

INSTITUTO ACADÉMICO DE IDIOMAS

# Kronos

REVISTA  
The Language Teaching Journal

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**REVISTA KRONOS**

Vol. 4, N.o 1 (febrero-julio 2023)

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KRONOS-The Language Teaching Journal, en su nueva temporada 2022, es una revista científica del Instituto Académico de Idiomas de la Universidad Central del Ecuador de frecuencia bianual, que publica en los meses de febrero y agosto. Su objetivo es la divulgación científica, cuyos campos de investigación se concentran, pero no se limitan, a la búsqueda de metodologías alternativas y novedosas en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas, así como en la investigación y crítica del corpus teórico y práctico alrededor de la pedagogía, didáctica, tecnología y cultura. Kronos está dirigida a investigadores, docentes, estudiantes, profesionales, y público interesado en el quehacer educativo.

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En los últimos años, la revista Kronos “The Language Teaching Journal”, ha difundido investigaciones relacionadas a prácticas educativas e innovadoras en el área de inglés y áreas afines, a través de la publicación de artículos originales e inéditos. Por tal motivo y con mucho agrado se presenta el volumen cuatro, versión número uno de la revista, misma que cuenta con ocho artículos académicos.

Los investigadores Carmen Moncayo, Jardel Coutinho dos Santos y Rossana Ramírez, presentan el primer artículo titulado “Efecto de evaluación de pares en las destrezas orales mediante actividades de drama-CLT, con estudiantes EFL B1.2”, en el cual establecen por medio de un proyecto de 40 horas con estudiantes de nivel Técnico Superior, la importancia que conlleva el incluir la evaluación de pares, el drama y el arte para un aprendizaje integral en el idioma inglés.

El segundo artículo, “¿Cómo estamos preparando a los futuros profesores de inglés? Un estudio de las variaciones curriculares entre carreras que preparan profesores de inglés” de los autores Diego Cajas, Sara Cherres, y Verónica Chicaiza; exterioriza los efectos, dificultades y retos que causó el currículo genérico de las carreras de educación utilizado por todas las universidades con dichas carreras diseñado por el gobierno.

En cuanto al tercer artículo de la autora Sandra González titulado “Reflexión sobre las actividades de servicio a la comunidad: Influencia de la enseñanza-aprendizaje a través de actividades de servicio a la comunidad en estudiantes de pregrado”, invita a entender la importancia de servir a la comunidad de la cual en un futuro serán parte como profesionales y cómo la misma influye en su formación académica y técnica.

Las autoras del quinto artículo, Laura Rosado y Mónica Vaca-Cárdenas en su artículo “Métodos, técnicas y estrategias de motivación para mejorar la habilidad oral de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera” evidencia la falta de motivación, temor y las consecuencias de muchos estudiantes al comunicarse en un idioma extranjero. A su vez, detalla las diversas estrategias, técnicas y métodos que pueden ser de gran utilidad para que los docentes puedan ayudar a mejorar dichas situaciones.

Helen Moreira y Carlos Álvarez autores del sexto artículo, “Uso de Padlet para la implementación del proceso de escritura” muestra como la implementación de esta herramienta tecnológica influyó en los estudiantes no sólo a mejorar la calidad de escritura en sus textos sino también a aumentar su confianza y motivación a realizar tareas de producción escrita.

El séptimo artículo titulado “La comprensión del alcance de las políticas educativas en el Ecuador: un análisis de su evolución histórica” de los autores Danilo Garnica y Fanny Jiménez presenta un análisis literario a través de la historia en el cual se aprecia como los distintos acontecimientos en el Ecuador han influenciado en las políticas públicas en el área de educación, y al tipo de retos se enfrentará la educación pública

Finalmente, en el octavo artículo de los autores Lisseth Chango, Gabriela Córdova y Olga González detalla las “Percepciones de la estrategia de enseñanza entre pares en la carrera de inglés en una universidad pública del Ecuador”. Esta publicación muestra el proceso y enlista los beneficios que conlleva fomentar y aplicar un aprendizaje colaborativo entre estudiantes.

La revista Kronos agradece a quienes han contribuido y colaborado con el desarrollo y producto final de la misma. A su vez se invita a la comunidad educativa y científica de áreas afines a enviar sus artículos y puedan formar parte de las publicaciones futuras.

*Equipo editorial*  
*Revista científica Kronos, 2023*



In recent years, Kronos "The Language Teaching Journal" has disseminated research related to innovative educational practices in the field of English and related areas, through the publication of original and unpublished articles. With great pleasure, the first version of the fourth volume of the journal is presented, which features eight academic articles.

The first article, titled "The Effect of Peer Assessment on Oral Skills through Drama-CLT Activities, with EFL B1.2 Students," by researchers Carmen Moncayo, Jardel Coutinho dos Santos, and Rossana Ramírez, establishes the importance of including peer assessment, drama, and art for comprehensive learning in the English language. This is done through a 40-hour project with higher education students.

The second article, "How are we preparing future English teachers? A study of curricular variations among teacher preparation programs," by authors Diego Cajas, Sara Cherres, and Verónica Chicaiza, discusses the effects, difficulties, and challenges caused by the generic curriculum used by all universities with teacher preparation programs, designed by the government.

Regarding the third article, "Reflection on Community Service Activities: Influence of Teaching-Learning through Community Service Activities on Undergraduate Students," by author Sandra González, invites readers to understand the importance of serving the community in which students will be part of as future professionals, and how it influences their academic and technical training.

Chita Espino authored the fourth article entitled "Language for Specific Purposes: Using Films and Current Hispanic Themes to Teach Specific Vocabulary and Context Related to Professions Online". In this article, she explains how the use of movies with specific topics can assist in creating content and presenting vocabulary that is pertinent to the professional needs of Spanish language learners. Furthermore, incorporating these films into advanced Spanish courses can enhance students' language proficiency, boost their confidence, and deepen their understanding of Hispanic culture.

In the fifth article of the journal, authors Laura Rosado and Mónica Vaca-Cárdenas address the issue of lack of motivation, fear, and the consequences that many students face when communicating in a foreign language. This article, titled "Motivation Methods, Techniques and Strategies to Improve Oral Skills of Students of English as a Foreign Language," presents various strategies, techniques, and methods that can be of great use for teachers to help improve the oral skills of their students.

Authors Helen Moreira and Carlos Álvarez, in the sixth article titled "Use of Padlet for the Implementation of the Writing Process," show how the implementation of this technological tool influenced students not only to improve the quality of their writing but also to increase their confidence and motivation to perform writing tasks.

The seventh article, titled "Understanding the Scope of Education Policies in Ecuador: An Analysis of its Historical Evolution," by authors Danilo Garnica and Fanny Jiménez, presents a literary analysis that addresses how different events in the history of Ecuador have influenced public policies in education and the challenges faced by public education.

Finally, in the eighth article, written by Lisseth Chango, Gabriela Córdova, and Olga González, details the "Perceptions of Peer Teaching Strategy in the English Major at a Public University in Ecuador." This article describes the process and lists the benefits obtained when promoting and applying collaborative learning among students.

Kronos Journal wishes to express gratitude to all those who have contributed and collaborated in developing and producing this edition. Likewise, a cordial invitation is extended to the educational and scientific community of related areas to submit their articles to be part of future publications.

*Editorial team*  
*Kronos Scientific Journal, 2023*



# REVISTA KRONOS

## Peer Assessment Effect in Speaking Skills by means of CLT-Drama activities-in EFL B1.2 Students

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**ABSTRACT** This action research study aims to determine the close proximity and significance there is between peer assessment and drama, as elements that foster Speaking Skills. The dynamics of these elements generate an efficient learning process. It makes use of a careful backward design as well as Gradual Release of Responsibility-GRR considerations, and the use of CLT activities. The project was implemented within a time frame of 4 weeks, 2 hours a day; a total of 40 hours were reported in this research by means of CLT-Drama activities-in EFL B1.2 Students, its impact and improvement in Speaking Skills. Drama is a unique space that promotes and sustains motivation, as it is a social learning ground naturally filled with interaction that makes transfer viable. Several assets derive from this experience: creativity, tolerance, nonlinear thinking, receptivity to other's ideas, breaking with stereotypes, helps self-esteem by resorting to expression of feeling, and opinions. This is a pre/posttest design study with instruments to collect data for the Quantitative research question: Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? Data collection for qualitative questions are based upon the researcher's field notes in reply to qualitative question: How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? Finally, an invitation to reflect on the importance of including peer assessment, drama activities and art to fulfill holistic learning in the English classroom.

**KEY WORDS** Drama, Nonlinear Thinking, Peer Assessment, Social Learning, Speaking Skills.

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### Efecto de evaluación de pares en las destrezas orales mediante actividades de Drama-CLT, con estudiantes EFL B1.2

**RESUMEN** Este estudio de investigación-acción propone determinar el efecto de la evaluación de pares y el drama como elementos estratégicos que fomentan las destrezas orales. La dinámica de estos elementos genera un proceso de aprendizaje eficaz mediante el uso cuidadoso de diseño inverso y de consideraciones GRR (Liberación Gradual de Responsabilidades). El proyecto se realizó en un período de 4 semanas, 2 horas diarias, 40 horas en total, con estudiantes del B1.2 de nivel técnico superior. Así pues, las actividades CLT mediadas por el drama, como espacio único que promueve sostenidamente la motivación, es el terreno de aprendizaje social, interactivo que hace viable la transferencia. Experiencia que resulta en varias ventajas: la creatividad, tolerancia, pensamiento no lineal, receptividad al pensamiento de otros, el romper con estereotipos, autoestima mediante la expresión de sentimientos y opiniones. Conviene subrayar, que este estudio de diseño pre- posttest recoge datos para la pregunta cuantitativa: ¿tiene la evaluación de pares un efecto en las destrezas orales cuando se utilizan actividades CLT-drama con estudiantes EFL B1.2 de nivel superior tecnológico?; así como también los datos recogidos para la pregunta cualitativa basados en las notas de campo de la investigadora, siendo esta: ¿cómo impacta la evaluación de pares en las destrezas orales mediante el uso de actividades CLT-drama en estudiantes de EFL B1.2 de nivel superior tecnológico? Finalmente, este estudio es una invitación a reflexionar en la importancia de incluir la evaluación de pares, el drama y el arte para alcanzar un aprendizaje holístico en el aula de inglés.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Aprendizaje social, destrezas orales, drama, evaluación de pares, pensamiento no-lineal.

## INTRODUCTION

Developing oral competence requires consistent practice and adequate meaningful practices that are real as well as useful for students' communication learning process (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019). The key to understanding the link between peer assessment and its effect in Speaking Skills using CLT activities is realizing assessment is undeniably a piece aligned to the success of the learning process (Wiggins, 1991).

Assessment traditionally has been disconnected from the learning process planning when it should be considered initially to envision learning as a dynamic holistic process that addresses the makeup of communication. Thus, peer assessment works towards learning. It is impacting and lasting for students provide feedback during formative stage that will allow reflection and necessary adjustments to reach final objectives, plus by providing feedback students reach awareness of their own learning process, giving place to meta-cognition (Joo, 2016).

Therefore, a clear understanding of a need of production entails the complexity of prioritizing a balance in the practice of the four skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening; providing opportunities for students to participate and do the crossover from the grammatical-theoretical competence to the pragmatic competence (Lessard-Clouston, 2018).

This study aims to report the effect peer assessment has in developing speaking skills providing students timely feedback to ensure their learning through understanding specifics towards improving their performance in speaking skills. Teacher should think of assessment as a unique opportunity of getting to know the individual process and to take the timely task of giving feedback for students to identify and learn from mistakes (Soulsby, 2009).

## QUESTIONS AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The literature review will support the following research questions: "Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? and How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students?"

The problem of effectively Learning English in Ecuador has to do with the following factors, English is a mandatory requirement to attain a graduate degree in superior education according to the Academic Regime Regulations (Consejo Educación Superior [CES], 2019) which implies an added pressure in students. Plus, along their academic journey students have not been able to practice Speaking skills mainly due to a traditional approach that stresses the importance of enforcing a Structural Approach style, by following grammar rules with an enormous teacher teaching time and little time for students' participation.

Consequently, students target grammar usage happens only in a mechanical fashion and their control and appropriacy to express their feelings, opinions in response to real situations is not clear, vocabulary complexity does not reflect level and pronunciation, intonation and stress is unclear and impedes understanding.

## SPEAKING SKILLS AND PEER ASSESSMENT EFFECTIVENESS RELATED STUDIES

Peer assessment in speaking skills with undergraduate college students addressed by a study performed in Hiroshima Shudo University (Otoshi & Heffernan, 2007) aimed to contrast peer assessment to instructor assessment. The results revealed reliability which depend to

a large extent to peer proficiency, directly connected to statistically significant correlations between student and teacher oral presentation assessing methods. One factor mentioned is the lack of both theoretical and empirical studies, plus the fact that evaluation does not have enough research in regards to this matter.

King affirmed that oral presentations include multi-faceted factors criteria such as: language, content, delivery, and visual aids (King, 2002). Criteria which are established by the teacher in assessing student's performance. According to a research analyzing peer assessment in oral presentations (Otoshi & Heffernan, 2007), there is a possibility for a biased evaluation. However, this also reflects the engagement there is on both sides, a narrative of the learning process events taking place in the classroom with the participation of its actors, assertively placing the classroom into reality.

Advocates for peer assessment affirm, it is pivotal to collaborative learning, emphasizing how it promotes autonomy (Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, 1981), responsibility and an active role in learning (Cheng & Warren, 2005). Cooperative learning is particularly effective in developing interpersonal skills, and teamwork giving place to meaningful learning (Shanti, Divaharan Lourdusamy, 2003). Nonetheless, Joo (2016) contrasted a research where test culture impedes being enriched by peer assessment, highlighting one necessary fact that underlies education in its context and culture and the need of considering both. Peer assessment has shown to be a tool that promotes reflecting on students' learning process through generating constructive feedback resulting in understanding and metacognitive learning.

## HOW TO TRAIN STUDENTS TO PEER ASSESS

Peer assessment is considered as a favorable tool, if adequate training is provided (Otoshi, J. & Heffernan, 2007). Training students in peer assessment should underline learning is the aim and thus, it goes beyond measuring levels or giving grades to their peers. Students should build their understanding on peer assessment as a contribution to the learning process, that must take place consistently through the process in several activities. Only then, students will take peer assessment as a tool to have an active role in the class by helping their peers as well as themselves and the teacher by identifying specific needs and to deepen their understanding of particular aspects.

## CLT ACTIVITIES

Communicative Language Teaching improves Oral Skills by bringing reality into classroom experiences to enrich communication with real life situations that are easy for students to relate to (Richards, Jack C.; Rodgers, 1999). Thus, it increases significantly their exchange of information, avoiding mechanical repetitions for communicative exchange will more likely generate unpredictable situations that give place to real communication (Richards, 2006).

There are many methods and CLT activities that can be implemented in a class, it all depends on the group and choices the teacher has made towards the benefit of their learning process. Some CLT activities to be mentioned are: Buzz groups, brainstorming, debates, outdoor activities, field trips, role play and some approaches such as case studies, project-based learning, STEAM, and others (Richards, Jack C.; Rodgers, 1999).

## THE USE OF DRAMA FOR THIS RESEARCH

Promoting speaking skills through drama results effective for students because it is decisive in deepening the expression of ideas (Hidayat & Apriyanto, 2019) since drama allows to cater students' diverse learning styles, plus it engages an active participation. We must remember each student has a different learning style of processing information, by means of visualizing, listening or through their body expression, plus it builds self confidence in students who are shy.

Consequently, when using drama, students are able to integrate all skills in their learning process facilitating the cognitive process. Dramatization is attractive for it generates creativity which allows students to work collaboratively in problem solving. Engaging students in the learning process is key to meaningful and lasting learning which also refers to learning by doing (Zafeiriadou, 2009a), understanding the need of classroom as a space of transformation (Freire, 2006), the fulfillment of the right every human has to freedom, through art towards strengthening expression and critical thinking (Shaheed, 2013).

Drama also allows learning through social interaction which makes learning significant, fostering Vygotsky's ZPD, zone of proximal development (Vigotski, 2000). This study will focus on drama since studies support the fact that verbal skills have noticeably improved proficiency and real-life communication (Hidayat & Apriyanto, 2019). One other advantage to be mentioned is the provision of a necessary change to lecture strategies, transforming Passive English to Active English which drama achieves by means of the use of diverse strategies and techniques. Drama also offers a powerful tool in problem-solving giving place to building self-confidence (Janudom & Wasanasomsithi, 2009).

Dramatization is a complex expression that requires introspection, reflection, feelings, emotions, bringing words alive and has room and flexibility to customize our own thoughts into a predetermined script and the author's lines, it allows to draw lines connecting us to certain characters, resulting in an appropriation of the material through a work that includes reality and imagination (Barbee, 2010). The use of drama allows infinite opportunities of thinking outside the box and relating to L2 in a functional way, understanding its usefulness in real life.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To start with this section, it is fundamental to understand what Action Research is. Action research is part of a movement that has been going on for some time now, it is a way of deepening the educational praxis with reflection in order to problematize by generating questions to identify problems and address them according to students' needs, catering and contextualizing learning with the active participation of its actors (Burns, 2010).

Action research displays the scope, action and power pedagogy has in deconstructing traditional patterns of teaching. It offers proposals that enhance learning, relearning, by means of reflection to prevent activities that lack meaning and that only reach the void of the immediate, displacing the urgency of the profound, lasting and important (Walsh, 2013). It is a way of bringing research (Creswell, 2015) into educational settings providing the necessary reflection to first hand reality experienced in the classroom.

The research design that was utilized in this action research project was a pre-posttest comparison design. Field notes, and a survey were used as qualitative tools, while pre and posttest were chosen as quantitative instruments. The independent variable Peer Assessment, and one dependent variable: Oral Skills Improvement. A dependent variable, that is evidenced through results of pre and posttests. Table 1 below shows the research design implemented with this action research (see Table 1).

Table 1. Research design for this study: variables and data sources

	<b>Intervention students: peer assessment rubric -in drama</b>	<b>Comparison of results pre- test-posttest</b>
Independent variable: PEER ASSESSMENT	1. Speaking (pretest) (posttest) 2. Researcher log diary field notes	1. Speaking (pretest) and (posttest)
Dependent variable (outcome): ORAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT	1. Pre and posttests 2. Researcher log diary field notes on research perceptions	1. Pre and post speaking survey

## PARTICIPANTS

The group that participated in the study was made up of sixteen B1.2-students who have approved prior level B1.1 that approved placement exam based upon CEFR level descriptors (Examenglish.com, 2021). Students are emerging adults, age range 21 to 25 years old. All students agreed to participate in the project. There were fourteen students that belong to National Tourism Guide Career program, one student is a Nurse student and one of them belongs to the Software Development Career Program. All students completed the activities of the Action Research. The final sample completed the pretest and posttest and participated in the peer-assessment intervention. Female students correspond to 68.75% of the students correspond to female students and 31.25% correspond to male students.

## INSTRUMENTS

Pretest and Posttest in Speaking Skills will be the instruments to collect data for Quantitative research question: Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students?

Instruments for productive skills in this research: Speaking would be based upon the researcher's field notes, as well as a survey, can be requested at any time, these describe the data collection for qualitative questions in regards to peer assessment. highlighting details of this process, in reply to qualitative question: How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students?

## RESEARCHER'S FIELD NOTES ON PEER ASSESSMENT EXPERIENCE

Researcher's field notes provide an idea of the day-to-day class learning environment as well as student's reactions to peer assessment experience, their interaction amongst themselves in individual, pair and group activities that students had prior to the drama performance. The importance of having various opportunities in peer assessment training, until reaching pretest and post-test.

## PROCEDURE FOR CREATING MY RUBRIC FOR THE INNOVATION PROJECT

Since this was a pilot simulating experience it allowed pertinent reflection and validity to generate improvements and to create a rubric that could be both complete and easier for students and teacher to assess and give timely feedback. The rubric is based upon the Analytical Cambridge Scales and given the specifics of my research innovation which is peer assessment effect in speaking skills by means of drama. The criterion included in the rubric contemplates the following: language usage which refers to grammatical and syntax aspects linked to control and appropriacy; vocabulary range that matches the contents of the lesson plan and innovation proposal; pronunciation and enunciation with particular interest given to intonation and stress, also part of the objective of this study; text and vocal work which has to do with clarity, expressiveness, articulation and an appropriate use of volume; and the interactive communication which addressed initiating conversation, and responding to conversation. The referred rubric resulting from this experience, is available upon request.

## RESULTS

### QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Quantitative results refer to students' pretest scores on the rubric that responds to research question: Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? as seen in figure 1 (see Figure 1).

The following criterion were considered: grammar and syntax resulted in a mean of 3,62 which denotes the use of target grammar usage: have to vs. want to and wish that showcase control and appropriacy topic related to expressing feelings, wishes, hopes, and dreams related to relationships in response to others in a dialogue situation, with a few mistakes and generally clear meaning; while it achieved an 3,37 in vocabulary which means students use a great amount of vocabulary words related to unit. Pronunciation score achieved of 3,37 denoting students' expression, intonation and stress as clear and easy to understand. Text and vocal work reached a 3,31 which refers to expressiveness, voice projection and volume while conveying a message.

Figures corresponding to interactive communication resulted in 3,37 which reflects the skills of initiating and responding when communicating with others in a dialogue situation. The total range of the rubric for grammar, vocabulary pronunciation, text and vocal work, and interactive communication went between 0 to 4; for the pretest students' results range between 3,31 to 3,62. A distribution of scores can be seen in figure 1 for pretest.

Student post-test scores on the rubric that responds to research quantitative question: Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? as seen in figure 2 (see Figure 2).

While the total range of the rubric was 0 to 4, but the actual range was 3.31 to 4 at pretest and 3.75 to 4 at posttest, displaying students satisfy above average 3.5 with some element of band 4. There is an overall increase in posttest students' peer assessment scores which describes and denotes the use of the tool is better understood, and its effect is evident in the development of the learning process and speaking skills improvement.

A paired-sample test was used to explore the research question, "Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities by means of drama in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students?", in a paired sample *t*-test.



Figure 1. Pretest rubric scores

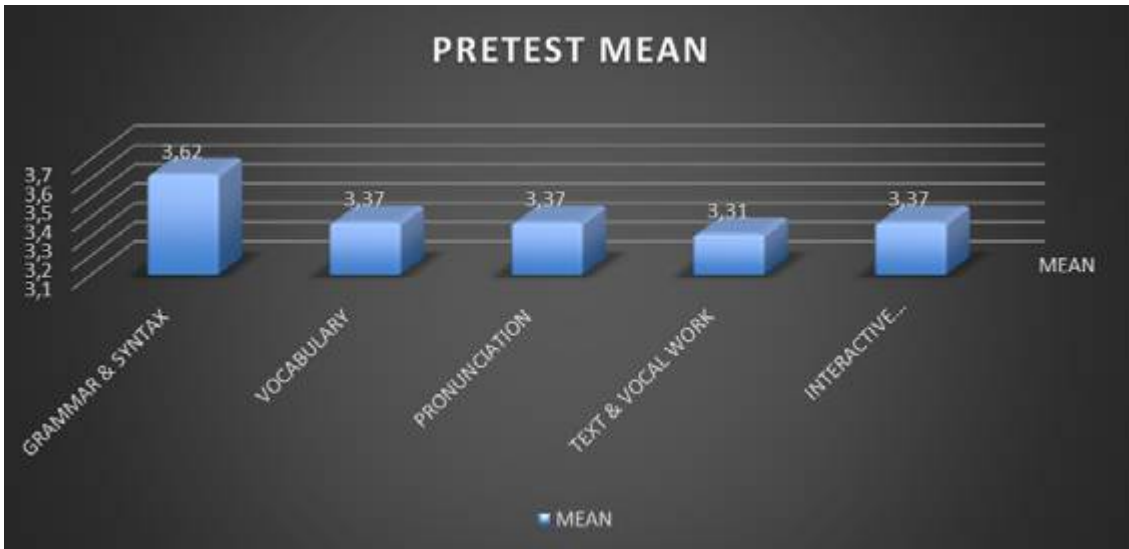
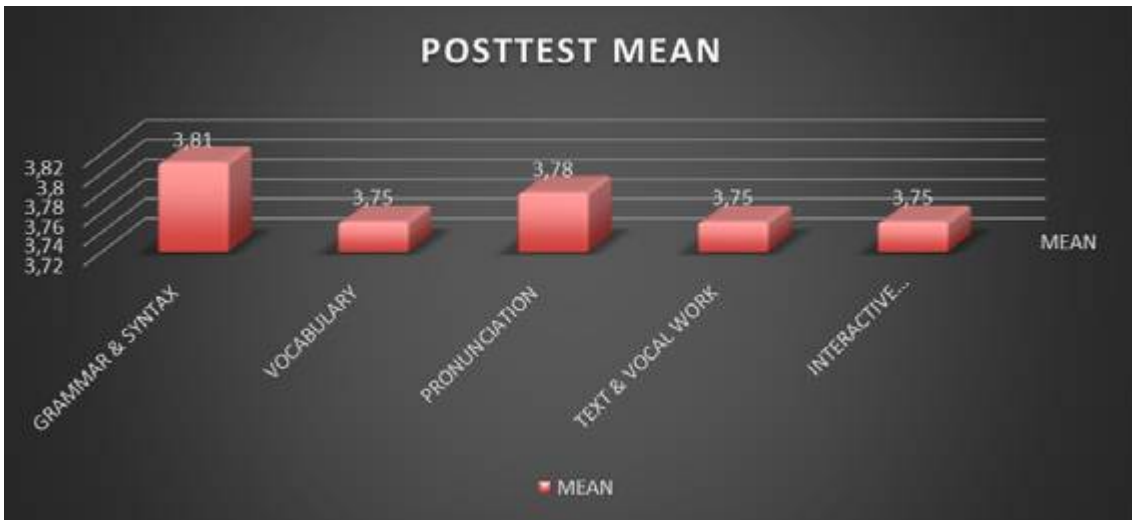


Figure 2. Posttest rubric scores



The paired -sample *t*-test identified a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores ( $t=-3.84, p<0.001$ ). The test indicated support for the alternative hypothesis, as shown in table below (see Table 2).

### QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Qualitative results made use of a survey and researchers field notes that respond to research question: How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? The graphic shows the answers categorized into colors, green representing metacognitive processes and critical thinking, blue representing acceptance to peer evaluation, magenta represents social learning, brown representing the importance of training in peer assessment, and finally identifying advantages and disadvantages.

The survey provided the following results making use of excel and color-coded formulas to organize and see the frequency of similar answers for qualitative data.

Table 2. Paired -sample t-test

	<b>Variable 1</b> PRETEST	<b>Variable 2</b> POSTTEST
Media	0,853125	0,9421875
Variance	0,00748958	0,00439323
Observations	16	16
Pearson Coefficient Correlation	0,28783081	
Hypothetical Mean Difference	0	
Degrees of freedom	15	
Statistical t	3,84585385	
P(T<=t) one tail	0,00079365	
Critical Value of t (one tail)	1,75305036	
P(T<=t) two tail	0,00158731	
Critical Value of t (two tail)	2,13144955	

Statistically significant for pretest is different from posttest.

Survey provided information on aspects of peer assessment as a direct contribution to metacognitive that ranges from 31 to 34%, the category of training as a positive resulting factor that goes from 24 to 27%; the social learning area identified from a 16% to 18%, and the advantages peer assessment had in learning process ranging from 14 to 15%, and just 5 to 6% were some considerations of peer assessment to have disadvantages. as shown next page in figure 3 (see Figure 3).

## SURVEY NARRATIVE

The survey describes data collection from students' perception on the peer assessment process during training and application of peer feedback assessment highlighting details of this process.

