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Editorial 2025-1

Edgar Lucero¹

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In recent years, English language teaching (ELT) in Colombia and Latin America has undergone significant transformations and responded to local sociocultural realities and global demands. The articles featured in this issue continue to reflect a growing trend toward reimagining pedagogical approaches that foster critical awareness, communicative competence, and innovative methodologies that embrace technology and student-centered learning.

One of the predominant themes in this issue is the enhancement of oral fluency and speaking skills, particularly in Colombia and Chile. The first four studies emphasize the need to go beyond traditional grammar-based instruction and encourage dynamic, interactive, and personalized feedback mechanisms that place learners at the center of the speaking process. From Colombia, Glenis Gamarra-Paatt and Zoila Liliana Giraldo-Martínez examine the potential impact of Project-Based Learning (PBL) on the speaking abilities of a group of seventh-grade students at a public school in Cartagena. In their study, PBL emerges as a powerful approach to developing those abilities and autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning.

From Chile, Pablo Aedo Cancino presents an Action Research study on a course of undergraduate students from various programs to improve their English oral skills. The pedagogical experience also increased their self-confidence, reduced language-specific anxiety, and provided individual potential feedback. On the same line, Nicoll Stefanie Castillo-Torres and Angie Quintanilla-Espinoza study the ‘describing picture strategy’ in boosting English-language undergraduate students’ oral fluency. These two Chilean studies also illustrate how formative assessment and structured speaking tasks can make students gain confidence and reduce anxiety.

Francisca Lazcano-Santibáñez and Nataly Valeria Quezada-Telles explore an engaging and purposeful way to foster fluency in vocational education. They analyze how the Elevator Pitch technique increased the oral fluency of six English as a foreign language 11th graders

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in a rural at-risk context in Hualqui, Chile. The researchers show how students improved oral fluency and received a positive perception of the technique.

Integrating technology into language learning is the other recurring theme in this issue. The article on video-based listening activities, by Chilean researchers Ana Elizabeth Acuña-González and Claudio Heraldo Díaz-Larenas, underscores the importance of multimodal input for developing students' listening comprehension. The study reinforces the role of audiovisual materials in fostering engagement and retention and supports the belief that using video-based listening activities is an effective tool for those skills. Meanwhile, the documentary review of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) experiences in Latin America, by Colombian researcher Yuranny Marcela Romero-Archila, highlights how technology can facilitate intercultural exchanges beyond physical mobility. The study opens new avenues for collaborative and globally connected language learning.

Another key area of focus in this issue is the critical and sociocultural dimensions of ELT in Colombia. Using the IMAGE model, Ana Maria Sagre-Barboza and Paula Andrea García-Montes challenge the persistence of stereotypes in English as a foreign language classroom. They advocate for a pedagogical shift that fosters cultural awareness and critical engagement with the English language. Similarly, Diego Ubaque-Casallas' theoretical review offers a thought-provoking analysis of how pedagogy is framed in ELT discourses, exposing the tensions between colonial influences and emerging decolonial, translanguaging, and anti-racist perspectives. This posture contributes to shifting the geography of reason concerning English language pedagogy. These two articles call for re-examining how English is taught, not merely as a skill but as a space for identity negotiation and ideological contestation.

Altogether, these eight articles reveal a pressing need to keep rethinking ELT in Colombia and Latin America through an interdisciplinary, inclusive, and research-informed lens. The authors in this issue demonstrate that effective English instruction goes beyond developing linguistic competence; it must also foster critical engagement, intercultural awareness, and innovative teaching practices. Drawing on reflective research and classroom experiences, these eight studies contribute valuable insights that can inform educators worldwide. These articles encourage a more reflective and contextually responsive approach to English language teaching.

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As a journal committed to maintaining communication among English language teachers and researchers, *HOW* has always been a platform for sharing knowledge that emerges from educational and research practices. This issue invites readers to engage with current trends in ELT, considering the integration of technology, innovative pedagogical strategies, and critical analysis of language ideologies in teaching. By fostering these conversations, *HOW* continues to support a global community of educators, committed to enhancing their teaching practices and contributing to the ongoing development of English language education in diverse contexts.

Language Learning Strategies Under the PBL Approach: Study of Seventh Graders' Speaking

Estrategias de Aprendizaje de Idiomas bajo el Enfoque de Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos: Estudio de la Habilidad Oral en estudiantes de Séptimo Grado

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Abstract

This study deeply examines the potential impact of Project-Based Learning (PBL) on the speaking abilities of a group of seventh-grade students at a public school in Cartagena, Colombia, and its connection to language learning strategies. A mixed-gender group of thirty-five students aged between 12 and 15 was randomly chosen for this explorative action research. The methodology involved six dynamic workshops wherein the students were evaluated using a multi-modal approach including surveys, a research diary, and a non-participant observation checklist. These tools helped examine the efficacy of different strategies and students' oral performance during their final presentations. Data were systematically collected and analyzed with recurrent information organized into defined

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categories and coded into emerging themes from the applied artifacts. Comparative analyses of students' performances across three distinct stages - diagnosis, action, and evaluation - revealed noticeable differences in learning outcomes, confidence, and motivation among the participants. The authors claim that incorporating the PBL approach and language learning strategies can boost students' motivation, foster autonomous learning, and nurture critical thinking and collaborative skills.

Keywords: Collaborative work, confidence, language learning strategies, project-based learning, speaking skill

Resumen

Este artículo indaga sobre el impacto potencial del Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos (ABP) en la habilidad oral de un grupo de estudiantes de séptimo grado de una escuela pública en Cartagena, Colombia, y también explora su conexión con las estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas. Las investigadoras seleccionaron al azar un grupo de 35 estudiantes cuyas edades estaban entre 12 y 15 años para efectos de esta investigación-acción. La metodología incluyó seis talleres bajo un enfoque multimodal que incluía encuestas, un diario de campo, y una lista de chequeo no participante. Estas herramientas ayudaron a evaluar la eficacia de diferentes estrategias y el desempeño oral durante sus presentaciones orales finales. La información se recogió y examinó sistemáticamente organizada en categorías definidas codificadas con base en temas emergentes de los artefactos aplicados. Los análisis comparativos de los desempeños de los estudiantes a través de tres diferentes etapas (diagnóstico, acción y evaluación) revelaron diferencias notables en los resultados del aprendizaje, la confianza y la motivación entre los participantes. Las autoras postulan que la incorporación del enfoque ABP y las estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas pueden aumentar la motivación de los estudiantes, fomentar el aprendizaje autónomo, el pensamiento crítico y las habilidades de colaboración.

Palabras Claves: Aprendizaje basado en proyectos, confianza, estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas, habilidad oral, trabajo colaborativo

Introduction

Mastering multiple languages is desirable in today's global society, prompting many individuals to seek instruction from specialized institutions. To meet this demand, these entities employ educators trained in contemporary and effective teaching approaches such as Project-Based Learning (PBL). As Lam (2011) noted, PBL is a dynamic approach in which students delve into real-world problems, prompting a deeper understanding and retention of the subject matter compared to traditional textbook-based learning. This approach effectively promotes cognitive, social, and language skills, while accounting for the learner's context, turning it into a potent source of knowledge.

This study is centered on implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) to encourage the oral skills in English among 35 seventh-grade students at a public school in Cartagena. After an initial diagnosis, we concluded that most of them exhibited a lack of motivation in verbally employing their target language (TL). When students were required to speak, many

of them displayed feelings of embarrassment. In addition, difficulties were observed during group activities, particularly with low levels of tolerance and cooperation. These issues pose potential impediments to their overall language performance. Therefore, the need to investigate possible underlying causes and devise appropriate strategies arose. The goal is to provide these students with effective tools to enhance their oral proficiency and foster better teamwork.

This paper explores the components and characteristics of PBL, as framed within Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of language learning strategies, and examines its impact on fostering cooperative work and enhancing speaking skills. The research was conducted in line with Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) concept of Action Research, which delineates four critical steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The diagnostic phase formed the initial stage, highlighting the urgent need to improve speaking skills within the target group. Several categories emerged from this stage, including speaking difficulties signifying a reluctance to speak due to internal and external factors. This connected with the next category, high affective filter, indicating significant emotional barriers to language learning. Nonetheless, it was observed that most of the students were enthusiastic about learning a target language (L2), underscoring the need for a teaching approach that actively engages them in their learning process.

Following the collection and analysis of data in the diagnostic stage, the subsequent step entailed planning six workshops rooted in the PBL approach. These sessions aimed to bolster speaking fluency, encourage cooperative work, and nurture 21st-century skills such as creativity and collaboration. Bell (2010) posits that PBL fosters a more profound understanding of a topic, promotes deeper learning, enhances higher-level reading abilities, and boosts learning motivation. Hence, implementing this approach allows students to comprehend the causality of a problem situation, stimulating their enthusiasm to continue their learning journey.

In the final phase of this research, an evaluation of the six workshops was undertaken, and the collected data were analyzed to discern key findings and formulate recommendations for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. The analysis uncovered notable improvements in students' speaking fluency, confidence, and language proficiency.

Previous Studies

This section displays seven studies about the impact of PBL on speaking skills. It comprises national, Latin American, and international research to validate PBL, the advantages of implementing Oxford's (1990) learning strategies taxonomy in an EFL class, and alignment with current language learning features regarding teachers and students.

In this action research, Vaca Torres and Gómez (2017) examined how thirty-ninth graders from a public school in Colombia enhanced their speaking skills through PBL. This study aimed to generate collaboration, help each other, be responsible, and work at their own pace. The instruments used for collecting data were field notes, transcripts of learners' oral performance, and an interview. The information was analyzed using the grounded approach to discover patterns in the collected data. Results revealed an increase in oral production since learners needed target vocabulary to communicate their ideas and to overcome their speaking fear which was possible through PBL work.

Additionally, Riswandi (2018) analyzed two aspects of PBL implementation. First, the effect on ninth graders' speaking skills from Surakarta, Indonesia, and second, the teaching and learning process. The Action Research was implemented in two cycles. The researcher employed an observation checklist, field notes, a performance test, a questionnaire, and an interview to gather information.

Triangulation was used to validate data. Each cycle revealed its results. Cycle one displayed an increase in students' motivation and speaking skills. However, some students were still reluctant to speak. Cycle two revealed that most of the students participated actively during the project. This study also displayed students' progress in linguistic features such as pronunciation, grammar, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary.

Dewi's (2016) study aimed to describe PBL applicability in a classroom. The researcher implemented observations and teaching experiences in which she realized students' four needed aspects: time to practice speaking, more vocabulary, and interest because of the teachers' methodology, and contents from real life. Based on this data, and students' achievements in an English proficiency test, the researcher applied Action Research in two cycles administering researchers' and learners' observation sheets, tests, and student questionnaire sheets. After comparing the pre and post-test results, findings pointed out that students increased participation and improved their speaking.

Alhaysony (2017) relayed in reporting the research results of Learning Strategies usage in Saudi EFL 66 men and 68 women students from Aljouf University. This objective was to understand the relationship between three aspects of Language Learning strategies, gender, and the duration of English language study. The researcher administered a questionnaire focusing on cognitive, metacognitive, memory, affective, compensation, and social strategies. Results from this study revealed that metacognitive, compensation, and cognitive strategies were mainly used, and memory and affective were less utilized. Moreover, results showed that women used more Language Learning strategies than men.

Moreover, a Colombian study validated the positive impact of metacognitive strategies to elevate EFL awareness of stress and intonation. Peñuela (2018) conducted this action research to examine the effect of three metacognitive strategies: overviewing, goal setting,

and self-evaluation. The participants were ten adult students from a private language center in Bogota. These learners presented a lack of awareness of using suprasegments (stress and intonation) to communicate in an oral interview. The research was conducted in three cycles using learning logs, recorded artifacts, and field notes to collect data. The author analyzed the information by triangulation. The results demonstrated awareness raised through a triadic process, including fostering the understanding of suprasegmental features, promoting metacognition to increase self-regulation, and provoking self-awareness.

In the same way, González et al. (2018) demonstrated the impact of cognitive strategies in a mixed-method study to develop listening in EFL. The participants were students in the first year of a university's Bachelor's Degree program in Foreign Languages. The research study employed a diagnostic test. Qualitative and quantitative instruments included The Strategy Inventory Language Learning in version 7.0, focus groups, diaries, and rubrics. Findings showed that listening was developed due to a more regulated and supervised use of cognitive strategies.

Qualitative research conducted by De Araúz (2009) validated Oxford's language learning characteristics. In her study, 30 first-year students from the Bachelor's Degree in English participated. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews, in-class observations, reflective portfolios, and students' diaries concerning listening, writing, speaking, and reading skills to gather information. The author used Oxford's taxonomy with a learning styles questionnaire to reinforce their research. Results showed that most learners used each strategy and had more confidence.

Methodology

Considering that this study examines the effect of learning strategies under the PBL approach on learners' speaking skills, a qualitative approach such as Action Research (AR) was appropriate. The objectives were to comprehend learners' low performance in oral tasks and possible causes of anxiety during these activities and compile data on pupils' experiences and opinions about the proposed methodologies to tackle their language deficiencies. Creswell (2009) affirms that qualitative research sifts through human individual or group situations. It is the case of Action research, which involves the participants' employment of different instruments to collect information and reflect on this data.

Burns (2001) argues that the core of Action Research lies in the systematic observation of ongoing social processes across various contexts—in this case, the classroom—to intervene in them to bring about changes that will eventually lead to improvements. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), Action Research is a cyclical process that involves four essential components: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

As teacher researchers, we conducted these processes during three stages: diagnostic, action, and evaluation. For this study, we set research questions and objectives. To further understand the phenomenon, we managed a literature review. Following this, we implemented six workshops to collect data in the action stage. Likewise, we outlined the instruments to collect data (observations, surveys, a non-participant observation checklist, and transcripts). After this, it was necessary to reflect on the process to validate the impact of these workshops. Ultimately, the authors analyzed advances in students' performance and objectives' achievements during the evaluation .

Diagnostic Stage

This stage was carried out in the second semester of 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was done in hybrid classes: some students were in virtual classes while others were face-to-face. First, the teacher researcher used a teacher interview, a student survey, journals, and a diagnostic test to understand the phenomenon more deeply. The survey was to validate the data collected in the journal, which contains Likert scales, multiple choice, semantic scales, numerical scales, and open-ended questions related to speaking skills, feelings while doing oral tasks, methodology to learn English, and attitudes towards English lessons. In addition, the interview with the teacher was implemented to collect information about the previous teacher's perceptions of participants' English learning in terms of cognitive and social skills. The diagnostic test was applied regarding the four skills of listening, writing, reading, and speaking, in which oral proficiency was the weakest skill in the participants. Each instrument was coded and then triangulated to find concurrency.

The analysis of each instrument revealed speaking difficulties (lack of knowledge of vocabulary and expressions to speak fluently about any topic), high affective filter, lack of L2 understanding, and students' low participation in class. However, they showed a willingness to learn English, and a tendency to do collaborative work.

14 Finally, the analysis conducted during the diagnostic stage informed the selection of the PBL approach for the six workshops and the associated learning strategies. This decision was made considering the learners' needs, the educational context, and the school's pedagogical model. To ensure alignment with this approach and to accommodate the participants' preference for group work, the teacher-researcher carefully selected workshop topics that resonated with these factors.

The table below provides a succinct yet clear explanation of the reasons for using each instrument during the Diagnostic stage.

Table 1. *Data Collection Techniques and Instruments during the Diagnostic Stage*

No.	Data Collection Techniques	Data Collection Instruments	Rationale
1	Students' survey	Questionnaire	To collect information about probable causes of students' demotivation towards English class and how they perceive this language.
2	Teacher's interview	Interview protocol	To gather data about the students' motivation towards the English class, the attitudes, feelings, perceptions, and other relevant aspects that interfere with language learning in the previous course (6 grade).
3	Non-participant observation	Diagnostic Test	To collect information about students' performance in the four skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking to determine the most prominent difficulties.
4	Participant observation	Journal	This instrument aims to collect information about the students' behavior, and attitudes regarding the activities proposed in class.

Action Stage

During this stage, the teacher researcher implemented six workshops following the Gold Standards of PBL, incorporating one learning strategy per workshop based on Oxford's (1990) taxonomy. In her book, she defines learning strategies as "actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (p. 8). Therefore, applying learning strategies can be a useful tool for motivating students to construct knowledge and apply it to real-life situations when learning a target language. These workshops included issues related to various aspects of Cartagena city. In addition, projects had audio-visual support, such as images or videos. Activities during the sustained inquiry and authenticity stages in which students familiarize themselves with the learning strategy, vocabulary, or the project's core by doing speaking or

writing activities. The following stages included self and peer assessment activities, giving opinions, evaluating, and making decisions about the project's resources to present the final product. Finally, the researcher applied a post-test to determine the impact of the PBL approach and learning strategies.

The table below provides a brief description of the workshops implemented, the learning strategies applied, and the skills targeted in each workshop.

Table 2. *Workshops' Description*

Workshop's Name	What was the project about?	Learning strategy	Project's focus
Workshop 1: A Visit to the Aviary	Participants displayed an interview between native people and tourists talking about bird species and different activities in the National Aviary on Barú Island.	Applying images and sounds	Vocabulary recognition through images
Workshop 2: Protecting our Mangroves	Learners centered on describing actions to preserve Mangroves and mentioning bird species that live in these ecosystems by role-playing a situation in which they showed the summarized information and actions organized in a mind map.	Creating a structure for input and output (Summarizing and Mind mapping)	Vocabulary knowledge, developing thinking skills, a self-assessment checklist
Workshop 3: Knowing Cartagena Islands	Pupils prepared a presentation about tourist attractions and activities tourists may do in the Cartagena Islands. They planned their task based on information gathered from some web pages to submit a brochure.	Planning for a language task (identifying the purpose of a language task)	Encourage speaking, creativity, peer feedback, and having roles in teamwork
Workshop 4: Embellishing Our City	Students learned several strategies to control nervousness by presenting news to other partners about causes and actions to embellish deteriorated places in their communities.	Lowering your anxiety (meditation, relaxation, and deep breathing)	Confidence and self-esteem
Workshop 5: Giving a Good Impression	Participants represented a tourist tour by reflecting on positive attitudes to impress tourists and created a podcast interviewing a tourist.	Switching to the first language	Increase students' confidence. Self-assessment questionnaire and developing language learner and teacher profile

Workshop's Name	What was the project about?	Learning strategy	Project's focus
Workshop 6: My Neighborhood, My Customs	Learners performed a dialogue with community members about their neighborhood's cultural aspects and displayed the information in a brochure or public announcement.	Getting help (using mimics or gestures)	Teacher's feedback to the students and vocabulary knowledge

For this stage, the teachers researchers employed three instruments to collect information during the first three workshops: (a) a non-participant observation checklist in which an external teacher evaluates students' performance during the final product presentation; (b) the journal registered details about every class and important insights into the lesson; and (c) the students' survey gathered data about their perceptions of the topic, learning strategy, language improvement, collaborative work, and confidence. Nevertheless, based on the journals' observations, it was necessary to include transcripts of the participants' speech in the final stage showing information about their use of vocabulary, fluency, and message clarity. The teacher-researchers also used a speaking assessment rubric during each workshop.

The following table describes the data collection techniques and instruments used during the research process. Moreover, it justifies each.

Table 3. *Data Collection Techniques and Instruments in the Action Stage*

No.	Data collection techniques	Data collection instruments	Rationale
1	Participant Observation	Journal	To register and analyze information about students' behavior, participation, and language use.
2	Students survey	Questionnaire	To collect information about learning strategy usefulness and PBL effectiveness to foster speaking ability and students' perceptions about the proposed activities to work on the workshops' topic.
3	Non-participant observation	Checklist	To collect data about the effectiveness and the impact of the strategy, vocabulary, anxiety levels, and collaborative work for developing the Workshops.

No.	Data collection techniques	Data collection instruments	Rationale
4	Participant observation	Journal	To collect data about students' performance concerning the use of the language and their behavior and perceptions towards the EFL classroom.
5	Test	Post-test	To assess the progress of speaking skills and compare it with the pre-test results and examine the impact of the action stage of the study.
6	Scoring	Rubrics	To evaluate students' speaking skills by scoring from 0 to 5 according to the CEFR for an A1 level in fluency, message clarity, and vocabulary.

Participants

This study was conducted with 35 students from a seventh-grade course (10 girls and 25 boys). Their ages ranged between 12 and 15 years old. The teacher-researchers considered convenience sampling theory to collect and analyze data (Mackey & Gass, 2005). These participants came from low-income families with deep socio-economic phenomena such as drug addiction, gangsters, robbery, or prostitution. However, they were committed, respectful, and willing to participate in projects' activities.

They had a low English language proficiency level, as perceived in the diagnostic stage results. Likewise, the most prominent deficiency was in their speaking ability considering their deficient connection with the language. Besides, they spent two years at home because of the pandemic COVID-19 and most did not have the internet to connect to virtual classes. Moreover, they did not study the language in primary or preschool. Therefore, they needed higher levels of writing, listening, reading, and speaking skills. They knew some words and expressions but needed more for their grade.

Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze data, the teacher researchers followed what Seliger and Shohamy (2003) state about analyzing information to find common issues and refer to shifting, organizing, summarizing, and synthesizing to produce some results and conclusions of the research. This is what Saldaña (2016) defines as a code (it could be a word or phrase that represents the nature of a piece of information). Therefore, the teacher researchers used a coding process to examine the information gathered from the diagnostics and action stages instruments. According to Freeman (1998), triangulation is a process in which the researcher

includes several facts and opinions about the object of the study or investigation question. Furthermore, instruments were triangulated with a description (operationalization) and percentages. The non-participant observation checklist, journal, and transcripts were coded in a Microsoft Word document and afterward, these codes were refined in a Microsoft Excel document with their frequencies. The student's survey was coded manually and written in another Microsoft Excel document with the number of occurrences.

The following table presents the codes that emerged during the evaluation stage and explains each one.

Table 4. *Codes Emerged during the Evaluation Stage*

Categories	Operationalization
High performance in project	It explains when the students demonstrate in their performance social or cognitive skills such as creativity, teamwork, and others derived from project work when conducting the project.
Students' satisfactory performance and language progress	It expresses the students' participation in class and project activities, evidence of their previous or topic's knowledge, and their improvement in language issues such as fluency, skills recognition, language awareness of grammar, and pronunciation.
Low affective filter	It demonstrates the students' willingness to participate in the activities and expresses confidence and relaxation to speak during oral activities.
High affective filter	It refers to the students' unwillingness to participate because of nervousness, lack of confidence, or embarrassment produced by anxiety.
Usage of vocabulary learned	It represents when the students learn new vocabulary and express it in class participation or incorporate it into their activities and final product.
Strategy effectiveness/ ss. strategy use	It describes the effectiveness of the strategy used concerning ss language abilities and times when the students use it in class, when the teacher presents it, or when they use it in their final product presentation.
Speaking fluency	The code represents when the students speak without hesitation, clearly, and efficiently while doing oral activities.
Teacher pedagogical and methodological issues	This code represents every time the teacher motivates learners to participate in class, teamwork, confidence exemplifies, asks for an activity, uses a strategy to make the students understand the topic or activity, or elicits answers from this activity. It also explains when the teacher encourages them to participate and to use English. This category also includes when the teacher gives feedback.

Categories	Operationalization
Interest in oral activities	It describes the students' willingness to participate in oral activities and the ease of conducting these kinds of tasks.
Misunderstanding of the message	It appears when the students speak, and the message needs to be clarified or understood, or they speak in a low voice.
Pronunciation difficulties	It reports the students' pronunciation mistakes.
Low performance in project	It represents when the students demonstrate low social and cognitive skills such as participation in project design, creativity, and teamwork.

Results and Discussion

This research demonstrates the impact of learning strategies under the PBL approach on seventh graders' speaking skills. This section presents the results after triangulating the information obtained from the students' survey, transcript, non-participant observation checklists, and journals applied in each workshop. After examining the frequency of the previously mentioned instruments, the following categories obtained the same percentage: *e: Students' good performance and language progress* and *low affective filter* with 16%, followed by *High performance in the project* with 13%. The codes *Usage of vocabulary learned* and *Strategy effectiveness and use* both had 10%.

These last codes obtained significant percentages showing that fluency improvement and teacher orientation are needed (speaking fluency with 7% / teacher pedagogical and methodological issues with 11%). The following chart displays the categories with the percentages and frequencies obtained in each project.

The following table presents the frequency of each emerging category across the six workshops. Furthermore, it displays the percentage of occurrence for each category.

Table 5. *General Workshops Triangulation*

Categories	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3	Workshop 4	Workshop 5	Workshop 6	Total	Percentage
High performance in Project	66	73	190	119	106	111	665	13%
Students' good performance and language progress	108	102	134	132	102	235	813	16%

Categories	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3	Workshop 4	Workshop 5	Workshop 6	Total	Percentage
Low affective filter	84	163	176	112	123	150	808	16%
High affective filter	80	123	70	47	97	43	460	9%
Usage of vocabulary learned	94	82	57	77	81	102	493	10%
Strategy effectiveness/strategy use	39	50	20	139	70	180	498	10%
Speaking fluency	23	Not present	51	94	111	87	366	7%
Teacher pedagogical and methodological issues	65	46	174	112	106	57	560	11%
Interest in oral activities	Not present	56	Not present	55	73	83	267	5%
Misunderstanding of the message	Not present	Not present	13	18	18	12	61	1%
Pronunciation difficulties	Not present	Not present	17	16	29	36	98	2%
Low performance in project	41	32	Not present	Not present	Not present	Not present	73	1%
Totals	600	727	902	921	916	1096	5162	100%

After analyzing the information from the six workshops and following the research objectives, the researchers distinguished the following findings:

Finding 1. Speaking Fluency Changed According to the Learning Strategy

Fluency varied according to the learning strategy since some students facilitated more natural and spontaneous speech. The category “speaking fluency” experienced a notable increase in Workshop 4, where an effective strategy was deployed (relaxation, deep breathing, and meditation), and in Workshops 5 and 6, where a compensation strategy (switching to mother tongue and getting help, using mimics and gestures) was used to bolster confidence and allow learners to articulate more eloquently. Hence, these strategies helped participants have fewer pauses and profit from the time to speak because they dominated vocabulary and the topic being dealt with (Fillmore et al., 2014, p. 93; Vaca Torres & Gómez, 2017).

Some students' comments validate this observation. For instance, "*Me sentí bien porque me salió fluido*", "*Bien seguro, mejor pude hablar fluido por corto tiempo.*" (see translations in the footnotes³). Other journals' comments also supported this hypothesis, for instance, "*Despite having pronunciation difficulties students did not stop their speech or hesitate, which means they were more fluent*", "*Breathing and meditation practices were helpful because they were fluent, and the audience understood their role.*" Conversely, this aspect obtained low frequency in workshops 1, 2, and 3 in which transcripts were not part of the instruments and language learning strategies targeted cognitive issues related to retention, recall of information, and metacognitive processes for participants to understand how they learned and analyze features surrounding the projects (Peñuela, 2018).

Finding 2. PBL Stimulated Interest in Oral Tasks

Implementing this approach incentivized participants' interest in performing oral tasks as Dewi, 2016 suggests in the study we cited in the previous studies section. The code "interest in oral tasks" reflected that collaborative work and investigation of familiar topics increased students' participation and lesson involvement. This, in turn, fostered a willingness to engage in speaking activities, regardless of potential errors, indicating the effective nature of these pedagogical strategies in stimulating oral language participation (Dewi, 2016). Thomas (2000) states that PBL should be developed, considering driven questions to foster students' participation in the project and information gathering. The survey generated significant data about this fact. For example, when some students were asked the question "*¿Piensas que el trabajo por proyectos te permite participar más de las actividades en la clase de inglés? Si o No ¿Por qué?*" Some of them replied, "*Si, porque puedo expresarme oralmente más que en otras clases*" or "*si, porque cada persona del grupo se expresa a través de la actuación y todos hablamos*"⁴.

Finding 3. Students Ameliorated Social and Cognitive Skills through the PBL Approach

Drawing on Shin's (2018) research, PBL is a pivotal approach for cultivating other aspects such as intrinsic motivation, creativity, and collaboration. This assumption confirms what the six workshops' implementation revealed in terms of cognitive skills such as memory, classification, and recall that facilitated vocabulary learning, searching for information, and creation of materials. Additionally, collaborative work, which is a social skill, was improved since students had a role in their group facilitating performance during the final product

³ "I felt good because it came out fluently," "Very confident, I was able to speak fluently for a short time."

⁴ "Do you think that project work allows you to participate more in the activities in English class? Yes or No Why?" "Yes, because I can express myself orally more than in other classes" or "Yes, because each person in the group expresses themselves through acting and we all speak."

presentation. As Nguyen (2011) asserts, PBL stimulates cooperative skills such as trust in partners' work and provides opportunities to reflect deeply on peers' feedback. This approach fostered their active involvement and nurtured their ability to work within a team effectively.

Another social skill meliorated was giving and receiving feedback, as evident in the suggested activities during the critique revision stage of the project in which other social skills such as paying close attention to the other's utterances, empathy, good manners, and non-verbal communication took place. This finding corroborates Larmer et al.'s (2015) assumption about enhancing feedback moments in which students evaluate their work with classmates and the teacher.

Finding 4. Improvement of Language Features with Language Learning Use and PBL Workshops

The research objective was to define the impact of learning strategies under the PBL approach on learners' speaking skills. The code "Students' good performance and language progress" gave evidence of the effectiveness of those strategies. Furthermore, those strategies allowed students to learn thinking and problem-solving skills, and knowledge-acquisition skills guaranteeing learning through the process (Hardan, 2013; Riswandi, 2018). For example, Workshop 6 showed a higher frequency of occurrences compared to the other five workshops, although all marked significant learner engagement. Moreover, the participants expressed satisfaction level towards most of the strategies, especially those used in Workshop 1 (Imagery and Sound), Workshop 3 (Planning for a Language Task and Identifying the Purpose of a Language Task), Workshop 4 (Lowering Anxiety through Meditation and Breathing), and Workshop 6 (Asking for Help through Mimics and Gestures). These workshops led to substantial improvements in fluency, pronunciation, grammar awareness, and self-recognition of their language abilities, further underscoring the effectiveness of the strategies employed.

For instance, some students wrote on the survey 1: "*Esta estrategia me ayuda a soltarme y relajarme al hablar en público con las demás personas*", "*Hablo más fluido*", or "*he mejorado las pronunciaciones en inglés y me he soltado más al hablar.*"⁵ (See English translation in the footnotes). The PBL methodology also took an important place in students' progress since they could monitor their learning through teacher's feedback and peer feedback considering that learners noticed their weaknesses and strengths. This last aspect is described as a formative process since students received comments about issues to improve or maintain to foster learning (Falchikov, 1996, as cited by Ching & Hsu, 2013).

⁵ "This strategy helps me to loosen up and relax when speaking in public with other people", "I speak more fluently", or "I have improved my English pronunciation, and I have become more relaxed when speaking."

Finding 5. Language Learning Strategies Augmented Vocabulary in Participants

Data displayed a significant improvement in learners' vocabulary range after comparing the pre and post-test results. It can be said that learning strategies promote retention and recall of vocabulary. Celce-Murcia (2001) points out that explicit vocabulary learning allows students to focus on vocabulary through different strategies, such as examining their previous vocabulary knowledge, using images, and several techniques to facilitate their education. Every project showed the category usage of vocabulary learned. Workshops 1, 2, 5, and 6 focused on *image and sound*, *summarizing*, *semantic mapping*, *switching to mother tongue*, and *asking for help*; those strategies constituted an essential way to develop students' abilities to enrich their lexicon. Moreover, those strategies inspired students to apply them to their oral activities recognizing the positive effect on stress control (*lowering your anxiety*) and metacognition (*arranging and planning your learning*).

Finding 6. Language Learning Strategies and PBL Fostered Confidence through Collaborative Work

PBL and language learning strategies fostered confidence since the beginning of the projects, reflected in the code *Low Affective Filter*. Workshops 2, 3, and 6 promoted self-esteem and collaborative work. In the same way, Workshops 1, 4, and 5 also enhanced self-assurance and relaxation in oral activities, despite having low rates. These facts led us to an essential feature of the affective strategies of *Lowering your anxiety*, *Encouraging yourself*, and *Taking your Emotional Temperature* (its acronym LET). These strategies aided students in controlling emotions and attitudes that negatively influence their language learning process (Oxford, 1990, González et al, 2018).

Moreover, PBL influenced participants' confidence since collaborative work stimulated comfort through role assignation. They felt support from their peers to accomplish projects' objectives.

24 *Finding 7. Contextualized Projects Stimulated Strategies' Effectiveness and Use*

Workshops showed that topics based on environmental and sociocultural issues spurred students to take advantage and enrich their knowledge and vocabulary. This was evident in the code *Strategy effectiveness and use* that got high frequencies in Workshops 4 and 6. These workshops showed that the strategies *Lowering your anxiety* and *Asking for help* had a positive impact on participants' language learning and speaking ability.

Finding 8. Classroom Environment Accentuated Researchers' Intervention

Half of the six workshops showed a high frequency regarding strategies to make participants understand the activities, giving feedback, motivating students to participate, or eliciting answers from a task represented in the code *teachers' pedagogical and methodological issues*. This finding validates Harmers' (2007) theory of the teacher's role as a controller, prompter, tutor, and resource since the teacher researcher became a fundamental part of the process, orienting and motivating participants to be actively involved in the projects. Workshops 3, 4, and 5 had a high frequency. This factor may result in learners' need for guidance and motivation to conduct projects and their activities. In addition, other factors such as time, participants' encouragement, and behavioral constraints took place while implementing the workshops.

Conclusions

Considering the aspects mentioned in the findings, and in the previous section regarding the research question, the teacher researchers concluded that:

- a. Participants show more fluent speeches when using practical strategies centered on context and interaction. Moreover, they demonstrate improvement in memory and problem-solving skills.
- b. PBL encourages learners' natural speeches since they use oral activities that involve exchanging information in L1 and L2 and gathering information about projects' themes.
- c. PBL provides students with opportunities to explore and improve cognitive and social skills. The collected data revealed that students learn more effectively in a collaborative ambiance.
- d. Familiarizing learners with the PBL approach and learning strategies fosters progress in language acquisition of functional and linguistic aspects such as fluency, confidence, and vocabulary recognition. Additionally, this approach facilitates the creation of contextual settings where students can express their opinions regarding any aspect of the projects such as material use and information assimilation.
- e. Strategies focused on context, first language, and students' emotional aspects effectively lower anxiety levels and encourage seeking assistance; thereby facilitating effective communication. This improvement can be attributed to the pupil's use of these strategies in fulfilling the objectives of the workshops, particularly the need

- to integrate new vocabulary into their speech for task completion and final product presentation.
- f. The collaborative principles inherent to PBL, combined with various learning strategies, cater to students' cognitive, affective, and metacognitive aspects. This comprehensive approach helps foster students' confidence and motivation, and reduces anxiety levels, thereby creating an environment conducive to learning.
 - g. Context facilitates using learning strategies since students incorporate facts from their lives. When these strategies align with learning strategies, participants find it more interesting to communicate these aspects in L2.
 - h. A high degree of teacher intervention is necessary due to students' need for encouragement and guidance in each activity. However, such intervention also provides constructive feedback and motivates learners to participate and utilize the target language actively.

Implications and Limitations

Context is critical in classroom activities and should be incorporated into teachers' lesson plans. This incorporation ensures that students learn academic content and gain insights into their realities. For instance, in this study, participants were unfamiliar with certain local features, such as mangroves, the islands of Cartagena, or traditions in their neighborhoods. Students learned about these important aspects of their surroundings by integrating these elements into the workshops. Another crucial consideration for teachers when planning lessons is understanding students' needs and skills.

This study encountered several limitations at each stage, but these did not hinder the overall implementation and indeed provided valuable insights into the participants' abilities and needs. For example, in the diagnostic stage, schools adopted hybrid classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic and some students were learning remotely while others attended classes in-person. During the action stage, the first constraint revolved around student behavior. The sample group contained more male students demonstrating disruptive conduct, necessitating heightened intervention from the teacher-researcher to mediate these issues. Familiarity with strategies presented another hurdle, as students were unaccustomed to their use in classroom settings and required more practice.

