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Author:

Leech Morejon Adriana Vanessa

Tutor:

Mgs. Adriana Carolina Lara Velarde

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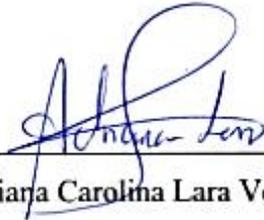
Adriana Vanessa Leech Morejon

C.I: 0604485011

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I, Adriana Carolina Lara Velarde professor affiliated to the Faculty of Education, Humanities, and Technologies, through this document certify that I have advised and reviewed the development of the research paper titled: Context-Based Learning and its Possibilities to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of English Focused on Cultural Identity Development, authored by Adriana Vanessa Leech Morejon; therefore, I authorize the initiation of the legal procedures for its defence.

This statement is made truthfully and in good faith; in Riobamba, on the 1st of April, of 2025.



Adriana Carolina Lara Velarde

C.I: 0603964206

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We, the undersigned, appointed professors serving as Members of the Degree Examination Committee for the evaluation of the research work Context-Based Learning and its Possibilities to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of English Focused on Cultural Identity Development, submitted by Adriana Vanessa Leech Morejon, holder of Citizenship ID No. 0604485011, under the supervision of Mgs. Adriana Carolina Lara Velarde, certify that we recommend its **APPROVAL** for the purpose of degree conferral. Prior to this recommendation, the research paper has been thoroughly evaluated, and the candidate's oral defence has been heard, with no further observations to be made.

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Mónica Cadena, Mgs.
**PRESIDENT OF THE DEGREE EXAMINATION
COMMITTEE**



Magdalena Ullauri, Dra.
**MEMBER OF THE DEGREE EXAMINATION
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Daysi Fierro, Ms.
**MEMBER OF THE DEGREE EXAMINATION
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Que, **LEECH MOREJON ADRIANA VANESSA** con CC: **0604485011**, estudiante de la Carrera **PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS**, Facultad de **CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN, HUMANAS Y TECNOLOGIAS**; ha trabajado bajo mi tutoría el trabajo de investigación titulado "**Context-Based Learning and its Possibilities to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of English Focused on Cultural Identity Development**", cumple con el 8 %, de acuerdo al reporte del sistema Anti plagio **COMPILATIO**, porcentaje aceptado de acuerdo a la reglamentación institucional, por consiguiente autorizo continuar con el proceso.

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“What is nearest to our heart is often furthest from our mouth” Anonymous. First and foremost, I want to thank God for always guiding and looking after me, my mother Maria who always held my hand, my brother and sister Daya & Chris, who gave me the emotional support and courage I needed. Most importantly, all my achievements, including this research work, go in dedication to my father Carl who I consider as my guide, mentor, and inspiration. An exemplary father and a caring human being who worked to the bone to give me everything and every opportunity to make it big in this world. This thesis is my final step toward the goal I have worked so hard towards, finally reuniting with my father and uniting my family once more. There were times when I felt the finish line to be too distant and the pressure to be greater than me, but the thought of making my father proud and being able to dedicate my lifework to him gave me all the strength I needed to finish this research. Having said this, I hope I have made everyone proud; I love you all.

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RESUMEN

El Aprendizaje Basado en el Contexto (ABC) es una metodología pedagógica centrado en el alumnado que sitúa el aprendizaje basado en idiomas dentro de contextos del mundo real, integrando tanto aspectos sociales como culturales, acrecentando la relevancia y practicidad del conocimiento adquirido. El ABC es fundamental para la enseñanza efectiva de idiomas, ya que busca conectar contenido académico con actividades o escenarios prácticos de la vida real e integrar los antecedentes culturales, experiencias, e intereses del alumnado. A pesar de esto, el Ecuador enfrenta creciente demandas con el objetivo de alinear las realidades culturales de los estudiantes con el contenido de aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, con la esperanza de mejorar el proceso de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras mediante metodologías como el ABC. Sin embargo, aquellas metodologías suelen ser mal ejecutadas por la mayoría de los profesores de lenguas extranjeras debido a una representación errónea inherente. Por lo tanto, esta investigación tuvo como objetivo analizar la posibilidad o posibilidades académicas de la metodología de enseñanza ABC en el enriquecimiento del desarrollo de la identidad cultural a través de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés. Este estudio cualitativo se llevó a cabo bajo los principios de la modalidad bibliográfica, descriptiva, e explicativa. El muestreo incluyó distintas bases de datos confiables como Emerald Insight, ERIC, Google Libros, Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, ResearchGate, Science Direct, Scielo, Scopus, Wiley Online Library y Web of Science. Para ello, una revisión integradora de la literatura fue aplicada con el fin de proporcionar una síntesis comprensiva de la literatura sobre el tema. Los resultados revelaron las bases constructivistas y socioculturales establecidas dentro del proceso metodológico del ABC. Además, se reveló las actividades que más favorecen el ABC como el calendario de celebraciones culturales, la resolución de problemas basada en escenarios, el juego de roles, los rompecabezas y el aprendizaje basado en proyectos. Finalmente, el estudio muestra la construcción de una guía pedagógica utilizando el ABC como la base metodológica, así como las cinco actividades pedagógicas para enriquecer el desarrollo de la identidad cultural a través del aprendizaje del inglés. Para concluir, la investigación destaca los hallazgos más importantes del ABC como los fundamentos constructivistas y socioculturales del CBL, las actividades pedagógicas, y la creación de una guía pedagógica basada en estos principios.

Palabras claves: ABC, metodologías activas, lenguas extranjeras, enseñanza del inglés, identidad cultural.

ABSTRACT

Context-Based Learning (CBL) is a student-centred educational approach that situates language learning within real-world scenarios, integrating both social and cultural contexts, and enhancing the relevance and practicality of the knowledge acquired. CBL is integral to effective language teaching as it aims to connect academic content with practical real-life scenarios whilst integrating students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and interests. Despite this, Ecuador faces growing demands to align students' cultural realities with language learning content in hopes of improving foreign language teaching through methodologies such as CBL. However, these are usually poorly executed by most educators due to an inherent misrepresentation. Therefore, this research aimed to analyse the academic possibilities of the CBL teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. This qualitative study was conducted under the principles of the bibliographic, descriptive, and explicative modality. The sample included different databases such as Emerald Insight, ERIC, Google Libros, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Pro-Quest, ResearchGate, Science Direct, Scielo, Scopus, Wiley Online Library, and Web of Science. For this, an integrative literature review method was applied to provide a comprehensive synthesis of existing literature on the topic. The results reveal its constructivist and sociocultural bases within its methodological process. Alongside this, the activities that most aid CBL are cultural celebrations calendar activity, scenario-based problem-solving, role-playing, puzzles, and project-based learning. Lastly, the study shows the construction of a pedagogical guide using CBL as the foundational method as well as the five pedagogical activities chosen to enrich the development of cultural identity through the learning of English. Overall, the research highlights the constructivist and sociocultural foundations of CBL, highlighting key pedagogical activities that support cultural identity development in English learning and culminating in the creation of a pedagogical guide based on these principles.

Keywords: CBL, active methodologies, foreign languages, English teaching, cultural identity

Reviewed by:



Mgs. Mónica Noemi Cadena Figueroa
English Professor
C.C. 0602935926



CHAPTER I

1. REFERENTIAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

Today's generation is immersed in a multicultural and ethnic world where bilingualism has become a practical necessity. Said interconnectedness has created a need for individuals to participate in the global community and learn more than one language when presented with travel, work, and educational opportunities (Antoniou, 2019). In the face of this challenge, education now needs to evolve and find innovative methodologies to embrace this new bilingual identity within future generations' education. This has led to the integration of a foreign language within student's curricula in hopes of enriching their learning experience. Moreover, this broadens their learning horizons through exposure to different cultures and confers an advantage in executive functions (Antoniou, 2019).

Despite education playing an important role in becoming functioning members of this globalized world, students are having problems accustoming to this new bilingual identity. They may find it difficult to comprehend the material without the appropriate guidance or usage of proper methodologies from the professors. An example of this is language professor's vast knowledge of a topic taught without considering student's novice perspectives. Educators may struggle when explaining new concepts since they are so familiar that imagining being unfamiliar, such as their students, becomes a challenge. As a result, the explanation given to students may not be at the level of detail that would be most helpful to them, which may lead to a lack of confidence and participation in the class. Ergo, students may develop a series of mental filters resulting in a lack of confidence, communication, and understanding of the target language (Harvard, 2024).

These reasons have led to CBL being considered as a methodology that can enhance the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. This pedagogical methodology centres its belief that both the social and cultural context of the learning environment are pivotal to the acquisition and processing of knowledge. The method is based on a constructivist and sociocultural basis where learning is considered a communal activity centred on the interactions between people (Rose, 2012). Therefore, CBL exposes students to social and communicative aspects of language within a contextualized environment. By creating a space where learning is placed in the context and the content, learners can combine their newfound knowledge and skills, increasing their capacity to transfer and use said knowledge in real-world contexts (Overton, 2016). Hands-on activities such as experiments, role plays, group and individual problem-solving tasks, and projects have been considered helpful towards CBL and fostering cultural identity (Stryker, 2024). CBL plays a pivotal role when cultural identity as this methodology immerses students' backgrounds within their learning process. By integrating learning and cultural practices into

the classroom, CBL enhances the relevance and relatability of education as well as empowers students to develop a sense of pride in their cultural identity.

The gap between traditional teaching methods and student needs deems research into active and innovative methodologies such as CBL considered essential for improving educational outcomes. This leads to CBL seeking to address the lack of culturally relevant language instruction (Antoniou, 2019). For these reasons, the following research aims to analyse the possibility or academic possibilities of the Context-Based Learning teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. The study development will be done in Riobamba, Chimborazo during the academic period of 2024 – 2025.

This research paper will be divided into five chapters. “*Chapter I*” presents an overview of what the research paper will discuss. “*Chapter II*” will be divided into two sections: the research background, detailing how CBL became a renewed pedagogical methodology, and the theoretical background, entailing language theories sustaining CBL within this context. “*Chapter III*” will be divided into 5 sections: approach, which outlines the qualitative research paradigm; research modality, describing the study's overall bibliographic approach; level or type of research, that defines the nature and depth of the descriptive and explicative study; study population, which explains the chosen databases for the research paper; data collection and instruments which subdivide into: instruments, being an SLR, integrative literature review, and a systematization of information method; and techniques, being a bibliographic matrix instrument, and a checklist. “*Chapter IV*” will be divided into results subdivided into three categories and discussions which also subdivide into the same three categories. “*Chapter V*” will be divided into three conclusions entailing “*Chapter IV*” and three recommendations based on the overall information provided within the research paper.

1.2 Problem Statement

CBL is referred to as a pedagogical methodology that centres its belief that both the social and cultural context of the learning environment are pivotal to the acquisition and processing of knowledge. The approach is based on the firm conviction that learning is a communal activity centred on the interactions between people (Rose, 2012). Thus, this context is shaped by communications media to establish a shared cultural environment within the academic community (Overton, 2016). It is also worth mentioning Hansman (2001) who asserts that effective learning through CBL occurs exclusively when the context and methodologies converge to foster interaction among learners. The reason why CBL is so effective as mentioned by Overton (2016) is that it has been demonstrated to enhance problem-solving skills, comprehension, and develop a range of transferable skills or abilities. Milliken (2022) states that situating learning within the context where learners will apply their new knowledge and skills enhances their ability to transfer and utilize that knowledge in real-world scenarios. This approach increases the likelihood that learners will understand

the relevance of their acquired knowledge to future job roles, increasing motivation and willingness to participate.

Alongside this, CBL plays a pivotal role when developing a sense of cultural identity in students by situating educational experiences within real-life contexts and cultural immersion. This is backed by Lave and Wenger (1991), who suggest that learning is inherently a social process that occurs through participation in culturally and contextually meaningful activities. CBL allows learners to engage not only with different cultures but also engage and reflect on the cultural heritage and traditions of their community. This thereby fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of their own cultural identity, as well as others. By integrating learning and cultural practices into the classroom, CBL not only enhances the relevance and relatability of education but also empowers learners to develop a sense of cultural identity and recognize its importance.

Within Ecuador's educational reality, growing demands to align students' cultural realities come to light for effective foreign language education. The gap between traditional teaching methods and student needs deems research into active and innovative methodologies such as CBL considered essential for improving educational outcomes. This leads to CBL seeking to address the lack of culturally relevant language instruction, which may hinder both language acquisition and cultural awareness (Antoniou, 2019). Comprehending CBL and its academic possibilities to facilitate language learning in a culturally rich context, may lead to competent students ready to face real-world scenarios. CBL.

However, within Ecuadorian education, methodologies such as CBL are usually poorly executed by most educators due to an inherent misrepresentation of how the mind acquires, processes, and produces knowledge. As a result, this may well inhibit the success of learning and make student's learning process less immersive. (Rose, 2012) According to O'Connor (2012), professors who do not incorporate CBL into their educational process may find their alumni exhibiting mental barriers, including decreased engagement and motivation. This, in turn, may bring consequences such as limited vocabulary retention, lack of cultural understanding, difficulty in grammar application, and ineffective communication skills. These skills are mostly developed through the input received from English textbooks which often lack the incorporation of CBL (Connor, 2012).

Unfortunately, alongside the lack of CBL within Ecuadorian education, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language often fails to integrate the cultural and social reality of Ecuadorian students. This misalignment between the curriculum and social context can hinder the effectiveness of English language education. Camacho (2023) highlights that English instruction in Ecuador frequently relies on standardized materials such as books and methodologies that align with an unrelated cultural and social reality to those of students. This may lead to a feeling of alienation within students which in turn leads to a sense of diminished importance of their own cultural identity and reduced motivation to learn. By not incorporating Ecuadorian cultural elements and real-life situations into English lessons, the

education system misses an opportunity to make learning more relevant and engaging for students.

Based on the above, the main intention of the study is to explore insights into how CBL could be adapted to local cultural contexts, specifically in Ecuador, and nurture students' cultural identity through language teaching and learning. This is considered fundamental as other methodologies could also be adapted to address linguistic competence as well as nurture cultural identity among learners (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

1.3 Problem Formulation

What is the possibility or academic possibilities of the Context-Based Learning teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English?

1.4 Justification

Ecuador's educational reality considers language learning as a key element that allows them to not only understand the importance of other cultures behind each language but also the importance of their own. However, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners rarely have opportunities to practice English in authentic and contextualized settings (Sevy-Biloon, 2022). By not providing students with authentic settings, language learning may result in hindering to students as both language acquisition and cultural awareness, going against what is expected within Ecuador's Ministerio de Educación language learning goals.

Therefore, the importance of this study is related to CBL filling this educational gap that exists within Ecuador's language learning reality. By comprehending CBL and its academic possibilities to facilitate language learning in a culturally rich context, foreign language professors within Ecuador's educational reality may be able to integrate CBL whilst embracing students' cultural identity. Through providing insights into how CBL can be adapted to local cultural contexts, specifically in Ecuador, other pedagogical activities or methodologies could also be adapted to not only address linguistic competence but also nurture cultural identity and engagement among learners.

To do this, the study analysed the epistemological foundations of CBL, first comprehending how language is acquired through fundamental language learning theories. As well as this, this study seeks key pedagogical activities to further fortify students' cultural identity through language learning when applying CBL within the classroom. Overall, the study seeks to identify the characteristics, methodology, and activities of the methodology and its possibility or academic possibilities of the Context-Based Learning teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English.

1.5 Objectives:

1.5.1. General Objective

To analyse the possibility or academic possibilities of the Context-Based Learning teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English.

