only of technological tools, but also of the centrality and emergency use of the English Language,

which allowed the exchange of information in a broad, fast and effective way, that is, accessing data and information in a universal Foreign Language, such as English, became literally indispensable.

According to Hargreaves (2010), the study of the English language intensified and was disseminated in different countries, since this language is used in commercial transactions and also in everyday situations, because in addition to native speakers, this language was consecrated in a globalized way. In addition, technological advances, especially the Internet, facilitate and provide intercultural interaction in communication relations between citizens and the rest of the fully globalized world.

In this new and abrupt reality, the field of Education, especially the segments of Early Childhood Education and Elementary School faced the challenge of transpose into Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), all its pedagogical work, adapting routines, methods, approaches, activities, language, evaluations and even the modes of teacher-student and student-student interaction.

Although challenging, this moment proved to be conducive to learning, to new reflections, thus enabling the development of new knowledge appropriate to the demands of the new times. Added to this, to learn a Foreign Language (LE), it is necessary to develop communicative skills and make use of them. Thus, this article proposes to report how it is possible to develop language skills for a Foreign Language (LE), at this time of pandemic and remote teaching, describe and mobilize the tools that help the teaching-learning process, in addition to problematizing the difficulties encountered in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), through the action research that will be presented in this study, whose development occurred between March and July 2020 , within the scope of the English classes of the Bilingual Program, held in the Virtual Learning Environment, in a Private Elementary School, Regular, with third-year elementary school students.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The elaboration of this article is methodologically supported by an experimental research that, according to Negoceki (2018), is characterized by the submission of the object of study

to the influence of certain variables, under controlled and known conditions, so that the results that the variables produce in the object are observed.

As for the means, the study can be classified as action research, because it “implies a practical knowledge in which the researcher himself is involved in the actions, in addition to describing, explaining and predicting the phenomena studied” (BARBIER, 2007, apud NEGOCEKI, 2018). Also Bezerra and Tanajura (2015) understand action research as an open and dialectical model of research that is located and organized around the subjects of a certain group about their daily problem(s), producing knowledge and transforming reality.

Based on this methodological view mentioned above, this research was conducted with a third year class of elementary school in a Regular School, from the private network, which offers classes from Early Childhood To Elementary School. The school, since the beginning of 2019, has been developing a Bilingual Program, with 45-minute daily classes within the CLIL (Integrated Content and Language Teaching) approach, having as work material, the textbook, within this same approach and in accordance with the Common National Curriculum Base (BNCC, 2018). The experimental research was conducted entirely in Remote Teaching classes, english, taught daily from March 16 to July 17, through the school’s Virtual Learning Environment.

The development of the research had the participation of the teacher-researcher and the 18 students enrolled in the class, identified as number 302, in addition to the collection of reports from the guardians, the Teacher Regent of the class and the Pedagogical Coordination of the school. It should also be added that all the students of this class, involved in the research, are children, between 8 and 9 years old, Brazilian and monolingual speakers of Portuguese language, as a mother tongue.

Throughout the study, the following instruments were used to collect data: teaching plan and planning of the classes taught; images (photographs) of the activities carried out; class diaries; recording of the classes and activities carried out.

During the research, the following variables were tested and analyzed:

a) the offer of video lessons, previously recorded and the holding of live classes through

videoconferences;

b) the use of three different video conferencing applications;

c) preparation and offer of diverse visual supporting materials (videos, songs, posters, maps, slide shows, concrete materials, virtual games);

d) offer of classes at different times;

e) implementation of a routine and combined with the class;

f) interaction with members of the students' families;

g) collection of students' reports about their impressions about the classes and activities performed;

h) collection of the reports of the guardians regarding their impressions about the classes and activities performed;

i) collection of the reports of the teacher regent of the class and the pedagogical coordination of the school regarding their impressions about the classes and activities performed;

j) formal assessments applied to students.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively according to the interest and involvement of the class, also considering the development of the observed linguistic skills (listening comprehension, oral production, reading and writing). In view of this situation, formal evaluations were successful, which allowed us to obtain quantitative data regarding the individual use of each student. Finally, our observations were analyzed in the light of the revision of texts pertinent to the subject researched.

BILINGUAL PROGRAM AND CLIL APPROACH

Having said that, we started this section by presenting the Bilingual Program, as it had been

developed before the pandemic.