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Prospective Feedback to Improve Speaking and Affective Dimensions in Higher Education Students

Retroalimentación Prospectiva para Mejorar la Habilidad Oral y las Dimensiones Afectivas en Estudiantes de Educación Superior

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Abstract

The article presents a pedagogical experience with a course of undergraduate students from various programs. The main objectives were to improve their oral skills in English, increase their self-confidence, reduce language-specific anxiety, and provide individual prospective feedback. An action research design was employed, adhering to the conditions of effective feedback proposed by Sadler (2010). Through oral assessments and a semi-structured interview, positive effects were observed in the students' oral proficiency and psychological factors such as self-confidence, beliefs, and anxiety.

Keywords: anxiety, feedback, formative assessment, self-confidence, speaking skill

Resumen

El artículo presenta una experiencia pedagógica con un curso de estudiantes de pregrado de diversos programas. Los principales objetivos fueron mejorar sus habilidades orales en inglés, aumentar su confianza en sí mismos, reducir la ansiedad específica del idioma y proporcionar retroalimentación prospectiva individualizada, y analizar sus resultados y percepciones hacia la intervención. Se empleó un diseño de investigación-acción, siguiendo las condiciones de retroalimentación efectiva propuestas por Sadler (2010). A través de evaluaciones orales y una entrevista semiestructurada, se observaron efectos positivos no solo en la competencia oral de los estudiantes, sino también en factores psicológicos como la autoconfianza, las creencias y la ansiedad.

Palabras clave: ansiedad, autoconfianza, evaluación formativa, habilidad oral, retroalimentación

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Introduction

It is recognized that the English language is an excellent communication tool for people. This is consistent with the Chilean government's concern in promoting English Language teaching in schools with initiatives to develop teachers' skills and increase teaching hours (MINEDUC, 2017). However, these initiatives have not been efficient enough to improve students' general English language proficiency levels. Chile is placed in the 37th position in a ranking of English proficiency (EF Education First, 2020). In higher education, I have observed that speaking is the skill students need for different purposes (presentations, research, etc.). Speaking can be considered a key skill essential to be proficient in a foreign language (Luoma, 2004). However, I have observed that many difficulties arise when developing this skill.

What seems problematic for the learning process must be less with English linguistic aspects and more with the ways this is assessed and how these processes affect affective domains. Students are exposed to elevated levels of anxiety or foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986) when they face oral assessments which are also detrimental to their self-confidence and beliefs about learning a language.

Consequently, assessment also emerges as an issue to be addressed. Assessment can serve different purposes such as certification for accountability and promoting learning (Mansell et al., 2009). In Chile, the first function predominates because of the neoliberal educational policies of management. Education institutions are subject to a national evaluation system, characterized by implementing standardized tests at various stages. This pervades the inside of classrooms when teachers collect information about the learning process. Thereby, a phenomenon known as 'teaching to the test' comes out (Black & William, 2006, 2009). This practice acts against the assessment oriented to help students' learning despite the learning assessment being universally recognized as an approach that improves pupils' learning and the results (Black et al., 2003). This perspective is also advocated by the Ministry of Education and suggested to be enacted within the Chilean educational system (MINEDUC, 2006).

30 Considering this assessment context for certification, standardized tests, and students with low confidence and limiting beliefs about oral English proficiency, I implemented an action research pedagogical experience focusing on formative assessment and prospective feedback. The implementation took place in an English II course at a university to improve students' performance and change their perceptions towards this fundamental activity of acquiring a foreign language.

Theoretical Framework

Evaluation within the Chilean Educational Context

A peculiar feature of the Chilean educational system is how centralized and standardized evaluation is adopted regardless of the education or administration level. Higher education follows this trend strongly. They must undergo a process called accountability. This process reports how the resources are managed and invested in different audiences (Corvalán, 2006). Thus, standardized tests become the main tool for showing results and building rankings. This method of certifying schools and students' learning has been gradually implemented in Chile since 1990 (Bravo, 2011). This trend towards accountability and certification seems to pervade the whole educational system.

Another perspective about assessment has strongly emerged, assessment for learning or formative assessment (Black & William 2006, 2009). Authorities in Chile have tried to introduce the foundations of this approach to enact this assessment focus properly in English lessons (MINEDUC, 2006). Thus, assessment and feedback become relevant principles to collect information about students' learning. This purpose of assessment has been powered by educational decrees that promote assessment for learning over evaluation for certification and accountability (MINEDUC, 2018). This implementation has shown improvements in student engagement and academic progress, although challenges such as lack of teacher training remain (López et al., 2020).

Speaking

Speaking skills are essential to produce language. They are so important that language teachers need to know about them deeply. They involve real-time, productive, and aural/oral dimensions (Nunan, 2003). They are immediate, interactive, outward, and dialectical. Therefore, speaking is an intrinsically complex set of skills. Speaking encompasses both micro and macro skills. Micro skills involve producing distinct sounds, using appropriate intonation, and constructing phrases and sentences, while macro skills refer to organizing discourse, managing conversations, and adapting language to different social contexts (Brown, 2004). Additionally, speaking is influenced by cognitive, linguistic, and affective factors, such as vocabulary knowledge, fluency, and confidence (Bygate, 2001).

Assessing speaking is a challenge for teachers as it is considered the most difficult language skill to assess reliably (Louma, 2004). The teacher must make immediate judgments about a range of aspects. Thus, the assessment depends not only upon speech features such as pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, and coherence but also on other factors such as language level, and cognitive and affective skills. The tasks and the context will

have an impact on student performance. It is challenging. Brown (2004) describes two major challenges: (1) the interaction of listening and speaking, that is, it is difficult to isolate speaking and (2) the speaker strategy to convey meaning may make it difficult for teachers to design a solid elicitation technique. For my intervention, I will use the extensive type of assessment (Brown, 2004) which involves speaking presentations.

Foreign Language Anxiety

This construct has emerged in the learning context of speaking a foreign language. This is Foreign Language Anxiety (Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz et al., 1986; Jones, 2004). It occurs when people are engaged in the acquisition of a foreign language in a classroom context. It conveys complex self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning. Students are supposed to learn and demonstrate learning constantly. This situation generates anxiety that rises in specific moments such as participation, dialogues, or speaking presentations. This anxiety negatively affects their opportunities for participating as students prefer to avoid instances that, paradoxically, are designed for them to take risks and make mistakes in pursuit of learning. This anxiety often manifests when students must participate in oral presentations or impromptu speaking tasks. For example, students may fear being judged by their peers or making mistakes, leading to behaviors such as staying silent during group discussions or avoiding language practice altogether (Zhang, 2019).

These behaviors impact students' willingness to communicate with other people (Oz et al., 2015), their perception of being negatively judged by classmates and teachers (Aydin, 2008), and their fear of failing in test situations (Büyükahıska, 2016). As a result, these situations affect students' self-confidence and beliefs resulting in avoidance attitudes and low motivation to participate in learning activities (Dweck, 2006; Marsh & Martin, 2011).

Speaking in a foreign language has been considered particularly challenging due to the complex process of constructing meaning (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Speaking requires the speaker to decide why, how, and when to communicate depending on the cultural and social context in which the speaking act occurs. Due to its complexity, speaking has been recognized as the most anxiety-provoking skill (Luo, H. 2014) producing a negative effect on achieving the L2. Finally, some factors influence students' anxiety concerning language tests such as test validity, format, techniques, length, time limit, and clarity of test instructions (Young, 1990). These factors are connected to speaking assessment as unclear instructions, complex formats, or time constraints can increase anxiety by making it harder for students to perform. Techniques like spontaneous tasks or tests with unfamiliar topics further elevate stress requiring immediate language production without preparation (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009).

Assessment for Learning

Conceived as an active process that is inextricably linked to teaching and learning, learning assessment is any assessment for which its design and practice priority is to serve the purpose of collecting evidence to promote students' learning and provide information for all the parties involved to improve practices (Black et al., 2004). Authors cited in this research use formative and learning assessment as synonyms. Formative assessment is an essential classroom work component, and its development can raise achievement standards. Another key element of formative assessment is the collected evidence use, which is intended to help students close the gap between the actual level of performance and the learning goal (Sadler, 1989). The evidence serves as material to raise judgments on the quality of students' pieces of work to shape and improve their competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning. Teachers should know students and their learning needs. Likewise, the teacher-student relationship and the teaching-learning link must be interactive (Black, 2007). This alignment implies teachers know about students' advantages and disadvantages, needs, individual skills, and classroom divergences. In speaking performance, assessment should focus on fluency, pronunciation, and coherence, using continuous feedback to help students improve through targeted practice (Harmer, 2007).

Feedback

There is usually a key feature of formative assessment, feedback through interaction. Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement. However, the type of feedback and the way it is given can be differentially effective (Black & William, 2004; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Sadler, 1989). Feedback plays a key role in formative assessment. It is defined in terms of information about how successfully something has been or is being done (Sadler, 1989). This activity plays a crucial role in teaching-learning processes by helping students understand the course goals and acquire the tools to reach them. The teacher plays a key role in modeling, describing, and demonstrating a high-quality performance and must be capable of guiding the students through improvement by transmitting this feedback and providing strategies for it.

Additionally, students use feedback to monitor their strengths and weaknesses and take a more active role. Feedback should therefore empower students to become self-regulated learners. Students should be able to self-monitor and use strategies to alter gaps between the expected quality and their actual level of performance. Feedback also impacts positively on affective factors such as motivation, beliefs, self-concept, and self-confidence (Gnepp et al., 2020; Hamidun et al., 2013; Kim & Lee, 2019; Lundstorm & Baker, 2009). Besides, for feedback to be effective, it must fulfill three conditions: (a) that the learner possesses

a concept of the standard being aimed for, (b) compares the actual (or current) level of performance with the standard, and (c) engages in appropriate action which leads to some closure of the gap (Sadler, 1983, 1989, 2010). In this sense, feedback is a tool for future work. It equips students to face future learning activities and assessments. Thus, feedback works as feedforward or prospective feedback (Sadler, 2010).

Providing Feedback

Understanding feedback is not easy for students. This is difficult because it requires them to think and later self-regulate their learning processes. Therefore, how feedback is delivered and how learners internalize it to take further actions are relevant points in this process. The teacher already possesses this knowledge (quality); it must somehow be shared with the student. Teachers' conceptions of quality are typically held in unarticulated form, inside their heads as tacit knowledge.

A tool was built to reduce this abstraction, externalize this quality element, and consider this theorization key in this research. Besides, students must understand the meaning of feedback before they can apply it to their work. Students need to identify with near certainty the aspects of their work that need attention. In this case, the teacher's role is to provide the students with comments on their work. In doing so, students need to receive concrete references to know where to start toward the goal (quality).

Other recommendations from Sadler include telling students about the strengths of their works; telling them (gently) about deficiencies, where they occurred, and their nature; telling students what would have improved their works; and pointing them to what could be done next time they complete a related type of response. In doing all this, feedback should be in a face-to-face modality that allows proper assessment and strategies for every student to improve their work. Specific strategies must be delivered to every student to work on their own to task improvement (Sadler, 2010).

In the context of speaking performance, feedback must address specific areas such as fluency, pronunciation, and coherence. Teachers can provide targeted feedback that helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement, guiding them through modeling and practical strategies. Individualized, face-to-face feedback is especially effective in helping students develop self-monitoring skills and close the gap between their current abilities and the expected speaking performance (Sadler, 2010).

In the context of this research, all the strategies are followed to reach students' best understanding of their current performance state within the framework of a dialogic process and based on criteria that contribute to prospective feedback (i.e., to move towards learning that favors future decision-making).

Feedback in Higher Education

Assessment practices are confined to summative assessment in which the main goal is to judge students' work to get numerical scores that may allow them to pass or not the course. Traditional forms of assessment have been largely taken for granted and developments in formative assessment are mostly ignored. As a result, much teaching at whatever level still assumes a model of education as knowledge transmission and acquisition, with formative assessment conceptualized as an instrumental adjunct or a quick fix to educational problems (Pryor & Crossouard, 2010). Formative assessment has been misunderstood or misused. This practice and the prevalence of summative assessment methodologies also model students' assessment perception.

Method

Type of Research

This qualitative study seeks an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Mason, 2002). As an action research design (Berg & Lune, 2012), the participants can experience the intervention process and collect valuable lessons for teaching improvement and making changes (Creswell, 2005; Sandín, 2003). Therefore, its design involves the following overlapping stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2009). In this study, planning involved designing the intervention, action focused on implementing it in the classroom, observation of collected data during the process, and reflection on analyzing the results to improve teaching practices (Burns, 2009).

Research Problem

This action research is contextualized in a Basic English II course for undergraduate students from different programs. The speaking tasks were challenging to them due to their limited experience with spoken English. There are few opportunities for them to receive feedback, and when it is done, it conveys the form of comments or grades for work done. The speaking skills are assessed twice each semester. However, it is not a widespread practice that students receive feedback on their performance when they may receive suggestions to improve. This issue may be due to the assessment approach that pervades teaching, how students appreciate it, or how they conceive feedback provision. Students highly value feedback focused on grades with summative purposes and not centered on improvement actions. Also, they have expressed concerns when facing speaking tasks. Their self-confidence and beliefs about speaking are fixed so they rarely implement strategies to improve due to the elevated level of anxiety they feel at the thought of having to speak English in front of the class.

Research Objectives

The objectives are:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of formative feedback on students' oral production.
2. To explore the participants' views on formative feedback for improving speaking-presentation dimensions in English and reducing negative psychological aspects such as anxiety, negative beliefs, and self-confidence.

Participants

The sample is purposive and classified as discretionary sampling (Diaz, 2006; Palys, 2008). Participants were selected for meeting the following criteria, appropriate for the study:

- *Heterogeneity*: 24 mixed-undergraduate students from different study fields such as nursing, psychology, kinesiology, veterinary medicine, business engineering, social work, and law. The nature of the disciplines may influence the ways they learn English.
- *Age*: Ranging from 18 to 25 years old. There is little gap in academic work between now and high school.
- *Educational background*: All of them come from public schools; so, it can be assumed that they had English lessons from 10th to 12th grade at least 3-4 hours a week, as stated by the governmental programs with a little focus on speaking.
- *Level of English*: The Basic English II course is aligned with The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the A1 proficiency level (Council of Europe, 2001).

Research Procedures

The action plan was carried out for five weeks, from the first week of May to the first week of June. The action plan had six sessions presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Stages of the Action Plan*

Session	Description	Focus
1	– Pretest: Speaking presentation about daily routine	– Assessing students' performance using the rubric – Gathering information for pre-test

Session	Description	Focus
2	– To determine the compressibility of the instruments.	– Validation of instruments with students, other teachers, and experts.
3	– To analyze a high-quality oral presentation given by the teacher. – To describe a situation in the past	– Modeling – Studying the analytic rubric and the criteria – Preparation of presentation script – Monitoring and praising
4	– To analyze the criteria of the analytic rubric. – To implement specific strategies to improve oral performance	– Exemplification of a superior performance – Correction of scripts – Oral individual feedback was given – Provision of strategies to close the gap: – keeping a draft, recording samples of their presentation, knowing the criteria, distinguishing between exceptionally good and poor performance for each one of the criteria, using visual aids, self-assessing their presentations
5	– Posttest: speaking presentation about a story in the past	– Assessing students' performance using the rubric – Gathering information for posttest
6	– Interview: to analyze participants' perception of the intervention using a semi-structured interview	– Conducting interview – Gathering qualitative information from students' perceptions

Source: Own work.

Data Collection Instruments

Pre and Posttests

Both tests consisted of speaking presentations to help students understand the task quality criteria (Sadler, 1989, 2010). An analytic rubric was designed and used to monitor both oral speaking assessments. This rubric's criteria included grammar, vocabulary, content, pronunciation, and fluency. The maximum score was 20 points. It was designed in Spanish to facilitate understanding and comprehension.

The first one (pretest) was carried out before the action plan in session 1. Students had to present about their daily routines. The second one (posttest) was carried out after individual feedback was provided to students in session 4. Students had to present a story in the past tense.

Semi-structured Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted in Spanish considering the students' English language competence, the need to collect rich information about the process, and an understanding of a social phenomenon from the participants' perspective. Collected data attempted to describe the findings as experienced by the subjects (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) (see Appendix A).

Data Analysis Techniques

For the data collected with the pre and post-tests, descriptive statistics helped summarize findings by describing general tendencies in the data and the overall spread of the scores (Dörnyei, 2007). Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the interviews. The analytical stages considered: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing, defining, and naming the themes (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Findings

Specific Objective 1

Pre and Post-test General Results

The result of the mean obtained in both tests is illustrated in Figure 1.

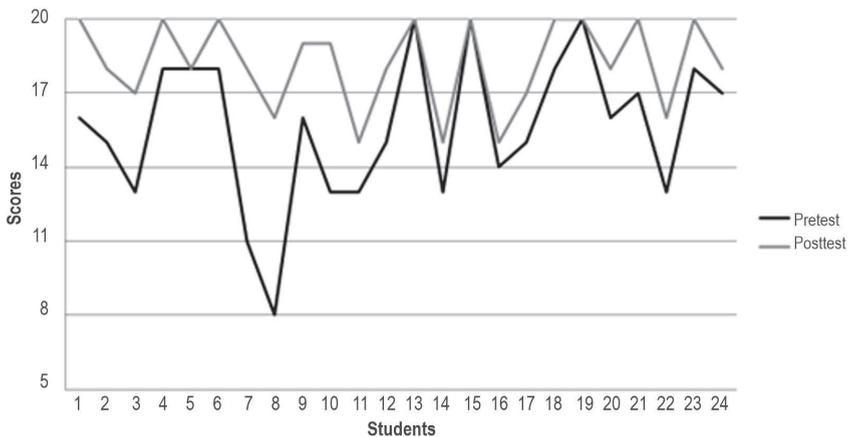


Figure 1. Pre and Posttests General Results

The scores' mean for the pre-intervention test was 15,63 out of twenty, while for the post-intervention test was 18,21 out of 20. Thus, the data collected showed an increase of 2,58 points after the intervention. It is worth noticing that low achievers in the pre-test increased in the post-test.

Pre and Post-Test Results by Criteria

By contrasting pre and post-tests, it is possible to ascertain that the intervention improved all the participants' speaking skill dimensions including fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and content. These dimensions were consistent with the criteria used in the analytic rubric to monitor the students' learning before and after the formative feedback methodology was emphasized during lessons. This is shown in Figure 2.

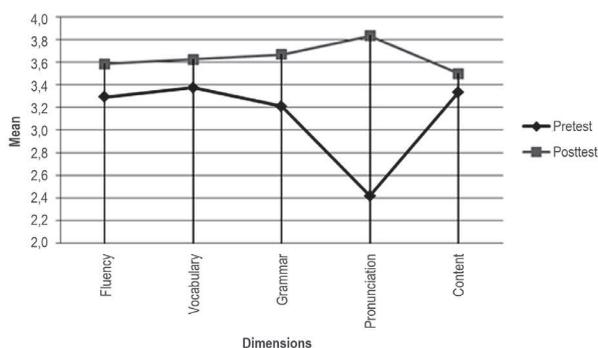


Figure 2. *Pre and Post-test Results by Criteria*

There has been an improvement within many of the assessed dimensions. The maximum score for each dimension was 4 points. Indeed, all the dimensions reached punctuation over 3.5 in the post-test. There is a remarkable case for the pronunciation dimension. The scores increased from 2.4 (pre-test) to 3.8 (post-test). In addition, the participants exhibited the lowest scores for this dimension in the pre-test but the highest for the same ability in the post-intervention test. Thus, the data strongly suggest that enhancement in the learning process for this skill exists.

Specific Objective 2²

The data from the interview with six of the participants suggest four clear dimensions: (1) formative assessment, (2) dimension improvement, (3) strategies for improvement, and

² Interviews were translated from Spanish into English for publication purposes.

(4) impact on affective factors. Each of these dimensions contains, at the same time, specific themes.

Formative Assessment

The participants valued the innovative methodology of actively incorporating formative feedback, highlighting each moment of it. They especially appreciated modeling, continuous feedback, individual feedback, and knowing the evaluation instrument beforehand.

Students valued the teacher's modeling strategy regarding using examples for the speaking task. It was helpful for them as a reference in terms of time, depth, development, delivery, and presentation language. They also refer to modeling as a guide or criteria to prepare and visualize their presentation:

“...it was very useful to have an idea of what we had to accomplish...because sometimes you do much more and it is unnecessary, or you do much less, and you need much more. In short, it was useful having a parameter of what we had to accomplish.” (Participant 2)

Continuous feedback interrelated with the learning process was considered a valuable opportunity to practice and rehearse with the teacher before the real presentation. They highlight that this instance was helpful, on one hand, to find out what their strengths and weaknesses were before the task; on the other, to uncover by themselves what was their English proficiency level at that moment as a reference to practice and improve it during the time they had before the actual presentation. The following comments exemplify this issue:

“Constantly getting feedback was helpful because it's good to know what to do and how to do it at every moment ... I was learning about the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation, and I felt like I was not alone as it happens in other presentations. It's good to feel guided.” (Participant 5)

“...because I was able to make sure that my presentation... that is, what I was going to say... was correct or what corrections I had to make to make it look good. Also, since I had the opportunity to present... saying what I was going to present... I realized what I needed to work on to improve... with the comments and seeing how the previous evaluation with the guideline.” (Participant 1)

Knowing the instrument beforehand refers to the value participants give to the knowledge of the assessment instrument, in this case, the analytic rubric. Knowing the instrument and its criteria benefited their progress since they knew how they were assessed in the real instance. It served as a guide when they were studying for the task. Also, some of them mentioned that it was helpful to focus their study as for some other assessments they lost time not knowing what to concentrate on because they did not have a reference. Finally, some of them also mentioned that the proficiency levels were helpful when rehearsing because they had a concrete reference, the “very well” level, to orient their study and improvement. For example:

“...having that guideline...the rubric...and also knowing that with that we will be assessed and knowing exactly what we have to do to get a good grade is very helpful to guide us and not waste time or concentration on things that won't be assessed.” (Participant 5)

“...because then I could prepare myself with certainty knowing that I had to improve since in that instance...of feedback...I knew my strengths and weaknesses besides knowing the guidelines with which I would be assessed.” (Participant 6)

“It was good to learn what a rubric means. Not all teachers send the guidelines with the work instructions and the ones that don't explain what it means. They assume you know what they know.” (Participant 2)

Dimension Improvement

This dimension refers to an important result of this intervention. All dimensions, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and content improved. As previously analyzed, pronunciation was the dimension with the greatest improvement.

All the participants mentioned that the prospective feedback instance helped them improve all the dimensions. Students highlight that the intervention helped them internalize the rubric criteria and understand what each one is about. In addition, they mention that having strategies to study autonomously helped them a lot because they could use their time more effectively. Additionally, they value their improvement in the pronunciation dimension as shown in the following comments:

“I was able to improve on all the criteria in the assessment guideline since this time I knew what they meant, and I was also able to learn strategies for studying alone at home.” (Participant 1)

“In the presentation work sessions when you individually gave us feedback, I realized that I had a lot of work to do to improve my pronunciation so that what I wanted to say would be understood and I started to use the strategies I had learned.” (Participant 6)

Strategies for Improvement Dimension

An important objective of the intervention is that students could manage strategies to improve. In this regard, three strategies stand out among those mentioned by the participants: visual aid, keeping a draft, and using a voice record.

Using visual aids to prepare the presentation and practice for its final presentation helped them organize ideas, follow the story through the images, and implement retrieval practice strategies (Bjork, 1988). This is reported below:

“For my presentation, I practiced with images, just images. I could reach the skill of seeing the image and remembering what I had to say. In this sense, that helped me learn the presentation better.” (Participant 3)

Keeping a draft corrected by the teacher with comments and suggestions made the participants feel confident about practicing with this corrected draft as they were sure of learning something one hundred percent precise. This is presented below:

“I have taken up much of my sheet of paper with the notes from the comments you made to me. This helped me organize my presentation and keep track of the improvements I needed to make.” (Participant 5)

Participants also used their cell phones to record the teacher’s comments and pay better attention when giving feedback. This is important as sometimes the comments are extended and there is much to say. Using this type of strategy reduces the exogenous load on the working memory and allows focus on the work (Sweller, 2010) as expressed below:

“Something I used a lot to prepare the presentation better was to record the comments. That helped me not worry about everything at the same time during the feedback. With the recording, I could listen to the comments as many times as I wanted.” (Participant 4)

Impact on Affective Factors

An interesting aspect of the experience is how the methodology impacted the students’ affective factors. In general, much attention is paid to cognitive aspects such as memory, attention, and problem-solving, which are crucial in language learning. These aspects may be intuitive but not necessarily accurate. Students report that the intervention helped them improve their self-confidence, decrease their anxiety towards speaking tasks, and modify their beliefs about how to learn English. For example:

“The whole process helped me be confident in my abilities to present in English. I think that is very important in learning anything. Feeling confident that you can do something with help from the teacher lessens those feelings of inadequacy.” (Participant 2)

“Receiving feedback and knowing what strategies to use to improve much helped me not go through that nervousness that usually happens to me before speaking in English. Sometimes just thinking about having to speak in English, I started to feel nervous and anxious; that made me forget what I had to say.” (Participant 6)

“I have never felt so good preparing an oral presentation in English. The process was so good that I now think learning English is not difficult if you have the proper guidance to do it. In fact, now I am more interested in continuing to learn.” (Participant 4)

Conclusions

As previously described, my intervention dealt with prospective feedback and its principles to improve my participants’ speaking skill dimensions and help them with affective factors that usually hinder their performance. Formative assessment and feedback highly

and positively affected students' performance. All the students increased their overall scores in the post-test. No matter the program they were studying, they incorporated strategies for improving the presentation. Besides, all the speaking skill dimensions improved. The intervention affected low achievers who needed support and guidance during learning.

Regarding feedback, students improved when they clearly understood what they had to do in a task. Therefore, modeling or exemplifying the objective of a task, in this case, an oral presentation, was beneficial for them. This is supported by Sadler (2010) who states that students should have —an appreciation of what constitutes high-quality work of the type they are called to produce. Students preferred individual feedback over other ways of receiving comments. Among the reasons, I found out that they were more relaxed and open to comments when this instance was individual rather than in groups, mostly when they felt less confident and shy.

They also benefited when they knew their current performance level. In the intervention, the students analyzed the rubric and its criteria and understood the assessment on their presentations before the final one. The rubric was a starting point to visualize progress and a specific goal. They knew the quality of their present work concerning the quality target. This idea also supports the implementation of a high-quality example. Students also had to understand what the teacher meant with the feedback, so it had to become a dialogic experience.

Students selected specific strategies to make progress for the final presentation. During the intervention, many options were provided. As teachers, we cannot expect they already know how to close the gap. Students should develop a repertoire of tactics that help them close the gap between the high-quality target and their current level and these strategies should also be taught. This idea supports the use of prospective feedback. The strategies are for future use to become independent learners. Using visual aids, keeping a corrected draft, and recording teachers' comments stood out among the students' commonly used strategies.

The intervention impacted affective factors such as self-confidence, beliefs, and anxiety. The participants of this study reported an increase in their self-confidence and a decrease in their anxiety when facing speaking tasks. Finally, the intervention had a positive impact on students' beliefs. This is relevant because beliefs can predispose individuals to generate strategies to cope with or avoid certain activities (Dweck, 2006). English language learners in general have limiting beliefs about learning a foreign language, especially about speaking in a foreign language. It is relevant to work on these beliefs that students bring to classrooms as they can limit motivation, attention, curiosity, memory, and learning strategies (Fredrickson, 2004; Gopnik, 2012; Gruber et al., 2014).

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Appendix A.

Semi-structured interview

Dimension 1: Appreciation of feedback

1. Do you remember a time when you received feedback on your oral performance?
2. To what extent did it help you to know the standard of a high-quality presentation for your work?
3. Do you think that knowing the evaluation criteria and their key concepts was helpful to you?

Dimension 2: Contribution of Feedback

4. Do you think that the teacher's feedback was useful to improve your oral performance? Do you think that the teacher's feedback was useful to improve your oral performance in what aspects?
5. Do you think that how the feedback was given was beneficial for your improvement?
6. What elements of the feedback do you think were most helpful?
7. Why do you think the suggestions were helpful? Which suggestions were most helpful?
8. Did the feedback instance have an impact on the way you prepare for an oral assessment, and why?

Enhancing Oral Fluency with the Describing Picture Strategy in Chilean Higher Education

Mejorando la Fluidez Oral con la Estrategia de Descripción de Imágenes en la Educación Superior Chilena

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Abstract

This action research centered on features of oral fluency among Chilean higher education students, focusing on the ‘describing picture strategy’ innovation. Set in the context of the Advanced English II course, the study determines the effects of the strategy in boosting oral fluency. The intervention of this investigation was enhanced by integrating technological tools such as a projector and a computer, which provided a dynamic and interactive learning environment and contributed to positive outcomes in speech rate and repairs. However, the results also highlighted other indicators, such as hesitation, where participants showed similar results. While this research points out the strategy potential in this specific Chilean context, it also emphasizes the challenges of generalizing the findings due to its unique cultural, technological, and pedagogical particularities. This study wraps up with the recommendation of adopting a holistic approach to fluency development; it also suggests further research, especially in exploring the long-term effect of the strategy and its adaptability to different educational settings.

Keywords: Chilean higher education, English language teaching, oral fluency, picture strategy

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Resumen

Esta investigación-acción se centró en las características de la fluidez oral entre estudiantes Chilenos de la Educación Superior; se enfocó en la innovadora “estrategia descriptiva de imágenes”. Ubicado en el contexto del curso de Inglés Avanzado II, el estudio determina los efectos de la estrategia para impulsar la fluidez oral. La intervención de esta investigación mejora con la integración de herramientas tecnológicas como un proyector y un computador, lo que proporcionó un entorno de aprendizaje dinámico e interactivo, el cual contribuyó a los resultados positivos en la velocidad del habla y las reparaciones. Sin embargo, los resultados también destacaron otros indicadores, como la vacilación, donde los participantes mostraron resultados similares. Si bien esta investigación señala el potencial de la estrategia en este contexto chileno específicamente, también enfatiza los desafíos de generalizar los hallazgos debido a las particularidades culturales, tecnológicas y pedagógicas únicas del entorno. Este estudio concluye con la recomendación de adoptar un enfoque holístico para el desarrollo de la fluidez y sugiere realizar más investigaciones, especialmente para explorar el efecto a largo plazo de la estrategia y su adaptabilidad a diferentes entornos educativos.

Palabras clave: educación superior chilena, enseñanza del inglés, estrategia de descripción de imágenes, fluidez oral

Introduction

Contemporary global competition dictates that English fluency is no longer a mere linguistic skill but a major factor in school and career success in a person’s life (Rao, 2019). This skill becomes a challenge for 15 college students undertaking the Advanced English II course at a Chilean university. The course uses Communicative Approaches with parameters provided by the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2020), to give learners the necessary communication ability. In describing the pictures, they often speak slowly, pause frequently, and use many fillers. These characteristics hinder smooth communication. Unless such issues are solved, they can jeopardize their prospects in an increasingly competitive world. This situation raises an important research question: How does the describing picture strategy (DPS) develop Business Administration students’ speaking fluency at a Chilean higher education institution?

The study looks to determine any changes in speech rate, pauses, breakdowns, and repairs before and after the strategy implementation. The literature also suggests that picture description is one of the strategies for enhancing fluency. Ho (2018) indicates its multiple benefits while Kano and Fardyansyah (2015) focus on its motivational aspects. Pratiwi and Ayu (2023), Sahrani et al. (2023), and Ayu (2020) discuss its broader pedagogical implications (see the elaboration in the next section).

Describing pictures aids in the retention of vocabulary and in spontaneous speaking, which is a speaker’s key to oral fluency. The strategy encourages close observation and structured expression and follows the principles of Communicative Language Teaching

(CLT) by giving top priority to real-life communication. The benefits of DPS in ELT are expounded as increasing cognitive engagement, building confidence, and language skills application in use, hence making learning livelier and more effective (Sahrani et al. (2023), and Ayu (2020); Pratiwi & Ayu, 2023). This technique caters to diverse students' needs, proactively enhancing the learning atmosphere, and ensuring a comprehensive approach to language acquisition.

Theoretical Framework

The Importance of Speaking Skills and the Cultural Factors in EFL Instruction

Communication is a fundamental aspect of human interaction that enables people to convey messages, express feelings, share information, and build relationships. However, effective communication goes beyond merely exchanging words and requires conveying thoughts and ideas concisely and convincingly. This is where speaking skills play a vital role.

Speaking English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a complex skill, often seen as the most challenging among the four language abilities (Nunan, 2003). When students communicate in English, they must organize and express their thoughts with appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Harmer (2015) suggests that speaking fluently requires knowledge of linguistic structures and the ability to assimilate new linguistic information quickly. This skill is multifaceted, with paralinguistic elements like eye contact, facial expressions, and body language playing a crucial role in the conversation (Thornbury, 2007). Moreover, how one speaks often becomes the primary criterion for evaluation in many situations. McDonough et al. (2013) emphasize that individuals are frequently judged “at face value” based on their speaking abilities, underscoring the importance of conveying information effectively and articulating thoughts and emotions. This premise is especially pertinent given the global prominence of English worldwide. As Crystal and Potter (2020) note, English has become the lingua franca in various fields, from computer coding and international business to higher education, making proficient speaking skills in this language even more essential.

Additionally, speaking skills are crucial for participating in classroom activities, workplace communication, and public speaking with audiences. Developing strong speaking skills is also important to improve cognitive skills, memory, creativity, confidence, and social skills (Rao, 2019). Ultimately, the importance of speaking skills lies in their ability to enable effective communication, facilitate successful interactions with others, and open opportunities for personal and professional growth (Adhelia & Triastuti, 2023).

Speaking skills are influenced by cultural elements, in this case, Chilean. The strong emphasis on politeness and indirect communication in the Chilean culture most often manifests as people speaking around the point to avoid some form of confrontation or offense. In the educational context of the study, this cultural trait can affect how students express themselves in English during the teaching and learning processes, often becoming much more hesitant or elusive. Some studies into intercultural communication inform such influence in language learning and language use in ways that require language instructional practices to acknowledge cultural influences on development seriously (Byram et al., 2001; Dewey, 2012)

The context's cultural aspects impact the development of speaking fluency, as students might not prefer speaking directly or assertively. Recognizing and addressing these cultural norms and expectations is essential for effective speaking instruction. By doing so, educators can create a learning environment that respects and incorporates these cultural factors and encourages more active verbal participation. For example, the teacher can design activities that progressively build confidence, allowing speaking skills to be practiced suitably (Sharif et al., 2017).

Speaking Fluency

Speaking fluency is so multi-dimensional that its features make it hard to define in detail (Foster, 2020). Traditionally, fluency has often been mistakenly associated with a fast speech rate. Indeed, Fulcher (2003) views that, with such a misconception, learners get the impression that talking fast is speaking fluently. Santos and Ramirez-Ávila (2022) clarify that true fluency combines this essential factor with the speech rate, including pauses, repetitions, and corrections.

According to Segalowitz (2010), fluency consists of three components: speed, breakdown, and repair. Speed refers to word articulation rates but must be checked against clarity and coherence. Breakdown incorporates silent and filled pauses, including the speaker's instances of hesitation and thinking time that intervene through the smooth flow of conversation. Repair refers to the speaker's error management through repetitions and corrections.

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A closer inspection of speaking fluency revisits the notion of speed combined with a natural flow of speech and clear articulation. The breakdown elements, like pauses, inform about the speaker's need to gather thoughts or overcome hesitation, which are natural parts of speech. Effective repair strategies, for example, self-correction, show how well the speaker can manage and improve the speech in real-time (Kormos, 2006; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005).

These dimensions, embedded into the language classroom, promote a more holistic approach to enabling students to develop the ability to speak quickly, smoothly, and accurately

(Derwing et al., 2008; Nation & Newton, 2009). Our research focus is improving English oral fluency by addressing all these critical components, which are: speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs.

By attending to these small details of fluency, a teacher is far more likely to assist students in achieving true fluency. It would suggest a fluent speaker who is articulate, confident, less hesitant, and more natural in repair mechanisms. Ultimately, this shapes higher effectiveness in communication skills required for personal and professional success (Goh & Burns, 2012; Thornbury, 2007).