1.5.2. Specific Objectives

- To describe the nature and approach of CBL within the realm of foreign language teaching and learning.
- To identify activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target.
- To construct a pedagogical-didactic guide illustrating the academic benefits of CBL in the construction of cultural identity.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Research Background

The first apparitions of CBL date back to the early 20th century within the Early Educational Theories (EET) by John Dewey. According to Dewey, cited in Pappas (2023) individuals evolve and acquire knowledge through their interactions with the world. Through engaging with their environment, individuals uncover new ideas, concepts, and practices, which enable them to construct their understandings. These understandings are progressively solidified through both learning and social experiences. This philosophy laid the groundwork for CBL by advocating for learning experiences interconnected with real-life experiences.

Another renowned author during this epoch who contributed significantly to the foundation of CBL is Jean Piaget and his theories of Cognitive Development (CD). Piaget, cited by Thompson (2019) emphasized the significance of knowledge construction through environmental interaction, consistent with the principles of CBL. Moreover, the author identified four critical stages in CD and called them sensorimotor intelligence, preoperational thinking, concrete operational thinking, and formal operational thinking. These four stages were considered foundational to understanding how human cognition grows from infancy to early adulthood. Each stage represents a distinct phase of cognitive maturity, characterized by its unique ways of thinking, acting, and interacting with society.

In the late 1960s, the academic field took a dramatic turn when notable educational psychologists Jerome Bruner and Lev Vygotsky developed the constructivist approach. Bruner and Vygotsky stressed that learning is an active process where learners build new knowledge based on their experiences and prior knowledge of a topic. A key concept in Lev Vygotsky's theory of learning and development was the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD was considered fundamental as it focused on explaining the potential for cognitive development emphasizing the role of social interaction and context in learning (Billings, 2017). The ZPD essentially represents the range of tasks that learners are able to do with the guidance of a more knowledgeable other transitioning from dependant to independent. ZPD highlights the critical role of social interaction and the importance of tailored instructional support to bridge the gap between current capabilities and potential development (Billings, 2017).

In the 1990s, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger introduced Situated Learning (SL), which posits that learning develops most effectively in the context in which it is applied. According to Lave, cited in Herrera (2020) SL significantly impact on the development of CBL. This influence was due to learners practicing in a community where they reach the level of the expert as they have more opportunities to practice within the learning context. Lave and Wenger (1991) point out how learning is a long-lasting process that takes place not within an individual mind but within a participation framework. This perspective

underscores the importance of context and social interaction in learning, both of which are integral to the effectiveness of CBL.

Later on in the 90s, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) emerged where students work on complex, real-world problems and learning content as they seek solutions. This method is used as the vehicle to promote student learning of concepts and principles as opposed to the direct presentation of facts, emphasizing learning in context as CBL does. Alongside this method, CBL gained prominence in the science field where Context-Based Science Education was born. Curricula like the Salters' approach in the UK integrated scientific concepts with real-world applications to make learning more relevant and engaging for students.

Currently, technological advancements, digital tools, and resources have enabled more immersive and interactive CBL experiences within language learning. The teacher is now expected to perceive CBL, interpret it, and adjust it to student's needs and backgrounds in the classroom. (Putter-Smits, 2012).

A study analysis on CBL by Özer (2023) titled “Context-Based Learning in Turkish Idioms Learning by International University Students” demonstrated that the CBL environment effectively enhances language learning. The study provides a compelling presentation of the CBL digital environment, highlighting changes in student behaviours and performances. This research, emphasizes the social constructivist approach and the efficacy of CBL, advocating the significance of peer support and collaboration. The research arrived at this conclusion by investigating the experiences of twelve international students enrolled at Firat University and nine native Turkish students all learning Turkish idioms within a CBL digital environment. Employing an embedded mixed-method research design, this study gathered both quantitative and qualitative data to explore how individual and collaborative efforts in CBL environments facilitate international students' acquisition of Turkish idioms. Data sources included log data, focus group interviews, achievement tests, and interviews.

Alongside this Sedas (2012) in his conference paper “Context-Based Learning: learning through Understanding” explained how there remains a gap between practical knowledge and experience in real-world contexts. This prompted the exploration and development of CBL, a model that emphasizes early teaching through understanding. Teaching through understanding involves continually expanding the student's awareness and perception of their reality to build meaning through an incremental, iterative process that includes motivation, experience, active exploration, rehearsal, chunking, and challenge. The paper outlines the cognitive foundations that support CBL.

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Language Learning Acquisition Theories (LLAT)

2.2.1.1 Constructivism

Constructivism posits that learners construct knowledge through their experiences and interactions with the world. Lev Vygotsky expressed, through his theory, that social interaction heavily influences children's developmental processes across linguistic, social, and cognitive domains. Vygotsky further develops this by introducing the importance of the professor's role within the classroom as a facilitator. As a result, students are expected to engage and collaborate with a more knowledgeable other whilst the professor is at their disposal as a guide and provider of information. This collaborative interaction looks to assist students in completing tasks that are slightly beyond their current level of competence, thus promoting cognitive growth. Furthermore, Vygotsky advocated for mixed age grouping within educational settings, elucidating that such environments enhance student's acquisition of skills and knowledge. This author believed that, cited by Cherry (2022), parents, caregivers, peers, and other societal influences collectively contribute to the cognitive development of the brain and its functions. It is believed that due to the existing variations of communication between different cultures, the brain's cognitive development may vary.

Through constructivism CBL was able to build a learning platform whereby relating the culture, context, and content, key aspects of CBL, students are provided with real-world experiences and problem-solving activities. This method encourages students to draw on their prior knowledge and cultural backgrounds which fosters a deeper understanding and retention of the acquired knowledge (Cherry, 2022). By relating content with self-culture students are more likely to see the value and relevance of their education and heritage. Therefore, the aim is to broaden students understanding through the appreciation of different cultures through inclusivity and respect (Zhou, 2024).

To achieve this in a CBL classroom, from a constructivist point of view, four learning dimensions by Labudde (2008) must be considered. The first dimension involves the individual, where each learner is responsible for their learning. The second dimension involves social interactions, meaning building knowledge through meaningful communication with others (Torres, 2017). The third dimension refers to the content taught in the classroom. Labudde (2008) states that if learning is considered an active process of constructing new knowledge based on prior knowledge, then the contents to be learned must be within the horizon of the learner. Lastly, the fourth dimension applies to the teaching method and teacher roles. The latter two dimensions are of importance to CBL since these entail active learning of concepts within a context (Labudde, 2008). Alongside these four learning dimensions are active teaching methods such as experiments and hands-on activities, learning cycles, project learning, or case studies. Such classroom activities are deemed more helpful in promoting active learning and stimulating the construction of knowledge.

2.2.1.2 Situativity Theory

2.2.1.2.1. Situativity. The situativity theory argues that knowledge, thinking, and learning are situated within experience, with individual cognition and meaning being socially and culturally constructed (Owen, 2014). Wilson (1999) also argues that knowledge, thinking, and learning depend on context as different situations will call for different language functions. This involves working collaboratively, addressing contextualized authentic problems, and negotiating meaning through practice (Barab & Duffy, 2000). The importance of context to CBL and Situativity theories is of utmost importance. Durning (2011) believed that although the environment brings a unique contribution to knowledge, thinking, and learning, these three elements are dependent elements of context. Within Situativity theory, four subcategories influence CBL within the classroom which include situated cognition, situated learning, ecological psychology, and distributed cognition (Durning, 2011).

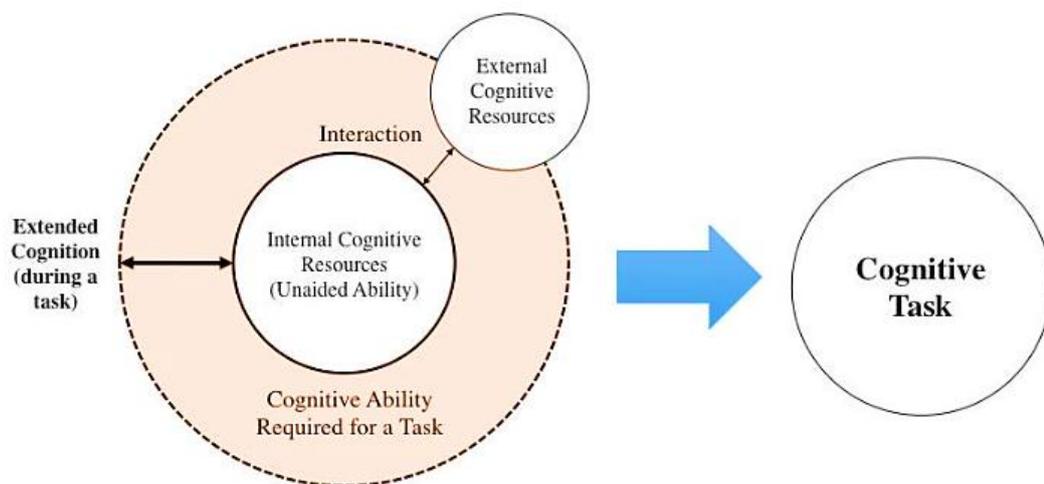
This theory is also closely related to Vygotsky's theory on ZPD (Owen, 2014). This process involves meaningful communication where students learn from others until they become independent. Classroom activities to achieve this are observation, sharing ideas, and engaging in practical activities such as analysing their and other student's work. By further expanding this theory we are faced with contextualized authentic practice activities to encompass Communities of Practice (CoPs) (Owen, 2014). The focus of CoPs in learning is to take the individual identity, and the community and intertwine them to the point where they become inseparable. CoPs offer a variety of benefits in the classroom such as fostering shared practices, values, and language among members engaged in mutual activities, highlighting learning within the social context (Owen, 2014). Through participation, individuals construct not only communication and transferable skills but also their sense of belonging and identity. This involves gradually negotiating meanings, adopting communal norms, sharing cultures, and contributing to the group's knowledge base. The learner, this way, progressively moves towards a more central position in the community (Owen, 2014). This dynamic interplay of individual and collective agency in CoPs is central to the development of a shared cultural identity.

2.2.1.2.2. Distributed Cognition Theory (DCT). The DCT sheds light on student's cognition which stems as a result from functional relationships among elements including various forms of representations and physical tools all belonging to a larger cognitive system (Zhang & Patel, 2006). Cognition is viewed as the interaction between students and the elements that surround a cognitive activity allowing for an information flow (Morgan et al., 2008). Teachers contextualize an environment in which learners can use various types of resources or representations to accomplish a cognitive task (Xu & Clarke, 2012). Said representations enhance access to essential knowledge as well as aid in information processing (Zhang, 1994). The completion of cognitive tasks results in an intertwined processing of internal and external representations that make up most of an individual's intelligent behavior (Zhang & Patel, 2006).

Said cognitive systems can be established as internal and external (Toon, 2013). Internal representations are the cognitive resources such as knowledge and structure belonging to the student’s mind. External representations are those outside of the individual’s mind including other minds, symbolic media, the environment, and artifacts (Morgan et al., 2008; Zhang & Norman, 1994). Through the assistance of external resources students can complete a cognitive task beyond their cognitive ability (Xu & Clarke, 2011; see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Theory of Distributed Cognition



Note. A graph detailing students’ internal process on how to complete a cognitive task beyond their cognitive ability. Adapted from “[A Framework for Implementing OER-Based Lesson Design Activities for Pre-Service Teachers]”, by Kim, D. (p. 151), 2018, (https://www.researchgate.net/figure/tb11_327910392?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6Ii9kaXJlY3QiLCJwYWdlIjoiX2RpcmVjdCJ9fQ).

The DCT also indicates that meaningful learning, through the internalization of external elements, is observed when learners play a central role in the cognitive system (Perkins, 1997). DCT’s relation to CBL underlies the belief that through the process of learners depending on their surroundings in the early phases of a cognitive task they eventually overcome their limited cognitive capacity and gain back their autonomy (Belland, 2011). CBL research has also illustrated the transitional process of contextualized learning from social to self-regulated phases (Kim, 2018).

Both theories also intersect in emphasizing the use of environments, tools, cognition, and example teaching within the learning process. CBL situates meaningful learning within authentic, culturally relevant, contexts enabling students to not only understand but apply the content in relevant scenarios (Brown et al., 1989). This is backed by Salomon (1993)

who reinstates how DCT posits that cognition includes eternal elements such as tools, artifacts, and social systems. When applied to education, this alignment fosters the importance of culture and student's cultural identity by allowing them to draw from prior knowledge and practices rooted in their CoPs.

2.2.1.2.3. Situated Cognition Theory. Situated cognition aims to place an individual's cognition within a larger social context of communication and cultural meanings (Wilson, 1999). In other words, this theory shifts the focus from the person inside the environment to the person and their environment (Bredo, 1994). This provides a more personalized or "person plus" understanding of how the individual processes their knowledge and how their social actions are intertwined and shaped by this and vice versa. Wilson (1999) explains that human knowledge goes hand in hand with communication where three elements partake in the process: the situation, environment, and person. (Wilson, 1999). Situated Learning theory enables CBL to share similar principles relating to learning environments and how students acquire new knowledge as well as considering student's diverse backgrounds.

Table 1

Situated Cognition & CBL Shared Principles Relating to Learning Environments

Learning in context: Thinking and learning make sense only when situating learning in context. All thinking, learning, and cognition are situated within particular contexts; there is no such thing as non-situated learning.

Communities of practice: People act and construct meaning within communities of practice. These communities are powerful repositories and conveyors of meaning and serve to legitimate action. Communities construct and define appropriate discourse practices.

Learning as active participation: Learning is seen in terms of belonging and participating in communities of practice. Learning is seen as a dialectical process of interaction with other people, tools, and the physical world. Cognition is tied to action - either direct physical action or deliberate reflection and internal action. To understand what is learned is to see how it is learned within the activity context.

Knowledge in action: Knowledge evolves as we participate in and negotiate our way through new situations. The development of knowledge and competence, like the development of language, involves continued knowledge-using activity in authentic situations.

Mediation of artifacts: Cognition depends on the use of a variety of artifacts and tools, chiefly language and culture. These tools and constructed environments constitute the mediums, forms, or worlds through which cognition takes place. Problem-solving involves reasoning about purposes in relationship to the resources and tools that a situation affords.

Tools and artifacts as cultural repositories: Tools embody the history of a culture. They enable thought and intellectual processes and constrain or limit that thought. They also provide powerful means of transmitting culture.

Rules, norms, and beliefs: Cognitive tools include forms of reasoning and argumentation that are accepted as normative in society. Using a tool in a certain manner implies the adoption of a cultural belief system about how the tool is to be used.

History: Situations make sense within a historical context, including the past experiences and interactions of participants, as well as anticipated needs and events. Cultures, through tools, artifacts, and discourse practices, embody the accumulated meanings of the past.

Levels of scale: Cognition can best be understood as a dynamic interplay between individual and social levels. Focus on one level, while assuming constancy or predictability at the other, is bound to at least partly misinterpret the situation.

Interactionism: Just as situations shape individual cognition, individual thinking, and action shape the situation. This reciprocal influence constitutes an alternative conception of systemic causality to the more commonly assumed linear object causality.

Identities and self-construction: People's notion of self-continuing identity, separate from others yet belonging to various groups — is a constructed artifact with many uses. People have multiple identities, which can serve as tools for thinking and acting.

Note. Adapted from “[Situated Cognition in Theoretical and Practical Context]”, by Wilson, B. G., & Myers, K. M., (p. 5), 1999, (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239062816_Situated_Cognition_in_Theoretical_and_Practical_Context).

2.2.1.3 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

ZPD is stipulated as the distance between the actual development level of a student and the next level attainable of potential development. Through capable adult or peer facilitation, students' goals become clearer as they aim to achieve realistic communicative

goals. Activities such as independent problem-solving and problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with a more knowledgeable other help determine a student's level and future objectives. The idea of ZPD is that students learn best when working together with others during collaborative work. Students through collaborative endeavors and with the aid of a more knowledgeable other learn and internalize new concepts and skills (Shabani, 2010). Vygotsky (1978) states that higher mental functions such as attention, memory, logical thinking, new concepts, and communication skills go through internalization. This is often referred to as an external social stage in its development before becoming an internal mental function. (Shabani, 2010).

