

**The Impact of Communication Strategies under PBL on Ninth Graders' Speaking Skills at
a Public School on a Caribbean Island**

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Cartagena, Colombia

2023

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A thesis presented as a partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain the degree of MA in
English Didactics

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Acknowledgements

“We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps” (New Living Translation, 1996, Proverbs 16:9). First of all, I would like to express my eternal gratitude to God, who enabled me to live this process. He has been my fountain of wisdom and strength. I would also like to thank my family: my husband and daughter, for being my support and engine in the process. I thank them for their patience and understanding during the long days of studying. Also, I would like to express my special thanks to my advisor, Carolyn Carpenter, for her time, efforts, advice, and suggestions. She has been of great help during the realization of this project. I would also like to express my profound gratitude to all the professors whose insights enriched my research, especially Mrs. Ramirez, Mr. Vela, Mr. Giraldo, and the former program coordinator Mrs. Lopez. Finally, I must acknowledge my own effort and thank myself for believing it was possible.

Abstract

This research report presents an action research study that determined the impact of communication strategies while implementing the PBL approach on ninth graders' speaking skills at a Caribbean Island public school outside of Cartagena, Colombia. The researcher purposely selected 19 ninth-graders as participants in the study. The intervention took place through the implementation of six workshops based on the PBL approach that lasted between two to three weeks each. Students had to work on three projects during the workshops. In each workshop, students had to use one communication strategy to improve their speaking skills. Data were collected using a pre-test before the action stage and a post-test after completion. During the action stage, the researcher collected data through the teachers' journal, non-participant observation checklist, and a student self-assessment that the researcher administered after each workshop. Findings revealed that using communication strategies under the PBL approach improved students' speaking skills and showed improvement, especially in vocabulary, fluency, and accuracy. The researcher also found that PBL lessons helped increase students' vocabulary range.

Keywords: Accuracy, Communication strategies, fluency, Project-Based Learning, speaking skills, vocabulary.

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Introduction

The current globalized world has demonstrated that speaking English has become a necessity in the academic and labor markets. Consequently, English has become the most learned language in the world. According to Saslow and Ascher (2015), there are two billion English speakers worldwide, and only 20% are native speakers. Therefore, the majority is composed of people who learned English. Learning English allows people to understand other cultures and learn their habits, customs, and culture, traditions, and language. Considering the importance of learning English, the Colombian National Ministry of Education (MEN by its acronym in Spanish) implemented a Bilingualism Program aiming at fostering the development of communicative competence (MEN, 2020). Accordingly, this study meets the MEN expectation of developing communicative competencies in students to improve the EFL learning process at a secondary level.

The researcher conducted this study with 19 students from a public school in Caño del Oro on Tierra Bomba Island, located south of Cartagena and north of Baru Island. The population of this community is primarily Afro-Colombian. They are day laborers with a low level of education dedicated to fishing and tourism. Since this is a setting in which tourism plays an essential role in the economy, it does not escape the need to develop communicative competence in English.

The researcher conducted the present study through different stages. First, she started with a diagnostic step, collecting data from four instruments: a teachers' journal, an observer checklist, a students' interview, and a survey. The data analysis triangulation of the aforementioned instruments revealed students' negative perception of English since they expressed they considered it a difficult language. It also showed a lack of speaking skills, interest

in engaging activities, and low language proficiency. Due to those results, the teacher inquired about the effect of implementing communication strategies under the Project Based Learning (PBL) approach on students' speaking skills, considering the significant impact communication strategies and PBL have demonstrated on language learners' speaking skills in other studies. To answer that question, the researcher established the general objective of determining the impact of communication strategies under PBL on ninth graders' speaking skills. To reach that general objective, she set three specific objectives. First, she described ninth graders' speaking fluency during the PBL lessons. Secondly, she examined the impact of communication strategies under PBL on students' accuracy and, finally, evaluated the effect of communication strategies under PBL on students' vocabulary usage.

Once the researcher identified speaking as the main weakness in the diagnostic stage and established the objectives to accomplish, she focused her attention on the research variables: speaking skills and communication strategies under PBL, which guided this research with insights that allowed her to implement a plan of action.

The researcher designed six workshops based on the PBL approach during the action stage. The workshops focused on developing speaking skills by implementing six communication strategies through authentic tasks. Overall, the author considered employing communication strategies under PBL workshops as the proper strategy to develop students' speaking skills. According to Aslam (2003), the language learning process is easier when using problem-solving tasks since it allows students to participate and interact with their peers. Based on that principle, the researcher found it pertinent to implement PBL to create a language learning environment. Furthermore, following Bygate (2003), there is a difference between

knowing about a language and having the skills to use it. Consequently, the researcher used the tasks of each workshop as the scenario for learners to use language knowledge in action.

In addition, implementing communication strategies under PBL lessons helps develop speaking skills. It also allows students to produce sentences in real situations more than merely knowing how to bring statements together abstractly. The present study supports the previous belief since the data collected in the action stage was coded, triangulated, analyzed, and the analysis demonstrated that implementing the six workshops positively impacted students' vocabulary, oral accuracy, and fluency. Consequently, the researcher concluded that implementing communication strategies under the PBL approach improved students' speaking skills since the data analysis demonstrated that students were engaged in their language learning process. The communication strategies implemented during the workshops gave them tools that served as support to communicate their ideas.

1. Research Problem

1.1 Rationale

The present Action Research study aims at determining the impact of communication strategies under PBL on oral fluency, vocabulary usage, and accuracy of ninth-grade students from a public school on a Caribbean Island. There are three main reasons for this study to be essential. First, this research adds to the studies on second language learning and contributes to the field by integrating communication strategies with PBL. Many studies are related to these two topics separately, but very few implement both simultaneously. Second, it provides the EFL teachers with insights about strategies to implement in the classroom to improve students speaking skills based on the data analysis from the study. Finally, it is also of prime importance for the context as it meets the needs of the students and community regarding language learning.

This study enriches the research that deals with improving students' speaking skills. It focuses on the impact of implementing communication strategies framed under PBL, resulting in a considerable improvement in students' oral fluency, accuracy, and overall vocabulary usage. The integration of communication strategies and PBL has been demonstrated to be significant in developing students' speaking skills through this study. Hence, its findings enrich the research conducted in this field, providing some insights that can guide teachers and researchers seeking to find successful strategies to implement in the EFL classroom, which demonstrates why this study is pertinent.

Researchers and teachers can find insights that can serve as a framework for their study in this field. Moreover, this study compiles an array of tasks framed under PBL that can be tested and used in other contexts. Finally, this study highlights six communication strategies for

teachers to help students dissolve communication barriers and communicate their ideas in English by implementing different tasks.

This study impacts the context in which it took place since students were provided with valuable tools that allowed them to communicate their ideas in English. According to the objectives of MEN (2020), concerning English language learning, it is expected to develop students' communicative competency in the second language and graduate with a B1 level based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Also, considering Cartagena's tourism industry, it is vital due to the contextual need of students to speak English. Hence, language teaching-learning strategies need to be implemented to reach that objective. Besides, the diagnostic stage conducted at the beginning of the study detected that students expected to have English classes that engage them in the learning process and include their interests. Thus, this study implemented a series of communication strategies hand in hand with PBL to meet those needs, resulting in a significant impact in the students' context.

1.2 Description of the Context and Setting

English has become the most learned language in the world because of the multiple benefits learners get from learning this language. First of all, learning English allows people to understand other cultures, their habits, and customs and better understand the learner's culture, traditions, and language. Considering the importance of learning English in Colombia, the MEN has implemented a series of programs looking for a master of the English Language. *Portal Colombia Aprende* (2016) affirms that the current *Colombia Bilingue* program aims to strengthen the teaching and learning of English to educate citizens capable of communicating in English, as well as, to enhance English learning as a foreign language at the different levels of teaching (elementary, secondary, and university).

Since 2004, the MEN has adopted the Common European Framework of References for Language (CEFR) to establish the English language's achievement goals throughout the different stages of the educative process (MEN, 2020). The CEFR sets six language proficiency levels, A1 for beginner, A2 for Basic, B1 Pre-intermediate, B2 for Intermediate, C1 for Pre-advanced, and C2 for Advanced. The MEN added the A- and B+ levels in the evaluation process for the standardized exam for school leavers (ICFES, n.d.). Thus, the National English Program expects high school graduates to achieve proficiency in English B1 (Pre-Intermediate).

This research was conducted on Tierra Bomba Island, located south of Cartagena and north of Baru Island. The island is within the legal administration of Cartagena, Bolivar. The only way to access the island is by boat, and people from the island are dedicated to fishing and tourism. The population is mainly Afro-Colombian. In general, the residents are day laborers with a low level of education.

Tierra Bomba comprises four communities: Bocachica, Tierra Bomba, Punta Arena, and Caño del Oro. Each sector has its public school. The school where this research was carried out is located in Caño del Oro. It borders to the south and east with the bay of Cartagena, to the north with Lomas del Loro, and to the west with non-urbanized areas (Cartagena Cómo Vamos, 2009.) Indigenous people initially inhabited the land where the community is located, and later it was a hamlet of formerly enslaved people. Then, the community was developed around a hospital for lepers built more than 200 years ago. The community has electric power service; some areas have propane gas networks and Wi-Fi antennas. Besides, the community does not have drinking water. According to the 2018 census by the Colombian statistics bureau, DANE, the township comprises 1,631 people. According to DANE, people from the island belong to a low socio-

economic class due to the precarious conditions of most inhabitants; DANE (2018) reported that 37% of the population is in poverty.

The research site, San José de Caño del Oro School, is a public ethnic-educational school; its pedagogy seeks to strengthen ethnic and cultural diversity. The institution leads students' cognitive-formative processes through a humanistic-social and intercultural pedagogical model. The Institutional Education Plan (PEI) is based on the following principles: integrity, linguistic diversity, autonomy, community participation, interculturality, flexibility, progressiveness, and solidarity. Concerning the cycles of learning and intensity, the school follows the decree 1850 of MEN (2002), which establishes that students must stay in school as follows: kindergarten 20 hours per week, Elementary school 25 hours per week, and High school 30 hours per week. The school's curriculum collects objectives, contents, methodological criteria, and evaluation processes that address the pedagogical practice. The curriculum is pertinent to the general guidelines required by the MEN. EFL teachers are allowed to follow the suggested curriculum provided by MEN. The curriculum is flexible, which means it is adaptable and inclusive to the context of the educative community and students. The syllabus is an essential element of the curriculum, which defines the time to develop the weekly activities, the number of hours per subject, and the schedule. The faculty and staff of the institution in 2021 are made up of the board of directors, composed of the principal and the coordinator, 26 teachers, one guidance counselor, two administrative support personnel, and cleaning and security staff. The current building was built in 2006. It has 22 classrooms, a library, two offices, an Information Technology classroom, a lab, a cafeteria, and a soccer field in the central courtyard. The classrooms are spacious and have a capacity for 36 students; all of them are equipped with whiteboards, chairs, and desks. Hence, there is a lack of materials and resources to develop the

classes. For instance, the English department does not count on speakers, projectors, or tv for the teachers to use in class; there is only a set of English coursebooks for the different grades that a private school in Cartagena donated, and 50 English dictionaries bought by the institution.

Teachers must be creative and carry their materials (laptop, loudspeaker, printouts) to the school to develop a dynamic methodology.

The school has two English language teachers, each teaching 22 hours a week, three English hours per grade. Nevertheless, according to the results in Saber-11 in the last five years, San Jose de Caño del Oro students have a –A1 level, representing a deficient English level. Hence, San Jose de Caño del Oro is listed as a low-achievement institution in English and other subjects.

This research collaborated with the institution's English teachers, ninth-grade students, and the board of directors. The pupils are the principal participants: boys and girls from 13 to 16 years old. Most of them are natives of Tierra Bomba, have low English proficiency, and lack study habits. They have a strong desire to learn English and a clear awareness of its importance in their particular context, a beautiful island facing Cartagena with natural beauty and history that attracts more tourists daily.

1.3 Description of the Problem

During the diagnostic stage of the study, the researcher applied four data collection instruments: the teacher's journal, a students' survey, a student's interview and a non-participant observer checklist. Those instruments helped the researcher to picture and identify the problem. The analysis result of the information collected through the instruments revealed positive and negative aspects of the subject under study, which will be outlined below.

On the one hand, the analysis showed that students had a positive attitude toward learning English. Students under study are very active, and they expect to have engaging activities in the class. Their expectations about the course are favorable since they also recognize the importance of learning English due to the context in which they are involved. Hence, they need more classes that meet their interests and needs because sometimes they consider some classes boring and want to feel attracted to learning English.

On the other hand, the researcher identified that ninth-grade students have a deficient English level despite having a positive attitude toward learning English. The researcher applied a students' survey, including the standards of what they should do in ninth-grade in the target language. According to the student's perception, it was found that they were not at the expected level. Additionally, according to the non-participant observer and teacher's view, reported on the checklist and journal, students only used Spanish during class, reducing their participation in speaking activities in English. Besides, before starting the action stage and implementing the first workshop, the researcher administered a pre-test to the students in which they had to describe six pictures of their context. The result of this test showed that according to the CEFR, students were not even at an A1 level or beginner since students could not perform a task that was designed following CEFR standards for an A1 level. Hence, the researcher could evidence that students had a low English language proficiency, especially in speaking.

Finally, the researcher detected another critical aspect when she concluded the diagnostic stage: students negatively perceived English. Despite having a good attitude in English classes, they consider it challenging to develop speaking skills. When students answered the interview about their perceptions of learning English, most coincided that it was difficult for them, and they thought they could not speak English, which implies that this negative perception becomes a

barrier that influences their low English level since it reduces their level of engagement. When students had to perform a speaking activity, the first thing they did was laugh nervously and say that they did not know. Consequently, it hindered them from trying to do the tasks. Overall, the author of this study noticed that the negative perception of English directly affects their performance in the language.

1.4 Research Question and Objectives

1.4.1 Research Question

How does implementing communication strategies under the PBL approach affect students' speaking skills at a public school on Tierra Bomba Island?

1.4.2 Objectives

1.4.2.1 General Objective

- ❖ To determine the impact of communication strategies under PBL on ninth graders' speaking skills.

1.4.2.2 Specific Objectives

- ❖ To describe the effect of communication strategies under PBL on students' fluency.
- ❖ To evaluate the effect of communication strategies under PBL on students' vocabulary usage.
- ❖ To examine the impact of communication strategies under PBL on students' accuracy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter reviews theories and research studies that serve as a theoretical framework for the present study and lays the foundations for investigating the answer to the research question. It presents the conceptualization of the main components of this research, which are relevant to comprehending this study. The first review focuses on a discussion of the definition of speaking skills, which according to Harmer (2001), involves more than the knowledge of grammar rules or language features but producing the language on the spot. Besides, the author introduces Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an umbrella term that, according to Vela et al. (2022), establishes the roots of PBL since CLT “links teaching methodologies to appropriate communicative tasks” (p.33) as those proposed by the PBL approach. CLT emerged in 1970 due to the need for new language teaching approaches (Richards, 2006), and it changed the focus of grammar competence to a communicative one. As a result, this chapter explores and relates the different insights about CLT, starting from the need to enhance learners' speaking skills. It also illustrates how those skills are reinforced through various communication strategies and assessed according to the theorists in language teaching. The subsequent area includes an overview of Project-Based Learning (PBL), highlighting some essential standards authors consider necessary to implement when implementing PBL. Finally, this review references relevant research studies about the impact of communication strategies and PBL on developing speaking skills. Those references will serve as a framework and departure point for the current investigation and help understand its purpose and implications.

2.1.1 Speaking Skills

Different authors consider speaking the most crucial skill to develop communicative competence since spoken language is the primary way people communicate with people worldwide and achieve their communication aims and objectives (Annala et al., 2016; Srinivas, 2019). Various authors have defined speaking as a process in which people construct and share meaning (Brown, 2015; Chaney, 1998). For Brown, it involves the act of producing, receiving, and processing information, which demands interaction. Chaney (1998) notes that it implies using verbal and non-verbal symbols in different situations.

Furthermore, according to Ramos and Aguirre (2018), one aspect that characterizes speaking is the natural ability of human beings to express feelings, emotions, and thoughts in oral interactions. Following the same train of thought, Jones and Hudson (2018) define speaking as a process in which people can make implicit ideas explicit.

Bygate (2003) distinguishes between knowing about a language and having the skills to use it. The author concedes that it is essential to know the language, grammar, and vocabulary when it comes to speaking, but it is not enough. Instead, it is necessary to consider that knowledge has to be used in action. Consequently, language learners must develop speaking skills to produce sentences and phrases in real situations more than merely knowing how to combine sentences abstractly. Hence, when teaching speaking, teachers must focus on boosting a variety of sub-skills derived from speaking that will lead to developing communicative competence.

Brown (2004) divides speaking into micro and macro skills and states that integrating these skills defines what learners need to know and perform in language learning. Macro skills refer to learners' ability to manage the large and complex elements of the language, such as

fluency, style, cohesion, non-verbal communication, and discourse. According to Kadhim (2019), a group of micro-skills exists within these macro skills. On the contrary, micro-skills refer to the ability to produce language portions such as words, phonemes, morphemes, and collocations. Brown (2004, pp.142-143) provides an abridged list of micro-skills that includes the following:

- The ability to produce differences between English phonemes and allophonic alternatives.
- The ability to produce English stress patterns.
- The ability to produce short forms of words and phrases.
- The ability to self-monitor oral production using communication strategies.
- The ability to produce natural speech.

The author also highlights the following macro-skills:

- The ability to use sociolinguistic features in face-to-face interactions, such as appropriate style, registers, redundancies, pragmatic conventions, conversation rules, interrupting, etc.
- The ability to use facial features, body language, nonverbal elements, and verbal language.

Consequently, developing communicative competence goes beyond teaching grammar and vocabulary. It is essential to focus on developing the learner's speaking skills, from the micro to the macro skills.

2.1.2 Assessing Speaking

Speaking skills and assessing speaking are vital concepts in language teaching. Various authors emphasize the importance of speaking skills in language teaching and learning (Fulcher,

2015; Isaacs, 2016; Luoma, 2004). When talking about the importance of speaking, we cannot neglect the relevance of speaking assessment in this process. According to Luoma (2004), speaking skill is a vital aspect of language teaching and learning, and therefore, it is of great relevance for assessment. Therefore, assessing speaking cannot be taken lightly. Assessors must be clear about the methods, constructs, purposes, and criteria for evaluating speaking. Applying an accurate speaking assessment entails improving the learner's speaking skills. Hence, the importance of using appropriate methods and instruments that ensure a reliable and valid speaking assessment is high.

Assessing speaking refers to collecting and measuring information about students' skills to communicate a message orally using evaluation instruments. Several authors differentiate assessing speaking according to the traditional and communicative approaches (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2017; Florez, 1999; Mead & Rubin, 1985; Ounis, 2017). In the traditional approach, students are assigned a specific topic and are supposed to talk about that topic for an established time. On the other hand, in the communicative approach, the topic is presented as an interactive task where students must exchange information. Besides, Green (2014) adds that although the traditional and communicative approaches are seen as oceans apart, even the most spontaneous conversation requires a short time for planning and thinking about what learners will say. Consequently, we can state that assessing speaking is a complex process whose success relies, to some extent, on some factors that teachers and assessors need to consider.

When assessing speaking, it is vital to establish some requirements previously. Weir (1983, cited in O'Sullivan, 2008) highlights the following factors to be considered when assessing speaking: operations, performance conditions, and the expected level of performance. Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2017) relate processes with the assessed functional aspects of the spoken

language. Those operational aspects can be informational or interactional. The informative function entails oral presentations, descriptions, narrations, comparisons, etc. Various authors stress that speaking demands an interactive process in which the speaker takes the listener role to exchange information (Mead & Rubin, 1985; Isaacs, 2016). Hence, the interactional function involves the different real-life situation activities that demand interaction, such as interviews, face-to-face conversations, role plays, meetings, telephone conversations, etc. Considering the operation factor, assessors must pay special attention to "the kinds of productive and interactive language use that are relevant to the decisions their assessments will inform" (Green, 2014, p. 129). In other words, the operation entailed in a task helps the assessor define the constructs that will be examined.

Considering performance conditions, some authors interpret assessing speaking as necessary to establish the conditions in which the task will be performed, which serves as a parameter for evaluating speaking skills (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2017; O'Sullivan, 2008). An example of those conditions is the time the assessor establishes to perform the task. Students are expected to perform a specific task in a determined time. Authors Mead and Rubin (1985) suggest six minutes as the shortest time to complete a task, while Ur (1996) states ten minutes as the regular time for students to perform the task and demonstrate their speaking skills.

Finally, it is necessary to move to the last parameter to complement the parameters for assessing speaking. The level of performance is an essential factor to consider when assessing speaking. Weir (1993) states that test designers must be clear about the output level required or expected for that specific speaking assessment. The level of performance can be delimited by some essential criteria to consider, such as fluency, coherence, accuracy, vocabulary, or intelligibility (Al-Mahrooqi et al., 2018; Weir, 1993). Giraldo (2019) states that when it comes to

language assessment, it is necessary to be clear about the construct to be assessed, which represents the skills to be assessed and what to expect from learners. Accordingly, test specifications are vital in language assessment.