Strategies and the DPS to Teach Speaking

The describing picture strategy (DPS) has been generally acknowledged as one of the methods that works towards enhancing the oral fluency of an EFL learner. Ho (2018) states that DPS confers multiple benefits beyond language acquisition. The strategy works on improving fluency and caters to different learning profiles; therefore, it is an inclusive pedagogical tool. According to Kano and Fardyansyah (2015), the DPS's motivational attributes include differentiation and scaffolding increasing students' interest and motivation. This is crucial in language learning since keeping students' interest and participation is important if effective learning outcomes are to be achieved. The DPS's efficacy in creating an interactive and supportive learning environment in which both linguistic competence and confidence can be developed is further supported by Sahrani et al. (2023), Ayu (2020), and Pratiwi and Ayu (2023). Teaching and learning English require the use of effective and proper strategies. Various theories and empirical studies provide a theoretical foundation for understanding strategies, approaches, and techniques to ensure successful English teaching and learning. Furthermore, incorporating strategies into the teaching-learning process makes students more aware of their significance. They also become more independent, autonomous, and lifelong learners (Benson, 2013; Oxford, 2017).

DPS is a language teaching strategy using visual aids or pictures to encourage learners to describe in English what they see. This strategy is based on the premise that visual stimuli can enhance language learning and improve English language learners' speaking skills (Pratiwi & Ayu, 2023). DPS involves showing learners a picture and then encouraging them to engage in a discussion or presentation about the picture.

Wahyudin (2017) suggests that the preparation and procedure stages for describing pictures can make pupils more active and ensure no boredom in the classroom. Describing pictures is one of the most important and successful ways to enhance students' speaking skills based on preparation and procedures. Then, rather than simply memorizing, this oral practice might lead to genuine communication. Multiple other studies explore the advantages of using pictures in teaching speaking. Goh and Burns (2012) present a framework for

teaching speaking that integrates pictures with varied techniques and strategies. They argue that pictures can be a powerful tool for developing speaking abilities, as they can help learners visualize and organize their thoughts and provide them with a context for discussion and expression.

Sahrani et al. (2023) investigated the effect of using DPS on high school students' speaking ability in Indonesia. The study revealed that engaging students in describing pictures in detail significantly improved their speaking fluency in English. The researchers highlighted that DPS triggered motivation on students to express themselves and provided guidelines to improve speaking fluency through practice. The researchers concluded that using DPS could be an effective strategy for teachers to promote speaking proficiency in their language learners. While this study focuses specifically on the use of DPS in Indonesian high schools, it provides valuable evidence for the potential effectiveness of DPS in developing speaking proficiency across similar educational contexts.

Studies have also shown that providing interactional feedback during picture description tasks can contribute to developing speaking fluency (Goh & Zhang, 2019). Feedback on fluency-related aspects, such as encouraging smoother speech flow or providing guidance on appropriate pausing, can positively impact learners' speaking fluency development (Goh, 2008).

Methodology

Type of Study

This action research study applies a systematic and reflective approach to challenges in speaking fluency of the students undertaking this course, focusing on speech rate, pauses, hesitation, and repairs. As Burns (2010) and Mills (2007) outline, the action research cycle consists of the teacher-researcher identifying these problems, and then planning interventions, implementations, and observations of their effects. The subsequent steps are collecting data and reflecting on the results.

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In this study, a pre-intervention oral assessment was conducted using pictures the students had to describe to establish a baseline for their fluency indicators (speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs) contained in the analytic rubric. This diagnosis then informed the planning of sessions using Chamot's CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) model, which allows cyclical and adaptable teaching. The intervention consisted of five sessions with structured picture description activities that gradually built-up confidence and proficiency following the CALLA model procedure: preparation, display, exercise, assessment, expansion activities, and evaluation. The qualitative data about the

students' performance and class engagement were gathered through observation and reflection, noted by the teacher-researcher in a diary. Then, a post-intervention assessment on speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs using different pictures occurred. Also, a focus group discussion elicited their views about the DPS, defining its benefits and challenges.

Participants

A sample of 15 Chilean higher education students aged 20–45 in their third year of Business Administration was initially selected for the study. However, only 11 participants were included since four dropped. The students were part of a mandatory 72-hour, 14-week Advanced English II course, with a syllabus aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2020), targeting a B2 level after progressing from A1 to B1. This convenience-type sample was chosen based on the teacher's pre-existing student group, as Nikolopoulou (2022) and Creswell (2012) described. The institution assigned all participants to the teacher-researcher.

The study adhered to ethical standards, obtaining informed consent from participants and ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality. Participants could withdraw at any time. The relevant institutional review board approved the research, and data were securely stored with restricted access.

Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

Analytic Rubric to Assess Oral Fluency

Using an analytic rubric in this study was pivotal for assessing oral fluency. As Brookhart (2018) emphasizes, analytic rubrics are particularly beneficial during the learning process due to their ability to list multiple characteristics or criteria for evaluation. This allows for a comprehensive skill assessment, examining it from various perspectives. In this study, the analytic rubric was structured to score performance levels ranging from “excellent” to “needs improvement,” with scores assigned from 4 to 1 (Excellent = 4; Good = 3; Satisfactory = 2; Needs Improvement = 1).

The rubric specifically focused on evaluating speech rate, pauses, hesitation, and repairs, with descriptors based on the number of words, fillers, pauses, and repairs per minute. The maximum attainable score on this rubric was 16, providing a clear benchmark for students to understand their performance and areas for improvement. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze these fluency indicators, and the study utilized descriptive analysis to compare results before and after the intervention.

Pre- and Post-Intervention Speaking Assessment

The pre-intervention test required students to describe a picture within 1 to 1.5 minutes. The teacher-researcher assessed their oral performance by using an analytic rubric. The findings showed that the learners struggled with oral fluency since most spoke slowly and paused constantly to find the words to complete the task. Hesitations were also present during the performances, where fillers and repeated words indicated a lack of confidence in their proficiency. Additionally, their speech was frequently interrupted with silent and filled pauses, which jeopardized its smooth flow; and repairs in the form of self-corrections and repeated attempts to express ideas clearly regarding the picture. In terms of speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and breakdowns, the findings made it clear that the students were striving to achieve oral fluency. A pedagogical intervention was required to address these specific issues in this context. The post-intervention assessment used the same speaking task but with a different picture, emphasizing speaking fluency based on speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs.

Creswell (2012) highlights that quantitative data can be categorized, counted, and measured. The DPS rates derived the mean and mode of the data. Begun (2018) notes the importance of variables like intervention strength in research. As Dawson (2009) suggests, a simple interval scale calculation was used in the study to analyze the participants' results in improving their oral fluency. The teacher-researcher crafted a rubric for assessing oral fluency, which was subsequently sent to professors and colleagues from Chilean universities for validation. Based on their invaluable feedback, the instrument underwent refinements before being introduced to participants.

Employing a quantitative method, data were collected and analyzed using measures of central tendency, specifically the mean, mode, and standard deviation. Calculations concerning the frequency of certain fluency issues, like pauses, hesitations, and repairs, were also done to find common patterns. Descriptive statistics gave a full and detailed summary of the overall performance. These comprehensive techniques provided insight into participants' oral fluency in such a way that showed their improvements and the intervention's effectiveness. The participants mentioned feeling more motivated and interested in learning the EFL. Teamwork and reflection in this process guaranteed an appropriate and trustworthy judgment with relevant findings into the DPS's effects on oral fluency.

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Instructional Design

To tackle the participants' lack of speaking fluency, we as the researchers referred to the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) model developed by Chamot in 2005. This model includes learning strategies in content-based and academic activities. It is cyclical, both teachers and students can recycle through former instructional phases if

necessary. We used the CALLA model in planning our sessions with the DPS. Figure 1 shows the CALLA's six steps of instructional design.

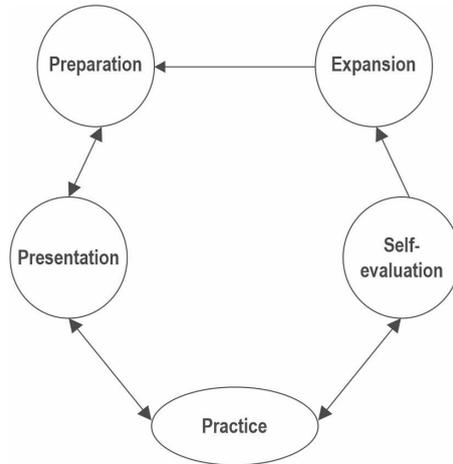


Figure 1. *CALLA Model of Cognitive Strategy Instruction*

Source: Nejad and Mahmoodi-Shahreabaki (2015).

During the intervention, using Chamot's model ensured that our sessions were systematically set up to make the learning process as effective as possible. The CALLA model was thoughtfully combined with the DPS throughout each phase to enhance cognitive engagement and language development. This would promote oral fluency and make students more autonomous and strategic in language use. This model allowed us to promote a supportive and safe learning environment. CALLA's cyclical nature allowed adjustments and improvements through constant observation and student feedback so that our instructional strategies remained responsive to the participants' different needs. This methodology proved to be a key to deeper and more meaningful learning for our students, tailored to help them succeed in and out of the classroom.

The eight-session action plan intervention enhanced oral fluency through the DPS. Following Chamot's CALLA Model (2005), the sessions incorporated vocabulary about sustainability and steadily built student's confidence and proficiency. Table 1 provides a summary of the activities implemented during the intervention, including the description of the pre- and post-intervention oral tests, structured practice sessions, and feedback mechanisms to tackle the key fluency indicators: speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs.

Table 1. *Action Plan*

Date	Activities and Procedures	Time	Objective
May 17th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation: Vocabulary for describing pictures and global sustainability was presented. – Display: Previous knowledge is compared against the model shown. Stages for describing pictures were analyzed and inferred by the students. – Exercise/Assessment: Descriptions of pictures were prepared and presented to classmates. Students gave Peer feedback on the vocabulary used and speech rate. – Expansion: Descriptions of pictures were prepared and presented to classmates based on the previous feedback. – Evaluation: Metacognition took place and students received general feedback from the teacher. <p>Observations: Speech rate and vocabulary usage were the main problems, so the next session will include specific vocabulary exercises and more practice before the description of the picture to increase speech rate during that task.</p>	80'	SO1: To analyze participants' results on their oral fluency, aspects of speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs; before and after the intervention with the describing picture strategy.
May 23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation/Display: Vocabulary for describing pictures and global sustainability was elicited. – Display: Previous knowledge is compared against the model shown. Stages for the students to describe, analyze, and infer pictures. – Exercise/Assessment: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures. Students gave peer feedback on the vocabulary used and hesitation. – Expansion: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures based on the previous feedback. – Evaluation: Metacognition took place and students received general feedback from the teacher. <p>Observations: Students frequently hesitated and used the filler “em”, “and”, therefore, a timed speaking activity will be introduced before describing a picture, together with spontaneous speaking, to reduce hesitation and build confidence</p>	80'	

Date	Activities and Procedures	Time	Objective
May 24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation/Display: Vocabulary for describing pictures and global sustainability was elicited. – Display: Previous knowledge is compared against the model shown. Students described, analyzed, and inferred pictures. – Exercise/Assessment: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures. Students gave peer feedback on the vocabulary used and pauses. – Expansion: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures based on the previous feedback. – Evaluation: Metacognition took place and students received general feedback from the teacher. <p>Observation: Frequent and inappropriate pauses hindered the student's smooth flow of speech. Next session, the description of pictures will be recorded to count pauses and identify when they make them. They will receive/give immediate peer feedback on pausing patterns.</p>	80'	
May 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation/Display: Vocabulary for describing pictures and global sustainability was elicited. – Display: Previous knowledge is compared against the model shown. Students described, analyzed, and inferred pictures. – Exercise/Assessment: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures. Students gave peer feedback on the vocabulary used and pauses. – Expansion: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures based on the previous feedback. – Evaluation: Metacognition took place and students received general feedback from the teacher. <p>Observation: Students are aware of the moments in which they make inappropriate pauses but still make too many due to a lack of confidence. More real-time speaking practice will take place with the target vocabulary before they perform the describing picture strategy exercise.</p>	80'	

Date	Activities and Procedures	Time	Objective
<p>May 31st</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Preparation/Display: Vocabulary for describing pictures and global sustainability was elicited. – Display: Previous knowledge is compared against the model shown. Students described, analyzed, and inferred pictures. – Exercise/Assessment: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures. Students gave peer feedback on the vocabulary used and repairs. – Expansion: Classmates' preparation, presentation, and description of pictures based on the previous feedback. – Evaluation: Metacognition took place and students received general feedback from the teacher. <p>Observation: Self-corrections and repeated attempts were covered; however, more confidence in their pronunciation is needed not to repeat the same ideas/words they already conveyed.</p>	<p>80'</p>	

Source: Own work.

Finally, we highlight that the successful attainment of the study's objectives can be attributed, in part, to the cooperative endeavors of the students during the tasks, wherein they collaboratively provided mutual support and feedback. In alignment with the specific objective, the evaluation stage was meticulously designed to critically analyze the participants' oral fluency indicators, emphasizing speech rate, hesitation, pauses, and repairs. The evaluation unfolded in two primary phases:

1. Pre-intervention Assessment: Before implementing the describing picture strategy, an assessment was conducted to gauge participants' baseline oral fluency furnishing a lucid understanding of their initial performance metrics and potential areas necessitating enhancement.
2. Post-intervention Assessment: A parallel assessment occurred after the intervention employing the describing picture strategy. This phase was instrumental in discerning the strategy's tangible impact on the participants' oral fluency dynamics.

To understand the DPS's effects on oral fluency, we compared the pre- and post-intervention assessment results. This comparison shed light on the indicators of speaking fluency in which learners could improve and revealed the areas requiring further research.

Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the research findings from the pre- and post-intervention speaking fluency rubric used to rate the participants' descriptions of pictures. The results of both speaking presentations were analyzed to compare participant's speaking fluency. The analysis is presented according to the specific objective stated in this study.

The arithmetic mean, mode, and standard deviation (SD), measures of central tendency, were used to analyze the participant's results regarding the indicators of their oral fluency (speech rate, breakdowns, and repairs) before and after the intervention with the DPS. The maximum score in the rubric to assess students' fluency was 16 points, where *excellent* corresponded to 4 points, *good* (3 points), *satisfactory* (2 points), and *needs improvement* (1 point). The participants' scores are presented in Table 2

Table 2. Participant's Global Scores in the Pre- and Post-Intervention Tests

Participants' Fluency Level				
Participants	Pre-intervention test Total score: 16		Post-intervention test Total score: 16	
	Total Score	Percentage of Achievement	Total Score	Percentage of Achievement
1	8	50%	11	69%
2	9	56%	11	69%
3	6	38%	9	56%
4	7	44%	10	63%
5	8	50%	9	56%
6	8	50%	8	50%
7	7	44%	9	56%
8	6	38%	9	56%
9	8	50%	10	63%
10	7	44%	11	69%
11	7	44%	11	69%
Mean	7	46%	10	61%
Mode	8	50%	11	69%
Standard Deviation	0.92		1.07	

Source: Own elaboration

Upon scrutinizing the data in Table 2, there is a discernible enhancement in participants' speaking fluency following the intervention. In the pre-intervention assessment, none of the

participants reached the general minimum passing score of 10, signifying a universal need for fluency augmentation. Scores during this phase oscillated between 6 and 9, translating to achievement percentages from 38% to 56%. In contrast, in the post-intervention, 55% of the participants achieved scores of 10 or higher ranging from 8 to 11, and achievement percentages between 50% and 69%.

The arithmetic mean of the scores ascended from 7 (46% achievement) in the pre-intervention to 10 (61% achievement) in the post-intervention, accentuating the intervention's potency. The mode increased from 8 to 11, and the corresponding achievement percentage leaped from 50% to 69%. Delving into the standard deviation, the pre-intervention test registered a value of 0.92, indicating a relatively tight cluster of scores around the mean. This suggests that most participants had similar fluency levels before the intervention. In the post-intervention, the standard deviation increased slightly to 1.07, indicating a broader spread of scores. This could be interpreted as participants experiencing varied levels of improvement, with some benefiting more than others from the intervention.

The data underscores the positive impact of the describing picture strategy on participants' oral fluency. While the overall fluency levels have been bolstered, the nuanced change in the post-intervention standard deviation suggests a diverse range of individual improvements.

This highlights the importance of personalized approaches and further investigations into specific fluency indicators for a more comprehensive understanding.

Analysis of Participant's Fluency Level: Speech Rate

An analytical rubric was used to evaluate the participants' observed speech rate, accounting for the four degrees of expertise listed in Table 3.

Table 3. *Participant's Speech Rate Levels*

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
	4	3	2	1
Speech rate	Produces from 150 words per minute up	Produces between 126-149 words per minute	Produces between 100 and 125 words per minute	Produces less than 99 words per minute

Source: Own work.

Based on Table 3, it can be said that according to this criterion results, participants were required to produce 150 words per minute while describing the picture related to

sustainability (assigned randomly); however, there was not a significant difference in terms of points assigned with the rubric, as it can be seen in Table 4 and Figure 2.

Table 4. *Participants' Speech Rate (Words Per Minute: WPM)*

Participants	Words Per Minute		
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
1	43	45	2
2	38	55	17
3	33	37	4
4	20	31	11
5	70	86	16
6	33	37	4
7	23	17	-6
8	42	45	3
9	32	30	-2
10	24	38	14
11	34	65	31
		Average	9

Source: Own work.

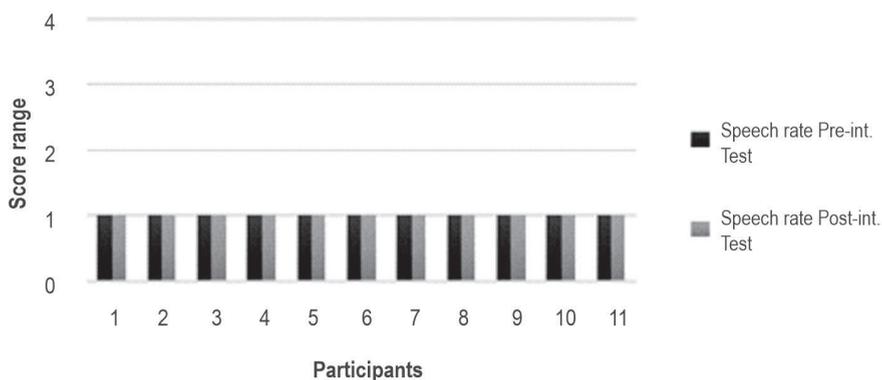


Figure 2. *Participants' Speech Rate (Words Per Minute)*

The speech rate had no difference in the analytic rubric during the pre- and post-intervention assessment. Therefore, the presentations' recordings in both assessments were transcribed and analyzed for a more detailed analysis. This analysis concentrated on the number of words the participants produced per minute (WPM).

The analysis indicates a change in speaking fluency from pre- to post-intervention. The average WPM during the pre-intervention test was 35.9, while the average WPM in the post-test increased to 44.9. Thus, there was an increase of 9 words a minute on average, showing how the participants had changed their speaking fluency. Results show different performances for different learners. Five of them increased their WPM significantly during speech ranging from 14 to 31 words. On the other hand, two participants decreased from 6 to 2 in WPM. Four participants increased their WPM by a small margin, ranging from 2 to 4 words. These individual differences underline the complexity of speaking fluency development and the requirement to consider different learning profiles.

Although improvement in the speech rate, not all the participants got the same results because of the learners' different individual needs. Therefore, the participants who showed improvements received reinforcement and encouragement to keep practicing with DPS. For those with a slight or no increase, targeted support was offered during the class, like additional rehearsal to master vocabulary and more opportunities for self-correction during their performances.

Analysis of Participant's Level of Hesitation

Four levels of mastery in an analytic rubric were used to compare results in the participant's level of hesitation, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. *Participant's Level of Hesitation*

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
	4	3	2	1
Hesitation	The speaker speaks confidently and naturally with no distracting hesitations or fillers that show hesitation.	The speaker hesitates or uses fillers that show hesitation 3 to 5 times.	The speaker has hesitations or use of fillers that show hesitation 6 times up.	The speaker is uncertain and hesitates or uses fillers that show hesitation more than 6 times.

Source: Own work.

The pre-test scores obtained by the participants with the analytic rubric ranged from 1 to 2, with 4 being the maximum score. The distribution of participants' scores revealed that most participants (10 out of 11 equals 91%) achieved a score of 2 (Satisfactory), representing a moderate level of hesitation while one participant achieved a score of 1 (9%), indicating a higher level of hesitation. No participants achieved the maximum score of 4.

The scores obtained in the post-test also ranged from 1 to 3. The analysis demonstrated an enhancement in hesitation levels after the intervention. Most participants (82%) achieved 3 as a score, indicating reduced hesitation. Two participants (18%) worsened their scores from 2 to 1, reflecting a significant increase in hesitation. One participant maintained a score of 2. Again, no participants achieved the maximum score of 4 (see Table 6 and Figure 3).

Table 6. *Participants' Levels of Hesitation*

Participants	Participant's level of Hesitation		
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
1	2	3	-1
2	2	3	-1
3	1	3	-2
4	2	3	-1
5	2	1	1
6	2	1	1
7	2	3	-1
8	2	3	-1
9	2	3	-1
10	2	3	-1
11	2	3	-1
		Average	-1

Source: Own work.

The analysis of hesitation in both tests demonstrated improvements in speaking fluency among participants. The majority achieved higher scores in the post-intervention test, indicating reduced hesitation levels.

Analysis of Participant's Level of Pauses

Another indicator of the rubric to assess fluency was the pauses, where the participants were required to speak confidently and naturally with pauses of no longer than 2 seconds during the performance. The respective rubric considered four levels of mastery, as shown in Table 7.

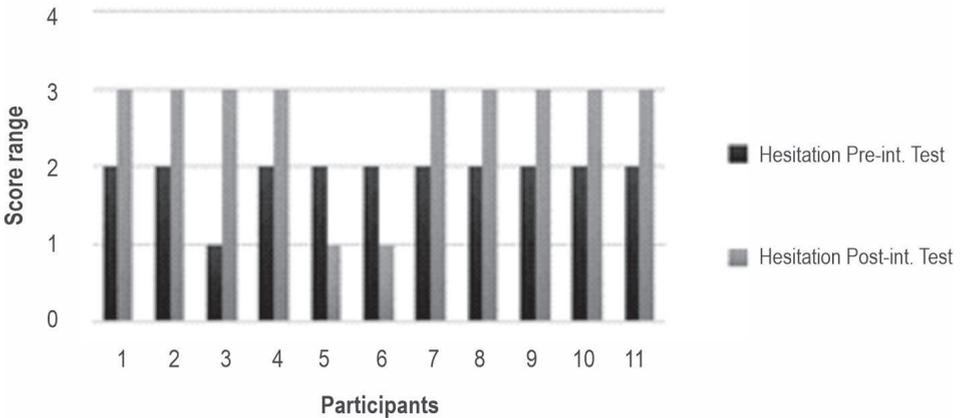


Figure 3. *Participants' Level of Hesitation*

Source: Own work.

Table 7. *Participant's Level of Pauses*

	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Pauses	The speaker speaks confidently and naturally with pauses of no longer than 2 seconds during the performance.	The speaker produces 3 to 5 pauses of more than two seconds during the performance.	The speaker produces 6 to 9 pauses of more than two seconds during the performance.	The speaker makes more than 10 pauses of more than two seconds during the performance.

Source: Own work.

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Among the pre-intervention test scores, the lowest score achieved was 1, indicating a low number of pauses, while the highest score achieved was 3, representing a higher number of pauses. The pre-intervention test scores obtained by the participants ranged from 1 to 3, with 4 being the maximum score. The distribution of scores revealed that five participants (45%) achieved a score of 1, indicating few pauses during speech. Five participants (45%) got 2, indicating moderate pauses. One participant (10%) got 3, representing higher pauses. No participants achieved the maximum score of 4.

In the post-intervention test scores, the analysis demonstrated improvements in the participants' pause levels. Three participants (27%) got 1, indicating fewer pauses. One participant (10%) scored 2, suggesting consistent pauses. Seven participants (64%) got 3,

indicating higher pauses. Again, no participants achieved the maximum score of 4. Table 8 and Figure 4 show the participant's performance regarding pauses.

Table 8. *Participants' Level of Pauses*

Participants	Participant's Level of Pauses		
	Pre-Test	Post Test	Difference
1	2	3	1+
2	3	3	0
3	1	1	0
4	1	3	2+
5	2	3	1+
6	2	2	0
7	2	1	1-
8	1	1	0
9	2	3	1+
10	1	3	2+
11	1	3	2+
		Average	-1

Source: Own work

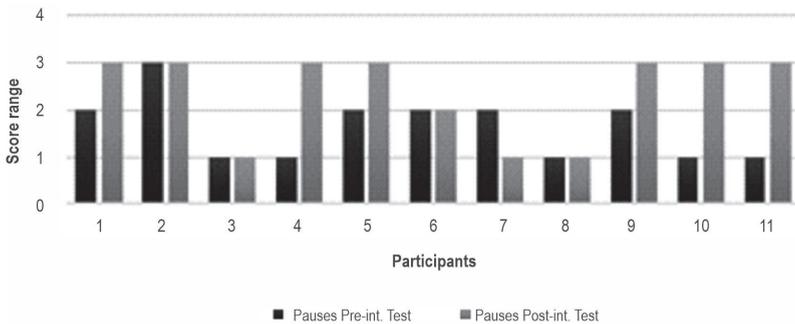


Figure 4. *Participants' Level of Pauses*

Source: Own work.

The data gathered reveal key insights into the participants' speech patterns. The post-intervention showed a discernible impact with many participants exhibiting reduced hesitations. However, individual variations underscore the intricate nature of speech hesitation. While the overarching trend suggests improvement, the nuances in individual

outcomes emphasize the multifaceted challenges in achieving consistent oral fluency. These findings validate the action research's objective and potentially mitigate speech hesitations through targeted interventions.

The analysis of pre-intervention and post-intervention test results revealed the participants' performance and improvements in pause levels. While some participants showed a decrease in the number of pauses after the intervention, others maintained consistent or increased levels. This suggests the complexity of addressing pause levels in speaking fluency development. Further research and instructional approaches can focus on targeted strategies to reduce pauses and promote fluent and continuous speech.

Analysis of Participant's Level of Repairs

This indicator of the analytic rubric analyzed the participants' repair levels during the pre-intervention and post-intervention tests. According to Kormos (2006), repairs are the speaker's ability to manage and correct themselves when speaking in real time to maintain communication clarity and coherence. Effective repair strategies such as self-correction and rephrasing show that a speaker can be fluent, even with a linguistic challenge (e.g., limited vocabulary, incorrect grammar usage, pronunciation errors, or difficulty recalling words). Also, this is one main skill related to giving fluency feedback in L2 speaking because it influences the speaker's awareness of language, that is, whether they can monitor and adjust language use. Repairs considered four levels of mastery in the rubric, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. *Participant's Level of Repairs*

	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Repair	The speaker's ideas flow efficiently with no repairs.	The speaker makes 3 to 5 repairs during the performance.	The speaker makes 6 to 9 repairs during the performance.	The speaker makes more than 10 repairs during the performance.

Source: Own work.

In the pre-intervention test, the participants' scores ranged from 3 to 4, showing their moderate repair skills. No participant got the maximum score of 4. In the post-intervention test, scores were in approximately the same range: most participants scored 4, indicating an enhancement in their ability to repair their speech. This gain means an increment in the repair skills that conform to the fluency of conversation. The lowest score in the pre-

intervention test was 2, a sign of moderate repair skills, whereas the maximum was 3. On the contrary, the lowest score in the post-intervention test was 3, showing increasing repair skills, whereas the maximum score was 4.

According to the obtained results from the analysis of pre- and post-intervention tests, there is a significant increase in repair scores. Most participants could achieve a higher repair level of 4 after the intervention. This shows that repair-skill development is important for overall speaking fluency. Such development allows speakers to communicate clearly and effectively even when the speaker makes a mistake, and the intended meaning is unclear. Table 10 and Figure 5 introduce the participants' performance concerning the repairs.

Table 10. *Participants' Level of Repair*

Participants	Participant's Level of Repairs		
	Pre-Test	Post Test	Difference
1	3	4	-1
2	3	4	-1
3	3	4	-1
4	3	3	0
5	3	4	-1
6	3	4	-1
7	2	4	-2
8	2	4	-2
9	3	3	0
10	3	4	-1
11	3	4	-1
		Average	-1

Source: Own work.

The data showed how the participants handled speech repairs before and after the intervention. Speech repair is an important indicator of speaking fluency since it maintains a natural flow in oral interactions through self-correction and rephrasing. In this respect, the intervention positively affected the participants, resulting in an observable enhancement in their speech repair ability. Before the intervention, many of the participants showed problems regarding fragmented and hesitant speech. After the intervention, their strategies of repair had become significantly better. The improvements now allowed smoother and more fluent speech, a critical feature of fluency.

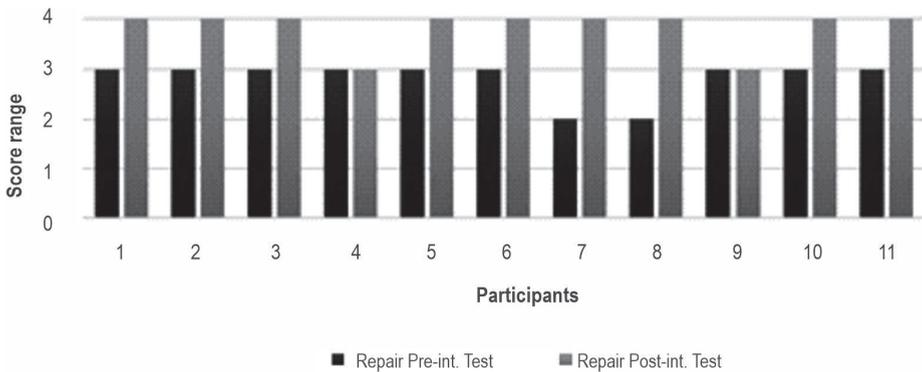


Figure 5. *Participants' Level of Repair*

Source: Own work.

These individual differences underscore the complexity involved in speech repairs, whereby each participant takes a unique personal learning process toward fluency. These variations suggest that personalized approaches are essential in addressing specific needs. Overall, the results confirm that action research was effective in helping the participants improve their ability to self-correct and enhance speaking fluency.

Conclusions

This action research showed the effectiveness of the DPS in enhancing oral fluency among Chilean Higher education students. Its findings revealed improvements in speech rate and repair mechanisms after the intervention, while hesitation and pause levels showed mixed results among participants. The results underscore DPS as a valuable pedagogical tool for fostering speaking fluency, highlighting its potential to motivate learners and tackle diverse leaning needs in English language teaching.

An in-depth analysis revealed a significant enhancement in participants' repair mechanisms post-intervention. However, the data also illuminated certain domains, such as hesitation, where outcomes varied among participants. This granular nature of the data, echoing the complexities inherent in language acquisition (e.g., managing cognitive load, balancing fluency and accuracy, overcoming hesitation, and lexical retrieval speed), serves as a testament to the intricate nuances of the learning process. Furthermore, the Chilean cultural context, which values, politeness, and indirectness, plays a pivotal role in speaking instruction (Byram et al., 2001; Dewey, 2012). Recognizing these cultural norms, as emphasized by Thornbury (2007) and McDonough et al. (2013), is crucial for effective language instruction.

The DPS emerged as a potent pedagogical tool to improve fluency and cater to diverse learning profiles. It emphasizes its motivational aspects through differentiation and scaffolding, echoed by many in the academic community. However, every research endeavor has its limitations. A notable constraint in this study was the innovative nature of the strategy for the specific Chilean context. Incorporating technological tools, such as projectors and computers during the intervention emerged as significant assets, enhancing the delivery and engagement. Yet, the unique cultural, technological, and pedagogical nuances of the Chilean context mean that results cannot be broadly generalized. Thus, given the positive outcomes associated with the DPS, there is a compelling case for its integration into mainstream EFL curricula. Future research could delve into its long-term effects, potential adaptations for different learner profiles, and its applicability in diverse educational settings.

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The Contribution of the Elevator Pitch to Support 11th EFL Graders' Oral Fluency

La Contribución del *Elevator Pitch* para Apoyar la Fluidez Oral de Estudiantes de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

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Abstract

This study adopted an action research design to analyze the contribution of the Elevator Pitch technique on English as foreign language learners' oral fluency. Six 11th graders in a rural at-risk context in a vocational public high school in Hualqui, Chile participated in this study. The Elevator Pitch technique was implemented during seven sessions. Data were collected by conducting a pre- and post-intervention test and a focus group. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test; thematic analysis was used to categorize the responses from the qualitative data. Results suggest an improvement in oral fluency and a positive perception toward the technique used during the intervention, which illustrates how effective the Elevator Pitch technique could be among Chilean learners from similar contexts.

Keywords: Elevator Pitch, English as a foreign language, fluency, secondary education, vocational education

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Resumen

Este estudio adoptó un diseño de investigación acción con el objetivo de evaluar la contribución de la técnica del *Elevator Pitch* para apoyar a estudiantes jóvenes de inglés como lengua extranjera. En esta investigación-acción participaron seis estudiantes de tercero medio. Ellos estaban inmersos en un contexto rural de alta vulnerabilidad en un liceo público en Chile. La técnica se implementó durante siete sesiones. Para la recolección de datos se administró una prueba previa, una posterior y un grupo focal. Los datos cuantitativos se analizaron mediante estadística descriptiva y la prueba no paramétrica de Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon, mientras que se utilizó el análisis temático para categorizar las respuestas emergidas de los datos cualitativos. Los resultados sugieren una mejora en la fluidez oral y una percepción positiva de la técnica usada durante la intervención, lo que ilustra cuán efectiva podría ser la técnica del *Elevator Pitch* entre los estudiantes chilenos de contextos similares.

Palabras clave: Elevator Pitch, fluidez, educación técnico profesional, educación secundaria, inglés como lengua extranjera

Introduction

In recent years, the importance of effective communication skills in English has become increasingly recognized in academic and professional contexts. As globalization continues to shape the landscape of education and employment, the ability to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively in English is essential for success. This is particularly true for students in vocational programs in Chile where the demand for proficient communication skills is paramount.

In the context of this study, English for Specific Purposes (ESP onwards) is particularly relevant because it addresses the specific linguistic and communicative needs of students pursuing vocational programs in Chile, such as students in the Administration and Human Resources program in schools' eleventh grade that require English language skills that are directly applicable to their future jobs. The connection between communication skills and ESP is fundamental to developing effective language learning for vocational students. In vocational programs, students must master skills relevant to their future careers, such as presenting ideas, negotiating, and participating in meetings.

According to the Chilean Ministry of Education (2019), eleventh graders are expected to be able to present information orally and engage in conversations, discussions, and presentations, highlighting their relevance for communication. These expectations align with the need for students in vocational programs to develop English language proficiency that supports their career goals, ensuring they are prepared for the labor market demands. As English is often the lingua franca in many professional fields, students in vocational programs are expected to achieve a certain level of proficiency in English.

This action research study revolves around the low fluency levels displayed by English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, particularly among eleventh graders in a rural context in Chile. The study identifies that these learners often lack opportunities to practice speaking in English in and out of the classroom which impedes their ability to communicate effectively. These students exhibit difficulties in speaking fluency in English; observations performed for this study reveal that these eleventh graders struggle to communicate in English when they try. Daily exposure to English is insufficient to encourage students to improve their speaking abilities, as they cannot communicate clearly about studied subjects. They frequently take long, silent pauses while repeating the same idea multiple times; as a result, they have a very low level of oral fluency. This lack of oral fluency is seen in their low speech rate, extensive pauses, hesitations, and many corrections when speaking. These difficulties have prevented students from obtaining the desired proficiency level of English at the end of high school and when they complete their vocational program and enter the labor market. As a result, it is critical to address this shortcoming by developing a teaching strategy that supports students in achieving better results.

Therefore, the Elevator Pitch is shown as a technique to speak out clearly and concisely within thirty seconds to one minute and helps to prepare what someone wants to speak about. For example, in an interview, students can talk about job responsibilities and frame the speech as smooth, smart, and rehearsed due to its recitation practice (Yoshimura & MacWhinney, 2017). This strategy supports eleventh-grade students' fluency to decrease the hesitations, pauses, and corrections when they speak out.

