



UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

School of English Language Teaching

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Licentiate Degree in
English Language Teaching for I and II Cycle of Basic General Education

**The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and
English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School,
First Quarter 2026.**

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April 2026

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Sworn Declaration

Yo Natalia Kristina Castillo Jiménez, mayor de edad, portadora de la cédula de identidad número 112490649, egresada de la carrera de Bachillerato en Ciencias de la Educación en I y II Ciclos con Concentración en la Enseñanza del Inglés, de la Universidad Estatal a Distancia, hago constar por medio de éste acto y debidamente apercibido y entendido de las penas y consecuencias con las que se castiga en el Código Penal el delito de perjurio, ante quienes se constituyen en el Tribunal Examinador de mi trabajo de tesis para optar por el título de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés Para I y II Ciclos de la Educación General Básica, juro solemnemente que mi trabajo de investigación titulado: "The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026, es una obra original que ha respetado todo lo preceptuado por las Leyes Penales, así como la Ley de Derecho de Autor y Derecho Conexos número 6683 del 14 de octubre de 1982 y sus reformas, publicada en la Gaceta número 226 del 25 de noviembre de 1982; incluyendo el numeral 70 de dicha ley que advierte; artículo 70. Es permitido citar a un autor, transcribiendo los pasajes pertinentes siempre que éstos no sean tantos y seguidos, que puedan considerarse como una producción simulada y sustancial, que redunde en perjuicio del autor de la obra original. Asimismo, quedo advertido que la Universidad se reserva el derecho de protocolizar este documento ante Notario Público.

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	<i>Descripción</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>% Obt</i>
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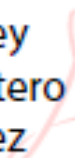
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He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre éstos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

Por consiguiente, este trabajo cuenta con mi aval para ser presentado en la defensa pública. Atte.

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Dedictory

First, I give thanks to God for His guidance, strength, and constant presence throughout this journey. He gave me perseverance during moments of doubt and renewed hope when challenges arose. This project is a reflection of faith, patience, and trust in His plan, which sustained me every day.

I also dedicate this work to my family, especially to my mother, Grace, who is my unconditional support. To my husband, Omer, for his constant love, understanding, and belief in my abilities. And to my daughters, Mari Paz and Abigail, who are my greatest inspiration and motivation; this achievement is for you, so you may always pursue your dreams with courage and determination. I am also deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with my students, whose voices, stories, and cultural richness gave meaning and purpose to this research and reminded me why teaching is a vocation of the heart.

Acknowledgments

I am truly grateful to my thesis advisor, Yanory Arguedas, for her guidance, patience, and professional support throughout the development of this thesis. Her feedback, encouragement, and dedication were essential in shaping this project and strengthening my growth as a researcher and educator.

I would like to give special recognition to Professor Ronald Lobo, an exceptional professional and, above all, an extraordinary human being. His passion for teaching, inspiring words, and genuine care for his students left a profound mark on my academic formation. His guidance and example motivated me to believe in myself, to strive for excellence, and to continue giving the best of me despite the adversities.

I am deeply grateful to Professor Yorleny González, who guided this investigation with professionalism, patience, and unwavering support. Her commitment to this project and her trust in my work made this research possible, and for that, I extend my heartfelt appreciation.

Abstract

In most public schools in Costa Rica, students do not have enough opportunities to practice English in meaningful contexts. At La Trinidad School in Moravia, sixth-grade students show limitations in expressing themselves confidently in English, and this is exacerbated by the high cultural diversity of the classrooms. The main purpose of this research is to determine the Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.

This research employs a mixed-methods design involving 32 sixth-grade students. Data were collected using diagnostic questionnaires, observation checklists, reflective instruments, and pre- and post-tests, before and after the implementation of intercultural PBL activities. During the implementation of the project, the students worked collaboratively on projects that promote interculturality and in which they were able to explore traditions, cultural themes and personal experiences while using the English language to communicate.

The results are intended to reflect the students' progress in improving their confidence when speaking English, being able to communicate with fewer pauses, and interacting respectfully and empathetically with classmates from different cultural backgrounds.

The study concludes that PBL is a powerful tool for transforming English lessons into meaningful learning experiences that strengthen fluency and foster intercultural awareness and respect for others.

Keywords: PBL, intercultural awareness, fluency, intercultural awareness.

Resumen

En la mayoría de las escuelas públicas de Costa Rica, los estudiantes no tienen suficientes oportunidades para practicar inglés en contextos significativos. En la Escuela La Trinidad de Moravia, los estudiantes de sexto grado muestran limitaciones para expresarse con confianza en inglés, lo que se ve agravado por la alta diversidad cultural de las aulas. El objetivo principal de esta investigación es determinar la efectividad del aprendizaje basado en proyectos para promover la conciencia intercultural y la fluidez en inglés en estudiantes de sexto grado de la Escuela La Trinidad de Moravia, durante el primer trimestre de 2026.

Esta investigación emplea un diseño de métodos mixtos con 32 estudiantes de sexto grado. Los datos se recopilaron mediante cuestionarios de diagnóstico, listas de verificación de observación, instrumentos de reflexión y pruebas previas y posteriores, antes y después de la implementación de actividades interculturales de aprendizaje basado en proyectos (ABP). Durante la implementación del proyecto, los estudiantes trabajaron de forma colaborativa en proyectos que promueven la interculturalidad y en los que pudieron explorar tradiciones, temas culturales y experiencias personales mientras utilizaban el inglés para comunicarse. Los resultados buscan reflejar el progreso de los estudiantes en la mejora de su confianza al hablar inglés, su capacidad para comunicarse con menos pausas y su interacción respetuosa y empática con compañeros de diferentes orígenes culturales.

El estudio concluye que el ABP es una herramienta poderosa para transformar las clases de inglés en experiencias de aprendizaje significativas que fortalecen la fluidez y fomentan la conciencia intercultural y el respeto por los demás.

Palabras clave: ABP, conciencia intercultural, fluidez, conciencia intercultural.

Chapter I

Problem Statement

1.1. Introduction

Nowadays, people are more connected than ever all over the world. As an example, a message sent in San José, Costa Rica can be read in Tokyo within seconds, or a child in Nicaragua can listen to the same music as someone in London or Missouri. And yet, in the classroom, many children still struggle to find their voice, especially when it comes to speaking English as a second language. At La Trinidad de Moravia School, this reality is alive and visible every single day. Sixth-grade students, full of energy and curiosity, face the challenge of expressing themselves in English, and sometimes even in Spanish, which is their mother tongue, with confidence. Some remain quiet not because they don't want to participate, but because they are afraid of being ashamed for their accent, their mistakes, or simply because their culture is different.

This research project, *The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026*, was born from that need: to give these students a voice, to make them participate and let them express their ideas sharing also their valuable cultural background. It aims to use Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a bridge between cultures, languages, and, most importantly, between students themselves. The hope is that English stops being just another subject and instead becomes a living tool, to help children connect, create, and understand both themselves and others.

The importance of this project is the ability to combine language and culture to benefit students from different cultures. In Costa Rica, English lessons in public schools are not enough to make students bilingual. Sometimes, teacher just focus on memorizing grammar rules, practicing isolated vocabulary lists, or repeating short dialogues that are given in the

planning. But the richness of culture, values, stories, are not included. As Byram (1997) said, you can't really separate language from culture, because one gives meaning to the other.

Intercultural awareness is now a basic skill for life. Deardorff (2006) explains that intercultural competence means having the knowledge, attitudes, and abilities to engage respectfully with people from different backgrounds. At La Trinidad de Moravia is common to see in a classroom a child that comes from Nicaragua, another from Venezuela, and another from Costa Rica, it would be very enriching to take advantage of this cultural variety that exists where these students can also share their traditions. If their diversity is ignored, this can become a source of insecurity, isolation, and limited classroom interaction while learning English. But if it is embraced, it turns into an opportunity for learning to listen, to value, and to collaborate with others.

Previous research has shown that PBL helps students go beyond memorization. Thomas (2000) described it as an approach that gives students real-world tasks, where they solve problems, ask questions, and create together. Beckett and Slater (2020) showed that in language classrooms, this kind of work turns English into a living language, students use it because they need it. Araya Rodríguez (2017) found that creative, cooperative approaches helped sixth graders in Costa Rica improve their oral communication. Vesterås (2021), working in Norway, showed that teachers who integrated intercultural competence into their English lessons helped students develop tolerance and respect. And Rakovskaya (2019) observed how cultural diversity, when used as a resource in schools, fostered openness and empathy among children. All of these studies indicate a consistent outcome: when culture and language come together in an educational setting, the learning experience becomes more impactful.

At La Trinidad de Moravia School, English is taught only three lessons a week. Sometimes even less because schedules change or special activities take priority. This makes English feel like a fragmented subject. This school also has many immigrants or children of immigrant families, accents vary and traditions are different. Some students feel ashamed or afraid to speak, and this prevents them from practicing. But considering this an advantage, they are living examples of cultural diversity that enrich every lesson.

This study focuses on building mental and emotional habits that students will continue to need throughout their lives. If a group of sixth graders learn to express their culture in English and to value diversity instead of rejecting it, imagine the impact this could have later in high school, college, or even in the workplace. Definitely this are powerful life lessons that shape confident, empathetic, and open-minded individuals. As Deardorff (2006) argues, intercultural competence is a lifelong journey, one that prepares people to grow, adapt, and thrive in diverse environments. All students should be proud of who they are, and where they come from.

1.1.1 Background of the Problem

A significant study that influenced this project was conducted by Araya Rodríguez in 2017. She examined the development of English-speaking skills through an innovative classroom approach that uses cooperative learning. Her research focused on sixth-grade students at CIDEP, a private institution located in Belén. Initially, it might seem that her situation was different, as her students participated in over ten English classes weekly, whereas students at La Trinidad de Moravia attend only three classes. However, her students faced difficulties with oral communication. This observation is important, because it suggests that having more English

lessons does not necessarily lead to improved outcomes unless the teaching methods promote engaging, meaningful interactions.

Araya's findings showed that children enjoy collaborating, working in groups, and interacting with peers, and this collaboration helps them assist each in the class and create a good learning environment while traditional, conventional methods cannot. By incorporating interactive techniques, she allowed her students to have motivating reasons to express themselves. Students were able to share their own ideas and participate in an easier way. The outcome demonstrated that creative cooperative approaches helped students conquer their fear of speaking and build self-assurance, as indicated by Araya Rodríguez's research in 2017.

At La Trinidad de Moravia School, sixth grades frequently struggle with communication in English. They feel afraid and anxious about errors or pronunciation. Araya's conclusions imply that the challenges can be improved according to the teaching strategies employed. It is crucial that students are provided with environments that feel natural, secure, and enjoyable for speaking. She also believes in the creation of creative lessons by the implementation of PBL approach and teamwork; this technique, when applied in public schools, can have a powerful positive impact on students' learning.

An additional impactful viewpoint is shared by Vesterås (2021), who explored how primary educators in Norway integrate the teaching of intercultural competence during English classes. Her investigation concentrated on students in grades 5 to 7, which aligns closely with the age range of sixth-grade learners. She characterized intercultural competence as vital in a society still influenced by prejudice and discrimination that affect children's everyday lives.

The results of her research were fascinating. Educators recognized the significance of intercultural competence and worked to include it in their English teaching. Most of the time

teachers focus on knowledge, and do not include culture, personal experiences, traditions, or reflective exercises. That's why Vesterås identified a discrepancy: although knowledge was evident, factors such as openness, curiosity, and critical cultural understanding were not consistently taught with the same emphasis. These qualities usually appeared in an indirect way and mostly depended on the teacher's style or the materials they used (Vesterås, 2021).

This resonates with what is seen in Costa Rica as well. Students sometimes learn about English-speaking countries in a distant, factual way, but they rarely get to reflect on what these cultural practices mean or how they compare to their own. Without that reflection, intercultural competence stays shallow. Something very attractive about Vesterås' research is her emphasis on communication and respect. Helping students to express their own ideas and feelings and interacting respectfully with others were central goals.

This connects directly to education in Costa Rica where classes have students from different countries. If Norwegian teachers see the need to cultivate openness and curiosity in their classrooms, then Costa Rican classrooms need it just as much, if not more. La Trinidad School has students, who come from Nicaragua, Panamá, Venezuela, and Costa Rica, live cultural difference every day. If those differences are ignored, they can become sources of shame or division. But if they are used intentionally in the English classroom, they become powerful tools for learning and growth.

The third thesis, by Rakovskaya (2019), looked at cultural diversity in Norwegian elementary schools and how it influences children's development. By doing some interviews with educators and after-school support staff, she discovered that diversity served as a beneficial strength. She had the chance to see how children from various cultural heritages communicated, interacted, and worked together. Once more the learning environment was filled with respect,

curiosity, and open-mindedness. Teachers and staff noticed that cultural diversity helped broaden children's perspectives and supported not only their academic but also their social development (Rakovskaya, 2019).

At La Trinidad de Moravia School, students come from different social and cultural backgrounds, they have different accents, customs, and narratives that at the end are shared in the classroom. Sometimes this can be unhelpful, as peer pressure can affect their ability to communicate or express themselves in English. This is the main reason why cultural diversity must be seen as powerful resource. Rakovskaya's findings indicate that, with appropriate guidance, children actively welcome diversity, transforming it into an enriching aspect so children can learn from each other.

Rakovskaya's research relates to Project-Based Learning approach since students work on projects about their customs or recount stories from their homes affirming their identities. She also talks about the importance on teacher training. Educators need to receive instruction in intercultural teaching methods to lead students towards empathy and comprehension. It is the educator's responsibility to transform classes into secure and meaningful experiences.

Students need environments where authentic communication occurs, where culture is experienced, and where diversity is appreciated.

1.1.2 Problematization

This research will be focused on a real situation presented with a group of 18 students from 11 to 12 years old, at Escuela La Trinidad, located in La Trinidad, Moravia. This is a public school with more than 72 years of experience in education. Sixth grade students are not

completely bilingual, and students only have 3 English lesson per week; due to some changes in schedule or different activities or situations, these three lessons are not always given. A weakness that was detected is that students come from different countries, such as Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panamá, and Venezuela, they all have different accents when talking and present difficulties when expressing themselves in English even in Spanish which is their mother tongue. The problem is that they seem shy and are unable to interact with their peers because they feel ashamed of their origins, especially since teenagers can be cruel or mocked at that age. If it's difficult for foreign students to express themselves freely in Spanish, it's even more difficult for them to feel confident enough to express themselves in English. Using PBL-focused activities, the teacher can help the students to use English as a means to develop intercultural awareness, critical thinking, and linguistic fluency through peer-to-peer communication. Therefore, this project seeks not only to strengthen students' English language skills, but also to empower them to embrace their identities, value cultural diversity, and build the confidence needed to interact meaningfully with others in an increasingly interconnected world.

In this research, information about how to use project-based learning (PBL) to promote intercultural awareness and improve English language skills in 6th grade students will be explored. According to Thomas (2000), project-based learning offers opportunities for students to engage in meaningful tasks that integrate real-life contexts, which makes learning more authentic and motivating. Beckett and Slater (2020) also highlight that PBL allows students to use English as a living language for communication and collaboration. Every student comes from a different background and has unique learning needs; therefore, activities based on projects provide flexibility and multiple ways for students to learn and succeed. Moreover, by participating in cultural projects, students who may feel shy or insecure about their accents or

origins can find a safe space to express themselves and share their identity, which helps build confidence and empathy in the classroom.

According to Byram (1997), language learning cannot be separated from its cultural context, as understanding culture is essential to develop true communicative competence. Similarly, Deardorff (2006) points out that intercultural competence equips learners with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to interact respectfully and effectively in diverse environments. This project is based on the belief that English lessons should go beyond grammar and vocabulary memorization, creating instead opportunities for genuine communication, teamwork, and reflection. By integrating cultural exploration, storytelling, and peer-to-peer dialogues into PBL tasks, students will strengthen their language fluency and will grow as respectful, curious, and empathetic individuals prepared for today's multicultural world.

