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KRONOS-The Language Teaching Journal, 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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Nos complace compartir con nuestra comunidad académica el volumen 6, número 1 de *Kronos* «*The Language Teaching Journal*», disponible en formato digital. En esta edición encontrará ocho artículos que analizan métodos y estrategias para optimizar la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de idiomas, junto con estudios que inspiran nuevas perspectivas sobre educación.

En el primer artículo **“Percepciones del Aprendizaje de Gramática en Clase Invertida con estudiantes nivel B1 (inglés) en Ecuador”** sus autores analizan las percepciones de estudiantes B1 sobre el uso del aula invertida para aprender gramática en un contexto EFL. Con 96 participantes, se compararon enfoques tradicional e invertido durante un semestre. Los resultados revelan percepciones positivas, destacando que los videos previos facilitan la comprensión y el rendimiento. Sin embargo, se observan limitaciones en la calidad y acceso a los recursos, lo que indica la necesidad de mejorar su diseño.

En el segundo artículo **“Errores lingüísticos más comunes identificados en el discurso oral de estudiantes universitarios de una universidad pública”** sus autores tuvieron como objetivo identificar los errores lingüísticos más frecuentes en el discurso oral de estudiantes de Pedagogía de los Idiomas en una universidad pública de Azogues analizando las interacciones orales espontáneas de estudiantes de quinto a noveno semestre mediante grabación, transcripción y codificación en MAXQDA y la utilización de un enfoque de Lingüística de Corpus para organizar y clasificar los datos.

El tercer artículo **“Implementación de la técnica de Lectura y Composición Cooperativa Integrada (CIRC) para mejorar la comprensión lectora de los alumnos de décimo año de Educación General Básica”** los autores analizaron el impacto de la técnica Cooperativa Integrada de Lectura y Composición (CIRC) en la comprensión lectora de estudiantes de décimo grado en una escuela pública de Cuenca, Ecuador. Mediante un enfoque mixto de Investigación Acción Exploratoria, aplicando pruebas diagnósticas, sumativas y reflexiones escritas antes y después de la intervención. Los resultados evidenciaron mejoras significativas en comprensión lectora y motivación.

En el cuarto artículo **“Proceso de Estimulación Acuática en el desarrollo infantil en niños de uno a cinco años”** sus autores analizan la estimulación acuática como estrategia pedagógica innovadora para niños de 1 a 5 años en educación inicial, destacando sus beneficios para el desarrollo psicomotor, cognitivo, emocional y social. Con un enfoque cuantitativo y muestra de 75 docentes, se obtuvo un índice de confiabilidad de 0,79 (Alfa de Cronbach). Los resultados evidencian un impacto positivo en la calidad educativa y en el desarrollo integral infantil, fortaleciendo las prácticas pedagógicas y contribuyendo a la formación de generaciones más saludables.

En el quinto artículo **“Aprendizaje digital y gamificación: un puente hacia la práctica de la autorregulación en lengua extranjera inglesa”** sus autores realizan un análisis de cómo la era digital ha transformado el aprendizaje del inglés mediante recursos accesibles, personalizados y gamificados, fomentando habilidades comunicativas y autorregulación, mediante encuestas y correlación de Pearson en SPSS se evidencia cómo la gamificación y las herramientas digitales apoyan el aprendizaje del idioma y la autorregulación.

En el sexto artículo **“Portugués Brasileño: Un Enfoque Bibliométrico”** su autora analiza los estudios sobre el portugués brasileño, una variante nacida de la interacción entre culturas nativas, europeas y africanas relacionando su crecimiento mundial con el

desarrollo económico y social de Brasil, lo que influencia la enseñanza de idiomas. La investigación, basada en análisis bibliométrico con Scopus y VOSviewer, revela que las publicaciones iniciaron en 2007 y aumentaron hasta 2024. Las disciplinas más vinculadas son Ciencias Sociales, Artes/Humanidades y Psicología.

En el séptimo artículo **“Los efectos de la evaluación de portafolios en la escritura de estudiantes de EFL”** los autores estudian el impacto del uso de portafolios en el desarrollo de la expresión escrita en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. A través de actividades reflexivas y guiadas por el docente, los portafolios fomentan autonomía, creatividad y aprendizaje progresivo. La investigación cualitativa incluyó observaciones, entrevistas y análisis de textos escritos. Los resultados muestran mejoras en la autonomía y una mayor comprensión docente de las necesidades estudiantiles.

Finalmente, en el octavo artículo **“Soft CLIL: Cómo aplicar la Taxonomía de Bloom para promover habilidades cognitivas de lectura en la Educación Superior”** sus autores revisan el enfoque CLIL (Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas) y su relación con la Taxonomía de Bloom para mejorar la comprensión lectora en estudiantes universitarios destaca la necesidad de integrar ambos métodos en la educación ecuatoriana para fomentar el pensamiento crítico y creativo. La combinación de contenidos y cuestionamientos en el aula de EFL busca crear clases prácticas y funcionales.

We are pleased to share with our academic community volume 6, number 1 of Kronos “The Language Teaching Journal,” available in digital format. In this edition, you will find eight articles that analyze methods and strategies for optimizing languages teaching and learning, along with studies that inspire new perspectives on education.

In the first article; **“Perceptions of Grammar Learning in a Flipped Classroom with B1 Level students (English) in Ecuador,”** the authors analyze the perceptions of B1 students on the use of the flipped classroom to learn grammar in an EFL context. With 96 participants, traditional and flipped approaches were compared over the course of a semester. The results reveal positive perceptions, highlighting that the pre-class videos facilitate comprehension and performance. However, limitations in the quality and access to resources were observed, indicating the need to improve their design.

In the second article, **“Most Common Linguistic Errors Identified in Oral Discourse in Undergraduate Students from a Public University,”** the authors aimed to identify the most frequent linguistic errors in the oral discourse of language education students at a public university in Azogues by analyzing the spontaneous oral interactions of students in their fifth to ninth semesters through recording, transcription, and coding in MAXQDA and using a corpus linguistics approach to organize and classify the data. The results present a detailed list of the most common errors detected in student speech.

In the third article, **“Implementing Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique to improve tenth-grade students’ reading comprehension”** the authors analyzed the impact of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique on the reading comprehension of tenth-grade students at a public school in Cuenca, Ecuador. Using a mixed approach of exploratory action research, applying diagnostic and summative tests and written reflections before and after the intervention, the results showed significant improvements in reading comprehension and motivation.

In the fourth article **“Aquatic Stimulation process in child development in children from one to five years old”** the authors analyze aquatic stimulation as an innovative pedagogical strategy for children aged 1 to 5 years in early childhood education, highlighting its benefits for psychomotor, cognitive, emotional, and social development. Using a quantitative approach and a sample of 75 teachers, a reliability index of 0.79 (Cronbach’s alpha) was obtained. The results show a positive impact on educational quality and comprehensive child development, strengthening pedagogical practices and contributing to the formation of healthier generations.

In the fifth article, **“Digital learning and gamification: a bridge to self-regulation practice on English foreign language”** the authors analyze how the digital age has transformed English language learning through accessible, personalized, and gamified resources, promoting communication skills and self-regulation. Through surveys and Pearson correlation in SPSS, they demonstrate how gamification and digital tools support language learning and self-regulation.

In the sixth article **“Brazilian Portuguese: A Bibliometric Approach”** the author analyzes studies on Brazilian Portuguese, a variant born from the interaction between native, European, and African cultures, relating its global growth to Brazil’s economic and social development, which influences language teaching. The research, based on bibliometric analysis with Scopus and VOSviewer, reveals that publications began in 2007

and increased until 2024. The most closely related disciplines are Social Sciences, Arts/Humanities, and Psychology.

In the seventh article, **“The Effects of Portfolio Assessment on Writing of EFL Students,”** the authors study the impact of using portfolios on the development of written expression in students learning English as a foreign language. Through reflective activities guided by the teacher, portfolios foster autonomy, creativity, and progressive learning. The qualitative research included observations, interviews, and analysis of written texts. The results show improvements in autonomy and greater teacher understanding of student needs.

Finally, in the eighth article, **“Soft CLIL: How to Effectively Apply Bloom’s Taxonomy to Promote Reading Cognitive Skills in Higher Education,”** the authors review the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach and its relationship with Bloom’s Taxonomy to improve reading comprehension in university students highlighting the need to integrate both methods into Ecuadorian education to foster critical and creative thinking. The combination of content and questioning in the EFL classroom seeks to create practical and functional lessons.



REVISTA KRONOS

Perceptions of Flipped Grammar Learning: A study with B1-level English Students in Ecuador.

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ABSTRACT This paper discusses B1-level English students' perceptions of flipped classroom grammar learning (FL) in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) at a university in Ecuador. It is an action research study, involving 69 B1-level English students across five classes and three instructors, and focused on within-subjects approach where students experienced a non-flipped grammar approach during the first 8 weeks of the semester (until midterm) and then a flipped learning approach (8 weeks). Surveys were conducted at the end of the semester to collect qualitative and quantitative data on students' perceptions of FL in English grammar learning. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with a subgroup of students provided detailed qualitative insights. The results indicated that students generally have positive perceptions of FL for grammar learning as watching grammar videos before class improves their understanding and positively impacts their performance. Although participants mostly prefer a flipped approach to learning grammar, some students expressed concerns regarding technical aspects of tutorial videos. Quantitative results from grammar tests show that students slightly improved their grammar academic performance. Overall, the study concludes that while flipped learning is perceived positively and has academic benefits, further refinement on the approach, particularly in the design of instructional videos, is necessary for optimal effectiveness.

KEYWORDS Flipped learning, English as a foreign language, student's perceptions, learning, grammar.

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Percepciones del Aprendizaje de Gramática en Clase Invertida con Estudiantes nivel B1 (inglés) en Ecuador.

RESUMEN Este artículo explora las percepciones de los estudiantes universitarios de inglés de nivel B1 sobre el aprendizaje de gramática mediante el método del aula invertida (FL) en el contexto del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en una universidad de Ecuador. El estudio es una investigación-acción que involucra a 96 estudiantes de inglés de nivel B1 distribuidos en cinco clases y bajo la instrucción de tres docentes diferentes. El diseño de la investigación adoptó un enfoque intra-sujetos, aplicando una metodología no invertida de gramática durante la primera mitad del semestre (8 semanas) y posteriormente implementando el método de aula invertida (8 semanas). Al finalizar el semestre, se administraron encuestas para recopilar datos tanto cualitativos como cuantitativos sobre las percepciones de los estudiantes respecto al aula invertida en el aprendizaje de la gramática del idioma inglés. Además, se llevaron a cabo entrevistas semi-estructuradas con un subgrupo de estudiantes para obtener información cualitativa detallada. Los resultados indicaron que los estudiantes, en general, mantienen percepciones positivas sobre el aula invertida para el aprendizaje de la gramática, destacando que ver videos de gramática antes de las clases mejora significativamente su comprensión y tiene un impacto positivo en su rendimiento académico. Aunque la mayoría de los estudiantes prefieren el enfoque invertido para el aprendizaje de gramática, algunos expresaron inquietudes respecto a ciertos aspectos técnicos de los videos tutoriales, tales como la calidad del contenido y la facilidad de acceso. Los resultados cuantitativos de las pruebas de gramática demostraron que los estudiantes mejoraron ligeramente su rendimiento académico en este ámbito. El estudio concluye que, si bien el aprendizaje invertido se percibe de manera positiva y conlleva beneficios académicos, es necesario un mayor refinamiento del enfoque, particularmente en el diseño y la implementación de los videos instructivos, para lograr una efectividad óptima en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

PALABRAS CLAVE Aula invertida, inglés como lengua extranjera, percepciones de los estudiantes, aprendizaje, gramática.

INTRODUCTION

The flipped learning (FL) methodology has become a popular approach to teaching reshaping traditional classroom dynamics. By shifting initial learning to pre-class activities and reserving classroom time for interactive engagement, FL emphasizes active student participation and deeper exploration of content. This learner-centered approach has demonstrated potential in fostering independence, critical thinking, and adaptability among students, making it particularly relevant in modern educational settings (Vita & Al-Hoorie, 2023).

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, FL has shown promising outcomes, especially in enhancing key skills such as writing and speaking, while promoting academic resilience (Cabezas, 2021). However, its application to specific areas, such as grammar instruction, remains underexplored, particularly within the Ecuadorian context. This study aims to address this gap by examining students' perceptions of flipped grammar learning in university-level B1 English courses.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the study, the subsequent sections will explore key elements essential to this research. These include the theoretical foundation of flipped learning, the significance of grammar instruction in EFL contexts, the characteristics of B1-level English proficiency, and the role of student perceptions in evaluating educational methodologies. Each subsection highlights critical concepts and their relevance to the research, offering insights into how FL can be effectively implemented in grammar instruction.

FLIPPED LEARNING

The flipped learning (FL) methodology transforms traditional educational paradigms by relocating initial exposure to new content outside the classroom, thereby utilizing class time for enhanced engagement and active learning (Vita & Al-Hoorie, 2023). In this approach, students prepare for class by accessing materials – such as videos, readings, or interactive modules – at their own pace, which equips them for more dynamic classroom interactions. Class activities prioritize discussions, problem-solving, group collaboration, and teacher-student interactions, fostering a more immersive learning environment (HEA, 2024).

FL emphasizes a learner-centered approach, shifting the focus from instructor-led teaching to a participatory environment that enhances student engagement and offers flexibility. This model supports personalized learning experiences as students can access pre-class materials at their convenience (Guayasamin & Inga, 2024). The key elements of FL are the flexible environment in which students select when and where to learn, accommodating diverse learning styles and schedules (Guayasamin & Inga, 2024), learning culture in which classrooms evolve into spaces for in-depth exploration where students can clarify doubts and engage in enriching activities (HEA, 2024), and intentional content which is created or chosen by educators to maximize classroom interaction and concept application (Kwon, 2021). Through these elements, teachers become facilitators who guide collaborative problem-solving rather than merely delivering lectures (HEA, 2024).

Research indicates that FL promotes active engagement and enhances student outcomes by empowering learners to take charge of their education while receiving ongoing support from instructors (Guayasamin & Inga, 2024). This methodology not only enriches the learning experience but also cultivates independence and critical thinking skills necessary for modern educational challenges (Kwon, 2021).

Various studies have investigated the effects of flipped instruction on English as Foreign Language (EFL) students' language skills, revealing promising outcomes. For instance, a study involving Indonesian university students demonstrated significant improvements in

opinion essay writing skills with flipped learning compared to traditional methods (Putri et al., 2024). Furthermore, flipped classrooms have been shown to create a more engaging and interactive atmosphere that encourages greater student autonomy in language learning activities (Izadpanah, 2022; Çiftci Aksoy & Takkaç Tulgar, 2024).

In terms of listening skills, EFL students exhibited improved performance following participation in flipped instruction; post-test scores were significantly higher than pre-test scores (Khoiriyah, 2021). Additionally, FL has been linked to increased academic resilience and self-directed learning among EFL students, suggesting that this approach not only enhances language proficiency but also contributes to overall learner development (Izadpanah, 2022).

While there are mixed findings regarding the effectiveness of FL in EFL contexts, the prevailing consensus highlights its potential benefits in improving language skills and fostering an active learning environment (Putri et al., 2024; Lotino & Ocampo, 2024). Ongoing research is necessary to fully explore the benefits and drawbacks of this teaching strategy, which has gained traction globally. In Ecuador specifically, research on this topic has been advancing in recent years.

GRAMMAR

According to Merriam Webster (n.d.), grammar is defined as ‘a system of rules that defines the grammatical structure of a language.’ Complementing this view, Thornbury (1999) defines grammar as a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed, emphasizing its role in effective communication and language proficiency.

In this study, the grammar topics covered correspond to the competencies expected at the upper B1 level (B1.2) according to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). These competencies include the ability to use a range of grammatical structures, such as past perfect, first and second conditionals, reported speech, relative clauses, modal verbs for advice, obligation, and deduction, and the passive voice. Mastery of these structures supports learners in producing connected spoken and written discourse, describing experiences and events, expressing hopes and ambitions, giving reasons and explanations, and interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity in familiar situations.

B1 LEVEL OF ENGLISH

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) “organizes language proficiency in six levels, A1 to C2, which can be regrouped into three broad levels: Basic User, Independent User and Proficient User, and that can be further subdivided according to the needs of the local context” (Council of Europe, 2001). B1 stands for the lower stage of independent user where the learner “has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events” (Council of Europe, 2001).

Students in this study were enrolled in level B1.2, which corresponds to level 4 out of 6 in the course sequence at the university where the research was conducted (Level 1: A1, Level 2: A2, Level 3: B1.1, Level 4: B1.2, Level 5: B2.1, Level 6: B2.2). A separate placement test was not administered, as the determination that participants complied with the B1 level can-do statements was based on the institutional course progression system. Students who enrolled in level 4 (B1.2) had previously demonstrated achievement of the

B1.1 (level 3) can do statements by successfully meeting the minimum requirements in both summative assessments (midterm and final exams) and formative assessments (ongoing classroom assessments and assignments) at that level. Furthermore, at the end of the semester, students in level 4 (B1.2) completed a final exam specifically designed to assess their attainment of the can do statements associated with B1.2, thereby confirming their compliance with the targeted competencies.

Regarding needs analysis, at the beginning of the semester, students completed diagnostic tests designed to assess their strengths and weaknesses across listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, thus identifying their specific learning needs for the course.

PERCEPTIONS

According to Cambridge Dictionary, a perception is ‘a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem’ (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). However, in the context of language learning, Wenden (1991) defines learner perceptions as the beliefs and judgments that learners hold about their language learning processes and experiences. These perceptions influence their motivation, strategy use, and overall engagement with instructional methods.

In the context of this research project, the term perception refers to how the participants (in this case, B1-level English university students in Ecuador) interpret, understand, and feel about their experiences with flipped grammar learning. This involves their subjective opinions, attitudes, and beliefs about the method and its impact on their learning process.

Throughout the study, a comprehensive selection of learners’ opinions, attitudes, and beliefs was reviewed. This included their understanding of flipped learning (FL), specifically how students comprehend the concept and methodology of flipped grammar instruction. Students’ attitudes toward FL were also examined, focusing on how they feel about the flipped approach compared to traditional grammar instruction. Additionally, the study explored learners’ personal experiences with FL, including perceived benefits and challenges. The evaluation of effectiveness looked at how students perceive the flipped model’s role in helping them achieve their grammar learning goals. Contextual influences were considered, such as local factors like educational norms and technological access, which shape students’ perceptions of the flipped approach. Lastly, comparisons with traditional teaching methods were made, with students offering views on how flipped learning compares to traditional teacher-led grammar instruction.

RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS

The primary objective of this research is to explore the perceptions of B1-level university students regarding their experiences learning grammar through flipped learning (FL). The central research question guiding this study is: What are students’ perceptions of learning grammar through flipped learning?

This objective is further explained through two specific aims: (a) To gather data and compare the results with existing studies on the perceptions of B1-level university students of EFL regarding learning English grammar through traditional methods versus the flipped classroom methodology in Ecuador, and (b) to examine how the flipped classroom methodology affects the grammar learning outcomes of B1-level university students of EFL in Ecuador.

The research is inspired by the limited availability of evidence derived from local studies in Ecuador. By addressing this gap, the study offers meaningful contributions not only to the host university but also to the broader community of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors, both nationally and internationally. The findings hope to provide relevant conclusions about the application of this innovative pedagogical approach.

Additionally, this study aims not only to explore the implementation of flipped learning (FL) in B1-level English classes within an Ecuadorian university context but also to propose practical recommendations for its more effective implementation, particularly in terms of video design, instructional content, and student-centered classroom activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Flipped learning, a pedagogical approach where instructional content is delivered outside the classroom while traditional homework activities are conducted in class, has been increasingly adopted in various educational contexts (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). This approach is particularly relevant in grammar instruction, where understanding and application often benefit from active, guided practice. This review provides a brief synthesis of research on flipped learning in grammar education around the world, followed by a specific focus on Latin America and Ecuador.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The flipped classroom model has gained significant progress in grammar education globally. Studies indicate that flipped learning fosters greater student engagement and autonomy. For instance, a study conducted by Abeysekera and Dawson (2015) found that students appreciated the ability to learn at their own pace and review materials as needed. This autonomy often led to higher levels of engagement during in-class activities (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015).

Research by Zainuddin and Halili (2016) highlights that students perceive flipped learning as beneficial for understanding complex grammatical concepts. The in-class time dedicated to active learning and immediate feedback enhances students' grasp of grammar rules and their application in writing and speaking (Zainuddin & Halili, 2016).

Despite the benefits, technological challenges remain a significant barrier. A study by Bergmann and Sams (2012) noted that unequal access to technology can hinder the effectiveness of flipped learning. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may struggle with accessing the necessary digital resources, which can impact their learning experience (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

Initial resistance to flipped learning is a common theme. Both students and teachers accustomed to traditional teaching methods may initially find the flipped model disorienting. However, studies such as those by Chen et al (2014) show that with proper orientation and continuous support, students gradually adapt and develop a preference for the flipped approach (Chen et al, 2014). To mitigate initial resistance, it is recommended to implement orientation sessions and provide continuous pedagogical support, especially in early stages of implementation. This can help both teachers and students transition more smoothly into the flipped model (Chen et al., 2014; García & Díaz, 2019).

FL FROM LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

The adoption of flipped learning in Latin America, particularly in grammar instruction, presents unique opportunities and challenges. Cultural, socio-economic, and educational contexts significantly influence students' perceptions and the overall effectiveness of this pedagogical model.

A study by López et al. (2017) involving university students in Colombia found a generally positive reception towards flipped learning. Students reported higher engagement and a better understanding of grammar concepts, attributing this to the interactive in-class activities and the ability to review lectures multiple times (López et al., 2017).

Research in Mexico by Alzahrani (2017) revealed that students perceived an improvement in their language proficiency, particularly in grammar, when engaged in flipped classrooms. The collaborative in-class environment allowed for more practical exercises and immediate feedback, enhancing their learning experience (Alzahrani, 2017).

In Latin America, the success of flipped learning often depends on adequate technological and pedagogical support. For example, a study in Brazil by Almeida and Mendes (2018) emphasized the need for robust technical infrastructure and teacher training to ensure the effective implementation of flipped classrooms. Without such support, students' experiences and perceptions can be negatively affected (Almeida & Mendes, 2018).

Cultural factors play a crucial role in the perception and acceptance of flipped learning. In countries like Chile and Argentina, where traditional lecture-based teaching is deeply rooted, students initially exhibited skepticism towards the flipped model. However, research by García and Díaz (2019) indicates that culturally responsive teaching strategies and gradual implementation helped in overcoming resistance and improving student perceptions (García & Díaz, 2019).

Overall, students' perceptions of flipped learning in grammar education are predominantly positive, both globally and in Latin America. Key factors influencing these perceptions include availability of technology, quality of pedagogical support, and cultural context. Addressing these factors can enhance the effectiveness of flipped learning, leading to better student engagement, understanding, and application of grammatical concepts.

FLIPPED LEARNING IN ECUADOR

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in and application of Flipped Learning methodologies within Ecuador across various educational contexts, particularly in high school and technical education settings. The research on FL within English language education in Ecuador is still in the early stages of development; however, in the last few years, researchers have explored various applications of FL at a university level for enhancing language skills and improving student engagement. Those studies have shown that FL can significantly benefit EFL students at university level by promoting active learning and collaborative practices.

A study conducted by Yanchatipan (2021) at the Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi aimed to enhance the teaching-learning process of English through the FL model among A2-level students. The research identified key challenges faced by students in language acquisition and proposed a set of strategies based on FL principles. By implementing lesson plans that encouraged students to engage with content at home and participate in collaborative classroom activities, the study reported improvements in students' language proficiency and overall learning experience (Yanchatipan, 2021)

Research undertaken by Guayasamin and Inga (2024) at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana examined FL as a tool for enhancing English language skills. The findings indicated that FL fosters an active learning environment, motivating students to take control of their learning process while allowing teachers to act as facilitators. This study emphasized the importance of integrating technology into the classroom to create engaging digital environments that support language learning (Guayasamin & Inga, 2024).

At Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, a quasi-experimental study carried out by Cabezas (2021) focused on the impact of FL on developing speaking skills among A2 level university learners. The experimental group utilized FL strategies such as watching instructional videos at home and engaging in class activities that emphasized grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The results demonstrated significant improvements in the speaking abilities of students who experienced FL compared to those who received traditional instruction (Cabezas, 2021).

Furthermore, a study by Solano et al (2023) explored the effectiveness of FL in distance education contexts and revealed that this approach positively influenced EFL students' listening and speaking skills. Students who participated in the flipped lessons showed a positive attitude towards the flipped classroom strategy. They improved their speaking proficiency and understanding of the target language, which was evidenced by the improvement of their academic grades. The research highlighted how FL facilitates personalized learning experiences, enabling students to progress at their own pace while benefiting from collaborative practices during class time (Solano et al, 2023).

The growing body of research indicates that FL not only enhances language proficiency but also promotes critical thinking and higher-order cognitive skills among university students. By encouraging collaborative learning and active participation, FL helps develop essential communicative competencies necessary for success in real-world contexts (Guayasamin & Inga, 2024; Solano et al, 2023).

Although flipped learning (FL) has shown promising results, several challenges persist in its implementation within Ecuadorian universities. Issues such as access to technology, teacher training, and resistance to change from traditional teaching methods can hinder widespread adoption. Therefore, ongoing professional development for educators and investment in technological infrastructure are crucial for maximizing the benefits of FL in English language education (Yanchatipan, 2021; Marriott Toledo & Sánchez Pérez, 2017).

In general, FL represents a transformative approach to English language teaching at the university level in Ecuador. As more educators embrace this methodology, continued research will be vital in refining its application and addressing potential barriers, ultimately enriching the educational experience for EFL students across the country.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goals of this study an action research approach was adopted, as it is particularly suitable for addressing real classroom challenges while engaging educators in reflective practice (Efron & Ravid, 2020). In this context, a within-subjects design was implemented to allow the same group of students to experience both instructional methods, non-flipped and flipped learning, enabling a more reliable comparison of their perceptions and performance. Research was conducted with a population of 96 B1 level students across five classes and three English teachers. The semester lasted 16 weeks, with the first 8 weeks dedicated to a non-flipped grammar approach, followed by the implementation of a flipped learning approach starting after the midterm exam in the second half of the semester.

In terms of needs analysis, at the beginning of the semester, students completed diagnostic tests designed to assess their strengths and weaknesses across listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. These tests provided valuable insights into their specific learning needs for the course and helped inform the structure of the instructional approaches.

For the flipped component, teachers selected YouTube videos that met specific criteria, including content accuracy, clarity of the speaker's explanation, quality of graphics and audio, appropriate language level, presence of subtitles, absence of errors, and overall originality and creativity. Videos were required to align with the grammar topics outlined in the institutional curriculum. While length was noted, it was not a primary selection criterion; the quality and relevance of the content were prioritized. Chosen videos ranged from 3 to 15 minutes in length.

The following research tools were used:

- (1) a survey at the end of the semester with the objective of collecting qualitative and quantitative information on the perceptions of university students about the use of the flipped classroom model in learning English grammar at B1 level;
- (2) semi-structured interviews at the end of the semester with a group of students (33% of the total sample) to collect more detailed qualitative information on their perceptions of the use of the flipped classroom model in learning the English grammar at B1 level;
- (3) results of the grammar tests applied (Grammar section of Unit Tests) during the semester which are part of the B1 level curriculum.

This triangulation of instruments was used to gather a holistic result of students' perceptions about learning grammar through flipped learning as well as to evidence their grammar performance.

Potential challenges in this research included the possibility of limited student participation due to the voluntary nature of involvement. This issue was mitigated by teachers in class, who provided thorough explanations of the research objectives and actively worked to inspire students' curiosity. As a result, most students demonstrated a willingness to participate.

Additionally, as the study took an entire semester (16 weeks), there was a risk that the initial number of participants might not correspond to the number of students completing the surveys at the end. This challenge was addressed by teachers who consistently motivated and encouraged students to remain engaged in the study, thereby minimizing dropouts.