2.1.3 Fluency

Fluency is partially the ability to communicate naturally. The British Council (n.d.) defines this criterion as the ability to speak rapidly and without hesitation. Accordingly, a person is fluent in a language when they can speak that language quickly without pausing and sounding natural or spontaneous. Some authors validate fluency as a reference of the domain or master of a language, taking precedence over accuracy. For instance, Tavakoli and Hunter (2018) define fluency as an indicator of speaking proficiency that refers to the facility and spontaneity of speech, which means that a learner masters the language if they can have a free-flowing and effortless speech. In the same way, Koponen and Riggensbach (2000) add that fluency deals with the smoothness of speech. Given this, fluency reflects the mastery of the spoken language and deals mainly with the flow and speed speakers convey messages.

On the other hand, a broader definition of fluency includes speech speed but also comprehensibility (Brand & Götz, 2011; Crowther et al., 2015). This definition suggests that speaking rapidly and without pauses is insufficient to be fluent in a language and demonstrate proficiency; it is also necessary to be able to convey a message in a coherent and reasoned way. Then, the speech does not need to be error-free to be fluent but also comprehensible, which means that fluency does not work independently on accuracy (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). By contrast, those criteria complement each other to reflect the mastery of a language; for this reason, to be proficient in speaking a language, it is essential to be fluent and accurate.

2.1.4 Accuracy

Accuracy means speaking a language correctly with the fewest errors. Housen and Kuiken (2009) relate accuracy to error-free speech, suggesting that language learners speak accurately when they make fewer or no mistakes. At the same time, accuracy relates to the target language according to the linguistic parameters of that language. On that account, many authors attached accuracy to the norms or rules of the spoken language. For example, Palloti (2009) points out that accuracy is the degree of compliance with language standards. For Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), accuracy refers to how well the target language is spoken concerning its rules system. Similarly, Ellis (2003) defines accuracy as "the extent to which the language produced in performing a task conforms to target language norms" (p. 339).

Additionally, when defining accuracy and referring to the norms of the target language, people could enclose the concept to grammar structures, but it goes beyond grammar. The British Council (n.d.) states that accuracy encompasses correctly using grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. And in the same way, Vela et al. (2022) point out that "accuracy has been identified by researchers in several aspects that include the grammatical, sociolinguistic, semantic, rhetorical accuracy, and surface features like spelling, punctuation and pronunciation" (p. 56). Consequently, when learners are accurate in a language, they produce utterances without errors that affect the language's phonological, syntactic, and semantic features, as highlighted by Vela et al. (2022). However, it does not mean that accuracy means completely error-free speech because even native speakers make some minor mistakes at some point, but they care about self-correction. Hence, accuracy is also about being so conscious of the forms and different aspects of the language that learners can notice their speech errors getting to correct themselves.

2.1.5 Vocabulary

Regarding the language learning process, vocabulary plays an important role since the knowledge students have of it affects the way they communicate their ideas. Schmitt and Carter (2000) state that vocabulary is essential when learning a language. Therefore, people cannot speak a language without learning vocabulary. In this matter, vocabulary is related to two main concepts; on the one hand, there is knowledge of words, and on the other hand, the use of that knowledge in communication. Accordingly, Cook (2016) states that vocabulary refers to the knowledge of words and the ability to use adequate those words in real communication. Similarly, Neuman and Dwyer (2009, p. 385) define vocabulary as “the words we must know to communicate effectively: words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary).” Therefore, learning vocabulary also implies the ability to use those words in context when uttering and listening to a message from an interlocutor. Consequently, students' vocabulary range shows learners' understanding of the language in its different forms. Besides, according to Stahl & Fairbanks (1986), vocabulary is an essential forecaster of students' performance, which implies that a learner's vocabulary range will impact how they communicate. Hence, when speakers know a lot of words, they can compose more complex speech. However, vocabulary deals not only with the knowledge of terms learners have but also the knowledge of their structure, use, meanings, and links to other words (*Literacy Teaching Toolkit*, 2021). It can be seen that it is not enough for a learner to be proficient in a language by knowing a lot of words, but also knowing how to use them, which also deals with grammar, learning their meanings to be able to use them correctly, and establishing relationships with other words to convey messages. Overall, teaching vocabulary goes beyond teaching a set of terms; it is also necessary to provide learners with strategies for the complete domain of the new language.

2.1.6 Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered one of the most effective approaches to language teaching since teachers understand the need to connect the language in real-life situations and the instructions students receive in the classroom. Nunan (2003) defines CLT as an approach that combines language learning at the school with the language students need outside the classroom. Therefore, students need to use language communicatively, which implies that it is necessary to focus on developing students' communicative competence.

Richards (2006) states that communicative competence represents the goal of language teaching, and it delimits some specific skills, such as being clear about what to say and how and when to say it. Besides, communicative competence allows language learners to differentiate the goals of the conversation.

CLT focuses on four skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking, and aims to foster learners' communicative competence (Richards, 2006). The four skills are categorized into two: receptive and productive. Listening and reading are classified as receptive skills since they focus on receiving outside information. On the other hand, speaking and writing are classified as productive skills since they focus on what learners produce (Linse, 2005). Accordingly, teachers must recognize the four skills and their classification to enhance students' communicative competence.

2.1.7 Communication Strategies

Communication strategies are techniques used by speakers to communicate. It is prevalent to find language learners reluctant to speak and afraid of sharing their ideas since they do not have enough knowledge of the language. Communication strategies help learners have the tools to communicate, even when they have some basic understanding. Cohen (2005, p.277)

proposes a series of strategies learners must use when performing speech acts based on their language knowledge. Learners benefit from communication strategies since it helps them convey messages successfully and enhances their speaking skills. The author highlights the following communication strategies considering the purpose:

- Communication strategies for steering the conversation away from problematic areas.
- Communication strategies for expressing meaning in different ways (for example, paraphrasing a word, using facial expressions, coining words)
- Communication strategies for gaining more time for them to think
- Communication strategies for negotiating the challenging parts of a conversation.
- Communication strategies for compensating for gaps by utilizing literal translation from the L1 or changing the language.
- Communication strategies for maintaining the floor (Hesitation devices such as using fillers).

In addition, the author states that communication strategies involve conversational interaction strategies like asking for help, asking for clarification, or confirming something. In this case, the communication strategies involve interaction with an interlocutor. Several authors provide different classifications of communication strategies. For example, Dörnyei (1995, pp.55-58) classifies the communication strategies as follows: message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, use of all-purpose words, word coinage, use of non-linguistic means, literal translation, foreignizing, code-switching, appeal for help, and use of fillers/hesitation devices. Dörnyei's (1995) list of communication strategies highlights the different techniques speakers of any language can utilize in their speech. Castro and Lopez

(2014) provide a table with the communication strategies proposed by Dörnyei (1995) with detailed explanations and examples.

Table 1

Communication strategies selected for the present study adapted from Castro & Lopez (2014)

Compensatory strategy	Description and illustration
Prefabricated patterns	Using memorized stock phrases, usually for "survival" purposes (e.g., Where is the ___? where the morphological components are not known to the learner).
Time gaining	Stalling or time-gaining strategies: to use fillers or hesitation devices to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., well, now, let's see, uh, as a matter of fact).
Approximation	Using an alternative term that expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., ship for a sailboat).
Circumlocution	Describe or exemplify an action's target object (e.g., the thing you open wine bottles with for the corkscrew).
Appealing for help	Asking for aid from the interlocutor either directly (e.g. what do you call...?) or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression).
Use of all-purpose words	Extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (e.g., the overuse of thing, stuff, what-do-you-call-it, thingy).

The above-mentioned are the communication strategies the researcher selected to teach the students through the Project-Based Learning lessons, considering the level of proficiency of

learners, as well as the teachability of these CSs. Hence, in the following paragraphs, the researcher delimits the Project-Based Learning construct and analyzes the concept in detail.

2.1.8 Project-Based Learning

Project-Based Learning (PBL) has gained many advocates in the last decades since it represents an alternative to traditional teacher-centered courses. PBL is based on Dewey's constructivist premise that students learn by doing, placing students in the center of the language teaching and learning process while giving the teachers the role of facilitators (Mergendoller and Thomas, 2005). The previous represents the main change that PBL brought to education since it stood for seeking deeper learning in which students took more participation and active exploration of their context and real-world situations. For this purpose, it was necessary to focus on developing tasks that engaged students in their learning process or, as Ravitch (2000) states, activities undertaken by learners that really caught their attention.

Consequently, PBL is defined as "a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge" (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.). Furthermore, Blumenfeld et al. (1991) define PBL as an approach focused on engaging students in an investigation to achieve deeper learning. Students look for solutions to real-life problems, ask and design questions, make predictions, create a plan of action, collect information, and come up with an answer to the driving question. Overall, this approach comprises a series of principles called "essentials" that makes what is known as Project-Based Learning and differentiate it from other instructional approaches or just doing projects.

2.1.9 Essentials for Project-Based Learning

Larmer & Mergendoller (2010, pp. 34-37) state seven essential elements for a PBL lesson that guarantees a successful and deeper learning process. The following essentials of PBL provide teachers with clear principles to design and implement PBL lessons and, as Condliffe et al. (2017) state, help people differentiate PBL from just doing a project.

A Need to Know. Teachers can activate students' need to know by presenting a project that calls students' attention, engages interest, and arouses doubts and questions in the students. The idea is that students feel they need to know about that topic.

A Driving Question. The starting point of a project is a driving question, and this question aims to drive subsequent learning (JMC, 2018). A driving question is defined as a question that students formulate with the teacher's guidance and the student's answer throughout a research and project process (Krajcik & Mamlok-Naaman, 2006). Various authors provide some specifications about how a driving question should be. According to Larmer and Mergendoller (2010), the driving question must be encouraging, open-ended, complex, and related to what teachers want students to learn. On the other hand, the authors state that the question must be viable, beneficial, contextualized, meaningful, and ethical (Krajcik & Mamlok-Naaman, 2006; Krajcik & Shin, 2014).

Student Voice and Choice. Some researchers state that projects must be designed and directed by students and that the role of the teacher is virtually a resource and guide for learners (Holm, 2011; JMC, 2018). The teacher must listen to students' interests and opinions for meaningful student projects. Students should be free to decide how to design the project and use their creativity. Besides, students can also choose the topic of the project and the driving question. The more interested students are in the project, the more participative they will be.

21's Century Skills. One of the advantages of PBL on the student's learning process is that it helps develop 21st-century skills such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and the use of technology. Those are skills that students have to build for life; for instance, in a work setting, people are expected to have the ability to work with others. Consequently, a project must allow students to develop or work with these skills. Larmer and Mergendoller (2010) highlight that collaboration is vital for project work. It will enable students to create and share knowledge with their peers.

Inquiry and Innovation. Students find learning meaningful when they have the opportunity to investigate genuinely. However, it is essential to clarify that an investigation or a research process goes beyond searching for something on the internet; it involves an intense inquiry process. "In real inquiry, students follow a trail that begins with their questions, leads to a search for resources and the discovery of answers, and often ultimately leads to generating new questions, testing ideas, and drawing conclusions. Moreover, with real inquiry comes innovation—a new answer to a driving question, a new product, or an individually generated solution to a problem" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010, p.5).

Feedback and Revision. Various authors highlight the relevance and benefits of the learning process of providing time for feedback, correction, and, consequently, reflection (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008; Mansoor and Grant, 2002; Larmer and Mergendoller, 2010). This process helps students improve their skills since the teacher provides a rubric for the assessment and feedback with recommendations that will encourage students to continue improving their processes and products.

A Publicly Presented Product. It is a stage in which students make their products public; they must present them to people outside the classroom (Buck Institute for Education,

n.d.). A public product is a tangible way to make people know what students have learned, and it helps learners to develop their social and emotional skills since they have to build confidence and communication skills. These products can be a presentation, a publication, a festival, a video, or just an explanation of the driving question solution (JMC, 2018).

2.2 Related Research

Implementing Communicative Language Teaching and Project-Based Learning approaches is of interest in the field of EFL. Research studies have reported the effects of utilizing communication strategies on students' speaking skills. Peña (2021) analyzed the impact of implementing communication strategies to foster learners' speaking skills. To gather data, the researcher applied a pre-test and a post-test before and after implementing six workshops that included some communication strategies. The research study showed that communication strategies positively affected learners' oral proficiency. The study also revealed that implementing this strategy with appropriate oral tasks helps improve students' fluency and lexicon and lower their affective filter.

Similarly, Mendoza (2018) assessed the role of communication strategies in promoting the oral skills of seventh graders. The researcher used a journal, a survey, a diagnostic test, and a speaking rubric to collect data. The study found that communication strategies through Information Communication Technology tools (ICT) overcame the use of L1 and that students increased their confidence when having a face-to-face conversation in English. Additionally, Gomez and Mayora (2019) conducted a study to improve undergraduate students' communicative competence in English by implementing communication strategies through conversation clubs. The researchers used a field observation journal, a focus group interview, and a survey to collect data. This study showed the effectiveness of communication strategies in

enhancing speaking skills and helping learners deal with limited linguistic resources. Finally, Amer and Muhammad (2019) investigated the effect of training on the use of communication strategies on students' speaking skills. The researcher collected information using an EFL speaking test and a rubric to assess learners' speaking skills. The researcher found that students trained using communication strategies improved their speaking skills. According to the studies above, communication strategies positively impact learners' speaking skills since they are provided with techniques that help them express their ideas differently. The studies show that approximation, self-repeat-filler words, and comprehension checks were the most effective communication strategies.

Research studies have shown the positive effects of implementing PBL on the learning process, and some of them focused on implementing PBL, specifically on the language learning process. Firstly, the study by Pinzon (2014) described and interpreted the effect of implementing project-based learning helps to increase English skills. To collect information for the analysis, the researcher conducted interviews. The study revealed that students were motivated to learn English since the topics of the projects were related to their context. It also showed that it was easy for the students to learn vocabulary because it was taught through activities that engaged students. Finally, it revealed that PBL strengthened the relationship between students and teachers since PBL allows cooperation and collaboration through teamwork.

Similarly, Poonpon (2017) aimed to investigate learners' opinions about using project-based learning in an EFL classroom and determine the impact of project-based Learning on English language skills. To gather data, the researcher used a semi-structured interview. This study found that PBL successfully enhanced learners' speaking skills and should be implemented in the language classroom. This study also revealed that students had positive perceptions of

implementing PBL and stayed engaged. Another study by Vaca and Gomez (2017) examined how PBL helped enhance ninth graders' speaking skills. The researcher collected data through field notes, transcripts of students' performances, and interviews. The study revealed that project-based learning encouraged students to increase their oral production by developing linguistic competence. It also showed that by implementing PBL, students overcame the fear of speaking English. Students increased their interest in learning about school life and community since PBL focuses on including students' interests and context.

Finally, this Literature Review explored general conceptions about CLT, speaking skills, and assessing speaking and its relevance in language assessment. Firstly, it showed the implications of understanding the essentials of assessing speaking and their application in the design and plan of this type of assessment, based on studies showing that an accurate speaking evaluation positively impacts learners' speaking skills. In addition, this article revised intervention strategies such as communication strategies and PBL that are effective in the EFL classroom and that, according to the presented research studies, have positively impacted speaking skills. Those studies showed, on the one hand, the positive effects of implementing communications strategies on learners' speaking skills and, on the other hand, the positive impact of implementing project-based learning on learners' speaking skills. However, as seen through this review, little research involves communication strategies while implementing project-based learning to analyze their impact on speaking skills, especially in the Colombian context, which represents a gap in the field that leads to research on the effects of implementing communication strategies under the PBL approach on learners' speaking skills.

3. Methodological Design

3.1 Type of Study

The present study corresponds to qualitative research. Creswell (2014) states that this type of research aims at exploring and understanding the meaning that groups attribute to a social problem. The research process uses emerging questions and collects data in the participants' setting. Following this approach, the researcher collects data where the participants interact, analyses the data from particular to general themes, and provides an interpretation of the meaning of those data. This study's main methodological tools are observation, description, and data collection from different sources (Burns, 2001).

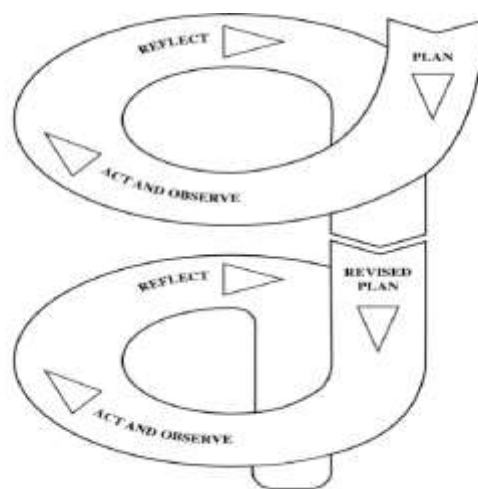
This research follows the action research method, an evaluative and reflective process that aims to bring change and improvement in practice. It involves the researcher's participation since she is an observer and the teacher, but it also consists of the involvement of all the persons involved in the context under study. Action research dissolves the barrier between the participants and the researcher since the teacher actively participates in the situation or setting while conducting the research. According to Burns (2001), action research is a collaborative process involving the collaboration and cooperation of researchers, practitioners, and participants in that context to bring change.

To generate a change in the context under study or improve the practice, action research follows a cyclical process that, according to Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited in Burns, 2010), consists of four crucial moments that are part of a complementary process; those moments are namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. Throughout the present study, those four steps can be evidenced as described as follows; the researcher starts by planning, which begins with inquiring and defining a research question. Then it is necessary to conduct a literature

review to better understand the topic and determine the methods to gather data and set up the systems. After planning, the researcher moves to the action and observation steps, where the researcher embarks on multiple cycles of experimentation and data collection. In this study, the researcher uses qualitative data collection instruments such as observations and interviews and one quantitative instrument, surveys. The next step to consider is reflection. In this step, the researcher reflects on the effects of implementing the plan of action in the context and the appropriateness of applying that plan of action in terms of whether the expected changes or improvements were achieved. The importance of this cyclical process relies on the need to start the process again with a revised and improved plan of action; the main idea is to constantly improve, and the researcher seeks to refine her craft as a teacher.

Figure 1

The cyclical Action Research Model theorized by Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited in Burns, 2010)



Note. This figure illustrates Kemmis and McTaggart's cyclical action research model from *Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching: A Guide for Practitioners* (p.9) by Burns, Routledge.

3.2 Participants

This study was carried out with 19 students from ninth grade, eight boys and eleven girls, aged between fourteen and seventeen years old. They are natives of Tierra Bomba Island, most of them live in Caño del Oro, where the school is located, and some come from a neighboring region on the same island. This group of students belongs to the lowest level of socio-economic classes, which can be evidenced by the lack of resources they have to work during the English classes. For example, most of them do not have an English dictionary, books, electronic devices, or access to an internet connection in their homes.

The participants have a low English proficiency level. When applying the pre-test, the results showed that most could not utter more than two words in English. In fact, despite being in ninth grade, the totality of the students does not accomplish the Basic Standards of Competencies in EFL proposed by the Ministry of Education for sixth and seventh grade found in Guide N°22 English Basic Standards (MEN, 2020). These students spent two years receiving distance classes due to the pandemic. It was a period in which they were receiving learning guides, and the direct contact with the teacher was almost nil due to the lack of internet connection and electronic devices, having a negative impact on students' learning process.

Apart from showing a low English proficiency when returning to on-site classes, they demonstrated interest and enthusiasm in learning English, and correspondingly, they were selected as participants of this research project according to the convenience sampling proposed by Mackey and Gass (2012), which suggests that it involves using what is immediately available. These students demonstrated readiness to embark on this adventure of learning English through Project-based learning to enhance their speaking skills. They demanded English classes

encouraging them to participate, work in groups, and remain active. Consequently, they were the best sample to conduct this study.

3.3 Instruments

For the data collection process, the researcher applied several instruments, a teacher's journal, a students' questionnaire, a students' interview, a non-participant observer checklist, a language proficiency test, and speaking rubrics. The following chart displays the different instruments implemented during this study's diagnostic and action stages.

Table 2

Data collection techniques and instruments in the diagnostic stage

No.	Data collection techniques	Data collection instruments	Rationale
1	Students survey	Questionnaire	To collect data about students' relationship with English learning and their performance using the language.
2	Students Interview	Interview protocol	To collect information about ninth-grade students' opinions regarding EFL and their strengths and weaknesses in using the foreign language.
3	Non-participant observation	Checklist	To register the behaviors and different attitudes of the students during the English class.
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.

Table 3*Data collection techniques and instruments in the action stage*

No.	Data collection techniques	Data collection instruments	Rationale
1	Test	Pre-test	To diagnose students' level of proficiency in speaking.
2	Self-assessment	Questionnaire	To collect information about students' perceptions of their performance, strengths, and weaknesses in using a foreign language.
3	Non-participant observation	Checklist	To register the behaviors and different attitudes of the students during the English class.
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 measure the progress of students' speaking skills and compare with the pre-test results to state the impact of the action stage of the study.
6	Scoring	Rubrics	To assess students' speaking skills by scoring from band 0 or null to 5 according to the CEFR for an A1 level.

4. Stages of the Study

4.1 Diagnostic Stage

A diagnostic stage was carried out during the second semester of 2021 to identify the difficulties in the EFL classroom. When starting the stage, data were collected from 19 eighth graders. Raw data was gathered in the classroom where students had classes to maintain the normal daily conditions, preventing any threat to validity. The researcher implemented the aforementioned instruments to collect information from three various sources.

