Peer-assessment to Improve Speaking in Fourth Graders: An Action Research Study

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Abstract

This action research measured the effect of peer-assessment strategy in speaking at a private school in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The participants were 40 children with an A1 level in the English language. The process involved quantitative and qualitative data. Pre and a post-test were quantitative instruments. The tests were graded with a rubric. The items were intelligibility, rhythm and expression, intonation, grammar and content. The overall scores improved according to the test taken at the end of the study. The effect size was 2.3, indicating that the increase in their speaking level was significant. The qualitative part addressed the students’ perceptions with a two-part survey: a Likert-type section and an open-ended one. The results demonstrated that peer assessment helped students to improve their performance in oral tasks. The students indicated that they looked forward to using peer-assessment in speaking tasks. Teachers engaged in EFL programs in other public or private schools will consider this implementation if they like to include peer-assessment in their classes.

Keywords: peer assessment, speaking, EFL, elementary school.
Resumen

Esta investigación-acción midió el efecto de la estrategia de evaluación grupal en la habilidad oral. Se aplicó en una escuela privada en Guayaquil, Ecuador. Los participantes fueron 40 niños con un nivel A1 en inglés. El proceso incluyó datos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Una prueba previa y prueba posterior se utilizaron como instrumento cuantitativo. Para calificar las pruebas se utilizó una rúbrica. Los elementos fueron inteligibilidad, ritmo y expresión, y entonación. Las puntuaciones generales mejoraron de acuerdo con la prueba realizada al final del estudio. El tamaño del efecto fue de 2,3, lo que indica que el aumento en su nivel de habla fue significativo. La parte cualitativa abordó las percepciones de los estudiantes con una encuesta de dos partes; una sección de tipo Likert y una abierta. Los resultados demostraron que la evaluación por pares ayudó a los estudiantes a mejorar su rendimiento oral. Los alumnos indicaron su interés hacia el uso de la evaluación grupal en las tareas orales. Los docentes de inglés como lengua extranjera de otras instituciones públicas o privadas podrían considerar este estudio si desean incluir la evaluación de pares en sus clases.

_palabras clave_: evaluación grupal, competencia oral, EFL, Escuela.
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There is an ever-growing need for oral production in the English language, and some instances of learning need to be addressed (Richards, 2006). For example, learners face limitations in communication such as misunderstandings, unsustained interaction, and low vocabulary (Richards, 2008). For the latter, Krashen (1982) suggested to provide more “input” to students but remarked that to progress in English learning, there needs to exist communication and “conversation” using the language.

Speaking is one skill that current research relates to communication (Brown, 2002). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches have changed older learning schemes in terms of classroom dynamics, design, materials, and the role of teachers (Richards & Renandya, 2002). CLT has become important in current studies. Interaction is the most important part of this approach from which second language learners may benefit. Given that communicative oral activities should aim to be “free”, students should have many opportunities to use the language (Syafirizal & Rohmawati, 2017).

In contrast, there are several elements to consider when trying to speak in another language. Cognitive factors (Derakhshan, Nadi, & Beheshti, 2016) and emotional factors of students need to be considered in English learning: anxiety, willingness, and error awareness (Brown, 2002). Similarly, speaking is not an easy task due to immediateness (Tomlinson, 2013); lack of personal strategies (Burns, 2019), anxiety (Liu, 2006), or fear of embarrassment (Syafirizal & Rohmawati, 2017).

Language learners avoid having conversations due to the mentioned factors, but authors mention solutions. Iman (2017) stated that that students should have exposure to huge amounts of speaking activities to have students more “active”. In the same way, instruction has the responsibility of focusing on and detecting oral production problems in students. Assessment is one strategy that permits to identify lack of words, basic knowledge in the
language, ineffective planning, and inexistence of instruments to measure production, among others (Akkaya, Yilmaz, & Aydin, 2018). Syafrizal and Rohmawati (2017) mentioned communicative activities that involve students working together in speaking activities: to practice, to model several scenarios, and to achieve a common goal or competence.

Similar studies differ in certain aspects as well as in the reported results. Darmuki, Andayani, Nurkamto, and Saddhono (2018) used collaboration in speaking; the authors predicted and proved that if students work together, they improve in speaking. The results in their study showed that the scores of the experimental group were higher than the ones of the control group.