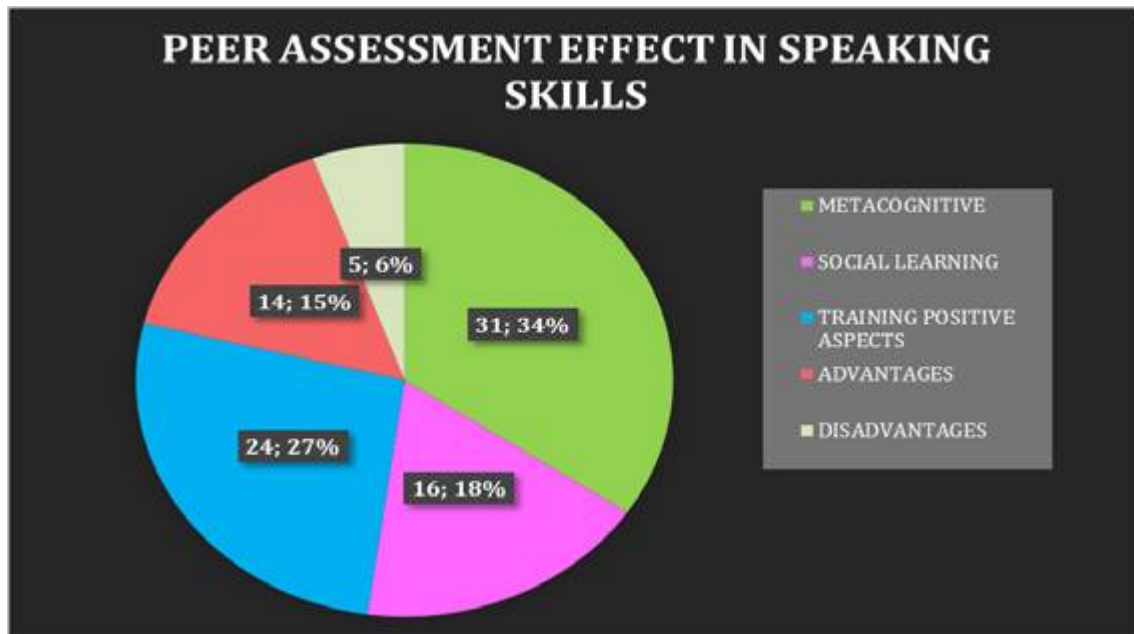
Researcher's field notes provide idea of the day-to-day class learning environment as well as student's reactions to peer assessment experience. Complete survey narrative with questions and answers from participants is available upon request.

## DISCUSSION

This research responds to research quantitative question: Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? and in reply to qualitative question: How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? It starts with great expectations that rise from the real needs tech college students have in expressing their thoughts, feelings, opinions and wishes fluently and to interact both in the social and academic spectrum.

The study reveals results and several coincidences some of the authors pointed out at the literature regarding peer assessment which defines an overall increase in posttest

Figure 3. Peer Assessment Effect in Speaking Skills Survey Results



students' peer assessment scores. Thus, it describes and denotes the use of the tool is better understood, and its effect is evident in the development of the learning process and speaking skills improvement.

Details on activities that fostered productive skills are registered in researcher's field notes, and provide an idea of the day-to-day class learning environment as well as student's reactions to peer assessment experience, the survey describing details on data collection in reply to qualitative question: How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students?

It definitely matches prior studies on the importance of training for peer assessment and providing several opportunities for students to peer assess, in order to reach an understanding of the advantages of peer assessment in learning by acknowledging their own process while providing feedback to their peers, particularly due to the fact that peer assessment is not part of our culture.

Accompanied by the fact that drama goes beyond words, giving the possibility of owning words in a dynamic relationship that gives significance to characters according to each individuals interpretation which filters spiritually, emotionally and physically, giving place to productivity (Barbee, 2010). Strengthening teacher's call to encourage meaningful learning activity that requires to breach traditional and official ways (Zafeiriadou, 2009b).

## CONCLUSIONS

Revising the initial literature review and research questions: "Does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? and How does peer assessment have an effect in Speaking Skills when using CLT activities in EFL B1.2 Public Tech College Students? In consideration to the problem it was found that is, in Ecuador English is a mandatory requirement to attain a graduate degree in superior education according to Art.80 on the Academic Regime Regulations (Consejo de Educación Superior [CES], 2019) which implies an added pressure in students for achieving this requirement. In addition to the fact that along their academic journey,

students are not provided with practice in Speaking skills mainly due to the agenda and requirements imposed by certain educational organizations that focus on traditional Structural Approach that enforces grammar rules over students' participation.

This research findings highlight peer assessment contribution to metacognitive and social learning and drama as a unique space to foster and sustain motivation. The implications of social learning ground which naturally gives place to interaction making transfer viable, showcasing collaborative learning as essential in generating learning, portrayed in results with a considerable improvement in speaking skills. Several assets derive from this experience creativity, tolerance, nonlinear thinking, receptivity to other's ideas, breaking with stereotypes, helps self-esteem by resourcing to expression of feeling, and opinions. It is an experiential learning that has proven to successfully improve speaking skills, moreover it also enables students with skills to cope with reality. The importance on trespassing traditional frames and methodologies towards the aim of understanding education and language are key in transforming life opportunities for many by achieving, doing and acting with creativity over passivity by means of implementing CLT activities-drama as a strategical method to cater students learning styles. This not only requires planning, but matching a lesson plan coherently to aim and achieve peer assessment and transfer for long term learning process. Planning must consider authentic assessment as part of the learning process; consequently, if planning aims a meaningful learning process, assessment should replicate this by being real and close to students' experiences by showcasing genuinely a link to life and to their goals to the future. When planning, assessment must be part of the initial reflection in order for it to match learning process goals, and to be aligned with the objectives and results pursued throughout the unit. It must give students the necessary consideration at all times, fostering a student-centered class throughout the learning process.

To sum up, classes should consider a variety of activities to cater students' diverse learning styles, as well as to provide opportunities for all students to activate their speaking skills, and gain confidence. Art is a mediator in my classes, through music, painting, writing, and decision-making when designing their own presentations, clearly evidenced in the Drama Open House where all skills were conjugated

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## How are we preparing future English teachers?: A study of the curricular variations among selected EFL undergraduate programs

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**ABSTRACT** In order to improve the pre-service formation in Ecuador, the government created an education standardized curriculum to be used for all Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) offering education undergraduate programs. Unfortunately, when designing this curriculum, curriculum developers did not consider the particularities of all different pre-service programs existing in the country, for instance, English language teaching and focused more on primary education. This lack of consideration for different education undergraduate programs resulted in difficulties in adopting the standardized curriculum in other specializations. This research presents the different variations existing among the English language teaching curricula which resulted from the attempts to adopt the standardized curriculum in English language teaching pre-service formation; as well as the challenges and difficulties that curriculum developers faced during this process. Using a mixed-methods research methodology, results showed that curriculum variations revolve around the total number of practicum hours, low percentage of the use of English as a means of instruction, scarce common academic subjects despite the existence of common professional competencies, and differences in the total number of instruction hours.

**KEY WORDS** Curriculum, Curriculum design, English teacher preparation, ELT, professional competences of teachers.

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## ¿Cómo estamos preparando a los futuros profesores de inglés?: Un estudio de las variaciones curriculares entre carreras que preparan profesores de inglés

**RESUMEN** Para mejorar la formación de los profesores en el Ecuador, el gobierno diseñó el currículo genérico de carreras de educación para que sea usado por todas las universidades que ofrecen carreras de educación. Desafortunadamente, cuando se diseñó este currículo, las personas a cargo no consideraron las particularidades de todas las carreras en educación existentes en el país, por ejemplo, la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, y se centraron más en la carrera de Educación Básica. Esta falta de visión relacionada con las diferentes carreras generó dificultades en la adopción del currículo genérico. Este estudio presenta las diferentes variaciones existentes entre los currículos de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros en diferentes universidades, los efectos que esto causó en la formación de profesores de inglés, y las dificultades y retos que tuvieron las personas encargadas del desarrollo del currículo durante este proceso. Usando una metodología de investigación mixta, los resultados muestran que las variaciones curriculares giran alrededor el número total de horas de práctica preprofesional, un bajo porcentaje del uso del idioma inglés como medio de instrucción, pocas asignaturas comunes entre universidades a pesar de la existencia de competencias profesionales, más o menos estandarizadas, y diferencias en el total de la malla curricular.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Currículo, diseño curricular, preparación de docentes de inglés, ELT, competencias profesionales del profesor..

## INTRODUCTION

### THE SITUATION OF ENGLISH TEACHING IN ECUADOR

In 2008 the ministry of Education created a project called “Project for Improving English”. The objective of this project was to improve English Language Teaching (ELT) in the country and comprised four main components. One, the creation a new English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum for primary and secondary education. Two, the use of the Common European Framework language indicators as the learning outcomes for primary and secondary years. In correspondence with this, the government also stated that students leaving secondary education need to have a B1 level of English. Three, free distribution of EFL textbooks among primary and secondary public-school students. And four, the requisite of a B2 level of English for all in-service teachers (fortalecimiento del inglés, nd).

In 2016 via a Ministerial Order, “Acuerdo Nro. MINEDUC-ME-2016-00020-A”, the Ministry of Education stated that English as a foreign language (EFL) must be taught in the primary and secondary public education systems. For primary education EFL has to be taught from 3 to 5 hours per week and for secondary education 5 hours, except for the last year of secondary education where 3 hours were allotted (Ministerio de Educación, 2016). Through this Ministerial Order the government manifested its interest in improving the quality of ELT in the public education sector. Regrettably, public policymakers did not consider the future problems that would result during the implementation of this policy, for instance, a shortage of English teachers as well as the current in-service teachers’ qualifications.

According to Directors in some schools, the shortage of English teachers resulted in demanding teachers from other subjects for example, ICT teachers or administrative staff such as secretaries to teach EFL in their respective schools. Regarding the in-service English teachers’ qualifications, there were two main problems: first, a low level of English proficiency and second, a limited knowledge of ELT methodology.

In respect of the English proficiency level among in-service EFL teachers, a representative from the Ministry of Education stated that in 2014 only 10% of these teachers had a B2 level of English; and added that this percentage has improved in recent years due to language training courses offered by the Ministry of Education (“Suficiencia en inglés”, 2018). In the same vein, the Deputy Secretary of Professional Development, an office which is part of the Ministry of Education, highlighted that 34% of in-service teachers had a B2 level of English in the year 2018 and urged universities to form English teachers with the appropriate competencies to effectively teach this language in public schools. She also stated that, although there were 9,737 English teachers in the public education system at that time, there was still a need of 4,273 teachers to meet public demand (“Solo 34% de maestros con suficiencia para el inglés”, 2018). To date, the government has not made public the exact number of EFL teachers needed to cover the students’ demand. Yet, it can be assumed that the number of EFL teachers needed may remain the same or higher than in 2018 since the government has not officially hired permanent teachers for the public sector.

Regarding the B2 level of English proficiency requirement for in-service EFL teachers, it is important to mention that this level needs to be validated via an international test, for example: TOEFL or First Certificate of English. Yet, attaining this level of English seems to be difficult among pre and in-service teachers.

There is no doubt that there has been an improvement of the level of English proficiency among in-service English teachers in the last years. Unfortunately, the overall level is still problematic, as mentioned before, only 34% of the current in-service teachers have a B2 level of English. This hinders the teacher’s class performance since it may be difficult

for them to properly carry out instructional class activities where they have to model the language to their students.

Language proficiency among the majority of recent graduates seeking a permanent EFL teaching position in public schools is also problematic, as the results of the English tests administered to these group of teachers showed. In order to have a permanent position in the public education sector, teachers need to participate in a hiring process called “Quiero Ser Maestro” (“I Want to be a Teacher”). This process is comprised of a psychometric test, an English test (candidates need to demonstrate a B2 level) and a demo class. Candidates who successfully pass all these tests will be offered a permanent position by the Ministry of Education. In the case of EFL, out of 2336 candidates who initially participated in this process in 2017, only 117 teachers passed the English test. In other words, only 5% of the candidates demonstrated a B2 level of English (Información Ecuador.com, n. d.).

In 2010, the Ecuadorian government stated that the Ecuadorian education was not a quality education and legally addressed this problem via the Higher Education Law declaring all education undergraduate programs to be in the national interest. In accordance with this declaration, Article 104 of the Higher Education Law stated that the basic curriculum contents and the criteria for the duration of the pre-professional practicum of undergraduate programs in the national interest will be established by the Board of Higher Education (LOES, 2010).

Following the legal demands and in accordance with Article 104, the Board of Higher Education, together with some HEIS, developed a national standardized curriculum for education undergraduate programs. The development of this curriculum and the implications for English teachers’ formation in Ecuador is described below.

## **THE ECUADORIAN STANDARDIZED CURRICULUM FOR EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**

In order to understand the reasons that propelled the creation of the Standardized Curriculum for Education Undergraduate Programs, it is important to refer to the changes that the Ecuadorian higher education system has experienced in the last decade. In 2010, following a rigorous process of evaluation and accreditation of HEIS which took place in 2008, the National Assembly (formerly known as National Congress) enacted a new Higher Education Law. This law aimed to improve the Ecuadorian higher education system via specific legal demands, for example: the inclusion of further academic qualifications for the teaching personnel in HEIS, such as a Master’s or a Ph. D. title, a demand to improve teaching and research in HEIS, and a more effective connection between the HEIS and the community through community outreach projects, among others.

With the aim of improving teaching and the quality of the undergraduate programs in the tertiary education sector in Ecuador, HEIS were required to modify their curricula. To meet this requirement, HEIS started working individually or with other HEI, for instance, universities offering engineering undergraduate programs grouped with other HEIS offering the same programs. Although there was support and advice from the Higher Education Board (Consejo de Educación Superior-CES) throughout this process, HEIS’ curriculum developers had the prerogative to decide on the type of curriculum modifications they would make in their programs. This, however, was not the case of HEIS offering education undergraduate programs where CES took the lead in the design of a new standardized curriculum together with 33 HEIS’ representatives.

The standardized curriculum for education, according to CES (2015), was an innovative curriculum proposal, based on the following characteristics: a) pertinence to the teachers’ formation, b) curriculum flexibility, c) the practice of action research as the main mechanism



to structure the curriculum, d) a primary focus on students via an academic and personal tutoring system, e) emphasis on research and f) the use of innovative teaching methodologies as well as ICT integration in education. Furthermore, this curriculum comprises 41 academic subjects to be taught in 9 semesters. According to the creators of this curriculum, one of the most evident innovations was the duration of the pre-service teaching practicum which amounted to 1800 hours progressively distributed along the 9 semesters.

Although the design and the principles of this standardized curriculum may have been helpful and innovative for primary education undergraduate programs, it posed serious problems for other specializations, for instance, teaching English as a foreign language. Conversely, to the government idea of curriculum standardization for pre-service formation, the existing literature in the area of ELT curriculum development provides different models to facilitate the design of a curriculum that can help the formation of effective English teachers.

However, what is shared by different authors is that there is not a specific curriculum developing model considered to be perfect for ELT. Finney (2002, p. 77) emphasizes that “there is a need [...] for much more discussion and research before it can be said that there is a coherent model of ELT curriculum planning and development”. Thus, the importance of avoiding adhering to a single model for curriculum development. Instead, curriculum planners need take advantage of the different models in order to facilitate the development of students’ professional competencies.

In the case of English teaching pre-service formation, the curriculum needs to respond to the current situation of English teaching in the country as well as the reality that future teachers will face once they finish university and insert in the national education sector.

The need of developing an Innovative Curriculum for English Teaching Undergraduate Programs

In the country, there are 60 HEIS. This includes public, private and co-funded institutions (Co-funded HEIS are institutions partially funded by the government and students’ fees). Out of this number, 17 HEIS offer English language teaching undergraduate programs, 15 on a face-to-face mode and 2 online. This number represents the 28% of Ecuadorian universities. Moreover, this percentage also shows the students’ interest in English language teaching pre-service formation.

A high student interest in pursuing an English teaching degree poses a huge responsibility for HEIS; especially under the current in-service situation in the country where English proficiency and ELT methodology is problematic. In order to address these problems, curriculum planners in HEIS need to innovate their pre-service curriculum. Innovation, however, is not always an easy task, according to Humphries and Burns (2015, p 293), innovation “often ends in failure due to educational policies that are incompatible with the realities of the teaching context, insufficient levels of professional support, and inadequate teaching materials”. For this reason, curriculum innovation cannot be seen as an isolated process; it is rather a cooperative act in which national education authorities, HEI authorities, teachers and students need to be involved. Policies, on the other hand, have a prime role since they need to pave the way for facilitating innovation and avoiding prescriptions.

To facilitate innovation, according to Humphries and Burns (2015, p 239-240), there are three aspects that need to be considered, for instance “Teachers’ expectations” which relates to teachers’ beliefs and practice, “External constraints” such as “government policies, mandated materials, teacher performance evaluations... stakeholders” and “Internal constraints” like “working conditions and the institutional culture”. Out of these three aspects important consideration needs to be paid to teachers since an effective curriculum implementation and innovation lies in their hands. Hence, the need to incorporate their voices in “curriculum development” (Rahman, Pandian and Kaur, 2018, p. 121).

In order to effect change in English language teaching pre-service formation, curriculum innovation cannot be seen as a series of general steps that need to be mechanically

followed and without proper reflection. First, it needs to respond to the HEI's ethos and second "be underpinned by a clear educational philosophy" (McKimm and Jones 2017, 2015, p 520). These two aspects become the heart of the pre-service formation curriculum since they form the values and attitudes of future English teachers.

In addition, McKimm and Jones (2017) present 12 tips for curriculum development and considering the national conditions; the following suggestions can be considered for creating a pertinent pre-service curriculum: 1. "Analyze the internal environment and culture", 2. "Develop a strategy for change involving key stakeholders", 3. "Choose the right combination of approaches to change", 4. "Plan for transition and loss of competence" and 5. "Don't underestimate the complexity".

In relation to the formation of English teachers, Kuhlman and Knežević (2014, p. 7) suggest the use of standards; and based on the work of other authors, they mention 3 types, for instance, a) "Content standards" which comprises "linguistics, language acquisition and development, and culture". b) "Pedagogical standards", which refers to the development of students' English teaching competency and "assessment", and c) "Performance standards" which help check whether the previous standards have been met or not. The use of these standards can be helpful for curriculum planners to check the extent of completion of English proficiency acquisition and teaching competency. However, standards need to remain general to avoid prescriptions.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study was a mixed-methods design. The core of this method is "the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches" with an aim of providing "a more complex understanding of a research problem" (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). Thus, in order to identify the challenges that language planners experienced during the process of developing their curricula for the English teaching undergraduate programs, this study employed a quantitative part which was followed by a qualitative part. In the quantitative part, there was an analysis of the existing English language teaching curriculum of the participating HEIs aiming to provide an overview of the current status of these undergraduate programs in the country. In the qualitative part, interviews were conducted to 4 Directors belonging to the participating universities. This with the aim to explore further the results obtained from the quantitative part. For the quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics were used and for the qualitative data, a thematic analysis.

The research question that this study aimed to answer was: what are the challenges that HEIs' curriculum planners experienced in adapting the national standardized curriculum for education undergraduate programs in developing their English language teaching curriculum?

## PARTICIPANTS

An invitation to participate in this study was sent to 15 different Directors of English language teaching pre-service programs. Directors from the two HEIs that offer online English Teaching undergraduate programs were not invited. This because due to their online nature, these undergraduate programs use a different curriculum and content organization. After sending the invitations, 8 Directors accepted to participate in this research and provided their curricula for this study; and 4 program Directors were later interviewed.

The criteria for selecting the 4 Directors for the interview were: a) have actively participated in the development of the current curriculum and b) have been a program Director under the new curriculum for at least 2 years.

In order to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, the name of the HEIS and Directors will not be mentioned. Hereafter, HEIS will simply be identified as HEI1, HEI2, HEI3, HEI4, HEI5, HEI6, HEI7 and HEI8, and program Directors from these HEIS as Directors.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

In Ecuador, CES is the government office in charge of legally authorize the opening of any new programs offered by public and private HEIS, as well as allowing any existing curriculum modifications. In this sense, HEIS seeking to offer new undergraduate programs to students need to send a curriculum proposal to CES for revision and official approval. In this office, there are different specialists whose task is to oversee whether proposals meet the minimum requirements needed for the legal approval and subsequent official authorization. HEIS cannot offer any undergraduate program which has not been officially authorized by CES. The same process applies for intended modification to existing curricula.

Once HEIS send their curriculum proposal to CES, one specialist is assigned for overseeing the whole process until its final approval. The main roles of the CES specialist are first, to check the proposal's technical aspects; for instance, minimum number of hours, institutional infrastructure, teachers' qualifications, etc. Second, the CES specialist must send the proposal to an academic specialist to review its academic content. The academic specialist is usually a university professor who works for an HEI in the same undergraduate program and has enough experience and knowledge to validate it. If the academic specialists deem pertinent, they will suggest corrections to the curriculum proposals. These changes, in turn, need to be addressed by HEIS in order to continue with the approval of the curriculum proposals. Third, the CES specialist must make a report recommending official approval of the undergraduate program, once all technical and academic changes have been made. This report may not be the same for all HEIS since the specialists are different and have different views.

The initial intention of the Board of Higher Education (CES) which was to standardize the pre-service formation through the insertion of a new curriculum, seemed not to be very effective for English language teaching undergraduate programs. Hence, by following its structure and demands, curriculum planners faced certain challenges, namely: a) development of English language proficiency, b) difficulties in combining the standardized curriculum content and subjects pertinent to the ELT pre-service formation and c) adapting the prescribed structure of the teaching practicum to the English language teaching curriculum.

### **A) DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

The development of language proficiency among pre- and in-service EFL teachers is a need that HEIS have to address, particularly when only 34% of current in-service EFL teachers and only 5% of applicants to the public education system have a B2 level ("Solo 34% de maestros con suficiencia para el inglés", 2018, Información Ecuador.com, n. d.). Regrettably, by promoting the standardization of a common curriculum, this particular aspect of language proficiency development has been difficult to address and resulted in serious challenges to HEIS' curriculum planners. Who, because of the official demand to adhere to the standardized curriculum, had to juggle between reinforcing their students' English language proficiency and including the subjects mandated in the standardized curriculum. A Director referred to this challenge in the following terms:

The standardized curriculum focuses only on general education and does not provide a guide for English language teaching programs. Preparing English teachers is different; they need to learn the language and the standardized curriculum does not consider this aspect.

Out of the 8 participating HEIS, 7 had established a B2 level in English as their overall English language proficiency goal for their pre-service students and one university a C1 level. The selection of a B2 level in almost all HEIS is aligned to the language requirements for EFL teachers established by the Ministry of Education. Though, there is an apparent common language competency goal, HEIS have a diverse organization of language input in their curricula, mostly in terms of number of instruction hours. This is shown on table 1 (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows the variation in the number of instruction hours for developing English language proficiency among pre-service EFL teachers. The HEI that has the highest number of English language input hours (HEI 1) is the institution whose aim is to form EFL teachers with a C1 level, whereas in the other HEIS the maximum number of hours is 1,720 and the minimum (720). It is necessary to emphasize that with this marked difference in the number of English language input hours; it will be difficult for HEIS achieve the goal of having graduates with a B2 level of English.

This language input differences may also lead to the students' acquisition of diverse language proficiency levels which, in turn, may influence student's selections of HEIS. Resulting in having high demand for a few HEIS and, opposite to this, a low demand for the majority of HEIS offering English language teaching undergraduate programs.

Directors of English teaching undergraduate programs are conscious that their students need to have at least a B2 level of English and fear that their existing curricula may not be able to facilitate the acquisition of this level. Unfortunately, due to the normative orientation of the standardized curriculum, most of them feel powerless to improve pre-service students' language proficiency by introducing innovation in their curricula and have ended up reducing to the minimum the English language input to their students in order to cope with the government's demands. A director referred to this in the following terms:

According to the Ministry of Education, when students finish their secondary school, they need to have a B2 level of English. We all know that it is not the case. Some students finish with an A2 level and, in some cases, they even have an A1 level. These are the type of students who come to the university pursuing a career in English language teaching. Regrettably, we cannot deviate much from the standardized curriculum requirements and increase the number of English proficiency teaching hours to improve language proficiency among our students.

## **B) DIFFICULTIES IN COMBINING THE STANDARDIZED CURRICULUM CONTENT AND SUBJECTS PERTINENT TO THE ELT PRE-SERVICE FORMATION**

In 2015, CES presented the standardized curriculum as an innovative proposal comprised of 41 academic subjects characterized, according to its creators, by: a) pertinence to the teacher's formation, b) flexibility, c) the practice of action research as the main mechanism to structure the pre-service formation, d) a primary focus on students via an academic and personal tutoring system, e) emphasis on action research and f) the use of innovative teaching methodologies as well as ICT integration. This whole curriculum was conceptualized to be taught in 9 semesters.

This structure, however, complicated matters for English language teaching curriculum planners since the standardized curriculum targeted primary education and did not include any subject which could promote English proficiency development nor ELT in general. A director referred to this in the following terms:

Table 1. Number of hours for developing English language proficiency

HEIs	Number of instruction hours to develop English language proficiency
HEI 1	2304
HEI 2	960
HEI 3	1440
HEI 4	1720
HEI 5	1160
HEI 6	1600
HEI 7	1600
HEI 8	720

The standardized curriculum had a predetermined set of subjects which are mandatory to include in our curriculum and due to the low entry English language proficiency level among our students, it is difficult to use English as the means of instruction for these predetermined subjects. Thus, we decided to teach these subjects in Spanish and reduce the subjects related to English proficiency.

The above excerpt shows that curriculum planners found themselves in a dilemma where they had two options; 1) change the subjects included in the standardized curriculum by those which are more pertinent to English Language Teaching or English Language proficiency and 2) use English as the means of instruction for the predetermined subjects from the standardized curriculum in order to develop academic content and students' English proficiency at the same time. Majority of HEIs opted for the first option which resulted in having a different number and type of subjects in their curricula limiting English language input as presented below on table 2 (see Table 2).

Table 2 shows that despite the official requirement of having 41 academic subjects for pre-service formation, curriculum planners have not strictly followed it and, instead, they have included additional subjects. Generally, the additional subjects are those related to linguistics and ELT. By adhering to this practice, the percentage of the use of English as a means of instruction among HEIs presents a vast discrepancy; for instance, pre-service EFL teachers in HEI 1 receive their pedagogical formation almost completely in English (93.6%) whereas in HEI 5 the use of English is very limited (17%).

What it is important to emphasize is that the 7 participating HEIs have stated that their students will graduate with a B2 level of English. This, however, seems difficult to achieve since not all of these HEIs have the same language input. HEI 1, on the other hand, has an appropriate connection with the amount of English input and the overall language proficiency level (C1).

### C) ADAPTING THE PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE OF THE TEACHING PRACTICUM TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CURRICULUM

Teaching practicum in ELT pre-service formation has become, according to the participants, the most problematic aspect in developing the curriculum of the English language teaching undergraduate programs due to the high number of hours mandated by CES. The standardized curriculum states that pre-service students need to complete a total of 1,800

Table 2. Number of academic subjects and percentage of the use of English as means of instruction per HEI

HEIs	Number of academic subjects	% of the use of English as the means of instruction*
HEI 1	47	93.6
HEI 2	59	37.3
HEI 3	52	57.7
HEI 4	42	66.7
HEI 5	53	17
HEI 6	50	66
HEI 7	53	52.8
HEI 8	52	78.8

\* % of the use of English as the means of instruction also includes academic subjects related to English proficiency acquisition.

hours of teaching practicum in local schools. This requirement, however, was not strictly followed by all HEIs (see Table 3).

Table 3 shows that there is a marked difference in the total number of hours assigned to teaching practicum among HEIs. Three HEIs strictly comply with the requirement of having 1,800 hours for teaching practicum whereas the rest of the HEIs have assigned between 344 to 1,640 hours to this aspect.

