



ACADEMIC UNIT:

POSTGRADUATE OFFICE

Topic:

**PROBLEM BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE A2 SPEAKING SKILLS AT
VICENTE LEÓN SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS**

**Research project prior to obtaining the title of Master Pedagogy of English
as a Foreign Language**

Line of research:

Innovative Pedagogies, Teaching Methods

Author:

Santiago Gabriel Ramón Amores

Director:

Mg. Andrea Cristina Salazar Carranco

Ambato – Ecuador

Noviembre 2021

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL ECUADOR
SEDE AMBATO

APPROVAL SHEET

Topic:

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE A2 SPEAKING SKILLS AT
VICENTE LEÓN SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS

Line of research:

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES, TEACHING METHODS

Author:

SANTIAGO GABRIEL RAMÓN AMORES


Andrea Cristina Salazar Carranco, Mg.

CALIFICADOR

f. 

María Augusta Villacrés Camino, Mg.

CALIFICADOR

f. 

Verónica Gissela Jarrín Escobar, Mg.

CALIFICADOR

f. 

Juan Carlos Acosta Teneda, MSc

DIRECTOR DE POSGRADOS

f. 

Hugo Rogelio Altamirano Villaroel, Dr

SECRETARIO GENERAL PUCESA

f. 

Ambato – Ecuador
Noviembre 2021

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Yo: SANTIAGO GABRIEL RAMÓN AMORES, con CC. 0503568826, autor del trabajo de graduación intitulado: **“PROBLEM BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE A2 SPEAKING SKILLS AT VICENTE LEÓN SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS”**, previa a la obtención del título profesional de **Magister en Pedagogía del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera**, en el programa de **Posgrado Maestría en Pedagogía en inglés como Lengua Extranjera**.

1. Declaro tener pleno conocimiento de la obligación que tiene la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, de conformidad con el artículo 144 de la Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, de entregar a la SENESCYT en formato digital una copia del referido trabajo de graduación para que sea integrado al Sistema Nacional de Información de la Educación Superior del Ecuador para su difusión pública respetando los derechos de autor.
2. Autorizo a la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador a difundir a través de sitio web de la Biblioteca de la PUCE Ambato, el referido trabajo de graduación, respetando las políticas de propiedad intelectual de Universidad

Ambato, Noviembre 2021



SANTIAGO GABRIEL RAMÓN AMORES

CC. 0503568826

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special thanks to the Pontifical Catholic University of Ambato, for the collaboration and support provided all this time.

I would also like to thank my tutor who has guided this research with his technical support and knowledge throughout the execution of this project.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family, for their support and trust at all times to achieve my goals and make me a better person through their advice, teaching and example.

RESUMEN

Dentro del presente trabajo de investigación se aborda la temática de la influencia de la metodología ABP (aprendizaje basado en problemas) dentro de la mejora de las habilidades de speaking de los estudiantes del Instituto Superior Vicente León de la ciudad de Latacunga. Las habilidades de speaking son el punto de partida dentro del aprendizaje del inglés como segundo idioma, esto debido a que por medio de estas habilidades el estudiante puede comunicar sus ideas a los demás. Para el presente estudio se planteó una metodología cuantitativa en la recolección de datos. Se emplearon como instrumentos al pretest, posttest y a la encuesta. Los tests permitieron comprobar si existe una diferencia en las habilidades de speaking antes y después de la aplicación de la propuesta, mientras que la encuesta permitió conocer la pertinencia de aplicación de la propuesta en la institución. Los resultados obtenidos por los tests permitieron comprobar que si existe una mejora en las habilidades de speaking luego de aplicada la propuesta basada en la metodología ABP.

Palabras clave: ABP, habilidades, EFL, speaking

ABSTRACT

The study addresses the influence of a problem-based learning methodology (PBL) in the scope of improving speaking skills of the students of the Vicente León Higher Institute of the city of Latacunga. Speaking skills are the starting point in learning English as a second language. It is through these skills, the student can communicate their ideas to others. In the present study, a quantitative methodology was used for data collection and a pretest, posttest and survey as instruments. The tests indicated the differences in speaking skills before and after the application of the proposal, while the survey demonstrated its actual relevance within the institution. The results obtained verified is an improvement in speaking skills after applying the proposal based on the PBL methodology.

Keywords: PBL, skills, EFL, speaking

INDEX

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY AND RESPONSIBILITY	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
DEDICATION	v
RESUMEN	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
INDEX	viii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER I. STATE OF ART AND PRACTICE	4
1.1 Problem-Based Learning (PBL)	4
1.2 Speaking skills.....	15
CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN.....	24
2.1 Design of the investigation	24
2.2 Characterization of the institution	25
2.3 Proposal development.....	30
CHAPTER III – ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS	45
3.1 Teachers’ survey results.....	45
3.2 Pretest and posttest results	50
3.3 Checking the idea to defend.....	52
CONCLUSIONS	53
RECOMMENDATIONS	54
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	55
ANNEXES	59

INTRODUCTION

In any language, one of the most important skills to be developed is the speaking skill, it represents for students, the opportunity to communicate with people from other countries and with a different language. This skill is not developed at all at "Vicente León Superior" Technological Institute due to some factors, which have been observed; to begin with, the most relevant is the fact that teachers focus on the development of grammar structure instead of giving importance to each one of the English skills.

The second fact is related with vocabulary, it is clear that students have big problems with vocabulary acquisition, they have a low level of words and for that reason they do not feel motivated or confident to talk or they are afraid to do so.

To continue with the following aspect, the disinterest in learning English language, this happens due to this subject is taken by students just as a requisite to obtain the final degree according to their career.

Finally, and the most important fact which can be observed is the lack of opportunities to talk for students, oral activities proposed by the teacher and the books are not attractive or they have formal answers which are not representative for students to keep them in mind, they just repeat what they hear and do not make an analysis of the different ways to answer a question or create any other.

This can be identified as a problem because this skill is not developed in a correct way, answers given by students are not reflected, and they are just repeated, creating a big problem for future professionals given by this institution.

Based on the above, the idea of defending this research work is problem-based learning influences positively in the development of English-Speaking Skills in students from the proficiency English program at Vicente León Superior Technological Institute.

The hypothesis to be verified by carrying out this work is: "The application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) will improve the speaking skills on students from the proficiency English program at Vicente León Superior Technological Institute". The scientific question of this research work is: How the application of Problem based

learning (PBL) will improve speaking skills on students from the proficiency English program at Vicente León Superior Technological Institute?

The general objective of this research work is to determine the impact of PBL method to improve the development of speaking skills on students from the proficiency English program at "Vicente León" Superior Technological Institute.

On the other hand, the specific objectives of the research work are the following:

- To identify the stages of Problem Based Learning (PBL) method and the influences they have on speaking skills
- To analyze reliable data about the way speaking skills are developed by using a quantitative and qualitative research
- To design a guide which includes activities having as a base the Problem Based Learning in order to improve speaking skills
- To analyze and interpret data in order to provide general conclusions and recommendations

For this research work, a quantitative methodology will be used because data will be collected from students and professors of the institution in order to verify the level of speaking skills that students present. To verify the hypothesis of the present work, two working groups will be carried out. The first group will be called "experimental group", while the second group will be called "control group". The control group will receive classes in the traditional way, while the experimental group will receive classes using Problem Based Learning (PBL).

For the comparison of the results, a pre-test will be applied before starting with the application of the methodology to the two groups. After finishing the class sessions, a post-test will be applied to the students of both groups. The results obtained in both tests will be tabulated and statistical tests will be carried out in order to check if there is a significant difference between the research groups.

It is important to mention that problem-based learning is considered as one of the teaching-learning strategies in which importance is given to the acquisition of

knowledge as well as the development of skills and attitudes. Within this methodology, small groups of students are made who meet with a tutor in order to analyze and solve a problem that is specifically designed to achieve certain learning objectives (González, Carbonero, Lara, & Martín, 2014).

Several studies mention the importance and advantages of this methodology in relation to traditional teaching styles. These investigations sustain that students who use problem-based learning have better reasoning, having a better ability to use their knowledge in real time. These students also maintain high levels of motivation and use strategies that allow them to achieve deeper learning, unlike students who follow traditional procedures. For this reason, this research work will show the advantages of problem-based learning methodology in improving English speaking skills, pointing out the main advantages of this methodology through a literature review.

CHAPTER I. STATE OF ART AND PRACTICE

1.1 Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

Problem-based learning (PBL) is defined as a pedagogical approach that allows students to learn while actively engaging with meaningful problems that are elaborated with a specific purpose. Within this methodology, students present the opportunity to solve problems in the middle of a collaborative environment, creating mental models for learning and forming self-directed learning habits through practice and reflection (Yew & Goh, 2016).

The PBL methodology is based on the development of critical thinking within the same learning process. This methodology seeks that the student understands and adequately deepens the answer to the problems that are used to learn, this by approaching different study paradigms. It is important to mention that this methodology focuses on the application of a comprehensive teaching approach, which encourages conscious learning and systematic group work in a collaborative learning experience. (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, 2010).

Taking into consideration what is mentioned in previous paragraphs, the main objective that teachers have within an educational institution when applying the methodology is to facilitate student learning. This means that teachers are not in charge of preparing the necessary information for the class as such, nor are they in the task of guiding students to think correctly. Teachers should stimulate students' thinking by asking questions. This strategy helps to handle the problem in a better way. As mentioned by Almulla (2019), given that this methodology focuses mainly on the student, it is considered that it presents a greater advantage compared to traditional didactic techniques that are centered on the teacher, this because the methodology promotes the retention of information over the long term.

There is a precedent for PBL within education. In this sense, Delisle (1997) mentions that teachers should ask students to explore and create learning materials through their natural instincts. In addition, PBL requires a more natural way to develop and apply thinking by focusing on observation, imagination, and asking questions. Through every stage, learners have the support of their instructor who helps them

to solve problems based on simple things they understand and then encourage them to solve more difficult situations around them (Guerrero & Moya, 2020).



Graph 1: PBL Process

Source: Taken from (González, Carbonero, Lara, & Martín, 2014)

Among the main advantages of the application of the problem-based learning methodology, three can be mentioned. Problem-based learning influences motivation, interest, and learning.

Regarding motivation, when the PBL method is used, teachers seek that students can engage with the class so that they can participate in an active way. In this sense, the Teaching Methodology must be used correctly, in order to achieve the learning goals proposed at the beginning of the methodology, regardless of the way in which motivation can be presented among students. In addition to this, when students are part of a collaborative learning and work in small groups to analyze and solve a problem as a team, they feel higher levels of motivation because they feel that they are part of the activity carried out (Moallem, Hung, & Dabbagh, 2019).

Regarding interest, the first step to help students increase their interest in a specific topic or subject is to avoid creating confusion at the beginning of each class. In this regard, the teacher must be sure that each student understands the topic of the class and can interpret the problem. This strategy should help keep students in a continuous process of brainstorming, comparing what they know with what they don't know. When students feel confident, they are able to solve problems, complete an activity and present a good final class product, thanks to the fact that their interest in the class has increased (Moallem, Hung, & Dabbagh, 2019).

Regarding learning, problem-based learning promotes student-centered learning. This methodology allows the creation of an environment of self-learning for the student, which is guided by a teacher tutor. Students are part of an active collaboration through group work, where they activate their previous knowledge and reflect it on the work, they are doing by searching for new information and adjusting said information to the previously approved curriculum. Problem-based learning also helps students to explore new resources through perception that allow them to develop greater and better knowledge (Moallem, Hung, & Dabbagh, 2019).

On the other hand, Moallen, Hung and Dabbagh (2019) mention that the main objectives of the ABP deal with the structuring of knowledge to be used in different contexts, mainly in clinical contexts. This methodology is used mainly in the field of medicine because it allows the development of an effective clinical reasoning process focused on conflict resolution. This situation allows the development of skills related to self-learning and increased motivation of students when learning new knowledge (development of intrinsic motivation).

Among the main characteristics of the PBL is that of fostering in the student an attitude of positivism towards learning. Within this methodology, the autonomy of the student is respected, who learns about the contents and his own work experience within the dynamics of the method.

Guevara (2010) mentions some characteristics of the ABP, which are presented below:

- It is an active work method where students constantly participate in the acquisition of their knowledge
- The method is aimed at solving problems that are selected or designed to achieve the learning of certain knowledge objectives.
- Learning focuses on the student and not on the teacher or only on the content.
- It is a method that stimulates collaborative work in different disciplines, working in small groups.
- The courses with this working model are open to different disciplines of knowledge.
- The teacher becomes a facilitator or tutor of learning.

