



Education Quarterly Reviews

Abad, A., & Villafuerte-Holguin, J. (2025). Implementing Project-Based Learning in English Classes. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 8(3), 127-139.

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.08.03.598

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Education Quarterly Reviews* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

Implementing Project-Based Learning in English Lessons^{*}

Anthony Abad¹, Jhonny Villafuerte-Holguín²

¹ Student at the University Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabi, Ecuador. Email: e0750573420@live.uileam.edu.ec
Program: PINE

² University Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabi, Ecuador. Innovaciones pedagogicas. Member of the research project: Innovaciones pedagógicas e internacionalización de la formación de docentes para el desarrollo humano y sostenible. Research group: Innovaciones pedagógicas para el desarrollo sostenible. Email: johnny.villafuerte@uleam.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6053-6307>.

Abstract

Project-Based Learning (PBL) has established itself as a dynamic, student-centered educational approach, especially in English language teaching. Based on constructivist theory, it encourages students to engage in real-world tasks that integrate language skills with critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. The research aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of concepts, characterizing and highlighting key aspects of Project-Based Learning on English instruction to support educators and researchers in developing and energizing classrooms with evidence-based practices and flexible educational projects. Furthermore, it is relevant to include active strategies with achievable and independent activities, innovative and creative sessions, so that students are encouraged to recognize errors in their English learning and work cooperatively to improve. The conclusion is that Project Based Learning significantly promotes the development of oral competence in English and in turn generates active learning, collaborative work, metacognitive strategies, creativity and motivation for learning which are involved in the PBL Method, thus providing key content during the research, planning and preparation phases which is conclusive, since it is a crucial scaffolding technique.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Planning, Student Engagement, Education, Competencies

1. Introduction

One of the main difficulties faced by English as a foreign language (EFL) students in their learning is the lack of opportunities to practice speaking outside of the school setting. Therefore, project-based learning (PBL) is presented as an option for teaching speaking, as it is a collaborative and student-centered method that provides students with more opportunities to share their ideas and support each other in overcoming their speaking

^{*} Research project: *Innovaciones pedagógicas e internacionalización de la formación de docentes para el desarrollo humano y sostenible*. Research group: *Innovaciones de Pedagogías para el Desarrollo Sostenible*. Professor at the University Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabi, Ecuador

difficulties while developing practical projects (Cahyana et al., 2022; Mafrudloh et al., 2020; and Ratna et al., 2019).

It is an educational approach whose main purpose is the creation of a final product that responds to a real challenge (Segura, 2021). Teachers analyze and consider the work process according to the characteristics of their students, ensuring that they have the necessary resources to address it. The process includes exploration, reflection, problem identification, teamwork, interpretation of information, and evaluation, among other activities, and is the result of collaborative work between students and teachers. Furthermore, Sanz and Sánchez (2021) consider PBL to be one of the most effective and practical approaches, closely linked to the communicative approach (CA) or communicative language teaching (CLT). Furthermore, it allows students to become the center of their own learning, fostering their autonomy and critical thinking. It's not just about memorizing or collecting data; it's about young people learning by doing, placing great importance on the acquisition of skills and attitudes. Starting with a question, a challenge, or a problem and carrying out a process until obtaining a final product generates a sense of achievement in students, reflects the effort expended, and produces meaningful learning.

Project-based learning (PBL), frequently used in English language teaching (ELT), has significantly improved, adapting to different educational contexts and demographics. These adaptations highlighted both the advantages and limitations of the approach, especially in relation to diverse student populations and cultural contexts. For this reason, Mujiono (2023) points out that English teachers implement various methodologies to engage students in learning experiences. Project-based learning, which is based on social constructivism and Lev Vygotsky's 1962 learning theory, uses a project or activity as a tool that facilitates the transfer of students' knowledge and skills through interactions and experiences. As Vygotsky emphasized, knowledge is created through human action, reality is jointly constructed by members of a society, learning is an active and social process, people generate meaning through interactions with others, and meaningful learning occurs when people participate in social activities.

Most theoretical and empirical studies come from Eastern European countries and focus on research into how problem-based learning (PrBL) improves students' participation, cooperation, and communication skills. Therefore, it represents an opportunity for English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers to contribute to the development of their teaching experience. In the Latin American context, where the implementation of PrBL is relatively recent, there is an urgent demand for communication skills applicable in diverse everyday settings, preparing students for the complexities of an increasingly globalized and interconnected world.

In Latin America, it is also necessary to overcome mechanistic educational approaches. For Marrero (2019), *fragmenting the traditional teaching-learning model into a theoretical-practical subject in order to activate self-directed instruction in a holistic and comprehensive manner requires creating a common thread between prior knowledge and new information*. Indeed, the educational process must be a space that fosters an environment that inspires motivation and participation in students.

According to Villao et al., (2025) some of the obstacles to successful English learning include a lack of ongoing exposure to the language, a lack of adequate educational resources, and insufficient practice in real-life contexts. These factors can hinder the development of strong language skills and the fluency necessary to communicate effectively in English. For Philominraj et al., (2022) another important factor is the lack of ongoing exposure to the language, which is a common obstacle in Latin American countries. Without regular and consistent practice, students find it difficult to internalize the grammatical structures and vocabulary necessary to achieve fluency. Furthermore, many educational environments do not offer sufficient opportunities for language immersion, which limits students' ability to develop listening and speaking skills in a real-life context.