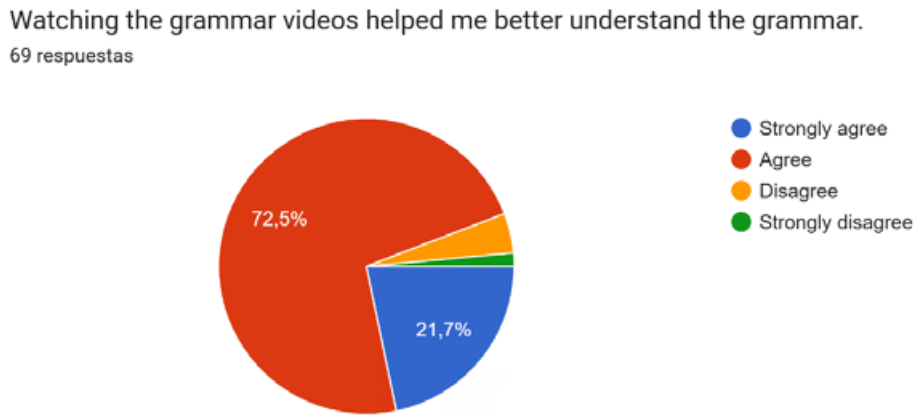
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results indicate that students' perceptions of flipped learning (FL) for grammar instruction are predominantly positive. The survey data revealed several recurring patterns. One key finding is that watching grammar videos prior to attending class significantly enhances students' understanding of grammatical concepts. Notably, the vast majority of participants (93%) agreed that having prior knowledge of the topic facilitates a better understanding of the teacher's in-class explanations.

These results confirm what other studies have found about students' perception of FL. For example, a study by Hashemi et al. (2021) compared traditional approach and FL instruction that implemented WhatsApp for pre-class grammar videos. The experimental group (flipped) improved comprehension of grammar topics, indicating a favorable perception of this method (Hashemi et al., 2021). Similarly, Hosseini et al. (2017) demon-

strated a positive attitude towards implementing FL for teaching grammar to Swedish students (Hosseini et al., 2017).

Figure 1. Students' responses to grammar understanding

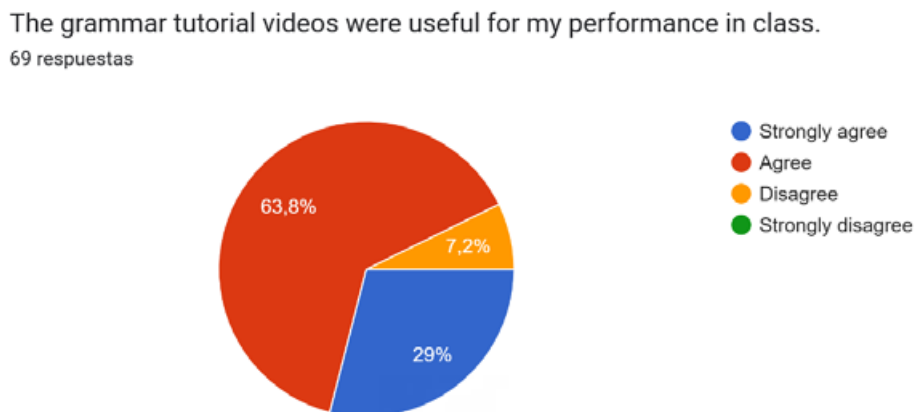


Source: Compiled by the authors

The second common response pattern is the positive influence on students' performance in class as 91% of participants stated that the grammar videos were useful for their class performance. Being able to better understand a grammar topic not only allows students to increase their participation during the class but also gives them the ability to delve into the topic. Students feel more confident in doing the grammar exercises as well as participating in class.

These outcomes are supported by other research findings, such as a quasi-experimental study conducted in Türkiye on 37 students who learned English as a foreign language at a state university. The results provided insights in favor of FL in terms of engagement and performance (Dinçer & Polat, 2022). Similarly, a study conducted in Oman discovered that FL improved learners' self-confidence enhancing overall language performance and class participation (Abdullah, Hussin, Hammad, & Ismail, 2020).

Figure 2. Students' responses to performance in class



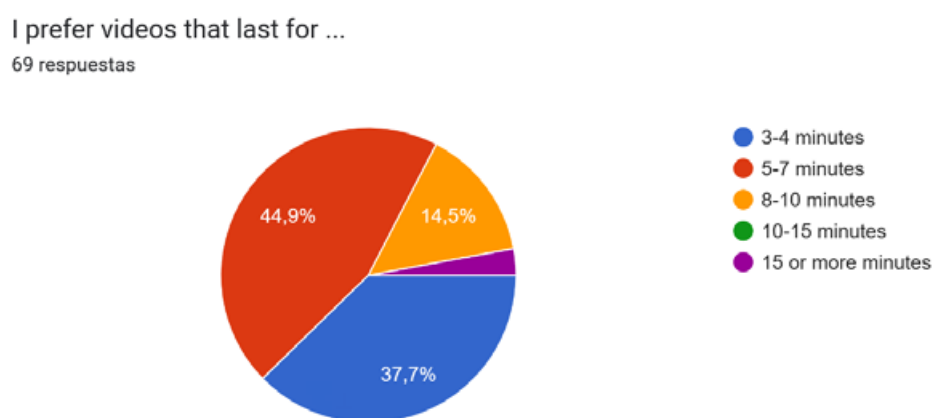
Source: Compiled by the authors

Regarding negative perceptions about FL, the most recurrent response was that some grammar tutorial videos are very long. Over 82% of responses affirm that students prefer videos that are 5-7 minutes long. In the opinion of the students, long videos are more tedious to watch and require extra time. Additionally, 20 % of students would prefer their teacher to make the tutorial videos as they are more focused on the specific topic and aligned to the needs of the students. This shows that although the FL model is mostly seen as positive, there is still room for improvement.

A study by Yu and Gao (2022) confirms these results. It examined the effects of video length on English proficiency, student engagement, and satisfaction, and concluded that the shorter the videos (shorter than 5 minutes), the higher the levels of English proficiency, engagement, and satisfaction. This, overall, indicated that students preferred brief videos (Yu & Gao, 2022).

Similarly, a study by Bakla & Mehdiyev (2022), in which students in an English language teaching methodology course were asked to take turns each week to watch either teacher-created videos or YouTube videos, discovered that students were in favor of teacher-made videos, stating a stronger connection to the content of the course, which enhanced their motivation to engage with the material (Bakla & Mehdiyev, 2022).

Figure 3. Students' responses to videos duration preference



Source: Compiled by the authors

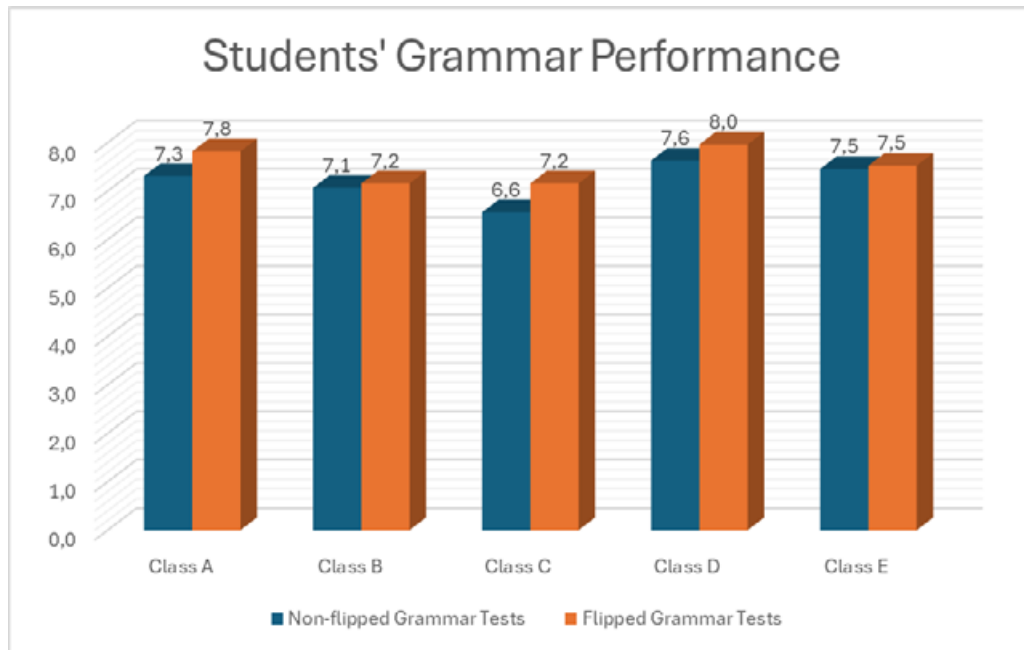
The findings from semi-structured interviews show that the flipped learning model is mostly perceived as a positive influence on students' learning. Overall, students believe that the videos provide them with more preparation which increases their understanding and class participation and improves performance in class. Additionally, many students are willing to continue using videos in their next English course to learn grammar, indicating that they perceive this method as effective for acquiring new knowledge.

Other research studies corroborate these results. For instance, a study by Masruddin et al. (2024) demonstrated that student engagement in the FL class is generally positive compared to those in the non-flipped class. Overall, it suggested higher quality, positive collaboration between student lecturers, increasing interest in learning, active participation in learning and strengthening relationships between students and lecturers (Masruddin et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the statistical analysis of the quantitative results of the grammar tests shows only a slight improvement in students' grammar performance. Although FL was perceived as positive by students, it did not significantly improve their grammar scores in

comparison to non-flipped learning of grammar. This result suggests that the effectiveness of FL can be affected by other aspects, such as students' prior knowledge and language proficiency levels.

Figure 4. Students' grammar performance



Source: Compiled by the authors

Research indicates that students with varying levels of grammatical understanding may not benefit equally from the flipped learning (FL) approach (Dinçer & Polat, 2022). Those with a solid grammar foundation may find FL less impactful on their grades compared to peers struggling with basic concepts, as they might engage less with pre-class materials (Dinçer & Polat, 2022; El-Bassuony, 2016). Consequently, future research in Ecuador should differentiate students' proficiency levels within the same English course.

The quality and accessibility of pre-class materials are crucial for FL success. Students lacking access to high-quality instructional videos tailored to their learning styles may struggle to grasp grammatical concepts effectively. Studies show that engaging and well-structured pre-class content correlates with better performance in class activities (Dinçer & Polat, 2022; Warden, 2016).

Furthermore, teacher support and feedback are essential as effective FL implementation requires teachers to facilitate discussions and provide timely feedback, enhancing students' understanding of grammatical rules. Without adequate support, students may find it challenging to apply what they have learned outside the classroom (Safiyeh, 2020; Shahnama, 2021).

Lastly, student motivation significantly impacts FL outcomes. While active learning opportunities can boost motivation, a lack of intrinsic interest or perceived relevance can diminish the impact on academic performance (Khasawneh, 2022; Kereibayeva & Baisbay, 2024).

All the aspects mentioned above suggest that although this model provides students with a positive experience, it is not a guarantee of outstanding academic excellence. Therefore, it is recommended that flipped learning be implemented alongside differentiated support strategies, such as scaffolding, formative feedback, and learner training in autonomous

study habits. These elements may help bridge the gap between perceived usefulness and actual academic gains, especially in grammar instruction.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Beyond reporting students' perceptions, this study offers evidence-based pedagogical recommendations aimed at improving flipped grammar instruction in EFL classrooms, thereby guiding educators and institutions toward more effective model implementation.

While this study aligns with previous research on the benefits of flipped learning (FL), it contributes to the field of language pedagogy in original and innovative ways through four key aspects.

To begin with, it addresses the relatively unexplored area of grammar instruction within FL in EFL contexts as most FL research has primarily focused on productive skills such as speaking and writing. In fact, a recent systematic review by Hava (2024) confirms this trend, indicating that very few studies in EFL education target grammar instruction specifically.

Additionally, the unique setting of the study adds valuable insight. Conducted with university students in Ecuador, this research provides a perspective from a region that is underrepresented in empirical FL literature, thereby broadening the global understanding of how FL can be adapted to different socio-cultural and educational environments.

Also, the within-subject research design strengthens the reliability of the findings by allowing a direct comparison of student perceptions and academic performance before and after the implementation of FL with the same group of participants. This approach isolates the impact of the instructional method and minimizes external variables; a design rarely used on grammar in EFL contexts despite the prevalence of quasi-experimental designs in FL research (Hava, 2024).

Moreover, the study offers practical pedagogical recommendations regarding the ideal length of instructional videos and students' preference for teacher-created videos. Such pedagogical insights are rarely emphasized in previous FL studies, which often remain at a theoretical level. In doing so, it goes beyond descriptive analysis and contributes actionable insights for the more effective implementation of FL across varied educational settings.

Based on the data collected, this study proposes several practical recommendations for a more efficient use of FL for grammar in EFL contexts. Specifically, the findings suggest six key actions to take to enhance students' academic success.

First, instructors should ensure that students consistently watch grammar videos before class, as prior exposure to the topic significantly improves their understanding of in-class explanations.

Second, short instructional videos should be used, ideally ranging from 5 to 7-minutes in length as, based on students' responses, extensive videos are less engaging and affect learning effectiveness.

Third, the videos should be carefully selected or designed to align closely with course objectives and be clear and engaging, in order to positively impact their class performance.

Fourth, the creation of teacher-made videos which are preferred over generic content. They can connect better with students as they can be tailored to course objectives and learners' specific needs.

Fifth, teachers should develop students' increased confidence and comprehension by incorporating more interactive and practice-based activities during class, allowing learners to apply what they learned from the videos, participate actively, and deepen their understanding of grammar concepts.

Finally, the integration of in-class student-centered activities that promote peer interaction, application of grammar concepts, and immediate formative feedback. These suggestions can be implemented by offering teacher training on digital content creation, establishing quality standards for video materials and designing in-class activities that align directly with pre-class input.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this research indicate that students' perceptions of flipped learning (FL) for grammar instruction are predominantly positive, underscoring its potential as an effective pedagogical approach. The survey data revealed that a significant majority of participants (93%) believe that watching grammar videos prior to class enhances their understanding of grammatical concepts. This aligns with previous studies, such as Hashemi *et al.* (2021) and Hosseini *et al.* (2017), which also reported favorable perceptions of FL among EFL learners.

The results suggest that prior exposure to instructional content facilitates better comprehension of in-class explanations, thereby enriching the overall learning experience. Moreover, the study found a strong correlation between the use of grammar videos and improved classroom performance, with 91% of participants indicating that these resources were beneficial for their engagement and participation during lessons. This enhancement in confidence and performance is corroborated by findings from Dinçer & Polat (2022) and Abdullah *et al.* (2020), which highlight the positive impact of FL on student engagement and self-confidence in language learning contexts.

Despite these positive perceptions, the study also identified areas for improvement, particularly regarding the duration of instructional videos. Over 82% of respondents expressed a preference for shorter videos, ideally lasting between 5 to 7 minutes, as longer videos were perceived as tedious and time-consuming. This preference is consistent with findings from Yu & Gao (2022), which emphasize that shorter video lengths correlate with higher levels of student engagement and satisfaction. Additionally, students indicated a desire for teacher-created videos tailored to their specific needs, suggesting that personalized content may enhance their learning experience.

While the qualitative data reflect a generally positive attitude towards FL, the quantitative analysis revealed only slight improvements in students' grammar performance. This discrepancy indicates that while students appreciate the FL model, it does not necessarily translate into significant academic gains in grammar scores compared to traditional methods, which might be due to factors such as students' prior knowledge and language proficiency levels, quality and accessibility of pre-class materials and teacher support and feedback. To address this, future implementations of flipped learning should ensure that pre-class materials are designed using evidence-based instructional strategies, including microlearning techniques and embedded formative quizzes. Additionally, teachers should receive training in how to monitor and support student engagement with pre-class materials to maximize in-class application and knowledge retention.

Lastly, student motivation and engagement emerged as significant factors influencing the effectiveness of FL. While active learning opportunities can enhance motivation, a lack of intrinsic interest or perceived relevance can diminish the impact on academic performance.

Future implementations of flipped learning should include teacher and student orientation sessions at the beginning of the course to reduce resistance and support a smooth transition into this pedagogical model.

Overall, this study demonstrates that while flipped learning is perceived positively by students and has potential benefits for grammar instruction, its effectiveness is contingent upon various factors including video length, quality of materials, teacher support, and student motivation. Future research should focus on addressing these elements to optimize the implementation of FL in Ecuadorian educational contexts, ensuring that it meets diverse learner needs and enhances overall language proficiency outcomes.

CONTRIBUTOR ROLES

Hamilton Quezada: Conceptualization, introduction writing, results analysis, graph creation, original draft writing, review and editing, final manuscript preparation.

Kinga Paulina Tomczyk: Literature review, discussion writing, review and editing, formal analysis.

Paola Vanessa Santamaría Velásquez: Methodology design, data collection, survey and interview design, results description, conclusions, and editing support.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors state that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial and non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented.

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REVISTA KRONOS

Most Common Linguistic Errors Identified in Oral Discourse in Undergraduate Students from a Public University.

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Martha Lucía Lara Freire | iD Universidad Nacional de Educación-Ecuador

ABSTRACT The main objective of this study was to identify the most common linguistic errors undergraduate students from a public university located in the city of Azogues, in the parish Chuquipata make in oral discourse. Therefore, the teachers-researchers selected students from fifth to ninth semester from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major; additionally, teachers also collaborated with the data collection stage. The focus was to analyze students' spontaneous oral interaction. The researchers were in charge of recording the audios, transcribing the oral utterances, proof-reading them, encoding the information collected in MAXQDA and organizing it in an Excel spreadsheet. The methodology applied in this research was the Corpus Linguistics approach. At the end of the study, the researchers were able to present a list of the most common linguistics errors students make in oral discourse. .

KEYWORDS Spontaneous interactions, corpora, errors, communicate competences, English as a Foreign Language.

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Errores lingüísticos más comunes identificados en el discurso oral de estudiantes universitarios de una universidad pública.

RESUMEN El objetivo principal de este estudio fue identificar los errores lingüísticos más comunes que los estudiantes de pregrado de una universidad pública localizada en la ciudad de Azogues, en la parroquia de Chuquipata, cometen en el discurso oral. Por lo tanto, los docentes-investigadores seleccionaron a estudiantes de quinto a noveno semestre de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros; cabe mencionar que los profesores también colaboraron en la etapa de recolección de datos. El enfoque principal de la investigación fue analizar la interacción oral espontánea de los estudiantes. Los investigadores se encargaron de grabar los audios, transcribir las expresiones orales, revisarlas, codificar la información recopilada en MAXQDA y organizarla en una hoja de cálculo de Excel. La metodología aplicada en esta investigación fue el enfoque de Lingüística de Corpus. Al final del estudio, los investigadores pudieron presentar una lista de los errores lingüísticos más comunes que los estudiantes cometen en el discurso oral.

PALABRAS CLAVE Interacciones espontáneas, corpora, errores, competencias comunicativas, inglés como lengua extranjera.

INTRODUCTION

The situations in which English is taught across the globe are many and varied. Considering this reality, it is not wise to generalize about the English language classroom. Rather, it might be useful to consider the English language classroom – and the experiences of teachers and learners – as a ranging along a continuum (Bhowmik, 2014).

For example, Bartlett (2021) reports an experiment he conducted in a university in Japan. Convinced that the time devoted to learning English in class was totally inadequate for the achievement of communicative competence, he persuaded many of his students to sign a contract agreeing to speak only English to each other whenever they met in or out the university. After a year, the students who regularly participated in such unstructured interaction with other students, had considerably improved both in typical length of utterance when communicating and as had enriched their vocabulary.

One of the major problems that non-native speakers have when communicating with native speakers or with non-native speakers is achieving pragmatic effectiveness. They might use correct grammatical structures but not achieve the intended effect because they are, for example, too formal or informal, too direct or indirect, and too blunt or tentative. It is imperative for learners to gain substantially more experience in communicating with the target language with speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as to develop a significantly heightened awareness of how intended communicative effects can be effectively achieved. (Padilla, 2013).

English as an International Language is mainly distinguished from standard native speaker Englishes by its significant features which are more recognizably EIL than Standard English. Many of these are phonological features, some are lexical items, some are syntactic and grammatical features, and some are manifestations of speech acts. In order to determine what these items and features are, it would be necessary to examine the many corpora of Englishes. Such an examination could help us to discover the commonalities between the corpora (García, 2013).

In today's English classrooms, language learners are frequently observed sitting in pairs and groups talking or working together on a task. Such kinds of activities are aimed at helping learners to gain confidence and fluency in speech and are particularly necessary in countries where English is not widely used (Richards, 2006).

Speaking involves dynamic interactions of mental, articulatory, and social processes. To express a message, speakers need to decide what to say and use their linguistic knowledge to construct utterances and encode this message in sounds and sound patterns that can be recognized and understood by their listeners. They also need to consider the context of interaction and engage the listeners in socially appropriate ways through various linguistic choices and forms. For example, speakers may use certain vocabulary or register when speaking with people with whom they have shared knowledge and experience. Speaking is also influenced by varied cognitive and affective factors, such as the ability to process speech quickly and feelings of anxiety respectively (Iftah, 2020).

Most spoken interactions occur in contexts where participants have equal or similar opportunities to talk. Very often; however, language learners may have longer turns and are required to produce extended pieces of discourse; for example, when giving a presentation, explaining or describing procedures and narrating an event or a story. They will, therefore, need skills to construct these spoken texts in ways that are consistent with the sociocultural conventions for the respective genres in the language being learnt. In addition to knowing about discourse routines, learners require relevant language to frame the moves. For example, when delivering a presentation, learners must make use of discourse markers to signpost transitions (Maynard, 2006).

Speaking in an L2 clearly presents many challenges to language learners. These challenges, however, do not always get addressed in the classroom. Although students have opportunities to develop their confidence and fluency through oral activities, they do not in general receive much of the scaffolding they need for learning and improvement to take place during the instructional process. Spurred by their motivation to succeed, many learners must put in extra time and effort to practice their spoken English (Renandya & Puji, 2016).

Subsequently, the key factor for students is to develop confidence and a profound commitment with their learning process. This can be achieved by, first, by identifying specific areas of improvement through self-evaluation and self-reflection; and second, by looking for opportunities to practice their oral communication skills outside the classroom. Moreover, students should take advantage of the material presented by researchers as a result of their meticulous studies in the English as a Foreign Language in specific contexts. This includes exploring research-based resources, practicing skills outlined in the studies, and applying these insights to their language learning practices.

Teaching at university level is very often a difficult task compared to teaching at lower educational levels because professors must teach their subjects, conduct impactful research and publish specialized articles, participate in administrative duties, and focus on the needs of their students. Its pedagogical status is ambiguous since university students are assumed to be well-educated adults who are able to pursue intellectual challenges and perform complicated feats of the mind which are beyond the reach of non-university people. On the other hand, while university students may possess general knowledge and skills, they often lack specific prior knowledge in their chosen field of study, requiring them to build their understanding from foundational concepts. Also, their study techniques and emotional response to academic stress are not mature enough in many cases. In addition, there is no clear policy about the role that they should play. The expectations about what teachers should aim at are also diverse, but in most cases, the emphasis is put on getting some measurable results, which should be checked against criteria set up in the learning objectives (Alonso et al., 1999).

Unfortunately, the above-mentioned is a reality in the public university where the research participants belong to. In that sense, the researchers sought to deeply analyze the spontaneous interaction of students who are part of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program. The starting point was to identify the words students misuse in oral interaction.

Hence, achieving effectiveness in communication requires communicative competence, which involves mastering the language and the ability to use the knowledge in actual communication, or pragmatics, the knowledge of language, or linguistic competence, encompasses mastery of lexis, grammar and the sound system of the language. While linguistic competence needs to be complemented by sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competencies for effective communication to take place, excessive gaps in linguistic accuracy can compromise meanings made (Ahmed & Thabit, 2018).

Studies on spoken English tend to deal with areas such as speaking skills, students' reluctance to speak in English classes and features of English. Linguistic accuracy of spoken language may be more difficult to study because of the nature of speech. McCarthy (1998) writes about real dialogues which do not look neat with well-formed sentences. According to Bartram and Walton (2002), accuracy in spoken English refers to utterances as near as to a native speaker's as possible (Mahadhir et al., 2010).

Such experiences have also been experienced by the participants in this study. In fact, in one of the studies (which has not been published yet) developed by one of the teachers from the public university and subject of the current study, he mentions that shy students experience a range of emotions when speaking in a foreign language and anxiety is at

the forefront of these sentiments. The apprehension of making mistakes stands out as a significant contributor to anxiety, leading to a reluctance to speak in class. This concern is compounded by the rigid adherence to grammatical rules, as students are often afraid of deviating from these norms and, consequently, check their speech for errors regularly. The fear of making mistakes also manifests in a tendency to immediately repeat statements upon recognizing an error (Ordulj & Grabar, 2014).

In a foreign language classroom, it is common to focus on the mistakes students make in order to find the most effective strategies to help students improve their oral discourse. Then, it is undeniable that errors play an important role in the learning process and they can be seen as something natural. Without errors, how do teachers know which specific aspects should be addressed during a lesson? For students who are learning an L2, learning is not much a question of acquiring a set of automatic habits, but a process of discovering the underlying rules, categories, and systems of choice in the language (He, 2024). In order to see if the learning process is effective, students have to go through several stages and processes which include errors making. However, error making is inevitable and is necessary and crucial to language learning. For that reason, it is important that teachers know the type of errors students usually make so they can identify and use techniques to help them correct the errors effectively (Zhu, 2010).

Similarly, in the EFL classroom, it is common to find several types of errors; nevertheless, researchers in the field of applied linguistics usually distinguish two: performance errors and competence errors. Performance errors are those mistakes made by learners when they are tired or in a hurry. Normally, this type of error is not serious and can be overcome with little effort from the learner. Competence errors, on the other hand, are more serious since they reflect inadequate learning (Fang & Xue-mei, 2007).

According to Osegueda et al. (2014), mistakes in second language acquisition mainly originate from two sources: impact of the mother tongue and language-specific learning difficulties. Osegueda describes that as learners acquire a new language, they commonly integrate rules from their first language to the target one. This process takes place when learners contrast the characteristics of the target language with their native language, highlighting the profound effect of the native language on the process of acquiring a second language.

Undoubtedly, a significant factor in L2 learning for Spanish speakers is L1 interference. Students tend to translate most of the words they do not know in the target language mechanically.

The use of interaction, actual verbal communication, authentic oral texts or spoken language corpora has been identified as determinant source of learning English as a Foreign Language. Such use can also serve as an approach for reflective practice that is both evidence-based and data-led (Neiva, 2021). Hence, this study focuses on corpus. So, what is a Corpus? From the Latin word for "body," corpus (corpora in plural) has been used to refer to a collection of texts stored on a computer. Note that references to text are not limited only to language that was initially written. A text can also be a transcription of speech. These electronic texts are equivalent to researchers' datasets. However, in linguistics, a corpus is even more narrowly defined. In addition to being a collection of information, it is also viewed as systematically collected, naturally occurring categories of texts. Before the age of computers, such collection was accomplished laboriously by hand. With the advent of personal computers and the digitalization of much of our everyday spoken and written language, Corpus Linguistics, or CL, has become a much more widely practiced, accessible approach to examining languages and their use (Friginal, 2018).

Moreover, the objective of this study was to identify the most common linguistic-related mistakes made by students when interacting in the L2. Since, even though some students have already reached the B2 level, they still make some basic mistakes in their oral discourse. The study was conducted during two academic periods, six months each.

During this time, teachers recorded students' spontaneous oral production during diverse activities, such as presentations, dialogues, round tables, and debates developed in the regular class. Some of them English and others Content Subjects like Didactics, Curriculum Management, and Research.

On that account, this article is the result of the project ““Elaboración de una Guía Didáctica para Estudiantes de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (EFL): El Proceso de Contextualización de Palabras para Uso Académico en la Formación de Profesores.”

Therefore, the first stage of this study was to collect data by recording students' oral interaction activities. For this stage, three modalities were implemented; the subject teachers were the ones recording the audios, the students who were part of the research data collection stage were responsible for the recording, and the researchers visited the classes and recorded the audios themselves.

Once the data was collected, the second specific objective was to transcribe the audios; this activity was completed by the researchers using Microsoft Office 365, and the Word option which was extremely useful and effective as we could save a lot of time. It is worth mentioning that after the audios were transcribed using technology, the researchers checked and made sure the information was clear and understandable to be analyzed.