Literature Review

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) in the Chilean Educational System

In the Chilean educational system, the final four years of compulsory education are dedicated to secondary education, divided into two types: scientific-humanistic and vocational. The former (scientific-humanistic) is oriented towards deepening the learners' areas of interest regarding their general training to eventually pursue undergraduate studies (Ley General de Educación, 2009). On the contrary, the vocational program, known as Professional-Technical Secondary Education (EMTP-T), is a formal program within the technical-professional education path in Chile. According to Peralta-Rojas et al. (2020), this program is well-structured featuring a standardized curriculum and entrance requirements defined by the Chilean Ministry of Education (Mineduc) under the General Law of Education (Ley General de Educación No. 20.370) (BNC, 2009). The EMTP-T program is offered in various schools and includes clearly defined learning objectives, allocated learning

time, and support from qualified trainers, instructors, or teachers. Upon completion, students receive formal recognition, a bachelor's degree in secondary education, which validates their vocational training and prepares them for work.

In Chile, students can choose from seventeen majors during their final two years of high school, with vocational education offering thirty-four professional technical programs. Each includes a curriculum component that provides two hours of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) per week, more specifically English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). EOP is typically integrated into professional curricula, such as English for secretaries, technicians, pilots, or nurses (Bui & Huong, 2023; Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991; Kim, 2008). This focus on practical application emphasizes the importance of teaching English relevant to specific job roles and functions. By incorporating EOP into the curriculum, students are better prepared to meet the linguistic demands of their future careers, enhancing their employability and professional competence.

The context of this study is EOP, as it highlights the significance of equipping students with the language skills necessary for their specific occupations. EOP prepares students for immediate job communication and effectively fosters their ability to work in professional environments. By focusing on pre-work purposes, EOP ensures that students are proficient in English and able to apply their language skills in real scenarios, thereby enhancing their future careers.

Oral Fluency

Different authors agree that fluency is the ability to keep a natural conversation, known as speech rate, without many filled or unfilled pauses, using a small number of fillers and formulaic language (Bohn, 2015; Housen & Kuiken, 2009). Oral fluency is also “a measure of how well and how easily you can communicate your ideas clearly and accurately in speech” (Karimy & Pishkar, 2017, p. 49).

In language learning, fluency is a crucial aspect of oral proficiency. It involves communicating smoothly and effectively and demonstrating a command of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Fluency is not only about speed but also about the coherence and accuracy of speech. It is a key component in communicative language programs (Metcalf et al., 2016). Similarly, when assessing oral fluency, the following aspects are necessary: speech rate, articulation rate, number of pauses per minute, phonation-time ratio, filled pauses, disfluencies, length of utterance, and pause duration (De Wolf et al., 2017; Khau & Huynh, 2022).

The development of approaches that could improve student speaking skills and provide students more opportunities to communicate and express themselves in the target

language are all matters that teachers may do to assist students in learning English effectively (Namaziandost et al., 2020). Teachers need to keep in mind four characteristics while designing fluency activities: a message focus, easy material, pressure to go faster, and quality of practice. From these four aspects, choosing easy material is important because it is hard to become fluent while exposed to difficult material (Muller et al., 2014).

For instance, the 4/3/2 technique studied by Santos and Ramirez-Avila (2023) is a valuable tool for supporting students' fluency. This technique employs a three-round approach to speaking and listening. In the initial round, students share their thoughts on a given topic for four minutes, promoting comprehensive articulation of their ideas. Subsequently, in the second round, they summarize their ideas into a three-minute discussion in which they must prioritize and synthesize their thoughts. Lastly, in the third round, students must summarize their ideas within a concise two-minute presentation. As the time allocated decreases with each round, students develop the skill to express themselves more fluently and concisely. This technique enhances speaking confidence and nurtures the capacity to adapt language to various contexts and audiences. By planning and rehearsing learners can continue improving what they want to say, thus performing better. Therefore, planning becomes pivotal with such techniques.

Task planning has garnered significant attention from researchers in recent years, and its impact on language learners' fluency has been investigated in various studies. One such study, conducted on EFL learners at language institutes in Iran by Farde Davaji and Ghoorchaei (2023) aimed to investigate the effects of pre-task planning on fluency and accuracy. The study found that planning time before task performance showed better fluency and accuracy in their oral performance compared to groups with no planning time. The research findings indicate that different tasks and planning conditions during the pre-task planning stage contribute to fluency in oral performance. Moreover, this study aligns with previous research by Moradi and Talebi (2014) and Yuan and Ellis (2003), reinforcing that allowing learners to engage in planning before task performance yields beneficial outcomes for fluency. Ellis's (2005) classification of task-based planning into pre-task and within-task planning, further nuanced by guided and unguided, detailed, or undetailed planning, offers a comprehensive framework to understand the various dimensions of planning and their implications for oral proficiency.

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The presented concept discusses different planning types, as outlined by Ellis (2005), and their impact on oral performance. Ellis identifies two principal types of task-based planning: pre-task planning and within-task planning. Pre-task planning involves rehearsal and strategic planning, while within-task planning involves pressured and unpressured planning. Both plans can be categorized as unguided or guided planning, the latter is further considered detailed or undetailed planning. The study focuses on pre-task planning (strategic planning), the time given for pre-task planning, and its impact on oral performance.

Elevator Pitch as a Strategy to Improve Fluency

Elevator Pitch originated from the business world and was later introduced into the educational field around 1980. It can be described as a meeting between an entrepreneur and an executive in an elevator in which the former aims to persuade the latter. In education, the Elevator Pitch becomes a brief oral presentation designed to capture the listener's attention in a short time (Aznar Juan, 2022; Bieger Morales & Caballero-García, 2019).

Among effective techniques to support oral fluency, Sridhar Iyer (2016) states that Elevator Pitch briefly describes a product or service and its value proposition. A successful pitch persuades the listener to make the speaker's desired decision. The pitch is usually thirty seconds to one minute (what an elevator ride usually lasts) and its primary purpose is to provide a clear, concise, and memorable summary of a project. According to a course work (*Creating Your Elevator Speech*) designed by Sridhar Iyer (2016) from the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay, a well-crafted elevator pitch should be precise; the problem should be emphasized, good examples should be used, and the speech should be free of vague points. Its implementation also provides room for learners to plan, design, craft, memorize, practice, and perform (O'Leary, 2008; Sagimin, 2015). O'Leary (2008) also adds that the Elevator Pitch should include key features, defined as the Nine C's (see Figure 1 below).

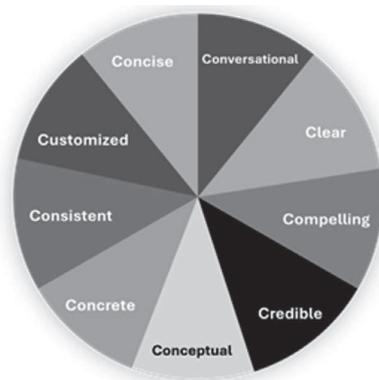


Figure 1. *The Nine C's*

Furthermore, implementing the Elevator Pitch in teaching how to speak to support speaking fluency poses a beneficial opportunity for EFL learners and their speaking skills (Beltrán-Palanquez, 2023; Sagimin, 2015). Sagimin (2015) reflects upon the results that students felt. The technique was easy to conduct and implement when drilling their speaking skills since it has easy steps to be learned, and they had a good opportunity to use and practice the language.

The same study contributes to the idea that practice allows students to produce language fluently and express ideas spontaneously (Sagimin, 2015). Moreover, when the speaker is given the option to repeat the task, a large chunk of the conceptualizing, formulating, and articulating process is already accomplished, and as a result, attentional resources are free up to be directed to various dimensions of oral output (Begley, 2017; Bygate & Samuda, 2005). This may result in improving the speaker's language production of the identical meanings expressed in the first task performance. According to Movahed and Karkia (2014), developing oral fluency is necessary to repeat the same words and phrases many times so students can feel confident, which makes each delivery grammatically correct.

This strategy appears to be an appropriate alternative for a speaking class, particularly for students who frequently use English to communicate in an office setting or job, and for those who deliver speeches or present brief presentations in front of others. Students are urged to produce any conceivable speech in various settings of their working field and interest when delivering an Elevator Pitch, such as presenting and promoting the product, or conducting a presentation in a meeting and elaborating ideas.

As the Elevator Pitch embraces practicing (Morgan & Wright, 2021; O'Leary, 2008; Sagimin, 2015), students from the vocational program of Administration and Human Resources can gain fluency in their speaking skills when they can practice saying their pitch through oral repetition.

Method

This study followed an action research design with mixed-method techniques. It involved three instruments: a pre-intervention test, a post-intervention test, and a focus group. Each test was assessed by an analytic rubric (see Appendix A) adapted from Santos and Ramírez-Avila's (2022). The teacher-researcher created the focus group. The three instruments were validated by three university professors, experts in English teaching and research, an educational psychologist, and the vocational program coordinator in the school. The material was adapted according to the context of the Chilean curricular framework. The main objective was to assess the contribution of the Elevator Pitch technique on EFL learners' oral fluency. Two specific objectives were proposed: (1) To assess students' progress in their fluency in terms of rate, hesitations, pauses, and corrections, and (2) to identify students' perceptions regarding their fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch when performing oral presentations.

Participants

The purposive sample of this study was six 11th graders from a vocational public high school in Hualqui, Chile. Learners were observed and chosen due to their low performance

in speaking activities. Furthermore, learners and parents were informed about the study and agreed to participate voluntarily by signing a consent letter. The school is in a rural area of the region, with a high percentage (95%) of vulnerability according to IVE 2023 (i.e. *Index of School Vulnerability* as translated from Spanish) (Junaeb, 2023).

Procedure

Afterward, the participants were asked to take the pre-intervention test at the beginning of the intervention. This consisted of four lessons within five weeks using the Elevator Pitch technique. The teacher-researcher used the analytic rubric for fluency to assess the pre-test. Every lesson started with a brief vocabulary instruction of The Elevator Pitch's four steps and then the students modeled the task. The interventions outlined the key elements of the Elevator Pitch strategy, the introduction to fluency and its components, the creation of an outline on a given topic, feedback provision by the teacher-researcher, role switching in pairs, rehearsing the pitch by private practice, and recording an audio of the one-minute Elevator Pitch. These sessions focused on progressively building skills related to crafting and delivering Elevator Pitch.

By the end of the intervention, the participants were asked to take the post-intervention test by using the same analytic rubric in the pre-intervention test. Finally, a focus group was applied to five students.

Data Analysis

The pre- and post-intervention tests responded to the first research objective; the focus group was conducted to address the second. The quantitative data were codified and analyzed using descriptive statistics and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test. The qualitative data were transcribed and categorized into a thematic analysis. Considering the qualitative nature of the responses, thematic analysis is a suitable technique for analyzing data categorizing and defining themes that could emerge from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The findings of the analysis are represented in the next section.

Findings

The intervention sought to approach the main objective: To analyze the contribution of Elevator Pitch to support eleventh-grade students' fluency. An analytic rubric was used as a pre-intervention test to assess the participants and identify their initial fluency based on Santos & Ramírez-Ávila's rubric (2022). This includes the following criteria, which are worth three points each (12 points): (a) speech rate; (b) hesitations; (c) repetitions, and (d) corrections. According to each student's performance on the pre- and post-test, the researcher assigned

a mark ranging from one to three in each part of the rubric. Figure 2 shows students' results obtained in both pre- and post-tests.

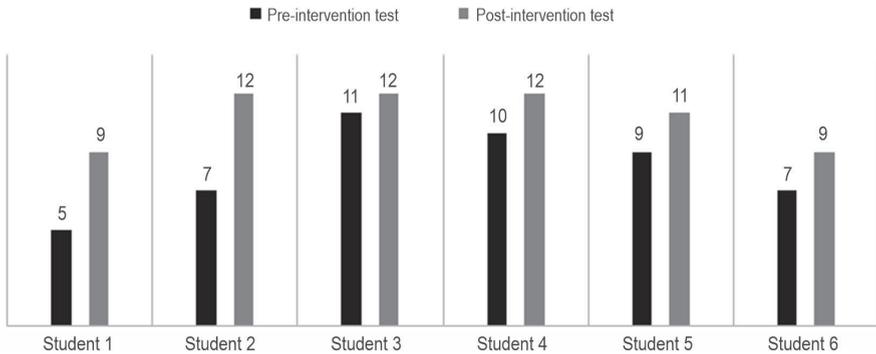


Figure 2. *Participants' Results from both Pre- and Post-Intervention Tests*

Note. Own work.

Before the intervention, participants completed a pre-test to assess their initial level of oral fluency, which revealed a range of proficiency among the students. Some participants scored more than half of the total score, and some were close to the maximum. Notwithstanding, after the intervention, participants took the post-test to assess their fluency after using the Elevator Pitch. For this assessment, the same analytical rubric as the pre-test was used. As observed, there was an improvement in the participants' speaking fluency after the intervention. This improvement can be observed in the post-intervention test final mean score, which was 11 points, representing 90% of achievement compared with 68% in the pre-intervention test with a mean score of 8 points. It can also be noticed that, in the pre-intervention test, none of the students achieved 100% of the task, but in the post-intervention test, three students (50% of the participants) obtained 100% of achievement.

Table 1 shows the pre- and post-intervention test results regarding descriptive statistics, which demonstrate significant improvements across rates, hesitations, corrections, and repetitions.

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There was a substantial increase in mean scores from 8 to 11, accompanied by a reduction in standard deviation from 2.23 to 1.47 in the post-intervention. Moreover, specific speech attributes such as speech rate experienced a notable enhancement, elevating from 2.50 to 3.0 in the post-intervention. Hesitation, repetitions, and corrections also exhibited marked improvements, indicating the efficacy of the intervention in refining these speech-related parameters. These findings underscore the intervention's positive influence on oral fluency and overall communication effectiveness in a one-minute pitch.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics from Pre and Post Intervention Tests*

	Pre-intervention test	Post-intervention test
Mean score	8	11
Standard deviation	2.23	1.47
Mean score: speech rate	2.50	3.0
Mean score: hesitation levels	1.67	2.50
Mean score: repetitions levels	2.17	2.67
Mean score: corrections levels	2.17	2.67

Note. Own work.

Furthermore, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test was applied to see any statistically significant differences between both tests in their fluency level. This non-parametric test considers a null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there is no statistically significant difference between the results from the pre- and post-intervention tests whereas the alternative hypothesis (H_1) sets the opposite: there is a statistically significant difference between these results. Table 2 shows the results from this non-parametric test.

Table 2. *Test statistics of Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon Test*

	Results from pre- and post-intervention tests
Z-score	-1.92154
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) (p-value)	.05486

Note. Own work.

As can be seen in the table, p-value is higher than the significance level ($.055 > .05$). This leads to accepting the null hypothesis (H_0), as the results show no statistically significant difference. Nonetheless, it is important to mention again that the scores in the post-intervention test have shown improvement in the participants' speaking fluency when using the Elevator Pitch despite the result from the Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon test.

Moreover, the second data collection instrument (focus group) included opening and follow-up questions. The focus group was designed to identify students' perceptions of

their fluency and the effectiveness of the Elevator Pitch in enhancing oral fluency. It aimed to uncover insights into how students felt about their speaking skills before and after the interventions.

The focus group consisted of the participants who underwent the Elevator Pitch. Their responses were expected to reflect their experiences and perceptions regarding the technique. Every utterance was transcribed and categorized. Two dimensions and four themes emerged from participants' responses, which have been established for the analysis of students' perceptions towards their experience of being exposed to the Elevator Pitch strategy. Of these four themes, nine sub-themes emerged. Figure 3 shows the students' most recurrent answers regarding their preference for using the Elevator Pitch during the intervention.

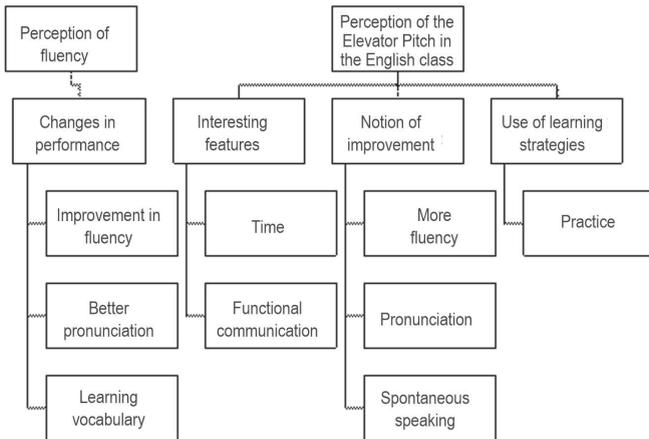


Figure 3. Dimensions, Themes, and Sub-Themes from Students' Perceptions

Note. Own work.

Regarding all the participants' responses in the focus group, it can be stated that most of them seem to value using the Elevator Pitch as a helpful strategy to support their fluency. Moreover, they also appear to hold high regard for how practicing has helped them improve other aspects as using time or vocabulary acquisition. For instance, P1 and P4 state the following: *"mejoré mi fluidez en inglés"* (I improved my fluency in English) (P1_FocusGroup), *"Hablo un poco más fluido ahora"* (I speak a little bit more fluently now) (P4_FocusGroup).

The information provided by the theme *Changes in Performance* from Dimension I (*Perception of the fluency*) highlights three main areas of improvement perceived by students using the Elevator Pitch strategy: fluency improvement, in which most of the students noted progress in their oral fluency. They mentioned how they enhanced their fluency in English

after using the Elevator Pitch in class. They also attributed the Elevator Pitch to improve their pronunciation noticeably, as can be seen in P5's response: "*Mejoró mucho mi pronunciación y mi fluidez*" (My pronunciation and fluency improved) (P5_FocusGroup), and P2's response: "*Abora puedo pronunciar mucho mejor las palabras*" (I can pronounce the words much better now) (P2_FocusGroup). Finally, they expressed how they expanded their vocabulary and learnt new words by practicing the one-minute pitch. As P3 said: "*Abora sé más palabras en inglés*" (I know more words in English now) (P3_FocusGroup).

Among the participants' responses, favorable perceptions were identified in Dimension II (*Perception of the Elevator Pitch in the English class*). Time perception is crucial as it highlights the challenge that students faced within the time constraint when they crafted their pitch. It demonstrates their understanding of time as a factor in fluency development, as stated by P1: "*Lo común es que uno escribe, eso se traduce y eso queda en el cuaderno, pero aquí había que escribirlo, traducirlo y después practicarlo muchas veces, grabar y volverlo a grabar y que tenía que ser sólo en un minuto*" (One usually writes something, then it is translated and stays in the notebook, but [with the technique] it has been written, translated, and then recorded; then, recorded again. All in just one minute) (P1_FocusGroup).

The *functional Communication* theme showcases the practical utility of the Elevator Pitch beyond mere language learning. It demonstrates how participants considered its applicability in expressing personal information and even in potential professional scenarios like selling products. The emphasis on consistent practice and repetition is fundamental in language learning. This theme highlights students' dedication and effort in refining their communication skills. For example, P1 said: "*Abora puedo dar mi información personal en inglés y vender productos*" (I can now give personal information in English and sell products) (P1_FocusGroup), and P4: "*Nos ayudó a dar información de lo que a nosotros nos gusta*" (It helped us give information about what we like) (P4_FocusGroup).

The focus group provided rich qualitative insights into students' perceptions of the Elevator Pitch technique. The findings highlighted improvements in fluency, increased engagement with the learning process, and the technique's applicability beyond the English classroom. The thematic analysis also revealed participants' positive impacts and challenges. Noting their observed improvements in fluency, vocabulary, confidence, and proficiency reinforces the effectiveness of the Elevator Pitch exercise. These detailed perceptions collectively indicate that the Elevator Pitch technique positively impacted students' fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition in the English class.

Discussion

Under this action research implementation, the EFL students improved their oral performance. Besides, implementing the Elevator Pitch technique in this classroom has

provided valuable insights into the dynamics of language learning, particularly in enhancing oral fluency among EFL learners. Throughout the intervention, the teacher-researcher observed an enhancement in students' speaking abilities, which could be attributed to the structured nature of the Elevator Pitch. This technique is essential for real-life communication because its format encourages ESP students to deliver innovative ideas or projects persuasively in a limited time (Beltrán-Palanquez, 2023).

Learners improved their oral communication after the intervention, which can be particularly observed in the post-intervention test final mean score, which was 11 points, representing 90% of achievement compared with 68% in the pre-intervention test. Another important point is that all the students (100%) reported an improvement in their fluency. Similar results on speaking fluency are stated in Sagimin's study (2015), which reflects upon the important contribution to students' speaking fluency from this technique. Like that investigation, this action research showed that this technique helped train English students' speaking skills in producing the language fluently, concisely, and smoothly, for students had several opportunities to use and practice by crafting, drilling, practicing, and memorizing (Begley, 2017; Sagimin, 2015).

Moreover, these results showed important consequences for fostering students' fluency since Elevator Pitch required individual practice through oral repetition, as Yoshimura and Macwhinney (2017) indicated. Furthermore, students' perceptions align with their actual performance as many perceived improved oral fluency after being exposed to the intervention. All these results and viewpoints provide a wider perspective for the teacher-researcher in the field of EOP and vocational education, especially when considering the inclusion of more real-life tasks in the EFL classroom.

Furthermore, the Elevator Pitch technique shares some similarities with the technique known as 4/3/2, because both methods aim to deliver fluent messages in a limited amount of time (Beltrán-Palanquez, 2023; Santos & Ramírez-Ávila, 2023). In the case of the 4/3/2 technique, Santos and Ramirez-Avila (2023) observed that after implementing this technique in an exploratory group significant improvements were noted in the post-intervention test. These improvements encompass enhanced English-speaking speed, a reduction in filled and silent pauses, fewer repetitions, and a decrease in the number of corrections required. Namely, this action research participants also saw improvement in repetition or correction levels. These positive outcomes highlight the efficacy of concise communication techniques like 4/3/2 and the Elevator Pitch in supporting students' fluency.

The improvements in students' fluency shown in this action research are directly linked to the efficacy of concise communication techniques in supporting students' fluency. Overall, the use of these technologies has contributed to the observed improvements in fluency, as they encourage students to speak more fluidly, with greater confidence, and with

reduced pauses, repetitions, and corrections when students use English. All factors were also observed by the teacher-researcher from the outset and pointed out by the participants in the focus group. Moreover, the teacher-researcher noticed a marked increase in students' engagement during the sessions. The format of the Elevator Pitch, which requires concise and focused communication, seemed to resonate well with the students, as they are likely to appreciate the straightforward steps involved in crafting and delivering pitches (Sagimin, 2015).

Additionally, when considering how planning and practice are pivotal for a good pitch, the features and benefits of strategic planning (Farde Davaji & Ghoorchaei, 2023; Moradi & Talebi, 2014; Yuan & Ellis, 2003) play a crucial role, as Elevator Pitch technique provides room for these learning strategies. This technique offers learners several opportunities to rehearse students' fluency by crafting, drilling, practicing, and memorizing (Morgan & Wright, 2021; O'Leary, 2008). Besides, Sagimin (2015) and Farde Davaji and Ghoorchaei (2023) highlight the importance of planning in language learning, particularly concerning speaking skills. Therefore, strategic planning is a crucial aspect of an elevator pitch. It comes into play when crafting an elevator pitch, as it involves rehearsing and planning the key points and structure of the pitch to effectively capture the listener's attention and communicate the intended message within a short time frame. It is essential for developing and supporting students' fluency.

Finally, participants showed positive perceptions towards speaking activities using Elevator Pitch. They expressed their perception in two dimensions: perception of fluency and the use of the Elevator Pitch in the English class. Learners pointed out that Elevator Pitch helped them express their ideas fluently, learn new words, and improve their pronunciation. They also felt the Elevator Pitch helped them speak English confidently because the practice allowed them to improve their pitch (Morgan & Wright, 2021; Sagimin, 2015). Not only did they perceive this enhanced oral performance but scores in the post-intervention test matched their perceptions, as previously described.

Conclusions

Firstly, the Elevator Pitch helped all the participants to improve their speech rate, they avoided extended hesitations and decreased repetitions and corrections in one-minute speech as indicated by the results of the Wilcoxon test. Comparing the pre- and post-intervention tests yields three different outcomes. On the one hand, all the participants increased their scores in the fluency rubric, which was 68% in the "good level" and moved forward to the "excellent level". There were two cases in which the participants did not show an improvement nor a decrease in their performance in terms of hesitations, corrections, and

repetitions because their level of fluency was not high before the pre-intervention test, and they needed further practice.

Secondly, participants' perceptions about the contribution of Elevator Pitch to support their speaking fluency were mostly favorable. The participants agreed that the Elevator Pitch was useful to practice oral fluency; after the intervention, they felt more confident when speaking. Even more, some students agreed that the Elevator Pitch helped them develop their ideas better and they had more chances to improve their pronunciation.

Thirdly, results indicate a relation between the participants' time practice during the sessions and their increased speaking fluency. Learners who practiced more when using the Elevator Pitch were the ones who improved their post-intervention test, hence their speaking fluency. This is probably because they had more chances to improve when they received peer feedback each time they practiced. Therefore, when students practice the Elevator Pitch by themselves, they have numerous instances of reading aloud, repetition, planning, and managing their thoughts or ideas. Thus, they can improve their articulatory pronunciation and delivery, they can focus on speaking, using the appropriate tone and pace, and making their message engaging.

Finally, through practice, students can adapt their pitches in various situations, such as job interviews, networking events, or project presentations. This adaptability is crucial due to the participants' vocational program. It is worth mentioning that, due to the nature of action research, the contextualized intervention, and the specific features of this group, the results and their conclusions are not generalized. Nonetheless, EFL teachers in vocational programs or EOP could consider some aspects addressed in this study to adopt or adapt the Elevator Pitch technique in their classrooms.

Limitations

The EFL learners' fluency was low before the intervention. Their lack of speaking skills might have been caused by their context and limited opportunities to interact with native speakers outside the classroom in real-world situations. Learners seemed to have experienced limited opportunities to approach speaking activities inside the English classroom. The main drawback encountered was the participants' attendance throughout the intervention. Though only six participants completed the intervention, eleven students originally participated in this investigation and five of them had to cease participation due to health and familiar issues.

Doing the intervention sessions in the school lab caused another drawback to developing the action plan, with technical problems and participants' lack of technological knowledge. Some participants had technical difficulties in the first intervention. For example, some reported computer problems and a slow internet connection. Other participants had

difficulties using Microsoft Word and sending emails. Consequently, the teacher-researcher decided to develop the intervention plan in the students' classroom where the participants feel more comfortable using their phones and notebooks.

There were also some challenges during the interventions. The first was that the participants were not used to working with time limits, although they tried to, they did not finish the tasks. Thus, the teacher-researcher concluded that some stages needed to be longer in terms of time. The second challenge was that one participant presented difficulties writing and speaking in Spanish, so writing and speaking in English was also a struggle. The cause delayed his process to achieve the task; however, the participant was helped by the teacher of special education and the teacher-researcher decided to adapt the speaking fluency rubric.

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Appendix A

Fluency Rubric 1-minute pitch (pre- and post-intervention test)

Descriptors/ Score	1 point	2 points	3 points
Rate	The speaker speaks 20 to 39 words	The speaker speaks 40-59 words	The speaker speaks 60 or more words
Hesitations	The speaker has many hesitations (4 or more hesitations)	The speaker has some noticeable hesitations (from 2-3) and short pauses (3 seconds or less)	The speaker has few noticeable hesitations (1 or less) and few short pauses
Repetitions	The speaker makes many repetitions (4 or more)	The speaker makes some repetitions (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few repetitions (1 or less)
Corrections	The speaker makes many corrections (4 or more)	The speaker makes some corrections (from 2-3)	The speaker makes a few corrections (1 or less)
Total:			

Source: Own work. Based on Santos and Ramírez-Avila (2022).

Appendix 2

Dimensions	Questions	Main Ideas
Dimension I Fluency	1. ¿Cómo te sientes hablando en inglés en la clase después de usar el Elevator Pitch?	
	2. ¿Qué cambios notaste en tu uso del inglés al hablar después de hacer el Elevator Pitch?	
	3. ¿Crees que ahora hablas más rápido en un minuto?	
	4. ¿Qué dificultades encontraste al presentar tu Elevator Pitch de un minuto? ¿Las pudiste superar? ¿Cómo?	
Dimension II English Class	5. ¿Qué es lo que más te llamó la atención de preparar el Elevator Pitch en la clase de inglés?	
	6. ¿Como crees que el uso del Elevator Pitch podría mejorarse o ampliarse en las clases de inglés?	

Source: Own work.

Use of Video-Based Listening Activities to Improve Students' Listening Comprehension

Uso de Actividades Auditivas Basadas en Videos para Mejorar la Comprensión Auditiva de los Estudiantes

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Abstract

Conducted in a French private school in Chile, this action research study aims to explore the contribution of video-based listening activities from the ESL video website in supporting the listening comprehension skills for specific information of a group of 18 fifth graders. The results of a pre- and post-intervention test used to identify students' progress indicated that the students' English listening comprehension skills increased significantly after learning with videos. A Likert scale and focus group survey were used to analyze participants' views towards the intervention. Their findings show that participants consider this intervention's effectiveness positive in developing their listening comprehension skills, which supports the belief that using video-based listening activities is an effective tool to enhance students' listening comprehension skills when learning English as a foreign language.

Keywords: video-based listening activities, ESL, listening comprehension, intervention, listening strategies, student perception

Resumen

Realizado en una escuela privada francesa en Chile, este estudio de investigación acción tiene como objetivo explorar la contribución del uso de actividades auditivas basadas en video del sitio web

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de videos ESL para apoyar el desarrollo de la habilidad de comprensión auditiva de información específica de un grupo de 18 estudiantes de quinto grado. Los resultados de una prueba previa y posterior a la intervención utilizada para identificar el progreso de los estudiantes indicaron que la capacidad de comprensión auditiva en inglés de los estudiantes aumentó significativamente después de aprender con videos. Se utilizó una encuesta que usó una escala Likert y un grupo focal para analizar las opiniones de los participantes sobre la intervención. Sus hallazgos muestran que los participantes consideran la efectividad positivamente de esta intervención en el desarrollo de su habilidad de comprensión auditiva, lo que apoya la idea de que el uso de actividades auditivas basadas en videos es una herramienta eficaz para mejorar las habilidades de comprensión auditiva de los estudiantes cuando aprenden inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: actividades auditivas basadas en videos, inglés como segunda lengua, comprensión auditiva, intervención, estrategias auditivas, percepción del estudiante

Introduction

Since the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the accessibility and integration of multimedia technologies into educational settings have significantly impacted language teaching practices, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Videos have emerged as a powerful tool that engage students and facilitates the development of crucial skills such as listening comprehension. According to Nunan (2003) and Hwaider (2017), listening comprehension is a dynamic process through which individuals make sense of auditory information, underscoring its fundamental role in language acquisition.

In the context of Chilean education, specific language proficiency goals are set for students. For instance, at the end of sixth grade, students are expected to reach an A1 proficiency level (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) by understanding important information from short audio messages, identifying basic grammatical structures, and acquiring some relevant vocabulary. Integrating video-based listening activities has become essential in addressing students' challenges in meeting these listening comprehension objectives, often resulting in frustration and demotivation. The action research project discussed in this paper aims to explore the effectiveness of incorporating ESL video website content into teaching practices. Specifically, it focuses on enhancing the ability of 5th-grade students to comprehend specific information from audio-visual materials.

The research contributes to the field by demonstrating how video-based activities can accommodate diverse learner needs and preferences. Videos provide engaging and authentic language input and offer contextual cues that aid comprehension. As noted by Wilkinson (1984) and Field (2008), videos enable students to observe paralinguistic features, non-verbal communication, and situational context, enriching their understanding of linguistic nuances and cultural dimensions.

Moreover, the paper discusses how educators can effectively utilize technical features of videos, such as freeze frames and review options, to scaffold students' language analysis and comprehension skills (Candlin, 1982). This approach empowers teachers to create interactive and learner-centered environments promoting active engagement and deeper learning.

This research contributes valuable insights into the practical application of video-based listening activities in EFL classrooms, particularly in Chilean educational contexts. By exploring students' perceptions and outcomes related to these activities, the study aims to inform pedagogical practices and enhance the effectiveness of language teaching methodologies focused on listening comprehension skills.

Conceptual Framework

The Importance of Listening Comprehension in the EFL Classroom

Listening is a powerful and primary source of comprehensible input for second language acquisition (Rost, 2011). Developing learners' listening comprehension skills can significantly enhance their general communicative abilities and language competencies (Hwaider, 2017). Consequently, teaching listening should be a priority for EFL teachers to meet their students' language needs. Despite this crucial role, listening was one of the most neglected skills in second and foreign-language classrooms. According to Field (2008), in the early days of English Language Teaching (ELT), listening primarily served to introduce new grammar through model dialogues. However, listening has now assumed greater importance in EFL classrooms. Wallace et al. (2004), emphasize that listening skills are vital for learning, enabling students to acquire insights, information, and success in communicating with others.

Listening Comprehension

Mastering listening comprehension in a second language is a complex task that demands effort and skill. Vandergrift (1999) defines listening comprehension as a complicated interactive process where listeners must focus on elements such as sounds, intonation, linguistic structures, and social contexts. Mendelsohn (1994) defines listening comprehension as the ability to understand the spoken language. Ahmadi (2016) underscores its crucial role, stating that understanding the spoken language is essential for authentic classroom communication and oral interactions between native and non-native speakers.

Proficiency in listening is crucial for developing speaking and writing in a second or foreign language. It enhances awareness of pronunciation nuances, intonation patterns, and idiomatic expressions crucial for fluent speech. Listening also aids in understanding the language's rhythm and cadence, which supports coherent spoken communication. In writing,

effective listening skills ensure accurate transcription and contribute to clarity and cohesion in written texts. Engagement with spoken language deepens vocabulary and grammar comprehension, enabling clear and sophisticated communication across various contexts.

Micro-skills of Listening Comprehension

Brown (2001) outlines various micro-skills essential for effective listening comprehension, including activating prior knowledge, making predictions, using context clues, note-taking, skimming and scanning, visualizing, seeking clarification, and reflecting on their listening experiences. By explicitly teaching and practicing listening micro-skills, EFL learners can improve their ability to comprehend specific information while listening.

Bottom-up Versus Top-down Approaches to Listening

Three different processing approaches are essential to understanding listening comprehension. Richards (1990) explains that bottom-up processing, as deriving meaning from incoming data using lexical and grammatical knowledge, is crucial for beginners lacking linguistic categories (Celce-Murcia & Snow, 2014). On the other hand, top-down model processing, as Wilson (2008) describes, relies on prior knowledge to anticipate content, making it listener-centered (Alfaki & Siddiek, 2013). According to Vandergrift (2003), interactive processing combines both approaches using prior and linguistic knowledge for enhanced comprehension.

Listening Lessons

In structuring listening lessons, Wilson (2008) states three stages: pre-listening, in which students activate schemata to predict content; while-listening, which centers on comprehension; and post-listening, which helps learners to reflect on language aspects like sound, grammar, and vocabulary (Underwood, 1989). The while-listening stage aims to understand the text message, not every word. Some post-listening activities may be extensions of all the exercises carried out at pre-listening and while-listening work, but some may not be related to them.

Strategies to Support Listening to Specific Information

Specific information listening strategies, outlined by Wilson (2008), involve focusing on factual details, predicting potential content, and recognizing varied expressions within audio recordings (Mann & Taylore-Knowles, 2014). Strategies to support listening for specific information include cognitive (e.g., elaboration, inferencing, translation) directly related to auditory input, and metacognitive refers to methods used to help learners understand

how they learn (O'Malley et al., 1987). Additionally, socio-affective strategies encompass interactions with peers and teachers to reduce anxiety and enhance learning (Wilson, 2008).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Videos for Listening

Using videos in listening comprehension offers distinct advantages and disadvantages. Çakir (2006), states that “even without hearing the language spoken clues, meaning can be picked up from the vision alone” (p. 68). A study by Kusumarasdyati (2004) examined the effect of using movie presentations on EFL learners’ listening skills and imagination in Indonesia. He found that movies were an effective teaching technique in developing EFL learners’ listening skills and stimulating their imagination and motivation. On the other hand, selecting appropriate content aligned with students’ proficiency levels and interests is time-consuming (Van Duzer, 1997). Implementing videos in ESL classrooms could be problematic if teachers do not select the material based on students’ language proficiency levels and interests.