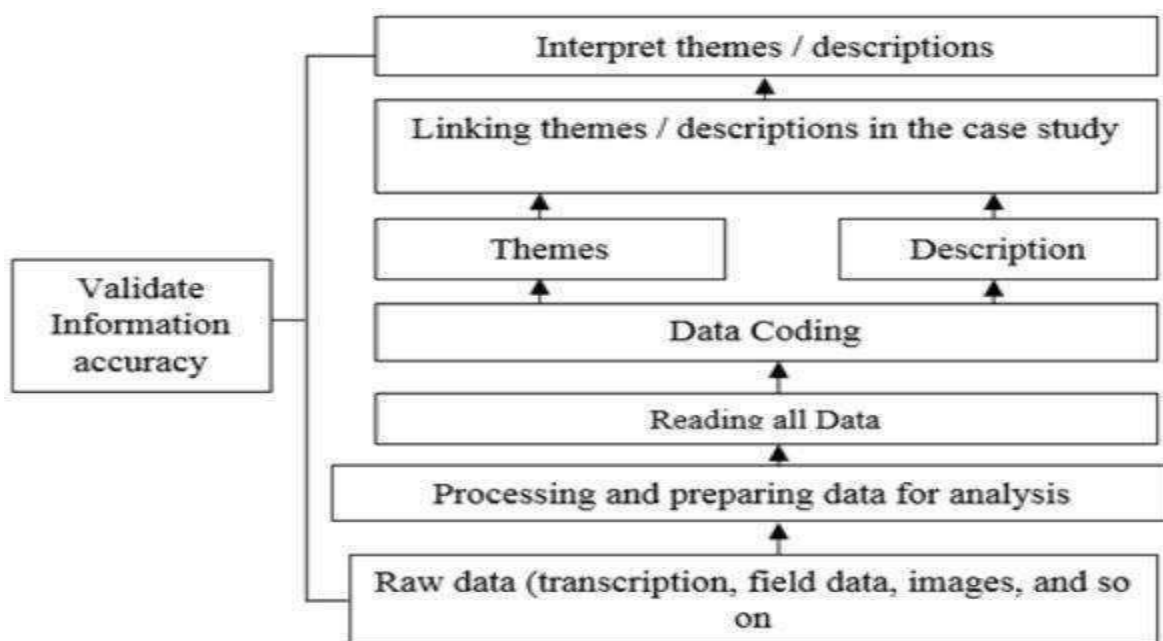
First, students were asked to fill out a questionnaire in Spanish about their perception of the EFL class and their performance in the English learning standards proposed by the MEN (See Appendix 1). This survey contained five open-ended questions that gave the researcher a broader vision of students' thoughts about their EFL classroom and attitudes toward learning English. Students spent around 20 minutes answering the questions, and every time they had doubts about a question, the teacher explained what was required. Second, an interview was also conducted (See Appendix 2), considering that, as Avineri (2017) suggests, questionnaires are more effective when they are joined with other data collection methods like interviews. Students were interviewed in two sessions of 60 minutes. They were asked open-ended questions about their relationship and experience with the English language, their level of proficiency in the four language skills, and their perceptions of the EFL classes. This instrument aimed to collect information about students' opinions regarding EFL and their strengths and weaknesses in using a foreign language. Third, a colleague filled out a checklist intending to register the behaviors and different attitudes of the students in one of the one-hour English classes, which helped enrich the data collection process with an additional source of information to ensure the reliability and objectivity of this research (See Appendix 3). Finally, a teacher's journal was also used to gather

information about the second semester of the year (See Appendix 4, diagnostic stage sample). The participant-observer wrote her class observation providing details and descriptions of the events, behaviors, and movements in the EFL classroom.

For the data analysis process, Creswell's (2014) approach was followed. This linear approach is built from the bottom to the top, but its different stages are interrelated and do not necessarily follow the order presented. The following figure illustrates the various steps proposed by Creswell for data analysis.

Figure 2

Data Analysis in Qualitative Research (Creswell, 2014)



Note. This figure illustrates the qualitative data analysis process from *Research Design:*

Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (p.247) by Creswell, SAGE.

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According to the abovementioned approach, the first step was *organizing and preparing* the data for analysis. It involved transcribing the interviews, typing the researcher's journal, and arranging the students' questionnaires and checklists. The data was organized and joined together, considering the different sources of information.

Once the data was organized, the second step was *reading through all the data*. The data collected through the four instruments were read to get a general sense of the information provided by the different sources. It was an inspection phase that helped the researcher to have a general idea about the participants' overall thoughts and perceptions.

The third step followed was the *coding process*. The researcher divided the material into segments of text and provided labels. During this stage, it was used Atlas.ti software to optimize and make the process faster and more efficient. Following Tesch's guidance for the coding process (Creswell 2014), the researcher started the process by reviewing all the data collected in the four instruments and making a list of topics that later were abbreviated as codes and written next to the appropriate portion of text in Atlas.ti software. The researcher clustered topics related to others to reduce each instrument's total list of codes and generated a group of five themes. Finally, the researcher alphabetized and listed the categories and frequencies in each instrument, as can be observed in table 4.

Then, the process of triangulation took place. According to Freeman (1998) “triangulation means including multiple sources of information or points of view on the phenomenon or question you are investigating” (p.96). The data collected through the four instruments were triangulated, bringing all the data sources to bear on a single point (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p.146). According to Terrel (2016), triangulation of the data helps the researcher ensure credibility since this process minimizes bias in findings. The triangulation

process resulted in 18 codes, and following the fourth step proposed by Creswell (2014), the researcher used the coding to *generate a small group of themes*. When themes are established after the triangulation process and "based on converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, then this process can be claimed as adding to the study's validity" (Creswell, 2014, p.191). The four data collection techniques reported the following five themes in Table 4: Students' Positive Attitude Towards English, Students' lack of Speaking Skills, Students' Negative Attitude Towards English, Students' Low English Proficiency, and Students' Need for Engaging Activities.

The following table illustrates the themes of the four data collection techniques with their operationalization, total frequencies, and percentages.

Table 4

Data triangulation in the diagnostic stage

Themes	Operationalization	Journal	Checklist	Interview	Survey	Total	Percentage
Lack of speaking skills	It evidences the students' weaknesses to convey messages in English.	55	38	14	30	137	21,7%
Negative perception towards English	It describes the negative thoughts and perceptions students have towards English.	54	9	17	11	91	14,4%
Need for engaging activities	It describes students' requests for activities in which they can participate more and discover new things.	12	16	13	25	66	10,4%
Positive attitude towards English	It portrays students' good behaviour during the class and some insights that they enjoy the class.	83	44	41	81	249	39,4%
Low Language proficiency	It describes students' low	21	4	35	29	89	14,1%

	performance when using the L2					
Total	225	111	120	176	632	100%

This diagnostic stage aimed to analyze and identify the possible problems hindering eighth-grade students' EFL learning process. The final step in the data analysis process, according to Creswell (2014), involves **building interpretations** or providing meaning to the data. The following graph portrays a summary of the findings in the diagnostic stage that helped the researcher build an interpretation of the problem under study.

Figure 3

List of emerging themes in the diagnostic stage

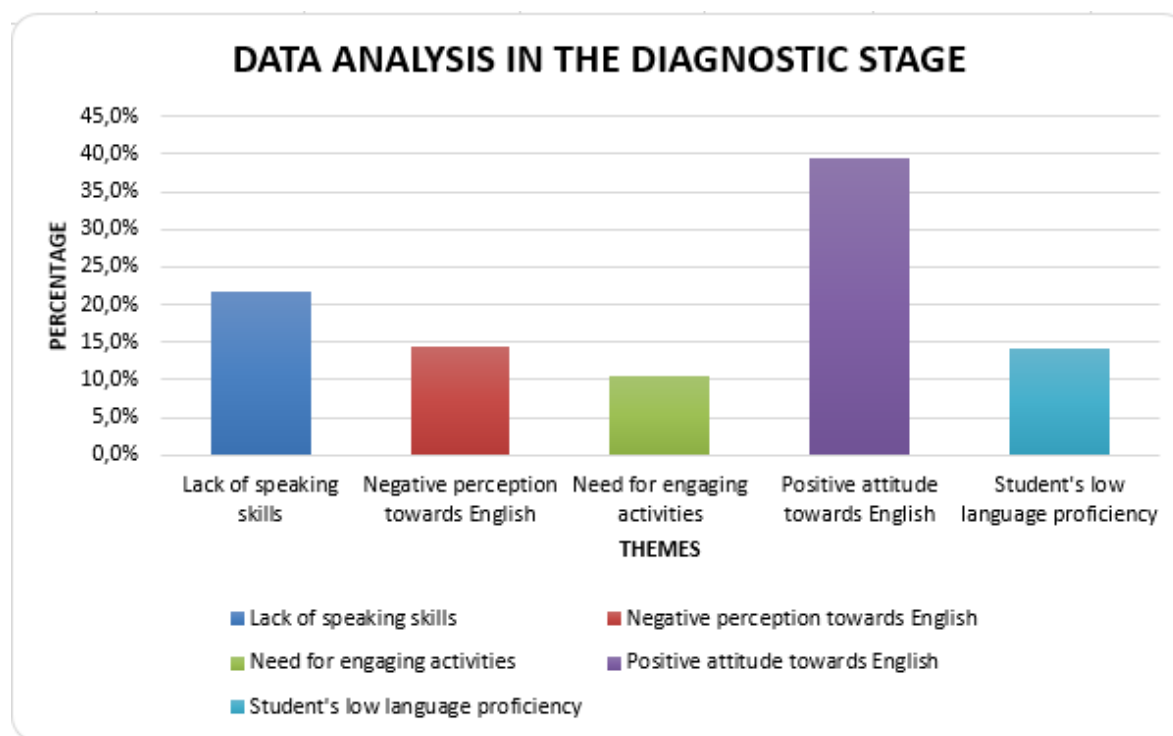


Table 4 and Figure 3 evidence the themes that emerged from the triangulation process. They highlight their frequency in terms of percentages and are described in detail in the following paragraphs.

Positive Attitudes Toward English. According to the information collected, the theme *positive attitude toward English* was the most frequent in the analysis, with 39,4%. This theme portrays students' good behavior during the class and some signs that they enjoyed the class. During the diagnostic stage, the researcher could evidence that students felt good when they were exposed to the target language. An example of this can be found in the students' interview; when the researcher asked about the way they felt when the teacher spoke English, a student said that she liked it when the teacher spoke English because they loved the way it sounded (Student 3, personal communication, August 11, 2021).

The researcher also noticed that students were very active in the class while doing the activities. They were very participative, showing that they liked and enjoyed the class. For example, one of the most frequent behaviors the non-participant observer marked in the checklist while observing the class was participation (see Appendix 3, Diagnostic stage sample). The observer reported 17 moments in which the students participated in different activities during the class. Another example supporting this finding is the students' interview; when the researcher asked about what they consider a perfect English class, a student answered that “he would love a class where they could participate a lot by going to the board and doing several exercises” (Student 11, personal communication, August 11, 2021). This claim demonstrates students' desire for classes where they had the opportunity to participate because they would like to do it. However, they expect to have all the tools or knowledge required to participate. Throughout the data analysis, the researcher found that students were very participative when clear about what to do. For example, the researcher asked about what the students liked the most about their English class while doing the interview, and students expressed, “I like it when I understand the topics,

and I have to work on activities and participate” (student 9, personal communication, August 11, 2021).

Besides, the instruments showed that this positive attitude was closely related to the support and encouragement provided by the teacher; therefore, whenever the teacher provided instructions clearly and elicited information, the students were eager to participate. Remarkably, the participant observer reported in her journal that when the teacher started asking questions about how to say different parts of the body in Spanish related to a song performed before, most of the students answered the questions because they could remember the vocabulary from the activity; however, some students did not answer because they did not remember the meaning of the words, so the teacher asked them to sing the song, and at the end, most of them could remember the word. Students were very participative during the activity, saying the words in Spanish. (Teacher’s Journal, August 19, 2021)

Overall, throughout the different instruments implemented during this diagnostic stage, it was found that students had a positive attitude toward learning English. This positive attitude is reflected in their good behavior during class and their high participation in the activities.

Lack of Speaking Skills. The data analysis reported that the *lack of speaking skills* theme stood out with a frequency of 21.7%. This theme shows students' weaknesses in conveying English messages and explains students' silence while the professor asks them to answer something in English. The four instruments applied during this stage show students could not use English in class interactions. For instance, the teacher's journal exposed the periods of silence when the teacher asked the students to answer in English and some of the students' responses when they were asked to speak English. Most students argued that they did not speak

English and could not answer. The following excerpt taken from the teacher's journal is evidence of those mentioned above:

I asked them to tell me in English what the reading was about. My idea was to see how much they could say in English about the reading, but my students did not answer, so I repeated it in Spanish, and they were silent. I interrupted the period of silence, asking the students (in Spanish) what they could tell me about the reading. Then, students told me they could answer but not in English because it was too difficult to say in English, and they did not speak English. Most students agreed with that comment by saying it was true. (See Appendix 4, Diagnostic stage sample)

Students' interviews also validated this finding since they answered several times that they did not speak English (see Appendix 2, sample). For instance, the researcher asked about their proficiency in speaking, and most of the students answered, "Speak in English? Nooo, teacher. I do not know how to say anything in English" (student 2, personal communication, August 11, 2021). The researcher also asked about the way students felt when the teacher asked them to answer questions in English, and students' responses reflected their lack of speaking skills, as can be noticed in the answer of one of the students. The student answered, "I feel frustrated because I do not speak English, so I am not capable of responding in English" (Student 8, personal communication, August 11, 2021).

The previous examples taken from the students' interviews demonstrated that the students perceived the lack of speaking skills as a barrier that prevented them from achieving the goal of answering her questions in English. On the other hand, the non-participant observer checklist showed that the most frequent behavior noticed by the observer during the English class was that

students used Spanish all the time in their interventions, and it was due to the lack of speaking skills (see Appendix 3, Diagnostic stage sample).

Finally, the survey applied to the students showed as a result of one of the questions that students considered speaking the most difficult skill for them. This instrument also revealed in some open-ended questions that students considered they need to learn to speak English because they think it is essential since they live in a context frequented by tourists. Additionally, when students were asked about the activities in which they do not like to participate, most of them answered that in the speaking activities since they do not speak English, but they also explained that they need to practice speaking and learn vocabulary in class to develop this skill as can be observed in the following excerpt taken from the students' survey:

No me gusta participar en las actividades en las que tengo que hablar en inglés porque yo no sé nada, pero si sería chévere aprender a hablarlo para poder hablar con los turistas, pero para eso hay que practicar bastante y aprender un poco de palabras. [I do not like to participate in speaking activities because I do not speak English, but it would be great to learn to speak English to speak with tourists; to do that, we need to practice a lot and learn a lot of words]. (See Appendix 1, sample)

Negative Perception Towards English. Despite being *positive attitudes toward English* the most frequently found in the analysis, the data analysis revealed that the theme of *negative perception towards English* had a frequency of 14.4%, a considerable percentage, although it could be considered contradictory. However, the triangulation process yielded a result that despite having a great attitude in class in terms of participation, interest, and behavior, students also had some negative perceptions towards

learning English. Hence, this theme describes students' negative thoughts and perceptions towards English, perceptions that were found persistent in the four instruments applied.

For example, the teacher's journal reported that most students considered English a difficult language and that they were not good at it. This perception predisposed them to perform the activities in class; they preferred to postpone them until they got home or avoid them. Most of the time, when the teacher asked the students to do an activity, they replied that it was too difficult for them. The following excerpt taken from the teacher's journal supports those mentioned above:

He only said: Teacher, I will do the activity once I get home. The teacher asked the student to start the activity immediately, but he refused and said: No, teacher, I don't want to do the activity right now because I don't like English and I am not good at this.

(Teachers' Journal, August 26, 2021)

The peer observation checklist also reported that students had a negative perception of English since the observer noticed that students complained about the activities on multiple occasions, saying that they were too complicated and unable to do those activities. This perception hinders the students from completing the activities assigned by the teacher. The observer reported that when the teacher assigned an activity, the students first remarked that the English language was complex. In the survey, more evidence about this finding is exposed. For instance, when asked about the difficulty level of learning English, only two students answered that it was easy; the rest responded that it was not that easy. Most students answered: "What I do not like about the English classes is that it is too difficult. Sometimes I do not understand because it is a difficult language" (see Appendix 1, sample).

Finally, the students' interviews also reported this theme as a recurrent finding. Most of the interviewed students expressed that learning English is problematic, resulting in the students' affirmation that they will not be able to learn English, and that affects their future relationship with the language. When students were asked if they see themselves speaking English in the future, 12 answered negatively due to the preconception of difficulty. Students' negative perception of English interferes with the English learning process since they feel that trying to learn English is hopeless. The following was an answer from one of the interviewed students when asked if they saw themselves speaking English in the future: "No, teacher. I don't. English is too difficult to learn" (Student 8, personal communication, August 21, 2021).

Low English Language Proficiency. Another important theme found in the triangulation process, which was frequent in all the instruments applied during the diagnostic stage, is students' *low language proficiency*. This theme has a frequency of 14,1%, and it describes the poor performance of students using the L2. In the journal, the teacher reported that students had weaknesses in the different skills of the language. The description provided by the teacher in the journal showed that sometimes students did not feel comfortable when exposed to the target language due to the lack of communication skills, and they felt frustrated. The students usually complained to the teacher when exposed to the English language as if the teacher's expectations were too high for them. The following excerpt from the teacher's journal helps to illustrate this:

The students feel insecure when they are exposed to English. When I speak in English, they always ask me to speak Spanish because they do not understand. When I ask them to say something in English, they usually refuse. They typically say that they cannot do it and show some reactions of embarrassment; for example, they start laughing. (Teachers' Journal, September 17, 2021)

The peer observation checklist also illustrates that students spoke Spanish in their intervention during the class because they did not have proficiency in using English. The observer reported that students never asked questions in English. Every time they were going to ask something, they used the L1 (see Appendix 3, Diagnostic stage sample).

The survey applied to the students demonstrated low language proficiency as a recurrent finding. The survey had different questions about the competencies standards in English language students should master in eighth grade, according to the MEN. Still, most students said they did not master those standards; therefore, according to the standards, they could not do what was expected in English. For instance, most students answered that they could not identify the general theme and relevant details in conversations, radio news, and oral presentations (see Appendix 1, sample). Students should be able to do it at this level, so it is proof of their low English language proficiency.

Finally, the interview also highlights students' low English proficiency as one of the most frequent issues in the diagnostic stage. During the interview, students were asked how they consider their performance in the different language skills. All the students thought they performed poorly in the four skills: speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Need for Engaging Activities. Another important finding from the data analysis and triangulation process is students' *need for engaging activities*. This theme had a frequency of 10,4 %, a significant percentage. Students' need for engaging activities describes their requests for activities where they can participate more, integrate different activities, discover new things, and be active during the class. The various instruments applied during the diagnostic stage can be found as supporting evidence of this finding.

Firstly, the teacher reported in the journal that students demonstrated not to be engaged in the class; they complained about the activities and got distracted easily at different moments of the class. As mentioned before, students are very active and easily bored when working for a long time on the same activity. In different classes, for example, the students told the teacher they were bored and wanted to do something different. One of the teachers' reflections on this issue was that she needed to consider students' interests and design activities that caught more students' attention (See Appendix 3, Diagnostic stage sample).

In the checklist, the observer also reported that some students got distracted easily during the class and complained about the activities they had to do (see Appendix 3, Diagnostic stage sample), which evidenced the teacher's need to implement activities that involve students in the learning process and keep them attentive and active. The interview with the students revealed students' interest in activities that kept them motivated and engaged during class. When students were asked about the activities they liked the most in English class, they all expressed that they wanted the teacher to implement different activities that kept them participating and doing different things instead of devoting the whole class to working only on one thing. Some of them mentioned, for example, that they wanted the teacher to implement role-plays and dynamics in the class as exposed for a student as follows: "I would like the teacher to implement role-plays, presentations, and more dynamic activities" (Student 14, personal communication, August 21, 2021).

Finally, the survey displayed results related to those mentioned above, highlighting the need for engaging activities. Students expressed that they do not like boring English classes with routine activities because they do not pay attention. They also answered that they wanted

activities that kept them participating, and they would like to have drama activities, games, and presentations in their English class (see Appendix 1, sample).

On the whole, the *need for engaging activities* was persistent in all four instruments applied in this diagnostic stage. Moreover, all the instruments disclosed that students that were not engaged in the activities got distracted easily and ignored the class. Besides, it evidenced students' English class expectations summarized in appealing activities that awaken their interest and participation or that can keep them engaged in their English learning process.

4.2 Action Stage

The diagnostic stage revealed that students lacked speaking skills and needed engaging activities since they had the negative perception that learning English is difficult. Based on that, there was a need to propose and implement a series of engaging activities that help enhance students' speaking skills by implementing six communication strategies under Project-based learning.

Six workshops were designed and applied to foster ninth graders' speaking skills during the action stage (see Appendix 5). The six workshops were designed and implemented under the Project Based Learning (PBL) method. Consequently, three projects were planned during the Action Stage, and each project was carried out through two workshops. To gather information related to the variables of the present study: students' speaking skills and communication strategies under PBL, three data collection instruments were administered, namely a teacher's journal, a non-participant observer checklist, and a student self-assessment (see Appendix 6). Before starting the application of the six workshops, the researcher applied a pre-test to diagnose the actual performance of the students in the English Language and validate the evidence found

in the diagnostic stage (see Appendix 7). After implementing the workshops, she applied a post-test to measure students' achievements (see Appendix 8).

Furthermore, after each workshop was applied, the data collection instruments were analyzed to follow Kemmis and McTaggart's (2000) steps of doing action research. This analysis guided the study to a process of reflection in which a new plan of action and strategies emerged to keep improving the practice in the following workshops. The following Table illustrates each workshop's names, topics, and communication strategies.