The expected impact of this research has two main aspects: first, students will improve their English language skills by practicing grammar, vocabulary, and oral fluency in real and meaningful situations; second, they will gain intercultural competence and soft skills such as cooperation and critical thinking, which will benefit them beyond the classroom. As Deardorff (2006) notes, developing intercultural competence equips students to become global citizens who can understand and appreciate diversity. This is particularly significant in a classroom like La Trinidad de Moravia, where children from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela interact daily. Through project-based learning, cultural differences will not be viewed as obstacles, but rather as chances to learn from each other (Thomas, 2000; Beckett & Slater, 2020). Overall, this research is based on the belief that education is about cultivating students who can respect others, think critically, and communicate confidently in a multicultural world (Byram, 1997).

1.1.3 Justification

By addressing the challenges identified in the English learning process at La Trinidad de Moravia Primary School, this research proposes the use of PBL in cross-cultural projects as a teaching method to improve both their understanding of different cultures and their English language skills. The research will take place during the first quarter of 2026 and will use English as the main language for communication. Through this project, students will engage with various cultural viewpoints, which is expected to help them develop empathy, critical thinking, and stronger language abilities.

This project builds upon previous researches that emphasize the importance of integrating language and culture in the classroom (Byram, 1997), the potential of intercultural education to improve soft skills, values, and collaboration in young learners (Deardorff, 2006). Also to understand the effectiveness of project-based learning to make English a living tool to engage meaningfully with the world. (Thomas, 2000; Beckett & Slater, 2020)

The main objective of this study is to explore how effective cross-cultural projects are in enhancing language skills and intercultural competencies in sixth-grade students.

It is necessary to enhance vocabulary, grammar, and fluency by engaging students in authentic, culturally themed tasks while fostering critical thinking and empathy through the analysis of cultural similarities and differences. Also to develop intercultural competence by exposing students to and comparing cultural practices, encouraging them to value diversity and strengthen their communicative abilities.

The research will involve one group of approximately 20 sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia Primary School. The development of this thesis project will last 8 weeks,

and it will be done in the first quarter of 2026. Learners will engage in organized, project-oriented tasks in which English serves as the means for exploring different cultures.

The activities will include cultural exploration projects to research customs, traditions, and celebrations from Costa Rica and other cultures. Tasks will include poster creation, short presentations, and peer teaching sessions in English, storytelling, reflection, and collaborative presentations to engage in authentic communication, exchange cultural perspectives in English to compare cultural values and presenting them in English to their peers.

To evaluate results, data will be gathered and analyzed. Pre- and post-assessments will assess students' vocabulary, grammar, and speaking fluency. Surveys and reflection journals will gauge their attitudes towards learning English and their views on cultural diversity. Observations will track engagement, collaboration, and the enhancement of soft skills. A thematic analysis of students' reflections will offer deeper insights into their development in intercultural competence.

By analyzing the existing challenges of English teaching in public primary schools, this study aspires to offer an innovative teaching model that combines language development with intercultural understanding. I believe the results of this thesis project can inspire teachers, school leaders, and researchers who share the dream of preparing our students to grow as open-minded and caring citizens in Costa Rica. This proposal is about guiding children to respect others, to think with curiosity and kindness, and to feel confident living and collaborating with people from different cultures.

1.2 Research Problem

Sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School face difficulties when using English to communicate effectively in the classroom. Although English is part of the national curriculum, students show limited oral fluency, reduced confidence when speaking, and hesitation to interact with their peers, especially during communicative activities. These difficulties are more evident in a culturally diverse classroom, where students come from different countries and linguistic backgrounds.

The problem is intensified by the limited number of English lessons per week. As a result, students have few opportunities to use English in meaningful, real-life contexts that allow them to express their ideas, share their cultural identity, and interact naturally with classmates. This situation restricts both language development and the growth of intercultural awareness among students.

Consequently, many students remain passive during English lessons, feel insecure about their accents or mistakes, and struggle to engage in collaborative communication, affecting their English language fluency and limiting the development of respect, empathy, and appreciation for cultural diversity. Therefore, there is a need to explore effective teaching strategies that promote authentic language use while fostering intercultural awareness in a culturally diverse sixth-grade classroom.

1.2.1 Problem statement

Difficulties that 32 sixth-grade students from 11 to 12 years old at La Trinidad de Moravia School are having when using English to express themselves confidently, interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds, and develop intercultural awareness.

1.2.2 Research Question

What is the effectiveness of applying project-based learning (PBL) activities to promote intercultural awareness and improve English language fluency in 18 sixth-grade students of La Trinidad de Moravia School, during the first quarter of 2026?

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To determine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To implement project-based learning (PBL) activities based on intercultural themes relevant to sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School.
2. To analyze the development of intercultural awareness in students through their participation in PBL activities during the first quarter of 2026.
3. To determine the improvement in English language fluency among sixth-grade students as a result of engaging in PBL activities focused on intercultural topics.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

1.4.1 Scope

This research is addressed to sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, located in Moravia, San José, Costa Rica. The investigation will involve a group of 18 students between the ages of 11 and 12 during the first quarter of 2026. This project will be conducted

during the three English lessons provided per week. The research focuses on the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in promoting both intercultural awareness and English language fluency (vocabulary, grammar, and oral expression).

The study includes the execution of cultural oriented projects where students will have the chance to share, and present traditions, customs, and cultural perspectives in English. It also intends to measure changes in language fluency, attitudes towards cultural diversity, and students' confidence in expressing themselves in English. The results may serve as a model for other public schools in Costa Rica that face similar challenges of limited lesson hours and culturally diverse classrooms.

1.4.2 Limitations

The main limitation of this of this study is related to the minimal number of English lessons students receive (three lessons weekly). Sometimes they can be disrupted by schedule modifications, activities, or special occasions, reducing the consistency of the intervention.

Moreover, the final results of this research will depend on the students' motivation to participate actively and the school's availability to conduct PBL activities in classes to shape the overall effectiveness of the approach and to continue using it as a methodology.

If this investigation is successfully applied, teacher and students in La Trinidad de Moravia School will have the chance to use project-based education to boost student's proficiency in English and their understanding of diverse cultures. Furthermore, this can serve as an example to other public schools that face the same challenges so that they become opportunities in schools with culturally diverse environments. This will conduct learners to develop self-assurance, empathy, sensitivity, and teamwork abilities that reach far beyond their

educational environment, equipping them for future academic, social, and career prospects in an interconnected world.

Chapter II
Theoretical Framework

2.1 Historical Context

2.1.1 Escuela La Trinidad de Moravia

Escuela La Trinidad de Moravia is a public primary school located in the district of La Trinidad, in the canton of Moravia, province of San José, Costa Rica. La Trinidad was officially established as a district on March 24, 1950, evolving from a rural settlement into an increasingly urbanized community within the metropolitan area of San José. The school serves as a key educational institution within this district and reflects the broader social dynamics of its community.

As a public school under the Ministry of Education (MEP), Escuela La Trinidad develops its work in alignment with national educational policies and the educational programs of the Costa Rican public education system. Although specific formal mission and vision statements of the school itself are not widely published, the institution's community focus aligns with the values of the Costa Rican educational model: fostering academic skills, social responsibility, respect, and inclusion among students, while supporting their holistic development as active citizens within their society.

The community surrounding the school is socio-economically diverse and includes families with limited economic resources as well as an increasing number of immigrant families settling in the area. This context presents both rich cultural diversity and real challenges related to access to resources and services.

As a public institution in a community with economic needs and resource limitations, the school often operates with limited material resources, which underscores the importance of committed educators and community engagement in ensuring quality educational experiences for its students.

2.2 Theoretical-Conceptual Context

This chapter provides the theoretical foundation for the research project “*The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.*” It explores the most relevant concepts, frameworks, and studies that define the reasoning behind this study and clarify how language learning, cultural understanding, and student engagement are combined in the classroom.

Schools in Costa Rica are enhancing the cultural richness of the present society. Students come from different countries, so this contributes to their distinct languages, customs and viewpoints. That’s the reason why classes cannot be focused only in isolated grammar or vocabulary word lists. English lessons must show a connection between different cultures, allowing learners to engage in significant communication and appreciate diversity while building their identity. As Byram (1997) reminds us, language learning and culture are inseparable because “one gives meaning to the other” (p. 22). Consequently, effective English teaching must intentionally foster intercultural understanding along with linguistic competence.

This theoretical framework is built upon three central perspectives that guide the development of this research:

Project-Based Learning Theory (Thomas, 2000; Beckett & Slater, 2020), which views learning as an active, inquiry-based process in which students construct knowledge through authentic projects.

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) (Byram, 1997), which integrates language, culture, and critical reflection to enable communication across cultural boundaries.

Intercultural Competence Model (Deardorff, 2006), which highlights the importance of attitudes such as respect, curiosity, and empathy for effective interaction in diverse contexts.

Together, these researches evidence that English learning should be a human experience, based in real life situations, which will involve empathy, curiosity, motivation and confidence. They also explain that English language is living tool for connection among cultures, allowing students to share who they are while learning about peers.

This chapter is divided into five major sections. The first part focuses on the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in educational settings, taking into account aspects such as structure, time frame, participant roles, and effects on motivation. The second part explains the concept of intercultural awareness, its definition, significance, and connection to empathy and social responsibility on a global scale. The third part describes how English language proficiency is developed, associating it with communicative skills and genuine interaction. The fourth part is based on understanding the demographic elements such as age, gender, economic status, and past experiences that may affect educational results. Lastly, the fifth part highlights the traits of sixth graders, specially related to their motivation, preferred learning styles, and involvement in the classroom.

What this theoretical framework aims to demonstrate is that Project-Based Learning can transform the English classroom into a space of collaboration, reflection, motivation, and intercultural growth.

2.3 Use of Project-Based Learning in Education

Education has evolved remarkably in recent years, compared to the way students used to learn in the past. Classes are more dynamic, creative, and student-centered, instead of having the

teacher as the only one who has all knowledge to share. Students are learning how to get their own learning experiences to share them with others in a livelier way. One of the most effective methodologies that has been part of this new evolution is Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL is considered a mindset. It changes the way students learn and interact, and the way teachers give lessons, knowledge is taught through real, meaningful ways.

Project-Based Learning can be defined as an educational approach where students engage with real-world situations, asks questions, investigate, and active participation. (Thomas, 2000). According to this, students are acquiring knowledge and other soft skills when applying this approach. They design projects, tackle challenges, and highlight results that are meaningful personally and socially.

Beckett and Slater (2020) state that PBL is defined as “a framework that brings together language acquisition, communication skills, and cultural understanding through meaningful activities” (p. 18). This means that PBL is a powerful instrument to develop language skills, analytical abilities, and cultural understanding by involving students in genuine, teamwork-oriented activities that show real situations. Classroom learning is connected to the real world, encouraging students to communicate naturally while working on something meaningful. This is relevant at La Trinidad de Moravia, where English lessons are often limited in time and exposure. Through PBL, even three weekly lessons can become rich, creative spaces where students use English to share ideas, explore their cultures, and learn from one another.

2.3.1 The design and implementation of PBL activities in the classroom.

Designing a project-based learning activity involves thinking about the whole learning process, rather than simply writing a lesson plan. Thomas (2000) points out that effective projects are motivated by questions that spark curiosity and exploration, and that promote the

search for solutions. For example, a sixth-grade English class could initiate a project called "How Birthdays Are Celebrated Around the World," with the goal of having each student research and share a custom that caught their attention from a country they have researched. This project combines cultural understanding with language skills; while also teaching students an appreciation for diversity

The implementation of this kind of projects encompasses multiple stages, such as planning, research, collaboration, creation, and presenting outcomes. Teachers will function as guides directing, probing, and inspiring students, and pupils take responsibility for their own learning experiences. According to Beckett and Slatter (2020), PBL includes flexibility and reflection. Every project is different, which is what makes the experience authentic and engaging.

Project-based education naturally aligns with Collaborative Learning, where students work together to achieve shared goals and improve one another's understanding (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). In these team-focused settings, learners exchange ideas, co-interpret meanings, and enhance their communication skills. This is especially significant in culturally diverse classrooms, where the input of each student contributes to a richer overall learning environment.

2.3.2 The duration and frequency of PBL sessions to support learning outcomes.

The success of PBL sessions is greatly impacted by its planning and ongoing support. As exposed by Thomas (2000), projects need to run for a duration that permits learners to investigate topics, refine their outputs, and think about their educational experiences. Certain initiatives can extend over multiple weeks, but even brief cycles can achieve important results if they revolve around specific goals.

Beckett and Slater (2020) emphasize that regularity is crucial: “Having multiple chances for interaction and contemplation enables students to assimilate language and principles at the same time” (p. 46). In environments with a few number of lessons given and limited English practice, like La Trinidad de Moravia Primary School, short and regular projects, held weekly or biweekly, can help students develop language skills while understanding culture.

2.3.3 The roles of teachers and students in the development of PBL activities.

PBL changes traditional lessons and classroom roles. Teachers, instead of having all knowledge and being in charge of transmitting it to their students, become mentors and facilitators, they will model the learning environment for students to have a positive environment where curiosity leads the way. Teachers will guide students’ questions, help them set the most important goals, and seeks to ensure that adequate reflection takes place at each stage. Thomas (2000) said, “the teacher’s task is not to provide all the answers, but to cultivate the right questions” (p. 7). Teachers must have the ability to motivate students in their learning process.

On the other hand, students play an essential role as learners, they are active participants, they make their own decisions and collaborate with peers. They investigate, discuss, design, and share their discoveries, developing autonomy and confidence. When PBL activities are done, students also experience authentic communication, which refers to using language for real life situations instead of planned ones. (Nunan, 2004). For example, when a student interviews a classmate about his favorite activities, the exchange becomes a meaningful act of communication that naturally improves fluency and comprehension and also leads to showing empathy and respect for others’ opinions.

2.3.4 Students' engagement and motivation during PBL activities.

Engagement and motivation are essential elements in the learning process. PBL includes these aspects by linking personal interest with educational objectives. When students get involved in projects that reflect their experiences, traditions, or aspirations, they recognize the importance of their contributions. As noted by Beckett and Slater (2020), “motivation increases when individuals feel a sense of ownership over their assignments and see their importance in everyday life” (p. 82). This means that students learn best when what they do feels like it belongs to them. It is also reinforcing the sense of ownership and increasing motivation. PBL projects become personal, it connects to the student's life, emotions, and identity. And that's when real learning happens.

Students experience a sense of recognition and appreciation from their classmates, which boosts confidence and involvement. Working together makes them feel in a community where achievements are celebrated collectively rather than through competition. This concept fits with Deardorff's (2006) Intercultural Competence framework. It emphasizes different attitudes like openness, curiosity, and empathy as essential components for successful cross-cultural interactions. PBL connects language acquisition, teamwork, and cultural comprehension. It creates an environment where the English language can be transformed and can become a vital and natural tool for communication.

2.4 Comprehension of Intercultural Awareness

Nowadays, Costa Rica is a country that has a great number of immigrants that come to find better living opportunities. Of course, this means that more students from different nationalities are being part of the Costa Rican education system. OECD (2023) reports that Costa

Rica has experienced a steady increase in its immigrant student population, rising from 6% in 2012 to 12% in 2022. This data shows that classrooms are becoming increasingly multicultural and linguistically diverse. There is a mixture of accents, languages, perspectives, stories, values, and different ways of seeing the world. Sharing the classroom with people from different background, helps develop intercultural awareness and act in a more natural way while communication flows.

2.4.1 Demonstrating knowledge of cultures different from one's own.

Intercultural awareness also involves recognizing that all individuals are different. Each has distinct beliefs, practices, ethics, and perceive these variations as chances for education. Byram (1997) describes intercultural awareness as “the comprehension of social groups and their products and practices in one's own country and that of one's conversational partner, along with the overall dynamics of societal and personal interaction” (p. 34). In practical application, this requires supporting students in understanding that customs, forms of expression, and even physical gestures may differ among cultures. For instance, a student from Nicaragua attending La Trinidad School may share at home ideas about some behaviors they perceive as different from other classmates. As students communicate in English, they will begin to use the language as a genuine tool for comprehension and interaction, instead of relying on translation. Through this process, their fluency and ease of expression will naturally increase.