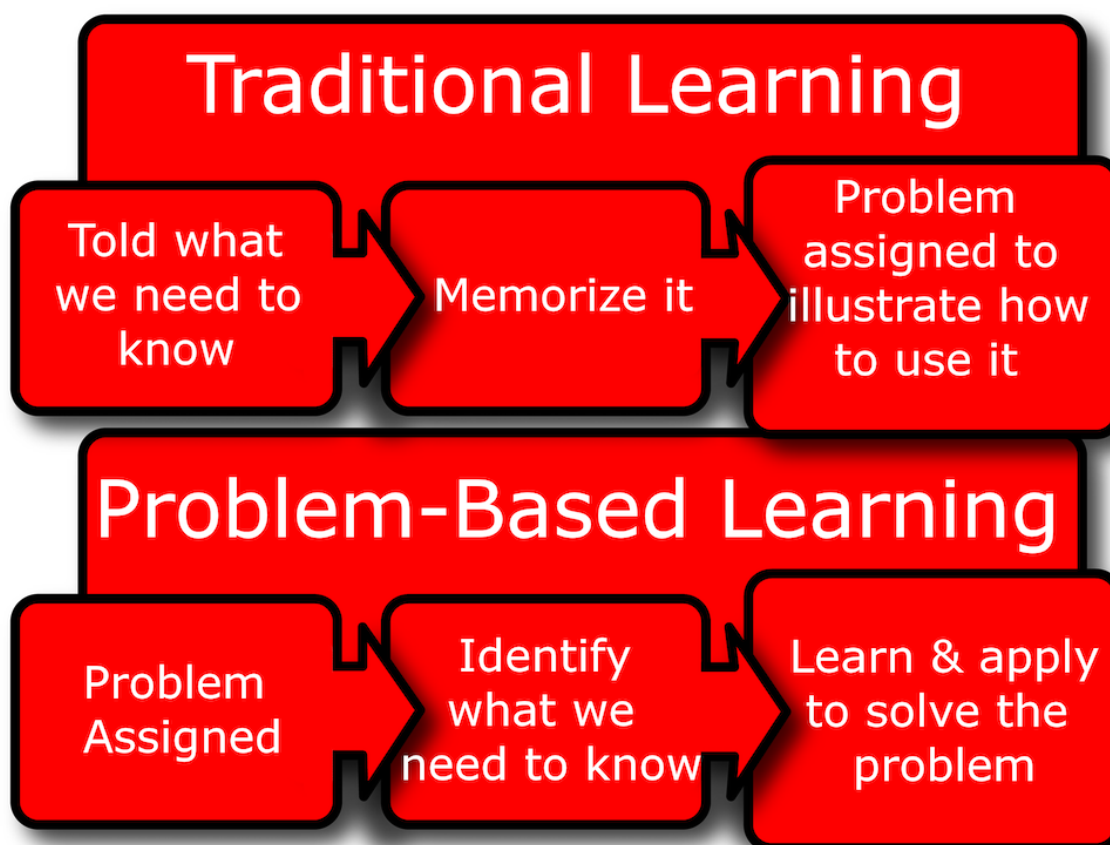
When working with the PBL, the activity revolves around the discussion of a problem and learning arises from the experience of working on that problem, it is a method that stimulates self-learning and allows the student to practice when facing real situations and identifying their knowledge deficiencies.

On the other hand, Guevara (2010) also mentions the objectives of this methodology, among which the following can be highlighted: Promote in the student the responsibility of their own learning, develop a relevant knowledge base characterized by depth and flexibility, develop skills for critical evaluation and acquisition of new knowledge with a commitment to lifelong learning, develop skills for interpersonal relationships, involve the student in a challenge (problem, situation or task) with initiative and enthusiasm, develop effective and creative reasoning according to an integrated and flexible knowledge base, monitor the existence of learning objectives appropriate to the level of development of the students, guide the lack of knowledge and skills efficiently and effectively towards the search for improvement and stimulate the development of a sense of collaboration as a member of a team to achieve a common goal.

Being a relatively new methodology, PBL differs in many ways from traditional learning. Zaidi, Hammad, Awad and Qasem (2017) made a comparison between the main differences between traditional learning and problem-based learning. These differences are presented in the following table:

Table 1: Comparison between methodologies

Traditional learning	Problem-Based Learning
The teacher takes the role of expert or authority within the subject taught	The teacher acts as a facilitator or guide within the subject.
Teachers transmit information to students	Students are responsible for their own learning, considering teachers as guides.
The teachers organize the content in exhibitions according to their discipline.	Teachers base their activities on solving real problems, a situation that improves the motivational component of students.
Students are considered as a blank book, that is, the previous learning acquired by them is ignored	Teachers seek to improve the prior knowledge of their students, also considering that they can learn from their students.
The didactic resources used by teachers focus on a single communication channel, that is, only the transmission of information from teacher to student is carried out	Students form work groups in order to solve problems. This allows students to improve and apply their prior knowledge.
Students transcribe and memorize specific knowledge acquired to take exams	The students present an active participation within the class processes, helping to solve problems.
Summative assessments are applied, where the teacher is the only one authorized to evaluate	Students are in the ability to assess their own knowledge, this through peer assessment or formative assessments



Graph 2: Comparison between methodologies

Source: Taken from (Almulla, 2019).

During the last 25 years, the PBL has established itself as an independent educational method, this due to the great advances within the theory of learning. However, Intykbekov (2017) mentions that this methodology is not a new idea, but has been used in the learning process over the years and generating different projects.

Although it is considered that the PBL methodology has had extensive development throughout history, it can be said that this methodology is still under development, a situation that leads to improvements in it in the short term. It is important to mention that the main objective of the methodology focuses on the interaction of all educational components.

Regarding the perspective that teachers have regarding PBL, they understand the methodology in different ways, because there are notable differences between each

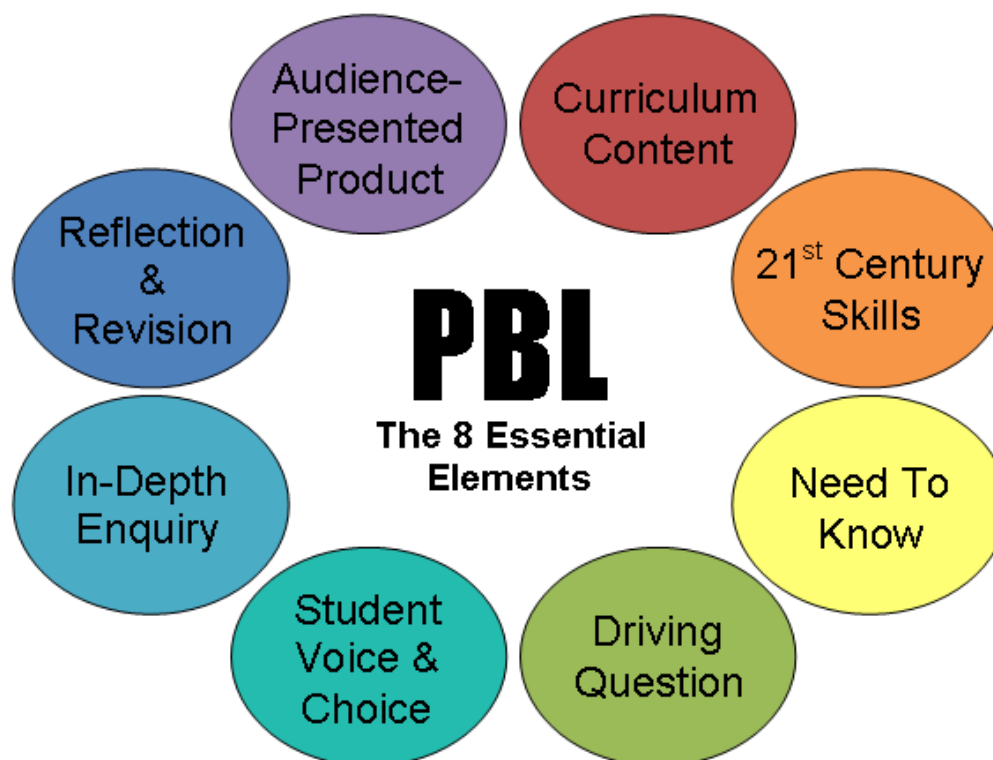
of the teachers, such as the subject taught and different factors that influence the application of the methodology. Regarding this situation, González et al (2014) mention that different empirical studies have focused on obtaining the teachers' perceptions about the aforementioned methodology, pointing out that teachers have different positive pedagogical beliefs about PBL. However, these investigations also present certain aspects by which teachers understand PBL.

In this regard, teachers perceive the methodology as an approach that is student-oriented, which allows them to generate their own knowledge. This methodology necessarily requires self-regulation, which allows students to have a certain level of choice and opinion when selecting the subject of learning, find their own sources of information, work autonomously on projects that go at their own pace. study and considering their main interests when acquiring knowledge.

On the other hand, teachers have the ability to understand their role within the methodology, being able to be facilitators or supervisors of educational processes, thus being a support for students through guidance through teacher-student interaction, performance of guiding questions, peer counseling and the application of worksheets in practice. Initially, teachers use PBL-based planning strategies to plan study sessions, that is, the following points are taken into consideration:

- Goal setting
- Establish control points and deadlines
- Explain the evaluation criteria that will be used in the classroom (Intykbekov, 2017).

Teachers also consider the use of different PBL management and management strategies for groups, a situation that allows teachers to support students throughout the process of implementing the methodology as such. Within this topic Delisle (1997) mentions that according to teachers who implement the PBL methodology within their teaching and learning processes in educational institutions, the topic of classroom management varies greatly from traditional educational processes. In this process, teachers do not use staff-centered methodologies or any kind of educational tool based on this approach.



Graph 3: PBL elements

Source: Taken from (Intykbekov, 2017)

Most of the time it is the students who generate most of the knowledge by working independently by creating small groups. Many teachers also claim that when teaching their classes using the PBL methodology they feel as if they are dealing with their classmates, leaving the authority figure aside.

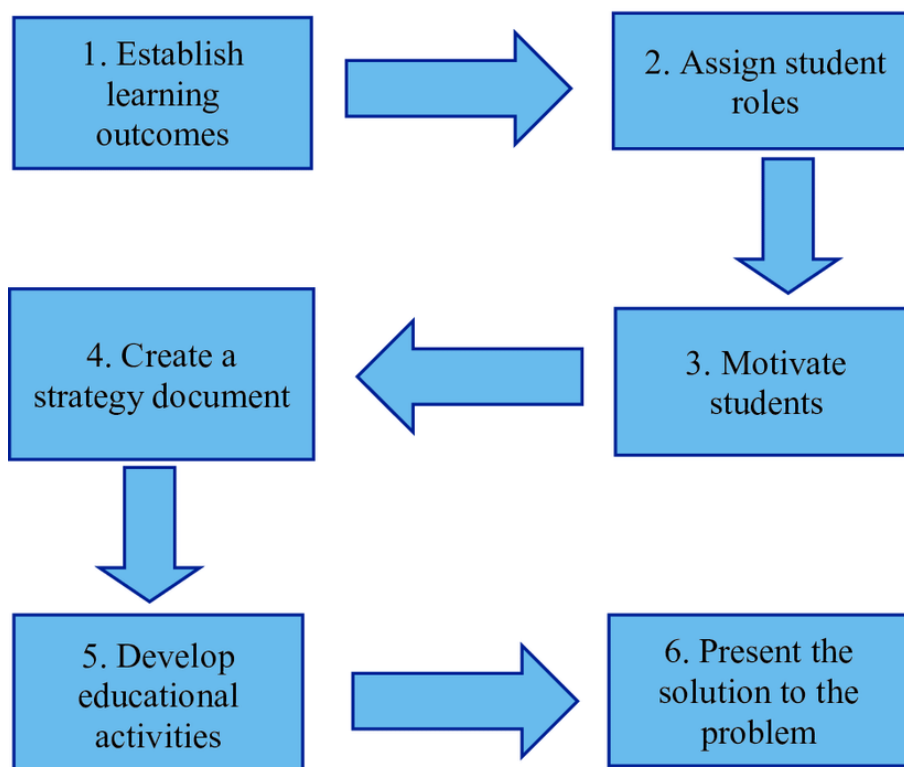
Another way that teachers perceive the PBL methodology is as an authentic learning process that requires students to prepare realistic final products, presentations, or models. Almulla (2019) mentions that the development of the final class project is one of the main tools that help stimulate student learning, this being a motivational factor that allows students to better develop their knowledge.

Another aspect that differentiates PBL from other learning approaches is collaboration between classmates. Teachers perceive PBL as an approach directly related to teamwork, which can help and encourage the participation of students in the classroom, thus allowing them to have the opportunity to work in groups, bringing benefits such as share ideas, help each other and learn from the mistakes of their fellow group members.