Table 5

List of projects and workshops applied during the action stage

Project Name	Workshop Name	Communication Strategy	Language content	Final Product
Island Promo Video	Knowing the Island	Prefabricated Pattern	Prepositions of place There is- There are, a and an, Local places vocabulary	A Video
	Making the Island Known	Time-gaining Strategy	Wh questions with be, Local places vocabulary	
Saving the Island Campaign	Taking Care of the Island	Approximation	Present simple – Should- Should not- expressions to give an opinion – Environment vocabulary.	An Environmental Campaign
	Raising your voice	Circumlocution	Present simple: Imperative and negative form, and vocabulary related to the environment.	
Fisherman's Day Fair	A Day in the Life of an Islander	Appealing for Help	Present simple: Affirmative, interrogative, Daily Routines, free time activities, time expressions.	A Fair
	Island Celebrations	All-purpose words	Present simple, Prepositions; at, in, on. Wh questions with the Present simple.	

4.2.1 Project One: Island Promo Video

Considering the essentials of PBL, the researcher designed this first project to engage students in their English language learning process by using students' context and interests. In a regular conversation with the students about the Island and its historical places, the researcher noticed students' lack of knowledge about their cultural and historical identity; therefore, the idea of this project arose. Students questioned what they could do to make Tierra Bomba known, and then the researcher used this question to lead the project. According to the students' consideration, working on a video that helps them promote the Island was a great idea because they could learn more about their culture and history through inquiry. Hence, the researcher divided the project into two workshops to ensure the project's proper development, and each workshop comprised a series of tasks that prepared the students to develop and present the final product.

4.2.1.1 Workshop 1: Knowing the Island. This first workshop is divided into three main parts: first, introduction, then development, and finally, consolidation. In the introduction section, the teacher presented the communication strategy, prefabricated pattern as the strategy to implement in the speaking activities. The teacher also presented places on the Island vocabulary, the use of prepositions of place, and there is/there are. Besides, the teacher used the lyric of a song and illustrations to introduce the vocabulary. In the second section, named development, the teacher designed a set of activities that oriented the students to the project's development. For this purpose, the teacher used some prefabricated patterns for the students to use when doing the speaking task. Besides, in this section, the project's construction started, so the teacher guided the students out of the school to visit essential places on the island and begin inquiring and discovering. The last section was consolidation. In this section, students had to consolidate their

ideas and present the speaking task in which they had to pretend to be a tourist guide and introduce one of the visited places in front of the class by using the communication strategy learned in class. Finally, the workshop ended with a peer evaluation through which students expressed their opinions about their classmates' presentations.

4.2.1.2 Workshop 2: Making the Island Known. This workshop was designed following the same structure: introduction, development, and consolidation. In the introduction section, the researcher used a set of activities to introduce the new vocabulary and communication strategy to use in the speaking tasks. In this case, the strategy the teacher selected was the time-gaining strategy. In the development section, the students started working on the strategies to make the island known, which was the final task. The teacher designed some activities for this section that help the students construct the language knowledge required for the project presentation. Besides, the teacher gave the students ideas to prepare the video promoting the island and generate more ideas in groups. Finally, students could record and upload the videos to a Facebook profile in the consolidation. Then, all the students presented their videos in front of the class.

4.2.2 Project Two: Saving the Island Campaign

After developing the first project and knowing the great interest in working on the project raised by students, the researcher designed the second project considering students' interests and context. The idea for this second project came from students' concerns about the high pollution level in Caño del Oro. Students noticed that their classroom was very dirty and needed to do something to solve that situation reflected in the school. The teacher led students to formulate a question that drove the project following PBL principles; as a result, students started questioning what they could do to raise environmental awareness in the community and minimize the impact

of pollution on the island. Considering different ideas, the group decided to design an ecological campaign to protect the island from pollution. Consequently, the teacher created two workshops to develop this second project (Appendix 5).

4.2.2.1 Workshop 3: Taking Care of the Island. This workshop started with the presentation of the communication strategy to use: Approximation. Then, the teacher introduced the topic or problem base of the workshop through some authentic pictures of the island to elicit previous language knowledge from the students. Finally, the teacher introduced the new vocabulary related to the environment using a video about caring for the earth. The second part of the workshop consisted of developing the first part of the project. For this purpose, the teacher provided students with some structures that helped them enrich their language knowledge and express their suggestions about what people should do to protect the island. In this section, students started to work on the organization of a round table which was the speaking task of the workshop and the task that trained them to present the final product. Finally, students had to arrange the round table, define the roles and start sharing their ideas about what people should and should not do to protect the island by using the communication strategies learned in class and the vocabulary and useful expressions.

4.2.2.2 Workshop 4: Raising Your Voice. The second part of the project started with the introduction. In this section, the teacher presented the communication strategy circumlocution and gave students some examples. In this section, the teacher also introduced the project's main idea for the students to start thinking about how to develop it. For this purpose, the teacher started presenting an introductory video about the planet in future years if people do not take care of the earth. Then, the teacher continued showing a video about an environmental campaign for students to get more ideas about the project. In this section, the teacher introduced

the new vocabulary through the videos and a poster related to the protection of the planet. Then, students started working on the project's final product in the development section, so students had to work in groups to think and develop ideas about creating an environmental campaign to raise environmental awareness in the community. The teacher gave the students some steps to follow to be clear about the message to send. Then, students had to define the problem, the solution, and the actions to take in the campaign. As a final step of this workshop section, students worked in groups to create posters with the message they wanted to send to the community with the campaign. Finally, in the consolidation section of the workshop, students went out of the classroom and pasted the posters in different places of the school and the community. Then, they started the environmental campaign by talking to the educational community about the importance of taking care of the environment and giving suggestions to protect the island from environmental problems.

4.2.3 Project Three: Fisherman's Day Fair

The final project, Fisherman's Day Fair, in honor of a regional celebration in July, consisted of two workshops. The first is named "A Day in the Life of an Islander," and the second is "Island Celebrations." The idea of the project came from students' interest in this celebration. Students were discussing the celebration and inquiring whether it occurs only on the Island or is also celebrated in Cartagena and other regions. The teacher started asking more questions about this celebration, and some students suggested starting a related project to get to know more about it and find a way to preserve the students' cultural identity. Thus, departing from the question, students asked how they could help keep the cultural identity, and the idea of organizing a fair that projects different aspects of Fisherman's Day came. Consequently, the

teacher designed the two workshops through students who developed the various topics and tasks that led them to the presentation of the final product of the project: The Fisherman's Day fair.

4.2.3.1 Workshop 5: a Day in the Life of an Islander. Following the established structure for the workshops, the researcher introduced the communication strategy appealing for help and gave the students some examples of how to use this strategy. Then, as part of the introduction section of the workshop, the researcher played a video about the different routines that teenagers from other parts of the world have. Consequently, the teacher asked questions about the video to elicit some previous language knowledge and continued introducing the new vocabulary about daily routines, different ways to tell the time, and the prepositions of time. For the development section, students identified other people's daily routines, considered and wrote their daily routines as islanders, and compared if they were similar or different. Finally, in the consolidation section, students worked on the speaking activity. Students pretended to be famous YouTubers and recorded a video describing their lives as islanders for outsiders to know how a day is in their lives as islanders. For this purpose, students used the vocabulary learned in class, the communication strategy proposed in the workshop, and the previous ones.

4.2.3.2 Workshop 6: Island Celebrations. The sixth workshop presented the final product of the last project students worked on. As an initial part of the workshop, the teacher introduced the communication strategy using all-purpose words and gave the students some examples of how to use this strategy. Then, the teacher introduced the new vocabulary related to cultural celebrations, and students worked on a series of activities to put into practice the vocabulary. In the development section, students worked in groups to start designing the fair; for this purpose, the teacher suggested the class in groups and assigned each group an aspect of the celebration. There were five groups, one in charge of the food, another in charge of the setup and

decoration, the other in charge of the costume, another in charge of the music, and the last in charge of the characters. Thus, all the students worked on preparing those aspects for the fair following teacher's instructions and guidance. Students had to inquire about how those aspects are presented in the celebration to prepare for the consolidation section. Finally, in the consolidation, students decorated the classroom following the Fisherman's Day theme, and all the students were dressed according to the celebration. The classroom was open for all the students to come in and watch. During the fair, each group presented and described the aspect of the festival they were in charge of.

4.3 Evaluation Stage

The following section presents the results and analysis of the instruments implemented during the action stage and the triangulation of the data gathered through those instruments. The researcher analyzed the information per project, each composed of two workshops; thus, the present section presents the evaluation of the impact communication strategies had on students speaking skills during the implementation of the six workshops designed following the PBL approach during the action stage.

4.3.1 Results and Analysis of the Workshops

4.3.1.1 Project One: Island Promo Video. Once the researcher applied the first two workshops, she analyzed the three data collection instruments (teacher's journal, non-participant observer checklist, and student's self-assessment). Then, she triangulated the results of each instrument, and the analysis can be observed in the following chart.

Table 6

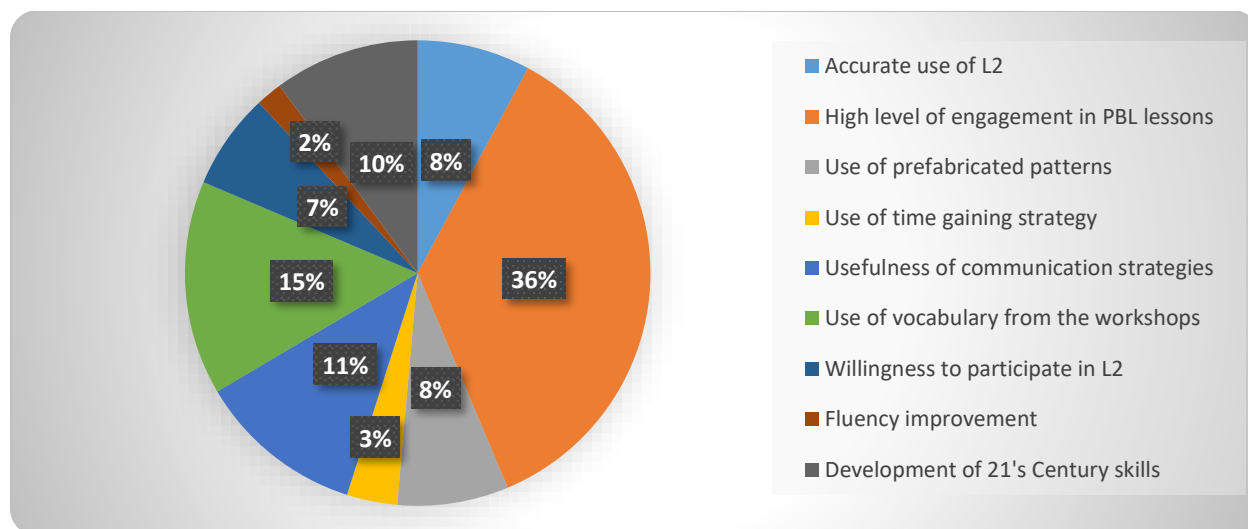
Triangulation Project One (workshops one and two)

Themes	Journal	Checklist	Self-assessment	Total	Percentage
Accurate use of L2	14	31	67	112	7,9%
Development of 21's Century skills	13	38	93	144	10,1%
Fluency improvement	2	16	8	26	1,8%
High level of engagement in PBL lessons	117	120	273	510	35,8%
Usefulness of CS's	25	36	104	165	11,6%
Use of prefabricated patterns	26	47	37	110	7,7%
Use of time-gaining strategies	3	28	19	50	3,5%
Use of vocabulary from the workshops	20	38	154	212	14,9%
Willingness to participate in L2	13	33	49	95	6,7%
Total	233	387	804	1424	100%

The triangulation table displays the categories from the different instruments and their frequencies. The following figure provides a broader picture of the categories found in the three instruments during the application of the first two workshops and their frequency.

Figure 4

Data triangulation project one



Regarding the results displayed in Table 6, it can be stated that the category with the highest frequency level was a *high level of engagement in PBL lessons*, with a frequency corresponding to 36%. This category was the highest of the three instruments, demonstrating that from the three points of view, pupils were engaged in PBL lessons. They demonstrated that they enjoyed working on this first workshop and that they considered they were learning since PBL topics reflected their interest and context, which caught their attention and engaged them in the learning process. Teachers' observations on this matter can evidence the following excerpt:

Students started working in groups and designing what they wanted to do in their videos and what they wanted to show to make people know about Tierra Bomba. Students were very concentrated on the activity; they were discussing and designing where they were going to record the video and what they were going to share. At this point, students were so engaged in the activity that they were unaware of being in an English class. They discussed the topic, gave opinions, and worked enthusiastically on the Project. (See Appendix 4, Action stage sample)

On the other hand, from the learner's point of view, they were engaged in the topics presented during the PBL lessons since they were more participative and committed to the

assignments. An example of this can be observed in the following answer of one of the students in his self-assessment when he was asked to write about their comments about workshop 1.

I liked this workshop because it was pretty interesting. I feel that I enjoyed it a lot. I participated all the time in all the activities. Besides, I think the topic was engaging since we had to talk about something we like, which is our island. I feel that working on a project was very interesting since it allowed me to work with my classmates, go out, to know some places, inquire, and overall, we could participate in everything. (See Appendix 6, sample)

Finally, from the point of view of the external observer, it was identified that students were very participative in speaking activities carried out under the PBL method. The following is a comment from the non-participant observer checklist fulfilled during the first workshop.

Students were engaged in the activities. They expressed in different moments that they liked PBL bases activities. Thus, they were always proposing and making suggestions. For example, in terms of vocabulary, they always asked for new words to learn. (Checklist, workshop 1)

The second category with a high frequency was the *use of vocabulary from the workshops*, with a frequency of 15%. This code shows students' vocabulary acquisition from the workshops since they could remember that vocabulary and put it into practice in different situations. The following excerpt illustrates what the teacher observed in class. "Every time they arrived at a different place, the teacher asked them what that place was, and students always answered in English since they had already learned that vocabulary in previous classes" (Teacher's journal, workshop 1).

According to the teacher's annotation, the students were in a context different from the classroom since the teacher had taken the students to visit the most important places on the island. The teacher asked students to name other sites in English, and the students could do it because there was a good acquisition of the vocabulary taught in the lessons. The use of the vocabulary from the lesson is closely related to what they had of that vocabulary, and in turn, it relates to the code that had the highest frequency: a high level of engagement in PBL lessons. Hence, it could be asserted that the PBL environment under the vocabulary was taught helped the students better acquire it.

On the other hand, the external observer also reported that students used the vocabulary studied in class and made the following comment demonstrating vocabulary usage as a relevant code in this analysis. "All the students used the vocabulary about the places, colors, and adjectives during the island presentation in the video and the presentation of the final product" (Checklist, workshop 2). Therefore, students demonstrated having learned the vocabulary and successfully used it. According to the students' perception, they stated that they could remember the vocabulary when needed. The following excerpt from the student's self-assessment demonstrated students' thoughts about their performance related to the use of vocabulary during the class. "I never forgot the vocabulary studied in class. When I had to use it, I always remembered it. Mostly because I always related the vocabulary with something else" (see Appendix 6, sample). "The students rated their performance as outstanding since they considered that they never forgot the vocabulary studied in class, and when needed to use it, they could remember it.

Another category that emerged from this triangulation was the *usefulness of communication strategies*. This category had a frequency of 11%, and it was present in all the

instruments used by the researcher during the implementation of the workshops. This category highlights the benefits that brought the use of communication strategies for students; for instance, the teacher observed that students could convey short messages in English with the support of communication strategies. Besides, this code restates the relevance and importance of using and teaching students prefabricated patterns and time-gaining strategies so they have a tool that allows them to communicate effectively in English. The teacher's reflection on students' behavior in class suggests that students found communication strategies an ally to dissolve the barriers in communication. The following excerpt illustrates this assumption. "Students were attentive to the explanation of the communication strategies since they found in the strategy previously studied a tool to achieve the goal of communicating their ideas" (see Appendix 4, Action stage sample).

Another category of high relevance was the *development of 21st-century skills*, with a frequency of 10%. The results showed that there was a significant development of 21st-century skills in the students through the implementation of PBL. Especially collaborative skills, critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. The instruments showed that workshops based on PBL demanded the students to face situations in which they had to work in groups and be critical to identify and solve problems in their context, as well as use communication when making presentations or presenting the final project. In the teacher's journal, it can be observed that students worked on different activities that involved and demanded the development of 21st-century skills. For example, when designing the project and thinking about the driving questions, students had to be critical and think about the real situation that those driving questions involved, but they also had to be very creative to find a solution and present it as a final product. Pupils indicated they felt challenged when they had to think about the questions

that drove the projects since they had to come up with ideas to find solutions. For instance, one student conveyed the following in the students' self-assessment: "I liked that we all had to think about problems in our community but also create strategies to solve them, and that is something we never do; for example, I had never thought about the importance of knowing our Island and let others know about it" (Student's self-assessment, workshop 2). On the other hand, the following excerpt highlights collaborative and communication skills developed during workshops one and two.

Another important and relevant observation from this workshop was that students liked working in groups. They demonstrated that they enjoy working with their classmates and feel supported, and are not on the spot alone. Thus, it is a great idea to reinforce teamwork and cooperative work considering that students can also learn from their peers. (See Appendix 4, Action stage sample)

Furthermore, the non-participant observer checklist also demonstrated the relevance of this category in this research since it was exposed that students worked cooperatively with their classmates and "were committed to teamwork. All of the students enjoyed working in groups and communicating their ideas successfully to get great results" (Checklist, workshop 2). According to this, it can be established that students enjoyed working collaboratively and sharing their ideas with their classmates, which positively influenced their performance when doing the assignments.

Besides, the teacher reported that she invited some teachers and the coordinator for the presentation of the final product of the first project, where each group had to introduce their product and talk about their work and the relevance of promoting the island and making people know about this place. Hence, the teacher's journal accentuated that:

The process of doing a project helped the students to have the ability to speak in English about the island and to let others know about the important places on the island, and using the communication strategies they learned made the process of communicating their ideas more successful. Consequently, the presentation of the final product of a project is an important event for the students to develop their communication skills.

(Teacher's journal, workshop 2)

The results of triangulating the three instruments used during this action stage also disclosed two special categories with an equal frequency of 8%. On the one hand, there is the use of prefabricated patterns, and on the other hand, accurate use of L2. This similarity in the frequencies suggests a correlation between them. First, it was found that during the first two workshops, students significantly used the prefabricated patterns taught by the teacher in class to communicate and answer the teacher's questions. Most of the time, students could express their ideas by taking advantage of the prefabricated patterns. For instance, the researcher reported in her journal that prefabricated patterns helped students to perform well in their speaking activities, as it is remarked in the following excerpt:

Prefabricated patterns helped the students perform well in their speaking activity, giving them the confidence to do what they were asked to. For example, the teacher asked some questions about the places, and students could answer using the prefabricated patterns studied in class. (Teachers' journal, workshop 1)

The use of prefabricated patterns led the students to use L2 accurately since they were attached to those structures that allowed them to communicate their ideas. Consequently, students succeeded in communicating accurately. This means that according to the A1 level, they used some simple structures correctly. Accordingly, it can be asserted that the accurate use of L2

resulted, to some extent, from prefabricated patterns. The non-participant observer reported the accurate use of L2, claiming that “students spoke accurately using the right grammar structures when describing the places” (Checklist, workshop 2). Besides, the external observer also reported that students were very attached to the prefabricated patterns. “Students were very accurate when speaking using the prefabricated patterns. When they were asked something different and had to answer without a pattern, they were limited to using just monosyllables” (Checklist, workshop 2). Thus, in this case, the accuracy in L2 relied on the prefabricated patterns. Most of the students confirmed this relation of dependence in the students’ self-assessment; when they were asked about their performance in the appropriate use of some grammar structures, they claimed to be strong, arguing that they used some patterns that helped them to speak using the grammar structures learned. This answer is described below in one of the students’ answers when they were asked to explain why they considered their performance in accuracy as strong: “Porque yo aprendí los temas y además, había algunas estructuras que me ayudaron a construir mis oraciones usando por ejemplo: there is and there are, o también el presente simple”[Because I learned the topics, and besides, there were some structures that helped me to construct my sentences using for example, there is, or there are, or the simple present] (see Appendix 6, sample).

Another important category from the analysis and triangulation of the three instruments used during these first two workshops was the *willingness to participate in L2*. The analysis presented this category with a frequency of 7%, representing that students wanted to participate in speaking activities; they were willing to express their ideas in English and keep learning vocabulary to use in their interventions in class.

On the one hand, the analysis of teachers' journals revealed that students were engaged in the topics under discussion. They wanted to participate, and since the conversation was in English, they did it in English. Consequently, it is pertinent to assert that using a topic that calls students' attention increases their interest in participating in class and positively affects the use of L2. Furthermore, the teacher also reported that students did not refuse to use L2 in their interventions; quite the contrary, whenever they felt capable, they chose English to participate. The following excerpt illustrates those mentioned above.

During the discussion, the teacher used English to ask the questions, and without asking the students to answer in English, most students always tried to use English in their answers. Students felt they could talk about the topic and made an effort to try to do it in English because they wanted to participate in the conversation. (Teacher's journal, workshop 2)

Additionally, the analysis of the checklist and student self-assessment also proved the relevance of this category in these first two workshops. From these two perspectives, students significantly participated in using the second language in PBL lessons. For example, the external observer reported that students were very participative in class and always tried to use the L2 during the interventions (Checklist, workshop 1). Besides, students also expressed that they feel confident speaking English because of communication strategies and feel capable of speaking English. Therefore, they liked to participate in speaking activities using L2. The following excerpt corresponded to a student's answer when she was asked about her comments about the workshops.