Local studies have also contributed to findings in speaking. Although working with assessment, Aguilar (2019) used self-assessment. The author reported that the strategy was a good way for students to analyze their own learning process and that it fostered self-correction. Students obtained better scores in the post-tests, which meant a better pronunciation. Yépez (2019) explained that peer-assessment helped students not only to improve their scores in speaking but also to become better at giving feedback, which may translate to other aspects of their learning process. Vega (2019) explored the improvement in speaking of children and supported self-assessment as a strategy to increase confidence and scores.

The present study had as goal to determine how speaking improves with peer assessment. The participants were students of 4th grade of a public school of Guayaquil. The ages were 8 and 9. The ages determined the skills that students should achieve: communicating with peers, even though their talking is slowly, they talk clearly, and are willing to participate (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).
Literature Review

The variables described below involve meanings and previous research. The dependent variable is the speaking skills, and the independent variable is the peer assessment. This section considers positive and negative aspects of implementing this strategy with students.

Speaking

According to Syafirizal and Rohmawati (2017), students avoid speaking because they are not confident in speaking and are afraid of making mistakes. However, working in small groups provides a safe space to practice and negotiate meaning. Other studies support peer work in speaking skills. According to Setiyadi, Sukirlan, and Mahpul (2016), there is a strong correlation of using social strategies to student’s scores in speaking. Some particular classroom activities that may help achieving this are opinion sharing and scavenger hunt. These activities allow students to talk about topics they care about as they mingle with their classmates, which may eventually promote interaction. Along with the corresponding teacher’s incorporation of structure and vocabulary, these activities are a great tool to enhance students to speak confidently.

Students learn to give positive feedback to each other without focusing on mistakes. Local educational authorities (Ministerio de Educación, 2016) urged educators not to stress over accuracy in speaking as they are young learners and need to experiment first. For this reason, accuracy is not included.

Pronunciation has gained more importance due to its effect on intelligibility (Foote, Holtby, & Derwing, 2011). Alotaibi (2014) considered intelligibility and comprehensibility in a study but also declared that speaking must consider rhythm, and expressions. Iman (2017) measured in her study: comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation grammar, and fluency. Derakhshan, Nadi, and Beheshti (2016) used a test to assess pronunciation, intonation, material suitability, expression, and diction.
According to Burns (2019), there are three components of second language speaking competence. These elements are language knowledge, which includes knowing grammar; core skills in speaking (understanding, correcting and giving feedback), and strategies (i.e. planning, thinking and compensating).

**Grammar.**

Derakhshan, Nadi, and Beheshti (2016) reported several factors in speaking production. The authors supported production and interaction of the language as a determinant factor in improving speaking skills, and that grammar is important to achieve a certain degree of confidence to speak. In the case of the present study, the unit and syllabus focus on verbs in the past, for that reason, it is an element in the speaking rubric.

**Intelligibility, rhythm, and intonation.**

Cox, Henrichsen, and Tanner (2019) asserted that one part of communication relies on being understood. The authors suggested that there should be moments of correction and feedback in order to improve speaking. In line with the present study, the authors mentioned that students can highly benefit from specific elements such as rhythm (pauses and beats), intonation (pitches and scales), and sentence stress (high and low sounds to create meaning).

**Peer-assessment**

One of the highlights of the English language curriculum in Ecuador is to use collaborative learning through pair work or group work (Ministerio de Educación, 2016). In an interview to 82 teachers in Canada, the strategies that teachers used the most were in-class activities, recordings of oral production, and peer evaluations (Foote, Holtby, & Derwing, 2011). Peer-assessment is a delicate strategy as it involves comments from classmates. In this sense, Syafrizal and Rohmawati (2017) advised to avoid interruptions and not to signal individual errors.

According to Zheng, Chen, Cui, and Zhang (2019), peer assessment is a method
through which learners evaluate aspects of their classmates’ tasks. Joo (2016) identified that self-assessment starts with a progressive “training” of learners to provide feedback supported with teachers’ notes or other instruments, such as interviews. Similarly, Nejad and Mahfoodh (2019) paid special attention to the learners’ knowledge of both, the rubrics and the assessing aspects of oral skills, in order to avoid biased or ambiguous results.

**Communicative Language Teaching**

The Ecuadorian National Guidelines (Ministerio de Educación, 2016) describe CLT as a set of approaches that focus on the interaction between the facilitator and students. The report also mentions that CLT activities may include role-plays, interviews, and group work. For elementary education, local authorities enable the use of CLT in the English language practice.