The last objective was to analyze the transcriptions and work on a list with the most common mistakes identified through the collected data.

Based on the aforementioned, this study is relevant not only because it focused on students' needs but also because it serves as a starting point for future studies. The data collected helped identify real problems students face when using the L2 in oral interaction. This is particularly important considering that the main goal of a language is communication.

METHOD

The current investigation took place at a public university in the Cañar Province, with the participation of 600 students and 8 teachers from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major, focused on students from the 5th to 9th semesters. Data was obtained by capturing natural, unprepared interactions during different subjects and classes. Using the Microsoft 365 transcription tool, the recordings were transcribed to organize the data systematically for further analysis. The reviewed transcriptions were processed with MAXQDA software to analyze frequent errors and gain insights into typical linguistic trends and inaccuracies.

The methodology applied for this study based on Corpus Linguistics. One way to understand linguistic analysis is through corpus linguistics, which looks at how the language is actually used in certain contexts and how it can vary from context to context. While understanding variation and contextual differences is a goal shared by researchers in other areas of linguistic research, corpus linguistics describes language variation and use by looking at large amounts of texts that have been produced in similar circumstances (Crawford & Csmay, 2016).

However, in the research area, corpus linguistics is a methodological approach that takes an empirical stance to the study of language. It relies on the analysis, whether qualitative or quantitative, of a body of written texts or transcriptions of spontaneous or semi-spontaneous speech. Corpus linguistic methods have a potentially strong impact on theory as they can offer support or challenge theoretical assumptions. Moreover, corpus linguistics is closely related to various fields of applied linguistics (Staples & Fernández, 2019).

In this specific study, spoken corpora was analyzed as it includes a wide range of contact phenomena and may reveal information about the cognitive processes involved in the production and comprehension of bilingual speech. Large spoken corpora of adult language have been constituted on the basis of scripted or unscripted speech from TV and radio broadcasting. Some smaller corpora provide transcripts and recordings of free-speech conversations. Most of these corpora; however, do not target interactions between bilinguals and can at best provide evidence for the study of borrowing; therefore, the findings of this study clearly contribute to understanding the common mistakes English as a Foreign Language students make in spoken corpora (Adamou, 2019).

In addition, the four main characteristics of the Corpus Approach were considered as explained below.

1. IT IS EMPIRICAL, ANALYZING THE ACTUAL PATTERNS OF LANGUAGE USE IN NATURAL CONTEXTS AND ORAL COMMUNICATION.

The key to this characteristic of the Corpus Approach is authentic language. For this reason, the researchers made sure that the oral interaction activities were spontaneous and not a result of a prepared task. Since corpora are composed of any real-life situation in which any linguistic communication takes place.

2. IT UTILIZES A LARGE AND PRINCIPLED COLLECTION OF NATURAL TEXTS AS THE BASIS FOR ANALYSIS.

This characteristic of the Corpus Approach refers to the corpus itself. Researchers may work with written corpus, a spoken corpus, an academic spoken corpus, etc. In this specific case, the data collected was exclusively an academic spoken corpus; considering that the students who participated in the data collection stage belong to the Major of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages, specifically from the highest levels.

3. IT MAKES EXTENSIVE USE OF COMPUTER OR TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES FOR ANALYSIS.

Not only do computers hold corpora, but they also assist in analyzing the language within a corpus when paired with appropriate software. A corpus is accessed and analyzed by a concordance program. In short, researchers can effectively utilize corpora, or employ the corpus approach, without a computer. In the present study, researchers mostly used their cell phones to record spontaneous oral interaction during classes; then, the data audios were transcribed by utilizing the Microsoft 365 transcription tool. And finally, the data was analyzed through word clouds and frequency visualizers in the MAXQDA software.

4. IT DEPENDS ON BOTH QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES.

This characteristic of the corpus approach highlights the importance of intuition as expert users of a language. The quantitative results generated from the corpus are taken and then

qualitatively analyzed to find significance. A table is presented in the results section where all the findings are presented and analyzed (Bannett, 2010).

RESULTS

This study classified and examined different mistakes committed by undergraduate English major students during oral communication. The aim was to quantify the types of linguistic mistakes made by students and to identify areas that English teachers could focus on to help their students to face and correct their errors. This research identified 94 different errors in categories related to grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The following chart shows the identified mistakes:

Table 1 *Error Analysis: Categories and Frequency Distribution*

Mistake Category	Total Words	Percentage
Pronunciation – diphthong sound /ai/, /ɔɪ/, /ei/	4	4%
Sound Spelling	30	32%
Subject-verb agreement	4	4%
Final consonant sound	2	2%
Specific sound: ‘th’	5	5%
Minimal pairs	4	4%
Initial consonant cluster	9	10%
Confusing Similar-Sounding	4	4%
Schwa sound production	12	13%
Transfer error or interference	6	6%
Use of language	1	1%
Adjective pluralization	1	1%
Coherence	1	1%
Interlanguage error	2	2%
Calque or loan translation	4	4%
Misarticulation	1	1%
Preposition error or misuse	1	1%
Relative pronoun error	1	1%
Adjective misuse	1	1%
Article error	1	1%
Total	94	100%

Note. Data organized in an Excel spreadsheet.

To start with, mistakes related to pronunciation included 25% of the total errors. Diphthong sounds like /ei/, /ɔɪ/, and /ai/, represent the 4% of all errors produced by students,

advising challenges with sounds like vowel sound that are critical for English pronunciation. For instance:

- Example 1: The speaker pronounced “trænzlaʃn”, revealing a mispronunciation of “translation” as “trænzleʃn”, substituting the proper diphthong /eɪ/ with /a/.

To illustrate, the sound “th” and the final consonant sound mispronunciation reported 2% and 5%, representing difficulties with some phonemes which are not used by students when they use their native language. For instance:

- Example 2: In the spoken word “/truθ/,” the speaker interchanges the /θ/ sound in “truth” with /t/, highlighting unfamiliarity with this phoneme.

Additionally, initial consonant clusters mispronunciation was highlighted in around the 10% of cases. Thus, it points out that students have some difficulties with blends that need exact articulation.

- Example 3: The student uttered the word “/sku:l/”, indicating the presence of an added sound, resulting in an error pronunciation “school” as /sku:l/, showing challenges in accurately pronouncing consonant groupings.

Subsequently, sound spelling mistakes represented 32% of errors which emphasizes that students have a disconnection with phonemic awareness and spelling conventions. For example:

- Example 4: In the utterance “/mu:ʃ/”, the speaker pronounced “much” as /mu:/, indicating influence from Spanish phonology, where “much” is articulated with a comparable sound. The correct pronunciation in English is /mʌt/.

Likewise, 13% represented significant amounts of mistakes of the improper usage of the schwa sound. Thus, this highlights how difficult it is for students to pronounce unstressed vowels in English. For example:

- Example 5: The speaker said the word “literally” as /li.t.r.æ.li/, with emphasis on all syllables and using unreduced vowel sounds, differentiating from the standard articulation /li.t.r.li/ or /li.t.r.li/.

Similarly, 4% represented the mistakes students had in confusing similar-sounding words and minimal pairs. For instance:

- Example 6: The word “meat” was pronounced as /mi:t/, identical to “meet,” exposing challenges in distinguishing the minimal pair /mi:t/ (meat) and /mi:t/ (meet)

In other words, these findings highlight the difficulties face in identifying subtle phonetic differences that could modify meaning.

Moreover, subject-verb agreement and other grammatical categories showed relatively low error rates (4% each for subject-verb agreement and misuse of articles, relative pronouns, and adjectives). For instance:

- Example 7: The speaker stated, “My studies is...” using inaccurately “is” instead of “are,” illustrating a lapse in subject-verb agreement.

Although these errors are less common, they highlight important challenges in syntactic structure, representing a crucial element for the complexity and accuracy of spoken language.

Alternatively, 6% of the total of this study represented interlanguage errors which come from interference or transfer errors from the students' native language. For example:

- Example 8: The speaker mentioned, "She is married with the tall man," incorrectly using "with" instead of "to," pointing to the impact of a direct translation from the first language.

Thus, all these errors usually implicate direct translation, which may not always align with English syntactic or lexical patterns. Then, the 4% of calques or loan translations shows the dependence that students have on their native language structures which are not translated into English clearly. For instance:

- Example 9: The speaker pronounced, "The sculpture is ubicated in France," incorrectly using "ubicated" instead of "located," indicating interference due to a literal transfer from the first language.

Finally, the 1% represented misuse of language, misarticulation positions errors and articulation misuse, discourse coherence, and adjective pluralization. For instance:

- Example 10: The speaker expressed "depend of," incorrectly using "of" instead of "on," signaling an incorrect prepositional choice based on native language norms.

Even though these errors were less recurrent, they could represent issues in language proficiency, such as keeping logical flow in communication and correct morphological inflections.

DISCUSSION

This study provides the variety of linguistic tasks confronted by undergraduate English major students during oral interactions. In fact, it could meaningfully influence their communication with peers and professors. Recognizing these mistakes by English teachers and student-teachers may help developing different teaching strategies that could successfully improve these oral communication mistakes. As discussed in the introduction, communicative competence entails more than just proficiency in grammatical rules; it encompasses the ability to use language appropriately in diverse environments while countering the influence of L1 interference, and fostering fluency by means of practice (Padilla, 2013; Renandya & Puji, 2016). These findings are consistent. With these challenges, emphasizing the critical need for focused strategies to address particular linguistic deficiencies.

First, pronunciation mistakes comprised an important part of mistakes in diphthongs and consonant sounds. Foote et al. (2012) mention that non-native speakers usually struggle with sounds that they do not have in their mother tongue, advising teachers to create and practice pronunciation exercises that reinforce these sounds production. Likewise, Niolaki et al. (2023) mention how important it is to help learners develop a coherent system for matching sounds to letters for precise, accurate and precise spelling. This corroborates the introduction-s observation assertion that students typically need considerable practice to master English phonological features, as noted in research conducted by García

(2013) highlighting the role of phonological features in English as an International Language. Similarly, Kalantar (2024) states that students have problems communicating at a C1 level when they must use unfamiliar topics; however, the use of familiar topics helps them to speak fluently. This method is supported by incorporating different auditory discrimination tasks to improve phonemic awareness and pronunciation (Thomson, 2013). According to Kalantar (2024), the L1 could affect students' communication negatively when they do not receive proper feedback from teachers, causing language fossilization and affecting their oral communication.

Second, the sound spelling mistakes, reporting for 32% of the total, advocate an interruption between phonemic consciousness and spelling facts. Perfetti and Hart (2002) specify that improved phonologic preparation could link to this breach, refining mutual spelling and pronunciation skills. If English teachers implement clear phonics, training may be beneficial for their students, teaching the connection between sounds and their system of written forms. Similarly, Andrews, Veldre, and Clarke (2020) emphasize that phonological decoding plays an important role to help learners improve their spelling precisions and overall lexical mastery. This corresponds to the introduction's point that oral activities, while vital for fostering fluency, may not offer adequate support for learners to connect spoken and written language forms. (Richards, 2006).

Furthermore, even though grammatical structure mistakes such as, subject-verb agreement are less frequent when students communicate with each other, they could impact the precision and intelligibility of students' oral communication. Nassaji and Fotos (2011), mention that clear grammar tutoring, and significant production activities could considerably develop grammatical accuracy in English language learners. In the same way, Nassaji and Kartchava (2019) point out that specific directions and feedback help learners improve the grammatical precisions and comprehensive linguistic competence. In other words, practicing grammar helps students to assume and use complex grammatical structures much better when they communicate in real contexts with their peers and teachers. These results relate to the introduction's observation about the need for learners to construct extended pieces of discourse, such as presentations and narratives that depend on accurate grammar and appropriate discourse markers (Maynard, 2006).

Additionally, this investigation emphasized how students make interlanguage mistakes. It includes calques and transfers which come from specific translations that are not in English syntactical structures. According to Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008), helping students be aware of language interference produced by two common languages, and using a contrast analysis may help students diminish these production mistakes. Also, teachers could incorporate metalinguistic activities to encourage students to be critical when they need to contrast two languages and avoid making oral mistakes. Likewise, Al-Sobhi (2019) emphasizes the importance of helping students identify language interference and increase their awareness of these differences to reduce errors in second language acquisition. These mistakes highlight the need for focused constructive analysis and reflective practices to help students reduce their dependence on native language structures (Neiva, 2021). This associations are essential, as previously mentioned, for learned to achieve pragmatic competence in communication.

Finally, adjective pluralization, preposition misuse, and coherence are the least common mistakes, and they could affect the fluency and precision of students when they must communicate, affecting the acquisition of English as a Second Language. Swain (1995) mentions that it is important to push students about communication activities that test their linguistics skills, which could promote syntactic processing skills and complete language expertise. Similarly, Peker and Arslan (2020) agree with Swain on the idea of pushing learners to construct output because it contributes significantly to the improve-

ment of morphological and syntactical accuracy while fostering the refinement of their overall language proficiency.

CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, the researchers focused on four objectives which were fulfilled through three stages. Therefore, the authors organized specific visits to different classes, and once they had the consent from teachers and students, recorded 34 audios which have specifically spontaneous oral interaction activities. For the second stage, the transcriptions were made by using Microsoft 365, which was a useful tool, allowing researchers to save time. However, in order to guarantee quality in the transcription, the investigators developed a rigorous proof-reading process. In the next stage, the data collected through the transcriptions was encoded in the software MAXQDA to have a general idea about the frequency of words that the participants were misusing, the analysis was performed through word clouds and frequency visualizers. Once the general data was gathered, scholars organized the word categories and the percentages in an Excel spreadsheet.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

Cristian Alexander Pardo Fierro: data collection and analysis, writing up the results, and manuscript discussion.

Martha Lucía Lara Freire: writing objectives, introduction, conclusions, recommendations, and summary; reviewing and editing the manuscript. Submissions to the journal.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors declare that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented in this article.

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REVISTA KRONOS

Implementing Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique to improve tenth-grade students' reading comprehension

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ABSTRACT Education First (2022) and the British Council (2015) claim that there is a lack of reading culture among the population, affecting both English and their native language. Reading comprehension skills development is, therefore, crucial for EFL students since it allows them to access primary sources, expand their vocabulary and language proficiency, succeed academically, and foster lifelong learning and personal development. Thus, EFL teachers should focus on improving their students' reading skills to increase their English language competency (Casco and Mayorga, 2021). For this reason, the current study sought to investigate how the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique affected the reading comprehension abilities of tenth-grade students at a public high school in Cuenca, Ecuador. The present study employed both quantitative and qualitative tools within an Exploratory Action Research framework. This included diagnostic and summative tests and written reflections, collected before and after the CIRC intervention. The research found that the CIRC technique significantly improved reading comprehension and motivated students. Cooperative methods, such as the CIRC technique, enhance reading comprehension, communication, critical thinking, academic skills, and peer-social connections, making it a valuable tool for educators.

KEYWORDS Cooperative learning, Reading comprehension, Exploratory Action Research.

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Implementación de la técnica de Lectura y Composición Cooperativa Integrada (CIRC) para mejorar la comprensión lectora de los alumnos de décimo año de Educación General Básica.

RESUMEN Education First (2022) y British Council (2015) afirman que existe una falta de cultura lectora en la población, lo que afecta tanto al inglés como a su lengua materna. Por lo tanto, el desarrollo de la comprensión lectora es crucial para los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), ya que les permite acceder a fuentes primarias, ampliar su vocabulario y dominio del idioma, alcanzar el éxito académico y fomentar el aprendizaje permanente y el desarrollo personal. Por lo tanto, los docentes de EFL deben centrarse en mejorar las habilidades lectoras de sus estudiantes para aumentar su competencia en inglés (Casco y Mayorga, 2021). Por esta razón, el presente estudio buscó investigar cómo la técnica de Lectura y Composición Cooperativa Integrada (CIRC) afectó las habilidades de comprensión lectora de estudiantes de décimo grado en una escuela secundaria pública en Cuenca, Ecuador. El presente estudio empleó herramientas cuantitativas y cualitativas dentro del marco de la Investigación Acción Exploratoria. Esto incluyó pruebas diagnósticas y sumativas, y reflexiones escritas, recopiladas antes y después de la intervención CIRC. La investigación encontró que la técnica CIRC mejoró significativamente la comprensión lectora y motivó a los estudiantes. Los métodos cooperativos, como la técnica CIRC, mejoran la comprensión lectora, la comunicación, el pensamiento crítico, las habilidades académicas y las conexiones sociales entre pares, lo que la convierte en una herramienta valiosa para los educadores.

PALABRAS CLAVE Aprendizaje Cooperativo, Comprensión Lectora, Investigación Acción Exploratoria

INTRODUCTION

Many Ecuadorian EFL learners lack the ability to read in English, with only a minority engaging in reading for mandatory class assignments (Castillo, 2021). For instance, a study conducted by the British Council revealed that Ecuadorian EFL learners have limited reading skills due to infrequent reading in English (45%), short study periods (28%), and other factors related to the educational system (British Council, 2015). To further investigate this issue, a study by Jaramillo et al. (2019) revealed that a majority (62.19%) of participants struggled with English reading due to poor comprehension. Additionally, a study by Education First (EF, 2022) ranked Ecuadorians' English proficiency low among Latin American countries, indicating challenges with English proficiency and reading comprehension.

Developing reading comprehension skills is essential for students, as it gives them access to primary sources and supports their future academic achievements. Thus, EFL teachers must prioritize enhancing these skills since better comprehension enables learners to improve English proficiency. However, Alvarez and Ha (2022) highlight that in Ecuador, several challenges such as large class sizes, lack of teacher training, and heavy extra-curricular loads lead teachers to focus on traditional teaching. Consequently, this traditional teaching results in teachers mainly focusing on individual tasks centered around grammar and vocabulary teaching (Alvarez & Ha, 2022).

Traditional teaching methods often lead to students losing interest or becoming passive learners. To address these issues, a comprehensive approach is required. This approach should include active and collaborative learning, suitable reading exercises, and engaging materials (Casco & Mayorga, 2021). These components are essential for improving reading comprehension, cognitive abilities, and promoting lifelong learning. Carrillo et al. (2019) highlight that cooperative learning can encompass all these components and is crucial in EFL education. Employing cooperative instructional techniques, such as Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), is vital for achieving the best outcomes for EFL learners (Umar Al Faruq et al., 2020). In line with this, the EFL Ecuadorian curriculum (2016) for middle-high school students strongly emphasizes collaborative and cooperative group work since it encourages students to take charge of their own learning, rather than depending on direct instruction.

PREVIOUS STUDIES: CIRC TECHNIQUE IN PRACTICE

Recent studies by Ghasemi and Baradaran (2018), Azhari et al. (2019), Asrifan and Octaberlina (2021), and Mahdahera and Ridwan (2023) have shown that implementing the CIRC strategy in EFL classrooms, which involves collaborative reading activities such as discussing and analyzing texts, can enhance students' comprehension, engagement, and critical thinking skills.

The CIRC technique, which emphasizes social interaction and peer support, is particularly beneficial for struggling readers. Studies by Ghasemi and Baradaran (2018), Azhari et al. (2019), and Asrifan and Octaberlina (2021) highlight that the CIRC technique differs from traditional reading methods by emphasizing group collaboration and writing activities. Under this technique, students work in small groups to read, analyze, discuss, and write about texts.

Additionally, Mahdahera and Ridwan's (2023) study found that using the CIRC technique led to three types of student engagement: behavioral (participating in discussions

and following instructions), emotional (expressing feelings during activities), and cognitive (completing tasks using different methods).

JUSTIFICATION

During the 2022-2023 academic year at a public school in Cuenca, Ecuador, participant observation and daily journal entries allowed the researchers to identify limited student interaction in a tenth-grade classroom. In this classroom, the teaching method primarily focused on grammar and vocabulary tasks. Additionally, when reading, some tenth-grade students faced difficulties in identifying the main idea, finding specific information, understanding text vocabulary, drawing conclusions, and relating the text content to their personal experiences.

Once these issues were identified, the researchers implemented the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique to enhance reading comprehension skills among tenth-grade EFL learners. This choice was supported by the EFL Ecuadorian curriculum (2016) and previous research by Ghasemi and Baradaran (2018), Azhari et al. (2019), Asrifan and Octaberlina (2021), and Mahdahera and Ridwan (2023), which detailed the benefits, such as participating in discussions, expressing feelings, and completing tasks using different methods, of cooperative and collaborative approaches in EFL classrooms and learners' reading abilities.

In addition, after reviewing the previous studies, the CIRC technique was selected because it enhances reading comprehension through cooperative activities and direct instruction, and promotes active engagement and collaboration among students (Hasjaya et al., 2022). Therefore, the present research study aimed to establish how the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique can improve the reading comprehension abilities of tenth-grade EFL learners and to find out how the technique affects learners' perceptions of EFL classes.

METHODOLOGY

The present research study employed Exploratory Action Research (EAR), using both quantitative and qualitative tools. According to Smith and Rebolledo (2019), EAR is a cyclical process that involves planning, exploration, analysis, reflection, and action to solve classroom problems. Therefore, this approach was selected for its effectiveness in addressing issues within the classroom setting where the researchers are involved.

PARTICIPANTS

Thirty-six tenth-grade students, aged 15-16, from a middle high school in Cuenca, Ecuador participated in this exploratory action research study. A contextualization journal administered during the 2022-2023 academic year revealed that the students had similar educational, and socio-economic backgrounds and received three hours of English instruction per week. Moreover, the researchers obtained the necessary permissions and informed consent, ensuring that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained.

INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The study used written reflection journals before and after the CIRC intervention to encourage critical thinking about learners' learning experiences and identify areas for improvement. A Cambridge A2 reading exam served as both a diagnostic and summative test. The action phase began with a diagnostic test, followed by the CIRC intervention, and concluded with a final summative test to evaluate the intervention's effectiveness.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE CIRC STUDY

The instruments employed in this Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) study exhibited high validity and reliability using a variety of verification approaches and statistical analyses.

The pre- and post-intervention tests had strong internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.85-0.88$), showing that the items accurately measured the same domain. They also showed good test-retest reliability ($r=0.79$), indicating that participants' scores were stable over time. Content validity was determined by expert evaluation and alignment with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) standards, ensuring that the tests fully covered the intended topic.

The journal observation tools demonstrated high inter-rater reliability ($\kappa=0.78$) and intra-rater consistency ($r=0.82$), indicating consistent ratings across time. This was accomplished using defined protocols and trained observers. The observations were made in natural classroom settings.

Surveys and questionnaires, derived from proven instruments, demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha=0.78-0.91$) and acceptable test-retest reliability ($r=0.74-0.81$).

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The study began with a thorough understanding of the EFL classroom dynamics to make informed decisions for improvement (Smith and Rebolledo, 2019). The exploratory phase involved careful planning to assess the current classroom situation. The action research stage, conducted over ten weeks, integrated identified themes during the exploratory phase to enhance tenth-grade learners' reading comprehension. The researchers planned, implemented, observed, evaluated, and reflected on the changes to understand their effects (Smith and Rebolledo, 2019).

The research process was conducted as follows:

1. **Plan to Explore:** In this initial step, the teachers investigated the educational situation. The researcher got to know the students and reviewed the process of teaching reading by observing and reflecting on the challenges they were facing. After that, the teacher researched the literature to plan and investigate ways to change or improve reading comprehension in the classroom.
2. **Explore:** During this phase, researchers collected data and evidence to identify frequent reading issues among learners. They accomplished this by observing them in class and utilizing an observation guide to evaluate their reading abilities. In addition, a survey was conducted to learn about students' attitudes toward reading and their perspectives on cooperative and collaborative learning. This phase aimed to answer

key exploratory questions such as How did students feel about in-class reading activities? What were students' opinions on cooperative learning? What reading materials did teachers use? What strategies did students employ for text comprehension? What were students' perceptions of their own reading comprehension? To address these questions, researchers utilized classroom observations (documented through daily, weekly, and monthly journals), questionnaires/surveys, and reflective writing by students.

3. **Analyze and reflect:** After exploring and collecting data on students' attitudes toward reading, the use of cooperative activities, and common reading challenges, the researchers examined and reflected on the findings. The findings from this study were then utilized to reflect on the observed occurrences, setting the basis for an action plan. As a result, the themes that emerged from the exploratory phase guided the necessary classroom changes to improve learners' reading comprehension. The findings from the analysis served as a foundation for reflection, which shaped the subsequent action plan.
4. **Plan to change:** Based on the themes found during the exploratory phase, the researchers created an action plan outlining the methods and activities that would be employed to improve learners' reading comprehension. During the action phase, the teacher would implement activities and lesson plans that were specific to the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) strategy. Additionally, before implementing the CIRC technique, learners took a Cambridge A2 reading exam to assess their reading skills.
5. **Act:** During this phase, the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) strategy was implemented in classroom activities. This represented the principal implementation of the action research study, which lasted ten weeks.
6. **Observe:** Throughout this step, the researchers gathered data on what happened throughout the implementation of the CIRC strategy. In the final week of the intervention, students took another Cambridge A2 reading exam to assess changes in their reading comprehension. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to students to gather their perceptions of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique. Both the pre- and post-tests, as well as the questionnaire, aimed to assess whether learners improved their reading comprehension skills, specifically in areas such as identifying the main idea, finding implicit and explicit information, understanding word references, and determining the meaning of words based on context.
7. **Reflect:** In this final phase, the researchers analyzed, evaluated, and reflected on the findings of the observation tools, questionnaires, and pre- and post-intervention reading tests. This detailed analysis enabled them to formulate the study's findings. Finally, the researchers evaluated the effectiveness of implementing the CIRC technique to improve learners' reading comprehension.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CIRC INTERVENTION

The CIRC intervention involved introducing new vocabulary, group work, role assignments, silent reading, group discussion, summarization, and summary presentation to the class. Reading texts on topics like hobbies, technology, and health were chosen based on learner preferences and adapted for the CIRC technique.

While applying the CIRC technique, students worked in small groups with specific roles and responsibilities: Captain, Investigator, Recorder, and Checker (Sanita, 2019). The Captain led the reading and discussion, while the Investigator found answers within

the text. The Recorder documented the group's responses, and the Checker verified these responses and provided feedback.

Since Ecuadorian public schools only offer three hours of English instruction per week, the researchers implemented the CIRC technique on Mondays for ten weeks, from March 20th to June 5th, 2023. Each session lasted 80 minutes.

DATA ANALYSIS

Before applying the CIRC technique, students took a diagnostic test to assess their reading ability. After implementing the technique, a summative assessment evaluated their reading competence. Scores from both tests, originally out of thirty points, were converted to a ten-point scale using the cross-multiplication method. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, minimum and maximum scores, and standard deviations from both tests, were utilized to determine the impact of the technique on the reading comprehension abilities of tenth-grade learners.

The students' written reflections were analyzed by transcribing, coding, and categorizing their responses to understand their perspectives on English classes before and after the CIRC intervention. The qualitative analysis followed an inductive process, organizing information into codes, themes, and categories to identify patterns and explain the central issue (Fernández and Baptista, 2013; Smith and Rebolledo, 2019). The data was systematically arranged and presented using charts and graphs for better comprehension.

RESULTS

The present Exploratory Action Research (EAR) study sought to establish how EFL learners' reading comprehension can be improved by using the Cooperative Integrated Reading and composition (CIRC) technique. The qualitative and quantitative instruments provided information to answer the two following research questions:

1. What are the differences in learners' reading comprehension skills before and after implementing the CIRC technique?
2. What are learners' perceptions and thoughts towards English classes before and after implementing the CIRC technique?

LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION BEFORE AND AFTER THE CIRC INTERVENTION

The diagnostic exam administered at the beginning of the present study showed that most learners had beginner English reading skills with a mean score of 4.79 (out of 10) and a standard deviation of 1.08, as it can be seen in Table 1. Out of 36 students, 30 (83.33%) were classified as beginners (A1), 2 (5.55%) had acceptable reading skills (A2), and 4 (11.11%) had minimal or poor reading skills (Pre-A1) and struggled with comprehension.