One of the reasons for this variation in the number of teaching practicum hours, according to a Director, is that Article 89 of the Academic Regimen Regulation (a legal document that helps HEIs operationalize the higher education law) states that the number of hours allocated to teaching practicum for undergraduate programs is 400 hours in general. It does not clearly state that education undergraduate programs need to have a different teaching practicum arrangement. Thus, some curriculum planners followed what was required by the standardized curriculum and others, what was stated in the law. In other words, curriculum planes assigned a number of practicum hours that they considered was appropriate for their students' formation. A Director illustrated it as follows:

In order to select the number of hours for practicum, we based our decision on the higher education law. We did not follow the standardized curriculum because it has too many hours for teaching practicum. When we submitted our proposal to CES for approval, the people in charge of checking our curriculum design never questioned this type of organization.

As it was explained in the beginning of this analysis, CES assigns a specialist for the process of official approval of undergraduate programs. This type of organization has resulted in idiosyncratic curriculum changes and, therefore, curriculum variations among the different English language teaching undergraduate programs, as it is the case of teaching practicum.

When HEIs put into practice their curricula, they faced a serious problem in facilitating the teaching practicum of their pre-service students due to the lack of in-service EFL teachers in the public education system. A director described this problem in the following excerpt,

One of the biggest problems we have is that there are not enough EFL teachers in the schools where our students do their teaching practicum. In some schools there is only one teacher with a university degree in English teaching. For example, in one school where our students go, there is only one EFL teacher with a university degree in this area; the other two are the school secretaries. Our students have to complete 1,800 hours but if there are no EFL teachers in the schools who can guide and support them, what can our students learn from someone who does not have the academic preparation to teach English?

Table 3. Number of hours assigned for pre-professional practicum per HEI

HEIs	Number of hours for assigned for preprofesional practicum
HEI 1	1,800
HEI 2	1,200
HEI 3	1,800
HEI 4	1,640
HEI 5	344
HEI 6	840
HEI 7	840
HEI 8	1,800

The lack of qualified EFL teachers is a problem that all HEIs face, yet it becomes more intense for HEIs with 1,800 teaching practicum hours. In these institutions, students start their practicum in the first semester and the number of hours increase as they advance in their formation. The worry that directors have revolves around the amount of time that their students have to spend in schools with non-qualified EFL teachers who may not add much to their professional formation. A director expressed her concerns in the following lines:

Personally, I believe that 1,800 hours is too much for a pre-professional practicum. Our students complain because they say that they are not learning anything from the schoolteacher. She is an ICT teacher and she can barely speak English. I am not criticizing the teacher: she is also forced by the school director to teach English. But our students cannot spend long hours in school without learning anything. I feel powerless because I cannot do anything to change this situation.

## CONCLUSION

This research focused on the variations that English language teaching undergraduate programs have and the challenges that HEI's curriculum planners faced in designing their curricula. Results showed that despite the existence of a standardized curriculum for education undergraduate programs, pre-service English language formation in the country is varied in terms of academic subjects, language proficiency development, English language input and the pre-professional practicum.

What is common in almost all HEIs offering ELT undergraduate programs is the exit profile established for their graduates. Almost all HEIs stated that their graduates will have a B2 level of English and a strong knowledge of teaching methodology. However, given the current characteristics of their curricula, achieving this profile seems to be elusive for the majority of these HEIs.

Despite the government's intention to improve pre-service formation via a standardized curriculum, its structure has caused the opposite effect in English language teaching undergraduate programs. Where, in an attempt to adapt the educational standardized curriculum to ELT pre-service formation, curriculum planners ended up designing different types of curricula, leaving apart the essential aspects that characterize EFL teachers' formation; for instance, a proper level of English language proficiency and a strong knowledge of ELT methodology. Thus, attempts to standardize pre-service formation through an official curriculum need to be prevented since it limits curriculum innovation, academic

development and the inclusion of the particularities that characterize each of the different education undergraduate programs.

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# REVISTA KRONOS

## **A reflection on community-service activities: Influence of teaching-learning through community-service activities in undergraduate students**

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**ABSTRACT** Service-learning constitutes a relatively new activity in Ecuadorian higher education contexts, which aims to provide the community in need with a service while the participating undergraduate students learn about their future profession while practicing in real contexts. This article presents the importance of changes and reflection that the aforementioned Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE) students experienced during the service-learning practices included in their curriculum. Apprentices who participated in this research were invited to an in-depth interview. They were asked to tell their stories and experiences during their involvement in projects where they taught English to children from 5 to 11 years old in a virtual modality in different PINE programs in the last year. These interviews were later analyzed using the narrative analysis method in its content analysis form, which consists of listening to the testimonies, after recording, transcribing, and coding them, extracting only the most relevant information for the research from students' narratives. After analyzing the interviews, the data showed that PINE students, after a time frame of participating in the aforementioned activities, experienced plenty of changes in their practices when it comes to their professional training linked to the community and reflection played a key role in that process. After the analysis, the results show that students' exposure to service-learning practices greatly influenced their perceptions about teaching and the practices they consider important during formal instruction.

**KEY WORDS** Service-learning, English education, reflection, undergraduate education, community service, vocational training.

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## **Reflexión sobre las actividades de servicio a la comunidad: influencia de la enseñanza-aprendizaje a través de actividades de servicio a la comunidad en estudiantes de pregrado**

**RESUMEN** El aprendizaje-servicio constituye una actividad relativamente nueva en los contextos de educación superior ecuatoriana, donde el objetivo es brindar un servicio a la comunidad necesitada mientras los estudiantes de pregrado participantes aprenden sobre su futura profesión, ejerciendo la misma en contextos reales. Este artículo presenta la importancia de los cambios y la reflexión que los estudiantes de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE), antes mencionados, experimentaron durante las prácticas de servicio comunitario (guiado por el aprendizaje-servicio) incluidas en su malla curricular. Los aprendices fueron invitados a una entrevista en profundidad. Se les pidió que contaran sus historias y experiencias durante su participación en proyectos donde enseñaron inglés a niños de 5 a 11 años virtualmente en diferentes programas del PINE en el último año. Estas entrevistas fueron posteriormente analizadas

utilizando el método de análisis narrativo empleando el análisis de contenido, que consiste en escuchar los testimonios, luego de grabarlos, transcribirlos y codificarlos, extrayendo de las narrativas obtenidas la información más relevante para la investigación. Después del análisis de las entrevistas, los datos mostraron que los estudiantes del PINE, luego de un tiempo participando en estas actividades, experimentaron muchos cambios en sus prácticas referentes a su formación profesional vinculada a la comunidad y que la reflexión jugó un papel vital durante el proceso. Después del análisis, los resultados muestran que la exposición de los estudiantes a las prácticas de aprendizaje-servicio influyó significativamente en sus percepciones sobre la enseñanza y las prácticas que consideran importantes durante la instrucción formal.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Aprendizaje-servicio, educación en inglés, reflexión, educación de pregrado, servicio comunitario, formación profesional.

## INTRODUCTION

Helping our communities has been considered a valuable service throughout the years, and adding that people can learn from those forms of serving during their formal instruction is revolutionary. Students, after learning in real contexts, are called to use those understandings in their profession in the future, which clearly constitutes an innovative way of teaching in instructional settings. This is how the concept of service-learning was born and adopted by educational institutions around the world. Service-learning has been recognized as one of the methods to enhance students' skills beyond classroom environments and make connections with their communities by understanding education yonder the official curriculum (Bruce-Davis & Chancey, 2012). However, we need to start explaining how service learning is defined. The most accepted and cited definition corresponds to Bringle & Hatcher (1996):

A credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (p. 222)

Once the concept has been defined, it is clear that using service-learning establishes sturdy parameters to simultaneously help three main actors: Students who need to practice their skills and abilities in real contexts, teachers who need to propitiate immersive scenarios for their pupils to reflect on their undergraduate track, and the communities who are the stakeholders of the services that the two aforementioned actors perform in order to cover the different needs they have at the time of executing the projects. Applying this methodology promises to not just help the students in their forthcoming careers but also enlighten them about the realities in contexts that are different from their own.

Based on the concept of this method, universities in Ecuador have applied this activity in their curriculum in the last years; a private university in the north of the country was the first one to include it in their General Education Program (Universidad San Francisco de Quito, 2022). Following this path, a public university located in the south of the country asks students to complete 144 community-service activities (adapted from the service-learning methodology) hours through outreaching programs; therefore, students from the Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (pine) major need to complete this amount of time in 3 semesters (48 hours each). With this aim, students from the lower semesters are included in various programs, one of them where they teach English to children from 5 to 11 years old. In the last 2 years, these activities were implemented through a virtual modality due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019.

These service-learning projects implemented by the aforementioned university aim to serve the community, create consciousness about their needs, introduce students to teaching scenarios, and make them reflect on their practices. Procee (2006) enounced that professionals from different spheres, including teachers, need to be skillful about reflection processes to improve and be pro-

fessional and self-confident about their practices. Additionally, he states that “in education, formal learning and reflection are complementary activities. It would be inappropriate to consider these two activities as competing aspects” (Procee, 2006). Therefore, it is not odd that higher education institutions wanted to implement these activities to help students develop a better competence in their teaching-learning practices and encourage reflection about their performance during these activities.

In the light of the importance of reflection, the researcher found it significant to explore students’ thoughts and reflections about the programs where they participated. Hence, a study was carried out with two students who narrated their stories and experiences about their time participating in service-learning practices and how it influenced their lives, practices, and attitudes towards education, community, and vocational training.

This study sought to answer the following research question: What are the changes that PINE students experienced during their service-learning?

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study was a narrative inquiry, which blends the view of particularities of people’s experiences and the possibility of an inquiry into these experiences to have an inside interpretation of them in a specific time and context (Clandinin & Caine, 2008). Recognizing that a narrative contains a story relevant to the narrator and the audience, we can understand that this methodology has a valid source of information (Moen, 2006). “Narrative analysis takes stories as its primary source of data and examines the content, structure, performance, or context of such narratives considered as a whole” (Wells, 2011). Furthermore, the familiarity students felt when talking to the interviewer was an important matter since, according to Savin-Baden & Niekerk (2007), “when using narrative inquiry it is important that the researcher is not only able to ask questions that elicit stories but also that she/he is able to position her/himself so that stories can be analyzed effectively”. Taking this as a basis, the present study was carried out with two students who narrated their experiences during their participation in these projects related to service-learning during the last two years and reflected on their experiences during that period.

## DATA COLLECTION

An in-depth interview guide was prepared and applied to two students who participated in two different programs in the PINE major from April 2020 until April 2022 during the covid-19 pandemic, which was why these programs were executed in a virtual modality. The programs taught English to children from 5 to 11 years old for around 3 months and camps that lasted about a month.

Students were prompted to tell their own stories about their participation in the different projects with no restriction, which was helpful since, according to Francis (2018), using the narrative approach can give the researcher a deeper understanding of the subjects’ insights and their personal stories. Five open-ended questions were asked to the participants so they allowed individuals to include any type of information they considered relevant according to their personal opinions and experiences. The researcher spent around 5 minutes with each participant to get them ready for the questions answered. The interviews lasted around 30 minutes each, and they were audio-recorded. Participants used their mother tongue (Spanish) since they felt more comfortable using their first language to express their understandings and ideas without any constraint of lack of vocabulary or fluency.

The students' narratives started with their very first moments enrolling in the service-learning project, their feelings, and expectations about it and then, they continued talking about their experiences while they were involved in the activities and how their skills and abilities started to change. Here it was evident that they went through a process where they embraced progression and improvement from the different events that occurred during their permanency in the program. Finally, they ended the interview by stating the experiences that marked them and how they remember their participation in the projects. Later, the testimonies were transcribed and coded, so the relevant information for the study was translated into English. The data collection ended when the interviewees exhausted all their answers. This was evidenced when their answers to follow-up questions turned repetitive or very short. Once the interviews concluded, they were transcribed and coded using the MAXQDA software.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The data analysis started with the transcription of the obtained information from the individuals. Once the texts were available, the data analysis was based on the guidelines provided by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber (1998) and one of their four types of reading a narrative: Categorical content perspective. This method, also known as "content analysis," was selected because the individuals' stories can be read by taking into account just the content and not the form of their stories. Therefore, the different utterances and topics that could be mentioned can be "extracted, classified, and gathered into [...] categories/groups" (Lieblich *et al.*, 1998).

After reading the transcripts several times, the process of coding was carried out using the MAXQDA software. The coding was based on stressing the ideas that were repeated or similar in the testimonies of the two students who participated in the study. Highlighting the comparable narratives from the students allowed the researcher to identify different aspects that were repeated in both testimonies. Therefore, these pieces of information were used through the content analysis method to detach them from the story itself and compare them to their parallel ones, extracted from the other student. This process showed that individuals who were part of this research went through alike experiences while they were part of the service-learning programs.

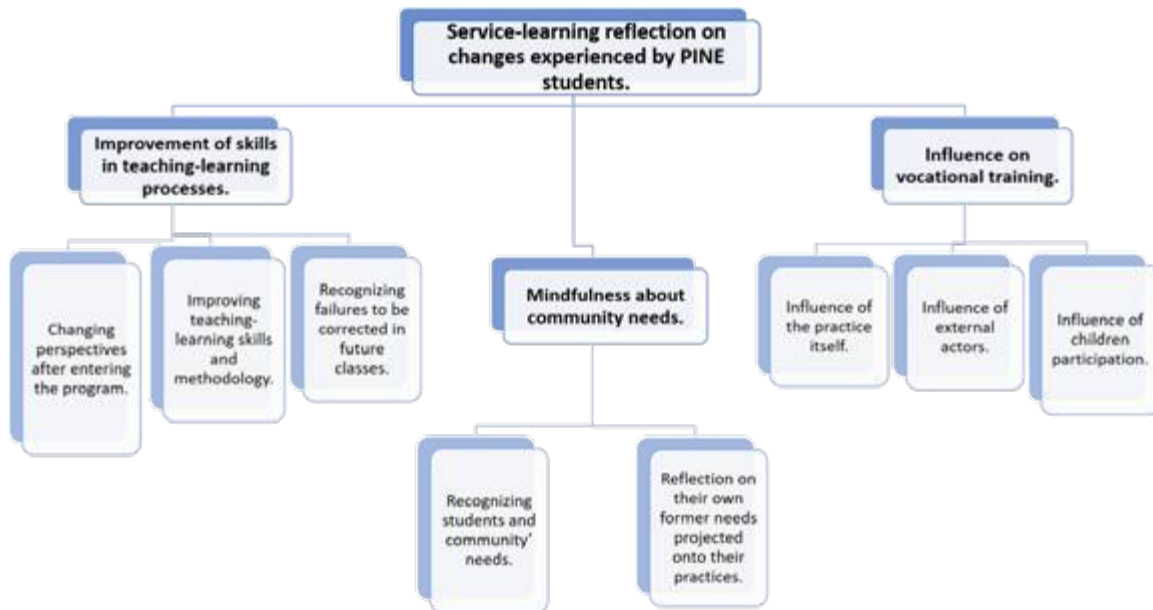
It is important to evidence that due to the similar stories narrated by the students the researcher could find, analyze, and reflect on the three categories that are explained below (see Figure 1).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### IMPROVEMENT OF SKILLS IN TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESSES

It is important to mention that the students started this process when they were in the first and second semesters of the degree program when they performed this activity, so they were merely starting their major studies when they participated in these projects. Nevertheless, participants expressed that during the time they belonged to the project, they were able to enhance their skills in classroom management, especially the abilities regarding their speaking skills and the facility to express themselves in front of the children. This

Figure 1. Service-learning reflection on changes experienced by PINE students



matches the idea that one of the main things students improve in service-learning scenarios is their confidence (Prentice & Robinson, 2010).

Participant A, the first student, told her story and started stating that she did not have a clear idea about teaching itself. Her initial words said:

Service learning is not an activity I wanted to do per se. I joined it because I was told it was part of my major curriculum. I did not have a clear idea of what teaching was, nor how to manage a group; however, three semesters have passed, and I had the opportunity to practice and improve. It was difficult initially because I was nervous, but later, you became more confident, and you can build trust among the students. (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

Additionally, Participant B was also interviewed, and she provided the following insights about the beginning of her service-learning participation:

I enrolled for this activity because I received a piece of advice saying that if I did not do it, I would be in trouble. It was not the best way to say it. Nevertheless, after that, I actually enjoyed being part of the program. Before the service-learning program, I would have said that it was just to complete my curriculum hours, but after I was part of that, I do not see it like that anymore. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

These findings contrast previous thoughts about education and teacher candidates since some decades ago, it was thought that “most preservice teachers believe that they already possess the attributes most important for successful teaching and that they will not have to face the problems faced by most classroom teachers” (Pajares, 1993). Hence, we can observe how the perception of education changed from ‘know-it-all’ profiles to more reflective and conscious undergrad learners.

This is directly related to the motivation and willingness that pre-service teachers have to acquire new learning (Ojala, 1997). For instance, if students felt that they already knew how to manage a class or teach, they may not have been interested in being part of the teaching program. However, contrary to that, students stated that their teaching practices themselves changed when they got involved in the process:

At first, I thought ‘I will be a teacher. I’ll stand in front of my students, and I will talk to them,’ but now that I was already in front of a group, it is not just that. It is much more than that. It is preparing material, catching their attention, and keeping everything on point because you need to care about your students. It is not just lecturing them but being humans, understanding how it is that they learn and what activities make them feel more comfortable. This process helped me improve my activities as a future teacher and be more confident about myself. (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

Participant B contributed to this idea as well:

I think the main thing I improved was my patience. I used to be very impatient, but now I have worked on that because I understand what I know they did not know, so I needed to be patient. Also, I learned to be a teacher; I learned how to teach those kids and not just tell them when something is wrong but explain to them and talk about their mistakes. I try to help them. I even had a notebook just for this activity where I took notes of the words I needed to research because I did not know them, but I wanted to give my students a quality class. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

It is worth emphasizing that “the increasing prevalence of standards, high-stakes testing, and outcomes assessment obscure the value of reflection, and much else, from fields of vision” (Ward & McCotter, 2004); nonetheless, in this study, the researcher considered reflection as one of the critical results due to the nature of the research paper. Then, as the third piece of information of this code, students revealed their reflection on the practices that they recognized to be faulty by proposing ideas to improve those areas:

I recognize that I need to improve things. I am studying my fourth semester yet, and there is a long way to the top. Mainly, I would say that I need to improve my time management. In some classes, I ended up not doing one or two activities that were planned because I did not manage the previous activities correctly, and I was just focused on seeing my students having fun. In general, I think I have to organize my classes better, especially in timing matters. (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

I used to think that the topics for my students who were 10 to 11 years old could be the alphabet or colors, but then my guide teacher suggested using routines and more complicated things, and at first, I thought it would be difficult, but then I learned they could do that and more. After the practice, I recognized I used to be very bitter. Then, if there is another chance to enter this program, I would be more dynamic and play more games because, in virtual education, it was sort of difficult to do that. In a face-to-face program, I would be able to see them, and I would do my best. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

Students, according to their narratives, evinced that the changes in their views and reflections did not appear from the very first moment they were involved in the practice. Based on their reflections and stories, we can show it was part of a process where they gradually acquired different skills, abilities, and awareness. After analyzing these testimonies, the key codes that were constantly repeated included the words ‘difficult’, ‘improve’, and ‘learn’. As an interesting fact, we can take these three codes to delimit the time frame that they went through during their practices to notice the changes in their viewpoints.

According to the testimonies, it is evidenced that students at first were afraid or unwilling to be part of the proposed project and it was difficult for them to start the process or follow the expected instructions for effective classes. Later, the ongoing practices pushed them to learn how to teach, how to manage a class, and how to put into practice what they already knew with the guidance of their teachers. Finally, based on what they already knew, they identified opportunities to improve their performance based on the students’ interaction and the effectiveness of their classes according to their own reflections on them. Thus, based on this reflection, we can remark on the transformative potential essence of the service-learning experiences.

## MINDFULNESS ABOUT COMMUNITY NEEDS

For the students who participate in service activities, it is significant to be aware of the issues influencing the stakeholder communities in outreach programs. Service-learning does not only focus on enhancing students' abilities but also on merging it with a service and reflection about the people who are beneficiaries of the performed activities. Then, we can highlight the importance of this by stating that "Scholarship on the learning outcomes of service-learning emphasizes the importance of facilitating connections between the academic material and the service experience" (Blouin & Perry, 2009).

Based on this premise, the participants also reflected on the outcomes they could observe from their involvement. Hence, Participant A expressed that:

I think the beneficiaries, besides us as students, were the people in our society. So giving these children the opportunity to attend these classes, giving moms, who do not have enough economic resources to access an English course for their kids, the chance to be part of this, I think is beneficial. So in that way, children can learn English.

From the previous testimony from Participant A, we can indicate that the student greatly understood and implemented one of the main objectives of service-learning, which is the awareness of providing a service to a community. Furthermore, this partaker has explored the justice cause that some authors claim should be included in service-learning from a political perspective (Lambright, 2008). Participant B, as well, commented on this particular characteristic of service-learning;

Some kids don't really know many things about English. The first group I had was from big schools (from bigger cities and towns) and performed well, but the second group was from a smaller town, and it was evident those kids needed more help. They did not know about colors or verbs that are very frequent, and it made me realize there is a lot of need for the language in these places. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

An additional important feature revealed is that both students reflected on their own needs when they were kids and remembered their school experiences as not very pleasant, so they reflected on their own needs when they were school students and projected them into their classes. Therefore, they expressed they wanted to change that in their lessons:

Sometimes, when I was a kid, and something happened, something like a stomachache or so, we as children were afraid to tell the teacher. I used to think the teacher would scold me, and I did not say anything. Now I think that children have needs and I need to talk to them, be their friend and know how they feel because that is important in education.

When I was a kid, teachers were not patient with us. They used to shout at us, just tell us something was wrong, and that was it. They never corrected us or gave us feedback. I tried to do it differently with my kids. I corrected them, I try to explain things well, and we have conversations. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

This last reflection should help students understand that teachers, even when seen as figures of authority and total respect for the kids, "are half-full vessels that need to be filled with the knowledge of outside experts" (Oleson & Hora, 2014). Consequently, as future teachers, participants reflected on the needs their former teachers had so they do not repeat it with their students. From this experience, participants identified unknown problems until then due to their lack of familiarity with some of the ill-fated backgrounds children in the program had. Fortunately, these situations triggered their reflection on the need to help these stakeholders in teaching-learning English scenarios.

It is also worth mentioning that these PINE students found out that English plays a key role in people's lives. They included phrases assuring English was important and that this language opens doors, which can be also taken as an indicator that they learned the value of not just learning a second language but teaching it to people who can take advantage of

it in future scenarios. As students of the PINE major, it is a vital acknowledgment that can help them reflect on the service they provide adding that this is one that only effectively trained English teachers can make available.

## INFLUENCE ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The primary decision of being a teacher may depend on many different variables such as tilts toward kids, previously identified skills, political motivation, etc. Nonetheless, service-learning can provide pre-service teachers motivation to ensure that they select the right professional training. In the light of this discernment, participants talked about their vocational training motivation and how it changed in this context:

These practices served as the basis of what was coming next. We're studying to be teachers and this is taking the first steps toward there. This process caught my attention and made me want to be better. It helped make me see myself in the future and say, "This is what I want to do, this is what I want to do for a living, and this is what I want to work for". (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

This was a beautiful experience as the kids helped me a lot. It widened my mind because, at first, I wanted to be a translator, but then I taught those kids and realized this is the place where I belong, this is my vocation, and I want to culminate in this major. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

The previous statements agree with some other studies carried out in different majors related to education. For instance, a study about pre-service teachers of Physical Education revealed that "positive direction students expressed about this service-learning experience and its influence upon their continued desire to remain in the PETE program with an ambition to teach physical education provides some contribution toward a democracy of meaningful learning through service" (Miller, 2012). It is also stated that this experience "reinforced their call to teach" (Miller, 2012). Then, comparing this study to the previous participants' testimonies, we can observe the desire of remaining in the same major pursuing the selected career after experiencing firsthand teaching.

Connected to the realization of their vocation, students also expressed that there is external motivation provided by different actors involved in the process. Some of these groups are parents and guide teachers who are key in developing service-learning activities. For example, the first participant highlighted the role of parents in her motivation changes:

At the end of the course, some parents reached me and asked me to continue teaching their kids in particular classes. I said no because I did not feel I was prepared for that yet, but it made me feel good about myself because it told me I did a good job and other people recognized it. It made me feel proud of myself. Parents trusted me, which is also part of being a good teacher. (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

On the other hand, Participant B expressed that motivation also came from her guide teacher, who helped students in different situations:

I think our guide professor was always there for us, and it was important. He never left us 'on seen', and he tried to help when there was any problem. He never blamed anything on us when anything went wrong but tried to find a solution. That was motivating. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

This last statement matches the claim that teacher educators should guide students in the creation of principles when performing their educator roles and also help them build heuristics from the different teaching-learning experiences. These actions will shape students' decisions and profiles as future teachers when they relate these experiences to real future contexts (Whitney et al., 2013).



Finally, students expressed their greater motivation that changed initial perceptions about their profession came from the kids, expressing that:

When I started teaching my first group, the kids were so participative that I loved to be in that class. When it came to the second group, they were even more participative, and they talked to me telling stories and expressing how they liked the classes. I could see myself in the future saying this is what I want my students to feel, I will try to be their friend and address them in the best way possible. (Participant A, personal communication, May 18th, 2022)

The kids helped me a lot all the time. They entered the classes because they wanted to learn; they liked English and expressed it. When the course was over, they kept telling me not to go; they said they loved me. This was amazing because I felt I did things well. This was the best experience, although I cried a lot. (Participant B, personal communication, May 19th, 2022)

Reflecting on the stories that the participants presented, it is revealed that they did not feel influenced only by the practice itself but also by the actors who were involved in the process. Therefore, we can highlight that here it is evidenced that service-learning is “a social network setting that comprised of so many individuals; the community people, school teachers/administrators, and students from different socio-cultural, background and locations” (Deba et al., 2014). Consequently, experiences are varied, multidimensional, and likely to deliver diverse results about students’ changing their viewpoints about their practices depending on these variables.

The obtained information made it clear that students who participated in this study found service-learning to be an experience that greatly influenced their practices, although they had to go through a process before the reflection itself happened. Students evinced they were afraid and even reluctant at the very beginning of their practices; however, as time went by, they acknowledged that providing the community with a service while they were learning and improving their performance as future teachers was even more valuable than just learning in the university campus.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the PINE students who participated in this study experienced significant changes in their practices after exposure to service-learning activities. Their teaching-learning skills, awareness of the community’s needs, and vocational training were greatly swayed depending on the different events happening around their performance during their involvement in the different projects and following a time frame of evolution during their participation. The value of activities like service learning in preparing students for their future careers as a teacher is demonstrated in this research. Students found out that their pre-conceptions and previously learned skills could be improved once they met real contexts and practices. Abilities to teach, mindfulness of the community’s needs, and motivation to pursue their vocational training were reinforced while they were part of these projects. Nevertheless, as it can be observed, students need to be willing to acquire innovative knowledge and reflect on their performance while being part of service-learning programs so their learning can be meaningful.

Furthermore, comparing these outcomes to other studies evinced that service-learning is a powerful tool to introduce pre-service teachers or professionals to their future real job scenarios and identify if they selected the right career. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that this study has some limitations since it cannot be generalized to other service-learning practices due to the nature of the study and that the sources of information are individuals who told their experiences from their point of view. Finally, for further research, it

is recommended that wider studies be carried out by analyzing the identified and coded changes in categories using a larger sample to evidence service-learning's impact.

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# REVISTA KRONOS

## Language for Specific Purposes: using Hispanic films and current Hispanic issues to teach specific vocabulary and context related to the professions online

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**ABSTRACT** In this study I explain how an advanced Spanish conversation course can be created for virtual students using Spanish for Specific Purposes. The course is divided in different online homework students need to work on using four Hispanic films. This course is taught online and asynchronously. Students need to watch four films in this course, work on quizzes about the films, work on debates, and group presentations that are uploaded on VT (Voice Thread). The most important aspect of creating an advanced Spanish conversation course online is to define the goals and outcomes of the course very well and find the films that best serve to teach Spanish language and vocabulary related to the professions. Most films had a main topic, but there were other themes as well in the films students could learn about and use as interesting topics for their presentations in Spanish.