As Intykbekov (2017) mentions, collaboration between classmates includes peer review and brainstorming sessions. On the other hand, teachers see the methodology as an opportunity to collaborate with their co-workers and share ideas about the development of different projects within the classroom. The teachers also make a differentiation between the PBL methodology and the other educational processes through the evaluation methods used. In order to obtain better results in the final product of classes, the methodology requires that teachers use a continuous evaluation, which is intrinsic to the applied methodology.

In summary, teachers' perception regarding PBL has different dimensions, however, teachers generally understand that the methodology is defined as student-centered learning, where teachers act as moderators and facilitators for the students. On the other hand, the methodology is also perceived as an excellent tool that allows students to be involved in the resolution of conflicts and problems in real life, this through group work, sharing ideas and helping each other in groups. Finally, the PBL can be perceived as an effective approach that allows evaluating students throughout the educational process implemented.

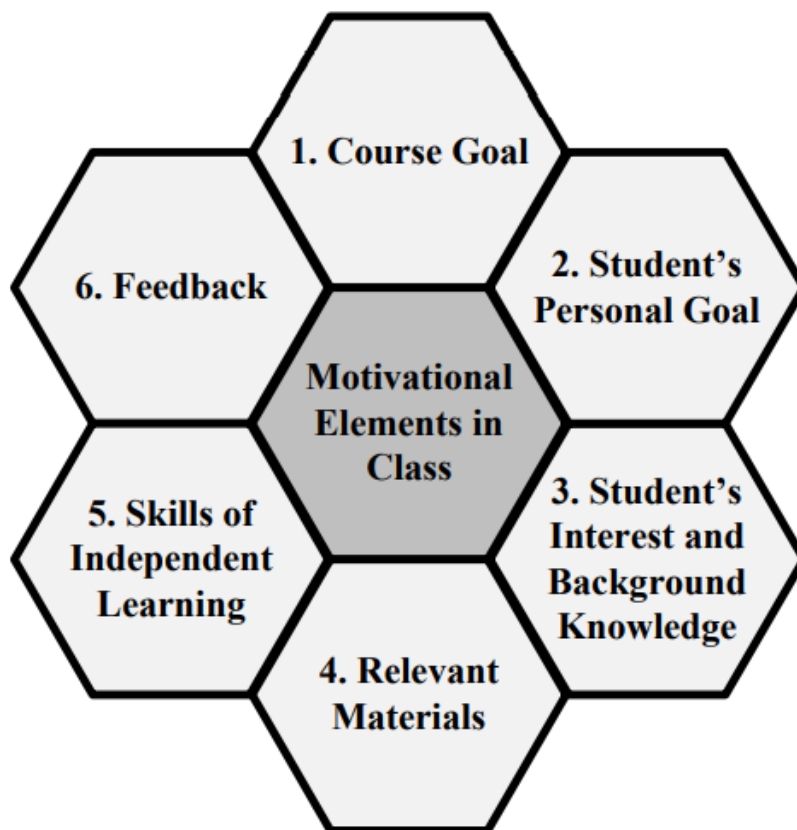
When talking about the implementation of this methodology in traditional teaching and learning processes, it is important to address the issue regarding the benefits that can be found when using PBL. Guerrero and Moya (2020) mention that teachers find more benefits than difficulties when using the methodology. The main benefits are directed towards the students, while the main difficulties are oriented towards the teachers.



Regarding the implementation phases of the PBL methodology, Estrada (2017) mentions 6 stages that are directly related to the implementation of the methodology in the classroom processes. These steps can be seen in the graphic above. First, the learning outcomes must be established. In this stage, the teacher is in charge of establishing the goals that he sets out to achieve at the end of the study methodology. In general, these learning goals are directly related to the level of knowledge that the group of students has at the time of implementation of the methodology.

The second step refers to assigning roles to students. The teacher must designate the roles corresponding to each of the students, so that they can develop the activities in the best possible way. The third step refers to the motivational component of the students. In this regard, Farida et al. (2012) mention that motivation in students is the main component of the success of the application of the PBL methodology. In the learning environment in which conventional modes are still predominant, students are generally not ready to undertake PBL. When they first encounter PBL class, most students normally express frustration to show their resistance before they can adapt to the new learning environment. While getting

introduced to the course contents without prior experience in PBL, students may have difficulty in determining what is important for them and what is not.



Graph 4: Motivational elements in class

Source: Taken from (Farida, Mohd, & Ahmad, 2012)

The fourth point refers to the creation of a document that has all the strategies that will be implemented within the methodology as such. These strategies will take into consideration aspects such as the way in which the students know the problem, the way in which the students should know the problem and the way in which the problem will be learned (Estrada, 2017)

The fifth step is related to the development of activities based on the interest of the students. These activities must be directly related to the tastes and preferences that students have regarding the activities that must be developed in class. Finally, the sixth step allows to present the solution to the problem, which includes the conclusions and recommendations that were reached after solving the problem (Estrada, 2017).

Among the main benefits that can be mentioned when applying this methodology, the following can be mentioned:

Greater motivation. The first great benefit of using PBL is the increased commitment and motivation to learn. Guerrero and Moya (2020) mention that the application of the PBL increases the participation of the students, this because the students can deal with real problems, a situation that allows them to learn experiences outside the classroom. In general, the activities that help to generate a higher level of motivation within the PBL are the following: Design processes, decision making, trouble search, problem resolution and model discovery or construction

On the other hand, students present a high level of motivation within this methodology because the PBL provides them with a practical approach to content. In summary, the ABP methodology is considered one of the best tools for increasing the active participation of students, this because the methodology focuses on establishing opportunities to learn and generate knowledge in a practical way.

Skills development. Students who participate in ABP activities have the opportunity to develop a wide variety of skills. These skills are collaboration skills, communication skills, problem solving skills and critical thinking skills.

Better academic performance. Various studies indicate that the application of PBL within the classroom has a significant influence on the performance of students as such. Students who participate within the PBL show significantly high knowledge results because the PBL gives them the opportunity to learn by doing.

1.2 Speaking skills

According to Alfi (2015), speaking is an activity that takes place in real life that people carry out to carry out their ideas and interact with listeners. These activities are not planned and their continuity is based on the situations that may arise.

That is, speaking is one of the basic communication skills that are used in daily life in order to establish communication within society. This ability is based on the natural ability of communication that occurs in society, which is considered as a

constructive process of meanings and knowledge that are expressed through sounds and words emitted by an interlocutor.

Within the process of speaking the English language, students find this skill the most difficult in learning the language. In this sense, for the student to express himself fluently, he must master two specific skills: micro-skills and macro-skills.

Regarding micro-skills, Alfi (2015) mentions these skills as the most important: Produce language fragments of different lengths, orally produce differences between English phonemes and their respective variants, produce accent patterns in English, checking the intonation scheme of the word or phrase being treated, make reduced forms for certain sentences, use an adequate number of words to communicate ideas, improve pronunciation levels when establishing oral communication processes, maintain constant monitoring of the student's oral production by establishing different strategies, use grammatical word classes, make speeches with appropriate and natural words, express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms and adequately use different communication functions, which will go hand in hand with the situations that arise in the dialogue.

Within these abilities can also be mentioned the use of appropriate registers, implicature, pragmatic conventions, and other sociolinguistic features in face-to-face conversations, transmit ideas and emotional ties that allow knowing the main idea of the transmitted speech, using body gestures and other types of unspoken language to convey the idea of a speech and employ speaking strategies focused on the interpretation of speech.

On the other hand, the macro-skills are the following:

- Adequately fulfill the communicative functions related to communication.
- Use proper conversation styles and techniques.
- Use appropriate registers, implicature, pragmatic conventions, and other sociolinguistic features in face-to-face conversations.
- Transmit ideas and emotional ties that allow knowing the main idea of the transmitted speech.

Within the functions of speech, Harmer (2011) states that when speaking, students understand ideas, opinions and information from other people. Harmer classifies speech functions as follows:

- Talk as interaction
- Talk as transaction
- Talk as performance

Talking as interaction refers to normal conversation. This type of speaking is related to the social role, and deals with people and their normal communication in society. These conversations should be friendly, allowing you to establish an excellent relationship with society.

On the other hand, speaking as a transaction refers to situations where the message is focused solely on the person who emits it. Within this aspect, the main objective is the message and the way in which it can be communicated to others. Harmer (2011) distinguishes between two different types of conversation as a transaction. The first type refers to situations where the focus is on information, while the second type is focused on obtaining goods and services.

The third type of conversation that can be usefully distinguished has been termed speaking as acting. This type of conversation refers to all public speeches, that is, at the time that one interlocutor makes a speech to many people. These approaches are primarily focused on listening, where the functions of speech are not focused solely on producing ideas, but are also focused on other objectives within everyday communication. (Alfi, 2015).

Regarding the aspects that are evaluated when measuring the level of oral skill, Rodríguez (2016) mentions the following:

- **Pronunciation:** It is defined as an important process within oral communication, which include important elements, such as the development of the appropriate sounds for the establishment of a good conversation.
- **Grammar:** It is considered as one of the integral parts of the language, which are defined as a set of rules focused on correct writing.

- **Vocabulary:** It refers to the number of words necessary to establish adequate communication with society.
- **Accuracy:** It refers to the correct use of words within the language, combining the grammatical and pronunciation aspects.
- **Fluency:** Fluency is related to the speed of pronouncing sentences and phrases correctly (Rodríguez, 2016).

Within this topic, it is important to mention the difference between speaking and talking. Regarding this issue, Rybáková (2012) mentions that the acquisition of speaking skills is one of the most important aspects of acquiring a new language. Students can learn the language just by being exposed to it, they can memorize some patterns or rules of vocabulary and grammar.

Among the main problems that can be mentioned within the development of speaking skills, the following can be mentioned:

- Students are not the same. It is important to consider that students have different study rates, also considering the different personalities and characters that each one of them presents and that influence the educational aspect in different ways.
- Students are not interested in the given topic, even though the writers of student books do their best to get as close to the students as possible. In this topic, students find many topics irrelevant and boring, so they are not motivated to participate.
- Students do not have clear reasons to act and speak in class. At L1 level, people communicate to give or receive a message. All oral participations have a common objective, always related to communication.
- Students don't know the correct way to start a conversation. Many students feel awkward and awkward when engaging in or starting a conversation in the new language. Although they have no problem communicating in their

first language, when using their second language they feel confused. Teachers should also teach students to have a conversation, to respond to their partner's speech. Reactions that make all conversations fluid and lively should be presented to students (Rybáková, 2012).

On the other hand, Harmer (2011) mentions the following characteristics regarding the production of spoken language, which help to improve production. These measurements are as follows:

- Use of appropriate sounds to express ideas
- Use of expressions and expressive distinctions through the correct use of tone, accentuation, that allow the correct meaning to be conveyed.
- Use of grammar and lexicon through the use of appropriate expressions for different functions.
- Use of negotiation language (asking for clarification in conversation)

On the other hand, Kurum (2016) mentions three other characteristics of speaking skills, which are divided as follows:

- Mechanics including pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, which means using the language with correct words, pronunciation, and order.
- Functions such as transaction and interaction that focus on sending the correct message as understood by the other party. Therefore, the interaction occurs in the process of speaking.
- Social, pragmatic and cultural rules and norms such as participant roles, turns and others. It is relevant to know who we are talking to, in what circumstances, for what and the true purpose of the communication.

It is important to mention that an adequate methodology must be followed for the development of the mentioned speaking activities. Regarding the subject, Sisalema (2019) mentions the following:

First, setting a task to engage students into the topic; second planning the speaking that involves decision on how to organize students into the topic; third rehearsing the speaking in which learners practice, and the teacher comments and give suggestions and improvements; fourth doing the task to make learners perform the task; fifth giving feedback to discuss about the possible drawbacks committed during the oral production; sixth adding, correcting and revising in which learners talk about how they can improve the activities for the next time, and finally redoing the task through which students have the opportunity to perform the task again (p.49).

