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FINAL PROJECT

“An action research for implementing the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru” .

Thesis to qualify for: Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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An action research for implementing the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

1. INTRODUCTION

Carrying out a deep analysis in the EFL primary level classroom is a way in which teachers can find out more about the needs and lacks of our students. In that respect, instructors may find it applicable to formulate a deep diagnostic test before designing any teaching program so that they make sure that their lessons address their pupils' particular needs and lacks in their learning process.

Doing a deep diagnostic test can be an excellent way for English teachers as a foreign language to discover a lot more about their students and plan straightforward in the long term. It is absolutely helpful to detect students' motivation, their prior knowledge, the contexts in which they can probably use little English, and which language skills they need to improve.

After getting this information, the teacher can carefully decide on and create the most appropriate and useful learning materials and activities. Thus, any diagnostic test should comprise questions which permit teachers to get to know more about their pupils and, in particular, their interests, so that the lessons can be more engaging and really motivating.

According to Brindley (1989), there are several types of EFL students' needs including demands, wants, desires, expectations motivations, constraints, lacks, and requirements. Richards (2001) argues learners' needs are frequently described in terms of linguistic deficiency; in other words, the difference between a student's present ability in using target language and what she or he should be able to do.

By applying a diagnostic test, the teacher is able to identify what the students require the most help relevant to their learning process. As soon as teachers know their pupils' current level in oral communication competence, definitely they are ready to set goals for their progress.

My initial project has been suggested to be applied in a private primary level school in Lima, Peru so that the results will allow me to make my classes more interesting and engaging for my students to ensure students and parents' satisfaction.

The diagnostic tests can be used after a short period of time, at the beginning or at the end of a semester. The results will demonstrate my students' strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, my lessons should also adequately address my pupils' goals so that I can eventually support and guide in the development of their oral competence.

I will employ different strategies to strengthen my pupils' skills to improve their level of oral competence in the acquisition of English as a foreign language.

This project is organized in seven chapters. After this introduction, there is a presentation of the academic and personal justification of the project, which discusses why the need to carry out this project. Then in the third chapter of the project dedicated to the objectives there is a presentation of the general and specific objectives.

Next, the fourth chapter is dedicated to the theoretical background and it presents important terms and theories that support this project's material design. After this, the fifth chapter dedicated to the methodology of the project presents a description of the methodology explaining including important information about the design of the materials.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to the results and discussion. Finally, the last chapter of the conclusions presents conclusions reached in the elaboration of this final project and discusses further implications of the project, while envisaging future research that can be carried out after this final project.

2. JUSTIFICATION OF ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL INTEREST

The principal reason of this project is to help children develop their speaking skills. Nowadays most private schools in my country set as a goal all their students to pass an international exam.

The fourth-grade children at Santa Angela primary school in Lima Peru, according to the Common European Framework Reference for languages, belong to the level A1 and who aim to take the Movers International Exam next year.

They are ten aged children who have started studying under a new modality; virtual classes due to the pandemic. Currently they are taking classes three times a week, each class last 35 minutes. They use a book called Guess What 4 from Cambridge University. At Santa Angela School, children use a book that focus on the receptive and productive skills. However, the children's level of speaking is still low.

Additionally, the current conditions are not helping much. What is more, in virtual classes, time is much shorter. Besides, classroom management in such context is different and monitoring children's work takes longer than in presential classes and I definitely find this modality really challenging but interesting.

Unfortunately, this year the world is facing a tough situation due to the pandemic that affects terribly the health and education systems in our country. Thus, students had to change the form of taking lessons moving from presential classes at school to virtual classes from home.

Additionally, this has meant the necessity of adapting the annual programme, in terms of dosification of length of the contents and the strategies in order to develop the communicative competence.

At the beginning it was not undoubtedly easy to anybody to have access to this type of education since we were not prepared for a sudden change; remote work was a great challenge for teachers and students.

Currently my students have to connect through a platform from Google Chrome called Meet. This is a free and friendly extension which lets us communicate effectively. Furthermore, this application can be downloaded in their smartphones.

The teacher and students interact enthusiastically with each other using this online tool in synchronic lessons. Even though this class is not face to face, they really make a big effort to participate actively during the daily lessons.

During the development of my everyday lessons I have noticed that my fourth-grade students have difficulty to develop their speaking skills through virtual classes.

Based on my own personal teaching experience I have seen that my students lack of fluency and accuracy in simple grammar structures.

This happens because they do not have enough vocabulary to use in sentence patterns, in different grammar structures so these disadvantages cannot help them improve and produce accurately the target language in short term.

This situation gets worse as the children do not have somebody to practice with nor in class neither at home. As a consequence, the children take too long to produce simple sentences and short texts.

Additionally, several of the activities proposed are based on approaches that even though are communicative, still need extra useful activities and materials to make my students master or produce the language.

More importantly reasons are the lack of access to the platform due to connectivity problems, power cut, also not having devices at home; it means one computer in the family, shyness and demotivation. in some cases, lack of time to monitor students' work. As a consequence, the most relevant variable which I intend to improve is the application of appropriate strategies that can fit better in this context.

As teachers we have the responsibility of being familiar with theoretical communicative approaches. Nevertheless, we have to adapt our teaching methodology to the world changes and be more resourceful and innovative as well as empathetic.

As I mentioned before my fourth-grade students will take the Movers International Exam from Cambridge University next year due to the pandemic whose speaking paper section requires description of pictures and storytelling.

All teachers seek their students to speak, but it is necessary that we provide them with all the strategies and materials to reach that aim. I have to recognize that after doing a great research during this time I have discovered that there are plenty of online resources that can help to achieve this goal.

As the target group is 10 -year old children, they have to be closely guided throughout their learning process. They also need to be provided with the language or pieces of language to enable them to produce it. However, this simply will not occur unless they have the great opportunity to practice with it.

Based on the problem described above, difficulty to develop their speaking skills through virtual classes, and the reasons why this happens I have decided to prepare my lessons using visual aids in power point and sentence completion with engaging activities that promote dynamic participation.

On the other hand, this project will be of valuable benefit so far for other children of primary level at Santa Angela School who aim to develop their speaking skills to pass successfully an international exam such as Movers from Cambridge University.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

How can visual aids be implemented in the classroom to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru, 2020?

3.1 Main aim of the project

To do an action research for implementing the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

3.2 Specific aims:

- To determine the students' needs in relation to the development of the speaking skills, by using a diagnostic speaking test using Movers international exam format.
- To design didactic strategies and materials that incorporated use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.
- To use the visual material and Power Point presentations prepared to help the children develop speaking skills.
- To implement and evaluate in the classroom didactic strategies and materials that incorporated use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru
- To evaluate children's progress using Movers international exam speaking test format and based on the results of the research provide guidelines for the implementation of this methodology at Santa Angela School.

4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Teaching young learners is per se a very challenging job. However, teaching them in the middle of a worldwide sanitary crisis where they could not attend classrooms, but have virtual classes instead, is still a great feat. The pandemic that terribly stroke every single country forced teachers to rethink the way we usually teach and creatively adapt our methodology to the new virtualization of education in real time.

Therefore, teachers and pupils have been encouraged to give and attend classes online through the different tools of communication, such as personal computers, laptops, tablets and cell phones.

At the beginning of the quarantine, in Peru, there was no enough time and economical resources to update most of the tools I am referring to, because of the sudden lockdown. Teachers and students had to face difficult times trying to accommodate to the way of giving and attending a class. The first ones, because of the lack of training in preparing a totally online class, with a good scope and sequence pedagogy and up-to-date tools in a safe virtual environment.

Additionally, the students because of their old or not updated types of equipment and low-quality internet bandwidth which allows a non-interruption class and having to tolerate a full schedule scheme online. Nevertheless, some school subjects were not considered in the curriculum for the online learning modality so this made somehow pupils feel discontent.

Fortunately, there were two components that were a great help in the online teaching process; technology and visuals. our students have changed the way they learn. They are digital natives: technology is part of their lives; just as electric light was for us compared to that of our grandparents and grandmothers some centuries ago.

Furthermore, their minds do not conceive of a non-technological world, as ours did not conceive that to wash oneself you would have to draw water from a well with a manual pump. The act of learning, like washing, remains essentially the same, but pretending that digital natives learn through textbook study, memory, and repetition is almost like asking them to draw water from a well for washing.

Correspondingly, it is well - known by far that students, especially children enjoy using technology and that was an ally that led us through the path of successful teaching and learning. That component together with the appropriate employment of visual aids in the form of Power Point and the supply of sentence patterns shaped our methodology amazingly acceptable.

The appropriateness use of visual aids definitely increased students' interest and attention and made them more engaged in the topic presented because they served to give more sense of any context meaningfully. As a consequence, the students were more participative and communicative during the whole class.

Markedly known that there are different roles teachers play in a classroom. I certainly consider being resourceful together with creative as numbers one and two respectively the main roles to perform effectively especially in this current situation that our teaching modality has changed completely. What is more, it has caused a great impact on both important participants; teachers and students who are the main actors in the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, I would like to emphasize the roles of being resourceful and creative nowadays since teachers are definitely able to present impressive and engaging PowerPoints or Google slides as visual aids. certainly, there is a previous professional work that teachers enthusiastically do, is to look for the right images to incorporate as visual aids, this process takes for sure more than two hours.

Consequently, if a teacher is a careful person who really enjoys his or her work making his or her students be surprised and engaged with different impressive visual aids as mentioned above, taken for granted that he or she will see that his or her big effort is worthy. A teacher can witness this whenever the students say openly that this visual aid you created was absolutely awesome.

Fortunately, there are different online tools that help a lot to make this happen. Once a teacher masters these online resources really well surely, it will take him or her less than two hours to make an interesting visual aid with the only purpose to draw students' attention.

To sum up this section regarding technological devices and accessibility, this technological era has provided teachers with an ample number of online strategies and means to teach the target language and bring the real world into the virtual classroom.

There is one valuable factor which is predominant in any human being; how motivated can a person be to concrete the most unbelievable or ideal dream; this is called motivation.

Motivation is the fuel to do anything we aspire to achieve or conquer. In the education field, motivation plays a significant as well as an outstanding role in this process of teaching and virtual learning.

Motivation is the factors that determine a person's desire to do something **(Richards, Platt & Platt, 2000)**. According to **Williams and Burden (1997)**, it is made up of four parts: 1) The desire and determination for an action; 2) The interest for an object or an activity; 3) The energy one holds; 4) The maintenance of the interest and participation. Motivation is a subjective reason that can directly promote and preserve the study of the students, that is, learning motivation can make the students keep and carry out the study activities. Motivation is commonly viewed as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves the learners to a particular action **(Brown, 1980)**.

Regarding this key factor which is inherent in education matters, I would like to emphasize the following not only students must feel motivated towards the studying of this target language; English but also teachers. we teachers have assumed a very notable part of our society since the atypical time. I have to be honest, sometimes I have felt frustrated when I cannot help my students produce the language as they used to do in the face – to face class.

Fortunately, we teachers are professionals devoted to service vocation. We undoubtedly know we have to persevere to complete the task. Also, we certainly know there are always some obstacles to prove our strengths and to defeat our weaknesses. However, with resilience and persistence we finally encounter the light at the end of the tunnel. Being a thinker, a risktaker, a promoter will definitely help our pupils learn with large amount of enthusiasm. That is why our role is very important and challenging in our society since we work with people, we change minds, we contribute a great deal in their lives.

To summarize being motivated is the first step to let learning empower itself. Every time students show real interest in learning any topic, we certainly realize that our job has done successfully. There are several examples to assess that my students are really motivated. I can cite them due to my experience; when a student salutes in English, volunteers to pray in English, sings songs with energy, answers with total confidence a question, presents homework on time, participates enthusiastically, or when simply says thank you for the class, teacher.

Another valuable factor is the affective filter together with motivation contributes a lot in the acquisition of a foreign language since they are basic pillars to support learners' achievements regarding the learning process of the target language.

For this reason, the teacher plays a predominant role since they are the ones who will facilitate the interaction between peers. Socialization is part of our nature as human beings who need to communicate with others.

Furthermore, it is in our hands to facilitate knowledge and means to our students in order to improve their cognitive and social skills when learning a foreign language. Although teachers have to deal with students who present a lack of interest in language acquisition or what is worse, they do not believe in themselves. With this view, we have to encounter some useful strategies to make them reflect on their difficulties to improve when acquiring the target language. Actually, this is an additional role teachers have to experience so we are facilitators of new knowledge.

Unquestionably, teachers have to reflect on good practices when teaching the target language. It is understood that the use of the inappropriate methodology could be the reason why a student presents a poor achievement in the acquisition of English language. We have to analyze about the importance of making our students learn English with a good attitude.

Attitude toward the classroom and teacher may relate to both acquisition and learning. The student who feels at ease in the classroom and likes the teacher may seek out intake by volunteering (he may be a "high input generator"; Seliger, 1977)

Additionally, teachers should customize their classes depending on the background or profile of their students. For instance, if more than fifty percent of the students love learning English with games or engaging activities like listening to music, these tasks will encourage them to learn in a very stimulating way so there is no choice the teachers have to motivate them using these strategies.

In the long run, teachers find out ways to improve their classes. Actually, this is a long process since we are certainly looking for the best strategies to apply them in the virtual class in order to make our pupils succeed.

Teachers foster active participation during the virtual lessons at every moment in order to avoid students' boredom, lack of interest or what is worse anxiety. Some students present these types of problems in class. Fortunately, there is a group of professionals who work with them. The psychologists accompany these pupils who present disorders like anxiety or depression.

Additionally, the use of online tools like videos, pictures, impressive images, quizzes, attractive and amazing platforms and others will certainly raise students' motivation as well as deepen their knowledge of the language and improve their language competence.

It is said that the more quality of time we invest in finding ways to make our classes more dynamic and interesting the better results our students achieve.

In the final analysis, showing empathy towards our students is the best demonstration that we really care for them. We have to reflect also on some of our students have lost some close relatives in this terrible pandemic so it is comprehensible that they do not want to participate in class with great enthusiasm as they used to do. Unfortunately, these terrible events could impact them negatively and could be one reason to give up learning a new language or participate actively as we expected to.

That is the reason why we should bear in our minds that due to these events our students have experienced so we have to tell them that we are there to support them. If they need extra hours of class, we should make a big effort to help them so that they will learn the message that although bad experiences they can face, they have their teachers to help them accomplish their goals.

*Empathy, the ability to put oneself in another's shoes, is also predicted to be relevant to acquisition in that the empathic person may be the one who is able to identify more easily with speakers of a target language and thus accept their input as intake for language acquisition (lowered affective filter). Empathy appears to interact with other attitudinal factors. **Schumann (1975)** suggests that "... the natural factors that induce ego flexibility and lower inhibitions (assumed to relate to increased empathy) are those conditions which make the learner less anxious, make him feel accepted and make him form positive identifications with speakers of the target language"*

Teaching the values like empathy will contribute greatly to form twenty first century citizens with the capacity to face and overcome obstacles and always thinking what happens to others. Furthermore, we have to make our students develop other importantly features like being autonomous, critical thinking, self – regulation, decision making and self - direction in order to become a better worldwide citizen.

Another significant aspect that should be mentioned is the development of students' autonomy. Regarding this new modality employed during the current academic year most of our students have developed this important skill, which is tremendously pertinent for their social skills.

Considering importantly to develop this skill we teachers should promote activities to make our students think about how to get the answer to a simple question. Little by little, we can increase the level of complexity of the tasks with the only purpose to make them be critical thinkers and take control of their learning.

It is advisable to encourage our students to make a plan for learning English as well as to have a good command of internet use. These strategies and tools are really helpful to become autonomous learners in the long run. Even though at the beginning it is hard work, but it is known that when something is worthy, we have to demonstrate how resilient we can be to achieve our dearest dreams.

"...Because language learning is largely an autonomous activity, promoting learner autonomy is vitally important. It involves helping learners learn how to learn, equipping them with the means necessary to self-direct their own learning..." (Kumaravadivelu, 1994).

All things considered in this section are definitely clearly explained. As a professional in the teaching of English as a foreign language, motivation, affective filter are essential to developing autonomy.

Sinclair et al (2000) defined that autonomy is cultural-bounded, autonomy can be differently interpreted in different cultures and contexts. The awareness of this has significant implication for language teaching. Having said that the cultural sensitivity to understand the respondents' perception should be taken into account. **Benson (2007)** illuminated two broad spectrums of autonomy, which are *Autonomy Beyond the Classroom* and *Autonomy in the Classroom*. The former covers *Self-Access, Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Self-instruction, Distance Learning, Study Abroad*. *Autonomy in classroom embraces group works, co-operative learning, innovative learning or other classroom actions and activities.*

Let us start with a description of the type of research carried out to find the relation between the two variables subject of this study.

4.1 Action Research

This is a *small scale* and situational type of research and focuses on a particular problem in a classroom with the aim to understand and try to solve it.

It is also defined as “ideas-in-action” and is not usually done by an external expert. It is carried out by a classroom teacher or group of teachers during normal, everyday activities.

A professional in the education field is always a researcher-teacher since is in constant reflection upon their teaching practice, experimenting, evaluating the effects of the experiment, and the changes in their practices.

The experimental component can be present in action research where the teacher changes one variable and observes the effects of the change. These should result in improvements. The ultimate aim is for action research to become “reflective” or introspective about classroom practices (**Nunan, 1989**).

With the aim of organizing the steps of this research, we followed the checklist provide by **Nunan (1989)**. This was adapted from **Cohen and Manion (1985, 220-221)**, for action research projects:

1. Identify a problem. It is important that the problem be narrow and focused. (Ibid).
2. Develop a plan to carry out the research, discussing and negotiating with other teachers, advisors, and outside experts. (Ibid).
3. Review at least some of what has already been written about the issue in question. (Ibid).
4. Restate the problem in the form of a hypothesis or research question; discuss the assumptions underlying the research project. (Ibid).
5. Select research procedures, materials, resources, etc. (Ibid).
6. Choose the best way to evaluate your results. (Ibid).
7. Collect data, analyze it, and evaluate your project. (Ibid).
8. Interpret the data and feed the information and insights back into your own teaching and others, perhaps in the form of a workshop or a written report. (Ibid).

4.2 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Richards, J. (2006), Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom.

4.2.1 The goals of Language Teaching

CLT sets as its main goal the communicative competence. We cannot deny that grammatical competence is an important component of language learning. However, it is not everything a learner has to be able to know since one person can be competent in the rules of sentence formation in a language, but useless at using it for meaningful communication. This is the capacity understood by communicative competence and **Richards, J. (2006)**, says that it includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions. (Ibid).
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication). (Ibid).
- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations). (Ibid).
- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies). (Ibid).

4.2.2 How Learners Learn a Language

The perspective from which language learning is seen has changed over the years.

Richards, J. (2006), says that it is now considered as resulting from processes such as:

- Interaction between the learner and users of the language. (Ibid).
- Collaborative creation of meaning. (Ibid).
- Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language. (Ibid).
- Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding. (Ibid).
- Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language. (Ibid).
- Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence. (Ibid).
- Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things. (Ibid).

Our sessions had as a central component interaction through which students negotiated meaning either by performing conversations, doing listening exercises, doing presentations about topics that were familiar to them such as their pet, free time, or routines.

These strategies helped deepen students' understanding of the language, also they served to develop the students speaking skills.

4.2.3 Classroom Activities in Communicative Language Teaching

4.2.3.1 Accuracy and fluency

When teaching a foreign language many teachers emphasize on accuracy others on fluency. Neither of them is better than the other, what is more, they are in fact a complement of each other.

Richards, J. (2006), says that fluency is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence.

The students at Santa Angela School developed **fluency** because a great deal of careful dedication was put in the creation of the classroom activities where the students had to negotiate meaning, they used communication strategies, there were moments where they corrected misunderstandings in order to avoid communication breakdowns.

That fluency practice was accompanied by **accuracy practice** which focuses on the creation of correct examples of sentences, ranging from very simple to a little more elaborated structures such as describing people's appearance.

4.3 Mechanical, Meaningful, and Communicative Practice

Another characteristic that can be granted to CLT is the distinction between mechanical, meaningful, and communicative practice.

Richards, J. (2006), gives the definitions for these types of practice:

Mechanical practice: refers to a controlled practice activity which students can successfully carry out without necessarily understanding the language they are using. (Ibid).

The fourth-grade students at Santa Angela School carried out this type of practice by doing repetition drills and substitution drills which were designed to practice a particular grammatical form.

Meaningful practice: refers to an activity where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice. (Ibid).

For instance, in order to practice vocabulary about prepositions to describe the location of place, they also had to use a map of their neighborhood in order to ask and give directions to get to a place. Like this, the experience was meaningful for them.

Communicative practice: refers to activities where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable. (Ibid).

The distinction between mechanical, meaningful, and communicative activities is similar to that given by **Littlewood, W. (1981)**, who groups activities into two kinds:

Pre-communicative activities

Structural activities

Quasi-communicative activities

Communicative activities

Functional communication activities

Social interactional activities

Functional communication activities require students to use their language resources to overcome an information gap or solve a problem. Social interactional activities require the learner to pay attention to the context and the roles of the people involved, and to attend to such things as formal versus informal language.

Since the group of students, part of this research are children, sometimes we followed the Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) model with the aim of leading them to the use the target language. Other times we followed the functional approach asking the students to perform dialogues for a situation and purpose given. In the end, these approaches, PPP and The notional-functional Approach are also part of the theories that form the Communicative Language Teaching methodology.

More specifically, these are some of the activities carried out with the students during the development of the research:

Task-completion activities: puzzles, games, map-reading, and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one's language resources to complete a task.