**KEY WORDS** Spanish for Specific Purposes, Hispanic Film and Culture, Hispanic Issues and Professions, Advanced Spanish Conversation online, Virtual Conversation Course, Creating an Online Conversation Class with Films for SSP.

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### Lenguaje para propósitos específicos: uso de películas hispanas y temas hispanos actuales para enseñar vocabulario específico y contexto relacionado con las profesiones en línea

**RESUMEN** En este estudio explico cómo se puede crear un curso avanzado de conversación en español para estudiantes virtuales que utilizan el español con fines específicos. El curso se divide en diferentes tareas que los estudiantes efectúan online teniendo en cuenta cuatro películas hispanas que son parte del contenido del curso. Este curso se imparte online y de forma asíncrona. Los estudiantes deben ver cuatro películas en este curso, tomar pruebas cortas sobre las películas y trabajar en debates y presentaciones grupales que se cargan en VT (Voice Thread). El aspecto más importante de crear un curso avanzado de conversación en español virtual es definir muy bien los objetivos y resultados del curso y encontrar las películas que mejor sirvan para enseñar el idioma español y el vocabulario relacionado con las profesiones. La mayoría de las películas tenían un tema principal, pero también había subtemas en las películas que los estudiantes podían usar como contenidos interesantes para sus presentaciones en español.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Español con fines específicos, cine y cultura hispana, asuntos y profesiones hispanas, conversación en español avanzado online, curso de conversación virtual, creación de una clase de conversación online con películas para español con fines específicos.

## CREATING AN ONLINE ADVANCED SPANISH CONVERSATION COURSE

In an advanced Spanish conversation class that is taught online, it may seem hard to teach Hispanic issues and specific vocabulary related to the professions, but it is not impossible. In this study, we will talk about a course we created some semesters ago that was taught on campus, and it was called *Spanish Advanced Conversation*. It was created as an elective (600 level) for the new program in the Modern Languages Department at FHSU, as we were creating a new track that was Spanish for Specific Purposes (the professions). This course met originally three times per week on campus and aimed at preparing students to improve their conversational Spanish skills at the advanced level. Spanish for Specific Purposes (SSP) was used for this course using Hispanic Films that directly or indirectly dealt with specific professions our students were preparing themselves for in our Spanish program (Business, Translation & Interpretation, and Medical Spanish). The online version of this course was designed to have the same content, but was delivered virtually and with some minor variations, as students instead of presenting in the classroom, would present in groups and on Voice Thread (VT). The online course would also not meet face to face, so participation in this course was done on VT. Students could create a thread with their opinion and critical comments on the group presentation on VT. It was an asynchronous course where students worked at their own pace, and homework had to be turned in on the due dates. We also needed to create a course that had balanced content between content-area knowledge and linguistic content. As Trace (2015) explains:

Going back to one of the original questions about LSP and the balance between content-area knowledge and linguistic content, one issue that seems conveniently lost in this discussion is about the degree to which access to content-area information is even available. Compared to ESP, most areas of LSP are considerably under-developed, and outside of the more common areas such as Language for Business or Medical Purposes, materials and existing information are often all but absent. For many LSP developers particularly those addressing needs related to local contexts or LCTLs-access to both instructional materials and content-area expertise can be a real concern. It becomes less of question of how to balance language and content, and more about whether it is even possible to do so in the first place. (12)

We had limited resources to access and copy a course idea, so we ended up designing a new course that balanced both components, the content-area knowledge, and the linguistic content. We also needed to have into account the target community we were serving with this new course. As Trace (2015) explains:

Another major theme that affects the design of most LSP programs is the role of the target community. As we saw with culture and content, LSP courses are not taught in isolation, but rather in direct response to a specific and identified context. How this context is defined can have a significant effect on the entire structure of the course. We can divide LSP contexts into two categories: local contexts and global contexts. Local contexts are those where the L2 is being used as a FL within a targeted community of L1 speakers of the language. (10)

Students taking this Advanced Spanish Conversation course (face to face, or online) were mostly students from different programs who were learning Spanish for Specific Purposes in our department. Some students were in business, others were in nursing and radiology, and a smaller group were majors in our Spanish Program.

### USING HISPANIC FILMS FOR SPANISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH AND TASKED-BASED ACTIVITIES

*Communicative Language Teaching* sees meaningful communication as the goal whereas *Task-Based Learning Approach* takes it a bit further, so students need to communicate in order to achieve or do a meaningful task. Both acknowledge the importance of *real authentic*

*meaningful communication* as a way to learn a language. Specific vocabulary and sentences in Spanish were used in the debates and presentations students had to prepare. Students/attendees not only learned the words, but new Spanish syntactical structures as well and how to use the new vocabulary in context. Yiqng Lin (2020) explains the difference between TBLT and CLT:

The difference between TBLT and CLT is that they take different routes to achieve the goal of communicative competence, and frame tasks differently. CLT engages students in the function of language use, whilst TBLT focuses on improve the comprehension-based competence of language use. However, the approaches have many more similarities than differences. Although CLT has fallen from favor, TBLT, exists as a development of the communicative approach, covering shortcomings in both theory and practice, creating a diverse environment for communication and interaction. (24)

There is limited material and resources on Spanish for Specific Purposes to use for advanced and graduate courses. Many LSP instructors and course designers would agree to the need to have more resources to help create different course models for LSP and SSP. When designing a new advanced conversation course for Spanish Majors in the SSP Program, and Graduates, we need to make it interesting and address the professions they are preparing for from different perspectives. Since there are little resources, we had to be creative. As Jonathan Trace explains in his book chapter and conclusion of the book (2015), “[...] what is to be done in regard to choosing or designing materials for LSP? While there is no simple answer, through looking at the proposals presented here we can point to several possible alternatives that curriculum developers and teachers might pursue” (12). It is important to have in mind that the course you want to design using SSP addresses language and culture learning at the same time. Trace (2015) explains:

For most LSP contexts, the culture of the community seems almost as important to learn as the linguistic content itself. Learning a foreign language for any purpose is about more than simply acquiring grammatical structures, vocabulary, or fluency, but rather a part of what makes it valuable is the cultural affordances that it provides. Knowing a language has long been understood as a way of opening the door for learners to understand, acknowledge, and negotiate other ways of thinking and viewing the world. (7)

Films were an ideal resource to use as they present the stories, lives, and situations of different people and their cultures. They were also chosen in the target language, that is in Spanish, to convey specific vocabulary that needed to be learned, specific cultural context for that vocabulary, and the most important, specific vocabulary related to the professions we wanted them to learn. While designing this course, we also had in mind what Trace (2015) explains here:

Looking at the proposals presented here, four common themes seem to stand out as being consistent and important in the development and implementation of LSP. In no particular order, these are: (a) learner proficiency; (b) culture as content; (c) the target community; and (d) existing information. While these concepts will probably sound familiar to most language teachers in some form or another, they take on a slightly different meaning when we consider them in relation to the development and implementation of LSP. (2)

Trace explains that the learner’s proficiency is subject to standardization through the establishment of scales, like the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL), or the guidelines used in the Common European Framework (3). We agree with Trace when he explains how this would work for Language for Specific Purposes: “In LSP, however, we commonly approach proficiency from a more local perspective in terms of linguistic competence on its own or in relation to content-area knowledge or even cultural knowledge” (3). It is for this reason we decided to use Films as the main resource, and all the cultural backgrounds they brought into a class activity created for Spanish for Specific Purposes. This would also be considered for the virtual version of the course. We also agree with Mallinger and Rossy (2003) when they say, “[...] films tell stories about people,

their hopes, dreams, challenges, and fears, how they relate to others, and what behaviors are socially acceptable (and unacceptable). As such, film provides an important representation of cultures and their salient issues” (3). Mallinger and Rossy also think that film helps address two of the most difficult issues in management education, which are motivation and retention. Students today are accustomed to learning through multi-media. They become easily bored or distracted by more traditional pedagogies. As a generation raised on television, film, and computers, they are more receptive to and learning through film (4). I believe it applies to most students of younger generations. Mallinger and Rossy also mention Campoux and Postman saying that film is also likely to improve retention by providing strong images and emotional content (4).

The course goals we created were stated clearly for the Advanced Spanish Conversation course, and we had into account the language ability of each student in relation to individual improvement, not just how well a student used the language in general (Trace, 2). There needed to be new vocabulary and language structure learning and usage incorporated into the class activities we were designing for this course. Using the Communicative Approach and Task-Based Activities (group debates and group presentations), we made sure students had to use the new learned material in their debates and presentations in class, or on Voice Thread (VT) in the online course. We would also focus on specific topics related to the professions, which were the cultural context of the vocabulary and structures students were learning in this Advanced Spanish Conversation course. Trace explains that in the following quote:

For most LSP contexts, the culture of the community seems almost as important to learn as the linguistic content itself. Learning a foreign language for any purpose is about more than simply acquiring grammatical structures, vocabulary, or fluency, but rather a part of what makes it valuable is the cultural affordances that it provides. Knowing a language has long been understood as a way of opening the door for learners to understand, acknowledge, and negotiate other ways of thinking and viewing the world. (7)

To add one more step of complexity to the learning of specific vocabulary and structures related to the professions, the presentations were chosen by the students, after the instructor approved them. Students had to choose a controversial topic related to the film they watched and visit a Hispanic country and research about it. This was done to incorporate the cultural component about the Hispanic world into the learning activity, which was to be developed by the students while they researched about the topic and the Hispanic country of their choice. Buendía Cambronero (2013) explains:

In the teaching of language in its general scope, culture has taken a predominant role following the consolidation of the communicative approach and task-based learning in the nineties. It is widely accepted that language learning implies cultural comprehension alongside linguistic acquisition. This linguistic acquisition can hardly be complete or may even be ineffective if it is not accompanied by correct use in a cultural sense. However, this general affirmation is still a problematic issue when it comes to including cultural content in learning materials or syllabuses. What aspects of culture should be included in each stage of the learning process? How can culture be taught so that it avoids stereotypes or axiomatic messages? (<https://journals.openedition.org/apliut/3570>).

Buendía Cambronero is trying to define what cultural aspects should be included for a Business Spanish course. In our case, we would specify the culture we want to include with the films we chose for the Advanced Spanish Conversation course. The films talked about a country, some characters, and their lives. The film director had a vision about that country and used the characters to present a story. The story was part of a culture. The characters also belonged to a country and a culture, and we learned about their stories through the vision of the director. The culture we wanted to include in the Advanced Spanish Conversation course was any aspect of a Hispanic country, the culture of that country, the Spanish language variations, and the accents the characters brought to the scenes, the behaviors



the characters portrayed, the social norms and cultural aspects that were part of that country, and so on. All the chosen films had a connection to a profession as well, where specific vocabulary could be learned in context. This would make the learning more effective, as students could hear where the vocabulary and the specific linguistic structure were used in the film, which was in the professional context. Films present the imitation of life, and the cultural contexts the film provided helped students understand and acquire the new vocabulary related to the professions. We also learn about other themes in the films, as films normally deal with secondary characters, and their lives and problems as well.

Each student would learn a different aspect about the Hispanic country and the related controversial topic. We included 'controversial' topics to create debates and an interesting conversation between the different groups in class and online. Trace explains (2015):

The link between culture and language is inseparable for many authors, especially when paired with a specific purpose. More so than language for general purposes, especially at advanced levels that are devoted to language and literature, LSP is about language in use within specific domains that are situated within a target language community. Though culture was already mentioned as a viable tool for teaching in beginner level classes, it is just as important with more proficient learners as well, and we have examples of this in the chapters on Business Language. (8)

Using LSP to create a new Advanced Spanish Conversation course became then an asset, as we had to come up with what students needed to learn at this advanced level, what grammar needed to be reviewed, what specific vocabulary was going to be part of the course activities, and what needed to be acquired through the films, debates, and presentations. The goals for the course had all these components in mind. Trace (2015) explains:

After all, the very reason we are engaging in LSP development is to delineate language ability in terms of a particular target language use or purpose, and indeed one of the goals we should set for our needs analysis is to determine the specific language abilities our learners need to acquire. In contrast, consider that many languages for general purposes programs set their outcomes according to ACTFL proficiency guidelines for the very reason that actual target language uses are often hard to determine in these contexts. (4)

In our Advanced Spanish Conversation course, students had to view four Hispanic films that were part of the course that dealt with current Hispanic issues, and they would have to take a short quiz to prove they had watched the film. Then they had to prepare a debate about an assigned topic (Task-Based Activity). The topic was related to the different themes we could find in the film. Students worked in groups for the debate and recorded themselves speaking between 5-10 minutes on the topic in front of a camera. Finally, they had to do a longer presentation on a topic they would choose (with approval of the instructor of the class), and which would also be related to one of the film's different themes. The presentation topic needed to present a controversial aspect of the topic and invite other students to debate and comment on the topic in the target language. It needed to be related as well to one Hispanic country. Students would learn about how that Hispanic country would deal with an issue, or aspect of an issue. Videos of their debates and group presentations were uploaded on vT.

The *goals* in this Advanced Spanish Conversation class were the following:

- Learn and use new idiomatic expressions in Spanish.
- Acquire more confidence to communicate in Spanish.
- Learn and use new vocabulary in Spanish about the business world, medical Spanish, and translation/interpretation.
- Acquire precision when using specific vocabulary.
- Acquire, use, and practice specialized vocabulary related to the studied topics.
- Dominate complex grammatical structures in Spanish.

- Debate about different controversial and current topics of the Hispanic world and learn about diversity.
- Augment listening comprehension and improve Spanish pronunciation.
- Research current affairs in Spanish (A. Writer, 2017).

It is important to remember that creating a course having in mind Language for the Professions needed to be carefully developed and thought through to be able to teach specific objectives. Hudson and Brown in *Developing Courses in Languages for Specific Purposes* explain that:

Language for specific purposes (LSP) courses are those in which the methodology, the content, the objectives, the materials, the teaching, and the assessment practices all stem from specific, target language uses based on an identified set of specialized needs. Common examples of LSP include courses like Japanese for Business, Spanish for Doctors, Mandarin for Tourism, or English for Air-traffic Controllers. In each of these cases, the content and focus of the language instruction is narrowed to a specific context or even a particular subset of tasks and skills. (2)

The Spanish conversation course aimed at having the online students create and deliver debates and presentations in Spanish at the advanced level. They were to learn new vocabulary related to the professions through the cultural context the films presented. The different films that were used for this advanced conversation course were: *María llena eres de gracia (Maria Full of Grace)* (2004), directed by Joshua Marston; *Todo sobre mi madre (All about My Mother)* (1999), directed by Pedro Almodóvar; *ESL: English as a Second Language* (2005), directed by Youssef Delara; *César Chávez* (2014), directed by Diego Luna; and *La misma luna (Under the Same Moon)* (2007), directed by Patricia Riggen. What all these movies have in common is the presentation of the life and problems of common, diverse, and marginalized people (A. Writer, 2017). The films also use specific vocabulary related to different professions, like the medical terminology and vocabulary related to diseases we could find in *Todo sobre mi madre (All about My Mother)* (1999), for example, or *ESL: English as a Second Language* (2005), where the protagonist learns English at an ESL School to improve his skills and be able to get a better job in the US, even though he is an undocumented illegal immigrant. Students in this course also had to write down and define three or four words they had learned during the research done for the debates and presentations and had to use each word at least once during their presentation. This helped learn new vocabulary related to the topic and use it and remember it for the future. For this reason, all the selected films had sub-topics related to the medical, business, and translation/interpretation worlds, so each group would learn specific vocabulary related to these professional fields and use them in their debates. In this way, each student was able to discuss issues and vocabulary related to the specific professions in Spanish at the advanced level (A. Writer, 2017).

It was important to learn to give good presentations about the chosen topics. Students were required to sit at a table and look professional in front of the camera. They were asked to use ear buds as well for better sound quality. They were not allowed to read the presentation. They had to present it. They would start memorizing specific information about their presentation, but eventually, they would be able to use their own Spanish structures, and present without memorizing. Barbara A. Lafford, Ann Abbott and Darcy Lear explain in “Spanish in the professions and in the community in the US” (2014) that:

In upper division language courses, more opportunities to develop real-world, professional skills present themselves. For example, classroom presentations are an opportunity to develop professional presentation skills. Students know all the signs of a bad presentation (reading or reciting, going over time limits, repeating content that the audience already knows, lack of practice, abuse of PowerPoint), but when it comes time to present, they default to these presentation modes, which they know are bad, because they have never been explicitly taught how to do it better. A good presenter practices and polishes to achieve the perfect balance between scripted and spontaneous. To increase engagement with

presentation content, students should choose topics related to their professional aspirations: literature is full of references to public health, illness, commerce, and economic models. (178)

Students were allowed to choose the presentation topic, but it had to be related to the film they had watched, and it needed to incorporate newly learned vocabulary and Spanish linguistic structures. Students were also taught how to give good presentations, by explaining they needed to focus on the important information and not get lost in the details. It was important to follow a format, that is, students had to sit at a table and follow basic instructions on how to place the camera, so their faces and bodies would be centered on the computer screen. The information they delivered needed to be relevant and related to the topic they had chosen, and it needed to be a formal presentation. It was important to also allow students to express the ideas with their own words. They could only read data or statistics if they needed to.

The films for the course were carefully chosen so they would present content and vocabulary related to specific professions our students are preparing themselves for. It was important to have students present well in the target language about a controversial topic, so they would use the vocabulary related to the specific profession they were learning about in each film. But the vocabulary was not the only content students were learning, as Barbara A. Lafford, Ann Abbott and Darcy Lear explain (2014):

Profession-specific vocabulary is important, of course, and should be threaded into the curriculum. However, instead of giving students long vocabulary lists to memorize, LSP educators can approach the acquisition of professional jargon as yet another foundational professional skill that students should develop. (176)

Through the films where vocabulary was used in a specific context, and through the debates and the presentations, students would learn and better retain new vocabulary for different professions and acquire other words and structures from the professional world. The aim of each debate and presentation was to prepare the students be able to talk about a specific profession, related controversial topics, and use the vocabulary related to that profession in Spanish. An example is *Todo sobre mi madre* (*All about My Mother*) (1999), directed by Pedro Almodóvar. Students learned about specific vocabulary related to medicine and nursing. For example: SIDA (AIDS), Sero positivo/negativo (HIV positive/negative), transfusión de sangre (blood transfusion), encefalograma (encephalogram), ecografía (ultrasound), embarazo (pregnancy), donación de órganos (organ donation), muerte cerebral (brain death), donador y receptor (donor and recipient), Alzheimer, and so on. Students would be able to learn/acquire specific medical vocabulary from the film that was used in the medical context. By watching a film where this new vocabulary was used in context, students would understand it better and remember it.

The online course was divided into five parts, exactly as was the campus course: film, quiz, test, debate, and presentation. The online course was asynchronous, and students worked on their own organizing their homework. Homework was turned in on due dates assigned by the instructor. The first stage was to watch the film, then students would take a short quiz on Blackboard about the main characters and the plot. The conversation class was divided into Blackboard groups of three or four to work on debates with a specific topic assigned by the instructor. The groups then presented the debate on vT and some brought questions for the class to create a debate. After the debates, students worked on longer group presentations that dealt with a controversial topic each group chose (A. Writer, 2017). With the debates and the assigned topic, students would be able to explore the vocabulary related to the film and a profession. The debate would prepare the students for the group presentation where they needed to talk about a controversial topic related to the film and the Hispanic world. An example of this would be the topic "Transsexuality in Mexico. What is the situation of transsexuals in this country? What are the challenges and issues trans people experience in Mexico? What does Mexico do to solve the social margin-

alization of this group?” This topic would be researched and students in the group would divide the topic into different sections. All aspects of this topic needed to be researched and addressed in the group presentation and it was done in Spanish.

The Advanced Spanish Conversation course was also created for the graduate students. All students worked on 4 debates and 4 group presentations. Graduate students would have one extra film and one extra presentation to work on as part of their course work. Using Ruggiero’s ideas about the audience for whom you create a Spanish for Specific Purposes graduate course (2014), the course was created for an external audience, “... the students who want to “consume” or take the classes and who will benefit from learning how to use languages in such a specific manner” (61). It was important to create a course that incorporated different aspects of SSP into our language program, and it needed to be relevant and interesting to the students who took it who were studying Spanish for the Professions, and for the students who were not interested in languages for the professions as well. As Ruggiero explains (2014): “The needs of students in the twenty-first century are changing. It is imperative that graduate programs in foreign languages broaden their goals, objectives, and course offerings beyond a focus on literary and language competency in order to remain relevant” (68). Students want to be able to use the foreign language skills they are learning in their future professions, and this course helped create a space where students could practice that at the advanced level. It was very important to make this course available for online students, as they have the same needs as the campus ones. Students have different reasons why they study languages. As Laura Marqués-Pascual explains (2019):

Students may be interested in learning Spanish for a myriad of purposes. Some students’ goal may be to become medical or court interpreters, conduct international business, manage a non-profit organization, become a Spanish or English as a second language teacher, work as an international tour guide, work for the FBI, do mission work internationally, or serve in the Peace Corps. All of these are examples of Spanish for professional purposes. On the other hand, some students may be interested in learning Spanish to study content courses for a semester or a year at a Spanish-speaking university. This is an example of Spanish for academic purposes. (281)

In any of the cases, when creating a SSP course (for campus or online students) at the advanced level, you need to have into account the different needs different students might have. Not all students will be interested in the same professions, so choosing different films with different stories and characters, different topics and vocabulary related to different professions was important. The cultural component each movie presented was also very important as it gave context to a story and the language used for that story. Language learning through films helps students visualize the context the language is used in (specific language and vocabulary used in a hospital, or in a business, for example). Using Hispanic films where specific language and vocabulary for the different professions is used and where different topics could be studied helped students find interest in a profession and the language and vocabulary used for that profession. The language was used in context and made more sense to the learners. Students ended up researching about a topic they thought was interesting to them and they did it in Spanish.

One last aspect we would like to mention in this study is the importance of the use of films for teaching many aspects of culture. Amalia, Kusrini, and Ramadhani (2019) explain:

There are many reasons behind the use of films in the teaching and learning activity. One of them is that the rich content of films introduces the learners to be exposed to a real-life situation and sometimes to the world of imagination. These audiovisual media lead the learners to use and optimize their sight and hearing to grasp the information delivered by the films. These two senses, sight, and hearing, enable the learners to absorb the input more optimally. Another reason for using films to teach English is that films offer opportunities for developing fluency. (120)

We agree with them, as students in our Advanced Spanish Conversation course were able to acquire new language they had not used before, they were exposed to an issue, a different culture, and different behaviors towards that issue. The films used in this course would certainly help improve the student's fluency in Spanish. They proved so in their debates and presentations. Student's presentation topics became more interesting and complex after the second film was viewed, and their arguments to defend a point of view were better supported at the end of the semester, than at the beginning of the semester. Students did an excellent job in the final presentations in this course. Amalia, Kusriani, and Ramadhani (2019) mention a post-viewing activity:

Stoller (1988) in Ruusunen (2011) highlights the importance of post-viewing activities. They are meant to stimulate both written and oral use of the target language and information from the film. Post-viewing activities should extract the main ideas and issues of the film since the small details of the film have been missed. Post-viewing activities are also essential to understand the main points of the film. (129)

For our Advanced Spanish Conversation course, a short quiz would be taken to make sure students had watched the film on their own. The quiz asked basic questions about the plot of the film and the main characters. Then they would have to prepare a debate with an assigned topic in their group and connect it to the film. The films watched in the course were the starting point of the debates and longer presentations student had to prepare (Task-Based Activity). They provided a new cultural context, the main topic, specific vocabulary, and linguistic structures related to the professions, and an approach to understand the director's view on the topic. Group presentations were used to make students practice their oral skills at the low advanced-advanced level. Students found a presentation topic related to the film and to Hispanic culture (topics were approved by the professor), and prepared a presentation using the new vocabulary learned and the structures they had been working on in class. All students improved their presentation grade a whole letter with their final presentation, that is, students with a B received an A, and students with a low A received an A+. Most students felt they had really improved their language skills in this course, and believed they could communicate ideas about any topic better in Spanish after taking this course.

## CONCLUSION

The learning outcomes of these courses were also thought carefully as we wanted campus and online students in the advanced level of Spanish to improve all their language skills (writing, listening, reading, and speaking). Students used new idiomatic expressions in Spanish, they expressed themselves orally in Spanish with confidence, they used new vocabulary from business Spanish, medical Spanish, and translation from Spanish to English, and they were precise when using that vocabulary. Students used specialized vocabulary related to the topic being studied through the film, they mastered complex grammatical structures in Spanish, they discussed different controversial and current issues in the Hispanic world, they improved their listening comprehension in Spanish, and had better pronunciation of Spanish, in general. Lastly, students were able to research different current issues about the Hispanic world in Spanish, which helped improve their critical thinking skills and connection of ideas. At the end of the course, students would be able to make complex connections about any topic and they would do it in Spanish, using the specific vocabulary related to that topic. All student's presentations improved throughout the semester. It was our hope student made what they learned their own and would not forget the new linguistic structures and vocabulary and culture they learned. We agree with Trace (2015) when he says:

Many of the authors expressed their hope that through LSP they could encourage and inspire their students to continue learning language. Through a focus on needs and uses, LSP can act as a great motivator for learners who might otherwise feel that learning a language is nothing more than a requirement to be fulfilled and forgotten. We should never forget that language has value, and as teachers we want to be able to instill this notion within our learners. We are only able to accomplish this when we work towards creating environments that can provide our learners with the affordances to embrace language as their own. (15-16)

It was interesting to note that some students learned a great deal about Hispanic culture, different behaviors with respect to an issue, or how a particular Hispanic country would behave towards an issue. Mallinger and Rossy explain: “To enhance teaching of cultural concepts through the use of film, students need a comprehensive, yet parsimonious, framework to facilitate their understanding of the ways in which culture affects behavior” (3). Their study was applied to another context where film was used to appreciate ambiguity and paradox associated with national and organizational cultures (3). They presented an integrated framework for measuring culture used to illustrate cultural dimensions and issues through film case analysis. This exercise would enhance understanding of difference and would help students recognize the subtleties in dealing with complex cross-cultural issues (2). We could well apply Mallinger and Rossy’s ideas to our Advanced Spanish Conversation course. Through the films we watched in our course, and the culture presented in the films, students were able to learn about different behaviors with respect to one same issue. They would learn diverse views on a specific controversial topic and could compare them to the views of their own country and culture, which made the learning experience richer. Films would help better retain the new vocabulary and linguistic structures being learned.

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# REVISTA KRONOS

## Methods, techniques, and strategies to motivate students of English as a foreign language to improve the speaking skill

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**ABSTRACT** Speaking is one of the most important skills a student should practice when learning a foreign language. However, many students are afraid of speaking because they do not want to make mistakes. A lack of motivation is a problem that affects students who are disengaged from learning. When motivation is missing in the learning process, serious consequences can occur. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine methods, techniques, and strategies to motivate students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to improve the speaking skill. This study is a review article, where bibliographic, analytical, and synthetic methods were employed. Articles were selected from different sources such as Google scholar, Redalyc, Scielo, Eric, and other databases. Among the main results, different methods, techniques, and strategies were found to motivate students to improve the speaking skill and subskills, which can be applied by English teacher, according to their students' level of education, age and needs. It is concluded that motivation is sometimes overlooked by some EFL teachers and authorities. Nevertheless, teachers have the responsibility to use different strategies and techniques to motivate and engage students.