2.4.2 Students' understanding toward cultural differences.

Understanding different cultures is just the first step. The next step involves promoting a positive attitude among students' differences. According to Deardorff's (2006) Intercultural

Competence Model, genuine growth in intercultural relations starts with feelings of curiosity, openness, and respect. These are the bases for the abilities that are going to be acquired and for an effective communication.

Students often mirror what they feel in their learning environment. When teachers show respect and worry for the students, they respond with enthusiasm in a very positive way. They will feel more confident, and it would be nice to see a Venezuelan child sharing a traditional dance or a Costa Rican boy learning about Nicaraguan expressions. These valuable moments build empathy and break down stereotypes.

Empathy is crucial in this context. It involves the ability and capacity to accept different viewpoints, understand their feelings, listen respectfully, and learn from others. As Deardorff (2006) emphasized, empathy represents a fundamental outcome of intercultural education, enhancing interpersonal connections and communication abilities.

2.4.3 The importance of intercultural awareness in personal and academic contexts.

Intercultural awareness extends far beyond the classroom. Byram (1997) emphasized that intercultural awareness helps also to develop critical thinking and helps students to question information or the world around them. This skill transforms students into reflective global citizens. It means that intercultural awareness promotes positive attitudes such as managing friendship, collaboration, cooperation and social interactions with real empathy and appreciation. For the academic context, perhaps, when discussing English texts that mention how holidays are celebrated in different countries, students talk about their own cultural celebrations, comparing and contrasting them to enrich knowledge.

In today's world, students need to be prepared to live and work in multicultural environments. All schools should have the responsibility to promote a positive classroom environment where individual differences are respected, and where these differences are used to the benefit of the students. This way, students will become more tolerant, creative, and confident when they want to communicate in English language without fear of making mistakes.

2.4.4 Students' ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries.

To communicate effectively across cultures, there must be a balance between linguistic ability and cultural sensitivity. Byram (1997) captures this through his theory of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). He says that communication is more than just understanding words; it encompasses interpreting, negotiating, and appreciating the variation of the words and vocabulary included in other cultures.

Essentially, Intercultural Communicative Competence refers to the capacity to involve properly and successfully with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Bryam identifies five crucial aspects he names as *savoirs*: knowledge (*savoir*), the ability to interpret and relate (*savoir comprendre*), the aptitude for exploration and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*), critical awareness of cultural contexts (*savoir s'engager*), and an attitude marked by curiosity and open-mindedness (*savoir être*).

This context is especially pertinent to language education because it is related with the communicative objectives of teaching English. When sixth graders at La Trinidad School participate in project-based learning (PBL) tasks that involve interviewing classmates, crafting posters, or delivering presentations in English, they are actively engaging with these *savoirs* in practical contexts. They learn to modify their tone, honor cultural differences, and perform in active listening, all while communicating in a foreign language.

Cultural diversity serves as the framework for this developmental process. It connects to the range of cultural heritages, languages, and experiences that exist in a community (UNESCO, 2001). In a classroom having students from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela, diversity is an everyday experience.

Finally, all of these elements contribute to shaping Global Citizenship. This concept describes individuals who recognize their interconnection with the world and act responsibly toward others (UNESCO, 2015). Students as citizens must be tolerant, empathetic, and proactive; they use communication and understanding as tools for peace and cooperation. Through this kind of intercultural education, students begin one conversation, one project, one shared story at a time, bringing more benefits to their learning and enriching their own experiences.

2.5 Development of English Language Fluency

When students are learning English as a second language, words and grammar are not the only important parts students must know. They also have to learn how to express their thoughts, emotions, and culture. English is a bridge that will connect them to the world and allow them to use what they already know with new concepts and ideas. However, for many Costa Rican learners, fluency in English is very challenging. Students are not accustomed to think directly in English. Instead, they use grammatical structures in their native language and then attempt to translate and express them orally. For this reason, their fluency is significantly affected. Project-Based Learning (PBL) activities in classes provide a chance to transform English lessons by making language acquisition an engaging, significant, and collaborative experience.

2.5.1 Fluency: Confidence When Speaking

Confidence when speaking is a fundamental component of English language fluency. Fluency involves the learner's willingness and ability to express ideas without fear or excessive self-monitoring. Richards (2006) defines fluency as "the ability to produce language easily and smoothly without unnecessary pauses or hesitation" (p. 47), which implies a level of confidence that allows communication to flow naturally, even when errors are present.

For sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, confidence is closely related to the classroom environment. Students develop oral fluency more effectively when they feel safe, respected, and accepted, particularly in culturally diverse groups where accents and backgrounds may differ. Project-Based Learning (PBL) contributes to this process by providing authentic and meaningful contexts for communication. As Thomas (2000) explains, PBL "gives students opportunities to use language in authentic contexts that mirror real life" (p. 12). Through collaborative projects, students gradually gain confidence as they use English to share ideas, express opinions, and present aspects of their own culture, understanding that communication is more important than linguistic perfection.

2.5.2 Being Understood Without So Much Effort

Another essential aspect of fluency is the ability to be understood by others without requiring excessive effort from either the speaker or the listener. In a multicultural classroom such as La Trinidad de Moravia School, students are exposed to a variety of accents and speech patterns, which enriches their listening and speaking experiences.

Listening comprehension plays a key role in this process. According to Nation and Newton (2009), “listening is the natural precursor to speaking and a vital part of language acquisition” (p. 37). When students actively listen to their classmates during discussions and group work, they become more aware of how language is used to convey meaning clearly. PBL supports this development by exposing learners to continuous and varied input from peers, teachers, and resources. These authentic interactions help students adjust their speech, clarify meaning when necessary, and communicate ideas more effectively, allowing them to be understood with greater ease and confidence.

2.5.3 Speaking with Few Pauses: Using the Language Naturally

Speaking with few pauses and using the language naturally reflects a more advanced level of fluency, where learners focus on meaning rather than form. Natural speech involves an appropriate flow of ideas, the automatic use of vocabulary and grammatical structures, and reduced reliance on translation from the first language. Richards (2006) emphasizes that fluency prioritizes communication over accuracy, allowing speakers to maintain continuity and coherence while expressing their thoughts.

Project-Based Learning encourages this type of natural language use by moving students beyond rote memorization. According to Thomas (2000), learning becomes meaningful when “learners apply it to solve real problems” (p. 8). During PBL activities, students research, discuss, and present topics related to their lives, traditions, and cultural experiences, which promotes spontaneous language production. Beckett and Slater (2020) highlight that PBL “creates purposeful opportunities for vocabulary growth through authentic use and collaboration”

(p. 56). In the context of La Trinidad de Moravia School, this approach enables sixth graders to speak English with fewer interruptions, greater fluency, and increased naturalness, as they create their own messages through genuine interaction rather than relying on pre-made dialogues.

2.6 Understanding of the Demographic Factors

Every classroom in a school is different. Students come from different backgrounds and families, which makes the learning process a mix of ages, experiences, dreams, and realities that shape the way they learn. That's why it becomes a necessity in public schools, such as *La Trinidad de Moravia*, to understand the demographic factors. They will influence how students learn and also who they are. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning occurs within a social and cultural context, meaning that factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic conditions directly influence how students construct knowledge and interact with others.

When using PBL approach differences are being respected because it allows students to participate according to their own life experiences. PBL projects become a great opportunity to transform diversity into a collective tool for learning.

2.6.1 Students' age in relation to their learning needs and progress.

Sixth grade students are usually between 11 and 12 years old. They are in a transition between childhood and early adolescence. Students at this age are curious, sensitive, care about what other think of them, and usually most of them like expressing opinions. They are beginning to seek independence, they want to develop their own personality, and they are also very vulnerable to peer pressure.

Piaget (1972) described this stage as the concrete operational period, where students start to think logically but still need tangible and relatable experiences to make sense of abstract concepts. When they are learning English as a second language, PBL projects will provide a lot of benefits because they are related to meaningful life experiences. When students at La Trinidad participate in cultural projects, English is being used for authentic purposes. As Thomas (2000) explains, “students learn more effectively when they are actively engaged in constructing their own understanding through inquiry and collaboration” (p. 14). PBL also provides learners with structure and helps them use their creativity to solve real-world situations and develop innovative solutions.

2.6.2 Students’ gender in relation to learning patterns and outcomes.

Gender can also influence how students interact and communicate with others. It also impacts their vision about completing certain tasks. Researchers have proved that boys and girls can succeed equally when learning a new language, but their learning styles and participation patterns may differ. Oxford (2016) observed that girls often exhibit more effective verbal communication and social skills, while boys prefer competitive or task-oriented activities.

In La Trinidad School, where classes are multicultural, and some students are afraid or ashamed when talking in front of their classmates, it is crucial to create projects that balance these differences and promote equal participation. Collaborative tasks that make students create and speak allow each student to contribute in a more natural environment.

Each student, boy or girl, must feel unique and valuable. PBL will make students feel confident and will also teach them that respect is a very important part of interaction. When

teachers find this balance, empathy and cultural sensitivity become essential for developing intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006).

2.6.3 Students' socioeconomic backgrounds and access to learning resources and support.

Socioeconomic background is a powerful factor in education. Some students at La Trinidad de Moravia School come from families with limited access to resources such as books, technology, or private tutoring. Some of these students come from difficult backgrounds and dysfunctional families who have little access to education; therefore, they are not professionals, they work in jobs that allow them to subsist, and students cannot be supported in acquiring a new language.

According to UNESCO (2015), equitable education means ensuring that “learning opportunities are inclusive, relevant, and adapted to the diverse realities of all learners” (p. 22). PBL relates to this concept by offering affordable and effective educational experiences. Learners can develop projects using low-cost materials, and shared classroom resources.

When students collaborate in teams, societal distinctions often fade away. Working together promotes shared assistance, allowing students to gain knowledge from the experiences of their peers. As Beckett and Slater (2020) wrote, “project-based learning empowers all learners by connecting academic content to real-life contexts that matter to them” (p. 29). This sense of belonging changes the classroom into a space where all learners can share their voice and participate equally.

2.6.4 Students' previous English learning experiences and their impact on current proficiency and learning strategies.

Students' previous experiences with English influence the way they get new educational experiences. Some sixth-grade students have discovered English through previous school years or through social media or online games. Others are engaging with the language for the first time. These differences impact not just skill levels but also self-assurance and motivation.

According to Lightbown and Spada (2013), past experiences influence language acquisition because "learners' beliefs about how languages are learned affect the strategies they use and their ultimate success" (p. 87). Students who have had negative previous experiences while learning English usually associate it with demotivation, lack of interest, and fear of making mistakes, which causes them to hesitate to speak or participate, while those who have had a more positive and friendly learning experience participate with greater freedom and confidence and feel motivated to continue learning.

Project-based learning facilitates access to information. Students interact in different ways within the same project. All their contributions are important, and by working as a team, they progressively improve their skills and self-confidence. Byram (1997) reminds us that communicative and intercultural development happen best when learners feel emotionally safe: "the motivation to engage in intercultural communication increases when learners perceive acceptance and mutual respect" (p. 112). Therefore, recognizing students' previous experiences is an act of empathy and inclusion.

2.7 Characteristics of Sixth-Graders

Sixth grade marks an important part in children's life; they are changing from childhood to adolescence. At this stage, learners are full of energy, curiosity, and emotion. Students are eager to share their ideas, but they also seek their own identity, as well as the approval and recognition of their peers. Therefore, teachers must foster a balance of sufficient autonomy and sensitivity to guide the learning process.

Psychologists such as Piaget (1972) and Erikson (1968) describe this period as one of exploration and identity formation. At this stage, students begin to explore boundaries, think abstractly, and develop their own conceptions and ideas about the world. They believe they possess a great deal of knowledge in the social sphere and begin to reflect on their relationships with others. In language learning, this fosters a very positive environment for communication, creativity, and collaboration, key aspects of Project-Based Learning.

By understanding the characteristics of students in sixth grade, teachers can create educational opportunities that involve academic requirements and emotional and social situations.

2.7.1 Students' motivation and interest in learning English.

Motivation is key to learning. Students between 11 and 12 years old in sixth grade are influenced by the social environment, as well as their relationships with teachers and classmates, and their own perception of achievements. According to Dörnyei (2001), motivation in second language learning "determines the degree of active personal involvement in L2 learning" (p. 8).

At La Trinidad School in Moravia, sixth-grade students are motivated to learn English by a desire to communicate, interact, learn songs, play games, and even browse social media. However, some of them struggle with insecurity, fear of making mistakes, or mispronouncing words. This is where Project-Based Learning (PBL) becomes a transformative tool.

When students work on group projects that are meaningful to them, they see English as a bridge to connect with others. Beckett and Slater (2020) point out that "motivation increases when students feel ownership of their projects and see their relevance to real life" (p. 82).

It's very motivating to see them find a personal connection and begin to engage and persevere. Learning English should be a joyful, enriching, purposeful, and socially rewarding experience.

2.7.2 Students' learning preferences and how they influence English acquisition.

Students in sixth grade benefit most from engaging, experiential, and collaborative learning methods, this is also related to their age and how curious they are. This innate curiosity decreases when lessons become boring, monotonous or irrelevant to their lives. PBL activities makes students feel in action, relate in community, share their life experiences with peers, and also learn from others.

To understand this, it's important to cite Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (2011), which states that students process information in different ways, including linguistic, interpersonal, visual, and musical styles, among others. When teachers create tasks that influence multiple intelligences, students remain engaged and simultaneously develop soft skills.

As Thomas (2000) noted, "Project-based learning fosters active involvement and accommodates diverse learning styles by linking academic content to real-life situations" (p. 22).

These learning styles, being so different, offer opportunities for personalized teaching and recognizing the unique abilities of each student, which, when combined, enhance learning within the classroom.

2.7.3 Students' consistent engagement in classroom activities and meaningful contributions to discussions.

At this point, students genuinely value when their opinions are acknowledged and respected, and when they are made to feel that their perspective is important; this leads to more normal and active participation from them. Vygotsky (1978) illustrated this with his idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the area that exists between what a student is capable of achieving independently and what they can achieve with support and teamwork.

In a project-based learning (PBL) classroom, this space develops naturally. Students learn to support each other, explain their ideas, share their experiences, and take on shared responsibility that guides them to achieve successful results. By collaborating without fear or embarrassment, their confidence grows. Each collaborative activity strengthens both their language skills and their self-esteem.

Byram (1997) pointed out that interacting in diverse cultural settings “demands not just language skills but also empathy, respect, and inquisitiveness” (p. 71). This is exactly what PBL develops. By collaborating and engaging with different cultures, learners cultivate a sense of community and purpose, they come to recognize themselves as active participants in an environment they like and enjoy.

Furthermore, continuous participation creates a classroom environment where students see mistakes as an opportunity for growth, not as something negative. This also benefits their

emotional well-being, making them more willing to take risks when speaking English, improving their fluency, and simultaneously gaining a deeper understanding of other cultures.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

This section outlines the research framework utilized to assess the impact of Project-Based Learning (PBL) on enhancing intercultural understanding and English language proficiency among sixth graders at La Trinidad de Moravia School in the first quarter of 2026. The purpose of this section is to articulate, with clarity and accuracy, the study's design, participant details, tools used, as well as the methods for data collection and analysis. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a clearly outlined methodology guarantees that the research is transparent, structured, and in line with the study's aims. In this way, the methodology acts as a guide for every phase of the research.

Given that this investigation aims to explore the effects of PBL on student's cultural awareness and language skills, the chapter starts with a description of the study's type and nature, followed by a discussion of the research framework, the sample population, sampling methods, and hypotheses. The variables are presented both conceptually and operationally to provide a foundation for measurement.

Finally, the chapter elaborates on the data collection techniques and tools employed, including observation, questionnaires, interviews, and performance evaluations. As mentioned by Hernández Sampieri et al. (2014), it is crucial to choose suitable tools to ensure that the gathered data accurately represent the concepts being examined. By structuring the methodology in this organized way, the section outlines a clear guide for the research process and the eventual interpretation of the results.