Information-gathering activities: student-conducted surveys, interviews, and searches in which students are required to use their linguistic resources to collect information.

Role plays: activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or exchange based on given information or clues.

4.4 Ten Assumptions of Current Communicative Language Teaching

The Approaches to language teaching, nowadays, aim to highlight importance of language and language learning assumed by a communicative view of language. **Jacobs and Farrell (2003), cited by Richards, J. (2006)**, see the shift toward CLT as marking a paradigm shift in our thinking about teachers, learning, and teaching. They identify key components of this shift as follows:

1. Focusing greater attention on the role of learners rather than the external stimuli learners are receiving from their environment. Thus, the center of attention shifts from the teacher to the student. This shift is generally known as the move from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered instruction.

2. Focusing greater attention on the learning process rather than the products that learners produce. This shift is known as the move from product-oriented to process-oriented instruction.

3. Focusing greater attention on the social nature of learning rather than on students as separate, decontextualized individuals

4. Focusing greater attention on diversity among learners and viewing these difference not as impediments to learning but as resources to be recognized, catered to, and appreciated. This shift is known as the study of individual differences.

5. In research and theory-building, focusing greater attention on the views of those internal to the classroom rather than solely valuing the views of those who come from outside to study classrooms, investigate and evaluate what goes on there, and engage in theorizing about it. This shift is associated with such innovations as qualitative research, which highlights the subjective and affective, the participants' insider views, and the uniqueness of each context.

6. Along with this emphasis on context comes the idea of connecting the school with the world beyond as means of promoting holistic learning.

7. Helping students to understand the purpose of learning and develop their own purpose

8. A whole-to-part orientation instead of a part-to-whole approach. This involves such approaches as beginning with meaningful whole text and then helping students understand the various features that enable texts to function, e.g., the choice of words and the text's organizational structure.

9. An emphasis on the importance of meaning rather than drills and other forms of rote learning

10. A view of learning as a lifelong process rather than something done to prepare students for an exam.

Jacobs and Farrell (2003), suggest that the CLT paradigm shift outlined above has led to eight major changes in approaches to language teaching. These changes are:

1. Learner autonomy: Giving learners greater choice over their own learning, both in terms of the content of learning as well as processes they might employ. The use of small groups is one example of this, as well as the use of self-assessment.

2. The social nature of learning: Learning is not an individual, private activity, but a social one that depends upon interaction with others. The movement known as cooperative learning reflects this viewpoint.

3. Curricular integration: The connection between different strands of the curriculum is emphasized, so that English is not seen as a stand-alone subject but is linked to other subjects in the curriculum. Text-based learning (see below) reflects this approach, and seeks to develop fluency in text types that can be used across the curriculum. Project work in language teaching also requires students to explore issues outside of the language classroom.

4. Focus on meaning: Meaning is viewed as the driving force of learning. Content-based teaching reflects this view and seeks to make the exploration of meaning through content the core of language learning activities.

5. Diversity: Learners learn in different ways and have different strengths. Teaching needs to take these differences into account rather than try to force students into a single mold. In language teaching, this has led to an emphasis on developing students' use and awareness of learning strategies.

6. Thinking skills: Language should serve as a means of developing higher-order thinking skills, also known as critical and creative thinking. In language teaching, this means that students do not learn language for its own sake but in order to develop and apply their thinking skills in situations that go beyond the language classroom.

7. Alternative assessment: New forms of assessment are needed to replace traditional multiple-choice and other items that test lower-order skills. Multiple forms of assessment (e.g., observation, interviews, journals, portfolios) can be used to build a comprehensive picture of what students can do in a second language.

8. Teachers as co-learners: The teacher is viewed as a facilitator who is constantly trying out different alternatives, i.e., learning through doing. In language teaching, this has led to an interest in action research and other forms of classroom investigation.

While there is no single syllabus model that has been universally accepted, a language syllabus today needs to include systematic coverage of the many different components of communicative competence, including language skills, content, grammar, vocabulary, and functions. Different syllabus types within a communicative orientation to language teaching employ different routes to developing communicative competence.

4.5 Technology in the Language Teaching Field

Technology started to play an important role in society since the invention of computers and the arrival of the internet. We can utterly state that it is one of the components responsible for constant changes.

Today in the year 2020, due to the pandemic the world is facing, all the protagonists of the teaching-learning process have been forced to change the way we interact and communicate with information and among people.

In this context, we had to ask ourselves, as teachers, how to integrate the new learning environments and the digital tools as well as the new ways of communicating within the classroom. The outcomes have been fruitful thanks to technology and teachers and students have been able to continue with the academic year as it was at risk at first.

An example of those adaptations are the virtual classes that the students have to listen and the teachers have to prepare using the virtual platforms and tools to achieve the class goals.

Based on this scenario, it urges the need to redefine some crucial concepts regarding education and, above principally, regarding learning. As a consequence of this new reality, many authors speak of new theories.

4.6 Connectivism

This theory developed by **George Siemens**, explains the importance of the different contexts and environments in which learning, formal and informal, takes place.

Connectivism has as the main aim to understand the role of the teacher as a manager, guide, and facilitator, of the learning environments that appeared inside and outside the classroom. Also it gives great importance to the promotion of autonomy of the students and collaborative works among the learners.

In this new education context, for Connectivism, the classroom is seen as an entirely unpredictable place, for this reason, both the teacher and the activities have to be prepared for constant adaptation to the possible learning needs, understanding that these will be subject to modifications depending on the students, the moment and the context. The teaching- learning process is defined as a complex process that implies factors of different nature.

We must teach then in a way that is flexible and likely to change and therefore work, having in mind with strategies to read, write, search, and participate in the web.

This sounds like something easy to do. Even though. *Santa Angela* is a private school, however, there have been and there are still some difficulties we have had to overcome. For instance, some teachers and even worst, students, were reluctant n regarding to the use of technology mainly because of lack of knowledge on how to interact with it, other for lack of the hardware to connect to the classes. The variety of the web tools such as pages like quizzlet, kahoot, Class dojo, mentimeter, as well as our Santa Angela Virtual room and others have allowed students to develop their communicative skills: oral and written and comprehension. With such help students created products like videos, podcasts, I nteractive posters, power point presentations and shared them with others to see.

4.7 Virtual Learning Environments (VLE)

Wilson, S. (2005), It is a system designed to support teaching and learning in an educational setting.

At Santa Angela School, our classes are being developed via Meet platform and to make the interaction with the students friendlier we always use videoconference which is the principal tool in virtual learning environments. That has several advantages that make it an effective tool for language learning.

- It offers real interaction in real time.
- It requires the participation and collaboration of users.
- The teacher can easily follow the activity of the students.
- It can be complemented with other materials.
- The features are easy to access. the teacher can record the class, can manage the number of participants in a session as well as can take out a participant.

4.8 The Role of the Teacher in the language VLE at Santa Angela School

Apart from the known roles of the teacher such as monitor, guide, controller, facilitator, tutor and others, In VLE the role of the teacher of the following points:

- To manage and to make available materials for the course in different formats. (text, image, video, audio, power point, Google slides etc.).
- To manage and correct written work by students. Some of them in real time.
- To configure and to manage the sessions in the platforms; the Santa Angela virtual room and Meet.
- To locate relevant information and to solve technical problems that may arise in their daily use of the course.
- To design activities by integrating external resource (links, videos, audio, etc.)
- To motivate intrinsically and extrinsically students to participate in the language they are learning.
- To pay special attention to the diversity of the students, taking into account: foreign language level, digital and communicative competence, connection problems, etc.
- To diligently and politely deal with parents at any time and employ different devices like Meet or through telephone calls to communicate them how their children are working in class.
- To attend different workshops provided by the institution, or others at any time of the day.

- To take part in different meetings to report some difficulties we have experienced.
- To solve problems that we have encountered in any sessions (hackers, uninvited people in the virtual class) with the help of technical support staff.

Brown, H. Douglas (2007) mentions that “teachers can play many roles in the course of teaching and this might facilitate learning. Their ability to carry these out effectively will depend to a large extent on the rapport they establish with their students, and of course, on their own level of knowledge and skills.”

On the other hand, According to **Harmer, J. (2007)**, the term ‘facilitator’ is used by many authors to describe a particular kind of teacher, one who is democratic (where the teacher shares some of the leadership with the students) rather than autocratic (where the teacher is in control of everything that goes on in the classroom), and one who fosters learner autonomy (where students not only learn on their own but also take responsibility for that learning) through the use of group and pair work and by acting as more of a resource than a transmitter of knowledge.

4.9 The Role of the Student in the VLE at Santa Angela School

The students who are part of this research project are in fourth grade. Even though they are young learners, little by little they are acquiring the idea of autonomy, and that is precisely one of their roles in virtual learning environments. They know they have to either record a video, prepare a power point presentation and submit it in the platform. During the sessions they are asked to work in pairs or groups collaboratively and present their tasks on time and in real time. These learning experiences support the notion of students being the centre of their own learning process.

Among others, the students who took part of this virtual environment had the following roles:

- To participate in the different spaces in the course, consuming and producing content.
- To socialize with other classmates and teachers.
- To ask questions to classmates and teacher.
- To take advantage of the different spaces of communication: emails, chats, etc.
- To get involved in the processes of collaborative learning: working in groups, for example.

- To participate in the VLE in a progressive way.
- To accept responsibility for learning
- To attend punctually every class with their materials.

4.10 Assessment and Tutorship in the VLE at Santa Angela School

As a teacher my role during the virtual lessons and after them, regarding assessment was of constant observation and help of my students. They had to be provided with material, guidance, tutorial videos and even extra virtual classes in order to help them fulfil the learning and skills goals. This means I had to keep track of their progress.

In some cases, depending on the activities and topics I had to use extra tools like checklists, rubrics, or observation charts where I jotted down the students' performance, weaknesses, and strengths. After a follow up I had to report to my boss how my students performed in class. After that, I had to carry out a workshop for students who needed some additional classes. Furthermore, they took a differentiation assessment.

In addition to this, I had to follow-up of their learning process with suggestions of extra material they could use to improve their learning. Also, in the platform they use, it was necessary to check the students' participation, the readings and activities they had done, when, how much time they had devoted to perform them, etc.

Therefore, assessment was constant, formative and summative whose result will be explained and described in the upcoming chapter.

4.11 Developing the Skill of Speaking

Dash, N. (2007), affirms that:

Language is primarily speech. This means that language is primarily learnt by listening and speaking. Speaking comes after listening but before reading and writing. The child learnt his mother tongue in this way. He can also learn English by speaking in the language first before he can read and write in the language. Speaking, therefore, occupies the most important place in English language teaching.

If we review and observe the process of child when learning a language, we will be able to notice that in speech the child tends to imitate or reproduce the sounds he hears;

likewise, he speaks and understands what he speaks, he can also understand what others speak in the language. This acquisition process places the responsibility in the teacher to enable the learner to understand the foreign language and speak intelligibly.

During my virtual sessions with my fourth-grade students I was always careful to see that they understood meaning of words, phrases and sentences in context as well as statements, questions and commands. At later stages of the development of the lessons they had to understand simple narrations and descriptions, but also, they had to do that orally. For that, I used a variety of pictures presented in power point and provided them with sentence patterns with the aim of helping them increase their vocabulary.

Another important aspect to consider was the correct production of the language and to speak it intelligibly. Learners had to always be encouraged to exchange conversational greetings, ask and respond to questions, participate in dialogues, describe events, etc. orally to their classmates.

Our aim is to help students develop and improve their speaking skills to perform successfully in the Movers Examination from Cambridge University. We are aware that oral work is the only way of developing speech habits of learners, accompanied of visuals with always help clarify meanings of words. Some students still need more practice. Unfortunately, oral work in English was neglected as the school demanded teachers to stick to the book, this led to very poor speech habits among children. However, with these new strategies and methodology, the children had more opportunities to understand and produce the foreign language.

Among others, **Dash, N. (2007)**, offers the following drilling methods from which the substitution drill and completion drill are the two principal ones that are being proposed as a method to improve and enhance learners speaking skill at Santa Angela School.

Repetition drill. This is the easiest drilling method. In this method, the teacher makes a statement and then the student repeats it imitating the sounds made by the teacher. (Ibid).

Chain drill. In this method the teacher first gives examples using a structure. Then one pupil asks a question to another pupil to reply. Then the second pupil puts a question to a third pupil to reply, and so on. Each time the situation must be changed. (Ibid).

Substitution drill. These techniques may be of different types: at the initial stage simple substitution can be used which the pupil has to substitute different words in the patterns supplied by the teacher. (Ibid).

Completion drill. In this method, the teacher first gives a sentence and the pupil repeats it.

The teacher gives one or two words of other sentences and the pupil completes the sentences. (Ibid).

We have studied before that the acquisition of a language follows a natural process. Before speaking the learner must be exposed to sufficient oral and written input. Children had a great deal of practice using the structures orally before they were asked to read and write. The topics considered for the lessons were taken from the school annual planning. Many of them were based on day to day experiences of the children.

According to **Thompson and Wyant (1935)**, "speaking, like walking or running, is not learnt entirely by rule. It is learnt more by practice... The teacher must create meaningful situations so that the pupil feels the necessity of speaking English.

The class must be made as interesting and playful as possible and the pupil must find it a pleasure to speak in English.

To sum up, the following points should find place in the scheme of oral work for the development of speech **Panchal, (1976)**: listening, speaking, conversation, question and answers, discussion, storytelling, reading aloud, recitation of interesting and important paragraphs, inquiries and replies, short accounts

These techniques were also part of the tasks the students had to perform during the Movers test. There is a component in each task that aims to develop the student's skill that goes from a simple to a more complex one. This matches the taxonomy of Bloom, **B. (1956)** because according to him tasks must enhance the development of the student's critical thinking and skills starting with a low-difficulty to one that enables the learner to push himself even further. That was done with the children during the lessons, the activities range from the utterance of simple sentences to describe pictures or situations to more complex one where they had to even use their imagination to describe a scene and had to answer questions, describing, predicting and comparing pictures.

Panchal, (1976) suggests that conversation and oral compositions are the two important methods of conducting oral work at the higher stages.

4.12 Teaching English to young Learners

As **Pinter (2006 p.29)** points out, all children are unique, and two children at the same chronological age can exhibit markedly different characteristics. This is why he prefers to call them young learners.

He lists the following characteristics of young learners:

- Generally, they have a holistic approach to language, which means that they understand meaningful messages but cannot analyze language yet. (Ibid).
- They have lower levels of awareness about themselves as well as about the process of learning. (Ibid).
- They have a limited reading and writing skills, even in their first language. (Ibid).
- Generally, they are more concerned about themselves than others. (Ibid).
- They have limited knowledge about the world. (Ibid).
- They enjoy fantasy, imagination and movement. (Ibid).

4.13 Competence

Competence is a “can-do” category; it is something a student is able to perform. Students are competent when they have knowledge and skills at their disposal, know how to employ them, and are also able to reflect independently on their knowledge and skills(...) Creativity and innovative skills-as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills-are essential qualities in modern societies (...) Creativity, problem –solving and innovation often go hand in hand, which means that knowledge and skills as well as competences are seen as important prerequisites for creativity and innovation-not as tight limitations. **(Rasmussen 2013:7)**

As stated above, the students will only be able to show what they can do with the as long as they have been provided with the language they need. Additionally, they must be taught how to use the language. My young learners are students who were always eager to learn and do new things. They love doing and participating thus classes flowed smoothly and they used the techniques when working either in pairs or individually.

4.14 The use of Power Point to Present visuals in the Foreign Language Classroom

Power point is a technological tool that supports the teacher job. An appropriate use of it during the lessons resulted in the increment of the student's willingness and engagement to learn as well as in the improvement of student's language competence.

A picture tells more than one thousand words. When the students saw the visuals shown in power point, they had the opportunity to internalize the information visually transmitted. Likewise, they became more interested and engaged in the activities. If these pictures present quality in terms of color and style, definitely young learners will be motivated to learn new things in English and what is more to use in real situations.

Thomas, M & Keinders, H. (2010, pp.25-26) point out that the use of visuals “help the teacher to clarify, establish, correlate and coordinate accurate concepts, interpretations and appreciations and enable him to make learning more concrete, effective, interesting, inspirational, meaningful and vivid”

Moriarty, S. (1994, pp. 11-21) gives us another explanation and says that “it is specific to human beings to develop their visual language skills before the verbal language development”, offering a possible explanation for the need of pictorial information rather than textual among young students.

Bamford, A. (2013) tells teachers to consider the fact that “visual literacy is the best way to obtain information, construct knowledge and build successful educational outcomes”

Since the beginning of humanity, the first individuals communicated with each other by drawing pictures. Automatically, they understood the message the author tried to transmit.

That is one of the principles we followed in the development of our lessons, the use of meaningful visuals, which enabled students to acquire the language because they helped to memorize vocabulary and structures. The visuals contained either a story, or any other picture related to their previous experiences and connected them to places, things, people, events or other things they were familiar with.

As **Kang,S. (2004)** claims “they are designed to help the learner, bringing the prior knowledge to a conscious level in the form of an organizational structure. They help enhancing comprehension and learning, as well as eliciting, explaining and communicating information”. In his opinion, the advantages of visual organizers are the following:

- They allow users to develop a holistic understanding that words cannot convey. (Ibid).
- They provide users with tools to make thought and organization processes visible. (Ibid).
- They clarify complex concepts into a simpler, meaningful display. (Ibid).
- They assist users in processing and restructuring ideas and information. (Ibid).
- They promote recall and retention of learning through synthesis and analysis. (Ibid).

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Approach

This type of research, which most teachers conduct on daily basis in the classrooms, may not be research in pure sense to generate or to test a theory; rather, it is a form of investigation that can assist teachers to make the teaching and learning process more effective.

Action research can be defined as “inquiry teachers undertake to understand and improve their own practice” (**McCutcheon & Jung, 1990:144**).

Moreover, Action research requires teachers to understand their own practice by being self-reflective and examining it critically and systematically (**Burns, 2010**).

This project conducted research using two paradigms, Qualitative and quantitative.

5.1.1. Quantitative Approach to Action Research

According to this approach, education and school are objects or phenomena that can be investigated. If we want to understand these phenomena, we have to do it deductively using scientific or experimental research to obtain objective, quantifiable outcomes.

The present action research relies on numerical data obtained from the learner's grades in the pre-test (diagnostic) and post-test to determine the effectiveness of our methodology. Following this, according to some policies in our curriculum regarding secondary level, the minimum score to pass is eleven and the highest score is twenty.

On the other hand, at the primary level, the way how we grade is different since we have to use letters; AD means outstanding, A means achieved and B the learner is in progress, C means the students are at the beginning of their learning process.

Compiling several definitions of action research proposed by a number of experts, **Costello (2003:5)** listed the following characteristics that those definitions have in common:

(1) It is referred to as a term, process, enquiry, approach, flexible spiral process and as cyclic, (2) It has a practical, problem-solving emphasis, (3) It is carried out by individuals, professionals and educators, (4) It involves research, systematic, critical reflection and action, (5) It aims to improve educational practice, (6) Action is undertaken to understand, evaluate and change, (7) research involves gathering and interpreting data, often on an aspect of teaching and learning, and (8) Critical reflection involves reviewing actions undertaken and planning future actions.

The following are examples of other action researches where the researcher applied the quantitative approach.

Mountford, K. (2007) attempted to solve the problem of reading fluency faced by ten 4th and 5th graders with learning disabilities by using Readers' Theater, in which the learners read a script aloud with appropriate expressions before an audience. She used three research instruments: a student survey to elicit their attitudes toward reading, a 4-point rubric to evaluate their reading performance, and an oral one-minute timed reading to find out the number of words they read per minute. All of the instruments were administered to the participants before and after the interventions so she obtained two sets of numeric data from each and labeled them 'pretest' and posttest.' In general, there was an increase when the results of the pretest were compared to that of the posttest, and the gain led to a conclusion that Readers' Theater was an effective technique to overcome reading fluency faced by the 4th and 5th graders.

Kieltyka, A. (2005) compared different conditions in the interventions when conducting action research to determine which one was the most effective to improve her students' reading comprehension, fluency and attitude toward reading. She utilized a teaching technique called Round Robin Reading, in which the learners took turns reading an unfamiliar text aloud in front of an audience, and applied four different conditions to different groups selected randomly from the 4th grade class she taught: no pre-reading discussion without rehearsal time, pre-reading discussion without rehearsal time, no pre-reading discussion with rehearsal time, and pre-reading discussion with rehearsal time. She used oral reading trial as the instrument to measure the students' reading comprehension and fluency, and administered a questionnaire to obtain data about their attitude towards reading, yielding numeric data from both instruments.

The results indicated that of four types of reading trials the most effective one turned out to be pre-reading discussion with rehearsal time, and the number of learners who lacked interest in using Round Robin Reading kept dwindling, reaching zero at the end of the intervention. Consequently, this technique was deemed very helpful in enhancing fluency and comprehension of the 4th graders as well as positively shifting their attitude toward reading.

It is essential to mention that action research can also make use of an experiment design. In addition, distinguish action research which makes use of an experimental design. In addition, regardless of the designs it adopts, it aims to take a critical, reflective look at the teachers' own practice and improve it. Whereas, experimental research, on the other hand, is conducted to test a particular theory and find out whether a component of the theory is effective or not, reporting the results as they are without having improvement as an end.

The history of action research began in the US in the 1930s when Kurt Lewin introduced it as a form of qualitative inquiry in the applied social science, and two decades later it gained momentum in the field of education (**Adelman, 1993; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006**). Despite its reliance on the interpretive paradigm at the early stage of development, in the course of time action research was approached using alternative paradigms (**McCutcheon & Jung, 1990**).