**KEY WORDS** Motivation, speaking skill, methods, techniques, strategies.

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### Métodos, técnicas y estrategias de motivación para mejorar la habilidad oral de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera

**RESUMEN** La producción oral es una de las habilidades más importantes que los estudiantes deben practicar cuando aprenden un idioma extranjero. Sin embargo, muchos estudiantes tienen miedo a hacerlo porque no quieren cometer errores. La falta de motivación es un problema que afecta a los estudiantes que se encuentran desvinculados del aprendizaje. Cuando falta la motivación en el proceso de aprendizaje, pueden ocurrir graves consecuencias. Por lo tanto, el propósito de esta investigación es determinar métodos, técnicas y estrategias para motivar a los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) a mejorar sus habilidades para hablar. Este estudio es un artículo de revisión, donde se emplearon métodos bibliográficos, analíticos y sintéticos. Los artículos fueron seleccionados de distintas fuentes tales como Google Scholar, Redalyc, Scielo, Eric y otras bases de datos. Entre los principales resultados se encontraron diferentes métodos, técnicas y estrategias para motivar a los estudiantes a mejorar la habilidad y sub habilidades para hablar inglés, las cuales pueden ser aplicadas por docente de inglés, de acuerdo al nivel educativo, edad y las necesidades de los estudiantes. Se concluye que la motivación es pasada por alto por algunos profesores y autoridades de inglés como lengua extranjera, sin embargo, los maestros tienen la responsabilidad de usar diferentes estrategias y técnicas para motivar e involucrar a los estudiantes.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Motivación, habla, métodos, técnicas y estrategias.



## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has produced a new society in which English has become a lingua franca, shared among diverse groups of non-native speakers. That is to say English is not always associated with particular geographic or cultural communities, but, with an expanding global culture that includes many areas such as business, technological innovation, consumer values, democracy, world travel, fashion, sports, and music (Lamb, 2004). Therefore, English has become the most spoken language in the world that people need to learn, so in many countries, English has had seen as a compulsory subject at schools.

In Latin America, English, as an academic subject, has low results in exams because the educative system has not developed proper learning skills for this language. Generally, in public schools, English classes are crowded with students, there is a low allocation of time for classes and there is usually low quality of teaching. Actually, the educative system has changed in many aspects, but English has not accomplished the objectives to get the standardized levels (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017).

In Ecuador, English is a compulsory part of the study program in primary and secondary schools. Therefore, learning a foreign language is considered an academic requirement for obtaining a university degree, as established by official regulations issued by the Council of Higher Education of Ecuador. In the English language learning process, motivation has become an essential element, since it is a process that initiates, guides, and maintains the spirit to accomplish a goal (Hidalgo & Villacís, 2020).

The main purpose of teaching English is to provide students with the ability to use the English language positively and appropriately in communication (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Among the basic skills, speaking is one of the most important skills pertaining to linguistic abilities, and a person who learns a second language should manage it. Furthermore, this skill is well known as the way to standardize the level of any language (Sinaga, 2018).

Several problems for learning English and gain confidence with speaking can be identified. Lack of motivation for learning English (Barre-Parrales & Villafuerte-Holguín, 2021). In addition, because English is a compulsory subject, students put more effort on just trying to get good grades or pass exams rather than in improving their English skills. Moreover, during class, students do not pay attention to class, get bored, and show little effort in their assignments.

As well, motivation and engagement in school activities decline steadily as students' progress from elementary to middle and high school. When motivation is missing in the learning process, serious consequences can take place. For example, students tend to drop out the school. Additionally, learning a second language can be stressful when motivation is lacking (Center on Education Policy, 2012). Finally, in Manabí Province public schools, there are many students who do not develop the communication skills in English, due to a lack of opportunities for practicing it, limitation of class hours, and an excessive number of students per class (Barre-Parrales & Villafuerte-Holguín, 2021).

Even though, many studies are focused on motivation, only a few are concerned on motivating students to practice the speaking skill of English as a foreign language. For this reason, the main objective of this study is to determine methods, techniques, and strategies to help students to improve the speaking skill of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a review article where bibliographic, analytical and synthetic methods were employed. Articles were searched from different data bases such as Google scholar, Redalyc, Scielo, Eric, and others. The following keywords were used to find for relevant scientific

articles in the area: motivation, speaking skill, English as a foreign language, teaching, and learning. Finally, the articles were selected under the following criteria: peer-reviewed scientific articles, English or Spanish articles, and updated articles since 2016.

A worksheet was created to produce a database and organize the articles by categories. They were organized by title, abstract, introduction, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, author, year of publication, and finally the name of magazine. Then, with the organized database, the two variables motivation and development of speaking skill were identified. After that, the articles were analyzed, highlighting the most relevant information through a comparative system. Finally, a summary was developed to get significant information.

Main studies about motivation to improve the speaking skill are listed below (see Table 1).

## RESULTS

### SPEAKING SKILL

Speaking is one of the most important skills of a language because through it, people transmit a message to a listener, whether it is understood or not (Amru Bin As, 2016). Speaking has a great significance when people express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. For teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), it is necessary that students practice the speaking skill to get a good pronunciation, word choice, pragmatics, word and sentence stress, intonation, rhythm, fluency, among others subskills.

Speaking has some components that people need to take into consideration to produce a speech, such as fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and comprehension (Sihotang et al., 2021). Furthermore, it is necessary to take into consideration some aspects to master the speaking skill, like the use of grammatical rules, the target word and the manner to pronounce it (Raba, 2017).

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING SKILL

Nowadays, speaking has a big influence on globalization because people need to be interconnected and integrated with each other. As it is well known, English is the universal language; so, people around the world need to speak it to get socially integrated (Sinaga, 2018). Everybody naturally speaks before reading or writing because people need to interact with others. It means that speaking is the most important skill for interacting and communicating with the surrounding world. In language teaching, people need to follow rules and essential elements to speak and do it in the right way (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

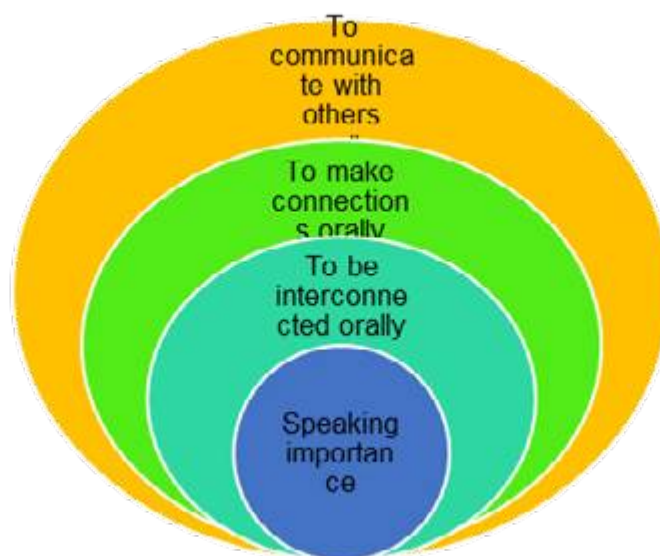
To this aim, Derakhshan et al. (2016) mention some kinds of performance criteria for speaking skill, such as imitation, responsive intensive transactional dialogue, interpersonal dialogue, and extensive dialogue.

It is important that when people speak and interact with others, the listener must understand what they are conveying. Also, success on speaking skill activities is based on characteristics such as the students having the chance to speak, being motivated, having the desire to speak, and, that level of language production is acceptable (Zuhriyah, 2017) (see Figure 1).

Table 1. Studies about motivation to improve the speaking skill

Reference #	Title	Study aim
[1]	A review of studies on Cooperative Learning strategy to improve esl Students' Speaking Skills	This study investigates of the esl students towards cooperative learning and their motivation towards speaking skills.
[2]	English language students and their motivation to learn the language.	The aim to learn about the students' perceptions in relation to their motivation to learn English inside the classroom.
[3]	Developing efl Learner's Speaking Ability, Accuracy and Fluency	This paper reviews some empirical studies to clarify the effectiveness of various methods and approaches to promote the speaking skill accurately and fluently.
[4]	Inside-outside circle as the way in building students' motivation and interaction in speaking classroom activities	The researcher focused on students' motivation and interaction in speaking classroom activities through Inside Outside Circle (ioc) strategy.
[5]	Teaching speaking skills through motivational strategies	The aim of this diploma paper is to explore practicing English teacher's personal experience in the use of motivational strategies in speaking activities.

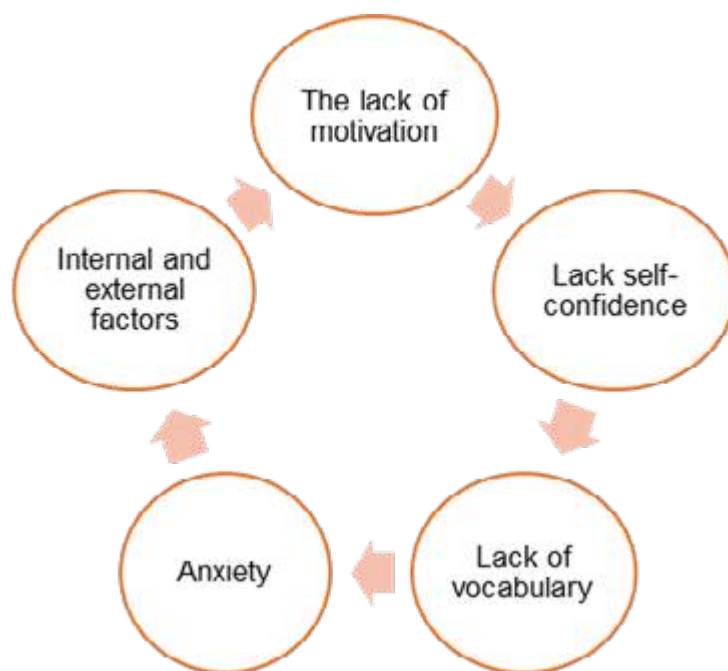
Figure 1. Importance of speaking skill



### SPEAKING PROBLEMS

In English as a Foreign language, the acquisition of language skills is one of the most difficult skills to acquire for students. They need to think before start communicating and giving a good speech using utterances grammatically well-structured and in a determined time (Anil, 2016). The lack of motivation, self-confidence, and vocabulary are problems that students have to face in their learning process. Students face anxiety when they speak to others because they feel worried about what errors they can produce when they are communicating (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Speaking problems



Additionally, the problems that students have to face in classrooms come from four aspects, such as inhibition, lack of knowledge of some topic, lack of participation, and difficulties in translating from their L1. If teachers make these improvements, students will foster their speaking skill (Sinaga, 2018). These problems can be associated with intrinsic factors such as linguistic or non-linguistic. So, teachers have to find their students' speaking problems and try to develop their communicative abilities (Zakaria et al., 2019). In addition, teachers need to lower students' inhibition, increase their knowledge on general topics, improve their performance, and reduce the usage of their mother tongue.

Speaking skill are conformed by components, like accuracy and fluency. Accuracy is seen as part of grammar, the set of words, and their articulation; while fluency is the manner to express themselves with confidence to others naturally (Derakhshan et al., 2016). Internal and external factors are associated with speaking problems. The first one depends on students themselves because they are afraid when they speak to others, thus they feel anxious to make mistakes when they are interacting, or they are shy or do not want to speak. The second one comes from teachers about what they teach, how they teach or what strategies, methods, techniques and activities they use the classroom, and how they assess their students (Amru Bin As, 2016) (see Figure 2).

## MOTIVATION

### Definition of Motivation

Motivation has a great incidence in second language learning achievement. Also, it is known as the prediction to acquire any language using mechanisms such as perseverance, improvement actions and predisposition to learn. Among the reasons why people want to

learn a second language, it can be considered to meet a requirement, desire to learn other cultures or live abroad, or just for social prestige (Peng & Patterson, 2021).

According to Masgored and Gardner's theory, a person's motivation begins when he/she strives and is aware of something that he/she needs to accomplish. It is accompanied by desires, goals, enjoyment of what he/she is doing, experiences the reinforcement and failures through which he/she learns and gets better strategies to solve and achieve goals (see Figure 3). It means that people need high doses of motivation to accomplish their goals, otherwise it may be unlikely to reach their objectives (WATI, 2021)

In the language learning process, motivation has an important role. Language teachers need to consider the connection between motivation and how it impacts language learning because it refers to intrinsic goals and what people want. Teachers should help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and how to integrate them to accomplish their goals (Chee Hong & Ganapathy, 2017).

Several researchers have studied and discussed students' motivation for learning a new language. It was found that motivation has an important impact on the learning of a foreign language (Susanti, 2021).

### THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Motivation acts as a fundamental part of the Second Language (L2) learning since students want to learn a new culture and language to communicate in their daily life (Hudson, 2017). Many students believe that English opens doors for the future because it is the most spoken language worldwide. It also depends on economic factors due to the fact that students from low-income families have lower motivation and autonomous learning, as opposed to those from middle or high-income families (Muslim & Sukyadi, 2020).

Additionally, motivation is important to promote the students' interests and desires to learn a language, as well as to open their minds toward new cultures, new languages, and opportunities (Seven, 2020). Families and teachers have important roles, guiding students in the learning process to achieve their objectives and goals. For example, teachers should apply innovative materials, methodologies, and strategies to fulfill the students' educational needs (Estupiñán Boboy, 2016).

According to Pearse Romera & Ruiz Cecilia (2019), some students are motivated for extrinsic reasons, like for getting well-paid jobs or for attending well-named universities. This situation is based on the socio-educational model sustained by Gardner (1985, p. 10), in which students tend to choose instrumental motivation, contrary to integrative motivation. Moreover, the findings showed that motivation was the predominant factor to acquire English as a second language among students, since they consider that extrinsic and instrumental motivation was more significant than integrative motivation to learn a foreign language.

In the learning process, students need to realize how to think critically and be productive with the material that is being taught. In many schools, teachers have presented the content of subjects to their students and repeat them in a sequence, but they do not allow students to explore and be more analytical. Thus, if they do not participate, it is less probable that they feel motivated for the subject.

Pearse & Ruiz (2019) have shown that intrinsically motivated students analyze and criticize better the subject content. In brief, teachers should motivate their students to be critical and analytical in the language learning process, and possibly in other aspects of their lives as well. Motivational strategies are inspiring procedures that people develop in a conscious way to get a positive effect when accomplishing a goal.

Sanjay & Narayana (2020) offer some speaking strategies for the classroom taken from

**Figure 3. Definition of motivation**

Dörnyei's book *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*, such as: choosing varied tasks, choosing relevant topics for the learners, giving positive information feedback, among others (see Figure 4) (Sanjay & Narayana, 2020).

#### TYPES OF MOTIVATION

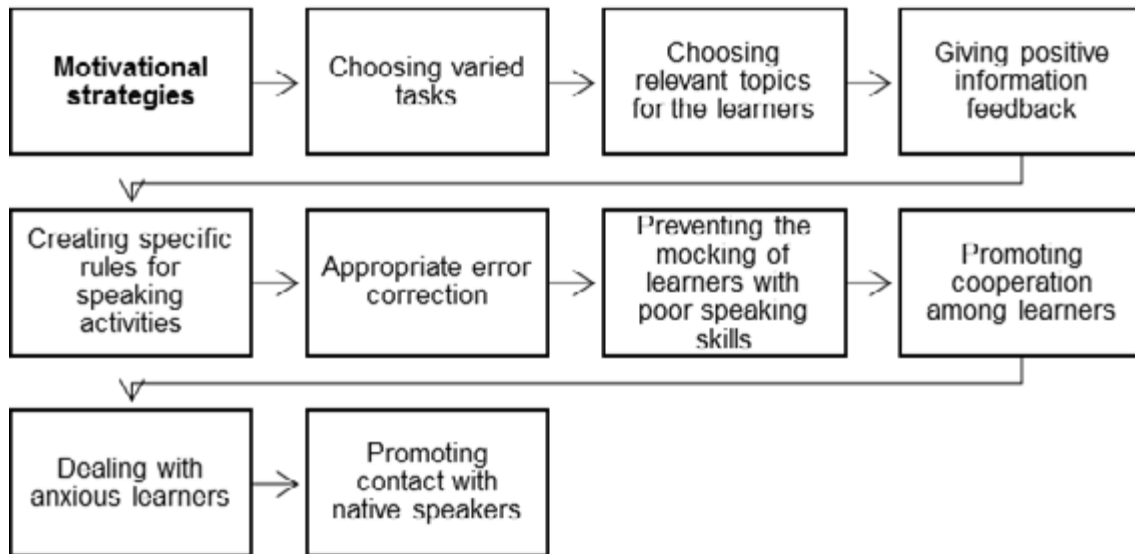
Seven (2020) distinguishes four types of motivation: a) instrumental, b) integrative, c) extrinsic, and d) intrinsic. Motivation is conducted by two means, instrumental versus integrative motivation, and intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation (see Figure 5).

Instrumental motivation refers to the acquisition of a language as a means of achieving instrumental goals in which the learner gains advantages by learning a second language. On the other hand, integrative motivation describes the learner who wants to get involved in a different culture by means of a second language and wishes to communicate with people who use the target language. According to Kumar (2021), instrumental motivation is more effective than integrative motivation because the students have successful objectives based on the material gain. On the contrary, instrumental, and integrative motivations are fundamental in second language acquisition.

Recent research by Susanti (2021) showed that integrative and instrumental motivation are both involved in learning English. In integrative motivation, students are engaged because they want to know other cultures and languages in order to communicate with native speakers. This author encourages teachers to use the target language history and culture in the learning-teaching processes by presenting conversations between native or near-native speakers.

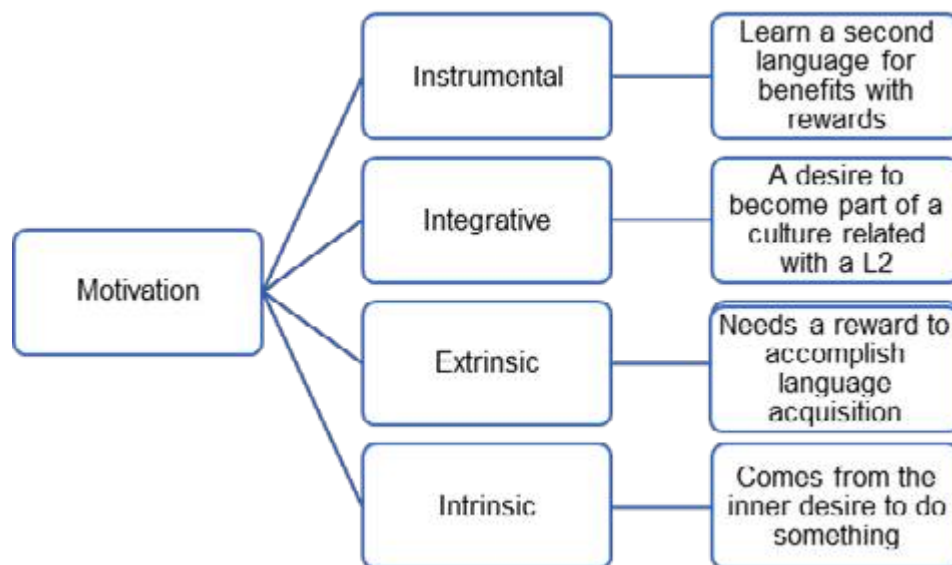
Also, the author suggests the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as apps on cellphones and TV-series to create interactive learning. On the other hand, instrumental motivation is conducted to help students feel motivated in order to get better jobs and educative careers in their future. Therefore, students need that their teachers focus on their needs and interests, so they can improve their practice within real context activities or scenarios.

Figure 4. Suggested sequence of activities for effective motivational strategies in the Language classroom



Note. Adapted from *Teaching Speaking Skills through Motivational Strategies* (p. 42-44), by G. Sanjay & T. Narayana, 2020, *Research Journal of English*, 5 (37).

Figure 5. Types of motivation



### INTEGRATIVE MOTIVATION

Integrative motivation determines a desire to become part of a culture associated with a second language. It means that a L2 includes knowing and adapting to a new culture to learn a language that is not their own. Moreover, to learn a foreign language, people need attitudes, desires, and the motivation intensity to acquire it, which means being near other language communities (Kim & Shin, 2021). Besides, Hudson (2017) agrees and says that integrative motivation is defined as the people's desire to learn a second language and be part of the target language community and culture.

Some students believe that their integrative motivation help them to improve their English skills to communicate with native people, because they can interact in the target language (Muslim & Sukyadi, 2020). Díaz Iza (2016) says that motivation plays an important role in students' learning because the activities, methodologies, and strategies that teachers apply in their classes help to engage their attention and desire to learn English.

### **INSTRUMENTAL MOTIVATION**

Based on Gardner and MacIntyre's theory, instrumental motivation gets advantages in learning a new language. A learner endeavors by which means he wants to get excellent grades in the final results as a reward because he does something out of necessity, not satisfaction (WATI, 2021). Instrumental motivation makes students learn a second language to get benefits with rewards like getting better job opportunities and completing a level of proficiency when studying a foreign language, among other benefits (Khansir & Jarizadegan, 2016).

According to Gardner and Lambert (1959), Instrumental motivation is when learners are motivated to increase their knowledge or to be part of certain jobs especially if it has benefits with language. In the same way, Krashen (1988) says that instrumental motivation includes the concepts of purely practical costs of learning a second language, increasing students' career or business opportunities, reward plus prestige and power, access to scientific and technical information, or simply taking a course at school (Sukri et al., 2021).

### **INTRINSIC MOTIVATION**

This motivation comes from the inner desire to do something, and it does not have an award to get or accomplish an objective. However, if the teachers motivate and offer emotional benefits, they could engage students in the L2 learning (Díaz Iza, 2016). Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation in which learners engage in activities because it is fun to perform. It means that the activities to perform are enjoyable for them, so it generates feelings of competence and self-determination as consequences (Alizadeh, 2016) Intrinsic motivation is guided by their self-factors.

### **EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION**

Extrinsic motivation needs a reward to accomplish language acquisition. If teachers do not give rewards like high grades, students tend to be unmotivated to learn an L2. Furthermore, external aspects, such as a proper pedagogical environment, relationships, personal achievements, and so on, have been considered to acquire a second language effectively (Díaz Iza, 2016).

### **METHODS, TECHNIQUES, AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE SPEAKING SKILL**

To motivate students to improve speaking skill, teachers could make use of different methods, techniques, and strategies.



## METHODS

Some methods teachers could use to motivate students to improve their speaking skill include the following.

**Task-based learning (TBL).** It allows learners to develop tasks at the same time they practice speaking skill. To upgrade skills, facilitators have to bring in ICTs (Information and communications technologies) to focus on their development, creating an interesting and innovative way to learn English (Anil, 2016).

From another perspective, the Task-Based Language Teaching Approach focuses on the development of the language through situations that are performed as if students were outside the classroom; on the contrary, in classrooms students use the language to communicate achievements. Albino (2017) shows in his research that students felt confident to speak, believed in their strengths to use the target language, and increased their vocabulary, concluding that the use of this approach was relevant.

**Project-Based Learning.** It is a method that allow students to produce and show results about projects that need to be designed, planned, and gotten results. Moreover, through this technique, students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personal meaningful projects using language skills of English as a second language (Dewi, 2016). This author concluded that after applying this technique, students were more motivated, happy, and confident to speak English.

**Content and Language Integrated-Learning (CLIL).** It is a method that guides and supports the language learning process, in which students acquire skills and abilities of the target language. Students use the communication to convey information and apply cognition, which encourages students to increase their linguistic competence and culture, that has a near relationship with the mother tongue language and the target language (Barre-Parrales & Villafuerte-Holguín, 2021).

Improving speaking skill is a big responsibility in the teacher's hands because they are the means to teach and engage students' attention. That is why they need to reinvent and motivate how they can boost this skill.

**Cooperative Learning.** Vellayan et al. (2021) states that is a method where students developed their activities in a cooperative way among their classmates, creating an enjoyable and collaborative environment of the class to achieve the teachers' proposal. It is essential in the SLA (Second Language Acquisition) communicative skill because students feel comfortable and self-confident to interact with others, and it is a good strategy to engage students to speak confidently and in a participative way.

Namaziandost et al. (2019) mention that Cooperative Learning (CL) is centered on the learners. Thus, this approach motivates and develops speaking skill in students. Also, they show evidence that this method has a high impact on the communication process in a positive way, and researchers have suggested implementing CL in the classrooms to improve English speaking skill getting on motivated students.

## TECHNIQUES

Manurung & Izar (2020) argued that the lack of interaction with others comes from internal and external factors that lower production and cause the wrong application of techniques to speak. Some techniques for improving the speaking skill include.

**Role plays.** This technique helps students to gain self-confidence to diminish shyness, using real activities developed in class as Derakhshan *et al.* (2016).

**Interview techniques.** They help to improve speaking skill. Sihotang et al. (2021) suggest a good way to get better through describing pictures, giving opinions, and retelling stories. In their research, they propose the naturally speaking guidebook as a good technique to develop speaking, where students can find real examples for communicate and an assessment is provided to check their progress.

**Debate.** It is a technique in which students develop their speaking abilities by defending opinions and giving their arguments of a specific topic. Through this technique, students participate actively and speak more with their classmates in the classrooms as are shown in results (Arung, 2016) In this study students improved their speaking skill efficiently and effective results were obtained.

**Storytelling.** It is a technique in which pupils show their expressions and create an external sense of the world. It fosters a good environment because students get relaxed inside of class. Moreover, in storytelling students experiment with a set of stories, which create a sense of humor in the classroom through their own opinions and words, increasing the students' knowledge about other cultures, places, heritages, and beliefs. Through this technique, teachers conduct their pupils to listen, concentrate, and follow their arguments based on a logical sequence (Amru Bin As, 2016).

**Questioning.** It is a technique to trigger students to be active and to keep them speaking along the teaching process because they participate and involve in the learning activities (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022). Also, it enhances students to listen and understand the questions thus, achieves good fluency and accuracy of speech in English.

## STRATEGIES

Teachers should select the best strategies that can help students to improve their speaking skill in the context to communicate inside the classroom and in real-life scenarios (Zakaria et al., 2019). Díaz Iza (2016) suggests that a good way to motivate students is that teachers establish goals, assessments, and guided strategies to enhance their students to learn a foreign language. When they are connected, students have the chance to practice and improve their English, so they are motivated and feel comfortable and reliable with others.

**Bandura's theory.** The use of language strategies like Bandura's theory helps students to improve their speaking skill through motivation and feedback. Bandura Zakaria et al. (2019) suggests strategies called social and affective strategies in which students learn from others how they act and imitate.

**Group work.** It enhances the student's speaking skill. Rao (2019) says that the teachers should apply group activities in which students get the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas in an integrated atmosphere through selected topics thinking based on the needs and interests of the learners. Moreover, with this strategy, students might work independently and try to speak more and produce sentences.

**Direct and Indirect strategies.** In the same way, Khodadad & Kaur (2016) cited in their study that an essential strategy to teach a foreign language has six types of strategies divided into subcategories as direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies, which need mental processing of language, involve memory, cognitive as well as compensation strategies. Indirect strategies, on the other hand, include metacognitive, affective as well as social strategies. They conduct and help in an indirect way with language acquisition.

**Inside Outside Circle.** This strategy is suggested by Tiwery & Souisa (2019) to teach speaking skill. Through it, teachers can integrate all the students in the class because students can interact and establish communicative abilities in the classroom among them.

Also, if the students practice more, they can speak naturally and increase spoken production as a result of their own motivation in the learning route.

**Peer feedback.** It is a strategy in which students evaluate themselves through feedback (Vinansaca Trelles, 2021). This is a technique in which students feel comfortable because they interact and make feedback to their classmates; on the contrary when teachers make feedback, they feel embarrassed about their errors.

**Videos.** They increase the lexical grammar in students, which depends on their tastes, interests, and age.

**Flashcards.** Getting learners' attention by images is used to increase vocabulary and grammar too. Then they can easily use them later to check if they have understood the target language.

### ASSESSMENT FOR SPEAKING SKILL

In the learning process, the teachers have to evaluate their educators and the assessment way can be good when applied correctly. However, many teachers sometimes tend to be confused about which evaluation method to apply. Zaim et al. (2020) said an authentic assessment is a select technique to collect students' advances and accomplishments. It shows if the established objectives were successfully achieved.

### RUBRICS FOR ASSESSING THE SPEAKING SKILL

Rubrics let teachers have a tool to grade their students' learning activities or skills through criteria to have clear what they expect from them. Wei Su (2020) posits that rubrics permit learners know how they are going to be evaluated and it facilitates feedback.