3.1 Type of research

This project is applied research; it seeks to implement the Project-Based Learning approach to assess its effectiveness in improving intercultural awareness and English language

fluency among sixth-grade students. Applied research seeks to solve real educational needs through the implementation of strategies and interventions (Thomas, 2000).

3.1.1 Purpose: Applied

In this research, the type of investigation selected is categorized as applied. Its purpose is to intervene, apply, and measure outcomes in a real educational context.

3.1.2 Temporal dimension: Transversal

The research uses a transversal (cross-sectional) design. Data will be collected during the first quarter of 2026, within a defined and limited period, in order to measure the effects of PBL before and after implementation. The temporal design is transversal because data will be collected during a single period, which is the first quarter of 2026, allowing the researcher to observe and measure changes during that timeframe (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.1.3 Framework: Mega-macro-micro

This research fits into a larger educational picture that moves from the global, to the national, and finally to the classroom itself. The study hopes to understand, in a very human way, how national and global educational principles come to life in the hands of real learners.

- **Mega:**

At mega level there are four different public schools located in Moravia: Porfirio Brenes Castro School, San Blas School, Platanares School, and La Trinidad School. At this mega level, the study resonates with international guidelines from organizations such as UNESCO, which

emphasize the need for schools to develop students' intercultural competence and their ability to engage meaningfully in a rapidly globalizing world (UNESCO, 2013).

- **Macro:**

At the macro level, this research is positioned within the everyday learning environment of a single institution: La Trinidad de Moravia School. The research aligns with Costa Rica's national English curriculum, which encourages communicative, intercultural, and competency-based learning experiences that help students use English for real purposes and interact respectfully with cultural diversity (Ministerio de Educación Pública [MEP], 2024).

- **Micro:**

This project takes place in the everyday environment of La Trinidad de Moravia School, a public institution that serves a diverse community of students from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. In this particular sixth-grade classrooms, students collaborate daily, negotiate meaning, and bring their own cultural perspectives into group work, making it an ideal setting to explore how Project-Based Learning supports intercultural awareness and English fluency. By observing what happens in this real and lively space, the study seeks to understand how broad educational ideals are lived out by actual children in a real Costa Rican classroom.

3.1.4 Hypothesis

In this research study a hypothesis is proposed, where an independent variable and two dependent variables are established.

3.1.5 Nature: (Mixed)

This research uses a mixed-methods approach. Mixed-methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative data to strengthen reliability, triangulate findings, and deepen interpretation (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative research permits the researcher to go beyond viewpoints, behaviors, and personal experiences, especially when developing PBL activities that involve teamwork and intercultural exchange. Creswell (2014) emphasizes that “qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). According to him, this related with how sixth-grade students understand intercultural interactions and how they construct meaning while using English in authentic tasks. For this study, qualitative evidence will be obtained from classroom observations checklist, and evidence about the students’ engagement in the lessons.

On the other hand, quantitative research will show numerical evidence of student performance related to the topic of intercultural awareness and English language fluency. According to Creswell (2014), “quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables” (p. 4). This study also uses Likert-scale responses, interview frequencies, and rubric scores to determine if PBL implementation can produce observable changes.

3.1.6 Character

This investigation is primarily identified as explanatory in nature because it is focusing on clarifying the reasons and methods by which Project-Based Learning (PBL) influences sixth graders' intercultural sensitivity and proficiency in the English language.

Explanatory studies aim to discover causal linkages and provide analyses that extend beyond mere observation (Hernández Sampieri et al. , 2014). In this project, the researcher goes beyond simply noting student actions; it explores the processes by which PBL, related to applying teamwork, sincere communication, and cultural exploration, creates observable advancements in student education. Through the evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative findings, this study clarifies the teaching dynamics that contribute to enhancement, presenting data-supported understanding of the efficiency of PBL as a useful educational approach.

Moreover, the choice of explanatory research is suitable since the investigation relates to the particular circumstances that lead PBL to yield language and cultural benefits. According to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), explanatory research "seeks to elucidate the essence of certain connections by pinpointing the root causes" (p. 586), which this research effectively achieves by correlating elements of PBL with students' communication practices and intercultural growth fostering an understanding of the reasons PBL succeeds in English classes for sixth graders

This approach requires moving beyond standard teaching practices. Instead of simply delivering content, the core idea is to introduce a novel method or tool (in this case, Genially) into a specific learning scenario and then compare the results to what would typically occur without it.

3.2 Subjects and sources of information

3.2.1 Subjects

In this section, the population included in the study is described and the individuals are categorized according to the research needs. As in most educational investigations, participants are classified into the universe and the sample. For this study, the universe refers to all elementary students enrolled at La Trinidad de Moravia School, who represent the broader group from which participants could potentially be selected. However, the universe will not be studied in its entirety. Instead, a sample will be intentionally selected based on the specific characteristics required for the research objectives.

The sample for this investigation consists of an equal percentage of students in each group of sixth-graders from La Trinidad de Moravia School. Sixth graders were chosen because they are the groups in which the Project-Based Learning (PBL) intervention will be implemented during the first quarter of 2026. Students will be equally exposed to the intercultural and fluency-focused PBL activities. This sampling ensures that the data collected accurately reflects the effects of PBL on the sixth-graders.

3.2.2 Sources of information

Table 1

Firsthand Sources Used in the Research Process

Author(s):	University or Organization:	Country:	Year:
Byram, M.	University of Durham	United Kingdom	1997

Deardorff, D. K.	Duke University	United States	2006
Thomas, J. W.	Autodesk Foundation	United States	2000
Beckett, G. H. & Slater, T.	University of Cincinnati University of Nevada	United States	2020
Hymes, D.	University of Pennsylvania	United States	1972
Creswell, J. W.	University of Michigan	United States	2014
Ministerio de Educación Pública	Ministerio de Educación Pública	Costa Rica	2024

Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2025)

Table 1

Secondhand Sources Used in the Research Process

Author(s):	Book Title:	Year:
Brown, H. D.	Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. Pearson Education.	2007

Vygotsky, L. S.	Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. Harvard University Press.	1978
Brown, H. D.	Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. Pearson Education.	2007
Banks, J. A.	Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching. Pearson Education.	2010
Kolb, D. A.	Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development. Prentice Hall.	1984

Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2025)

Table 3

Thirdhand Sources Used in the Research Process

Author(s):	Article:	Year:
Richards, J. C.	Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (entry on “Communicative Competence”).	2015
Dörnyei, Z.	The Routledge Encyclopedia of Second Language Acquisition (chapter: “Motivation in Language Learning”).	2013

Oxford, R. L.	Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know (summary chapter used as a tertiary source).	2017
UNESCO	Intercultural Competence Framework: Key Concepts and Definitions (encyclopedic synthesis).	2013
Cambridge University Press	Cambridge Dictionary of Education (entry on “Project-Based Learning”).	2021

Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2025)

3.3 Sampling and Type

3.3.1 Non-probabilistic

The sample used in this study is **non-probabilistic**, since the group was selected based on their suitability for implementing Project-Based Learning. According to Hernández Sampieri et al. (2014), non-probabilistic sampling is appropriate when participants are chosen “based on specific characteristics related to the purpose of the study” (p. 176). Sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School meet these characteristics because they possess the cognitive maturity to engage in PBL activities and collaborate in small groups, which aligns with typical developmental traits of students aged 11 to 12. As Patton (2015) explains, purposeful sampling allows researchers to select participants who are “information-rich cases” (p. 53), meaning they can contribute valuable insights to the research objectives.

Additionally, this group was chosen because it reflects a growing level of cultural diversity, which is essential for examining intercultural awareness. Creswell and Creswell (2018)

note that qualitative and mixed-methods studies often rely on non-probabilistic samples when the goal is to understand how participants experience or respond to a particular educational intervention. Thus, the selection of this group is justified, as it allows for a meaningful assessment of whether PBL fosters intercultural awareness and English language fluency in a naturally diverse classroom environment.

3.4 Techniques and Instruments

In order to obtain valid, dependable, and comprehensive data, this research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. The use of multiple instruments allowed for triangulation of data, which strengthens the credibility of the findings and provides a more complete understanding of the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in promoting intercultural awareness and English language fluency (Creswell, 2014; Hernández Sampieri et al., 2014). All instruments were designed in direct alignment with the main objective and the specific objectives of the study and were applied before, during, and after the implementation of the PBL intervention.

Observation was used as a qualitative technique to examine students' English language fluency in authentic classroom contexts. According to Hernández Sampieri et al. (2014), observation allows researchers to systematically record behaviors and interactions as they naturally occur, making it especially suitable for educational settings. In this study, two observation checklists were designed and applied by the researcher: one prior to the PBL implementation and one after the intervention.

The observation checklists focused on three key dimensions of English language fluency: confidence when speaking, being understood without excessive effort, and speaking with few pauses using the language naturally. These dimensions are consistent with communicative approaches to language learning, which emphasize natural interaction over mechanical accuracy (Richards, 2006). Each checklist included specific indicators marked as “Observed” or “Not Observed,” ensuring consistency and objectivity in data collection. An additional comments section was included to record relevant qualitative observations that supported interpretation of results

Questionnaires were used as a quantitative technique to measure students’ perceptions and attitudes regarding intercultural awareness and the effectiveness of PBL. Creswell (2014) states that questionnaires are useful for collecting standardized data from multiple participants and for identifying patterns that can be statistically analyzed.

Two closed-ended questionnaires were administered as a pre-test and post-test to assess students’ intercultural awareness. These instruments evaluated students’ ability to understand cultural differences, respect others, and interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. The questionnaires used a Likert-scale format, which facilitated comparison of results before and after the intervention and allowed for measurement of attitudinal change over time (Hernández Sampieri et al., 2014)

Additionally, a Likert-scale questionnaire was applied at the end of the project to evaluate students’ perceptions of Project-Based Learning as a teaching strategy. This instrument assessed three areas: PBL and intercultural awareness, PBL and English language fluency, and PBL as a learning strategy. Likert scales are widely used in educational research to measure attitudes, perceptions, and levels of agreement in a structured and quantifiable manner (Creswell, 2014).

To complement quantitative findings, reflective instruments were used to collect qualitative data related to students' learning experiences. A KWL (Know–Want to Learn–Learned) chart was implemented to promote metacognitive reflection and to capture students' perceptions of intercultural awareness before, during, and after the project. According to Ogle (1986), KWL charts encourage learners to activate prior knowledge, set learning goals, and reflect on new understanding, making them particularly effective in educational research.

The combination of observation, questionnaires, and reflective instruments ensured a comprehensive evaluation of the research variables. By applying these techniques at different stages of the study, it was possible to measure changes in students' intercultural awareness and English language fluency, as well as to analyze students' perceptions of Project-Based Learning as an effective instructional approach in a culturally diverse sixth-grade classroom at La Trinidad de Moravia School.

All the instruments underwent a validation process in which five teachers evaluated their relevance and clarity. Among their recommendations, they noted the following: it is important not to include student's name in order to keep their information confidential and guarantee the anonymity of the participants. The instruments were approved and considered excellent. They agreed that the instruments used will show both strengths and deficiencies among students which will help to obtain better results while teaching. Statements are clear, simple, and culturally relevant for 11–12-year-olds, using accessible language, reinforcing the impact of classroom projects by measuring progress in respect for and appreciation of diversity, relevant to Costa Rican multicultural environments. They contain observable and concrete criteria with a binary format that reduces evaluator subjectivity. They also promote metacognitive reflection in a visual and flexible way, with guided examples that help students with low reading/writing fluency. The

K-W-L structure captures progress (prior knowledge, curiosity, learning), integrating qualitative data. These instruments form a robust triangulated (quantitative, qualitative, observational) set for this study.

3.5 Variables (all the chart operational and theoretical definitions)

The following operational variables chart presents how the variables of this research are analyzed and measured, as well as the instruments used to validate them. This chart is directly aligned with the main objective and the specific objectives of the study, which focus on determining the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) in promoting intercultural awareness and English language fluency among sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School.

The operational variables chart is a fundamental component of this research, as it bridges the theoretical framework and the methodological design by transforming abstract concepts into observable and measurable elements. According to Hernández Sampieri et al. (2014), operationalization allows researchers to define how variables will be measured and analyzed, ensuring clarity, consistency, and methodological rigor. Through this process, each variable is clearly identified, defined, and linked to specific data collection instruments.

This chart outlines the relationship between the specific objectives and their corresponding variables, providing a conceptual definition based on relevant theoretical foundations such as intercultural communicative competence and language fluency (Byram, 1997; Richards, 2006). Additionally, it includes an instrumental definition that specifies the tools and techniques used to collect data, such as questionnaires, observation checklists, and reflective

instruments. Finally, the operational definition establishes the criteria used to determine the validity of each variable, allowing for systematic evaluation and comparison of results before and after the PBL intervention (Creswell, 2014).

Table 3

Title: The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.

VARIABLES CHART

General Objective: To determine the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.

Specific Objectives	Variable	Conceptual Definition	Instrumental Definition	Operational Definition
To implement project-based learning (PBL) activities based on intercultural themes relevant to sixth-grade students at La	Implementation of PBL activities to foster intercultural themes.	Project-Based Learning as an approach to engage students in collaborative tasks to work in activities connected to	This variable is measured through instruments designed to evaluate students' perceptions and engagement with Project-Based Learning	The implementation of PBL activities is considered effective when at least 70% of the students select “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” in the Likert Scale

Trinidad de Moravia School.		real-life situations. Intercultural themes refer to topics that explore students' cultural practices, values, and perspectives from their own context.	activities. The instruments used include the Likert Scale Questionnaire on PBL , which evaluates students' views on intercultural awareness, English language fluency, and PBL as a learning strategy, as well as the KWL Chart , which allows students to reflect on their prior knowledge, learning expectations, and acquired knowledge related to intercultural awareness during the project	items related to intercultural awareness and learning through projects. Additionally, evidence of effective implementation is supported when students complete all three sections of the KWL chart, demonstrating progression from prior knowledge to newly acquired understanding of intercultural awareness.
To analyze the development of intercultural	Intercultural awareness	Understand, respect, and interpret cultural	Intercultural awareness is measured by using multiple	Intercultural awareness is considered to

<p>awareness in students through their participation in PBL activities during the first quarter of 2026.</p>	<p>associated with cultural knowledge, attitudes, and communication.</p>	<p>differences; show empathy, recognize similarities and differences.</p>	<p>instruments to ensure data triangulation. These instruments include the Initial Diagnostic Questionnaire (Pre-test) and the Intercultural Awareness Questionnaire (Post-test), both using closed-ended questions focused on understanding cultural differences, respecting others, and interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, qualitative data is collected through the KWL Chart which allow students to show</p>	<p>have developed when at least 70% of student responses in the post-test fall within the “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” categories, showing improvement compared to the pre-test results. Qualitative evidence from the KWL chart must also show progress in students’ attitudes, respect, and interaction</p>
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			their progress related to intercultural learning	with culturally diverse peers.
To determine the improvement in English language fluency among sixth-grade students as a result of engaging in PBL activities focused on intercultural topics.	English language fluency, speaking, vocabulary use, pronunciation, communication, flow.	The ability to speak the language smoothly, clearly, and accurately. Use proper vocabulary, pronunciation, and communicative flow.	English language fluency is measured using two observation checklists applied before and after the PBL intervention. These checklists evaluate key aspects of fluency, including confidence when speaking, being understood without excessive effort, speaking with few pauses, natural use of language, and communicative flow. Complementary data is collected through the Likert Scale	Improvement in English language fluency is considered evident when at least 70% of the indicators in the post-observation checklist are marked as “Observed.” Additionally, positive improvement is supported when at least 70% of students select “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” in the

			Questionnaire on PBL , which gathers students' self-perceptions regarding their improvement in English fluency	Likert Scale items related to confidence, natural language use, and reduced pauses when speaking English.
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Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2025).

Chapter IV

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the implementation of the research project conducted with sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School during the first quarter of 2026. The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the information gathered through the different research instruments applied during the study, including the diagnostic questionnaire, observation checklists, pre-test and post-test, student reflections, and the Likert scale evaluation.

The analysis of the collected data allows the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a useful pedagogical strategy to promote intercultural awareness and improve English language fluency among sixth-grade students.