An added challenge for this approach is the insufficient educational resources. In various regions, students don't have access to proper teaching materials or technology that enables interactive learning. This lack is made worse by traditional teaching methods not being engaging or encouraging enough for the students to take active part or confidently participate in conversational practice. As a result, psychological factors such as anxiety, lack of

motivation, and low self-esteem can make it even more challenging for students to open up and learn. These challenges demonstrate the need to implement more interactive and engaging approaches, applying innovating strategies and cultivating a positive learning environment

In Ecuador, a low level of academic performance has been observed, placing it 80th out of 113 countries, with an index of 460 out of 800, considered a low level of English proficiency. Since English is not the native language in the country, language learning can be a challenge in the context of public education, due to a number of factors, such as overcrowding in each classroom, lack of attention, and low motivation for learning. It has also been observed that, to improve these conditions, it is necessary to combine educational activities with gamification and digital environments. Furthermore, it is necessary to include active strategies with flexible and independent activities, innovative and creative sessions, so that students are encouraged to recognize errors in their English learning and work cooperatively to improve.

This systematic review aims to collect and examine relevant publications in a specific area from the students' perspective, gathering essential information for research. Consequently, this review aims to investigate project-based work in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms to identify pedagogical methods and teaching experiences during their implementation. The keywords used to search for information are: Project-Based Learning (PBL), planning, student engagement, education, competencies. The research team selected 60 articles that met the specified criteria. The research examines ideas, describes, and highlights the most important aspects of project-based learning and English language teaching. The research provides fundamental, reliable, and verifiable data through the analysis and interpretation of data in a specific population (Chicaiza, 2020). It is necessary to remember that the purpose of literature reviews is to generate new knowledge through a process of searching, analyzing, and interpreting information obtained by different researchers from print, audiovisual, or digital sources.

The research questions driving this research are: (1) How does PBL contribute to the learning of English by students from diverse cultures? ; (2) What difficulties or impediments to the implementation of PBL have been identified in different educational settings? ; and (3) What adaptations are suggested to make PBL more inclusive? The aim of this research is to offer a hermeneutic analysis of concepts, characterize and highlight key aspects of project-based learning and the English language in order to support educators and researchers in developing ways to energize the classroom with evidence-based practices and flexible projects.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Concept of Project-Based Learning (PBL)

It is part of the active and innovative methodologies used by many educational institutions around the world to transform conventional teaching. Currently, there is no single definition of PBL. Likewise, Conard (2018) states that the methodology is collaborative, since it uses group or individual work situations, exposing students to real problems to find possible solutions. Thus, Bueno (2018) expresses that PBL is an integrative methodology that considers three fundamental elements to achieve meaningful learning: student interests, a pre-established curriculum, and the needs and context of the educational environment.

It is worth mentioning that Chicaiza (2020) points out that the Project-Based Learning methodology arises from the idea of progressive education, promoted by philosophers and pedagogues who were key in the creation of educational reforms at an international level to implement in the teaching and learning of second languages, as well as in other subjects and areas of study.

According to Xiangyun et al. (2020), the principles of Project-Based Learning involves three different aspects: (1) a cognitive approach, (2) a content-based approach, and (3) collaborative learning. First of all, the cognitive approach refers to an essential problem with to the completion of a project, allowing students to gain knowledge through experiences in real life situations. On the other hand, a more content based approach relates to learning that goes beyond traditional disciplines and methods, tightening the connection between theory and practice. Finally, the social or collaborative approach involves active group participation and involvement.

To Orosz et al. (2018), it is essential to enhance students' English learning in real-life contexts so that their educational experience is meaningful. It is essential for students to be actively involved in their learning, as this process is dynamic. Students learn best when they discover the meaning and application of knowledge in their lives. Likewise, Díaz and Hernández (2002) assert that it is the learner who selects and relates the information provided to their prior knowledge; therefore, the teacher is the one who must provide the spaces for meaningful learning to occur in students. In this way, collaborative work between educators and students will lead to a substantial teaching-learning process.

According to research conducted by West (2018), teaching English as a foreign language has its own mechanism within the teaching-learning process. In a single class, more than one skill or even all of them, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, can be addressed, depending on the activity being developed. English classes require more than theory, but also constant practice both inside and outside the classroom. This ongoing practice demands teachers and students engaged in the educational process, as well as the use of strategies and techniques from an active methodology that promotes holistic English language learning. In addition, West (2018) points out that active learning in the teaching of another language requires a teacher who is reflective and critical of their own practice and a student who is committed to their learning. Reflective teachers question their practice, both yesterday's and today's, and seek mechanisms to improve or adjust their next practice. This teacher must be willing to change and, under these conditions, educate, which implies educating students by considering their intellectual and moral dimensions. In this sense, the student's commitment to their training is fundamental since active learning provides students with greater responsibility and decision-making power, which gives the learner greater autonomy.