YouTube as a Pedagogical Tool

YouTube “offers fast and fun access to language and culture-based videos and instruction from all over the globe” (Terantino, 2011). As cited in Berk (2009), using video (YouTube) has strong effects on the mind and senses that will help the teacher to get students’ motivation and attraction in teaching listening comprehension. In a study by Al-Hammouri et al. (2022), the findings indicated that YouTube videos had a noteworthy influence on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in several key areas, for instance, learners experienced substantial improvements in vocabulary acquisition as they engaged with the diverse content available on YouTube.

Use of Websites to Support Listening Comprehension

To support the development of students’ listening skills effectively, educators rely on suitable learning media that provide authentic English materials and sources (Anggraeni & Indriani, 2018). Teachers explore a variety of English resources to identify those most compatible and effective for second language learning. Numerous websites and platforms offer authentic audio and video materials that can significantly enhance the proficiency of second language learners (Metruk, 2018). Utilizing authentic videos in EFL classrooms is crucial in advancing learners’ proficiency in the target language. Therefore, integrating appropriate learning media and authentic resources in language education underscores educators’ commitment to using digital advancements in language learning.

One exemplary resource is the ESL Video website, which provides a range of online English listening and grammar activities, and free teaching materials. Additionally, educators can utilize the ESL Video quiz maker tool to create interactive video-based listening and gap-fill quizzes. This platform also facilitates tracking and reporting student scores, supporting effective monitoring of learning outcomes. Moreover, ESL Video coordinates the International Teens Conversation Exchange, promoting global linguistic and cultural exchange among students.

Assessing Listening Comprehension

Assessing listening comprehension is a complex process with various factors affecting validity and reliability, including cultural contexts and question clarity (Wilson, 2008). Concerning listening tests, the factors contributing to the difficulty of listening, such as the message, delivery, listener, and environment, can also be seen as potential sources of test unfairness. For instance, cultural issues incorporated into the listening passage can affect students' performance if the topics are unfamiliar, highlighting the role of background knowledge rather than pure listening ability. Similarly, a student's understanding of the passage may be hindered by unclear or confusing accompanying questions, raising questions about whether the issue lies with listening or reading skills. In essence, testing listening skills requires careful consideration of these factors to ensure fairness and accuracy in the assessment.

Method

Type of Study

This project is framed within a qualitative action research design with mixed methods (Berg & Lune, 2012), whose main objective is understanding a specific phenomenon in an educational setting. Referring to Burns's (2010) views, action research aims to intervene deliberately in a problematic situation to bring changes and practice improvements.

Research Problem

Regardless of the strong encouragement of listening comprehension skills in the EFL classroom, students from a French bilingual school struggle to listen and understand to an A1 proficiency level. Namely, activities such as understanding important information from a short text, identifying simple grammatical structures, and some vocabulary to communicate according to the CEFR (2001) listening goals. Based on class observation, students found it difficult to understand specific information from simple short audio which causes them

frustration and lack of motivation. From this context, the need to conduct action research in English lessons, focusing on developing a methodology that employs listening activities from an ESL video website, emerges.

Research Objectives

1. To identify the participants' progress in listening for specific information comprehension skills in video-based listening activities.
2. To analyze the participants' views towards using video-based listening activities to support their listening skills for specific information.

Participants

This research consisted of a convenience sample of 21 students, for they were the most accessible subjects (Etikan et al., 2016). They all had English classes once a week. They were all the same age (10-11) and were at beginner English language proficiency level. Moreover, students had three years of English at school before the intervention and came from the same socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

Research Procedure

Within a four-week frame, this study explored the contribution of video-based listening activities from the ESL video website to support the listening comprehension skills for specific information. In four sessions, participants were exposed to four different listening strategies: brainstorming keywords and ideas from the video's topic on the board, predicting the topic from pictures, predicting keywords said in muted sequenced videos, and predicting from a list of keywords from the video. Each session lasted 45 minutes (4.5 hours in total). Data collection instruments were applied before and after the intervention.

Data Collection Instruments

Pre- and Post-intervention Tests

Regarding specific objective 1, a pre- and post-intervention test was carried out (see Appendix 1). These listening comprehension tests were specifically designed for this intervention based on A1 proficiency level (elementary) videos, which lasted one to three minutes. All videos were related to topics already studied by the learners. Each test consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions, each had three choices. The tests only assessed listening comprehension for specific information.

Likert Scale

A Likert scale (see Appendix 2) with twelve statements in Spanish was carried out on eighteen learners to gather information about specific objective 2. The scale followed the suggestions by Flórez et al. (2012) to adapt a scale for children (Mellor & Moore, 2014) such as the use of images of glasses of water to represent the students' agreement levels (Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree). Half of the items focused on the effectiveness of videos in supporting the development of listening comprehension skills (dimension 1) and the other half on the students' impressions about using activities based on videos (dimension 2).

Focus Group

A focus group (see Appendix 3) was applied to assess specific objective 2. It was chosen because it created a safe environment in participatory research, especially when young people are involved (Bagnoli & Clark, 2010) and to avoid the power imbalances between researchers and participants (Shaw et al., 2011). The participants addressed six open-ended questions about two different dimensions in Spanish for clarity and reliability. A purposive sampling was chosen for this instrument since only 10 students were part of the focus group. All the participants were selected randomly.

Data Analysis Techniques

The study used descriptive statistics (Dörnyei, 2007) to analyze the data collected with the pre- and post-intervention tests. The central tendency, specifically the mean, measured the average score achieved by the group before and after the intervention. A range calculation determined whether the scores before and after using video-based activities were similar or varied significantly. All the information collected was tabulated, and figures were used to describe and interpret the data.

Descriptive statistics also helped to summarize findings from the Likert scale, describing the general tendencies in the data and the overall spread of the scores (Dörnyei, 2007). The study used the mean and standard deviation for each item of the Likert scale (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These mean values revealed the tendency and variability of students' perspectives toward using YouTube video-based listening activities. The results were categorized into two dimensions.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the focus group. The responses were transcribed into a written format and analyzed considering different stages (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Pedagogical Intervention

This intervention was tailored for 5th graders from a private school with a beginner English language proficiency level. The class consisted of 20 learners studying English as part of their school curriculum, with only forty-five minutes of English weekly. Due to the limited exposure to English, the teacher-researcher identified a need for increased exposure and training in listening comprehension activities.

The pedagogical intervention was designed to enhance students' listening comprehension of specific information using video-based activities from an ESL video website. The intervention lasted four weeks, with the teacher-researcher conducting classes once a week. Materials included a data projector, a computer, and an answer sheet for each student. The videos selected for each activity were chosen based on their difficulty level, duration, and appropriateness for the learning objectives. Multiple-choice questions were specifically for their ability to challenge learners effectively while assessing their understanding. This choice was informed by content, cognitive, and language analyses, ensuring the questions aligned closely with the educational goals of the intervention.

To validate these instruments and guarantee that they measure what they are intended to measure, two language specialists in education and language learning were consulted to provide valuable feedback on these instruments. These experts were selected based on their expertise and experience in action research. A clear explanation of the scope of the study, the research questions, and the objectives were provided for the experts' judgment as well as the instruments, along with detailed instructions for completion. The three data collection instruments were also piloted with another class from the same level and school to increase their validity.

In session 1, students had to identify specific information from a video from the ESL video website by brainstorming keywords and ideas from the video's topic on the board to activate background knowledge. In session 2, students had to identify specific information from a video by predicting the topic from pictures (video screenshots) to scaffold understanding before listening. In session 3, students had to identify specific information from a video by predicting keywords in a muted sequence, focusing on visual cues and contextual understanding. In session 4, students had to identify specific information from a video by predicting what happened in the text from a list of keywords provided by the teacher, reinforcing listening comprehension through active recall.

A post-test was applied after session 4 to assess the effectiveness of the intervention on students' listening comprehension of specific information. After the post-test, a survey and a focus group served to analyze participants' views of the videos. This intervention can be adapted based on student needs, feedback, and ongoing assessment.

Findings

Specific Objective 1

Pre and Post-test General Results

Participants' scores were compared during the pre- and post-intervention tests to examine their listening for specific information progress before and after the intervention. The results obtained in both tests are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

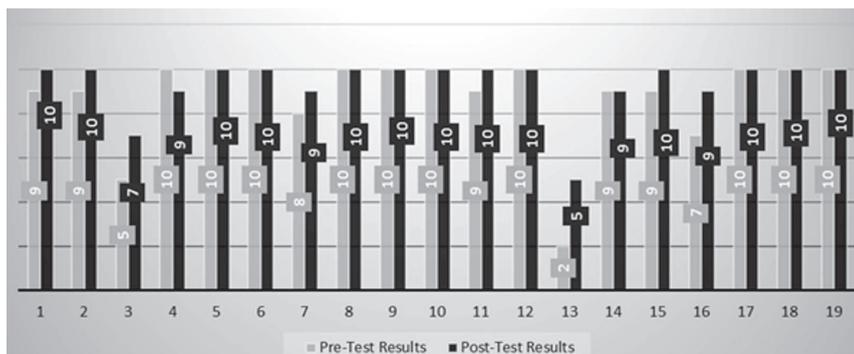


Figure 1. *Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Test Scores by Students*

Note. Own work.

Examining the points presented in Figure 1, it becomes clear that 10 out of 19 participants increased their results when comparing their performance between the pre- and post-intervention tests, which correspond to 55 % of the sample. This improvement may be associated with using video-based listening activities to support their listening comprehension of specific information. Regarding the other students' results, 7 out of 19 participants kept the same level of achievement of 39 % of the sample and only 1 student decreased their result, which corresponds to 6 % of the sample. The mean for the pre-intervention test was 8.79 out of 10, while for the post-intervention test was 9.37 out of 10. Thus, the data collected showed an increase of 0.58 points after the intervention.

Specific Objective 2

Findings from the Likert Scale

The participants rated the levels of perception of using video-based listening activities about each of the 12 statements on a scale of 4 points:

- Totally agree: 4 points
- Agree: 3 points
- Disagree: 2 points
- Totally disagree: 1 point

Dimension 1: Effectiveness of Using Videos to Support Listening Comprehension Skills Development. All students’ percentages concerning the statements of dimension 1 are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. *Dimension 1 Students’ Answers by Question*

	Totally agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Totally disagree (1)
1. The video’s images help me understand what I am listening to.	47,4%	52,6%	0	0
2. Watching videos in English allows me to work more independently.	47,4%	47,4%	5,2%	0
3. Watching videos in English helps me concentrate on what I am listening to.	31,6%	63,2%	5,2%	0
4. When watching videos in English classes, I realize that I understand more English than I thought.	68,4%	21,1%	10,5%	0
5. I think my listening ability improved because of the video activities done in English classes.	57,9%	36,8%	5,2%	0
6. Watching videos helps me remember information.	47,4%	52,6%	0	0

Note. Own work.

By analyzing the previous data, the two statements with the highest average percentage of respondents who selected score 4 “Totally agree” were statement 4 with a rate of 68.4% and statement 5 with 57.09%. This could mean the use of video-based activities helps students understand more English and improves their listening skills.

The four statements with the lowest average percentage of respondents who selected score 4 “Totally agree” were statement 3 (31.6%) and statements 1, 2, and 6 (47.4%). These results could mean the students still lose focus while listening to video-based activities.

Dimension 2: Students' Impressions about Using Listening Comprehension Activities Based on Videos. All students' answers percentages concerning the statements of dimension 2 are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. *Dimension 2 Students' Answers by Question*

	Totally agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Totally disagree (1)
7. I like watching videos in English classes more than just listening to audios in English.	100%	0	0	0
8. I feel comfortable participating in activities related to videos.	57,9%	42,1%	0	0
9. I feel confident doing the video-based listening activities in the English class.	63,2%	15,8%	10,5%	10,5%
10. I feel calmer watching videos in English classes than listening to only audios in English.	63,2%	36,8%	0	0
11. After working with videos, I feel better about my skills in English.	57,9%	31,6%	10,5%	0
12. Watching videos in English is entertaining because of the topics, images, and sounds.	57,9%	42,1%	0	0

Note. Own work.

By analyzing the previous data, the two statements with the highest average percentage of respondents who selected score 4 "Totally agree", were statements 7 with an average of 100%, and statements 9 and 10 with 63.2%. The two statements with the lowest average percentage of respondents who selected score 4 "Totally agree" were statements 8, 11, and 12 with 57.9%.

In the analysis of the results of dimension 1, the mean score of 20.68 out of 24 suggests that, on average, participants rated the effectiveness of using videos for developing listening comprehension skills positively. The standard deviation of 1.60 indicates that the responses varied moderately around the mean. This suggests that while the average perception of effectiveness was positive, there was some variability in individual opinions. In the analysis of the results of dimension 2, the mean score of 21.68 out of 24 indicates that, on average, students had favorable impressions of the intervention. The standard deviation of 1.86 suggests a moderate variability in students' impressions. While the average impression was positive, individual opinions varied to some extent.

In both dimensions, the mean scores are relatively high, indicating that, on average, participants rated the intervention's effectiveness positively and their intervention impressions were favorable. The standard deviations, though moderate, suggest that there were some variations in the responses, with some participants having different opinions.

The mean of dimension 1 provides insight into the average level of agreement or disagreement the students had with the sentences of that dimension. By analyzing dimension 2's mean, the students agreed with the statements. This can be seen in Figure 2 below.

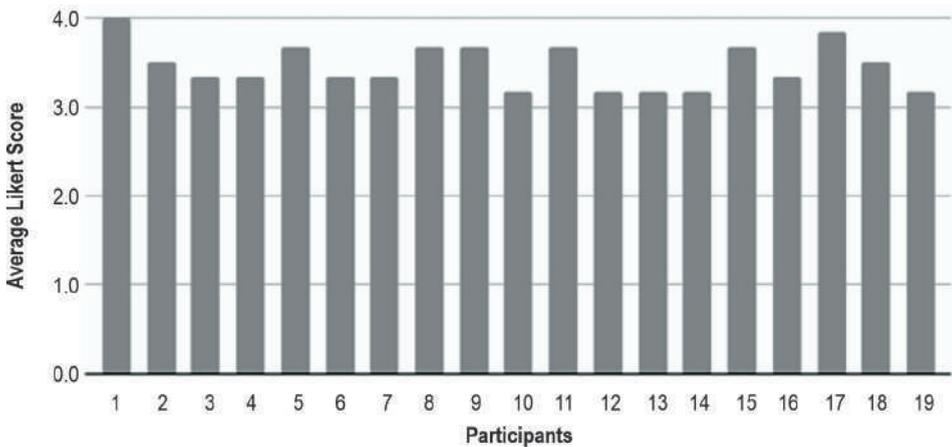


Figure 2. Mean Likert Scores by Participants – Dimension 1

Note. Own work.

The mean of dimension 2 provides insight into the average level of agreement or disagreement the students had with the sentences of that dimension. By analyzing dimension 2's mean, the students agreed with the statements. This can be seen in Figure 3 below.

Analyzing the distribution of dimension 1 of the Likert scale scores, the frequency of responses for each item response option shows a central tendency towards agreement in each statement. 50% of the students strongly agreed with the statements, 46% agreed, only 4% disagreed, and 0% totally disagreed. This can be seen in Figure 4 below.

Examining the distribution of dimension 2 of the Likert scores, the frequency for each item response option also shows a central tendency towards agreement in each statement: 67% of students totally agreed, 28% agreed, only 3% disagreed, and 2% totally disagreed. This can be seen in Figure 5 below.

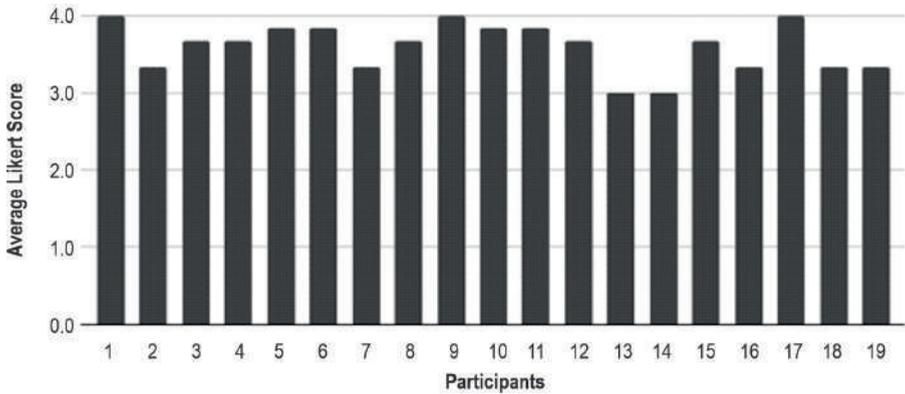


Figure 3. Mean Likert Scale by Participant - Dimension 2

Note. Own work.

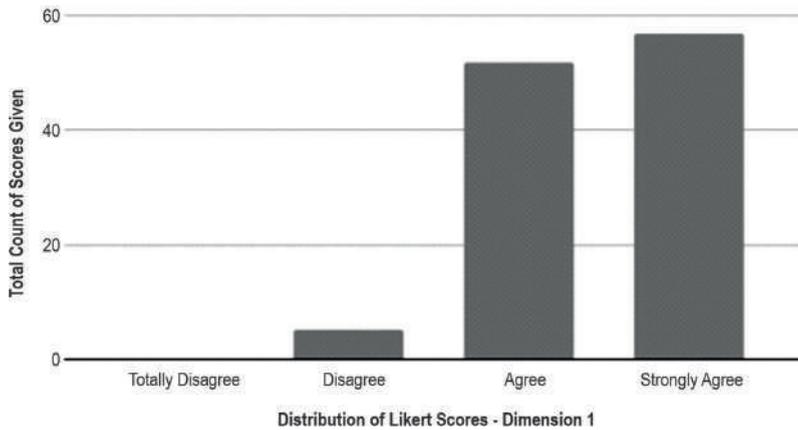


Figure 4. Distribution of Likert Scores – Dimension 1

Note. Own work.

Findings from the Focus Group

The focus group interview was conducted after the intervention was completed. The posterior analysis of the results was based on a relevant thematic analysis obtained from transcripts of students' comments, which were grouped into three clear main dimensions:

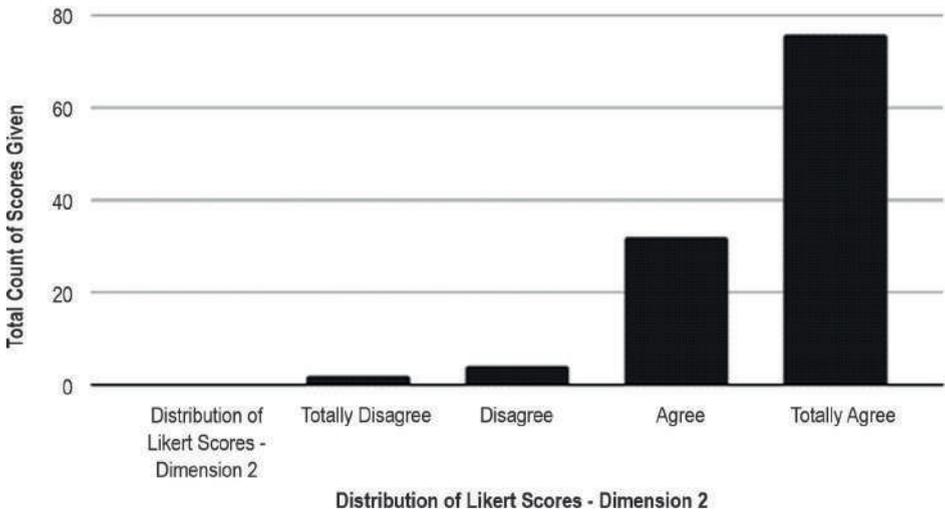


Figure 5. *Distribution of Likert Scores – Dimension 2*

Note. Own work

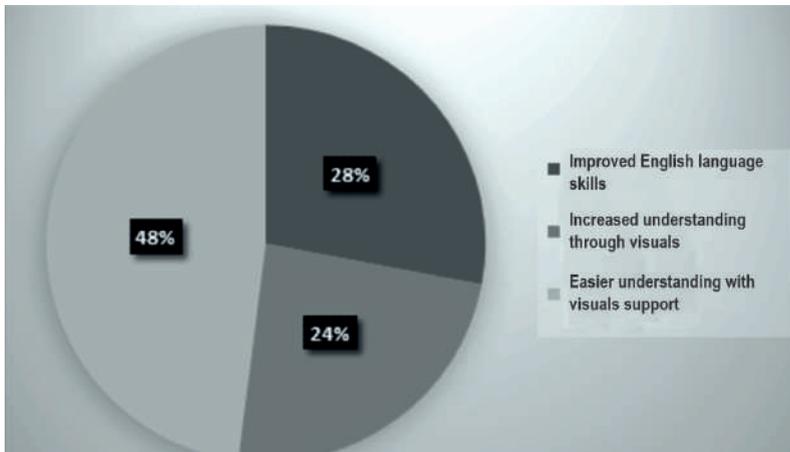


Figure 6. *Percentages of Sub-themes Mentioned during the Focus Group in Dimension 1 “Opinions about the use of activities for developing listening comprehension skills based on videos”*

Note. Own work.

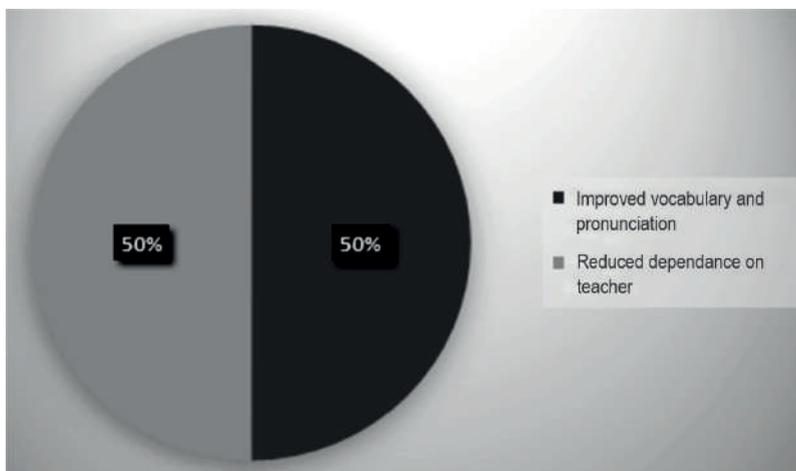


Figure 7. Percentages of Sub-themes Mentioned during the Focus Group in Dimension 2 “Perception of improvement through video activities”

Note. Own work.

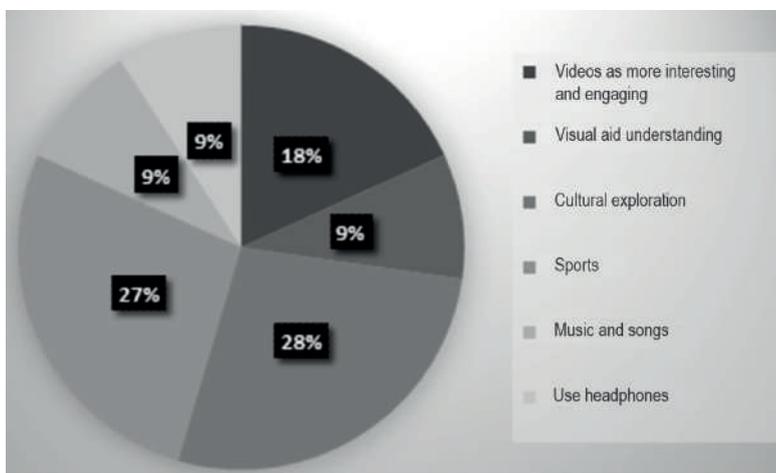


Figure 8. Percentages of Sub-themes Mentioned during the Focus Group in Dimension 3 “Preferences and suggestions for video activities. From each dimension emerged themes and sub-themes”

Note. Own work.

(1) Opinions about the use of activities for developing listening comprehension skills based on videos, (2) Perception of improvement through video activities, (3) Preferences and suggestions for video activities. From each dimension emerged themes and sub-themes. The next three figures show the percentages of each sub-theme mentioned in dimensions 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

According to the research participants' views towards the use of video-based listening activities to support their listening skills for specific information expressed in the focus group, they believed that the use of this methodology helped in different aspects such as the improvements of their English language skills, increased understanding thanks to the use of visuals, improved listening comprehension, increased confidence and the interest in exploring topics such as culture and sports. They also mentioned they would like to try videos related to music, specifically songs. These dimensions, themes, and subthemes provided valuable insights into the participants' opinions and suggestions regarding the use of video activities to support the development of listening comprehension skills. They can guide further improvements in instructional practices and curriculum design in the English language class.

Discussions

About Aspects Related to Specific Objective 1

After evaluating the results, the intervention employing video-based listening activities significantly enhanced participants' ability to comprehend specific information. This aligns with findings from Woottipong (2014), who similarly observed improved English listening comprehension among students using videos, coupled with positive attitudes towards this teaching method. Additionally, Riawan and Sulistyani (2020) found that students exposed to video-based activities demonstrated superior listening skills compared to those without such exposure, attributing this improvement to heightened motivation and engagement fostered by multimedia content.

Most participants either maintained or improved their scores from pre-test to post-test, categorizing them into three groups based on their performance trends. Group one, the majority, sustained high scores, likely due to their strong commitment to learning and active participation in class. Group two, showing improvement, benefited from the effective use of video-based activities and the application of specific listening strategies taught during the intervention. In contrast, group three had only one participant whose score declined post-intervention, possibly influenced by external factors like mood or concentration, or methodological variations in video difficulty level.

These findings contrast with Berk's (2009) assertions about the benefits of using videos in education, including enhanced comprehension and engagement. They underscore that

while overall there was improvement in listening comprehension, individual responses varied, influenced by instructional strategies and participant characteristics. Wah (2019) highlights the importance of teaching listening strategies, which were integral to this intervention's success. The teacher-researcher's guidance empowered students to effectively utilize video-based activities, enhancing their confidence and achievement in comprehending specific information.

In conclusion, while the intervention effectively improved students' listening comprehension skills, the results may reflect diverse influences beyond video-based activities alone. Individual differences and the specific strategies employed during the intervention also played crucial roles in shaping outcomes.

About Aspects Related to Specific Objective 2

According to this action research's findings, participants generally viewed the intervention positively, as indicated by high mean scores on the Likert scale for both dimensions. This suggests a strong consensus among participants regarding the effectiveness of video-based listening activities in enhancing their listening comprehension skills. However, moderate standard deviations indicate varying individual responses, reflecting differing perspectives among participants. This finding aligns with Oddone's (2011) observation that comprehension may vary due to factors like pronunciation and cultural context in videos not tailored for non-native speakers.

The focus group discussions provided deeper insights into participants' experiences and preferences with video-based activities. Under the first dimension—Opinions about the use of activities for developing listening comprehension skills based on videos—participants recognized the value of visual cues in aiding their understanding and enhancing their attention to detail, consistent with Hardiah's (2019) findings. They also noted improvements in vocabulary acquisition through exposure to new words in the videos, echoing insights from Yawiloeng (2020) on multimedia's role in vocabulary learning. Regarding the second dimension—Perception of improvement through video activities—participants reported enhanced listening skills and increased confidence in understanding spoken English, which correlates with findings from Yuyun and Simamora (2021) regarding confidence and enjoyment in learning through multimedia platforms. In the third dimension—Preferences and suggestions for video activities—participants expressed interest in engaging with topics like music, culture, and sports, citing their potential for improving pronunciation and cultural understanding. This finding aligns with Natasa and Solucia (2022) on social media videos enhancing learning and cultural enrichment.

Overall, while participants acknowledged the benefits of video-based activities in improving listening comprehension, individual responses varied. Their responses highlight

the need for tailored approaches to address diverse learning preferences and optimize learning outcomes.

Implications

The findings about video-based listening activities being effective for improving English language skills, enhancing confidence, and sparking interest in diverse topics, are context-specific and may not apply universally. The preference for music-related videos is significant, but curriculum development should consider a broader range of learner interests and needs. The effectiveness of video-based listening activities depends on factors like content quality, learner proficiency, instructional strategies, and technology availability.

In some cases, technological limitations at schools, such as the lack of internet access and equipment, can hinder video-based activities. Future curriculum development efforts should carefully consider these factors and balance the potential benefits with the need for further exploration and adaptation to meet diverse learner needs.

This action research offers innovative insights for teachers seeking to enhance listening comprehension skills for specific information using multimedia resources. Video-based activities proved to be engaging and motivating for students, with endless possibilities due to the variety of available videos. Educators can experiment with different contexts, objectives, and tools to assess their effectiveness in their specific teaching situations.

Limitations

Originally designed as an extracurricular workshop for students of the same age group, this action research was intended to be voluntary for students from four different classes. However, due to logistical constraints, including room availability and timing, the intervention was limited to one of the fifth-grade classes taught by the teacher researcher. This reduced the planned sessions from eight to four, conducted over a condensed four-week period. This short timeframe may limit the generalizability of the findings and require a longer intervention to validate the results and assess sustainability over an extended period.

112 *Impact of the Intervention on Professional Development*

As a teacher-researcher, this intervention transformed my professional development by empowering me to manage my growth. It prompted proactive problem-solving in response to classroom challenges. The positive impact on my students and teaching boosted my confidence, potentially benefiting me professionally.

The action research deepened my teaching insights in several ways. It helped me discover effective instructional strategies adapted to my students' needs, facilitating more

precise curriculum adjustments. Incorporating technology-made lessons and data-driven decision-making improved my teaching effectiveness. Additionally, the intervention fostered self-reflection, enhancing self-awareness and openness to change. Feedback from peers and colleagues provided valuable perspectives for refining my teaching practices.

Thus, this intervention empowered me to drive my professional development, fostering a proactive mindset to tackle challenges. The positive outcomes have boosted my confidence, setting the stage for continued growth in my teaching career.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to explore the contribution of video-based listening activities in enhancing the listening comprehension skills of fifth-grade students, focusing on their ability to identify specific information. Concerning specific objective 1, the findings from the pre- and post-tests provided compelling evidence that participants made significant progress in their listening comprehension skills after the intervention. These improvements were achieved when learners were exposed to video-based activities, indicating that videos played an engaging role in the learning process. As affirmed by Berk (2009, p. 2), the use of video, including platforms like YouTube, has a profound impact on cognitive processes and sensory engagement, contributing to increasing motivation and attentiveness among students during listening comprehension instruction. Thus, this pedagogical strategy positively influenced learners' performance, notably their ability to identify specific details.

Turning to specific objective 2, the findings from the Likert scale responses and the insights from the focus group discussions denoted that the intervention was a highly effective tool for enhancing the students' listening comprehension skills. They are strongly inclined toward incorporating these activities into their English classes, recognizing how much videos help their understanding of spoken context. The visual component of videos was particularly acknowledged for enhancing comprehension and fostering attention to detail.

Furthermore, several participants reported a notable improvement in their ability to comprehend rapidly spoken language after engaging in video activities. This enhancement in listening comprehension improved academic performance and boosted students' self-confidence in their English language abilities—a significant personal achievement for the learners. In line with these findings, a study by Natasa and Solucia (2022) emphasized the positive impact of short videos on social media platforms in improving listening skills and expanding knowledge. In the study of Fadillah et al. (2023), qualitative evidence also shows that YouTube videos are perceived as effective tools for self-improvement in listening comprehension among university students in Indonesia. In addition, it discusses how videos

are used for self-improvement and highlights the benefits such as a better understanding of main ideas and general information while listening.

In sum, this action research enhances listening comprehension skills, underscoring the potential of video-based activities as an effective methodology for ESL/EFL teachers. Thus, integrating video-based listening activities should be considered in English classes, as it has the potential to substantially support and enhance listening comprehension, ultimately benefiting language learners.

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Appendix 1

Pre and Post Intervention Tests

Pre-Intervention Test: Pancake Day!

Instructions: Read all the questions carefully. Now listen and choose one answer for each question. You are going to listen 2 times. (1 point each) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYaXHYMINpY&ab_channel=EnglishPortal

1. What food is popular all over the world? a. Cakes b. Pancakes c. Cupcakes	2. What is their flavor? a. salty b. sour c. salty
3. What is their common shape? a. round b. squared c. hearted	4. In what country do they come with chocolate? a. Prague b. France c. USA
5. What food do people put in Asia on top? a. meat b. fish c. eggs	6. What food do people put in the UK on top? a. lemon and sugar b. orange and chocolate c. Nutella and sugar
7. When is pancake day? a. on a Monday b. on a Friday c. on a Tuesday	8. How many eggs are used on Pancake Day? a. 54 million b. 52 million c. 15 million
9. What type of pancakes are popular in the USA? a. classic pancakes b. artistic pancakes c. sweet pancakes	10. What are pancake ingredients? a. milk, water, flour and eggs b. milk, water, rice and sugar c. milk, butter, water and eggs

Post-Intervention Test: Help the Planet!

Instructions: Read all the questions carefully. Now listen and choose one answer for each question. You are going to listen 2 times. (1 point each) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9awWVp9Ek0&ab_channel=EnglishPortal

1. How can you save energy? a. Turn on the lights b. Turns off the lights c. Switch on your computer	2. How can you save water? a. Have a bath b. Have a shower c. Have a long shower
3. What should you do when you brush your teeth? a. Leave the tap running b. Don't brush your teeth c. Don't leave the tap running	4. What can you do with garbage? a. Recycle b. Use bags c. Classify it
5. How can you clean the air? a. Use your car b. Use your bike c. Use a van	6. How can you reduce waste? a. Donate old TVs and fridges b. Throw away TVs and fridges c. Buy new TVs and fridges
7. Where can you donate old appliances? a. to a supermarket b. to a museum c. to a charity	8. How can you protect trees? a. Buy newspapers online b. Read newspapers online c. Don't read newspapers
9. What can you do with food? a. Throw it away b. Make soup and sandwiches c. Buy sandwiches	10. How can you help endangered animals? a. Join a zoo b. Adopt a pet c. Join a conservation group

Appendix 2

Escala Likert

Instrucciones: ¿Que tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo estas con las siguientes afirmaciones? Responde lo más sincero posible. No hay respuestas buenas ni malas.

Marca con una X la casilla de tu preferencia y recuerda que en cada respuesta puedes elegir solo una opción.

	Totalmente de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Totalmente en desacuerdo
Dimensión 1: Efectividad del uso de videos como apoyo en el desarrollo de la habilidad auditiva.				
1. Las imágenes del video que veo en clases de inglés, me ayudan a entender lo que escucho.				
2. Ver videos en las clases de inglés me ayuda a hacerle menos preguntas de vocabulario a mi profesora.				
3. Ver videos en las clases de inglés, me ayuda a concentrarme en lo que estoy escuchando.				
4. Al ver videos en las clases de inglés. me doy cuenta de que entiendo más inglés de lo yo creía.				
5. Creo que mi habilidad auditiva mejoró por las actividades con videos realizadas en las clases de inglés.				
6. Ver videos en las clases de inglés me ayuda a identificar información específica más fácilmente.				
Dimensión 2: Impresiones de los alumnos acerca de usar actividades auditivas basadas en videos.				
7. Me agrada más ver videos en clases de inglés que solo escuchar audios en inglés.				
8. Me siento cómodo/a participando en las actividades de la clase de inglés relacionadas con videos.				

	Totalmente de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Totalmente en desacuerdo
9. Me siento confiado/a al realizar las actividades auditivas en la clase de inglés basadas en videos.				
10.Me siento más tranquilo/a viendo videos en las clases de inglés que escuchando solo audios en inglés.				
11.Me gusta la forma en que se presentaron las actividades auditivas basadas en videos en la clase de inglés.				
12.Me siento satisfecho/a con mi progreso al realizar las actividades auditivas basadas en videos durante las clases de inglés.				

Appendix 3 Focus Group

Dimensión 1: Efectividad del uso de videos como apoyo en el desarrollo de la habilidad auditiva.

1. ¿Qué aspectos positivos tiene ver videos en inglés del sitio web ESL video?
2. ¿Ustedes sienten que entienden más o menos después de ver los videos?
3. ¿Cómo se han dado cuenta que han mejorado con los videos?

Dimensión 2: Impresiones de los alumnos acerca de usar actividades auditivas basadas en videos.