When referring to the ZPD, it is also key to mention intersubjectivity which Rommetveit (1974, 1985) describes as an established shared perspective between a more knowledgeable other and a learner in a problem-solving task. In other words, Verenikina (2003) considers intersubjectivity as a key step in the process of internalization as students gradually become independent as the expert transfers their responsibility. In the ZPD, it is observed how a learner's performance is mediated socially, meaning, how shared understanding or intersubjectivity has been achieved through the learners growing from current capabilities to a higher, culturally mediated level of development (Shabani, 2010). De Valenzuela (2006) also adds that cognitive development is seen not as unfolding in a biologically driven sequence, but as emerging because of interactions within a cultural and historical context.

Vygotsky stipulates how every function in the cultural development of a child appears twice, first on the social plane between people as an inter-mental category. Then, on the psychological plane within the child as an intra-mental category. (Shabani, 2010). To further elucidate, Vygotsky presents his concept of mediation known as a mechanism through which external, socio-cultural activities are transformed into internal, mental functioning (Pham, 2003). The author through this concept demonstrates how development cannot be separated from its social and cultural context and reiterates the fact that social interaction alongside cultural tools forms the most integral part of a learner's psychological development (Shabani, 2010). Cultural tools refer to all things used in day-to-day lives such as beds, chairs, and folders, to more complex concepts such as language, science, religion, arts, etc. (Cole, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978).

2.2.1.4 Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

Vygotsky's SCT states that learning is embedded within social events as individuals interact with their environment (Cherry, 2022). By partaking in social environments higher mental functions are developed through participation in social interactions and, within educational contexts, communicative activities. These cognitive and communicative functions aim to nurture and scaffold students' learning process as well as integrate students' socio-cultural reality (Aimin, 2013). Through this perspective, a student's language learning process arises from meaning-making, or in other words, giving a situation or object an

interpreted meaning in light of previous knowledge and experiences (Zittoun & Brinkmann, 2012).

The essence of language and meaning according to SCT is to be able to communicate a clear message to another individual. Meaningful communication is one of the foundations of SCT in language learning (Aimin, 2013). Interaction between learners should be placed within the context of the common second language being learned as well as with the speakers of the language they are learning. Ideally, SCT suggests that the most effective way to acquire a second language is to contextualize the learning environment (Aimin, 2013). This is achieved by placing the learners within environments where the language is used with the aid of a native speaker, acting as a more knowledgeable other (Torres, 2017). Alongside environment setting, culture and identity are two key factors in stimulating the cultural context of the language when applying communicative activities in practice (Aimin, 2013).

2.2.1.5 Social / Interactionist Approach

CBL states the importance of learner's interaction with their surrounding environment, not only contextualizing their learning but also creating a link between this environment and past experiences. Vygotsky, cited by Alharbi (2023) stated that his theory surged from the belief that social interaction plays a pivotal role in a person's cognitive development. This learner-centred theory holds the potential to significantly empower language instructors if incorporated efficiently into foreign language classrooms. Alongside this, Alharbi (2023) also mentions how this theory highlights collaborative partnerships as a key aspect in the classroom. This aspect is crucial as it fosters problem-solving, with a strong emphasis on the connection between the scholar and the personal aspect. Zhou (2024) develops this idea further and notes that professors need to foster community involvement, recognizing the diverse influences and educational approaches from family participation deeming it crucial. Zhou (2024) mentions how this theory supports inclusive practices that accommodate student's needs and learning styles, thereby fostering creativity, problem-solving abilities, and communication skills. According to Alharbi (2023) this helps optimize the efficacy of social interaction in foreign language learning.

2.2.1.6 Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLAT)

The SLAT examines how learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to a second language. This language learning theory seeks to understand why second language learners do not attain the same level of proficiency as those native speakers. However, this theory also seeks to explain cases where learners do achieve this native-like proficiency in multiple languages (Eckman, 2013). To understand this phenomenon, the SLAT must understand the learning process students go through to learn a second language. This process starts by encompassing the learner's initial exposure to the second language until learners achieve varying degrees of comprehensibility as well as intelligibility (Eckman, 2013).

Various authors have argued how this process takes place. Skinner argued that language learners can be made to automatically produce and comprehend language, achievable through a series of stimuli and responses. Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis posits that learners acquire language most effectively when they are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current proficiency level (Krashen, 2019). Additionally, Merrill Swain's Output Hypothesis argues that producing language encourages learners to process language more deeply, leading to better acquisition (Swain, 1985).

According to this theory, learners construct knowledge through social interactions within their cultural context, making the learning process inherently collaborative such as conversation and collaborative tasks, in facilitating language acquisition (Long, 1996). In SLAT classrooms, this theory has been demonstrated to be most effective with second-language learners. By integrating student's cultural identity and contextualizing language learning classrooms surrounding culture, students find themselves curious and motivated to learn. Integrative motivation desires to combine into SLA classrooms context, language, and culture, aiming for practical benefits of language proficiency such as comprehensibility and intelligibility (Eckman, 2013).

2.2.2 Student-Centred Learning Models

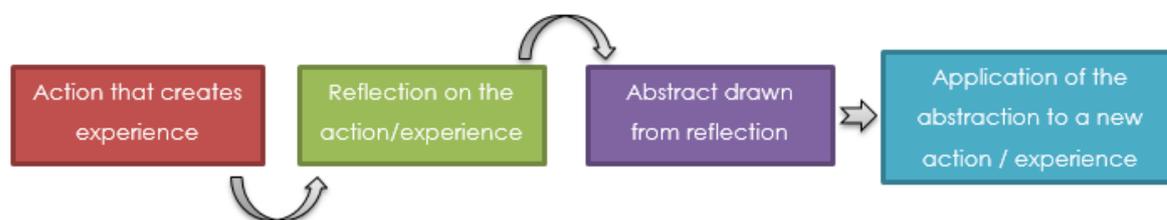
2.2.2.1 Experiential Learning (EL)

EL is the process of making meaning through reflecting on the alumni's past experiences. Educators act as a guide to setting suitable experiences as well as posing problem-solving tasks within learners' education. Therefore, EL education's classroom settings are student-centred, giving space to the individual student experience, interpretation, and learning (Putter-Smits, 2012). Said experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative within their learning and foster decision-making. Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, and constructing meaning. Learner's involvement with EL aims to produce an authentic perception of the learning task, resulting in productive knowledge for future experience and learning (Cepeda, 2018).

The foundation of EL education is based on four pedagogical principles: authenticity, active learning, drawing on student experience, and providing mechanisms for connecting experience to future opportunities. By correctly implementing these four principles, a cycle is formed where students first act through experience until they learn to apply said abstract knowledge to a new experience. The learner's learning outcomes are dependent on the learner's "experience". This is dependent on the pedagogy, strategies, and instruction of the educator which are influenced by the nature of the content, context, and student's learning styles (Stehno, 1986; see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Basic Tenets of Experiential Learning



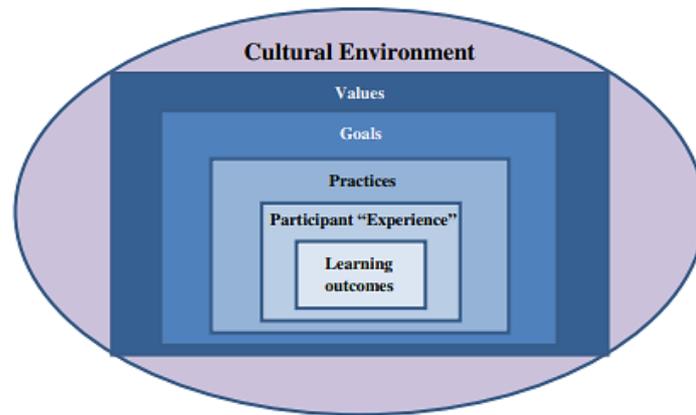
Note. A graph detailing the four principles of experiential learning as well the process and result from applying a EL programme. Adapted from “[The Application and Integration of Experiential Education in Higher Education]” by Stehno, J., (p. 8), 1986, (<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED285465>).

Alongside these principles, key characteristics are found within EL classrooms which are considered fundamental for understanding how learners process concepts within language learning. First and foremost, learning is not reflected by the expected outcome, but best conceived by the continuous process. Smith (2013) explains how students learn and relearn concepts forming a continuous cycle modified by experience, clarifying how no two thoughts are the same. This goes hand in hand with how knowledge is viewed in EL, a transformation process continuously created and recreated, not acquired or transmitted. According to Kolb, cited by Cepeda (2018), understanding this leads to a continuous construction of concepts through communicative processes of assimilation. Alongside learning being considered a continuous process, experience must always be grounded and present within. The principle of continuity of experience refers to experience using lived events to modify the view on events that have yet to happen. As people pass from situation to situation, what they have learned becomes an instrument for understanding and dealing effectively with future events (Cepeda, 2018).

Another key factor influencing students’ future decision-making based on their perspectives on past experiences is the context in which it took place. As Dewey cited in Pappas (2023) states, the experience cannot be isolated by its context as said experience is influenced by factors whether it be societal, cultural, or political. Hence, students’ learning outcomes must consider students’ socio-cultural aspects such as their identity. In fact, (Kolb, 1984) asserts that the context in which content is taught is as fundamental as the methodologies used within the classroom. Therefore, educators working in multicultural environments should be aware of students’ various backgrounds, creating goals including relevant contexts to the content and methodologies. All these elements aim to create more inclusive and responsive educational environments (Cepeda, 2018; see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Experiential Education Program Structure Embedded in a Cultural Environment



Note. A graph demonstrating learning outcomes embedded within a cultural environment in an EL classroom. Adapted from “[Recognizing Culture in Experiential Education: An Analysis and Framework for Practitioners]” by Kurka, V., (p. 15), 2012, (<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/32444970.pdf>).

The relationship between the person and the environment within EL refers to the person's internal state and how they interact with their environment. Learning is often misconstrued as primarily a personal, internal process limited to English teaching books, the teacher, and the classroom. Cepeda (2018) takes from Kolb who states that treating environmental stimuli as independent variables leads to a one-way view of learning, where environmental stimuli should consider the whole and wider real-world environment. Experience is not confined solely to the internal processes of an individual or, in other words, go inside a person. Every genuine experience showcases action or interaction taking place which changes the conditions under which said experiences are had. This reinstates Smith's (2013) idea of how no two thoughts are ever the same. Experience, therefore, is an interplay of these two sets of conditions, forming a situation (Cepeda, 2018).

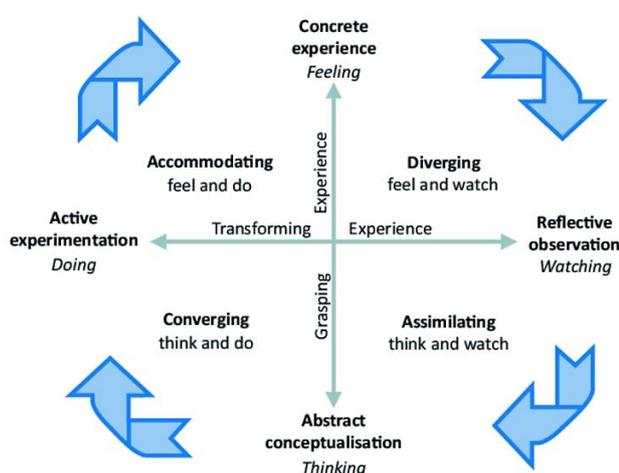
Kolb mentions how “The statement that individuals live in a world means, that they live in a series of situations” (1984, p. 19). These reviewed concepts of situation and interaction become inseparable when describing an experience. To clarify, the uniqueness or essences of experiences are always what they are because of a transaction taking place within a determined situation. This does not mean only between individuals, but also with time, objects, a topic, or an event. To elucidate, the reader and the book being read constitute a part of a situation and interaction, a learner and the material they are learning. Overall, the environment constitutes the set conditions where individuals interact within the situation, expressing needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience that is had (Smith, 2013).

Said dynamic interplay within the environment aligns seamlessly with the principles of EL as well as CBL, which leverages the use of real-life problems to foster and develop creative problem-solving skills relevant to the learning process, context, and content (Cepeda, 2018). Fostering said skills within students is not only for them to understand the importance and meaning of language learning but also well adapt their knowledge to real-life scenarios. Paulo Freire, cited by Gulistan (2020) better determines these problems as how reflection and action upon the world are transformed through this process. The way the “world is named” is through an active process of transforming individuals understanding of the world, through experience, which in turn leads to individual reflection. These perspectives then influence the choice of words which then give meaning to the world around them (Gulistan, 2020). This process of “naming the world” is achieved through meaningful communication among individuals on the same cognitive and cultural level. This process of inquiry and learning sets against Freire’s work against the banking concept of language learning (Kolb, 1984). For these two models, Kolb’s Experiential Learning cycle has been considered to explain the aforementioned process.

2.2.2.1.1. Kolb’s Learning Cycle (KLC). The mentioned learning cycle seeks to detail how students learn and create knowledge through experience. The process begins with concrete experience which involves feeling and taking in information followed by reflective observation, consisting of watching and interpreting information. Students then follow through abstract conceptualization, or in other words, thinking and grasping information. Lastly, students face active experimentation where the aim is for them to do and act on information (Kurt, 2022). This cyclical process enables learners to actively engage in real-world challenges, reflect on their experiences, conceptualize solutions, and test these solutions in future scenarios, which helps them adapt their knowledge to new contexts (Kolb, 1984; See Figure 4).

Figure 4

Kolb’s Learning Cycle



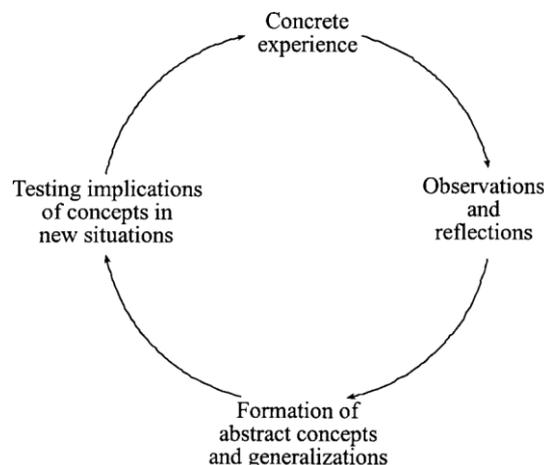
Note. This cycle detonates four steps to learning where students first try out what they have learned, have the actual experience, reflect on said experience, and finally learn from the experience. Adapted from “[Experiential Learning Experience As The Source Of Learning And Development]” by Kolb, (p. 15), 1984, (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235701029_Experiential_Learning_Experience_As_The_Source_Of_Learning_And_Development).

EL establishes its basis on the work of authors who share a constructivist view within their models of learning, emphasizing the active role of learners in constructing knowledge through experience. Out of Lewin, Dewy, and Piaget’s learning theories, Lewin’s is the theory that most elucidate the importance of centring experience within the learning process, allowing for a holistic integrative perspective that combines experience, cognition, and perception (Akella, 2010).

2.2.2.1.2. The Lewinian Model of Learning (LML). Learning, change, and growth start with present, first-hand experiences followed by feedback about the experience. feedback is given to students to modify their perspectives on the previous experience of their behavior and choice of new actions, leading to new experiences (Kolb, 1984). Immediate personal experience is the focal point for learning where students give personal meaning to abstract concepts (Smith, 2013). The use of a personal experience loop combined with the student’s learning process creates a 4-stage learning cycle, starting from observation and reflection using immediate concrete experience as a basis. Said observations are then assimilated into a learning theory from which new hypotheses for taking action are created. These hypotheses then serve as a guide in acting to create new perspectives on said experiences. The aim of creating new perspectives is for students to be able to share their views on the experience fully, concretely, and abstractly, fostering communication (Smith, 2013; see Figure 5).