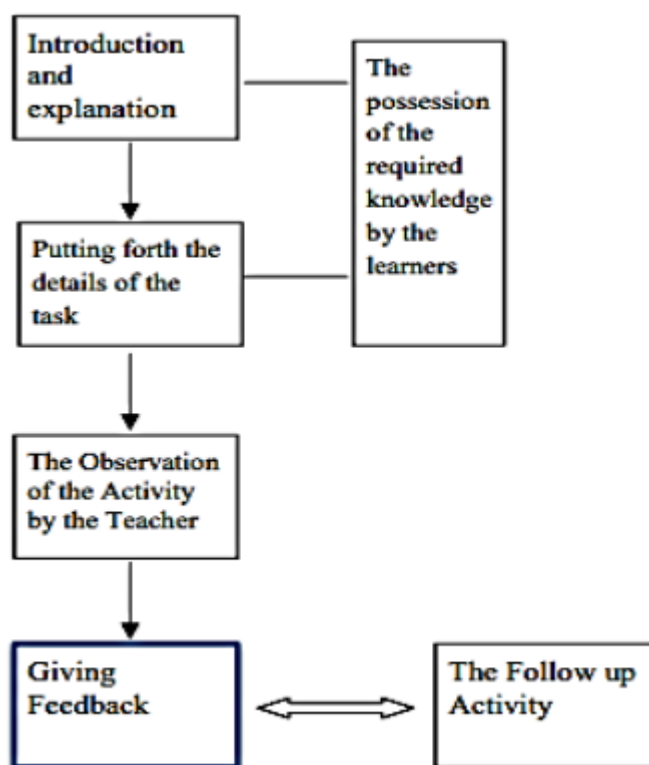
In other words, the processes related to speaking skills must always have an adequate structure for the student to handle said knowledge and skills. It is the teacher's responsibility to establish the appropriate guidelines to strengthen the development of spoken language, this through the implementation of different activities and methodologies that are of help and interest to students.

As an example, Sisalema (2019) mentions a standard process for the application of lessons that are aimed at improving speaking skills. The mentioned structure is as follows:

- In this section, the teacher focuses on explaining the main objective of the prepared class.
- Presentation of the task: During this phase, the teacher is in charge of giving the necessary instructions so that the planned activities can be developed in the best possible way.
- Observation: During this phase, the teacher focuses on observing the progress of the students in carrying out the assigned activities, being able to intervene if necessary.

- **Feedback:** Feedback is done at the end of the class. During this activity, the teacher focuses on highlighting the positive and negative points during the development of the proposed activities. Feedback allows students to improve their language skills.
- **Follow up-activity:** In addition to the oral activity carried out in class, the teachers carry out a follow-up activity to reinforce the weaknesses in the previous task (p.50).

The process above for a speaking lesson is displayed in the following image.



Graph 5: Process to develop a speaking lesson

Source: Taken from (Bohari, 2019)

This whole process is based on the different activities that are related to oral expression. These activities can be classified as follows:

- **Controlled activities:** These types of activities refer to the precision of speaking skills. They are controlled directly by the teacher.

- Guided activities: These activities are based on the precision of speaking skills, however, the activities carried out have a higher level of creativity.
- Creative communication activities. These activities are focused on fluency. The content of the language is not guided by the teacher, only his stage. Examples of these activities are simulations, debates, role plays, and discussions.

Finally, it is important to talk about activities aimed at evaluating students' speaking skills. These activities can be autonomous or collective, depending on the assessment methodology used by the teacher in his class. Autonomous activities have a better focus on developing fluency and other speaking-related skills for each student.

Among these skills, the following can be mentioned:

- Discussions: They are considered as one of the most common instruments within oral activities in EFL. In this activity, students analyze the problem and discuss with their classmates to find a possible solution.
- Speeches: This activity is carried out according to the language level of the students, considering the language skills of each one.
- Conversations: They are used as a complement to language practice. In this activity, students can improve their speaking skills.
- Oral Presentations: These activities help students show what they have learned orally and also motivate them to speak in front of other people. Hence, they become less shy and eager to do their best.



Graph 6: Ways to improve speaking skills

Source: Taken from (Kurum, 2016).

CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

2.1 Design of the investigation

For the development of this research, the use of a mixed-type approach is proposed. This approach combines the main advantages of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to give a higher investigative level to the work carried out.

In this regard, Guelmes and Nieto (2015) mention that the mixed research approach as a paradigm that represents the natural complement between the two types of traditional research (quantitative and qualitative), whose methods offer great tools that greatly contribute to the research. The authors define this approach as the search carried out by the researcher combines the aforementioned methods, having methodological pluralism as its main characteristic, which generates that the research has a greater investigative value by minimizing the weaknesses of the aforementioned approaches and the maximizing the strengths of both approaches.

Regarding the qualitative approach, Salgado (2007) mentions that this approach starts from the basic assumption that the social world is made up of meanings and symbols. The qualitative methodology has generated a multidisciplinary space that covers different areas of science, which generates a great contribution of knowledge.

Regarding the quantitative approach to research, Del Canto and Silva (2013) mention that the qualitative approach is based on evidential data. This approach uses data collection in order to verify the hypothesis raised in a study based on numerical measurement and statistical analysis, this in order to establish behavior patterns that allow the verification of theories.

The main characteristics of the aforementioned approach refer to the rigor with which the research process is carried out under this approach, this due to the fact that the information is compiled in a structured and systematic way, using deductive logic to identify causal or universal laws in a reality that is external to the object of study (Hernandez, Fernández, & Baptista, 2014).

Within this research, the mixed research approach will be used in order to know the main opinions and perspectives regarding the research topic. The qualitative

approach will allow to know if there is a significant difference between teaching through a normal methodology and the application of PBL.

Regarding the type of research to be used, the use of a pre-experimental type of research is proposed at a descriptive and explanatory level. The pre-experimental type of research is frequently used in research related to education and other social sciences. Despite this, many researchers in the aforementioned areas do not accept them as easily as a valid alternative to design their projects and / or tend to consider them with a disdainful attitude and, therefore, to justify their implementation in the research they are carrying out (Salas, 2013).

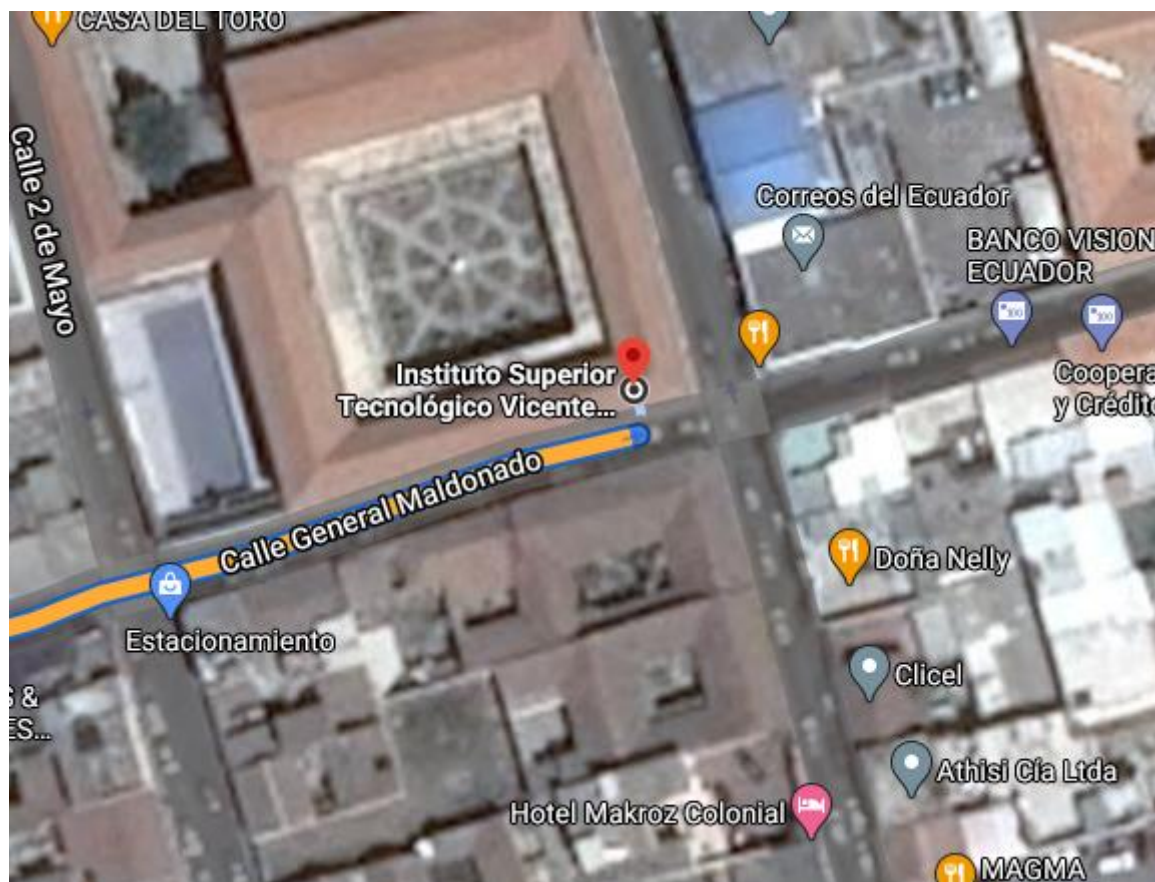
2.2 Characterization of the institution

"Vicente León" Higher Technological Institute began as a school from May 7, 1840, but for organizational reasons it began to function from May 24, 1842 (Anonymous, 2011); Since this date, it has been established as a centennial institution that contributes to the academic training of Cotopaxian men and women; citizens who have contributed to the aggrandizement of the town and its surroundings, in gratitude for the contribution of his benefactor, Dr. Vicente León y Arguelles, a lawyer and philanthropist from Latacunga who bequeathed his fortune so that it could be invested in works in favor of The education.

In 1980 it became a Higher Technical Institute (Anonymous, 2011), during this period on February 12, 1993, according to agreement 311 of the Ministry of Education and Culture, signed by the Undersecretary of Education Lic. Gabriel Pazmiño. The operation is authorized of the programming specializations in systems and marketing for the 1992-1993 school period, counting as antecedents within the same document, the operation of specializations such as: Occupational Safety and Hygiene, Cost Accounting, Bilingual Executive Secretariat, Dental Mechanics and Mechanics Optics.

On November 6, 1996, according to agreement No. 1686 of the Ministry of Education and Culture during the management of Dr. Freddy Torres Cepeda as Rector, the "Vicente León" Higher Technical Institute was elevated by the Minister of Education and Culture, Dra. Sandra Correa León to the category of Higher Technological Institute "Vicente León" with the operation of the first, second- and

third-year post-bachelor specializations Marketing and Systems Programming for 1996-1997 educational period.



Graph 7: Institute location

To collect the necessary information for the implementation of the PBL-based proposal, a survey was conducted with the school teachers in order to identify the main flaws that students present within the development of speaking skills. Within the pedagogical proposal, information will be collected before the application and after the application of the proposal. For this purpose, the pretest and posttest tools will be used.

For the evaluation of the pretest and the posttest applied to the students, the evaluation criteria mentioned by Bohari (2019) will be taken into consideration. The author mentions that 4 stages should be applied for the assessment with pretest and posttest instruments. The stages are shown in the following figure, where the research design for the application of the methodology of the present study is shown.



Graph 8: Stages for assessment

Source: Bohari (2019)

The parameters that will be evaluated in the pretest and posttest applied will be the following:

- Vocabulary: One of the aspects to evaluate in the use of vocabulary is the number of words in a normal conversation. The use of vocabulary is an important aspect; however, it is not considered as the first part to be considered.
- Grammar: It refers to the necessary rules for a correct language development.
- Fluency: It deals with the ability of a person to establish communication quickly and fluently.
- Comprehension: It refers to the level of capture of ideas that the receiver has to the message emitted by the sender.
- Pronunciation: It refers to the sounds necessary for the best understanding of the language. (Bohari, 2019).

The following tables show the parameters that will be taken into consideration when scoring each item of the pretest and posttest.

Table 2: Oral Proficiency Achievement of Grammar

Achievement	Proficiency description
1	Grammar mistakes are common, but the speaker can be understood
2	The speaker can handle elementary sentences with some success, but does not have adequate control of grammar
3	The control of grammar is correct, which allows the speaker to be able to speak with a sufficient grammatical structure.
4	The speaker is in the ability to use language appropriately. This level is suitable for a professional.
5	The speaker is considered a native speaker

Source: (Bohari, 2019)

Table 3: Oral Proficiency Achievement - Vocabulary

Achievement	Proficiency description
1	The speaker has an inappropriate vocabulary
2	The speaker has a sufficient vocabulary level to express his ideas
3	The speaker is able to speak the language with enough vocabulary to participate in formal and informal conversations.
4	The speaker can understand and participate in all types of conversation with a high range of experience.
5	The speaker is considered a native speaker

Source: (Bohari, 2019)

Table 4: Oral Proficiency Achievement - Comprehension

Achievement	Proficiency description
1	The speaker can understand simple sentences due to his limited experience in the language.
2	You can understand the main content of the conversations.
3	Comprehension is quite complete at a normal rate of speech.
4	The speaker can understand all types of conversation according to his experience
5	The speaker is considered a native speaker

Source: (Bohari, 2019)

Table 5: Oral Proficiency Achievement - Fluency

Achievement	Proficiency description
1	The speaker has a very low fluency level
2	The speaker can establish adequate conversations, but fluency is limited
3	The speaker can establish the main interest of the conversation.
4	Able to use the language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can participate in any conversation within the range of this experience with a high degree of fluency.
5	The speaker is considered a native speaker

Source: (Bohari, 2019)

Table 6: Oral Proficiency Achievement - Pronunciation

Achievement	Proficiency description
1	There are frequent mistakes in pronunciation, but the speaker can express himself
2	An accent is intelligible though often quite faulty.
3	Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. An accent can be obviously foreign.
4	Errors in pronunciation are quite rare
5	The speaker is considered a native speaker

Source: (Bohari, 2019)

The results obtained in these tests, as well as the results obtained from the survey applied to teachers, were tabulated in a spreadsheet. The results of the pretest and posttest will be evaluated in order to identify if there are significant differences in the students' grades after applying the methodological proposal, while the survey data will allow knowing the perceptions of the teachers regarding the skills of speaking and its improvement in students.