4. Hemos trabajado con audios, videos, canciones, y videos en el sitio web ESL videos. ¿Cuál de ellas es más interesante? ¿Por qué?
5. ¿Les gustaría seguir usando videos del sitio web ESL videos para que sigamos trabajando la comprensión auditiva?
6. ¿Qué sugerencias tienen para mejorar las actividades con videos en la clase de inglés?

Close Your Passport: A Revision of Latin American Experiences Using Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

Cierra tu Pasaporte: Una Revisión de Experiencias Latinoamericanas Sobre el Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional y En Línea (COIL)

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Abstract

Internationalization in higher education goes far beyond international mobility for university students, which is why Collaborative Online International Learning has gained relevance. This documentary research reviewed teachers' and students' experiences with Collaborative Online International Learning in four Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico) over the last seven years. 23 research reports and pedagogical experiences were reviewed; the findings unveil the evolution this type of international collaborative learning has had in recent years, particularly regarding publication experiences, institutional support, and technology use. Besides, the benefits and challenges of Collaborative Online International Learning experiences were analyzed and a description of aspects related to emotions, empathy, and cross-cultural awareness were found.

Keywords: COIL, intercultural encounters, internationalization at home, literature review, Latin America, teacher experiences, student experiences

Resumen

La internacionalización de la educación superior hace referencia a mucho más que solamente la movilidad internacional de estudiantes y es por esta razón que el Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacio-

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nal y en Línea (COIL, por sus siglas en inglés) ha ganado relevancia; en consecuencia, una investigación documental fue desarrollada para revisar las experiencias de profesores y estudiantes sobre el uso del Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional y en Línea en cuatro países latinoamericanos (Argentina, Brasil, Colombia, y México) en los últimos siete años. 23 artículos entre reportes de investigación y experiencias pedagógicas fueron revisados. Los resultados ilustran la evolución que este tipo de aprendizaje colaborativo internacional ha tenido en los últimos años particularmente en términos de publicaciones, apoyo institucional y uso de la tecnología. Además, se analizan los beneficios y desafíos del uso del Aprendizaje Colaborativo Internacional y en Línea, así como con aspectos relacionados con emociones, empatía y conciencia intercultural son descritos.

Palabras clave: COIL, encuentros interculturales, internacionalización en casa, revisión de la literatura, Latinoamérica, experiencias de profesores, experiencias de estudiantes

Introduction

University students are more aware of how globalization and technology have interconnected the world, and they know that they are no longer not only citizens of their own countries, but they are now citizens of the world (Meza-Morón, 2018). It is here that the internationalization of higher education plays a key role. According to Knight (2008), internationalization of higher education can be defined as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of higher education at the institutional and national levels” (p. 11); university student international mobility, as part of the internationalization processes done at universities, does not only refer to traveling abroad because, the number of students who have access to international academic trips is very limited (Ramírez-Ramírez & Bustos-Aguirre, 2022). Internationalization at home has opened new perspectives and offered different opportunities for students to interact and collaborate with people from several parts of the world without leaving home (Echeverria-King & Lafont-Castillo, 2020).

Collaborative Online International Learning, COIL henceforth, is a strategy to promote internationalization at home with no money investment and without requesting a passport; an open mind and willingness to interact and collaborate with international peers are the only requirements. According to Rubin (2017), “COIL is not a technology or a technology platform but rather a new teaching and learning paradigm that develops cross-cultural awareness across shared multicultural learning environments” (pp. 33-34).

The term COIL was coined by Jon Rubin, a professor at the State University of New York (SUNY) at the beginning of the 21st century (Rubin, 2017). Nonetheless, Miao (2018) mentions that integrating technology in internationalization at home dates back to the 1990s with the use of pen pals, where students write and receive letters from peers in different settings or countries (Collins, 2024). Thus, this idea is not new, but there is a need to continue increasing these COIL experiences in language teacher education programs in

Colombia. COIL aims to exchange intercultural knowledge between university teachers and students from two or more countries using online technology where synchronous and/or asynchronous activities are developed (SUNY COIL Center, 2019). The SUNY COIL Center (2019) proposes three stages for the successful development of COIL courses including a planning stage where teachers from both institutions agree on the contents and activities to be developed. During the development stage, an icebreaker for students to interact with their international peers is made as well as different activities where participants work together to attain a specific goal and complete a task. The final stage is evaluating the COIL course, in which the participants' voices are important for assessing the experience.

The purpose of this paper is to review empirical studies or pedagogical experiences where COIL methodology has been integrated into Latin American classrooms three years before and after the COVID-19 lockdowns started. The following three questions guided this review:

- How have COIL experiences evolved from 2017 to 2023 in four Latin American Countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico)?
- What do COIL experiences focus on in those countries?
- What do teachers' and students' experiences reveal about interculturality when involved in COIL sessions in those countries?

Method

This review followed the eight steps that Guapacha-Chamorro and Chaves-Varón (2023) propose in their methodological framework for qualitative research synthesis. The initial phases involved an extensive search of Research Reports and Pedagogical Experiences in Spanish and English within Colombian ELT Journals and Education Journals regarding COIL experiences in areas related to Foreign Language Teaching and Learning, Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, or Health Education between 2017 and 2023. That period was chosen because it is said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a turning point in recent education; consequently, this review wanted to explore three years before and after 2020. Table 1 summarizes the inclusion and exclusion criteria at this first stage.

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176 journal issue numbers were reviewed in search of titles regarding COIL, Internationalization at home, and International Telecollaboration (refer to Table 2). Then, the abstracts of the 14 chosen articles were read to verify that they met the inclusion criteria. Finally, seven articles were selected.

However, due to the number of journal issue numbers revised and the limited quantity of articles, it was necessary to open the scope of the search and look for information in four databases (*Ebsco Host*, *Dialnet*, *Taylor & Francis*, and *Scopus*) regarding COIL experiences

Table 1. *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria – Initial Stage*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Year of publication	Articles published from January 2017 to December 2023	Articles published before 2017 and after 2023
Type of article	Research reports or Pedagogical experiences	Literature Reviews
Journals	Colombian ELT or Education Journals	Engineering Journals
Languages	English or Spanish	Other languages different from English and Spanish
Areas	Foreign Language Learning, Social Sciences, Humanities Education, or Health Education	Engineering, Chemistry, Exact sciences
Telecollaboration experience setting	University	School

Table 2. *Inventory of Revised Journals, Journal Issue Numbers and Articles*

Number	Journal	Number Journal Issue Numbers Revised	Number of Articles Selected
1	Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal	14	0
2	HOW Journal	15	0
3	GIST Education and Research Journal	12	0
4	Ikala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura	21	1
5	Matices en Lenguas Extranjeras	5	1
6	Shimmering Words	5	0
7	Enletawa Journal	14	0
8	Cuadernos de Lingüística Hispánica	15	0
9	Praxis y Saber	24	1
10	Revista Historia y Memoria	16	1
11	Reflexiones Pedagógicas Urosario	20	3
12	Profile: Issues in Teacher Professional Development	15	0

in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, which, according to Orantes (2019), are Latin American countries where internationalization of higher education models are more developed. The following terms, along with the Boolean operators ‘OR/AND’, were used: “Collaborative Online International Learning”, “COIL”, and “Latin America” (See Table 3). Advanced search filters for full text, in English or Spanish, and articles published from January 2017 to December 2023 were applied.

A total of thirty-nine articles were retrieved; nonetheless, just 16 were considered useful for this review. The others did not meet the inclusion criteria since they focused on Engineering, Business, or Administration/Management; others on electronics because of the word ‘*coil*’ which differs from the acronym under revision; others were conducted in Latin American Countries out of the scope of this review; the remaining were reflection or historical articles. Duplicate articles were counted just once. Twenty-three articles were used for this review; 17 (73.9%) were qualitative studies, four (17.4%) were pedagogical experiences, and two (8.7%) were quantitative studies.

Table 3. *Databases Search*

Databases	Articles Found	Selected Articles
Ebsco Host	13	2
Dialnet	18	12
Taylor & Francis	3	0
Scopus	11	3

The COIL experiences in the articles were classified by country. This classification helped to identify that the COIL courses have been developed in collaboration with other Latin American countries and with countries from the five continents where the use of English as a foreign language was required to interact with international peers. Table 4 shows an inventory of the COIL experiences, at least one Latin American country was involved.

Table 4. *COIL Experiences Sorted by Country*

Coil Experience (Countries)	Number of Experiences
Argentina – Chile	1
Argentina – Dominican Republic	1
Brazil – France – Germany	1

Coil Experience (Countries)	Number of Experiences
Brazil – Sri Lanka – UK	1
Brazil – Sierra Leone	1
Colombia – Spain	1
Colombia – Chile	1
Colombia – Mexico	3
Colombia – Colombia – Italy	1
Colombia – Egypt	1
Colombia – China	1
Colombia – Peru	2
Colombia – Mexico – Brazil	1
Colombia – USA	1
Colombia – Holland	1
Mexico – USA	3
Mexico – Spain	1
Mexico – Dominican Republic - Chile	1

Eighty-seven percent of these experiences were conducted with undergraduate students, 8.7% were with graduate students, and the remaining 4.3% corresponded to integrating both graduate and undergraduate students into the same experience. According to the State University of New York SUNY COIL Center (2019), the aspects that need to be agreed upon are the language of instruction and the common objectives. Out of the 23 experiences, two (8.7%) were carried out in English Language Teacher Education programs; six (26.1%) were conducted in English as a foreign language; five (21.7%) were developed in English as a foreign language but as a bridge for working on interdisciplinary areas such as health, psychology, and social communication; seven (30.4%) were done in Spanish as a mother tongue, and the other three (13.1%) were in Spanish and English as foreign languages.

Findings and Discussion

These findings include a general view of COIL experiences without distinguishing them by the four countries; instead, similarities and differences among the experiences will be expressed. First, it is worth mentioning that all the COIL experiences followed the three stages proposed by the SUNY COIL Center (2019) and demonstrated accurate development of the COIL courses in terms of planning, development, and evaluation. This section

presents information on three emerging categories and their corresponding sub-categories to answer the three research questions (See Table 5).

Table 5. *Emerging Categories and Sub-categories*

Question	Category	Sub-category
How have COIL experiences evolved from 2017 to 2023 in four Latin American Countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico)?	Evolution of COIL Experiences	
What do COIL experiences focus on in those countries?	Fostered or Hindered Aspects by the COIL Experiences	Benefits and Limitations of COIL Experiences
		COIL as a Third Space
What do teachers' and students' experiences reveal about interculturality when involved in COIL sessions in those countries?	Watering the Intercultural Competences Tree	Turning Fear into Excitement and Understanding
		Becoming Aware of...

Evolution of COIL Experiences

Regarding research question 1, firstly, none of the 23 COIL experiences were published in 2017 or 2018, four articles (17.4%) were written in 2019 and 2020; three articles (13%) were issued in 2021, and ten (43.5%) and six (26.1%) were published in 2022 and 2023, respectively. This information is visually presented in Figure 1. Based on the articles written by Bassani and Buchem (2019), Martínez-Acevedo (2022), Ramírez-Ramírez and Bustos-Aguirre (2022), and Vera-Marquez et al. (2019), their COIL experiences were implemented before 2020. Meanwhile, the remaining nineteen experiences were conducted after 2020. This reveals an increasing number of COIL experiences and a rising interest in this area after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Secondly, an evolution of the types of activities that were planned for COIL experiences can be seen. For instance, Bassani and Buchem (2019) and Martínez-Acevedo (2022) integrated mostly asynchronous activities for their experience where social networks, the Google Plus platform, and email were mainly used for interaction. Other authors such as Cohen and Calderon Aponte (2021), Restrepo-Maya (2022), Cuño-Bonito and Soto-Arango (2022), and Aznar and Frank (2021), among others, have used video conferencing tools

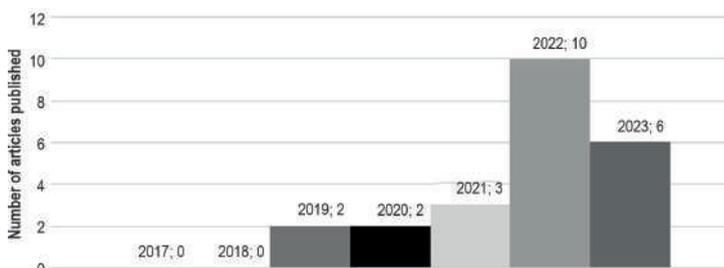


Figure 1. *Evolution in Publishing Years*

such as Skype, Google Meet, Zoom, Teams, and WhatsApp video calls for synchronous communication. Gutiérrez-Peláez and Ellis (2020), Romero-Rodríguez et al. (2023), and Cipagauta-Moyano (2022) also integrated additional tools such as Spotify, Padlet, and Kahoot to let their participants have other types of online intercultural interactions.

Nonetheless, in their findings, Ramírez-Marín et al. (2021), Martínez-Acevedo (2022), Vargas-Gutiérrez et al. (2022), and Wiesner-Luna and Burgoa-Godoy (2023) showed that students perceive a gap in the way technological resources were used by teachers in COIL experiences by mentioning that they lacked creativity. Complementarily, Vera-Márquez et al. (2019) and Martínez Acevedo (2022) mentioned that teachers recognize their students' limited knowledge to use technological resources for academic purposes and highlighted a need to work on strategies for reliable information search. These two perceptions reveal how COIL experiences need to evolve and have more training for both teachers and students.

Finally, there has been a moderate increase in institutional support for implementing COIL courses, especially in terms of teachers' qualifications and technological resources (Gutiérrez-Peláez & Ellis, 2020). However, more institutional stimulus for teachers and students is required (Lemos-Shlotter & Tineo-Espinal, 2022; Ramírez-Ramírez & Bustos-Aguirre, 2022). It can be seen that most of these experiences have been done mainly because of their teachers' own sake and students did not receive any recognition (e.g., homologating academic credits or schedule flexibility by the programs' curricular committees).

All the articles agreed on the significant effort that COIL experiences require for their development at different stages. Bassani and Buchen (2019); De la Garza and Maher (2022), Lemos-Shlotter and Tineo-Espinal (2022), Martínez-Acevedo (2022), and Vargas-Gutiérrez et al. (2022), among others, described how their planning process went through, and they mentioned that in some cases it took from four to ten weeks. Rubin (2017) argues that “international online collaborations moved forward without any direct support or even acknowledgment by the campus internationalization office and were not integrated into the

university internationalization plan” (p. 29). Nowadays, these collaborations have gained recognition from universities’ international affairs offices. This fact indicates that institutional support has somehow evolved a little; however, further attention is required from university stakeholders.

Fostered or Hindered Aspects by the COIL Experiences

Twenty-one articles focused on the positive and negative aspects of implementing COIL experiences in different contexts while the other two articles especially emphasized South-North COIL. Consequently, two sub-categories emerged to answer the second question. The first contained information about the advantages and disadvantages of COIL courses; the second described how COIL as Third Space became a useful initiative for the Global South.

Benefits and Limitations of COIL Experiences

Even though most of the benefits in the articles were related to developing intercultural competence, which will be further explained, other benefits emerged in the COIL experiences. As its name indicates, COIL promotes collaboration. This collaboration occurred in different directions, for instance, teacher-teacher cooperation that promoted teachers’ development and a constant revision of how the different curricula could be integrated into the COIL experience (Cipagauta-Moyano, 2022; Núñez et al., 2023). Teacher-teacher collaboration also occurred when teachers used their areas of expertise to enrich the multidisciplinary work as mentioned by Casas-Cortés et al. (2021) and Rodríguez-Marconi et al. (2023). In addition, Lemos-Shlotter and Tineo-Espinal (2022) expressed that their experience generated a collaborative encounter for materials development which could generate an additional impact in both contexts and countries.

Student-student collaboration emerged with their international peers and their national classmates as an alternative to solve technological issues, reach agreements, convert problems into opportunities for intercultural dialogues, and engage in active learning when there were clear and common objectives to attain (Aznar & Frank, 2021; Bassani & Buchem, 2019; Wiesner-Luna & Burgoa-Godoy, 2023). Furthermore, in the COIL experiences presented by Aznar and Frank (2021), Casas-Cortés et al. (2021), Gaytán-Oyarzun et al. (2022), Wiesner-Luna and Burgoa-Godoy (2023), and Cipagauta-Moyano (2022), teachers expressed that COIL courses developed problem-solving skills when real or hypothetical situations were presented, analyzed, and reviewed because they allowed students to make decisions and explore different alternatives through constant negotiation with their peers. This information can be complemented by Restrepo-Maya (2022) and Rodríguez-Marconi et al. (2023) who found that these COIL experiences allowed teachers and students to adapt better to new and unexpected situations.

Moving on to the drawbacks of COIL experiences, Aguilar-Cruz and Xiang (2023), Vera-Márquez et al. (2019), Wiesner-Luna and Burgoa-Godoy (2023), and Casas-Cortés et al. (2021) had similar findings regarding time constraints as one limitation of implementing COIL Courses, not only because of possible time zone differences among countries but also as some international partners' delay to respond and participate. It made asynchronous communication complex and commitment as a lack to fulfill the assignments (Vargas-Gutiérrez et al., 2022).

Another common obstacle in different studies concerns unstable internet connections (Aznar & Frank, 2021; Cohen & Calderon-Aponte, 2021; Gaytán-Oyarzun et al., 2022; Núñez et al., 2023); these network issues hindered the interaction processes and limited the experience to focus more on asynchronous activities rather than synchronous ones. On the one hand, trust cannot be relied on 100% in technology because unexpected situations might emerge. Several participants wanted to include more synchronous intercultural encounters (Aguilar-Cruz & Xiang, 2023; Vera-Marquez et al., 2019); however, technological issues could have affected their experience. These findings are aligned with Cipagauta-Moyano's (2022) premise of '*less is more*' where quality is better than quantity for successfully implementing COIL courses.

On the other hand, connectivity issues and the digital divide are common situations in Colombia and other Latin American countries; it is an aspect that should worry teachers, higher education institutions, stakeholders, and governments all over the globe. This idea is aligned with Wimpenny et al. (2022) and De la Garza and Maher (2022) who argued that learners in the Global South lack the same access and interconnectivity as Global North has.

COIL as a Third Space

De la Garza and Maher (2022) and Wimpenny et al. (2022) presented COIL experiences as alternatives to decolonizing learning with the *South-North* and *South-South* COIL. Wimpenny et al.'s experiences were conducted in ELT contexts where COIL was used to decentralize the vision of what the role of English is and debate the belief of "*native speakers* as the ideal teacher of English" (Wimpenny et al., 2022, p. 284). This study contrasts with Cohen and Calderón-Aponte's (2021), which also focused on language teaching; Wimpenny et al. (2022) emphasized a decentralized (nonwestern) view of the Global South, focusing on English teachers' roles while Cohen and Calderón-Aponte (2021) explored language assessment aspects which have a more North-oriented perspective.

Watering the Intercultural Competences Tree

UNESCO (2017) proposed the Intercultural Competences Tree with different components using the analogy of the tree's roots, trunk, branches, and leaves. By reviewing the articles,

teachers' and students' voices revealed aspects in common such as reflection, flourishing of emotions, and creativity; therefore, two subcategories, Turning Fear into Excitement & Understanding and Becoming Aware of..., emerged to answer the third question.

Turning Fear into Excitement and Understanding

In connection to the emotions as one of the leaves in UNESCO's Intercultural Competences Tree, students' perceptions reveal their initial fears of becoming part of COIL experiences because they feel they lack cultural knowledge and preparation to work and interact with their international peers (Aguilar-Cruz & Xiang, 2023; Bassani & Buchem, 2019). Students also felt intimidated and held feelings back because they did not want to be excluded from the initial intercultural interactions (Wiesner-Luna & Burgoa-Godoy, 2023). These ideas can be confirmed with the findings in Cohen and Calderón-Aponte (2021) where teachers perceived similar feelings of concern in students at the beginning of the project. However, those feelings of apprehension turned into excitement and motivation to repeat this kind of intercultural encounter (Ramírez-Marín et al., 2020; Ramírez-Ramírez & Bustos-Aguirre, 2022, among others). At the end of the experience, Bassani and Buchem (2019) showed that students' self-confidence increased, and they felt more prepared to interact with their international peers.

Even though empathy is not an emotion per se, it can be defined as "the ability to understand how someone else feels" (MacMillan, 2008, p. 223). This definition can be complemented by Welsh (2011) who states that "intercultural understanding requires an ability to empathize and identify with others [...] it acknowledges the importance of identifying with the 'other', whilst not denying the 'self'" (p. 41). In this regard, students' perceptions mentioned empathy as a determining factor for collaboratively working with their partners and understanding similarities and differences between cultures plus an additional acknowledgment of who the other is (Aguilar-Cruz & Xiang, 2023; Cohen & Calderón-Aponte, 2021; Martínez-Acevedo, 2022; Parra-Magaña & Osorio-Gutiérrez, 2023; Ramírez-Marín et al., 2020; Wiesner-Luna & Burgoa-Godoy, 2023).

Deardorff (2017) describes empathy and interconnectedness as cross-cultural dimensions. The empathy led to an establishment of friendship bonds among the participants that went beyond the academic scenario and moved into more personal and family spheres as seen in teachers' and students' experiences in Ramírez-Marín et al. (2020), Gutiérrez-Peláez and Ellis (2020), Casas-Cortés et al. (2021), Ramírez-Ramírez and Bustos-Aguirre (2022), Wiesner-Luna and Burgoa-Godoy (2023), and Rodríguez-Marconi et al. (2023). This relationship-building was possible thanks to a better understanding of other people's realities, *'the other'* and *'the self'*; and it opened the mind to a deeper comprehension of the world (Ashman, 2018, as cited in Martínez-Acevedo, 2022).

Becoming Aware of ...

According to UNESCO (2017), sociolinguistic awareness is necessary when interacting with people from diverse cultures; it is more than just knowing the grammar rules but knowing how and when to use the language. Additionally, Deardorff (2017) explains that sociolinguistic awareness is part of cross-cultural competence knowledge and comprehension dimensions. On the one hand, students who participated in the COIL experiences whose language was Spanish, as their mother tongue, expressed that it facilitated communication; they also became aware of some linguistic features that differ from culture to culture and how misunderstandings can occur even when using the same language. Nonetheless, it became a motivator for students to know more about other cultures and the variations of the language such as idioms or phrases with different meanings depending on the contexts they are used (Cipagauta-Moyano, 2022; Parra-Magaña & Osorio-Gutiérrez, 2023; Rodríguez-Marconi, 2023). In other words, students became aware of cultural and linguistic similarities and differences.

On the other hand, in the COIL experiences where English was used for foreign language learning, students and teachers identified that the curiosity to learn about '*the other*' as well as the cultural components acted as motivators to practice the language due to an actual need to communicate a message (Lemos-Shlotter & Tineo-Espinal, 2023; Martínez-Acevedo, 2022). Besides, in those COIL experiences when English was used as a means of instruction, it was evident that students were not only aware of cultural and linguistic features, but they were also able to interact with people from various disciplines and generated dialogues of knowledge through intercultural virtual encounters (Restrepo-Maya, 2022; Vargas-Gutiérrez et al., 2022). Finally, students and teachers manifested that these COIL sessions encouraged students to be more reflective and critical (Aznar & Frank, 2021; Lemos-Shlotter & Tineo-Espinal, 2022; Restrepo-Maya, 2022; Rodríguez-Marconi et al., 2023); it matches with the concept of reflexivity proposed in the UNESCO's (2017) intercultural competences tree.

Conclusions

This revision process revealed a lack of publishing COIL experiences in Colombian ELT and education journals. More support should be provided to teachers and students in Colombia to increase COIL experiences and encourage their publication and sharing with others. Consequently, broadening the search scope and looking for information in different databases is necessary. This paper reviewed twenty-three articles concerning COIL experiences between 2017 and 2023 where at least one Latin American country was involved (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, or Mexico). This literature review also revealed that most of the studies were qualitative; less emphasis was put on quantitative or mixed research indicating a need to conduct more mixed-method studies regarding this topic in four Latin American Countries.

Another gap is the implementation of COIL experiences in Foreign Language teaching education programs where student-teachers are involved in intercultural encounters with other future language teachers. For further research, conducting more studies on ELT pedagogy and didactics is a worthy option. This systematic review found a limited number of experiences in the ELT area. However, those COIL experiences portray a new window to increase teachers' and students' awareness of the role of interculturality within the EFL classroom. It also showed that these COIL experiences promoted human interaction mediated by technology where the language becomes an excuse to learn about the other and the self.

Although COIL emerged almost 18 years ago, its use was boosted due to the COVID-19 lockdowns and the need to promote interaction and collaboration through technological mediation. It is evident that the number of publications related to COIL research and experiences increased after 2020, but it has also slightly decreased in 2023. Some changes have been made regarding institutional support for developing COIL experience; however, they seem insufficient considering the amount of work that COIL experiences imply for both teachers and students and the little external rewards received.

Furthermore, one of the primary goals of COIL experiences is the development of students' intercultural competence which has been successfully attained in the reviewed documents; in the participants' voices, these intercultural encounters encouraged a series of dimensions regarding cross-cultural understandings. Maintaining the strengths and overcoming the potential problems that emerge, especially in technology, participation, and time constraints is essential.

Finally, even though there were just two studies that emphasized COIL as a third space, language teachers and language teaching education programs must be more interested in implementing COIL sessions in their classes. By doing so, they can be aware of how COIL could be used to raise awareness and change its North-oriented perspective to a Global South that promotes more dialogues, encounters, and reflection. For instance, researchers can consider integrating COIL experiences and activities that promote critical interculturality through dialogue, reflection, and action in the participants' contexts to break the bonds of colonial perspectives. Additionally, more longitudinal studies can be held to explore the long-term impact of COIL experiences. Now, it is the article readers' turn: How do you think non-established COIL can be integrated into your classes?

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Using IMAGE Model to De-Center Stereotypes in EFL Colombian Eighth Graders

Aplicación del Modelo IMAGE para Erradicar Estereotipos en la Enseñanza del Inglés en Colombia con Estudiantes de Octavo Grado

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Abstract

This article informs the results of a study conducted at a public secondary school in Colombia whose purpose was to explore how eighth-grade students dispel judgment and stereotypes concerning cultural differences through authentic materials inserted in the IMAGE model. The research design involved a qualitative research method and the application of the action research cycle. The qualitative data were analyzed using deductive coding considering students' three preconceived stereotypes. The

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results reveal that students could move from generalizing and having prejudices to being more mindful of cultural differences concerning the English language. Likewise, this study shows that the target language, grammar, culture, and content could be integrated into a single English class.

Keywords: authentic materials, culture, English as a foreign language, image model, stereotype

Resumen

Este artículo informa sobre los resultados de un estudio realizado en una escuela secundaria pública de Colombia cuyo propósito era explorar cómo los estudiantes de grado octavo se desprenden de estereotipos sobre las diferencias culturales a través de material auténtico insertado en el modelo IMAGE. La metodología empleada fue la investigación cualitativa y la aplicación del ciclo de investigación-acción. Los datos cualitativos se analizaron mediante codificación deductiva teniendo en cuenta tres estereotipos preconcebidos. Los resultados revelan que los estudiantes fueron capaces de pasar de hacer generalizaciones a ser más conscientes de las diferencias culturales en relación con el idioma inglés. Del mismo modo, este estudio demostró que la lengua meta, la gramática, la cultura y el contenido pueden integrarse en una clase de inglés.

Palabras clave: cultura, estereotipo, materiales auténticos, modelo IMAGE, inglés como lengua extranjera

Introduction

Teaching and learning foreign languages involve not only language but also culture. All communicative events and classroom interactions are context and culture-dependent. Therefore, language acquisition and teaching should go beyond grammar and vocabulary activities and emphasize cultural awareness, understanding, and interpretation. Aware of this reality, the teaching of culture has gained significant attention in English as a foreign language (EFL) in the last two decades. Diverse frameworks, methodologies, and approaches have emerged to explain, suggest, and present the intricate relationship between language and culture (Barnes-Karol & Broner, 2010; Byram, 1997; Liddicoat, 2009;). Drawing from these authors' approaches to culture and interculturality, significant research has shown how students approach culture and interculturality, gaining cultural knowledge, awareness, interpretation, and critical understanding of intercultural events worldwide, including South American countries.

Campbell (2011) examined the affordances and challenges of an exchange abroad buddy project in the United Kingdom in which learners were paired up with a foreign student to accompany the international experience. Results indicated that students could challenge existing stereotypes and gain new perspectives about the foreign culture. Porto (2019) reported how students from Argentina and Australia broadened their perspectives on global environmental problems after a telecollaborative experience. In South America, Vega (2020) integrated the IMAGE model and authentic materials to help undergraduate students at a

public university decenter from existing stereotypes about local and foreign cultural practices and perspectives. Wagner and Alvarez (2022) showed how students from two different countries gained intercultural awareness and citizenship after following Byram's model of interculturality and being part of a telecollaborative experience.

Even though existing research has shown how students have broadened their cultural and intercultural awareness, results indicate that learners are still prone to stereotyping. That is, presenting an overgeneralization of culture by misinterpreting people, places, customs, and traditions (Beeghly, 2015). Smith and Hung (2008) mentioned that nowadays it is common to find stereotypes regarding race and gender that are not easy to eliminate, such as the idea that women are not as capable as men within the fields of math and science. Likewise, Barrera and Cantor (2007) agreed that stereotypes are still part of people's way of thinking; as a result, society unintentionally creates and perpetuates stereotypes that in many cases are detrimental. An in-depth observation process in a public school in a rural area in Córdoba shows that students usually present misconceptions about foreign nations (e.g., the United States, Canada, and England) concerning race, color, and accent that can be categorized as stereotypes. Even though students have regular English classes, they have few opportunities to dispel such stereotypes given the grammar-oriented syllabus students follow in the institution and the scarce immersion in communicative exchanges.

This study resorts to the four-stage IMAGE model (Glisan & Donato, 2017) using authentic materials to help students broaden their cultural perspectives and decenter from existing stereotypes. The IMAGE model is a method teachers might implement in their language classes to teach language and culture and make students aware of the world around them through images, extra information, and fact/thought questions. By using the model, learners are expected to move beyond the specific cultural content of the images/texts to reflect on the cultural perspectives (Barnes-Karol & Broner, 2010) embedded in existing cultural products and practices. The model also "provides students with an opportunity to look at both their native culture and the target culture through new critical lenses" (Johnson & English, 2023).

Authentic materials refer to resources not created for pedagogical purposes (e.g., photographs, TikTok videos, posts on social media, and texts from no academic webpage) (Richards, 2001). This material helps students have close contact with people and countries from their own and other cultures since they show realities students might understand (Alfonso Vargas & Romero Molina, 2023; Bernal, 2020). Scholarship (Bernal, 2020; Castillo et al., 2017; Codina, 2020; Palacio & Pulido, 2015; Touhami & Sebbat, 2020) have analyzed how authentic materials develop cultural awareness in the EFL learners after the process and the exposure of those resources. However, to our knowledge, few studies (Vega, 2020) have integrated authentic materials and the IMAGE model to develop students' cultural awareness concerning stereotyping in rural areas.

This study aims to help eighth-grade rural school students de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences studied in the EFL class through authentic materials using the IMAGE model method. The eighth graders in the study come from a secondary public school in a rural area of Córdoba, Colombia. At the time of the study, these learners had an A- English language proficiency level and came from low to middle socio-economic backgrounds. They had two hours of English instruction per week, primarily guided by a textbook called *Way to Go*, provided by the Colombian Ministry of National Education.

Given the little exposure, students have to cultural insights, the IMAGE model aims at expanding respective knowledge, developing cultural awareness, and consequently preventing them from growing up with wrong perceptions regarding people, places, situations, attitudes, behavior, or likes. This research is anchored in one question: How might authentic materials and the IMAGE model help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences?

Theoretical Framework

Culture

Culture refers to the diverse norms, customs, beliefs, and traditions that characterize a group of people, be it a region, a nation, a religious group, or a research team (Holliday, 2020). Such norms are not static, but flexible and are prone to changes as individuals interact with people from diverse backgrounds or subgroups. Therefore, the concept of culture should not be reduced to the homogenization of nations. Instead, culture refers to a dynamic system of opinions, values, behaviors, and mindsets that emerge and are shaped by the shared social practices, products, and perspectives of different small or big communities (Fandiño, 2014; Glisan & Donato, 2017).

When addressing culture in the foreign language classroom, it is significant to familiarize students with the diverse products (e.g., most common non-alcoholic beverages) and common practices of a group or subgroup (e.g., having coffee and doing work at a cafe). More importantly, students should be aware of the diverse perspectives (e.g., viewing cafes as the place to meet friends or do work) embedded in such products and practices. That is, the diverse meanings embedded in existing products and practices and how they change the minute interacting with media, people, and all sorts of literacies.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes represent strong ideas that guide one's thoughts and are not easily changed or moved in one's mind since they save individuals time when learning about others and other

cultures, making the environment less complex to understand (Sibley & Osborne, 2015) Stereotyping usually involves cultural misinterpretations (Glotov, 2023) that simplify cultures and reduce them to a few characteristics, attributing one single trait to a whole community full of diversity. Since they denote general claims, such generalizations lead to prejudices towards a person or group of people (Beeghly, 2015). As commented by Glotov (2023), Benanni (2023), and Vásquez-Guarnizo et al. (2020), these stereotypes are usually reinforced by social media, the internet, and textbooks when they overshadow minority cultures and give prominence to the cultures of dominant communities. In this study, stereotypes constitute all preconceptions and misjudgments students have about other regions and nations.

IMAGE Model

Drawing from Barnes-Karol and Broner's (2010) and Johnson and English's (2003) orientation to use images and texts for the exploration of culture, The IMAGE model is a pedagogical procedure in which teachers can teach culture through a set of images and questions to help students infer meanings beyond what they can observe. IMAGE lessons address a cultural aspect through images described and analyzed by responding to two types of questions: *fact* questions and *thought* questions. *Fact* questions enable students to describe the image presented in a literal way. *Thought* questions allow students to go beyond what they see and require analysis, opinions, hypotheses, and ideas about the images (Glisan & Donato, 2017).

The IMAGE model suggests four main steps. In the first step, *Images and Making Observations*, the teacher presents one or more images to their students about a cultural practice or product to start interaction with them. Then, three or five *fact* questions (e.g., what, where, when, and who) are asked to make detailed observations. In the second step, *Analyzing Additional Information*, the teacher provides extra, important, and concise data or information about the cultural practice or product that complements the image presented in the previous step. Articles, short texts, graphs, and charts constitute significant sources that foster students to have another perspective from the described image.

The third step, *Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives*, consists of students' analysis of the image(s) and the extra information provided. Teachers can ask students to analyze, reflect, and hypothesize. After that, the teacher shows another image(s) to continue the lesson and keep students focused, provoking further reflection. In this step, the teacher should elaborate on the *fact* questions (three or five will be enough) for students to give a significant analysis of the information presented in steps 1 and 2. In the fourth step, *Exploring perspectives and reflection further*, students can think about other reflections, ideas, and questions that were not covered during the lesson or any aspect they would like to add to expand the topic. Students are required to dig into the perspectives of a cultural practice or product.

The Use of the IMAGE Model When Teaching Languages

The IMAGE model contributes to teaching languages allowing students to learn the language as they familiarize themselves with local and foreign cultural products, practices, and perspectives. When implementing the model, students move from a general and literal perspective about cultural products to a more solid, widened, and imaginative perspective about cultural traits. Barnes-Karol and Broner (2010) illustrated this transition through a Spanish as a foreign language lesson aimed at exploring *La Canasta Familiar* (the cost of living) in Latin American countries. To this end, they propose a four-step model that starts by showing students two content-rich images that portray a market basket of two different families to have them brainstorm the content of the basket (all sorts of food) and its perspectives concerning *la canasta familiar* in Latin America (e.g., what do Latin Americans eat?).

As a second step, students are shown more content-rich pictures portraying other market baskets that broaden students' perspectives about the Latin American *Canasta Familiar*. As a third step, statistics illustrating estimates are presented about eating habits in Latin America, and a reading text describing families eating routines. This new input explores the reasons behind eating habits in Latin America and certain provoking topics such as obesity, malnutrition, and state food regulations.

In a nutshell, using well-selected images and multimodal texts helps students (1) understand vocabulary, concepts, and cultural traits; (2) voice observations about the images; and (3) make insightful comparisons among them. In this example, students studying a familiar topic like food makes them gain insights about *la canasta familiar* in Latin America.