After ten weeks of CIRC intervention, the summative exam showed an enhancement in most learners' English reading comprehension abilities, with a mean score of 5.81 (out of 10) and a standard deviation of 1.14, as illustrated in Table 1. The number of students with acceptable or elementary (A2) reading levels increased from two to ten, while those

with beginner (A1) levels decreased from thirty to twenty-five. The number of students with minimal (Pre-A1) reading abilities also decreased from four to one.

Table 1 Students' reading level before and after the CIRC implementation

Criteria		Before		After	
		# Students	[%]	# Students	[%]
CEFR level	Foundations (Pre-A1)	4	11.11%	1	2.77%
	Beginner (A1)	30	83.33 %	25	69.44%
	Elementary (A2)	2	5.55%	10	27.77%
	Pre Intermediate (B1)	0	-	0	-
Descriptive statistics	Mean Score	4.79		5.81	
	Standard Deviation	1.08		1.14	

Note: Differences in learners' reading comprehension skills before and after implementing the CIRC technique.

Source: Diagnostic and summative tests

Before the intervention, most students struggled with locating specific information (Part 2), understanding main ideas in longer texts (Part 3), and comprehending various kinds of texts (Part 1), but performed well in understanding vocabulary and grammatical forms (Part 4 & Part 5), as it is shown in Table 2. After the CIRC intervention, students showed significant improvement in understanding various types of texts (Part 1), grasping main ideas in longer texts (Part 3), and locating specific information (Part 2). However, their performance in understanding vocabulary and grammatical forms remained relatively the same (Part 4 & Part 5), as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 Students' improvement after the CIRC intervention.

KEY reading test	Description	Diagnostic-test Mean Score	Summative test Mean Score
Part #1	Understanding various kinds of texts	4.07	6.16
Part #2	Locating specific information and understanding detail	3.61	5.08
Part #3	Understanding main ideas and some details of longer texts	4	5.61
Part #4	Understanding vocabulary words within a context	6.34	6.34
Part #5	Understanding and knowing grammatical forms	5.97	5.97
Mean Score		4.79	5.81
Standard Deviation		1.08	1.14

Note: Students' reading comprehension enhancement after the CIRC intervention.

Source: Diagnostic and summative tests

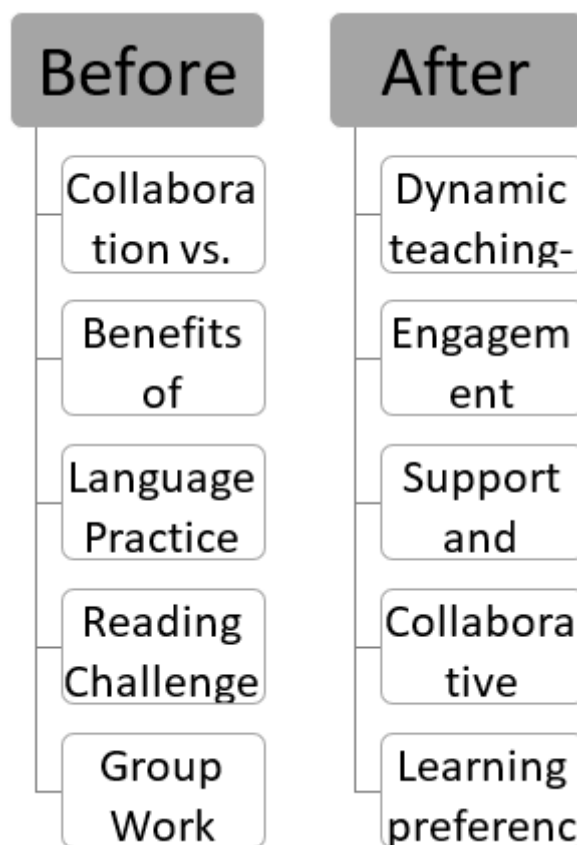
LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD ENGLISH CLASSES BEFORE AND AFTER THE CIRC INTERVENTION

Analyzing students' written reflections basically involved coding learners' responses into keywords or codes and later into categories (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Before the intervention, students' written reflections indicated that they believe collaborative work is more effective than individual work and that cooperative learning enhances class participation and eases the learning experience, as it can be seen in Figure 1. In addition, they noted a lack of cooperative learning in their classes but believed in its benefits. Students also emphasized the importance of actively using English and applying it in various activities. Most students felt they struggled with making inferences and reading critically, understanding only a small portion of texts. They suggested that working in small groups would improve their academic performance.

After ten weeks of CIRC intervention, students' perspectives toward English class changed significantly. They enjoyed dynamic activities, group work, peer support, familiar readings, and vocabulary explanations before reading, as shown in Figure 1. Moreover, feedback from tenth-grade learners indicated that engaging activities kept them interested and created a positive learning environment. Students also valued peer support, familiar readings, and vocabulary explanations, which facilitated their understanding of the texts. Additionally, some learners identified issues while implementing the CIRC technique. For instance, some tenth-grade learners indicated difficulties with uncooperative classmates, a preference for individual work, insufficient time for activities, challenges in understanding instructions, and struggles with writing summaries in English due to comprehension issues with the readings, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Learners' perceptions before and after the CIRC intervention



Note: Students' perceptions toward English classes before and after the CIRC intervention.

Source: Written reflection journals.

DISCUSSION

Data analysis after the CIRC implementation showed that the technique improved learners' reading comprehension skills. Most students found the CIRC activities helpful in understanding readings and vocabulary, enhancing comprehension. There was a notable increase in students achieving an acceptable reading level (A2) and a decrease in those at beginner (A1) and poor (Pre-A1) levels. These results support previous study findings by Hayatina and Fajrina (2018), which point out that the CIRC technique, based on cooperative learning, is more effective than traditional methods due to its supportive and collaborative environment and teacher guidance throughout the learning process.

Various research studies support the effectiveness of the CIRC technique in promoting reading comprehension. For instance, Ayu et al. (2017) and Nanda and Azmy (2020) highlight that this technique enhances skills such as identifying main ideas, locating information, making inferences, understanding references, and grasping vocabulary. Its student-centered approach fosters collaboration, reading comprehension abilities, and student engagement, improving teaching-learning processes (Nanda & Azmy, 2020). Furthermore, Umar Al Faruq et al. (2020) noted a positive correlation between the CIRC strategy and reading comprehension, indicating that a higher implementation of the CIRC strategy leads to better reading comprehension.

After implementing the CIRC technique, learners' attitudes toward English classes changed significantly. The technique enhanced collaboration, comprehension skills, and accountability. This is supported by Mahdahera and Ridwan (2023), who identified three types of engagement when using the CIRC technique: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Behavioral engagement is demonstrated through active participation and respectful communication, while emotional engagement is marked by positive emotions during group work (Mahdahera & Ridwan, 2023). Cognitive engagement is shown by learners using different methods to complete tasks and achieve the same outcomes. Rahmasari and Swasti (2022) also noted that the CIRC technique motivates learners, making classes more enjoyable and improving focus and attention.

Although the CIRC technique offers numerous benefits, there are potential challenges associated with its use in EFL classes, such as uncooperative classmates, individual work preferences, time constraints, limited language proficiency, and difficulties in understanding instructions. Rahmasari and Swasti (2022) and Ronalto et al. (2021) highlight some drawbacks due to the variety of activities included in the CIRC technique, such as partner reading, summarization, and vocabulary and reading comprehension exercises.

According to Ronalto et al. (2021), differentiated materials that offer the same texts with varying levels of difficulty, flexible role assignments that capitalize on individual strengths beyond reading ability, and mixed-ability grouping—in which students serve as peer tutors—can all help manage students with different proficiency levels. To maintain effective guidance while preserving the collaborative spirit, teachers should also implement strategic monitoring systems with observation checklists, use graduated independence that begins with structured activities before gradually transferring responsibility to students, and set clear success criteria and rubrics for self-monitoring.

Ayu et al. (2017) also pointed out that if teachers fail to ensure fair participation in group tasks, the technique's effectiveness may be hindered. Individual practice opportunities can be balanced within the cooperative framework, according to Ayu et al. (2017), through structured individual reflection time, peer accountability systems that require specific contributions from each student, and portfolio development that records both collaborative learning and personal growth.

CONCLUSIONS

The current Exploratory Action Research study indicates that the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique significantly enhanced tenth-grade students' English reading comprehension abilities. The results from diagnostic and summative tests showed better student performance in understanding various texts, identifying main ideas, and locating specific information. Students also exhibited positive attitudes and increased motivation in their English classes, as the CIRC activities encouraged collaboration and teamwork, making classes more enjoyable and promoting responsibility. However, the technique has some challenges in EFL classes, such as the need for careful planning and coordination, potential time constraints, challenges due to varying English proficiency levels, limited individual practice opportunities, and reduced direct teacher control and guidance.

Teachers can use the core benefits of CIRC to boost reading comprehension and student motivation in EFL settings, while also building an environment in which cooperation supports individual learning. This can be accomplished by thoughtfully addressing these concerns rather than viewing them as obstacles. Thus, differentiated resources that provide the same texts at different difficulty levels, flexible role assignments that make use of students' strengths other than reading ability, and mixed-ability groups—in which students function as peer tutors—can all help manage varying skill levels. Furthermore, time constraints require controlled management through time limits, routines that reduce procedural explanations, and the use of individual homework to better prepare students and maximize classroom time.

In summary, the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique, based on sociocultural theory, constructivism, and authentic literacy, promotes collaborative learning and active engagement to improve reading comprehension. It effectively enhances communication, critical thinking, academic skills, and peer interactions. Incorporating CIRC into teaching practices can increase collaboration, motivation, and academic performance, creating a more engaging learning experience for EFL students.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

William Santiago Chuquiguanga Tenesaca: Research, writing, editing, revision, creation of data collection instruments, qualitative and quantitative data collection, data analysis using software.

Genesis Milena Bravo Caguana: Research, writing, editing, revision, creation of data collection instruments, qualitative and quantitative data collection, data analysis with software.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors declare that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented in this article.

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REVISTA KRONOS

Aquatic Stimulation Process In Child Development In Children From One To Five Years Old

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ABSTRACT Aquatic stimulation implemented in early childhood education institutions, with educators trained in aquatic stimulation, represents an innovative pedagogical strategy for children aged one to five. This practice leverages the benefits of water to promote comprehensive child development, stimulating areas such as psychomotor, cognitive, emotional, and social growth, while aligning with contemporary pedagogical approaches. The study, employing a quantitative approach and stratified probabilistic design, involved a population of 236 educators and a sample of 75, achieving a reliability index of 0.79 based on Cronbach's Alpha. The findings highlight the positive impact of this technique on educational quality, contributing to the holistic development of children and strengthening educators' pedagogical tools. This approach has the potential to transform society by fostering healthier generations and providing greater opportunities for the integral development of future generations.

KEYWORDS Aquatic stimulation, Comprehensive development, Children, Pedagogical tool.

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Proceso De Estimulación Acuática En El Desarrollo Infantil En Niños De Uno A Cinco Años.

RESUMEN La estimulación acuática implementada en las instituciones de educación inicial, con docentes capacitados en la estimulación acuática, es una estrategia pedagógica innovadora para niños de uno a cinco años. Esta práctica aprovecha los beneficios del agua para promover el desarrollo integral infantil, estimulando áreas como el desarrollo psicomotor, cognitivo, emocional y social, adaptándose a enfoques pedagógicos contemporáneos. El estudio, de enfoque cuantitativo y diseño probabilístico estratificado, contó con una población de 236 docentes y una muestra 75, obteniendo un índice de confiabilidad de 0,79 según el Alfa de Cronbach. Los resultados destacan el impacto positivo de esta técnica en la calidad educativa, contribuyendo al desarrollo integral de los niños y fortaleciendo herramientas pedagógicas del docente. Este enfoque puede transformar la sociedad al formar generaciones más saludables y brindar mayores oportunidades para el desarrollo integral de las nuevas generaciones.

PALABRAS CLAVE Estimulación acuática, Desarrollo integral, niños, Herramienta pedagógica.

INTRODUCCIÓN

La estimulación acuática es un conjunto de actividades que aporta favorablemente al desarrollo físico, cognitivo y emocional de los niños. Es una de las estrategias didácticas que integra la formación docente contemporánea, permitiendo crear espacios y entornos de aprendizaje lúdicos, donde el agua crea un espacio atractivo libre que ayuda considerablemente al desarrollo de habilidades motoras, como el equilibrio y la fuerza. Cabe indicar que, además permite potenciar la parte cognitiva del niño en la resolución de problemas con creatividad. Otro aspecto de suma importancia de la estimulación acuática en los niños está direccionado a despertar la percepción de la textura, temperatura y movimiento. Sin lugar a duda los juegos y ejercicios incrementan la autonomía al explorar el agua, favoreciendo la confianza en sí mismos y el desarrollo motriz libre. El entorno de la investigación está enmarcado en los docentes que trabajan directamente en el desarrollo infantil y el proceso de la estimulación temprana, así como en estudiantes de pedagogía y psicología. También incluye centros educativos que diseñan proyectos enfocados en la primera infancia y padres de familia que apoyan el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de sus hijos en el hogar.

Las estrategias didácticas acuáticas fortalecen directamente el desarrollo simétrico dentro de los ejes longitudinales y transversales, ejercitando toda su destreza motriz, siempre respetando las cualidades y habilidades naturales. La implementación de un rincón acuático en las instituciones educativas de desarrollo infantil integral contribuye al desarrollo de la seguridad, la confianza en sí mismos, el dominio del cuerpo. Además, fortalece la comunicación integral e incrementa el conocimiento en todas sus formas, permitiendo a los niños vivir sus propias vivencias sin imposiciones a su voluntad (Mariana, 2023).

BASE LEGAL

Art. 41.- “La autoridad educativa nacional promoverá la coordinación entre las instituciones públicas y privadas competentes en el desarrollo y protección integral de los niños y niñas desde el nacimiento hasta los cinco años de edad” (Ecuador, 2021). La base legal en el estudio es importante porque establece el marco normativo que respalda las acciones y estrategias orientadas al desarrollo y protección integral de los niños y niñas. El Art. 41, también garantiza que las iniciativas propuestas, como la estimulación acuática, estén alineadas con la normativa legal vigente, lo que refuerza su legitimidad y asegura que las instituciones públicas y privadas actúen en coordinación para dar cumplimiento al proceso de estimulación acuática. Los niños desarrollan su capacidad para relacionarse con su entorno y con quienes rodean, dependiendo en gran medida de un sólido desarrollo sensoriomotor (García, 2022). “la importancia reside en el desarrollo de una práctica educativa que sobrepasa la mera actividad corporal individual y se extiende a la relación entre padres e hijos. El fin último de saber desenvolverse en el agua, garantiza simultáneamente una estimulación del ámbito motor, muy beneficiosa para la maduración del niño” (Valeiras, 2004).

CORRIENTES EDUCATIVAS

Las corrientes educativas tradicionales están experimentando transformaciones significativas en la utilización de herramientas virtuales, dando lugar a nuevas metodologías que generan espacio donde los estudiantes y docentes mejoran y transforman continuamente el panorama educativo, en este escenario, se requiere que los estudiantes desarrollen creatividad y autonomía mediante la implementación de métodos de enseñanza alternativos

como: El método Montessori y la estimulación acuática comparten principios fundamentales, como el respeto al proceso de aprendizaje de acuerdo al ritmo individual de cada niño y la promoción de un aprendizaje autónomo. Estos dos métodos utilizan actividades y materiales adaptados para que los niños descubran sus propias capacidades, fomentando su desarrollo integral en un entorno seguro y estructurado (Rojas Guevara, 2024).

El método Waldorf, tiene su enfoque en potenciar la estimulación acuática en los niños al fomentar la exploración libre, sensibilidad y aprendizaje autónomo, promoviendo habilidades motoras, emocionales y cognitivas (Simón, 2016). Método de Reggio Emilia, expone que el desarrollo del conocimiento, desde la infancia, se adquiere a través de la observación y la experimentación. En el agua se fomenta el juego cooperativo y la expresión creativa, tanto individual como en equipo (Andrade Ugalde, 2019). Las prácticas de renovación pedagógica han puesto en marcha una verdadera innovación en el ámbito de la educación desde la primera infancia, planteando el desarrollo del conocimiento desde una visión holística (Hontanar & López, 2020). Estas corrientes educativas inciden directamente a los niños en todas las dimensiones, generando un especial interés sobre el desarrollo integral, espacialmente a nivel emocional y afectivo.

BENEFICIOS

Existen múltiples beneficios al realizar la estimulación acuática desde temprana edad. Ofrece múltiples beneficios para los niños, ya que el agua permite realizar diversas actividades con menor riesgo de lesiones, debido a que el peso corporal se reduce entre un 80 y 90 por ciento. Adicionalmente, el agua reduce el impacto en las articulaciones, fortalece y tonifica la musculatura de todo el cuerpo, mejora la resistencia cardiovascular, mejora la flexibilidad, el equilibrio y la coordinación generando en el niño una sensación de bienestar (Edda, Daniel, & Alberto, 2023).

Adaptación del medio acuático: La adaptación del niño al agua no se limita en enseñarle a flotar, sino que busca fomentar un vínculo afectivo íntimo con el medio acuático y desarrollar habilidades motoras, cognitivas, socio emocional y psicomotor. La estimulación acuática infantil abarca todas las actividades que se realizan de manera efectiva en su entorno, junto a su docente, padres y piscina. Cuando los niños aprenden a controlar su cuerpo y equilibrarse durante los desplazamientos comienzan a socializar con otros niños, participando con actividades en equipo (Erreyes Guaman, 2025).

Finalidad: Desarrollar la motricidad acuática desde temprana edad contribuye una inversión en desarrollo integral de cada niño, ya que aporta beneficios físicos, cognitivos, emocionales y sociales. Esto sienta las bases para un estilo de vida activo, mejorando el tono muscular, la postura, la respiración, la toma de decisiones, la autoestima, la adquisición de autonomía, así como la confianza y seguridad en sí mismo (Fonseca-Pinto, 2024).

Aprender jugando: El juego es una herramienta muy importante en la estimulación acuática ya que convierte cada clase en experiencias enriquecedoras y divertidas para los niños. A través del juego los niños aprenden, se desarrollan y disfrutan del agua, mientras expresan sus deseos, fantasías, frustraciones y conflictos. La metodología del proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje debe estar fundamentada en el proceso, más no en el resultado. Entre las metodologías utilizadas se encuentran la activa, progresiva, placentera, intencional, lúdica y significativa. En la adquisición de sus primeras habilidades motrices acuáticas, los niños deben explorar su entorno y aprender mediante el ensayo y el error, con el apoyo de su docente tutor o padres de familia (Barragán Sanchez, 2024).

Materiales acuáticos: Los materiales acuáticos son herramientas esenciales para enriquecer las experiencias de estimulación acuática en la primera infancia, haciendo que cada

visita a la piscina sea divertida. Estos deben ser manejables por los niños, preferiblemente de colores vivos, con diferentes texturas, sonidos variados y tamaños diversos. Estos, deben ser seguros, estar en buen estado y facilitar la realización de juegos en equipo (Centeno, 2024).

DESARROLLO MOTOR ACUÁTICO

Los múltiples beneficios para el desarrollo integral del niño con la estimulación acuática en su primera infancia para el desarrollo integral del niño se enfocan en los siguientes aspectos: desarrollo neurotípico, desarrollo neurodiversidad, inclusión, salud y bienestar, y la vinculación afectiva. Estos influyen en el desarrollo neurotípico y neurodiverso, fomentando las habilidades motrices, cognitivas y sociales. Promueven la inclusión, la salud física y emocional, bienestar general y vínculos afectivos, fortaleciendo la interacción entre niños, docentes y los padres. La conceptualización de estos aspectos es relevante porque proporciona una base teórica sólida para analizar cómo la estimulación acuática impacta el desarrollo infantil (Nissim, 2014).

Aspectos Generales: El enfoque de esta investigación es que el docente, conjuntamente con los padres de familia, consiga que el niño disfrute de la estimulación acuática, moviéndose libremente en el agua, de tal manera que el tiempo de inmersión sea apropiado para su formación integral en sus dos etapas: de cero a tres años y de tres a cinco años. Sin embargo, hay que tener en cuenta ciertos factores importantes tales como: el tipo de instalaciones (bañera en casa o piscina adecuada a su tamaño), la temperatura del agua, la hora de programación ideal. Para niños de entre uno a tres años, se recomienda entre las 11H00 a 13H00, y entre las 17H00 a 20H00. Mientras que los niños de tres a cinco años, las horas recomendadas son de 16H00 a 20H00. También se debe considerar el material de flotación y las fases del programa como guía para el docente para una mejor adquisición de las habilidades motrices en el agua. Para niños de uno a tres años estas fases incluyen: familiarizan con la bañera, masaje muscular, ayuda al equilibrio, inmersiones controladas y desplazamientos autónomos básicos.

Para niños de tres a cinco años, las fases abarcan: equilibraciones autónomas, desplazamientos autónomos, giros y manipulaciones del material. Por último, la evaluación puede ser diaria o semanal, de acuerdo con los logros alcanzados (autonomía, patrones de postura, habilidades innatas, tipos de movimientos). Esta información es útil para proporcionar una orientación adecuada y asertiva para los padres y los docentes (Moreno, Abellán, & López, 2023).

EDUCACIÓN AMBIENTAL

Los niños, desde sus primeros momentos de vida, establecen una conexión directa e íntima con la naturaleza, lo cual despierta en ellos la curiosidad innata que los impulsa a explorar y a aprender. Es de gran importancia incentivar, desde su primera infancia la realización de cambios positivos y la adquisición de hábitos y actividades que contribuyan a proteger el medio que nos rodea (Puche, Samper, & Martíne, 2023). La UNESCO, expone que “la educación en el siglo XXI ha de basarse en cuatro pilares: Aprender a Conocer. Aprender a Hacer. Aprender a Vivir y Aprender a ser”. Siendo estos necesarios para enfrentar las futuras crisis ambientales

METODOLOGÍA

Enfoque metodológico: La investigación es de tipo cuantitativo, probabilístico estratificado. El enfoque cuantitativo permitió la recolección de la data para realizar el análisis numérico, generar las proporciones de las instituciones educativas que imparten la técnica de la estimulación acuática, y facilitar la estadística e interpretación de los resultados de manera efectiva. La población objetivo del estudio incluye a todos los docentes involucrados en el desarrollo infantil integral con formación en estimulación acuática en la primera infancia en el Distrito Metropolitano de Quito. La metodología utilizada para seleccionar la muestra se basó en el muestreo probabilístico, garantizando que cada docente que conforma la población tenga una probabilidad conocida de ser seleccionado para formar parte de la muestra.

El muestreo estratificado es ideal para este análisis ya que, permitirá asegurar que la muestra represente a los niños de diferentes edades (cero a cinco años) y con diferentes niveles de desarrollo, haciendo que los resultados sean confiables (Villamar & Gustavo, 2024). El tamaño de la muestra es de 236 de docentes que conocen y aplican sus conocimientos de la estimulación acuática con los niños de la primera infancia y los padres de familia. La muestra finita para el desarrollo del cuestionario es de 75 docentes de ambos sexos. El tamaño de la muestra se determinó en función de la disponibilidad y accesibilidad de los coordinadores de los establecimientos educativos para responder las encuestas con todos sus docentes a cargo.

Procesamiento de los datos: Los datos obtenidos servirán para evaluar el impacto de la estimulación acuática en los niños de uno a cinco años de edad. Los docentes fueron seleccionados de acuerdo a un muestreo aleatorio estratificado según la edad de los niños. Los datos se recopilan de acuerdo a una escala de valoración. Se espera, en este estudio, que los niños de diferentes instituciones educativas muestren mayores avances en habilidades motoras, con ayuda del docente guía y sus padres. Según, (Ortega, 2024), “El Alfa de Cronbach analiza la correlación entre todas las preguntas del cuestionario. Si las preguntas miden la misma idea o concepto, el Alfa será alto. Por otro lado, si algunas preguntas son inconsistentes, el Alfa será bajo”. Es importante tener en cuenta que la validez de los resultados está directamente relacionada con la estrecha conexión entre el instrumento utilizado y el concepto real que se busca comprobar mediante la medición.

Criterio de validez: La evaluación que se realiza con el criterio de Alfa de Cronbach demuestra que los ítems del cuestionario garantizan la fiabilidad de los resultados en esta investigación sobre el rincón de la estimulación acuática, implementado en los centros de desarrollo infantil privados y públicos. El Alfa de Cronbach, de acuerdo con la escala, arroja un resultado de 0,79, por lo cual, el cuestionario y la escala propuesta son muy confiables y todos los ítems están midiendo de manera consistente el desarrollo motor, cognitivo, socioemocional y psicomotor. La métrica en este tema de análisis y la metodología aplicada fortalece la base de los datos generados.

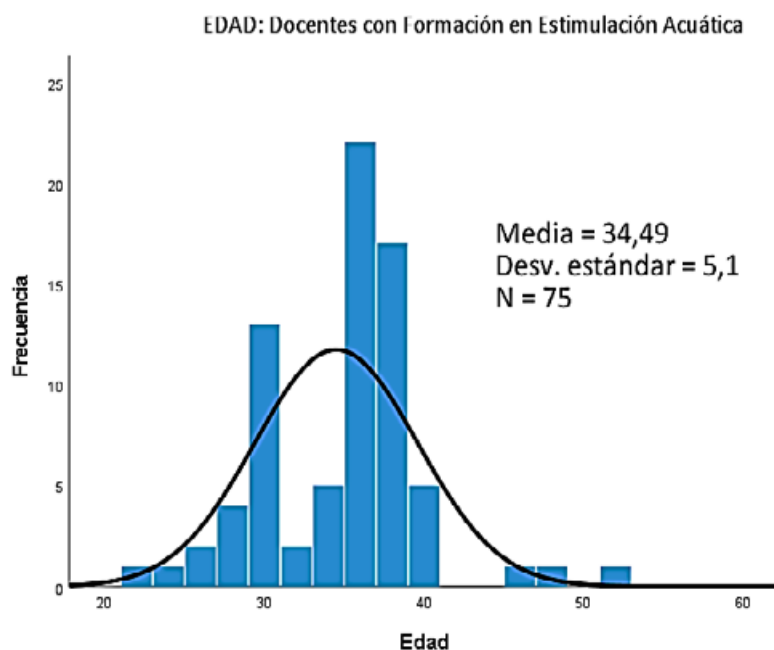
Tabla 1. Criterio de confiabilidad – Alfa de Crombach

$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} \left[1 - \frac{\sum S_i^2}{S_T^2} \right]$		
α	Coeficiente de confiabilidad del cuestionario	0,79
K	Número de preguntas del instrumento	20
$\sum_{i=1}^k S_i^2$		
S_T^2	Sumatoria de las varianzas de las preguntas	22,49
	Varianza total del instrumento	89,53
K-1		19
K/(K-1)		1,05
Niveles de confiabilidad Alfa de Cronbach		
Índice	Confiabilidad	Rango
1	Excelente	0,9 - 1,0
2	Muy bueno	0,7 - 0,9
3	Bueno	0,5 - 0,7
4	Regular	0,3 - 0,5
5	Deficiente	0,0 - 0,3

Nota: 0,79. Es un instrumento de muy buena confiabilidad

Para la recolección de la información de la investigación, se utilizó como instrumento principal el cuestionario. Este fue aplicado a los docentes de instituciones educativas tanto públicas como privadas, que implementan la estimulación acuática en sus programas de desarrollo infantil. El cuestionario fue diseñado para evaluar aspectos relacionados con el impacto de la estimulación acuática en el desarrollo motor, cognitivo, socioemocional y psicomotor de los niños, asegurando con un experto, que los ítems fueran claros y relevantes para el objetivo de la investigación. Además, este instrumento permitió obtener datos precisos y consistentes que contribuyeron al análisis y validación de los resultados.

Procesamiento de datos: La experiencia y juventud en la estimulación acuática, aplicada a la enseñanza y aprendizaje de los niños en la primera infancia, suelen combinar la energía, la pedagogía que aplican, aprovechando las nuevas perspectivas de los jóvenes con las corrientes didácticas actuales y una experiencia profesional en crecimiento. Esto influye en su enfoque pedagógico moderno y en la manera que implementan las actividades de estimulación acuática. Con la obtención de los datos, se categorizan los puntajes del instrumento de medición. La didáctica, basada en las herramientas de aprendizaje mediante la estimulación temprana, permite clasificar los puntajes totales obtenidos por los docentes guía en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje acuático, así como los puntajes de cada sinergia, dentro de una escala de 0 a 70 puntos.