In the topic of activities in the classroom, Brown (2002) also contributed with some insights. The emphasis of CLT is in the function of the language rather than its structure. Its implementation may provide students with the opportunity to use the language in a more spontaneous manner in the long run. In addition, the author expressed that students should take in the purpose of communicating, not only having good grades.

**Backwards Design**

The first part of the study was to determine the level of students and understand what was easy for them to plan the communicative activities (e.g. which ones or how many) and the tests. This belief comes from the term “backward design”. According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005), the first step is to know what the students need to “understand” by the end of the lesson. The authors suggested that the researcher (teacher) asks “why do my students need to do this activity?” This element was included in the study in order to achieve communicative competences, by first, giving “meaning” to the tasks and second, to establish clear priorities.

Considering these factors and in order to have an effect in students from the 4th grade of
school in speaking skills through peer-assessment, the present research looked to answer:

1. What is the effect of peer-assessment on students’ speaking skills?
2. What are students’ perspectives about this innovation?

**Innovation**

The innovation begins sending a consent letter (Appendix A) to parents to allow their children to participate in the study. In the following paragraphs, there is a summary of the lesson plan (Appendix B) implemented for the study. In addition, other elements of the study were included such as duration, and final performance of students. There were two phases: measuring and implementing. Implementing the research took 3 weeks, 8 hours per day and one task daily was assessed by themselves by using the textbook and adding communicative activities. To begin with the study, a pretest (Appendix C) was taken to collect data for checking students’ knowledge. At the final part, the posttest (Appendix C) was also required.

During the classes, students learned about assessment and group work in order to improve their speaking skills. Students in their tasks designed informal rubrics (using smileys) to identify important elements and created their own “checklist” with the guidance of the teacher. The researcher scaffolded the use of rubrics (Appendix D) and the specific checklist (Appendix E) to evaluate students’ improvement. The formal and final rubric was an adaptation of indicators from the Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación, 2016). The rubric measured production (intelligibility, conjugation, content, rhythm-expression, and intonation).

The final performance implied creating a story to perform it in front of their classmates. For this, the lesson plan was filled with communicative activities with the same goal, creating stories. The activities involved a set of tasks that were constantly done with different topics, as a builder for the overall performance.
Methodology

This section includes information about the participants and instruments. The present study is an action research as it aimed to provide changes to the current speaking strategies. Action research is “evidence-based” changes to improve the set of study, whether it is for teaching practice or learning process (Hunter, 2017; Norton, 2014). Participants are described with their English level. The description of instruments is mentioned in the application by using order.

Participants

The students attended a public school where the researcher worked. The participants were forty students who currently are in the fourth grade of elementary school. There were 21 boys and 19 girls who ranged between the ages of 8 and 9 years old. The placement test (Macmillan, 2012) reflected that 83% of students were A, and 17% were pre A1.

Instruments

For the first question: What is the effect of peer-assessment on students’ speaking skills? The researcher-teacher used a rubric (Appendix D) to obtain scores for the pre and post-test and graded accordingly. This rubric measured three elements of speaking: intelligibility, rhythm/expression, and intonation. There were other elements that needed to be measured as well, content and grammar, due to the unit’s content and to complement the overall performance. The score was over 10 and each element was over 2. Students performed a pre-test telling a story of their favorite object or toy (not electronic devices) and a post-test telling a story about the past life of a musical instrument.

To answer question two: What are students’ perspectives about this innovation? A survey (Appendix F) was taken at the end of the study, which contained six statements and six questions with open answers. The 12 items were presented in Spanish. The survey aimed to determine students’ views on the class activities with peer-assessment strategy and their
improvement in speaking.

In the Likert-type survey (Appendix G), students answered marking an X. Participants answered according to their perspectives if they: Totally Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Indifferent (3), Agree (4), or Totally Agree (5). The statements were: I feel confident to speak English in front of other people, I feel confident to be understood when I speak English, I know what to do to improve my pronunciation, It is helpful to work in groups to improve pronunciation, I feel good when I practice pronunciation with my classmates, I would enjoy peer assessment in pronunciation in the future.

The survey also included a section of questions where students had to write their opinions. The six questions aimed to get other situations that the researcher may or may not have identified during the study. The open-ended questions were: To improve pronunciation, what activities do you prefer? How effective is telling your classmates how is their pronunciation? How do you know you had improved in pronunciation? How have your classmates helped you to improve pronunciation? What changes have you noticed in the English class? Would you recommend working in groups and assessing each other to improve pronunciation? Why?

