

# **ARMY POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL**

## **DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES**

**APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN ENGLISH CAREER**

### **TITLE:**

**“ACTIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE MEANINGFUL LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE SEVENTH GRADES AT INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER “CEBI” IN AMBATO CITY DURING THE FIRST TERM OF SCHOOL YEAR 2008 - 2009”**

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# **CERTIFICATE**

We, Dr. María Eugenia Arcos Jiménez M.Sc., Director and Dr. Oswaldo Villa, Co-Director, duly certify that the Thesis under the title: **“ACTIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE MEANINGFUL LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE SEVENTH GRADES AT INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER “CEBI” IN AMBATO CITY DURING THE FIRST TERM OF SCHOOL YEAR 2008 - 2009”**, by Cristina Salazar and Antonio Hilaño, who have finished their studies in Applied Linguistics in the English Language Career at the distance modality in the Army Polytechnic School, after having studied and verified in all its chapters; the dissertation is authorized in front of the correspondent university authorities.

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Our special thanks to all those people who have contributed with the development of this project.

To God for having given us the skills and abilities needed to be Teachers. To our dear families for their support and encouragement. To our teachers who guided us through this process and to our colleagues and friends for their great contribution; finally we deeply thank our students who have taught us the real essence of being educators.

Our gratitude to the International Bilingual Educational Center's authorities, hardworking Teachers and Students; who have allowed us fulfill our research.

Special thanks to our Director Dr. María Eugenia Arcos M.Sc., and to our Co-director Dr. Oswaldo Villa, whose help made this thesis possible to be approved.

Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts!

# DEDICATION

To the Creator of all things, the source of all knowledge, and the owner of our lives. We dedicate this project to our God who has given us all the gifts that make us different from the rest of his creation.

With unconditional love, we would also like to dedicate this work to our families; the reasons of our lives, and the inspiration of our hardworking.

In addition, we would also like to thank each other thesis' partners for the dedication and support along the way to conclude this important research with success.

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## **SUMMARY**

To develop this research, the scheme proposed by the Army Polytechnic School's Language Department has been followed in detail. It clearly shows us how to develop a research and our dear Tutors helped us to obtain the requirement results which permit us to complete it successfully.

This research focused on the use of Active Techniques in order to achieve Meaningful Learning of English Language for the Primary School's Students of the Seventh Grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI" in Ambato city during the first term of school year 2008 – 2009".

Dependent and Independent variables were determined and categorized in the theoretical frame to obtain the main items through the interview, which allowed to get the required information to set up a proposal. The analysis and interpretation of the outcomes were used to set up the conclusions and recommendations, directly based of the specific objectives which were established at the beginning of the research work.

This work is supported on the application of methodological resources of the modern and critical didactics of language, which will allow the development of skills, waking up the interest for meaningful learning in a cooperative, reflexive and social environment, through the seek of a whole education since the acquisition of a language contributes to the interpersonal communication.

## INTRODUCTION

There have been several criteria related to the Active Techniques after the Second World War. First, the exaggerated Methodism, proposed the importance of following specific methods in the teaching work which was considered as a group of applicable rules which results had to be predictable. The method was determined and it was above the teacher who had to be its slave.

Nowadays, thanks to the conceptual and achieving evaluation, there are **Active Techniques** that are considered as individuals, collectives, mixed and globalized. More than one teacher has created his/her own technique, beginning from a general criterion. Good teaching does not adopt any already known technique blindly; techniques could be adapted to different educational requirements. Educators and their biological, social, financial, cultural and political conditions are variable.

Considering those changing circumstances, teachers should not be just “teaching” but promoting meaningful learning, looking for quality in education, based on creativity and humanism above all.

The needs of educational changes are formally known for all social groups of our country. However, there are not the same interests, clarity of objectives, and there had not been any fundamental assent to guarantee a stronger movement to promote better achievements.

The most important aspects found in each chapter are summarized in the following resume:



**Chapter I** refers to “Research Problem” which contains the themes such as problem identification, problem setting, main problem, secondary problems, variables working out, general and specific objectives, justification that helps to set up the real necessity to research new active techniques to improve the meaningful learning of the English language.

**Chapter II** concerns about the “Theoretical Frame” that involves theoretical and conceptual focus, structure, hypothesis system, working hypothesis, null hypothesis, and alternative hypothesis which serve to review in detail the different sources of useful information in the analysis of the researched topic.

**Chapter III** focuses on the “Methodological Design” which contains research type and design, population and sample, instruments for data collection, processing and analysis linked with the methodology to obtain and process the researched data for its analysis.

**Chapter IV** is about the “Analysis and Interpretation of results” with its components such as previous for the data collection, survey to students, survey to teachers; applying a descriptive statistics, through conventional formulas that helped us to verify the proposed hypothesis.

**Chapter V** mentions conclusions and recommendations which were achieved as outcomes of this important research.

**Chapter VI** deals with the Proposal, description, justification, objectives, theoretical Foundation, development of the seminary that they will help us as professionals to handle with new alternative techniques to improve the teaching-learning process.

The REFERENCE MATERIALS will show a brief description of bibliographical sources such as: books, magazines and websites that were used for the research, at the same time there will be the Annexes that contain some teacher - student’s surveys.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

## 1.1. RESEARCH THEME

**“ACTIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE MEANINGFUL LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE SEVENTH GRADES AT INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER “CEBI” IN AMBATO CITY DURING THE FIRST TERM OF SCHOOL YEAR 2008 - 2009”.**

## 1.2. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The International Committee of Education for the XXI Century considers that the diminutions of new education are: ethics, culture, science, technology and economy. UNESCO (1996) says: **“Education holds a treasure, dimensions of quality that should provide us with a new model of education. Such a model is the Qualitative-Humanist, focused on the Complete Development of human beings”.**

(Page. 234).

In the process of implementation of the Educative Modernization which is being developed nowadays, the Ministry of Education makes a diagnostic of the pedagogic practices: **“The educational process is mainly carried out inside the four walls of the classroom. In this anti-pedagogical environment the students receive “hour after hour” the pedagogical intervention of their teachers”.**

Currently, there are several theories about learning where teachers are the ones who have to develop their creativity about using different Active Techniques and Methods with its tools instruments, which have to be used for the acquisition of new contents given in theory for achieving meaningful learning in all the subjects, even more in English Language. These active techniques which are given to the students should conduct them to find a

way for solving their own problems as well as the ones belonging to the people who form part of their society and who share their similar conditions.

Education in our country has had important changes in its structure and objectives over the last years, for which the government institutionalized the Program of the Curricular Reform for the Basic Years of Primary Education and for the Secondary levels also. (Baccalaureate) including all educational entities. Besides, considering the quality of teaching English Language, there was a Ministerial disposition which established: **“The entire curriculum had to be changed according to the CRADLE Project”**.

Those changes are the results of evaluative studies made on students who had completed their baccalaureate in our country, concluding that most of those students had not developed applicable abilities for their daily lives, their formation was based on a memoirist and repetitive culture; they had not build up the capacity to work by themselves nor in groups, resulting most of them dependent, obedient, incompetent and leaderless students.

The decisive role of the social-economic factors in educational issues should not lead us to wrong conclusions like avoiding psycho-pedagogic matters with a critic and constructivist vision. An integral process of educative changing also involves the re-planning of epistemological, psychological, axiological and pedagogic type, plus the changes in the management areas. This is expressed in a teaching application as well as in a model of building knowledge inside and outside the classroom, place where all innovative and practical ideas must be felt.

Now, when everything directs its vision to globalization, there is a new challenge; our educational projects cannot be away from the world, it is necessary to change our mentality to change our attitude so we can have a critic, valuable and optimist opinion, guided on the constructivism.

Although the International Bilingual Educational Center was created with a humanistic orientation and an integral formation, there are some teachers who still use **traditional didactic techniques** which do not accomplish any of the new educational goals into the Conceptual Pedagogy and Processes, therefore Teachers' training required is not the most appropriate one, there is not efficiency nor effectiveness in their labour.

It is possible to notice that some teachers at CEBI are still practicing traditional methods, where the only instrument for the teaching-learning process is the book, the only tool used by students and for teachers also, there is not a creative development of both parts in developing individual or group active techniques to achieve meaningful learning of English language, students are memoirist, uncritical, uncreative, and they are not free of expressing their thoughts. Students are not able to confront the information with their teachers to acquire new contents and knowledge.

### **1.3. PROBLEM SETTING**

It has been noticed that English Teachers of the Primary school at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI" do not apply all the necessary **Active Techniques** during the English lessons; instead they only use traditional and bored methods so that students have not been able to acquire a **Meaningful Learning** of the English Language.

On the other hand, the teacher's resistance to change has been perceived due to the plenty of opportunities they have had to apply innovative

techniques and to use existent didactic materials during their classes, and the continuous use of traditional methods.

English classes seem to be bored to students, consequently they are not enough motivated because teachers have not been able to catch up their attention which leads to a lack of interest and motivation for learning English.

### **1.3.1. Main problem**

How will the application of **Active Techniques** contribute with the acquisition of a **Meaningful Learning** of the English Language for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009?

### **1.3.2. Secondary problems.**

- How does the **Teachers` Training** and their **Resistance to Change** towards adopting new teaching strategies affect the teaching-learning process for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009?
- How does the application of **Traditional Methods** limit the learning on the students for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009?

- How does the lack of using **Didactic Tools** reduce the students' opportunities for learning English and their **motivation** towards learning a language for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009?

### USE OF TRADITIONAL METHODS IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

CAUSE	EFFECT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even though English Teachers receive appropriate training, there is not control of their accomplishments in applying new techniques during their classes.</li> <li>• English Teachers mostly apply traditional teaching methods.</li> <li>• Traditional teaching methods do not let Ss develop their entire creativeness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers do not apply Active Techniques during the English Class so that Students have low performance on the English language production.</li> <li>• There is not meaningful learning of the English language.</li> <li>• English classes are bored, so that Ss. are not motivated about learning English.</li> </ul>

## 1.4. VARIABLES WORKING OUT

### INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Problem	Conceptual Definition	Dimensions	Subdimensions (Indicators)
Lack of <b>Active Techniques</b> application	They are the specific forms to fulfil didactic procedures, derived from an application of the principles that include: Teachers, Learners, Teaching processes and the Target language or Culture.	<p><b>Didactic Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debates</li> <li>• Games</li> <li>• Group work</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> </ul> <p><b>Methodological Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct experience</li> <li>• Researching</li> <li>• Projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions</li> <li>• Interaction</li> <li>• Role play</li> <li>• Conceptualizing</li>   <li>• Realia</li> <li>• Use multiple independent sources</li> <li>• Cooperation and creativity</li> </ul>

Elaborated: Mrs. Cristina Salazar Paredes and Mr. Antonio Hilaño





## 1.5. OBJECTIVES

### 1.5.1. General

To apply new strategies and **active techniques** to support and reach the **meaningful learning** of the English Language on primary school's students at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", term **2008 - 2009**.

### 1.5.2. Specific

- To control Teachers' accomplishments based on the application of **Active Techniques** and appropriate use of didactic tools to avoid traditional methods and long-standing techniques that affect the **Meaningful Learning** on primary school's students at International Bilingual Educational Center, term **2008 - 2009**.
- To provide English Teachers with appropriate training based on the application of **Active Techniques** to achieve **Meaningful Learning** of the English Language with the primary school's students at International Bilingual Educational Center, term **2008 - 2009**.
- To determine how the lack of using didactic tools affect the **Meaningful Learning** in the teaching – learning process on primary school's students at International Bilingual Educational Center, term **2008 - 2009**.
- To generate the research based on the proposal of applying **Active Techniques** to achieve the **Meaningful Learning** to primary school's students at International Bilingual Educational Center, term **2008 - 2009**.

## 1.6. JUSTIFICATION

The global linguistic environment is changing rapidly, so the English language training must update itself. According to research by The British Council, “English has official or special status in at least seventy-five countries with a total population of over two billion. English is spoken as a native language by around 375 million and as a second language by around 375 million speakers in the world. Speakers of English as a second language will soon outnumber those who speak it as a first language.

Around 750 million people are believed to speak English as a foreign language. One out of four of the world’s population speaks English to some level of competence. Demand from other three-quarters is increasing.”

Over two-thirds of the world’s scientists read in English. Three quarters of the world’s mail is written in English. Eighty per cent of the world’s electronically stored information is in English. Of the estimated forty million user of the internet, some eighty per cent communicate in English, so we can appreciate the importance of this language around the world; for that reason, countries like Ecuador and some others from South America are conscious of the English language relevance to develop their economy and to flow in a worldwide communication in the near future.

A human being is born and grows up in a society, but nowadays there are still borders that isolate countries to live in a global village, and one of them is the lack of a common international language for communication, so that English Language has an important role in the Ecuadorian education.

