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Improvement program to develop listening skill in Higher Education teachers

Programa de superación para desarrollar la habilidad escuchar en los docentes de la Educación Superior

Programa de melhoramento para desenvolver a habilidade de escuta nos professores do Ensino Superior

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal communication in the university classroom constitutes one of the essential supports for the apprehension of knowledge, skills and values. Therefore, the problems that appear in it can cause a formative impact that is not always positive. In this direction, this article aims to propose an improvement program aimed at developing the ability to listen in Higher

Education teachers as an essential way for the work they do. This is characterized by being flexible and dynamic. Methods were used mainly at the theoretical level within which analysis-synthesis and induction-deduction stand out. From the empirical level, documentary analysis was used on the legal basis that supports the permanent training of teachers at the higher level. A survey was also applied to the 52 teachers who make up the research group "Comprehensive training of subjects in the educational process, from attention to diversity." The fundamental result that is proposed is an improvement program aimed at developing listening skills in Higher Education teachers.

Keywords: teachers; ongoing training; listening skills; improvement program.

RESUMEN

La comunicación interpersonal en el aula universitaria constituye uno de los soportes fundamentales para la aprehensión de conocimientos, habilidades y valores. Por ende, las problemáticas que en ella se manifiestan pueden provocar un impacto formativo no siempre positivo. En esta dirección, el presente artículo tiene como objetivo proponer un programa de superación dirigido al desarrollo de la habilidad escuchar en los docentes de la Educación Superior, como vía esencial para la labor que realizan. Este se caracteriza por ser flexible y dinámico. Se emplearon métodos, fundamentalmente del nivel teórico, dentro de los cuales se destacan el análisis -síntesis e inducción-deducción. Del nivel empírico se empleó el análisis documental, sobre la base legal que soporta la formación permanente de los docentes en el nivel superior. También se aplicó una encuesta a los 52 docentes que integran el grupo de investigación "Formación integral de los sujetos del proceso educativo, desde la atención a la diversidad". El resultado

fundamental que se propone es un programa de superación dirigido al desarrollo de la habilidad escuchar en los docentes de la Educación Superior.

Palabras clave: docentes; formación permanente; habilidad escuchar; programa de superación.

RESUMO

A comunicação interpessoal na sala de aula da universidade constitui um dos suportes fundamentais para a apreensão de conhecimentos, habilidades e valores. Por conseguinte, os problemas que nela surgem podem ter um impacto formativo que nem sempre é positivo. Neste sentido, este artigo visa propor um programa de melhoria destinado a desenvolver a habilidade de ouvir nos professores do Ensino Superior, como uma forma essencial para o trabalho que realizam. Caracteriza-se pela sua flexibilidade e dinamismo. Foram utilizados métodos, fundamentalmente do nível teórico, dentro dos quais se destacam a análise-síntese e a indução-dedução. A partir do nível empírico, foi utilizada a análise documental, sobre a base legal que apoia a formação permanente de professores ao nível superior. Foi também aplicado um inquérito aos 52 professores que compõem o grupo de investigação "Formação integral das disciplinas do processo educativo, da atenção à diversidade". O resultado fundamental proposto é um programa de melhoria destinado a desenvolver a habilidade de escuta dos professores do Ensino Superior.

Palavras-chave: professores; educação contínua; habilidade de escuta; programa de melhoramento.

INTRODUCTION

Personal growth that is given in the formative process occurs, basically, in interaction with other human beings. The subject assimilates the universal culture in relation to its peers, at the same time that it guides its behavior and action in harmony with the world. This implies that the current education demand and of an educator to assume important roles.

Such aspirations include a teacher capable of organizing the interaction with the students and the direction of the educational process in general, for which it requires the development of communication skills, then, not only the need to educate academically but communicative mind, which is part of the integral formation of the human being arises. However, this is still not a reality, because universities are given greater attention to training and skills development of technical and professional nature, to the detriment of those related to the communicative.

Historically, teachers have been considered as good communicators, although not in all cases it is appreciated in the same way. In other words, the fact that teachers can adequately emit messages does not imply that they are good communicators. If it is appreciated that in the communication process the sender is also a receiver, in this two-way process listening becomes very important. Therefore, teachers should possess speaking skills at any stage and, at the same time, to listen to the caller. In the direction of the educational process, it is not enough to have knowledge that facilitates exchange, explanation and conviction; it is also necessary to listen carefully to understand the message from the point of view of learners.