For the authors, Zambrano and Mendoza (2022), PBL is a teaching methodology that has been implemented in different contexts and levels of education, for those who have taken the step toward this way of understanding education and teaching that entails the construction of knowledge through interaction with reality. Cáscales and Carrillo (2018) consider that PBL provokes a pedagogical and social change, establishing itself as an option to transform traditional teaching strategies.

On the other hand, Fernández (2017) states that PBL is an active methodology that makes it possible to reduce student demotivation. It can be structured as a teaching strategy that allows students to engage in research processes independently, minimizing the limitations of traditional teaching. It is worth highlighting that in this approach, both the teacher and the student play an important role, although the focus shifts to the student.

Likewise, Flores and Juárez (2017) agree that by using PBL as a teaching strategy, skills and competencies are strengthened, such as teamwork, communication, independent learning, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, research skills, use of technology, information search, coordination, planning, organization, among others. They agree with these authors in conceiving that through this type of learning, students develop competencies and new capacities that serve their personal and social development, while the teaching-learning process becomes more practical and interactive.

In this teaching process, the teacher will support the students in their role as a guide or advisor of the activities done by the students, "Interacting with them whenever necessary and fostering a more horizontal, dynamic style of communication. On the other hand, Salcido et al. (2024) mention that PBL is shown as an innovative option to enhance the educational process in schools. PBL is concentrated on the interests and experiences of the students aiming to improve academic results but also to cultivate critical skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork, and fundamental competencies growing today. Marra et al. (2014) states that PBL is active, Student-centered teaching methodology is characterized by promoting student learning through authentic problem-solving. The diverse profiles and previous educational experiences among students in semi-schooled high schools poses unique challenges in terms of identifying and meeting each student's individual needs. In this context, PBL offers flexible ways for educational interventions designed to address these needs more effectively. Giving as a result an inclusive and reasonable education.

PBL learning is an innovative opportunity for enhancing the educational process inside the classrooms. That centers its attention to the interests and experiences of the students, aiming to improve academic performance and

developing skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork, compulsory skills for the booming competencies in our current society. Traditional methods divide knowledge into multiple subjects; teachers typically impart knowledge orally and assess students through written tests, placing greater importance on the outcome of the activity than on the process. It means that teachers can quickly convey information to a very large number of students at once, but at the same time, it also entails a series of obvious limitations, such as a lack of discipline, a deterioration in critical thinking, and even a distancing of students from the application of knowledge. Therefore, PBL is relevant for teachers to implement in the classroom.

2.1. Educational projects

According to Béjar (2018), the fundamental elements for the creation of a project are known as "The Six A's of Project Design", developed by Adrya Steiberg in 1998, and include the following concepts: Authenticity, Academic Rigor, Applied Learning, Active Exploration, Connections with Adults, and Assessment Practice. First, authenticity in the creation of a project arises from a question or problem that is relevant to the student, allowing them to develop something of personal or social value that transcends the academic field. This occurs because a question that sparks interest and motivation adds more meaning to what they are learning, leading them to absorb the learning rather than memorize it.

About applied learning, Basilotta and Gómez (2018) state that the implementation of projects gives students interactive problems to solve, giving them the opportunity to work independently or in teams, which is essential because it puts in their hands the ability to analyze and solve a problem or look for help to solve something in collaboration. Basilotta and Gómez (2018) argue that the key to effective assessment of student learning is for teachers to express their goals and aims from the beginning of the project setting a bar. In this way, students can point their own learning and recognize the goal they must reach through the project. This is supported by Chicaiza (2020) who indicates that academic rigor in a project enhances the development of critical thinking skills and appropriate mindsets, challenging students to use research methods in various disciplines.

Macías and Arteaga (2022) point out that, to develop projects, students must conduct practical research using various technological tools that foster their interest in fieldwork. Furthermore, a commitment to responsibility and interest must be fostered, since, in the end, students are expected to demonstrate what they have learned through effective and dynamic presentations. Regarding interaction with adults, when starting a project, students must understand the reality of the problem or situation addressed, since it is essential that they share their doubts with members of the educational community in order to communicate and seek solutions or proposals for the final product.

Therefore, Olarte and Guzmán (2022) point out that learning techniques are considered one of the most accepted psychological concepts by specialists in recent decades, since student performance is strongly influenced by the methods that the teacher uses to impart knowledge. They include planning processes that encompass attention, comprehension and knowledge acquisition, and together they make up action strategies that must be applied in the classroom to improve both the students' attitude and their academic performance, which will subsequently allow them to carry out a critical analysis of their own learning process.

Project-Based Learning can also be described as a task-centered teaching and learning method, a collaborative process of negotiation among participants, whose fundamental objective is the creation of a final product. It encourages individual and autonomous learning within a framework of clear objectives and procedures. Students take responsibility for their learning, identifying their preferences and strategies throughout the process. They also have the opportunity to participate in decisions related to learning content and assessment.