In the second part of the survey, students were expected to answer with a certain degree of introspection. However, it was anticipated that they may need support from the teacher to get detailed answers. On the same note, the survey was taken in Spanish due to students’ English level.

Finally, the researcher included Field notes. During each class, the teacher wrote down particular reactions, moments of learning that students seemed to enjoy, and improvement from specific participants. These observations were not prepared from a set of questions, but only reflected the spontaneous reactions of the participants and the teacher.
Data Analysis

The rubric showed the scores for each student and provided the quantitative data tabulated in an Excel worksheet. The results belonged to the pretest and the posttest. The information was run through the IBM SPSS statistical program, which generated descriptive statistics. The calculation of the mean and standard deviation helped in turn obtaining the effect size of the study. This measure displayed the importance of the findings of the study (Rocconi & Gonyea, 2018) that can be compared across studies (Boulton, 2016).

The result of the surveys described students’ perspectives depending on their answers to the Likert type scale. In this case, students had a code by numbers, and the students’ answers were recorded. With this information, the Cronbach alpha was run with statistical programs such as SPSS. The open-ended questions were organized according to the variables of the innovation and commonalities. Field notes were used to support the research questions.

Ethical Considerations

Considering the ages of the participants and the place where the study took place, approval and consents were needed (Appendix A). A document with a requirement of approval to do the study was sent to the Director of the department, with a previous face-to-face conversation to explain the study and its benefits. After the respective signature of the Director and given that the participants were minors, a formal letter was sent to the parents asking for their consent, including the name of the study and reassuring them that their children’s personal information would not be shared.

Results

This section is subdivided based on the two research questions: What is the effect of peer-assessment on students’ speaking skills? And, what are students’ perspectives about this innovation? The first section describes the results obtained from the rubric, providing a quantitative analysis. The following subsections sum up the results for the quantitative
instruments, survey part one and the field notes

**Pre-test and Post-Test**

After taking the pre-test, there was an evident struggle to express orally. Students did not want to do speaking activities. Students did not have enough skills to present oral information. On the other hand, the post-test results evidenced that the students were more able to express themselves and spoke in a better range than before.

Table 1

*Test Results: Pre and Post-test*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test results</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>7.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = Amount of participants, M = mean, SD = standard deviation, d = Cohen’s

The table above shows the general results of the pre-and-posttest. The mean score of the participants before the innovation was 5.01. After the innovation, the average score increased to 7.72. It should be noted that the rubric elements were analyzed. Based on the results displayed in table 2, the element that improved the most was grammar followed by intelligibility.

Cohen’s d is 2.31. It was calculated using the means of pre and post-test as well as the standard deviation. This result helps to determine if the study has an effect size appropriate enough for being reproduced in future research with the same findings, based on the result, the effect size is large and positive.
Table 2

Improvement in speaking components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intonation</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;E</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligibility</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>116%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean of every component obtained from the pre-test and the post-test.

The table above shows the results obtained from the pre-test and the post-test. Every score written in each descriptor represents the mean obtained from the average of every single component used to evaluate speaking. In the improvement, it is noticeable that the highest result is the conjugation component, which was the descriptor with more improvement during the period of implementation.

Survey

The present instrument had two sections that gathered important insight from students. The Likert scale had to be entered first in the SPSS program in order to determine its reliability. Once the information was entered, the result was 0.76. This meant that the scale was “acceptable” and therefore, the results could be included in the present study.

In the Likert type section, the results showed an almost positive attitude towards the study, considering their initial reluctance to speak. The first statement was “I feel confident to speak English in front of other people”: 47.5% of students agreed, and 52.5% were unsure. The second question indicated that 30% of students feel they are understood when they speak English, 55% were not decided. The answers for question three revealed that students know what to do to improve their pronunciation (72.5% agreed). In item four regarding how helpful it is to work in groups to improve pronunciation, all students agreed (100%) with the statement. In relation to practicing pronunciation with their classmates (Question 5), 85% of
the students felt good during the sessions. The last item referred to recommending peer assessment to improve pronunciation in the future; 100% of students agreed with this statement.

**Open-ended questions in the survey.**

Six open-ended questions helped to encourage and prepare the participants of this study to start with the series of activities. These questions included the personal preferences that students might have to learn along with their willingness to give and accept opinions. These questions were meant to enable students to notice the improvements made in the English class. This implementation also promoted teamwork as a good means to share recommendations. A thorough analysis of these questions is discussed in the paragraphs below.