I felt I could speak English, maybe not that fluently, but I did not speak English. I think that learning vocabulary and knowing communication strategies helped me to construct phrases

in English. I used to fear speaking English because I did not know how. I feel I can do it now since I have the required tools. Thus, I enjoy participating in English-speaking Activities.

(Appendix 6, sample)

The previous excerpt demonstrates the influence of communication strategies on students' willingness to participate in L2. In this measure, they felt strong in English, thus capable of participating in speaking Activities in class.

Finally, the last two categories that resulted from the analysis are *use of time-gaining strategy* and *fluency improvement*. Those were the categories with less analysis frequency, with 3% and 2%, respectively. This result reveals a close relationship between those categories. Thus, it can be established that the more students used the gap fillers, such as gaining strategy, the more they improved their fluency. Hence, gap fillers helped them fill the spaces and have time to think about what they will say, avoiding periods of silence. The frequency of those categories denotes that gaining strategies were used less than the communication strategies used during these two workshops. Despite the students being able to use the L2 accurately, they did it with some pauses and hesitation, as evidenced in the last excerpt from the student self-assessment.

After analyzing and reflecting on the results of workshops 1 and 2, the researcher designed the second project that entails workshops 3 and 4 based on students' interests and considering the need for communication strategies students demonstrated to have to keep improving their communication skills. Thus, it was necessary to implement two new communication strategies during these workshops.

4.3.1.2 Project Two: Saving the Island Campaign. After applying workshops three and four, corresponding to the second project completed by students, the three data collection instruments (teacher's journal, non-participant observer checklist, and student's self-assessment)

were analyzed, and the results that emerged from each instrument were triangulated and can be observed in the following table.

Table 7

Triangulation project two (workshops three and four)

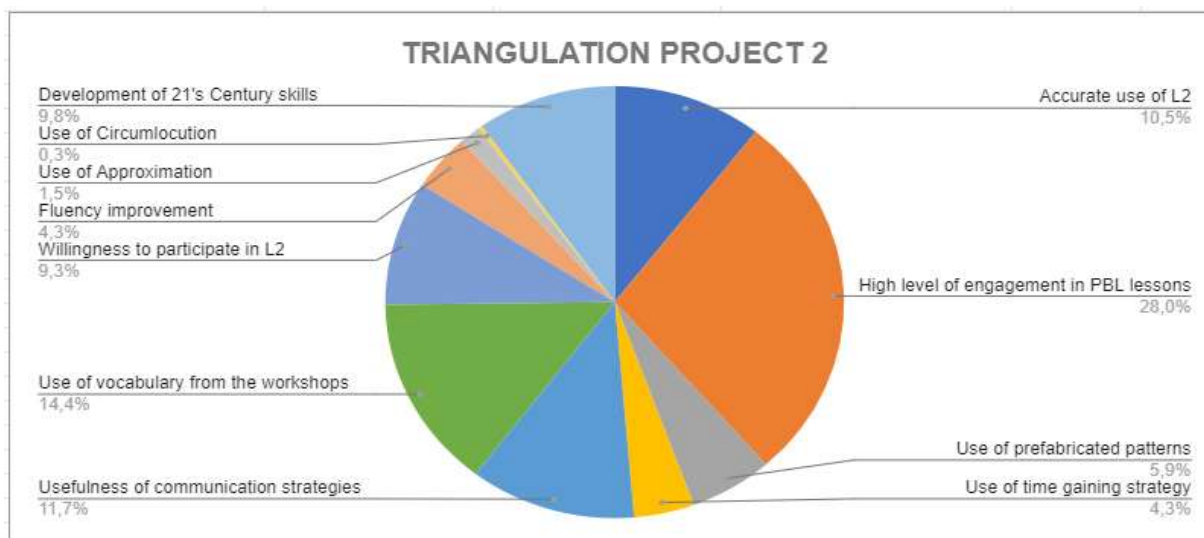
Themes	Journal	Checklist	Self-assessment	Total	Percentage
Accurate use of L2	91	42	75	208	10,5%
Development of 21's century skills	37	42	115	194	9,8%
Fluency improvement	12	27	45	84	4,3%
High level of engagement in PBL lessons	158	193	201	552	28,0%
Use of approximation	8	0	21	29	1,5%
Use of circumlocution	2	0	4	6	0,3%
Usefulness of communication strategies	33	80	118	231	11,7%
Use of prefabricated patterns	33	45	38	116	5,9%
Use of time gaining strategy	21	28	35	84	4,3%
Use of vocabulary from the workshops	48	84	153	285	14,4%
Willingness to participate in L2	24	40	120	184	9,3%
Total	467	581	925	1973	100,0%

The table displays the categories found in the analysis of the instruments implemented during workshops three and 4 with the frequency. After analyzing this information, it was found that the three instruments implemented during these workshops reported a *high level of engagement in PBL lessons* as the theme with the highest frequency and the use of

circumlocution as the theme with the lowest frequency. The following figure shows the triangulation analysis with the percentages per theme in great detail.

Figure 5

Data triangulation project two



The triangulation of the instruments implemented during workshops 3 and 4 revealed that students were very engaged during the PBL lessons; so, a *high level of engagement in PBL lessons* was the category with the highest frequency with 28,0%. As stated, this category predominated in the three instruments with the highest frequency.

Firstly, The Journal, under the teacher's observation, revealed that students were very interested in the lessons based on PBL. The teacher reported that students were very participative during the classes, making suggestions and committed to developing the activities. The following excerpt illustrates this observation.

Students debated the actions we should take to care for the environment. They were very participative and committed to the activity. All the students participated more than twice. At the end of the activity, they said they liked it because it allowed them to learn more about a topic of their interest and express their opinions. (Teacher's Journal, Workshop 3)

Related to this category, the external observer also reported on the checklist that students “were very active in participating in the activities, and they expressed at different moments that they loved working on this new project.” Besides, they expressed they felt attracted to these kinds of activities (See Appendix 3, Action stage sample).

Finally, the self-assessment, which reports students’ perceptions about the implementation of the workshops, demonstrated that students considered the PBL lessons exciting and attractive and recommended continuing to implement the development of projects in class (Self-assessment, workshop 4).

The triangulation of the instruments in these two workshops also highlighted the *use of vocabulary from the workshops* as one with the highest frequency (14,4%), denoting success in implementing the new vocabulary in the workshops. On the one hand, the teacher’s journal reported that during the speaking activities, students included the vocabulary studied in the previous classes in their speech. “During the debate, it was noticeable that students used vocabulary from the lessons; most of the students, for example, used words like trash, plastic, reduce, reuse, recycle, and pollution, among others. They also used the different expressions to give opinions learned in class, namely in my opinion and I think that” (Teacher’s journal, workshop 3).

On the other hand, the external observer reported on the checklist that all the students participated in the speaking activities using the vocabulary taught in class. The observer annotated that “students used the vocabulary related to the environment and the expressions to give opinion learned in class. They looked comfortable when using the vocabulary (See Appendix 3, Action stage sample).

Finally, the self-assessment reported that students admitted to increasing their vocabulary range through the lessons since they recognized that they had used the vocabulary learned during the speaking activities. Besides, they stated that learning the new vocabulary and practicing it in class helped them to develop the speaking activities cause otherwise, they wouldn't be able to perform well (Student self-assessment, workshop 4).

Another important category that emerged in the analysis and triangulation of these two workshops that also had a high frequency in the first two workshops was the *usefulness of communication strategies*, with a frequency of 11.7%, denoting that the implementation of the communication strategies had a positive impact from the perspective of the researcher, the non-participant observer, and the students.

The analysis of the journals implemented by the researcher during the second project showed that the use of communication strategies helped the students to carry out the speaking activities during the project since students implemented the communication strategies when making their oral presentations. The journal also reported that the communication strategy the students used the most was the prefabricated pattern. The use of prefabricated patterns was a category found in the analysis with a representative frequency of 5.9%. The second communication strategy used was time gaining strategy, with a frequency of 4.3%. Thus, implementing those strategies on behalf of the students impacted positively since the students could perform the speaking activities supported by those strategies.

On the other hand, the non-participant observer checklist also reported that the communication strategies were helpful for the students. The external observer reported that students remarkably accepted the communication strategies since they implemented them in the speaking activities. The external observer also noticed that students used specially prefabricated

patterns and time-gaining strategies in their oral interventions. The following excerpt from the checklist illustrates the relevance of communication strategies in developing speaking activities.

During the presentation of the environmental campaign, all the students used communication strategies. For example, the use of prefabricated patterns and time-gaining strategies was noticeable. I could also observe the use of circumlocution in some students. I noticed that by using these communication strategies, students could do an excellent presentation. (Checklist, workshop 4)

As mentioned before, students used communication strategies implemented during the first two workshops. In the case of the Approximation and the Circumlocution strategies implemented during the development of project two, the instruments demonstrated that they were less used. As shown in Graph 5, the *use of approximation* had a frequency of 1,5%, and the *use of circumlocution* had a frequency of 0,3%. That is to say that those were the categories with less frequency from the complete analysis.

The analysis of this second project also revealed an impact on the *development of the 21's century skills* (9,8%), mainly collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication. Students learned to work cooperatively, interacting and communicating with others. This project required students to work in teams and interact with their classmates since they had to create an environmental campaign as a possible solution for the environmental problems on the island. Thus, the analysis of the instruments showed that students felt comfortable working in groups and sharing information with their classmates; therefore, they preferred to work in a team rather than working alone. Students considered that working in groups was helpful for them to learn also from their classmates and to feel more confident about what they had to do, as it is evidenced in the following excerpt taken from students' self-assessment:

A mi me gustó mucho trabajar en grupo porque se hace más fácil la actividad; los compañeros siempre tienen buenas ideas y como dicen por ahí, dos cabezas piensan más que una. Además, uno se siente con más confianza en lo que está haciendo y con menos presión. [I really liked working in groups because the activity became easier, besides our classmates always had great ideas and as the saying says: two heads are better than one. We felt more confident in what we were doing and without pressure.] (Student's self-assessment, Workshop 4)

Furthermore, the analysis also revealed that using inquiry during the development of the projects stimulated the students' critical thinking hand in hand with their creativity. Students were exposed to real-life problems in which they had to give a close look at their context and formulate possible solutions. Finding solutions demand critical and creative thinking that involves creating, going further, and thinking out of the box. Besides, students were assigned to make important decisions about the project due to the nature of the method, which implies that their voices and choices played an essential role in the process. Accordingly, learners' level of commitment and engagement in the process, demonstrated through their active participation, evoked valuable contributions that proved their use of their critical thinking skills. To support this claim, the participant observer reported that:

After analyzing the problem, students were asked to think about a solution or an answer to that question, and they started to give ideas. Then, the teacher wrote the brainstorm on the whiteboard and asked the students to work in groups, analyze all the insights and decide which was the more suitable and pertinent for the context. After a few minutes of discussion, students agreed and concluded. (Teacher's Journal, workshop 3)

The previous fragment also showed students' ability to express their ideas, which deals with communication as one of the 21's century skills. During the development of the second project, students demonstrated their ability to state their beliefs and opinions and their respect for others' beliefs. For example, they could discuss the best way to protect the island from environmental problems, listening carefully to their classmates' insights and giving theirs without any problem. Additionally, students could successfully present the final product of the project to the student community. Some students stated that they enjoyed conveying a message to raise environmental awareness to their peers; for example, one student said: “Yo disfruté mucho salir al patio y hablarles a mis compañeros acerca de la importancia del cuidado del medio ambiente, siento que lo hice muy bien porque estaba convencida del propósito de esta actividad y no sentí pena”. [I really enjoyed going out to the schoolyard and talking to my classmates about the importance of caring for the environment, I feel that I did it very well because I was convinced of the purpose of this activity, and I did not feel embarrassed] (Student's self-assessment, workshop 4).

After analyzing the whole information of this second project, it was necessary to reflect on the impact and appropriateness of the communication strategies under PBL to support the students' speaking skills since it was observable that they failed to implement the communication strategies taught in this project. The researcher worked on designing two new workshops to implement, considering two new communication strategies that can help the students develop their communication skills. Thus, students worked on a third and final project.

4.3.1.3 Project Three: Fisherman's Day Fair. After applying workshops five and six, which correspond to the last project titled Fisherman's Day Fair, the data collection instruments (teacher's journal, non-participant observer checklist, and student's self-assessment) were

analyzed, and the results that emerged from each instrument were triangulated and are presented in the following table.

Table 8

Triangulation project three (workshops five and six)

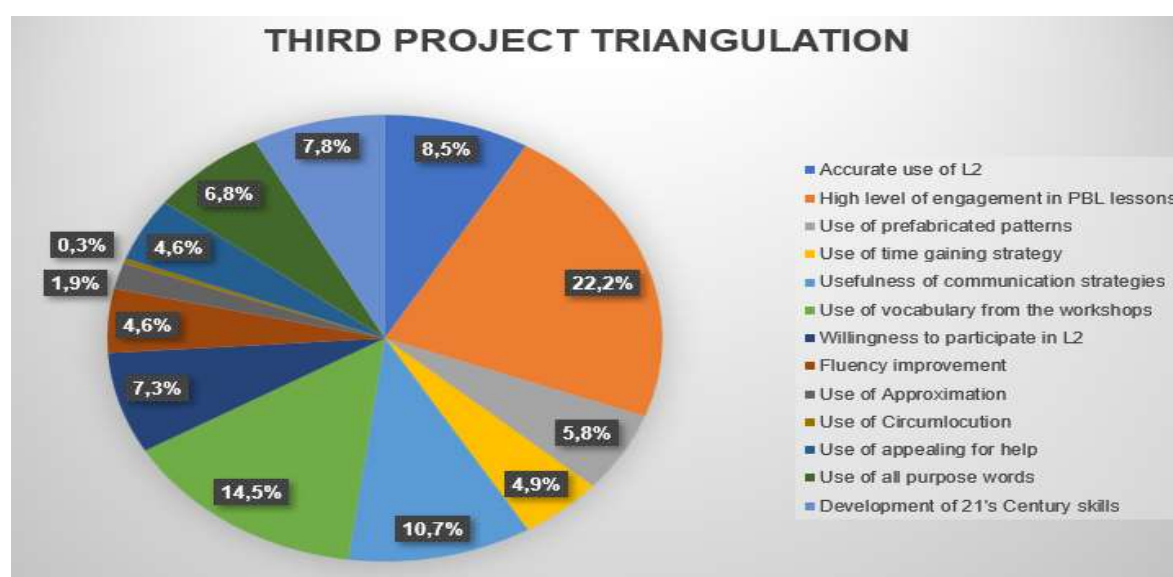
Themes	Journal	Checklist	Self-assessment	Total	Percentage
Accurate use of L2	63	68	89	220	8,5%
Development of 21's century skills	36	54	111	201	7,7%
Fluency improvement	31	38	51	120	4,6%
High level of engagement in PBL lessons	156	175	244	575	22,1%
Use of all-purpose words	52	82	43	177	6,8%
Use of appealing for help	52	32	35	119	4,6%
Use of approximation	11	15	23	49	1,9%
Use of circumlocution	6	0	3	9	0,3%
Usefulness of communication strategies	52	98	128	278	10,7%
Use of prefabricated patterns	33	64	54	151	5,8%
Use of time gaining strategy	45	46	35	126	4,9%
Use of vocabulary from the workshops	75	129	171	375	14,4%
Willingness to participate in L2	25	44	128	197	7,6%
Total	637	845	1115	2597	100,0%

The triangulation table of the third project displays the themes that emerged from the analysis of the different instruments implemented during workshops five and six. The table

shows the frequency each category had in every instrument, pointing out the *high level of engagement in PBL lessons* as the theme with the highest frequency in all the three instruments and the *use of circumlocution* as the one with the lowest level of frequency. Alternatively, the following figure shows the frequency percentages of every category resulting from the triangulation of each instrument in great detail.

Figure 6

Data triangulation project three



According to the figure, *high engagement in PBL lessons* remained the category with the highest frequency during the final project (22,1%) and in the previous ones. Table 8 demonstrated that this category was prevalent in all three instruments applied. That is to say that from the perspective of the teacher, the external observer, and the students, students had a great interest in developing the lessons under the PBL approach, as highlighted in the previous analysis.

The teacher's journal reported that students demonstrated a positive attitude toward the lessons when working on the workshop activities. For example, when working on the activity

called: a Day in the Life of an Islander, in which students had to look for the main activities that characterize the day of the islanders and present an oral report recorded on a video, students were very committed during the development of the activity, interested in the topic, and participating actively. As a result, all the students presented the activity (Teacher's Journal, Workshop 5).

The checklist used by the non-participant observer to analyze students' behavior during the development of the final project also noticed that students demonstrated interest in the lessons through their active participation during the class. For example, the observer reported that when students were working on the development of the Fisherman's Day fair, they were very excited about the preparation, and they were talking all the time about the fair, the activities they wanted to do, and giving their opinions about how they wanted to carry out the activity (Checklist, Workshop 6).

In addition, the self-assessment applied after the workshops reported that students felt attracted by the lessons in which they had to create and work on projects since they had the chance to express their opinions and also because the projects met their interests which kept them engaged and interested in every lesson. Students mentioned that what they enjoyed the most about PBL lessons was that topics dealt with their culture and interests (Student self-assessment, Workshop 6).

Regarding the other categories, Figure 6 also shows others with medium frequency. *Use of vocabulary from the workshops* appears with a frequency of 14,4%. Then, the *usefulness of communication strategies* with a frequency of 10,7%, *accurate use of the L2* category appeared with a frequency of 8,5%, followed by the *development of 21's Century Skills* with a frequency of 7,7% and *willingness to Participate in L2* with a frequency of 7,6%. The analysis revealed that the vocabulary taught through the PBL lessons significantly impacted students since they

continued using the new language in the speaking activities of the final two workshops. For example, the external observer identified and reported the vocabulary taught through the lessons on students' speech when describing a day in the life of an islander (Checklist, workshop 5).

Besides, the analysis of the instruments reported that the communication strategies proved to be helpful for students during the speaking production since students learned to use the communication strategies taught during the workshops to convey messages. They considered using communication strategies as a valuable tool for speaking English. This claim is visible in the following excerpt from students' self-assessments when asked about the advantages of using communication strategies.

I felt that the communication strategies helped me to start speaking English because, in the beginning, I felt lost, but having some strategies helped me to know how to do it. For example, we learned about using prefabricated patterns in the first workshop. I felt that that strategy helped me have an idea or a departure point of what to say; now that we have concluded the workshops and know more strategies, I feel we have improved.

(Student self-assessment, workshop 6)

At the same time, figure 6 displays an array of categories with less frequency but high importance for the present study. The figure shows the categories related to the communication strategies students used during workshop #5 and workshop #6 in order of frequency. Namely, *use all-purpose words* with a frequency of 6,8%, *prefabricated patterns* with 5,8%, *time-gaining strategy* with 4,9%, and with a frequency of 4,6%, *appealing for help* and *fluency improvement*.

According to the analysis of the third workshop presented in Figure 6, the categories with less frequency were the *use of approximation* with a frequency of 1,7% and the *use of circumlocution*. Therefore, students used those communication strategies at a lower level during

the development of workshops five and six. After analyzing the three instruments implemented, the researcher found that those categories did not appear in all the instruments, and, further, the frequency was shallow in those in which they appeared. After workshop six, students manifested in the self-assessment that they considered communication strategies beneficial. Still, some were challenging to use in the speaking activities since they required more English proficiency.

I found communication strategies helpful, but it was challenging to use circumlocution because I needed to know more words to describe a specific term. I do not have enough vocabulary to do that. Besides, it was also challenging to use approximation because I could not remember a synonym of the word I was looking for. (Student self-assessment, workshop 6)

4.3.2 Overall Workshops Results

After analyzing the six workshops carried out through the three projects, the researcher triangulated the data from the instruments applied to evaluate their relevance according to their frequency in all the projects. The following chart presents the results as a conclusion for the evaluation stage.

Table 9

Triangulation of the three projects

Themes	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Total	Percentage
Accurate use of L2	112	208	220	540	9,2%
Development of 21's century skills	144	194	201	539	9,1%
Fluency improvement	26	84	120	230	3,9%
High level of engagement in PBL lessons	410	552	575	1537	26,1%
Use of all-purpose words	0	0	177	177	3,0%
Use of appealing for help	0	0	119	119	2,0%

Use of approximation	0	29	49	78	1,9%
Use of circumlocution	0	6	9	15	0,3%
Usefulness of communication strategies	165	231	278	674	11,4%
Use of prefabricated patterns	110	116	151	377	6,4%
Use of time gaining strategy	50	84	126	260	4,4%
Use of vocabulary from the workshops	212	285	375	872	14,8%
Willingness to participate in L2	95	184	197	476	8,1%
Total	1324	1973	2597	5894	100,0%

According to the information presented in the table, the code with the highest frequency was a *high level of engagement in PBL lessons* with a total frequency of 26,1%. This code progressively increased from the first project to the third one but showed a more significant increase from the first project to the second. The second code with the highest frequency was the *use of vocabulary from the workshops*, with a total frequency of 14,8%. This code had a notable increase from the first project to the second one, but the higher growth was from the second project to the third one. Then, it goes *usefulness of communication strategies* with an overall frequency of 11,4%, followed by *accurate use of L2* and the *development of 21's century skills* with general frequencies of 9,2% and 9,1%, respectively. Those are the codes found in the triangulation of the three projects with the highest frequencies.

Table 9 also shows a group of codes with a median overall frequency. Firstly, there is a *willingness to participate in L2* with a frequency of 8,1%. This code increased considerably from the first project to the second but kept constant from the second to the third one.