In the research carried out by the authors, a large number of investigations

that address the issue of educational communication and the formation of communicative skills associated with different areas of science are evidenced, which propose diverse alternatives. Among them, it is valid to recognize the works of: Amayuela (2017); Fuentes (2017); De Paz and Ortiz (2019). There is less interest in studies related to the development of communication skills of teachers, although there are some studies such as those by Motta (2017); Suárez, Marzo and Hernández (2019), who have analyzed different perspectives of the communication process and the development of associated skills.

In such works it is recognized that, through communication, feelings, emotions and needs are shared, among others. It also defines the communication skills, but operations and actions that should be considered for treatment in the classroom cannot define. Thus, it is noticed (in such proposals) greater attention towards initial training students of different careers.

Few references close to the treatment of the listening skill development in university teachers, as an aspect that can limit performance professional functions were located. There were also insufficient the pedagogical proposals for teaching the methodological theoretical treatment, since the permanent formation of teachers in Cuba. For these reasons, this article aims to propose an improvement program aimed at developing listening skills in Cuban Higher Education teachers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the performance of this work, the method of analysis synthesis was applied, which allowed the valuation

of the particularities of the development of listening skills, from exploration carried out in the work of several Cuban authors and foreigners. It was also used the method of induction-deduction, which facilitated the realization and expression of the conclusions of the work.

From the empirical level, he resorted to documentary analysis, on the legal basis supporting the continuing education of teachers at the top level in Cuba: Resolution Ministerial of Education No. 140 of 2019 Regulations Education Graduate, methodology plans of the University of Camagüey from the years 2018, 2019 and 2020, with the idea of determining the budgets that support it, as well as the modalities of teaching improvement recognized in said documents and the treatment they offer to the ability to listen.

In the search for the path of solution to the problem, a survey of 52 teachers who make up the research group "integral formation of the subjects of the educational process, from the attention to diversity" was applied. These teachers are part of the cloister of the different careers of the University "Ignacio Agramonte Loynaz" of Camagüey province, Cuba. The use of this technique allowed collecting information on the degree of knowledge of teachers about listening skills, methodological treatment or other ways used to develop listening skills in the ongoing training process.

From the use of methodological triangulation, the strengths and weaknesses of the development of listening skills of teachers of the University of Camagüey were determined. The main problems underlying each module and session that make up the improvement program presented in this article are detected.

RESULTS

The analysis was performed to the legal basis supporting the continuing education of teachers in the higher level was supported by Ministerial Resolution of Education No. 140 of 2019, Regulations Graduate Education and methodological plans of the University of Camagüey from the years 2018, 2019 and 2020. The results obtained allowed to recognize the essential theoretical idea that underpins the definition of professional development and its relation to lifelong learning, which took into account the proposal made in this article. The methodological work plans, although contain core aspects for the improvement of teachers, do not reveal specific actions directed at issues related to the development of communication skills; neither in particular to the ability to listen.

The survey, applied to the 52 teachers who make up the research group "Comprehensive training of subjects in the educational process, based on attention to diversity", revealed strengths and weaknesses in the area of ongoing teacher training. Among the first, the recognition of the development of listening skills as one of the most important skills of teachers and the favorable disposition towards their treatment in the area of improvement. However, the teachers agreed that this skill has not been worked on in a sustained manner in the different improvement modalities through which they have passed, nor as part of the topics discussed within the methodological work. Also, the need for the existence of improvement programs that contribute to the development of listening skills was recognized.

A program of improvement to develop the ability to listen to the teachers

of Higher Education was proposed. It consists of general phases who allow their organization, planning and implementation.

First phase: This program starts from the identification of training needs of teachers on issues related to communication, associated with the key functions they perform. To determine these training needs, the authors propose the use of the methods and techniques described above. However, other variants such as the questionnaire, surveys or participant observations, among others may be used.

Second phase: The improvement of performance scheduling is done. To this, it should be considered aspects as:

- Clearly define the objective.
- Determine the content taking into account some actions and operations that can contribute to this end.
- Choose the method and modality.
- Establish the necessary resources, both human and technical.
- Agree on the frequency with which it will be taught and the place.