Since English is the main language of books, newspaper, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science,

technology, diplomacy, sport, international competitions, music and advertisement; we have noticed the need of developing this research work in order to contribute with the improvement of the tools that most educators apply to provide learners with the necessary information to qualify their communicative competences.

Our research has a social relevance because it looks for a change in society through quality in education which will be applied once teachers get to know the importance of training to update the strategies they apply, and use the tools that ensure this education, so that students will achieve a real integral formation with all the appropriate abilities and skills to contribute with the educative level of our country which is in crisis because of the wrong decisions that have been taken by the government in reference to the Cradle Project.

The current research work has an academic purpose since it enables teachers to know new paradigms referring to Education, Innovative theories, methodology, active techniques, with the purpose of overcoming the difficulties presented during the whole educative process, since every single class that teachers present, is considered as a new experience, for which it is very important to have useful and clear tools to achieve the objectives that each teacher has established, it means, to achieve meaningful learning on students in the English Language at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI".

Two of the most important aspects to consider carrying out this investigative work are the mission as well as the vision of the institution, where the application of this research will take place. The International Bilingual Educational Center CEBI's mission is to form bilingual young students with critical and humanistic thinking, protagonists of the betterment of our society and individuals who respect the variety of cultures and diverse thought tendency. To do that, an integral education is

practiced in which human values are of relevant importance as well as the sensitiveness towards all human beings, the balance between men and the natural environment, considering the inner and outer self, reaching the development appreciation of their emotions; obtaining in this way the academic and human excellence of all the students.

The International Bilingual Educational Center CEBI's vision is to reach the recognition of the whole community as the pioneer bilingual educative institution in the center of our country which offers its students an integral formation based on quality, ethics, and auto-critics that allow the actively introduction in the national and universal reality.

There has not been any research related with the meaningful learning of English as a target language in this School, it was the reason which motivated us to focus our investigation in this important area of knowledge, because through the investigation of Teaching active Techniques, it is possible to break down the traditional paradigms of education as well as to achieve the development of skills such as reflection, creativity, originality, criticism and propose, but the most important is to help students interact and socialize of their accomplishments.

Our proposal research is feasible to carry out at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI", because of the recent changes in education that require all educative institutions to update their academic offers and to improve the level of education, so that authorities and teachers must be conscious about the importance of investigation which supports their mission and goals in their daily labour, taking in account that educators' true role is to work as knowledge facilitators concerned in the effective teaching-learning process based on the **Meaningful Learning** of the English Language.

# **CHAPTER II**

## **THEORETICAL FRAME**

## **2.1. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOCUS**

### **Dependent Variable: MEANINGFUL LEARNING**

#### **CURRICULUM**

##### **Historical conception**

In *The Curriculum*, the first textbook published on the subject, in 1918, John Franklin Bobbitt<sup>1</sup> said that curriculum, as an idea, has its roots in the Latin word for race-course, explaining the curriculum as the course of deeds and experiences through which children become the adults they should be, for success in adult society. Furthermore, the curriculum encompasses the entire scope of formative deed and experience occurring in and out of school, and not experiences occurring in school; experiences that are unplanned and undirected, and experiences intentionally directed for the purposeful formation of adult members of society.

To Bobbitt, the curriculum is a social engineering arena. Per his cultural presumptions and social definitions, his curricular formulation has two notable features: (i) that scientific experts would best be qualified to and justified in designing curricula based upon their expert knowledge of what qualities are desirable in adult members of society, and which experiences would generate said qualities; and (ii) curriculum defined as the deeds-experiences the student ought to have to become the adult he or she ought become.

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<sup>1</sup> Bobbit J, (1918); Curriculum first definition.

Hence, he defined the curriculum as an ideal, rather than as the concrete reality of the deeds and experiences that form people to who and what they are.

Contemporary views of curriculum reject these features of Bobbitt's postulates, but retain the basis of curriculum as the course of experience(s) that forms human beings in to persons. Personal formation via curricula is studied at the personal level and at the group level, i.e. cultures and societies (e.g. professional formation, academic discipline via historical experience). The formation of a group is reciprocal, with the formation of its individual participants.

Although it formally appeared in Bobbitt's definition, curriculum as a course of formative experience also pervades John Dewey's work (who disagreed with Bobbitt on important matters). Although Bobbitt's and Dewey's idealistic understanding of "curriculum" is different from current, restricted uses of the word, curriculum writers and researchers generally share it as common, substantive understanding of curriculum.

### **Curriculum in formal schooling**

In formal education or schooling (cf. education), a **curriculum** is the set of courses, course work, and content offered at a school or university. A curriculum may be partly or entirely determined by an external, authoritative body (i.e. the National Curriculum for England in English schools). In the U.S., each state, with the individual school districts, establishes the curricula taught. Each state, however, builds its curriculum with great participation of national academic subject groups selected by the United States Department of Education, e.g. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) for mathematical instruction. In Australia each state's Education Department establishes curricula. UNESCO's International Bureau of Education has the primary mission of studying curricula and their implementation worldwide.



Curriculum means two things: (i) the range of courses from which students choose what subject matters to study, and (ii) a specific learning program. In the latter case, the curriculum collectively describes the teaching, learning, and assessment materials available for a given course of study.

Currently, a spiral curriculum is promoted as allowing students to revisit a subject matter's content at the different levels of development of the subject matter being studied. The constructivist approach, of the spiral curriculum, proposes that children learn best via active engagement with the educational environment, i.e. discovery learning.

A crucial aspect for learning, understanding by stimulating the imagination, is absent in the so-called "neo-conservative curriculum" that stresses the ineffective aspects of knowledge amounts and of logic-mathematical thinking, i.e. rote learning.

Crucial to the curriculum is the definition of the course objectives that usually are expressed as learning outcomes' and normally include the program's **assessment strategy**. These outcomes and assessments are grouped as **units** (or modules), and, therefore, the curriculum comprises a collection of such units, each, in turn, comprising a specialized, specific part of the curriculum. So, a typical curriculum includes communications, numeracy, information technology, and social skills units, with specific, specialized teaching of each.

## **Core Curriculum**

In education, a **core curriculum** is a **curriculum**, or course of study, which is deemed central and usually made mandatory for all students of a school or school system. Core curricula are often instituted, at the primary and secondary levels, by school boards, Departments of Education, or other administrative agencies charged with overseeing education. At the undergraduate level, individual college and university administrations and

faculties sometimes mandate core curricula, especially in the liberal arts. But because of increasing specialization and depth in the student's major field of study, a typical core curriculum in higher education mandates a far smaller proportion of a student's course work than a high school or elementary school core curriculum prescribes.

### **Curriculum that is Relevant**

Students must find relevance in the curriculum so that they can see how it connects with their lives. Curriculum is at its best when it poses a question or problem that motivates students to solve it by learning new information. An effective curriculum is one that connects science to technology and society.

### **Examples in Higher Education**

Amongst the best known and most expansive core curricula programs at leading American colleges are that of Columbia College at Columbia University, as well as the University of Chicago's. Both can take up to two years to complete without advanced standing, and are designed to foster critical skills in a broad range of academic disciplines, including: the social sciences, humanities, physical and biological sciences, mathematics, writing and foreign languages. However, other selective institutions have largely done away with core requirements in their entirety, the most famous being the student-driven course selection of Brown University, and Cornell University. Further, as core curricula began to be diminished over the course of the twentieth century at many American schools, several smaller institutions became famous for embracing a core curriculum that covers nearly the student's entire undergraduate education, often utilizing classic texts of the western canon to teach all subjects including science. St. John's College in the United States remains famous in this vein.

## **LEARNING THEORY**

According to Bonwell<sup>2</sup> and Edison, 1991; a learning theory is an attempt to describe how people and animals learn; thereby helping us understand the inherently complex process of learning.

There are three main categories or philosophical frameworks under which learning theories fall:

- (i) Behaviorism: focuses only on the objectively observable aspects of learning.
- (ii) Cognitivism: look beyond behavior to explain brain-based learning.
- (iii) Constructivism: views learning as a process in which the learner actively constructs or builds new ideas or concepts.

It is also important to take account of informal learning theories, and to consider the philosophical anthropology implied by any theory.

Due to our research theme, we have considered it necessary to emphasize on the constructivism theory, since it is the most related with the acquisition of a meaningful learning through the application of active techniques.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism views learning as a process in which the learner actively constructs or builds new ideas or concepts based upon current and past knowledge. In other words, "learning involves constructing one's own knowledge from one's own experiences." Constructivist learning, therefore, is a very personal endeavor, whereby internalized concepts, rules, and

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<sup>2</sup> Bonwell and Edison, (1991) Explain Learning Theory.

general principles may consequently be applied in a practical real-world context. The teacher acts as a facilitator who encourages students to discover principles for themselves and to construct knowledge by working to solve realistic problems.

This is also known as knowledge construction as a social process. We can work to clarify and organize their ideas so we can voice them to others. It gives us opportunities to elaborate on what they learned. We are exposed to the views of others. It enables us to discover flaws and inconsistencies by learning we can get good results.

Constructivism itself has many variations, such as:

### **(i) Active Learning**

Active learning is an umbrella term that refers to several models of instruction that focus the responsibility of learning on learners. Bonwell and Eison<sup>3</sup> (1991) popularized this approach to instruction. This "buzz word" of the 1980s became their 1990s report to the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE). In this report they discuss a variety of methodologies for promoting "active learning." However according to Mayer<sup>4</sup> (2004) strategies like "active learning" developed out of the work of an earlier group of theorists -- those promoting discovery learning.

It has been suggested that students who actively engage with the material, are more likely to recall information (Bruner, 1961)<sup>5</sup>, but several well known authors have argued this claim is not well supported by the literature (Anderson Reder, & Simon, 1998; Gagné, 1966; Mayer, 2004; Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark, 2006). Rather than being behaviorally active during learning, Mayer (2004) suggests learners should be cognitively active.

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<sup>3</sup> Bonwell and Edison, (1991); Active Learning Definition.

<sup>4</sup> Mayer, (2004); Considers Active Learning as strategies.

<sup>5</sup> Bruner, (1961); Ss recall information easily with materials.

## **(ii) Discovery Learning**

Discovery Learning is a method of inquiry-based instruction and is considered a constructivist based approach to education. It is supported by the work of learning theorists and psychologists Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, and Seymour Papert<sup>6</sup>.

Jerome Bruner is thought to have originated discovery learning in the 1960s, but his ideas are very similar those of earlier writers (e.g. John Dewey). Bruner argues that "Practice in discovering for oneself teaches one to acquire information in a way that makes that information more readily viable in problem solving" (Bruner, 1961, p.26). This philosophy later became the discovery learning movement of the 1960s. The mantra of this philosophical movement suggests that we should 'learn by doing'.

Discovery learning takes place in problem solving situations where the learner draws on his own experience and prior knowledge and is a method of instruction through which students interact with their environment by exploring and manipulating objects, wrestling with questions and controversies, or performing experiments.

## **(iii) Knowledge Building**

Knowledge Building theory was created and developed by Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia in order to describe what a community of learners needs to accomplish in order to create knowledge. The theory address the need to educate people for the knowledge age society, in which knowledge and innovation are pervasive (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2003).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Piaget, Bruner, and Papert; Discovery Learning as a Method.

<sup>7</sup> Scardamalia & Bereiter, (2003); Knowledge Building Theory.

## **Kinds of Learning**

Adam Blatner, 2002<sup>8</sup> mentioned these ideas briefly in his books where he discerned four categories of learning:

- Information
- Competence
- Understanding
- Wisdom

Each involves a different kind of learning process. This has relevance for the training of the psychotherapist, for the planning of treatment, and for thinking about education and personal development in general.

### **Information**

One acquires information through reading, attending lectures, listening to audio-cassettes, watching videotapes, and so on. Learning in this way emphasizes primarily the "left brain"; it means the memorization. Traditional schooling has utilized this approach, in contrast to more apprentice-style contexts.

Because of its pervasiveness in the curriculum, the memorization of information has come to be unrealistically associated with competence. The actual correlation between "book learning" and ability is not so impressive. Yet our culture relies on this criterion largely because of its relative ease and economy of assessment. That is, paper and pencil tests can be applied on a mass basis, and the faculty/student ratio can be rather low. Both teaching and testing an individual's competence requires much more time and attention. (This point takes on added relevance now that standardized testing is becoming a more prominent component in the curriculum, as a political response to the demand for accountability—with

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<sup>8</sup> Blatner A., (2002); Categories of Learning.

the ironic association of the arithmetic sense of accounting overlapping with the illusion of education.)

Another element lending illusory authority to the acquisition of memory is the information explosion. It seems as if the knowledge of all the most current professional literature should lend an aura of real mastery to anyone who could conceivably keep up, but in fact the nature of most of this information has little direct practical applicability. The best that could be said is that most of the professional literature offers resources for constructing a basis for further specialized research. The problem of eliciting relevant information from the morass of published material is daunting, and in truth perhaps one of the most important components of information processing is that of ascertaining which bits of data are useful. Often traditional education doesn't teach students how to ask the meaningful questions.