According to Segura (2021), the findings indicate that adequate teacher training is a significant issue. It also shows that many educators lack the tools and methodologies necessary to create effective projects, manage collaborative groups, or comprehensively assess communication skills. Some attempt to implement PBL but end up reproducing outdated dynamics, such as assigning group tasks that are, in reality, individual divisions of labor. In addition, teachers need at least 40 hours of practical training to understand PBL principles and apply them effectively.

To Indahsari Active (2020), learning in English helps students stay motivated, calm, and minimize stress because practical exercises improve their communication skills, reduce their use of Spanish, and allay fears of poor pronunciation. Additionally, entertaining exercises supported by multimedia techniques are integrated into this active methodology to reinforce learning. Chaves (2023) provides an example: a podcast simulation with an English-speaking visitor about community-based tourism showed evidence of fluency in dialogue and listening comprehension. Therefore, Sandoval and Diaz (2020) point out that podcasting supports English language learning, specifically listening skills. It is also a strategy that proactively impacts language teaching and significantly improves students' fluent pronunciation.

Investigations by Chica (2023) demonstrated the relevance of the active methodology in English learning. In her efforts to explain how active methods can be used to improve language comprehension, she emphasized that for students to be active and build independent and meaningful learning, it is necessary to adopt various cooperation and collaboration strategies, and that a single approach is not sufficient. Similarly, Guillermo, (2024) when examining the influence of the flipped classroom on English learning, emphasized that this active learning approach promotes student participation and teamwork. These strategies have revealed that students are confident and calm during activities to develop English communication skills, and it also promote collective enthusiasm and active participation.

On the other hand, Moslemi and Sarani (2023), indicate that with respect to the didactic strategy of problem-based learning (PrBL), barriers were found that prevented English teachers from using PBL. Their limited knowledge of this methodology was revealed, which made it difficult for them to design their planning based on PBL and connect it with English communicative skills. While it is true that there is a lack of creativity or knowledge to contextualize didactic planning with PBL, however, the greatest barrier that emerged during the observation was the excessive number of students in each course, the lack of Internet connectivity and, above all, the scarce technological infrastructure, characteristics that limit learning in any educational discipline, especially when studying a language other than the mother tongue.

On the other hand, Jiang and Kalyuga (2022) found that active learning was effective in teaching English, helping to improve writing and strengthen working memory. Similarly, Ahmed (2023) found that collaborative learning positively impacts students' motivation and anxiety control, helping them with reading comprehension, reading skills, and calmness in the learning process.

In the study directed by Salcido et al. (2024) they revealed that the surprising majority of students (77%) believe that Problem-Based Learning (PrBL) could be an effective strategy to cover educational gaps in high school. This positive perception is based on the belief that PrBL offers many significant benefits. Starting with the fact that PBL is perceived to promote active learning by engaging students in a dynamic and participatory process. Students engage with their peers and match points of view finding new perspectives and learning from one another students feel more motivated and engaged in their education, which can contribute to reducing educational gaps.

Added onto this, PBL projects provide students with the opportunity to develop practical skills. This real experience which can help them build a better understanding of their own abilities and the things they are capable of preparing them to face the challenges of the future workplace and academic world. Another notable aspect is the stimulation of creativity and innovation that it offers. Confronting problems found in real life, students are challenged to think creatively and find innovative solutions, which contributes to their holistic development as individuals. Finally, PBL is perceived as a strategy that considers students' individual interests and needs. By designing PBL projects relevant to their interests and contexts, their participation and commitment to learning can be significantly increased, which in turn can contribute to reducing educational attainment. In addition, Zambrano and Mendoza (2022) recognize that project-based learning focuses on students' ability to acquire skills and abilities. It highlights its potential to enhance the development of: The student's internal motivation towards studying, Interaction and collaboration between group members, Fluency in the oral and written presentation of their ideas and assessments, The student's responsibility in solving tasks, The expansion of the spectrum for your work location, The link between theory and practice, Spaces for the joint construction of knowledge and skills, Social skills that multiply the dimensions of your communication with others and the environment, Analytic

perspectives to solve the problems it addresses, Self-confidence, based on the recognition of one's strengths and weaknesses.

Besides, Salcido et al. (2024) indicate that students acknowledge role of teachers in the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PrBL). They see how teachers play multiple fundamental roles in the success of this methodology overlooking progress and guiding the improvement of the projects. The value carried by the guiding and orienting role that teachers must play during the development of PBL projects is so significant that students might feel a bit lost without it at first. They expect to receive the support and feedback necessary to advance their projects, as well as guidance to overcome potential obstacles. Furthermore, students emphasize the teachers' responsibility to provide the appropriate resources and materials to successfully carry out their projects. This provision of resources is crucial to ensure that students have access to the tools necessary to develop their skills and achieve their goals.

The use of PBL in the classroom offers teachers the opportunity to update their teaching strategies through meaningful theoretical and practical activities. Teachers must continuously monitor students' progress throughout this process and, with their support, enhance the skills they acquire during the development of their projects. Undoubtedly, through this support, teachers will discover significant experiences and lessons learned from their students, which the research activity inherent to PBL generates in the teaching-learning process. This strategy involves planning the phases of a project in the teaching-learning process according to the educational context in which it will be implemented, in order to achieve the objectives proposed in the teaching process.