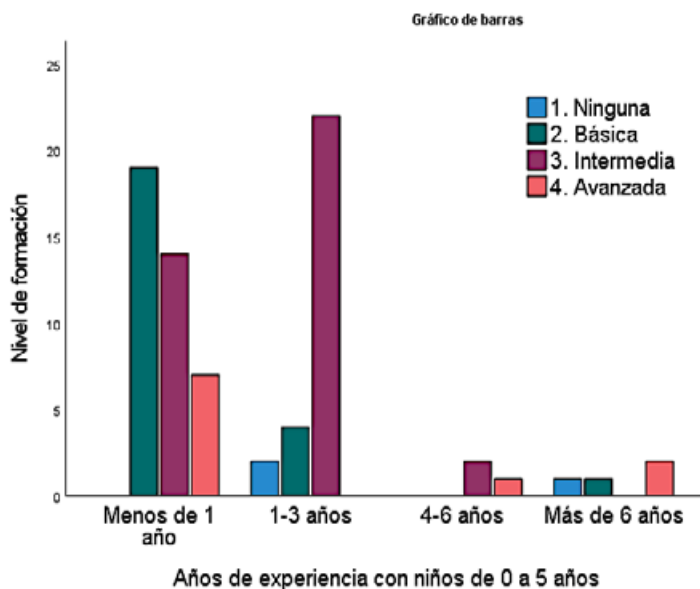
Figura 1. Edad: Docentes con formación en estimulación acuática de niños entre 1 a 5 años.

El análisis de datos generados por el instrumento de medición aplicado a los docentes parvularios de las diferentes instituciones de la ciudad de Quito y sus alrededores constituye una etapa crucial, ya que sienta las bases para un estudio exitoso. Este proceso evidencia que la innovación en las herramientas didácticas, utilizadas para implementar el proceso de estimulación acuática por parte de los docentes, con apoyo de los padres en el hogar, puede mejorar y ampliar sus competencias profesionales. Dicho análisis se centra en los tipos de herramientas didácticas y en los ambientes de aprendizaje, los resultados son fundamentales para fortalecer la práctica pedagógica y optimizar los resultados en el desarrollo infantil.

Tabla 2. Estadísticas de los docentes según edad y género (a. Existen múltiples modos. Se muestra el valor más pequeño)

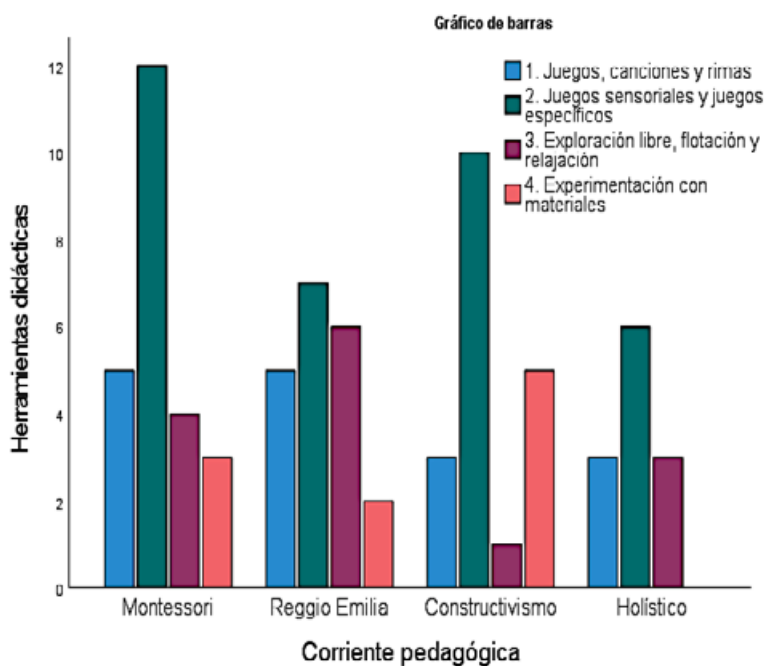
Estadísticos					
		Docentes Desarrollo Infantil Integral	Edad	Genero	IE
N	Válido	75	75	75	75
	Perdidos	0	0	0	0
Media		38,00	34,49		3,92
Mediana		38,00	35,00		4,00
Moda		1 ^a	36		1 ^a
Desv. Desviación		21,794	5,100		1,978
Varianza		475,000	26,010		3,912

La formación y la experiencia adquirida por los docentes influyen de manera significativa en la estimulación acuática en las instituciones educativas, contribuyendo al desarrollo integral de los niños. En la Figura 2, se presenta la relación entre los docentes que aplican la estimulación acuática y su formación académica, combinada con su experiencia profesional.

Figura 2. Formación en función de su experiencia**Tabla 3.** Medidas simétricas en la formación y la experiencia

Medidas simétricas					
		Valor	Error estándar asintótico	T Aproximada	Significación aproximada
Intervalo por intervalo	R de Pearson	,074	,164	,635	,527c
Ordinal por ordinal	Correlación de Spearman	,127	,130	1,096	,277c
N de casos válidos		75			
a. No se presupone la hipótesis nula.					
b. Utilización del error estándar asintótico que presupone la hipótesis nula.					
c. Se basa en aproximación normal.					

El análisis estadístico proporciona una base sólida para comprender la relación entre las corrientes pedagógicas y su aplicación de las herramientas didácticas, destacando cómo estas mejoran la práctica docente y el desarrollo del conocimiento del niño. Ver Figura 3, se presenta el porcentaje de docentes que utilizan las herramientas didácticas según el tipo de corriente pedagógica adoptada.

Figura 3. Corrientes pedagógicas Vs Herramientas didácticas.

Las medidas simétricas entre pedagogía y didáctica en contraste con las prácticas tradicionales de estimulación acuática, enfatizan la importancia de la simetría entre docente, niño y padres de familia. Este enfoque busca establecer relaciones más equitativas, colaborativas y orientadas al trabajo en equipo en el proceso de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje con los niños de uno a cinco años. Esto implica la diversidad de la aplicación de los conocimientos y experiencias en los diferentes entornos donde se desarrollan las actividades, fomentando la interacción horizontal, que promueve un aprendizaje más activo. Adicionalmente se consideran los desafíos y las condiciones necesarias de cada establecimiento educativo para garantizar que la implementación del “rincón de estimulación acuática” sea exitosa.

Tabla 4. Medidas simétricas de pedagogía y didáctica

Medidas simétricas					
		Valor	Error estándar asintótico ^a	T aproximada ^b	Significación aproximada
Intervalo por intervalo	R de Pearson	-,021	,107	-,177	,860c
Ordinal por ordinal	Correlación de Spearman	-,012	,111	-,100	,921c
N de casos válidos		75			

a. No se presupone la hipótesis nula.

b. Utilización del error estándar asintótico que presupone la hipótesis nula.

c. Se basa en aproximación normal.

La necesidad de capacitarse y mejorar su formación en el manejo del agua impulsa a los docentes a diseñar programas de aprendizaje infantil que contribuyan a optimizar su desempeño profesional. Estos programas permiten evaluar el impacto del desarrollo efectivo de las competencias docentes y en el rendimiento de los niños, considerando sus características individuales y los tipos de ambientes con los que les toca trabajar.

La estimulación acuática en la temprana edad, desde hace unos años, se ha convertido en un campo en constante evolución. Esto exige que los docentes estén altamente capacitados y actualizados en áreas como el desarrollo psicomotor, las adaptaciones fisiológicas al medio acuático infantil y el manejo de patologías comunes. De esta manera se garantiza un desarrollo óptimo de los niños desde sus primeros años de vida, promoviendo una base sólida para su crecimiento integral.

Tabla 5. Capacitación complementaria que requieren los docentes para mejorar sus competencias profesionales didácticas

Edad		Técnicas específicas		Desarrollo psicomotor		Adaptaciones para niños con necesidades especiales		Seguridad y primeros auxilios		Total	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
22	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	5,3	1	1,3	
23	1	5,9	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	1,3	
25	0	0,0	2	10,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	2	2,7	
27	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	5,3	0	0,0	1	1,3	
28	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	5,3	2	10,5	3	4,0	
29	0	0,0	1	5,0	3	15,8	1	5,3	5	6,7	
30	2	11,8	1	5,0	2	10,5	3	15,8	8	10,7	
31	1	5,9	1	5,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	2	2,7	
33	0	0,0%	0	0,0	1	5,3	0	0,0	1	1,3	
34	0	0,0	1	5,0	1	5,3	2	10,5	4	5,3	
35	3	17,6	4	20,0	0	0,0	3	15,8	10	13,3	
36	2	11,8	2	10,0	4	21,1	4	21,1	12	16,0	
37	2	11,8	1	5,0	1	5,3	2	10,5	6	8,0	
38	4	23,5	4	20,0	2	10,5	1	5,3	11	14,7	
39	1	5,9	0	0,0	1	5,3	0	0,0	2	2,7	
40	0	0,0	1	5,0	2	10,5	0	0,0	3	4,0	
45	0	0,0	1	5,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	1,3	
48	0	0,0	1	5,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	1,3	
52	1	5,9	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	1	1,3	
Total	17	100	20	100	19	100	19	100	75	100	

De acuerdo a los datos y resultados esperados, la estimulación acuática está generando un impacto significativo en el desarrollo motor de los niños de entre uno y cinco años. Este enfoque no sólo contribuye al fortalecimiento de habilidades psicomotoras, sino que también fomenta la coordinación, el equilibrio y la adaptación al medio acuático, aspectos esenciales para el desarrollo integral en la primera infancia.

RESULTADOS

La estimulación acuática en la educación infantil: De acuerdo a los resultados obtenidos, la estimulación acuática en niños de uno a cinco años dentro del ámbito educativo proporciona un entorno seguro, cómodo y relajante. Este medio acuático contribuye significativamente al desarrollo integral de los niños, mejorando la circulación sanguínea y estimulando el sistema inmunológico. Además, las estrategias didácticas diseñadas por los docentes permiten fortalecer la musculatura, el equilibrio, la coordinación, las habilidades innatas y la flexibilidad, promoviendo la independencia funcional en cada niño (Ángeles, 2023).

Esta investigación fortalece la importancia de contar con un espacio dedicado a la estimulación acuática en la educación infantil. Los beneficios de esta técnica, junto con las estrategias implementadas tienen un impacto directo en el desarrollo emocional y físico de los niños. Sin embargo, dichos beneficios pueden variar según factores como la edad, la frecuencia de duración de las sesiones, así como la experiencia y las competencias profesionales de los docentes encargados en la formación infantil. Estos elementos son fundamentales para garantizar el éxito de las actividades programadas y consolidar los avances en el desarrollo infantil.

Las estrategias, el desarrollo emocional y sus aportes con esta técnica acuática pueden variar directamente según su edad, la frecuencia, la duración de las sesiones, la edad la experiencia y las competencias profesionales de los docentes dedicados a la formación infantil de uno a cinco años de edad, que son fundamentales fortaleciendo su éxito en todas las actividades programadas.

Tabla 6. Beneficios y estrategias en la estimulación acuática en la primera infancia

Beneficios	Estrategias
Niños 6 a 12 meses:	
Buen comportamiento	Escalas evolutivas (Emocional, social y cognitiva o afectiva)
Competencia motriz acuática	
Explora el comportamiento real y natural del niño	
Niños de 6 a 24 meses:	
Desarrollo Psicomotor	Relación directa docente – niño – padres
Fortalecimiento del sistema cardiorrespiratorio	Relación niño-agua.
Ayuda al sistema inmunológico	Activa
Eleva el coeficiente intelectual.	Progresiva
Inicia la socialización sin traumas en un ambiente lúdico y recreativo	Placentera
Desarrolla las habilidades vitales de supervivencia	Intencional
Seguridad y relajación	Lúdica
	Significativa

Figura 4: Estimulación acuática /Instituciones educativas



Niños de 24 a 60 meses:

Vencer el temor al agua, para desplazarse y mantenerse con una mínima seguridad

Dominio inmediato de un medio diferente al habitual y habilidad de socialización.

Capacidad de captar la idea del docente en el aspecto educativo formativo en el aprendizaje de la estimulación acuática

Desarrollan una percepción mayor del mundo que los rodea y una mejor relación afectiva

Aumenta la eficiencia en la oxigenación y traslado de la sangre.

Mejora y refuerza la relación afectiva y cognitiva.

Estimular el carácter competitivo y su habilidad de aprender las técnicas

Propiciar acciones de carácter recreativo, mediante las actividades lúdicas, del juego y la satisfacción de estar en contacto con el agua

Posiciones en decúbito supino y prono (volteos e inicio a la sedestación e inmersiones, aprovechando la presencia del reflejo de buceo)

Impacto en el desarrollo emocional

Iniciativa y confianza

Relaciones significativas existentes entre la inteligencia emocional e intelectual

Presentan una considerable calidad y cantidad de redes interpersonales y de apoyo social

Comprensión y regulación de sus emociones.

Desarrollo de conductas socioemocionales

Generan interpretación del mundo y un concepto sobre sí mismos

Inician la comprensión y manejan sus emociones.

Desarrollo adecuado de las conductas socioemocionales adecuadas.

Generan interpretación del medio que los rodea y generan un concepto sobre sí mismos.

Comprender los sentimientos y emociones de sí mismo y de los niños que lo rodean.

Intención de ponerse en el lugar del otro.

Actitudes positivas sobre el cuidado de sí mismo

Vínculo directo entre el docente, el niño y los padres.

Regulación emocional

Logra metas individuales y en equipo

Identifica los cambios en su entorno habitual.

Aportes de la estimulación acuática en el desarrollo emocional.

Disminuye sus efectos negativos • Logros académicos más gratificantes • Aceptación de sus emociones y sentimientos.

Disminuye sus efectos negativos

Logros académicos son más gratificantes

Aceptación de sus emociones y sentimientos.

El cuidado del ambiente, la familia.

Diseñar un currículo para que los niños desarrollen habilidades cognitivas, emocionales y sociales que pueden ayudarlos en su vida cotidiana y académica.

Circuito acuático independientemente del tipo de bañera, donde experimentan sus emociones básicas (alegría, tristeza, miedo, enfado, sorpresa, amor y asco)

informaciones sensoriales que llegan a los centros emocionales del cerebro
Produce una respuesta neurofisiológica

Resuelve situaciones incómodas.

Regulación emocional que se desarrollan durante todo el ciclo vital

Nota: la tabla destaca beneficios y estrategias de estimulación acuática para niños de seis meses a cinco años, promoviendo desarrollo psicomotor, emocional, habilidades sociales, supervivencia y fortaleciendo vínculos familiares y educativos. Fuente: Autores.

Tabla 7. Propuestas de patrón básico en la estimulación básica para la primera infancia

FASE	Ambientación lúdico – motriz. Mes I				Aprendizaje cognitivo – motriz. Mes II				Profundización cogni- tiva – motriz. Mes III			
Mes	Enero				Febrero				Marzo			
Semana	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Iniciación y desarrollo de la planificación	6 - 10	13 - 17	20 - 24	27 - 31	3 - 7	10 - 14	17 - 21	24 - 28	3 - 7	10 - 14	17 - 21	24 - 28
Sesiones de entrenamiento por semana	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	33	3	3	3
Volumen promedio por sesión (min)	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'	50'
Volumen total semanal	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'	150'
PATRONES BASICOS DE LOCOMO- CION	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'	120'

Nota: la tabla muestra estrategias de estimulación acuática para niños, destacando planificación, sesiones, volumen y patrones motores en tres fases mensuales. Fuente: Autores

CONCLUSIONES

La estimulación acuática en niños de uno a cinco años constituye una herramienta innovadora que ha transformado los enfoques pedagógicos en los centros de desarrollo infantil públicos y privados de Quito. Este estudio evidencia que la práctica no sólo favorece los vínculos afectivos, sino que también estimula capacidades cognitivas como la creatividad, el pensamiento lógico y el trabajo en equipo, además de potenciar el desarrollo psicomotor mediante la mejora de la coordinación y las habilidades motoras finas. Más allá de los beneficios inmediatos, la estimulación acuática fomenta una socialización efectiva, colaboración y convivencia positiva, contribuyendo integralmente al desarrollo físico, emocional y cognitivo de los niños. Estas contribuciones subrayan su potencial como una estrategia fundamental para sentar las bases de un aprendizaje y desarrollo óptimo en la primera infancia. La estimulación acuática, conocida como el “rincón de estimulación acuática”, ya se está siendo incorporada en los programas educativos nacionales debido al impacto significativo en el desarrollo integral de los niños considerándose como una estrategia clave dentro de los enfoques pedagógicos actuales.

La metodología utilizada para este estudio, basada en un cuestionario respondido por 236 docentes parvularios de diversas instituciones de educación inicial, tanto públicas como privadas, permitió recopilar datos relevantes y confiables para el análisis del proceso de estimulación acuática en el desarrollo infantil de niños de uno a cinco años. Con una muestra finita es de 75 docentes, con una escala valorativa de 0 a 10 puntos. El índice de confiabilidad obtenido fue de 0,79 puntos, según el Alfa de Cronbach, lo que indica una alta consistencia en los resultados. Estos datos respaldan el objetivo de investigación, que busca evaluar y comprender cómo la estimulación acuática contribuye al desarrollo integral de los niños y su potencial implementación en instituciones públicas y privadas de la ciudad de Quito. Estos resultados obtenidos también ofrecen una base sólida para promover la integración de esa práctica como una estrategia pedagógica clave en los programas educativos de la primera infancia.

RECOMENDACIÓN

Con base en los resultados obtenidos, se recomienda a las instituciones educativas públicas y privadas de la ciudad de Quito implementar de manera sistemática espacios dedicados a la estimulación acuática en sus programas de educación inicial, asegurando que estos entornos sean seguros, cómodos y adaptados a las necesidades de los niños de uno a cinco años. Asimismo, se sugiere realizar un monitoreo constante del impacto de esta técnica de desarrollo infantil, permitiendo ajustar las estrategias según los avances observados y las necesidades particulares de cada institución educativa. Finalmente se recomienda que las autoridades educativas consideren la estimulación acuática como una herramienta pedagógica clave dentro de los programas nacionales, promoviendo su integración y asegurando los recursos necesarios para su implementación, con el objetivo de maximizar los beneficios que esta técnica ofrece en el desarrollo integral de los niños de la primera infancia.

La estimulación acuática implementada en las instituciones de educación inicial, con docentes capacitados en la estimulación acuática, es una estrategia pedagógica innovadora para niños de uno a cinco años. Esta práctica aprovecha los beneficios del agua para promover el desarrollo integral infantil, estimulando áreas como el desarrollo psicomotor, cognitivo, emocional y social, adaptándose a enfoques pedagógicos contemporáneos. El estudio, de enfoque cuantitativo y diseño probabilístico estratificado, contó con una población de 236 docentes y una muestra 75, obteniendo un índice de confiabilidad de 0,79 según el Alfa de Cronbach. Los resultados destacan el impacto positivo de esta técnica en la calidad educativa, contribuyendo al desarrollo integral de los niños y fortaleciendo herramientas pedagógicas del docente. Este enfoque puede transformar la sociedad al formar generaciones más saludables y brindar mayores oportunidades para el desarrollo integral de las nuevas generaciones.

CONTRIBUCIÓN DE LOS AUTORES

Ernesto Quishpe: marco conceptual, metodología, y análisis estadístico.

Nelson Caiza: marco conceptual, visitas a las instituciones educativas, encuestas.

IMPLICACIONES ÉTICAS

Los autores declaran no tener implicaciones éticas en el desarrollo de la investigación.

CONFLICTO DE INTERÉS

Los autores declaran no tener conflicto de interés en el desarrollo de su investigación.

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REVISTA KRONOS

Digital learning and gamification: a bridge to self-regulation practice on English foreign language

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ABSTRACT The digital era has revolutionized language learning in the case of English bringing opportunities for accessible education, personalized and innovative. Integrating the teaching formative process fosters communicative abilities, likewise, future teachers are equipped with these technologies to apply them in their forthcoming classes. Nowadays, digital learning resources introduce gamification to research how gamified digital learning resources improve language learning. On the other hand, mass connection type applications, instant messaging, and educational platforms increased their frequency of use because of the pandemic. As well as electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers. Another skill promoted parallelly was self-regulation so that students know their development curvature and learn how to keep their pace. Thus, the objective of this research is to analyze digital learning and gamification resources as a self-regulation bridge for learning English as a second language and to identify tools that promote the communicative skills practice of the language. Data gathering was a survey designed and then shared among higher education English bachelor students and teachers. This information was processed on spss which allowed us to use person correlation among our variables. The results showed teachers and students use digital tools and resources to foster communicative skills. Self-regulation, and digital learning and gamification evokes the practice of the language.

KEYWORDS Digital Learning, Gamification, Self-Regulation, EFL.

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Aprendizaje digital y gamificación: un puente hacia la práctica de la autorregulación en lengua extranjera inglesa

RESUMEN La era digital ha revolucionado el aprendizaje de idiomas en el caso del inglés trayendo oportunidades para una educación accesible, personalizada e innovadora. Integrar el proceso formativo de enseñanza fomenta las habilidades comunicativas, así mismo, los futuros docentes están equipados con estas tecnologías para aplicarlas en sus próximas clases. En la actualidad, los recursos digitales de aprendizaje introducen la gamificación para investigar cómo los recursos digitales de aprendizaje gamificados mejoran el aprendizaje de idiomas. Por otro lado, las aplicaciones de tipo conexión masiva, mensajería instantánea y plataformas educativas aumentaron su frecuencia de uso debido a la pandemia. Así como los dispositivos electrónicos como teléfonos inteligentes, tabletas y computadoras. Otra habilidad promovida paralelamente fue la autorregulación para que los estudiantes conozcan su curva de desarrollo y aprendan a llevar su ritmo. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el aprendizaje digital y los recursos de gamificación como un puente de autorregulación para el aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua e identificar herramientas que promuevan la práctica de habilidades comunicativas del idioma. La recolección de datos fue una encuesta diseñada y luego compartida entre estudiantes y docentes de la licenciatura en inglés de educación superior. Esta información fue procesada en SPSS que nos permitió utilizar la correlación de Pearson entre nuestras variables. Los resultados mostraron que docentes y estudiantes utilizan herramientas y recursos digitales para fomentar habilidades comunicativas, autorregulación, aprendizaje digital y gamificación que evocan la práctica del idioma.

PALABRAS CLAVE Aprendizaje Digital, Gamificación, Auto-Regulación, Inglés como Segunda Lengua.

INTRODUCTION

Technology has been increasingly used in higher education around the globe. COVID-19 accelerated the adoption of technology in teaching and learning, however, the application of these resources in universities started before the pandemic. This transformation is observed everywhere including across Latin America and the Caribbean, despite the socio-economic, political, and technological contexts (United Nations of Educational, 2024).

In our country, the English language is being taught from the General Basic level to Higher Education to promote a population prepared in academic, scientific, and technological fields. Teaching the language was included in the curriculum since 1944 when the Ministry of Education promoted a national curriculum for 2,500 public elementary schools including 54 kindergartens, on the primary level. The secondary level had 25 public schools. The official plan of study for the secondary level included the English as a Foreign Language course with 3 hours of classes a week through the school year (Bravo & Alves, 2019). On the other hand, Higher education in Ecuador is opened through the Central University of Quito, the Universities of Cuenca and Guayaquil, the University School of Loja and the two Institutes of Higher Education and Letters of Quito and Guayaquil (Ebaugh, 1947).

Teaching policies from its creation have displayed diverse theory and methodological initiatives, such as the “Advance English Project” and the “Go Teacher Program”, 2012; B2 minimum level requirement for teachers and implementation of the CLIL methodology, 2014; B1 level proficiency for secondary graduates, 2017 (Barre & Villafuerte-Holguin, 2021).

The English First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) which assesses reading and listening showed lousy outcomes. The report published since 2011 is a global indicator of English proficiency level. Ecuador has had a rough position on the scale compared to other countries in the zone. In 2012 occupied 43rd position in “very low proficiency” behind Chile (39th), Venezuela (40st), and El Salvador (41st).

In 2018 Ecuador escalated to 65th position behind Peru (59th) and Colombia (60th), the Latin American region was the only one that experienced a decrease in English proficiency. Despite the numbers mentioned, our country in 2023 moved to the 80th place while Peru escalated to the 51st, Chile 52nd, Venezuela 56th, and Colombia 75th. (EF First Education, 2017, 2018, 2023).

In the context of the last pandemic outbreak which paralyzed all activities, an open gateway was found to implement virtuality to continue learning and teaching from our homes. In this scenario, is where platforms like Zoom, Teams, Google Classroom, and other communicative applications increased their use among the population demonstrating their effectiveness in the teaching-learning process.

Digital Learning is an increasingly diversified field that has been informed by decades of research into human learning, language learning, technological integration, human-computer interaction, and other varied aspects within educational and social sciences. Some English Foreign Language (EFL) researchers believe that learners enjoy their teaching activities by their means (Lilian et al., 2021; Nugroho & Mutiaraningrum, 2020). This offers personalization and flexibility for each student to plan, gather, manage, analyze, and report information (Lilian et al., 2021).

In addition, this configured learning environment allows to reduce the time-space barrier and turn the educational process engaging and interesting by a personalized teaching methodology. The DL involves technological features like ICT, artificial intelligence (AI), social networks, virtual educational platforms and multimedia content (Altamirano-Pazmiño et al., 2022).

In the DL Gamification, rewards are a strategy that is very used because of its mechanics and fun ideas based on games, this inspires action and enhances learning and problem-solving skills. It includes fun environments in the process of adding motivation and attraction (Canals; & Minguell, 2018). Quiroz et al., assert that gamification turns education immersive which evokes in students a dedicated feeling (Quiroz Peña et al., n.d.). Regarding the use of the strategy, another author like Dehghanzadeh asserts that it increases the students' argumentation development, critical thinking, and reasoning behavior (Dehghanzadeh et al., 2021). Gamified approaches contribute to students' language self-development as they are addressed to participate in the gaming mechanics.

(González et al., 2018) researched the level of English found in public system schools. They evidenced that teaching methodologies and didactic materials were inadequate, fundamentally due to a high tendency to combine simultaneous traditional translation techniques that carry an obstacle to achieving the objectives; Although there exists a technological relationship with users perfectly familiarized with the DL and its tools.

In the Ecuadorian Higher Education System, English Language is studied as a professional Second Language Teaching career and used as a tool for communication. Regarding teaching a second language, as a pedagogic career Ponce et al., assert that students who get into the higher level have not developed communicative skills due to a lack of assertive teaching methodologies and study plans on previous levels (Ponce et al., 2019).

According to Alvarez, teachers have identified the skills necessary to foster these competencies which include critical thinking and the incorporation of educational technologies in the teaching-learning process (Erazo-Álvarez et al., 2023). While it is true that digital learning can enhance the teaching-learning process, self-regulated work and the role of the student play an angular role in mastering the second language. In this sense, the research aims to analyze digital learning and gamification as a bridge to the practice of English as a second language and identify tools that facilitate communicative skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The introduction of teaching English as a second language in Ecuador dates back to the mid-twentieth century with the opening of 2,500 primary schools, 25 secondary schools, and the first higher education centers in several Ecuadorian cities (Ebaugh, 1947). In this way, the study of the English language became institutionalized and formalized at the different curricular levels.

By 1964, a scholar reform was extended to primary education, and within rural schools the development cycle was regulated to 6 years, aligning with urban schools. At the basic secondary level, a diversified study program was introduced to its 6-year cycle and English language teaching was maintained at 3 hours per week. On the other hand, public and private universities were granted autonomy for their academic and administrative activities ((Rieckmann et al., 2024). This led to a traditional, structural, and behaviorist teaching model being extended to the level.

By the 1980s, our country was affected by the problem of external debt, causing public spending on education to decrease drastically. This led to an increase in student dropouts and a profound neglect of the educational sector. In terms of teaching the second language, the traditionalist approach was maintained in such a way that the student was a figure who received information, the main skills that were developed were reading comprehension and writing (Intriago et al., 2019; Torres & Asqui, 2022).