Indeed, one of the challenges of modern education is to deconstruct the illusion of pseudo-education, to debunk the false values of scientism (i.e., applying the norms of science as a philosophy of life), and to appreciate the pitfalls of what Neil Postman<sup>9</sup> has called "technopoly." We must question programs which infuse information and grant certificates based on the memorization of information much of which is quickly forgotten after some key qualifying examination.

### **Competence**

While information is acquired primarily through what the developmental cognitive psychologist Piaget called "assimilation," competence, the knack of doing something, is acquired through "accommodation." Individuals constantly revise their picture of the world, and assimilation involves the adding of data and filling in the gaps of information. But when people learn to climb a tree, swim, ride a bicycle, make love, deal with a child's tantrum,

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<sup>9</sup> Postman N.; Technopoly definition.

etc., they have to change that picture of the world on the level of their feelings, their body's physical orientation, complex coordinating and integrating processes. Indeed, while assimilation seems to be largely reversible in that it's easy to forget so much, accommodation seems to be largely irreversible: Once people learn to swim, make love, etc., it's not only impossible to forget these skills completely, but it seems to become difficult if not impossible to remember what it was like before one ever knew these skills.

Accommodative learning occurs through actual experience. Lectures or books can only offer a general cognitive orientation, but the acquisition of the knack of most skills comes through actual physical practice. Role playing, experimentation, simulation, these and other training methods offer relatively fail-safe precursors to the actual experience, and the skill building progresses from a beginner's to an intermediate to an advanced level.

One of the sayings in medical training is "see one, do one, teach one." This is grossly misleading, a residual of the high pressure settings of interns in county hospitals, overburdened with patients and demands. Sometimes an intern might in fact only see a procedure done once before finding himself challenged to do it without supervision! Yet in fact most skill components require many repetitions in order to gain the knack. People need to be given opportunities for sufficient practice, and if not given, the student must request--perhaps even demand--more time and situations in which the important skill can be exercised. There must be access to modeling--seeing the required activity performed by someone more skillful, and then when the student tries it, this practice must be observed and modified by constructive and encouraging feedback.

At a certain point in the development of a skill people come to recognize consciously that they have achieved a degree of mastery and that awareness adds a measure of confidence to the overall level of



competence. Another component of competence is that of "flow," a degree of mastery in which the practitioner can allow some spontaneity to become a part of the work, to balance the structured elements.

One implication of this is that students of psychotherapy should prioritize their learning opportunities so they attend experiential programs more than didactic ones. Most lectures are either already in print or soon to be published, but the learning of therapeutic techniques is best accomplished through workshops in which one becomes both subject and practice facilitator. I encourage my students to learn about methods derived from various types of "body" work, such as Bioenergetics Analysis; Gestalt therapy or psychodrama; use various art, dance, movement, poetry, drama, and music therapy techniques; participate in experiential therapy or personal growth workshops; take courses in hypnosis, meditation, or other new approaches; and continue to utilize these learning experiences as a way of deepening and broadening their own personality.

The artist recognizes that in addition to the acquisition of mere technique, the challenge involves also the integration of the unique blend of the artist's many personal variables. In this sense, competence moves beyond simple craftsmanship and opens to the deeper sources of creativity and healing.

### **Understanding**

This category may be appreciated in two senses. In a more general way, a person develops understanding through integrating both information-oriented knowing and competence-knowing, as well as learning also about the general contexts and other related systems of knowledge. More specifically, in the realm of psychotherapy and interpersonal relations, understanding refers primarily to an awareness of the dynamics and world-view of the other person, a kind of empathy. Learning this skill involves an exercise of the imagination, an opening to what it might be like

to be in another person's situation. This mode of learning also involves an integration of one's own intuition and emotions as well as some creative elements of rational cognition. I tell my students, "You need to learn to think like an actor or playwright as much as like a textbook."

Understanding is the primary skill dimension involved in becoming "psychologically minded." By considering the range and depth of personal experiences, one learns about psychodynamics from the viewpoint of the other person's own "self system." People don't think of themselves in terms of the clichés of psychology, as "controlling" or "manipulative" or "defensive" or "dependent" or "avoidant." They have more concrete ways of articulating their experience, and therapists must learn to appreciate these modes of perception.

Having lived through a given experience lends some degree of understanding, although perhaps only on a superficial level. Many people have gone through a divorce, the death of a loved one, a life-threatening illness, or some other challenge and yet gained very little insight. They may have adapted by escaping from any awareness of the rich variety of their own feelings through the use of any number of techniques, ranging from the various defense mechanisms to the flight into alcohol, aggressiveness, or sexuality.

We have found the best method of acquiring understanding is through role playing, taking the part of the person whom one wishes to understand. Either some scene can be enacted or perhaps the person (in role) is interviewed by others. The teacher helps the student practicing this skill to avoid overgeneralizations, psychological jargon, vagueness, or other tendencies to create emotional distance.

Once the student has learned the basic skills, the situations are moved gradually from relatively familiar roles to increasingly foreign experiences.

George Bernard Shaw<sup>10</sup>, the humorist and playwright, noted that one shouldn't "do unto others as you would have them do unto you!--They might not have the same tastes!" Yet this doesn't mean we should abandon the effort to empathize, only that we should temper it by (1) trying to include as much as possible the awareness of different temperamental or cultural preferences, and (2) whenever possible checking out one's developing hypotheses with the person with whom one is attempting to empathize--and utilizing any corrections to refine or redirect one's line of thought.

One of the most powerful benefits of this mode of learning is not only a tremendous broadening of one's role repertoire, but more, practice in at least partially relinquishing one's own egocentric and ethnocentric perspectives.

## **Wisdom**

Certainly this is the most elusive category, but I believe for all practical purposes it can be defined in a reasonably operational way. Wisdom consists of the ability to draw on one's ideals and to integrate these personal aspects of behavior with the other modes of knowing.

It is possible to be competent and even understanding without being wise. In fact, most people relapse repeatedly into a state of automatic reactivity, habitual responses which reflect more childish modes of thinking and feeling. When one can notice these tendencies, stop them, and replace the reaction with a behavior which integrates the greatest degree of awareness, then he or she has expressed a degree of wisdom.

Wisdom is a higher-order skill that can be learned and practiced. It can be taught to some small degree, in terms of talking about it, putting it in

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<sup>10</sup> Shaw G.; Benefits of learning mode.

books, etc. Having living models of the behavior who inspire identification is an even more powerful source of learning. As with understanding, though, this mode of learning requires, in addition to practice, a process of ongoing inner maturation. The integration of the other three approaches with one's own deepening in turn gives those other skill areas a depth of sensitivity.

One component of wisdom is the conscious cultivation of ideals, in terms of talking about and affirming noble aspirations, adapting them realistically to one's own temperament, abilities and life roles, and then learning to integrate them with the other aspects of the personality. This should not be thought of as easy. As part of genuine maturation and health, an individual learns to tap into the inner resources of such qualities as faith, openness, responsibility, letting go, patience, courage, humility, simplicity, generosity of spirit, sensitivity to beauty, humor, compassion, etc. These function as the motivators and guides for understanding one's own tendencies towards impatience, judgmentalness, or whatever other "blind spots" are discovered in the course of learning to understand oneself.

Because our culture has avoided any semblance of sentimentality and our profession has moved away from mere exhortation as a mode of therapy, the articulation of ideals has lost its place as a part of instruction. Certainly exhortation alone will not suffice, but weaving a discussion of ideals into a multimodal educational program is appropriate and effective.

It's impossible to assess wisdom on tests. Nor can it be taught in a didactic fashion. The process occurs most typically when students (or intern or resident) are on call, unsupervised. Perhaps they're tired, and they're tempted to feel self-pity, overloaded, overburdened--in other words, a subtle state of pre-clinical "burn-out." They're tempted to snap at the patient, overlook the subtle elements of compassion, or in other ways become judgmental. To the extent that they can pause and avoid these

temptations, will themselves to encounter their patients and co-workers with a more humane attitude, they express their growing wisdom.

## **Independent Variable: ACTIVE TECHNIQUES**

### **Techniques definitions:**

Teaching Techniques are the classroom activities and procedures derived from an application of the principles that include: teachers, learners, teaching processes, learning processes and the target language or culture – in other words, they are the behavioural manifestations of the principles mentioned above.

There is no necessary one-to-one correspondence between technique and method, since particular techniques may be well associated with more than one method depending on their principles.

### **Active Techniques**

#### **Concept:**

Active Techniques are: “**the specific forms to fulfil didactic procedures**”, it means, the technique is the action procedure.

There is a close relationship among methods, procedures and techniques, only differentiated by the level of speciality with which each of them acts in the teaching-learning process.

**The expressions:** didactic and methodological strategies, which could be considered as synonyms for the effects of the planning designs.

According to Lima, B. (2002) insists: **“the best opportunities for students to learn, are noticed when they become active, dynamic, active and participative elements”**. (Page.56).<sup>11</sup>

### **Importance of Active Techniques**

The importance of the Active Techniques is based on its functions between the object or competence that follows and the learning of students, being an auxiliary tool for teachers in their mission to guide the process of learning.

Because of its inner nature, the method serves to generate or to find new knowledge, organize actions, ideas and facts, with time and effort optimization, guaranteeing the accomplishment of the objectives or competences and the consistence of the results.

For those reasons, it is convenient to apply the most appropriate Active Techniques for each theme, which election will be used as a guide for any practical application, as is expressed by COMENIO: **“it is better to learn by looking rather than by hearing, and even better than looking and hearing, by making”**.

### **Functions of the Active Techniques**

The educational processes become essential due to the methodological components. In this case, the methodology constitute an instrumental aspect because it allows to link students with contents and with learning activities also,

PEÑALOZA, Walter. (1998), **says: “the contents and possible experiences that had been selected must have a sequence ordered so that teachers**

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<sup>11</sup> Lima B, (2002); Opportunities for Learning.

**can handle each part of the curriculum without any trouble". (Page.276)<sup>12</sup>**

### **Criterion and Guides for the Selection of Active Techniques**

Considering that the technique should not be applied indiscriminately, for an appropriate selection, the following criterion and guides should be considered:

- a) Be informed about the philosophic and political orientation of education in a determined time and place.
- b) Get to know the reality and the socio-geographic environment of the place and educational resources that the local culture provides with.
- c) Determine through an entry test, the requirement level of the student before beginning a project, a unit or a learning program. It means, determine the previous knowledge of the students.
- d) Get to know the bio-psycho-socio conditions of the students.
- e) Specify the student profile
- f) Identify the objectives and nature of the subject or theme to be developed.
- g) Get to know the objectives of the level and the Educational Model.
- h) Consider the knowledge and personal abilities of teachers.

### **Recommendations for selecting Active Techniques.**

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<sup>12</sup> PEÑALOZA, Walter. (1998); Contents and Experiences must have a sequence.

For selecting appropriate Active Techniques, is it important to follow some of the JAMES KUETHE's ideas,<sup>13</sup> and consider the following:

- Direct students' attention towards the specific nature of the learning, so that they will exactly know what is expected from them, and what they will have to achieve.
- Provide with motivation to learn.
- Keep the interest
- Provide with immediate feedback.
- Allow students to progress according to their own learning rhythm.
- Avoid frustration and often failure.
- Promote learning transfer or new applications outside the classroom.
- Develop and keep students' favourable attitudes towards themselves, teachers, the subjects and the educative process in general.
- Allow the accomplishment of all educational objectives.

### **Use of Active Techniques of Learning**

The different uses of Techniques strengthen the learning. Just reading is different from underlying, summarizing, scheming, conceptualizing, and exposing about the same topic. Who uses the second forms of studying will have a good level of learning so that it is convenient to use concrete, reinforced and integrative techniques of study.

### **Description of the Active Techniques of learning to be applied**

- **Interaction with Others**, where students have opportunities to explore the learning content through discourse with peers and the teacher.

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<sup>13</sup> James Kuethe, Recommendations for selecting Active Techniques.



- **Student Role Play** by assigning roles to students to develop their own discussion questions, on a particular topic or reading will provide peer evaluation and feedback.
- **Sequencing Graphic Organizers** which are used to see changes over time, reveal the sequence of step-by-step methods, illustrate complex processes, and show cause and effect.
- **A story with two or more endings** which allows students to choose between the two endings or invents a new one of their own as they will always be asked to give the reasons for their preferences.

### **Instructional Strategies**

Students learn best when they have to think deeply about the ideas under study. The teachers will need to develop a disposition for critical thinking within a variety of contexts. Among these are the construction of knowledge, an inquiry approach, technology strategies and cooperative learning. Laboratory investigations provide connections to concepts, problem-solving, critical thinking and scientific processes.