The major purpose of assessment rubrics is to assess performance. Assessing students' performance examiner can whether observe the process of doing something or observe the product that is the result of students' work (Ulker, 2017). Speaking assessment is usually reported as an overall mark on bands scales or score points, in order to provide valid, reliable and consistent results of assessment, that show the learners' speaking achievement/level (see Table 2).

### DISCUSSION

The present research focuses on methods, techniques, and strategies to improve the speaking skill of English as a Foreign Language students. Speaking is considered the most predominant skill to develop. Additionally, this skill is well known as the way to standardize the level of any language that a person speaks (Sinaga, 2018). Zuhriyah (2017) mentioned that the speaking skill success activities are based on characteristics such as the students having the chance to speak, being motivated, having the desire to speak, and the level of language production being acceptable.

Students of English as a second language find some problems when they need to express themselves. Lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence, and limited vocabulary are factors that student have to face in their learning process as (Zakaria et al., 2019).

Four types of motivation have been described, called integrative, instrumental, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation. All of them have a big influence in a foreign language acquisition. Integrative motivation is defined an interest in learning the language to meet and communicate with members of the second language community. While, Instrumen-

Table 2. Speaking rubric

Speaking rubric			
Criteria to be evaluated	2,5	1,5	0,5
Fluency	Smooth flow; quick, continuous flow; natural pauses; volume is excellent.	Occasional hesitation, searching for words; Speaker can self-correct.	Constant searching for vocabulary, verb tense; does not complete utterances.
Pronunciation	Phonetically correct; almost error-free; genuine effort to sound like a native speaker	Frequent errors that confuse listener and require guessing at meaning.	Most utterances contain errors; many utterances are incomprehensible; little communication.
Vocabulary	Very good; wide range; uses appropriate and new words and expressions.	Vocabulary is just adequate to respond; Basic response.	Inadequate vocabulary or incorrect use of lexical items; communication difficult.
Grammar	Demonstrates good accuracy and variety of grammatical structures; no errors.	Frequent errors in grammatical structures even in simple structures.	Makes utterances that are so brief that there is little evidence of structure and comprehensibility is impeded.

tal motivation refers to those reasons, which stress the pragmatic aspects of learning the second language, without any particular interest in communicating with the second language community. According to Chee Hong, Y., & Ganapathy, M. (2017) instrumental motivation was found to have a greater impact on students' English language learning. In addition, studies from (Zakaria et al., 2019;) showed that instrumental motivation has better result in teenagers. They learn a second language to obtains rewards, they think in their future and they want to continue studying to get a remarkable career, better job opportunities, and to get better salaries.

This research presented some methods, strategies, and techniques to improve the speaking skill. The following methods were mentioned: Albino (2017) showed that with the implementation of the Task-Based Language Teaching approach the students felt confident to speak, believed in their strengths to use the target language, and increased their vocabulary, concluding that the use of this approach was relevant.

In the same way, Hassan & et al., (2021) they agree that task-based learning enhances pupils' English-speaking achievement significantly because this method supplies students get the advantage of interacting with their classmates and teachers to promote self-confidence to acquire English language skills.

Project-Based Learning allows to students learn in an active way engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects using language skills of English as a second language. According to, Riswandi (2018) the implementation of Project Based Learning in teaching speaking can develop the students' speaking skills and motivation. Moreover, learners are engaged if they have high motivation to work in groups in the speaking class so, when they work in groups they practice their pronunciation, increase their vocabulary, and between them create ideas and sentences while they are speaking.

Content and Language Integrated-Learning encourages students to acquire and increase their linguistic competence between their mother tongue and target language. Also, Sarip (2019) mentions that Content and Language Integrated-Learning grant an advantage

in the educative process specially in class because it blends content that is integrated with their life context and from students' experiences in real life.

Cooperative Learning is a way to communicate with others because they feel confident and participate freely with classmates to improve their speaking skills. Singh (2020) mentions through this method creates an environment in which students connect with their classmates in order to accomplish the learning target in the class. Learners need to be confident on their knowledge, their leadership and their subskills to achieve the target goal and doing the activities.

One of the most useful techniques that this paper shows is debating in which students develop their speaking abilities by giving their arguments and defending opinions themselves. Arung (2016) affirm that debate technique improves students' speaking skill efficiently and effectively because learners get the chance to interact and enrollment in debate. Also, they participated in a cooperative way and defending their ideas in teams.

Role play is a good technique that helps students to gain self-confidence to diminish shyness, using real activities developed in class. Neupane (2019) mentions that role play improves the students speaking skill because through this technique in EFL classroom the students generate self-confidence and imagination thus, they are motivated to communicate. Moreover, this technique improves fluency and vocabularies according to the chosen topics. Furthermore, storytelling techniques provide students with a lot of opportunities to practice their skills by completing various student-centered tasks such as describing pictures and making predictions and personal connections in which students get intrigued and motivated to participate. According to Amru Bin As (2016), there are various post-storytelling tasks too, including role-plays, answering questions, making alternative endings of the story, and so on. Moreover, Eissa (2019) mentions that this technique lets students to practice with new vocabularies and use the appropriate grammar hence, improve their speaking skill by mastering stress, tone and intonation.

Interview techniques let students describe pictures, give opinions, and retell stories. Also, learners ask questions to their classmates about a selected topic answering in a relaxed and comfortable way. Aristy et al., (2019) suggest implementing interview techniques to improve speaking in class because learners feel motivated to talk and describe people with the whole class.

Finally, questioning motivates students to be active and participate with their classmates in their classrooms to improve their speaking ability. Wahyudi (2017) suggest the use of questioning because it allows students to increase their vocabulary, understand what they say, improve their grammar, better fluency and pronunciation when they speak.

Among the strategies, social and affective strategies get students to learn from others how they act and imitate. Gani et al., (2015) Social strategies provide students with opportunities to practice their knowledge on the contrary, affective strategies help students to develop their self-confidence.

Moreover, in group work, students have a chance to speak about their relevant topics sharing their thoughts and ideas. Otherwise, some advantages are suggested by Rospinah et al., (2021) one of them is group work creates an interactive room, follow rules, and students' responsibility to do the assignments in groups with their peers

Direct strategies need mental processing of language which involves memory, and, indirect strategies include the metacognitive processes that help to acquire a language. Based on John et al., (2021) findings say that students improve their speaking abilities through the metacognitive strategy meaning the indirect strategy, because they are conscious of their knowledge and get more confidence to speak in English.

Inside Outside Circle is a strategy used for teaching speaking skill in which students can speak naturally and increase spoken production as a result of their own motivation in the learning route. Wijaya & Sari (2017) argued this strategy provides students with opportunities to exchange knowledge with their peers. The inside-outside circle is a strategy

learned in class, taking turns in different pairs to check understanding, review, process, and speaking practice students.

Peer feedback is a technique in which students feel comfortable because they interact and provide feedback to their classmates. Rodríguez-González & Castañeda (2016) mention combining peer feedback with effective teaching and training in the L2 classroom allows you a powerful tool to increase the learners' self-confidence and self-efficacy. Finally, videos and flashcards increase grammar, vocabulary, and fluency in students, the videos and flashcards are chosen on their tastes, interests, and age. About Kusumawardhani (2019) suggests the flashcards' use because enhance and increases the students' number of words, pronunciation, spelling, and grammar of their speech. Similarly, Purwanti et al., (2022) say that the use of videos improve students' pronunciation, enhance their intonation, develop their grammar, enrich their vocabulary, refine their fluency, and promote comprehension while fostering their autonomy.

All the methods, techniques, and strategies mentioned before help teachers improve their students' speaking skill through motivation, since they involve successful participation in communicative skills.

## CONCLUSION

Motivation has a great influence in the improvement of the speaking skill of students of English as a foreign language.

Motivation is sometimes overlooked by some EFL teachers and authorities. However, teachers have the responsibility to use different strategies and techniques to motivate and engage students.

Teachers at all level should make use of different methods, techniques, and strategies, according to their level, to motivate their students to develop the speaking skill.

Future research will cover the application of different types of motivation in the teaching and learning process.

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# REVISTA KRONOS

## Use of padlet for the implementation of the writing process

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**ABSTRACT** This research project intended to enhance the writing abilities of English language learners by the implementation of the writing process through the collaborative use of the technological tool Padlet. The intervention included five weeks of instruction on the various writing phases. The study's participants included forty high school students. They struggled to write coherent, comprehensive paragraphs and had a competency level between A1 and A2. The researcher used a pretest-posttest design to evaluate the progress in the students' writing. The viewpoints of learners toward the innovation were gathered by pre- and post-survey applications. In order to determine how the students interacted and participated in the group projects' writing assignments, observation checklists were completed. The post-test scores were higher than the pre-test scores, revealing a Cohen's  $d = 0.33$ . The findings revealed that implementing the writing process helped learners improve the quality of their writing pieces whereas the collaborative use of Padlet contributed to increase their levels of confidence and motivation in writing activities. The study has significance for language teachers and learners because it might raise helpful insights concerning the importance of collaborating with students to follow a writing process and enhance the quality of their writing.

**KEY WORDS** Collaborative writing, writing skills, writing process, Padlet.

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## Uso de padlet para la implementación del proceso de escritura

**RESUMEN** Este proyecto de investigación pretendió potenciar las habilidades de escritura de los aprendices del idioma inglés mediante la implementación del proceso de escritura a través del uso colaborativo de la herramienta tecnológica Padlet. La intervención incluyó cinco semanas de instrucción en las diversas fases de la escritura. Los participantes del estudio incluyeron cuarenta estudiantes de secundaria a quienes les resultaba difícil escribir párrafos completos y coherentes y tenían un nivel de competencia entre A1 y A2. El investigador utilizó un diseño de prueba previa y posterior para evaluar el progreso en la escritura de los estudiantes. Las puntuaciones del post-test fueron más altas que las del pre-test, revelando la  $d$  de Cohen = 0.33. Los hallazgos revelaron que implementar el proceso de escritura ayudó a los alumnos a mejorar la calidad de sus piezas de escritura y el uso colaborativo de Padlet contribuyó a aumentar sus niveles de confianza y motivación en las actividades de escritura. El estudio tiene relevancia para los profesores y estudiantes de idiomas porque podría generar ideas útiles sobre la importancia de colaborar con los estudiantes para seguir un proceso de escritura y mejorar la calidad de su producción escrita.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Escritura colaborativa, habilidades de escritura, proceso de escritura, Padlet.

## INTRODUCTION

The value of learning English, which has spread to become a common international language, has been acknowledged by educators all over the world. The four fundamental abilities must be managed by students in order for them to be proficient while using it. The Ministry of Education in Ecuador is also aware of its significance and has taken certain steps to promote this field in the nation. Some of those actions include making English a mandatory subject for every student from second grade and promoting teachers' training abroad. Authorities have focused on the communicative approach to guide the teaching and learning process for the development of the necessary language skills (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

Based on the Ministry's guidelines, high school students are expected to reach an exit profile of B1 level of English proficiency (Independent users of language) according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). In order to meet the required standards, the communicative approach proposed for the Ecuadorian English curriculum focuses on a real-world context and the relationship of language forms. It is remarkably important the use of the language productively for meaningful purposes (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

Despite the widely known importance of English language learning, some studies have revealed that language learners face and share common problems such as apprehension, fear or resistance, factors that can account for a student's unsatisfactory writing skills (Javadi-Safa, 2018). Their motivation and performance are impacted by these failure beliefs (Belhabib, 2014; Dooley, 2006; Matsuya, 2003). According to Yau (2007), producing engaging and effective writing for English language learners is a challenging undertaking that exposes a lack of understanding, planning, and enthusiasm in their homework.

A similar reality has been demonstrated in the situation of Ecuador. Specifically, in Manabi's rural area, where 11<sup>th</sup> grade students from a public school are required to have a B1.1 level of English and progress to a B1.2 level by the time they graduate from high school. They are between 16 to 18 years old and their current proficiency ranges are between A1 and A2 levels of English language proficiency. The students have shown a deficiency addressing essential components in their writing pieces, such as the development of an introduction, topic sentence, coherent organization of the supporting details, concluding ideas, and accurate spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Besides, they are unaware of how a writing process develops in their written assignments. In addition, students appear reluctant and unmotivated to take part in writing exercises.

Faraj (2016) remarked the use of the writing process with a teacher's scaffold as a basis for enhancing students to write good pieces of writing meaningfully and accurately. Researchers have also looked into how technology may be used as a strong tool to encourage students to improve their writing abilities. Godwin-Jones (2018) emphasized the importance of technology and collaborative learning activities as contributors to motivating students to write more and better. A technological tool called *Padlet*, according to research by Fuchs (2014), has real-time benefits for participation and offers a place for the collection and revision of collaborative written work. This researcher affirmed that by using *Padlet*, all students had the ability to contribute and learn from one another.

However, there is a gap in research related to the collaborative use of Padlet and the implementation of the writing process in the Ecuadorian context at the high school level. For this reason, this research study aims to provide more information to improve the writing skills of students of English as a foreign language and how to increase their levels of engagement, participation, and motivation in English language learning and writing.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to achieve its goal of improving students' writing abilities by applying the writing process through Padlet. It is quantitative since the data collection would measure possible improvement in students' writings and collaboration through the use of Padlet. Additionally, it is qualitative due to the interpretation of data based on observations about how students collaborate using the tool.

### PARTICIPANTS

A convenient sample of 40 students, 16 females and 24 males, from a public high school in a rural area of Manabí participated in the study. The participants were the students assigned to the researcher and had been chosen from two other classes considering the number and the availability of students. They are in 11<sup>th</sup> grade in a range of 16-18 years of age in an A1 - A2 level of English proficiency. The participants had been studying English as a foreign language for several years, but when asked to speak or write in the target language, they exhibit a lack of confidence and motivation.

### VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

According to the research questions of this study, the operational definition and variables are described as follows:

- Implementing the writing process: A recursive process that involves five stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing.
- Writing skills: Abilities to communicate with proper standards, grammar, punctuation, among others.
- Collaboration: Working together to create or produce something.
- Engagement in writing: Students' level of focus, drive, and enthusiasm when completing written assignments.

Four different types of data gathering procedures were used in this study to help answer the research questions. A pre and post-test were applied to assess learners' writing skills at the beginning and at the end of the intervention period to measure improvement. These examinations evaluated four performance levels, from beginner to exemplary, according to the following factors:

1. Topic sentence: Strong and clearly stated
2. Body: Development of the main idea
3. Concluding sentence: Complete, restates the main idea
4. Organization/fluency: Focus and logical flow
5. Mechanics: Grammar, spelling, and punctuation

The researcher-filled observation checklists during the development of group tasks. This instrument facilitated the data collection of the frequency of students 1) staying on task. 2) participating in group discussions; 3) commenting and providing feedback, and) exhibiting positive attitudes while collaborating in Padlet. With a rating scale, the checklist quantified the levels of frequency (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes, and 1 = Rarely)

Finally, pre-post surveys (Appendix D) were applied before and after the implementation to collect and analyze the students' thoughts, feelings, and perspectives about:

- 1) Attitudes towards writing
- 2) Generating, revising, feedback
- 3) Collaboration

The pre-post surveys used a qualitative scale: Always, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never. Additionally, a Post survey about Padlet was applied at the end of the implementation. This survey presented 7 different statements about Padlet and its implications in English language learning on a qualitative scale with the following descriptors: Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly disagree.

## RESULTS

Regarding the initial research question: Will implementing the writing process through Padlet improve students' writing skills? The results of the post-tests indicated that the collaborative use of Padlet in writing activities helped students achieve better performance, improved their writing skills, and increased the quality of their writings.

According to the findings, students shown evidence of difficulty organizing and articulating their ideas in a paragraph during the pre-test. The establishment of a topic phrase and a concluding thought in the first paragraphs presented difficulties for the students. In addition, there were a lot of grammatical and spelling mistakes, as well as very little vocabulary use, in the evaluation of the pre-test. The post-test results, however, confirmed that the intervention aided students in producing more consistent, detailed, and understandable paragraphs (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows the minimum and maximum grades as well as the means and Standard Deviation obtained from the pre and posts tests. The mean of the pretest was 9.10 (SD 2,437) and the mean of the post-test was 15.73 (SD 1,358). Moreover, the minimum grade in the pretest (5) improved in the post test (14).

The effect size was calculated on the Social Science Statistics web site and the result indicated a Cohen's *d* (Mean of pretest - Mean of posttest / pooled SD) = 0.33 which means a medium effect size, a criterion that, according to Bialo and Sivin-Kachala (1996), represents a point at which educational interventions are considered to have achieved educationally meaningful gains over the course of a school year (see Table 2).

Table 2 shows the values of the individual categories of performance collected from the pre and post-tests. The outcomes demonstrate that after the implementation was accomplished, the groups improved in every category. The "topic sentence" category increased from (M = 1.83) to (M = 3.30) as the highest value among the other categories in the Post-test. This category demonstrated that students were able to write stronger and more clearly stated topic sentences.

The "concluding sentence" category had the largest improvement of all the performance categories, increasing by 1.47 points from the pre-test (M = 1.58) to the post-test (M = 3.23). According to the results, students were able to compose closing sentences that were more comprehensive than those they were able to in the Pre-test.

The Post-test findings showed that the "body/supporting details" category (M = 2.93) and the "mechanics" component (M = 3.10) had the lowest values. The findings showed that some students used fewer information to increase readers' interest in the issue in the body of their essays. Nevertheless, students did not always use the appropriate vocabulary. Furthermore, some students' sentences lacked flow and there were, in some cases, more than 5 errors in spelling and grammar.

Table 1. Overall results of Pre-test and Post-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	40	5	14	9.10	2.437
Post-test	40	14	18	15.73	1.358

Table 2. Results according to the categories of performance Pre and Post-test

	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Topic Sentence	1	3	1.83	.844	1	4	3.30	.791
Body/ Supporting details	1	3	1.87	.607	2	4	2.93	.474
Concluding sentence	1	3	1.58	.675	2	4	3.23	.577
Organization/ fluency	1	3	1.85	.580	2	4	3.18	.501
Mechanics	1	3	1.97	.698	2	4	3.10	.545

In order to answer the second research question: To what extent will collaboration using Padlet impact students' engagement in writing? Observation checklists were filled by the teacher once a week during the implementation. These observations were made on 10 groups of 4 students and considered the frequencies of students staying on task, participating in group discussions, commenting, and providing feedback, as well as exhibiting positive attitudes during the prewriting activities. The data collected were entered into SPSS software to obtain an average of the frequencies from the observations of three sessions of study (see Figure 1).

The observations revealed that during the development of the group work students stayed on task (45% usually and 36.5 % sometimes). In relation to the participation of students in group discussions, students (43.5% usually and 38.5% sometimes) participated in group discussions. Additionally, students offered comments and feedback (47.5% usually and 36% sometimes). Finally, throughout group projects, students showed a positive attitude (66.5% usually and 23.5% always).

It was observed that the students who showed the highest levels of engagement were the ones chosen as team leaders by their peers. These students showed excellent leadership, research, and technological skills. On the other hand, those who needed the most help with technology management and research abilities were the ones who showed the lowest levels of engagement. However, as the sessions progressed, students were able to face technology issues and manage the tool more easily, increasing their engagement levels.

In order to answer the third research question: What will students' perspectives be towards the use of technology and collaborative writing activities in class? surveys were applied at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. The survey results revealed that students' perceptions had improved (see Figure 2).

The post-survey results showed that students attitude towards writing was more positive than before the implementation (Post-survey = 48% always and 41.5% sometimes), compared to (Pre-survey = 25% always and 62.5% sometimes). They have higher confidence in their ability to communicate themselves (post-survey = 36.6% constantly and 48.8% occasionally). Students also perceive themselves as writers (post-survey = 39.5% constantly and 34.5% occasionally) (see Figure 3).

Figure 1. Observation Checklists results. This figure illustrates the frequencies of the Observations Checklists related to the students' engagement in writing through the collaborative use of Padlet.



Figure 2. Pre-post Survey attitudes towards writing. This figure illustrates the frequencies of the Pre and Post surveys related to the students' attitude towards writing.

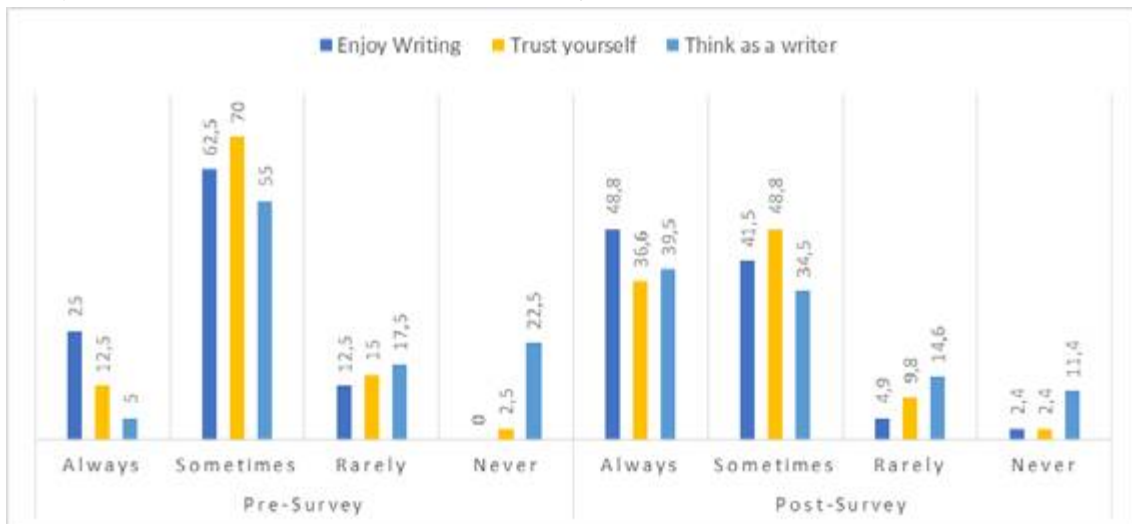
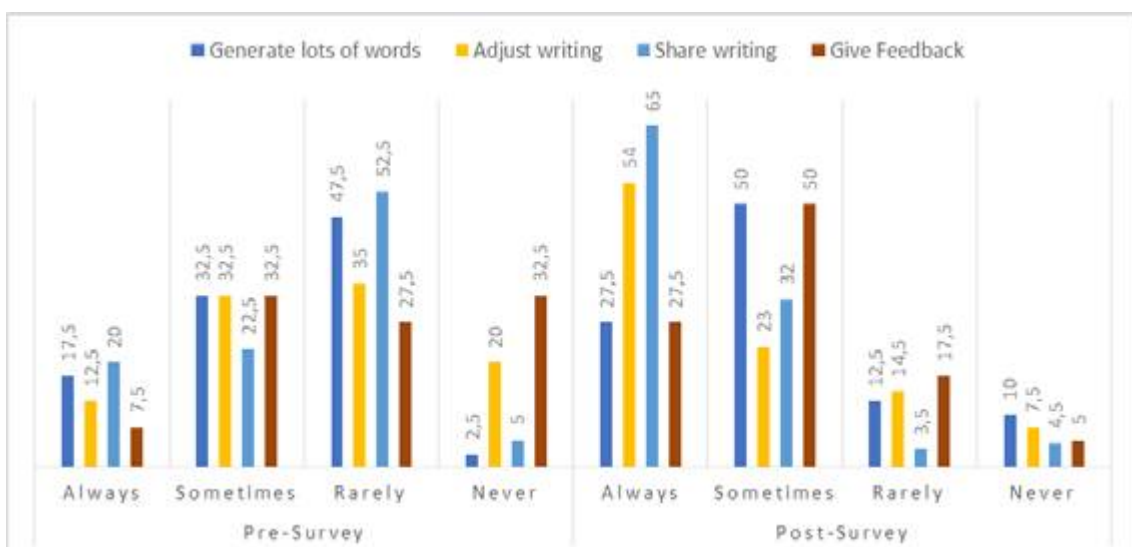


Figure 3. Pre-post Survey Generating, revising, feedback. This figure illustrates the frequencies of the Pre and Post surveys related to the students' abilities to generate words, revise their work, and provide feedback.



The results of the pre-survey revealed that students rarely generated lots of words (47.5%), rarely were able to adjust their writing pieces (35%), rarely used to share their writings and drafts (52.5%), and sometimes gave feedback (32.5%) before the implementation. On the other hand, according to the Post-survey, students agreed that after the implementation they could generate lots of words fairly, quickly, and freely (27.5 % always and 50% sometimes), adjust or edit their written work to fit the needs of a particular reader (54% always and 23% sometimes), enjoy sharing with friends a draft of what they have written (65% always and 32% sometimes), and provide feedback (27.5% always and 50% sometimes) (see Figure 4).

In terms of collaboration, students manifested positive attitudes since the beginning of the study. According to the result of the post-survey students agreed that they could work on a task collaboratively with a small group, pitch in, share the work, and keep the group on task (62.5% always and 37.5% sometimes), listen to each other's opinions and ideas (52.5% always and 47.5% sometimes), use their time effectively while working in groups (65% always and 35% sometimes), and learn from their peers while working collaboratively (62.5% always and 37.5% sometimes) (see Figure 5).

In relation to the use of the technological tool Padlet, 57.5 % of students agreed and 30% strongly agreed that language learning through Padlet is a good idea. Also, 45% of students agreed and 40% strongly agreed that the work on Padlet kept them engaged during the tasks. In addition, 55% of students agreed and 30% strongly agreed that their performance in English writing has improved through the collaborative use of Padlet. Similarly, 55% of students agreed and 35% strongly agreed that the interactions through Padlet helped them to become active in writing activities. Finally, 62.5% of students agreed and 27.5% strongly agreed that they will use Padlet in English language learning in the future.

## DISCUSSION

The results showed that as in the studies conducted by Godwin-Jones (2018); Mallon & Bersten (2015); Fuchs (2014) students' participation, motivation, and engagement increased through the implementation of technology as well as collaboration during the lessons.

Additionally, because the writing process was included into a range of activities with various topics, learners' writing abilities significantly improved. Implementing the writing process approach satisfied the students' needs in EFL writing while also enhancing their writing abilities, as indicated in Faraj (2015) and Laksmi (2006). Students were able to articulate their thoughts in a more structured manner. Their works used more descriptive terminology and included complete topic sentences and conclusions.

For the study to be successful, student collaboration was essential. As it is presented by the findings of Chen (2018) collaborative learning helps both teachers and learners to develop a supportive learning environment, motivating students to produce, participate, and interact within the groups. Students had the chance to share their ideas, give feedback, and develop by working as a team and accepting responsibility for the task at hand through collaborative writing.

Lastly, as per Fuchs (2014) and De Berg (2014), Padlet offered students a platform to actively engage in their learning. The use of Padlet could result in a positive impact on students reducing their inhibitions and reluctance to share or show their written work to a larger audience. Padlet is a stage for collaboration, interaction, and creativity for language learners.

Figure 4. Pre-post survey Collaboration. This figure illustrates the frequencies of the Pre and Post surveys related to the students' collaboration.