Implemented at the beginning of the 2019 school year, the program's proposal has been to provide students with immersion in the English language through 45-minute daily classes. The development of the work has classes and didactic material developed, according to the CLIL (Integrated Teaching of Content and Language) approach and with the execution of various activities that aim to enable students to experience concrete situations of use of foreign language (LE), such as: play and playful activities, musicalization, psychomotor activities in English, cooking classes, arts classes, storytelling, science classes in the laboratory, chess classes.

The CLIL (Integrated Content and Language Teaching) approach has been used by bilingual schools or that adopt bilingual programs, not only in Brazil, but also in several countries (GUPTA, 2020; NEGOCIKI, 2018; MOLYNEUX ALIANI, 2016; FINARDI, 2016). The acronym CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which can be translated by Integrated Content and Language Teaching, refers to an educational approach to teaching content through an additional language, having a double focus – both on content and language (GUPTA, 2020; NEGOCIKI, 2018). This approach enables the teaching of foreign language involved in real and contextualized uses of the language, besides allowing interdisciplinary work. It is also considered an attractive and effective way to teach the foreign language, because it escapes the traditional class model, focused on grammatical topics and vocabulary lists (FINARDI, 2016).

In addition to the CLIL (Integrated Content and Language Teaching) approach, the institution studied had also been supporting its pedagogical practice in the use of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and in the hybrid teaching work, merging face-to-face activities with the use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLE). With the beginning of isolation, the use of ICTs intensifies and all pedagogical work migrates to Virtual Learning Environments, as we will see below.

However, preceding the case study, we believe that a brief reflection on the uses of Technology in Education and Remote Education, supported in Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) is relevant.

USE OF TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

The technological developments experienced by humanity in recent decades have gradually transformed the ways of living, living, working and knowing. In recent years, the pace of use of technological tools and devices has intensified, proposing new challenges to the field of Education. From there, dealing with the production and reproduction of knowledge, relating to the new generations are actions that can no longer be thought of in traditional and static ways, on the contrary, require from us, educators, new and constant updated looks.

In this scenario, for learning to occur, it is essential to interact between all those involved with communication facilitating instruments, appropriating technologies, offering various resources in virtual pedagogical mediation, thus contributing to a quality education and appropriate to the demands of the contemporary. In this view, according to Mello Ribeiro (2014), it is necessary a learning environment that supplants restricted schools, only by texts and teaching materials, and teachers working to meet cultural needs that other spaces are not able to provoke.

According to Moran; Masetto and Behrens (2000),

[...] there will be a great integration of technologies and methodologies for teaching oral applications, by writing and audiovisual. The known methods do not need to be abandoned, what will be an integration of these methods with the forms used with new technologies, allowing to be used as a facilitator in a participatory teaching methodology.

The arguments put forward confirm how it is necessary to intentionally apply Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) in Education, in order to be stimulators, aiming at assimilating the proposed contents, being attractive in the act of teaching, through professionals who follow the changes. The education professional must, therefore, seek constant improvement in order to get out of the common place and use the tools in an enriching way.

In this perspective, it is observed, therefore, how much the use of innovative pedagogical proposals, widely based on technology is pertinent to the moment in which we live, whose

pandemic has driven, at a frightening speed, a new modality of Teaching for this moment, based on collaboration and sharing of knowledge, considered as Remote Teaching.

Ramal (2013) draws attention to the fact that the obstacles to teachers will be many, among them the inadequacy of the training of Brazilian educators, which does not include skills with new technologies. In this approach, Ramal (2013) also considers a different profile for the student:

[...] being compared as a cognitive architect, who has the ability to draw mental maps of the student who will work, because he would be like a dynamic of collective intelligence with the aim of forming cooperative learning communities.

Thus, this perspective demonstrates that the research that invites us has many aspects and categories to consider for the understanding of this educational phenomenon, considering technological, methodological, cognitive variables, among others.

REMOTE TEACHING AND VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The virtual environment must be involved in a set of knowledge, establishing actions that stimulate the construction of knowledge, directing the student to success. The important thing is to respect the differentiated learning of each student, in view of the limitations and individual possibilities.

Through this, the teacher has an indispensable role in the virtual learning environment, because in this context, it is not only educated in order to assimilate the content worked, but so that the connection between student/teacher, collaboratively, is established at all moments of learning, thus providing quality in the content worked.

In this context, according to Faria and Lopes (2014), a discussion on autonomy is proposed, based on the paradox of autonomy/dependence, since in Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), it is possible and necessary to promote autonomy, freeing the human being from everything that oppresses him, which prevents him from fulfilling his vocation to be more, recognizing that history is a time and possibilities. Thus, virtual environments should be elaborated in order to involve the student, seeking curiosity for research, exploring the

contents in a playful perspective, from a technology focused on Education.