The results are presented and interpreted in relation to the objectives proposed in this research. Highlighting changes in students' participation, confidence when speaking, and their attitudes toward cultural diversity.

Through this chapter, and the data analysis, it is possible to identify both the strengths and challenges observed during the intervention, providing valuable insights into how intercultural project-based activities can influence language learning when diversity is found in the classroom.

4.1 Diagnostic of the Current Situation

The diagnostic of the current situation was carried out to understand the initial conditions of the sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School before the implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) intervention. The group of 32 students, between 11 and 12 years old, presented a culturally diverse profile, including learners from different countries such as Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama.

From the researcher's perspective, although students showed a generally positive attitude toward learning English, their participation in oral activities was limited, mainly due to lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes. This was particularly noticeable among some Nicaraguan students, who tended to feel shy or embarrassed when speaking, especially in activities related to cultural topics where they felt exposed.

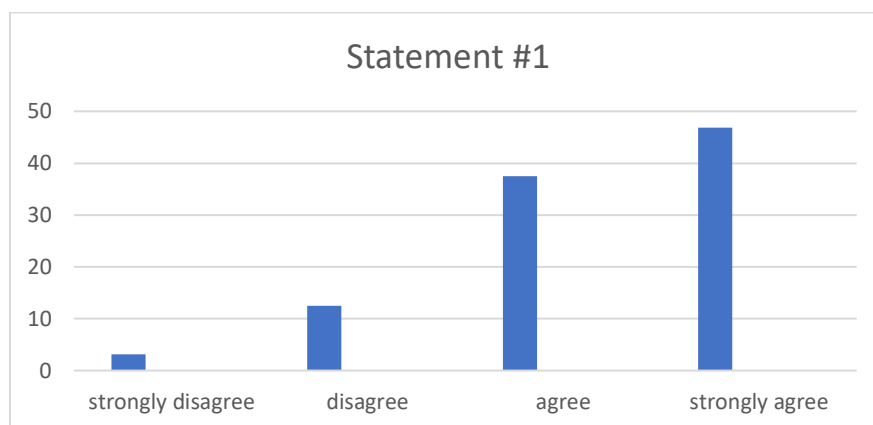
Additionally, the school context reflects limited access to technological resources, as the English teacher must move between classrooms and prepare printed materials for each lesson. Despite these challenges, the classroom environment was respectful and receptive, providing a valuable starting point to implement strategies improving fluency and fostering intercultural awareness.

4.1.1 Pre-test Initial Diagnostic Questionnaire

An Initial Diagnostic Questionnaire was conducted to obtain data to identify student's initial level of intercultural awareness before implementing PBL activities in order to understand cultural differences, respect others, and interact with people from other countries. In this section, data collected in the classroom observations are presented based on the answers given by students according to the scale used.

Graph 1: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #1: I understand that people from different cultures may think or act differently from me.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

The graph above presents students' responses to the statement related to their understanding of cultural differences. The results show that 47% of the students strongly agree, and 37% agree with the statement, showing that the majority of the participants recognize that people from different cultures may think or behave differently from themselves. This suggests that most students already have a basic level of intercultural awareness and demonstrate openness toward cultural diversity.

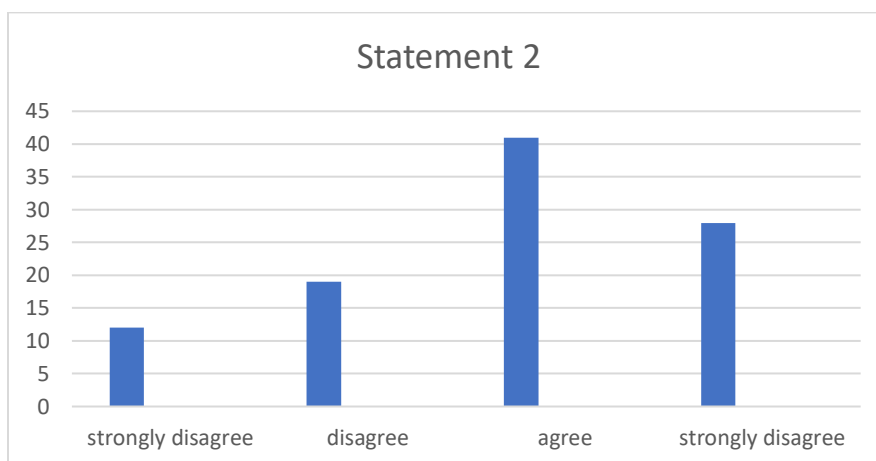
On the other hand, 13% of the participants selected disagree, while 3% strongly disagree, representing a small part of the group that may still have limited understanding of cultural differences due to limited opportunities to reflect on this topic.

Overall, the results indicate that although a large percentage of students demonstrate an understanding of cultural diversity, there is still a need to strengthen intercultural awareness

through meaningful class activities, supporting the importance of implementing PBL focused on this theme.

Graph 2: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #2: I believe that cultural differences make people interesting and valuable.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

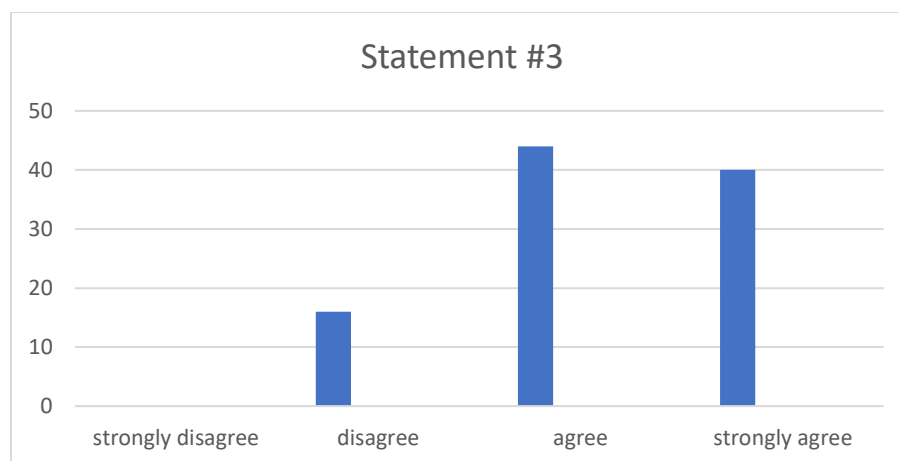
Graph 2 presents the students' responses regarding their perceptions of cultural diversity and the value of cultural differences. The results indicate that 41% of the participants agree and 28% strongly agree with the statement. This means that 69% of the students show a positive attitude, recognizing that cultural differences can enrich relationships and make people more interesting and valuable. However, the graph also shows that 19% selected the option disagree, and 12% strongly disagree, representing a 31% who may not yet fully recognize the way cultural differences complement them, usually related to feelings of insecurity when discussing cultural identity.

The results suggest that there is still a need in this topic, and that is why it is necessary to implement PBL encouraging students to explore cultural traditions, share experiences, and

develop empathy and respect for diversity, while practicing English in meaningful communicative context.

Graph 3: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #3: I respect classmates even if their traditions or customs are different from mine.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

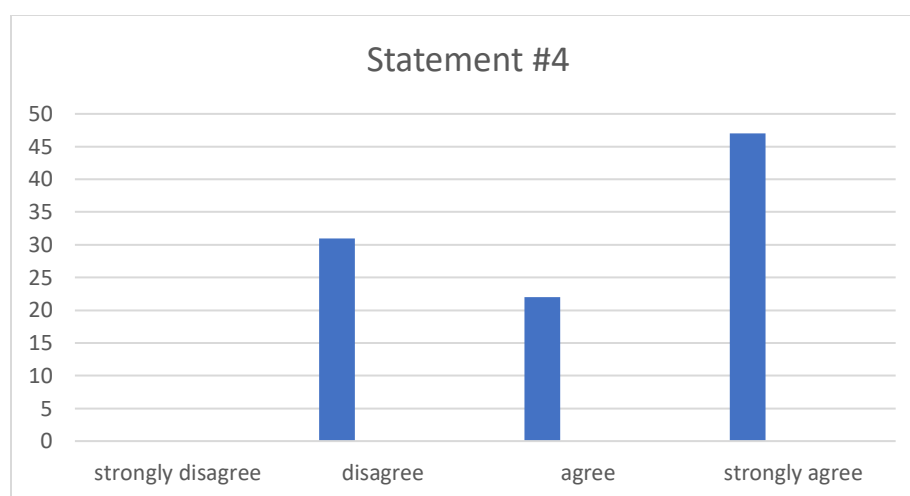
Graph 3 shows the students' responses to the third statement. The results show that 44% of the students agree, and 40% strongly agree with the statement. This indicates that 84% of the students recognize the importance of interacting respectfully with people from different cultural backgrounds. Only 15% of the participants selected strongly disagree. This suggests that a few students do not fully understand the importance of intercultural interaction and respect in diverse environments.

Overall, the results indicate a favorable attitude toward intercultural awareness, but there is still a need to promote PBL activities to give students time to share their cultural experiences,

collaborate with classmates, and develop intercultural awareness and English communication skills.

Graph 4: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #4: I feel comfortable listening to opinions from classmates with different cultural backgrounds.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

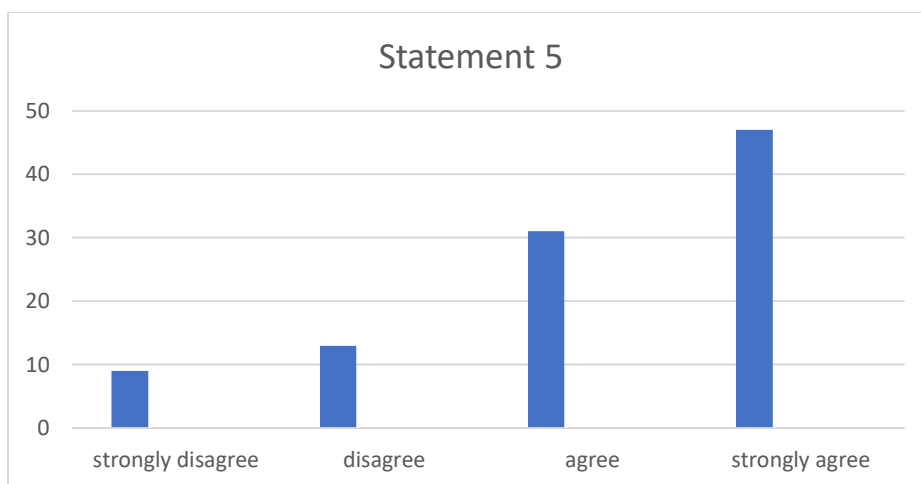
Graph 4 presents the students' responses regarding their comfort level when listening to classmates who come from different cultural backgrounds. The results show that 47% of the students strongly agree, and 22% agree with the statement. In total, 69% of the participants feel comfortable interacting and listening to others. However, the graph also indicates that 31% of the students selected the option disagree, while no students selected strongly disagree. It means that a considerable group of students may still feel uncertain when engaging in conversations about cultural differences due to fear of expressing opinions in front of classmates.

Overall, the results show that although most students demonstrate openness toward listening to diverse perspectives, there is still a requirement to promote dialogue and empathy in the

classroom. This is why PBL activities focused on intercultural themes can help create safe spaces where students feel encouraged, sharing respectfully with others in meaningful interactions with peers.

Graph 5: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #5: I try to understand why people behave differently instead of judging them.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 5 represents students' responses related to empathy and understanding toward people from different cultural backgrounds. The results show that 47% of the students strongly agree and 31% agree with the statement. This shows that 78% of the participants understand others rather than judging cultural differences, which reflects an important aspect of intercultural awareness.

On the other hand, 13% of the students selected the option disagree, while 9% strongly disagree. This means that a small portion of the group still has difficulties understanding or accepting behaviors that differ from their own cultural perspective due to lack of previous intercultural learning experiences.

Overall, the results prove that most students show empathy to others. Though, the presence of some disagreement reinforces the importance of reflection, respect, and cultural understanding. PBL activities can help students to interact respectfully and collaborate with others while practicing English in real contexts.

Graph 6: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #6: I can work in a group with classmates from other countries or cultures.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

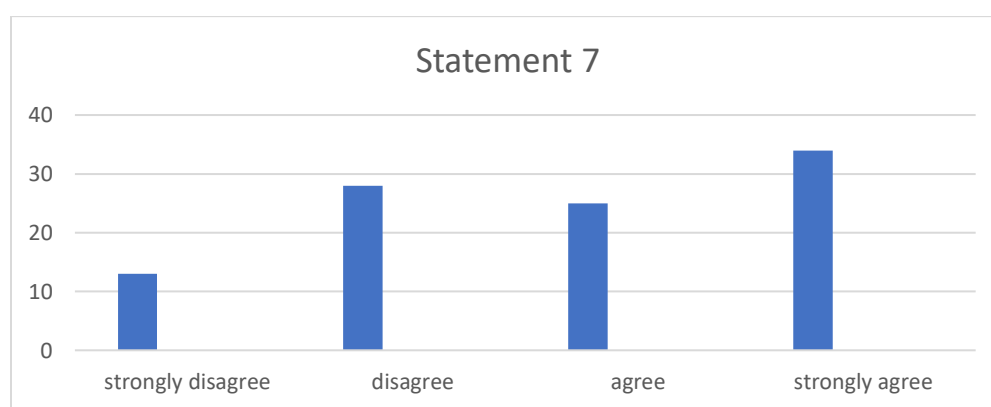
Graph 6 shows the students' responses regarding their willingness and ability to collaborate with classmates from different cultural backgrounds. The results indicate 41% of the students strongly agree, and 31% agree with the statement. It means that 72% of the participants show a positive attitude toward working collaboratively with classmates from other cultures, enjoying multicultural group activities.

However, the graph also shows that 25% of the students selected the option disagree, while 3% strongly disagree. This represents that a smaller portion of the group may feel insecure when interacting with classmates from other countries.

Overall, the results suggest that the majority of students demonstrate openness toward intercultural teamwork. Which is a positive indicator for the implementation of collaborative learning strategies. Nevertheless, the presence of some disagreement reinforces that using PBL in classes provide valuable opportunities for students to collaborate and share their cultural perspectives, while using English language to communicate.

Graph 7: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #7: I respect different accents or ways of speaking.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 7 presents students' responses regarding their attitudes toward different accents and ways of speaking, which is an important aspect of intercultural awareness and respect for cultural diversity. The results show that 34% of the students strongly agree and 25% agree with the statement. In total, 59% of the participants show a positive attitude toward respecting different accents and forms of expression and linguistic diversity.

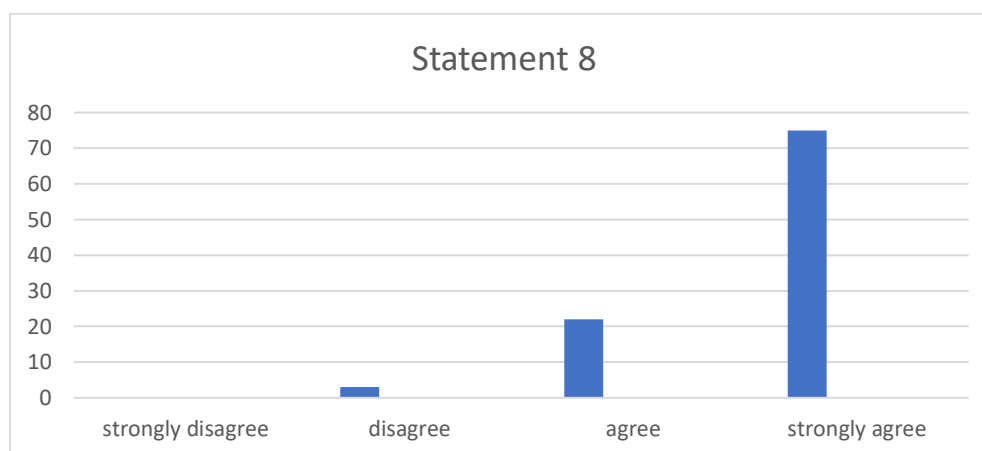
However, the graph also shows that 28% of the students selected the option disagree, while 13% strongly disagree. This 41% is a considerable number of students that have difficulty accepting and understanding linguistic differences among their classmates. This may be related

to social perceptions about accents or feelings of insecurity when speaking in front of others, especially in a classroom where students come from different countries.