Furthermore, the findings of action research apply only to the specific group of learners who participate in it because it attempts to solve a problem faced by these learners, while the findings obtained from a small group of learners (i.e. the sample) in experimental research can be generalized to a larger group (i.e. the population).

5.2 Research Type

This is a quasi-experimental research, so quantitative and qualitative methodologies will be used.

It is quasi-experimental because the phenomenon is caused or manipulated. The investigator determines the values of the independent variables (the methodology applying power point and visuals) according to their convenience to be able to see the effects which cause such variation in the dependent variable (the speaking skill) , but it does not exercise the degree of control characterized by the experimental one.

Research Approach

This study is correlational since it aims to look for the relationship between two variables in the same environment. The dependent variable is the development of the speaking skill in the fourth-grade children at Santa Angela School. The independent variable is the use of visuals by using power point and Google slides with appropriate images according to their ages and topics to teach.

5.3 Design of the investigation

This research consists of one group which is initially evaluated by using a Movers International English Test. Then, the group is exposed to the methodology with an initial evaluation then one group is exposed to the experimental treatment, which is the methodology using power point and visuals. After this period, the group is evaluated again in order to see how the speaking skill improved.

Experimental Group	O1	X	O2
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O1 : Initial Evaluation

O2 : Final Evaluation

X : Stimulus (Action research)

Process Evaluation (Experimental Group)

5.3 Population and study sample

The population and the study sample is represented by students of the fourth grade at Santa Angela Primary School. They are the experimental group. The average age of the children is 9 who possess different levels of knowledge of English. There is no control group as due to time and administrative issues we preferred to work only with one group.

Units of study	Number of Students
Experimental Group	

5.4 Variables

Independent variable: Power point and visuals.

Dependent variable: Improvement of the speaking skill of the fourth-grade students at Santa Anela Primary School

5.3 Research Tools

The present research starts by applying a diagnostic test, (SEE APPENDIX 1). After obtaining the results they will be subject of study and analysis, this will give us light with respect to the strengths and oral competence of the students.

In particular, the diagnostic test shows what actually a student knows and does not know about the use of the target language in different functions. The principal reason

is to determine the level of competence of the learner so the teacher can prepare effective classes considering the needs of the students.

The tests include instructions which enable the students to perform short tasks such as describing pictures, telling a story, comparing pictures and listing the differences or similarities.

With the aim of collecting the information to know the level of spoken competence of the students, we are going to use as an instrument a speaking test from the international exam Movers. Therefore, it is imperative to define some concepts to describe and understand their importance.

A Movers examination consist on three papers divided into listening, reading and writing and the speaking section. The limit of time to have our students well – prepared to take this exam depends basically on the number of hours the school provides to the English staff. In my country, private schools have different realities. Approximately, a private school has as a minimum of five academic hours a week.

This is a topic that corresponds to the hidden curriculum. Most of the time teachers are told to accomplish a task. However, they are not provided with some requirements like extra payment for training students for the international exam. Nevertheless, teachers feel intrinsically motivated to make their students succeed in this type of exam.

5.4 Assessment

According to **Brown, D. (1990)**, assessment refers to a related series of measures used to determine a complex attribute of an individual or group of individuals. This involves gathering and interpreting information about student level of attainment of learning goals.

Admittedly since we were born, we passed an exam (APGAR) in order to have our faculties evaluated. While the higher the result is, the evolution expected the better will be. During all our life, we have been taken exams to assess different types of aspect. For instance, exams to be admitted to a school or university, exams to apply for a job, exams prescribed by a doctor to evaluate our health. There are a lot more examples to cite when referring to assessments.

5.5 Summative and Formative Evaluation

Formative assessment is designed to assist the learning process by providing feedback to the learner, which can be used to identify strengths and weakness and hence improve future performance. Formative assessment is most appropriate where the results are to be used internally by those involved in the learning process (students, teachers, curriculum developers). *Summative assessment* is used primarily to make decisions for grading or determine readiness for progression. Typically, summative assessment occurs at the end of an educational activity and is designed to judge the learner's overall performance. In addition to providing the basis for grade assignment, summative assessment is used to communicate students' abilities to external stakeholders, e.g., administrators and employers (**Darling-Hammond, 2006**).

Formative assessment refers to an assessment process in which students' learning is monitored on an ongoing basis to identify the difficulties the learners are experiencing in reaching the targeted learning goals and to provide explicit feedback to the teachers and learners, so that the teachers and learners can adjust their teaching and learning accordingly **(Black & William, 2009; Bloom, Hasting, & Madaus, 1971; Rea-Dickinson & Gardener, 2000; Torrance & Pryor, 1998)**.

Summative assessment is a synonym for formal assessment and it takes place when the students are aware of the purpose of the assessment.

The authorities at Santa Angela School have been informed that the fourth-grade students are taking part of a research as well as the formality of the exams they are going to be administered at the beginning and at the end of the research. Fourth – graders are acquainted to this type of examinations.

Most formal assessments also are summative in nature and thus tend to have greater motivation impact and are associated with increased stress. Given their role in decision-making, formal assessments should be held to higher standards of reliability and validity than informal assessments **(McAlpine 2002)**.

The test already has a rubric which we will use during the pre and post-test (SEE APPENDIX 2).

5.6 Diagnostic Tests.

They are used to determine students' areas of strengths and weakness in order to create appropriate types and levels of teaching and learning activities.

Assuredly, lines above I explained the importance of taking a diagnostic test in an educational institution. It helps the teachers a lot since we can prepare classes considering the level of competence of the learners. According to the results we are able to prepare the grammar structures the vocabulary appropriate to the level achieved.

admittedly, this type of exam takes time to think, prepare, and obviously, it is hard work. However, thinking about the benefits for our students we can certainly agree that is worthy.

The tests applied focus on the students' *performance* rather than *competence*. The distinction between them relies in the fact that competence refers to the knowledge the person possesses, whereas performance refers to the actual use of language in concrete situations (**CHOMSKY 1965:4**).

The purpose of the application of the diagnostic test is to collect information related to the level of competence of the students regarding the productive skills of speaking.

For this, we used **a band scale** which includes a number of divisions of possible student performance, and descriptors for each band. In this way, we can choose which criteria students are going to be assessed on (SEE APPENDIX 3)

6. STUDY

6.1 Description of the Context of the Research

An action research for implementing the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

First of all, I would like to review in this chart what I found out before starting the project.

Difficulties Identified in Class Observation, questionnaires and test.	Analysis of Difficulties	Strategies Developed for better results	Results After the Implementation of The Strategies mentioned above
Children were not confident enough to speak in English.	Children were exposed to learn grammar translation first in a demotivated deductive way in early years.	Teacher asked young learners how they would like to learn.	Children started participating more actively than before.
Children used their mother tongue very often.	Nobody at home speaks to them in English.	Teacher set rules for a better understanding of English language.	Children started talking in English little by little. (simple chunks)
Students did not want to participate in classroom due to lack of technological equipment.	Students were afraid of making mistakes since they did not have microphones or cameras.	Teacher applied interesting online resources to present engaging lessons.	Students participated with enthusiasm and confidence using PPT when making oral presentations.

The present action research had as a principal aim the development of speaking skills of the students of four grade by using visual aids in power point. The context where we carried out this project was in a primary school with four grade students, aged 9 or 10.

This action research was conducted from July to December . The subjects of the study are the students belonging to the fourth grade primary level .

Before the application of the project, the language level of the children was A1. The students showed clear lack of fluency due to grammar and vocabulary gaps and lack of practice.

As well as this, the pronunciation of the language was not clear and the interaction was poor.

The results of the pre-test gave us light to create the teaching material and techniques we considered necessary to help them develop the speaking skill.

The context chosen to undertake the research was Lima, Peru. The English language is the main foreign language taught within the educational system in Peru as it is part of the curriculum of all the education system. The educational level chosen to conduct this action research was primary education.

The Action research project was carried out in Santa Angela primary School which is a private school located in Salamanca, Ate a district in Lima, Peru. It is a Catholic educational community that provides a quality comprehensive education focused on all dimensions of the person, contributing with families in the formation of their children, respecting their differences and enhancing their abilities, with values marked by the love of God and the Marian Franciscan spirit, to achieve autonomous students, entrepreneurs, researchers, believers, happy and responsible with society and the environment; promoting pedagogical innovation that contributes to scientific, technological and humanistic development.

This middle class school where the students come from families who parents have a job that enables them pay for their children schooling. However, since 2020 all the world has been stroke by the COVID 19 pandemic, these families have also been affected economically and emotionally. This had also an impact in the way children had to accommodate their study routine and adapt to the new challenge of having virtual classes in their house.

All of a sudden, children saw themselves interacting with their teacher and classmates through a virtual platform where many times the only thing they heard was the voice of their classmates as some of them could not afford to buy a camera. Other times, other factors caused a discontinued and non-fluent class attendance because sometimes students could not connect to the class for not having paid the internet or electricity bill on time or simply because another sibling was having virtual classes at the same time and had to use the computer.

The English lessons involve one class consisting of thirty students. The research was conducted through the Google Meet platform. This class group was chosen because it was observed that the students had great enthusiasm for learning the language, even though they faced several difficulties, technical and academically. Most of the students showed themselves eager to study and learn.

In addition to those qualities, we can say that most of their parents have middle economic level, so their study is fully financially supported by their family.

As additional resources, we used audios, videos and applied techniques such as sentence completion exercises, pair work, short presentations, role plays and picture description.

The present action research had as a principal aim the development of speaking skills of the students of four grade by using visual aids in power point. The context where we carried out this project was in a primary school with four grade students, aged 9 or 10.

As additional resources, we used audios, videos and applied techniques such as sentence completion exercises, pair work, short oral presentations, role plays and picture description.

6.2 Description of the Corpus and Data Collection

This section provides the reader with an overview of the action research carried out and the process of the data collected.

This is an action research that intends to contribute with a solution to a problem identified in the classroom. It is a small scale research whose study results will serve to give evidence of how the students progressed or not. Apart from that, it

will serve as a model and encouragement to those other teachers who note their students have difficulty of different types with the language.

It was indispensable to collect the data which would give us the information necessary to obtain useful results. Like that, we would be able to obtain the record of what happens in our classroom in two main ways. On the one hand, by using a qualitative instrument: a) direct observational data: audio or video tape classroom behavior; field notes of observers; b) self-reports in the form of surveys, questionnaires, checklists, diaries or journals, and interviews with teachers and learners. On the other hand, quantitative data collection which we obtained by using a Speaking test.

In this research, we applied a speaking test where the students' performance was measured by using a quantitative rubric (SEE APPENDIX N° 2). After using the materials and applying our methodology, the score provided by the rubric during the diagnostic test was contrasted with the score of the post-test to measure the progress of the students' oral competence of the language. Let us clarify that it was feasible to apply more elaborated instruments and methodology to carry out this project. However, this is an action research which is anchored in what the classroom teacher can do basically on their own. Thus, once the data was collected it was compared and analyzed.

Likewise, we must say that this action research is based on a handful of strategies which were adapted to the purpose of this study, considering that speaking is a skill, and as such needs to be practiced and developed. The methodology used was participative learning. The interaction with others (teacher, and classmates) was very important in the cognitive and sociocultural development. The students' active participation was the central and key part of this plan taking advantage of the technology available in this pandemic context.

6.2.1 The Action Research Model

This study adopted the model of classroom action research developed by **Kemmis and McTaggart (1988.)**

The reason behind the decision to follow this model obeys the fact that the model agrees with the research environment as well as the experience the researcher has around that field (**Somekh, 2006**).

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) suggested a model with four stages which can follow a spiral path, and can be repeated according to the scope purposes, and outcomes of the research (**Burns, 2005**):

These four stages are the following:

a. Planning

At this stage the researcher develops a plan of action, critically informed. The aim of this plan is to improve what is already happening in the classroom. For this reason, we prepared everything that was to be needed for doing the research, for example the lesson plans, the class material for teaching like the power points and other materials necessary to teach and help the students improve the speaking skill. In addition to that, the researcher prepares the evaluation material to be used before and after the action to measure whether or not that the speaking proficiency improved.

b. Action and data collection

After having planned the action, we had to implement the learning activities of English such as role plays, readings, sentence completion, extra activities to be done as homework and games. All of them using the technological platforms available on internet, for instance, live worksheets, kahoot, and others. It is in this step that the pretest, exercises, and posttest were administered to the students. In other words, in this step, apart from implementing the teaching activities and material, we collected the data before and after the application of the methodology and the teaching material.

The Action Research “Developing this English speaking skill”, was held applying strategies designed to reach the main aim of this project , overcoming the deficiencies that were found during the development of the learning sessions. Every class included the activities designed in the Action research. The students’ participation with the researcher was a crucial to achieve the objectives.

The speaking tests were conducted in two different moments of the study. Each speaking test lasted seven minutes per student . The speaking tests were conducted in different dates, according to the attendance of the students. It is necessary to mention that this study was carried out in a moment where the country

was going through a drastic quarantine and there were a number of difficulties all the students' were facing in order to adapt to the new changes of virtual education.

The research was carried out in two periods; each period consisted of two oral tests. However, in the middle of them, we applied our methodology by using power point and visual aids to boost the students' speaking performance and interaction.

The first speaking test, the pre-test, was done on August 27th and September 2nd and the second speaking test, the post-test, was done on November 11th. The implementation of the methodology and use of the materials designed for our teaching purposes were carried from August to December, having a total of 20 weeks.

The data collected with the pre and post-test was quantitative and were analyzed to know the improvement of students' speaking competence.

The process of data collection followed several steps which were carefully done in order to fulfil the aims set for this project.

The data collected by means of the quantitative method were got from the pre-test and post-test. The test used was the Movers Speaking test by Cambridge University. In this action research, the researcher applies the pre-test at the beginning, before the application of the methodology of the teaching learning process. The post-test was done at the end of the research, after 18 weeks.

The procedure for the administration of the test was:

1. Preparing the test materials: speaking materials.
2. Evaluating the students to know their level of speaking English proficiency.
3. Having a record of the students' grades.
These three procedures were the same for both, the pre and post-test.
4. Examining, contrasting and comparing the result of the tests. The results were analyzed to see the degree of the student's speaking proficiency improvement.

c. Observation and data analysis

At this point it is important to highlight that the observation of the effects of the critically informed action in the context was done throughout all the research. Observation is an action that helped us

record the way the students responded to the stimuli, which was the methodology and teaching material created. For such effect, we used observation sheets to record some events of how the process of teaching and learning run. This will serve us to reflect upon the interaction and events that took place during the development of the classes.

As well as that, in this stage we analyzed the data collected with the pre and posttest. We contrasted the results for the variables considered in the speaking test administered, namely grammar and vocabulary, interaction and pronunciation. (SEE APPENDIX N°1) Finally, as **Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)** say, this information is useful in order to revise the findings and reflect upon them and plan a new action if necessary.

d. Reflection

In this step the researcher reflects how the teaching and learning process runs. The function of reflection is to be aware of the weaknesses and the strengths of the action. Thus, we made an evaluation of the result of the test and also from the observation done during the teaching and learning process. These findings would give us light on what to do and what to expect with the same groups later on and with groups with similar learning conditions and characteristics.

The spiral model developed by **Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)** is the following:

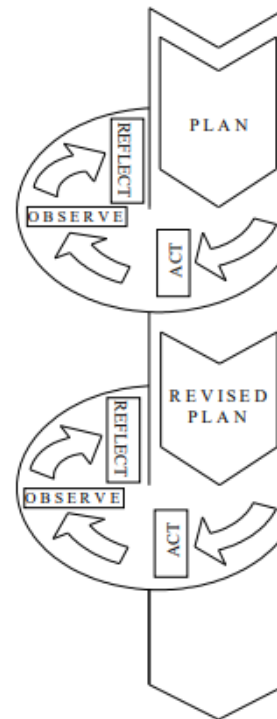


Figure 1. The Model of Action Research of Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988)

6.3 Research Tools Used

In this action research we employed a speaking test as the main method and used a Movers International Speaking test by Cambridge University as the instrument to collect and record the information about the students' level of speaking proficiency in the English Language.

6.3.1 The Cambridge Speaking Test for children and young people

The department of the University of Cambridge is in charge of designing and renewing exams that allow people to obtain an official qualification widely recognized internationally. The "Cambridge English Language Assessment" creates tests for all levels of difficulty, following the recommendations made by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (the CEFR), covering the levels set by this European standard today, that is, from A1 to C2.

However, not only the levels of difficulty are considered, but also the different ages of the candidates who usually take these exams, as well as their specific needs and characteristics.

In other words, creating an exam for an adult is not the same as creating an exam for a child or even for an adolescent or young student: mentalities change and, therefore, the contents must be adapted.

Cambridge English decided to create a special range of exams that, under the acronym YLE, derived from the expression Young Learners English, is in charge of designing specific tests for children, adolescents and young people, attending to the specific needs of this important group of students, candidates who decide to take Cambridge exams each year to properly validate their knowledge of English.

The chosen age period is the one ranging from 7 to 12 years old and the difficulty levels that they decided to create when talking about “Young Learners English” were “Starters, Movers and Flyers”.

Starters, refer to young children who begin their learning with English and who, therefore, do not have any notion about this language.

Movers, define those young students who have already started with this language and who aspire to obtain their first "degree", corresponding to level A1, as specified in the aforementioned CEFR. *This is the aim of our methodology, to prepare the students for the speaking part of this test.*

Flyers, refer to young students, always between 7 and 12 years old, who are already more familiar with the language and aspire to reach a slightly higher level of knowledge, in this case, the one corresponding to level A2 that establishes, once again, the CEFR.

6.3.2 Movers Speaking Summary of Procedures

The Movers Speaking Test employed in this action research included four sections:

- a. In the first section, the examiner asks the child to describe several differences between the two Find the Differences pictures, e.g. 'This is a bird but this is a cat.'
- b. In the second section, the examiner tells the child the name of the story and describes the first picture e.g. 'Fred is sad. He can't play football. His ball is very old. His mum's saying, "Take the dog to the park." ' The examiner then asks the child to continue telling the story.
- c. In the third section, the examiner demonstrates how to do this task with the first set of four odd-one out pictures and then asks the child to choose one picture in the other three sets and say which is different and why. For example, 'These are all animals, but this is a sweater.'
- d. In the fourth section, the examiner asks questions about the child, e.g. 'Who's the youngest in your family?'

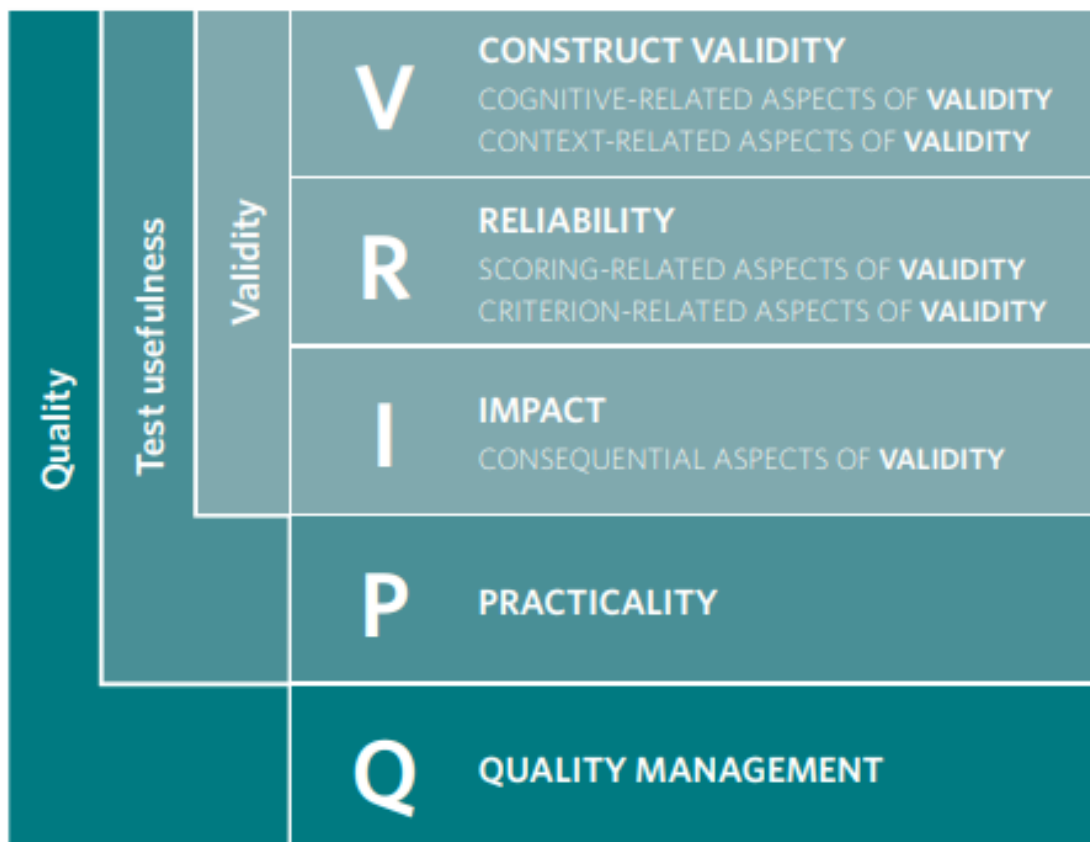
The record of the students' grades was done by using a scale also designed by Cambridge University. It contained grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation and interaction as the three main criteria to be considered in the speaking performance. It was necessary to adapt the punctuation in order to adjust it to the vigesimal system of the Peruvian grading. (SEE APPENDIX N°2)

The main limitation of the Speaking test was to find one that fit the students' annual planning and contents.