Another fundamental point is to realize, according to studies already produced, that the new generations, the so-called *digital natives*, are still in a position of not or few participants in the teaching process learning with the support of technology in schools, because the trainers are still as digital immigrants in this environment of increasing technology (PRENSKY, 2020).

In recent decades, education has undergone innovations due to new generations of digital natives. Moreover, the use of technological tools has influenced the mediation of traditional and virtual knowledge in current education. Because of this, our students are currently considered as “native speakers” bold of researchers- of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet, which does not indicate that they know how to reflect and build meaningful learning by their technological skills. Thus, it is necessary to understand that the way of teaching and learning needs to be innovated, transformed to meet in an ethical and moral way, the very needs of the human being as a creative and social thinking being, as Santander (2004) states.

So, as Santos (2016) reinforces:

Education must not only train workers for the demands of the labor market, but critical citizens capable of transforming an operating market into a market that values an increasingly important commodity: knowledge.

CASE STUDY

Back to the case study proposed here, we consider it pertinent to record that, since 2018, the institution studied already had its own platform, which was used for complementary activities, within the Hybrid Teaching approach. With the beginning of the isolation period, the teaching team was challenged to organize and adapt all pedagogical work to the school's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). From that moment, in March 2020, this action research begins, the course of which will be exposed below.

In the first six weeks of Remote Education, the teacher-researcher opted for recording video classes, which were posted daily in the class's virtual classroom. The duration of the videos

varied from 10 to 20 minutes, according to the level of complexity of the content. According to the CLIL approach, classes in Languages, Science, Social Studies and Math were taught entirely in English. In order to facilitate students' understanding, the teacher-researcher used different visual resources (drawings on the blackboard, cards with images, objects, maps, gold material, slide shows and videos in English).

As a way of interacting with the students, the teacher proposed their participation in forums, answering simple questions in English and whose structured response model had already been explained in the video lesson corresponding to each activity. Another proposal was for students to record short videos of themselves (with the help of those responsible), presenting tasks related to the content worked in the video lesson of the day.

Throughout the period in which such models of classes and activities were maintained, the researchers noticed some of their advantages, however, their limitations emerged.

On the one hand, it was found that:

- a) the posting of video classes allowed the organization of the student's study routines according to the reality of each family, meeting the different family demands (parents in home office, siblings in home schooling, computer sharing by family members, different study times, etc.);
- b) the videos recorded by the teacher-researcher without the participation of the students allowed brief and objective exposures, since there were no interruptions;
- c) similarly, the classes, without the participation of students in real time, allowed the exclusive use of the foreign language;
- d) this model of previously recorded classes, also allows editing, resulting in an aesthetically better elaborate audiovisual product, without the unforeseen events of a live class.

On the other hand, it was evidenced that:

- a) the classes taught through videos were not understandable to all students in the class, failing to reach those who presented greater difficulty to maintain attention and/or to

understand the content;

b) the lack of immediate interaction with the teacher and colleagues compromised the interest and engagement of most of the students, who, when questioned, stated that they did not like the video classes;

c) students who presented greater ease for language learning were able to perform the activities satisfactorily, unlike the others, whose performance and participation were declined over the weeks, according to the analysis performed when evaluating the frequency of the platform and the level of correct answers in the activities sent;

d) many students watched the videos, but did not post their activities, making it impossible for their performance to be verified by the teacher-researcher;

e) this model of classes makes it possible to work in an exhibition, focusing on content, lexical teaching and grammar, however, does not allow the work with the language to turn directly to communication.

At this first moment, a two-week experience with the live, videoconference class event was followed, and there was a greater engagement of the class for the possibility of interacting in real time with the teacher and with her classmates. It was also observed the possibility of monitoring the performance of the activities by the students and verifying, during the class time, the difficulties of the students, as well as their advances, which began to guide the planning of the following classes. It was also noticed that this class model allowed us to turn the focus of classes to communication in English, both between the teacher and the students, as well as among the children themselves.

If, on the one hand, there were many gains from the adoption of the videoconference resource, on the other hand, some limitations were also evidenced. The main one concerns purely technological issues: there are times when the internet connection (both of the teacher and of the students) fails or falls, compromising the progress of the class, compromising its quality or even making it impossible to continue it. Another difficulty noted was regarding the management of the class. Therefore, we will elucidate this topic later.