Overall, the results reveal that there is a big need to strengthen intercultural understanding and empathy in the classroom. PBL applied in the class may help to develop greater respect for linguistic diversity while improving their confidence and communication skills in English.

Graph 8: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #8: I believe everyone deserves to be treated with respect, no matter where they come from.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

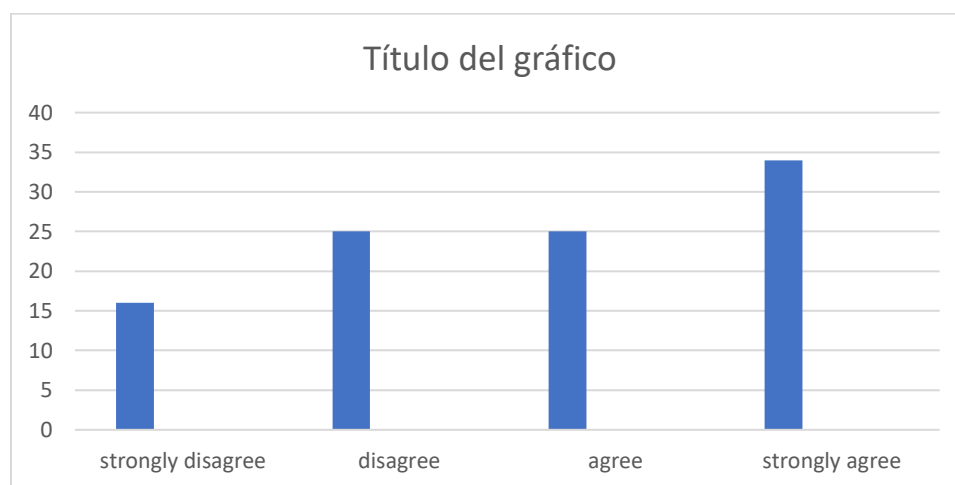
Graph 8 presents students' responses regarding their attitudes toward respect and equality among people from different backgrounds. The results show that 75% of the students strongly agree and 22% agree with the statement. This means that 97% of the participants demonstrate a strong positive attitude toward respecting people regardless of their origin, reflecting a high level of awareness about the importance of equality and respect in multicultural environments.

In contrast, 3% of the students selected the option disagree, while no students selected strongly disagree, suggesting that almost all students recognize the importance of treating other people with respect, regardless of cultural differences.

Overall, the results indicate that students have a strong understanding of the value of respect and inclusion in a culturally diverse classroom. This positive attitude provides a solid foundation for implementing PBL activities that promote intercultural awareness, collaboration, and respectful communication.

Graph 9: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #9: I am willing to learn about other cultures in the classroom.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

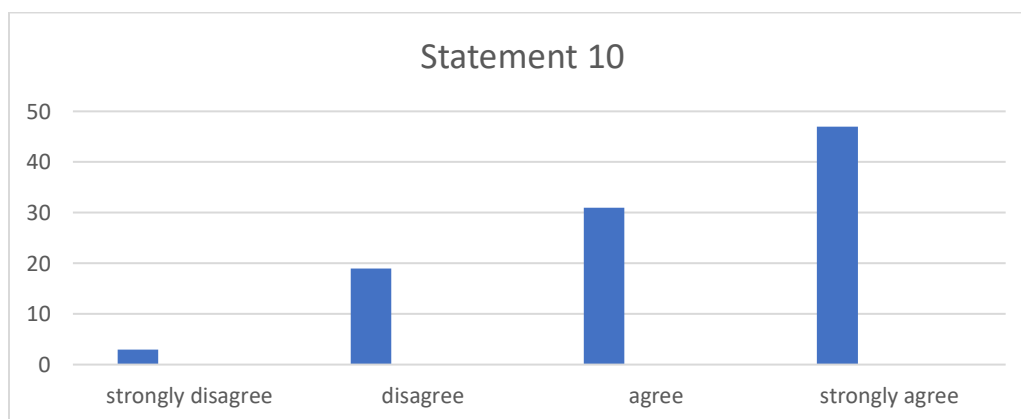
Graph 9 illustrates students' responses regarding their willingness to learn about other cultures during classroom activities. The results indicate that 34% of students strongly agree and 25% agree with the statement. This indicates that 59% of the participants show a positive disposition and interest toward learning about different cultures.

However, the graph also shows that 25% of the students selected disagree, while 16% strongly disagree, representing a 41% of the group, this is a considerable number of students that may not feel motivated when learning about other cultures in the classroom. This could be related to limited previous exposure to intercultural topics.

Overall, the results suggest that most students feel curious and interested in learning about cultural diversity. PBL implemented in the classroom allows students to explore cultural traditions, share experiences, and engage in meaningful discussions. This way, students can develop greater appreciation for cultural diversity while improving their English communication skills in authentic learning contexts.

Graph 10: Intercultural Awareness

Statement #10: I feel confident interacting with classmates who have different cultural backgrounds.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 10 presents students' responses regarding their confidence when interacting with classmates from different cultural backgrounds. The results show that 47% of students strongly agree and 31% agree with the statement. This means that 78% of the participants feel confident

communicating and interacting with peers from different cultures, indicating a positive level of intercultural interaction in the classroom.

On the other hand, 19% of the students selected the option disagree, while 3% strongly disagree. Those smaller percentages suggest that a few students may still feel uncomfortable when interacting with classmates from different cultural backgrounds, usually related to the fear of making mistakes when communicating with others in English language.

Overall, the results indicate that most students demonstrate confidence when interacting with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, once more, the presence of some disagreement highlights the importance of promoting classroom activities that encourage intercultural communication and collaboration. PBL is a great tool for students to work together, providing meaningful opportunities to share cultural experiences so that students feel more confident when communicating in English.

After analyzing the results presented in Graph 1 through 10, it is possible to observe that most students demonstrate a positive disposition toward intercultural awareness. Most of them showed agreement or strong agreement with statements related to empathy, respect, collaboration, and openness toward people from different cultural backgrounds. These findings suggest that students already possess an initial understanding of the value of cultural diversity and the importance of respectful interaction within the classroom, even though sometimes it is not evidenced. However, the presence of responses showing disagreement in several statements, indicates that intercultural awareness is still developing and requires continuous reinforcement through meaningful classroom experiences.

From the researcher's perspective, the application of this diagnostic instrument also provided valuable insights beyond the numerical results. During the process, it was evident that some students, particularly those from Nicaragua backgrounds, appeared shy or hesitant while answering certain statement related to culture, accents, and ways of speaking. A few students seemed uncomfortable when the topic of cultural identity was discussed, possibly because their accent is perceived as different by the Costa Rican classmates. This situation created moments in which some students avoided eye contact or responded quietly, which suggests that feelings of exposure or insecurity may still exist when discussing cultural differences openly in the classroom.

These observations reinforce the importance of creating safe and inclusive learning environments where students feel loved, respected, and confident sharing their cultural identities. Teachers should implement strategies that allow students to express themselves without fear for judgement. For this reason, the use of PBL activities based on intercultural themes becomes especially relevant. It is a way to help students gradually build confidence, learn to appreciate linguistic and cultural differences, and improve their ability to communicate more fluently in English in a supportive classroom community.

4.1.2 KWL Chart – Intercultural Awareness

- **K column of the KWL chart:**

The K column allowed students to express their previous knowledge and ideas related to what culture is, before the implementation of the PBL activities. The responses obtained from the participants showed a wide variety of concepts that reflect their personal observations and elements of their own social environment. Some of the answers provided included cultural

expressions such as “baile del diablito”, “rice and beans”, “gallo pinto”, “flags”, “traditions”, “food”, “religion”, “clothing”, “art”, and “New Year”. These responses show that several students relate culture with traditions, celebrations, national symbols, and typical foods, representing different communities. The examples given suggest that students are aware that cultural identity can be expressed through celebrations, gastronomy, and local customs.

Other responses such as “people from other countries”, “respect”, “love”, “citizens”, and “skin color” prove that some students understand culture as something connected to people, diversity, and social relationships. These answers reflect an emerging awareness that culture involves interaction between people from different backgrounds and that respect plays an important role in these relationships. From the researcher’s perspective, it is valuable because it indicates that some students are already beginning to connect cultural awareness with values such as empathy and respect for others.

On the other hand, it is necessary to analyze that some responses were less related to the concept of culture, some of these answers include “forests”, “plants”, “restaurants”, “games”, “provinces”, “landscapes”, “I don’t know”. These answers suggest that several students may have a limited or unclear understanding of what culture means, associating it with general aspects of the environment rather than with traditions, beliefs, or social practices. The answer “I don’t know” also indicates that a few students were unsure about the concept of culture, or had not previously reflected on it. These responses highlight the importance of providing structured learning opportunities that help students better understand the concept of intercultural awareness. Activities based on PBL can guide students to explore cultural traditions, values, and identities in a more meaningful way, helping them expand their understanding of culture beyond isolated elements and develop a deeper appreciation for diversity within their classroom community.

W column of the KWL chart:

The W column of the KWL chart allowed students to express what they were interested in learning about culture before beginning the PBL activities. The responses provided by the students reveal curiosity about intercultural aspects and showed that many of them were motivated to expand their knowledge about people and traditions from other countries. Some of them includes aspects such as food, language, celebrations, traditions, dances, and tamales, which suggests that students are interested in learning about the everyday practices and customs that represent different cultures. These responses reflect a natural curiosity about how culture is expressed through daily life.

Other responses describe topics such as famous people, how they live, studies, pueblos, and other countries, show that several students are not only curious about traditions, but also about the way people live, learn, and develop their lives in different cultural contexts. As a researcher, this is valuable because the answers demonstrate that students are willing to explore perspectives beyond their own environment and are opened to learn about the experiences of people from other parts of the world.

At the same time, responses given, such as animals and pueblos appear to be less related, showing that some students are curious and eager to learn, even if their understanding of culture is still developing. PBL projects will help students connect their interests with deeper cultural understanding.

- **L column of the KWL chart:**

The analysis of the column L (what I learned) shows a meaningful change in the way students internalized culture and diversity after participating in the project. Unlike the initial responses in

the K column, where many ideas were more general, the answers in this part of the chart reflect a deeper level of reflection and personal understanding. Students expressed their ideas based on respect, empathy, and the importance of values, such as: *“all cultures deserve respect,” “we should not judge others by their country of origin,”* and *“differences make people unique.”* These responses suggest that students moved beyond simply identifying cultural elements and internalized what intercultural awareness truly means.

It is also important to highlight how several students showed sensitivity toward global realities. Statements like *“some countries still face discrimination”* and *“not all people around the world have the same rights and freedom”* indicate that students are beginning to develop critical thinking and awareness of social issues. In addition, comments such as *“we are lucky because of our culture and freedom”* show an appreciation of their own context while recognizing that others live under different conditions. This reflects a more mature opinion and reflective perspective compared to the initial stage of the project.

Another interesting aspect is how students connected intercultural awareness with personal values. Responses like *“we are all valuable,” “being different is cool,”* and *“as part of our culture it is important to help others”* demonstrate that students are learning about intercultural awareness, and are also shaping attitudes that promote coexistence and respect.

From the researcher’s perspective, the answers given show that the project really had an impact beyond language learning, helping students build empathy and a stronger sense of identity. Overall, column L provides clear evidence that through the application of PBL students developed a more meaningful and human understanding of intercultural awareness.

An additional aspect worth to be included is that during the development of the PBL, three new students joined the class, all of them from Nicaragua. This situation became a valuable opportunity to observe how intercultural awareness was being applied in real life. Students showed a very positive and welcoming attitude, making a genuine effort to include the new classmates in activities and group work. As a result, the interaction and integration process was much smoother, allowing the new students to feel comfortable and accepted from the beginning. Unlike what had been observed at the start of the study. These kids did not show the same level of shyness or embarrassment when participating, which suggests that the classroom environment had become more inclusive, supportive, and respectful through the implementation of the PBL.

4.1.3 Instrument 3: Observation Checklist – English Language Fluency (Initial)

The purpose of this observation checklist was to examine student's English language fluency before the implementation of PBL activities. Through this instrument, the researcher observed specific aspects of students' oral communication during the project at La Trinidad de Moravia School. The checklist focused on identifying behaviors related to confidence when speaking, clarity of expression, and students' ability to communicate in English with fewer pauses. After the instrument was applied, the researcher was able to identify the group's initial level of fluency and participation. The information collected provided an important baseline for understanding students' performance prior to the implementation of the PBL intervention, and later comparing it with the results obtained after the project activities were applied.

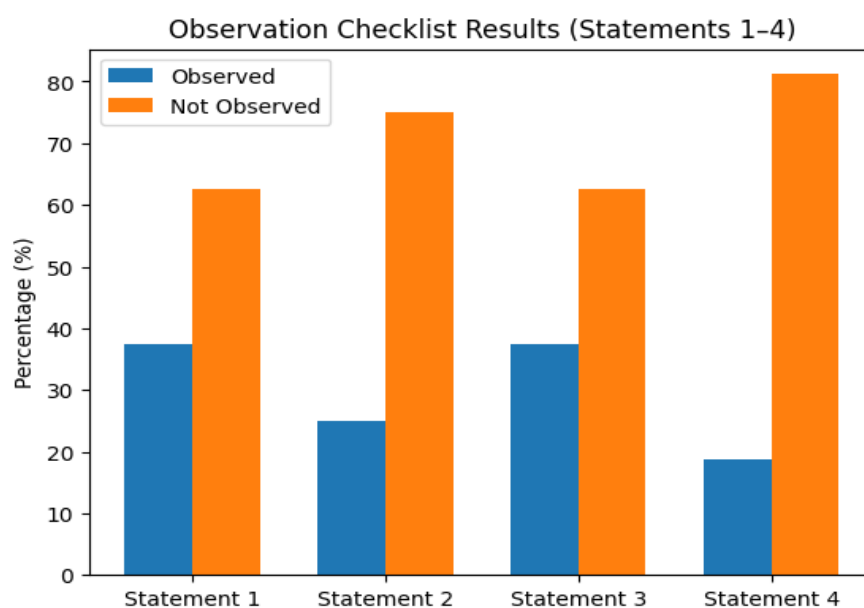
Graph 11: English Language Fluency (Initial)

Statement #1: Shows confidence when speaking English

Statement #2: Participates orally without fear of making mistakes

Statement #3: Is understood by peers without frequent clarification

Statement #4: Uses appropriate pronunciation and intonation



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 11 presents the results obtained from the first four statements of the observation checklist applied to evaluate students' English fluency before the implementation of PBL. The data collected shows that a considerable percentage of the expected behaviors related to fluency, were not frequently observed during the initial observation stage. For instance, in Statement 1 only 37,5 % of the students demonstrated the observed behavior, while 62,5% did not show it consistently during classroom interactions. It is similar in Statement 2, where 25% of students

demonstrated the behavior, while 75% did not. This shows that many students still struggle with participating confidently when speaking English.

In Statement 3, 37,5% of students demonstrated the expected behavior, while 62,5% did not, indicating that several students experienced difficulty expressing themselves naturally when communicating in the classroom. Statement 4 shows the lowest percentage of observed behavior, where only 18,8% of the students demonstrated the behavior, while 81,2% did not. The results show that many students had difficulty maintaining fluency when speaking English, often showing hesitation and limited participation during the activities.

From the researcher's perspective, these results reflect the classroom dynamics observed at La Trinidad Primary School, students often show interest in participating but may feel insecure when speaking English especially when speaking in front of their classmates. These findings confirm the need to implement strategies such as PBL to encourage students to use English more confidently and naturally in the classroom.