Otherwise, *prefabricated patterns* with a frequency of 6,4% remained constant in all the projects, but their frequency increased in the third one.

Finally, table 9 highlights those codes that had an overall minor frequency, such as the *use of time-gaining strategy* with a frequency of 4,4%, *fluency improvement* with a frequency of 3,9%, *use of all-purpose words* with a frequency of 3%, *use of appealing for help* 2%, *use of approximation* 1,3%, and *use of circumlocution* with a frequency of 0,3%. Regarding the communication strategies implemented in the projects, it is essential to notice that those implemented in the first project (*prefabricated patterns* and *time-gaining strategies*) increased from project to project, having their highest frequency in the third project. By contrast, those that were implemented in the second project (*approximation* and *circumlocution*) had a low frequency in the second project but also in the third one. Lastly, the communication strategies implemented during the third project (*appealing for help* and *all-purpose words*) were highly frequent in this final workshop.

Overall, this evaluation stage showed the impact of communication strategies under PBL on learners' speaking skills, evidenced by the data collection instruments and the categories that emerged from their analysis. For instance, the analysis demonstrated a relationship between the increase in students' level of engagement in PBL lessons and the growth in vocabulary learned from the PBL lessons. Besides, as reported in the analysis, it manifested the usefulness of communication strategies when making oral presentations and its impact on accuracy and fluency. Finally, this section also highlighted the development of the 21's century skills through the implementation of PBL lessons in which students demonstrated a high level of engagement, as stated before. Finally, to provide more evidence about the impact of the implementation stage

on students' speaking skills, the researcher presents the analysis of the pre-test and post-test results as follows.

4.3.3 Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

For this study, students faced two speaking tests. The first was a pre-test or diagnostic test to learn about students' skills before the action stage (see Appendix 7). The second one was a post-test or achievement test carried out after the action stage to know how much students learned during the process (see Appendix 8). In other words, the purpose of the tests was to measure and analyze students' level of proficiency in the English language from the departing point (pre-test) to the end of the six workshops (post-test). To evaluate the tests, the researcher used an analytic rubric that assessed grammar, fluency, and vocabulary, considering what students should know at the starter A1 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework and the standards for language learning proposed by the Ministry of Education found in La Guía 22 (see appendix 9). The rubric's rating scale is divided into six band descriptors: band 0, meaning that it does not reach the descriptors of band 1, band 1 for poor performance; band 2 for unsatisfactory; band 3 for satisfactory; band 4 for very good; and band 5 for excellent. The following figures illustrate and compare students' pre-test and post-test results.

Figure 7

Students' results in the pre-test

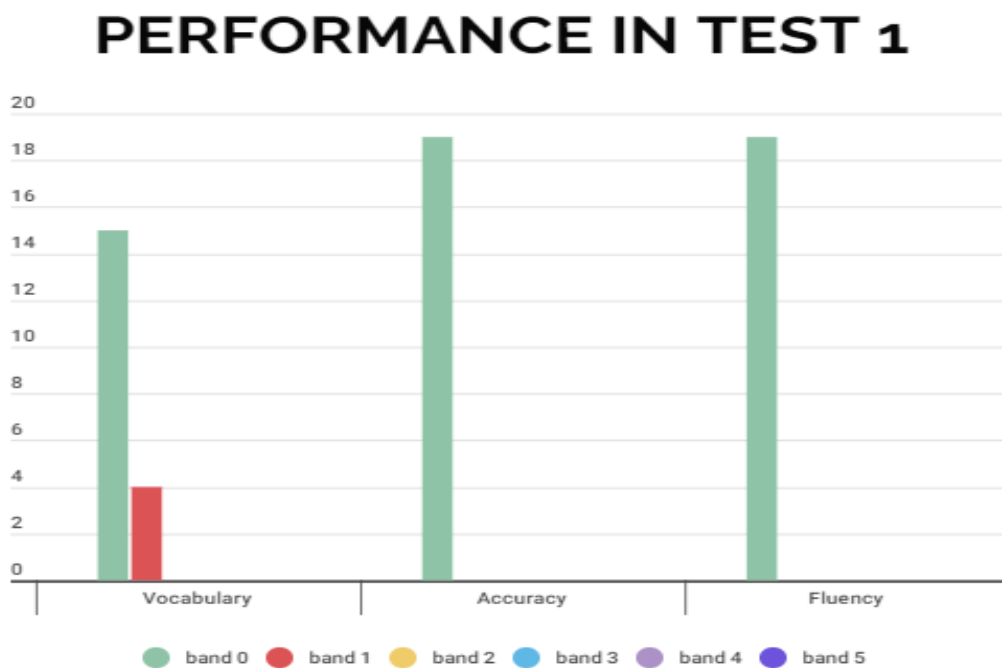


Figure 8

Students' results in the post-test

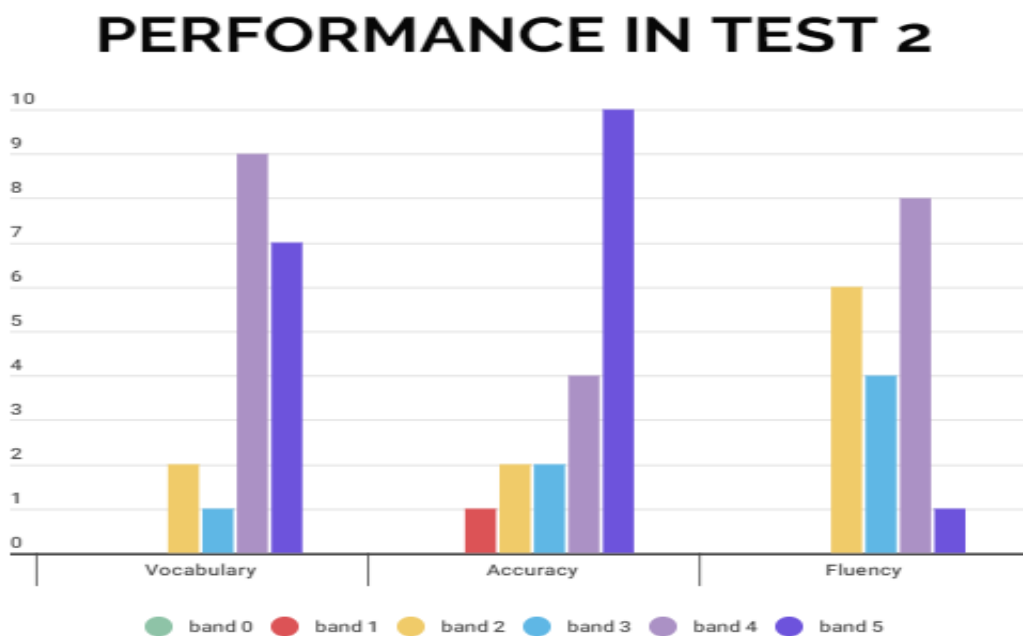


Figure 7 shows that 15 of 19 students were placed in band 0 regarding vocabulary in the pre-test. The above-mentioned means that most students did not reach the band one descriptor;

consequently, they did not utter a word in English. On the contrary, figure 8 shows that nine of 19 students were placed in band four and seven in band five. It represents that 84% of the students could respond at a word or phrase level and produce longer utterances.

Regarding accuracy, figure 7 illustrates that 100% of the students were placed in band 0. Thus, students did not reach the band one descriptor, demonstrating that they could not apply any grammatical structure. Conversely, Figure 8 illustrates that ten students were placed in band five (excellent), four in band four (very good), and only one student was placed in band one (poor). Hence, 73% of the students could produce an average level of grammatical structures.

Finally, in terms of fluency, figure 7 illustrates that 100% of the students were placed in band 0. Thus, students did not reach the band one descriptor, demonstrating that they could not produce speech. Contrarily, figure 8 indicates that eight students were placed in band four, six in band two, four in band three, and only one in band five, but there was no student in band zero and one. Therefore, 42% of the students could produce a good speech at an appropriate pace with some hesitation. 21% of the students could make a satisfactory speech with pauses and hesitations, 31% had a weak speech with frequent pauses and hesitations, and only 5% could produce a very good speech at an appropriate pace with little hesitations.

5. Findings

Considering that the primary purpose of the present study was to determine how communication strategies taught under PBL impacted ninth graders' speaking skills, this chapter describes the outcomes of implementing the six workshops during the action stage of this study. Thus, the present study's findings respond to the objectives proposed by the researcher at the beginning of the study. After the evaluation stage, the researcher determined the impact of communication strategies framed under PBL on students' speaking skills, especially vocabulary, fluency, and accuracy, and identified the following findings as a compendium.

Speaking Skills Improved Through the Use of Communication Strategies in PBL

Workshops

The general objective of the present study was to determine the impact of communication strategies under PBL on ninth graders' speaking skills. According to Popescu and Cohen (2014), learners benefit from communication strategies since it helps them convey messages successfully and enhances their speaking skills. Through this study, the researcher found that students improved their speaking skills using communication strategies during the PBL lessons. During the pre-test, it was evident that students could not perform the task due to their lack of speaking skills. Students had to describe six pictures the researcher took from the context where students live. When the researcher asked students what they observed in the first photographs, they remained silent. The students just answered in Spanish that they did not know and did not speak English. Only three students from 19 mentioned some colors they observed in the pictures: red, yellow, white, and blue. Besides recognizing those colors, students were not able to describe the images. However, in the post-test, 16 students could describe in great detail what they observed in the pictures by using the vocabulary learned from the lessons at a word or phrase level, as

shown in Figure 8. In addition, students used some of the communication strategies practiced in the workshops; the most used one was the prefabricated patterns, which helped the students to start describing the pictures with phrases they learned as a pattern during the lessons. Another communication strategy used in the post-test was time gaining; students used filler and hesitation devices during the description of the pictures to have more time to think about what they would say. Students also used appealing for help when unsure about a word; they tended to say the word with the intonation of a question to ask the teacher if it was right. Besides they also used all-purpose words. In addition, students used the vocabulary learned during the PBL lessons, which gave them the language required to explain the images. Consequently, the researcher determined that communication strategies under PBL positively impacted ninth-graders speaking skills.

Improvement in Speaking Fluency When Using Communication Strategies During the PBL Lessons

One of the specific objectives the author established for this study was to describe ninth graders' speaking fluency during the PBL lessons. For this purpose, the researcher used a speaking rubric to assess fluency at the end of each project. Besides, implementing a post-test after the action stage allowed her to compare students' fluency before starting the workshops and after. The results from the pre-test to post-test demonstrated that 13 students improved their fluency when performing their speaking activities in the PBL lessons. They were able to produce a satisfactory speech with some pauses and hesitations. In addition, following the study conducted by Peña (2021) about the influence of implementing communication strategies with appropriate oral tasks on students' fluency, this study found that implementing communication strategies under the PBL approach improved students' fluency. As presented in the data analysis

triangulation after the action stage, fluency improvement remained relevant in the overall results. Considering that the usefulness of communication strategies was one of the most frequent categories in all six workshops, the author found that those communication strategies necessarily impacted students' oral fluency. Students relied on communication strategies to perform their oral assignments and considered they were helping them. Thus, the communication strategies enabled students to have a more fluent discourse and avoid long periods of silence. According to students' insights about the usefulness of communication strategies found in the student's self-assessment, students considered that the communication strategies they were taught helped them to speak English since, in the beginning, they could not utter a word or phrase in English. When they started using communication strategies to communicate their ideas, they noticed that they began to express their opinions. Also, they explained that the tasks motivated them to talk in English and keep improving (Student self-assessment, workshop 6). The previous insight supports the author's statement that using communication strategies during the PBL lessons improved students' fluency. In addition, students enjoyed the topics of the PBL lessons, which encouraged them to perform the speaking activities through communication strategies.

Increased Vocabulary Range During the PBL Lessons

Through this study, the researcher proposed to evaluate the effect of communication strategies under PBL on students' vocabulary usage. In response to this objective, and through the different data collection instruments applied during the action stage and after the evaluation, she found that the communication strategies taught under PBL lessons facilitated students' vocabulary learning. Consequently, students increased their vocabulary range during the PBL lessons. According to Kholis and Nur (2019), PBL effectively enriches English learning vocabulary since students use communication to perform authentic tasks. PBL workshops

pretended students to develop original and engaging assignments related to the context in which they are involved, facilitating the learning process of learning vocabulary. It was easier for students to learn vocabulary since the educator taught it through engaging activities. After the high-level engagement in PBL lessons, the use of vocabulary from the workshops was the most frequent theme in the overall results, demonstrating a close relationship between those two categories. Hence, the increasing vocabulary learning during the six PBL workshops was noticeably supported by the instruments applied in the process. For instance, the post-test detailed those 16 students successfully used the vocabulary studied in the lessons when doing the test tasks and supported the communication strategies they learned. Overall, the post-test results proved a positive impact of implementing communication strategies using PBL workshops on students' vocabulary usage. Similarly, the study by Peña (2021) demonstrated that implementing communication strategies with adequate oral tasks, as in the case of the present study, the use of PBL helped improve students' lexicon.

Improvement in Speaking Accuracy When Using Communication Strategies During the PBL lessons

The researcher examined the impact of communication strategies under PBL on students' accuracy and found that using them through the PBL lessons helped the students improve their speaking accuracy. According to Gomez and Mayora (2019), implementing communication strategies in the classroom allow students to enhance their oral accuracy since communication strategies make students more aware of grammar structures. The researcher of the present study found that some communication strategies contributed more to strengthening the students' accuracy. For instance, the study showed that using prefabricated patterns helped students create their phrases following a given structure. For example, in the analysis of the first project, after

the implementation of the first two communication strategies, it was noticeable that students were aware of uttering complete statements when talking about the places on the island. They said, as an example, *there is an old church on the Island* (Teacher's Journal, workshop 2). Hence, students were focused on maintaining the grammar structures learned in class. Before the implementation of the six workshops, students did not follow any grammar structure due to their low language knowledge. Similarly, Gomez and Mayora claim this strategy made the students aware of the English grammar structures. The prefabricated pattern was the communication strategy most used during the development of the six workshops; therefore, it resulted in a noticeable improvement in oral accuracy.

Additionally, the researcher found that when students implemented the appealing for help strategy in the fifth workshop, she identified that the main reason for using this strategy was to enhance their accuracy level. Students were aware of using the correct structures and the correct words. Therefore, students asked for help in different moments of their interventions to find the accurate way of a word or even a sentence. Overall, notwithstanding the students' language proficiency, communication strategies under PBL raised learners' awareness of the grammar structures seeking correctness.

Conversely, the analysis of the workshops also revealed that there were some communication strategies, such as circumlocution and approximation, that, despite being of great potential for improving oral accuracy, did not contribute since students did not use them because it demanded a higher-level knowledge of the language.

6. Conclusions, Pedagogical Implications, and Limitations

6.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings and as a response to the research question, the author concludes that implementing communication strategies under the PBL approach enhances the speaking skills of her students. Communication strategies help them communicate and avoid periods of silence. The workshops provide a constructivist learning environment that engages students with authentic tasks and topics that interest them in their language learning.

Furthermore, using communication strategies under the PBL approach improves students' fluency since they practice speaking to perform authentic tasks that demand the use of the language in a natural context. Vela et al. (2022) suggest that “implementing Project Based Learning is appropriate to affect students’ oral fluency since it involves a sequence of tasks and steps that permit learners to improvise, engage them in the communication practice and thus lead them to produce orally” (p, 57). Then, when students receive training in communication strategies and develop assignments that allow them to use those strategies and vocabulary learned during the lessons, the outcome is an improvement in their fluency.

On the other hand, implementing communication strategies framed under the PBL approach also increases students' vocabulary range. The communication strategies and the topics of the PBL lessons provide the students with comprehensible inputs to grasp and relate to the knowledge they already have. One of the main features of PBL lessons is that learning is perdurable due to its constructivist nature. Consequently, it is easy for students to learn and remember the new vocabulary within a PBL framework.

Finally, the researcher also concludes that implementing communication strategies under a PBL scenario affects students’ accuracy. There are some communication strategies, such as the

use of prefabricated patterns and asking for help, that make the students more aware of the grammar structures and the correct way of their utterances. When students perform the authentic tasks of the PBL lessons using communication strategies, they are prone to perform well with minor mistakes.

6.2 Pedagogical Implications

The main implication of the present study lies in the EFL teaching and learning context. There is a need for teachers' instruction on the teachability of communication strategies under the PBL approach. Teaching communication strategies to students impacts their speaking skills, but not many language instructors teach communication strategies in high schools, and far fewer do through PBL. Rodriguez and Roux (2012) state that communication strategies help students cope with communication problems and achieve a certain degree of fluency even in the most basic class. Thus, teaching communication strategies is not only for advanced English learners. This study demonstrates that communication strategies under PBL positively impact high-school students' speaking skills; therefore, high school is the perfect scenario for teaching communication strategies.

On the other hand, considering the positive outcomes PBL has on students learning and following the constructivist premise that students learn when they do, teachers need to structure more English lessons under the PBL approach. Furthermore, this study showed that students enjoy and engage in tasks designed under this approach. Therefore, teachers and researchers can adapt and apply this proposal and implementation in a similar setting and serve as a basis for further research on this topic.

6.3 Limitations

The overall limitation of this study was time constraints. Developing a project takes time, and students from the school where the researcher conducted her research had only three hours a week of English classes. Two hours on Mondays and one hour on Tuesdays; however, there were some Monday holidays in which it was impossible to advance in the project. In the beginning, the idea was to develop one project per workshop for a total of six projects, but being conscious of this limitation, the researcher divided each project into two workshops for a total of three projects and six workshops.

In addition, time constraints mixed with students' low English levels also limited the scope of the research since the researcher had to focus only on some aspects of speaking, leaving aside the analysis of the impact that the investigation could have had on interaction. However, it is a departing point for other researchers to continue investigating the impact of communication strategies under PBL on students' speaking skills, including student interaction.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Survey

EXPLORING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN EIGHTH-GRADE CLASS AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL ON TIERRA BOMBA ISLAND

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA SAN JOSÉ DE CAÑO DEL ORO



STUDENT SURVEY

Nos gustaría pedirte que nos ayudes respondiendo las siguientes preguntas relacionadas al aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. Este cuestionario es llevado a cabo por la docente Milagro Agudelo, quién busca analizar la percepción que tienen los estudiantes con respecto al aprendizaje del inglés e identificar las principales debilidades que presentan para posteriormente implementar un plan de acción que busque mitigar dichos problemas.

Este no es un examen, así que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas y tampoco tienes que escribir tu nombre. El contenido de este formulario es absolutamente confidencial. Cualquier información que identifique al encuestado no será divulgada bajo ninguna circunstancia. Estamos interesados en tu opinión personal. Necesitamos respuestas sinceras para garantizar el éxito de esta investigación. Gracias por tu ayuda.

I. En esta sección del cuestionario debes calificar los conceptos en una serie de escalas. Todos tienen pares de opuestos en cada extremo, y entre ellos hay 7 guiones. Debes colocar una X en una de las siete posiciones, indicando cómo se siente acerca del concepto en particular.

1. EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS ES:

Difícil ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Fácil

Innecesario ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Necesario

2. LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS SON:

Entretenidas ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Aburridas

Claras ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Confusas

Dinámicas ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Monótonas

Productivas ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Improductivas

3. AL ESTUDIAR INGLÉS ME SIENTO:

Motivado ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Desmotivado

Capaz ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____ Incapaz

- II. A continuación, hay un número de oraciones con las cuáles podrías estar o no de acuerdo. Queremos que nos indiques tu opinión después de cada enunciado marcando con una 'X' en el recuadro que mejor indique hasta qué punto estás de acuerdo o no con la declaración.**

ASPECTOS	TOTALMENTE DE ACUERDO	DE ACUERDO	INDECISO	EN DESACUERDO	TOTALMENTE EN DESACUERDO
4. Es importante leer textos en inglés.					
5. Es necesario hacer uso del idioma que aprendo por eso en clases hablo en inglés.					
6. Las clases deben explicarse en Inglés.					
7. Las clases de Inglés deben estar relacionadas con mi contexto.					
8. El profesor debe implementar más actividades que fomenten la escritura en inglés.					
9. Aprender vocabulario es fundamental para hablar Inglés.					
10. El profesor debe enfocarse en enseñar gramática.					

IV. Ordena del 1 al 4 las siguientes habilidades. Siendo 1 la más fácil y 4 la más difícil.

21. ____ Leer ____ Escribir ____ Hablar ____ Escuchar

V. Responde las siguientes preguntas. Siéntete libre de expresar tu opinión al respecto.

22. ¿qué actividades consideras que deban implementarse en la clase de inglés, para un mejor aprendizaje de la lengua?

23. ¿qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de inglés? ¿porqué?

24. ¿qué es lo que menos te gusta de la clase de inglés? ¿porqué?

25. ¿Durante la clase de inglés, en qué tipo de actividades te gusta participar? ¿porqué?

24. ¿Durante la clase de inglés, en qué tipo de actividades no te gusta participar? ¿porqué?

Estamos muy agradecidos por el tiempo dedicado a responder esta encuesta, sus respuestas son de gran valor para nuestra investigación. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!



Survey Sample

UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
DIAGNOSTIC STAGE
STUDENT SURVEY

EXPLORING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN EIGHTH GRADE CLASS FROM A PUBLIC SCHOOL ON TIERRA BOMBA ISLAND

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA SAN JOSÉ DE CAÑÍ DEL ORO

STUDENT SURVEY

Nos gustaría pedirle que nos ayude respondiendo las siguientes preguntas relacionadas al aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. Este cuestionario es llevado a cabo por la docente Milagro Aguado, quien busca analizar la percepción que tienen los estudiantes con respecto al aprendizaje del inglés e identificar las principales dificultades que presentan para posteriormente implementar un plan de acción que busque mitigar dichos problemas.