### **Meaningful Learning**

#### **Concept:**

For a better understanding, all of the following definitions of Meaningful Learning should be taken into account:

- Meaningful Learning is a process through which the new information gets a meaning by interaction with relevant pre-existing aspects of the cognitive structure.

- Meaningful Learning is information that ties into previously learned materials and is immediately useful for the learner.
- Williams & Cavallo, 1995;<sup>14</sup> define meaningful learning as: **“the formation of viable relationships among ideas, concepts, and information”**.
- **Meaningful Learning** allow acquired knowledge, abilities and skills, values and habits to be used in the circumstances in which students live and in the others that will be presented in the future.
- Is the one that has a direct relation between new and prior – knowledge to form part of the cognitive structure of the human being and that can be used at any time.
- Is the one that leads students to the comprehension and understanding, allowing the use of new learning in different situations for solving problems and as a support for future learnings.
- Meaningful learning is produced when the new knowledge relates with the prior knowledge.
- Novak, 1984;<sup>15</sup> says: **“Students with a meaningful learning orientation attempt to make connections between concepts, whereas students not possessing a meaningful learning orientation memorize facts”**.
- Novak, 1984;<sup>16</sup> says: **“Meaningful understanding is the product that may result when a person with a meaningful learning orientation**

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<sup>14</sup> Williams & Carvallo, Meaningful learning concept, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> Novak, Meaningful learning characteristic, 1984.

<sup>16</sup> Novak, Meaningful understanding characteristic, 1984.

**and sufficient prior knowledge interacts with content that has the potential of being learned in a meaningful way”.**

### **Characteristics of Meaningful Learning:**

- Non-arbitrary, non-verbatim, substantive incorporation of new knowledge into cognitive structure.
- Deliberate effort to link new knowledge with higher order concepts in cognitive structure
- Learning related to experiences with events or objects.
- Affective commitment to relate new knowledge to prior learning.

### **The processes of meaningful learning:**

Ausubel proposed four processes by which meaningful learning can occur:

- 1. Derivative subsumption.** This describes the situation in which the new information is an instance or example of a concept that has been learnt. So, supposing that a basic concept such as "tree" has been acquired, the learner knows that the tree has a trunk, branches, green leaves, and may have some kind of fruit, and that, when fully grown is likely to be at least 12 feet tall. Now, the student learns about a kind of tree that he has never seen before, for example, a persimmon tree that conforms to his previous understanding of tree. His new knowledge of persimmon trees is attached to his concept of tree, without substantially altering that concept in any way. So, an Ausubelian would say that the student had learnt about persimmon trees through the process of derivative subsumption.

- 2. Correlative subsumption.** If the learner encounters a new kind of tree that has red leaves, rather than green, he will have to accommodate this new information by altering or extending his concept of tree to include the possibility of red leaves. He has learnt about this new kind of tree through the process of correlative subsumption. In a sense, the learner might say that this is more "valuable" learning than that of derivative subsumption, since it enriches the higher-level concept.
  
- 3. Superordinate learning.** Imagine that the learner was well acquainted with maples, oaks, apple trees, etc., but he did not know, until he was taught, that these were all examples of deciduous trees. In this case, the student already knew a lot of examples of the concept, but he did not know the concept itself until it was taught to him. This is superordinate learning.
  
- 4. Combinatorial learning.** The first three learning processes all involve new information that "attaches" to a hierarchy at a level that is either below or above previously acquired knowledge. Combinatorial learning is different; it describes a process by which the new idea is derived from another idea that is neither higher nor lower in the hierarchy, but at the same level (in a different, but related, "branch"). The student could think of this as learning by analogy. For example, to teach about pollination in plants, the student might relate it to previously acquired knowledge of how fish eggs are fertilized.

### **How to Achieve Meaningful and Functional Learnings**

To achieve Meaningful Learnings, there must be a restoring of the didactic processes and a transformation of the teachers' role to achieve better results in the quality of education.

The following practices of these principles help to achieve meaningful and functional learnings considering the Zone of Closest Development which includes: relationship between teacher – student, student - teacher, student – other students, student – parents or student - friends.

- If the learning process is developed outside this zone, any Meaningful Learning will be achieved.
- Meaningful Learnings generate a new zone of closest development and help students achieve their maturity.
- The more acquired knowledge, the better accomplishments in the personal development of students.
- Begin from inner activities and motivation as pre-requirements for Meaningful Learnings.
- Work on frequent processes of self-evaluation with students as well as with teachers.

### **Types of Significant Learnings**

It is important to remark that the significant learning is not only the simple link between the new information with the prior knowledge into the cognitive structure of the learner, on the other hand, the mechanical learning is the only arbitrary connection; significant learning includes the modification and evolution of the new information, such as the cognitive structure involved in the learning process.

Ausubel distinguishes the following types of Significant Learnings:

**Learning of Propositions.** - It is the most elemental learning from which the rest of learnings depend on. It consists on the attribution of meaning to determined signs. It happens when the sign meanings equal the arbitrary sign meanings with their own referents symbolizing for the students any meaning to which its referent adduce. This learning is generally presented to children, for example, the learning of the word “ball”, happens when the meaning of this word represents, or becomes equivalent to the ball that the child is perceiving in that moment, so that they mean the same thing. It is not about a simple association between the sign and the object, but children relate them in such a relative way, like a representative equivalence with the existing relevant contents in their cognitive structure.

**Learning of Concepts.-** Concepts are defined as “something conceived in the mind; a thought or notion”, so we can say that in a certain way it is also a learning of representations. Concepts are acquired through two processes. Formation and Assimilation. In the formation of concepts, the attributes of concept criteria are acquired through direct experience, in stages of formulation and hypotheses. Using the previous example we can say that the child acquires the generic meaning of the word “ball”, this sign also serves as a significant for the cultural meaning of “ball”, in that case there is equivalence between the symbol and its attributes of common criteria.

Learning of concepts by assimilation increases as the children acquires vocabulary, since the attributes of concept criteria can be defined when using combinations in the cognitive structure so that the children will be able to distinguish different colours, sizes and shapes affirming that “there is a ball” whenever he sees one.

## Requirements for Significant Learning

Ausubel 1998.<sup>17</sup> Indicates:

**“Students must express willingness to link substantially rather than arbitrarily the new material with its cognitive structure, as the material to be learnt is potentially meaningful for him.”** (Page. 234), it means, related with its structure of knowledge on a non-arbitrary base.

The above supposes:

- a. The material must be potentially meaningful.** - It means that the material can be related non-arbitrarily with the specific cognitive structure of the student, which should have “logic meaning”, it means that it should be relatable intentionally and substantially with the corresponding ideas to the cognitive structure of the student, considering the characteristics of the material that will be learnt in its nature.
- b. Disposition for Meaningful Learning.** - It means that the student should show a disposition to relate substantively rather than literally the new knowledge with its cognitive structure. So, independently from the amount of the potential meaning the material to be learnt process, if the intention of the student is to memorize the process of learning as well as its results arbitrary and literally, the results will be mechanical; in such a different way without considering the significance of the student’s disposition, nor the process, nor the results will be significant, if the material is not potentially meaningful, and if it is not related with its cognitive structure.

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<sup>17</sup> Ausubel, Requirement for Significant Learning, 1998.

## **Principles for Meaningful Learning:**

The most general ideas of a subject should be presented first and then progressively differentiated in terms of detail and specificity.

Instructional materials should attempt to integrate new material with previously presented information through comparisons and cross-referencing of new and old ideas.

## **Assessment:**

Assessing is the process of acquiring information and making judgments about students' learning. The purposes of assessment include the following:

- To assist student learning related to outcomes.
- To make judgments about students' achievements.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programs.
- To inform decisions about students' future learning.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring refers to a series of assessments done over a period of time.

At the classroom and school level, the purpose of monitoring is to keep track of and analyze developments in students' learning, assess their progress towards goals, and facilitate program evaluation to inform future planning and accountability.

## **Reporting**

Reporting is communication to stakeholders about the information obtained from assessing and monitoring. The purpose of reporting is to improve learning. Reporting is characterized by clear, open



communication and involves a mutually respectful partnership between parents/careers, teachers and students.

### **Assessing of, for and as learning**

Assessment of learning is not the same as assessment for learning or assessment as learning. Assessment of learning in English provides evidence of student achievement for reporting and accountability purposes. Its main purpose is to make judgments about performance.

Assessment **for** learning in English helps to inform the teaching and learning process by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses. Its main purpose is to gather information.

Assessment **as** learning in English helps students to learn more. Its main purpose is self-monitoring. When assessment as learning principles are employed, students come to understand what it means to be responsible for their own learning - the foundation of lifelong learning.

Some teachers view assessment for and as learning in similar ways.

### **Assessment practices for English learning within the Essential Learnings Framework**

Enacting the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Principles means that assessing, monitoring, moderation and reporting practices need to change for English teachers. As the primary purpose for assessment is to improve learning, assessment practices must be inclusive, explicit, valid and reliable.

English teachers need to ensure that an appropriate balance of assessing as learning, for learning and of learning takes place in classrooms. Learning is enhanced when teachers make the criteria for success explicit

and provide frequent and varied feedback to students on their progress towards achieving Essential Learnings outcomes and standards.

Formative, ongoing and authentic assessment practices which are designed to improve learning need to be central to English learning. Students should participate actively in the assessment of their learning through self and peer assessment.

English teachers also need to work more collaboratively with other teachers, both within and across schools, to ensure consistency of teacher judgment about student achievement against the Essential Learnings outcomes and standards.

### **The language of assessing**

Consistency of teacher judgment relies on a common understanding of the Essential Learnings outcomes and standards and what student demonstration of the outcomes and standards looks like.

On balance judgment requires a teacher or group of teachers to make a qualitative judgment about the standard of student achievement at a particular time given a range of evidence. On balance judgments are not average performance over time or determined by algorithms.

A rubric is a key that describes varying levels of quality from excellent to poor for a specific assignment, skill, project, essay, research paper or performance. Its purposes are to give informative feedback about works in progress and to give detailed evaluation of final products. All rubrics have two features in common: a list of criteria and gradations of achievement. The criteria are chosen to define and guide the teaching and learning. Rubrics can be constructed by teachers or collaboratively by students and teachers.

## Meaningful Assessment Promotes Meaningful Learning

By Diane K. Brantley<sup>18</sup>

Within our present culture of testing, how can we open a dialogue as to the value of creating a meaningful assessment system that promotes meaningful learning within the classroom? No doubt the answer lies in the research on teaching and learning. For decades, educators and psychologists have been studying the cognitive development of children, beginning at birth and extending into adulthood. Emerging from this body of literature is research on the collaborative nature of instruction and assessment. When we understand this relationship, it becomes clear how and why we should and should not assess learners. To begin with, let's focus on the how's and why's of assessment.

- Why assess students throughout the learning process?
- How does continuous, authentic assessment promote meaningful learning?

Wiggins<sup>19</sup> (1998) begins to address the aims of assessment when he describes educative assessment as follows:

“An educative assessment system is designed to teach—to improve performance (of student and teacher) and evoke exemplary pedagogy. It is built on the bedrock of meaningful performance tasks that are credible and realistic (authentic), hence engaging to students” (p.12).

It should be noted that an educative assessment system includes both the teacher and the learner as active participants in the assessment process thereby making it a collaborative effort that is used to support meaningful teaching and learning within the classroom.

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<sup>18</sup> Brantley D., (Meaningful Assessment promotes Meaningful Learning)

<sup>19</sup> Wiggins, (1998) Description of Educative Assessment.

Additionally Wiggins distinguishes educative assessment as a “system” rather than a series of disconnected tests and assignments that lie outside the realm of instruction. By incorporating such a system of assessment into the curriculum, the act of assessing a student becomes integral to the act of teaching a student. Together teaching, learning and assessing are co-mingled throughout the instructional day, allowing both teachers and students to continually monitor and reflect upon their understandings

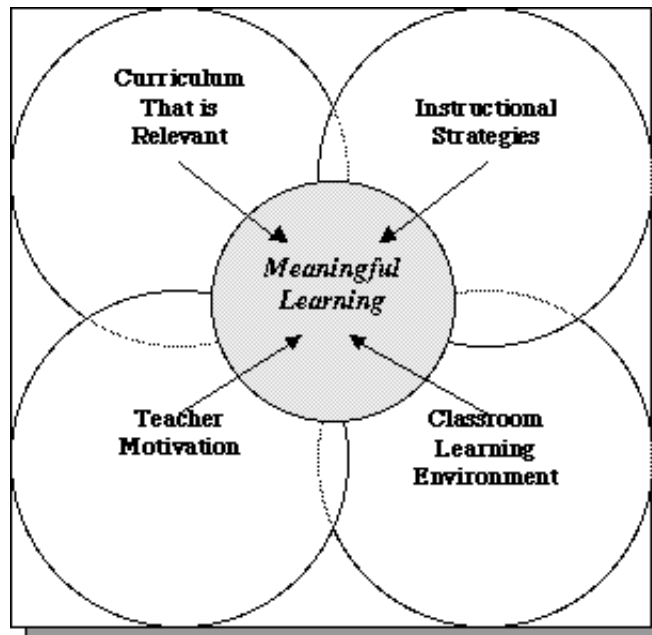
With this being said, it becomes imperative for educators to have a voice in educational decisions being made at various levels of government which then trickles down to inform educational practice in schools. Popham<sup>20</sup> (2001) believes, “that one of the chief reasons that educators passively suffer the increasingly serious set of test-induced difficulties in their classrooms is that, by and large, the educational community is woefully ignorant about measurement” (p. 26). He refers to this phenomenon as assessment illiteracy. It is this lack of understanding about measurement that has allowed teachers to passively accept the mandated standardized assessment procedures with little resistance, even though they have proven to be detrimental to their students.