6.3.3 The Development of VRIPQ (Construct Validity, Reliability, Impact, Practicality, Quality management) of the Instrument: Movers-International English Test

Saville, N. (2016), Director, Research and Thought Leadership Cambridge English Language Assessment describes the diagram below which depicts the approach that Cambridge follows to achieve fitness for purpose, and shows how they tackled and developed language testing theory and quality management.

Saville, N. (2016), claims that “traditionally, theoretical frameworks in language testing tended not to include practicality and quality management, focusing instead on validity and reliability, which were often seen as polarized”. This view changed when **Messick (1989)** argued for a ‘unitary approach’ to validity in which the interacting nature of different types of validity is stressed. In the validity side bar, in the diagram below, you can see how it is represented.



6.3.3.1 Quality and Accountability

Saville, N. (2016), explains that:

Cambridge English Language Assessment is certified to the ISO 9001 international standard for quality management systems. We comply with regulations set by Ofqual, the UK regulator of assessments, and take part in the audits of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). These external checks provide a sound basis for accountability and give stakeholders confidence in the quality of our assessment systems.

6.3.3.2 Validity and Validation of Cambridge International exams

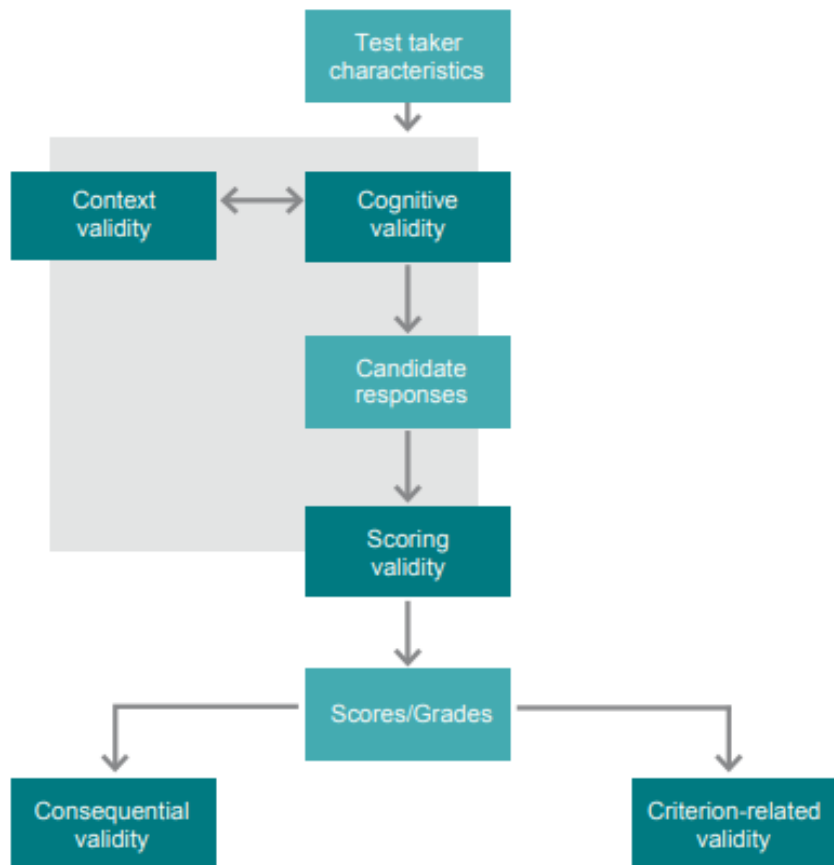
Validity, legitimacy is by and large characterized as the degree to which an evaluation can be appeared to deliver scores and/or results which are an exact reflection of the test taker's genuine level of capacity. It is concerned with the suitability and significance of the deductions made when utilizing the test comes about inside a specific social or instructive setting.

Validation, is in this way, the method of collecting prove to support these interpretations.

As a point of principle, it should be noted that the individual qualities of validity, reliability, impact and practicality cannot be evaluated independently, rather their relative importance must be determined in order to maximise the overall 'usefulness' or 'fitness for purpose' of the exam. This is consistent with the 'unitary' approach to validity as described by **Messick (1989) and Kane (2006)**.

Saville, N. (2016), says that:

Alongside VRIPQ, they also work with the socio-cognitive model. This is a theoretical framework of language learning and assessment that is used for more in-depth analysis of the validity of their exams. This model has been developed in collaboration with Professor Cyril Weir (**Weir 2005**) and draws on the work of Messick, Kane, Bachman and others. The approach is described as socio-cognitive in that the use of language is seen as a social phenomenon (the social dimension) and the language abilities to be tested are seen as mental constructs of the test taker (the cognitive dimension). The diagram on the next page illustrates the principal direction of hypothesized relationships between elements of the socio-cognitive framework. It shows that, while all aspects of validity need to be considered at test development stages, some types of validity evidence cannot be collected until after the test event.



Key – test specifications account for all of these aspects of validity

6.3.3.3 Reliability

Reliability concerns the extent to which test results are stable, consistent and free from errors of measurement.

Scoring-related aspects of validity

When a group of students takes a test, their scores will change depending on their capacity. Reliability in this sense is characterized as the proportion of score variability caused by the extent of score inconstancy caused by the capacity measured, and not by other variables.

The variability caused by other variables or factors is called error. This can be a result of variation in tests administration conditions, variety within the test takers such as lack of motivation or tiredness, and variety within the inspectors and within the tasks. A key point of an examination provider hence, is to seek to minimize the impacts of these sources of error. For instance, by standardizing the way of grading or the way the test administration is carried out.

Saville, N. (2016), says that:

Assessment has important impacts and consequences inside the educational system and inside society more broadly. Test takers in specific are affected because the results of tests are utilized to create imperative choices around them which can influence their lives. At Cambridge English Language Assessment we adopt the principle of impact by design. We strive to achieve positive impact within settings in which our assessments are applied and we undertake to investigate this through our validation processes. In promoting positive effects on curricula and learning, we seek to design and develop test features that are consistent with those found in instructional programmes.

6.3.3.4 Practicality

It can be defined as the degree to which an examination is practicable in terms of the necessary resources to produce and administer it in its expected context and use.

Our decision of taking an existing Movers test relies in the fact that there is sufficient evidence and foundations provided by Cambridge organization itself who demonstrate the process carried out for the validation and reliability of their tests.

They are well-designed tests that assure to measure what the tests were designed to in different contexts and situations. That is the reason why we chose as instruments the speaking test as well as the rubrics and criteria, and used them to measure the students speaking skill.

6.4 Description of the research plan

6.4.1 The Procedure of Action Research

In order to understand the procedure to carry out this action research, we will describe the procedure as follows:

We followed some steps in order to do this research. We identified a problem, selected the population of students subject of study, observed the student's performance during the classes, planned the materials and procedures, implemented the action and collected data through the pre and post-tests, observed the action results, reflected on the action and revised the plan.

6.4.1.1 Selection of the problem to investigate

We concentrated on a particular area of language which is speaking and applied a methodology and tests. After that, we had a record of the students' linguistic performance. The linguistic data is representative of the population of students chose for the research. It is demonstrably and informative.

6.4.1.2 Population Selection

Initially, we had to choose the target population of students. This was done based on the observation of their linguistic production.

6.4.1.3 Students' Performance Observation

We started by observing the students' performance during the classes and noticed the students struggled when having to utter a sentence or interacting either with the teacher or their class mates. It seemed to us it was a matter of fluency, lack of vocabulary, grammar structures, or practice.

6.4.1.4 Planning

In this step, we made a lesson plan for the lesson about a specific topic, we prepared the material, and we considered the time and chose the instruments to collect the information about the students' level of speaking

6.4.1.5 Action and data collection

In this step, we implemented or put into practice the activities prepared in the lesson plan but before that we collected data by administering the pretest using a Movers Speaking test paper already prepared by Cambridge.

The methodology applied with the students at Santa Angela School was designed for young learners of fourth grade.

None of them had ever taken any Cambridge exam thus they still needed to get familiar with the format of the exam and introduce them with the tasks they would have to perform during the Movers exam. Furthermore, a variety of activities were necessary in order to help them practice with different tasks, functions and language. Initially, according to the CEFR global scale, these students fell in the "basic user, Pre-A1 level" classification. Thus, this methodology took into account the skills required by the CEFR for the basic users.

According to the CEFR, the skills that basic users have to achieve are the following.

A1

Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a

concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Below we list and describe some of the activities done during the classes in this stage of action.

a. Elicited Production Procedures

Several techniques were used to elicit the learners' spoken language performance. For instance, by providing some initial verbal or physical context selected by the researcher, this included structured interviews that aimed to elicit the students' knowledge of the language in terms of grammar and vocabulary on different topics according to their level and age. Also some communication tasks were assigned with focus on meaning and form, role plays, picture descriptions, story-retelling, discourse completion, and other questions. All of which were used in the Oral Proficiency Interview at the beginning and at the end of the application of the methodology of this research.

b. Role plays and discourse completion

Role plays and discourse completion are techniques developed primarily to elicit only certain domains of target structure. They were used predominantly to elicit data on pragmatic abilities in a variety of speech activities.

c. Reading aloud, sentence completion and elicited productions

Other tasks were employed in this action research that prompted to produce forms of the language in a more active way. Tasks such as reading aloud with the purpose of assessing speech production, but more specifically phonological and lexical abilities; sentence completion in order to assess syntactic and lexical competences; and other activities that elicited production, for example using picture stimuli from the power point presentations or questions to explore and predict a topic. All of them gave us free access to the learners' knowledge and let us set up extended speech routines.

There are some researches in SLA that already adopted such procedures from L1 research, as in the case of prompting French aspect by doing sentence completion or blank filling (**Harley, 1989**), picture cued descriptions (with occasional verbal prompt) eliciting lexical items (**Snodgrass, 1993**)

d. Act-out tasks

Goodluck, H. (1996), in his book Act out, explains that this method has been largely employed in child L1 acquisition research but very rarely in SLA research. It was used with children for assessing comprehension mainly because of their lower capacity in productive language in contrast to receptive abilities.

6.4.1.6 Observation and data analysis

In this step, we took note of the occurrences during the teaching-learning process. Also we contrasted the results obtained in both tests, the pre and post-test.

6.4.1.7 Evaluation and Reflection

It is in this stage where we evaluated the findings of the whole process of application of our methodology and material. This helped us determine whether it is worthy and fructiferous the use of power point and visual aids for the improvement of the speaking skill of the students.

6.5 Research objectives and findings

This action research aimed to study the following objectives:

1. The first objective was to determine the students' needs in relation to the development of the speaking skills, by using a diagnostic speaking test using Movers international exam format.

The diagnostic test or pre-test gave us a clue of how the level of the students was regarding speaking and the components measured: grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation and interaction. It also showed the difficulties students faced when interacting in the foreign language.

2. The second objective was to design didactic strategies and materials that incorporated use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

The pre-test helped us come up with the material, topics and strategies to be used in the development of the lessons. We found that the students needed to tackle topics according to their age and reality, but also topics that helped them become more familiar with the format of the Movers International Exam. The reactions of the students' when taking the pre-test were very heterogeneous but the common variable was insecurity and the feeling of not knowing what else to expect from the test due to lack of familiarity.

3. The third objective was to use the visual material and Power Point presentations prepared to help the children develop speaking skills.

During the development of the lessons it was clearly observed that the students felt much more confident of what they were learning because they could see the pictures related to the vocabulary they were learning. Thus, when they wanted to express an idea they were able to do it more fluently and without feeling afraid of making mistakes.

4. The fourth objective was to implement and evaluate in the classroom didactic strategies and materials that incorporated the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

The use of visuals definitely was of tremendous support in the expression of ideas. Additionally, the students used sentence completion exercises. These helped them utter ideas minimizing grammar errors to such an extent that their sentences were perfect almost all the time. Apart from that, that instilled in them the habit of making sentences grammatically correct since they used them again and again whenever they had to use similar ideas in different contexts and used the vocabulary necessary for the context.

5. The fifth objective was to evaluate children's progress using Movers international exam speaking test format and based on the results of the research provide guidelines for the implementation of this methodology at Santa Angela School.

After applying the use of visuals and sentence completion exercises, we applied the post-test. The results of the test were positive and showed the improvement of the students regarding the three aspect being evaluated in the speaking test: grammar and vocabulary, interaction and pronunciation. The students had more vocabulary which they used appropriately and contextualized, in sentences that were also grammatically correct. Regarding the pronunciation, the errors were minor, with a little hesitation in very few times, but all in all, knowing grammar, vocabulary, and the pronunciation of words made them more confident when interacting in the foreign language.

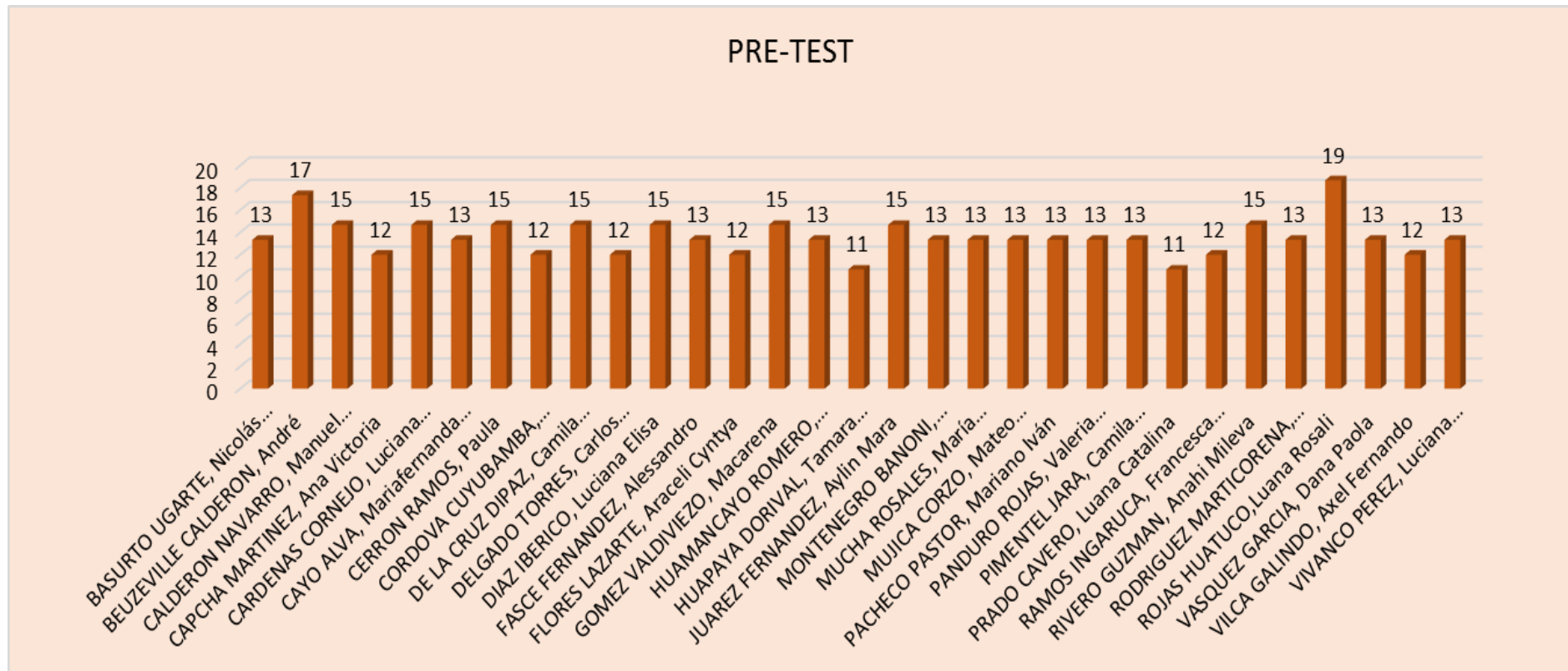
7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to do an action research for implementing the use of visual aids to promote sentence completion and support the development of the speaking skills of fourth-grade A1 EFL students at Santa Angela primary school in Lima, Peru.

Observing the students' performance during the classes before the action research, it was noticed that most of the students had difficulty with the speaking skill much more than with the other three skills. The speaking problems the students faced were a consequence of lack of vocabulary, mispronunciation, badlack of fluency and accuracy and also not feeling confident when speaking. The results of the pre-test were as follow:

GRAPH 01:

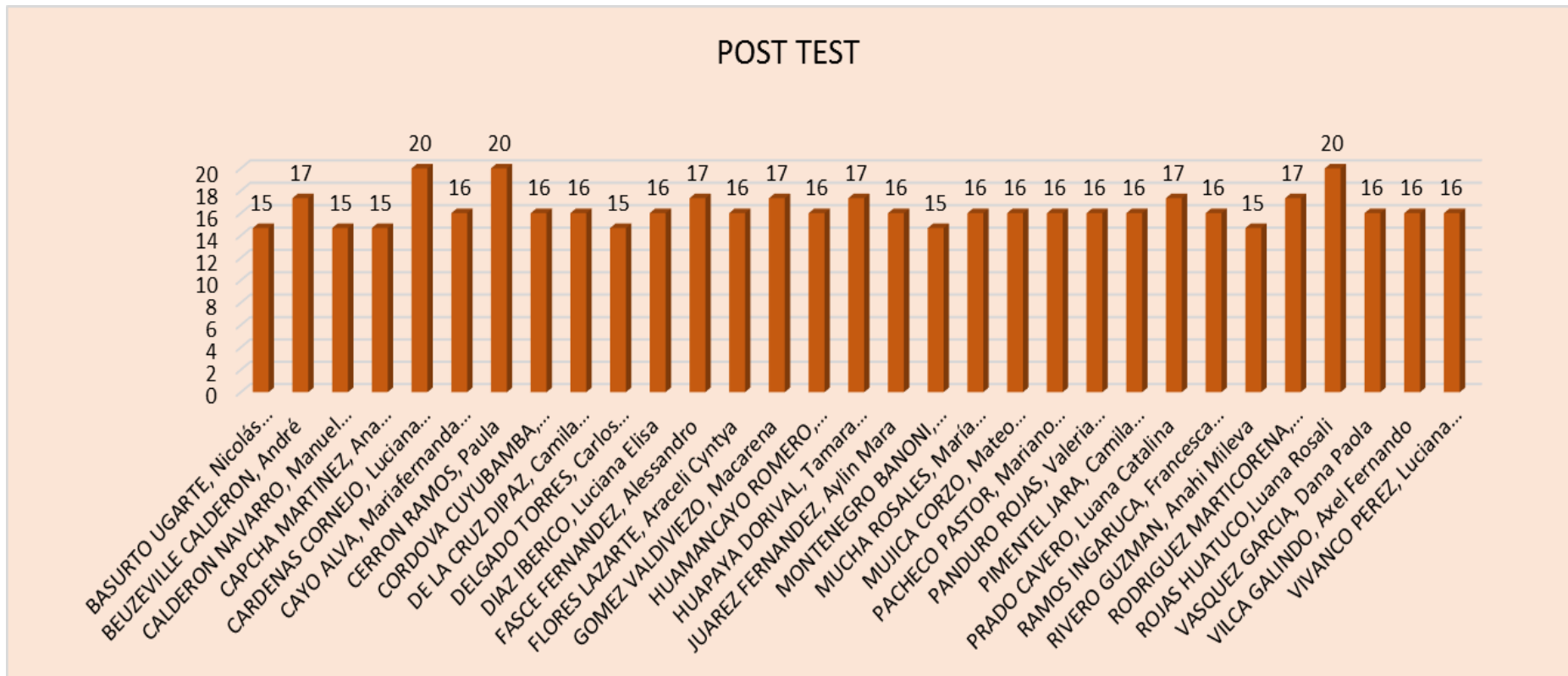
Results of the Pre-Test



Description: The bar chart provides information about the pre-test grades. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 11 out of 20 and the highest score was 19. However, a big number of students obtained a score of 15, others 13 out of 20.