While Gomez (2019), Glisan and Donato (2017), and Vega (2020) have implemented the IMAGE model for EFL learning exploring topics such as currency variation, graduation practices, food practices, and perspectives, little is known about the implementation of the model in low beginning levels where students struggle to understand English lessons. Therefore, this study illustrates how the IMAGE model is realized in an EFL lesson in a rural area.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach to have close contact with the students and comprehend their perspectives and insights. This study also followed the action research cycle described by Baskerville and Pries-Heje (1999) which follows five steps: (1) *diagnosing* the problem, situation, or fault; (2) *action planning* according to the problem; (3) *taking action*, based on the selected plan; (4) *evaluating* the actions or plan to know the consequences; and (5) *specifying learnings* to identify findings. In this study, a teacher candidate (first author of this paper) realized that eighth graders had stereotypes about foreign countries concerning race, gender, and accent. Second, she reviewed the literature to identify a method that helps students de-center from stereotypes. Third, she planned and implemented the IMAGE

model for a month and evaluated the results. Finally, the three authors described the main affordances of the implementation process.

Context and Participants

This study was conducted at a public secondary school in a rural area of Lorica, Córdoba, Colombia. Participants were 36 students belonging to an eighth grade with basic English language proficiency skills and a teacher candidate completing her teaching practicum by the time of the study.

Implementation of the IMAGE Model

The student teacher designed a unit with all the stages of the IMAGE model suggested by Glisan and Donato (2017). The unit consisted of four lessons. Each lesson responded to the steps of the IMAGE model. In the first lesson, students watched various images about English speakers to identify their differences and similarities. In the second lesson, they analyzed extra information (text and audio) about English speakers including characteristics of countries where English is spoken. In lesson three, they shared their perceptions regarding the images previously presented. In lesson four, they shared extra information and conclusions about English-speaking countries. Table 1 provides further details about the implementation process.

Table 1. *IMAGE Model Steps*

Image Model	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Goal	Lesson 1: To allow students to understand clearly the product/practice, which is the English language.	Lesson 2: To make students aware of the countries where English is spoken and its accent variety.	Lesson 3: To promote new perspectives about culture to students.	Lesson 4: To expand students' knowledge and promote critical thinking.
Description	Students were asked to observe two images of English speakers projected in a Microsoft PowerPoint file. Then, students answered fact questions concerning the images. Finally, learners filled out a chart with the similarities and differences they found relating to the set of images.	Divided into groups, students analyzed a blog that contained countries where English is spoken to socialize the information they gathered with the rest of the class. Then, they listened to different English accents and answered questions about the topic.	Students watched a new image of English speakers from different parts of the world for the purpose of answering thought questions.	Students were asked to investigate for more information concerning three aspects not covered during the lessons. They shared the information, commented, and reflected on that.

Source: Own work.

Instruments for Data Collection

Data sources included participant observations and written tasks. Participant observation allowed the teacher candidate to interact with the students in their context or setting and provide information regarding their behavior, perceptions, and attitudes with the day-to-day immersion (Berthelsen et al., 2016). Written tasks (i.e., a chart about similarities and differences concerning a set of images showing native English speakers) allowed students to capture their progress concerning decentering their existing beliefs.

Data Analysis

Due to the nature of qualitative research, data were analyzed through coding. This procedure is a qualitative research analysis that helps to identify the most important parts of the data; it can be a word, an item, a phrase, or a single sentence to classify them into codes and categories (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). Furthermore, coding was followed using a deductive approach, seeing that codes or categories were established, and the analysis was focused on existing codes (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

As the main purpose of this work was to identify students' stereotypes and changes in their awareness using the IMAGE model, the analysis related to the preconceived stereotypes students had about English-speaking countries (*English is only spoken in the United States or England, with the same accent, and physical characteristics*). First, the three authors became familiar with the data, associating the pre-existing categories with the transcripts and tasks. In a second round of analysis, we searched for changes in students' identified stereotypes, including their awareness of different countries where the language was spoken, variety of accents, and peoples' physical appearance. Third, we discussed the evidence as a group to ensure the reliability of the data. Finally, we analyzed and selected the changes that responded to the decentering of the stereotypes.

Findings

This chapter shows the findings concerning the question of this study after implementing the IMAGE model using authentic materials. The data collection sources showed that students could de-center from stereotypes and judgments regarding cultural differences. For instance, students realized that English does not come just from countries such as the United States or England. Besides, they became aware of the different accents surrounding this language. Learners also understood that fair-skinned people live in such countries and speak English. These three main stereotypes from which students were de-centered will be described below in detail showing how authentic materials such as images, audios, and texts helped students build different

perspectives from the ones they previously had. The following table summarizes the main categories found in the study:

Table 2. *Main Stereotypes Dispelled*

Research Question	Main Stereotypes Dispelled
<i>How might authentic materials and the IMAGE model help secondary school students to de-center from judgment and stereotypes regarding cultural differences?</i>	The English language comes from the United States or England.
	English speakers have the same accent.
	Skin color determines one's place of origin.

The English language Comes from the United States or England

When teaching Lesson 2, students showed limited knowledge regarding places where the English language is officially spoken. For example, when asked about places where English is used, most of them showed existing stereotypes as seen below:

Transcript 1: Students' perceptions about where English is spoken.
<p>T: ¿De dónde creen ustedes que viene el idioma inglés? (<i>Where do you think the English language comes from?</i>)</p> <p>Ss: (XXX)</p> <p>S1: Viene de Estados Unidos. (<i>It comes from the United States.</i>)</p> <p>S2: De Estados Unidos. (<i>From The United States.</i>)</p> <p>S3: De Inglaterra. (<i>From England.</i>)</p> <p>S4: De Estados Unidos. (<i>From The United States.</i>)</p> <p>S5: De Francia, señor. (<i>From France, teacher.</i>)</p>

As seen in the transcript above, most students agreed that English comes from the United States. Others said that it comes from countries such as England and even France. Such responses show that students had a pre-established conception of English and a limited understanding of the other places where the language is spoken.

In the first step of the IMAGE model, Images and Making Observations, students slightly changed their existing stereotypes. In that lesson, students watched two images about English speakers and responded to some questions. During the image analysis, students started to change their minds by comparing the images and drawing conclusions about them. The following transcription showed the initial changes in students' viewpoints concerning English speakers.

Transcript 2: Initial awareness.

T: Chicos, ahora, ustedes dijeron que ella podría ser de Suiza, ella de India y ella de Estados Unidos. (*Guys, now, you said that she can be from Switzerland, she is from India, and she is from the United States. (Pointing at each woman in the image, respectively).*)

T: (*Getting closer to the students*) Ustedes mencionaron tres países diferentes. Tres países diferentes. ¿Y en qué idioma están hablando? (*Looking at the board*). (*You mentioned three different countries. What language are they speaking?*)

S?: En inglés. (*In English*)

T: ¿En inglés? ¿Y por qué se da esa situación? (*In English? And why does it happen?*)

S2: (*Raising his hand*) Porque las tres son de los Estados Unidos. (*Because the three of them are from the United States.*)

T: Porque las tres son de Estados Unidos. ¡Ok! ¿Qué más? (*Because they are from the United States (Ok, what else?)*)

S?: Porque las tres hablan inglés (*because the three of them speak in English.*)

T: Ok!

S3: Porque en los países o ciudades en donde ellas viven se habla inglés. O ellas lo aprendieron. (*Because in the countries and cities where they are from, English is spoken, or they learned it.*)

T: Very good!

In this transcription, some participants mentioned that people in the images are from The United States because they speak English. However, other students expressed that the women in the images were from different countries (Switzerland, India, and The United States), but spoke the same language (English). When students were asked about why this situation occurred (being from different countries and speaking the same language), students answered that the people in the images were from The United States. Interestingly, S3 responded differently (because in the countries and cities where these people live, English is spoken), which shows an emerging view of the places where English is spoken.

After that, they established differences and similarities between the two images of English speakers by analyzing them and characterizing the people. Then, students wrote down the differences and similarities in a chart (See Appendix A). The most notorious similarity students wrote down in the chart was that people in the images use the same language to communicate: (*They speak the same language, speak English, The language*). However, the most common difference they noticed was that people in the images come from different countries. In this task, it was also evident that students started to be aware of the different countries where people speak English.

When analyzing additional information, the students showed a new understanding while analyzing extra information regarding the different countries where English is spoken.

The next transcript showed that students' knowledge of English was not limited to a single country such as The United States. Instead, they recognized that this language is spoken in other places.

Transcript 3: Students' new understanding.

T: Entonces, ¿el inglés solo se habla en los Estados Unidos?
(*So, Is English only spoken in the United States?*)
Ss: ¡No!
T: ¿Están seguros? (*Are you sure?*)
S4: Si hay 67 es porque hay un poco, señor. (*If there are 67 countries, it is because there are a lot of them, teacher.*)

In this interaction, while students analyzed the information in the Berlitz blog concerning the 67 English-speaking countries (See Appendix B), students were asked if English is just spoken in The United States. Most of the students provided a negative response to this question. For instance, students answered that *if there are 67 countries, it is because there are a lot of them*, meaning that if there are 67 countries where English is spoken, there are more English native speakers in other countries worldwide after all. Thus, this student did not limit himself to thinking about American or British; on the contrary, he showed a more open view of culture and the use of English.

When generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives, students answered questions about people in the places where English is spoken. They were conscious of the fact that English is spoken in many countries. Therefore, their responses included the names of different countries all over the world as shown below.

Transcript 4: Students are aware of the different countries where English is spoken.

T: Si ellas están hablando en inglés, ¿quiere decir que son de Estados Unidos o Inglaterra? (*If they are speaking in English, so they are from the United States or England?*)
Ss: ¡No!
S6: ((*Moving her head from side to side indicating a negative response*))
T: ¿De dónde más pueden ser entonces? (*Where else can they be from?*)
S5: De otro continente o país. (*From another continent or country.*)
T: ¿Cómo cuál? (*Which one?*)
S5: Suiza. (*Switzerland.*)
S?: Africa. (*Africa.*)
S5: Canada. (*Canada.*)
T: Very good!
S?: Irlanda. (*Ireland.*)
T: Perfect!
S5: Nueva Zelanda. (*New Zealand.*)

After students watched an image with a group of women, from different nationalities, talking in English about environmental matters, students' answers varied. Considering such answers, at that point of the unit, they were aware that English expands beyond the United States and England. It means that, from then on, they were more likely to associate English with other countries in America, Africa, Oceania, and Europe. It also indicates that they have become more open-minded and have achieved the purpose of the unit and research: to de-center students from the stereotypes or preconceptions regarding this language.

English Speakers Have the Same Accent

At the beginning of the unit, the students were not aware of the different accents surrounding English. However, as the lessons progressed, especially after listening to the audio of native English speakers worldwide, they understood that English can have different accents, and so does Spanish. Students' first understanding of the accent variation is presented below.

In this interaction, it can be seen how the students started to recognize the accents as specific to each person, community, city, or country after listening to the audio in which each English speaker spoke with a different accent. For instance, when S7 said that “they speak English but not with the same tone”, with the word *tone*, she meant an accent.

When answering questions regarding the last image of the model in Step 3, Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives, students showed the new understanding they acquired about this concern. In the following transcription, it is seen that students not only became aware of the English accents but also recognized that it does not have to be the same for everyone since each person has their own way of speaking a language.

Students started answering the questions concerning the image presented in which a group of women was gathered. They expressed that although they spoke in English, their accent was different. This means that some students expanded their knowledge by referring to how people talk to one another even when they use the same language. Now, they think accents could vary from person to person.

Skin Color Determines One's Place of Origin

At the beginning of implementing the IMAGE model, students only associated fair-skinned people with an American background. Then, they realized that dark-skinned people can also be American or Swiss and native speakers of English. When they watched a set of images showing fair-skinned and dark-skinned people, they labeled them as coming from Switzerland and the United States, and Africa and Chocó (Colombia) respectively, as shown below.

Transcript 1: Students' initial awareness.

T: ¿Ustedes creen que en todos los continentes que ustedes dijeron, en todos los países en donde se habla el inglés, todas esas personas tienen el mismo acento, hablan igual? (*Do you think that, in all the continents that you mentioned, in all the countries where English is spoken, all those people have the same accent? Do they speak with the same accent?*)
Ss: ¡No!
T: Yes or no?
Ss: Noo!
T: ¿Las personas en África hablan el inglés igual? (*Do people in Africa speak English the same way?*)
S?: No!
S?: No!
T: ¿Las personas en América hablan el inglés igual? (*Do people in America speak English the same way?*)
Ss: ¡Noo!
T: ¿Las personas de Canadá con las personas de Australia hablan el mismo inglés? Yes or no? (*Do people from Canada and people from Australia have the same accent? Yes, or no?*)
S?: Yes!
S?: No!
T: ¿Por qué? (*Why?*)
S7: ((XXX))
T: S7 dice que ellos hablan inglés, pero no con el mismo tono. (*S7 says that they speak English but not with the same accent*). Pero más que con el mismo tono, es con el mismo acento. (*But rather than the same tone, it is with the same accent.*)

Transcript 2: Students' awareness of the different accents surrounding English.

T: Chicos, ¿ustedes creen que tiene que haber el mismo inglés para todo el mundo? (*Do you think people must speak with the same English accent?*)
Ss: ¡No!
T: ¿Por qué? (*Why?*)
Ss: ((XXX))
T: Porque tienen la misma lengua, ¿pero el acento es qué? (*Because they speak the same language, but what is the accent about?*)
Ss: Diferente. (*Different.*)

When the first image was presented to the students in the first step of the model, S1 indicated that one of the two women was from the United States because she was pretty and fair-skinned while other students either agreed or disagreed with the response. After showing the second image, the first reaction came from S2, who at first glance indicated that one of them was “Chocoana” (from Chocó-Colombia) because of her dark skin color; others mentioned that she was from “Africa”. Regarding the woman in the image, some learners agreed that she was from “Switzerland” because of her physical appearance, especially her blue eyes. As seen in the transcript, S2 changed his mind and said the dark-skinned woman was American. Considering this answer, S6 disagreed since he said, “The United States does not

accept skinned color people". In other words, he said that dark-skinned people are discriminated against in the United States. This information points out the general stereotype they have when assuming that if a person is fair-skinned and has blue eyes, it is because they are from countries such as the United States or Switzerland and dark-skinned people are from Africa or Chocó, Colombia. It was evident how students attributed one characteristic to an entire continent or region without carefully considering people's diversity.

In Step 3 of the IMAGE model, Generating Hypotheses about Cultural Perspectives, students realized how diverse a country can be regarding people's skin color. They also understood that in the United States, dark-skinned people live as well as fair-skinned people in Africa, as described in the transcript below.

At this point, students could recognize that pretty and fair-skinned women are from the United States and other regions. Students also realized that all dark-skinned people are not only from Africa. This showed that they became conscious that a country such as the United States is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity.

At the end of the unit, in Step 4, Exploring Perspectives and Reflecting Further, students were asked to look for more information regarding three aspects not covered during the lessons to expand their knowledge. First, students investigated the country in Latin America where English is its official language and the reason why this occurs. To this end, students found that, in Guyana, English is the official language because British people colonized this territory. Second, students were asked to search for an English accent different from the ones studied in class. Some mentioned the Scottish and Irish accents and added that they are hard to understand.

Another student mentioned the *Posh* accent, common among the upper class in England. Third, participants searched for reasons English is not the official language in the United States. They found that this country considered that a language should not be imposed on its citizens, but each state was free to choose it. Students agreed with this since they think that the United States is a country full of diversity, visited by people worldwide.

Discussion

This research showed that students could move from generalizing and having prejudices to being mindful of cultural differences concerning English, in terms of accent, language variety, and speakers' background. The findings revealed that the IMAGE model and authentic materials helped bring about these changes in the students. Most gained a broader understanding of the countries where English is spoken or is an official language. They also realized that all people who use this language daily do not have the same accent since it might vary even from person to person.

Transcript 1: Students categorize people by their physical appearance.

T: ((Pointing to a student)) ¿Por qué piensas que es de Estados Unidos? (*Why do you think he is from the United States?*)
S1: Porque es blanquita y bonita. (*Because she is light-skinned and beautiful.*)
T: ¿Las únicas personas bonitas son de Estados Unidos? ((Asking the whole class)) (*Most beautiful people are only from the United States?*)
S?: ¡Sí! (*Yes.*)
S?: ¡No!
T: ((Showing another image))
S2: ((Pointing to one of the three women in the image)) Aquella es chochoana. (*She is from Chocó.*)
T: Vamos a empezar con esta. Ella es... ((Pointing to the students)) (*Let's start with this one, she is ...*)
S3: Suiza. (*Swiss.*)
S4: Suiza. (*Swiss.*)
T: ¿Por qué? (*Why?*)
S3: Por la forma de sus ojos, de sus ojos y de su cara. (*Because of the shape of their eyes and face.*)
S4: Por sus características, señor. (*Because of their physical features, teacher.*)
S3: Por las características. (*Because of their physical features.*)
T: ¿Cuáles características? ¿Físicas? (*Which features? Physical?*)
S3: ¡Ajá! ((Nodding her head)) (*Yes*)
T: ¿De dónde es ella? (*Where is she from?*) ((Pointing to one of the women in the image))
S2: De Estados Unidos. (*From The United States.*)
S5: De África. (*From Africa.*)
S?: África, África. (*Africa.*)
S6: De Estados Unidos no es, porque allá no aceptan a los morenos. (*They are not from the United States because they do not accept dark-skinned people.*)
T: ¿Tú piensas que los discriminan? (*Do you think that they discriminate against them?*)
S6: ((Nodding his head))

Transcript 2: Students are aware that dark-skinned people can be from the United States, too.

T: ¿Ustedes piensan que todas las mujeres que son blancas y bonitas son de Estados Unidos? (*Do you think that all light-skinned and pretty women are from the United States?*)
Ss: ¡Noo!
T: ¿En Estados Unidos hay personas de color moreno? (*Are there dark-skinned people in the United States?*)
Ss: ¡Síii! (*Yes.*)
T: ¿Pueden mencionar a una persona de color moreno que sea de Estados Unidos? Algún famoso que conozcan. (*Can you mention a dark-skinned person who is from the United States? Some famous people that you know?*)
S?: Will Smith.
T: Excellent.
T: Chicos, ¿todas las personas morenas son de África? (*Are all dark-skinned people from Africa?*)
Ss: ¡No!

Additionally, the findings showed that students developed their cultural awareness when they realized that a single physical feature does not define an entire society. In this case, it denotes that both light-colored and dark-colored people can belong to the same region and be native English speakers as well. Such findings suggest that students started to gain some insights about culture and intercultural communication, having more open-mindedness about how diverse a culture could be.

This study also revealed that rural school students commonly face stereotypes due to social and cultural narratives that oversimplify or misrepresent their experiences, behaviors, and abilities. Their lack of exposure to authentic materials and cultural practices worldwide fosters stereotypes often leading to generalizations and discriminatory practices (Roberts & Guenther, 2021). These results are worthy of supporting teachers strategically in recognizing and combating biases that enact discriminatory practices in rural schools. As shown in this study, students became more open-minded, and their cultural repertoire increased as they saw images and analyzed them acutely.

Furthermore, the findings of this study resonate with Touhami and Sebbat's (2020) and Vega's (2020) research in that raising students' awareness regarding cultural differences allows them to change their attitudes and perspectives toward cultural aspects and gain their understanding of English-speaking countries. Likewise, this research also supports previous studies (Bernal, 2020; Castillo et al., 2017; Codina, 2020; Touhami & Sebbat, 2020) saying that authentic materials play an important role in the development of cultural awareness since they encourage students to think critically, reflect and express their opinion concerning cultural topics. In this same line of thought, the current study shares the view of Palacio and Pulido (2015) when they highlight that authentic images and short texts help students connect with real aspects of the target culture such as social, economic, geographic, and cultural aspects. This study also showed that, as in Vega's (2020) case, the IMAGE model approach is appropriate for organizing a cultural lesson given that its structure is divided into four steps easy to follow and help students dispel their existing stereotypes and judgments.

One important learning in this study is that the IMAGE model could be a significant approach to teaching culture even when students have a low English language proficiency level given that images make meaning and facilitate the understanding of the language. Furthermore, the IMAGE model with authentic materials allowed beginning learners to have cultural and intercultural gains that could not have been obtained otherwise given their limitations to interact with people from foreign cultural backgrounds and grammar-syllabus in their schools. A common goal can be that students' initial cultural awareness becomes a springboard for dispelling upcoming stereotypes and understanding new cultural and intercultural aspects.

Another important learning is that the IMAGE model is a potential tool to contextualize (Glisan & Donato, 2021) an English unit by integrating grammar, vocabulary, culture, and content. As presented in the findings, students were part of diverse communicative events in which they (1) identified the diverse countries where English is spoken while they learned vocabulary and dispelled a rooted stereotype; (2) recognized the diverse accents embedded into English at the time they got familiar with significant geographical and lexico-grammatical aspects; (3) associated people's physical features with their geographical backgrounds while they studied adjectives and de-centered their initial views about English speakers' physical appearance.

A third significant implication of the study is that apart from familiarizing students with conventional cultural products and practices such as the so-called four Fs (food, festivals, folks, and fairy tales), learners explored the possible perspectives embedded in the cultural aspects studied in class. This approach made students aware of cultural topics usually underplayed in foreign language classes. We expect that further research can expand the exploration of the IMAGE model, pointing to other stereotypes and prejudices that may go unnoticed in foreign language courses. Likewise, further research should explore ways to integrate culture and language at beginning levels integrating more L2 interactions in the lessons. As evidenced in the findings, most classroom interactions in the study were mediated by the students' L1.

Conclusions

The current research showed that integrating cultural lessons through the IMAGE model approach and authentic materials helped secondary school students change existing misinterpretations about culture. At the beginning of the project, students showed confidence when sharing their ideas regarding some aspects of the foreign culture, which denoted stereotypes. They had “rigid representations” (Kurylo, 2012, p. 337) that progressively changed throughout classroom interactions, allowing them to dismantle stereotypes associated with nationality, language, and physical appearance. Exploring these rigid representations showed students a widened view of culture that yielded the exploration of diversities (i.e., accents, language variations, multiple physical appearance traits, and heterogeneous features) in the world around them (Dervin, 2016). We expect that exploring and understanding these diversities will help students be more open-minded when exposed to other stereotypical scenarios, thus, being less judgmental and discriminatory.

The present study informs how the target language, grammar, vocabulary, culture, and content could be integrated into a single English class. In this sense, this study shows how a lesson could be contextualized creating a situated and connected lesson with the context “...

by establishing clearly defined reasons and purposes for communication in cultural context” (Glisan & Donato 2017, p. 11).

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Appendix A

Chart of similarities and differences filled by students.

Similarities	Differences
hablan el mismo idioma	son de parte diferente

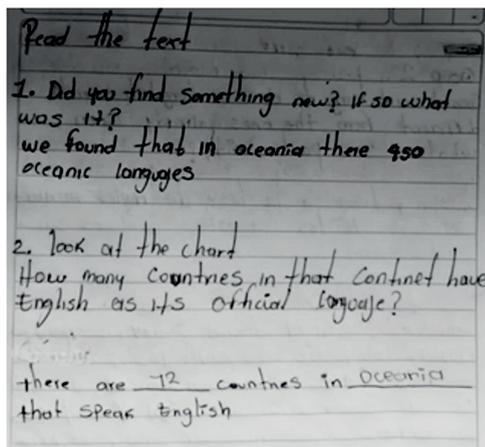
Similarities	Differences
± idioma	lugar
ropa	personas
	ropa
	color de piel
	no

Similarities	Differences
hablan el mismo idioma	son de parte diferente

Similarities	Differences
hablan el mismo lenguaje	visten diferente
	son de parte diferente
	son de diferentes piel
	en uno no hacen entreci

Appendix B

Information taken from Berlitz's blog by students.



Enunciative Practices in English Pedagogy. Profiling the Literature from a Border- Perspective¹

Prácticas de Enunciación en la Pedagogía del Inglés. Perfilando la Literatura desde una Perspectiva Fronteriza

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Abstract

This review article reflects on the notion of pedagogy in English language teaching and teacher education. To advance in the state of the art at stake, forty-four articles were profiled out of eighty-eight to trace how pedagogy has been built as a universal that carries onto-epistemological consequences. The analysis here concentrated on the enunciation levels the studies inspected. This manuscript discusses four categories: Critical Decolonial, Translanguaging, and Anti-racist pedagogies. It anchors the conversation from a border-thinking perspective to claim that most approaches to pedagogy focus on protesting against Modern/Colonial pedagogy, but there is little contestation concerning it. This posture contributes to shifting the geography of reason concerning English language pedagogy.

Keywords: border thinking, critical pedagogy, decolonial pedagogy, profiling, trans-pedagogies

Resumen

Este artículo de revisión explora las reflexiones sobre la noción de pedagogía en la enseñanza del idioma inglés y la formación docente. Para avanzar en el estado del arte, se perfilaron cuarenta y cuatro artículos de ochenta y ocho para rastrear cómo la pedagogía se ha construido como un universal que

¹ This article is the result of a literature review and profiling exercise conducted as part of the Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación (DIE) at Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, with emphasis on English Language Teaching (ELT).

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conlleva consecuencias onto-epistemológicas. El análisis se concentró en los niveles de enunciación que inspeccionaron los estudios. Este manuscrito proporciona una discusión en torno a cuatro categorías: Pedagogías Críticas, Decoloniales, de Translenguaje y Antirracistas. Se propone la conversación desde una perspectiva de pensamiento fronterizo para afirmar que la mayoría de los enfoques de la pedagogía se centran en protestar contra la pedagogía Moderna/Colonial, pero hay poca disputa al respecto. Esta postura contribuye a cambiar la geografía de la razón con respecto a la pedagogía del idioma inglés.

Palabras clave: pensamiento fronterizo, pedagogía crítica, pedagogía decolonial, profiling, trans-pedagogías

Introduction

Pedagogy is an ontological, not an epistemological term. If one revises Greek etymology, pedagogy originates in ancient Greek *paidagōgós*. This term comprised *Paidos* (child) and *Gogía* (driving or carrying). However, since pedagogy has permanently been embedded in schools and classrooms, as it is linked to academic knowledge and development, some tendencies have coopted pedagogy as an epistemology that represents not only one type of knowledge but also one type of being (e.g., gender-neutral, de-racialized, disembodied, and desexualized). As an authority, pedagogy has also been assigned properties, foundations, conditions, meaning, and *colonial* purpose. As a teacher educator and English language teacher, I have witnessed how the “discipline” has also constructed pedagogy as a universal that encapsulates instrumental representations of teaching. Once installed in the imaginary of teachers, teacher educators, and institutions, these representations have brought the incorporation of notions such as methods, methodologies, approaches, and so on and forth as the mechanisms to regulate and control teaching and learning. This has also caused us (i.e., teachers, teacher educators, and institutions) to equate pedagogy to the instruction and application of teaching methodologies. This representation has resulted in the marginalization of pedagogical doings, that is, *knowledge rather than ways of knowing*, and the obliviousness of its ontological nature. In other words, for scholars like Granados-Beltrán (2018), pedagogy as universal is an architecture supported by the inventory of Bachelor graduate projects in Teacher Education Programs.

Pedagogy’s principal aim has been to equip students with the knowledge and tools to acquire it (Bakhurst, 2020). For instance, Granados-Beltrán (2018) argues that pedagogy, from the perspective of language, “is focused on the meeting of standards, which represent a certain level of acquisition of that skill” (p. 175). This orientation responds to the neoliberal horizon the ELT and teacher education programs face due to colonial legacies still inherent in them (Kramersch, 2019). Not surprisingly, English language classrooms and universities continue fostering the acquisition of 21st-century skills where the target is to become a global citizen (Fandiño, 2013). As a result of this colonial nuance, there are “educational philosophers who continue to speak of knowledge in the singular [and] implicitly endorse a

monolithic Enlightenment conception of rationality at the expense of other, more marginal perspectives” (Bakhurst, 2020, p. 259). Arguably, although the metaphysics of pedagogy lies in its ontological significance, pedagogy has also undertaken colonial-capitalist ethics (i.e., of universal nature) with cognitive orientations.

Suppose I choose to locate pedagogy back to Aristotle. In that case, individuals should be educated about the human telos (i.e., the purpose of human beings) to achieve *phronesis* (i.e., practical wisdom). However, I consider it impossible to comprehend pedagogy from a humanistic perspective (i.e., it is more ontic than ontological). Nor is it possible to do so with language pedagogy. I argue here, echoing Wynter (2003), that the notion of the man/human cannot be the ontological dimension to understanding pedagogy since both are more fictional entities that make something (and someone) exist but do not refer to the ones that live. With this, I direct the attention to the notion of man/human as a representation of an ideal (i.e., white-European) man established by Renaissance intellectuals. A fictional entity that denies being human as *praxis* (Wynter, 2003) and the realization of the living (Maturana & Varela, 1980). In this sense, when it comes to pedagogy, keeping the Aristotelian view would imply preserving dehumanized and anthropocentric categories to build language pedagogy’s ontological principle and foundation. It would also mean denying that the human being is an organism (i.e., *Autopoiesis* for Maturana & Varela, 1980) that lives and not just exists. Therefore, I claim that traditional pedagogy has undoubtedly adopted and executed various controlled production and reproduction practices of living. This is why I choose to navigate and search for other possibilities to comprehend lived experiences of pedagogy to avoid disciplinary and instrumental chains.

In the logic above, I adopt a border thinking perspective (Mignolo, 2012) to move beyond Western epistemology. Such a lens is my decision to embrace and emerge from ways of knowing that dwell in the borders (see Anzaldúa, 1987). I refer to borders that are “not only geographic; they are racial and sexual, epistemic and ontological, religious and aesthetic, linguistic and national” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 112) and therefore borders that become possibilities of living and making sense of the exteriority I occupy. I intend to do this after realizing that my knowledge/being has been disavowed and denied as an English language teacher and teacher educator. For instance, my own doing and being have been represented within the logic of coloniality. As a non-native English language speaker and educator, I have been placed in the exteriority of nativeness. I am not white, not European, or Anglo-American. On the contrary, I am a male *mestizo* who was educated in rural areas and came to the big city to be “educated.” As such, I have not been allowed to think independently (Kusch, 2010).

This review article adds my locus of enunciation as a doctoral student. Writing this article is part of my process of becoming a doctor in education and a venue to move within the borders (i.e., interiors and exteriors) I have occupied. This is an opportunity to change

the terms of the conversation (i.e., who and where) (Mignolo, 2012) and shift the geography of reason regarding English language pedagogy. However, I must add a word of caution as this review article critically examines the principles, as opposed to the practices, of prevailing pedagogical discourses. This analysis then endeavors to trace the genealogies and levels of enunciation articulated within these educational frameworks. This is why this review article presents a bibliometric revision and a profiling approach that revise literature around pedagogy within the English Language Teaching field and teacher education. I advance this revision by wondering who the most salient enunciators are and the most common epistemological foundations and practices of enunciation. I conclude by introducing the idea of Trans-Pedagogies through which I imagine the possibility of lived experiences of pedagogy.

Method

This review article contributes to updating the reviews and includes systematic documentation about pedagogy in English Language Teaching and teacher education. To make this revision reliable, I design a three-step protocol (i.e., identification, revision, and profiling) that is configured not only to trace academic production but to inspect the levels of enunciation that have constituted the domination over pedagogy along with the geopolitical strategies and practices of enunciation (i.e., the where-how) presented in English Language Pedagogy and teacher education. Figure 1 summarizes the process I followed and describes the amount of academic production retrieved. It specifies (a) production identified in databases and other academic sources, (b) production revised and filtered based on exclusion-inclusion criteria and content analysis, and (c) the profiling approach adopted to unpack the border thinking perspective in revising the literature.

The revision of the academic production retrieved was geared toward responding to the following questions:

- Who are the most salient enunciators (i.e., the who) that have constituted what pedagogy and English Language Pedagogy are?
- What are the most common epistemological foundations and practices of enunciation (i.e., the where-how) presented in English Language Pedagogy and teacher education?

Step One: Identification of Academic Production

The first step of the protocol was divided into two processes. First, I inspected two primary databases available for my search. Second, I accessed different academic and free-access journals and manually searched for academic production. I describe the processes below.

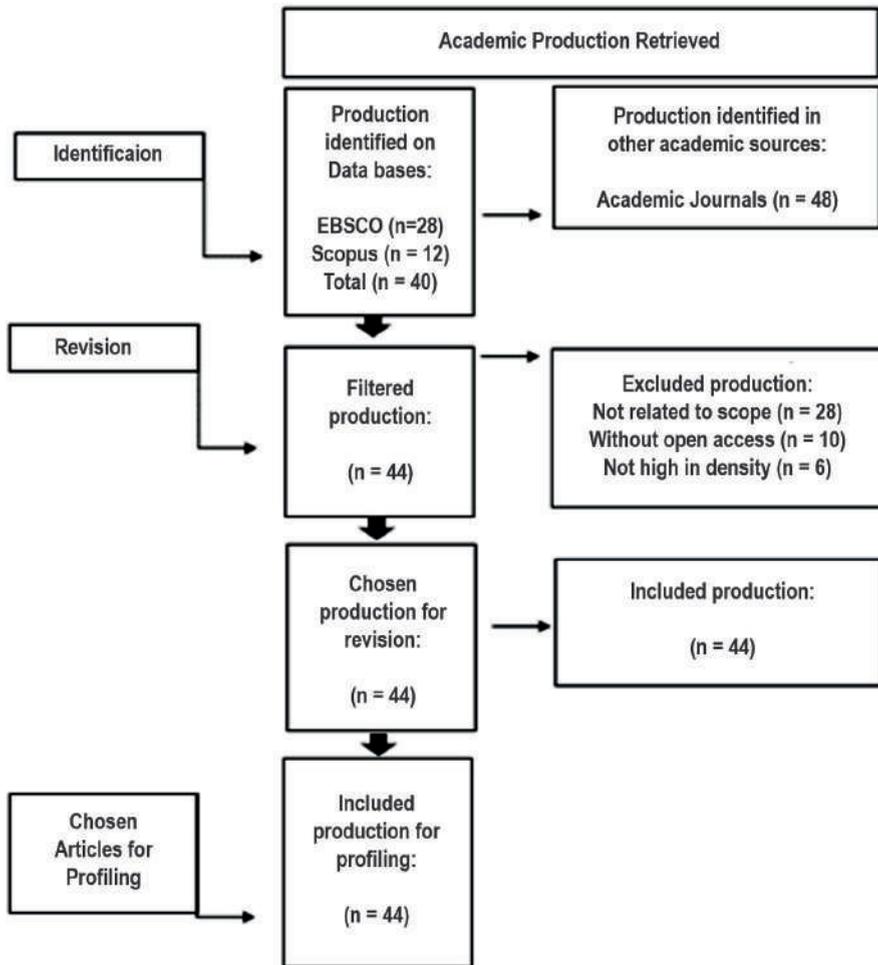


Figure 1. Flow Chart. Results of the Systematic Review

Scopus and Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)

I used keywords and search equations to identify academic production through Scopus and Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)³. The methodology used search equations to identify and measure academic production in these databases. I started by formulating

³ I could not access other databases due to restrictions and availability at my workplace.

specific equations to trace what has been produced at the pedagogy and language pedagogy levels in English teaching and teacher education. Since these were the two leading search axes, these terms were suitable for recovering the records according to the production's period, coverage, and geographical location. I wanted to trace articles and theoretical reviews since they are the typologies that could allow me greater saturation. To formulate the equations, I established the field entry through keywords (i.e., TITLE+ABS+KEY) and added the OR search operator to search for records that include any of the terms separated by it. Also, I use the AND operator to direct the search into records that include all the terms separated by the operator and located in the education field. My equations then looked as follows: TITLE-ABS-KEY (“pedagogy” OR “teacher education” OR “English language pedagogy”) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (“university” OR “higher education” OR “college”) / TITLE-ABS-KEY (“pedagogy” AND “teaching English” AND “English language pedagogy”) / TITLE-ABS-KEY (“PEDAGOGY” AND “teacher education” AND “English language “ AND “higher education” OR “college”).

In EBSCO, I traced back 28 entries of academic production. In Scopus, I recovered 12. Figure 2 gathers the search and shows the quantity and geographical location.