2.3 Proposal development

Within the development of this research work, the development of a pedagogical manual with activities focused on the problem-based learning methodology is proposed. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is one of the teaching learning methods that have become more trained in higher education institutions in recent years. The path taken by the conventional learning process is reversed by working in the PBL. While traditionally the information is first exposed and then its application is sought in the resolution of a problem, in the case of the PBL the problem is presented first, the learning needs are identified, the necessary information is sought and finally the problem is returned.

The main objective of this proposal is to apply activities based on the problem-based learning methodology in order to improve the speaking skills of A2 level students of Vicente León Superior Technological Institute. Based on this objective, a proposal is made consisting of 8 activities (one activity per week). In week 1 and week 8 the pretest and posttest will be applied to students, respectively. During 6 weeks there will be activities focused on improving speaking skills based on the ABP methodology.

For the application of the methodology, in the first place, a survey was elaborated in order to evaluate the relevance of the application of the designed proposal. The results obtained allowed us to observe that the teachers and students of the educational institution agree on the implementation of the proposal, focusing on improving the students' speaking skills.

The implementation of the proposal will be carried out based on the ABP process, which is detailed in the following figure.



Graph 9: PBL Process

Source: (Sisalema, 2019)

First, the problem to be solved for the students is detailed. The students propose different ideas that help to solve the problem, motivating the students to improve their skills and knowledge.

Objectives

General Objective

To contribute to the improvement of the oral production skill in English through the application of Problem Based Learning.

Specific Objectives

- To design a practical Based Problem Learning activities.
- To encourage students to interact in provided activities as an alternative to get significant knowledge
- To offer possibilities of working

Activities

Activity N°1

Objective: Assess the student's ability to recognize problems

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Story project based on PBL, books, multimedia

Process

- Before starting the class, the teacher will briefly explain the methodology that will be used during the duration of the proposal. The teacher will make sure that the students understand what to do in class, organizing in a better way the ideas they have regarding the class.
- After the socialization, the teacher will provide a story to the students. In order to evaluate the ability of students to identify the problem and provide solutions based on the PBL methodology.

Getting to know my problems

It is a teaching-learning strategy in which both the acquisition of knowledge such as the development of skills and attitudes is important, in the BPL a small group of students meets, with the facilitation of a tutor, to analyze and solve a problem selected or designed especially for the achievement of certain learning objectives. During the interaction process of the students in order to understand and solve the problem, they can develop a diagnosis of their own learning needs, which include the importance of working collaboratively, developing skills analysis and synthesis of information, also the learning subject's own knowledge being committed to their learning process.

To – Do Activities

- Into the classroom, each student improves 4 skills competencies, experience independent, expand book literacy and build self-confidence.
- Students share their comments and suggestions for each other.

Title: The Lady, or The Tiger? by Frank Stockton

This is one of my absolute favorite short stories to dig into. “The Lady, or The Tiger?” centers around a justice system in which the accused determine their own fate by choosing between two doors in an arena, behind one is a lady (marriage is the reward for innocence) and behind the other is a tiger (death is the punishment for guilt). The plot intensifies when the king of the arena discovers that his daughter is in love with a commoner and puts that man on trial. To help my students understand the king’s system of justice, I created a simulation in which each student is assigned a crime and gets to choose a door to determine their innocence or guilt. Later students reveal whether they actually committed the crime of which they were accused. This leads to discussion about the fairness of this justice system and comparison to the fairness of our own. This short story would be a great lead in to any text centered around a court case like *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee or *Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence and Robert Edwin Lee. There is often something current in the media related to the justice system that can be connected to the story as well.

Activity N°2

Objective: To talk about cultures around Ecuador. Make a collaborative learning to describe the Ecuadorian provinces. Use Simple Present and Simple Past Tenses.

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Ecuadorian map, touristic places per region, multimedia resources

Process

- Before starting the class, the teacher will ask the students about their favorite tourist destinations. He will ask them where they have traveled and what caught their attention the most during the trip. The teacher will also comment on his experiences with respect to the trips he has made.
- After this short discussion, the teacher will facilitate a reading about a tourist destination. The students will solve the questions that the teacher will give them on another sheet.

Instructions

- Individual Work: Read about the most famous touristic place in Ecuador. Do you know more details about it?
- Individual and pair work: Read the information above and decide if the statements below are true or false.
- Group work: Talk about Galapagos Islands. Describe its main tourist spots, its food and traditions.

Wonderful Places around Ecuador

Look at the picture. Do you know this place?



The Galápagos Islands

Since their "discovery" in the 16th century, the Galápagos Islands have intrigued and inspired visitors from around the globe. Named for the giant tortoises on the islands, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to a unique ecosystem that largely evolved without outside influences (mainland Ecuador lies some 1,000 kilometers to the east) and offers an exceptional opportunity for wildlife viewing.

The Galápagos Islands remain one of the most active volcanic regions in the world, and the formation of the islands is still in progress. Most of the 13 large islands, six smaller islands, and 42 islets that make up the Galápagos were declared part of the Galápagos National Park in the 1950s, and visiting this fragile ecosystem can only be undertaken as part of a guided tour to designated visitor sites (there are, however, one or two areas visitors can go without a guide, including some areas popular with scuba divers).

The main attraction here are its many bird species, of which 28 are unique to the islands, including the Galápagos penguin, flightless cormorant, and waved albatross, and the 13 species of Darwin's famous finches. Hot Tip: Be sure to book a behind-the-scenes visit to the Charles Darwin Research Station in Puerto Ayora on Santa Cruz Island (tours of this important research facility can be made in advance of your arrival).

Questions

1. Describe the following photo



2. After reading about the Galapagos Islands, answer these questions with true or false

Question	True	False
The Galapagos Islands were discovered in the 15th century		
The Galápagos Islands remain one of the most passive volcanic regions in the world		
Galapagos were declared part of the Galápagos National Park in the 1960s		
The main attraction here are its many bird species, of which 28 are unique to the islands, including the Galápagos penguin, flightless cormorant, and waved albatross, and the 13 species of Darwin's famous finches		

3. Talk about Galapagos Islands. Describe its main tourist spots, its food and traditions

Activity N°3

Objective: To talk about entertainment in past and present Tense

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pictures about entertainment, multimedia resources

Process

- Before starting the class, the teacher will ask the students about their favorite tourist destinations. He will ask them where they have traveled and what caught their attention the most during the trip. The teacher will also comment on his experiences with respect to the trips he has made.
- After this short discussion, the teacher will facilitate a reading about a tourist destination. The students will solve the questions that the teacher will give them on another sheet.

Instructions

- Individual Work: Watch a video about entertainment activities in USA. Is the same in your country? What is interesting? What is not interesting? Why?
- Individual and pair work: Talk about your entertainment activities. What did you do in your last vacation? Where did you go? What did you do?
- Group work: Discuss about entertainment activities in your town and downtown. Talk about children, teens and adult people activities.

1. Check out the following video. Compare the activities carried out in the United States with those carried out in Ecuador. Do you find any difference?

Video link: [Teens & Young People - USA: What do you do in your spare time? - YouTube](#)

2. Look at the pictures and label them with the phrases below.

rafting hula hoop roller coaster skiing



3. Discuss about entertainment activities in your town and downtown.

Talk about children, teens and adult people activities. Make a chart to help you.

	Town	Downtown
Adults		
Teens		

Activity N°4

Objective: To talk about extreme sports

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pictures about extreme sports, multimedia resources

Process

- Before starting the class, the teacher will ask the students if they know or have done any kind of extreme sport. Students will talk in groups about extreme sports they have played or watched.
- After the conversation between students, the teacher will give worksheets to the students, in order to carry out activities focused on the topic of extreme sports.

Instructions

- Individual Work: Read definitions of extreme sports.
- Individual and pair work: What kind of sport have you tried? Would you like to try an extreme sport? Which one?
- Group work: Use a graphic organizer to summarize some information about extreme sports. Present your ideas to your classmates, discuss about it.

1. Read the following definitions of extreme sports. Match the meanings with the correct word.

a. Rafting		The sport or pastime of riding on a skateboard.
b. Bungee jumping		The sport or activity of riding a mountain bike (a type of bicycle that has a strong frame, thick tires, and straight handlebars)
c. Skateboarding		Adventure sport that consists of descending several people in a boat without a motor down a whitewater river
d. Downhill mountain biking		the activity of leaping from a high place while secured by a long nylon-cased rubber band around the ankles

2. Read the information below and summarize it in a graphic organizer, present to your classmates

Ecuador Extreme Sports Options

If you are interested in extreme sports, one of the best options for you is to head to the town of Baños. Perhaps it is the fiery volcano “Mama Tungurahua” that constantly threatens the town that has led to the emergence of the extreme sports industry here, or perhaps the landscape lends itself to it, or maybe a bit of both. Whatever the reason, Baños is worth a special mention for its extreme sports options in Ecuador due to the fact there is such a variety of opportunities here. For

example, you can do rappelling, white water rafting or mountain biking using this small town as your base. In case this is not enough for you, there is also some great rock climbing in the areas around Baños.

If mountain biking is your thing, then why not try biking down one of the highest active volcanoes on Earth? It is possible to take such a day trip from Quito. You'll head out early in the morning from the capital city and drive to the Cotopaxi National Park. From here you will be driven up to a high altitude on the Cotopaxi volcano, and you can enjoy the thrill of biking down.

Kayakers consider Ecuador to be a "whitewater heaven" with good reason. You will never be far from a fast-flowing river. For kayaking on Class V rivers, the Quijos Valley is usually considered a good bet. This is easily accessed from the jungle town of Tena, and there is a lot of whitewater in this area. Many kayaking operators are based here for this reason, but you will also find kayaking tour operators in Quito. You can also find kayaking around the town of Baños too.

While you are in the Tena region, why not consider a spot of caving? There are several opportunities to do so in this region. One superb place for caving is in the Jumandi Caves. There are three caves here, and one of which is a river cave. This provides for a fun visit as you have to swim through pools and scramble a little over rocks to pass through the cave. There are also possibilities for caving in the Lagarto Caves, situated about four hours from Quito, close to Archidona – again in the Amazon region, and at Los Tayos Cave near Macas.

Finally for the Ecuadorian mainland, if you enjoy surfing, then you might want to head to the hippy party beach town of Montanita on Ecuador's Pacific Coast. This is considered the capital of surfing in Ecuador. The waves are at their best between December and March, and there are lots of surf competitions to observe here too, if you've had enough of doing the extreme thing yourself.

- 3. Read your summary of the class reading. Compare the answers you got with your classmates.**

Activity N°5

Objective: Talk about healthy and unhealthy food, advantages and disadvantages.

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pictures about food, multimedia resources

Process

- Before starting the class, the teacher will ask the students about their favorite food. The teacher will do work groups in which the students will comment on their favorite food. Then one student per group will share the results of the group to which the student belongs.
- After the conversation, the students will answer the questions posed on the sheets provided by the teacher.