By becoming informed consumers of assessments, teachers will be able to more confidently voice their concerns to parents and legislators within their communities and have a significant impact on educational policy. It will also allow teachers to provide students with authentic, meaning-based alternative assessments that will enhance learning rather than detract from the learning process. Though this may seem intimidating to many teachers, it is essential for teachers to become proactive and educate the public regarding learning theory and meaningful assessment. Teachers are the experts in the field of education and by understanding and promoting **meaningful instruction** and assessment they can affect positive changes within our present culture of testing.

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<sup>20</sup> Popham, (2001) The Educational Community is ignorant about measurement.

## The Components of Meaningful Learning



### **Curriculum That Is Relevant**

Students must find relevance in the curriculum so that they can see how it connects with their lives. Curriculum is at its best when it poses a question or problem that motivates students to solve it by learning new information. An effective curriculum is one that connects science to technology and society.

### **Instructional Strategies**

Students learn best when they have to think deeply about the ideas under study. The teachers will need to develop a disposition for critical thinking within a variety of contexts. Among these are the construction of knowledge, an inquiry approach, technology strategies and cooperative learning. Laboratory investigations provide connections to concepts, problem-solving, critical thinking and scientific processes.

## **TEACHER MOTIVATION**

A student's attitude toward the teacher greatly influences the student's attitude towards the subject and learning. A teacher who is motivated and enthusiastic about student learning will greatly influence the student learning process.

### **Classroom Learning Environment**

The school, classroom, and the student's personal environment affect the way a student learns. Setting up a classroom environment that is pleasant, friendly and conducive to learning will certainly help promote learning. Computer, lab equipment, audiovisual equipment and materials, space and the classroom's physical condition all contribute to the learning environment.

Joseph F. Zisk, 1998

### **Steps in Creating Meaningful Learning Environment**

In the introductory courses in the Instructional Technology for Teacher Education Programmer at NIE, the trainee teachers are assigned to create an MLE using ICT. Working in groups particularly in pairs, the trainee teachers experience the process of meaningful learning as they progress through the following steps of producing the MLE.

1. **Developing an Idea Map Using Mind-mapping Tools:** Each group of trainee teachers decides on a topic and brainstorms on how to include various attributes of meaningful learning in the creation of a learning environment for their students. The trainee teachers then represent their ideas in a visual format using 'mind-mapping tools'

Next, two other groups of trainee teachers review each Idea Map. The feedback is provided to the creators online using the discussion forum 'Blackboard' delivery platform. Based on the peer-review feedback

received, each trainee teacher then makes changes and modifications. The trainee teachers also note down their reflections on how useful they have found these sets of activities.

2. **Creating a Flowchart of Activities<sup>\*</sup>**: Based on their own requirements for developing a student-centered learning environment, the trainee teachers organize the information and activities that they want their students to cover by following four basic steps:

- divide the content into logical units;
- establish a hierarchy of importance and generality;
- use the hierarchy to structure relationships among chunks; and
- Analyze the functional and aesthetic success of the complete system.

Next, the trainee teachers sequence the activities using flowchart techniques such as Grid, Web, Sequence and Hierarchy. After sequencing the activities the trainees start working towards the detailed design of the individual screen for display in the form of storyboard.

3. **Designing the Storyboard**: A storyboard is a visual representation, or sketch, of what an interface (e.g. computer-based training, website, movie, and book) is supposed to look like. The trainee teachers draft their storyboards based on the following three key considerations:

- **Navigation**: What and where will it appear on each page? What technology will be used to implement it?
- **Identification Info**: What type of identification information (e.g. title, menu link, home link) did each page need?
- **Content**: What should be visible on a particular page?

To help them create their respective storyboards, the trainees learn the techniques and strategies of searching information on the Internet and how to evaluate these resources. Then they search the Internet for relevant data to be incorporated into the chosen topic for their respective MLE projects.

4. **Creating the MLE Using PowerPoint:** To actually create their respective MLEs, the trainee teachers learn and use the advanced features of the MS PowerPoint software as well as media selection for maximizing learning effectiveness. When developing the MLE, the trainee teachers concentrate on three aspects:

- **Context:** creating a real-life, complex and authentic scenario;
- **Activities:** designing activities for collaboration, sharing, decision-making and knowledge construction; and
- **Tools:** providing tools for searching, thinking, reflection and creativity.

The trainee teachers make a workstation presentation of their final artifact of their respective MLE projects. Subsequently, peer evaluation is conducted and the feedback collected is used to modify each project before final submission.



## 2.2. STRUCTURE

No doubt, English is the most important language in the world. Therefore, developing English skills will have numerous advantages for Students at any level of education, considering the importance to build communicative competences that will be applied in the students' daily life.

It is known that education in our country has not contributed to satisfy the expectations of students, since the traditional systems have not facilitated a **meaningful learning** of the English language, so that listening, understanding, and application of a new knowledge has not been practiced by learners who have not really developed their own communicative skills and abilities.

In short, English teachers must be conscious about their responsibility in educating students, taking into account that when learners begin their school years, their natural great potential help them identify what has been taught in a significant way for the life itself.

Considering what has been mentioned before, the present research is based on the **meaningful learning** as our dependable variable which is mentioned in the first part of this structure; and the **active techniques** as our independent variable which is mentioned in second part; subsequently, we refer to the relation of both variables in the third part.

## **2.3. HYPOTHESIS SYSTEM**

### **2.3.1. Working Hypothesis**

Active Techniques allow students to develop their skills in the English Language.

Meaningful Learning generates the acquisition of the knowledge of the English Language.

### **2.3.2. Null Hypothesis**

Active Techniques do not develop Meaningful Learning of English language for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI" in Ambato city during the first term of the school year 2008 - 2009".

### **2.3.3. Alternative Hypothesis**

Active Techniques will generate Meaningful Learning of the English language for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center "CEBI" in Ambato city during the first term of the school year 2008 - 2009".

# **CHAPTER III**

## **METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN**

### 3.1. RESEARCH TYPE AND DESIGN

**Descriptive**, serves to obtain the information about how the problem is settled, describes the situation and behaviour of the phenomena or facts in the working context, it applies the techniques such as the survey for collecting information.

#### DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

This type of research is also a grouping that includes many particular research methodologies and procedures, such as observations, surveys, self-reports, and tests. The four parameters of research will help us understand how descriptive research in general is similar to, and different from, other types of research.

#### GENERAL APPROACH

##### APPROACH



**Synthetic**  
(Holistic)

**Analytic**  
(Constituent)

Unlike qualitative research, descriptive research may be more analytic. It often focuses on a particular variable or factor.

##### RESEARCH AIM

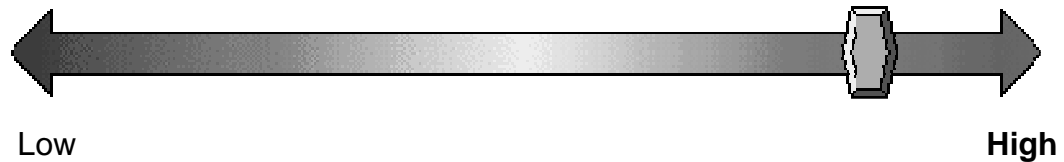


**Deductive**  
(Hypothesis Testing)

**Heuristic**  
(Hypothesis Generating)

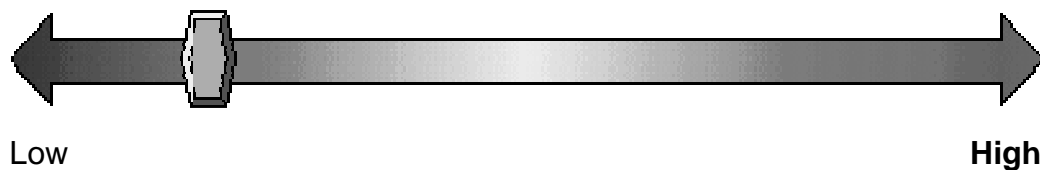
Descriptive research may also operate on the basis of hypotheses (often generated through previous, qualitative research). That moves it toward the deductive side of the deductive/heuristic continuum.

### **CONTROL OVER THE RESEARCH CONTEXT**



Finally, like qualitative research, descriptive research aims to gather data without any manipulation of the research context. In other words, descriptive research is also low on the "control or manipulation of research context" scale. It is non-intrusive and deals with naturally occurring phenomena.

### **EXPLICITNESS OF DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**



In addition, the data collection procedures used in descriptive research may be very explicit. Some observation instruments, for example, employ highly refined categories of behavior and yield quantitative (numerical) data.

These differences also lead to another significant characteristic of descriptive research-the types of subjects it studies.

Descriptive research may focus on individual subjects and go into great depth and detail in describing them. Individual variation is not only allowed for but studied. This approach is called a case-study.

On the other hand, because of the data collection and analysis procedures (such as surveys) it may employ, descriptive research can also investigate

large groups of subjects. Often these are pre-existing classes. In these cases, the analytical procedures tend to produce results that show "average" behavior for the group.

## 3.2. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

### 3.2.1. Population

Muñoz (2002)<sup>21</sup> explains: “that **the population or universe as a group of investigative units refers to the people, institutions, documents, facts, among others, to which the investigation refers and for which the conclusions made will be valid**”. (Page.184).

This research was made at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI”; it is located at Alfredo Sevilla Street and Pedro Vásquez Sevilla Avenue in Izamba village of Ambato city, Tungurahua province.

It has four sections: Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, and the Program of International Baccalaureate with a total school population of 463 students, distributed in the following way:

• Pre-primary section:	62
• <b>Primary section:</b>	<b>215</b>
• Secondary section:	111
• Baccalaureate:	75
	-----
TOTAL:	463 Students.

---

<sup>21</sup> Muñoz, Population or universe, 2002.

The Primary school section is furthermore divided into six grades, and the population is distributed as follows:

<b>FRACTION BY EXTRACT</b>	<b>Parallel A</b>	<b>Parallel B</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
SECOND GRADE	17	18	35
THIRD GRADE	12	11	23
FOURTH GRADE	22	21	43
FIFTH GRADE	23	21	44
SIXTH GRADE	17	17	34
<b>SEVENTH GRADE</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>215</b>

The seventh grades which concerns to the research have a total population of 36 students on which this investigation was developed.

### **3.2.2. SAMPLE**

By request of the CEBI's Principal and the researcher's unanimous decision, the sample "n" was selected randomly, where thirty six students from the seventh grades of the Primary Section served as sample for this study.

The sample was formed by seventeen students from the parallel "A" which was identified as the experimental group; and by nineteen students from the parallel "B" which was identified as the control group.

### **3.3. FIELDING**

This part of our investigation was based on two different types of questionnaires that were given to teachers and students in which we included to whom the survey was directed, the objective, instructions, as well as the content which was made of nine multiple choice questions with four parameters, or options of responses.

This type of survey was very useful and of a great contribution when we were analyzing and processing the data collected from our field investigation.

### **3.4. INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION**

Survey research is one of the most important areas of measurement in applied social research. The broad area of survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions of respondents.

#### **Selecting the Survey Method**

Selecting the type of survey is one of the most critical decisions in many social research contexts. There are very few simple rules that helped make the decision by using judgment to balance the advantages and disadvantages of different survey types. The following questions were asked to guide a decision.

#### **Population Issues**

The first set of considerations has to do with the population and its accessibility.



- Can the population be enumerated?
- Is the population literate?
- Are there language issues?
- Will the population cooperate?
- What are the geographic restrictions?

### **Sampling Issues**

The sample is the actual group on which the researchers had to contact in some way. There are several important sampling issues considered when doing this survey research.

- What data is available?
- Can respondents be found?
- Who is the respondent?
- Can all members of population be sampled?
- Are response rates likely to be a problem?

### **Question Issues**

Sometimes the nature of the questions asked to the respondents also determines the type of survey selection.

- What types of questions can be asked?
- How complex will the questions be?
- Will screen questions be needed?
- Can question sequence be controlled?
- Will lengthy questions be asked?
- Will long response scales be used?