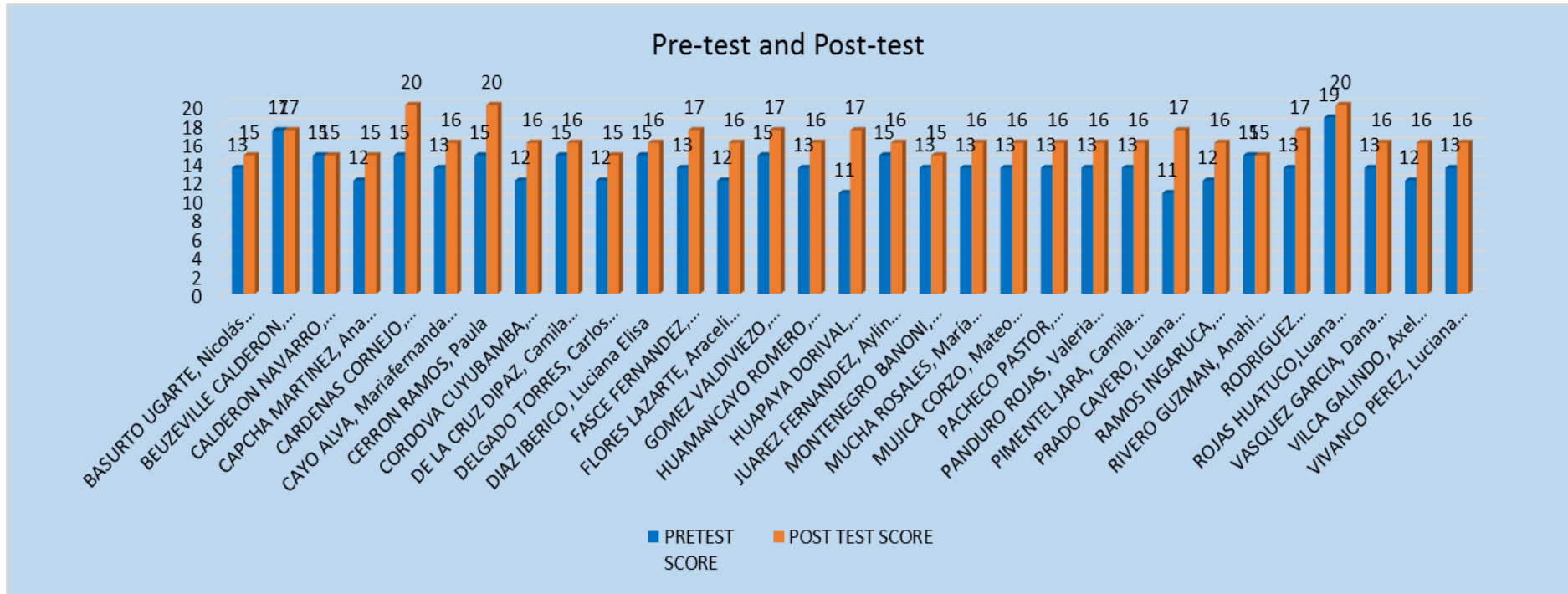
GRAPH 02:

Results of the Post-Test



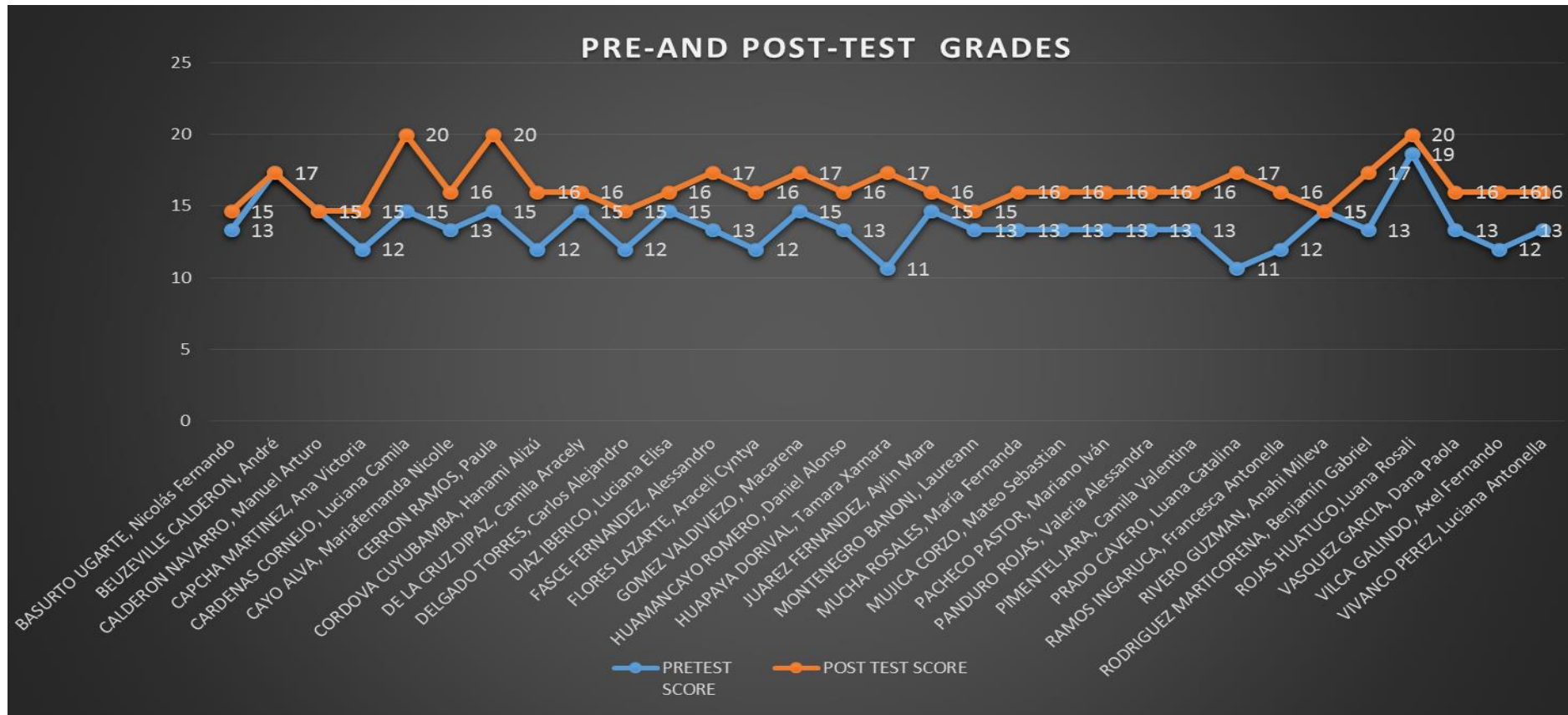
Description: The bar chart provides information about the Post-test grades. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 15 out of 20 and the highest score was 20. A big number of students obtained a score of 16 out of 20.

GRAPH 03: Contrast of the Results of the Pre-Test and Post-Test



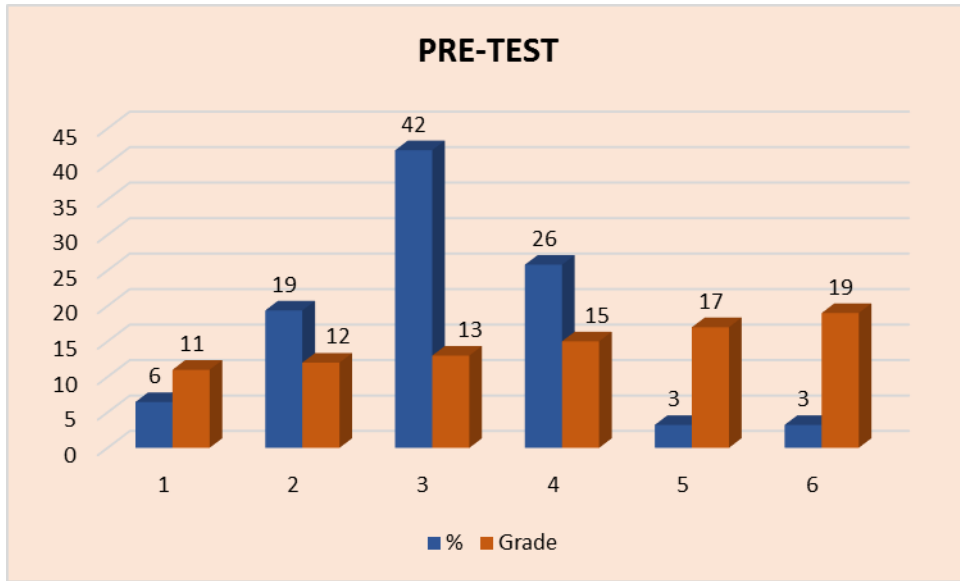
Description: The bar chart provides information about the pre-test and post-test grades. From the graph it can be seen that an important majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. In the pre-test the lowest grade was eleven out of twenty points and the higher grade was nineteen. However, there was only one student who obtained this grade. In contrast, in the post-test, the grades resulted in higher ones, with a great number of students who obtained twenty as the maximum grade.

GRAPH 04: Contrast of the Results of the Pre-Test and Post-Test

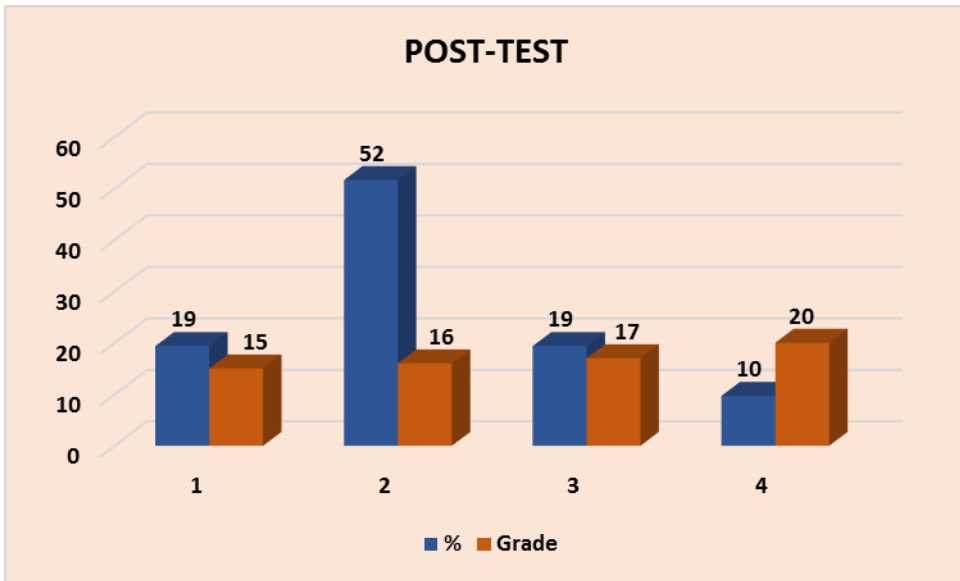


Description: The graph provides information about the pre-test and post-test grades. It can be seen that a significant majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. In the pre-test the lowest grade was eleven out of twenty points and the higher grade was nineteen. However, there was only one student who obtained this grade. In contrast, in the post-test, the grades resulted in higher ones, with a great number of students who obtained twenty as the maximum grade.

Graph 05: Comparative Pre-Test and Post-Test results



Graph 06: Comparative Pre-Test and Post-Test results



Graphs number 05 and 06 illustrate the comparative results obtained by the students in the Pre-Test and Post-Test. As can be seen in these graphs, only a 3% of students obtained a grade of 17, while in the Post-test 19% of students obtained a grade of 17.

Likewise, whereas in the Pre-Test only 3% of the students obtained 19 as a grade, in the Post-Test 10% obtained 20 as a grade. Additionally, in the Pre-Test some students obtained of 11, 12 and 13. This did not occur in the Post-test where the minimum grade was 15. A remarkable 52% of the class improved in the Post-Test obtaining 16 as a grade. This is more than half of the students' speaking performance improved, that implies grammar and vocabulary, interaction and pronunciation.

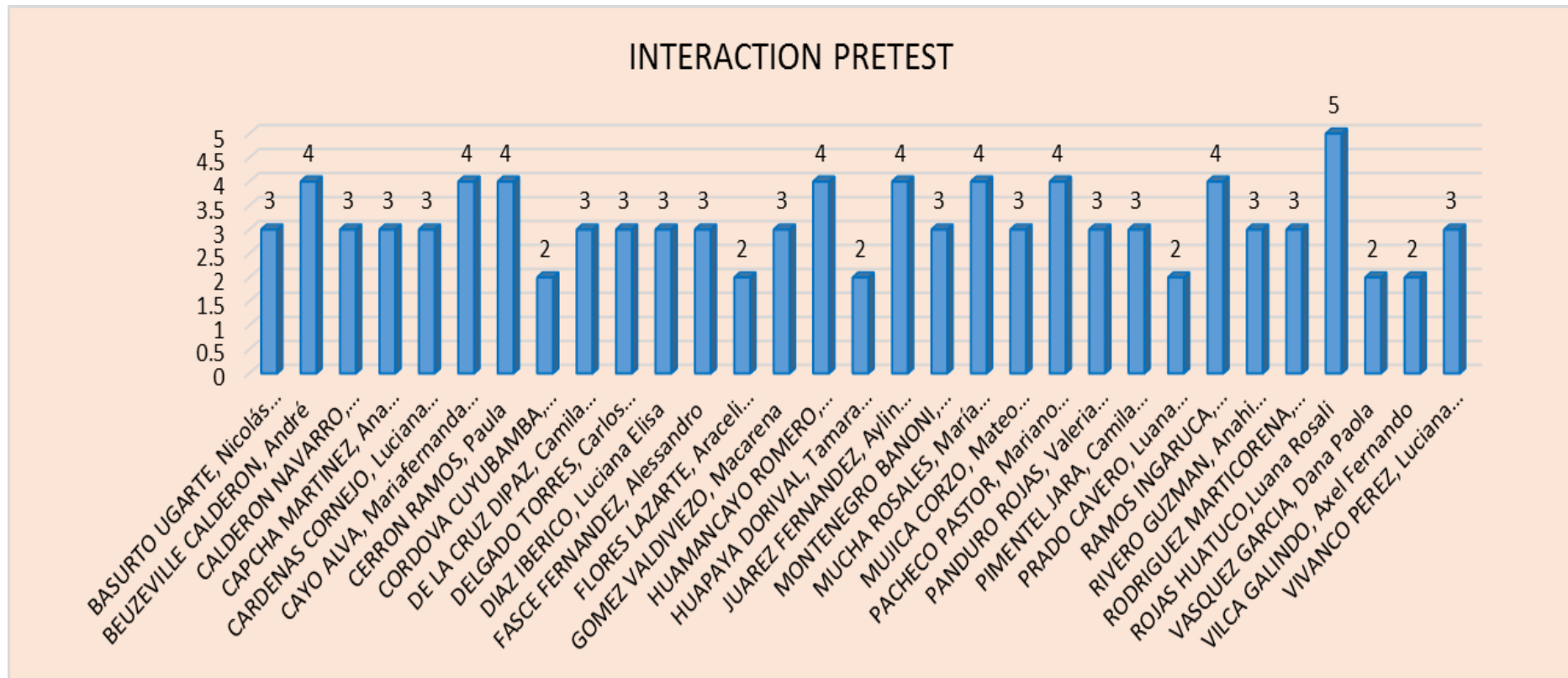
They were actively engaged in the tasks assigned to do during the speaking test. Besides the improvement shown above, it was due to the activities created, the activities assigned so the students became more familiar with the format of the Movers exam. Their performance was a result of carefully designed material and class planning.

Brown, R. (1973) emphasizes that using visual aids, will increase the probability that the students will learn more, retain better what they learn and improve their performance of the skills they are expected to develop. Moreover, Finocchiaro (1974:63) states that the students will understand and retain better when they have been shown or taught some objects that associate with it.

Joseph (2006) confirmed that students tend to be more motivated and choose to complete assignments and tasks that contain some items that are known to them and that appear to demand a lower level of effort because they feel confident about their ability to complete such tasks.

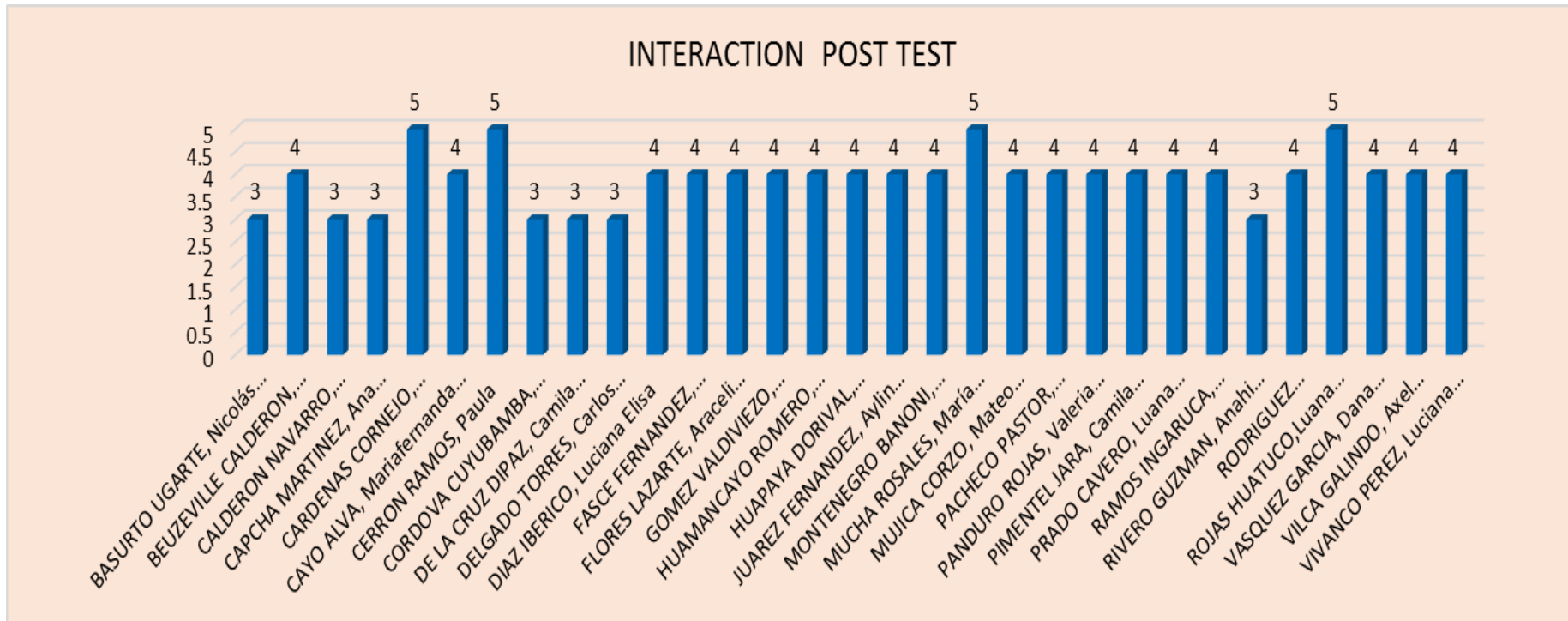
All in all, we can infer that after applying the methodology, power point, visual aids and other teaching materials during our lessons, the students' performance improved.

GRAPH 07: Results of the Variable Interaction in the Pre-Test



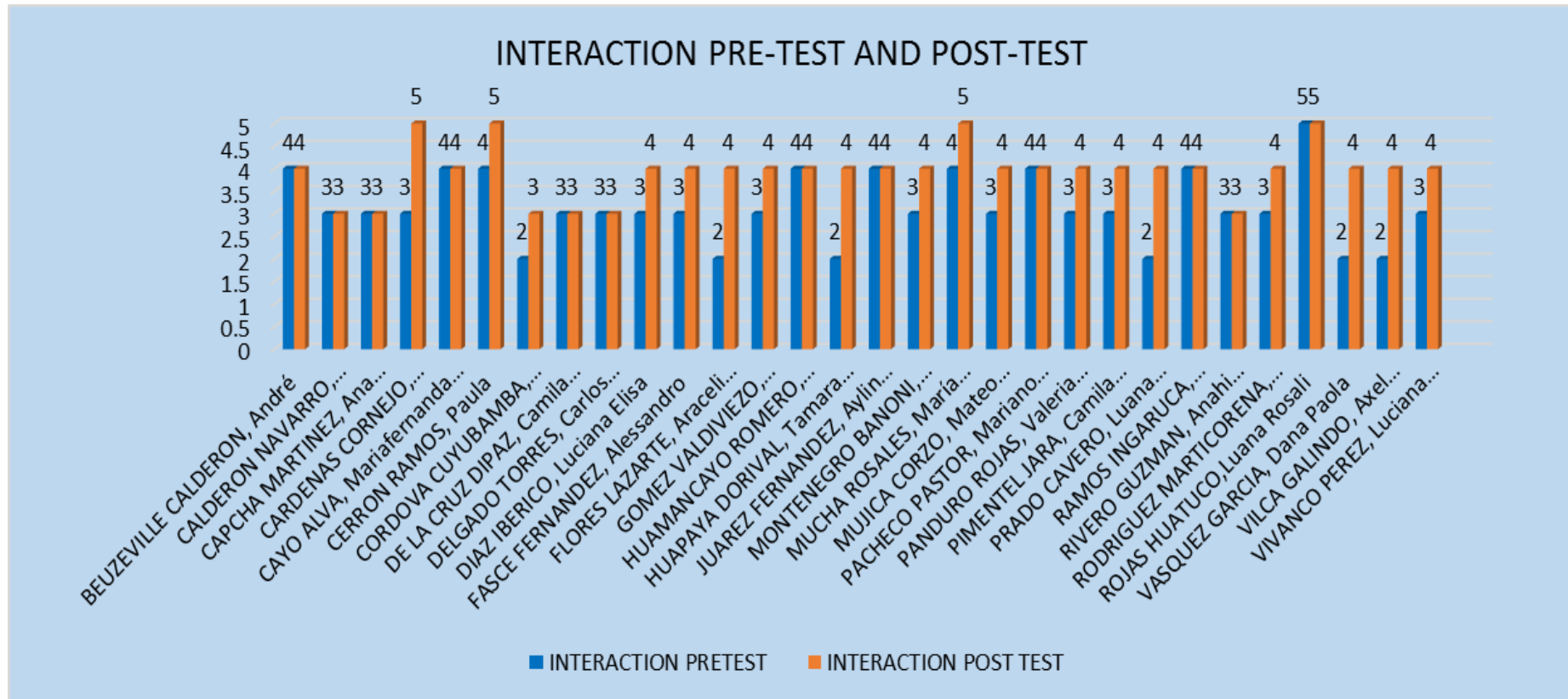
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Interaction in the Pre-test. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 2 out of 5 and the highest score was 5. However, it can be observed that the average score obtained by the majority of the students is 3.