Third phase: The improvement that is carried out by a specialist in the field and is directed to the hierarchical level that is required is implemented. Finally, the efficiency of its implementation is evaluated. This means that it is necessary to observe if the given information was assimilated and put into practice.

The use of participatory methods is suggested, which bring teachers closer to the process of communication in general and listening in particular. Such methods may favor that the subjects of the process must feel motivated, necessary and prepared to offer solution to the

problems presented in the educative work.

The program consists of the following structure:

- General objective
- Admission profile
- Graduate profile
- Duration of the program
- Problems faced by teachers in communicative order
- Structure of the program

General objective of the program: to contribute to develop the ability to listen in university teaching.

Admission Profile: university teachers in order to acquire knowledge, skills and values in their training.

Graduate profile: The university teachers who graduate from the program, to develop the ability to listen will be able to establish an affective and accurate communication. They will face educational missions entrusted and circumstances of life with greater chances of success. They will establish appropriate interpersonal relationships. They will rise the ability of perception and transmission of messages and could solve the problems identified in their actions in a positive way.

Duration of the program: The program to develop the ability to listen is designed to perform in three modules, possible to run on a period of three months. It may vary depending on the characteristics of the enrolled and the results of the diagnosis.

Problems facing teachers (these are examples of some problems that can be worked, may vary from one context to another):

- They do not know elements of the ability to listen, although they recognize its importance and

need for the exercise of educational work and professional training.

- They do not know the theoretical elements for the development of listening, specifically active and empathetic listening.
- Problems associated with the use of elements of listening that limit the understanding of messages in the formative context: interruptions in communication (associated with anxiety to finish the speech, which causes an inadequate understanding of the message).

Methodology: It starts from the determining of the strengths and weaknesses presented by the teachers involved in the process of overcoming. The fundamental problems presented by teachers in the subject of communication in general and regarding the ability to listen in particular are specified. Each module will be worked from marked improvement needs for the above issues raised, which are based on current theory addressed by the authors that define the listening skill.

The professor responsible for the implementation of the program must have recognized expertise in the area of communication skills and in the pedagogical sciences, which will favor his performance as a counselor. Others (may support this teacher) will determine the actions and operations of the listening skill that will be taken into account in the work sessions. Then examples of empathic and active listening expression will be presented to teachers. Each session may include the use of active methods, such as situations, simulation, role playing, working group for the creative problem solving, dynamic, self - reflection and critical analysis.

Organizational forms: The organizational forms selected for the implementation of the program

are the workshops and self-preparation. These graduate modalities favor the apprehension of knowledge, development of skills, values and attitudes that are reflected in the communication. At first, through the knowledge and information they receive and, at a second moment, through the interrelation that occurs with the students. The workshops and self-preparation will give rise to the theoretical and practical topics that are organized in the designed modules and sessions. The development of the workshops motivates to explain, justify ideas, seek information, manage the elements of listening, share experiences, learn to see other alternatives to their points of view and respect them.

Conclusions and reflections per session:

In these moments the most important aspects of the session by the facilitator and students, clarifying doubts and pooling some issues of the treated subject highlights. It is important that each session will incite to the student to apply what is seen to his daily life and emphasis on the exercise of the profession.

Evaluation of the

program: The purposes of the program, the teaching resources, the methods and strategies, the organizational forms and the procedures were evaluated by a group of specialists, teachers with experience in the field of Higher Education.

The activities proposed are designed to develop the purposes of the program and to transcend the framework of the classroom and directly affect the ongoing training of teachers. To evaluate the fulfillment of the purposes of the sessions, it is suggested to use various techniques and instruments such as: questionnaires, scales, self-report and external observers.

Essential Bibliography for the program to develop listening skills

(it will be determined by the teachers who run the contextualization of the program and its implementation; then, an example):

- Amayuela Mora, G. (2017). "Communication and its relationship with education in the university context". *Alternatives in psychology*. August-January: 8-19.
- Hernández Calderón, KA and Lesmes Silva, AK (2018). Active listening as a necessary element for dialogue. *Convictions Magazine*, 9(1): 83-87.
- Miguens Liens, EM (2015). "Know how to listen to first-rate skills in the teaching and learning process." *Cuban Journal of Health Technology*, 6(1): 31-41.
- Motta Ávila, JH (2017). "The attitude of listening, the foundation of communication and democracy in the classroom". *Cuadernos de Lingüística Hispánica*, (30): 149-69.