3. Material and technological elements used in Project-Based Learning

PBL also has the potential to change unfavorable educational circumstances. Guzmán and Olarte (2022) document its implementation in a rural, under-resourced school, where projects focused on the needs of the local community. E.g., tour guides for visitors from other countries. Despite the limited infrastructure, a single projector for the entire school, the creativity of teachers and students compensated for these shortcomings. Results indicated that, even without advanced technology, PBL managed to increase oral skills, as assessed by standardized tests, by 35%. This example is representative of contexts with similar constraints.

Time presents perhaps the biggest challenge, as Ortega's (2024) research measured that teachers need 30% more hours to prepare significant projects compared to traditional teaching. Students also require longer periods to complete said projects, at least eight weeks, suggested by the data, to complete full cycles of research, creation, and review. In educational environments focused on curriculum constraints, this timeframe crashes with the pressure to cover content quickly. The researchers' proposal is to reconsider curriculums and adapt them so that project-based learning is a main focus over which the learning is done and progressed, rather than a secondary activity.

Finally, Arochman et al. (2024) present an interesting point of view: the fusion of PBL with Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). This combination proved particularly effective in secondary education, where projects on scientific topics. E.g., climate change experiments, allowed students to practice English while learning and applying concepts from other subjects. Students not only improved their language skills but also understood better the topics taught in their curriculum, strongly suggesting that PBL can function as a link between different areas of knowledge.

Active learning is considered one of the most important elements of PBL, as it generates a more participatory and dynamic role on the part of the student, which in turn increases their participation in learning. Thus, from the perspective of Yang and Puakpong (2016), the adoption of the PBL methodology is a process that requires time, given that the interests and needs of students determine the learning spaces both inside and outside the classroom. For this reason, it is believed that the student, being normally immersed in passive learning, in which he only receives the content that the teacher presents, decreases his motivation to investigate, explore or acquire knowledge independently.

Guslyakova et al. (2021) highlight a common problem faced by many students learning English as a foreign language: their lack of vocabulary limits their effective participation in project activities, leaving them relying on their native language and trying to apply their native language rules which many times ends not being optimal. To address this situation, educators should make prior preparation a must by introducing relevant vocabulary and phrases, thus reducing dependence on the native language during PBL tasks. Furthermore, Solorzano and Llor (2023) propose holding additional sessions outside of regular school hours to help students' understanding and competency development in the context of the project. The point of teachers playing a crucial role by providing essential content and creating opportunities that inspire more participation and the strengthening of language skills necessary for project success once again naturally makes appearance.

On the other hand, according to Chicaiza (2020), motivation represents a very significant advantage, as it allows students to increase their confidence and self-esteem in appropriate environments, avoiding the fear of making mistakes in front of their peers and improving their verbal communication in the classroom. Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that students, with the aim of strengthening their participation, take the initiative to use technological tools, such as applications or programs, that contribute to the process of linguistic production. In other words, strategies for exploring, reading, and analyzing information from different sources, such as newspapers, magazines, and news, are expanded, which generates prior knowledge that enriches conversation or intervention on any topic.

In the classroom, each student faces diverse realities that directly impact their academic performance. Therefore, PBL seeks to improve such performance through projects that facilitate the understanding of various subjects. Narváez and Díaz (2024) indicated that students who implemented the methodology achieved superior academic results compared to those who followed a traditional methodological approach. Therefore, it is evident that practical techniques are effective in motivating students and fostering cooperation, autonomy, curiosity, and effective feedback among them; however, all these elements are only developed if student motivation is high; otherwise, the aforementioned objectives will not be achieved.

On the other hand, Indahsari (2020) mentions that active learning is an educational approach that directly engages students in the learning process through activities and hands-on experiences. For Chaves, (2023) it is different from traditional teaching methods, where students are passive recipients of information. Active learning transforms students into active participants, encouraging them to interact with the material, reflect on what they are learning, and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Sandoval and Diaz point out (2020) that the methodology is extremely useful in education because it fosters a deeper understanding of content, as students not only memorize information but also contextualize and integrate it into their prior knowledge. Furthermore, active learning improves critical skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration, as it often involves group work, discussions, and practical projects. They are essential for success in the workplace and in everyday life. In this way, this method increases student motivation and engagement by making learning more dynamic and relevant to their interests and needs.

Active learning uses a variety of methodologies to effectively engage students. They focus on active student participation for improving knowledge understanding and retention but also developing essential skills for independent learning and success in diverse contexts. Some of the key methodologies employed in active learning include:

Project-Based Learning.- Involves students working on extensive, meaningful projects that often address real-world problems. Students research, design, and create solutions, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.

Problem-based learning.- is similar to project-based learning, but more focused on solving specific problems. Students are faced with a problem and must research, discuss, and collaborate to find a viable solution, developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the process.

Class discussion and debate. - These activities give students the challenge and opportunity to express themselves, hear different perspectives from other classmates, and argue their points of view. Not only improving their understanding of the topic but also developing their communication and critical thinking skills.