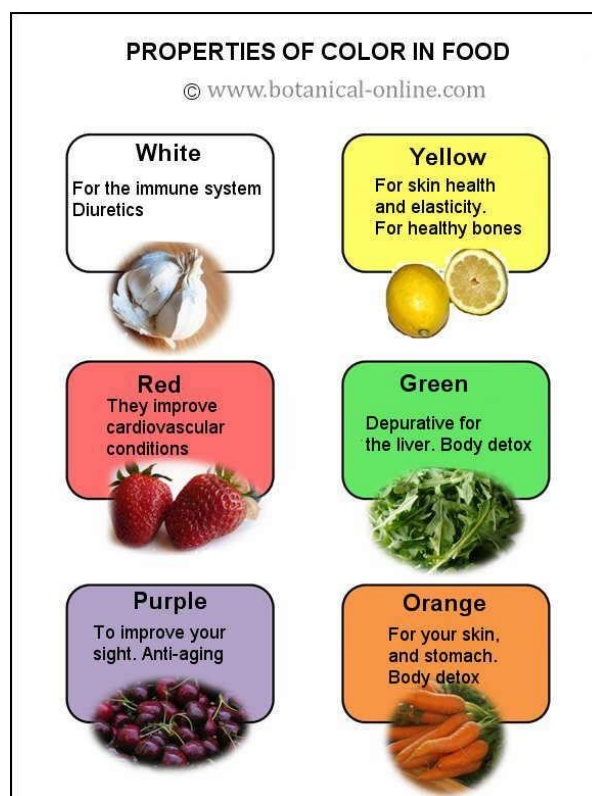
Instructions

- Individual Work: Analyze the pyramid food. Which food do you try every day?
- Individual and pair work: What do you usually have for breakfast / lunch/ dinner? How often do you eat junk food? How often do you eat vegetables and fruits?
- Group work: Colors in food

1. Look at the following image. Discuss with your partner which foods in the picture you consume the most.



2. Look at this information. Discuss it with your partners.



3. Talk to your colleagues. Do you think that you and your classmates have a good diet? Share your answers with the class.

Activity N°6

Objective: To talk about many uses for technology and its advantages and disadvantages in teenagers.

Focused Skill: Speaking

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Pictures about food, multimedia resources

Process

- Before class begins, the teacher will talk with the students about the advancement of technology. The teacher will ask the students from what age they use technology and what type of technology they use (cell phones, internet, computers, etc.).
- After the conversation, the students will answer the questions posed on the sheets provided by the teacher.

Instructions

- Individual Work: How much do you know about technology?
- Individual and pair work: What is technology used for? Can you identify the advantages and disadvantages?
- Group work: Talk about the changes brought about by technology in everyday life.

1. Form working groups. Talk to your classmates about technology and how technology has helped you in your studies. Share the answers with the rest of the class.
2. Look at the following image. Name all the tech gadgets you know.

Listen & Choose The Gadgets



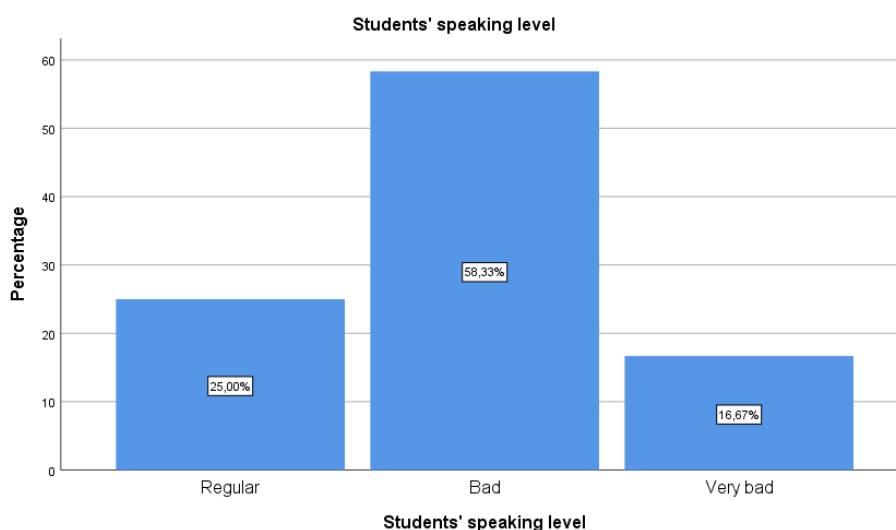
3. Talk about technology in the past, present and future. Write a short summary on the topic covered and share your summary with the class.

CHAPTER III – ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

This chapter proceeds to the analysis of the results obtained both for the surveys applied to teachers and for the grades obtained in the pretests and posttests applied to the students of Vicente Leon High School. In the first place, we proceed to analyze the surveys carried out with the teachers.

3.1 Teachers' survey results

After applying the surveys to 12 teachers selected for the study, the following results were obtained.

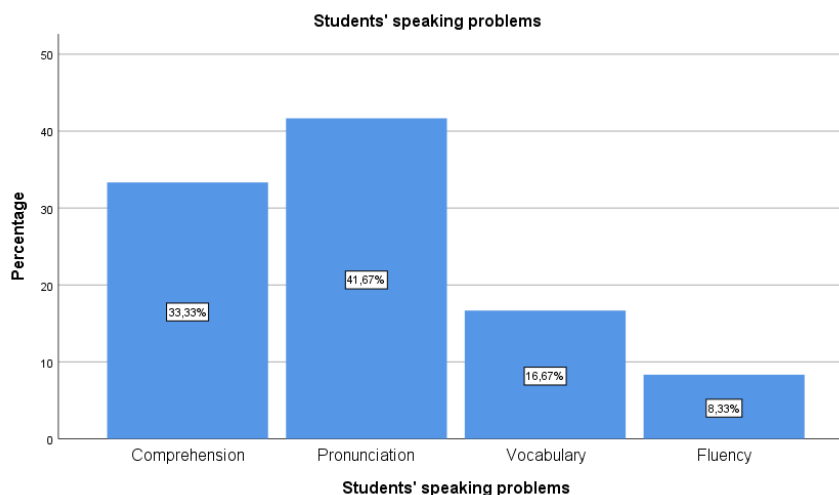


Graph 10: Students speaking level

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

Regarding the students' speaking level, 58.33% of the teachers mention that the students' speaking level is bad; 25% mention that the level is regular; while 16.67% mention that the level is very bad.

The results allow us to appreciate that the majority of teachers consider that the level of speaking of their students is low, a situation that requires the implementation of an urgent improvement within the learning process.

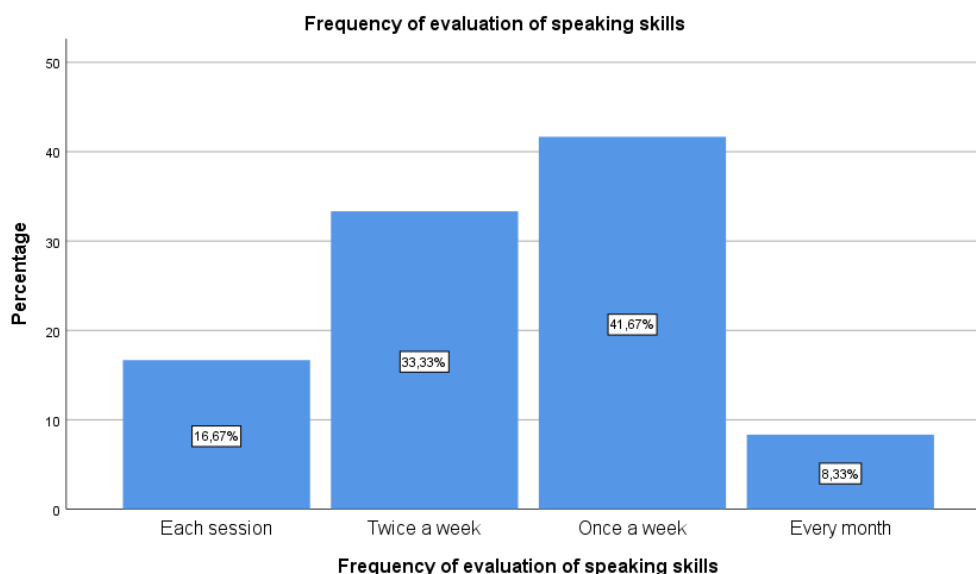


Graph 11: Students' speaking problems

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

Regarding the main problems that students have within the development of their speaking skills, 41.67% consider that pronunciation is the main problem; 33.33% consider that comprehension is the main problem; 16.67% consider that vocabulary is the main problem; while 8.33% consider that creep is the main problem.

In summary, pronunciation is considered as the main problem that students present when practicing their speaking skills. This problem is based on the difficulty of pronunciation of certain words in the new language, which are not familiar to students.

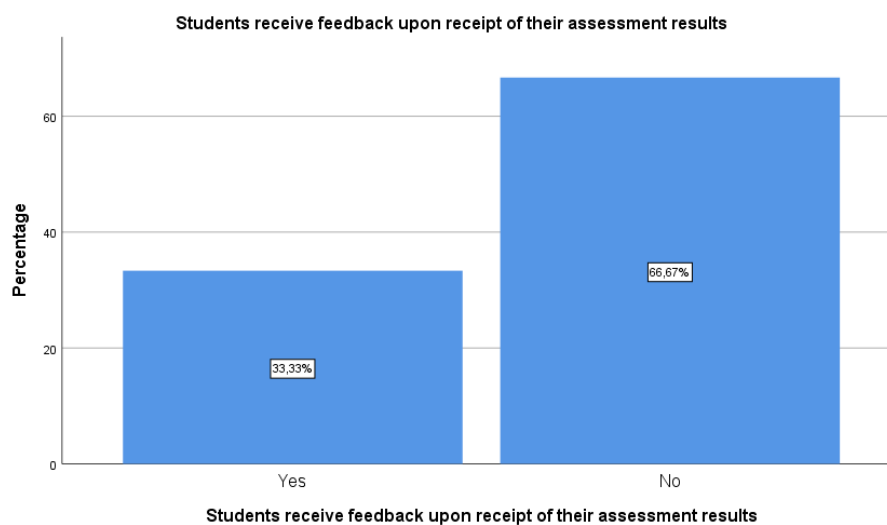


Graph 12: Frequency of evaluation of speaking skills

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

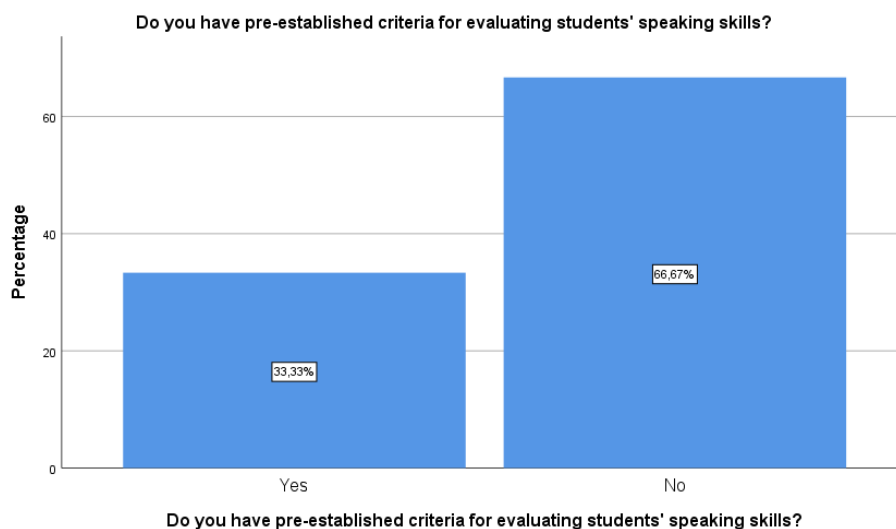
When asking teachers about the frequency of evaluation they have towards students, 41.67% mention that they carry out evaluations once a week; 33.33% mention that they carry out evaluations twice a week; 16.67% mention that they carry out evaluations each class; while 8.33% mention that they carry out evaluations every month.

It is important to highlight the importance in the application of evaluations by teachers, since they keep students in constant control and evaluation.



Graph 13: Feedback

When asked if students received feedback after receiving their grades, 66.67% of respondents said no, while 33.33% said yes. One of the weak points that can be observed is the lack of feedback from teachers towards students. This situation means that students do not know their mistakes and shortcomings.

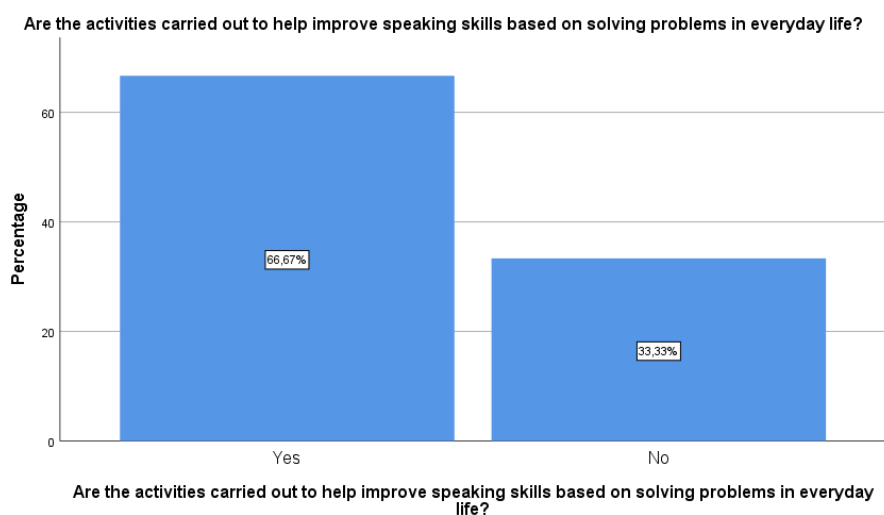


Graph 14: Existence of pre-established criteria for evaluation

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

When asking if teachers have pre-established criteria for evaluation, 66.67% mentioned that they do not have established criteria, while 33.33% mentioned that they do have established criteria for evaluation.