Esto no es un examen, así que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas y tampoco tiene que guardar los nombres. El contenido de este formulario es absolutamente confidencial. Cualquier información que identifique al encuestado no será divulgada bajo ninguna circunstancia. Estamos interesados en su opinión personal. Necesitamos respuestas sinceras para garantizar el éxito de esta investigación. Gracias por su ayuda.

I. En esta sección del cuestionario debes calificar los conceptos en una serie de escalas. Todos tienen pares de opuestos en cada extremo, y entre ellos hay 7 guiones. Debes colocar una X en uno de los siete espacios, indicando cómo se siente acerca del concepto en particular.

1. EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS ES
Difícil _____ Fácil
Intenso _____ _____ Menor

2. LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS SON
Empresariales _____ Aburridas
Claras _____ Confusas
Dinámicas _____ Monótonas
Productivas _____ Inproductivas

3. AL ESTUDIAR INGLÉS ME SIENTO
Motivado _____ _____ Demotivado
Cansado _____ _____ Incapaz

UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
DIAGNOSTIC STAGE
STUDENT SURVEY

20. Responda los ítems con un 1 a 5 según sea el nivel de acuerdo que usted tiene con los ítems.

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

IV. Ordéna del 1 al 4 las siguientes habilidades. Siendo 1 la más fácil y 4 la más difícil.

21. 1 Leer 3 Escribir 4 Hablar 2 Escuchar

V. Responda las siguientes preguntas. Siéntete libre de expresar tu opinión al respecto.

22. ¿qué actividades consideras que debes implementarse en la clase de inglés, para un mejor aprendizaje de la lengua?
Principalmente no me gustan las actividades aburridas porque siento que no presta atención. Me gustaria que se implementaran con actividades en las que participo activamente.


23. ¿qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de inglés? ¿por qué?

24. ¿qué es lo que menos te gusta de la clase de inglés? ¿por qué?
lo que no me gusta es que es muy difícil, porque voy no sabiendo y sé que es un idioma difícil.

25. Durante la clase de inglés, en qué tipo de actividades te gusta participar? ¿por qué?

26. Durante la clase de inglés, en qué tipo de actividades no te gusta participar? ¿por qué?
En las que tengo que hablar en inglés porque yo no sé nada, si solo quiero aprender a hablarlo para poder hablar con los amigos pero para eso hay que practicar bastante y aprender un poco de palabras.

Estamos muy agradecidos por el tiempo dedicado a responder esta encuesta, sus respuestas son de gran valor para nuestra investigación. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!



UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
DIAGNOSTIC STAGE
STUDENT SURVEY

II. A continuación, hay un número de oraciones con las cuales podría estar o no de acuerdo. Queremos que nos indiques tu opinión después de cada enunciado marcando con una "X" en el recuadro que mejor indique hasta qué punto estás de acuerdo o no con la declaración.

ASPECTOS	TOTALMENTE DE ACUERDO	DE ACUERDO	INDICADO	EN DISACUERDO	TOTALMENTE EN DISACUERDO
4. Es importante leer textos en inglés.		X			
5. Es necesario hacer uso del idioma que aprende por eso en clases hablo en inglés.		X			
6. Las clases deben explicarse en inglés.					X
7. Las clases de inglés deben estar relacionadas con mi contexto.	X				
8. El profesor debe implementar más actividades que fomenten la escritura en inglés.	X				
9. Aprender vocabulario es fundamental para hablar inglés.	X				

UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
DIAGNOSTIC STAGE
STUDENT SURVEY

10. El profesor debe enfocarse en enseñar gramática.

III. A continuación, encontrarás una escala del 1 al 10. Teniendo en cuenta que 10 es el valor más alto y 1 el valor más bajo, califica tu desempeño en la clase de inglés en relación a cada uno de los siguientes estándares.

ESTÁNDARES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11. Comprensión general y comprensión literal que se refieren a lo que se lee, se escucha y se ve.					X					
12. Identificar el tema general y los detalles relacionados al contenido, información implícita o inferencias sobre.		X								
13. Comprender instrucciones breves para hacer o saber algo (datos, direcciones, personal, etc.)						X				
14. Identificar la acción, los personajes y el contexto en textos narrativos.				X						
15. Comprender textos literarios, académicos y de interés general, usando un vocabulario adecuado.						X				
16. Identificar un tema central, principal, soporte, apoyo o hecho relevante en un texto y responder que no sea literal.		X								
17. Identificar temas centrales y una idea principal relacionados con información, apoyo o acciones de un texto literario.			X							
18. Leer, entender y usar una información sencilla sobre un tema o texto.						X				
19. Hacer inferencias más breves de información implícita y explícita.				X						

Appendix 2 Students' Interview

EXPLORING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN A EIGHTH-GRADE CLASS AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN TIERRA BOMBA ISLAND

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA SAN JOSÉ DE CAÑO DEL ORO



INTERVIEW GUIDE

Rationale: Este formato de entrevista es un instrumento de recolección de datos, el cuál tiene como objetivo recopilar las opiniones e impresiones de los estudiantes de grado octavo con relación al aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. De igual modo, analizar las fortalezas y debilidades de ellos en el uso de la lengua extranjera.

Este no es un examen, así que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas y tampoco tienes que escribir tu nombre. El contenido de este formulario es absolutamente confidencial. Cualquier información que identifique al entrevistado no será divulgada bajo ninguna circunstancia. Estamos interesados en tu opinión personal. Necesitamos respuestas sinceras para garantizar el éxito de esta investigación. Gracias por tu ayuda.

Instrucciones:

*Durante la entrevista es importante mantener un ambiente agradable, que el entrevistado sienta que es una conversación en la cual se puede expresar libremente.

*Hacer las preguntas de forma clara y en caso de ser necesario repetirla.

I. 1. ¿Podrías describir tu experiencia con el aprendizaje del inglés?

2. ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de inglés?

2. ¿Qué es lo que menos te gusta de la clase de inglés?

3. ¿Por qué crees que es importante aprender inglés?

4. ¿En el futuro cómo te ves haciendo uso del Idioma inglés?

5. ¿Cómo te sientes antes de iniciar la clase de inglés?

II. 5. ¿Cuál de las cuatro habilidades (Leer, escribir, escuchar, hablar) se te dificulta más?

6. Con relación a las habilidades antes mencionadas, ¿cuál consideras tu fortaleza?

7. ¿Cómo te sientes cuando el profesor habla en inglés?

III. 8. ¿Cuáles son las actividades que disfrutas más en la clase de inglés?

9. ¿Qué actividades te gustaría que se incluyeran más en clases?

10. Describe cómo sería tu clase de inglés ideal.

11. ¿para ti cuál es el mejor momento de la clase de inglés?

IV. 12. ¿Qué opinión tienes respecto al uso de material audiovisual en la clase de inglés?

13. ¿Qué opinión tienes respecto al uso de diccionario en la clase de inglés?

14. ¿Cómo te sientes cuando se usan textos en la clase de inglés?

15. ¿Con qué materiales te gustaría trabajar en clase?

Estamos muy agradecidos por el tiempo dedicado a responder esta entrevista, sus respuestas son de gran valor para nuestra investigación. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!

Interview Sample

INTERVIEW #2

Antes de proceder a hacer las preguntas, el entrevistador saluda al estudiante, se presenta, explica el propósito de la investigación, le informa al estudiante de la confidencialidad de sus respuestas y motiva al estudiante a responder de forma natural y honesta.

I: Interviewer
S2: Student #2

I: Primero te voy a hacer unas preguntitas con relación a tu experiencia con el aprendizaje del inglés. ¿cómo describirías tú, tu relación con el aprendizaje del inglés desde que comenzaste a estudiarlo. Cómo ha sido esa relación tuya con el inglés.

S2: La relación mía con el inglés no se une mucho porque yo no se mucho, la clase más difícil pa mi es inglés y matemática.

I: ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de inglés?

S2: Lo que más me gusta de la clase de inglés es escribir porque el inglés se pronuncia bien.

I: ¿Qué es lo que menos te gusta de la clase de inglés?

S2: ¿Lo que menos me gusta? A mi de inglés me gusta todo, pero lo que me falta es aprenderlo.

I: Porqué crees que es importante aprender inglés.

S2: Señó porque uno nunca sabe si alguien llega, algún cachaco que te dice: te vamos a darte no se cuántos mil pesos pa que hables con el cachaco pa que le entiendas y esas cosas.

I: ¿En el futuro te ves tu hablando inglés?

S2: Hablar en inglés? Noooooo profe, si yo no sé decir nada en inglés.

I: ¿cómo te sientes antes de iniciar la clase de inglés?

S2: Normal, bien.

I: ahora procedo a hacerte algunas preguntas con relación a las habilidades del lenguaje, que son Leer, escribir, hablar, escuchar. ¿cómo consideras tu desempeño en las habilidades del lenguaje?

S2: ¿Cómo así profe?

I: ¿Cómo te sientes tu cuándo el profesor comienza a hablar en inglés?

S2: Bien, normal.

I: ¿y cómo consideras que te desempeñas en eso? ¿Entiendes lo que el profesor te dice?

S2: Mas o menos. Entiendo algunas palabras.

I: ¿cómo te sientes tú cuando el profesor te pide que hables en inglés?

S2: Asustado, profe.

I: ¿Consideras que lo puedes hacer?

S2: Mmmm es difícil.

I: ¿Cómo te sientes cuando tienes que escribir en inglés?

S2: Da señó es que yo en inglés, a veces si me dictan en inglés yo no se escribir en inglés.

I: ¿cómo te sientes cuándo te piden que leas en inglés?

S2: Lo mismo, no me siento muy bien, porque no sé pronunciar las cosas en inglés.

I: ¿ok, consideras tú que tu nivel en cuánto a esas actividades sería bajo, alto, medio?

S2: Bajo señó.

I: Ahora te voy a hacer algunas preguntas relacionadas con la metodología, que hace el profesor en la clase, cómo son esas clases de inglés. Primero me gustaría conocer cuáles son las actividades que más disfrutas en la clase de inglés, las que más te gustan.

S2: Cuando el profe nos pone a participar me gusta.

I: ok, qué actividades te gustaría que se incluyeran más en la clase de inglés.

S2: Señó actividades donde tenga que escribir en inglés.

I: Describe cómo sería tu clase de inglés ideal. ¿qué te gustaría que se hiciera en las clases de ingles? Por ejemplo, que tú digas, la clase de inglés de mañana me gustaría que fuera así y así...

S2: Bueno señó, no, así como te digo, me gustaría que la clase de inglés fuera participar, pasar al frente y hablar en inglés.

I: ¿Para ti cuál es el mejor momento de la clase de inglés?

S2: Cuando llega el profesor hablando en inglés y uno le tiene que responder.

I: Agradece al estudiante y finaliza la entrevista.

Appendix 3 - Non-Participant Observer Checklist - Diagnostic Stage sample

EXPLORING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN AN EIGHTH-GRADE CLASS FROM A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN TIERRA BOMBA ISLAND

RATIONALE: This checklist is an observation instrument that aims to register the behaviors and different attitudes of the students during the English class.

Institution: San José de Caño del Oro

Teacher: Milagro Agudelo

Observer's name: Angélica Camargo

Telephone: 311 6782459

Date: October 8th, 2021

Instruction: Mark an x every time a student displays the behaviors indicated in the items:

ITEM TO OBSERVE	FREQUENCY	TOTAL	COMMENTS
<i>Participate in class</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	17	Students participated actively in class.
<i>Use English in their intervention</i>	XXXXX	5	Students used English only after the teacher asked them and provided the structures.
<i>Use Spanish in their intervention</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	17	Students use Spanish all the time when participating in class.
<i>Pay attention in class</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXX	11	
<i>Get distracted while the teacher is explaining</i>	XXXXXXX	7	Some students got distracted, and later they did not know what to do.
<i>Ask questions in Spanish</i>	XXXXXXX	7	Student asked a lot of questions about vocabulary. For instance, <i>profe que significa....</i>
<i>Ask questions in English</i>		0	
<i>Try to sabotage the class</i>		0	
<i>Refuses to participate in reading activities</i>	XXX	3	Some students felt incapable to read in English.
<i>Refuses to participate in oral activities</i>	XXXXXXX	8	Some students said that they were not able to do the oral activities.
<i>Ask the teacher to speak in Spanish</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXX	11	The teacher were asked to speak in Spanish several times because they could not understand and the teacher had to speak in Spanish.
<i>Complain about activities</i>	XXXXX	5	Some students expressed that the activities were difficult.

<i>Positive attitude towards the class</i>	xxxxxxxxxx	10	Students enjoyed the dynamic activities, they were laughing and smiling all the time.
<i>Negative attitude towards the class</i>	xxxxx	5	Some students complained when they had to participate in oral activities.
<i>Other behaviors:</i>			None

Non-Participant Observer Checklist - Action Stage Sample

NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION CHECKLIST CALDAS UNIVERSITY MASTER PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA SAN JOSÉ DE CAÑO DEL ORO
ACTION STAGE WORKSHOP #2

GRADE: 90_02

TEACHER: Milagro Agudelo

NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVER: Angélica Camargo

RATIONALE: The present checklist is an observation instrument that aims to register students' speaking performance in class from the perspective of a non-participant observer.

The following descriptors are related to the use of the communication strategies under PBL implemented in an EFL classroom to improve speaking skills. Mark with an x each time the descriptor occurs during this class. Add additional observations or comments you consider relevant to this research.

ITEM TO OBSERVE	FREQUENCY	TOTAL	COMMENTS
<i>The student uses the vocabulary studied in the previous classes in their interventions.</i>	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	36	The students used the vocabulary related to the environment and the expressions to give opinions learned in class. They looked comfortable when using the vocabulary.
<i>The student speaks accurately using the right grammar structures.</i>	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	20	the students were able to speak accurately in their interventions supported by some prefabricated patterns and other communication strategies.
<i>The student conveys their messages with a natural flow of speech.</i>	xxxxxxxxxxxxx	12	Some students spoke with a regular flow, but most of the students hesitated when speaking.
<i>The students exchange information with their classmates in the second language and take turns participating.</i>	xxxxxxx	8	The students exchange information with their classmates in Spanish.
<i>The student uses a communication strategy to convey messages.</i>	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	38	The students looked very comfortable when using the communication strategies.

<i>The student works cooperatively with their classmates.</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	19	Students demonstrated to enjoy working with their classmates.
<i>Students participate actively in speaking activities carried out under the PBL approach.</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	38	Students were very active in participating in the activities, and they expressed at different moments that they loved working on this new project.
<i>Other behaviors:</i>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	18	Students demonstrated enjoyed the class, and they were involved in the speaking activities, participating all the time. Students also let the teacher know about what they wanted to work on in the next workshop.

Appendix 4

Teacher's Journal

Diagnostic stage sample

UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
DIAGNOSTIC STAGE
JOURNAL



ENTRY #1

<i>Date: August 12th, 2021</i>	<i>Time: 8:00 am</i>	<i>Setting: Classroom</i>
<p><i>Description:</i></p> <p>I gave the students a short story to read and explained what they had to do: "Well, guys, first, you have to read the story and see how much you can understand from that text." The students looked at me astonished, but they did not say anything. I wrote the first point on the whiteboard and continued saying: Then you have to make a list of unknown words and look up those words in the dictionary, and I wrote that second point on the whiteboard too. The students quietly wrote down the indication on their notebooks, but one student said: "Profê yo no he entendido na de lo que hay que hacer. Usted todo lo ha dicho en inglés como si uno supiéramos inglés, y escribió todo eso en inglés si nosotros no sabemos nada de inglés ¿como vamos a hacer eso? Tiene que hablarnos en español para nosotros poder entender." Otros estudiantes se sumaron y dijeron: "si seño, hable en español para poder entender" I said: well, this is a short story. Do you know what a short story is? Saben que es una short story? And some students answered: "Una historia seño," so I continued saying: "ok, the first point says that you have to read it, el primer punto dice read... what does read mean? ¿no saben?" All students remained silent, so I continued: "A ver, ¿qué se hace con las historias, que se hace con los libros? Some students answered: "se leen seño" I replied: then, what does read mean? All of them were quiet, nobody answered. "que significa read" I said. Most of them answered in chorus: "leer" Yes, entonces ¿qué deben hacer en el primer punto? "Leer la historia," one of my students answered. Ok, and "How do we say that in English"? the student asked: "¿en inglés? ¿que lo digamos en inglés?". I replied: yes! And some students answered: "read the short story," Like asking me and showing insecurity. I told them that it was correct. Still, I asked the class to repeat it with confidence, and all of them replied: "read the story." After that, I continued explaining the rest of the assignment using English and Spanish to ensure they understood. When my students were supposed to be reading, they were very distracted talking in Spanish about different things unrelated to the class. I asked them to continue reading several times, and one student said: "profe, pero es que es aburrido leer algo que no entendemos, nosotros empezamos a leer pero no entendemos nada de lo que dice ahí y nisiquiera sabemos como se pronuncian esas palabras, así que nos enredamos." Then, I said: "chicos la idea es que se concentren en la lectura, aunque no entiendan la mayoría de las palabras, hagan una lectura general solo para ver que tanto entenideron, luego, con la ayuda del diccionario van a ir buscando las palabras que no entiendan y así la lectura va a tomar un poco de sentido." Some kept complaining about the activity, so I told them I would evaluate it at the end of the class. So, they started reading. In the end, I asked my students to tell me what the reading was about and what they could infer about what they read. One student said: "Da seño, yo no entendí fue nada, un poco de palabras ahí que uno no entiende" some of the students added: "verdad seño, nosotros leimos pero eso no entendimos nada" I told my students to look at the pictures and try to imagine what it was about and they remained in silent. As they were not participating, I asked them to continue working on the vocabulary, looking up the words they did not understand in the dictionary and rereading the text. After 20 minutes, I asked them to tell me in English about the reading. My idea was to see how much they could say in English about the reading, but my students did not answer, so I repeated it in Spanish, and they were silent. I interrupted the period of silence saying one more time: "Chicos, ¿que me pueden decir de la lectura? ¿qué entendieron?" and they said: "Seño pero en Inglés no, porque en inglés es difícil decirlo, nosotros no sabemos hablar en inglés, como para decirle en Inglés de qué trata esa lectura, de pronto podemos decirle una que otra cosa en español pero en inglés? Jjajajaj". Another student said: "verdad seño usted cree que nosotros hablamos inglés, pero solo hablamos español." Then the class was interrupted by the sound of the school bell announcing the end.</p>		

Interpretation:

Most of the students were reluctant to use L2 in the classroom. When I was speaking English, they said it was better if I spoke in Spanish because they would understand, so they were always asking for Spanish. It is easier and more understandable for them to receive Spanish input because it is their mother tongue. Still, I kept using L2 to expose them to the target language, understanding that they must receive English input. Most were reluctant to participate due to their lack of target language knowledge.

Consequently, they feel unable to perform the activities and with no confidence. Most of the time, I tried not to give them the answers but to lead them to the answers. I tried to help them to think because most of them always want to receive the answers from the teacher but do not want to think and create their knowledge. When the students were asked to speak in English, they started laughing and feeling nervous. Some showed shocked faces and said it was too much for them. They acted like I was too pretentious.

Reflection:

Students were not engaged in the class. They were complaining about the use of the L2. To continue talking in English is an excellent way to expose the students to the target language. Still, according to the level of my students, it is also necessary to provide instructions in Spanish to avoid reinforcing the feeling of frustration in my students for not understanding what they have to do. Next time I will give the instructions in Spanish from the very beginning.

Conversely, using a reading that catches my students' attention would be good. A reading of their interest could engage them in the activity. Most of the students did not want to analyze the question I asked. They always wanted to receive answers from me. Still, they must develop critical thinking and construct knowledge, so I will continue leading my students to think about the possible answers next time.