Figure 5

The Lewinian Experiential Learning Model



Note. A cycle demonstrating how people learn and create new experiences using previous ones as a base. Adapted from “[Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development]” by Kolb, D., (p. 5), 1984, (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235701029_Experiential_Learning_Experience_As_The_Source_Of_Learning_And_Development).

2.2.2.2 Situated Learning (SL)

Torres (2017) underscores that students are not empty vessels where knowledge is deposited by teachers, rather knowledge is constructed collaboratively within specific contexts and cultural settings. The broader principles of SL acknowledge the important role of culture in shaping learning experiences, emphasizing the creation of knowledge within authentic and specific socio-cultural contexts. This suggests that meaningful learning must consider and incorporate student’s cultural identity, therefore, including norms, values, and practices of the learning environment (Bell et al., 2013).

The perspective aligns with the foundational ideas of CBL, where meaningful learning occurs when learners engage and reflect on real-world problem-solving tasks that mirror not only professional practices but also their cultural reality (Bell et al., 2013). Educators by using real-world teaching scenarios within classroom settings foment authentic and context-rich environments. Said environments often implicitly involve cultural elements, as they reflect the practices, tools, and communication styles of specific educational CoPs. Overall, students’ learning process is deeply tied to the cultural settings in which it occurs. Therefore, it is suggested that teaching preparation programs must integrate SL as well as CBL to equip educators with the ability to contextualize their teaching practices effectively (Bell et al., 2013).

2.2.2.3 Active Learning (AL)

AL posits itself within constructivism where students are required to have a sense of responsibility over their learning process achievable through the combination of self-directed learning and the use of contexts (Gilbert, 2006; Parchmann et al., 2006). This constructivist view is consistent with the learning underlying context-based education, making AL an important element of CBL (Gilbert, 2006). The learning process AL learners go through is divided into four dimensions, starting by constructing a basis from the learner’s inquisitions (Labudde, 2008). From this, knowledge construction begins through social interactions with others where learning becomes an active process of building new comprehension based on the learner’s prior knowledge. Therefore, the new knowledge must be situated within students’ learning horizons, leading to how the educator chooses adequate methodologies to achieve the mentioned goals. Said process is specifically relevant to CBL as these entail learning concepts within a specific context, alongside specific active learning activities such as hands-on activities, and project learning (Labudde, 2008).

The mentioned learning activities fall under three categories: strong, shared, and loose teacher control (Labudde, 2008). Educators should be competent in knowing which category best suits their alumni, who in return learn to regulate their learning process rather than having it be controlled. In order to achieve intermediate or high self-regulated learning, a shared or loose learning activity is most effective (Putter Smits, 2012). This includes students making connections with their personal experiences, learning autonomy, subject freedom, goal and decision-making, and problem-solving activities (Labudde, 2008).

2.2.2.4 Cooperative Learning (CL)

CBL aims to integrate cooperative learning as a means for students to develop real-life communicative skills by practicing language functions (Torres, 2017). Cooperative learning is conceptualized as a pedagogical approach wherein students are organized into diverse groups aimed at enhancing classroom learning processes. This approach transcends mere group assignment by emphasizing collaborative efforts aimed at fostering reflective dialogue and mutual support, thereby facilitating meaningful learning experiences (Johnson and Johnson, 2003). Strategies such as peer collaboration, interaction with both peers and specialists, mutual assistance within teams, and cooperative research strategies contribute significantly to effective problem-solving, reflective practices, and the development of metacognitive strategies, such as monitoring comprehension and self-assessment of progress (Torres, 2017). The methodology of CL also aims to concretely realize the longstanding educational principle of student-centred teaching and learning (García, 2005).

2.2.2.5 Thematic Immersion

2.2.2.5.1. Thematic Immersion. This student-centered learning model refers to a topic discussion between educators and their alumni over a learning topic corresponding to students' learning experiences or cultural backgrounds. Said discussions include combining knowledge and skills from other learning areas which aim to improve students' thinking, communication, collaboration, and interdisciplinary skills and improve them to better adapt to real-life scenarios. By implementing this method with CBL, learners may be further motivated to practice and promote their comprehension. Alongside this, their learning experience becomes personalized by including their interests or life experiences (Yin, 2022). This constructivist learning model scaffolds multiple instructional activity designs and teaching strategies intending to arrange learning content to meet student's learning needs (Bezerra, 2016). Students, through this model, are permitted to explore the real world, identify problems, and continue to search for solutions, allowing them to develop cultural awareness, communication, and teamwork. The openness of considering students' voices when adjusting activities to the curriculum design allows educators to recognize possible future problems and promote active learning (Yin, 2022).

2.2.2.5.2 Thematic Immersion Teaching Activities. Within this learning method, Yeh and Lan (2017) propose that using thematic-based activities improves teacher-student interaction, listening comprehension skills, vocabulary retention, motivation, reduced

learning anxiety, learning attitude, and learning outcomes. These include story-based thematic language teaching, song-based thematic language teaching, and video-based thematic language (Wardani et al, 2020). Lan and Liao (2017) state that these activities through CBL can promote learners' speaking and communication skills, learning attitude, and listening motivation, which further enable textbook publishers to design teaching materials that better adapt to real-life communication situations.

2.2.3 Active Methodologies

2.2.3.1 Humanistic Approach

Within CBL, collaborative learning is one of the pillars of a successful contextualized classroom, yet each student is responsible for adding to the learning process. Therefore, CBL strongly adheres to the humanistic philosophy that emphasizes the inherent worth and potential of every individual. This approach is rooted in the works of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Roger (1969) highlights "student-centred learning" and its importance in creating a learning environment where students feel valued and respected, which in turn fosters motivation. Similarly, Maslow (1943) proposes a hierarchy of student needs where it states how students' basic physiological and psychological needs must be met before they can engage in the learning process. This in turn promotes a holistic educational experience. The humanistic approach advocates for an educational curriculum that prioritizes personal growth, self-expression, self-confidence, and self-determination, viewing education as a means to nurture the whole person rather than merely transmitting academic knowledge (Maslow, 1943). This approach also emphasizes the importance of personal experience and the subjective view of the learner. This approach posits that education should be learner-centred, focusing on the interests, goals, and needs of each student. Key elements include fostering a supportive teacher-student rapport and emotional well-being in the learning process and advocating for teachers to act as facilitators and guides rather than authoritative figures (Gomes da Silva, 2024).

2.2.3.2 Communicative Approach (CA)

The CA is a language theory that views language main function is for communication, involving various functions such as arguing, persuading, excusing, inviting, describing, narrating, apologizing, instructing, etc. Each language function is intended for specific social contexts where the interlocutor seeks to receive or provide specific information. It is vital to consider the interlocutor's communicational goal, the speaker's intent, and emotional disposition (Torres, 2017). Given that communication is a dynamic process, mere knowledge of language forms, meanings, and functions is insufficient for students. The crucial aspect lies in applying this knowledge to negotiate meaning actively. This interaction may occur between different communicational media such as speaker and listener or between writer and reader. This closely correlates with CBL as they both aim to involve functions of the language within the classroom to better communicative skills. These skills also aim to relate class contents to real-life use in the workplace, stating the importance

of the contents and better-motivating students. Overall, a language primarily serves to facilitate communication, enabling learners to articulate their ideas as well as to fulfil their specific communicative purposes through interaction with others. This enables learners to develop communicative competence (Torres, 2017).

2.2.3.3 Task-Based Learning (TBL)

CBL classrooms, as stated before, aim to develop communicative skills through collaboration whereas TBL has been considered as an effective methodology where students have the opportunity to develop their communication. TBL, in the words of Torres (2017), is oriented toward cultivating students' communicative competence and facilitating effective communication in a foreign language. A task is defined as a structured classroom activity where learners engage with the target language through comprehension, interaction, and production with a primary emphasis on meaning rather than form. Thus, TBL necessitates student participation in purposeful conversations aimed at accomplishing a task to produce a result. A task lies in its goal-oriented nature, where learners utilize language to achieve tangible outcomes such as problem-solving, puzzles, games, or the sharing of experiences (Willis, 1996). The primary objective is to seamlessly integrate all language skills, progressing from fluency towards a balance of accuracy and fluency. The diverse array of tasks available—including reading, listening, problem-solving, role-plays, questionnaires, and projects—provides substantial flexibility within this model, fostering highly motivating activities for learners (Torres, 2017).

2.2.3.4 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL is considered an educational approach where subjects are taught in the target foreign language with the goal of combining content mastery with language acquisition (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). In this sense, CLIL and CBL are intertwined as they both situate context and content where the content is related to language acquisition. It is vital to state how the content should never be isolated from the context as this impedes students from developing effective communication skills. Engaging students in both subject-specific content and language development at the same time promotes immersive learning. Alongside this, CLIL's key features within a student's learning process involve foreign language integrated objectives, focus on communication, cognitive skills, and the use of scaffolding techniques. Therefore, classroom activities using CLIL must be active such as project-based learning, collaborative tasks, debates, role-plays, and presentations. These activities foster an environment where students actively use the target language to engage with the subject matter. Overall, Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010), state how CLIL provides a holistic learning experience that prepares students for globalized contexts by developing their language proficiency and subject knowledge.

2.2.4 EFL Ecuadorian Curriculum

2.2.4.1 CLIL

Within CBL classrooms, one of the main goals is for students to learn the necessary communication skills that go hand in hand with the Ecuadorian curriculum proposal. Said proposal prioritizes the cultivation of the four communicative skills over the acquisition of linguistic content. This emphasis reflects the broader objective of foreign language education, which aims not to produce linguistic experts but rather proficient users of a second language capable of both oral and written communication. The curriculum adopts a language-oriented CLIL approach, leveraging content from various disciplines to facilitate meaningful and purposeful language utilization (Met, 1999). Within this framework, the proposal advocates for the integration of critical thinking skills alongside the development of communicative linguistic competencies. These aspects are portrayed as mutually dependent processes within the CLIL model, wherein critical thinking skills play a pivotal role in implementing the 4Cs framework being content, culture, communication, and cognition (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

This curriculum operationalizes the 4Cs by integrating five core curricular components: Oral Communication speaking and listening, Reading, Writing, Language through the Arts, and Communication and Cultural Awareness. Linguistic competencies are structured according to the international standards of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The Language through the Arts and Communication and Cultural Awareness components bolster the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) aspect of the curriculum by providing authentic written and oral texts, content-based and interdisciplinary materials, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources, and fostering learners' social, cultural, and epistemological understanding. Critical thinking skills and learning strategies are integrated across the curriculum, serving as mechanisms to connect ideas and propel the development of communicative language abilities and knowledge acquisition (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

2.2.4.2 Communication and Cultural Awareness (CCA)

According to Ministerio de Educación (2016), CCA is comprised of two aspects, Intercultural Awareness and Identity, and Social Competence and Values. Intercultural Awareness and Identity as noted by Çakir (2006), involves communicating internationally which inevitably involves communicating interculturally as well. Engaging in foreign language learning provides learners with essential opportunities to enhance their intercultural competence, utilizing the target language, English, as a conduit to a deeper understanding of both their own culture and cultures worldwide. Through activities designed to foster intercultural awareness, learners can gain insights into their cultural perspectives by examining how they perceive other cultures and how their culture is perceived by others. By discussing their cultural backgrounds and learning about children in other countries,

learners can broaden their perspectives and cultivate cultural sensitivity (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

2.2.5 Cultural Identity (CI)

CI encompasses the values, traditions, language, and customs that define individual cultures. This shapes personal and collective worldviews, influencing interactions and societal integration. Understanding cultural identity is crucial for fostering inclusivity and appreciating diversity in a globalized world. To discuss cultural identity, we must first discuss culture and identity.

2.2.5.1 Culture

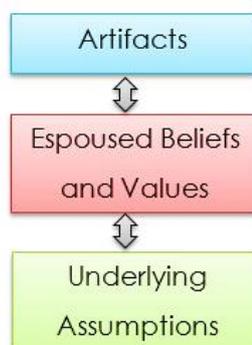
Culture is a multifaceted construct that encompasses the beliefs, behaviours, values, and symbols that a group of people accepts and passes along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next (Hofstede, 1980). Edward T. Hall (1959) reinstates the importance of culture and how it acts as a framework for creating the groundwork of distinct communities, providing the tools necessary for interpreting and interacting with the world. Clifford Geertz (1973) elaborates this further by describing culture as a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms through which individuals communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.

Schein (2010) mentions three basic levels that form culture. The first consists of artifacts, which refer to the physical, observable, and decipherable aspects of culture such as clothing, food, and behaviors. The second consists of espoused values, also known as the more difficult aspects of culture to understand that usually clarify the more one is submerged within the culture or cultural group. This is followed up by basic underlying assumptions, or in other words, implicit assumptions that guide a cultural group's behavior which are often referred to as unconscious actions, beliefs, thoughts, etc. (Schein, 2010). The basic assumptions mentioned are also known as cultural dimensions, which are measurable aspects of culture used to explain certain phenomena that occur in a cultural group (Schein, 2010).

Within educational contexts, cultural dimensions apply to experiential education contexts as they seek to integrate a student's past experiences within their learning process. These experiences may vary due to students' diverse cultural backgrounds, which influences students learning styles, behaviours, beliefs, personalities, and motivation. Overall, Raymond Williams (1983) posits that culture encompasses both the traditional and recreational activities of society and how these experiences shape their societal roles and identities (Schein, 2010).

Figure 6

Three Levels of Culture



Note. A graph detailing cultures three dimensions to consider in language teaching.

Adapted from “[Leadership and Organizational Culture]”, by Schein, E. (p. 47), 2010,

(<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiU3Yb9kqiKAXV9hIQIHSvTO-gQFnoECCMQAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fspace.vnbrims.org%3A13000%2Fjspui%2Fbitstream%2F123456789%2F2373%2F1%2FORGANIZATIONAL%2520CULTURE%2520Organizational%2520Culture%2520and%2520Leadership%2520C%25203rd%2520Edition.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3IrYYGgBGlsrYgKmcYZOT&opi=89978449>).

2.2.5.2 Identity

Identity, on the other hand, refers to the conception of oneself shaped through the shaping of personality, lived experiences, morals, and exterior influences. Erikson (1968) conceptualized identity as a dynamic and evolving construct formed through a continuous process of self-reflection and social interaction. Gee (2000) expands on this by highlighting that identity is multifaceted and encompasses personal, social, and cultural dimensions that are expressed through one's actions, language, and relationships. These influences lead individuals to the development of social identity, which impacts behaviour and self-conception. Overall, all these perspectives collectively underscore that identity is not a static attribute but a fluid and context-dependent construct, continually influenced by internal self-perception and external social contexts (Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

Within Ecuador's educational system, cultural identity is deeply intertwined with language teaching, as language is not only a means of communication but also a carrier of cultural values and beliefs. Kramsch (1993) posits that language learning is inherently linked to the cultural contexts in which it occurs, suggesting that learners inevitably acquire cultural knowledge alongside linguistic skills. Within Ecuador, Byram (1997) further argues that developing intercultural competence within students is a fundamental component of foreign language learning. Students not only learn to navigate and appreciate cultural differences but

also relate their own culture to earning and fostering a deeper connection to the importance of education. Similarly, Norton (2000) emphasizes the importance of cultural identity within foreign language learning asserting that learners' cultural identities are shaped by their experiences in acquiring language, shaping the way students view language learning. Hence, effective language teaching should integrate cultural elements to foster a holistic learning experience that respects and acknowledges the cultural identities of learners.

2.2.5.3 Cultural Identity and Pedagogical Activities

Educators are tasked with the challenge of fostering cultural identity with the objective of empowering their alumni through content curated to represent their own reality (Harrell-Levy, 20120). This leads to CBL advocating for activities that foster cultural identity through foreign language learning that must respond to a culturally responsive pedagogy. This type of responsive teaching validates and affirms students' cultural identities by incorporating their reality into the learning environment (Gay, 2000). Some practical activities that have proven to aid in this endeavour include problem-solving, hands-on, and collaborative activities (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Learners can engage in these pedagogical activities and develop a strong cultural identity as well as improve their language skills. Therefore, cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, puzzles, roleplays, and projects have been considered as pedagogical activities that reinforce cultural identity through CBL.