GRAPH 08: Results of the Variable Interaction in the Post-Test



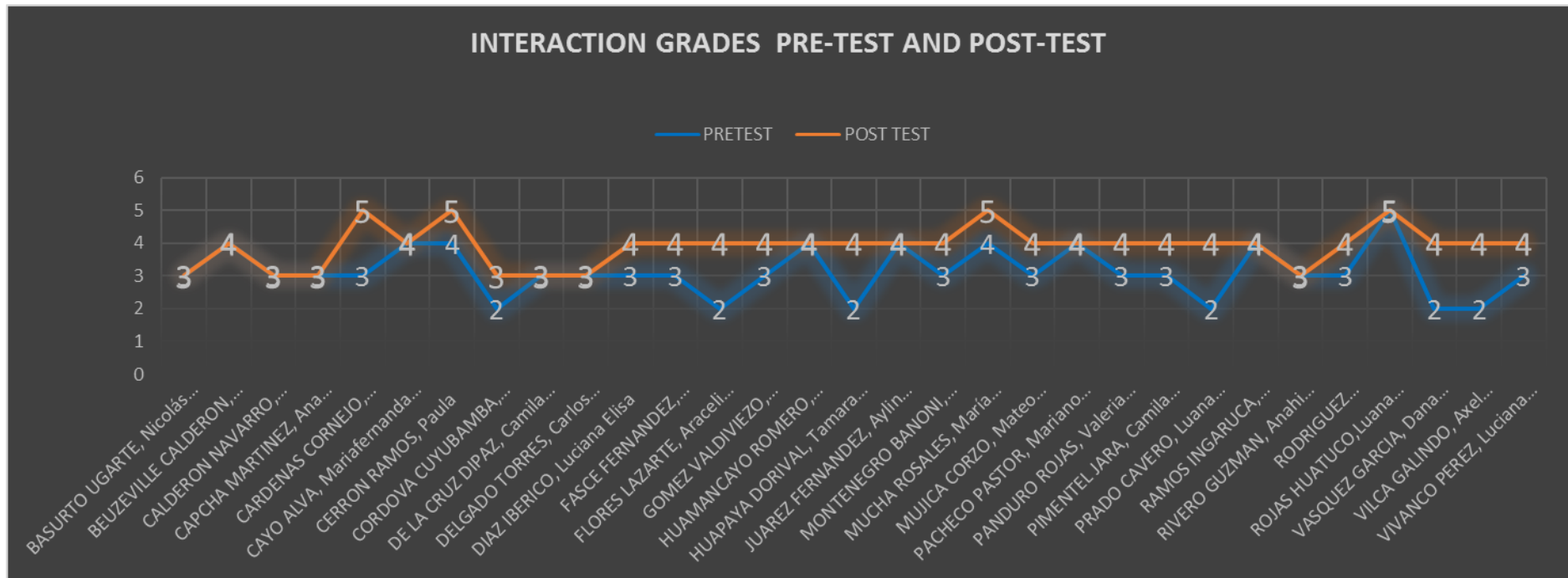
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Interaction in the Post-test. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 3 out of 5 and the highest score was 5. However, it can be observed that the average score obtained by the majority of the students is 4.

GRAPH 09: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Interaction in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



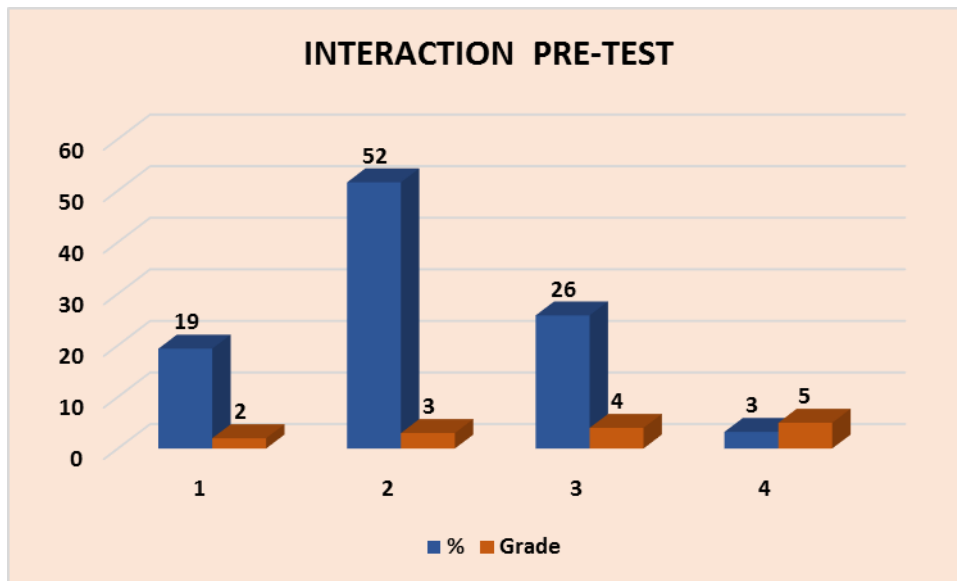
Description: The bar chart provides information about the results of the dependant variable Interaction in the Pre-Test and the Post-Test. . From the graph it can be seen that an important majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. In the pre-test the lowest grade was two2 out of 5 points and the higher grade was 5. While in the Post-Test, ghe lowest score obtained by the students was 3 and the highst was 5.

GRAPH 10: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Interaction in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

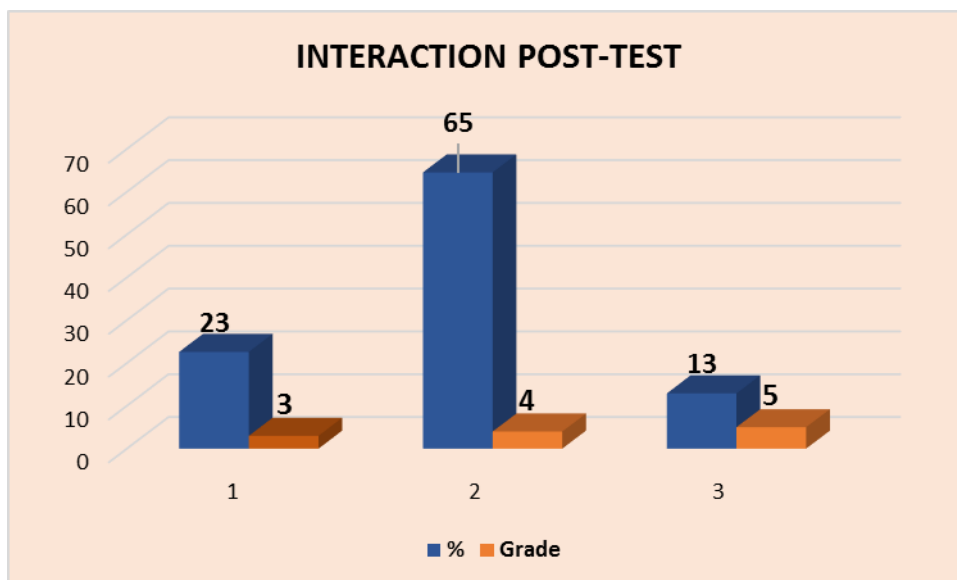


Description: The graph provides information about the results of the dependant variable Interaction in the Pre-Test and the Post-Test. . From the graph it can be seen that an important majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. In the pre-test the lowest grade was two out of 5 points and the higher grade was 5. While in the Post-Test, the lowest score obtained by the students was 3 and the highest was 5.

Graph 11: Comparative Interaction Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

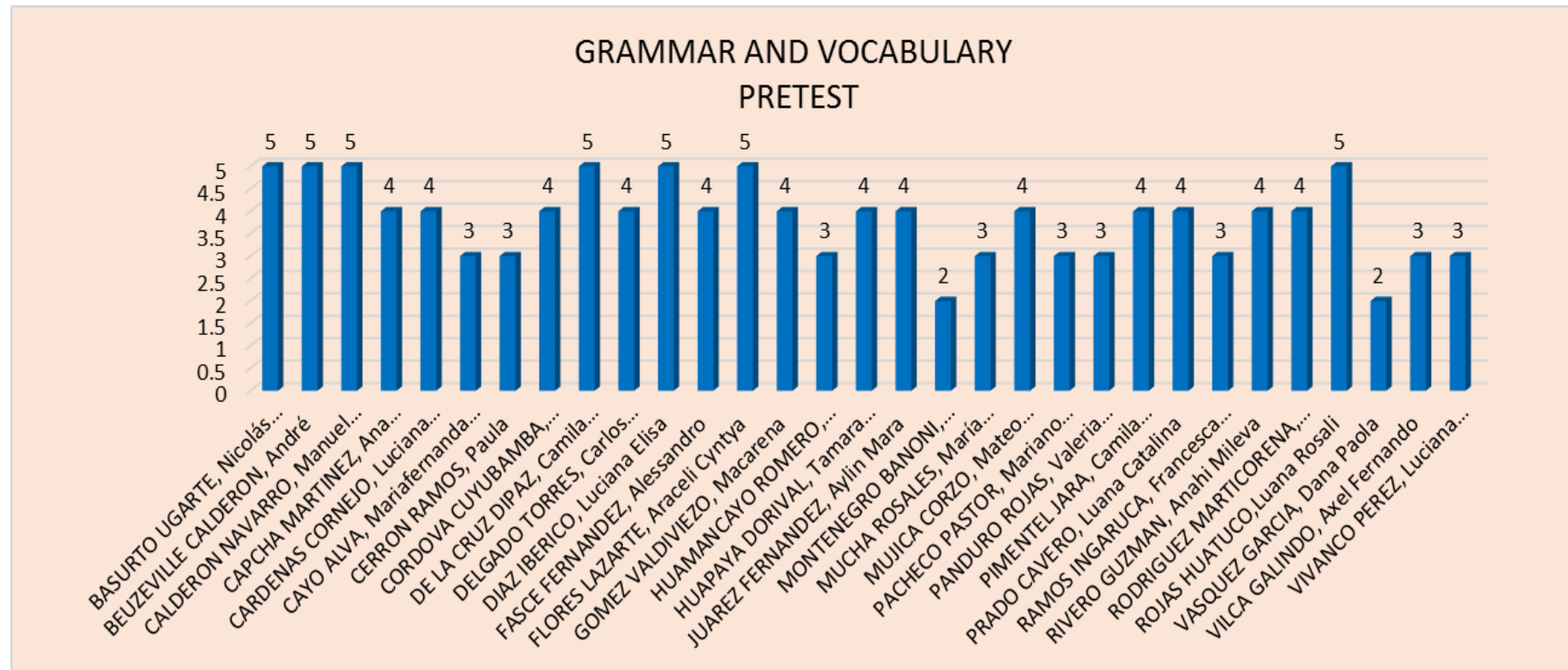


Graph 12: Comparative Interaction Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



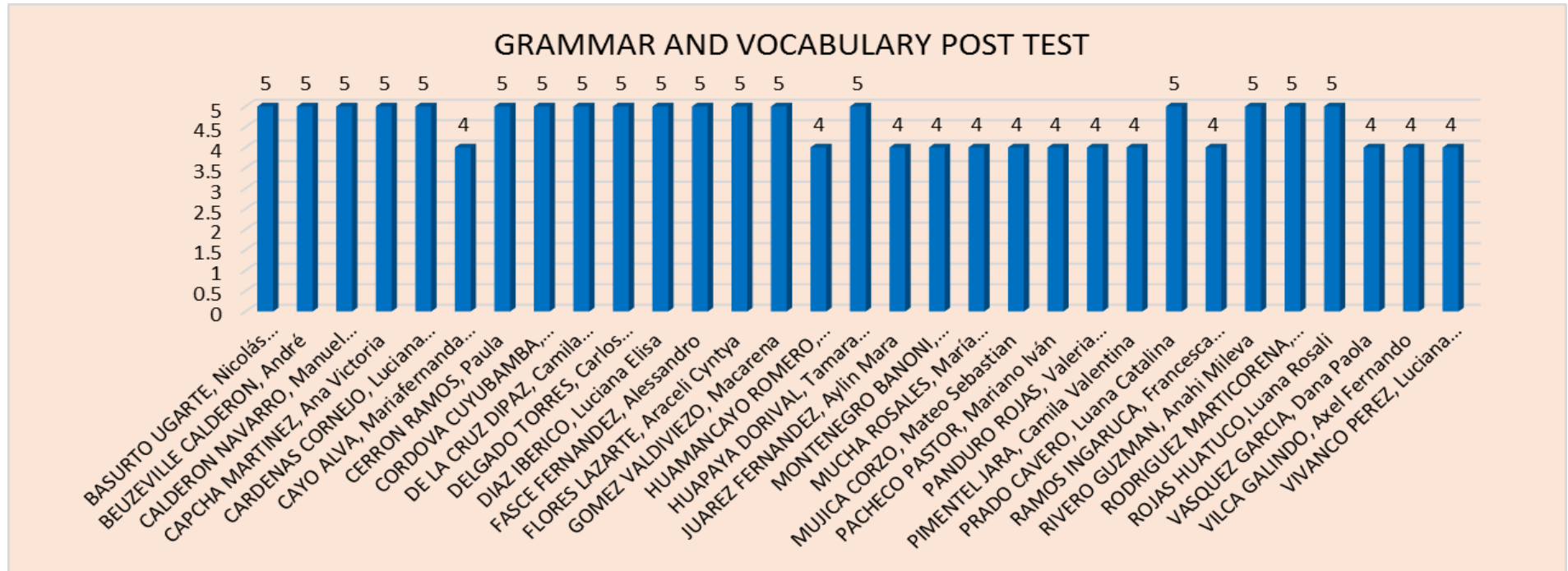
Graphs number 11 and 12 illustrate the comparative results obtained in the dependant variable Interaction by the students in the Pre-Test and Post-Test. As can be seen in these graphs, in the Pre-Test, 52% of students obtained 3 points out of 5 whereas in the Post-Test this figure decreased to 23%. In contrast, in the Pre-Test 26% obtained 4 points while in the Post-Test 65% obtained 4 points. Similarly, there was an increase in the percentage of students who obtained 5 points from 3% in the Pre-test to 13% in the Post-test. Additionally, in the Post-Test there were no students obtaining 2 points which did happen in the Pre-test. Thus, all in all, we can infer that after applying the methodology, power point, visual aids and other teaching materials during our lessons, the students' interaction improved.

GRAPH 13: Results of the Variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-Test



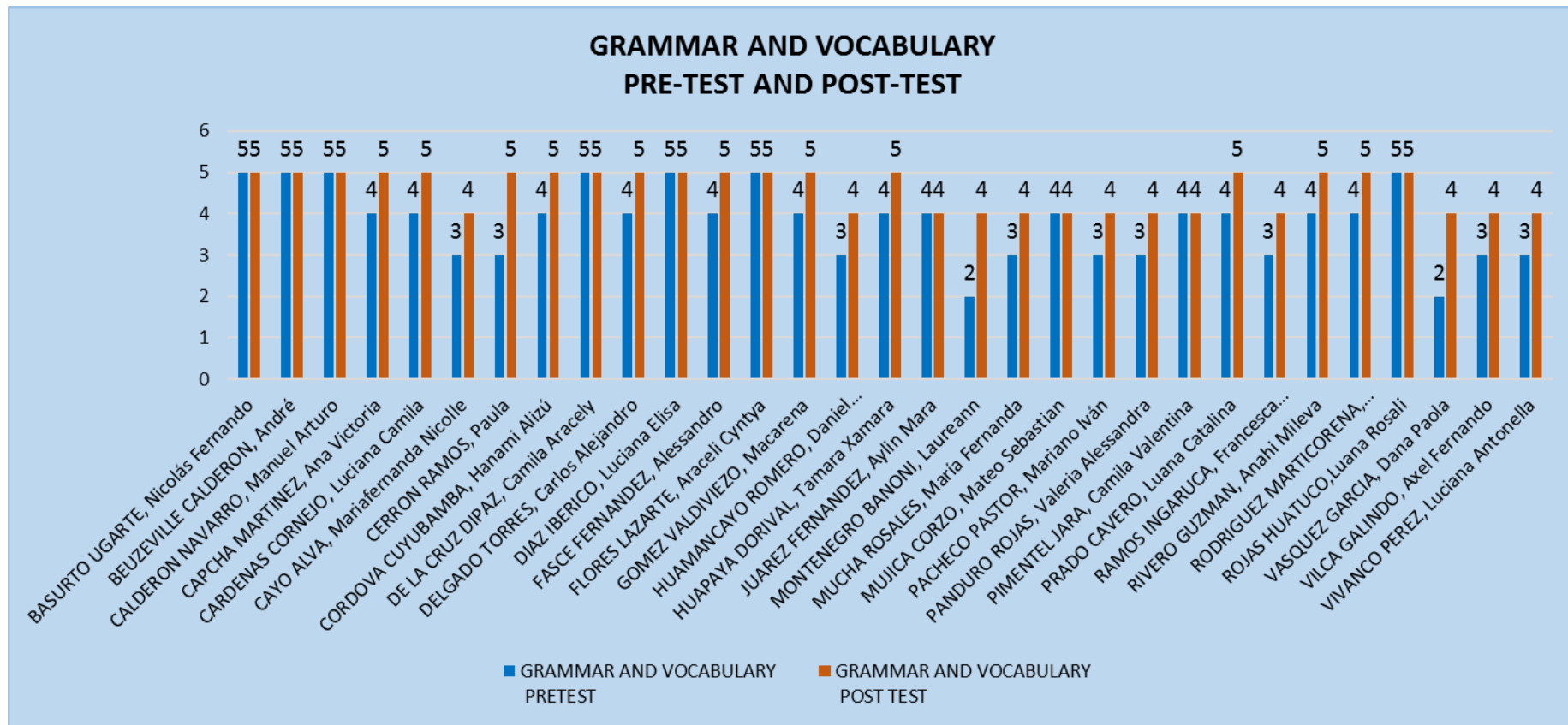
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-test. From the graph it can be seen that, even though, it was only two students, the lowest score was 2 out of 5 while the highest score was 5. On the other hand, it can be observed that a small number of students obtained 3 and a small number of students obtained 4.

GRAPH 14: Results of the Variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Post-Test



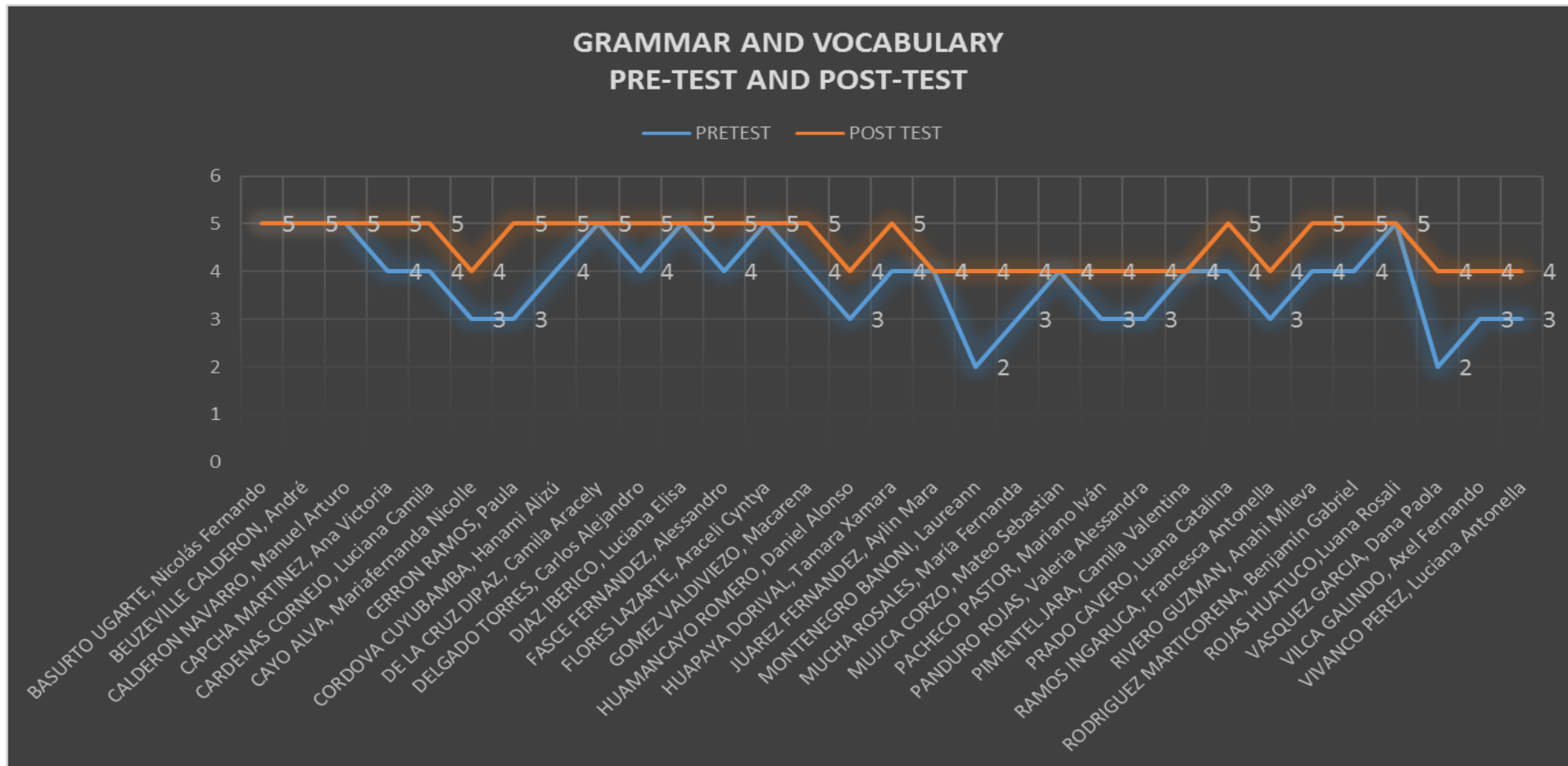
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Post-test. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 4 out of 5 while the highest score was 5.