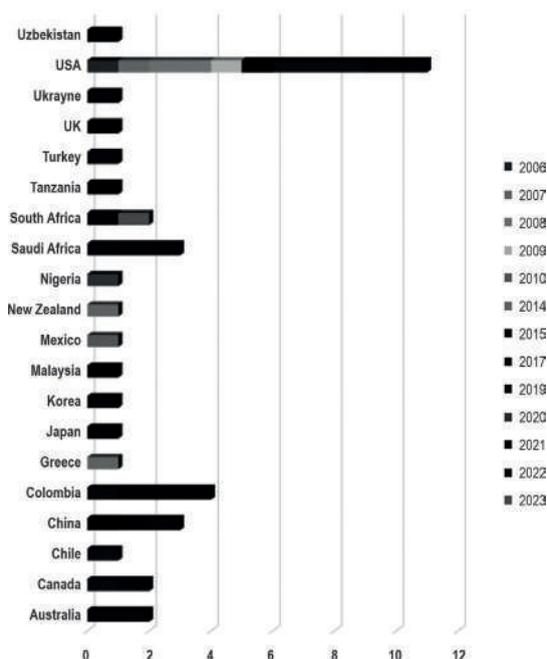


Figure 2. Scopus and EBSCO Search. Academic Work Retrieved

The time window for academic production begins in 2006 and until 2023. The United States (USA) produces the most, followed by Colombia.

Since the search for academic production about pedagogy in English Language Teaching and teacher education was scarce when consulting databases (28 items), I inspected other academic sources in which publications circulate. As publishing is also subject to hegemony over knowledge, I investigated other academic spaces (e.g., ResearchGate) where knowledge is mobilized. Figure 3 gathers the search and shows the quantity and geographical location within the time frame of the publications.

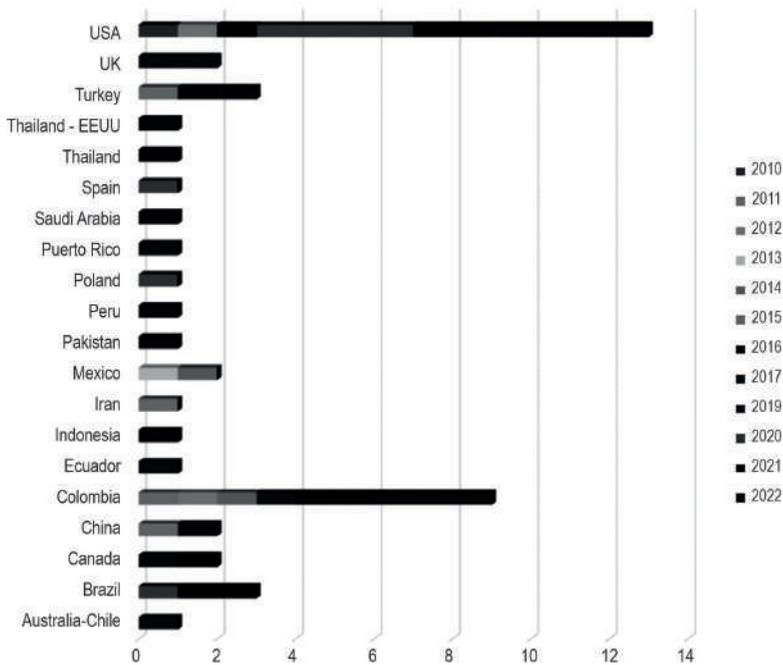


Figure 3. Other Academic Work Retrieved

The time window for academic production begins in 2010 and until 2022. The United States (USA) appears again to be the country with the most production, followed by Colombia.

Step Two: Revision of Academic Production

Step two concentrated on the revision and general scrutiny of the academic work retrieved. To align it with the search previously reported (i.e., “pedagogy” AND “teaching

English” AND “English language pedagogy”), I defined inclusion and exclusion criteria to be able to filter production worth including in Step three (i.e., profiling). Tables 1 and 2 present the defined criteria for the profiling interest.

Table 1. *Inclusion Criteria*

Inclusion Criteria Description	
IC1	Academic production needs to align with the interest of the profiling. This emanates from the identification of pedagogy and language pedagogy as keywords.
IC2	Academic production must be written in Spanish or English.
IC3	Academic production must be situated within the English language teaching and teacher education fields.
IC4	Academic production must be disseminated in academic periodicals.
IC5	Academic production must guarantee open access.

Table 2. *Exclusion Criteria*

Exclusion Criteria Description	
EC1	Academic production that does not align with the interest of the profiling. This emanates from the identification of pedagogy and language pedagogy as keywords.
EC2	Academic production written in other languages different from Spanish or English.
EC3	Academic production situated within other academic fields different from English language teaching and teacher education fields.
EC4	Academic production disseminated in books, thesis, or bachelor documents.
EC5	Academic production that does not guarantee open access.

While I was revising the academic production, not only did I apply inclusion-exclusion criteria, but I also conducted a content analysis to guarantee that the categories of inspection (i.e., pedagogy, language pedagogy, English teaching, and teacher education) were present and aligned with the interest of the profiling stage. This analysis was guided by my interest in going beyond the margins of pedagogy (i.e., border thinking) and intended to (a) obtain a concise description of key concepts and their meaning and (b) summarize the knowledge points proposed by the authors in all the suitable corpus of the academic work retrieved. In this line of thought, all academic production was examined to determine the levels of enunciation that have constituted the domination over pedagogy and to identify the three dimensions: the enunciator (i.e., the who), the enunciated (i.e., the what), and the geo-political

strategies and practices of enunciation (i.e., the where-how). These dimensions were relevant for the profiling of the literature, too.

As a result of the content revision, I came up with categories to narrow my scope of interest and production based on conceptualization regarding pedagogy and English language pedagogy. Figure 4 illustrates those categories. They were intended to help me avoid conceptual confusion in the profiling.

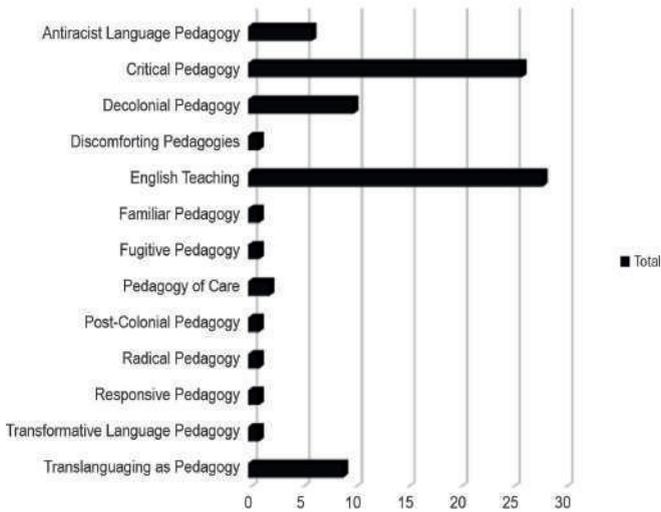


Figure 4. *Emerging Categories*

Academic work excluded was grouped inside the *English teaching* category (28 pieces). This category represents instrumental and instructional principles that refer to teaching as pedagogy. Although there was no explicit mention or reference to *pedagogy* as a foundational category, it seems to be equated with other terms (e.g., methods, methodologies, approaches). As such, English teaching as pedagogy is closer to “an education method in which the learner is dependent on the teacher for guidance, evaluation, and acquisition of knowledge” (Murray, 2018, p. 32). In this thought, pedagogy is represented in and through skills acquisition. Ten more pieces of academic production had to be discarded as they did not allow open access.

Step Three: Profiling

The profiling approach I adopted aimed to increase and refine ideas around the literary production concerning English language pedagogy (see Porter et al., 2002). In

steps one and two, I identified tenets regarding quantity in production around pedagogy in various geographical locations. However, since profiling is more than compiling tenets and numbers, I needed to add my reflexivity (i.e., border gnosis) as a teacher educator in the middle of a Doctoral Program in Education as someone who intends to crack his colonial rationality. I engaged in a reflexivity in which I asked myself three essential questions: ‘Why me?’, ‘Why this?’, ‘Why now/here?’ According to Patel (2019), the question of ‘Why me?’ “should prompt a humble pause and reflection on the specifics of individuals’ experiences that make them appropriately able to craft, contribute, and even question knowledges” (p. 58). ‘Why this?’ concerns “how we frame a research problem and its context” (p. 59) by considering the theories employed and their historical and contemporary relationship to settler colonialism. Lastly, ‘Why now/here?’ focuses on context. With this, Patel emphasizes that “learning and knowledge are never placeless” (p. 61).

These questions and their implications made me look for experiences, epistemologies, and ontological postulates to unlearn the knowledge, values, beliefs, judgments, traditions, and prejudices presented to me as unique and trustworthy regarding the notion of pedagogy. I would also say that the questions above guided the inspection of the enunciation levels (i.e., the enunciator, the enunciated, and the geo-political strategies and practices of enunciation) in studies that used the word pedagogy. Yet I must issue a word of caution: this inspection focused on critically examining prevailing pedagogical discourses’ principles rather than practices. This said, since profiling opened space to engage in border gnosis, I was determined to speak from the exteriority I occupy (Mignolo, 2021). To do this, I first began profiling academic production grounded on the notions of *Unmodified* and *Modified* pedagogies. According to Palermo (2014), any unmodified pedagogy is at the service of the political and economic system. Therefore, any modified pedagogy, on the contrary, should provide a “vision of the universe, the cosmos, the world in which we live, our own sociocultural practice and our experiences, understandings, and meanings” (Ortiz Ocaña et al., 2018, p. 207, own translation). In this line of thought, I began by identifying pedagogies that, in one way or another, were naming themselves as something more than pedagogy. Fifty articles about pedagogy in ELT and teacher education were then distributed in categories. Figure 5 illustrates them.

Below, I describe those modified pedagogies and add my reflexivity to discuss them. Yet, I must note that only the four main salient categories are included in this review. This does not imply that the categories not discussed are unimportant. However, due to the word limit of the article and the significant production in the categories mentioned, the absent categories will likely be examined in a subsequent publication.

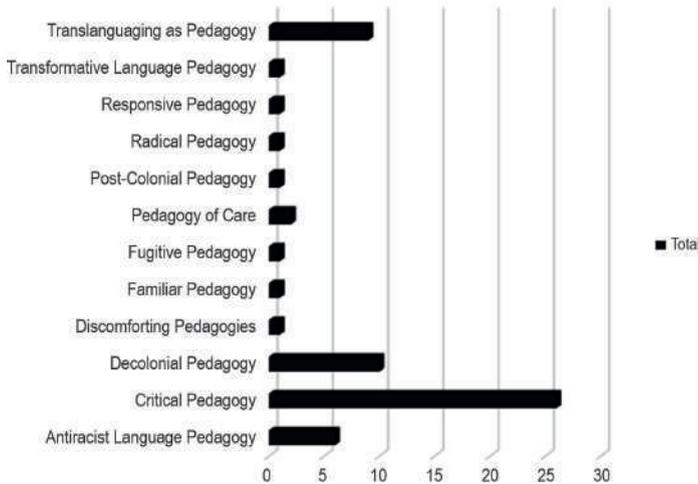


Figure 5. *Emerging Categories*

Inspection of Emerging Categories

Critical Pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy originated in the 1930s and was inspired by Critical Theory. Critical Pedagogy is said to express solidarity with subordinated and marginalized groups. Yet it is also argued that it has failed to “achieve the most ennobling goals of *modernity* (my emphasis), which are to link reason to values and ethical reflection to the project of individual emancipation and social justice” (McLaren, 1994, pp. 33-32). That “noble” aim takes Modernity as a foundation. Critical Pedagogy approaches are, consciously or not, embedded in a narrative that validates domination and exploitation. It is a narrative that legitimizes forms of violence that reduce alterity to abstract categories understood as existing entities (i.e., representation of the other as objective and absolute) but not living ones (i.e., another that respire, moves, suffers, grows, resists, fears, fights and resists not only to exist but to re-exist). Therefore, since I am interested in mapping the panorama of Critical Pedagogy studies, Table 4 describes emerging authors and years of publications for this category. I continue then by inspecting the practices of enunciation that support their claims by analyzing what has been said (i.e., the enunciated) about critical pedagogies and then direct my attention to “who and when, why and where knowledge is generated [since] Asking these questions means to shift the attention from the enunciated to the enunciation” (Mignolo, 2011, p. 119).

Table 3 *Academic Production on Critical Pedagogy*

Row Labels	2011	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019	2020	2021	2022
Critical Pedagogy	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	4
Aguirre Morales, J., & Ramos Holguín, B.	1									
Barros-del Río, M.							1			
Derince, Z.	1									
Echeverri Sucerquia, P., & Pérez Restrepo, S.			1							
García, M., & Piotrowski, A.										1
Gutiérrez, C. P.										1
Khamratana, S., & Adunyarittigun, D.									1	
Lu, S., & Ares, N.				1						
Maia, A. A de M.								1		
Mambu, J.										1
Masood, M. M., & Haque, M. M.										1
Migueliz Valcarlos, M., Wolgemuth, J. R., Haraf, S., & Fisk, N.								1		
Norooziasam, E., & Ali Soozandehfar, S.	1									
Portilla Quintero, B., & Herrera Molina, J.									1	
Ramírez, H., & Grijalva Arriaga, I. V.						1				
Reza-López, E., Huerta Charles, L., & Reyes, L.			1							
Samacá Bohórquez, Y.		1								
Sharkey, J.		1								
Sharkey, J., Clavijo Olarte, A., & Ramírez, L. M.					1					
Siqueira, S.									1	
Veliz, L., & Veliz-Campos, M.							1			

Academic work inspected concentrated on pre-service teachers (e.g., Aguirre Morales & Ramos Holguín, 2011; Gutiérrez, 2022), English language teachers (e.g., Barros-del Río, 2019; Echeverri Sucerquia & Pérez Restrepo 2014; Khamratana & Adunyarittigun, 2021;

Norooziasam & Ali Soozandehfar, 2011; Portilla Quintero & Herrera-Molina, 2021; Siqueira, 2021), teacher educators (e.g., Migueliz Valcarlos et al., 2020; Veliz & Veliz-Campos, 2019), English learners (e.g., Derince, 2011; Masood & Haque, 2022; Ramírez & Grijalva Arriaga, 2017; Reza-López et al., 2014), teacher education programs and curriculum (e.g. Maia, 2020; Mambu, 2022, Samacá Bohórquez, 2012; Sharkey, 2012, Sharkey et al., 2016), and supporting learning during pandemic (García & Piotrowski, 2022).

Common among these studies is that they resorted to Giroux's, Shor's, Freire's, Pennycook's, and McLaren's postulates to emphasize the role of critical pedagogy. These studies describe and protest colonial discourses and practices (e.g., native speakerism, curriculum, power relationships) and present the need to build more equitable and democratic societies (i.e., democratic classrooms, schools, teacher education programs, practices) by challenging hegemonic ideas and roles. What seems to be absent in the academic production inspected is contestation against the enunciative practices that have made critical pedagogy the only apparent source of emancipation. Significantly, the distinction between 'protest' and 'contestation' in academic production cannot be here overlooked. 'Protest' in academic discourse is typically theoretical, rooted in abstract critiques and ideological frameworks. It is a form of resistance that remains within the bounds of intellectual debate and discussion, often lacking the tangible engagement with lived experiences. On the other hand, 'contestation' is praxeological and communal, deeply embedded in the practices of living and re-existence. Contestation goes beyond mere discourse, involving active and collective efforts to challenge and transform existing structures and conditions. While protest might articulate dissatisfaction and propose theoretical alternatives, contestation embodies these alternatives through lived actions and community-driven efforts.

The main understandings of the critical pedagogy mix attempt to disrupt the effects of oppressive regimes of power, the need to develop critical consciousness, create non-alienating classrooms, and challenge the status quo and oppressive power relations among teachers and students. There is also an evident positioning to humanize education (Lu & Ares, 2015). On this matter, the study by Reza-López et al. (2014) is of note. It seems to elaborate on "a pedagogy with an emphasis on social justice and human dignity" (p. 107). The authors built it from Freire's notion of conscientization, Anzaldúa's notion of *Nepantla*, and Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism. I single out this study due to the decolonial nuance it entails. By adopting '*Nepantla*', a Nahuatl word meaning in-between space, there is a curiosity to explore theories of the borderlands and how these can be articulated with critical approaches in which "critical pedagogy [...] could benefit from complementary theoretical perspectives (Zembylas, 2018, p. 408).

Profiling Discussion. The studies mentioned above show an evident intention to portray the politically and ideologically oriented power relations and inequalities through reflection. From an epistemological perspective, I might say that consciously or not, resorting

to Giroux, Shor, Freire, Pennycook, and McLaren implies an emancipatory cognitive interest (Habermas, 1987). This common ground regarding foundations makes evident the most common enunciators when supporting political and ideological interest in pedagogy. These studies are rooted in Marxist views about education (e.g., education is part of a Socialist global design). It is not then naive to find these scholars as founding fathers of Critical Pedagogy. However, the absence of those marked by the colonial wound (e.g., black, gay, transgender, immigrants, peasants, non-native, women, and their intersections) is common in what has been reported. This absence reinforces my inability to locate decolonial or insurgent pedagogies within critical thought and genealogy. I differ from scholars like Bustos Erazo (2020) in Colombia, who claim that “decolonial pedagogy is recognized as that pedagogy that legitimizes alterity and is *based on* critical pedagogy” (p. 32). On the contrary, decolonial pedagogies cannot be based on critical pedagogy as these have a different genealogy of thought; while critical pedagogy is universal, decolonial pedagogies are planetarian. They do not intend to legitimize alterity, as legitimizing already implies making something *acceptable*. Far from this sense, decolonial, insurgent, or any pedagogy rooted in border sensing and thinking strives for *re*-existence in and out of the narrative of Modernity/Coloniality.

Although in the studies inspected, there is an evident criticism of those strategies managed by states (i.e., bio-politics) to impose a condition of oppression, there is no apparent response to subalternization and marginalization (e.g., border thinking, doing, sensing). However, I must say that Freire is the closest referent. Walsh (2015) mentioned that Freire reminded her that:

Being a critical educator and thinker means being with and in the world. It means understanding oneself in a constant process of becoming where the ‘critical’ is not a set postulate or an abstract of thought. Rather, it is a stance, posture, and attitude, an actional standpoint in which one’s own being and becoming are constitutive to the acts of thinking, imagining, and intervening in transformation; that is, in the construction, creation and ‘walking’ of a radically different world. (p. 10)

This ontological definition of a critical educator should not be taken lightly. This idea of *-being and becoming-* is denied by Western Eurocentric thought, as *Estar-Siendo* is not contemplated by the colonial epistemology (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). However, this reflection was not present in Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* but in his *Pedagogy of Hope*, where he began questioning his Western and Marxist biases. Although Freire could not deepen the colonial legacy of education, he was aware of its implications. I might also dare to say that Freire’s legacy is precisely in “the principle of equality of opportunity in [which] education is ideological, in the sense that all societies mask domination through structured symbolic capital that denies individual autonomy in favor of a dominant ideology” (dos Santos Costa et al., 2020, p. 98). However, as I have stated before, the rhetoric of Modernity/Coloniality is vast and constantly adapting. As such, my perspective of pedagogies is aligned

with the contribution of Freire, yet since my interests are also in “the cracks [that] become the place and space from which action, militancy, resistance, insurgency, transgression and/as pedagogization” (Walsh, 2015, p. 17), I require comprehending and living other acts of existence that live and dwell in logics *Otherwise*.

Decolonial Pedagogies

Any ethical posture that aligns with decolonization and decoloniality involves re-humanization (Ali Shah, 2021). When it comes to pedagogy, there have been counter-narratives, counter-knowledges, and counter-practices that have sought to dismantle, delink, and interrupt those colonial expressions that “isolate[c] people from the self and community, diminishing their spirits, constraining their imaginations, and frightening them into submission” (Eidoo, 2023, p. 145) (i.e., de-humanization). The literature consulted defines Decolonial Pedagogies as pedagogies that confront Western/colonial reason (Bautista, 2009). Although these pedagogies seem to be emerging up to 2010, the decolonial option began in the 19th century (Castro-Gómez, 2005). However, their appearance is relatively recent in ELT and teacher education. Table 5 shows the revision of literature and the emergence of those studies that, since 2010, account for Decolonial Pedagogies.

Table 4. *Decolonial Pedagogy. Revision of Literature*

Row Labels	2010	2013	2021	2022	Total
Decolonial Pedagogy	1	1	4	4	10
Mansoor, A., & Malik, S.				1	1
Aguirre, E., Ubaque-Casallas, D., Salazar-Sierra, A., & López-Hurtado, M.				1	1
Castañeda-Peña, H., & Méndez-Rivera, P.				1	1
De Lissovoy, N.	1				1
Fandiño-Parra, Y.J.			1		1
López-Gopar, M.		1			1
Pereira, F. M.			1		1
Sarmiento Párraga, J., & Perales Cárdenas, E.				1	1
Ubaque-Casallas, D.			2		2

Scholars draw attention to the importance of decentering the educational curriculum (e.g., De Lissovoy, 2010), discussing the critical teaching praxis of the student-teachers within a primary school in an Indigenous community (e.g., López-Gopar, 2013); engaging in ontological and epistemic struggles for humanizing language pedagogy (e.g., *Ubaque-*

Casallas, 2021a; 2021b) dismantling epistemologies of the North still present in the ELT (e.g., Fandiño-Parra, 2021; Pereira, 2021); analyzing the emergence of pedagogies that challenge modern rationality in ELT and teacher education (e.g., Castañeda-Peña & Méndez-Rivera, 2022); documenting emerging pedagogical knowledge among teacher-trainees during their pedagogical practicum experience (e.g., Aguirre et al., 2022); analyzing the role of teaching English as a foreign language in Latin America (e.g., Sarmiento Párraga & Perales Cárdenas, 2022); and proposing a decolonial-posthuman pedagogy (e.g., Mansoor & Malik, 2022).

This academic production resorted to Freire's, Mignolo's, Ofelia Garcia's, Grosfoguel's, Walsh's, Maldonado's, Quijano's, Veronelli's, Spivak's, and Braidotti's postulates to challenge the modern-colonial logic installed in ELT and teacher education. The studies draw special attention to how decolonial pedagogy may serve as a path to liberate education from the exploitation and oppression it has been subjected to.

Profiling Discussion. The emergence of decolonial interest in ELT and teacher education results from a genuine interest in decentering the hegemonic enunciative practices that have instituted pedagogy as universal within the teaching field. In this respect, pedagogy has embraced and reproduced different strategies of enunciation of given constructions on individuals and institutions. According to Mignolo and Walsh (2018), “once universal fictions have been installed in the imagination of the people [...] they operate as realities—that is, as ontologies that are described and represented through and in language” (p. 188). In this sense, pedagogy is universal in English language teaching and teacher education. Not only does it presuppose principles that are to guide teaching, but it also provides onto-epistemological representations of those who participate in teaching and learning. Therefore, since pedagogy is still tied to procedural and instrumental perspectives, these decolonial responses are necessary to decenter Western-North practices and pedagogical conceptualizations.

However, although some of these studies may emerge from non-Western onto-epistemological locations, once again, the absence of those marked by the colonial wound (e.g., black, gay, transgender, immigrants, peasants, non-native, women, and their intersections) is evident. Nevertheless, I cannot disregard that these expressions of decolonial pedagogies share the commitment to creating an alternative space, a space *Otherwise*. This is important since to embrace and build upon the diversity of experiences, particularly those at the margins of academia, there must be a shift in which what is emphasized is not the critical aspects of pedagogy (i.e., instrumental content and subject matter) but the perspectives (e.g., the who and where) from which it is conceived. Importantly, those who engage in decolonial pedagogies appear to be located on the border of subaltern knowledges (e.g., non-white native-scholars). They seem to think from the borders of the end of colonial rule, a perspective from where they feel-think (i.e., border dwelling) (Mignolo, 2011, p. xiii).

Added to the above, insufficient discussion exists to account for a more local-geo/political comprehension of how pedagogy is built and practiced in ELT and teacher education from a border lens. Therefore, it is necessary to locate inquiry in genealogy about pedagogy and identify not only what is said (i.e., the enunciated) but to shift the body geography of reason by producing, triggering, and engaging in pedagogies that emerge, enact, and enunciate struggles, conflicts, alliances, and power exercises, many of which are hidden nowadays (e.g., Segato, 2018; Medina-Melgarejo, 2015) from ELT and teacher education.

Other Modified Pedagogies

There are other salient pedagogies beyond those extensively discussed in this article. Although these pedagogies are briefly mentioned to illustrate alternative versions of pedagogy, this does not diminish their significance. Instead, it highlights the need for further research and production in these areas to understand fully their impact and potential. In profiling the literature, other modified pedagogies appeared in my search. I want to account then for those pedagogies that also present enunciative strategies. Table 6 presents those pedagogies that also emerged in my search (i.e., Translanguaging and Anti-racist Language Pedagogy).

Table 5. *Other Modified Pedagogies*

Other Modified Pedagogies	2017	2020	2021	2022	Total
Antiracist Language Pedagogy	1	2	2	1	6
Accurso, K., & Mizell, J. D.		1			1
Baker-Bell, A.		1			1
Kubota, R.			1		1
Maamujav, U., & Hardcre, B.			1		1
Olding, L.	1				1
Satienchayakorn, N., & Grant, R.				1	1
Translanguaging as Pedagogy	1	2		4	7
Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D.		1			1
Herrera, L., & España, C.				1	1
Phillips Galloway, E., Meston, H., & Aguilar, G.				1	1
Rivera, A. J., & Mazak, C. M.	1				1
Romanowski, P.		1			1
Wang, Y., & Li, D.				1	1
Yasar Yuzlu, M., & Dikilitas, K.				1	1

Translanguaging as Pedagogy

Academic production brings forward an evident interest in approaching translanguaging pedagogy from a different lens. Exploring students' practices concerning code-switching and Translanguaging (e.g., Rivera & Mazak, 2017); discussing how to use Translanguaging to develop a multilingual repertoire to avoid deficient perceptions over non-native users

of English (e.g., Cenoz & Gorter, 2020); exploring translanguaging over oral corrective (e.g., Wang & Li, 2022); analyzing register overlaps across Spanish and English (e.g., Phillips Galloway et al., 2020); exploring experiences among emergent bilingual teacher educators (e.g., Herrera & España, 2020); documenting perceptions of Translanguaging (Romanowski, 2020); and investigating translanguaging pedagogy over language skills (e.g., Yasar Yuzlu & Dikilitas, 2022).

Translanguaging perspectives appear to leverage students' linguistic repertoires to enhance learning. Yet, it is unclear in the revision conducted if such approaches challenge traditional monolingual instructional models by promoting linguistic diversity and inclusivity. As a matter of fact, the academic production presented above seems to approach Translanguaging as Pedagogy from a constructive, cognitive, interactive, and affective perspective. Although these postures do not antagonize what Translanguaging is, they fall far from its scope in which "language has been used as a tool of domination, conquest, and colonization throughout history" (García, 2019, p. 152). It appears as if academic production were aligned with the recognition in the field of education, particularly among those who believe that individuals naturally utilize their known languages to enhance their learning (Baker & Wright, 2017).

Profiling Discussion. The academic work approaches translanguaging as a pedagogy and a lens through which to comprehend teaching contexts. However, translanguaging as a theory and pedagogy (García & Wei, 2014) seems obscured by the interest in merging it with teaching approaches. Academic work inspected does not entirely resort to individuals' fully linguistic resources as knowledge systems (García & Kleifgen, 2020). In this respect, translanguaging perspectives are not clear about whether they challenge discourses framed in monolingual perspectives and racial hierarchies or if they hide the colonial ideologies inherent in an instrumental dimension of the language and teaching perspectives. Indeed, more analysis is needed to comprehend "the incorporation of languages as semiotic possibilities for students and teachers [and how they can] deploy their identity [as] pedagogical tool to resignify English language teaching and teacher education" (Ubaque-Casallas, 2023, p. 13).

Anti-racist Pedagogy

Academic work inspected adopted critical race theory to examine the intersection of racism and language (e.g., Olding, 2017); criticize genre pedagogy as it reinforces deficit perspectives of multilingual students of color (e.g., Accurso & Mizell, 2020); dismantle anti-black linguistic racism (e.g., Baker-Bell, 2020), engage in critical antiracist pedagogy (e.g., Kubota, 2021); analyze how in English language teaching, racist practices are reflected (e.g., Satienchayakorn & Grant, 2022); and problematize the dominance and legitimization of academic English (e.g., Maamuujav & Hardacre, 2020).

The main argument behind these studies is that students must be exposed to an antiracist language pedagogy that builds on critical inquiry and inclusive teaching. This is supported by the need to challenge the systemic biases and power dynamics inherent in traditional language instruction, which often marginalizes students of color and perpetuates linguistic hierarchies. However, just by incorporating critical inquiry, it is unclear whether educators encourage students to question and analyze the social, cultural, and political contexts of language use or if the main aim is to promote awareness and resistance to racist ideologies. Similarly, the above revision invites us to think of empowering marginalized voices by emphasizing their importance and experiences; this thinking is critical for antiracist pedagogy. This empowerment appears crucial for fostering a sense of agency belonging among all students and developing informed, reflective, and engaged citizens.

Profiling Discussion. Interestingly, most of the studies mentioned above come from the US. However, those who enunciate an Antiracist Language Pedagogy also speak from the marginalization created on the body and its color as a category of marginalization and classification. Like me, they seem to speak from the exteriority. I consider that their practices and theorizations are not just critical postures that aim to protest but contest their own colonial experiences and their students. However, fostering citizenship, as a modern category of pedagogy, often conflicts with other intentions (e.g., decolonial ones) and ideas of emancipation because it is deeply rooted in the constructs of the nation-state. The concept of citizenship inherently ties individuals to the framework of the nation-state, which historically has been an instrument of colonial power and control. This linkage perpetuates a Eurocentric worldview that prioritizes the rights and identities defined by state boundaries, often marginalizing or erasing other non-Western forms of identity and community.

Trans-Pedagogies

Although it is perhaps unnecessary and unhelpful to concentrate on the differences between critical pedagogies – decolonial pedagogies – translanguaging as pedagogy and anti-racist pedagogies, I do not do so to devalue, obscure, or even reject what these approaches have advanced in. On the contrary, I build from them, yet I also distance from them to appreciate what these approaches have in common. That is, a goal in the promotion of social justice and how these have contributed to achieving these at different extents, and, more importantly, how these can be useful to bring about more change, which could be in tune with the lack of contestation I am here in this revision pointing out. Nevertheless, since border thinking implies the pluriversal (Mignolo, 2021), I chose to think from what has been silenced and denied (e.g., thinking of and being black, gay, transgender, immigrants, peasants, non-natives, women, and their intersections). I then add my disobedience to the upsurging interest in dislocating and delinking from colonial architecture concerning the notion of pedagogy. This is why I am now thinking of Trans-Pedagogies.

I am inspired by Bello-Ramirez's (2018). Yet, I do not anchor my rationale in a transgender-dissident experience. Still, I do agree that there is an evident need to push "borders [so that] we can establish dialogues across differences to question the despotism of rigid identities" (p. 11) and the possibility to foster "the imagination of teaching as a process that engenders knowledge that heals, that connects the community and advocates for the construction of a world without qualifying categories" (p. 127). It is in her work that I build on. However, I would like to take this further and imagine Trans-Pedagogies as pedagogies of becoming (re-existing). Pedagogies that embrace alterity (*the other*) and become pedagogization practices (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018) that rebel against the humiliation, displacement, disembodiment, and degradation of those who have been subjected to the margins and borders (e.g., black, gay, transgender, immigrants, peasants, non-native, women, and their intersections). Yet I must warn the reader that Trans-Pedagogies are not new pedagogies just because by saying so, it would imply that I am adopting a modern frame. I align this claim with Mignolo (2021), for whom newness carries the rhetoric of Modernity.

Trans-Pedagogies, on the contrary, have always been there in the bodies, sensibilities, subjectivities, doings, pains, and sufferings of those wounded by coloniality. On the inside of the exteriority, these have been there, an exteriority that means "border dwelling and border dwelling generates border thinking and sensing" (p. 515). Being this the panorama, Trans-pedagogies are about relationalities and reciprocity and, as such, do not obey the principles, standards, and frames of Western/Anglo pedagogies. Nonetheless, the decolonial enactment of these pedagogies cannot be neatly mapped or traced, as they are deeply embedded in the lived experiences of colonial difference. These pedagogies are situated and embodied within specific times and spaces, reflecting the unique contexts and histories of those who practice them. Simultaneously, they are conceived and carried out within the dynamic and fluid coordinates of dwelling, meaning they evolve continuously in response to the shifting realities and resistances of those inhabiting these spaces. This intrinsic, context-specific nature makes Trans-Pedagogies inherently resistant to static representation and universalization.

Conclusions and Further Considerations

Since this review article intended to identify the most salient enunciators (i.e., the who) that have constituted what pedagogy and English Language Pedagogy are and what the most common epistemological foundations and practices of enunciation (i.e., the where-how) that have been presented in English Language Pedagogy and teacher education were, the conclusions I share must be considered within the context of the academic work inspected, the profiling discussions I proposed and my attempts to enact epistemic disobedience by thinking in and from the exteriority I occupy (i.e., border thinking).

In this sense, although I consider that much has been gained through the implementation, mostly theoretically, of Critical Pedagogies, they are missing contestation against gender-neutral, de-racialized, disembodied, and desexualized individuals they aim to emancipate. The profiling revealed that theoretical, critical discourses around pedagogy are still founded in geo-political spaces and body-political narratives that do not necessarily embody border dwellings. That is, they certainly serve to problematize colonial narratives (e.g., racism), yet the fact that such an account starts mainly from the oppressions of the Capitalist system, ignoring that there are other dominant heads, cannot be glossed over. Santos de Sousa (2020) speaks about Capitalism, Colonialism, and Patriarchy. One more would be Capacitism, according to Platero (2013). This obliviousness invites us (i.e., English language teachers and teacher educators) to seek praxes of enunciation that question the humanity of the human (Wynter, 2003) when it comes to language pedagogy. More reflexivity is needed if Critical Pedagogy is to serve re-humanizing purposes.

I also believe that pedagogy should cross and transcend Modern/Colonial representation in ELT and teacher education. There is still much to say about actions and theories that help read, think, and get involved with life (Bello-Ramirez, 2018). However, in my view, these are embodied projections of human life. As such, I am interested in engaging in and with subverted ontologies with epistemological consequences. With this, I mean to say that they are ways of living, liberating, reviving, and healing that put tension on the terms that support Modernity as a constitutive narrative of coloniality in education. And that can become a political/ideological space whose strength is in the bodies of those who live, dwell, and re-exist individually and collectively. Therefore, the pedagogical would imply multiplying the ways of inhabiting the world (subjectivities) and multiple ways to re-exist.

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Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement

This declaration's purpose is to clarify the expected duties and ethical behavior of all parties involved in the submission, evaluation, and selection processes of manuscripts sent to the *HOW* journal.

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- The Editor is responsible for maintaining the quality of the journal contents and, as such, has the final say on whether to accept or reject a manuscript.
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- The Editor is expected to be in constant communication with authors and reviewers about the status of a manuscript or any other issue that may arise along the process of submission, evaluation, and selection of manuscripts and which requires the attention of some, or all the parties involved.
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HOW Journal is a biannual publication by and for teachers of English who wish to share outcomes of educational and research experiences intended to add understanding to English language teaching practices (ELT). Therefore, the journal falls within the field of education and, specifically, the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language (ESL, EFL).

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American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *APAStyle.org: Electronic references*. <http://www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx>

Conference Presentations

Rodríguez, M., Cárdenas M. L., & Aldana, C. (2008). *The design of Alex virtual courses: Challenges and implications for ELT* [PowerPoint Slides]. Plenary Session 8 at ASOCOPI Conference, Tunja, 2008.

Unpublished Master's Thesis

Ochoa, M. (2004). *Meaning negotiation in EFL project work: How students express themselves and interact with others* [Unpublished master's dissertation]. Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

For titles of works in languages other than English, please provide the English translation in brackets (not parentheses) next to the original title.

Cabrales Vargas, M., & Cáceres Cabrales, J. A. (2013). La dinámica del currículo y la evolución de la autonomía en el aprendizaje del inglés [The dynamics of curriculum and the evolution of autonomy in learning English as a foreign language]. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 18(1), 45-60.

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