For the creation of the pedagogical guide, these five cultural pedagogical activities were chosen. These activities were particularly designed to fit into Ecuador's cultural festivities across the four regions in order to properly adapt to student's cultural reality. This multicultural education fosters cultural awareness and a sense of belonging through engagement with diverse festivities that reflect student's reality (Banks, 2001). These activities are valuable educational tools that immerse students in meaningful, real-world contexts, fostering critical soft skills (Lozano, 2023). All in all, the chosen pedagogical cultural activities that foster this cultural identity as well as relate to CBL are chosen for the creation of the pedagogical guide "An English Exploration".

One of the first activities to be considered is cultural celebrations calendars. This activity presents students with different cultural events and festivities from diverse regions throughout an entire calendar year and develops educational activities through this (Calendar, 2025). This aims to foster cultural awareness, promote inclusivity, and enhance soft and communication skills. This allows students to gain a deeper understanding of their cultural identity and appreciate the diversity of others (Eden, 2024). This activity was adapted to match students' own cultural identity which led to encouragement to connect with traditions, customs, and values associated with different festivities. By integrating these activities using CBL, these become relevant, impactful, authentic, and meaningful as they root themselves within real-world cultural contexts.

Following this train of thought, the following activity to be considered is scenario-based problem-solving tasks. This activity presents students with realistic situations that require them to analyze information, evaluate options, and devise effective solutions (Jonassen, 2010). This approach aims for students to develop critical decision-making and collaborative skills through flexible and creative thought devising. The activity was adapted to real-life scenarios and presented problems that reflected their cultural, social, or community issues, therefore, immersing the alumni's cultural identity (Gay, 2018). This activity aids in students' understanding of the importance of cultural identity as they relate practicableness to theory, turning language learning relevant, which aligns strongly with CBL principles, and situating learning within meaningful, authentic real-life challenges (Ladson-Billings, 2021).

Alongside this, the following activity to be considered are puzzles. This educational activity requires students to solve problems by identifying patterns, organizing information, or piecing together clues to form a complete solution. Said activity aims to enhance student's cognitive skills being critical decision-making, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and memory retention (Reza Khorammakan et al., 2023). This activity was adjusted to the student's cultural context through the use of cultural narratives/traditions as well as designed to encourage teamwork and communication, therefore including collaborative activities. This activity was also seen as appropriate and well-fitting to CBL by embedding educational tasks in meaningful cultural contexts, helping students connect abstract concepts to real-world cultural knowledge (Reza Khorammakan et al., 2023).

Moving on to the next pedagogical activity, role plays are another vital pedagogical activity. Said activity involves students assuming roles and acting out scenarios to explore real-life situations or historical, cultural, or social contexts. This activity seeks to enhance student's communication skills, situational awareness, quick thinking, and problem-solving abilities (Komisaryk et al., 2023). By stepping into diverse roles, students are offered deeper insights into different perspectives which ultimately change their view on cultural practices, which helps them connect to and reflect upon the importance of their own cultural identity. Role-plays act as meaningful activities for students as these situate and immerse students within culturally relevant experiences that require them to embody cultural narratives and values, encouraging experiential understanding, a key component within CBL (Cepeda, 2018).

As a final considered activity, projects are another key activity. Projects are comprehensive, student-centered learning activities that involve researching, planning, and creating a final product or presentation based on either a specific topic or a variety of them (Lassen et al., 2021). These activities, similar to some of the activities mentioned earlier, aim to develop student's critical thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration (David & Kiu Publication Extension, 2024). Through projects, students can engage in deeper and meaningful learning by exploring classroom knowledge in practical applications based on relevant cultural themes (Gay, 2018). When focused on cultural topics related to student's identity, projects allow them to explore and feel proud of their traditions,

customs, and historical narratives, shaping learning through students' lived experiences, aligned with CBL expectations.

2.2.6 Context-Based Learning (CBL)

2.2.6.1 Context-Based Learning

CBL is a student-centred educational approach that situates learning within the context of real-world scenarios, thereby enhancing the relevance and applicability of the knowledge acquired. According to Bennett, Lubben, and Hogarth (2007), this pedagogical strategy is integral to effective education as it aims to connect academic content with practical and relevant experiences, fostering a deeper understanding and retention of the subject matter. By incorporating authentic contexts, students are more likely to engage in meaningful learning processes, as they can see the direct implications and uses of their education (Gilbert, 2006). It is also pivotal to emphasize the importance of social and cultural context in cognitive development, asserting that learners construct knowledge through interactions within their environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Lave and Wenger (1991) agree with Vygotsky's idea stating that CBL fosters authentic learning experiences through participation in communities of practice, where learners engage in real-world activities.

CBL promotes problem-solving skills as learners are encouraged to apply theoretical concepts to solve real-life problems, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice (King, 2014). One of the most important factors that influences the learning process is active engagement with the material (Trimmer and Hawes, 2015). CBL to engage students with the material uses an inclusive methodological process and incorporates exercise using collaborative learning, challenge-based learning, case-based learning, problem-based learning, and project-based learning in an iterative, hands-on, incremental approach (Sedas, 2012). Overall, this approach not only improves cognitive outcomes but also helps students apply their knowledge to practical situations, promoting lifelong learning and adaptability. Adjacent to cognitive outcomes, this approach presents three main benefits for students such as enhanced understanding, increased motivation, and development of transferable skills such as problem-solving skills and collaborative skills (Prince, 2004).

2.2.6.2 Teacher Competences & Student Roles in CBL

Educators are expected to be members of a professional community who are ready, willing, and capacitated to teach and learn from their experience (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Within CBL, educators are expected to have the following competencies: context handlers, referring to establishing concepts; regulators, referring to promoting student active learning; emphasize, referring to explaining concepts through application; designers, referring to adjusting materials to student's needs; and innovators (Putter-Smits et al., 2012). Alongside this, educators take on the role of facilitators and guides, creating and presenting real-life contexts that are relevant and engaging to the students. Their aim whilst taking on these roles is to design scenarios and learning activities that encourage exploration, critical

decision-making skills, and problem-solving, while also providing support and scaffolding to help students navigate complex tasks (Putter-Smits, 2012). Alongside this, three key teacher competencies are needed for implementing a successful CBL environment: context handling, regulation, emphasis, and design (Putter Smits, 2012).

2.2.6.2.1 Context Handling. The nature of the CBL classroom differs from a traditional educational approach as these usually familiarise students with concepts, considered as the pivotal part of the lesson, and then later embark on the applicability of the concepts. CBL suggests that the context in class should cause a need for students to explore and learn the concepts where they can apply them to different situations. This is also referred to as context handling where an educator's competence is challenged in handling contexts, establishing concepts, and making the concepts transferable to other contexts (Putter-Smits et al., 2012). Alongside this, CBL classrooms foster students to routinely work alongside peers as well as educators in cooperative learning.

2.2.6.2.2 Regulation. CBL constructivist bases view learning through four learning dimensions: the individual learner, social interactions, achievable goals, and teaching methods (Labudde, 2008). The first dimension refers to knowledge as a construction of the individual learner, where educators recognize each student oversees their learning whilst collaborating and learning collaboratively within a group. The second dimension involves social interactions, or in other words, the construction and exchange of knowledge within determined groups. The third dimension concerns the content where learning is considered an active process of building knowledge using existing knowledge as a base for the creation of new knowledge situated within the horizon of the learner's abilities (Labudde, 2008). Lastly, the fourth dimension concerns the teaching methods and the educator's role in the learning process (Putter Smits, 2012).

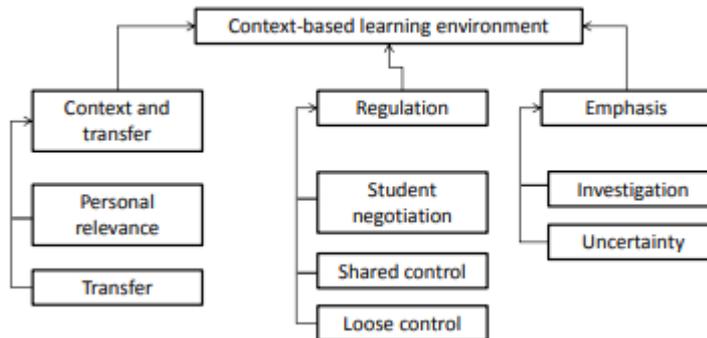
2.2.6.2.3 Emphasis & Design. Constructivist context-based materials are unfortunately faced with challenges within educational realms such as resources not always being available, automatically suited to every learning classroom, or adjusted to the needs of all individual learners. As well as this, context-based materials embed students within active learning roles that require activities such as experiments which put a strain on educators' timetables. Not all schools or educational programs are presented with the opportunity to meet these requirements and demands as well as meet learning objectives. This leads to the necessity for educators to redesign the material for the schools' facilities as well as for student's needs. Hence, educational design and adjustment of curriculum materials may be more demanding with context-based education and expected within teacher competencies more so than in traditional education (Putter Smits, 2012).

On the other hand, students take on an active role in their learning process as they engage with the contexts provided, apply their knowledge to solve problems, and collaborate with peers to construct understanding (Putter-Smits, 2012). This active involvement fosters meaningful learning and a deeper understanding of the learning practical relevance of their studies (Bennett and Holman, 2003). Within CBL, students are required to have a sense of

ownership and responsibility over their learning as well as learning topics as only students can construct their meanings from their experiences, rather than acquiring knowledge from others (Bennett, 2003).

Figure 7

Teacher Competences for Constructing an effective CBL environment



Note. A graph detailing how educators’ competences shape an effective CBL environment. Adapted from “[Science teachers designing context-based curriculum materials: developing context-based teaching competence]”, by Putter, L. (p. 72), 2012, (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254759584_Science_teachers_designing_context-based_curriculum_materialsdeveloping_context-based_teaching_competence).

2.2.6.3 Methodological Process

Alongside these requirements, educators must plan accordingly to establish a meaningful CBL lesson. To successfully apply CBL within classroom settings, 10 key principles must be considered within lesson planning: authentic contexts, meaningful learning, application of knowledge, active engagement, higher-order thinking, collaboration and social interaction, standards-related curricula, cultural responsiveness, authentic assessment, and the integration of multiple disciplines (CLIL) (Yusi, 2023). These principles are reflected in Tout’s (2015) 8 steps for planning lessons using CBL.

The first step refers to choosing a theme or context, where educators must find a topic of student’s interest or relevance. This is followed by brainstorming the possible areas and subtopics that could surge from the main topic. Then educators start to identify starting questions/tasks, meaning what possible questions, ideas, or impressions students may have, and from there establish a starting point. After this, educators identify possible language learning content that could be embedded or relevant to the topic. These must also reflect any curriculum outcomes expected to be met. After this, resources must be identified to develop

the activities. Lastly, educators plan the according assessment method and develop the CBL class (Tout, 2015).

Figure 8

Context-Based Teaching Lesson Planning



Note. A graph detailing how educators implementing CBL within their lessons should lesson plan before applying the methodology. Adapted from “[Planning for Context-Based Teaching]”, by Tout, D, 2015, (https://www.teachermagazine.com/au_en/articles/planning-for-context-based-teaching).

These key elements aim to connect academic material and knowledge and adapt these to the context of student’s reality including personal, social, and cultural aspects. To achieve this goal, CBL includes important aspects of student’s language learning process such as meaningful connections to their work, self-regulated learning, collaborative work, creative thinking, soft skills, maintaining slightly elevated activities according to students’ level, and authentic scoring (Putter-Smits et al., 2012). All in all, 4 main steps have been considered when applying CBL in the classroom (Tout, 2015) (Jong, 2008).

1. Contextualization

CBL first establishes the need to evoke students' curiosity, often referred to as their "need to know". This leads to educators presenting authentic and relevant cultural contexts that serve as anchors for the learning activities which all in all responds to the expected learning outcomes. This phase is divided into two stages:

- **Observation and Discussion:** Students observe engaging material such as videos, images, etc., prepared by the educator to kickstart discussions, sparking student's curiosity. This aims for students to start asking questions about the topic and grow a need for students to learn.
- **Related Activity:** Students are presented with an activity related to the cultural, relevant, and authentic context, enabling them to participate and explore the topic further. This aims for students to act upon their initial questions, using their past knowledge and experiences as a basis for this new knowledge.

2. Concept Introduction

The educator then creates a bridge that leads student's initial questions to the central idea or concept, providing clarity and helping students build an understanding of the subject matter. The educator presents the main topic of the class and utilizes thematic immersion to immerse students within the established cultural context. Students are exposed to the new material through videos, readings, or presentations of the topic, answering their initial questions as well as creating new ones, which are answered by the educator, acting as a guide.

3. Experimentation

Later students are exposed to the topic, where the professor enhances students' learning by linking questions to relevant information, integrating practical activities into the context. This approach allows students to see the practical application of theoretical knowledge, or in other words, students can see why their learning is meaningful and how this knowledge is useful within real-world contexts. These activities aside from being practical must be engaging, hands-on, active, collaborative, and individual. Students whilst working in groups must also take responsibility for their learning process, contributing their thoughts and perspectives on the topic as well as providing creative solutions for any problems the group may be confronted with. These activities must respond to curriculum and learning objectives as well as adapt to students' learning needs and adverse backgrounds. This phase is divided into two stages:

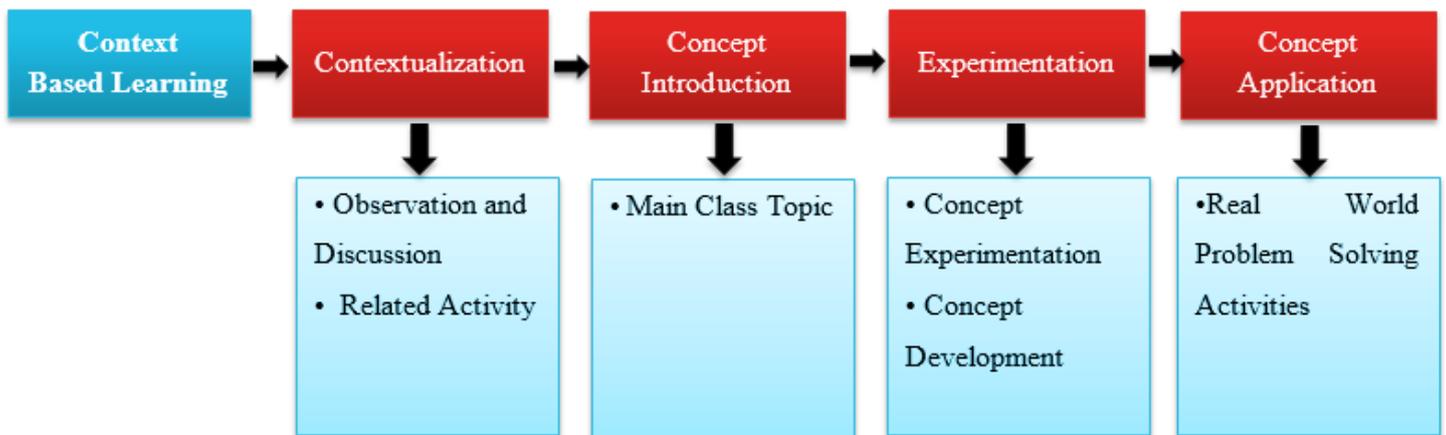
- **Concept Experimentation:** Students engage in experiments or hands-on activities to explore the concepts further. This aims for students to solidify what they've learnt within the classroom.
- **Concept Development:** Students gain a deeper understanding of the topic through reflection and learning. This aims for students to understand the importance of the topic, motivating them to further immerse themselves within their learning process.

4. Concept Application

The final stage focuses on students' "need to apply" their knowledge. Bennett and Holman (2003) emphasize that students engage in active learning through problem-solving activities, discussions, experiments, and projects tied to the context. These activities empower students to demonstrate their understanding and ability to analyse and evaluate information effectively. Overall, students are ready to solve problems or answer questions based on their knowledge.