About the second question of the survey, students said they never felt ashamed to give their opinions about their teammates’ pronunciation. When sharing their opinions, they never felt intimidated by receiving positive or negative remarks on their way to pronounce the words in English. Therefore, it may be concluded that it was effective to have students give opinions about their pronunciation because it drew pupils to open their minds to give and take suggestions.

Similarly, in question 4, how their classmates helped them to improve pronunciation, they expressed that their curiosity and willingness increased and kept the task going. For instance, one particular student showed her leading abilities to encourage their partners and promoted an atmosphere of cooperation and the courage to keep going despite their weaknesses. In question 5, students described several points that have changed in classes.

**Summary of the Field Notes**

Throughout the application of these techniques, the teacher noticed that the majority of students felt curious and remained attentive to the implementation. At the beginning, some of
the participants felt bewildered, but once the instructions were given along with the objectives and material, the students’ enthusiasm grew. Similarly, when students were answering the open-ended questions (Appendix F), they had to be monitored, and the teacher had to take notes on some of the comments to make them more explicit.

The most notable comments from this section are: For questions 1, 2.0% of students said they enjoyed peer work when they had to create the story of a musical instrument; it did not come through as a final test to them. In question 2, the teachers’ field notes describe that along with cooperation and generosity, another good resonance of the activities is that it allowed students to show their progress. Particularly, two students were eager to speak, and they were not too participative before the study. They said they wanted to perform in front of the class if they had a model. Another example is that although it was a little difficult for them to learn assess, students continued with the activity and turned into a challenge that got the best out of them.

Discussion

Before the study, the teacher-researcher had observed the resistance of students to engage in conversation. Therefore, the next step was to determine how to help learners in this process, with the placement test there could be a starting point to determine the competences they already knew. Later on, with the pre-test, it was evident that students could not perform a skill from their level A1 (Appendix C) “Learners can pronounce most familiar vocabulary items accurately, and can usually be easily understood”. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) stated that researchers should first determine the ultimate goal of understanding.

During the study, learners felt that they were able to practice their speaking skills in small groups, and they felt more confident. As explained by Syafrizal and Rohmawati (2017), learners sometimes do not speak to avoid making mistakes, whereas small groups reassure them. Peer work or assessment with meaningful activities provided students a safe space in
the classroom to talk about their own interests. Through the survey, students developed self-confidence and by means of mingling with other peers, they eventually got up the nerve to speak.

Students applied the peer assessment strategies in every session of class that they had in the innovation. Every student had the predisposition to give and receive moderate comments to their partners Zheng, Chen, Cui, and Zhang (2019). Also, the teacher’s support, monitoring and feedback were impressive and necessary to scaffold their learning as manifested by Joo (2016), who expressed about continuous training and the importance of working and creating bases to become the learning more effective.

According to the survey, students felt better and more confident towards speaking in front of others and they felt capable of improving on their own. To Cox, Henrichsen, and Tanner (2019), communication means being understood, and feedback is a proper step to improve speaking. Similarly, Burns (2019) sustained that understanding, correcting and giving feedback represent core skills in speaking activities. As predicted by Derakhshan, Nadi, and Beheshti (2016), interaction helped participants to gain confidence in speaking.

After taking the posttest, the results showed an increase in general scores. Students were able to express themselves better after taking feedback from their peers in activities such as the ones implemented in the lessons (creating stories, interacting with comments, and sharing opinions). As Setiyadi, Sukirlan, and Mahpul (2016) mentioned, using social interaction helps learners to improve their grades in speaking skills. The authors emphasized that learners could mingle with each other while using the target language. Furthermore, Derakhshan, Nadi, and Beheshti (2016) explained that interaction is determinant to improve speaking skills.

The activities throughout the lesson plan aimed to achieve interaction in assessment. With each text in the coursebook, the researcher took the opportunity to put students in groups and use the information to present something orally. They got the gist of the activities and
adapted to the process almost immediately. One particular aspect that helped to implement the strategy was not focusing on speaking “perfectly”, or on accuracy, but in specific elements that would help them to be “understood”. On this topic, Brown (2002) highlighted the importance of function in language learning to achieve a more “spontaneous” performance in communication.

**Conclusion**

To reduce students’ fear of speaking, this innovation implemented peer assessment strategy with positive results. The communicative strategy helped learners to achieve oral competences intrinsic to A1 CEFR levels. Another result that was explored was the students’ perceptions after participating in collaborative activities with feedback and interaction. These activities were based on collaboration to assess each other, express if they understood their classmate or not, and what aspects to improve. There were classes devoted to letting students know the best way to correct peers to avoid misunderstandings or offenses.