Structure of the program for the development of listening skills of university teachers

The program is organized by modules (others may be included, depending on the improvement needs of those involved in the process), whose theme is:

1. Ability to hear: Essential elements that characterize it
2. Theoretical Basics of the types of listening
3. Treatment of the main problems associated with the elements of listening

Each of the modules has a defined purpose. These, in turn, are divided into sessions, which were designed for each problem detected and analyzed from the application of a previous diagnosis. In this sense, the sessions have a purpose and a product.

Design of the modules and sessions of the listening skills development program of university teachers

General objective: To contribute to the development of listening skills of university teachers.

Module I

The ability to listen. Essential elements that characterize it

Purpose: characterize the essential elements of skill listening and its connotation for the exercise of the profession.

Session 1

Problem: The student does not know the elements of the listening skill.

Purpose of the session: characterize the ability to listen to identifying the elements that compose it.

Product: It will characterize the listening skill, regarding the elements of listening.

Session 2

Problem: Student does not know the importance of listening for professional practice.

Purpose of the session: It will identify listening elements taking into account the exercise of their functions.

Product: It will identify educative situations that allow recognizing the importance of the use of the elements of listening.

Module II

Theoretical foundations of listening types

Purpose: to analyze the theoretical foundations involved in listening.

Session 3

Problem: Student does not know the theoretical foundations of active listening and empathic listening.

Purpose of the meeting: to identify the elements of active listening and empathic listening from its theoretical foundations.

Product: It will identify the elements of active listening and empathetic listening for the development of listening skills.

Session 4

Problem: They do not know the main elements of the required listening in the process of lifelong learning.

Purpose of the session: To identify the fundamental elements of listening, necessary in the process of permanent teacher training.

Product: It will identify the use of the elements of listening in its ongoing formation process.

Module III

Treatment of the main problems associated with the elements of listening

Purpose: To identify the elements of listening skill that contribute to proper communication in the exercise of the profession.

Session 5

Problem: The student fails to recognize the essential problems of hearing it owns in the exercise of the profession.

Purpose of the session: To achieve recognition of the problems associated with the use of the elements of listening in the exercise of the profession.

Product: self- recognition of the essential communication problems related to listening, which will allow them to take on the change.

Session 6

Problem: The student does not know how to use the elements of listening to improve their communication with others.

Purpose of the session: To achieve a correct use of the elements of listening.

Product: To use properly the elements of the listening.

This proposed improvement program can be adapted to any training context and to teachers at different educational levels. What makes it unique is, without a doubt, the detection and treatment of the particular problems of the cloister. In this sense, each contextualization carried out of the same must consider the results of the previous diagnosis and will qualify the treatment of the topics by modules and sessions.

DISCUSSION

Universities are spaces for greater permanence of teachers and students; therefore, they

constitute a key setting for promoting communication exchange spaces. The teachers of these centers basically relate through the use of oral communication, which increasingly demands the apprehension of knowledge, the development of skills, values and attitudes, which allow them to establish the daily relationships that occur in the peculiar context of each career.

The authors of this article advocate the need to ponder listening studies, since it is not only the gateway to human language, but also has a major impact on other basic language skills: speaking, reading and writing. For his part, Codina (2014) states that people spend more time listening than talking. This does not mean that there is a greater disposition towards listening, but that man is more exposed to receiving information than to transmitting it.

Since another perspective, Goleman, as cited in Codina (2014, p.142), defines: "The ability to listen as one of the main skills of people with high levels of emotional intelligence, which determines the handling of relations, which makes it possible to understand others, which includes perceiving the feelings and perspectives of others, and taking an active interest in their concerns". This criterion is assumed by the authors, taking into account the purposes of the research.