### **Content Issues**

The content of the study also posed challenges for the different survey types to be utilized.

- Can the respondents be expected to know about the issue?
- Will respondent need to consult records?

### **Bias Issues**

People usually come to the research endeavor with their own sets of biases and prejudices. Sometimes, these biases were less of a problem with certain types of survey approaches.

- Can social desirability be avoided?
- Can interviewer distortion and subversion be controlled?
- Can false respondents be avoided?

### **Administrative Issues**

Last, but certainly not least, the feasibility of the survey method for the study had to be considered.

- costs
- facilities
- time
- personnel

**For collecting the required data in this project, surveys supported by questionnaires were used.**

Questionnaires are usually paper-and-pencil instruments that the respondent completes. Interviews are completed by the interviewer based on the respondent says.

The questionnaire is nothing else that a set of questions, carefully designed about the interested facts and aspects in an investigation to be answered by the population or its sample to obtain useful information.

Both questionnaires, the Pre-Test and Post Test of English Language, were directed for primary school students of the seventh grades at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI” in Ambato city during the first term of the school year 2008 - 2009”.

### **3.5 PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS**

After collecting all the information, the data were transformed following the processes listed below.

- All contradictory, unnecessary, incoherent or incomplete information was cleared.
- If any fault was detected, the processes of collecting information were repeated.
- The variables were tabulated, in this case the independent variable “Active Techniques” and the dependent variable “Meaningful Learning”.
- A box diagram was drawn placing inside the box all the data on the dependent variable. The box was then partitioned so that parts of the total data could be compared with other parts.  
The levels of the dependent variable “Meaningful learning” appear above each other on the left side of the box. The labels for the levels of the independent variable “Active Techniques” appear across the cells at the bottom of the box.
- The most appropriate statistical procedure was selected to present the results.

# **CHAPTER IV**

## **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

## 4.1. STATISTIC ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE GROUPS

### Pre-test

Ord.	Control Group “ B ” Pre-test	Experimental Group “ A ” Pre-test
1	11,50	10,50
2	14,00	15,50
3	14,00	11,50
4	9,50	5,50
5	11,00	6,50
6	14,00	16,50
7	14,00	15,50
8	3,50	3,25
9	14,50	10,00
10	5,50	13,50
11	4,00	8,50
12	13,50	9,50
13	11,50	17,50
14	16,50	9,50
15	12,50	13,50
16	7,50	9,50
17	14,00	12,00
18	7,50	
19	7,00	
$\bar{x} =$	10.81	11.07

**Pre-test calculation:**

CONTROL GROUP - PRE TEST RESULTS  
PARALLEL "B"

ORD. n	STUDENT'S NAMES	TEST GRADES		S <sup>2</sup>
		X <sub>i</sub>	X <sub>i</sub> - $\bar{x}$	
1	ACOSTA LIZANO RICARDO	11,5	0,68	0,46
2	AGUAYO PAZ MARIA	14	3,18	10,11
3	ALEXANDER ORTEGA ANDREA	14	3,18	10,11
4	BOWEN SALAZAR JUAN	9,5	-1,32	1,74
5	BUENAÑO TAMAYO MARIA	11	0,18	0,03
6	ESPIN MARTIN MONICA RAQUEL	14	3,18	10,11
7	FREIRE GALARZA KARLA	14	3,18	10,11
8	GUTIERREZ VASCONEZ FREDDY	3,5	-7,32	53,58
9	LASO DELGADO JUAN	14,5	3,68	13,54
10	LLERENA RAMOS CHRISTIAN	5,5	-5,32	28,30
11	LOPEZ GAMBOA DARIO	4	-6,82	46,51
12	MERINO BERNAL MARIA	13,5	2,68	7,18
13	NARANJO PAREDES VALENTINA	11,5	0,68	0,46
14	NUÑEZ MEJIA BRIAN	16,5	5,68	32,26
15	PADILLA VILLACRES DANIEL	12,5	1,68	2,82
16	PAZ VILLEGAS EMMANUEL	7,5	-3,32	11,02
17	SANCHEZ TORRES LUIS	14	3,18	10,11
18	SILVA LOPEZ CHRISTIAN	7,5	-3,32	11,02
19	VASQUEZ PICO ERIKA	7	-3,82	14,59
		$\Sigma =$ 205,50	-0,08	274,11

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP - PRE TEST RESULTS  
PARALLEL "A"

ORD. n	STUDENT'S NAMES	TEST GRADES		S <sup>2</sup>
		X <sub>i</sub>	X <sub>i</sub> - $\bar{x}$	
1	BRICHETO RESHUAN ANGELO	10,5	-0,57	0,32
2	BUCHELI GARCIA RENATA	15,5	4,43	19,62
3	ESPINOSA LOPEZ DAVID	11,5	0,43	0,18
4	GRANIZO LOPEZ DIEGO	5,5	-5,57	31,02
5	JARAMILLO BUENAÑO DANIELA	6,5	-4,57	20,88
6	LANAS ASTUDILLO ESTEBAN	16,5	5,43	29,48
7	LARREA DURAN VALERIA	15,5	4,43	19,62
8	ORELLANA CAGUANA CARLA	3,25	-7,82	61,15
9	ORTEGA SANCHEZ JAIME	10	-1,07	1,14
10	PAREDES GUERRA DAVID	13,5	2,43	5,90
11	PAZMIÑO GARRIDO DAYANA	8,5	-2,57	6,60
12	PEREZ ENRIQUEZ CHRISTOPHER	9,5	-1,57	2,46
13	RODRIGUEZ VALLEJO DIEGO	17,5	6,43	41,34
14	RODRIGUEZ VILLACIS DANIELA	9,5	-1,57	2,46
15	SANCHEZ TAMAYO JUAN	13,5	2,43	5,90
16	SOLIS LASCANO VALERIA	9,5	-1,57	2,46
17	VALLE REINOSO SOPHIA	12	0,93	0,86
		$\Sigma =$ 188,25	0,06	251,47

Mean

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_{19}}{19}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{205,50}{19}$$

$$\bar{X} = 10,82$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_{17}}{17}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{188,25}{17}$$

$$\bar{X} = 11,07$$

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Sample	n <sub>1</sub> = 19	n <sub>2</sub> = 17
Mean	$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{\sum x_i}{19} = \frac{205,50}{19} = 10,82$	$\bar{x}_2 = \frac{\sum x_i}{17} = \frac{188,25}{17} = 11,07$
Variance	$s_1^2 = \frac{\sum (x_{i1} - \bar{x}_1)^2}{n_1 - 1} = \frac{274,11}{18} = 15,23$	$s_2^2 = \frac{\sum (x_{i2} - \bar{x}_2)^2}{n_2 - 1} = \frac{251,47}{16} = 15,72$
Standard Deviation	$s_{x1} = \sqrt{15,23} = 3,90$	$s_{x2} = \sqrt{15,72} = 3,96$

## POST-TEST

<b>Ord.</b>	<b>Control Group "B" Post-test</b>	<b>Experimental Group "A" Post-test</b>
1	15	15
2	10	20
3	15	19
4	9	15
5	13	15
6	18	18
7	12	20
8	3	2
9	20	12
10	9	20
11	4	16
12	19	18
13	15	20
14	19	20
15	8	20
16	6	19
17	14	17
18	13	
19	10	
$\bar{x} =$	<b>12.21</b>	<b>16.82</b>

## Post-test calculation:

CONTROL GROUP - POST TEST RESULTS  
PARALLEL "B"

ORD.	STUDENT'S NAMES	TEST GRADES		
n		$X_i$	$X_i - \bar{X}$	$S^2$
1	ACOSTA LIZANO RICARDO	15	2,79	7,78
2	AGUAYO PAZ MARIA	10	-2,21	4,88
3	ALEXANDER ORTEGA ANDREA	15	2,79	7,78
4	BOWEN SALAZAR JUAN	9	-3,21	10,30
5	BUENAÑO TAMAYO MARIA	13	0,79	0,62
6	ESPIN MARTIN MONICA RAQUEL	18	5,79	33,52
7	FREIRE GALARZA KARLA	12	-0,21	0,04
8	GUTIERREZ VASCONEZ FREDDY	3	-9,21	84,82
9	LASO DELGADO JUAN	20	7,79	60,68
10	LLERENA RAMOS CHRISTIAN	9	-3,21	10,30
11	LOPEZ GAMBOA DARIO	4	-8,21	67,40
12	MERINO BERNAL MARIA	19	6,79	46,10
13	NARANJO PAREDES VALENTINA	15	2,79	7,78
14	NUÑEZ MEJIA BRIAN	19	6,79	46,10
15	PADILLA VILLACRES DANIEL	8	-4,21	17,72
16	PAZ VILLEGAS EMMANUEL	6	-6,21	38,56
17	SANCHEZ TORRES LUIS	14	1,79	3,20
18	SILVA LOPEZ CHRISTIAN	13	0,79	0,62
19	VASQUEZ PICO ERIKA	10	-2,21	4,88
$\Sigma =$		232	0,01	453,16

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP - POST TEST RESULTS  
PARALLEL "A"

ORD.	STUDENT'S NAMES	TEST GRADES		
n		$X_i$	$X_i - \bar{X}$	$S^2$
1	BRICHETO RESHUAN ANGELO	15	-1,82	3,31
2	BUCHELI GARCIA RENATA	20	3,18	10,11
3	ESPINOSA LOPEZ DAVID	19	2,18	4,75
4	GRANIZO LOPEZ DIEGO	15	-1,82	3,31
5	JARAMILLO BUENAÑO DANIELA	15	-1,82	3,31
6	LANAS ASTUDILLO ESTEBAN	18	1,18	1,39
7	LARREA DURAN VALERIA	20	3,18	10,11
8	ORELLANA CAGUANA CARLA	2	-14,82	219,63
9	ORTEGA SANCHEZ JAIME	12	-4,82	23,23
10	PAREDES GUERRA DAVID	20	3,18	10,11
11	PAZMIÑO GARRIDO DAYANA	16	-0,82	0,67
12	PEREZ ENRIQUEZ CHRISTOPHER	18	1,18	1,39
13	RODRIGUEZ VALLEJO DIEGO	20	3,18	10,11
14	RODRIGUEZ VILLACIS DANIELA	20	3,18	10,11
15	SANCHEZ TAMAYO JUAN	20	3,18	10,11
16	SOLIS LASCANO VALERIA	19	2,18	4,75
17	VALLE REINOSO SOPHIA	17	0,18	0,03
$\Sigma =$		286	0,06	326,47

## Mean:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_{19}}{19}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{232}{19}$$

$$\bar{X} = 12,21$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_{17}}{17}$$

$$\bar{X} = \frac{286}{17}$$

$$\bar{X} = 16,82$$

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Sample	$n_1 = 19$	$n_2 = 17$
Mean	$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{\sum x_i}{19} = \frac{232}{19} = 12,21$	$\bar{x}_2 = \frac{\sum x_i}{17} = \frac{286}{17} = 16,82$
Variance	$s_1^2 = \frac{\sum (x_{i1} - \bar{x}_1)^2}{n_1 - 1} = \frac{453,16}{18} = 25,17$	$s_2^2 = \frac{\sum (x_{i2} - \bar{x}_2)^2}{n_2 - 1} = \frac{326,47}{16} = 20,40$
Standard Deviation	$s_{x1} = \sqrt{25,17} = 5,02$	$s_{x2} = \sqrt{20,40} = 4,52$



**Control and Experimental Groups Variance:**

$$S^2 = \frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$$

$$S^2 = \frac{(19 - 1)25,17 + (17 - 1)20,40}{19 + 17 - 2}$$

$$S^2 = \frac{(18)25,17 + (16)20,40}{34}$$

$$S^2 = \frac{453,06 + 326,4}{34}$$

$$S^2 = \frac{779,46}{43}$$

$$S^2 = 22,92$$

**Standard Deviation:**  $S = \sqrt{22,92}$

$$S = 4,79$$

**t student:**

$$t_{obs} = \frac{\overline{x_2} - \overline{x_1}}{s \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}} =$$

$$t_{obs} = \frac{16,82 - 12,21}{4,79 \sqrt{1/19 + 1/17}}$$

$$t_{obs} = \frac{4,61}{4,79 \sqrt{0,053 + 0,059}}$$

$$t_{obs} = \frac{4,61}{4,79 \sqrt{0,112}}$$

$$t_{obs} = \frac{4,61}{4,79 \times 0,335}$$

$$t_{obs} = \frac{4,61}{1,605}$$

$$t_{obs} = 2,87$$

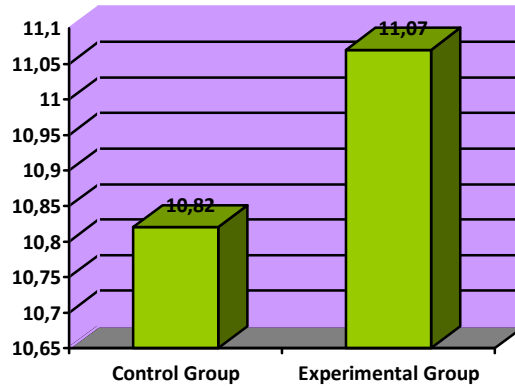
Significance level at 10%  $t_{\alpha} = 1.3062$