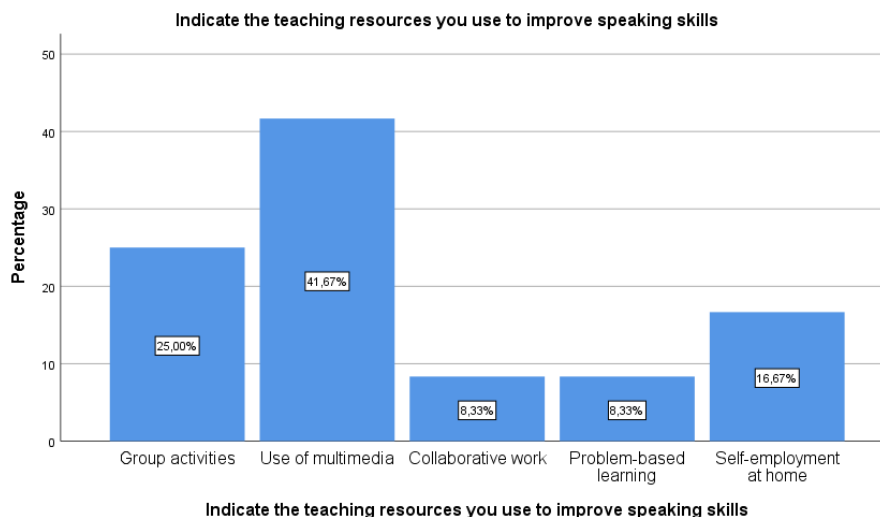
The establishment of standardized criteria for the evaluation of students is an important point when talking about the improvement in educational processes. Instrument standardization allows results to be compared quickly and efficiently.



Graph 15: Activities carried out in class

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

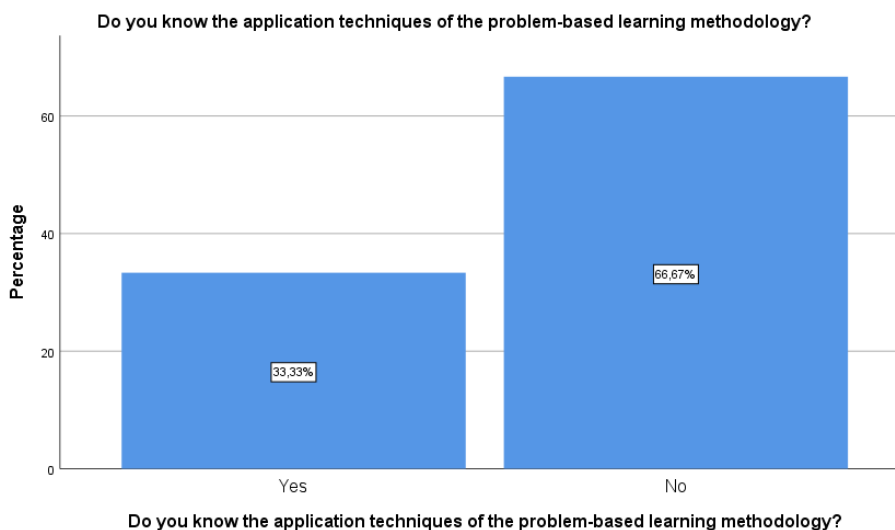
When asking if the activities carried out in the classroom are based on real life problems, 66.67% of teachers mentioned that they were, while 33.33% mentioned that they were not.



Graph 16: Teaching resources used in class

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey.

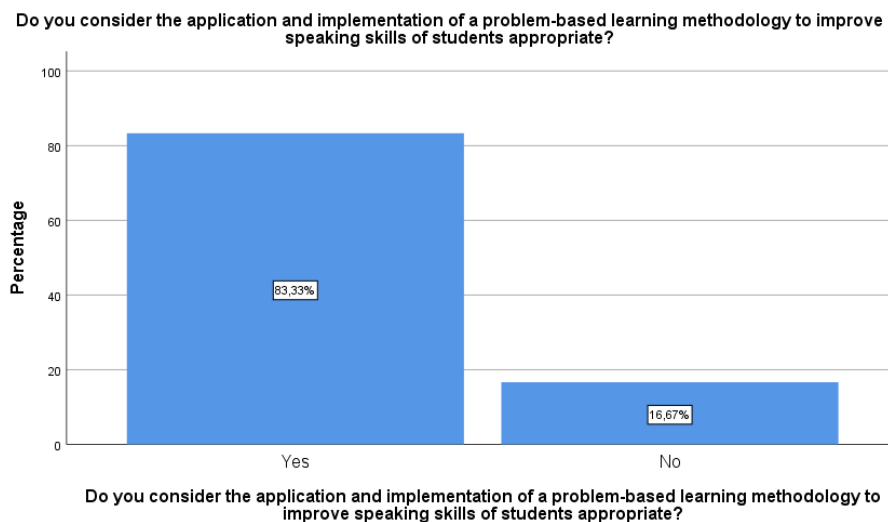
When asking about the resources used by teachers to improve students' speaking skills, 41.67% mention that they use multimedia, 25% mention that they use group activities, 16.67% mention that they do autonomous work at home, while 8.33% mention that they do collaborative work and problem-based learning.



Graph 17: Knowledge about the techniques to be used in the PBL methodology

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey

When teachers were asked if they know the application techniques of problem-based learning, 66.67% mention that they do not know the methodology, while 33.33% mention that they do know the methodology.



Graph 18: Opinion about the implementation of the ABP methodology

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the applied survey

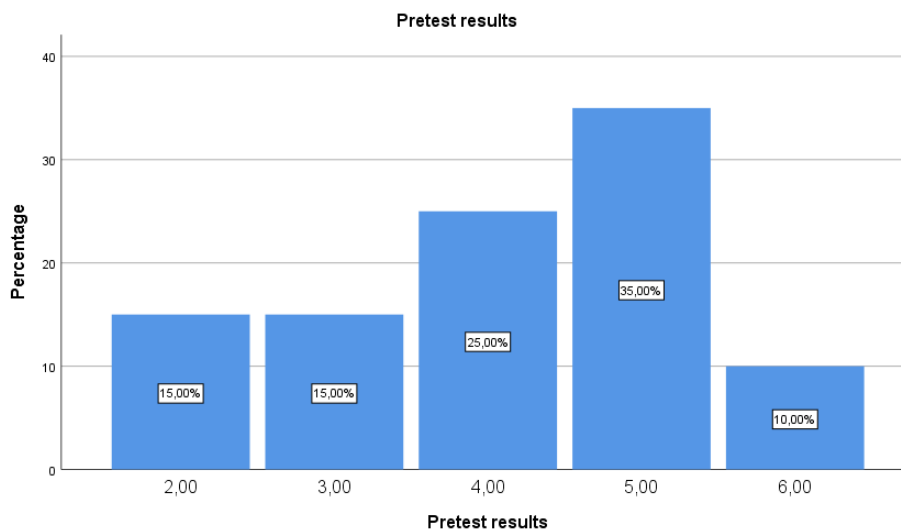
Finally, when asking the teachers about their opinion about the implementation of the problem-based learning methodology within their teaching and learning processes, 83.33% mentioned agreeing with the implementation; while 16.67% mentioned not agreeing on the implementation.

The results obtained allow us to visualize that the teachers consider the implementation of the problem-based learning methodology appropriate, since this learning method will substantially improve the processes carried out within the classroom.

3.2 Pretest and posttest results

After conducting the survey of teachers, the proposal for a problem-based learning methodology was elaborated. Before starting with the application of the proposal, a pretest was applied to the students. After the learning methodology was finished, the same test was applied as a posttest to evaluate if there was a difference in the students' grades.

The results obtained in the application of the pretest are presented in the following graph



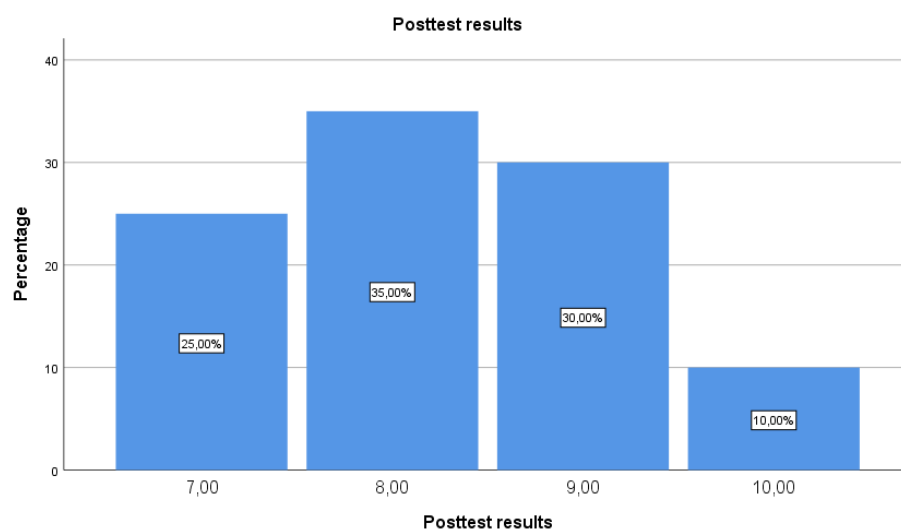
Graph 19: Pretest results

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of pretest and posttest

The results obtained in the pretest allow us to observe that 35% students had an average of 5, 25% of students obtained an average of 4; in equal parts (15%) they obtained averages of 2 and 3; while 10% of students obtained an average of 6.

It can be seen that the students, in general, have an average of 5, which allows us to appreciate that the students have a low level in their pronunciation and other skills related to speaking.

After the methodological proposal was finished, the same test was applied as a post-test. The results obtained were as follows.



Graph 20: Posttest results

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of pretest and posttest

From the previous graph it can be seen that 35% of students obtained an average of 8 in their grades; 30% of students obtained an average of 9; 25% obtained an average of 7, while 10% obtained an average of 10.

A significant improvement can be seen within the grades obtained by the students. This allows us to affirm, at a glance, that the applied proposal had a positive effect on the speaking skills of the selected students.

3.3 Checking the idea to defend

After analyzing the results obtained by the tests in a descriptive way, we proceed to check the idea to defend. The idea to defend for this research work mentions that the application of a problem-based learning proposal will significantly improve the students' speaking skills.

To check the hypothesis of the work, a Student's test was carried out, in order to verify if there are significant differences between the two groups of results. The results obtained for the verification are presented in the following table.

Table 7: T - Student results

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation	Sig.
Pretest & Posttest results	-4.15	1.46089	0.000

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of pretest and posttest

In the table above you can see the results obtained for the hypothesis test carried out. A significance value of less than 0.05 can be seen; which represents that the hypothesis raised is valid, that is, the application of the problem-based learning methodology positively influences the improvement of the students' speaking skills.

CONCLUSIONS

After completing the present research work, the following conclusions could be obtained.