Figure 9

CBL methodology



2.2.7 Activities for Teaching English to Develop Cultural Identity

To develop cultural identity while teaching English, educators can implement activities that immerse students in both the language and cultural exploration. Cultural exchange projects can be organized where students pair with peers from different cultural backgrounds to share traditions, stories, and customs through written and spoken English. Another effective activity is literature circles involving diverse authors from various cultural backgrounds allow students to read and discuss texts, fostering an appreciation of different perspectives and identities. Lastly, community engagement activities, such as interviews with community members from various cultural backgrounds or participation in local cultural festivals, provide practical contexts for language use and cultural learning. These activities not only enhance language skills but also deepen students' understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, thereby fostering a stronger sense of cultural identity (Byram, 1997).

2.2.8 CBL Situated to Enhance Cultural Identity

CBL can be effectively situated to enhance cultural identity by integrating culturally relevant contexts and materials into the curriculum. This approach acknowledges and values students' cultural backgrounds, promoting a deeper connection to the subject matter. According to Gay (2000), culturally responsive teaching, a form of CBL, helps students see

the relevance of their cultural heritage in their education, which can boost their engagement and academic achievement. By using culturally relevant examples, stories, and practices, CBL not only enhances students' understanding of the content but also fosters a sense of pride and belonging. This approach can lead to increased motivation, a stronger sense of identity, and the development of critical thinking skills as students learn to navigate and appreciate the diverse cultural landscapes that influence their lives.

2.2.9 Pedagogical Guide

A pedagogical guide is a structured framework that outlines the principles, strategies, and methods for effective teaching and learning. Its primary purpose is to provide educators with a clear roadmap for designing, implementing, and assessing instructional activities that facilitate student learning. The main components of a pedagogical guide typically include educational objectives, which define the desired learning outcomes; instructional strategies, which detail the approaches and techniques for delivering content; assessment methods, which describe how student learning will be evaluated; and resources, which list the materials and tools needed for instruction. Additionally, a pedagogical guide often incorporates theoretical foundations, offering a rationale for the chosen teaching methods based on educational research and learning theories (Bransford, 2000).

Creating a pedagogical guide involves a systematic process to provide educators with a framework for effective teaching. According to Jimenez-Liso (2019), the process typically begins with a needs assessment to identify the specific learning objectives and target audience. Next, the guide outlines the pedagogical approach, including instructional strategies, assessment methods, and resources. Parameters such as learning outcomes, evaluation criteria, and timelines are established to guide implementation. Elements of a pedagogical guide may include detailed lesson plans, sample activities, and assessment tools. The guide should be flexible enough to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs while ensuring alignment with educational standards and goals. All in all, Richards & Rodgers (2014) offer a model structure for the creation of a pedagogical guide that was reconstructed to fit according to students' needs as well as the research paper's objectives.

Table 2

Criteria for the Construction of the Pedagogical Guide

Introduction	
Purpose of the guide	Explains the intent of the guide and its relevance to the subject or topic.
Target Audience	Identifies the learners (age group, proficiency level, educational context).

Rationale	Justifies the need for the guide in addressing specific educational goals or challenges.
Learning Objective	Clearly outlines what the learners are expected to achieve by using the guide.
Theoretical Framework	
Pedagogical Principles	Provides the foundation of teaching approaches (e.g., constructivism, experiential learning).
Methodological Approach	Specifies the method(s) used (e.g., project-based learning, task-based learning, communicative language teaching).
Alignment with Standards	Links to relevant frameworks, such as CEFR, Bloom's Taxonomy, or national educational standards.
Curriculum Content	
Scope and Sequence	Outlines the topics and their logical progression.
Learning Module/Units	Breaks down content into manageable sections, each with: (Each activity can be considered as a unit) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specific objectives. 2. Key content and activities. 3. Estimated time for completion
Learning Activities	
Activity Descriptions	Detailed instructions for each activity, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Objectives. 2. Required materials. 3. Steps or procedures
Differentiation	Suggestions for adapting activities for diverse learners (e.g., advanced, struggling, or special needs students).

Integration of Skills	Specifies how multiple skills (e.g., reading, writing, collaboration) are incorporated
Assessment Tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formative Assessment: Activities or tools to monitor progress (e.g., quizzes, journals, peer evaluations). 2. Summative Assessment: Final evaluations to measure achievement (e.g., projects, tests, presentations). 3. Rubrics: Provides clear criteria for grading or evaluating performance
Resources	
Instructional Materials	Includes textbooks, online resources, videos, or multimedia tools.
Supplementary Materials	Provides additional content for practice, such as worksheets or handouts.
Technology Integration	Suggest apps, websites, or software to enhance learning.

Note. A table detailing the expected outline for the creation of the pedagogical guide.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Approach

This investigation worked towards outlining the process that was undertaken as well as validating this which was aimed to achieve the established objectives, which particularly followed the logic and principles of the qualitative approach. Conceptualized by Tenny (2022) a qualitative investigation is a type of research that investigates and offers deeper insights into real-world problems, gathering new ideas for further investigation and understanding rather than collecting numerical data points. This research gathered participants' experiences, perceptions, and behaviour to answer the how and why of the research.

In this case, the study aimed to understand the academic possibilities of the Context-Based Learning teaching method in enriching the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. The qualitative design was particularly suited to answer our research question where the investigator sought to understand from reliable sources what different authors thought and discussed about CBL considering topics such as theories, relevant aspects, methodological process, etc. Using this information, the investigator was able to construct a foundation to discuss the impact CBL had to develop cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English considering the different perspectives of renowned authors.

3.2. Research Modality

Typically, with qualitative designs investigators dedicate a great portion of time to researching information relevant to the study (Eumelia, 2001). In this case, the investigation sought to go through reliable documents such as articles, books, journals, etc., to have a better understanding of CBL. Therefore, the design adopted a bibliographic modality which consists of the revision of existing bibliographical material concerning the subject to be studied (Nishkala, 2023). This technique consists of selecting and collecting information through reading, critiquing documents and bibliographic materials, libraries, newspapers, and archives. This was considered essential to the study since it included a set of phases that encompassed observation, inquiry, interpretation, reflection, and analysis which helped obtain the necessary bases for the development of the study. The bases for said research were compiled into a series of topics and subtopics which were all stated within the theoretical framework.

3.3. Level or Type of Research

By having established a solid basis for the study, this aimed to detail vital aspects of CBL such as activities, teacher-student roles, and methodology that were employed through

CBL. This allowed the researcher to demonstrate the vast understanding and potential of CBL and answer how the aforementioned could be integrated as an effective methodology able to be employed to develop cultural identity through English language learning. Due to these reasons, the following investigation was descriptive which in the words of Brett (1988), a type of scientific research that aims to observe, describe, and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs without manipulating any variables. This kind of investigation seeks to provide an accurate portrayal of the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or population. It does not test hypotheses but rather focuses on gathering data to understand the "what" aspect of the subject under study. As well as this, the study was able to explain how this methodology responded to student's learning needs according to the Ecuadorian curriculum, which provided a solution to the lack of cultural disengagement within English learning classrooms. With this purpose, the study was also an explicative research which Ronald (2021) defines as a research method aimed at investigating causation in situations where data is scarce. Its primary objective is to discover associations among variables that may relate to the onset, severity, associated features, course, duration, and adjustment to a specific phenomenon. The outcomes of explicative research are frequently used in the development of theoretical frameworks and contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding a disorder.

3.4. Study Population

Due to the modality of this research, its population corresponded to all bibliographic sources and databases which were chosen and analysed within the study. The chosen databases for this study were Emerald Insight, ERIC, Google Libros, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Pro-Quest, ResearchGate, Science Direct, Scielo, Scopus, Wiley Online Library, and Web of Science. These data databases and online libraries were used for the research since these provided reliable and up-to-date information. Most of them offered free access or could be visited through institutional links. The data collected mainly involved research from the last decade in a similar context as those of Ecuadorians. The work of authors such as Putter Smits and Pappas was expected to be found within this research paper.

3.5. Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

3.5.1. Instruments

For the completion of the first specific objective "to describe the nature and approach of CBL within the realm of foreign language teaching and learning" a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method was applied. SLR is defined as a methodical approach to investigating and reviewing research based on a topic. This method involved identifying, selecting, and evaluating the relevance of the findings to the topic (Okoli, 2010). This method allowed the investigator to build a comprehensive understanding and base of pre-existing knowledge on CBL. This method allowed the investigator to identify key concepts, definitions, approaches, methodologies, implementation, effects on cultural identity, and foreign language development of CBL.

For the completion of the second objective “to identify activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target” an integrative literature review method was applied. This method involved synthesizing both empirical and theoretical literature to understand a particular topic. This method allowed for a holistic view considering perspectives and findings of the topic (Torraco, 2005). Therefore, this method permitted the investigator to gather and synthesize information about activities for the implementation of CBL from an ample range of credible sources. By doing so, this aided in identifying best practices, effective activities, and essential resources that were critical for the successful implementation of CBL.

Lastly, for the completion of the third objective “to construct a pedagogical-didactic guide illustrating the academic benefits of CBL in the construction of cultural identity” the study aspired to construct a pedagogical-didactic guide illustrating the academic benefits of CBL in the construction of cultural identity. For this, a systematization of the information method was applied. This method consisted of organizing and interpreting collected data in a coherent and structured manner involving a lengthy process of gathering, organizing, analysing, and synthesizing information which generated meaningful insights and actionable recommendations (Oscar, 2018). Through this method, the investigator aimed to compress the diverse experiences, perspectives, and data related to CBL into a clear and practical pedagogical-didactic guide. This guide allowed for a detailed examination of how CBL could be effectively used to foster cultural identity development, having made this a valuable resource for educators.

3.5.2. *Techniques*

For the completion of the first specific objective, the population was studied using a bibliography matrix instrument. A bibliographic matrix is a tool used in research to systematically organize and analyse credible literature such as papers, journals, articles, etc. These aided researchers in categorizing information and other relevant criteria, which facilitated a comprehensive and comparative review of the existing literature (Garrard, 2017). This was planned to make use of a bibliographic matrix to sort out and filter relevant information regarding CBL that allowed the researcher to construct a reliable and well-supported review.

For the completion of the second objective, a checklist instrument was used. A checklist tool is a systematic, organized list of criteria or tasks used to guide, assess, and ensure the completeness and accuracy of processes or activities. This served as a practical instrument for ensuring consistency and thoroughness, particularly in educational settings, by providing a clear framework for evaluating specific elements or steps (Mager, 1997). This tool aided the researcher in creating criteria for what is needed to develop cultural identity, activities, and resources through the implementation of CBL.

Lastly, for the completion of the third objective, a bibliography matrix instrument was implemented for the creation of a pedagogical guide establishing CBL and all its aspects.

CHAPTER IV

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

Constructivist Foundations in Action: Outcomes of CBL

The following findings in this research highlight CBL as a pedagogical methodology that fosters a profound connection between learners and the content by situating knowledge acquisition within a contextualized, cultural, and authentic classroom setting. This aligns with the proposed constructivist and sociocultural epistemologies, underscoring that knowledge is co-constructed through social interaction and practical engagement. CBL connects this theory and integrates cultural identity within the learning content, reaffirming that learning is not merely the transfer of information but rather the development of understanding through participation. This process includes contextual, meaningful, hands-on activities that serve to develop communicative and problem-solving skills adapted to real life scenarios. These obtained results respond to the first specific objective of this research “to describe the nature and approach of CBL within the realm of foreign language teaching and learning”. The results to be presented were obtained and carefully selected through a bibliographic matrix using the following criteria: the purpose of the document, the most relevant findings of the document, and pedagogical activities that can be applied through CBL.

CBL is a student-centred pedagogical methodology that situates learning within the context of real-world scenarios, where students enhance the relevance and applicability of their newfound knowledge. This is achieved by developing the academic content through practical activities, developing soft and communicative skills using authentic cultural contexts, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter. These authentic contexts, give meaning to student’s learning processes as the alumni experience first-hand the direct implications and uses of their language learning education. Alongside this, CBL establishes language learning foundations on constructivist and sociocultural theories, asserting that learners construct knowledge through interactions within their environment, emphasizing the importance of meaningful communication or interaction.

The methodology is based on the firm conviction that learning is a communal activity centred on the interactions between people. A key element of how this communication is shaped within the language learning classroom is by the used communications media, aka the various channels or means through which information is transmitted, shared, and received, to establish a shared culture environment within the classroom. This shared culture creates the steps to effective learning through CBL, occurring exclusively when the context and methodology converge to foster interaction among learners within authentic real-life scenarios. This allows for learners to develop their soft skills, comprehension, and a range

of transferable skills or abilities. CBL considers all these elements and situates learning within an authentic context that allow students learn to apply their new knowledge and skills to problem solving activities, enhancing their ability to transfer and utilize that knowledge in real-world scenarios. This approach increases the likelihood that learners will understand the relevance of their acquired knowledge to future job roles, increasing motivation and willingness to participate.

Despite CBL leveraging for a collaborative learning environment, this method also requires students to have a sense of responsibility over their learning process achievable through the combination of self-directed learning and the use of contexts. CBL posits for knowledge construction through social interactions with others transforming the learning process to an active one, building new comprehension based on learner's prior knowledge. Therefore, the new knowledge must be situated within students learning horizons, leading to how the educator chooses the adequate methodologies to achieve the mentioned goals. Content presented to students must be within the reach of their learning abilities yet must also integrate comprehensible input slightly above their level to further push student's abilities. This not only applies to the content taught, but also the pedagogical activities used within CBL.

CBL incorporates the use of collaborative activities with the aim of promoting problem-solving skills encouraging learners to apply theoretical concepts to solve real-life problems, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice. One of the most important factors that influences the learning process is active engagement with the material by integrating an inclusive methodological process and exercise. These include collaborative learning, challenge-based learning, case-based learning, problem-based learning, and project-based learning in an iterative, hands-on, incremental approach. These activities must be within the horizons of the learner, which depends on student's ZPD. Through capable adult or peer facilitation, students' goals become clearer as they aim to achieve realistic communicative goals whilst still being presented with challenges to overcome.

When establishing students' learning outcomes in CBL, socio-cultural aspects such as their cultural identity and surrounding environment must be considered. Within CBL, establishing an authentic context where learners can interact with their learning environment is considered key for setting the stepping stones to successful learning outcomes that also foster cultural awareness when learning another language. In fact, educators working in multicultural environments should be aware of students' various backgrounds, creating goals including relevant contexts to the content. Therefore, CBL educators are tasked with scaffolding multiple instructional activity designs and teaching strategies to arrange learning content to meet student's learning needs. Said dynamic interplay leverages the use and exploration of real-life problems, problem identification, and creative problem-solving skills relevant to the learning process, context, and content. Fostering said skills within students is not only for them to understand the importance and meaning of language learning but also well adapt their knowledge to real-life scenarios, allowing them to develop cultural awareness, communication, and teamwork.

These authentic learning experiences over time create group discussions in which communities of practice (CoPs) are formed. CBL aims to integrate cooperative learning as a means for students to develop real-life communicative skills by practicing language functions. In other words, CBL seeks to engage learners in real-world activities through collaborative pedagogical activities. This approach transcends mere group assignments by emphasizing collaborative efforts aimed at fostering reflective dialogue and mutual support, thereby facilitating meaningful learning experiences. Strategies such as peer collaboration, interaction with both peers and specialists, mutual assistance within teams, and cooperative research strategies contribute significantly to effective problem-solving, reflective practices, and the development of metacognitive strategies, such as monitoring comprehension and self-assessment of progress.