Degrees of freedom:  $= n_{cont} + n_{exp} - 2$   
 $= 19 + 17 - 2 = 34$

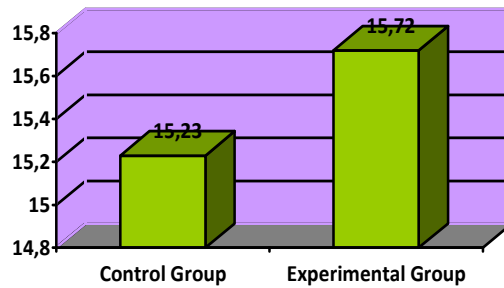
## 4.2. GRAPHICAL EXPOSITION OF RESULTS

### PRE-TEST RESULTS REPRESENTATION

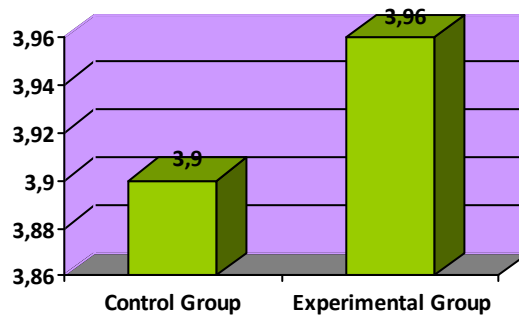
Mean



Variance

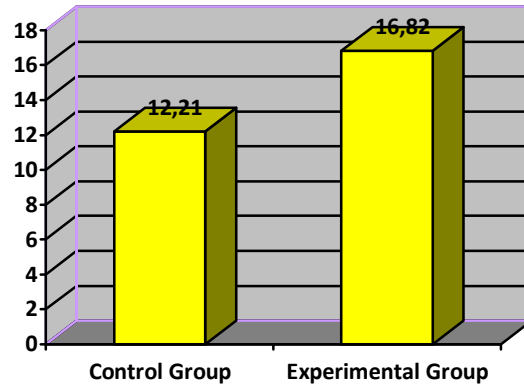


Standard Deviation

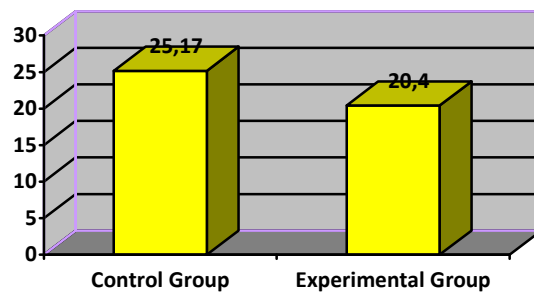


## POST-TEST RESULTS REPRESENTATION

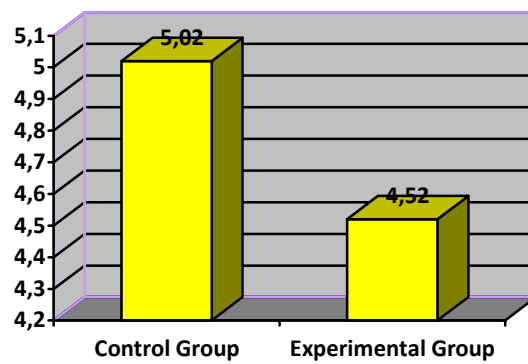
Mean



Variance

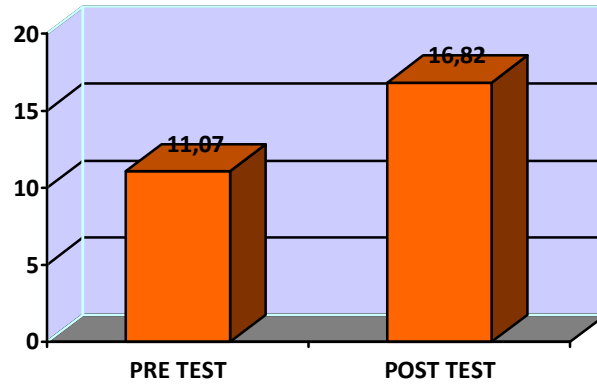


Standard Deviation

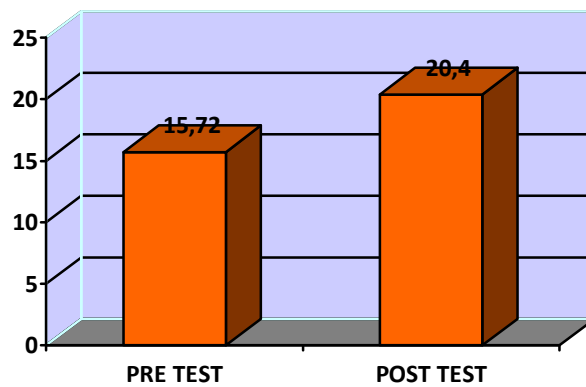


## EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RESULTS

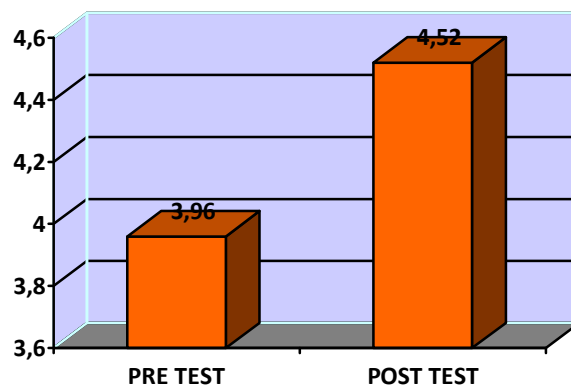
Mean

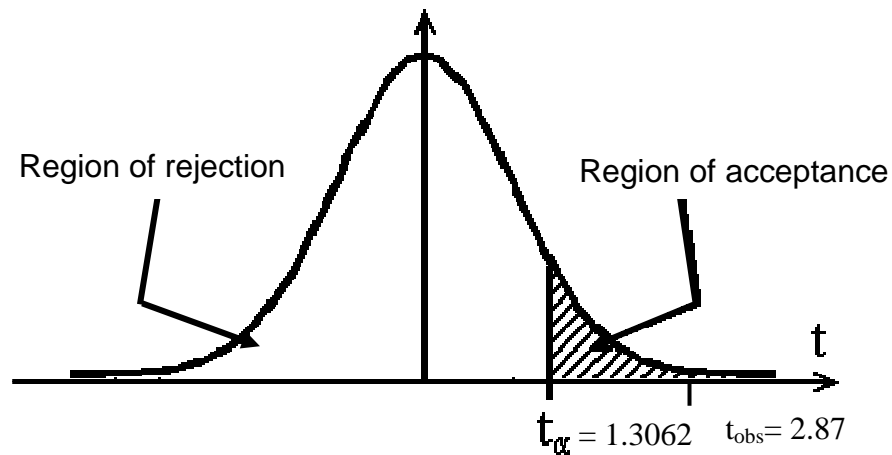


Variance



Standard Deviation





After analysing the data, the  $t_{obs}$  result is of 2.87 which fall in the region of acceptance, proving that the experimental group has got better results after having applied Active Techniques as stated in the alternative hypothesis.

### 4.3. ANALYSIS INSIDE THE GROUPS

$$H_o : \mu_d = 0$$

“There is no incidence of the application of **Active Techniques** in the Meaningful Learning of English Language for the Primary School’s Students at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI” in Ambato City during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009”

$$H_1 : \mu_d > 0$$

“There is a clear incidence of the application of **Active Techniques** in the Meaningful Learning of English Language for the Primary School’s Students at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI” in Ambato City during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009”

After analysing the data, the result is that the  $t_{obs}$  is 6.40, which falls in the rejection region proving that the null hypothesis “There is no incidence of the application of **Active Techniques** in the Meaningful Learning of English Language for the Primary School’s Students at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI” in Ambato City during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009” must be rejected.

This means that we can accept the alternative hypothesis<sup>1</sup> “There is a clear incidence of the application of **Active Techniques** in the Meaningful Learning of English Language for the Primary School’s Students at International Bilingual Educational Center “CEBI” in Ambato City during the first term of school year 2008 - 2009”

The same result can be appreciated when analysing the basic statistical factors, taken within the pre-test and the post-test in the experimental group.

The increase in the mean is significant, and the reduction in the variance and in the standard deviation clearly shows that the group has obtained better results after applying the **Active Techniques** in the Meaningful Learning of English Language as shown in the basic statistical factors related to the results between the control group and the experimental group where a meaningful improvement in the mean can be seen.

# **CHAPTER V**

# **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



## 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

Once the causes of this research project were analyzed, the Alternative Hypothesis was proved and accepted while the Null Hypothesis was rejected; the significance value is 1,3062 and  $t$  calculated is 2,87 which clearly shows that the Alternative Hypothesis is greater than the Critical Value  $t_{obs} = 2,87 > t_a = 1,3062$

It is proved that the Active Techniques permit teachers and students interact with each other as they develop their entire creativeness causing an appropriate environment full of motivation for learning English.

It was very noticeable that the control group, in which any Active Technique was applied, there was not any improvement in the students' performance, and what is even worse, students did not acquire any Meaningful Learning of the English language because of the use of traditional methods that do not make any significant contribution in the learning – process.

The Application of active Techniques in the Meaningful Learning of the English Language has allowed teachers to develop an excellent curriculum based on the students' needs, considering their interest as well as improving their performance as it was shown by the post – test results.

## 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Once the research work based on the application of Active Techniques for the Meaningful Learning of the English Language was carried out, we firmly suggest all English teachers to apply Techniques such as: **Debates, Games, Group Work, Graphic Organizers, Direct Experience, Researching, and Projects** in the whole Institution providing students with the necessary tools for acquiring a better performance in the English

Language in order to obtain better results in the development of students' basic language skills.

This investigation also leads with the finding of up-to-date training for teachers in terms of giving them the necessary information for combining the school philosophy with the application of at least some of the numerous Active Techniques in their daily plannings considering them into the methodological strategies to be applied in the classroom since it has been demonstrated that such techniques greatly contribute with better performance while enriching students' learning skills.

Such Trainings must also be monitored by the English – Area Coordinators when observing the classes given by teachers, to ensure that the processes are fully applied and also to encourage educators to be more conscious about the importance of using innovative teaching tools rather than the old ones.

To the teachers in charge of teaching-learning process to be conscious that the Meaningful Learning depends on the teacher's knowledge of Active Techniques to be able to catch up students' attention and interest while providing them with a high level of confidence and support.

# **CHAPTER VI**

# **PROPOSAL**

## **6.1. PROPOSAL**

**A HANDBOOK BASED ON THE ACTIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE MEANINGFUL LEARNING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR SHARING AMONG ENGLISH TEACHERS IN A SEMINARY AT INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER "CEBI" IN AMBATO CITY.**

## **6.2. DESCRIPTION**

Once the research has been finished, and considering the results obtained in the analysis and interpretation of results carried by the Control Group and The Experimental group in both, the Pre and the Post Tests, it is necessary to propose a new alternative for teachers who are still applying traditional methods in the classroom and therefore any Meaningful Learning of the English Language is acquired by students.

The verification of the alternative hypothesis, has given us a clue to overcome this problem by creating a short Handbook containing all the relevant information about the importance of applying Active Techniques in the classroom as well as the processes and steps required for Techniques that can help students perform in a better way.

The proposal has been planned and based in the lack of application of Active Techniques for the Meaningful Learning of the English language because it has been a problem affecting the teaching-learning processes which limit the students' development.

This proposal tries to help teachers up to date and refresh their knowledge in techniques and activities involved in the teaching-learning processes, to improve their abilities and capacities in the development of English classes which will allow students' increase their interest in the English language while learning in a very dynamic and easier way.

The proposal consists of a short Handbook about the application of Active Techniques' to be shared among all English Teachers at CEBI School so that they can be applied in the whole Institution.

### **6.3. JUSTIFICATION**

The **development** of education has been constant which has helped teachers to create the appropriate environment for students to accomplish their goals based on new challenges; it has been necessary not only to improve and up-to-date our own acquaintance in the professional aspects related to pedagogy, but also to share our knowledge based on experience and investigation with our colleagues in order to improve our education, and life style..

This seminary is feasible to carry out since the authorities of this institution have been always worried about the teachers' performance and there is a permanent training. The aspects to be analyzed during the Seminary will be of great interest for all English teachers because there had not been any Seminary about **Active Techniques in the Meaningful Learning of the English Language** so that the development of this training will especially help those teachers who had forgiven the right way to apply dynamic activities and for some other teachers who do not known what methodology means.

