

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to carry out an examination of the role of explanation as a corrective technique in the teaching of Spanish at the third form level. This was done with two groups of learners. One group, the experimental, was taught through a cognitive approach, with emphasis on explanation, while the other, the control, was taught through drills without the use of explanation. Both groups were drawn from the same school and were taught under similar conditions.

Teaching was done on two levels. All items were taught at level 1, which entailed a recognition of their use in the particular context. Level 2 teaching was reserved for verbs only and this entailed an emphasis on person-number verb agreement.

At the end of the project, pupils were tested for comparisons in performance between the following:

- i) The general pre and post-test performance of the Experimental group at Levels 1 and 2.
- ii) The general pre and post-test performance of the Control group at Levels 1 and 2.
- iii) The pre and post-test performance of the Experimental group on certain items which were repeated in the test at both Levels 1 and 2.

- iv) The pre and post-test performance of the Control group on certain items which were repeated in the test at both Levels 1 and 2.

For the experimental group there was a significant difference in performance between pre and post-test scores at level 1 ($p < .01$), while the control group showed no significant difference. However, for level 2, both groups showed a significant difference in performance between pre and post-test scores ($p < .01$). It should be noted here that both the mean gain and 't' value for the experimental group were higher than for the control group. Regarding the items which were repeated, there was no significant difference between pre and post-test performances for the control group at either level on any of the items. For the experimental group there were significant differences at the .05 level in three instances and in one instance the result was close to the critical level.

These results imply that the overall performance of the experimental group was significantly better on the post than on the pre-test, while the overall performance of the control group revealed no significant difference.

Chapter I looks at the general problem and the writer's interest in the problem. Chapters II-V review the literature related to the project. Chapter VI is a presentation of the research design while Chapter VII

attempts to define the variables. Chapter VIII reports on the project, with special emphasis on how the items were taught to both groups. Chapter IX presents and analyses the data collected while Chapter X is a discussion of the findings, conclusions and observations.

Appendices include the test, teaching material which was used with both groups, a table showing scores obtained by both groups at both levels, a table showing the correct responses for both levels 1 and 2 and the student questionnaire which was administered.