On the other hand, the ability to listen, according to Salazar, as quoted in Miguens (2015), implies showing interest in what the other wants to express; It also, shows respect, appreciation and valuation. The need to listen in the act of communication is essential to learn not only in school, but in social and family life. Therefore, it is important to mean that knowing how to listen is a highly complex skill. Therefore, it must be worked from its theoretical bases, first, and then its

treatment in teaching practice, always in an active and empathetic way.

Active listening means listening to and understanding communication from the speaker's point of view. This understanding from the place of the subject recipient of the message, involves the development of empathy, the ability to put yourself in the place of the other. It is a basic condition of interpersonal relationships. Listening with empathy means making an effort to understand what the interlocutor feels at each moment. It involves entering your world and seeing things from your point of view.

Therefore, active listening represents a physical and mental effort to obtain the entire message with attention, through verbal communication, tone of voice and body language, in the case of face-to-face communication. This ability also allows the detection of moods, emotions, evaluations and attitudes assumed by the subject with whom the communication is established. In this sense, it allows detecting problems in time and minimizing misunderstandings.

According to the criteria of Hernandez and Lesmes (2018, p. 85):

Active listening and the signal to think before speaking and acting, which allows the development of personal relationships and contributes to discovering the likes, needs and concerns of other people, gaining trust and strengthening ties of friendship, also promotes good performance in work teams highlighting leadership which motivates and inspires to achieve the objectives. Finally, when

actively listening, there is a domain to control and direct the conversation towards the set objective, thus achieving the ability to influence, projecting an image of intelligence and respect on the participant.

All this is very useful in the university environment. The communicative teacher-teacher, teacher-student relationships acquire different levels of depth and nature. That is, at this stage of development of the personality of the subjects, the teacher (very often) goes from having a strictly academic relationship, to becoming a parent or tutor figure. Therefore, knowing how to listen becomes a necessity to exercise the profession. In this sense, it must and can be systematically worked through teaching improvement.

Authors like Martín (2015); Sosa, JA, Sosa, LR and Gonzalez (2010) have focused their studies on topics related to teaching university education, and expressing aspects, such as: the basics from a developer perspective learning and teaching, the role of the management of the comprehensive training process for students; Santaya, Breijo and Piñero (2018) propose the theoretical bases of the process of developing professional pedagogical skills, among others. However, the ways to determine (from the theoretical-methodological point of view), the actions and operations that support the essential skills for the performance of teaching functions, from the formative work, tutorial and, therefore, the direction of the educational process is insufficiently specified.

The Ministerial Resolution of Education No. 140 of 2019, in Article 19, maintains that "the professional development aims to contribute to the permanent education and systematic updating of university graduates, improving the performance of their professional and

academic activities, as well as the enrichment of its cultural heritage (Resolution No. 140, 2019). In this way, permanent training is identified as the fundamental objective to guarantee that graduates of higher education institutions update their knowledge and offer solutions to professional problems.

In the legal body mentioned above, it is required that the academic training can occur through masters, PhDs and postdocs. Article 20.1 is also recognized as organizational forms of postgraduate education, such as: course, training and diploma. Although they are not ignored other forms of improvement such as: self-preparation, the specialized conference, the seminar, the workshop and the scientific debate; all which find support in programs designed for the professional growth of teachers.

At present, the position of articulating the lines of research is defended with the preparation of the subjects from the professional overcoming. It is so also advocates for the development of proposals that articulate several forms of improvement, so that they can exploit the potential of each ones to achieve positive changes in the subjects of the training process.

From this perspective, the proposed program could be vented through several lays down the procedures des above. However, the authors of this article consider that the workshop and self-preparation would be the ideal ones to materialize the proposal made.

Finally, it is possible to recognize that the analysis of the works of authors previously referred to in this article, revealed the limitations related to insufficient theoretical and methodological foundation for the development of the ability to listen to teachers of higher education, from the

permanent formation. Thus, the need to identify ways to introduce the development of the same in the permanent training of teachers was appreciated. Regarding the latter idea, a program of improvement that offers a treatment to the training needs of teachers on issues related to the ability to listen and its importance in the basic functions they perform, all, which can contribute to improving of the link with other subjects of the educational process, is proposed.

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Conflict of interest:

Authors declare not to have any conflict of interest.

Authors' Contribution:

Authors participated in the writing process of this article and in the analysis of documents.



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