Overall, CBL aids students in developing the ability to make connections with their personal experiences, learning autonomy, subject freedom, goal and decision-making, and problem-solving activities. This epistemological basis has aided in the creation of 4 main steps when applying CBL in the classroom. The first step to applying CBL within language learning classrooms is “*Contextualization*”. Educators first establish the need to evoke students' curiosity, often referred to as their "need to know". This leads to educators presenting authentic and relevant cultural contexts that serve as anchors for the learning activities which all in all respond to the expected learning outcomes.

This step is divided into two phases, the first being “*Observation and Discussion*”. Students start by observing engaging material such as videos, images, etc., prepared by the educator to kickstart discussions, sparking student’s curiosity. This aims for students to start asking questions about the topic and grown a need for students to learn. Following this is the second phase “*Related Activity*”. In this phase, students are presented with an activity related to the cultural, relevant, and authentic context, enabling them to participate and explore the topic further. This aims for students to act upon their initial questions, using their past knowledge and experiences as a basis for this new knowledge.

The second step to applying CBL is “*Concept Introduction*”. Foreign language educators in this step create a bridge that leads student’s initial questions to the central idea or concept, providing clarity and helping students build an understanding of the subject matter. The educator presents the main topic of the class and utilizes thematic immersion to immerse students within the established cultural context. Students are exposed to the new material through videos, readings, or presentations of the topic, answering their initial questions as well as creating new ones, which are answered by the educator, acting as a guide.

Subsequently, the third step is “*Experimentation*”. After students are introduced to the topic, the professor enhances students’ learning by linking questions to relevant information and integrating practical activities into the context. This approach allows students to see the practical application of theoretical knowledge, or in other words, students can see why their learning is meaningful and how this knowledge is useful within real-world

contexts. These activities aside from being practical must be engaging, hands-on, active, collaborative, and individual. Students, whilst working in groups, must also take responsibility for their learning process, contributing their thoughts and perspectives on the topic as well as providing creative solutions for any problems the group may be confronted with. These activities must respond to curriculum and learning objectives as well as adapt to students' learning needs and adverse backgrounds.

This step is divided into two phases, the first being “*Concept Experimentation*”. Students engage in experiments or hands-on activities to explore the concepts further. This aims for students to solidify what they’ve learnt within the classroom. Following this is the second phase “*Concept Development*”. Students gain a deeper understanding of the topic through reflection and learning. This aims for students to understand the importance of the topic, motivating them to further immerse themselves within their learning process.

The final stage “*Concept Application*” focuses on students’ "need to apply" their knowledge. Bennett and Holman (2003) emphasize that students engage in active learning through problem-solving activities, discussions, experiments, and projects tied to the context. These activities empower students to demonstrate their understanding and ability to analyse and evaluate information effectively. Overall, students are ready to solve problems or answer questions based on their knowledge.

Overall, this first section of the results has provided a framework of CBL and how this methodology enhances the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. CBL seeks to contextualize language learning experiences, bridging theoretical knowledge with real-world application through meaningful authentic activities. CBL emphasizes the use of collaborative learning, individual learning, and problem-solving activities to foster soft, communication, and problem-solving skills. This is reflected in CBL’s four structured steps: contextualization, concept introduction, experimentation, and concept application. Through this, CBL seeks to engage and introduce students to the topic through its practical use instead of its concept as in other traditional methods. All in all, this first section of the results responds to the first specific objective “To describe the nature and approach of CBL within the realm of foreign language teaching and learning”.

Enhancing Engagement and Understanding: CBL Activities

The following findings in this research highlight five main CBL pedagogical activities that connect learners’ content to contextualized, cultural, and authentic tasks. These activities are aligned with the proposed epistemologies as these are focused on being hands-on, problem-solving, meaningful, authentic, collaborative, active, and communicative all proving to be useful in the aid of CBL. This includes cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, role-playing, puzzles, and project-based activities. These obtained results respond to the second specific objective of this research “To identify activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target”. The results to be presented were obtained and carefully selected through a

bibliographic matrix using the following criteria: the purpose of the document, the most relevant findings of the document, and pedagogical activities that can be applied through CBL. As well as this, a checklist was created with the aim of identifying activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target. The criteria chosen to evaluate these activities were: context relevance, instructional design, cultural sensitivity, student engagement, learning outcomes, assessment, reflection & adaptation, and community & family involvement.

Alongside the implementation of CBL, activities such as cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, role-playing, puzzles, and projects are integral to enhancing students' communicative, collaborative, and problem-solving skills. Rooted in constructivist principles, these activities were found to promote active, meaningful engagement with content and were adaptable to student's cultural and contextual elements, bridging theory and practice. These activities situate themselves within the situated learning theory as these reflect real-world scenarios and foster practical application. These activities were chosen and ensured to not only aid students in foreign language acquisition but also develop the abilities and skills to apply and adapt them in diverse, authentic contexts.

These activities were particularly designed to fit into Ecuador's cultural festivities across the four regions to properly adapt to student's cultural reality. This multicultural education fosters cultural awareness and a sense of belonging through engagement with diverse festivities that reflect students' reality. These act as valuable educational tools that immerse students in meaningful, real-world contexts, fostering critical soft skills. All in all, the chosen pedagogical cultural activities that foster this cultural identity as well as relate to CBL were chosen for the creation of the pedagogical guide "*An English Exploration*".

One of the first activities to be considered is cultural celebrations calendars. This activity exposes students to different cultural events and festivities from diverse regions throughout an entire calendar year and develops educational activities through this. This is done with the aim of fostering cultural awareness, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing soft and communication skills. This allows students to gain a deeper understanding of their own cultural identity and appreciate the diversity of others. This activity was adapted to match students' own cultural identity which led to encouragement to connect with traditions, customs, and values associated with different festivities. Through the integration of these activities using CBL, the activity becomes relevant, impactful, authentic, and meaningful as it roots itself within real-world cultural contexts.

Following this train of thought, the following activity to be considered is scenario-based problem-solving tasks. This activity presents students with realistic situations that require them to analyze information, evaluate options, and devise effective solutions. This approach aims for students to develop critical decision-making and collaborative skills through flexible and creative thought devising. The aforementioned activity was adapted to real-life scenarios and presented problems that reflected their cultural, social, or community issues, therefore, immersing the alumni's cultural identity. This aids students' understanding

of the importance of cultural identity as they relate practicableness to theory, turning language learning relevant, which aligns strongly with CBL principles, and situating learning within meaningful, authentic real-life challenges.

Alongside this, the following activity to be considered are puzzles. This educational activity requires students to solve problems by identifying patterns, organizing information, or piecing together clues to form a complete solution. Said activity aims to enhance students' cognitive skills such as critical decision-making, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and memory retention. This activity was adjusted to the student's cultural context using cultural narratives/traditions as well as designed to encourage teamwork and communication, therefore including collaborative activities. This activity was also seen as appropriate and well-fitting to CBL by embedding educational tasks in meaningful cultural contexts, helping students connect abstract concepts to real-world cultural knowledge.

Another vital pedagogical activity considered was role plays. This involves students assuming roles and acting out scenarios to explore real-life situations or historical, cultural, or social contexts. Roleplays benefit students as these enhance communication skills, situational awareness, quick thinking, and problem-solving abilities. By stepping into diverse roles, students are offered deeper insights into different perspectives which ultimately change their view on cultural practices, which helps them connect to and reflect upon the importance of their own cultural identity. Role-plays act as meaningful activities for students as these situate and immerse students within culturally relevant experiences that require them to embody cultural narratives and values, encouraging experiential understanding, a key component within CBL.

The last chosen activity for aiding the CBL learning method was projects. This is a comprehensive, student-centered learning activity that involves researching, planning, and creating a final product or presentation based on either a specific topic or a variety of them. This, like some of the activities mentioned earlier, aims to develop students' critical thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration. Through projects, students can engage in deeper and meaningful learning by exploring classroom knowledge in practical applications based on relevant cultural themes. When focused on cultural topics related to student's identity, projects allow them to explore and feel proud of their traditions, customs, and historical narratives, shaping learning through students' lived experiences, aligned with CBL expectations.

Overall, this second section of the results has provided an overview of the five pedagogical activities that aid CBL to enhance the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. The considered activities being cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving tasks, puzzles, roleplays, and projects. These activities seek to engage students in hands on, problem solving, meaningful, authentic, collaborative, active, communicative, and collaborative activities. These activities also have been considered to foster students' cultural identity by including students' cultural realities. All in all, this second section of the results responds to the second specific objective "To

identify activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target”.

An English Exploration: The Creation of a Pedagogical Guide

The following findings in this research served as a base for the creation of a pedagogical guide that serves to demonstrate the project’s overall purpose which is CBL and its possibilities to enhance the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. This pedagogical guide includes not only CBL’s aforementioned theoretical foundations but also the development of CBL and the five chosen pedagogical activities: cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, role-playing, puzzles, and project-based activities. These obtained results respond to the third specific objective of this research “To construct a pedagogical-didactic guide illustrating the academic benefits of CBL in the construction of cultural identity”. The results to be presented were obtained and carefully selected through a checklist, created to verify if the implementation of CBL as well as the activities responded to this study's needs in correspondence with the study target. The criteria chosen to evaluate this were: context relevance, instructional design, cultural sensitivity, student engagement, learning outcomes, assessment, reflection & adaption, and community & family involvement.

The construction of the pedagogical guide was broken down into five sections: introduction, lesson 1, lesson 2, lesson 3, lesson 4, and extra materials. Each section was meticulously crafted to implement Ecuadorian students’ cultural identities, the CBL methodology, and the proposed pedagogical activities. The purpose of this guide was for students to be provided with material that demonstrated the importance of their own culture within language learning. Alongside this, another key objective was to teach English as a foreign language using an innovative methodology that helped bridge their learning to practical activities, helping students realize the importance and relevance of this knowledge and how this is applicable and useful within real-life scenarios. Therefore, four lessons were presented within the guide, each representing Ecuador’s four regions to encompass students’ varied realities within Ecuador. Having mentioned this, each section responded after the criteria of the aforementioned checklist as well as the mentioned table within the theoretical framework.

The four lessons within the pedagogical guide start with the region the guide will take place in and a topic that represents the region. The first region represents the Amazonian region with the topic “*Uyantza Raymi*”. The second region represents the Andes Mountain region with the topic “*Inti Ryami*”. The third region represents the Pacific Coastal region with the topic “*El Rodeo Montuvio*”. Lastly, the fourth region represents the Galápagos Islands with the topic “*The Lobster Festival*”. After mentioning the topic, the lesson starts with an overview entailing how each lesson will be developed through the CBL methodology. Each step within CBL details the activity students will be doing according to the step, as well as the language skill each step will develop as well as the vocabulary section. The last step of CBL's “concept application” will consist of students developing the five

chosen pedagogical activities adapted to the topic of the lesson. On task 6 “*Communicative Activity*” of each lesson, the chosen pedagogical activity will have an activity page entailing what the activity is about, the aim of the activity, and the steps to developing the activity. However, the activity “projects” will take place within each unit to close students' learning cycle, leaving the other four chosen pedagogical activities to be divided among the four other lessons. The first lesson uses a cultural celebrations calendar, the second unit a scenario-based problem-solving, the third unit a puzzle, and the fourth unit a role-playing activity.

Within each lesson, students will be provided with videos, images, audio, and brochures of the new topics to catch their attention as part of the first step of CBL. This is entailed by a reading or video of the new topic, as well as additional fun facts and information about the topic. Each activity seeks to promote students' English skills and to further delve into the topic in hopes of sparking students' curiosity towards their own cultural identity. As well as this, students will be faced with 10 new vocabulary words related to the topic. However, within units 1 and 2, students will also be presented with cultural words in the language “Kichwa” alongside their respective meanings. Each unit will contain 3 dictionary pages, flashcards, and vocabulary cards as well as the recommended vocabulary methods to use when teaching these new words. Throughout the guide, students will also be presented with tips on how to develop each of the four language skills. Finally, at the end of each unit, a “Now You!” page will appear, with the purpose of students auto-evaluating everything they have learnt within the lesson. These criteria will be defined through a toothed smiley face to indicate “I can do it very well”, a smiley face to indicate “I can do it”, a doubting face to indicate “I’m not sure about it”, and a crying face to indicate “I need to review it”.

At the end of all four lessons, the pedagogical guide will provide a vocabulary unit, indicating all the new English words students hopefully learnt as well as the worksheets, audio transcripts, and templates used within each unit. This section will be divided into the four units of the pedagogical guide.

Overall, this final section of the results has provided an overview of the creation of the pedagogical guide and how this integrated both CBL as well as the five pedagogical activities that seek to enhance the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. The pedagogical guide used CBL to contextualize language learning experiences, bridging theoretical knowledge with real-world application through meaningful authentic activities. This guide sought to emphasize the use of collaborative learning, individual learning, and problem-solving activities to foster soft, communication, and problem-solving skills through the chosen pedagogical activities: cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving tasks, puzzles, roleplays, and projects. These activities seek to engage students in hands-on, problem-solving, meaningful, authentic, collaborative, active, communicative, and collaborative activities. As well as this, the pedagogical guide sought to foster students' cultural identity by including students' cultural realities by integrating cultural elements and festivities as the main topic. All in all, this third section of the results responds to the third specific objective “To construct a pedagogical-

didactic guide illustrating the academic benefits of CBL in the construction of cultural identity”.

- **4.2 Discussion**

Constructivist Foundations in Action: Outcomes of CBL

Ecuador’s educational reality, as mentioned before, has sought to integrate foreign languages within students’ curriculums using innovative methodologies in hopes of fortifying their cultural awareness as well as language teaching and learning (Antoniou, 2019). Therefore, this study has resorted to proposing CBL as an innovative methodology that can provide Ecuadorian students with what the Ministerio de Educación seeks to accomplish. However, scholars such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o have discussed the challenges that come with attempting to integrate foreign language learning within educational frameworks whilst advocating for student’s cultural identity.

A book review by Lynn (2023) on Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o’s (1998) work "Decolonising the Mind" provides valuable insights into how language, education, and cultural identity are related. This specific research critiques how students’ language learning education is still dominated by colonial languages where students are provided with input curated to represent an entirely different cultural reality to that of the students. This makes students' learning process unnecessarily difficult as students are expected to learn a new language and culture that does not align with their reality but also apply said knowledge to their reality. On the other hand, those who choose to learn more than one language will most often choose colonial languages as these are seen as more “useful” or “respectful” when presented with work, travel, or educational opportunities. All this leads to students not seeing the importance of learning their native languages which diminishes the importance of their cultural identity (Lynn, 2023).

However, the results obtained within this investigation counterclaim this view as CBL demonstrated to be a teaching method that can enrich or enhance the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. Rose (2012) in her work “Context-Based Learning” emphasizes CBL as a methodology based on a constructivist and sociocultural basis where learning is considered a communal activity centred on the interactions between people. This goes per Suhendi & Purwarno’s (2018) work “Constructivist Learning Theory: The Contribution to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching”.

These authors state that language learners need to interact with physical experience as well as experience possessed by others through meaningful interaction to build a foundation for effective language learning. Therefore, constructivist methodologies such as CBL recognize that knowledge and understanding as constructed when students are socially engaged in dialogue and active in culturally and contextually meaningful activities. By creating a space where learning is placed in the context and the content and learners are

exposed to social and communicative aspects of language, learners can combine their newfound knowledge and skills, increasing their capacity to transfer and use said knowledge in real-world contexts (Overton, 2016). CBL achieves this using authentic contextualized learning environments, cooperative learning, and meaningful communicative and active activities. Whilst CBL integrates these elements, this methodology also recognizes the importance of integrating students' realities and cultural identities to foster authentic cultural practices within the classroom.