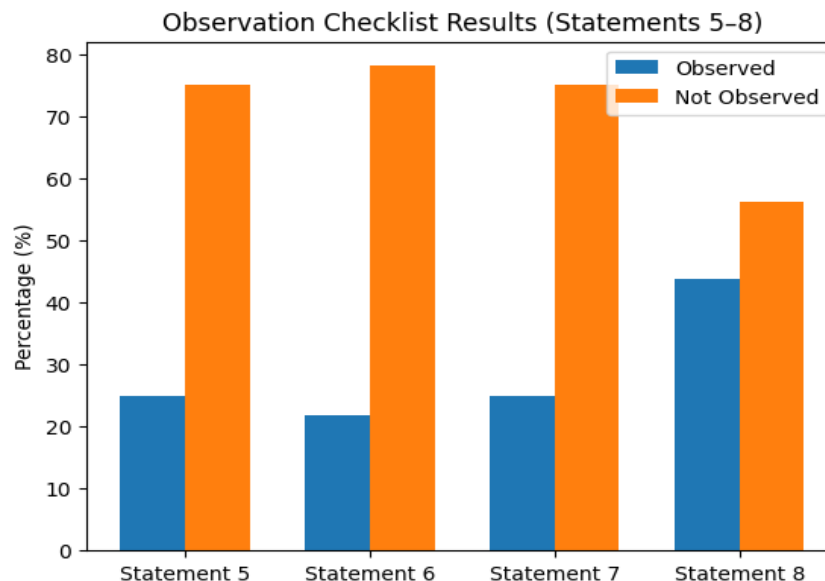
Graph 12: English Language Fluency (Initial)

Statement #5: Speaks with few pauses

Statement #6: Uses English naturally during activities

Statement #7: Maintains the flow of communication

Statement #8: Uses basic vocabulary appropriately



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 12 presents the results obtained from statements 5 to 8 of the observation checklist used to observe students' English fluency before the implementation of PBL. The data indicate that several of the behaviors associated with fluent oral communication were not consistently observed among the students. In Statement 5, only 25% of the students demonstrated the expected behavior while 75% did not, suggesting that many students experienced difficulty participating actively in English.

In Statement 6, 21,9% of the students demonstrated the behavior, while 78,1% did not, indicating that a large portion of the group still showed hesitation when communicating in English. Statement 7 reflects that 25% of students demonstrated the behavior, while 75% did not. This means that students were not yet using the language naturally during interaction with their classmates.

Statement 8 has a more positive result. In this case, 43,8%of students demonstrated the observed behavior, while 56,2% did not, indicating that a large number of students showed some willingness to communicate in English.

From the researcher's perspective, these results highlight that while students demonstrate interest in learning English, their fluency and confidence when speaking are still limited. These findings reinforce the importance of PBL activities, which can provide more meaningful opportunities for students to practice English through collaborative work and authentic communication in the classroom. At La Trinidad Primary School, where students are exposed to English only a few times per week and often have limited opportunities to practice speaking in meaningful contexts, during the observation process, it was noticeable that several students were interested in participating but felt unsure about their pronunciation or afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates.

4.1.4 Instrument 4 (Post-Observation Checklist): English Language Fluency

The purpose of this observation checklist was to evaluate students' improvement in English Language fluency after the implementation of PBL activities. Through this instrument, the researcher observed specific aspects of student's oral performance during classroom interactions at La Trinidad Primary School. The checklist identifies changes in students' confidence when speaking, their ability to express ideas among others, the use of English with fewer pauses, and participation in communicative activities. By recording the observed and not observed behaviors it was possible to determine the impact of PBL activities on students' fluency development and to compare these results with the initial diagnostic observation.

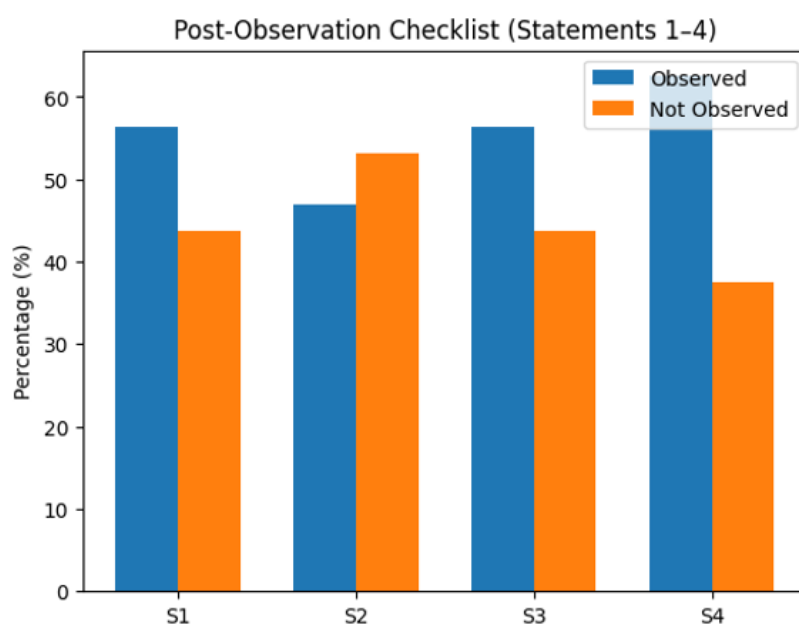
Graph 13: English Language Fluency (Post Observation)

Statement #1: Speaks English with increased confidence

Statement #2: Expresses ideas clearly with little effort

Statement #3: Is understood easily by classmates

Statement #4: Uses English with fewer pauses



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 13 shows the results after the implementation of Project-Based Learning activities. The results indicate a clear improvement compared to the initial observation. In statement 1, 56.25 % of the students were observed speaking with increased confidence, while 43.75 % still showed some difficulty. This suggests that more than half of the group became more comfortable using English in the classroom.

In statement 2, 46.9 % of the students expressed their ideas clearly with little effort, while 53.1 % still faced some challenges, indicating that although progress was made, this is an area that requires further reinforcement. Statement 3 shows that 56.25 % of students were understood easily by their classmates, and statement 4 62.5 % of students were able to use English with fewer pauses. Reflecting noticeable progress in fluency and communication.

From the researcher's perspective, the results show that sixth graders from La Trinidad de Moravia School responded positively to the PBL activities. During the project, students seemed more willing to participate and gradually became more confident when speaking English, especially when working in group and discussing meaningful topics. Students demonstrated interest and were motivated to participate and interact with peers.

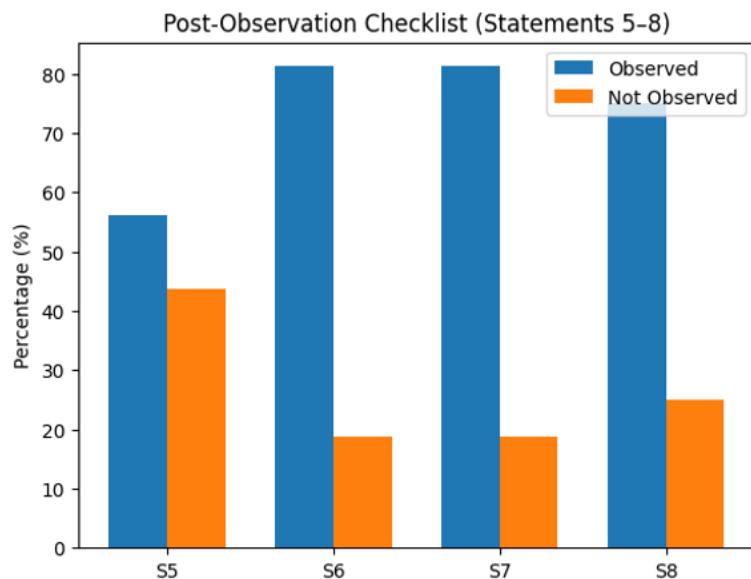
Graph 14: English Language Fluency (Post Observation)

Statement #5: Shows natural use of language in interaction

Statement #6: Participates actively in oral activities

Statement #7: Uses vocabulary related to project topics

Statement #8: Maintains communicative Flow



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 14 presents the results related to student's natural use of language, participation, vocabulary use, and communicative flow after applying PBL. The results show a significant improvement in these areas. In statement 5, 56.25 % of students demonstrated natural use of language when interacting, while 43.75 % still showed some limitations, indication progress, but also room for growth.

Statements 6 and 7 present the highest percentages of improvement. In both cases, 81.25% of students were observed participating actively and using vocabulary related to project topics, while only 18.75 % did not demonstrate consistently these behaviors. This shows that students felt more comfortable and motivated engaging in activities and using English meaningfully when working on the projects.

Finally, statement 8 shows that 75 % of students maintained communicative flow, while 25 % still experienced some interruptions when speaking. Overall, these results reflect a positive development in students' fluency.

From the researcher's point of view, this improvement was clearly visible in the classroom. Students became more engaged, interacted more naturally, and showed greater confidence when speaking English. Activities based on PBL created a supportive environment where students felt less afraid of making mistakes and more willing to express their ideas.

The comparison between the initial and post-observation results shows how students at the beginning hesitated and had limited participation; after the intervention, a greater number of students were observed speaking with more confidence, participating actively, and using English more naturally during the activities.

This change was also noticeable in the classroom environment, as students felt more motivated to interact with peers and express their ideas. Although some difficulties remain, the overall results suggest that Project-Based Learning contributed positively to the development of students' fluency by providing more meaningful and supportive opportunities to use English. The experience reaffirms that when language learning is connected to culture and real experiences, students not only learn to communicate, but also begin to understand, respect, and value others; every student has a story worth telling, and when they feel heard, respected, and confident, language becomes a bridge between cultures.

4.1.5 Post-Test: Intercultural Awareness Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire was to evaluate the development of student's intercultural awareness after the implementation of the Project Based Learning activities. This instrument was applied to sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia Primary School in order to measure changes in their ability to understand cultural differences, respect others, and interact with classmates from diverse cultural backgrounds. The information collected through this post-test

allowed the researcher to compare the results with the initial diagnostic and determine the impact of the PBL intervention on students' intercultural awareness.

Graph 15: Intercultural Awareness (Post Test)

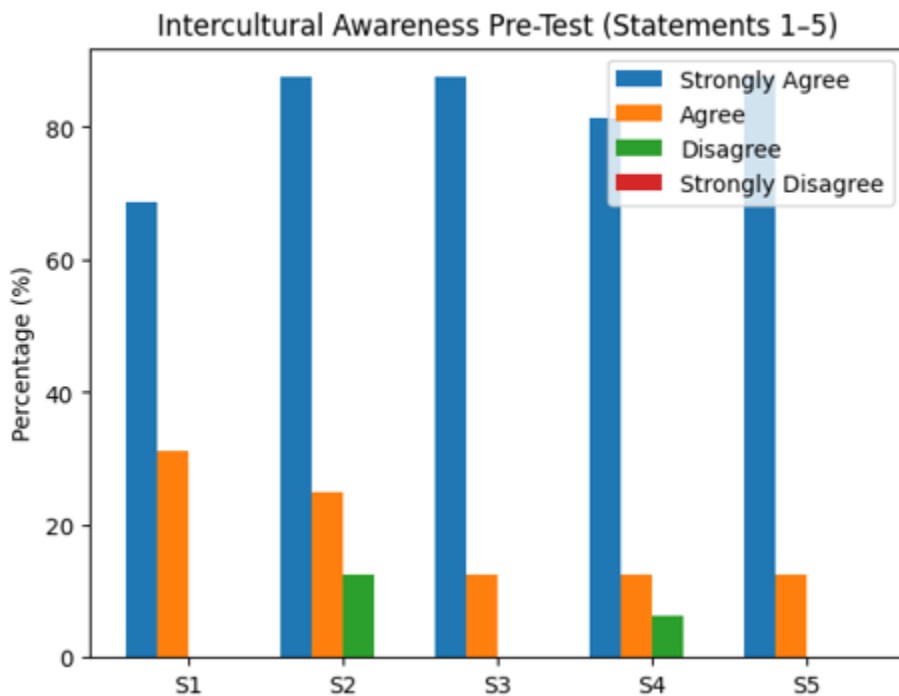
Statement #1: I understand that people from different cultures may think or act differently from me.

Statement #2: I believe that cultural differences make people interesting and valuable.

Statement #3: I respect classmates even if their traditions or customs are different from mine.

Statement #4: I feel comfortable listening to opinions from classmates with different cultural backgrounds.

Statement #5: I try to understand why people behave differently instead of judging them.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

In Graph 15, the results of the first five statements show a very positive tendency in students' perceptions related to intercultural awareness, even before the implementation of the PBL. In statement 1, 68.75 % of the students strongly agree and 31.25 % agree, showing that they understand cultural differences better than before. This means, that after the project, many students have some awareness of diversity in the environment.

In statement 2, most students showed a positive attitude 87.5 % strongly agree and 25 % agree. A small percentage of 12.5 % disagree. This shows that it is an aspect that can be strengthened through more meaningful activities. Statement 3 shows one of the strongest results, 87.5 % strongly agree and 12.5 % agree. Students recognize and respect traditions and opinions, which is a key component of intercultural awareness.

In statement 4, most students reported feeling comfortable sharing ideas with classmates from different cultures, 81.25 % strongly agree and 12.5 %. A small group of 6.25 % still felt discomfort due to insecurity when interacting with others. But in general, the classroom felt very positive. Finally, statement 5 shows that 87.5 % strongly agree and 12.5 % agree and they try to understand others before judging them, which is a strong base of empathy among the group to promote intercultural awareness.

From the researcher's point of view, these results show that students now have a foundation of respect and openness toward cultural diversity. Strategies such as using PBL in the class, will help to reinforce positive attitudes and turn them into more consistent behaviors in the classroom.

Graph 16: Intercultural Awareness (Post Test)

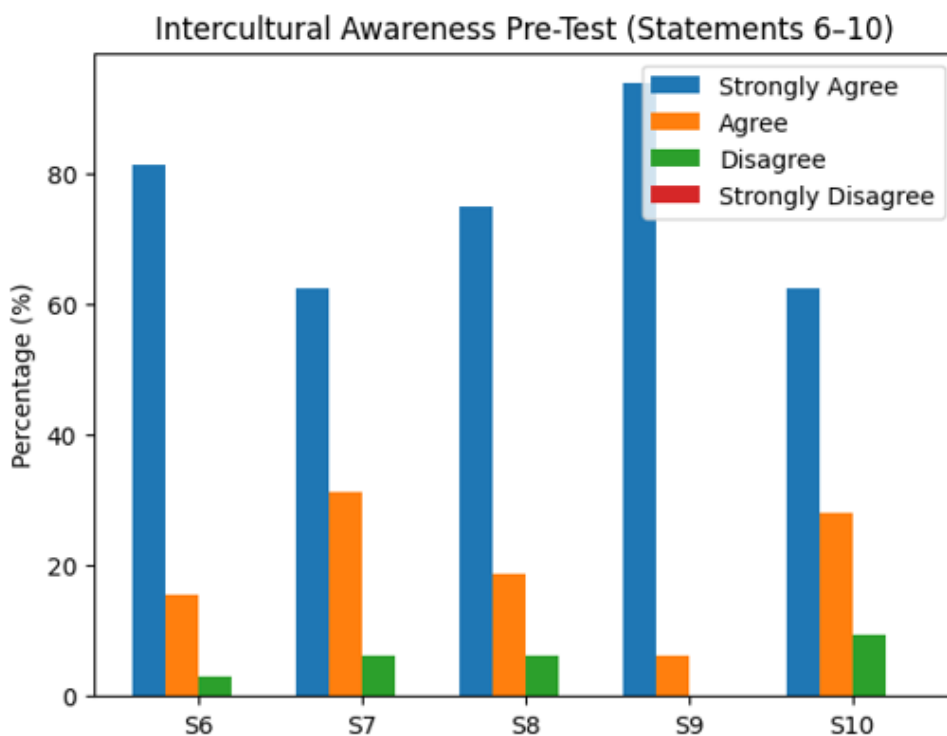
Statement #6: I can work in a group with classmates from other countries or cultures.

Statement #7: I respect different accents or ways of speaking.

Statement #8: I believe everyone deserves to be treated with respect, no matter where they come from.

Statement #9: I am willing to learn about other cultures in my classroom.