Cooperative learning. - In this methodology, students work in small groups to achieve common goals. Each group member assumes specific responsibilities and contributes to the group's success, fostering teamwork and collaboration skills.

Simulations and Role-Playing. - Students participate in activities that simulate real-world situations or take on specific roles. This allows them to experience and learn hands-on, developing decision-making and adaptability skills.

Case Study. - Students analyze and discuss real-life or hypothetical cases that illustrate key concepts or problems. This methodology helps connect theory with practice and promotes critical and analytical thinking.

Flipped classroom. - In this approach, students first study the material independently, often through online resources, and then use class time for interactive and collaborative activities that reinforce and apply what they have learned.

From the perspective of the author Travieso and Ortiz (2018), some of the most important advantages that the method has for teaching can be established, which is a gradual process to establish optimal learning for students, which is:

1. Project-based learning enables globalized and relational knowledge. From this perspective, educational projects facilitate the processing of information relevant to each student and also enable them to establish their own relationships between different content, based on problems or hypotheses, which facilitates the construction of their own knowledge.
2. It is geared toward the needs of teachers and students; it is realistic, recreational, and flexible in terms of resources.
3. It promotes integration between learning processes, so that the subject content acquires meaning in action.
4. Stimulates mental activity.
5. It encourages students' commitment to their achievement.
6. It constitutes a realistic activity.
7. It involves several people, which encourages interaction.
8. It develops students' autonomy, as it stimulates their initiative and creativity.
9. It stimulates tenacity, as it allows you to face the completion of a task, including its evaluation, from beginning to end.

Placing the participants in the teaching and learning process, the teacher is seen as a facilitator, taking care and an active role in the "learning moments." Added to this, an essential characteristic is the learning that occurs on the part of the teacher during this process. As for their part, students take on a leading role, as investigators, gathering all the information, being the key subjects in the construction of their own knowledge, and ultimately responsible for their learning.

According to Solorzano (2024), the study examines how digital inequality impacts the implementation of PBL: while urban schools with internet access can use tools such as video conferencing or collaborative platforms, rural institutions frequently resort to printed materials. Interestingly, the study revealed that the lack of technology is not a total obstacle (as mentioned in the previous section), although it does limit the types of projects that can be carried out. The authors suggest a gradual strategy, in which institutions begin with low-tech projects and, as they progress, integrate digital elements according to available resources.

Teachers and students play a very relevant role in this approach, contributing significantly to and cooperating with the learning process. The teacher connects, observes, analyzes, and transmits information. They also ask questions to express different opinions about the topic of interest. Students acquire and apply new knowledge by identifying and resolving conflicts, analyzing, synthesizing, and finally evaluating them. To conclude the PBL methodology, a series of phases must be established to ensure the project is successful and to meet all the objectives set at the outset.

4. Conclusions

The Project-Based Learning (PBL) methodology, significantly promotes the development of oral proficiency in English, as it incorporates elements such as active learning, teamwork, the development of meta cognitive strategies, creativity, and motivation. Thus, Mujiono (2023) and Bueno (2018) agree that this type of learning generates authentic communication situations that allow for the real use of English and facilitate the exchange of ideas and opinions among students. Furthermore, the implementation of PBL is oriented toward a process of continuous inquiry, which provides answers to questions, solves problems, or creates products, focusing on deepening topics and developing essential skills.

On the contrary, Chicaiza (2020) argues in his research that the current educational system has undergone continuous changes in its pedagogical approach, therefore, individual and social characteristics have changed. Therefore, it is necessary to reconsider the teaching strategies used in the classroom. In this sense, the analysis carried out investigated the Project-Based Learning (PBL) methodology. This methodology deviates from traditional models, as it prioritizes participatory activities in which the student becomes the central axis of the learning process. For this reason, many educational institutions have decided to integrate PBL, mainly due to its focus on promoting creativity, collaboration, and role change between teachers and students. Providing key content during the research, planning, and preparation phases is conclusive, as it is a crucial scaffolding technique.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is an educational approach that has seen attempts of being progressively integrated into the Ecuadorian education system in recent years. While it is not yet widespread and by no means properly established, it has gained interest among educators, who see and value the benefits this approach brings to student learning. For PBL to be effective in teaching English, it is essential for teachers to be able to plan projects carefully, and implement them within their curriculum providing students with the support and guidance they need. Projects must be aligned with students' interests and needs, facing them with challenges on par with their capabilities.

Teaching the PBL method involves the students' ability to address a real-life problem, research, learn, and apply knowledge to resolve similar situations. According to research conducted by Fernández (2017) and Villao et al., (2025) they state that learning to write involves the following actions: selecting a topic to write about, searching for information to provide solid arguments, writing a first draft, revising it, and editing it as many times as necessary to produce a clear text and convey the message. The didactic strategies considered viable for learning to write are dialogue, motivation, and feedback. Teachers apply these strategies during the teaching-learning process and create a reliable and optimal environment for an academic relationship between students and teachers, where students feel motivated throughout the learning process, freely express their concerns and questions, receive feedback on the topics learned, and acquire meaningful and effective learning.