CBL recognizes the importance of integrating learning within authentic contextualized learning as well as fostering cultural practices in the classroom. Maqsood (2024) in his work "Issues in Teaching English in A Cultural Context" mentions that language is not only a mere system of learning something but is also closely interrelated with the beliefs, values, and practices of a student's culture. Therefore, methodologies such as CBL that integrate English teaching within a cultural and authentic context, that reflects student's realities, acknowledge this connection and provide learners with a holistic language learning experience. Ordóñez (2023) concurs with this and states that when methodologies such as CBL integrate cultural content into English language teaching learners' communicative competence is more likely to develop more naturally and fluently. This methodology within this research connected student's cultural identity to their learning environment which was found to enhance the relevance and relatability of education before students. This also empowered students to take control over their learning as well as develop a sense of pride in their cultural identity. Ordóñez (2023) also states that when students are exposed to cultural content through methodologies such as CBL critical thinking skills and intercultural awareness are fostered. Suhendi & Purwarno (2018) back this stating that learning awareness, language awareness, and intercultural awareness are key elements fostered within constructivist methodologies such as CBL.

For these reasons, CBL is considered as a pivotal role when developing a sense of cultural identity in students. This methodology culturally immerses students by situating educational experiences within real-life contexts, fostering meaningful communication amongst learners. This allows learners to engage not only with different cultures but also engage and reflect on the cultural heritage and traditions of their community. This thereby fosters within students a deeper understanding, appreciation, and feeling of empowerment over their own cultural identity as well as others. CBL takes these elements and curates a culturally responsive teaching practice, setting relevant learning objectives, assessments, and activities that are vital in preparing learners to become effective language learners (Ordóñez et al., 2023). Educators when applying CBL specifically within Ecuadorian contexts work in an extremely multicultural environment and should be aware of students' various backgrounds when creating goals including relevant contexts to the content. All these elements are found to be reflected within CBL's methodological process.

As well as this, Sutaphan & Yuenyong (2019) in their research "STEM Education Teaching Approach: Inquiry from the Context-Based" present a CBL STEM methodology that resembles the proposed methodology within this research. These include the

identification of social issues, identification of potential solutions, need for knowledge, decision-making, development of prototype or product, test and evaluation of the solution, and socialization and completion decision stage. These authors state that through CBL educators were able to curate activities related to students' cultural and societal reality, by identifying social issues and curating creative problem-solving activities towards these. This method allows students to apply scientific and other knowledge which helps students creative problem-solving skills as well as collaborative skills for designing solutions through provided instructional context within real-world settings. By considering conceptual and procedural knowledge students were given the chance to relate learning, knowledge, thinking, and practice, creating successful learning within students. An additional benefit to implementing CBL was that students were provided with the opportunity to become entrepreneurs within their learning process.

Overall, despite the negative view some authors such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o may have over integrating foreign language learning within educational frameworks, CBL has been proven to be an efficient methodology that integrates students' cultural identity into English teaching and learning. CBL creates a space where learning is placed in the context and the content and learners are exposed to social and communicative aspects of language. This aids learners in combining their newfound knowledge and skills, increasing their capacity to transfer and use said knowledge in real-world contexts. Alongside this, CBL plays a pivotal role when developing a sense of cultural identity in students by situating educational experiences within real-life contexts and fostering meaningful communication among learners. This allows learners to engage not only with different cultures but also engage and reflect on the cultural heritage and traditions of their community, building an appreciation of their cultural identity as well as awareness of others.

Enhancing Engagement and Understanding: CBL Activities

Educators are tasked with the challenge of fostering cultural identity with the objective of empowering their alumni through content curated to represent their reality (Harrell-Levy, 20120). This leads to CBL advocating for activities that foster cultural identity through foreign language learning that must respond to a culturally responsive pedagogy. However, authors such as Evans, Turner, and Allen (2020) present opposing ideas within their work "Good Teachers" with "Good Intentions": Misappropriations of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy". This research paper examined the misappropriation of educators when applying methodologies such as CBL to pedagogical activities through a culturally responsive pedagogy that sought to adapt student's learning environments. The main issues found were culturally responsive practices as a smokescreen of good intentions, culture as a hook to gain students' attention, and culturally responsive pedagogy as a tool of assimilation.

However, the results obtained within this investigation counterclaim this view as these chosen pedagogical activities demonstrated to aid CBL in enriching or enhancing the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. Educators who employ a culturally responsive curriculum with a proposed framework such as CBL

seek to promote the academic success of culturally diverse learners. This engages the learner to critically reflect on how knowledge is constructed within cultures while exploring their own cultural identity. As a result, culturally diverse classrooms begin to understand language content in a more significant context and explore this through curated pedagogical activities that consider student's cultural backgrounds, learning objectives, and methodology (Kazanjian, 2019). The chosen pedagogical activities that have proven to aid in this endeavour include problem-solving, hands-on, and collaborative activities (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). These activities included cultural celebration calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, puzzles, role-plays, and projects. Through these activities, learners can engage in culturally related pedagogical tasks proposed by CBL and develop a strong cultural identity as well as improve their language skills.

A study by Dognay titled "The Impact of Cultural-Based Activities in Foreign Language Teaching at Intermediate (B1) Level" backs this up. Within this author's work, these activities immersed within CBL are considered a critical part of learning foreign language learning as learners are given a chance to practice the target language through their own culture within a welcoming environment. Cultural-based activities within foreign language teaching allow students to develop the four language skills through communicative activities. These activities also rely on student ZPD, anchoring the activities to be within students' learning horizons as well as slightly challenging. Moreover, these socio-cultural activities bring real-world context into the classroom and enhance students' use of English or communicative skills by presenting them with a variety of different scenarios (Dogany & Yergaliyeva, 2013). As well as this, each activity responds not only to CBL but also to student's needs for cultural immersion.

As a first activity, cultural celebrations calendars aid in the CBL process as this fosters cultural awareness, promotes inclusivity, and enhances soft and communication skills. This activity allows students to gain a deeper understanding of their cultural identity and appreciate the diversity of others (Eden, 2024). This is backed by Tao (2019) who evidenced in their study "The Impact of Festival Participation on Ethnic Identity: The Case of Yi Torch Festival" which mentioned how active participation in cultural celebrations calendars can effectively contribute to the ethnic identity of the community members. Through the integration of these activities using CBL, the activity becomes relevant, impactful, authentic, and meaningful as it roots itself within real-world cultural contexts.

Furthermore, scenario-based problem-solving activities aid in the CBL process as these develop critical decision-making and collaborative skills through flexible and creative thought devising (Gay, 2018). This is backed by Ernawati (2024) who evidenced in their study "Exploration of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Problem-Based Learning in The Diverse Learning of Prospective Science Teachers" that this activity can develop students' critical thinking skills and provide satisfaction in discovering new knowledge, motivate students, promote active learning, and provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to the real world. This activity can be applied and developed in different cultural contexts with diverse student backgrounds. The interaction between students based on

culture should expand student knowledge related to cultural diversity, therefore, fostering cultural awareness (Ernawati et al., 2024). This activity aids in students' understanding of the importance of cultural identity as they relate practicableness to theory, turning language learning relevant, which aligns strongly with CBL principles, and situating learning within meaningful, authentic real-life challenges (Ladson-Billings, 2021).

Moreover, puzzle activities aid in the CBL process as these enhance student's cognitive skills such as critical decision-making, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and memory retention (Reza Khorammakan et al., 2023). This is backed by Butarbutar (2019) who evidenced in their study "Analyzing of Puzzle Local Culture-Based in Teaching English for Young Learners" that when using puzzles to emphasize students' culture, students' appreciation for their culture arises, fostering their cultural identity. This study demonstrated the potential of puzzles to improve students' interest, vocabulary, metacognition, and four language skills. Alongside this, puzzles motivate students in their language-learning process (Butarbutar et al., 2019). Based on this, puzzles are well-fitting to CBL by embedding educational tasks in meaningful cultural contexts and helping students connect abstract concepts to real-world cultural knowledge (Reza Khorammakan et al., 2023).

Furthermore, role plays aid in the CBL process as these enhance student's communication skills, situational awareness, quick thinking, and problem-solving abilities (Komisaryk et al., 2023). This is backed by Shih (2022) in their study "Designing Culturally Responsive Education Strategies to Cultivate Young Children's Cultural Identities: A Case Study of the Development of a Preschool Local Culture Curriculum". This research showcased that drama activities can cultivate children's cultural identities and improve their communicative skills, specifically their expression and critical decision-making skills. Through drama, students learn to develop their talents, appreciate their culture, and learn how to pose guiding questions, lead discussions, and work collaboratively (Shih, 2022). Role-plays act as meaningful activities for students as these situate and immerse students within culturally relevant experiences that require them to embody cultural narratives and values, encouraging experiential understanding, a key component within CBL (Cepeda, 2018).

As a final considered activity, projects aid in the CBL process to develop students' critical thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration (David & Kiu Publication Extension, 2024). This is backed by Anca (2018) in their study "Development of Socio-Cultural Identity at Primary School Children Through School Projects". This research entails how projects are considered an engaging activity that helps students develop cultural knowledge through vocabulary learning and cultural awareness towards their cultural identity as well as others. Through projects, students can engage in deeper and meaningful learning by exploring classroom knowledge in practical applications based on relevant cultural themes (Gay, 2018). When focused on cultural topics related to student's identity, projects allow them to explore and feel proud of their traditions, customs, and historical narratives, shaping learning through students' lived experiences, aligned with CBL expectations.

Overall, despite the negative view some authors such as Evans, Turner, and Allen may have over advocating for activities that foster cultural identity as well as foreign language teaching and learning through CBL, these pedagogical activities have been proven to be efficient when integrating student's cultural identity into English teaching and learning. These pedagogical activities include cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, puzzles, role-plays, and projects. Through these activities, learners can engage in culturally related pedagogical tasks proposed by CBL and develop a strong cultural identity as well as improve their language skills.

An English Exploration: The Creation of a Pedagogical Guide

Creating a pedagogical guide involves a systematic process to provide educators with a framework for effective teaching considering parameters such as learning outcomes, evaluation criteria, and timelines are established to guide implementation. These flexible guides serve as material to accommodate students' diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and needs while ensuring alignment with educational standards and goals. However, a study by Mangila (2024) titled "Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices of Elementary Teachers and their Contribution to Pupils' Engagement and Academic Performance" demonstrated that there was no significant correlation between the teachers' culturally responsive teaching practices and the pupils' engagement and academic performance.

Despite this, the development of this pedagogical guide within this study demonstrated the importance of curating material adjusted to students' reality using CBL to enrich or enhance the development of cultural identity through the teaching and learning of English. This is backed by Yuliantari (2023) who evidenced in their study "Integration of Culturally-Responsive Teaching in English Learning" that most language learning textbooks present discrepancies with student's cultural reality. Educators, when facing this dilemma, often miss an important opportunity to make student's learning process meaningful and personal, failing to connect learning with real-life scenarios. Yuliantari (2023) states that when students are engaging in cultural and authentic learning practices across subject matters, they present an increase in positive attitudes, leading to further understanding and engagement with academic skills and concepts. As well as this, culturally responsive methodologies such as CBL also increased students' motivation, interest in content, and perception of themselves not only as capable language learning students but also changing their appreciation towards their cultural identity (Yuliantari, 2023).

CHAPTER V.

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

CBL is a pedagogical methodology that fosters a profound connection between learners and the content by situating knowledge acquisition within a contextualized, cultural, and authentic classroom setting. This aligns with the proposed constructivist and sociocultural epistemologies, underscoring that knowledge is co-constructed through social interaction and practical engagement. CBL connects this theory and integrates cultural identity within the learning content, reaffirming that learning is not merely the transfer of information but rather the development of understanding through participation.

Five CBL pedagogical activities that connect learners' content to contextualized, cultural, and authentic tasks include: cultural celebrations calendars, scenario-based problem-solving, role-playing, puzzles, and project-based activities. These activities are aligned with the proposed epistemologies as these are focused on being hands-on, problem-solving, meaningful, authentic, collaborative, active, communicative, and collaborative, proving to be useful in the aid of CBL. Through these activities, learners can engage in culturally related pedagogical tasks proposed by CBL and develop a strong cultural identity as well as improve their language skills.

CBL's epistemological foundations alongside the chosen pedagogical activities served for the creation of a pedagogical guide to enhance the teaching and learning of English focused on cultural identity development. The construction of the pedagogical guide was broken down into five sections: introduction, lesson 1, lesson 2, lesson 3, lesson 4, and extra materials. Each section was meticulously crafted to implement Ecuadorian students' cultural identities, the CBL methodology, and the proposed pedagogical activities. The purpose of this guide was for students to be provided with material that demonstrated the importance of their own culture within English language learning.

5.2 Recommendations

First, CBL should be a methodology applied regularly within foreign language teaching and learning classrooms instead of implementing traditional methodologies. This method recommends educators to understand the methodology to an expert level before applying this into the classroom. Educators should also foster an open language learning environment when implementing CBL where students are presented with the opportunity to apply the content being learnt. As well as this, language professors should also look to adapt this methodology according to students' needs as well as the educational facility's resources.

Alongside this, it is recommended that future educators find more pedagogical activities that could be adapted to the CBL method. Another recommendation is for

educators to be knowledgeable about these activities and provide clear instructions to students when adapting these activities to their learning classroom. As well as this, professors should consider implementing extra activities using CBL in the classroom.

Finally, educators are recommended to adopt the pedagogical guide “An English Exploration” to students' English levels, abilities, and resources. This flexible guide should also motivate educators to further delve into other methodologies that aim to foster student’s cultural identity through foreign language and teaching.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Checklist for Pedagogical Cultural Identity Fostering Activities

CHECKLIST				
Area:		Date:		
Topic:		Name:		
Unit:		Level:		
Objective:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify activities and resources required for the implementation of CBL in correspondence with the study target. 				
Category	Aspects	Outcomes		
Context Relevance	Authenticity: <i>Are the contexts used in the learning activities authentic and reflective of real-world scenarios?</i>	Yes	No	Observations
	Cultural Relevance: <i>Do the contexts reflect the cultural backgrounds and experiences of the students?</i>			
	Student Interest: <i>Are the contexts engaging and interesting to the students?</i>			
Instructional Design	Learning Objectives: <i>Are the learning objectives clearly defined and aligned with fostering cultural identity?</i>			
	Integration of Cultural Content: <i>Is cultural content seamlessly integrated into the learning activities?</i>			
	Active Learning: <i>Do the activities promote active learning and student participation?</i>			
Cultural Sensitivity	Respect for Diversity: <i>Are the activities designed with respect for cultural diversity and avoiding stereotypes?</i>			
	Inclusivity: <i>Do the activities accommodate students from diverse cultural backgrounds?</i>			
	Representation: <i>Are various cultural perspectives and voices represented in the materials and activities?</i>			
Student Engagement	Participation: <i>Are all students actively participating in the activities?</i>			
	Engagement: <i>Are the students engaged and showing interest in the cultural contexts presented?</i>			

	Collaboration: <i>Do the activities encourage collaboration among students from different cultural backgrounds?</i>			
Learning Outcomes	Knowledge and Understanding: <i>Are students gaining knowledge and understanding of their own and others' cultures?</i>			
	Identity Development: <i>Are the activities contributing to students' development of a strong and positive cultural identity?</i>			
Assessment	Formative Assessment: <i>Are there formative assessments to monitor student progress and understanding during the activities?</i>			
	Summative Assessment: <i>Are there summative assessments to evaluate overall learning outcomes related to cultural identity?</i>			
	Feedback Mechanisms: <i>Is there a system for collecting and incorporating student feedback on the activities?</i>			
Reflection and Adaptation	Reflection Opportunities: <i>Are there opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and cultural identity?</i>			
	Continuous Improvement: <i>Is there a process for continuously improving the activities based on student feedback and learning outcomes?</i>			
	Adaptability: <i>Are the activities adaptable to different cultural contexts and student needs?</i>			
Community and Family Involvement	Community Connections: <i>Do the activities connect students with the local community and cultural resources?</i>			
	Family Engagement: <i>Are families involved in the learning process, and is their cultural knowledge valued?</i>			

Annex 2. Bibliographic Revision Matrix

Bibliographic Matrix						
Name of document	Author and year/ Editorial	Type of document	URL / DOI	Purpose	Findings	CBL Activities