Once we have exposed the need for developing this seminary and considering its great importance the authorities in charge of the school have given their approval, and offered their collaboration with all the resources required such as the time to develop this seminary, equipment, material and any financial need also; being conscious that the lack of application of Active Techniques in the Meaningful Learning of the English Language has a direct incidence in the teaching learning process.

## 6.4. OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate to the English Teachers the application of **Active Techniques in the Meaningful Learning of the English Language** in a Seminary to be carried at CEBI School.
- To encourage teachers improve their knowledge in **Active Techniques** and to keep a permanent training in the English language in order to create new devices and tools to develop their classes with dynamism and an interesting environment while students develop their entire creativeness.
- To help teachers to be conscious of the importance of developing **Active** classroom **Techniques** with their students to wake up their interest and motivation for learning English language as improving their communicative competences.

## 6.5. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION.

As it has been mentioned before, learning is more effective when a student is actively engaged in the learning process rather than passively receiving big amounts of information. Through the application of **Active Techniques**, students get involved and participate actively in order to construct their own personal understanding based on experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences for performing better and developing their communicative competences while they acquire a **Meaningful Learning** of the English Language.

Before applying a specific technique, teachers must be conscious about the different **Principles of Language Learning** which seen as theory

derived from research, to which teachers need to match classroom practices. Here are some brief summaries of the **Cognitive Principles**:

- Automaticity: Subconscious processing of language with peripheral attention to language forms;
- **Meaningful Learning**: This can be contrasted to Rote Learning, and is thought to lead to better long term retention;
- Anticipation of Rewards: Learners are driven to act by the anticipation of rewards, tangible or intangible;
- Intrinsic Motivation: The most potent learning "rewards" are intrinsically motivated within the learner;
- Strategic Investment: The time and learning strategies learners invest into the language learning process.

After understanding the differences among some types of cognitive principles with the Meaningful Learning, the study and analysis of the Active Techniques that teachers can apply in the classroom will be developed.

## **6.6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEMINARY**

### **METHODOLOGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

- **PHASE 1**

- 1.1. Description of the Seminary
- 1.2. General and Specific Objectives of the Seminary

- **PHASE 2**

- 2.1. Principles of Language Learning
- 2.2. Analysis of the three types of language learning Principles: Cognitive, Affective and Linguistic.
- 2.3. Meaningful Learning and the Teachers' Role.

- **PHASE 3**

- 3.1. Second Language Teaching Methods.
- 3.2. Brief Description of each Teaching Approach
- 3.3. Comparison among the different types of approach
- 3.4. Selection of Methods for Acquiring a Meaningful Learning of the English Language.

- **PHASE 4**

- 4.1. Communicative Language Teaching Approaches
- 4.2. The PPP Approach to Communicative Language Teaching
- 4.3. Teachers' Role and Application
- 4.4. Practice through demonstrative classes



- **PHASE 5**

- 5.1. Characteristics and Objectives of Applying Active Teaching Techniques
- 5.2. Samples of Active Techniques and Strategies
- 5.3. Teachers' Role
- 5.4. Application of Active Techniques
- 5.5. Assessment

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# **ANNEXES**

**Annex No. 1. (Pre-Test)**

**INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER**

**CEBI  
2008 - 2009**

**GRADE**

**PRE-TEST**

--

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ LEVEL: Seventh A - B

***Instructions:***

- Read through all the questions carefully.
- Use a blue or black pen to write down your answers.
- Do not use liquid paper or white out to correct your mistakes.
- You can use an English – English dictionary if you need it.

➤ ***This test is based on the four basic skills of the Language.***

• **ORAL**

**1. Describe the pictures that your teacher will indicate you orally.**

**(2.5)**

Pronunciation	_____
Fluency	_____
Accuracy	_____
Grammar Structure	_____
Creativity	_____

**2. Tell your class about your last vacations. (2.5)**

- Pronunciation \_\_\_\_\_
- Fluency \_\_\_\_\_
- Accuracy \_\_\_\_\_
- Grammar Structure \_\_\_\_\_
- Use of appropriate vocabulary \_\_\_\_\_

**• LISTENING**

**3. Circle the words your teacher will say aloud. (2.5)**

- read                                      red                                      road
- steam                                      esteem                                      stem
- cat    caught                                      cut
- beer    bear    bird
- pear    pair    per

**4. Listen to the Story “Gold Beneath the Sea” by Linda Lott and answer the questions below. (2.5)**

- Why was 1622 an exciting time for adventures?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What dangers did the ships face?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why was the ship doomed from the start?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How does the mailbox help divers find treasure?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How could everyone tell that something exciting had occurred?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- **READING**

5. Read this information taken from on-the-street interviews.  
Then use the words in the box to make statements. Use each  
expression only once. (2.5)

**OPINIONS OF PEOPLE ON THE STREET**

92% are optimistic about the future.

78% are concerned about the economy.

64% are very happy in their current jobs.

49% are worried about pollution.

10% are interested in politics.

about half	hardly any	the majority of	most	quite a few
------------	------------	-----------------	------	-------------

- very happy in their current jobs

---

- optimistic about the future

---

- worried about pollution

---

- concerned about the economy

---

- interested in politics

---



6. Read the article “SIBLINGS” and check true (T) or false (F). Then rewrite the false statements to make them true. (2.5)

### SIBLINGS

WHEN WE ARE CHILDREN, our siblings – that is, our brothers and sisters – are our first friends and first enemies. At the end of life, they are often our oldest friends and oldest enemies. The effect of sibling relationship in childhood can last a lifetime.

Many experts say that the relationship among brothers and sisters explains a great deal about family life, especially today when brothers and sisters often spend more time with one another than with their parents.

Studies have shown that sibling relationships between sister – sister pairs and brother – brother pairs are different. Sister pairs are the closest. Brothers are the most competitive. Sisters are usually more supportive of each other. They

are more talkative, frank, and better at expressing themselves and sharing their feelings. On the other hand, brothers are usually more competitive with each other.

Experts agree that relationship among siblings is influenced by many factors. For example, studies have shown that both brothers and sisters become more competitive and aggressive when their parents treat them even a little bit differently from one another. But parental treatment is not the only factor. Genetics, gender, life events, people, and experiences outside the family all shape the lives of siblings. Recently, one researcher demonstrated another factor in sibling relationships. It was discovered that children dislike watching their siblings fight. In fact, they respond to arguments by taking sides – supporting one sibling and punishing the other.

**T**      **F**

- The main idea of the first paragraph is that sibling relationships are among the most important relationships in life.
- 

- Sister - brother pairs are the most competitive.
- 

- When parents treat each child a little differently, the children get along better.
- 

- Paternal treatment is not the only factor that influences sibling relationships.
- 

- Children avoid arguments that their siblings have.
-



**8. Draw a line from each kind of writing to one of its characteristics. (2.5)**

BIOGRAPHY	Often has a plot with a conflict and a resolution.
REALISTIC FICTION	Gives factual details that support a main idea.
NARRATIVE NONFICTION	Often has headings to organize sections.
EXPOSITORY NONFICTION	Includes details that help readers picture the setting.
SHORT STORY	Tells about a person's life and are written by another person.

## Annex No. 2. (Post-Test)

INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER  
SCHOOL YEAR 2008 – 2009



POST-TEST  
SEVENTH YEAR

GRADE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL: Seventh **A - B**

### **Instructions:**

- Read through all the questions carefully.
  - Use a blue or black pen to write down your answers.
  - Do not use liquid paper or white out to correct your mistakes.
  - You can use an English – English dictionary if you need it.
- ***This test is based on the four basic skills of the Language.***

1. In pairs, choose one of the following topics and develop a dialog for about 4 minutes. Make sure to ask and answer questions during your conversation. (4)

Christmas at School

Christmas Eve at Home

The New Year



Pronunciation \_\_\_\_\_  
Accuracy \_\_\_\_\_

Fluency \_\_\_\_\_  
Grammar Structure \_\_\_\_\_

2. Listen to the Story “HIKING WITH ACE” by Susan Blackaby and prepare a role-play in pairs about the main events presented in the selection. (4)

Understanding \_\_\_\_\_ Fluency \_\_\_\_\_  
Body Language \_\_\_\_\_ Creativity \_\_\_\_\_



3. Read through “High and Lifted Up” by Mike Krath. Then summarize the most important events in the graphic organizer below. Make sure to show the sequence as it happens through the story. (6)

**High and Lifted Up**  
by **Mike Krath**



It was a windy day.

The mailman barely made it to the front door. When the door opened, Mrs. Pennington said, "hello", but, before she had a real chance to say "thank you", the mail blew out of the mailman's hands, into the house and the front door slammed in his face. Mrs. Pennington ran to pick up the mail.

"Oh my," she said.

Tommy was watching the shutters open and then shut, open and then shut.

"Mom," he said, "may I go outside?"

"Be careful," she said. "It's so windy today."

Tommy crawled down from the window-seat and ran to the door. He opened it with a bang. The wind blew fiercely and snatched the newly recovered mail from Mrs. Pennington's hands and blew it even further into the house.

"Oh my," she said again. Tommy ran outside and the door slammed shut.

Outside, yellow, gold, and red leaves were leaping from swaying trees, landing on the roof, jumping off the roof, and then chasing one another down the street in tiny whirlwinds of merriment.

Tommy watched in fascination.

"If I was a leaf, I would fly clear across the world," Tommy thought and then ran out into the yard among the swirl of colors.

Mrs. Pennington came to the front porch.

"Tommy, I have your jacket. Please put it on."

However, there was no Tommy in the front yard.

"Tommy?"

Tommy was a leaf. He was blowing down the street with the rest of his play-mates.

A maple leaf came close-by, touched him and moved ahead. Tommy met him shortly, brushed against him, and moved further ahead. They swirled around and around, hit cars and poles, flew up into the air and then down again.

"This is fun," Tommy thought.

The maple leaf blew in front of him. It was bright red with well-defined veins. The sun-light shone through it giving it a brilliance never before seen by a little boy's eyes.

"Where do you think we are going?" Tommy asked the leaf.

"Does it matter?" the leaf replied. "Have fun. Life is short."

"I beg to differ," an older leaf said suddenly coming beside them. "The journey may be short, but the end is the beginning."

Tommy pondered this the best a leaf could ponder.

"Where do we end up?"

"If the wind blows you in that direction," the old leaf said, "you will end up in the city dump."

"I don't want that," Tommy said.

"If you are blown in that direction, you will fly high into the air and see things that no leaf has seen before."

"Follow me to the city dump," the maple leaf said. "Most of my friends are there."

The wind blew Tommy and the maple leaf along. Tommy thought of his choices. He wanted to continue to play.

"Okay," Tommy said, "I will go with you to the dump."

The winds shifted and Tommy and the leaf were blown in the direction of the city dump.

The old leaf didn't follow. He was blown further down the block and suddenly lifted up high into the air.

"Hey," he called out, "the sights up here. They are spectacular. Come and see."

Tommy and the maple leaf ignored him.

"I see something. I see the dump." The old leaf cried out. "I see smoke. Come up here. I see fire."

"I see nothing," the maple leaf said.

Tommy saw the fence that surrounded the city dump. He was happy to be with his friend. They would have fun in the dump.

Suddenly, a car pulled up. It was Tommy's mom. Mrs. Pennington wasn't about to let her little boy run into the city dump.

"Not so fast," she said getting out of the car. "You are not allowed to play in there. Don't you see the smoke?"

Tommy watched the maple leaf blow against the wall and struggle to get over. He ran over to get it but was unable to reach it.

Mrs. Pennington walked over and took the leaf. She put it in her pocket.

"There," she said, "it will be safe until we get home."

Tommy smiled, ran to the car and got in. He rolled down the back window and looked up into the sky. He wondered where the old leaf had gone. Perhaps one day he would see what the old leaf had seen - perhaps.





### Annex No. 3. (Active Techniques Chart)

#### Active Techniques applied in the Seventh Grade “A” at CEBI School

The chart below shows four of the Active Techniques for the Meaningful Learning according to each basic skill of the language, considering that any of these skills can be used for the development of more than one skill.

LANGUAGE SKILL	POST – TEST QUESTION	ACTIVE TECHNIQUE
ORAL	1	<b>Interaction with Others:</b> Students have opportunities to explore the learning content through discourse with peers and the teacher.
LISTENING	2	<b>Student Role Play:</b> Assigning roles to students to develop their own discussion questions, on a particular topic or reading will provide peer evaluation and feedback.
READING	3	<b>Sequencing Graphic Organizers:</b> Used to see changes over time, reveal the sequence of step-by-step methods, illustrate complex processes, and show cause and effect.
WRITING	4	<b>A story with two or more endings:</b> During the first term, students are told stories with different endings, and they are asked to choose between the two endings or invent a new one of their own, students will always be asked to give the reasons for their preferences.