- Speaking skills are one of the four important skills in learning EFL. These skills are the first to be developed by the student, in conjunction with listening skills. The importance of speaking skills lies in the fact that these skills are the first point of communication of new ideas from the student to others, which makes it necessary for these skills to be developed in the best possible way.
- Problem-based learning (PBL) is a teaching methodology focused mainly on solving situations that arise from everyday life. This type of methodology is more efficient due to the motivational component involved in the application of solving everyday problems, making the student feel that he is solving a problem in daily life through the application of pedagogical techniques. This type of methodology presents better results in its application within the normal teaching-learning processes.
- In the present research work, a methodology based on PBL was proposed to improve the speaking skills of the selected students. To verify if there is an improvement in the speaking skills of the students, a pre-test and a post-test were applied at the beginning and end of the application of the proposal. The results obtained allowed us to observe that there is a difference between the average of the students in the pretest and the average of the students in the posttest, which is why it is stated that the ABP methodology has a high degree of influence on the improvement of skills of speaking of the students of the educational institution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to better observe the difference in students before and after the application of the proposal, periodic evaluations must be carried out. These evaluations will help the teacher to know the reality of his students in a close way.
- It is recommended to establish a minimum period of 2 months for the application of the proposal in the students. A shorter period may give results that are not so close and real to the reality of the study carried out.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alfi, I. (2015). Improving the students' speaking skills through communicative games for the grade VIII students of MTS N Ngemplak. Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Retrieved from <https://eprints.uny.ac.id/23854/1/A%20THESIS%20-%20INTAN%20ALFI%20-%2011202241002.pdf>
- Almulla, M. (2019). The Efficacy of Employing Problem Based Learning (PBL) Approach as a Method of Facilitating Students' Achievement. *IEEE Access*, 1-1. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336339599_The_Efficacy_of_Employing_Problem_Based_Learning_PBL_Approach_as_a_Method_of_Facilitating_Students%27_Achievement
- Bohari, L. (2019). IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AT ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA PLUS MUNIRUL ARIFIN NW PRAYA. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 68-81. Retrieved from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234119584.pdf>
- Del Canto, E., & Silva, A. (2013). Metodología cuantitativa: Abordaje desde la complementariedad en ciencias sociales. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 25-34. Retrieved from <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/153/15329875002.pdf>
- Delisle, R. (1997). *How to Use Problem-Based Learning in the Classroom*. Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- González, C., Carbonero, M., Lara, F., & Martín, P. (2014). Nursing students' satisfaction in Problem-Based Learning. *Enfermería Global*, 97-104. Retrieved from http://scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1695-61412014000300006&lng=es&nrm=iso&tlng=en
- Guelmes, E., & Nieto, L. (2015). Algunas reflexiones sobre el enfoque mixto de la investigación pedagógica en el contexto cubano. *Universidad y Sociedad*, 23-29. Retrieved from http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2218-

"MARIANO BENÍTEZ" HIGH SCHOOL IN PELILEO, TUNGURAHUA.
Retrieved from Universidad Técnica de Ambato:
<https://repositorio.uta.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/24725/1/TESIS%20CLARA%20RODRIGUEZ.pdf>

- Rojas, M. (2015). Tipos de Investigación científica: Una simplificación de la complicada incoherente nomenclatura y clasificación. *REDVET. Revista Electrónica de Veterinaria*, 1-14. Retrieved from <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/636/63638739004.pdf>
- Rybáková, K. (2012). *Speaking Skills*. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwimxunPjMrvAhVw1lkKHeALDZcQFjAPegQIBxAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fis.cuni.cz%2Fwebapps%2Fzpz%2Fdownload%2F120077540&usg=AOvVaw3YtYJ1uG2SvrCGxPh9LBKA>
- Salas, E. (2013). Diseños preexperimentales en psicología y educación: una revisión conceptual. *Liberabit*, 133-141. Retrieved from http://www.scielo.org.pe/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1729-48272013000100013
- Salgado, A. (2007). Investigación cualitativa: diseños, evaluación del rigor metodológico y retos. *Liberabit. Revista de Psicología*, 71-78. Retrieved from <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/686/68601309.pdf>
- Sisalema, V. (2019). *Project-Based Learning to develop the speaking skill in English*. Retrieved from Universidad Técnica de Ambato: <https://repositorio.uta.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/29596/1/Sisalema%20Vanessa.pdf>
- Yew, E., & Goh, K. (2016). Problem-Based Learning: An Overview of its Process and Impact on Learning. *Health Professions Education*, 75-79. Retrieved from <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S2452301116300062?token=108828F4E44F6C9DDE997EE0CA28667DF1112F7010E8300EABBCF44021BFC648EF170087E4AE946E797C568BCD4AA52D>

Zaidi, U., Hammad, L., Awad, S., Qasem, H., & Ahmed, N. (2017). Problem-Based learning vs. traditional teaching methods: self efficacy and academic performance among students of health and rehabilitation sciences college, PNU. *Sci.Int.(Lahore)*, 547-551. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330900427_PROBLEM-BASED_LEARNING_VS_TRADITIONAL_TEACHING_METHODS_SELF-EFFICACY_AND_ACADEMIC_PERFORMANCE_AMONG_STUDENTS_OF_HEALTH_AND_REHABILITATION_SCIENCES_COLLEGE_PNU

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Survey model applied

MODELO DE CUESTIONARIO A APLICAR

Estimado docente, agradecemos su ayuda en la investigación titulada **PROBLEM BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE A2 SPEAKING SKILLS AT VICENTE LEÓN SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE STUDENTS**. Por favor, lea atentamente las siguientes preguntas y marque con una X la respuesta que usted crea conveniente.

1. ¿A qué nivel considera que se encuentran sus estudiantes con respecto a sus habilidades de speaking?

Excelente	
Muy bueno	
Regular	
Malo	
Pésimo	

2. ¿Cuáles son los principales problemas que puede apreciar en sus alumnos al momento de evaluar sus habilidades de speaking?

Falta de comprensión	
Falta de pronunciación	
Vocabulario escaso	
Bajo nivel de fluencia	

3. ¿Con qué frecuencia evalúa el nivel de las habilidades de speaking de sus estudiantes?

Cada clase	
Dos veces por semana	
Una vez por semana	
Cada mes	

4. ¿Los estudiantes reciben una retroalimentación al momento de recibir los resultados de su evaluación?

Si	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. ¿Cuenta usted con criterios preestablecidos para la evaluación de las habilidades de speaking en los estudiantes?

Si	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. ¿Las actividades realizadas para ayudar a mejorar las habilidades de speaking se fundamentan en la resolución de problemas de la vida cotidiana?

Si	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. ¿Indique los recursos didácticos que emplea para la mejora de las habilidades de speaking?

Actividades grupales	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uso de material multimedia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trabajo colaborativo	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aprendizaje basado en problemas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trabajo autónomo en casa	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. ¿Conoce usted las técnicas de aplicación de la metodología de aprendizaje basado en problemas?

Si	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. ¿Considera oportuna la aplicación e implementación de una metodología de aprendizaje basado en problemas para la mejora de las habilidades de speaking de los estudiantes?

Si	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

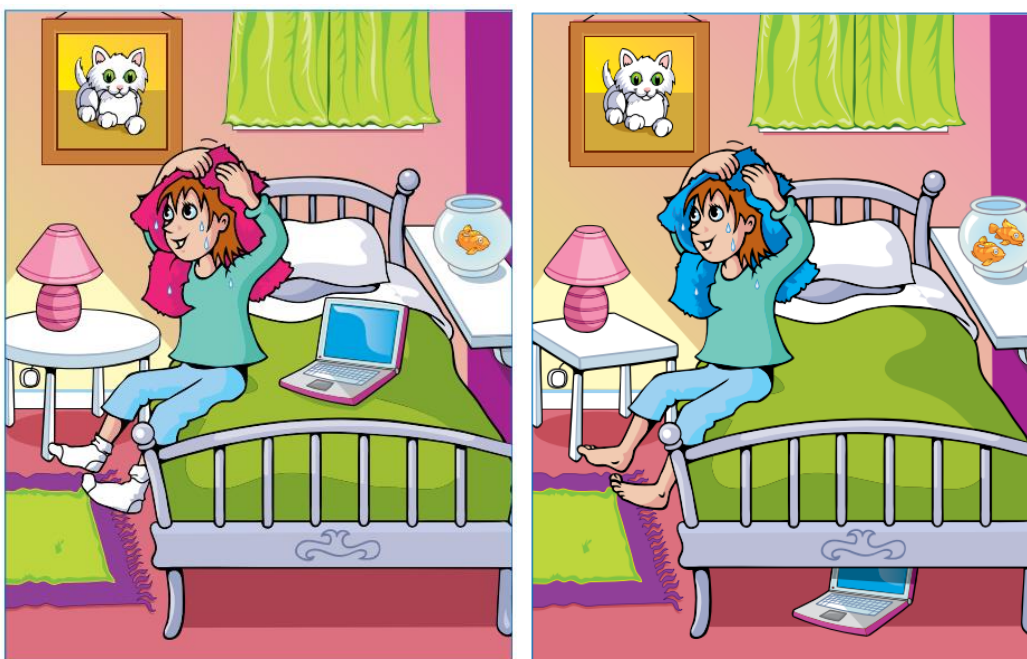
¡¡¡MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU COLABORACIÓN!!!

Annex B. Pretest and posttest model

The following pre-test will consist of 4 parts. The total duration of the pre-test will be 5 to 8 minutes.

Part 1.

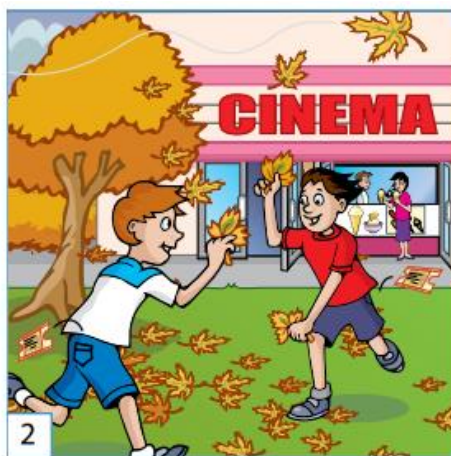
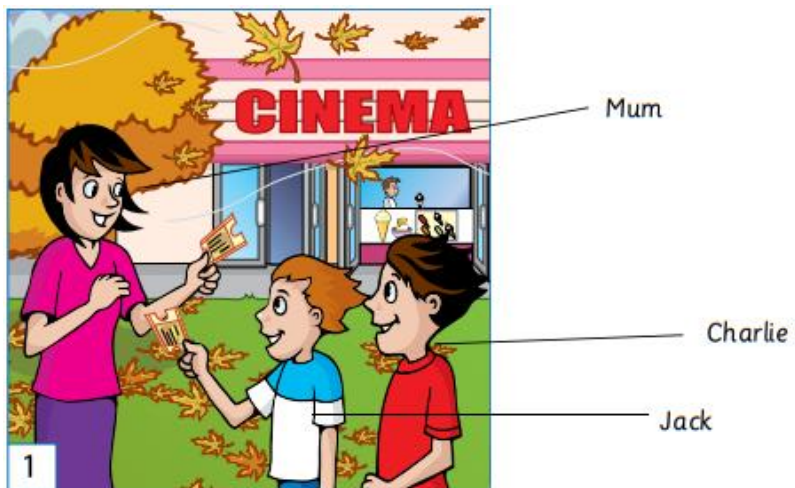
Look at the next two pictures. Find and describe four differences between the pictures.



Part 2

In this part, children talk about 4 pictures which tell a story. It's important to try to say something about all four pictures. The examiner tells the child the name of the story and gives him/her some time to look at the pictures.

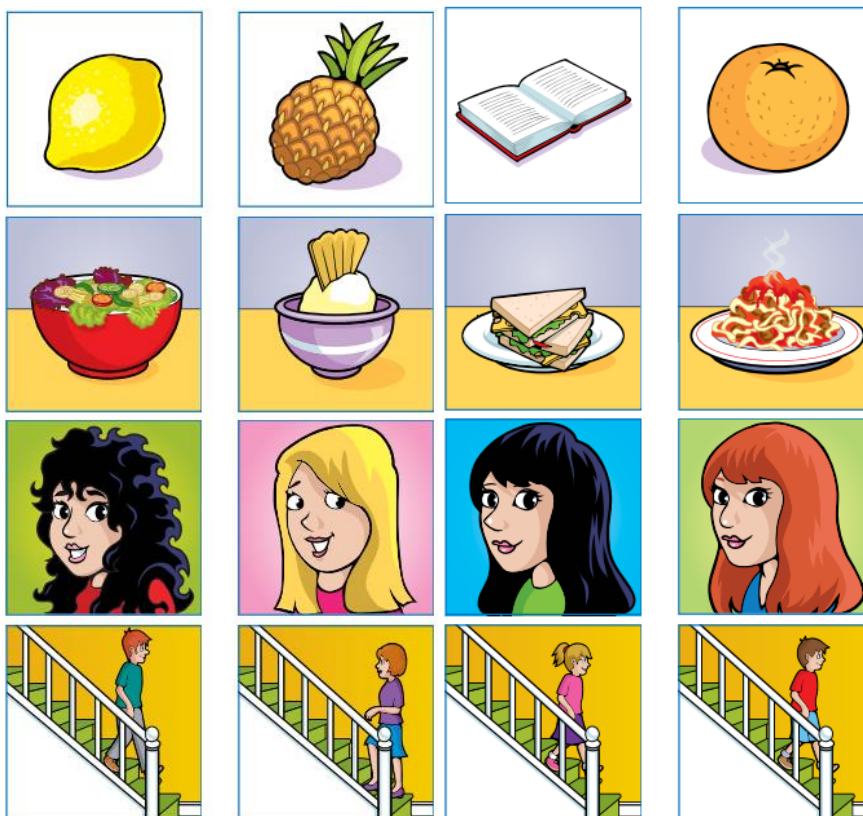
Name of the history: The windy day





Part 3

In this part, children look at 4 pictures and say which picture is different and why it is different.



Part 4

In this part, children answer four questions about themselves.

- Who's the oldest in your family?
- Who do you play with at school?

- What games do you play at school?
- What do you have for lunch?