The information compiled from the participants in the tests showed that they improved in scores after implementing the strategy of peer assessment. Learners had shown that they could not be understood while speaking and did not use pauses to help them achieve that understanding. However, their post-test grades showed that after assessing each other using their rubric (Appendix D), and the checklist (Appendix E). They had made progress in their speaking skills. Students discovered that communicating meant merely to have their audience understanding them and that this could be practiced amongst themselves.

The rubric was an advantageous tool to avoid falling in personal situations. Students used the instrument and assessed directly the constructs in it (intelligibility and rhythm, for example). By not addressing other distractive elements (if they were best friends or did not like each other), the lessons could flow better, and students were more focused on the tasks.

The surveys helped determine that student’s perceptions towards speaking and peer
work were better than before the study. Participants helped each other prior to presenting something to the teacher. This situation strengthened the student-centeredness aspect of the class. Similarly, given that students halfway created the performance by choosing what to talk about, the tasks were more meaningful to them, and they felt more involved.

In conclusion, the findings from the qualitative and quantitative instruments are favorable to current practice in speaking skills. Students developed more confidence in speaking and reduced their fears of making mistakes. The present study contributes to the research of peer-assessment and allowed students to improve their pronunciation in class, which is a mandatory goal to improve pronunciation in an elementary class.

Finally, the pre and post-tests results demonstrated that the implementation of the study was positive and favorable. The effective application of the innovation allowed students through a conscious practice to improve in every component of their speaking skills.

**Limitations**

Although the study showed positive results, some setbacks during the implementation will need to be foreseen in future research. On positive note, school authorities were supportive of the process, as it could greatly benefit students and instruction in the entity. Additionally, technology was not an issue, as the activities could be easily translated to paper-based format. However, two limitations were the time and student’s lack of prior experience in non-traditional classes.

The study was meant to be implemented during the last months of the school year due to thesis’ related timings. The three weeks of study were correctly applied, but students expressed their concern about exams and other assignments. Although they were happy with the changes in the methodology, it is important to avoid external pressure from other subjects.

The second limitation was to have a slight resistance to the study. It was the first time that students were using a different format of learning, not only following the coursebook but
also dissecting texts to learn the content and practice pronunciation. For instance, students had not used a rubric before, so it was something new to them. The students seemed to have never focused on peer assessment, and during the study, they would assess each other every time. Specific classes were required to provide proper feedback and practice, which in the end had fulfilling results.

**Recommendations**

For future studies, researchers should consider some of the following recommendations. In relation to the time, studies could be implemented for a longer time and planning based on future events. For example, check the coming holidays, or events in the target school. This way, external factors will not affect the results, and there could be a deeper analysis of students’ process. In relation to prior knowledge, consider having activities addressing the competences that they will need to achieve the communicative goal. In the present study, students had to assess each other; hence they should know what assessment is and how to do it correctly. It is recommendable that the open-ended questions are being monitored by the teacher, without interfering but making it clear that answers should be thoroughly analyzed up to their ages. Finally, one discovery of the study that should be regarded is that if it is a speaking skill, the researcher should monitor that students do not interrupt each other.
References


Darmuki, A., Andayani, J., & Saddhono, K. (2018). The development and evaluation of


Peersymmetric Assessment to Improve Speaking Skills


Bloomsbury.


Consent Letter

Estimado Director de Área:

Se tomará una encuesta a los alumnos de 4to de básica paralelo B, la cual se utilizará para el estudio denominado “El efecto de evaluación grupal para mejorar habilidades orales en Inglés”. Los datos obtenidos en este instrumento se tratarán con estricta confidencialidad.

Por favor firmar y devolver.

Atentamente,

Daniel Moreira
Candidato a Master

Estimados Padres de familia:

Se tomará una encuesta que se utilizará para el estudio denominado “El efecto de trabajo en grupo para mejorar habilidades orales en Inglés”. Los datos obtenidos en este instrumento se tratarán con estricta confidencialidad.

Por favor firmar y devolver.

Atentamente,

Daniel Moreira
Candidato a Master
Universidad Casa Grande
Encuesta en Español
Appendix B

Lesson plan.

Contact the author for this information.
Appendix C

Contact the author for this information.
Appendix D
Speaking Rubric

Contact the author for this information.
Appendix E

Speaking checklist

Contact the author for this information.
Appendix F

Contact the author for this information.
Appendix G

Contact the author for this information.