Entering the 1990s, this traditional teaching paradigm was maintained in Ecuadorian universities, even though the use of recorders and videos was introduced, marking the

beginning of a new era. During this period, a change began to take shape, which is evident in the English Curriculum Reform Project (CRADLE), a joint effort between the British Council and the Ministry of Education whose objective was to innovate and strengthen the teaching-learning process of the English language to develop in students the necessary communicative competence through the linguistic competences of listening, reading, speaking and writing.

As a result, the subject of English is made compulsory in the Secondary Education curriculum and pedagogical centers are created for the training of English teachers with texts recommended by the project (Torres & Asqui, 2022).

By the beginning of 2000, the creation of a new Organic Law on Higher Education emphasized the need to promote science and technology through teaching, research, and the recognition of respect for all types of knowledge expressed scientifically. Regarding teaching of foreign languages, art. 3 states:

“...Preservar y fortalecer la interculturalidad, la educación bilingüe, la solidaridad y la paz...” (Asamblea Nacional, 2000)

At the beginning of the 21st century, the ten-year plan was implemented as a state policy, to improve education and strengthen educational institutions at a national level. It was designed by the Ministry of Education together with the National Council of Education. Regarding the teaching of a second language, the Ministry of Education evaluated the knowledge of 5,000 English teachers in 2012. The results revealed that 2.4% of those evaluated obtained level B2 of the Common European Framework (CEFR) through the First Certificate test of Cambridge University (Serrano et al., 2015).

In 2013, due to the fact most English teachers did not obtain B2 accreditation, the “Go Teacher” scholarship program was launched, to facilitate the development of teachers’ communicative and didactic-methodological skills through internships and training in European, North American, and Caribbean universities. In addition, this program promoted language training at the master’s level. In particular, the program sought to train specialized professionals so that they could act as replicators in the country, getting involved either in schools, colleges, or universities with foreign language teacher training programs (Intriago et al., 2019).

Beltrán mentions that within the teaching-learning process, the role played by the student and the teacher is important, therefore, it is equally fundamental to maintain a relationship of respect, responsibility, and harmony. A correct combination of these elements will lead to significant achievements in the development of communicative competence in English (Beltrán, 2017).

For 2015, one of the greatest challenges facing Ecuadorian universities is to provide future professionals with competencies, knowledge, and skills, to ensure communication beyond local borders and that citizens are granted economic, linguistically, and politically world opportunities.

Universities and polytechnic schools, together with the Higher Education Council met to develop a generic curriculum proposal for education courses. Hence, the critical aspects of education are taken into consideration. This plan included the formation of the personal and professional development of the language teacher. Finally, the behaviorist, constructivist, and connectivism paradigms were references for academic instruction (Consejo de Educación Superior, 2015; Intriago et al., 2019)

Regarding digital learning, Almeida researched technology integration to the EFL classroom despite the benefits found, there is a gap between two types of users: native digital users and immigrant digital users. Most of the teachers are immigrant digital users while students are natively digital. Furthermore, this implies that their abilities to learn, communicate, and share thoughts are completely different. While native digital users are

comfortable surfing the net and multitasking with technological resources, immigrants' digital users schematize their discovery activities through the web (Almeida et al., 2017)

Cajas et al., point out some aspects of the standardized higher education curriculum that presented difficulties and influenced teaching English as a second language. The level of language proficiency, the adaptations of the curricular content and the academic training subjects, and the structure of pre-professional practices. Their data indicate that the reference objective of the English level handled by most of the universities consulted is B2, according to the MERC.

The curriculum proposed in the reform differs in terms of hours of academic instruction. This is reflected in the number of subjects covered throughout the training cycle. The official requirement included 41 subjects, despite this, the planners included additional subjects related to linguistics or teaching English.

Another analyzed aspect was the hourly distribution of pre-professional internships. According to the standardized proposal, the student in training must complete a total of 1,800 hours of internships in local educational units; However, this premise was not met by all institutions, since they considered that these were too many hours and in contrast to article 89 of the Academic Regulation Regime, which states that the number of hours of internship is 400. Therefore, the planners decided to adhere to the framework of the law. Finally, when the universities presented the curriculum for review to the CES, they did not present any new developments regarding this point (Cajas et al., 2023).

Currently, English as a foreign language is taught in universities as a tool and as a pedagogic course. Higher education institutions have designed their curricular plans considering the needs of future professionals and their field of action, setting pedagogical innovation and the integration of information technologies in the vocational training process.

It is acknowledged that the student and the teacher are the main actors in the teaching-learning process. And the role of the teacher today is to serve as a guide, which implies a high level of preparation, and handling of appropriate methodologies and techniques in the design of strategies for each student group.

DIGITAL LEARNING AND GAMIFICATION

Digital technology has taken an important role in education. Electronic communication devices, educational platforms, websites, and other technological elements such as artificial intelligence, audio and videos, podcasts, and videoconferencing have become very useful in second language instruction at different academic levels.

Shadiev and Yang conducted a bibliographical compilation in databases such as Web of Science and Scopus. Their research shows that online games and videos are technologies that are widely used in second language learning. The game is a resource defined within the recreational time of each young adult, therefore, playing is a crucial factor in learning. On the other hand, videos attract students' attention and awaken interest in language (Shadiev & Yang, 2020).

The impact of technology has allowed teachers to rethink how they are carrying out the educational process (Castillo, 2020). In addition, her research showed that most students have previously used digital games for academic purposes. However, none had played grammar or vocabulary games. Among the difficulties identified, grammatical structures such as phrasal verbs, infinitives, gerunds, and present perfect are mentioned.

Bećirović et al., see digital learning as the process of acquiring knowledge through electronic technology, which consequently empowers the second language teaching-learning process. Thus, an alternative to the traditional classroom environment is created (Bećirović et al., 2021).

At the higher academic level, digital technologies such as YouTube videos, Padlet, Quizizz, Kahoot, Prezi, Educaplay, and Canvas are used to improve the classroom environment and reinforce the teaching-learning process by including interactive and dynamic resources, among the most used are: **Youtube** is a streaming platform that allows you to watch and share videos. Although it was not designed for educational purposes, its versatility and diversity based on user experience has made it expand. Among its benefits is that it provides functionalities such as summarized content, provides clarity of complex concepts, explanation of domain-specific jargon, illustrations of abstract phenomena, and historical representations in filmed sequences (Greeves & Oz, 2023).

(Wahyuni & Utami, 2021) contested the use of Youtube to encourage speaking skills, a high average number of students believe this platform has suitable material, news, and debates. However, they mention that not everyone can select the right video according to their level.

Padlet is a real-time collaborative web platform. It has been designed as a virtual bulletin board, called “padlets”. It helps to improve the learning of second language vocabulary, students share their experience and ideas. In this way, the sociocultural context relates to the relationship and interaction of concepts (Md Deni & Zainal, 2018).

Kahoot, is an interactive web-based gamification platform where students play through questions that are displayed on the screen. It contains a variety of fun activities that can be adapted to teaching a second language. It provides a shared learning experience for the entire study group.

Quizizz brings us the excitement of a video show-style game focused on learning English. It has a very diverse field of application and an extensive community. It is also a web-based gamification platform. It is focused on the student’s pace, while the teacher can see the progress of the participants on the leaderboard and verify the correct and incorrect answers. In addition, it has immersive audio and integrates funny memes (Miller Matt, 2020).

Moreira and Freire conducted a study on educational innovation taking digital gamification as a reference. They used the Quizizz platform to develop formative assessment since this web resource offers features of a gamified environment such as a leaderboard, avatars, surround sound, and memes (Moreira & Lara Freire, 2024). Other authors like Pradnyadewi and Kristiani, researched fostering reading skills using Quizizz. They found that the use of this tool successfully helped the teachers to improve students’ motivation in reading and learning outcomes (Pradnyadewi & Kristiani, 2021).

Other platforms such as **Prezi** and **Canva** are designed for creating presentations integrating graphics, images, videos, and audio. There is a wide variety of web platforms available on the Internet that teachers can incorporate into their virtual classroom besides artificial intelligence.

Digital learning allows the incorporation and combination of multiple tools and resources where the student can develop within interactive scenarios, skills such as reading and writing. Gamification is an immersive technique that allows students to create new ways of learning and discovering while redesigning and innovating the acquired experience. This technique is known as educational gamification. Canals and others point out that it consists of creating educational experiences through a game, from there they consider details about the elaboration of the activities and the environment such as the narrative, the content, the inclusion of musical elements, and more dynamic mechanics (Canals & Minguell, 2018).

According to data shown at the conference given by Luis Von Ahn, about 2 billion people are learning foreign languages, both inside and outside the academic framework, and 80% of these people are learning English. He quoted: that a fun way to learn foreign

languages on a mobile phone which is accessible to everyone is using applications like Duolingo (Von Ahn, 2023). Furthermore, the effectiveness of Duolingo in students' writing skills was researched by Faizah and others based on a pre-test and post-test where they evidenced that after performing writing activities on the application, they increased their scores in the post-test. Researchers did agree that this tool can improve writing thanks to features such as flashcards, translations, quizzes, listening sections, exercises, and others (Faizah et al., 2024).

Blau et al. points out that to conduct learning within digital environments, students require skills that can be achieved through digital literacy. This implies a challenge for the meaningful integration of technology in the academic field. The adequate development of digital literacy goes beyond an isolated skill; it involves generating a deep understanding of the digital environment, allowing the creation of new knowledge with other users (Blau et al., 2020).

SELF-REGULATION AS A LEARNING PRACTICE

The strengthening and development of human capacities has been pursued as part of anthropological growth. The ability of academic self-regulation within the process of learning a second language allows subjects to improve and plan their educational cycle. As a result, students in training develop linguistic skills.

Considering within digital environments this skill is required allowing a more participative action on the student's role in the teaching-learning process. This ability consists of a series of activities that help the person cultivate their communicative skills in a critical, active, and conscious way.

For Blau and others these actions include: 1- cognitive regulation, cognitive and metacognitive activities, that is, selecting and using a variety of cognitive strategies for memorization, learning, thinking, and problem-solving. 2- regulation of emotions and motivation, the regulation of conviction to increase motivation in learning, as well as strategies for controlling emotions. 3- regulation of behavior, selecting actions to control students' behavior. For example, planning study time to meet assignments and deadlines or planning effective strategies to achieve learning objectives. 4- contextual regulation, creating an environment that facilitates the completion of learning tasks (Blau et al., 2020).

Indeed, Blau and his colleagues describe a series of characteristics that are part of a systematic approach that seeks to support the ability of autonomous learning. On the other hand, Zimmerman defines self-regulation as a process that includes characteristics such as metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral, which are personally undertaken by students to acquire knowledge, allowing them to create skills such as: setting goals, planning, learning strategies, self-reinforcement, and self-instruction. Therefore, the educational approach to students' learning skills and the instructional environment have been configured as entities that develop autonomously (Zimmerman, 2001).

This type of strategy is student focused. Nevertheless, the teacher plays a facilitating and guiding role, mediating student participation. Thus, the classroom environment is transformed into a medium for sharing information and exchanging knowledge. Godwin-Jones sees new opportunities for independent second language learning through mobile devices and the increasing availability of streaming videos and other authentic materials in various languages. The choice of resources is wide and personal, but it undoubtedly draws the student into collective contact and learning opportunities among peers. Consequently, the concept of self-learning has moved from the individual perspective to more sociable contexts (Godwin-Jones, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

The aim is to analyze digital learning and gamification as a self-regulation bridge for the practice of English as a second language, a survey was conducted using google forms on the resources most used in the classroom by teachers and students. The State University of the Peninsula of Santa Elena was selected, since it shares similar characteristics with all the Higher Education Centers in the country, in the sense that they teach the teacher preparation course in English virtually from the first to third semester and adhere to the same educational policies at the national level.

The teaching program is organized into eight academic semesters, granting the Bachelor in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy degree. The levels of competence A1, A2, and B1 are linked to the first, second, and third semesters. A total of 672 hours is received virtually. The study population consisted of the 3 English teachers of each semester and 380 students. The students' response rate was 64.21%.

The survey was designed with closed-ended questions regarding the use of several platforms, self-regulation, and learning outcomes throughout each semester. Digital learning and gamification, and Self-regulation data retrieved were processed using statistical software SPSS and correlated using Pearson correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learning English can be enhanced through self-regulation, using digital learning tools that are available to us today, in conjunction with gamification. This constitutes a pedagogical alternative that can be used at different levels and can be adjusted to the content and objectives of learning a second language as a training career.

The results show that digital tools are integrated into the professional training process that promotes the practice of English language skills. The following table shows the digital tools used by teachers regarding language skills in class.

Table 1: Digital tools used within virtuality. Self-elaboration.

Listening		Reading	
Podcasts	66.7%	Quizziz	33.3%
Book’s digital platform Connected	33.3%	ESL Lounge	33.3%
		Diffit	33.3%
Writing		Speaking	
Padlet	33.3%	Role plays	33.3%
Canvas	66.7%	Storytelling	33.3%
		Audios	33.3%

Regarding the orientation of students' activities for practicing their second language abilities. Teachers elicit listening practice through podcasts and the digital book's platform Connected which evidence different manners to promote the skill. Each of them used different resources like Quizziz, ESL Lounge, and Diffit for reading. On the other hand, writing is

mostly practiced using Padlet. Also, Canvas is a good choice for producing written interaction due to its friendly-user interface. Finally, the speaking ability was worked through activities like role plays, storytelling, and audio.

The digital tools used by students are shown in the following table.

Table 2. Digital tools used by students. Self-elaboration.

Listening		Reading	
Youtube videos	44.2%	Duolingo	50.9%
Films or series	34.3%	Quizziz	22.9%
Podcast	17.1%	Canvas	9.1%
Writing		Speaking	
Duolingo	40.9%	Youtube videos	38.0%
Microsoft Word	20.8	Duolingo	33.3%
Quizziz	16.7%	Recording app	19.7%

We found that teachers' digital tools do not necessarily match those of students. We are extending the use of digital tools to the English language training and practice process. As for Listening, YouTube videos, movies or series, and podcasts are the most used options.

Regarding Reading, they mostly make use of Duolingo, Quizziz, and Canvas applications. In congruence, (Faizah et al., 2024; Pradnyadewi & Kristiani, 2021) who analyzed how to improve language skills argued that digital tools due to the combination of resources such as flashcards, translations, and exercises improve the performance of this.

On the other hand, the practice of writing skills is exercised through the Duolingo application and is one of the most used resources, followed by the use of Word and Quizziz. Finally, about Speaking skills we have Youtube, Duolingo, and the use of a voice recording application.

The advance of digital technology is bringing with it more easily accessible tools, language skills are exercised within these environments, improving linguistic production. Regarding the difficulties encountered in working with these resources, teachers pointed out among them the quality of the internet, access to connection devices, and students with a low level of English.

The process of self-regulation is promoted by teachers through activities using gamified platforms such as Quizlet, Liveworksheets, and YouTube. However, they pointed out that Liveworksheets, is the most stimulating. On the other hand, with the help of these resources, they acknowledge a level of use identified as very good and good, showing that some aspects of technological integration must be improved.

From the students' point of view, regarding the digital platforms and gamification that they use to self-regulate their learning during their school process, they indicate that they most frequently use Quizziz (46.5%), followed by Kahoot (27.5%) and Quizlet (12.5%). When asked about learning management platforms, 51.6% of students agree that Zoom, followed by Moodle (21.8%), Canvas (13.0%), and Padlet (12.5%) are their best options.

Motivation plays an important role in self-regulation. Students are motivated to carry out activities organized by the teacher since it helps to improve their academic performance, is guided by the teacher, and contributes to enhancing autonomous skills.

On the chart below is the Pearson correlation table applied to the variables of our research which verified that there is a positive and moderate correlation relationship, and the influence of Digital learning and Gamification on Self-regulation is significant.

		Digital Learning and Gamification	Self-regulation
Digital Learning and Gamification	Pearson Correlation	1	,688**
	Sig. (bilateral)		,000
	N	244	244
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	,688**	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	,000	
	N	244	244

**. The correlation is significant at level 0.001 (bilateral).

According to (Shadiev & Yang, 2020) regarding the technologies used in learning a second language, they point out that games have been widely used. In 2019, there was an increased usage of technologies like online videos, automated feedback, websites, and digital resources.

Table 2. Technology used.

Technology \ Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Game	6	7	6	11	14	5	49
Online video	5	7	4	6	10	5	37
Collaborative writing	3	9	8	5	3	7	35
Corpus	8	5	9	5	2	3	32
Instant messaging	2	4	4	11	5	5	31
Automated feedback	6	4	4	4	5	6	29
Social networking	1	6	4	10	7	1	29
Websites and digital resources	3	2	5	6	3	6	25
Virtual reality	0	5	2	4	6	2	19
Speech recognition	0	3	5	4	3	3	18
Electronic gloss or annotation	3	1	0	3	2	1	10
e-Books	0	0	3	3	2	1	9
Electronic dictionary	2	0	3	1	1	1	8
Intelligent tutoring system	1	1	1	1	0	2	6
Voice recording	2	0	0	1	2	1	6
Augmented Reality	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Robots	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
Clicker	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
Wearable devices	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Course management system	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Digital library	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
White board	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unidentified technology	7	6	9	5	9	12	48

CONCLUSION

This paper addressed a novel topic as an alternative opening door to a vast horizon of technological resources to learn and practice. This proposal analyzed digital learning and

gamification as a bridge to self-regulation in the English language formative career at the higher academic level. Self-regulation as a curricular component underpins students' development cycle. Therefore, the results showed teachers and students use digital tools and resources to foster communicative abilities.

Meanwhile, the teacher's role shows the path to learning and acquiring new knowledge. Technological resources provide feedback to the learner because results can be analyzed and visualized in countless ways to uncover underlying deficiencies.

It is a challenge for our generation and future generations to discover how to take advantage of digital tools, computers, the Internet, and smartphones, discovering new ways to boost our cognitive skills, memory, communication, and our ability to solve problems, collaborate, and coordinate (Lévy, 1999).

Transforming education is about being aware of the kinds of digital users and finding collaborative approaches to reach educational objectives. As mentioned by Almeida, learners and teachers share different perspectives on technology. The way today's students learn is distinct, they process information much faster than adult generations used to, and they are multitasked, visual, and cooperative. This is why teacher awareness is not only the key to properly engaging the young generation's skills; eliciting discovery and motivation through a technological approach while they build a sense of a cultural knowledge-sharing community.

Digital learning and gamification resources provide self-motivation and a deeper understanding of ESL, even though technological innovations grow fast due to society's diverse types of learners' needs. The state and its legislative bodies are responsible for investing in quality education access through policies and funds.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

Eduardo Suárez: data collection and analysis, writing up the results, and manuscript discussion..

Evelyn Almeida: objective review; conceptualization (support), analysis (support); manuscript review and editing.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors declare that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented in this article.

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REVISTA KRONOS

Brazilian Portuguese. A Bibliometric Approach

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ABSTRACT This article examines studies conducted on Brazilian Portuguese, a variant of Portuguese spoken in Brazil, which emerged from the interaction of multiple cultures, particularly native, European, and African. Brazilian Portuguese, distinct from European Portuguese, has gained considerable global relevance in recent years, largely due to the significant economic, demographic, and migratory growth of Brazil. This rising prestige is reflected in matters related to language education. The present study analyzes the structure and characteristics of research on Brazilian Portuguese. The methodology follows bibliometric research guidelines, using Scopus—the largest international database—and the VOSviewer software (version 1.6.20) for scientific mapping. One notable finding is that publications in this area began only in 2007 and have increased substantially through 2024. The disciplines most actively contributing to this field are the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, and Psychology. The research mapping reveals two main thematic axes: one focused on early education, and the other on the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese to non-native speakers. In conclusion, the growing importance of Brazilian Portuguese is evident, highlighting numerous opportunities to deepen and expand current lines of research—an endeavor that should continue in the future.

KEYWORDS Brazilian Portuguese, institute, languages, research.

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Português Brasileiro. Un Enfoque Bibliométrico

RESUMEN Este artículo aborda los estudios efectuados alrededor del portugués brasileño, una variante del portugués utilizado en Brasil, cuyo nacimiento fue gracias a la interacción de varias culturas, en especial de las nativas, europeas y africanas. Esta lengua, que tiene sus diferencias con el portugués europeo, ha tenido en los últimos años relevancia a nivel mundial, en especial por el crecimiento significativo de Brasil en aspectos económicos, poblacionales y migratorios. Este mayor prestigio del portugués brasileño se ve reflejado principalmente en temas relacionados con la enseñanza de idiomas. Este estudio se centra en el análisis sobre la estructura y características presentes dentro de los estudios sobre el portugués brasileño. La metodología utilizada es a través de las recomendaciones para investigaciones bibliométricas, utilizando a Scopus, la mayor base de datos con presencia a nivel mundial y al software VOSviewer versión 1.6.20 para el mapeo científico. Uno de los resultados que primero resalta es que las publicaciones de este tipo apenas inician desde el año 2007 y han tenido un aumento significativo hasta el 2024. Las disciplinas que más contribuyen a este campo son las Ciencias Sociales, Artes/Humanidades y Psicología. El mapeo de las investigaciones muestra dos grandes ejes temáticos, el primero sobre la educación inicial y el segundo sobre la enseñanza de este idioma para quienes no son nativos en portugués. En conclusión, el portugués brasileño ha ganado relevancia como idioma prioritario, además, todavía existen muchas oportunidades para profundizar y ampliar las investigaciones actuales, estudios que deben seguir en el futuro.

PALABRAS CLAVE Portugués Brasileño, instituto, idiomas, investigaciones.

INTRODUCCIÓN

El portugués brasileño es una variante del idioma portugués que se habla en Brasil, un país con una rica diversidad lingüística y cultural (Barbosa & Albano, 2004). Esta lengua tiene una clara influencia de los habitantes nativos, pero también de otros pueblos que se establecieron en este país por diversas circunstancias, en especial provenientes de Europa y África. Este mix cultural crea una sociedad multilingüe, siendo en una importante medida responsable de la diferenciación entre el portugués europeo y el brasileño (Scarato, 2019).

En el año 1822, Brasil declara su independencia bajo la autoridad de Don Pedro I, pasando desde ese momento por diversos sistemas de gobiernos y reformas, los cuales han llevado dicho país a ser una de las más grandes potencias económicas a nivel mundial en nuestros días (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Brasil, 2022). Pero este avance económico siempre estuvo a la par de un importante crecimiento poblacional, que hasta mediados del año 2024 llegó a contabilizar 212,6 millones de habitantes (Instituto Brasileño de Geografía y Estadística, 2024)

Como un proceso natural a este incremento de su población, la emigración se muestra como otro fenómeno importante que ha llevado a las personas brasileñas a radicarse en decenas de diferentes países. Europa ha sido uno de los continentes más buscados para residir y la nación de Portugal ha demostrado ser la preferida, debido principalmente a sus vínculos históricos con Brasil. En la actualidad, se estima que el 30% de los inmigrantes que se han establecido en Portugal durante la última década son brasileños. No obstante, Estados Unidos fue y todavía es el destino favorito, se estima que sólo a finales del año 2023 ingresaron 300 mil personas a ese país atravesando por México (Infobae, 2025).

En consecuencia, el portugués “brasileño” ha ido ganando notoriedad como uno de los idiomas que es tomado en cuenta en varios centros de idiomas y para la educación en general. Este fenómeno se debe, en gran parte, al posicionamiento internacional de Brasil, como potencia emergente en el contexto internacional. Por ejemplo, Brasil se distingue al liderar la lista de las mejores universidades a nivel latinoamericano (Swiss Info, 2024). Pero también se debe a la emigración, como se mencionó anteriormente, pues generalmente aquellas personas que emigran desean que sus familias mantengan su identidad cultural y lingüística.

Según Silva (2014), un ejemplo de esa conservación de la identidad cultural y familiar son las mantenidas por las comunidades brasileñas ubicadas en Montreal-Canadá, aquí el portugués brasileño se convirtió en un desafío crucial para su preservación. Estas familias consideran importante que sus hijos mantengan el idioma materno, utilizando al hogar como el principal entorno para su aprendizaje (Lima & Rezende, 2020).

Otra forma de aprendizaje usada es a través de centros de formación que sirven como lugar para aprender la lengua heredada. Souza & Gomes (2017) resaltan que este hecho es un fenómeno reciente y también es visible en más ciudades a nivel mundial como en Londres y Barcelona. Todo este movimiento ha logrado que no solo los descendientes de brasileños encuentren esencial aprender el portugués brasileño, no solo pensando en su idioma sino también en su cultura, logrando que miles de personas de otras nacionalidades lo tomen en cuenta para incrementar su acervo cultural y de conocimientos, lo que ha ocasionado un incremento de escuelas y centros culturales para su enseñanza.

Al mismo tiempo, se ha visto un incremento en la enseñanza cultural de este idioma en varios países. En el mismo sentido, se ha apreciado el interés académico y científico relacionado con el campo de investigación sobre el portugués brasileño. No obstante, el conocimiento resultante de estas investigaciones todavía no se ha organizado y estructurado, aspecto que debería ser considerado para estos tipos de campos de estudio (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2021), debido al avance rápido en la comprensión que se ha tenido sobre el por-

tugués brasileño. Es así como esta brecha investigativa no cubierta todavía es justamente el objetivo de esta investigación, el cual para este estudio queda de la siguiente manera: establecer las características de la organización y estructura del conocimiento existente sobre el Portugués Brasileño mediante técnicas bibliométricas (Donthu et al., 2021).

MÉTODOS

Este artículo está compuesto por 5 secciones, la primera sección es la *Introducción* al estudio con su objetivo general. La segunda es la sección de *Métodos*, la cual describe las decisiones adoptadas para obtener un conjunto de documentos que se publicaron sobre el Portugués Brasileño. La tercera sección es la de *Resultados*, en la que se hace un análisis del corpus documental con mapeo científico (Noyons et al., 1999). La cuarta se concentra en las *Conclusiones*, en las cuales se realizan tanto un resumen de los principales hallazgos y respectiva discusión como también una recomendación para futuros estudios. Por último, se presentan las *Referencias* y otros aspectos investigativos concernientes a esta investigación.

Por ser un estudio bibliométrico, este trabajo recogió los lineamientos de Donthu et al. (2021), quien recomendó para este tipo de investigaciones seguir sistemáticamente los siguientes puntos: 1. Formulación del objetivo de investigación, 2. Diseño de la metodología de estudio, 3. Resultados obtenidos de la investigación. El primer punto, sobre el objetivo de estudio, fue revisado en el apartado “introducción” de este artículo. El siguiente punto, se describe en este mismo apartado, sobre los “métodos”. El tercer punto es analizado en los apartados “resultados” y “conclusiones”.

Para alcanzar el objetivo general de este estudio, sobre las características y estructuras existentes sobre el conocimiento científico en el portugués brasileño, fue desarrollada una estrategia que consiste en tomar varias decisiones para su búsqueda. Un punto de partida fue la elección de utilizar la base de datos Scopus, por ser considerada la base más grande con alcance mundial. Además, y la más importante, por la calidad de los contenidos de la mencionada base, y otra notable, por su accesibilidad (Pranckuté, 2021). Una segunda decisión se relaciona con la cadena de búsqueda que utiliza Scopus. Para empezar, la búsqueda se relaciona en general con “portugués y lengua”, para luego solamente enfocarse en el término exacto “portugués brasileño”.

La búsqueda fue realizada el 7 diciembre de 2024 y el período de análisis tuvo una duración de dos meses (diciembre 2024 – enero 2025) lo que permitió una revisión exhaustiva, enfocándose en los títulos, resúmenes y palabras claves. Al ser una investigación exploratoria, no hubo limitación de ninguna clase al tipo de publicación, como artículo, libros, capítulos de libros, entre otros, justamente para conocer cuáles son los más utilizados. Tampoco hubo una delimitación temporal, lo que permitió constatar desde qué año se iniciaron las publicaciones sobre esta área. Al final, la búsqueda con sus limitaciones determinó la existencia de 378 documentos, los cuales fueron analizados mediante un mapeo científico y una descripción sobre las características principales de estas publicaciones (Guleria & Kaur, 2021). Estos análisis son descritos en la siguiente sección.