The implementation of PBL in a classroom has been a valuable experience; however, in the research by Salcido et al., (2024) they point out that challenges are identified, such as project planning, since it requires attention to ensure the clarity of objectives and activities; the equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities is crucial for the good performance of the teams; and the development of skills to search and select reliable information is essential for effective research. It is important to highlight that the teacher plays a crucial role as a guide and support during PBL, facilitating communication, collaboration and teamwork, providing necessary resources and materials and evaluating student performance fairly and constructively. To strengthen PBL, it is essential to dedicate more time to project planning, implement strategies for the equitable distribution of roles and responsibilities, provide tools and resources to develop skills to search for reliable information, continue research on PBL and evaluate its impact on long-term student learning.

On the other hand, the research conducted by Zambrano and Mendoza (2022) shows a result in which the lack of diversity in methods and media used limits the potential of teamwork. Learning is a social act, an act of communication with others, and we always learn from others. Therefore, providing moments of exchange and joint reflection complements the vision of the problem being studied. Each individual carries a personal history whose experiences and experiences are enriched by interaction. Hence, it is suggested that the tasks planned to develop the PEA should be designed taking into account the aforementioned theoretical and methodological requirements.

Author Contributions: All authors contributed to this research.

Funding: Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics Approval: Not applicable.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies: This study has not used any generative AI tools or technologies in the preparation of this manuscript.

References

- Ahmed, K. C. (2023). Collaborative learning, scaffolding-based instruction, and self-assessment: impacts on intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension, motivation, and anxiety. *Language Testing in Asia*, 16. doi:10.1186/s40468-023-00229-1
- Arochman, T. M. (2024). The effect of project-based learning on English writing skill for EFL learners. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 310-324. doi: <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202423961>
- Basilotta Gómez-Pablos, V. (2018). The Value of Project-Based Learning with Technologies: An Analysis of Benchmark Practices. *University of Salamanca*. doi: <https://gredos.usal.es/handle/10366/139484>
- Béjar, R.L.-P.-I. (2018). Authenticity and project-based learning in a computer science. *Proceedings of the Conference on University Teaching of Computer Science*, 87–94. doi: https://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/125440/1/JENUI_2018_048.pdf
- Bueno, P. (2018). Project-based learning (PBL) and critical thinking skills: a binding relationship? *Interuniversity of Teacher Training*, 91. doi: <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/2170/217059664008/html/>
- Cahyana, P.D. (2022). The use of Project-based Learning to improve the students' speaking skills at Universitas Abulyatama. *Jurnal Dedikasi Pendidikan*. doi: <http://jurnal.abulyatama.ac.id/index.php/dedikasi>
- Cascales, A.C. (2018). Project-based learning in early childhood education: pedagogical and social change. *Ibero-American Journal of Education*, 79–89. doi: <https://rieoei.org/rie/article/view/2861>
- Chaves-Yuste, B. d.-I. (2023). Podcasts' effects on the EFL classroom: a socially relevant intervention. *Smart Learning Environments*, 20. doi:10.1186/s40561-023-00241-
- Chica Esquivia, N. (2023). Active and participatory strategies as tools to enhance the English teaching-learning process. *CIENCIAMATRIA*, 72-85. doi:10.35381/cm.v9i17.1124
- Chicaiza, L. (2020). Project-Based Learning in the Development of Students' Oral Production of the English Language. *Central University of Ecuador*. doi: <https://www.dspace.uce.edu.ec/server/api/core/bitstreams/72f653a4-a149-49da-80ff-75c64fd10340/content>
- Conard, D. &. (2018). Assessment strategies for online learning: Engagement. *Athabasca: University Press*, 26. doi: https://www.aupress.ca/app/uploads/120279_99Z_Conrad_Openo_2018-Assessment_Strategies_for_Online_Learning.pdf
- Diaz, A.H. (2002). *Teaching strategies for meaningful learning. A constructivist interpretation*. Mexico: McGraw Hill.
- Fernandez, M. (2017). Project-based learning at the university level: An experience of methodological innovation in education. *International Journal of Developmental and Educational Psychology*, 269–278. doi: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6295749>
- Flores, G.J. (2017). Project-based learning for the development of mathematical skills in high school. *Electronic Journal of Educational Research*, 71–91. doi: <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/155/15553204007.pdf>
- Guillermo, L. (2024). The effect of the flipped classroom on English language learning: A systematic review. *Horizontes. Journal of Research in Educational Sciences*, 544–559. doi:10.33996/revistahorizontes.v8i32.743
- Guslyakova, A. G. (2021). Project-based learning usage in L2 teaching in a contemporary comprehensive school (on the example of English as a foreign language classroom). *Revista Tempos e Espaços em Educação*, 14. doi: <https://periodicos.ufs.br/revtee/article/view/16754>
- Indahsari, D. (2020). "Using podcast for EFL students in language learning". 103-108: *Journal of English Educators Society*. doi:10.21070/jees.v5i2.767