GRAPH 15: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



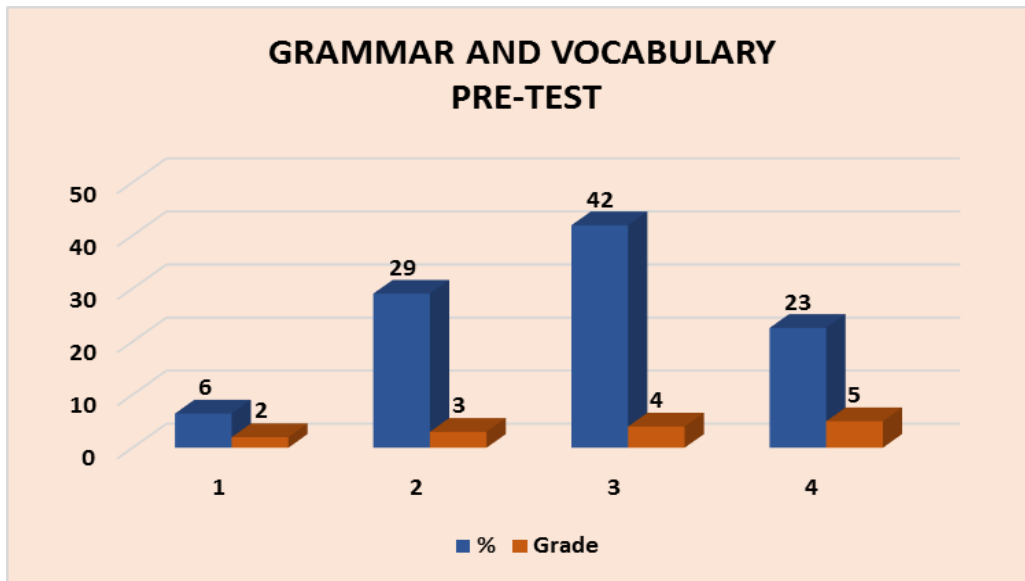
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in dependant variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-test and Post-Test. It can be seen that an important while in the pre-test a great number of students obtained 3, in the post-test the majority obtained 4.

GRAPH 16: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

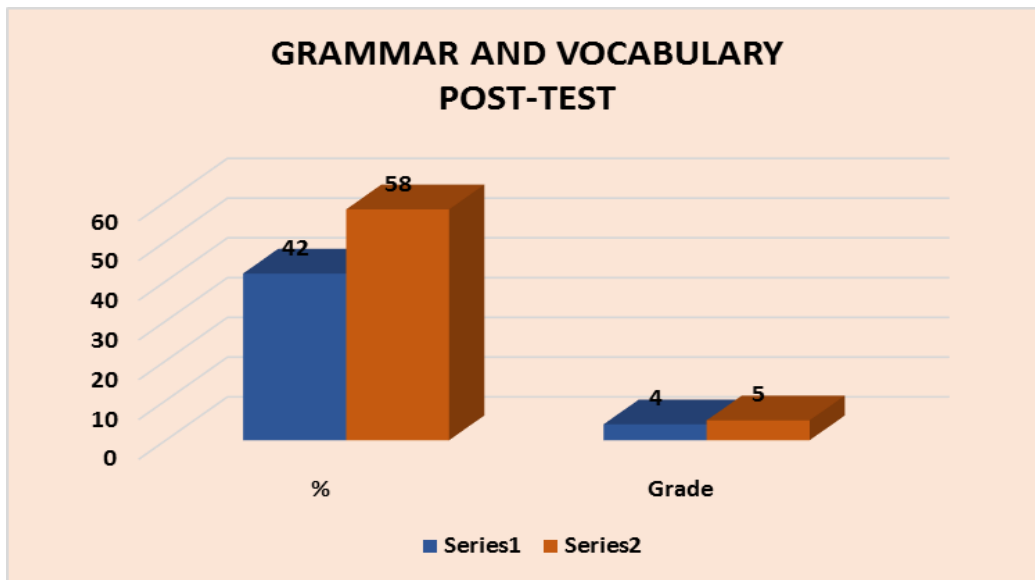


Description: The graph provides information about the grades obtained in dependant variable Grammar and Vocabulary in the Pre-test and Post-Test. It can be seen that an important while in the pre-test a great number of students obtained 3, in the post-test the majority obtained 4.

GRAPH 17: Comparative Grammar and Vocabulary Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



Graph 18: Comparative Grammar and Vocabulary Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



Graphs number 17 and 18 illustrate the comparative results obtained in the dependant variable Grammar and Vocabulary by the students in the Pre-Test and Post-Test. As can be seen in these graphs, in the Post-Test non of the students obtained 2 or 3 points. While in the Pre-Test the points where distributed from 2 to 5. Here, the students' knowledge

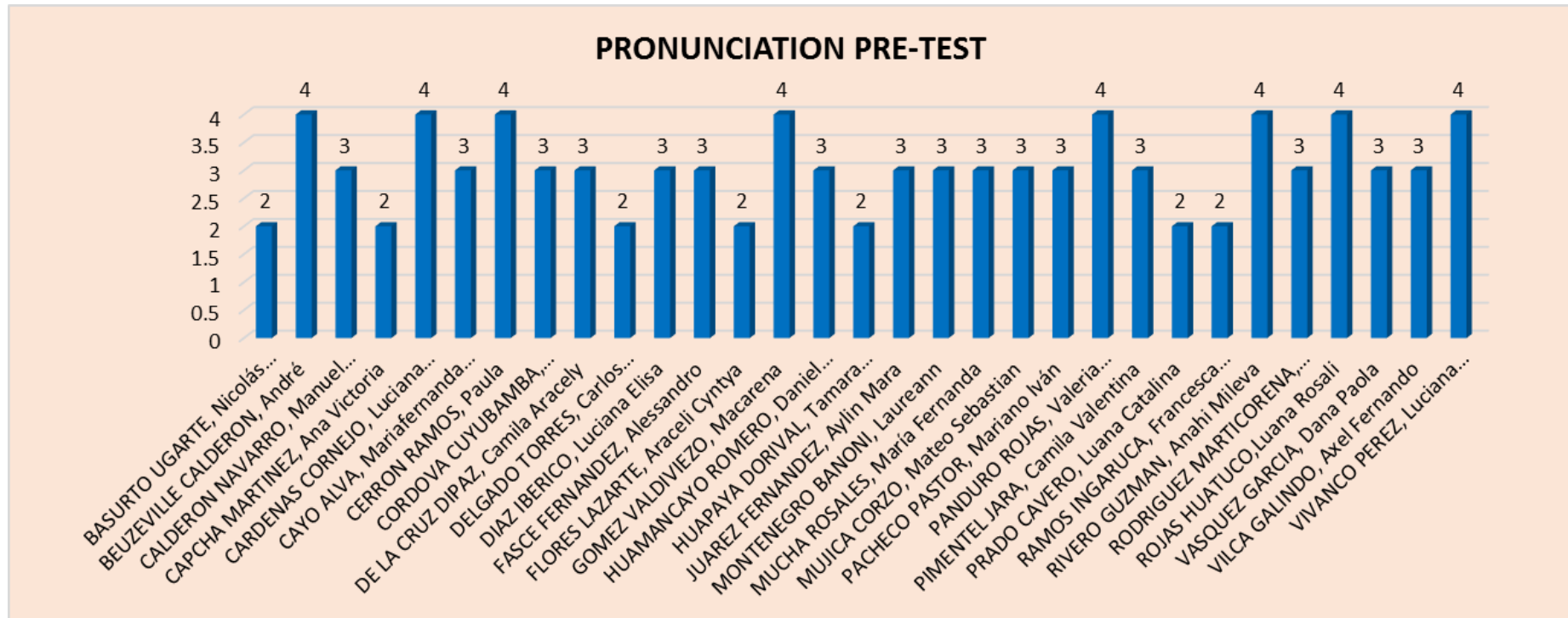
regarding the usage of the grammar and vocabulary was average; 42% obtained 4 points. In contrast, in the Post-Test, almost half of the class, still 42% obtained 4 points, but the number of students who obtained 5 points rose sharply to 58%.

This improvement in using grammar and vocabulary in English is a result of the implementation of visual aids which gave the students a cue of the words to use and the use of sentence completion exercises which gave the students cues on how to answer or express ideas. Thus, when the teacher implemented the class with pictures the students seemed enthusiastic to make sentences based on the pictures. Most of them raised their hands to participate and express their ideas orally, others wrote them on the board. Despite making some mistakes, they were strongly committed to continue participating.

It can be concluded that there was an important improvement in the students knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary in the Post-Test.

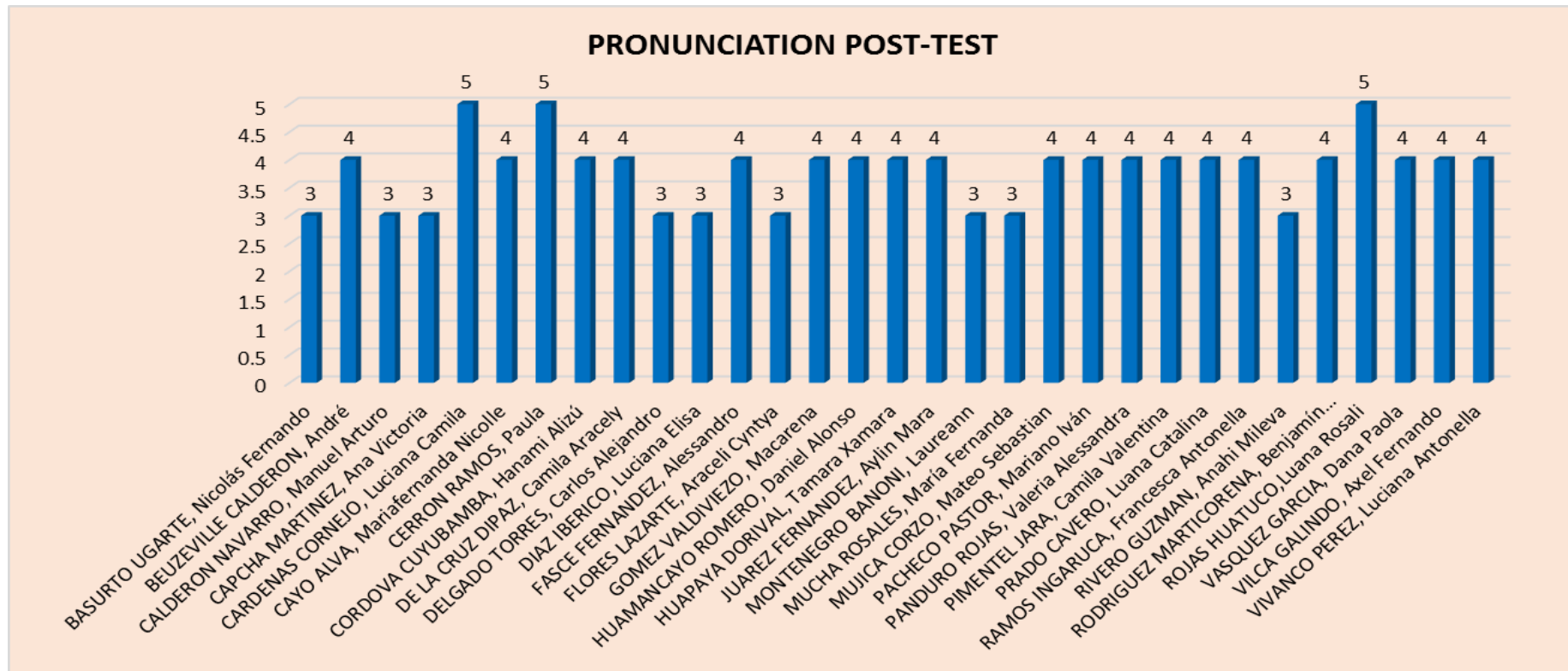
The fact that more than half of the students improved the usage of grammar and vocabulary may be taken as an indication of successful language learning.

GRAPH 19: Results of the Variable Pronunciation in the Pre-Test



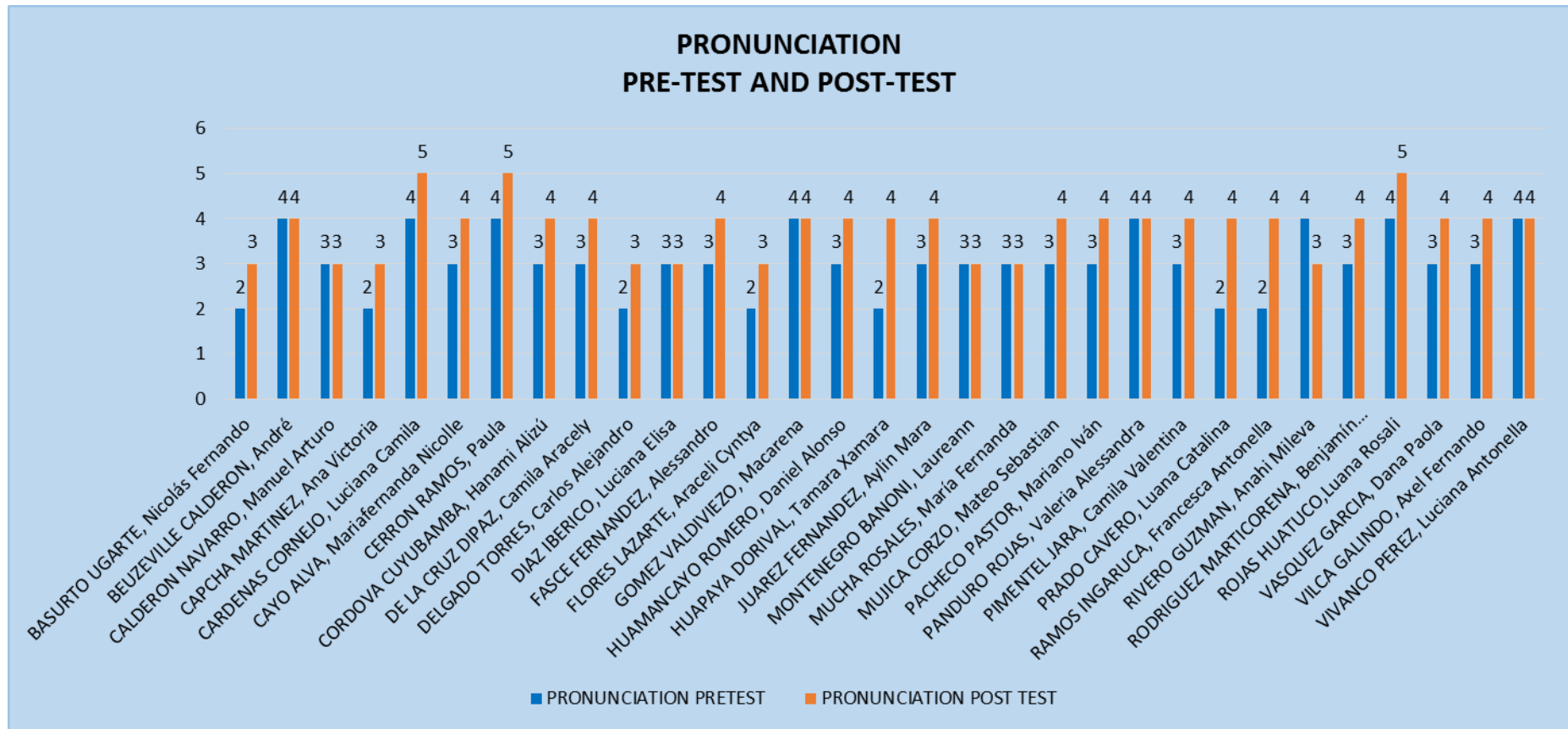
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Pronunciation in the Pre-Test. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 2 out of 5 while the highest score was 4.

GRAPH 20: Results of the Variable Pronunciation in the Post-Test



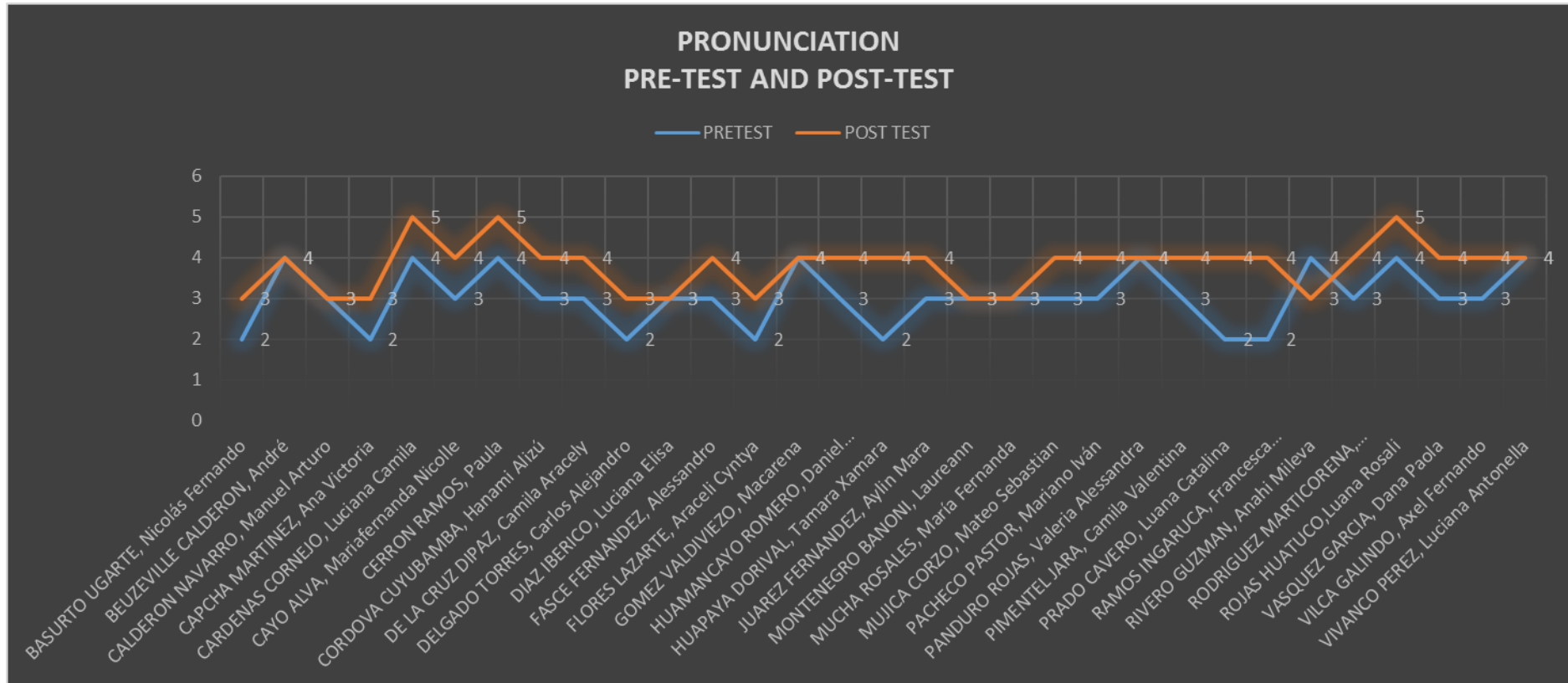
Description: The bar chart provides information about the grades obtained in the dependant variable Pronunciation in the Post-Test. From the graph it can be seen that the lowest score was 3 out of 5 while the highest score was 5.

GRAPH 21: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Pronunciation in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



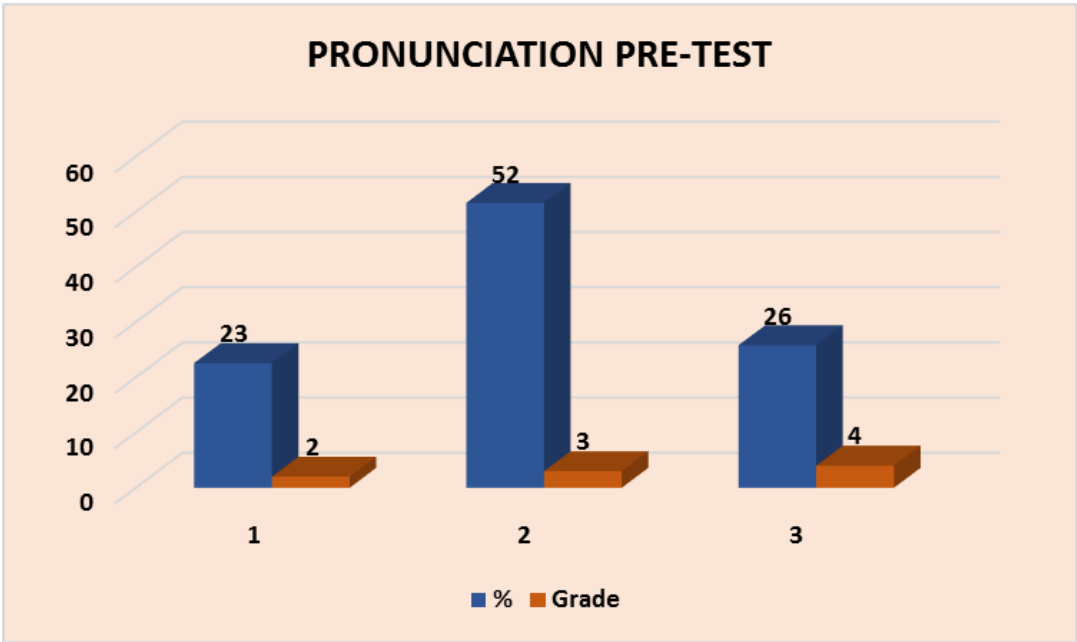
Description: The bar chart provides information about the dependant variable Pronunciation in the Pre-test and Post-Test. It can be seen that a significant majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. While n the pre-test the lowest grade was 2 and the higher grade was 4, in the Post-Test the lowest grade was 3 and the highest was 5.