RESULTADOS

El análisis sobre los artículos de este estudio se enfocó en determinar la actuación de los principales actores en la ciencia, como las instituciones que realizan dichos estudios, los países donde se los trabaja y los tipos de documentos resultantes. Este estudio inicia estableciendo el volumen de publicaciones en esta área de estudio. Los resultados se presentan

en la Figura 1, la cual nítidamente muestra una clara tendencia alcista en el número de investigaciones que fueron plasmadas en artículos revisados en revistas indexadas.

Adicionalmente, dentro de este patrón de crecimiento se ha identificado 2 fases, una primera localizada entre 2007 y 2016, la cual muestra incipientes estudios que al año no pasan de 1 cifra en la cantidad de publicaciones. En una segunda fase se observa un acelerado crecimiento en los estudios de portugués brasileño a partir del año 2017, llegando a 2 cifras por año, alcanzando un pico de 31 artículos para el último año analizado.

Figura 1 Publicaciones por año sobre portugués brasileño en Scopus



Nota. Obtenido de Scopus Database.

En relación con las disciplinas que más contribuyen al portugués brasileño, la Tabla 1 muestra que son las Ciencias Sociales, Artes/Humanidades y Psicología, siendo las más sobresalientes las dos primeras áreas, alcanzando el 96% de participación en su aporte a esta temática.

Tabla 1 Cantidad de publicaciones que aportan las disciplinas al portugués brasileño

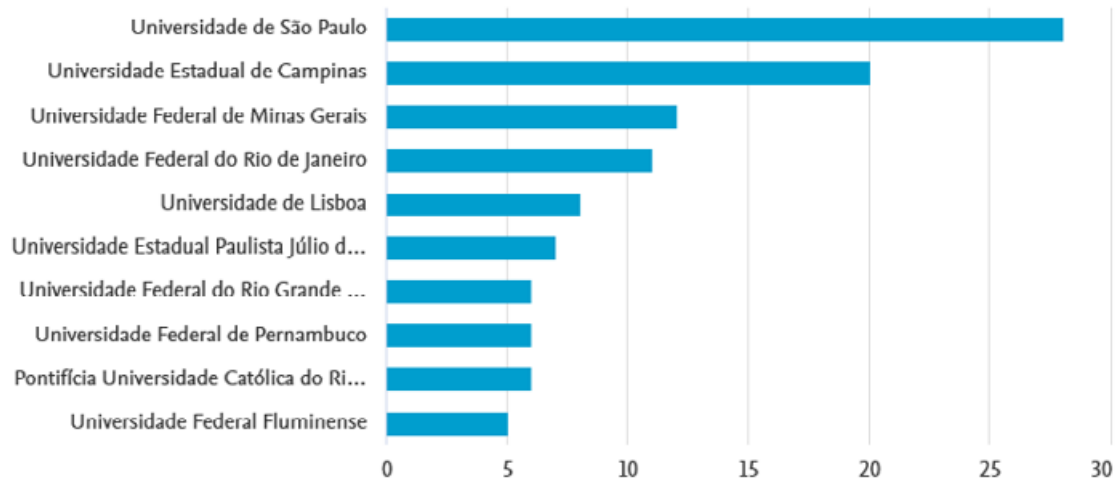
Área de Conocimiento	Número de Documentos	Porcentaje
Ciencias Sociales	185	49%
Artes y Humanidades	176	47%
Psicología	17	4%

Nota. Obtenido de Scopus Database.

La Figura 2 muestra que las universidades localizadas en Brasil son las que lideran ampliamente los estudios en esta área de investigación. En específico, estas se encuentran en las regiones sureste y sur del país (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Brasil, 2022). La líder en este campo es la “Universidade de São Paulo (USP)”, la cual es considerada como

la mejor universidad de Latinoamérica por varios organismos (Infobae, 2025). No obstante, las otras universidades que aparecen también se encuentran en lugares estelares en los principales rankings a nivel internacional. La única universidad no brasileña que se encuentra en esta lista es la “Universidade de Lisboa” ubicada en Portugal.

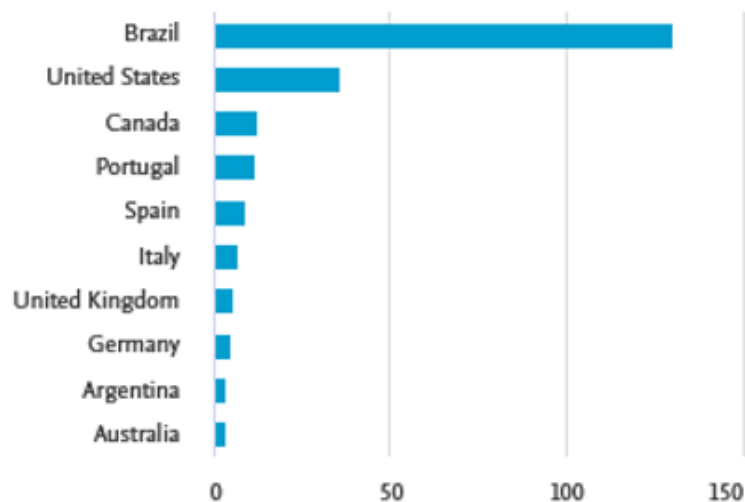
Figura 2 Cantidad de publicaciones que aportan las universidades al portugués brasileño



Nota. Obtenido de Scopus Database.

En cuanto a la producción científica de este tema por países, la Figura 3 solo confirma que Brasil es quien comanda la investigación en este campo de estudio. Aunque, es necesario mencionar una significativa presencia de otros países como Estados Unidos, Canadá y Portugal. Esto se puede justificar debido a que en general estas investigaciones son el resultado del trabajo de varios autores que trabajan en equipo. Justamente los 3 últimos países anteriormente mencionados son los que tradicionalmente acogen a la mayoría de los emigrantes brasileños, hecho que se mencionó en la sección de introducción de este artículo.

Figura 3 Cantidad de publicaciones que aportan las universidades al portugués brasileño



Nota. Obtenido de Scopus Database.

Otro aspecto de estudio sobre los resultados de las investigaciones del portugués brasileño es el tipo de documentos resultantes. La Tabla 2 muestra que la forma dominante es el artículo (65.4% de los documentos), seguido de capítulos de libros (22%) y de otras formas con menos del 10%. Con este resultado se afirma que las publicaciones en forma de artículo son el medio más utilizado para transmitir el conocimiento sobre esta área de estudio.

Tabla 2 Porcentaje de aportes con relación al tipo de publicaciones al portugués brasileño

Tipo	Porcentaje
Artículos	65.4%
Capítulos de libros	22.0%
Documentos de conferencia	7.3%
Revisiones	3.1%
Libros	2.1%
Otros	0.1%

Nota. Obtenido de Scopus Database.

Para finalizar este análisis, fue realizado un mapeo sobre las investigaciones realizadas en el área del idioma portugués brasileño. Las redes de expresiones de concurrencia y la superposición se eligieron por ser herramientas efectivas para su visualización (Van Eck, 2023). Al final se usaron los contenidos de los títulos y los resúmenes de los documentos seleccionados para servir como información a las herramientas seleccionadas, dentro del software VOSviewer versión 1.6.20.

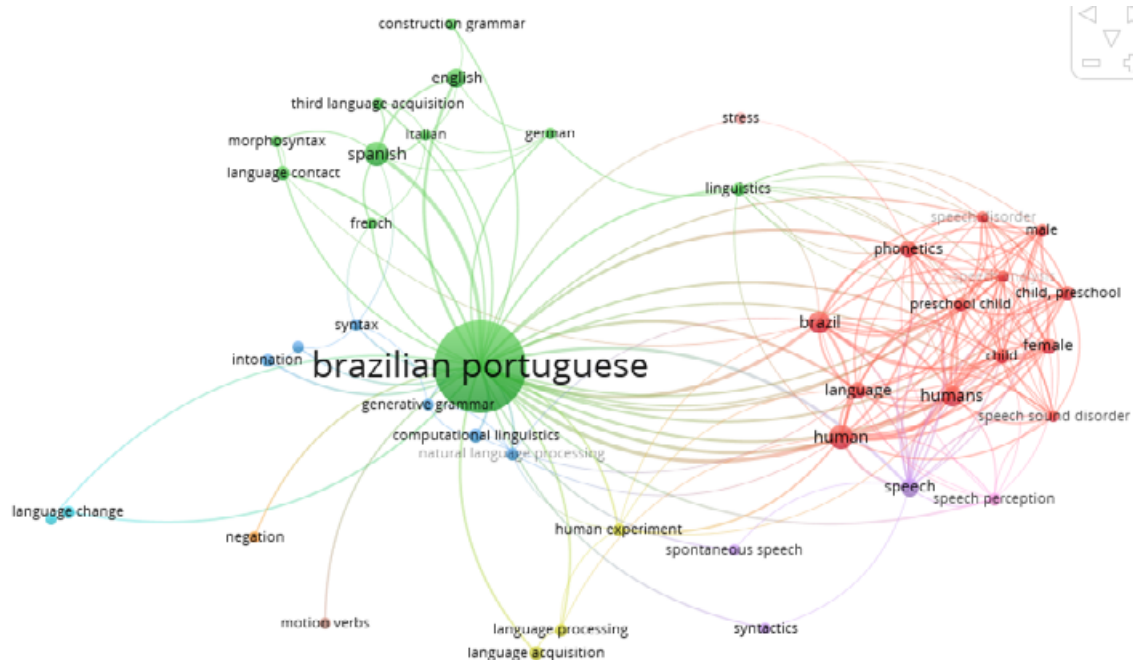
El objetivo de este análisis se enfoca en establecer grupos temáticos que se los identifica como *clusters* (Van Eck, 2010). Estos grupos sirven para entender mejor cuáles son las áreas o líneas de investigación que son de interés para los investigadores en este tópico. El resultado de este análisis se muestra en la Figura 4, en la cual se indica que existen 2 *clusters* principales y 2 secundarios en fase de crecimiento, estos últimos todavía no son muy significativos con respecto al volumen de estudios realizados. En este mapa cada *cluster* es representado con un color diferente para su identificación y cada palabra equivale a un nodo, donde el tamaño de cada uno es directamente proporcional a la frecuencia que cada término aparece en el contenido de los documentos (Van Eck, 2023). A continuación, se describe a cada *cluster*.

El mayor *cluster* (color rosado oscuro y 12 ítems) tiene como nodos principales a: “humanos”, “lenguaje” y “Brasil”. Otros nodos considerables se refieren a: “niños de preescolar”, “masculino”, “femenino” y “fonética”. Este *cluster* se encuentra asociado con la enseñanza del portugués brasileño especialmente en escuelas. El segundo *cluster* en importancia tiene un color verde y 10 ítems, su principal nodo es “español” e “inglés” y otros nodos notables son “alemán”, “francés”, “italiano”, “construcción gramatical”, “lenguaje de contacto” y “adquisición de una tercera lengua”. Este *cluster* se asocia con el aprendizaje de otra lengua en países donde su idioma materno es español, inglés y otros de origen europeo.

Los otros 2 *clusters* secundarios tienen menos ítems, el primero se diferencia por tener un color celeste y estar caracterizado por una connotación hacia elementos específicos del aprendizaje portugués, como una segunda o tercera lengua. Por lo que contiene nodos como “lingüística computacional”, “gramática generativa”, “entonación”, “sintaxis” y “cambio de lengua”. El segundo *cluster* de este grupo se caracteriza por su conexión

con experimentos y procesos relacionados al portugués brasileño y tiene como nodos a: “procesamiento del lenguaje”, “adquisición de idiomas”, “experimento humano” y “habla espontánea”.

Figura 4 Mapeo sobre las investigaciones realizadas en el área del idioma portugués brasileño



Nota. Obtenido de VOSviewer versión 1.6.20.

DISCUSIÓN Y CONCLUSIONES

Este estudio ha demostrado la necesidad de organizar y estructurar el conocimiento existente sobre el portugués brasileño para avanzar en su comprensión y enseñanza. El crecimiento en el número de publicaciones y la diversidad de disciplinas involucradas subrayan la importancia de este campo de estudio. Las universidades brasileñas juegan un papel crucial en la producción de investigaciones, y el mapeo de *clusters* temáticos proporciona una visión clara de las áreas de interés actuales.

Esta investigación muestra también que el interés académico y científico es reciente, apenas desde el 2007, lo que representa oportunidades para profundizar y ampliar investigaciones relacionadas al portugués brasileño. Dentro de las dos corrientes detectadas en el mapeo realizado de los estudios sobre este tema, la que se relaciona con la enseñanza de idiomas adquiere una significancia especial, debido a que podría formar equipos de investigadores de diferentes países, cuyo fin sería generar sinergias.

Para futuros estudios, se recomienda utilizar esta investigación bibliométrica inicial para continuar explorando con trabajos de campo, en especial interacciones entre el portugués brasileño y otros idiomas, así como investigar más a fondo los factores que contribuyen al crecimiento de este campo. Además, es esencial para un futuro no tan lejano volver a indagar sobre la organización y nuevas corrientes que vayan tomando el conocimiento existente sobre el portugués brasileño, lo que facilita aún más su comprensión para una mejora de su enseñanza.

CONTRIBUCIÓN DE LA AUTORA.

Guacyra Nascimento Queiroz. El estudio fue desarrollado integralmente por la autora, incluyendo investigación, metodología y análisis formal.

IMPLICACIONES ÉTICAS

La autora afirma que no hay implicaciones éticas.

CONFLICTO DE INTERÉS

La autora afirma que no hay conflictos de intereses financieros y no financieros que podrían haber influido en el estudio actual.

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REVISTA KRONOS

The Effects of Portfolio Assessment on Writing of EFL Students

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ABSTRACT This study analyzes the effects of portfolio assessment on the development of writing skills in students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Given the importance of language skills in academic and professional contexts, the portfolio is presented as an educational tool that supports the gradual and reflective development of writing, one of the most complex skills to acquire. Through introspective activities guided by the teacher, students find relevant content to write about, which enhances their autonomy and creativity. The research, with a qualitative approach, was conducted through observations, interviews, and analysis of written productions. Results show that 85% of students improved their writing autonomy, while 78% of teachers reported a better understanding of their students' needs. Portfolio use also allows for continuous and personalized formative assessment, promoting the application of metacognitive strategies that help plan, manage, and evaluate the writing process. In conclusion, the study proposes replacing traditional assessment methods with portfolio use, as it encourages critical thinking, self-reflection, and the adaptation of pedagogical practices to improve EFL writing instruction.

KEYWORDS Portfolio Assessment, metacognitive strategies, EFL (English as a Foreign Language), written expression, creative writing.

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Los efectos de la evaluación de portafolios en la escritura de estudiantes de EFL

RESUMEN Este estudio analiza los efectos de la evaluación mediante portafolios en el desarrollo de la expresión escrita en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). Considerando la importancia de las habilidades lingüísticas en contextos académicos y profesionales, se plantea el portafolio como una herramienta educativa que favorece el desarrollo progresivo y reflexivo de la escritura, una de las habilidades más complejas de adquirir. A través de actividades introspectivas guiadas por el docente, los estudiantes encuentran contenido relevante para escribir, lo que potencia su autonomía y creatividad. La investigación, de enfoque cualitativo, se llevó a cabo mediante observaciones, entrevistas y análisis de producciones escritas. Los resultados revelan que el 85% de los estudiantes mejoraron su autonomía en la escritura, mientras que el 78% de los docentes reportó una mayor comprensión de las necesidades de sus alumnos. El uso de portafolios también permite una evaluación formativa continua y personalizada, promoviendo el uso de estrategias metacognitivas que ayudan a planificar, gestionar y evaluar el proceso de escritura. En conclusión, el estudio propone reemplazar las evaluaciones tradicionales por portafolios, ya que estos impulsan el pensamiento crítico, la autorreflexión y el ajuste de las prácticas pedagógicas para mejorar la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

PALABRAS CLAVE Evaluación de portafolio, estrategias metacognitivas, EFL (Inglés como lengua extranjera), expresión escrita, escritura creativa, Ecuador.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, knowing another language is the most important requirement. For this reason, almost all students in high school or universities need to develop the four skills in English language. There are several methods and techniques for improving speaking, reading, listening and writing which teachers can apply in the classroom, including the use of a portfolio. Writing is considered one of the most complex skills for the students. Portfolios are considered as an assessment strategy that facilitates learning, reflection, self-assessment and motivation for students to improve their writing in English as a foreign language. A portfolio contains essential components for design and classroom application that provide guidance in the writing process.

The teaching and learning of writing in English is limited in some educational contexts by the use of grammar-focused textbooks, so teachers do not create teaching materials to develop these skills. According to a study by Hidalgo (2009), from the students' point of view, they are not developing their metacognitive skills related to the writing process or critical writing. In this way, the portfolio is proposed as an educational resource to introduce metacognition to students through creative writing.

The organization of the research report is presented below: the first chapter presents the context, problem, justification, and objectives. The theoretical background at local, national and international levels. Furthermore, the relevant theoretical foundations. This chapter also explains the methodological design and the techniques. It has the instruments used for data collection; which concerns the presentation of results and interpretation around the stated objectives.

The qualitative method focuses on how students can improve their writing skills using a portfolio. The observation in the classroom allows to contextualize the use of portfolio with the pedagogical dynamic; the interviews facilitate the access to the personal experiences for the students; and, the text analysis allows to get evidence in the writing process step by step.

English as a foreign language is taught in schools according to textbook requirements, with reading and listening more relevant than speaking or writing. Despite the emphasis on language in writing education, students do not take

ownership of their written work, making it more difficult to create original work that reflects their personal experiences and situations.

Teaching writing in English through non-traditional means will ignore all mental processes and efforts, neglect the importance of writing as a composition with steps or stages, and fail to develop students' critical thinking skills through planning/supervision and revision. Students' lack of writing skills hinders their ability to see writing as a process, to write about their interests or tastes and to develop awareness of their metacognitive skills for writing (Facione, 2007).

Portfolio assessment has become a fundamental tool in the educational field, especially in the teaching of English writing. By implementing this methodology, various activities are generated that encourage more reflective and autonomous learning among students. Sharing the set of writing activities between students promotes a relevant self-evaluation in which they revise their drafting step by step and can check mistakes in the final product. Team work or pair work can produce motivation for writing because the first step to being confident is to communicate among friends or collaborative writer partners.

Mixing students to participate together in activities is useful for both teachers and students. Applying peer correction as an alternative to make awareness mistakes in the linguistic part and to foster a better writing composition. Together, these dynamics con-

tribute to a more enriching and motivating learning environment, where writing becomes an active and participatory process (Orozco, 2021).

The portfolio was proposed as a didactic aid, using creative writing in English, to promote metacognition as an essential critical thinking skill, according to the thesis. The portfolios were named after the didactic resource that highlights the various stages of written production, enabling students to develop metacognition as an essential skill for critical thinking and self-regulation. Students can produce narratives of their own choice without being restricted by grammatical or academic writing, as it allows them to generate knowledge and past experiences through creative writing. Therefore, the following research question arose: *What are the effects of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' written expression?*

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The portfolio is a tool that organizes students' learning and promotes independent and reflective learning. It is a training and evaluation tool that generates a metacognitive process that allows students to follow their progress in learning, supported by a series of texts and personal explanations. It is interactive and participatory because everyone has the opportunity to learn and teach. In other words, translation is a communicative and collaborative relationship between students and teachers, which is why it is so important at university (Delmastro, 2005).

According to Lunar (2007), a portfolio is a collection of work that includes individual achievements, assignments, evaluations or other documents that demonstrate accomplishments during a specific period of time. There should be a process of self-assessment and collaboration, as achievements should be presented and discussed with peers.

The portfolio is a collection of work completed by the learner, including the best products created during the course and reflects the strengths and weaknesses of each learner. It includes "a selection of activities that students complete throughout the course and which are used to assess the student's performance based on the progress made on the initial tasks". As a flexible and personalized tool, the portfolio offers an authentic space to promote creative writing.

Writing is a mental activity that requires the expression of ideas, the use of verbal and complex knowledge, and the organization of ideas in a meaningful way. These parts are reflected in the portfolio. This dynamic fact establishes with the creative writing principles that values the exploration, the experimentation and constant revision. Portfolio improves students' linguistic competence and enhances students' artistic sensibility for communicating emotions and original viewpoints.

However, in the classroom experience of this aspect of teaching a foreign language, the teacher researchers observed that most of the time academic writing is taught with a grammatical approach, it is not possible to develop writing in this way: it is not the result of your own thinking, it is the result of attention to the construction of a sentence or a poem. Basically, the model has no development and no way to create the structure of the composition in different parts. Through the metacognitive skills of generating ideas, writing and evaluating, planning, organizing, and revising, the writing process involves increasing awareness of what you know and how to achieve it. (Harmer, 2004).

In terms of their involvement in language teaching, the traditional view of the teacher is that the teacher is the source of knowledge needed to transmit information to learners participating in the school environment. This model limits critical thinking development and the students' autonomy because they focus on the information transmitted instead of promoting the active construction of knowledge. However, the current education pro-

notes a more dynamic vision in which the knowledge is set in a collaborative way and the teacher is a guide in the learning-teaching process.

Some researchers have been at pains to warn about the limitations of budgets as an assessment tool. For example, Elbow (1994) discusses financial risk as a critical way to evaluate it, Murphy et al., (1994) mention the influence of cultural factors, White (1994) discusses validity and reliability reasons, and LeMahieu et al., (1995) noted difficulties in using it on a large scale when comparing outcomes across groups and industries. However, current learning methods can avoid these limitations because the most important aspect of the portfolio focuses on exploring process-driven strategies, quality and process monitoring.

The first reference found on the use of portfolio in foreign language teaching dates back to Sweet's study in 1976 (Calfée et al., 1996) and the subject was limited. Since then, there have been significant changes in the use and application of portfolio in education. It is the spread of research in education and foreign language teaching around the world in the last ten years of the twentieth century that vindicates the advantages of the portfolio as an assessment tool and as the right working strategy.

The role of learners in the creation of the portfolio not only increases opportunities to use the foreign language in different ways and encourages contact with authentic materials, but also encourages the combination of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Interacting with friends or teachers. In general, backgrounds are used in learning English education in the same way as in other areas of education or learning, because they promote learner independence, the development of metacognitive strategies and feedback on progress and individual learning in the mother tongue used in the field of English Foreign Language and second language education, especially abroad, for the development of reading and writing skills with a different assessment strategy. (Londoño, 2021).

During the third phase the internalization grows, as teachers demonstrate pedagogical understanding and conceptual development. Here the zone of imitation plays a significant role in teachers' conceptual development. In this sense, teachers can intellectually imitate the use of DA in all classes. Vygotsky states that imitation of the thinking process, not mechanical imitation, is an unconscious process through repetition, and then the concept is internalized and becomes conscious. In the specific case of teachers' understanding of assessment, this process allows teachers to become consciously aware of the role of DA in ALL (Almeida, 2022, p.35).

As for the field of writing, especially its contribution to the teaching of English writing, creative writing is an important topic because teachers can encourage students to write in a playful way and give them freedom to write. At the same time, teachers can be creative in their teaching of writing without stifling pressures. This is the focus of this study to create a conscious and reflective implementation of the portfolio that produces teachers' learning to write through creative writing. The writing process enables students to plan, verify and evaluate their own writing. As a teaching resource, this portfolio also aims to create a learning approach that focuses on developing students' metacognition and critical thinking skills.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To analyze the impact of portfolio assessment on the written expression skills of EFL students at Unidad Educativa Particular de Santa Elena.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the theoretical foundations of portfolio assessment and its role in enhancing students' written expression.
2. To investigate students' perceptions of the importance of EFL learning in relation to portfolio assessment.
3. To foster students' awareness of the importance of coherence, grammar, vocabulary and structure in their writing text.

METHODOLOGY

The study uses the qualitative method with the purpose of finding out the positions, criteria, opinions, and experiences of students and teachers of English at the Unidad Educativa Santa Teresita in teens students with regard to the use of the assessment portfolio as an alternative assessment strategy for the written production. This approach allows us to observe how students interact with their portfolios and reflect about the writing process and their self-evaluation.

The use of qualitative data collection methods, such as observation and key informant surveys, to identify authentic evidence or oral observations of stakeholders works with known verification strategies. It is used as an evaluation sample.

In the intervention phase, 35 people who attended Class I at different stages of learning were considered as a sample of nine learners who had the opportunity to practice before writing and learn to write in English.

The selection criteria are the following:

The evaluation and quality of the portfolio, the grades obtained in the part of the trimester taking into account the gender of the student.

Following a research approach and a case study design, it was agreed that systematic and rigorous observation methods would be used to document the issues in detail and provide an unbiased explanation of the analyses and final reports. These observations were maintained throughout the portfolio application process during the analysis, intervention and evaluation phases of the same strategy. In addition, students' reactions, attitudes and skills were recorded in various activities in the use of the backpack, including moments of interaction between the student teacher, the student's bag and the teacher's bag. For recording, description and interpretation, an observation sheet design should be created to record the actions and reactions occurring in the presence of the portfolio, the assessment based on the financial strategy and the approach to learning writing in English.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The research population is detailed as follows:

Table 1 Population

Nº	Detalle	Cantidad
1	Authorities	3
2	Teachers	4
3	Students	105
	Total	112

Source: Unidad Educativa Particular de Santa Elena. Prepared by: Tomalá, Ingrid, 2024.

The research sample was determined randomly as follows:

Table 2 Muestra

Nº	Detalle	Cantidad	Técnica de investigación
1	Authorities	2	Interview
2	Teachers	2	Interview
3	Students	31	Observation
	Total	35	

Source: Unidad Educativa Particular de Santa Elena Prepared by: Tomalá, Ingrid, 2024.

DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

For data analysis, the thematic analysis method was employed, which consists of recording data whose meanings are similar for registration, description, and interpretation. An observation sheet design was used to record the actions and reactions that occur in the presence of the portfolio and the evaluation at the moment of using English writing, with the data recorded as follows:

The results indicate a positive experience for both teachers and students. On the one hand, portfolio assessment allows students to deal with a closer academic progress due to monitoring step by step as compared to traditional assessment methods. Underscore some relevant advantages; such as, portfolios promote self-reflection as a purpose of learning and lead to organizational and coherence skills in writing. On the other hand, there are some disadvantages; for instance, the time is one relevant issue to manage the portfolios and provide specific students' feedback. It is a challenge for a large classroom.

According to the influence of portfolio assessment on the writing process, it was observed that it has had a positive impact. Since this methodology was used, there has been a 75% improvement in the ability to structure ideas clearly and coherently. By being able to review drafts and receive constant feedback, the fluency and organization of the writings improved.

The feedback received through the portfolio has been essential for motivation. 70% in outcome refers to a punctual area like errors or mistakes, which supportcheck their composition and improve their writing skills. These outcomes give more sureness including perceptible progress in each phase. Furthermore, the capacity for demonstrating errors in the text and to acquire a more proactive attitude focus on learning.

According to the collected data, just 25% of the students have to improve their ability to gather ideas together and structure paragraphs using the correct grammar patterns in comparison to traditional assessment methods. This enhancement contributes to the reflective approach of the portfolio, referring to personal practice, which allows students to foster the habit for creating their own criticism in writing skills.

With respect to grammar errors, the outcomes indicate that 68% of the students reduced their mistakes in key grammatical facts such as verb tense agreement and the correct use of English in sentences: prepositions, adverbs, prefixes, and so on. The continuous feedback is a main component in the portfolio, it causes a decrease in language errors, where teachers lead to specific comments in the structuring sentences as a priority in the composition. Teachers provide personal and practice topics for developing a rich writing. As a writing process, drafting is appropriated for revision mistakes and to get a deeper and more effective learning.

Additionally, the qualitative analysis in their writing production showed 80% achieved the communicative goal in this portfolio assessment. Students enhance in the clarity and coherence which are fundamental as good writing. A clear text uses a direct and precise language avoiding confusing terms. Students get a clear structure that facilitates the comprehension of the ideas gathered. Students apply a variety of vocabulary that expose arguments or a main narrative. The students mentioned that the use of the portfolio motivated them to continue improving their drafting using new words, or expressions and to get a better linguistic development.

From the perspective of self-assessment, portfolio assessment helped 70% of the students identify the quality in patterns and how they improve with the practice. Observing how the previous writing is different to the final production is the main objective. This self-awareness is crucial for understanding self-assessment such as evolutionary patterns and reference points. This means, students cannot grade their current writing without reference to their past writing.