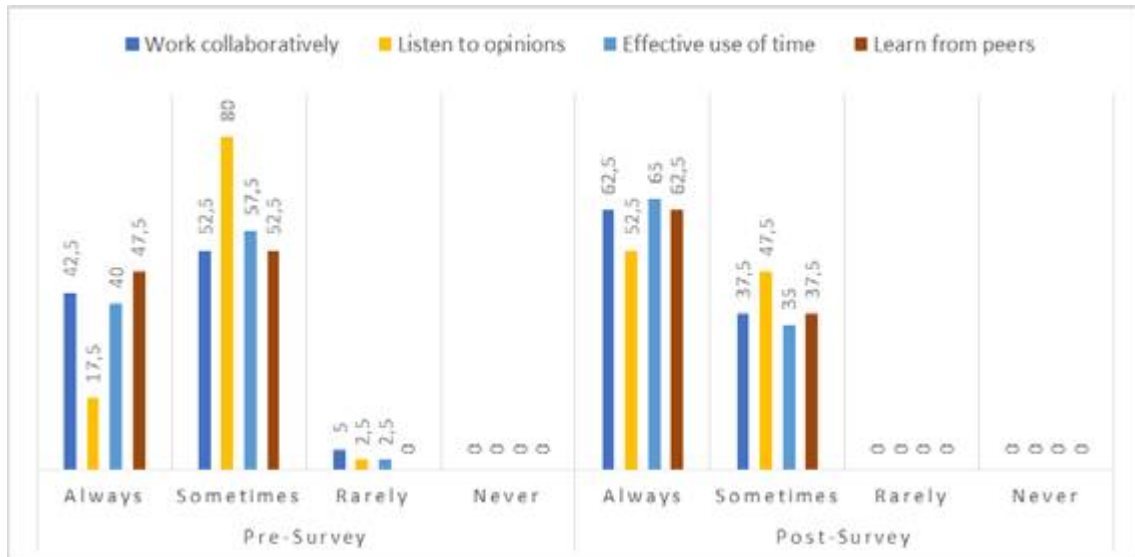
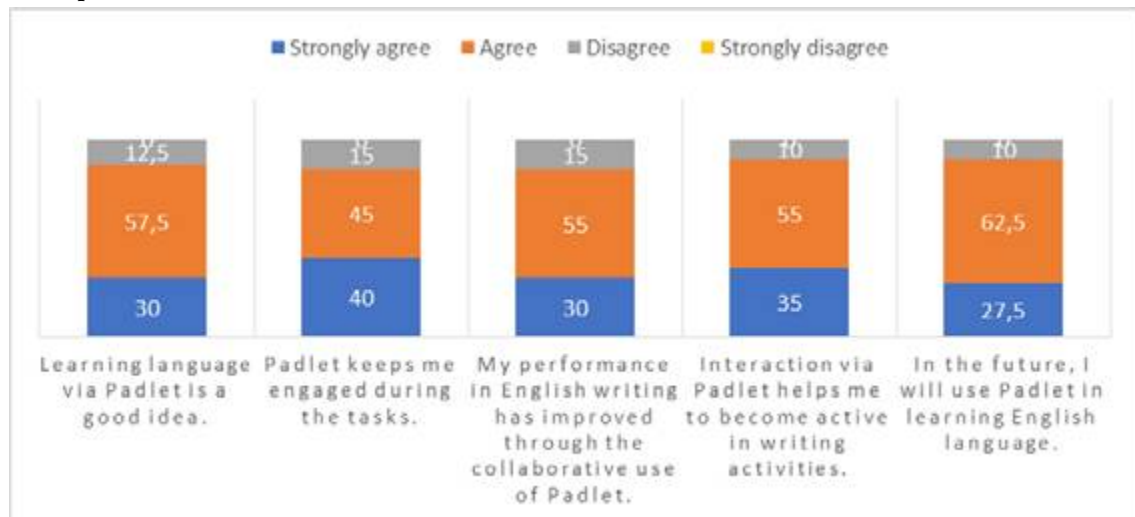


Figure 5. Post-survey Padlet. This figure illustrates the results of the surveys related to the use of Padlet after the implementation.



## CONCLUSIONS

The present action-research project explored a way of helping students meet the standards and the goals of EFL learning in the Ecuadorian context, as well as, increasing their engagement and willingness towards language learning. This study additionally sought to understand how incorporating the writing process through group collaboration on Padlet could impact students' perceptions of writing, group projects, and the use of technology to improve their work.

According to the findings of descriptive statistics, learners' writing abilities significantly improved between the pre- and post-test. The pre-test and pre-survey results showed that students were not familiar with the writing process or its stages prior to implementation. They were not used to writing drafts of their written tasks, and rarely did they show their work to someone before they submitted it. The post-survey results showed that these conditions changed positively. Students learned the value of writing through a multi-stage, non-linear approach that allowed them to go back and examine and revise their work as many times as necessary, just like professional writers do.



Similarly, the outcomes of post-tests showed a notable improvement in several areas of students' writing. By examining an example of a well-written paragraph and receiving frequent, useful comments students learned the importance of 1) to convey powerful, compelling topic sentences. 2) To build coherence in the body with the use of supporting ideas, and 3) To effectively restate the main point at the conclusion of their writing.

Padlet is a very useful tool for pre-writing activities, especially. Making lists, uploading pictures, commenting, and even giving likes to the posts, provided students with the opportunity to express themselves without fear or apprehension. Additionally, Padlet's collaborative writing feature encouraged and motivated students to participate. Even the more reserved students showed eagerness to join in group conversations and provide their thoughts because of the low-risk aspect of the Padlet platform.

The findings in this study demonstrated that implementation of the writing process through the collaborative use of Padlet helped improve language learners' writing skills, increased their levels of motivation, and exposed them to meaningful and communicative activities through an innovative tool.

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## Understanding the scope of educational policies in Ecuador: an analysis of its historical evolution

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**ABSTRACT** Education in Ecuador is complex because it is influenced by social, political, and economic aspects. This article aims to map out the historical events that have shaped Ecuadorian education to critically analyze the scope of the educational policies. It is essential to specify that this article does not aim to describe in-depth the reforms and public policies. Instead, it aims to critically describe the country's historical evolution and the current educational situation. In this sense, using a qualitative approach, this study starts with a literature review of the historical background of public education and the teaching methods used in Ecuador since 1830. Year when Ecuador became independent. To conclude, there is a discussion that starts with the policies that the governments have imposed on society and the future challenges that public education will face.

**KEY WORDS** Educational policies, liberal revolution, church, educational models.

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### La comprensión del alcance de las políticas educativas en el Ecuador: un análisis de su evolución histórica

**RESUMEN** La educación en el Ecuador se encuentra atravesada por procesos sociales, políticos y económicos que la vuelven compleja en su trayectoria. Por esa razón, este artículo tiene por objetivo retratar los acontecimientos de la complejidad histórica para repensar los alcances de las políticas educativas en el país. Es importante precisar que, no se pretende describir a profundidad las reformas y las políticas públicas del rango de información abordada, más bien se aportan elementos que permitan comprender la evolución histórica y la situación de la educación actual del país. Para ello, este trabajo parte de un enfoque cualitativo, por medio de la revisión de la literatura sobre los antecedentes históricos del proceso de instauración de la educación pública y los modelos de educación empleados en el Ecuador. Estos elementos son expuestos en un breve recuento desde 1830 cuando Ecuador se convierte en un Estado autónomo. A modo de cierre, se amplía la discusión de la educación desde la comprensión instrumental que los gobiernos han impuesto a la sociedad civil y se presentan los desafíos a futuro de la educación pública.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Políticas educativas, revolución liberal, Iglesia, modelos educativos.

## INTRODUCCIÓN

La reforma educativa y la ampliación de la educación pública instaurada en el 2007 e inspirada por el Plan Decenal de Educación del 2006, tiene un legado contradictorio. Esto se sintetiza en su falta de operatividad y calidad educativa, y se evidencia en el elevado porcentaje de analfabetismo, críticos niveles de acceso y deserción de la educación tanto básica, como de bachillerato y superior, en la deficiencia de la formación del profesorado, entre otros, permeando las desigualdades sociales y la pobreza extrema en el país (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2006).

Las causas que emergen de la literatura se relacionan con problemas económicos, cobertura educativa, currículos desactualizados y ausencia de programas en la educación superior de formación docente (Luna y Astorga, 2011; Terán, 2015; Robalino, 2015; Araujo y Bramwell, 2015; Paladines, 2018). Sin embargo, uno de los puntos centrales y menos referenciados es la discusión de la complejidad histórica y social que antecede al actual ciclo político e impregna a la institución educativa. Por tal motivo, este trabajo discute los orígenes de la educación pública y los modelos de la educación en la gestación republicana del Ecuador. Para ello, se concentra en el sentido de trayectoria que adquiere la impronta de lo público. Esto es, entender su concepción basada en un proyecto político, sujeto a la línea ideológica que delimita los elementos para su caracterización.

En la investigación se identifican los antecedentes históricos de la educación pública en el tránsito desde la educación como proceso de cristianización, a su eclosión en la revolución liberal y, posteriormente, su reforma en la época de la denominada Revolución Ciudadana. Los estudios que se analizaron enfocan su exploración en revisiones documentales y normativas haciendo énfasis en las principales reformas constitucionales y los cambios considerables en materia de política educativa. Además, se muestra un análisis en determinadas épocas, por lo que se caracteriza y profundiza en acontecimientos propios de la coyuntura.

En el análisis realizado se identifican varios modelos educativos que se han implementado en las diferentes épocas del país, en línea con los ciclos de transición política. Los modelos educativos se han caracterizado, en un primer momento, por tener una fuerte relación con la Iglesia católica y el sistema de doctrina y obediencia que debía seguir la población. Luego, en la época liberal, el modelo educativo se identifica por la separación del clero y la renovada formación de docentes a través de las escuelas normales. Posterior a eso, desde 1950, se enfoca en concentrar el modelo educativo con el fin de elevar los índices de desarrollo económico del país. En ese sentido, se trazan líneas de acción para la reducción del analfabetismo, especialmente con programas de alfabetización para comunidades rurales.

En la crisis de los noventa, a razón de la reducción presupuestaria, el Estado ecuatoriano, en su reajuste de obligaciones, planteó un modelo educativo participativo, en el que se dio mayor poder de decisiones a las familias y a los actores educativos. Posteriormente, en el ascenso de la Revolución Ciudadana, desde el 2007 hasta el 2017, se instauró un modelo educativo con los elementos del Plan Decenal de Educación del 2006. Desde el 2017 hasta la actualidad, este modelo persiste fragmentado por los grandes recortes presupuestarios y aún más deteriorado luego de la pandemia de la covid-19.

En esa línea, surge la importancia de enfocar esta investigación en la comprensión de la evolución histórica educativa del Ecuador, aportando diversos elementos que permitan entender la situación actual de la educación. Con aquello, se busca discutir la caracterización sobre los modelos que han guiado la educación en el país, así como también su proceso de transición histórica alineado a una coyuntura política que delimita las opciones de implementación. Con estas posturas, se busca aportar a la discusión sobre los desafíos actuales y futuros que enfrenta el núcleo abordado.

## MARCO TEÓRICO

La educación puede ser estudiada desde diversos campos, enfoques y marcos de referencia. Uno de los campos de estudio es el ámbito histórico de la educación, que se enfoca principalmente, en aquellos procesos, prácticas y elementos que delimitaron una situación o un momento específico en el que la sociedad estaba regida por parámetros o doctrinas por medio del sistema educativo (Guichot, 2006). En concordancia, estudiar la educación desde una perspectiva histórica permite entender los fundamentos con los que se construyeron prácticas para que la sociedad se estructure de acuerdo a los intereses estatales de una época y un contexto determinado, para así evidenciar sus tendencias y limitaciones en la toma de decisiones (Aguilar, 2019).

Desde el planteamiento de Soto et al. (2017) la perspectiva histórica en el campo de los estudios de la educación tiene que estar enfocada en reconstruir aquellos escenarios en los que los aspectos políticos, sociales y culturales ocasionaron reformas en las prácticas educativas. Además, el análisis temporal permite entender aquellas situaciones de cambio en momentos de coyuntura o transiciones ideológicas, sobre todo en América Latina. De esta forma, el papel que juega el Estado al momento de plantear cambios para el sistema educativo está vinculado con aquellas propuestas de un modelo ideal para la sociedad o, a su vez, de los intereses que están de por medio al momento de plantear las intervenciones.

Para Paladines (2015), la crítica histórica de la educación establece las trascendencias y evoluciones de un modelo educativo hacia otro, por lo que los cambios ideológicos, políticos y económicos permiten esclarecer determinados momentos en los que la educación se estructura para dar continuidad a programas y procesos en los que la sociedad participa. Por otra parte, para Soto et al. (2017), los cambios en la educación dependen de los valores del gobierno, estos valores delimitan las características de un modelo educativo, plantean modos de concebir la educación y establecen criterios para que la sociedad tenga una formación de acuerdo a los intereses e ideologías gubernamentales o estatales.

Estrada y Pinto (2021) establecen que un modelo educativo se conforma desde las asignaciones presupuestarias que el gobierno otorga al sistema educativo, hasta la práctica en el aula en la que interactúan docentes y estudiantes. Asimismo, señalan que su estructura consiste en los objetivos o metas que se plantea el Estado y la forma en que interactúan diversos actores que forman parte del sistema educativo. De esa forma, el modelo educativo está presente en todas las estructuras tanto a nivel macro, en donde se toman decisiones y se dictan reglamentos, como a nivel micro, en donde se desarrollan procesos pedagógicos.

El trabajo está orientado desde mencionados planteamientos teóricos, en donde principalmente se hace una revisión bibliográfica y documental, que permite comprender y analizar la evolución histórica de la educación pública y los modelos educativos que se han implementado en el Ecuador. El criterio de sistematización que se utiliza aborda la identificación de las políticas educativas desarrolladas en el país y la identificación de los modelos educativos que se han llevado a cabo. De esta forma, se demarcan aspectos claves sobre la evolución de la educación en materia histórica y una ampliación en las discusiones sobre los procesos de cambio político para vincular a la sociedad con la educación.

## METODOLOGÍA

Esta investigación parte de un enfoque cualitativo y utiliza la revisión de literatura. Además, se plantean diversas categorías de análisis e interpretación de los datos recolectados para construir significados y ampliar las discusiones en el campo de la evolución histórica de la educación pública y de sus diversos modelos (Duque y Aristizábal, 2019). Por otra parte, se indaga sobre las diversas reformas normativas que delimitan y alinean a un modelo

educativo para la sociedad. De esta forma, se trata de plantear los resultados de la investigación en una forma contextualizada y comprensible.

El análisis sobre la comprensión del alcance de las políticas educativas, parte de la categorización en dos aspectos. El primero en el que se plantean los antecedentes históricos de la educación pública en el Ecuador y la segunda en la que se presenta un breve recuento de los modelos educativos implementados en el país. En estas dos categorías se consideraron las épocas, los momentos e ideologías políticas, los objetivos o metas que se plantearon para el sistema educativo y los alcances o limitaciones que se presentaron. Esta categorización aporta la comprensión de la evolución histórica y la situación actual de la educación, así como también la descripción general de los acontecimientos de la complejidad histórica y los desfases de la política educativa.

## APORTES

### ANTECEDENTES HISTÓRICOS DE LA EDUCACIÓN PÚBLICA EN EL ECUADOR

Desde el año 1830, cuando Ecuador se convierte en república, el impulso a la educación pública siempre ha estado presente en las diferentes estructuras organizacionales del Estado. Un claro ejemplo de esto es la constante referencia a la misma que se ha realizado desde la primera Constitución de la república y sus respectivas modificaciones. Poveda et al. (1997) resaltan que, mediante los acuerdos nacionales en todas las constituciones del Ecuador, se han consagrado como obligación promover y fomentar la educación pública.

A lo largo de este período, el sistema de educación pública del país ha experimentado diferentes cambios y orientaciones, de acuerdo, a la inclinación de los gobernantes que han legitimado sus programas políticos. En ese sentido, la organización de la educación ha pasado de encontrarse regentada bajo una orientación meramente religiosa, elitista y excluyente, a una educación laica, inclusiva y obligatoria. Por ejemplo, en la Constitución vigente del 2008, se resalta que la educación es un derecho fundamental de las personas, en la cual el Estado garantiza la implementación de políticas públicas para cumplir con su «deber ineludible e inexcusable» (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2008, art. 26).

En el estudio realizado por Poveda et al. (1997) se menciona que desde el año 1835 hasta 1900 se expidieron en el país diferentes decretos y leyes con el objetivo de organizar y regular el sistema educativo. Ejemplos de estas regulaciones son:

- a. La instrucción pública se da en establecimientos fiscales y de órdenes religiosas, denominadas escuelas primarias, escuelas secundarias y universidades.
- b. En 1875 la instrucción en las escuelas primarias se encarga a los Hermanos Cristianos de La Salle y, la instrucción en las escuelas secundarias, politécnicas y universidades a los jesuitas.

Se delimita con énfasis en estos dos acontecimientos para denotar el poder que presidía la Iglesia católica en el control de la educación pública del país. Se concibe el poder desde la concepción de Foucault (2008), entendida como sistemas de control para lograr obediencia. Este poder sirvió para que, mediante el currículo nacional, el cual incluía un fuerte adoctrinamiento católico, la Iglesia mantuviera su influencia política y social en el país.

El dominio de poder totalitario de la Iglesia católica en la educación fue limitado por el presidente Eloy Alfaro, bajo la denominada «revolución liberal» en detrimento de la instrucción de larga data conservadora. En el año de 1906, bajo su mandato, el presidente

Alfaro dictaminó la creación de una nueva Constitución de la república en la que se resolvió que la educación pública debe ser gratuita, laica y obligatoria: «la enseñanza oficial y la costada por las Municipalidades, son esencialmente seculares y laicas» (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 1906, art. 16).

Es importante resaltar que, si bien mediante la victoria armada del general Eloy Alfaro se alcanza la revolución liberal en el país, la instauración institucional y legal lo impulsa el presidente Leónidas Plaza. El historiador, Emilio Uzcátegui (1951), afirma:

Ningún presidente ecuatoriano, ni ninguno de sus mensajes a la nación han igualado a este respecto a aquél del general Plaza en que dice: «hemos expulsado al clero del gobierno, de la política, de la educación, ahora hay que expulsarlo del territorio nacional», dijo, sin ambages ni reticencias, y pidió al Congreso la abolición de las comunidades religiosas (pp. 5-6).

En el período que comprende desde 1944 hasta 1983, de acuerdo con Ossenbach (2017), es difícil realizar una descripción detallada de lo ocurrido en la educación pública del país debido a la falta de estudios realizados en el área. Sin embargo, la autora recalca hechos relevantes que marcaron la educación pública durante esta época. Por ejemplo, la necesidad de crear una «identidad nacional no vinculada a los valores religiosos imperantes en la sociedad ecuatoriana» (p. 41), el nacimiento de una «cultura pedagógica» que emerge desde las instituciones de educación normales, la creación de políticas públicas para la reducción del analfabetismo, la atención preescolar y la impronta del Estado en dirigir su atención para impulsar la «calidad de la educación». Además, se sientan las bases para fomentar la educación intercultural bilingüe.

La atención del Estado bajo la gestación de estas políticas ayudó especialmente a que se aumentara el porcentaje de matrícula de las personas en el sistema de educación público del país. Los datos reflejan que entre 1950 y 1980 se incrementó la tasa de asistencia a la educación primaria de 71,1 a 92,2%. En cuanto a la educación secundaria la tasa se amplió del 11,6 al 40,5% (Luna y Astorga, 2011). Como resultado, en el año de 1985, de acuerdo a un estudio realizado por la Unesco, el Ecuador se situó «entre los países con más altos índices educativos de la región y echa las bases para el desarrollo económico y social futuro» (Poveda et al., 1997). Cabe aclarar que, a nivel latinoamericano, la educación pública ha sido históricamente relegada y restringida, por tanto, los porcentajes fueron alentadores a nivel de acceso en medio de los cercos institucionales y amplias desigualdades estructurales.

Desafortunadamente, y a pesar de un avance en el campo de la educación en la década de los ochenta, a finales de los años noventa los resultados de la educación pública fueron desalentadores. El país se encontró atravesado por una crisis económica e inestabilidad política. Por ejemplo, Araujo y Bramwell (2015) delimitan que, en 1999, «56% de ecuatorianos vivían bajo los límites de la pobreza, y existía un crónico desfinanciamiento de la educación pública y otros servicios sociales» (p. 1). En esa línea, Paladines (2015) responsabiliza del descalabro de la educación pública al Estado y a la sociedad civil, puesto que estos dos actores (el Estado y la sociedad civil) «permitieron que se disminuyan sensiblemente las inversiones en educación, se deteriore su calidad, su infraestructura [...]» (p. 14).

Se debe añadir, que la crisis económica y social que sufrió el país, entre 1998 y 2000, se encuentra atravesada por la debilidad del sistema financiero, la depreciación del sucre, el cierre de bancos, el feriado bancario y la transición a la dolarización (García, 2013), que ahondó más el problema de la asignación de recursos para la educación pública. La poca inversión que el Estado ha hecho en la educación se ha visto reflejada en la precaria infraestructura de las instituciones educativas, particularmente las que se encuentran localizadas en las zonas rurales del país. Además, de la disminución en la distribución gratuita de materiales didácticos, uniformes y alimentos. Por ende, estas condiciones agravaron la brecha de inequidad entre lo urbano-rural, acelerando la deserción y rezago educativo en el 2001 (Amaluís, 2011).

Contrario al descuido en el área de la educación de muchos de los gobiernos, con el ascenso del gobierno de la denominada «Revolución Ciudadana», entre el 2007 y 2017, se realizaron importantes inversiones y establecieron políticas que renovaron la estructura organizacional de la educación. Ejemplos de estas políticas de acuerdo a Paladines (2015) son:

- a. Producción y entrega de textos escolares
- b. Restauración de infraestructura
- c. Eliminación de costos en la matrícula
- d. Ampliación de la cobertura del servicio de desayuno escolar
- e. Dotación de uniformes escolares
- f. Desarrollo de la informática
- g. Creación de partidas para docentes en el Magisterio
- h. Estabilidad en las autoridades

Así mismo, es importante precisar que en el 2006 se elaboró el Plan Decenal de Educación que fue aprobado bajo consulta popular con un amplio margen de aceptación de la sociedad ecuatoriana. El plan constó de ocho políticas de Estado, que fueron de aplicación obligatoria, independientemente de las elecciones del 2007 (Cevallos y Bramwell, 2015). En esa línea, el gobierno de la Revolución Ciudadana adoptó en gran medida el Plan Decenal a su proyecto de educación:

1. Universalizar la Educación Inicial.
2. Universalizar la Educación Básica.
3. Incrementar la matrícula de Bachillerato a por lo menos el 75 % de la población en el grupo de edad correspondiente.
4. Erradicar el analfabetismo y fortalecer la educación de adultos.
5. Mejorar la infraestructura física y equipamiento de las escuelas.
6. Mejorar la calidad y equidad en la educación e implementar un sistema nacional de evaluación y rendición de cuentas.
7. Elevar el estatus de la profesión docente y mejorar la formación docente inicial, el desarrollo profesional, las condiciones de trabajo y la calidad de vida de los docentes.
8. Incrementar anualmente en un 0,5 por ciento del PIB el monto destinado a la educación hasta alcanzar por lo menos el 6 por ciento.

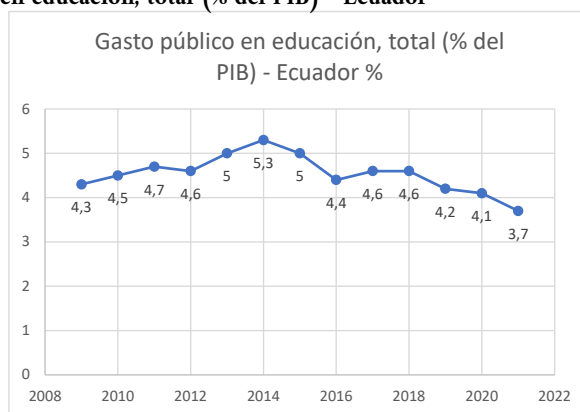
Desafortunadamente, con el cambio de ciclo político posterior al 2017 la inversión en el área de educación se redujo afectando negativamente a muchos programas educativos. Cabe mencionar que estas dificultades se agravaron en el 2020, con la pandemia de la covid-19. De acuerdo a datos del Instituto de Estadística de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (Unesco), en Ecuador se observa un decrecimiento del gasto público de educación con referencia al PIB. En el 2017 Ecuador destinó 4,6 % del PIB a educación, en contraposición al 3,7% del PIB en el 2021 (Banco Mundial, 2022) (ver Figura 1).

## BREVE RECUENTO DE LOS MODELOS DE EDUCACIÓN EN EL ECUADOR

A lo largo de la historia republicana del país han existido diferentes modelos educativos los cuales en su mayoría han sido adaptaciones de modelos empleados en otras latitudes. Esto, en palabras de Poveda et. al. (1997) ha causado que los modelos usados en el país no hayan sido efectivos, ni pertinentes para el contexto. Esto se dio porque no se tomó en consideración las condiciones socioculturales y dinámicas sociales propias del Ecuador.



Figura 1. Gasto público en educación, total (% del PIB) - Ecuador



Fuente: Instituto de Estadística de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO).

En cuanto a los modelos educativos utilizados en la educación pública del país, Poveda et al. (1997) hacen un recuento desde la Colonia. Los autores hacen hincapié que, durante la Colonia, el modelo educativo español utilizado en el país se centraba en dos elementos fundamentales:

- a. Educación elitista en la que participaban únicamente los españoles administradores de las colonias
- b. Educación para los indios cuyo único objetivo era su cristianización.

Este modelo educativo en el país fue instrumental para mantener el control totalitario de la Corona española y el poder de la Iglesia católica sobre la sociedad ecuatoriana. Luego de la independencia esta orientación clasista y elitista de la educación no cambió mayormente. En ese sentido, se establecieron dos grupos claramente marcados: el grupo de las élites herederas del poder colonial, y aquel de los mestizos de clase baja e indios.

Cada uno de estos grupos recibió diferentes tipos de formación: una mejor formación para el primer grupo, y una de baja calidad que se centraba primordialmente en las artes, oficios y religión para el segundo (Delgado, 2011). Es interesante puntualizar, que se genera la impronta de inicio de la universalización de la educación, aunque esta universalización se realizó solo en teoría ya que el acceso a la educación, y mucho más a una educación de calidad y de libre acceso, estuvo atado a la situación socio-económica de las personas.

A partir del siglo XIX, en línea con la revolución industrial, del positivismo y del pragmatismo el Ecuador se alineó a un modelo europeo de educación que promovía el estudio de las ciencias, la experimentación, el conocimiento práctico, la investigación de la naturaleza bajo el precepto de que «el único conocimiento válido es aquel que tiene una función utilitaria» (Poveda et. al, 1997, p. 22). Solo hasta 1984 se incluyó el estudio de la cultura en el sistema público de educación del país, como resultado de un Decreto Ejecutivo en la presidencia de Osvaldo Hurtado.

En 1970, paralelo a los cambios en la educación regular, los movimientos indígenas del Ecuador, luego de sus arduas luchas sociales y de reconocimiento, sientan las bases de un cambio en la educación rural. Lo que más tarde se denominó la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe. La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe forma parte de un «fenómeno mundial, enfrentado con la cuestión de la multiculturalidad ante la presión de la globalización» (Ossenbach, 2017, p. 51). La educación intercultural bilingüe de acuerdo al Moseib (2013) promueve tres fines principales:

- Apoyar la construcción del Estado plurinacional con una sociedad intercultural, basado en la sabiduría, conocimientos y prácticas ancestrales de los pueblos y nacionalidades, en la diversidad biológica del Ecuador, y en los aportes de las diferentes culturas del mundo;

- Fortalecer la identidad cultural, las lenguas y la organización de los pueblos y nacionalidades.
- Contribuir a la búsqueda de mejores condiciones de vida de las nacionalidades y de otros pueblos del país.

En la actualidad el sistema educativo ecuatoriano es intercultural a nivel nacional y es intercultural bilingüe en los contextos donde habitan pueblos y nacionalidades indígenas (LOEI, 2021). La distinción entre dos sistemas educativos en el caso ecuatoriano abre la posibilidad de plantear características propias de un modelo educativo y proyecto de Estado. No obstante, Rodríguez (2015), establece que a partir de la LOEI del año 2011 hubo cambios orientados a homogeneizar la educación a través de la construcción intercultural entendida como un proceso de «folklorización», refiriéndose a que el modelo educativo concibe este proceso como algo jerárquico en el que todas las pautas vienen desde el Ministerio y no hay una construcción desde los actores locales.

Esta poca participación orienta a que los instrumentos pedagógicos tengan una única orientación. Por ejemplo, en el caso de la educación intercultural bilingüe se evidencia el dominio de elementos culturales propios de la nacionalidad kichwa y no se desarrollan elementos con las características de las otras nacionalidades indígenas. De esta forma, el proceso de construir un modelo educativo intercultural e intercultural bilingüe sigue siendo una transición que no logra aterrizar en la realidad ecuatoriana. Para Krainer (2010), uno de los desafíos para la construcción de la interculturalidad en el sistema educativo es mejorar la formación docente para ampliar sus conocimientos y capacidades, con el fin de llevar a cabo prácticas educativas interculturales en el micro nivel (aulas de clase).