GRAPH 22: Contrast of the Results of the Variable Pronunciation in the Pre-Test and Post-Test

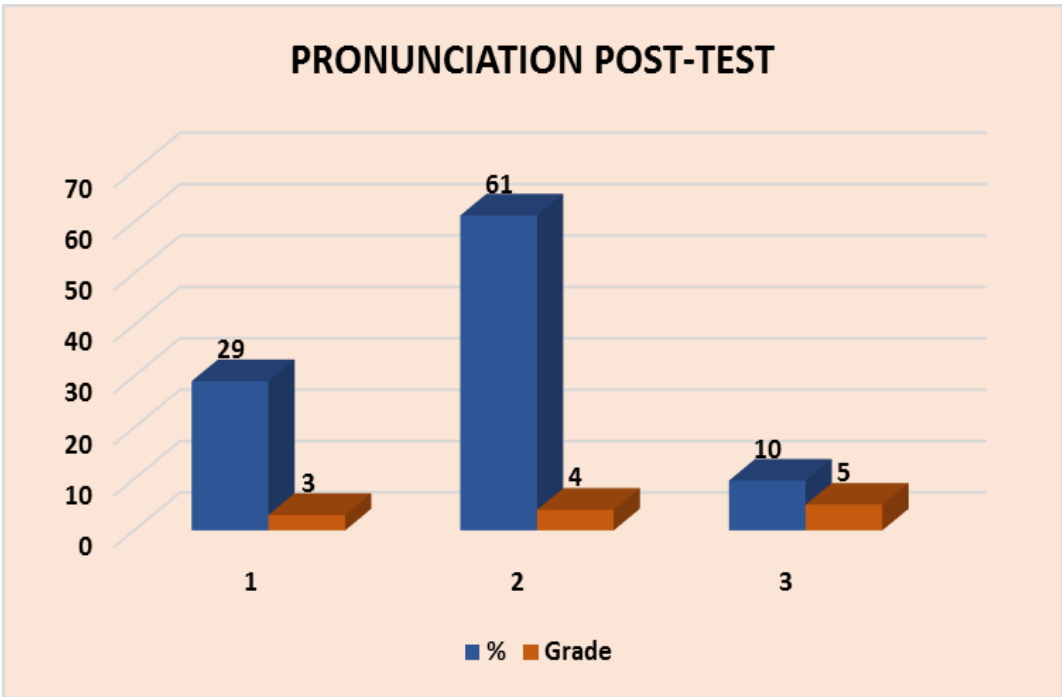


Description: The graph provides information about the dependant variable Pronunciation in the Pre-test and Post-Test. It can be seen that a significant majority of students' grades improved in the post-test. While n the pre-test the lowest grade was 2 and the higher grade was 4, in the Post-Test the lowest grade was 3 and the highest was 5.

Graph 23: Comparative Pronunciation Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



Graph 24: Comparative Pronunciation Results in the Pre-Test and Post-Test



Graphs number 23 and 24 illustrate the comparative results obtained in the dependant variable Pronunciation by the students in the Pre-Test and Post-Test. As can be seen in these graphs, in the Pre-test nobody obtained 5 points. Half of the group, 52%, obtained 3 points, and a small number of students, 26%, obtained 4 points.

These figures improved in the Post-Test. More than half of the students, 61%, obtained 4 points and 10% obtained 5 points, which means their pronunciation was intellegible.

Only 29% obtained 3 points. Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. To improve the pronunciation of the students, repetition drills were useful for familiarizing them quickly with a specific structure or formulaic expression (Doff 1990, 71).

We can conclude that the students' pronunciation improved after applying the methodology and teaching materilas proposed.

DISCUSSION

The improvement of the students speaking skills was achieved during the application of the action during the research. The students confidence increased when speaking and interacting with the teacher and with their classmates during the activities held in class.

At the beginning, when the methodology using power point and visuals started, the students showed themselves a bit shy and seemed to struggle with the type of activities designed, but in the third week they began to enjoy themselves and were very participative. They learned to explore and describe pictures, ask and answer questions using accurate expressions.

Before the action research, the students did exercises that were purposeless or that did not lead them to use the language they would use in real communication. During the action research, the activities the students did had a purpose (to take the Movers International Exam) and a context.

Before the action research, the speaking skill had been neglected reduced to minimal participation to give short answers or respond by using isolated words. During the action research the activities had an objective and were conceived in order to familiarize the students with the exam they would take.

All of the activities were involved spoken interaction to develop the speaking skills of the fourth-grade students. Ultimately, as was showed in the graphs, the students improved in interaction, grammar and vocabulary and pronunciation.

CONCLUSIONS

The present action research had as a principal aim which is the development of speaking skills of the students of four grade by using visual aids in power point and promote sentence completion.

The results obtained in this research allow us to confirm that the students' speaking skill improved, overcoming deficiencies and improving their communication abilities in English language. This was a consequence of the stimulus received from the Action Research which contained several strategies like: reading loudly, the use of power point and visuals, oral practice, collaborative work and students' active participation. The students grades of the post-test are very good. This meant that the level, according to the results obtained in the rubric (oral assessment criteria form) applied during the post –test showed very good use of vocabulary, pronunciation and only a few grammar mistakes, answering questions immediately with few pauses. It means the students improved their performance and speaking after the experimental period.

Speaking is a cognitive skill, so it improves by means of constant practice and a wide range of communicative strategies. All of them, complemented each other according to the students' needs and in order to prepare them to interact in real life contexts.

It is important to highlight that this project represents a great contribution to the field of English teaching as a foreign language since there are a lot of schools not only in my country Peru, but in other parts of the world that do not have technological facilities due to the pandemic. That is the reason why my students need to improve their oral competence using visual aids in power point presentations to promote sentence completion that can help to speak in English.

The achievements found in this research also permit us answer the research question which was whether the use of power point and visuals would help improve the students' speaking skills. The activities and strategies used in the development of this Action Research focused on the improvement of students' communication skills in English language. Also, the students' difficulties when speaking during their performance in the pre-test were eliminated. In the post-test they showed themselves self-confident. In addition, the strategies motivated the interaction among the students and stimulated the improvement of listening and speaking skills in English language. Restrictions in the use of the language were avoided in order to create autonomy to improve students' communication skills through the students' active participation and interaction with other students.

Furthermore, this project facilitates in the teaching of English language to children who aim to learn a foreign language in a motivating way. That is why this project gives the teacher the opportunity to create, design, and direct different activities, according to students' needs and learning standards according to our National Curriculum with the help of online resources.

Speaking is a principal skill in human beings. Therefore, the goal of any English course is to enable students to communicate in English, then speaking strategies should be practiced and taught in an English environment. It is teacher's responsibility to break different barriers, such as students' shyness and also teachers' ideas against teaching speaking skills, in order for children to start practicing the language and getting involved with it.

Research information was conducted by means of class' observation, in which students' motivation and the use of visual aids were taken into consideration, and oral tests, in which students were evaluated to know their performances in English environments. The results obtained were graphically described.

There is not a perfect way to teach English or to reach every student in virtual classroom, but as educators, we need to use different techniques and strategies to get students' attention. If teacher provides examples, explanations, and feedback through entertained activities, students will be engaged with the materials presented and will change their attitude towards English language learning and teaching. Moreover; if students are provided with different opportunities to use the language, they will improve their oral competency and will be ready to take an international proficiency exam.

Nowadays, due to the pandemic and the change of teaching modality the use of power point presentations and other visual aids fit well on the idea of updated methodologies. Different methodologies applied in English class enhance language acquisition.

What is more the use of technology in virtual classroom make most students more communicative, collaborative and critical thinkers. Ideally, It is a student-center class. Therefore, there is no explicit grammar instruction. The use of visual aids and online resources provide grammatical features implicitly while the students are engaged with the learning process.

It important to highlight that the use of visual aids in virtual classroom for teaching or learning English is not a new technique or strategy that teacher has been using, but it has worked so far.

Online resources are valuable tools for foreign language classroom. It is important for students and teacher to bear the objectives in mind and it is important for teachers to think about possible problems that might occur. If visual aids are selected carefully and used appropriately, they will motivate student to work while they are engaged and interested in the content taught. Also, to promote engaging activities will create a relaxed, fun, and anxiety free environment that will facilitate and enhance learning. Students will learn English language by creating meaningful use of English while they are developing and performing communicative skills.

Some advantages presented in this research are that students built their own learning strategies, they became creative, and used their critical thinking due to different learning goals. Most of speaking activities during virtual classes promoted interactivity. So, students collaborated and interacted with energy.

It was a student-centered class in which students learned from the resources provided by the teacher, therefore teacher was still a facilitator and guide as well as feedback was given by the teacher.

This action research has proved that primary grade students struggle to learn and practice English language. If students do not learn how to speak, they get demotivated and lose the interest in learning the language. Therefore, students will not reach their future achievements. For this reason, this action research has proposed the use of visual aids to promote young learners to speak in English in virtual classroom in order

to raise students' motivation and make them practice speaking skills in a fun and dynamic way.

This action research has proved that it is easier to obtain students' participation and motivation, in virtual environments when activities applied are entertaining, motivating, and original.

The purpose of the use of visual aids in virtual class was to change students' negative attitude towards English and motivate them by giving them a chance to speak and participate without they feeling under stressed or anxiety. Therefore, if students get used to feeling free to make mistakes and motivated, their fears to speak English will disappear.

The use of visual aids like Power Point presentations were proven to be useful in this research. I would like to highlight that speaking competence can be a complex skill that needs to be developed consciously and continuously in virtual and face to face classroom. It can best be developed with practice through online resources, which promote interaction between students, low their affective filter, provide students' knowledge, and at the same time, students get engaged with the content taught.

It is important to mention that activities applied in class should be related to or/and adapted to real-life situations in order for students to practice language in real context. Moreover, students' performances will add interest, engagement, feedback, preparation, free dialogues and, therefore, practice the speaking skills. All of these aspects will give students' confidence and a better functional aspect of English language.

In class, the teacher could notice that students appeared to enjoy gamification activities, they were more motivated, they did pay more attention, they worked on different tasks, and volunteered to participate orally in class. Learners from the fourth grade primary level group resulted with more enthusiasm.

Some drawbacks to mention are that lack of connectivity and lack of equipment when the students had to perform some oral presentations. However, the attitude was consistent. They used to ask for some online games as a reward for having a good behaviour. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to satisfy all students.

It is important to mention that fluency and accuracy cannot be improved easily since it takes time. It is a long process to achieve goals according to the CEFR. Therefore, different opportunities should be granted to the students to practice speaking skills in the more natural way possible to pass successfully any international exam.

Children recognized that their favourite part of a session is the online games. They are highly motivating and provided young learners different opportunities to communicate in English. The results of the post-test revealed that they have improved in a great deal. Moreover, students expressed that they learned more when they were motivated and when they had fun.

As it can be summarized, the goal of using visual aids like Power Point Presentations in virtual classroom was to engage students, lower students' affective filter, motivate them, and make them use the language. The outcomes of the research showed that the level of speaking skills has raised and improved. Students have showed their potential regarding speaking abilities through the use of oral presentations, projects which the students have to demonstrate their strategies to accomplish a goal when they started performing in English different role . plays. Using gamification in virtual classroom is importantly valuable for pedagogical or academic porpuses. It can be used while teaching any language structure.

It is really beneficial. They guarantee that the language used will be authentic, useful and relevant. Moreover, students will focus on practicing the English language rather than learning grammar structures.

In my personal view, this project could be taken further by my colleagues in which they may classify their students who want to apply for oral international examinations. Moreover, students are looking for English classes in which teachers apply fun and effective interesting virtual resources, those activities that are attached to a specific pedagogical goal, or by those English teachers who are looking at different strategies to improve their students' speaking skills.

At the beginning of this paper we claimed that speaking skills are the hardest of the three competencies according to the Peruvian curriculum. We can now reassert that in most cases students find it more challenging to communicate orally in the foreign language. Therefore, we can also confirm that despite the existing literature regarding speaking instruction, there is also a pressing need to approach our students' views on the teaching and learning of speaking skills.

On the one hand, another conclusion that can be drawn from our study is that students do have their own preferences regarding to speaking activities. Thus, the activity types preferred by students are those which involve them participating actively in the task, such as role plays and games (task-based activities), as well as free conversations (topic-based activities).

This leads us to agree on two different assumptions: first, most students do not enjoy much usual activities included in textbooks, nevertheless, they really want to have fun in virtual classes.

Teachers are creative enough to make interesting lessons with the use of helpful resources which learning English can be achieved through more authentic and realistic tasks. As we know, students prefer to work on fluency activities, with a higher focus on meaning than on form. Besides, the fact students prefer these types of activities is also related to their grouping preferences: the great majority of students prefer group work rather than individual work. Finally, as with activity types, the students preferred topics have to do with free time and hobbies, such as television or sports.

Consequently, it can be deduced that students do learn more when they are involved and interested in the tasks proposed; however, this fact may also indicate that students can make mistake what they like for what really help them make more progress in the adquisition of a foreign language. On the other hand, although students make an excellent participation in virtual classroom, we have to recognize that teacher's role is very important to make our students be engaged and students' interaction is the most useful type of grouping due to the development of personal skills.

This point is interesting, since students do not seem to consider useful to work without the teacher's monitoring, but they claim the role of the teacher as a monitor or guide of the teamwork. Saying this, we can make further progress in our work by improving an action plan with the objective of enriching our teaching practice, which -as stated at the beginning of this paper- was our ultimate goal. With this objetive, different tasks will be shown in the charts, which will be sorted out taking into account the data obtained in this study.

Finally, a series of aspects to be taken into account when using some speaking strategies when applying the oral test will also be presented below (see Appendix).

The first questions that arise from this project and its results have to do with self motivation: Do teachers bear in mind the students' attitudes according to their personal interests and needs? Do we take further interest in getting to know what our students enjoy learning? What is more, when choosing a book, Are students motivated by activities themselves or does the role of the teacher have something to do on this?

Let us reflect on this, in speaking performances, some students become anxious when they have to face an oral exam and it results in low participation or even no participation at all, here the affective filter plays an important role which usually ends up in some students with no importance to speaking skills. Therefore, it is our responsibility to make young learners get involved in speaking lessons.

Besides, the results of the oral exam may also indicate that students do like many different types of activities, but these must be presented in an appealing way. Dörnyei (2006) mentioned that analysis should be made so as to investigate upon our students' needs, interests and aims in order to decide on the most suitable activities for them, but more importantly teacher must encourage students for them to get involved in the activities.

Regarding the development of the oral exam; in the first part of it, students felt a little frustrated when could not use the appropriate words when they compared the two pictures. However, they made a big effort to overcome the situation. The second section students had to make up a story with the pictures given, they had to continue once the teacher started with the first line, most of the students could not reach the goal at first, but there were a few students who really showed some good command of the language.

Regarding the third part, it was a little bit much easier to reach the goal since they had some previous knowledge of vocabulary about clothes, objects and the use of prepositions. I would like to emphasize how recommendable is for learners to practice the vocabulary learned previously in order to put these words (vocabulary and grammar) into context.

Different authors, from which were quoted Ellis (1990) above, supported that learning was enhanced when learners were happy with the tasks they were given; in terms of speaking activities, when these are close to the students' reality, they are more likely to realise activities make sense and will be useful for them in real life.

To sum up, below there is a list of assumptions with a series of aspects to be considered when young learners have to face an international oral exam:

- During virtual or face to face class, it is recommendable to choose meaningful topics besides, they should be attractive and colorful and updated for the students, which do not sometimes match the teachers' interests. These usually include current issues related to entertainment and past time. Although contents must meet the Peruvian National Curriculum requirements, topics can be chosen according to our students' interests, needs and characteristics, however, they must meet the topics according to the Movers exam.

- Tasks should be as authentic, realistic and according to the topics related to Movers exam so that students can associate their learning situations to real life situations. This would allow students to deal with language at different levels and practise on different text types.

- Activities should also be varied and adequate to the students' levels so that all of them can take part in oral competency. Therefore, students should be taken out from their daily routines of using their book and they should be motivated with a varied range of activities.

- The teacher should establish a good rapport so that students can feel comfortable and ready to work in class enthusiastically.

- Team work should also be applied form time to time to make classes more dynamic. Present a class in different ways is motivating too. This way students cannot notice that they are under pressure of an international exam. In my point of view, students can produce the target language accurately without pressure. It is just a matter of habits. If they are used to working hard so facing an exam will not be stressful.

- Every time the teacher evaluates his or her students, he or she has to give them feedback afterwards. Students are interested in knowing their results and how well they are performing. Furthermore, they also need to know what they lack of.

To conclude, I could highlight that this project can contribute greatly to the improvement of our primary level students to perform successfully in an oral international exam.

The resources prepared for this; the visual aids like Power Point Presentations, are really meaningful since they follow the format of the Movers Cambridge Examination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Students are suggested to continue working with the proposed methodology and strategies or new ones according to their learning necessities since there is a small group of students who still need to practice more to achieve the ideal communicative level.

It is absolutely important that the teacher observes the students' performance in order to find the way to help them overcome their learning difficulties. Additionally, teachers must plan and create activities as well as material and strategies to motivate the students and to avoid repetitive, boring and teacher-centered classes.

The use of power point and visuals, as it was done in this research, would be really motivating and lead students to understand the language and produce it.

Under the current circumstances this pandemic is making us live, teachers must exploit the technology at hand to create lesson plans that involve the students as the central axe of the class. Activities such as pair work, dialogues, video recording, and others together with visuals are advisable to promote language production and interaction.

Constant motivation is extremely relevant in the English language learning process to enhance students' self-confidence.

Finally, this action research is feasible to be implemented with any other group of students who have difficulties with the speaking skill and with students of any age. Teachers should constantly do research in their classrooms looking for suitable learning strategies and to detect other students' problems in English language learning in order to propose possible solutions.

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5 APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: Diagnostic test

Movers Speaking

Summary of Procedures

The usher introduces the child to the examiner. The examiner asks how old the child is.

- 1 The examiner asks the child to describe several differences between the two Find the Differences pictures, e.g. 'This is a bird but this is a cat.'
- 2 The examiner tells the child the name of the story and describes the first picture e.g. 'Fred is sad. He can't play football. His ball is very old. His mum's saying, "Take the dog to the park."' The examiner then asks the child to continue telling the story.
- 3 The examiner demonstrates how to do this task with the first set of four odd-one-out pictures and then asks the child to choose one picture in the other three sets and say which is different and why. For example, 'These are all animals, but this is a sweater.'
- 4 The examiner asks questions about the child, e.g. 'Who's the youngest in your family?'

Movers Speaking

1.

Movers Speaking

MOVERS SPEAKING. Find the Differences

2.



MOVERS SPEAKING. Picture Story

Movers Speaking

3.



Movers Speaking

MOVERS SPEAKING. Odd-one-out

4.

Part Four

In part four, students must answer personal questions.

1. How many people are there in your family?
2. What's the name of your best friend?
3. What's your favourite subject at school?
4. What are your hobbies?
5. What do you have for breakfast?
6. What do you have for lunch?
7. How many brothers and sisters have you got?
8. What do you like doing at the weekend?
9. What did you do last Saturday morning?
10. What did you do last Sunday?
11. What's your mother's name?
12. Where did you go on your last holiday?
13. How many lessons do you have in a day?
14. What's the weather like today?
15. Who's the youngest in your family?
16. Who's the oldest in your family?

APPENDIX 2: SPEAKING RUBRIC

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary and grammar					x	
Pronunciation				x		
Interaction						x

15 -----20

12 -----x

$12 * 20 / 15 = 16$

APPENDIX 3: BAND SCALE

A1 Movers

	Vocabulary and grammar Range Control Extent Cohesion	Pronunciation Individual sounds Stress Intonation	Interaction Reception/Responding Support required Fluency/Promptness
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the vocabulary required to deal with all test tasks. • Uses some simple structures correctly but makes some mistakes, although meaning is generally clear. • Responds at word, phrase or longer utterance level. • Can join ideas with some simple linkers (e.g. <i>and, but, then, when</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is mostly intelligible. • Has limited control of word stress and intonation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to instructions, questions and visual prompts, and very little support is required. • Is able to ask for support if required. • Almost always responds promptly, although there may be hesitation and some pausing mid-utterance.
4	Some features of 3.0 and some features of 5.0 in approximately equal measure.		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the vocabulary required to deal with most test tasks. • Produces some simple structures but makes some basic mistakes which may obscure meaning. • Generally responds at word or phrase level but may also produce some longer utterances. • Can join ideas with a few simple linkers (e.g. <i>and</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is mostly intelligible, although some sounds may be unclear. • Has limited control of word stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to instructions, questions and visual prompts, although some support is required. • Is able to ask for support if required. • Often responds promptly, although there may be hesitation and pausing mid-utterance.
2	Some features of 3.0 and some features of 1.0 in approximately equal measure.		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the vocabulary required to attempt some test tasks. • Attempts a few simple utterances but makes some basic mistakes which may obscure meaning. • Generally responds at word level but may also produce phrases. • Can join words with simple linkers (e.g. <i>and</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes may be difficult to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to some instructions, questions and visual prompts, although frequent support may be required. • May attempt to ask for support if required. • There is hesitation and pausing mid-utterance; responses may be delayed or halting.
0	Performance does not satisfy the Band 1 descriptor.		
	Pronunciation: If the candidate produces some language, but insufficient language to make a confident judgement about pronunciation (e.g. just a couple of words), the maximum score that can be awarded is 3, regardless of quality of pronunciation.		