Regarding motivation, 80% of the students stated that portfolio assessment motivated them to improve, as they were able to see their progress in a tangible way and directed towards personal improvement goals. Self-assessment also helped 70% of the students identify their own strengths and weaknesses, which allowed them to develop greater autonomy in their learning process. For an effective implementation of portfolio assessment, it is considered essential that teachers receive specific training in this methodology.

During this study, teachers apply qualitative instruments such as observation shifts, rubrics for teachers' evaluation, writing portfolio analysis and interviews for the students. 80% of the students improve their writing quality and it is demonstrated from the comparative analysis between the first and the last text productions in the students' portfolio. Teachers apply rubrics with the appropriate criterion: textual coherence, the correct vocabulary, grammatical structure, ideas organization and spelling.

Table 3 Coding

Words		Coding
Motivation	Self-efficacy	EP
Coherence	Cohesion	EP
Reflection	Strategy	EP
Management	Time	EP
Improvements	Autonomy	BP
Process	Writing	EP
Strategies	Pedagogical	BP
Impact	Feedback	BP
Criteria	Evaluation	BP
Practices	Teachers	BP

Table 4 Categorization

Words		Coding	Descriptor
Motivation	Self-efficacy	EP	Learning culture
Coherence	Cohesion	EP	Performance improvement
Reflection	Strategy	EP	Performance improvement
Management	Time	EP	Adaptation to change
Improvements	Autonomy	BP	Adaptation to change
Process	Writing	EP	Learning culture
Strategies	Pedagogical	BP	Knowledge gaps
Impact	Feedback	BP	Performance improvement
Criteria	Evaluation	BP	Knowledge gaps
Practices	Teachers	BP	Learning culture

Table 5 Themes

Words		Themes	Coding	Descriptor
Motivation	Self-efficacy	Quality of written texts	EP	Learning culture
Process	Writing		EP	Learning culture
Practices	Teachers		BP	Learning culture
Coherence	Cohesion		EP	Performance improvement
Reflection	Strategy	Portfolio evaluation	EP	Performance improvement
Impact	Feedback		BP	Performance improvement
Management	Time	Teaching of teaching practices	EP	Adaptation to change
Improvements	Autonomy		BP	Adaptation to change
Strategies	Pedagogical		BP	Knowledge gaps
Criteria	Evaluation		BP	Knowledge gaps

TOPIC 1: QUALITY OF WRITTEN TEXTS

Effective communication in the educational field depends on the quality of texts. Interviews and classroom observations were led to assess current writing practices in this study. Compare what are the factors that improve this quality is up to the students' motivation. The outcomes show that there is a better organization among the strengths and weaknesses in writing instructions.

Students notice in a first writing production as drafting, notice the use of a lot of words such as prepositions in the same sentence. For instance, "University groups went into Colombia to make field activities. We arrived Wednesday in the evening and they received us with dinner". In a second writing production, students receive feedback from

the teacher, and improve in this way “University groups went to Colombia to make field activities. We arrived Wednesday evening and hotel staff received us with dinner”.

The interviews conducted with teachers showed the importance of elaborating a previous flexible plan before applying a portfolio, separating the portfolio in sections according to themes, including both auto-evaluation and co-evaluation. The strategy consists in the involvement in different types of evaluation and emphasis in the formative evaluation; by the way, it is appropriate to use scales due to complex mechanisms to evaluate the writing process.

During classroom observations, students showed lack of motivation to write in their compositions which caused a huge impact in the quality of the texts. Many students showed difficulties in the composition of descriptive texts. Students cannot connect clear ideas. In the first stage, students write:

“Use portfolio for develop my writing quality was rude. I was learn how to joining sentences and for share my ideas”.

“Using portfolio for developing my writing quality was impressive. I had learned how to join sentences and to share my ideas”..

In the final stage, students improve in this way, students connect their ideas using correct grammar patterns, and raise the quality of their texts. Many students need motivation to write.

Some effective strategies were identified to raise the quality of written texts during the classroom observations. For instance, teachers can apply personal themes based on experience in their lives to encourage them. Moreover, they obtain a relaxing environment and gather students’ interest and participation with this strategy,

The interviews and classroom observations showed how writing in English is too hard, as a peak to achieve, but there are also chances for improvement in the quality of the texts step by step. It is recommended to provide continuous training to teachers on innovative and effective methodologies for teaching writing. Likewise, it is essential to create an educational environment that fosters collaboration and the exchange of ideas among students. By addressing these aspects, one can significantly contribute to improving the quality of written texts in the school environment.

As indicated by Quillupangui (2023):

Writing essays on familiar or personal topics, as an exercise in learning English as a second language, allows students to express their ideas creatively and critically, with greater syntactic complexity, precision, and fluency, than when they have to write on unfamiliar, less known, or even class-discussed topics. The most frequent grammatical errors are, first, the use of spoken language, transferred from the structures of the native language, and second, the improper use of conjunctions. This indicates the need to deepen the mastery and practice of grammar through different methods and tools (p.847).

TOPIC 2: PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

Portfolio assessment is a pedagogical tool that allows students to demonstrate their learning and development over time. Barrientos (2023) argues that assessments in foreign language teaching should focus on grammar, as its absence would result in an obvious gap. For this reason, it is suggested that the teaching of international languages should focus on improving grammatical skills. To carry out this research, focus groups and interviews

were conducted with students from the language course. Additionally, rubrics were developed to be integrated into the teacher's portfolio, aligning with the topics covered and allowing students to apply the grammar learned at their own pace to complete their assessments and validate meaningful learning.

The interviews allow the teachers to apply the portfolio for evaluating student progress. During the classroom observations, students include text samples in their portfolios. It is relevant, teachers define the criteria evaluation and the portfolio segments. Most of their text production includes how students dismiss their errors. Students establish learning objectives due to the challenge in each theme for producing in the portfolio.

TOPIC 3: TEACHING OF TEACHING PRACTICES

The teaching of teaching practices is a main step in the portfolio application. Training teachers for using portfolios is a challenge to them. Teachers have to avoid applying traditional methods for enhancing writing skills. Teachers through portfolios can observe students' needs hence they have to prepare specific objectives and reconsider the activities quality. Explaining the goal in each writing activity fulfills the main requirement for guidance to the students. Portfolio assessment can be successful when teachers learn how to use it. They connect in the best linguistic manner both the grammatical part with the communicative part. Teachers include some characteristics to evaluate a portfolio such as patterns, rubrics, use of English box, vocabulary list according to the mood. Whole, helping students to improve their writing skills.

The interviews are the basis for organizing how and what teachers evaluate. The educators emphasized that practices must be aligned with contemporary pedagogical theories to be effective. However, challenges were also identified, such as the lack of resources and time to conduct effective observations and provide adequate feedback to future teachers. This situation suggests that, although there is a consensus on the importance of solid practical teaching, more favorable conditions are required for its implementation.

For Ureta (2022):

The gamification practice has a transcendental importance in school life because it guides, strengthens, and stimulates the interest to delve into educational content with enthusiasm. On the other hand, it is socially significant for the child because it marks a milestone in their history; the experiences lived will remain in their memory for a long time or for the rest of their life, and could motivate them to emulate this process with other individuals (p.69).

Teachers have the responsibility to encourage students during the writing process. Creating a good environment to start writing is not easy but they combine their enthusiasm and experience as a motivational tool to face the disadvantages or difficulties to manage English in text productions. Teachers gave students some reasons to write and dismiss the lack of motivation. Teachers can write phrases to motivate them and students try to rewrite what they understand. Teachers have to pay attention to students' needs and be functional and practical in the long-term or short-term. By addressing these aspects, it is possible to significantly contribute to the training of more competent and confident teachers in their professional practice.

CONCLUSIONS

A values strategy during the last decade in the century XX was the use of portfolio as a useful and pedagogical approach for the language teaching. This study demonstrates the utility, flexibility and versatility that portfolio has as assessment strategy due to the different types of evaluations (co-evaluation and self-assessment) and activities (elaboration of rubrics, portfolio design, and reflective process to promote the self-consciousness in the students), both imply students' motivational aspects.

The findings of this qualitative research show that the use of portfolio as a pedagogical tool has a positive impact in the development of writing skills. The analysis in the text productions, interviews and observations confirm that portfolio benefits the progress in linguistic aspects, coherence, cohesion, grammar; and, promote a better consciousness about the own learning process in the students.

The metacognitive approach led students to reflect about their strengths, mistakes, and strategies. Portfolio becomes a compromising activity which allows students have a continuous revision, comparison, reflection, and rating in their texts. Portfolio means structure and sequence in student's texts production. Moreover, portfolio also means an actionable plan which show a challenge, an amusement, a complex task and an opportunity to learn how to write in English and then, can apply in their academic and professional surroundings. Portfolios foster students to be independence and in the same time to work with peers and teachers.

To sum up, applying portfolio assessment to foster students to check mistakes and learn the differences among words. Parts of speech is a deep topic that students deal with in their final products. Students recognize how to use a noun instead of an adjective according to the content. On the other hand, they can mix roots with suffixes or prefixes in the sentences with coherence. For instance, a few letters "un-" or "-ful" in a root can be a big change in the composition context consequently the portfolio assessment application is a good manner to consider in writing skills.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

Ingrid Tomalá: data collection and analysis, results writing, and manuscript discussion.

Evelyn Almeida: review of objectives; conceptualization (supporting), analysis (supporting); manuscript review and editing.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors declare that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented in this article.

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REVISTA KRONOS

“Soft CLIL: How to Effectively Apply Bloom’s Taxonomy to Promote Reading Cognitive Skills in Higher Education”.

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ABSTRACT Many approaches such as “Content and Language Integrated Learning.” (CLIL, created by David Marsh, 1994) have emerged as an alternative to improve education. Nevertheless, there is little information about CLIL, its principles, and how to associate it with Bloom’s six levels of cognitive learning to encourage reading in pre-graduate learners into the classroom. The Ecuadorian education field of teaching a second language still has a lot to research on the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy associated with CLIL, thus this literature review aims to cover some aspects of application to language teaching especially reading skills looking to benefit both graduate students and professors. This article derives from the necessity to provide students and teachers a new path for teaching and learning critically and creatively. It mentions how and why CLIL and Bloom’s Taxonomy can complement each other to boost comprehensive reading in universities and benefit academic learners and their personal lives. Bloom’s Taxonomy in the EFL classroom combines content with questioning, to create a relevant, practical and functional class. Critical and creative thinking as well as reading are closely linked, in order to achieve different levels of reflection. Finally, this article clearly shows some examples of how this approach can be implemented and performed easily and frequently by any teacher moving from theory to practice to achieve improvement in their learners’ CCT.

KEYWORDS Content, language integrated learning (CLIL); critical and creative thinking (CCT), Bloom’s revised taxonomy, higher order thinking skills (HOT), lower order thinking skills (LOTS), English as a foreign language (EFL)

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Soft CLIL: Cómo aplicar eficazmente la taxonomía de Bloom para promover las habilidades cognitivas de lectura en la educación superior

RESUMEN Muchos enfoques, como el “Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas” (CLIL, creado por David Marsh, 1994), han surgido como una alternativa para mejorar la educación. Sin embargo, existe poca información sobre CLIL, sus principios y cómo asociarlo con los seis niveles de aprendizaje cognitivo de Bloom para fomentar la lectura en estudiantes pre graduados en el aula. El campo de la educación ecuatoriana en la enseñanza de una segunda lengua aún tiene mucho que investigar sobre el uso de la Taxonomía de Bloom asociada con CLIL, por lo que esta revisión bibliográfica tiene como objetivo cubrir algunos aspectos de su aplicación a la enseñanza de idiomas, especialmente las habilidades de lectura, con el fin de beneficiar tanto a estudiantes graduados como a profesores. Este artículo se deriva de la necesidad de brindar a estudiantes y docentes una nueva vía para enseñar y aprender de manera crítica y creativa. Menciona cómo y por qué CLIL y la Taxonomía de Bloom pueden complementarse para impulsar la lectura comprensiva en las universidades y beneficiar a los estudiantes académicos y sus vidas personales. La Taxonomía de Bloom en el aula de EFL combina el contenido con el cuestionamiento para crear una clase relevante, práctica y funcional. El pensamiento crítico y creativo, así como la lectura, están estrechamente vinculados para lograr diferentes niveles de reflexión. Finalmente, este artículo muestra claramente algunos ejemplos de cómo este enfoque puede implementarse y realizarse de manera fácil y frecuente por cualquier docente, pasando de la teoría a la práctica para lograr una mejora en las habilidades de pensamiento crítico y creativo (CCT) de sus alumnos.

PALABRAS CLAVE Contenido, aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas (CLIL); pensamiento crítico y creativo (CCT), taxonomía revisada de Bloom, habilidades de pensamiento de orden superior (HOT), habilidades de pensamiento de orden inferior (LOTS), inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL)

INTRODUCTION

According to Alderson (1984), reading is a receptive skill; it is a process rather than a product, aimed at building significance from the text. This procedure reveals how the reader achieves an individual understanding. Applying the levels of thinking under the Soft CLIL approach, while the product remains the reader's insight. This approach focuses on learning content through language to end with a project based on the CLIL principles, content, communication, cognition, and culture (Coyle, 2005).

It is significant to take actions to reach observable outcomes in the way reading processes are taught, considering mainly higher levels since these learners will be part of the workforce as soon as they become professionals. Consequently, they require being supported in their thinking processes, not only to be able to work efficiently but also to give opinions, justify ideas, and design something new, so that, their contribution will face society's new trends (Khadka, 2014).

In this context, we have to highlight Bloom's Taxonomy and its cognitive levels "higher order thinking skills" (HOTS) and "lower order thinking skills" (LOTS) which deal with learners' diversity, boosting their critical and creative thinking and performing a student-centered class (Churches, 2008).

This study analyzes the primary relevance of critical and creative thinking for college students by the means of the Bloom's Taxonomy which provides students the opportunities to increase cognitive skills through reading in a Soft CLIL atmosphere reaching educational and personal objectives.

1. PROMOTING A REFLEXIVE READING.

Asghari's research (2017) highlights a significant correlation between innovative information processing strategies and the successful integration of prior textual comprehension. This synergistic approach empowers learners to navigate complex texts independently, constructing a comprehensive understanding network. By seamlessly integrating previously acquired knowledge learners achieve a holistic comprehension, ultimately leading to a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the material.

Figure 1. Reading process table.



Source: Reading Booklet - to circulate.

Reading builds meaning from a text which is called discourse. This procedure focuses on how the reader reaches critical reading skills. While the product implies what the reader understood.

1.1 Why do Soft CLIL and Bloom's Taxonomy Boost Reading Cognitive Skills in College Learners?

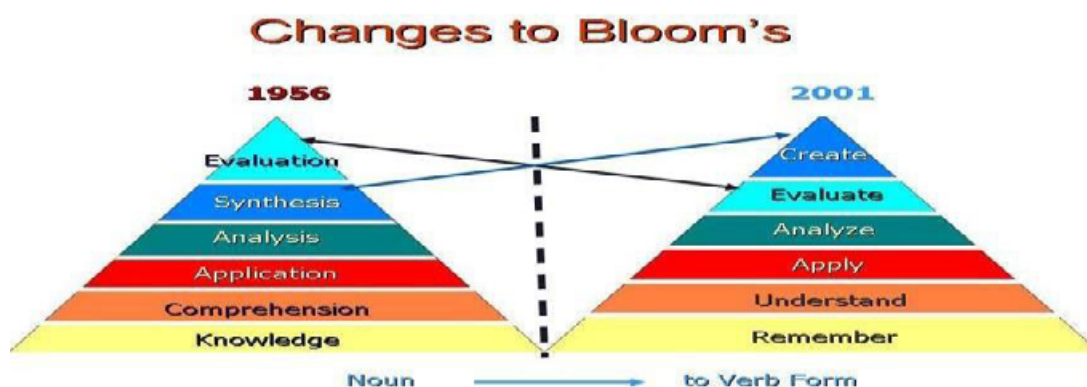
CLIL is a pedagogical approach created by professors David Marsh and Do Coyle, at the Jyväskylä University in Finland in 1994. This term stands for "Content and Language Integrated Learning" used in the content and language teaching and learning process. (Do, Philip, & David, 2010) through collaborative tasks to develop knowledge, skills and achieve meaningful learning among learners, and in this case through the reading dexterity.

Coyle et.al (2010), defines hard CLIL as using a foreign language to teach any subject with content objectives, and content acquisition being central. Conversely, soft CLIL, as described by Kuchynska (2024) focuses on using a foreign language to teach specific language course topics, prioritizing language acquisition. Soft CLIL can be effectively adapted to EFL instruction, allowing for realistic content and language delivery. This adaptation is based on Soft CLIL principles and a final project that results in an output product. Task-based and project-based learning incorporates necessary content and language as input a receptive skill, to enhance learners' understanding, motivation and cognitive processes, as highlighted by García (2017).

Regarding Banegas & Hemmi (2021) cognition is a central part of CLIL. So, it results remarkable to mention Bloom's Taxonomy created by Benjamin Bloom in the 1950s. which emerged from the educators' need to classify students' thinking and learning processes to measure students' abilities. Later, Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl incorporated a revised Bloom's taxonomy in 2001 making some changes and improvements to reach educational goals more effectively.

In this way, nouns were transformed into action verbs which became objectives that professors need to assist students to reach. Bloom's taxonomy underscores the importance of cultivating both Lower-Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in education. While LOTS involve basic cognitive functions, HOTS demand deeper level of reflection, analysis and evaluation.

Figure 2. Bloom's Taxonomy and Revised Bloom's Taxonomy



Source: (Owen & Leslie, 2020)

2. USE OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN EFL CLASSROOM TO PROMOTE CRITICAL READING

English's global significance (Jennifer, 2009) has led to its widespread adoption as a lingua franca, prompting individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to learn it for different purposes. Recognizing the crucial role of critical thinking in 21st-century success (Lai, 2001), educators are increasingly emphasizing its integration into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms (Pollard & Kim, 2017). By fostering a student-centered learning environment, teachers can guide learners in developing both language proficiency and higher-order thinking skills, enabling them to navigate a complex world. Building upon the Socratic method of inquiry, which encourages critical reflection and challenges pre-existing beliefs, (International, 2017). Bloom's Taxonomy categorizes cognitive processes into six levels, each requiring distinct actions and skills. The "remembering" level focuses on recalling and identifying specific information. Learners at this stage utilize verbs like "define," "list," and "name" to answer questions such as "Who," "What," and "Where". This level involves retrieving and identifying information from memory as key historical events or naming components of a scientific theory (Allen, 2013).

Learners advance to the understanding stage, where they interpret and explain information. Key skills include summarizing, classifying, comparing, and inferring. Students should answer questions like "What was the main idea?" "Can you explain the process of...?" (Generoso, 2024).

In the application stage, learners apply their knowledge practically. This involves solving problems, constructing and demonstrating with questions like "How would you solve this problem?" "Can you demonstrate how to...?" (Rutka, 2024).

The analyze stage involves breaking down information to uncover patterns and relationships. It uses verbs like categorize, discover and examine. Questions like "*What are the components of...?*" or "Why do you think this happens?" guide learners to critically examine content. For example, analyzing the structure of literary work or identifying the relationships between economic factors fosters analytical thinking (Krathwohl, 2002).

At the evaluate stage, learners judge and justify conclusions based on established criteria or standards. This stage incorporates verbs like assess, value, prioritize and support, prompting questions such as "Do you agree with this?" "Why or why not?", or "How would you prioritize these tasks?" (Melissa, 2024).

The final stage emphasizes synthesizing ideas and produce original outcomes. Verbs like generate, create, build, design, and produce are vital. Questions at this level include "How would you design a solution for this problem?" "*What new ideas can you generate about this topic?*" Tasks may involve designing a new product, developing innovative strategies, or composing original works of art or literature (Independent Learner, 2022).

2.1 How can reading development be more appealing through questioning using Soft CLIL handed by LOTS and HOTS?

CLIL is designed for effective teaching skills by integrating its foundations, aligned correctly with Bloom's taxonomy. Soft CLIL focuses on language acquisition through content while also improving reading skills. Structuring lessons into three stages is a clear example to ensure a progressive and absorbing learning process, enhancing overall effectiveness. (Ramírez & Mena, 2021).

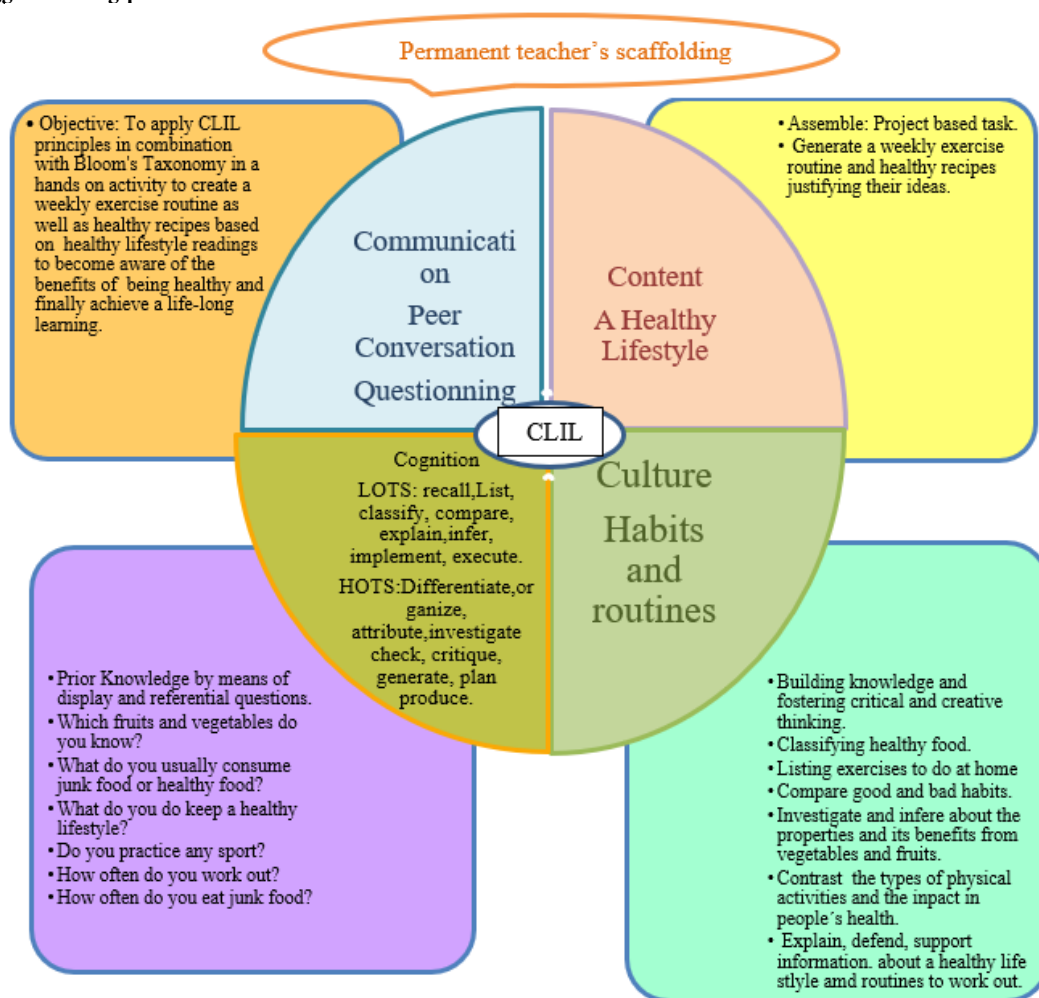
Name these three categories in pairs, knowledge and comprehension; application and analysis, finally synthesis and evaluation, proceed with an accurate explanation about the purpose of each category within Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure learners' understanding and reflection to evoke from LOTS to HOTS highlighting that it is crucial for reading critical-

ly to guarantee a gradual cognitive progress and later for effective communication. First, assign learners, a paragraph or article to read carefully. Afterward, have them formulate a question based on the reading and encouraging students go from the lowest to the highest order thinking skills aligned with every Bloom's category. Later participants will work in pairs or small groups to reinforce reading understanding by exchanging partners' answers to promote question-answering skills and critical thinking through active commitment. Finally, students will work in a thoughtful group discussion, exploring the nuances of each question and sharing several perspectives on the subject matter (Gershon, 2013).

Other strategies as task-based learning offers a robust framework for enhancing reading comprehension through content and interactive and meaningful tasks integrating questions that stimulate cognitive development, culture and communication. This approach emphasizes the importance of scaffolding and feedback in achieving reading outcomes and lifelong learning. (Priyana & Tri, 2020). Moreover, project-based learning complements task-based learning by promoting skills such as skimming, scanning, gathering information and identifying outstanding ideas regarding the undertaken project by questions and answers. It allows learners to activate schemata and explore new information thereby enriching their project work (Maya & Prasetyo, 2021).

3. Mind Map of how to apply Bloom's Taxonomy to Promote Reading Cognitive Skills in Higher Education Based on Soft CLIL.

Figure 3. Example of how teachers may use LOTS and HOTS in conjunction with the soft CLIL principles to trigger reading prowess



Source: (Pizarro & Suing, 2018)

The above figure is an example of how teachers may use LOTS and HOTS in conjunction with the soft CLIL principles to trigger reading prowess.

This table has been constructed in accordance with CLIL principles focusing on a curricular subject. It emphasizes communication through engaging topics that foster student interaction while learning English. Cognition is connected to Bloom's Taxonomy, which involves various levels of thinking, while Culture pertains to the customs and practices of specific groups, including aspects like food and traditions. The table effectively demonstrates Bloom's Taxonomy, beginning with Lower Order Thinking Skills that support the initial stages of learning through referential questions related to the content. As students progress, the emphasis shifts to language development and the promotion of critical and creative thinking, with tasks becoming increasingly challenging to align with cognitive levels. Reading comprehension is essential for enhancing higher level of cognition, enabling deeper engagement with materials. Ultimately, the educational process culminates in Higher Order Thinking Skills through project-based tasks that demand advanced cognitive abilities. Throughout this journey, the teacher's scaffolding is crucial for guiding students to successfully achieve their learning objectives.

CONCLUSION

CLIL's principles and Bloom's Taxonomy can be applied together not only to foster cognitive levels but also to boost reading comprehension activities in college learners.

The importance of critical and creative thinking, shows outstanding and meaningful concern for students of all ages around the world. Cognition is not only to think but it also involves the development, and application of varied skills such as reflection, judgment, evaluation, creation, analysis, synthesis, problem-solving with the proper, deep understanding and justification to know what to do and why to do it in the context of studies and life. Critical and creative thinking for college students is more demanding and imperative, because it is supposed that all of these skills have been nurtured since primary and they must flourish and cherish at the tertiary level to be employed in the labor force and personal life.

According to Bloom's Taxonomy and its application in different subjects, it is possible to make students become great critical and creative thinkers guided by LOTS and HOTS. These are categories of cognition level that must be implemented in the teaching and learning process to obtain a student-centered education and life lasting-learning. Only in this way, educative centers and education itself will accomplish one of their main objectives to product philanthropists, savvy decision-makers, and happier individuals.

Once the learners start to develop, increase and apply the high order critical dexterities, these would be noticed in every aspect of their lives, as Powel (2015) suggests "the ability to think critically can have a direct impact on academic, work and personal lives". In a blatant manner in their spoken sentences especially for decision-making situations, the individuals will achieve better goals, become wiser and more prosperous citizens, in other words, happier and more productive human beings which are the ones, if not the main, objective of a successful education.

CONTRIBUTOR ROLES

Angel Modesto Suing Nagua: Introduction, graph analysis, results, original draft writing, revision, and editing.

Verónica de Lourdes Pizarro Aguirre: Conceptualization, conclusions, formal analysis, writing, review, and editing.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The authors state that there are no ethical implications.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial and non-financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the work presented.

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Tabla 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit

EXPLICACIÓN	CATEGORÍA	CATEGORÍA	CATEGORÍA
Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx
Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx

Nota: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

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Figura 1. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit

EXPLICACIÓN	CATEGORÍA	CATEGORÍA	CATEGORÍA
Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx
Variable	xxx	xxx	xxx

Nota: Morbi dolor sapien, venenatis bibendum. Fuente: Morales (1995, p. 3).

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