## DISCUSIÓN

La aplicación de modelos educativos extranjeros está caracterizada por prescribir elementos como la homogeneización cultural, en la que a través de estándares y de normas generales se pretende que la sociedad cumpla con los requisitos estandarizados para transitar su vida en el sistema educativo (Delgado, 2011). En ese sentido, Avendaño y Ramón (2016), señalan que los modelos educativos de occidente están estructurados para que la sociedad reciba una educación adaptada a la globalización, por lo que se busca siempre orientar los aprendizajes, en función de los modos de sobrevivencia para los sistemas productivos y de desarrollo.

Esto implica ampliar las líneas de segregación, porque en su implementación se desatiende la contextualización y los elementos culturales propios de la sociedad. Flores (2016) señala precisamente que en el Ecuador esa segregación se evidencia en las comunidades rurales en las que los grupos de poblaciones indígenas tuvieron siempre negado el acceso a la educación. Para ello, la propuesta en cuanto al modelo del sistema de educación intercultural bilingüe significó un cambio trascendental en la historia de la educación, porque a través de políticas educativas se pretendió aplicar un modelo contextualizado a los valores culturales y simbólicos de las nacionalidades indígenas.

Para Arcos (2008), las transiciones políticas representan un cambio ideológico en el campo educativo, por lo que las reestructuraciones están orientadas siempre de acuerdo a lo que el gobierno de turno considera conveniente a sus intereses. Con la crisis de los noventa se evidenció cómo el modelo educativo tuvo orientaciones de organismos internacionales que delimitaban presupuestos y orientaciones para moldear el sistema educativo. Este modelo plantea básicamente que quienes tenían mejores posibilidades económicas tenían acceso a una educación de calidad. Esta limitación tiende a generar mayor desigualdad al momento de considerar el acceso a la educación de las personas.

Por esa razón, Carbonell (2019) propone que un modelo educativo tiene que ser contextualizado de acuerdo a la realidad de la sociedad y debe atender a todas las zonas y sectores sin generar distinciones. Para ello, es necesario articular los procesos de cambio a través de sistemas participativos en los que la sociedad exprese sus necesidades e intereses. Como en el caso del modelo de educación intercultural bilingüe en el que sus actores son quienes construyen sus propuestas para aplicarlas.

A pesar de que en la actualidad se ha tratado de emplear un modelo de educación intercultural, los procesos históricos permiten identificar que su aplicación está sesgada por las creencias y los valores de los regentes educativos. Las reformas que se han trabajado en la época de la Revolución Ciudadana a partir de la ejecución del Plan Decenal del 2006 han articulado un modelo educativo que está orientado en la universalización del acceso en los diferentes niveles. Sin embargo, no se han atendido las necesidades en materia de programas formativos contextualizados a las necesidades de los grupos vulnerables (Rodríguez, 2015). La poca participación de actores locales en la toma de decisiones permite que el modelo educativo no tenga continuidad y esté sujeto a cambios constantes.

## CONCLUSIONES

La educación pública en el Ecuador desde los inicios republicanos se organiza como proyección obligatoria del Estado; sin embargo, los datos analizados reflejan que no se ha logrado cumplir con esta meta hasta la actualidad. Los desfases en el acceso y permanencia siguen siendo los puntos de limitación. Es interesante destacar que, a pesar de las orientaciones políticas, la educación sigue siendo marginada, y con el pasar de los años se amplían las brechas sociales. Si bien existen períodos importantes como el ciclo político de la Revolución Ciudadana, que instauró una reestructuración del sistema educativo, existen grandes desfases que impiden un progreso mantenido y uniforme.

Las limitaciones surgen principalmente porque no existen orientaciones para contextualizar el modelo educativo a las necesidades de la población y por lo general se excluye aquellas características culturales propias de una zona. Al tener particularidades generales de implementación de un modelo educativo, en la mayoría de las ocasiones las personas no logran adaptarse o no tienen los instrumentos necesarios para llevarlo a cabo. Además, con los constantes cambios políticos que se dan en el país, los modelos educativos tienden a reformarse de acuerdo a los intereses o perspectivas de los actores de gobierno. Es así que la calidad educativa tiende a estandarizarse para evitar más peso a la gestión del sistema educativo.

A esto se suma que el país vive un *continuum* de inestabilidad política y económica que coarta los consensos y, por ende, la instauración de políticas de Estado, en detrimento de proyectos de gobierno sin horizonte. Para ello, al igual que en el 2006 con el Plan Decenal de Educación, la sociedad civil debe abanderar los procesos de universalización de la educación pública. Es decir, sobrepasar la argumentación retórica que se ha presentado en los proyectos políticos a lo largo de la complejidad histórica, para coartar las fronteras educativas pendientes. Con aquello se reafirma a la educación por fuera de modelos con fines utilitarios y se evita caer en el cliché de los conceptos de intercultural, inclusivos y obligatorios, que abanderan la Constitución, sin una transversalización y operativización real.

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# REVISTA KRONOS

## Perceptions of peer-teaching strategy in the English major at a public university in Ecuador

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**ABSTRACT** The aim of this article is to identify the different perceptions of teachers, peer teachers and learners about the peer teaching strategy. Which in detail consists of the process in which students learn from each other, some benefits of this teaching strategy include developing students' collaboration and communication skills, building students' confidence, and the ability to take control of their own learning. Learners are more comfortable with collaborative work, working with their peers, making them able to interact, engage in reflection, and explore ideas more deeply than in a teacher-tutor-led environment. This research was developed under the principles of qualitative research because it focused on recollection of the perceptions of the peer teaching strategy of the participants in the English major at a public university in Ecuador, through the application of semi-structured interviews, of the studied subjects who fulfilled the roles of the English teacher, peer teachers and peer learners, throughout the application of the teaching strategy. The analysis of the data collected was thematic, it was concluded from this that both the tutor and the students developed team spirit and more empathetic relationships; increased psychological well-being, social competence, communication skills, and self-esteem; higher performance and higher productivity in terms of better learning outcomes and English development. Overall, peer teaching had a positive impact and taking when it was aimed at students, as well as increased participation and skills of peer teachers and learners.

**KEYWORDS** Peer teaching, English development, teaching strategy, collaborative work.

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## Percepciones de la estrategia de enseñanza entre pares en la carrera de Inglés en una universidad pública del Ecuador

**RESUMEN** El objetivo de este artículo es identificar las diferentes percepciones de docentes, docentes pares y aprendices pares acerca de la estrategia enseñanza entre pares; que, en detalle, consiste en el proceso en el que los estudiantes aprenden unos de otros. Algunos beneficios de esta estrategia de enseñanza incluyen el desarrollo de las habilidades de trabajo colaborativo y comunicación de los estudiantes, fomentando la confianza de los estudiantes y su capacidad de tomar el control de su propio aprendizaje. Los alumnos se sienten más cómodos trabajando con sus compañeros, lo que permite interactuar, reflexionar y explorar ideas profundamente que en un entorno dirigido por un maestro-tutor. Esta investigación se desarrolló bajo los principios de la investigación cualitativa, ya que se centró en la recolección de las percepciones sobre la enseñanza entre pares desde el punto de vista de participantes de la carrera de inglés en una universidad pública del Ecuador, a través de la aplicación de entrevistas semiestructuradas, a los mismos, quienes cumplieron los roles del docente de inglés, pares docentes y aprendices pares, a lo largo de la aplicación de la estrategia. El análisis de los datos recolectados fue temático, se concluyó que tanto el tutor como los estudiantes desarrollaron un espíritu de equipo y relaciones más empáticas; mayor bienestar psicológico, competencia social, habilidades de comunicativas y se desarrolló su autoestima; se promovió mayor rendimiento y mayor productividad en términos de mejores resultados de aprendizaje y desarrollo del inglés. En general, la enseñanza entre compañeros tuvo un impacto positivo en los estudiantes, así como una mayor participación y habilidades de los compañeros docentes y los alumnos.

**PALABRAS CLAVE** Enseñanza entre pares, desarrollo del inglés, estrategia de enseñanza, trabajo colaborativo.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, teaching English is considered a challenge for foreign language educators. As a consequence, society has been transitioning to new methodologies and approaches that have risen to fulfill the students' needs, which is the case of peer teaching. Peer teaching is an instructional technique that has been used by teachers worldwide to successfully engage, exercise, and deepen student learning (Johnson, 2015).

As Coenen (2002) suggests, a peer teaching program can be applied in English learning classrooms to engage the learners during lessons and the production of activities that allows for open discussions outside the classroom. Thus, contributing to the learning relationship, student-peer and having as a result a better understanding of general knowledge. The flexibility of the strategy allows for the application of the same during short sessions after classes. The teacher within the development of peer teaching assumes the role of facilitator and assessor of the peer teachers. In addition to the benefits of this strategy for English teaching, it is considered a way of helping students of EFL to learn efficiently, improve their performance in the language, achieve the level of proficiency needed by the teachers, and gain remarkable marks. That might be the reason why researchers such as Adil and Ali (2018), Grubbs (2009), Kavanoz and Yüksel (2010), Sunggingwati (2018) have carried out studies on peer teaching.

This paper aims to identify the teachers, peer teachers, and peer learners' perceptions of the usage, influence, benefits, and barriers of peer-teaching strategy in English Major at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, and respond to the following questions; What is the leadership development In Peer Teaching and learning?, How is peer teaching considered a strategy for level development? Why is ZPD considered a principle in the implementation of peer teaching? What are the main areas that need to be improved during the application of the strategy?

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### PEER TEACHING

Peer teaching is a strategy that allows the process of teaching to have an interactive outlet for students to get the most out of the learning experience. As mentioned by Topping (2005) the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions. It involves people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learn themselves by so doing. Thus, relieving the pressure and the fear of being judged that exist when communicating difficulties to the teacher. According to Boud et. al (1999) this technique refers to the use of teaching and learning strategies in which students learn with and from each other without the immediate intervention of a teacher. Considering the benefit of its proportions, we can say that it serves as a multipurpose strategy that helps both teachers and students in the learning environment. As stated by Stigmar (2016) peer teaching has been invented to meet the dual requirement of improving teaching and learning quality while doing more with less. Apart from these benefits, it can also influence the development of social skills as well as collaboration in the process of learning and teaching while intertwining knowledge between peers. As described by Topping (2005) peer teaching contributes to the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions. It involves people from similar social

groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learn themselves by so doing.

Consequently, this strategy can also raise the performance of all students that have yet to better their academic performance. As it has been corroborated, peer teaching is used in remedial courses to cater to the needs of students who are unable to progress with the class in a normal classroom (Abu, 2011 as cited in Utha & Rinzin, 2019). That is why it has been proven by Burton that there are studies that have found clear and convincing proof that having students teach, individually tutor, or academically mentor each other can be an extremely effective tool for improving learning in the classroom.

### PEER TEACHING AS A TEACHING STRATEGY

The process of learning has become one of the most meaningful interests within the acquisition of knowledge through teaching. So much so that it has become a goal to better this process and simultaneously improve student outcomes. But to follow through with this it is necessary to understand an overall conclusion resulting from a half-century of research that states that learning isn't just a one-way transfer of information to students and that the role of both parts of the teaching process is important within the learning-teaching process (Rusli, 2020). Therefore, students must have control of the learning process and their way of understanding while using socialization between students to have the positive input of various perspectives in an academic environment.

### ADVANTAGES OF PEER TEACHING

This strategy can have a positive impact on students, mainly focused on emotional development and improvement in the educational process. Consequently, Al-Jbouri, et al. (2019) mentioned that from the learner's perceptions, the dominance over topics was greatly received due to the connection that was formed between experiences. Thus creating a dynamic where all students become active and invest more time to understand further on a topic (Stigmar, 2016). Consequently, it is important in peer teaching to provide a warm, non-threatening atmosphere where the tutee is habitually engaged and is unafraid to make mistakes, there is indeed tremendous potential (Rankin & Berman, 2018).

Being part of this process of learning as an approach that centers around learners is the essence of peer teaching run mainly by motivation as one of the benefits as seen in Burton's (2012) investigations of the younger students acting as peer learners were motivated and excited by the experience of being taught by older peers. Within the same concept, Gordon (2005) said that in educational institutions in the exterior, students improved their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation regarding schooling, learning, and sometimes life itself.

### DISADVANTAGES OF PEER TEACHING

Even though this teaching strategy is effective, there are some drawbacks that are stated in the literature that could interfere with the development of the teaching experience (Stigmar, 2016).

Manchishi & Mwanza (2016) also remarks that applying peer teaching may disclose disadvantages that may involve evaluation and progressive changes in the strategy. Re-



search conducted by Bulte *et al.* (2007) stated that there were still concerns regarding expert skills on the knowledge that a peer teacher may need at the moment of teaching, even though the strategy enhances social and cognitive unity. Furthermore, Burton (2012) claims that difficulties may present themselves when it comes to the control of the assigned groups due to respect between students in an informal outdoor classroom. Suggestions made by students were to receive training on ways of teaching for an effective group learning experience and guidance on tackling problems that happen when using the strategy (Benson & Ying, 2013). Another factor that can be counted as a disadvantage in regard to the teaching process is the procrastination and free-riding of groups of students to benefit from other groups' findings on the subject (Aggarwal & O'Brien, 2008). This creates setbacks in the relationships between peer learners when working in groups. This is a result of bigger groups that can't be identified easily or evaluated individually, which results in evaluating peers expressing unconformity with training for the role of an evaluator (Burton, 2012). Additional concerns are unclear, referring to the examination criteria and inadequate confidentiality within the assessment process (Hanrahan & Isaacs, 2001). This inconvenience can be improved by individualizing evaluations and providing feedback Torre *et al.* (2016). Peer teaching can take up a lot of time to get the process going until the tutor can see results. Teachers need to also spend additional time assembling the pairs of works (the peer teacher and the peer learner) and training them about the strategy. Finally, this strategy needs further requirements, continuous monitoring, and oversight, thus proving to be a constant procedure (Wagner & Gansemer-Topf, 2005).

### **ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT (ZPD)**

Karimi-Aghdam (2017) states that a child picks up a lot of knowledge through social interaction with a knowledgeable instructor. The tutor could provide the student with verbal guidance or serve as an example of certain actions. This refers to the difference between what a learner can accomplish on their own and what they can do with support and encouragement from a knowledgeable partner.

Regarding the connection between ZPD and the process that the learners experience along with the evolution of their role during the implementation of peer teaching, the following traits can be highlighted (Fani & Ghaemi 2011).

- The presence of someone with more experience and expertise (peer teacher) enhances the process of learning acquisition of the learner (peer learner).
- Social interactions with a knowledgeable pair let the student practice and observe without the apprehension that they experience with their head teacher.
- To support the learner as they are guided through the principles of peer teaching, ZPD lets the instructor build a more competent peer.

### **METHODS**

This research was developed following the principles of the qualitative approach. Chih-Pei & Chang (2017) define qualitative as a research method that collects and evaluates non-numerical data. In most cases, a small and non-representative sample is used to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences related to a particular situation that needs to be investigated. In that way, this approach allows recollecting the unknown perceptions on the usage of the peer teaching strategy of the group of participants from this study. All

the different stages of this project have been carried out, focusing on collecting data that would let the researchers interpret later on.

Phenomenological research is related to the search for the meaning of personal experiences and perceptions. Participants in phenomenological investigations must be encouraged to describe and explain their feelings, experiences, and thoughts about a particular phenomenon (Selvi, 2008). It has been shown that this particular research methodology allows the researcher in the education field to understand and study a phenomenon that happens in a particular context with a certain group of people. This research method has been chosen because it is needed to understand the lived experiences of each participant after the use of peer teaching, to show the participants' valuable input developed within different roles during the application of peer teaching.

## RESEARCH SAMPLE

Regarding the sampling or strategy to select the participants' the lineal snowball strategy of sampling has been used to select the appropriate participant to be interviewed. Bhardwaj (2019) Snowball sampling, often referred to as chain-referral sampling, is a non-probability method that enables the researcher to find variables with distinctive properties, think of it as a referral approach that relies on the idea of like-minded attraction. The researcher selects a few appropriate primary data sources and uses them to uncover comparable variables for the study. Thus, all the chain of sampling belonged to the members of the Technical University of Cotopaxi.

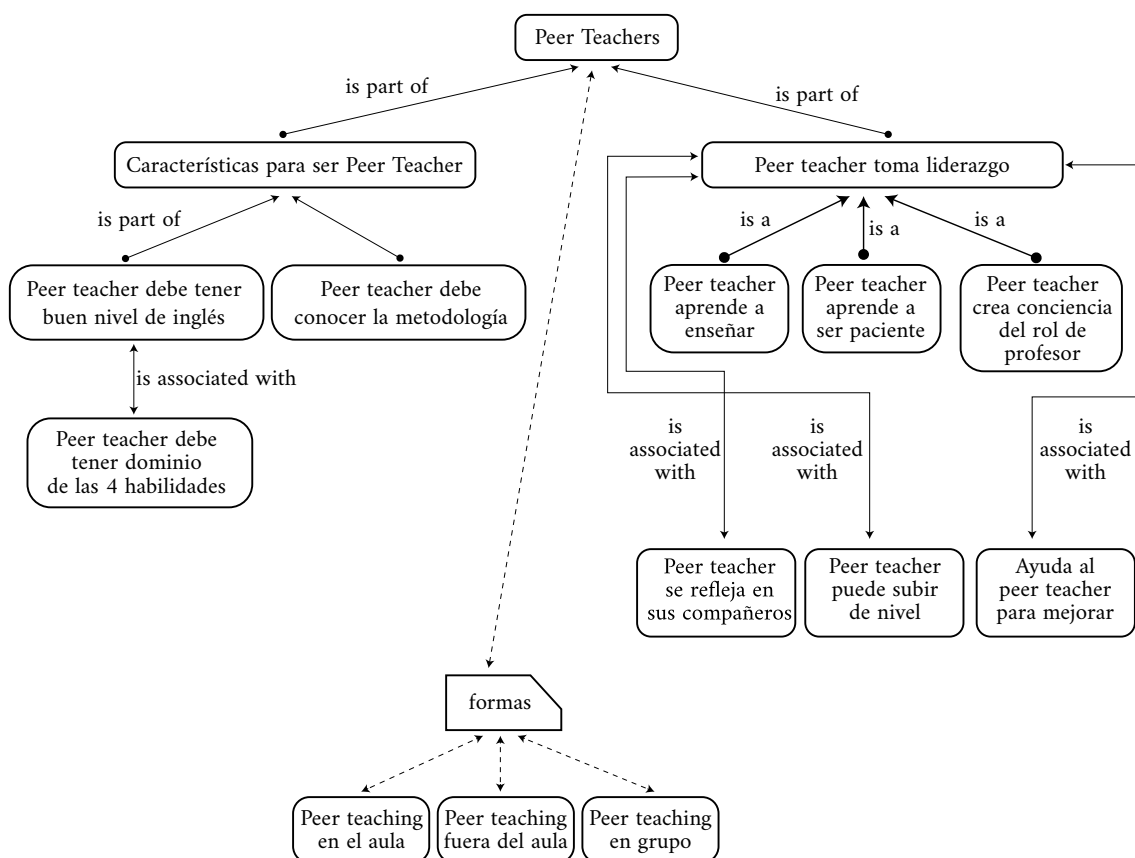
## TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

To collect the data, two semi-structured interview guidelines were developed following the questions from the "Teacher Questionnaire" designed by Adil and Ali (2018) as the main data collection instruments. The first semi-structured interview was conducted with the EFL teacher who was in charge of monitoring the sessions where peer teaching was applied. The second one was directed toward the pre-service teacher, who faces the role of a peer teacher. Moreover, to collect the richest data from the students who were peer learners, a focus group was conducted on the five students who actively participated and assisted in all the peer-teaching sessions. Bohnsack (2004) mentions that a focus group is a research method that brings together a small group of people to answer questions in a moderated setting. The questions are intended to provide light on an interesting topic, and the group is selected based on predetermined demographic characteristics.

## DATA ANALYSIS

This paper aims to identify the teachers, peer teachers, and peer learners' perceptions of usage, influence, benefits, and barriers of peer-teaching strategy in English Major at the Universidad Técnica del Cotopaxi. The process of data analysis was done through a thematic analysis. In-vitro coding was considered in the first instance. In this first phase, 177 Codes were obtained. The second coding process was debugging the codes to form categories and then themes presented below. The data analysis was carried out in Spanish since the evaluation instruments, both the interviews and the focus group with the teachers, the

Figure 1. Peer teaching as a strategy for the language development



peer teachers, and the students, were carried out in Spanish as it is the participants' mother tongue. Data analysis was performed using Atlas.ti.

The first network obtained from the data was related to the characteristics and the importance of leadership in peer teaching (see Figure 1).

The first overarching theme obtained from the data is leadership development in peer teaching and learning. Two themes are developing leadership: the abilities learned by the peer teacher and their reflections. Here, the peer teacher learns how to teach and becomes aware of the role of the teacher. Peer teachers reflect that with this strategy, they can reflect on their peers, learn to become more patient, support their peers, and in general, acquire more experience as teachers. The second theme deals with the role of the peer teacher and what he needs to know and develop. For instance, peer teachers must know the methodology applied in class, need to master the language skills, and must be aware of the things that need to be improved. Finally, the peer teacher must understand that he is a facilitator in this process and, therefore, has to develop teaching skills such as classroom management, assessment, methodology, and organization (see Table 1).

The second overarching theme obtained from the data is peer teaching as a strategy for language development. There are two themes-interactive learning and student-centered learning. Peer teachers, teachers, and peer learners coincided that the classes were interactive with activities that included games, videos, and presentations. Additionally, the class environment was good, and the students were most of the time motivated. The participants mentioned that the class was developed in pairs and groups, the classes were understandable, and the students helped each other, especially those with low levels. As corroborated by Utha & Rinzin (2019) students feel more comfortable in the absence of the teacher and communication can be done fearlessly in comparison to the traditional manner directed to a teacher.

Table 1. Peer teaching as a strategy for the language development

Overarching Theme	Theme	Sub-Themes	Categories
Leadership development in peer teaching and learning	Developing leadership	Abilities to be learned	Peer teacher learns to teach.
			Peer teacher learns to be patient.
			Peer teacher becomes aware of the role of the teacher.
			Peer teacher reflects on his peers.
			Peer teacher takes leadership
	Peer teacher Role	Need to know or develop	Peer teacher supports his peers
			Peer teacher acquires experience
			Peer teacher must know the methodology.
			Peer teacher must master the 4 skills.
			Peer teacher must have confidence
			Become aware of what needs to be improved
			Peer teacher must be a facilitator
			Must develop teaching skills, organization, classroom management, assessment.

Additionally, the peer teachers offered feedback, and there was significant progress in their language skills development. Peer learners informed the researchers that during the classes, they were not afraid to ask questions or express their opinions because the teacher was willing to answer all the questions they had. Learners were fearless in making mistakes in front of their peers. In general, it was a good experience focused on the student's learning (see Table 2).

The third overarching theme is ZPD as a central component in learning. Two themes are the construction of meaning working with ZPD and cooperative learning. Regarding the construction of meaning, participants manifested that they learn from each other, the strong students help the weak students, and therefore, there is meaningful learning. In these classes, the interaction was the key. There was a rapport between teachers and learners. As Rezaee & Azizi, (2012) said that ZPD highlights the difference between a learner's ability to solve problems on his own and his ability to do so while also getting help, which can be referred to as developmental level. Vygotsky's theory on the nature of human development between learning and development is clearly reflected in the ZPD concept.

Additionally, the concept of ZPD was presented in the whole process. Peer teachers worked as the more capable peers to help their peers. In this sense, peer teachers became the facilitators of knowledge, creating a space for interaction, personal growth, reflection, monitoring, and learning.

The peer learners expressed many positive feelings, such as empathy, positive influence, comfort, motivation, happiness, and respect. They also did not feel nervous about participating in class or afraid. They did not feel frustrated because they did not understand something. After all, the peer teacher always supported them. Those feelings helped them create a cooperative network in class. As Wagner & Gansemer-Topf (2005) recalled in their investigation about the benefits of peer teaching, peer learners receive direct interaction from their peer teachers, which means they get individualized learning. In that sense, peer teachers reinforce their own process of learning by instructing their peers in an environment full of opportunities to learn without feeling pressure (see Table 3).

Table 2. ZPD as a central component in the process of learning

Overarching Theme	Theme	Sub-Themes	Categories
Peer teaching as a strategy for the language development	Interactive learning	Interactive Classes	Active activities with games, videos, and presentation
			Good environment
	Student-centered	Class development	Teaching in groups and pairs
Students help each other			
			There is a significant progress
			Understandable classes
			Cooperative learning
			Help students with low level.
			Offer feedback
		Peer learners' Perceptions	Not afraid of asking questions.
			Not afraid of making mistakes.
			Answer students' needs
			Positive experience
			Can express their opinions

Table 3. Areas of improvement

Overarching Theme	Theme	Sub-Themes	Categories	
ZPD as a central component in the process of learning	zpd and the construction of meaning	Construction of meaning	Learn from each other.	
			Meaningful Learning	
			Weak and strong students work together	
			Help students develop their language skills.	
			Rapport	
	Work with the zpd		Interaction is the key	
			More capable peer	
			Peer interaction	
			Peer teacher as a facilitator	
			Peer teacher reflects on his peers.	
Cooperative learning	Positive feelings		Personal growth	
			Teachers promote interaction	
			Reflection	
			Peer teacher guides students	
			Teachers monitors	
	Good results			Empathy
				Do not feel afraid of participating
				Does not feel nervous
				Respect for peers and teachers
				Do not feel frustrated
			Feel motivated and happy	
			Positive influence	
			Feel more comfortable	
			Better results	
			Better use of the language	
			Better understanding	
			Better listening and speaking	
			Better relationship among peers	

Table 4.

Overarching Theme	Theme	Sub-Themes	Categories
Areas of improvement	Plan for improvement	Barriers	Peer teachers were afraid, worried, and nervous at the beginning Level of students Difficult to participate and work online Some students do not take it seriously No previous teaching experience
		Improvement	Need more training. Qualitative assessment Search about the methodology Material according to the level Reinforce knowledge

The final overarching theme is areas for improvement. Peer teaching could help preservice teachers and students grow and become better teachers. There were some barriers that peer teachers had to overcome, such as feeling afraid, worried, or nervous at the beginning of the project, this was due to their lack of experience in teaching. Peer teachers find it difficult to criticize their classmates. Given their inexperience and anxiety about making mistakes that can harm their peer learners, it would appear impossible for them to rate them based just on their effort (McKenna & French, 2011).

Participants also believed that it was difficult to participate and work online. Some students do not take the classes seriously because their teachers are also their peers. Saying this, an improvement plan is a must. Students need to be trained in this methodology, how to manage the class, how to assess, what materials to bring to class, etc. Furthermore, most importantly, to know what to do and to become aware of the benefits of peer teaching and learning. This strategy needs continuous monitoring and oversight by the main tutor or teacher in charge of the implementation of the strategy, thus proving constant evidence of progress (Lim, 2014) (see Table 4).

## CONCLUSIONS

Students responded positively to activities that were done based on the peer teaching strategy, taking into consideration conventional forms of teaching. This strategy has caused students a positive engagement and an increase in participation within the academic environment, creating a positive relationship with learning the English language. Although this strategy is focused on learning, it also enforces awareness in students regarding their capabilities and skills to have a better learning experience. Regarding the peer teacher, the awareness of their role was evident due to the control of emotions that was needed for a more controlled academic environment. When it came to peer learners, the positive effect of peer teaching was evident when interactive activities were applied along with feedback. In the learning environment, the awareness of the different skills of peer teachers and peer learners also benefitted this experience. Overall, peer teaching was a strategy that benefitted the three parts: the teacher, peer teacher, and peer learner.

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Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx
Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx

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