- Jiang, D. K. (2022). Learning English as a Foreign Language Writing Skills in Collaborative Settings: A Cognitive Load Perspective. *Front Psychol* , 13. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.932291
- Macias, M., & Arteaga, I. (2022). Project-Based Learning in Mathematics Teaching for High School Students at the UEF "Pablo Hannibal Vela". *Knowledge Pole* , 67. doi:file:///C:/Users/CompuStore/Desktop/k/Dialnet-AprendizajeBasadoEnProyectosEnLaEnsenanzaDeMatemat-8354925.pdf
- Mafruudloh, N. &. (2020). The Effect Of Project-based Learning To The Students' Speaking Ability. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics* , 7. doi:https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/celtic/index
- Marra, R.J. (2014). Why problem-based learning works: theoretical foundations. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching* , 221-238. doi:https://www.albany.edu/cee/assets/Why_Problembased_learning_works.pdf
- Marrero, E. (2019). Project-oriented learning in art and work. *Venezuelan Journal of Education* , 841–849. doi:https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=7426817
- Moslemi, S. Z. (2023). Problem-based language learning: Why Aren't teachers using it? *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* , 10-68. doi:10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100668
- Mujiono., WR (2023). roject-based learning intervention and its effect on promoting English language proficiency based on moderator variables: Meta-analysis. *International Journal of Instruction* , 16. doi:https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2023.16427a
- Narvaez, MD (2024). Collaborative Learning and Project-Based Learning: Applying the Integrated Learning Approach of Content and Foreign Language at the Surcos Educational Unit. *Latin American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* . doi:DOI: https://doi.org/10.56712/latam.v5i4.2418
- Olarte, LG (2022). Project-based learning strategy for skill development. *Los Libertadores University Foundation* , 19. doi:https://repository.libertadores.edu.co/server/api/core/bitstreams/800c44d8-2705-4331-b7b1-8bb1e1b62c08/content
- Orosz, A.O. (2018). Active learning for English as a foreign language classes. *Educational Policy Notebook 3* , 3-17. doi:https://unae.edu.ec/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/cuaderno-3.pdf
- Ortega, M.C. (2024). The Use of Project-Based Learning in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms: A Literature Review. *Journal Scientific Investigar* . doi:https://www.investigarmqr.com/ojs/index.php/mqr/article/view/1305/4601
- Philominraj, R.R. (2022). "Family's role and their Challenging Commitment to English Language Learning: A systematic Review." *Journal of Language and Education* , 216-230. doi:10.17323/jle.2022.12680
- Ratna, D.S. (2019). Improving Students' Speaking Skill Through Project Based Learning (PBL). *Professional Journal of English Education* , 241-246. doi:https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v2i2.p241-246
- Salcido, O. N. (2024). The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a strategy to address educational gap. *Latin American Journal of Research in Organizational Competitiveness* , 2. doi:file:///C:/Users/CompuStore/Desktop/k/Dialnet-LaImplementacionDelAprendizajeBasadoEnProyectosABP-10035497%20(1).pdf
- Sandoval, M. a. (2020). Podcast-based lessons: a useful tool to improve university students' descriptive oral skills. *Communication Magazine* , 52-60. doi:10.18845/rc.v29i1-2020.5260
- Sanz, F.J. (2021). Teaching foreign languages through project-based pedagogy. Implications for the classroom and teacher planning. *GEADEL* , 101–108. doi:https://periodos.ufac.br/index.php/GEADEL/article/view/5871
- Segura, A. (2021). Project-Based Learning for Teaching English as a Foreign Language. *University of Almería* , 16. doi:https://repositorio.ual.es/bitstream/handle/10835/13413/SEGURA%20PEREZ%2C%20ALBA%20MARIA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- Solórzano, A.D. (2024). Use of technological tools for the development of speaking skills in English among seventh-grade students at the Virgilio Drouet Elementary School. *Santa Elena Peninsula State University* . doi:https://repositorio.upse.edu.ec/xmlui/handle/46000/12175
- Solorzano, GL (2023). Project-Based Learning to Improve the Productive Skills in the Teaching and Learning of English. [Project-Based Learning to Improve the Productive Skills in the Teaching and Learning of English]. *Journal of Social Development Studies: Cuba and Latin America* , 11. doi:http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2308-01322023000200001
- Travieso, DO (2018). Problem-based learning and project-based teaching: Different teaching alternatives. *Cuban Journal of Higher Education* , 7. doi:http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0257-43142018000100009
- Villao, K. A. (2025). The influence of active learning on English language comprehension. *University, Science and Technology* , 29. doi:https://ve.scielo.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1316-48212025000500060
- West, J. (2018). Raising the quality of discussion by scaffolding students' reading. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* , 146-160. doi:https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1169822.pdf

- Xiangyun D., G.E. (2020). Research on PBL practice in engineering education. *Sense publishers* , 122.
doi:https://doi.org/10.1163/9789087909321_003
- Yang, D. &. (2016). Effects of Project-Based Learning on speaking skills of non-English major Chinese students. *Proceedings of CLASIC* . doi:https://fass.nus.edu.sg/cls/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2020/10/yang_di.pdf
- Zambrano, MH (2022). Project-based learning as a teaching strategy. *Conrado* , 84.
doi:http://scielo.sld.cu/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1990-86442022000100172