At the end of the two-week trial period, the researchers interviewed those responsible about

their perception of the quality of classes and the level of engagement of the children, asking them to commend the two approaches: video classes and videoconference classes. As a consequence, it was found that 90% of the parents pointed out the advantages of live classes, opting for them, instead of the recorded classes. The same question was asked to the students, being unanimous, the preference for classes in videoconferences.

Once the live class model was adopted, a new problem was placed before us: the difficulty in pedagogically articulating a class of 18 children in videoconference. In the first classes they were very agitated and elated to see the teacher and friends, wanted to talk, tell their stories and play. As we tried to impose a class routine that would allow us to work, we had difficulties with the excess of open microphones at the same time, the noises of the houses, the constant interruptions of the students. Even when they were engaged in class, they hindered the progress of the activities, because they asked questions out of time and, often, more than one student spoke at the same time.

Then, there was an attempt to analyze the situation and to seek solutions that would allow us to continue with the content, without, however, mischaracterizing the participation of the class. Making a parallel between the work performed in person and the new reality, it was realized how sudden and abrupt the transition to Remote Teaching was, in the middle of the bimester, because there was no time to prepare the students for the new routine, for the new way of interacting and studying, as well as in welcoming them in the virtual environment in a playful and gradual way, actions typically of the face-to-face school at the beginning of the school year. Similarly, we do not establish rules, teaching them how to behave in the context of Distance Learning (EAD).

From this finding, an action plan was elaborated that consisted of six slides containing images and short commands in English, with simple instructions on how to behave in online classes, as elaborated:

- 1) Respect teacher;
- 2) Respect Friends;
- 3) Respect timing;

- 4) Turn off your microphone;
- 5) Raise your hand to speak;
- 6) Have Fun! (Have fun!).

The teacher-researcher used the visual support of the images to propose to the students to adopt a new posture during the live classes, establishing an agreement with the class. During the three weeks that followed, all classes were started reviewing the Agreements. With this, gradually, the children were internalizing the rules and changing their habits, so that the teaching actions carried out by the Regent of the class became possible and the progress of the classes began to happen satisfactorily.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

English Language Teaching, in the modality of Remote Teaching, with the full use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) has advanced and can be efficient with the development of language skills associated with these technological and didactic resources appropriate to each objective in Foreign Language Teaching. However, the teacher should have good planning, carefully reflecting and analyzing the tool that best suited to his/her goal.

Moreover, we postulate as indispensable the Teaching of the English Language, as a way of access to universal cultural goods, academic and professional environments of the globalized world, also considering an inclusive formation that leads the student to expand their readings of the world.

Moreover, classes, in real time, help in the cognitive process in relation to playing, dialoguing, in addition to awakening sensitivities such as visual and auditory perceptions, necessary for learning. Despite some flexibility, the use of English contributed to welcoming students in the Mother Tongue, which did not impair the learning of the proposed contents, on the contrary, it brought the students closer to the teacher-researcher, enabling a better work in language teaching. The results were perceived in the formal evaluations and in the engagement of the students during the classes, corroborating the pedagogical work that goes beyond teaching the contents and also goes through the ability of the educator to

welcome and relate to his students.

Despite a pandemic moment, extremely challenging, especially for Foreign Language Teaching, especially English, this research emphasized the need to follow the advancement of digital technologies and transform new challenges into knowledge, to optimize the adaptability of individuals, in view of the emerging educational contexts that have already been configured as a new reality at this time.

It is concluded, therefore, that according to the study presented and the current readings on foreign language teaching, in interface with multiple methods and possibilities in Virtual Learning Environments, the new technological resources contribute and stimulate new didactic-pedagogical perspectives, in this panorama of Remote Teaching, driven by the pandemic. That said, it is possible to offer a teaching of LE, in Bilingual Programs, in Primary Schools in Brazil today, even in Elementary School, distance and quality, with priority to the development of all the language skills that an apprentice must activate, for a significant and efficient Foreign Language learning.

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^[1] Master in Letters from UFRRJ; Specialist in Portuguese Language at Faculdade São Luis /SP; Graduated and Graduated in Letters from UERJ.

^[2] Master's degree in Education from UDE/Uruguay; ICT Specialist at UFJF; Graduated and Graduated in Pedagogy from the Faculty of Philosophy of Itaperuna/ RJ.

^[3] Master in Communication and Culture from UFRJ; Graduated in Journalism from UFRJ; Graduated in Pedagogy from UNIRIO.

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