Action stage sample

Date: March 22, 2022	Time: 10:30 am – 12:30 pm	Setting: Classroom (workshop 2)
DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION	REFLECTION
<p>The teacher started the class by introducing the communication strategy of time gaining and providing some examples about how to use this strategy. The teacher explained to the students that they could use some fillers or hesitation devices to fill pauses and to gain time to think, for example: well, now, let's see, and Actually. Students were very attentive and paying attention while the teacher was explaining but also repeating the examples the teacher gave. Then the teacher started presenting the project to work on and asked them if, according to what they had learned in the last workshop, they considered it necessary to promote the island and to let people know about it. Students said that now that they had the opportunity to learn and know more about the island, they felt capable of letting others know about the island. One student mentioned that the last workshop helped her to realize the great value of some historical places that there are on the island, and she also said that they were not conscious of the importance of those places and that, for many people, it would also be interesting to know those places. One of the students said that many people do not know about Tierra Bomba and the different places they can find on the Island. Most of the people outside the island only know about a few places, but they realize there is too much more people should know and discover about Tierra Bomba. All the students demonstrated to be excited about carrying out this project about letting people know about Tierra Bomba. The teacher asked the students to make a round table for them to discover some details about the project. Then the teacher started the discussion in English, asking the students to think of a driving question for this project. And asked them to think about the question they started analyzing days before, and one student said: profe era sobre importance people know Tierra Bomba. So the teacher started asking: Do you think it is important to let people know Tierra Bomba? And all the students answered yes, teacher! So the teacher asked them why they consider it important, and one student said: Teacher, tourists visit the Island. Then the teacher asked them about how that project made them feel. Students said happy, and other students said: enthusiastic teacher. Some other students answered in Spanish and said that they felt interested in doing this project and learning through this process. So the teacher started asking questions</p>	<p>Students were attentive to the explanation of the communication strategies since they found in the strategy previously studied a tool to achieve the goal of communicating their ideas. The idea of working on a project made them feel enthusiastic since students demonstrated to enjoy working on things related to their context and things they are interested in. The students demonstrated to have interest in the project since they felt identified with the topic. The topic was related to something they like, and they know much more about this since they had the chance to investigate and learn more about it. Students demonstrated to have a positive attitude toward the project since it was analyzed with the students, and they were involved and participated in the construction of the question that drives the project. Students enjoy when they are involved in the activities and when they part in the decision-making of the activities. Students demonstrate to have a positive attitude toward the activity when they become active part in the activity and when their voices are heard. When students are engaged in the process, they will take care of the activity, and it was fundamental for the activity to make the students think about the importance and the impact of this project. At this point, students were so engaged in the activity that they were not conscious about being in an English class; they were just discussing the topic, giving opinions, and working on what they had to do. It is through this kind of activity that learning becomes significant. Students can construct knowledge through different situations and different scenarios that are part of their context, and they can relate what they learn to that context. During the discussion, the teacher tried to use English to ask the questions, and without asking the students to answer in English, most of the students always tried to use English in their answers. Despite the fact that they were not fluent, they were able and interested in using the vocabulary they had learned during the class. Thus, providing real situations in which students can use the L2 language is very important for</p>	<p>Providing the students with communication strategies becomes beneficial for them since it helps them students to communicate their ideas, and knowing that students become aware of the importance of knowing more communication strategies and understanding how to use those communication strategies. Due to the good acceptance of those strategies and the benefits that they represent for the students, it is a good idea for the teacher to keep teaching and reinforcing communication strategies. It is also a great idea to include students' interests and context in the lessons since they look more interested in the class when they are familiar with the things that are being discussed. They feel they can talk about it and make an effort to try to do it in English because they want to participate in the conversation. Working on a project of students' interest is a great way to keep students working and learning. They will work and do the assignments without feeling the grueling of a regular task. Keeping the project environment, it's a good idea for having the students interested in the class since the students demonstrate that they enjoy working under the PBL lessons and arranging and discussing the projects. Students expressed that they felt happy and motivated about the idea of working on projects which could be positive for the development of the project. Asking the students about how they perceived the development of the project or how they would like to carry it out increases students' participation and level of involvement in the activities. Students get to</p>

about how did they think it was the best way to carry out that project of letting Tierra Bomba known, and students said videos; one student said in Spanish that they wanted to record videos about the different places in Tierra Bomba and create a Facebook profile in which they could upload those videos and people from other places can see those videos and catch their attention to visit Tierra Bomba. All the students agreed and were so motivated to start working on this project. The teacher told the student that for this project, they were going to work in groups. As a way to lead the students to the development of the project, the teacher presented a series of tasks students had to do to get to the realization and presentation of the final product, which was a video. As a principal activity, the teacher showed the students a video of some people promoting their town. Students had to listen to the song and pay attention to the way people from the video promoted their town. This video was an idea of what students could do to promote the Island. The teacher used the lyric of the song from the video to teach the students a new vocabulary about some other places people can find in a town and the use of the articles a- an. Students had to identify the places in the lyric and the articles; then, they had to compare the town mentioned in the video and the place where they lived. Students were very participative during this activity; the teacher provided a structure or a prefabricated pattern for the students to describe and compare the towns. Students started taking turns and describing the places; they used the prefabricated patterns but also used some of the gap fillers the teacher taught them at the beginning of the class. Although they were not fluent, they got to describe the places without too much hesitation. After this activity, the teacher asked the students to make groups start working on the videos each group had to record to upload to the Facebook profile. Students started working in groups and designing what they wanted to do in their videos and what they wanted to show to make people know about Tierra Bomba. Students were very concentrated on the activity; they were discussing and designing where they were going to record the video and what they were going to share. At this point, students were so engaged in the activity that they were unaware of being in an English class. They discussed the topic, gave opinions, and worked enthusiastically on the Project.’’


the language learning process. For the development of the project, the teacher showed a video as an example for the students to have a clear idea about how they could develop this project or what could be an example of a final product. This makes the students feel secure and confident about the process. Although the students should take charge of the process, the teacher also plays an important role since they guide the process and give instructions to the students to make sure students are clear about what to do. The teacher should always be available to provide instructions and clarify students’ doubts. Working in activities that allow them to compare and analyze what they know with the new knowledge makes the construction of that knowledge significant, thus they won’t learn just for a moment; that knowledge will be perdurable, and students are going to be able to use that knowledge in another moment or situation. For example, if they are contrasting a vocabulary about the places in town with the places they find on the island, that knowledge will remain, and students are going to use that vocabulary in a different moment in a conversation. On the other hand, having communication strategies help the students to have the tools they need to communicate in English. Students were able to put into practice the different communication strategies the teacher had taught them, so they were able to fulfill the activity by describing and comparing the places using the prefabricated patterns and the gap fillers. Teamwork and cooperative work give students the confidence to do the activities since they find support in their classmates and feel encouraged to do the different activities.

feel that the project belongs to them, and it becomes part of them. Another important and relevant observation from this workshop was that students liked the idea of working in groups; they demonstrated that they enjoy working with their classmates, feeling the support, and that they are not on the spot alone. Thus, it is a great idea to keep reinforcing teamwork and cooperative work considering that students can also learn from their peers. When carrying a class under the PBL approach is also necessary to show students examples of how to develop the project and introduce the project step by step. Students feel more confident when they receive accurate instructions about what they are going to do and work with a better attitude. The PBL approach strengthens the interaction among students. Students felt confident when they were talking in English with their classmates. So having the tools required to convey their ideas as well as being in a pleasant learning environment brings positive results in the development of the speaking activity. The student's participation and interaction increased noticeably.

Appendix 5

Workshops

WORKSHOP #1 - LESSON PLAN
KNOWING THE ISLAND
PROJECT I: "ISLAND PROMO VIDEO"

	Institution: San José de Caño del Oro	City: Cartagena
Teacher: Milagro Agudelo	Dates: Feb 21 -22, March 1,8,14,15, and 16.	Time: 7 hours
Grade: 9 th	Age: 13-15	CEF Level: -A1
Communication strategy: Prefabricated patterns		
<p>Communicative purpose of the lesson: <i>By the end of this project, students will be able to present the most important places on Tierra Bomba Island.</i> <i>By the end of this project, students will be able to explain what people can do in those places.</i></p>		
<p>What skills will students practice? Students will practice listening, employing different videos, and reading through some short texts. The production skills students will work with will be speaking and writing on a minor scale.</p> <p>What language will students focus on? Present simple – prepositions of place- There is, and there are – Local places vocabulary- a/an</p>		
<p>Basic Learning Rights: Make brief presentations on academic topics related to their school environment or community.</p> <p>Standard: - I Prepare short presentations previously rehearsed about everyday and personal topics. -I interact with my classmates and teacher to make decisions about specific topics that I know.</p>		
Topic: Island Promo Video		
<p>Materials: Whiteboard and markers – Dictionaries- Notebooks</p> <p>Technology-based materials: Computer -Projector –Speakers – Cell phones -Pear Deck- Emaze – Youtube- Nearpod- Canva – Padlet.</p>		

INTRODUCTION

Task #1

Brainstorming! (Time: 20 Minutes)

What do people know about Tierra Bomba Island?

Students will have to draw two things they think people know about the island.

Draw two things people know about Tierra Bomba:

1

2

Students, draw anywhere on this slide!

Peer Deck Interactive Slide
Do not remove this bar

Task #2

Language content review! (Time: 30 minutes)

Students will have to analyze and draw conclusions about the use of *there is* and *there are*, and then the teacher will provide a more detailed explanation.

READ AND ANALYZE: WHEN TO USE OF THERE IS, AND THERE ARE

**READ AND ANALYZE: WHEN TO
USE THERE IS, AND THERE ARE**

There's a palace **in** my town

and a shopping center

There's a university

There are lots of things to do and see

There are cafes and restaurants

and a museum too

Let's go to the cinema

Welcome to my town

Let's go to the playground

Let's go to the library

Come and read a book with me

Let's go to the station

and see the trains waiting

Let's see the cathedral

and all the happy people

All the happy people

Look at all the happy people

All the happy people

Look at all the happy people

There's a hospital

A swimming pool

and a market every day

Let's go to the theatre

Let's go and see a play

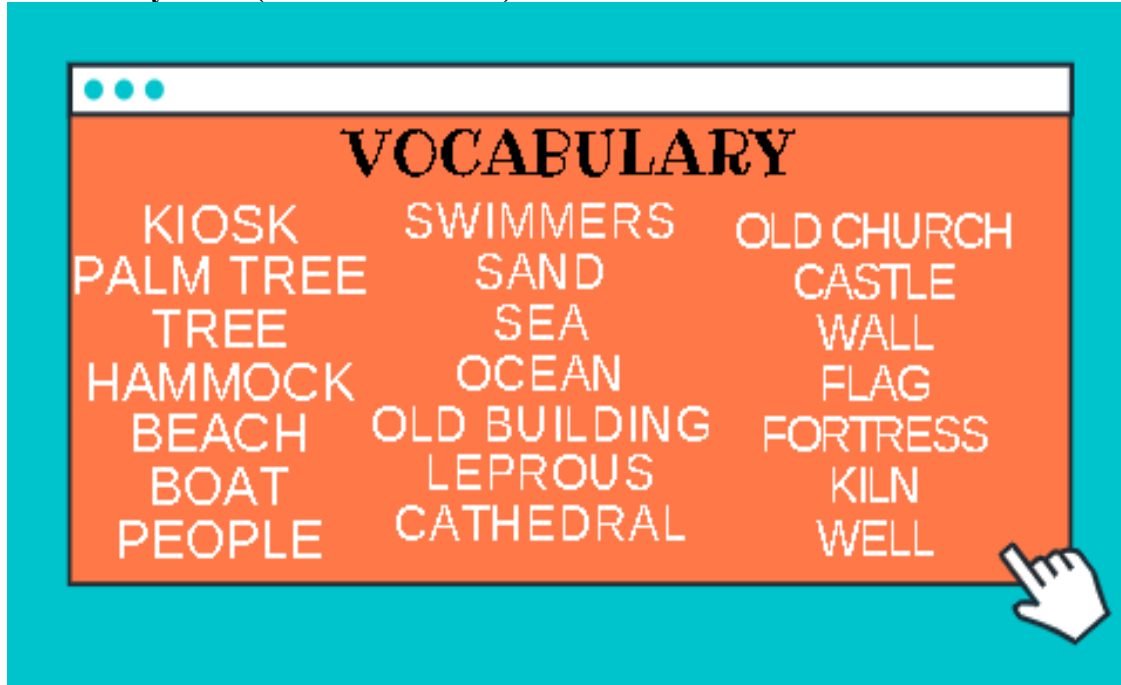
There's a bridge **by** the river

And a park **by** the school

There's a police station

and a football stadium.

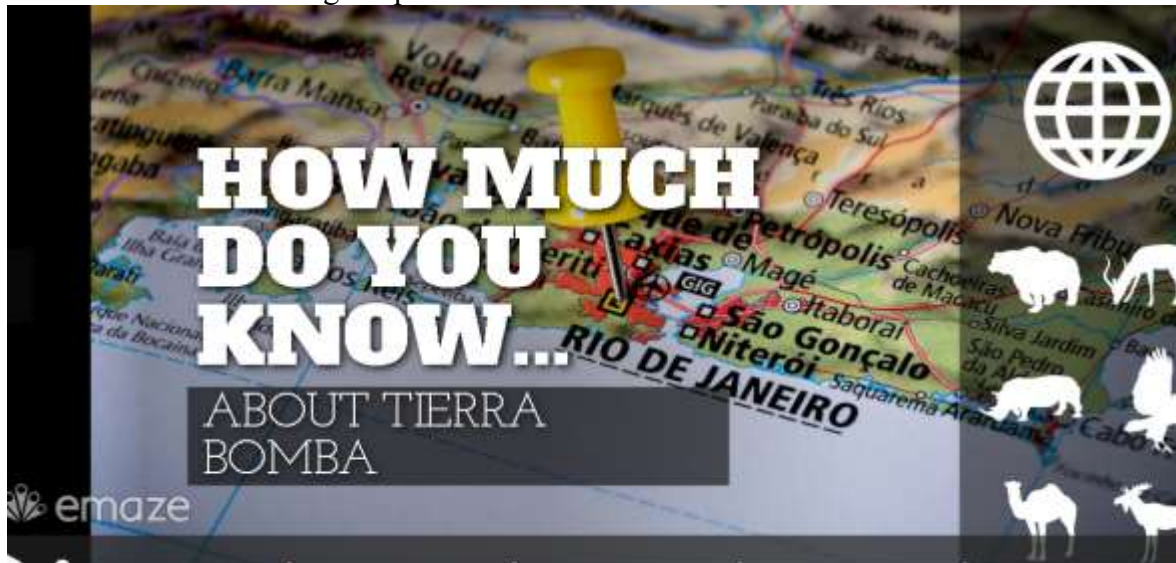
Vocabulary time! (Time: 20 minutes)



Task #3

How much do you know? (Time: 40 minutes)

The teacher will show several pictures of Tierra Bomba using an Emaze presentation, and the students will have to name those places. The teacher will reinforce the vocabulary of the sites and the articles a/an using the pictures.



<https://www.emaze.com/@AQQQIZWL/how-much-do-you-know>



Note: Every time the teacher presents a picture, she will ask the students the following questions:

What is this place?

Where is it located?

What can you do in this place?

The teacher will teach the students how to answer those questions; she will reinforce the vocabulary learned, the use of the article a/an, the verb to be, can, and the preposition of places. Example:

It is an old church

It is located in Caño del Oro

In this place, you can take pictures.

DEVELOPMENT

Task #1

Use the prefabricated patterns to describe Tierra Bomba (Time 20 minutes)

The students will have to use the following prefabricated patterns to describe what people know about Tierra Bomba and what they would like people to know.

People know that on Tierra Bomba, there is...

People know that on Tierra Bomba, there are...

I would like people to know that on Tierra Bomba, there is ...

I would like people to know that on Tierra Bomba, there are...

Task #2 (Time 20 minutes)**Use the prefabricated patterns in a discussion.**

In groups of three, students will have to discuss the topic using the prefabricated patterns and the vocabulary studied.

Let's discuss!

What do people know about Tierra Bomba Island?

follow these instructions:

- 1 People know that on Tierra Bomba **there is...**
- 2 People know that on Tierra Bomba **there are...**
- 3 I would like people to know that on Tierra Bomba **there is/there are**

Students, write your response!

Pear Deck Interactive Slide
Do not remove this bar

Task #3 (Time 20 minutes)**Think of a project.**

Students will have to analyze the questions covered during the class and inquire about a topic or problem that can become a project.



Example: Are people aware of the historical and cultural value of the island?

Task #4 (Time:1 hour)**Let's walk and discover**

The teacher will take the students outside the school to visit the closest exciting places. Students will have to take pictures of the sites. Then, the teacher will ask questions about the places. For example: What is this place? What can you do here? What else do you know about this place?



Task #4 (Time:1 hour)

Preparing a presentation!

Students will have to choose one of the pictures they took, upload it to Padlet, look for more information about that place, and prepare an oral presentation.

<https://padlet.com/miracleagudelo/9v6brp47437aroqk>



CONSOLIDATION

Task #1

Let's present! (Time 2 hours)

The teacher will project the Padlet creation with all the pictures the students uploaded, and each group will select his picture and start presenting the place. Students will pretend that the teacher and the rest of the class are visitors. So, students have to do their best to let the visitors know about the island.

Appendix 6

Student's Self-Assessment

Institución Educativa San José de Caño del Oro
Self-assessment Project development
Workshop #3

Teacher: Milagro Agudelo

Grade: _____

Objective: To self-assess the oral performance and achievements during the development of the activities implemented in the third workshop that corresponds to the first part of the project "Saving the Island Campaign."

Instructions: Mark with an X the option that best describes your performance in the oral activity presented at the end of this first workshop, then justify your answer.

PERFORMANCE AND SPEAKING SKILL	VERY LIMITED	LIMITED	ADEQUATE	STRONG	OUTSTANDING	WHY
1. I demonstrated appropriate use of Present simple – Should- Should not- expressions to give an opinion.						
2. I remembered and used the vocabulary learned in class.						
3. My speech was natural and fluent. I did not hesitate.						
4. I was confident, and I had an appropriate tone of voice and body posture						
5. I enjoyed working collaboratively						

Please answer the following questions as objectively and honestly as possible.

1. What was the most difficult part of doing this workshop regarding your oral performance? Why?

2. What was the easiest part of doing this workshop regarding your oral performance? Why?

3. What are your achievements from this workshop?

4. What are your personal comments about this workshop?

5. What was the main advantage of using communication strategies during this workshop?

Self-Assessment sample

Institución Educativa San José de Caño del Oro

Self-assessment Project development

Workshop #1

Teacher: Milagro Agudelo

Grade: 9-02

Objective: To self-assess the oral performance and achievements during the development of the activities implemented in the first workshop that corresponds to the first part of the project "island promo video"

Instructions: Mark with an X the option that best describes your performance in the oral activity presented at the end of this first workshop, then justify your answer.

PERFORMANCE AND SPEAKING SKILL	VERY LIMITED	LIMITED	ADEQUATE	STRONG	OUTSTANDING	WHY
1. I demonstrated appropriate use of there is, there are, the articles a, an, and plural forms.				X		Porque aprendí los verbos y algunos artículos algunos que me ayudaron a construir las oraciones usando there is there are a, an
2. I remembered and used the vocabulary learned in class.					X	Algunos de los vocabulario que aprendimos y también algunas relaciones con otras cosas.
3. My speech was natural and fluent. I did not hesitate.			X			Me fue fácil que me diera a pensar
4. I was confident, and I had an appropriate tone of voice and body posture			X			Al principio estaba un poco tímido pero después me sentí más confiado
5. I enjoyed working collaboratively					X	Me gustó muy bien trabajar con mis compañeros

Please answer the following questions as objectively and honestly as possible.

1. What was the most difficult part of doing this workshop regarding your oral performance? Why?

Al principio sentía mucho miedo y estaba muy torpe
porque no sabía hablar nada en inglés

2. What was the easiest part of doing this workshop regarding your oral performance? Why?

Aprender el vocabulario y usarlo en la presentación
porque las clases fueron muy entretenidas

3. What are your achievements from this workshop?

Si sentí que pude hablar inglés, quizás no tan fluido, pero
ya no hablaba nada de inglés y creo que aprender vocabulario
y conocer las estrategias de comunicación me ayudó a construir
frases en inglés. A mí me daba miedo hablar inglés porque no sabía
pero ahora siento que lo puedo hacer con las herramientas que
ahora disfruto participar en las actividades orales

4. What are your personal comments about this workshop?

A mí me gustó este workshop porque fue bastante
interesante. Siento que lo disfruté mucho, yo participaba
todo el tiempo en las actividades y además, yo creo
que el tema llamó mucho la atención porque tenemos que
hablar de nuestra isla que es algo que nos gusta, el proyecto
fue bastante interesante también porque pude trabajar con mis
compañeros, salir a conocer lugares, investigar y participar en todo

5. What was the main advantage of using communication strategies during this workshop?

Si esas estrategias creo que mi desempeño no
habría sido el mismo. Gracias a eso creo que pude
desarrollar las actividades orales

Appendix 7

Pre-Test

**UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
EVALUATION STAGE
PRE-TEST**



Speaking Test

Grade: Ninth

Level: A1

Intro: The candidate asks to name and age.

1. Describe four pictures by using short responses.
2. Identify four differences between pictures.

SPEAKING ASSESSMENT

Pre-test

- Describe the pictures by using short responses.
- Identify differences between images.

Appendix 8

Post-Test

UNIVERSITY OF CALDAS
MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH DIDACTICS
ACTION STAGE
POST-TEST



Speaking Test

Grade: Ninth

Level: A1

Intro: The candidate asks to name and age.

1. Describe four pictures by using short responses.
2. Identify four differences between pictures.

CIENCIA IDENTIDAD

SPEAKING ASSESSMENT

Post-test

Los

Appendix 9

Speaking Rubric

CRITERIA	0	1 Poor	2 Unsatisfactory	3 Satisfactory	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
Vocabulary	Performance does not satisfy the Band 1 descriptor.	Uses a very narrow range of vocabulary. Responds only at the single-word level.	May attempt some simple utterances but basic mistakes and lack of language prevent communication.	Uses simple and reduced vocabulary according to the topic. Uses the vocabulary required to deal with most tasks. Generally, responds at a word level but may also produce phrases.	Generally, responds at a word or phrase level and produces longer utterances.	Responds appropriately and uses the vocabulary required to deal with all test tasks. Generally, responds at word or phrase level but may also produce some longer utterances.
Grammar	Performance does not satisfy the Band 1 descriptor.	Has great difficulties in applying a grammatical structure, unaware of structures.	Has a lot of mistakes when using grammatical structures.	Produces a few basic grammatical structures.	Produces an average level of grammatical structures.	Uses some simple structures correctly but makes some mistakes, although the meaning is generally clear.
Fluency	Performance does not satisfy the Band 1 descriptor.	Has difficulty producing speech. Constant pauses & hesitations. Very slow pace.	Produces weak speech with frequent pauses and hesitations. Slow pace.	Produces a satisfactory speech with some pauses and hesitations.	Produces a good speech at an appropriate pace with hesitations.	Produces a very good speech at an appropriate pace with limited hesitations.
Total:		Comments:				