Statement #10: I feel confident interacting with classmates who have different cultural backgrounds



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 16 shows a very positive attitude toward intercultural interaction among students. In statement 6, 81.25 % strongly agree and 15.62 agree indicating that they can collaborate easily with classmates from different cultural backgrounds, which reflects a great level of teamwork. On the other hand, 3.13% disagree suggesting that one student still struggles with it. In statement 7, the results are more varied. In total, 62.5 % strongly agree and 31.25 % agree that they respect different accents and ways of speaking. A small group of 6.25 % disagree showing some difficulty in fully accepting linguistic differences, especially in a multicultural classroom like La Trinidad de Moravia Primary School, where accents are part of students' identity.

Statement 8 shows that most students treat their classmates with respect regardless of their cultural background, 75 % strongly agree and 18.75 % agree. However, 6.25 % disagree, which suggests that respect is present but not yet consistent in all interactions. Statement 9 presents one of the strongest results where 93.75 %strongly agree and 6.25 % agree. This represents that students enjoy learning about other cultures, showing a high level of interest and motivation toward intercultural topics.

Finally, Statement 10 reflects that 62.5 % strongly agree and 28.12 agree that they feel confident interacting with people from different cultures. Also, 9.38 % disagree, indicating that some students may feel insecure in these situations.

From the researcher's perspective, these results show that students have a very positive attitude toward intercultural awareness, but some areas, such as confidence and full acceptance of differences can be strengthen through meaningful classroom experiences using Project-Based Learning.

4.1.6: Likert Scale Questionnaire - For 6th Grade Students:

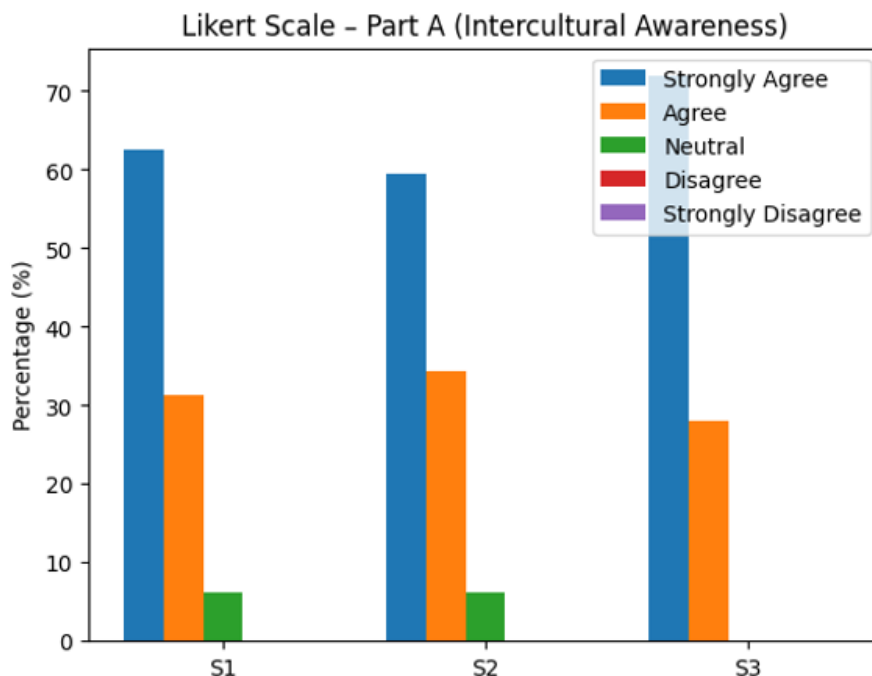
The purpose of this Likert Scale Questionnaire was to evaluate students' perceptions of the PBL experience after its implementation in the classroom. This instrument was applied to sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School to gather information about how PBL influenced their cultural awareness, English language fluency, and overall learning experience. The statements were organized into three sections: intercultural awareness, fluency, and PBL as a learning strategy. This helped the researcher to collect data and understand students' attitudes, motivation, and level of engagement with the activities carried out throughout the intervention.

Graph 17: A. PBL and Intercultural Awareness

Statement #1: The project helped me understand classmates' opinions different from mine.

Statement #2: The activities helped me appreciate cultural diversity in my classroom.

Statement #3: I interact respectfully with others when working on projects with others.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

The results obtained from Part A of the Likert Scale show a very positive perception of the PBL activities in relation to intercultural awareness. In statement 1, 62.5 % strongly agree and 31.25 % agree. This means that most students expressed that the project helped them understand their classmates' opinions in a better way. Only 6.25 % selected neutral, meaning that almost all students perceived a benefit in this area.

In statement 2, 59.37 % strongly agree and 34.38 % agree, indicating that the activities helped them appreciate cultural diversity in the classroom. Only 6.25 % selected neutral, but there were no negative responses, reflecting a positive attitude toward diversity. In statement 3, the results are even stronger, 71.87 % strongly agree and 28.13 % agree, meaning that students interacted respectfully with others during the project. The absence of negative responses suggests that students understood and showed respect while doing the project.

From the researcher's perspective, the results show that PBL activities created a positive and inclusive classroom environment where students were able to understand, appreciate, and interact respectfully with peers. It proves that intercultural awareness was discussed and actively experienced during the project, making learning more meaningful for the students.

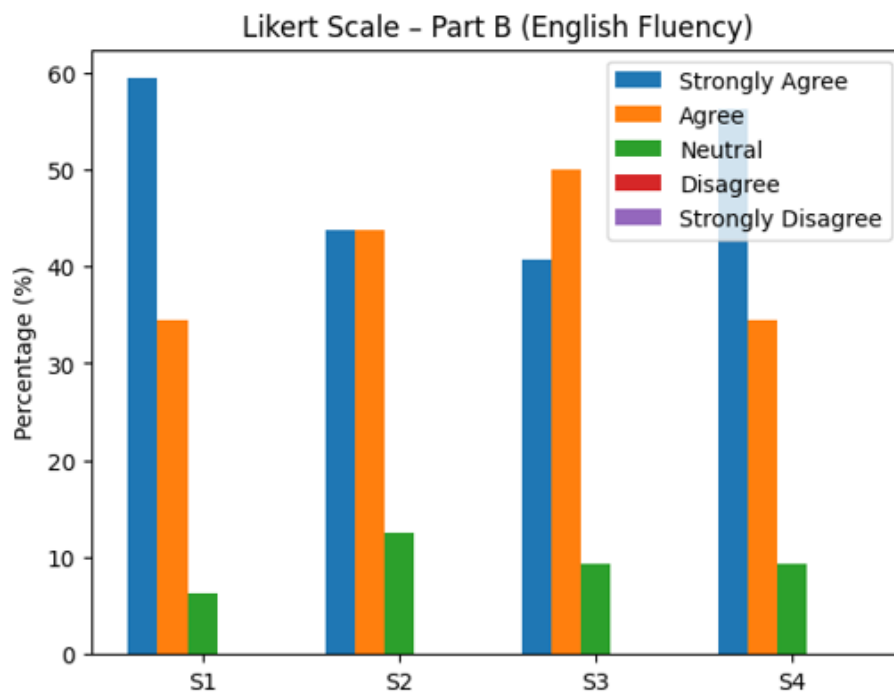
Graph 18: B. PBL and English Language Fluency

Statement #1: I felt more confident speaking English during the project.

Statement #2: I used English naturally while working with my group.

Statement #3: I spoke English with fewer pauses than before.

Statement #4: I was able to express my ideas in English.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 18 shows the results from Part B of the Likert Scale. Students perceived improvement in their English language fluency after participating in the project. In statement 1, 59.37 % strongly agree and 34.38 % agree, expressing that they felt more confident speaking English during the project. Only 6.25 % were neutral, but the majority experienced increased confidence when communicating. In statement 2, responses are more balanced. Both 43.75 % strongly agree and 43.75% agree indicating that they used English naturally while working in groups. Also 12.5 % selected, showing that some students are still in the process of developing more natural communication.

In statement 3, 40.62 % strongly agree and 50% agree that they spoke English with fewer pauses. A 9.38 % selected neutral. This suggests that students noticed improvement in their fluency, but not all of them felt completely confident yet, which is an area of improvement. Finally, in statement 4, 56.25 % strongly agree and 34.37% agree that they were able to express their ideas in English. Also 9.38% selected neutral. This means that fluency development is still a gradual process and activities like PBL become essential to strengthen these skills.

From the researcher's perspective could improve English fluency, particularly in their confidence and willingness to communicate. It was noticeable during the project that students became more active and less afraid of making mistakes, especially when working in groups. Some of them need more time and practice to feel completely comfortable using English. PBL helps students develop consistent exposure and meaningful interaction.

Graph 19: C. PBL as a Learning Strategy

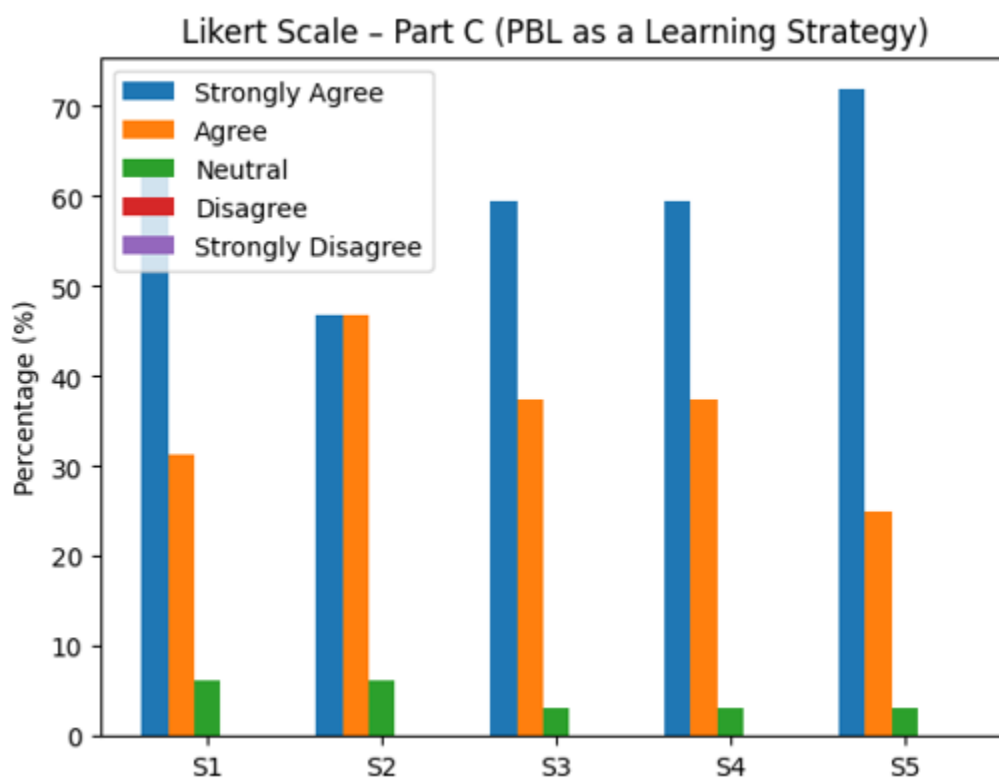
Statement #1: I enjoyed learning English through projects.

Statement #2: Projects helped me learn better than traditional lessons.

Statement #3: I felt motivated to participate during the project activities.

Statement #4: Working in groups helped me learn from others.

Statement #5: I would like to learn English using projects again.



Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026)

Graph 19 shows the results from Part C of the Likert Scale related to PBL as a learning strategy. In statement 1, most students expressed that they enjoyed learning English through projects, 62.5% strongly agree and 31.25% agree. Only 6.25 % selected neutral. This suggests that the majority of students found the activities engaging and meaningful. In statement 2, the responses are balanced, 46.87 % strongly agree and 46.87 agree, indicating that students recognized the value of learning through projects, even if some are still adjusting to this type of methodology.

In statement 3, as in statement 4, responses show the same results, 59.37 % strongly agree and 37.5 % agree; only 3.13 % disagree showing that students felt motivated to participate and recognized the importance of working in groups. Most students had a positive experience collaborating with others. To conclude, statement 5, shows that 71.87 % strongly agree, and 25% agree that students would like to learn English using projects again. This clearly reflects students' preference for this type of learning approach.

From the researcher's perspective, these results show that Project-Based learning was well received by the students and contributed to a more dynamic and motivating classroom environment. Students enjoyed the activities and recognized their value for learning. Overall, PBL proved to be a very effective and meaningful strategy for promoting learning and participation in the classroom.

This project demonstrates that meaningful learning happens when students feel safe, valued, and motivated to participate. When students find their voice, they don't just learn a language, they learn to belong to respect, and to connect with the world around them.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the main conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the study “The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, First Quarter 2026.”

The conclusions are based on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the different instruments applied during the intervention. These results provide a clear understanding of how students experienced the project and how their learning process improved in terms of both language fluency and intercultural awareness.

In addition, this chapter offers practical recommendations aimed at improving teaching practices in similar educational contexts. These suggestions are based on the findings of the research and are intended to guide teachers in the effective implementation of Project-Based Learning activities as a structures and meaningful approach to English language teaching. The reflections highlight the importance of creating organized, inclusive, and motivating learning environments where students feel confident to participate and where cultural diversity is valued as an essential part of the educational process.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the main objective of this research, which aimed to determine the effectiveness of PBL to promote intercultural awareness and English language fluency in sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School, it can be concluded that the implementation of PBL had a significant and positive impact on students’ learning. The results obtained through the different

instruments demonstrate that students really improved their ability to communicate in English and also developed a deeper understanding and respect for cultural diversity. This confirms what Thomas (2000) states about PBL as an approach that promotes meaningful learning through real-life contexts, allowing students to use language in authentic and purposeful ways.

Regarding the first specific objective, which focused on implementing PBL activities based on intercultural themes, it was evident that students showed high levels of motivation and interest throughout the project. The activities allowed them to connect learning with their own experiences, making the process more engaging. Students worked in an organized environment where collaboration was essential, supporting each other and sharing ideas. This aligns with Beckett and Slater (2020), who highlight that PBL fosters motivation by giving students a sense of ownership and relevance in their learning process.

In relation to the second specific objective, which intended to analyze the development of intercultural awareness, the findings show that students became more respectful, empathetic, and open-minded toward their classmates' cultural backgrounds. They demonstrated the ability to understand differences, value diversity, and interact positively with others. These results are consistent with Byram's (1997) concept of intercultural communicative competence and Deardorff's (2006) model, which emphasize respect, curiosity, and empathy as key elements for effective interaction in multicultural environments. The project helped students see cultural diversity as an opportunity to learn from one another.

In relation to the third specific objective, focused on improving English language fluency, students showed noticeable progress in their confidence when speaking even though they are not bilingual, their ability to be understood, and to be less afraid of speaking English. They also improved their capacity to communicate with fewer pauses. The classroom became a space

where English was used naturally, rather than through memorization. As Richards (2006) explains, fluency involves the ability to communicate smoothly and confidently, even if mistakes are present. Through PBL, students used English as a real communication tool, which contributed to their oral development in a more dynamic and meaningful way.

Additionally, it is important to mention that students felt genuinely motivated and interested in the project. They supported and guided each other during the activities, creating a positive and collaborative learning environment.

The researcher also played an important role in bringing the topic “down to earth,” presenting it as something natural, close to students’ realities, and easy to relate to. This helped reduce fear and increased participation, especially in a culturally diverse classroom where some foreign students initially felt shy or insecure.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, several recommendations can be proposed for future practice and research. First, it is important that teachers receive proper guidance and training on what Project-Based Learning truly involves. PBL is not an improvised strategy; it requires careful planning, clear objectives, structured activities, and continuous organization. As highlighted by Thomas (2000), effective PBL must be intentionally designed to ensure meaningful learning outcomes. Therefore, teachers should be prepared to understand its principles before implementing it in the classroom.

Second, it is necessary that teachers clearly explain to students what PBL is and how it works before starting any project. When students understand the purpose and expectations, they feel more confident and engaged in the process. Providing clear instructions and modeling tasks

can help students adapt more easily to this methodology, especially in public school contexts where traditional teaching methods are more common.

Another important recommendation is to continue promoting intercultural awareness as a central element in English language teaching. As Byram (1997) and Deardorff (2006) suggest, language learning should always be connected to cultural understanding. Teachers should create opportunities for students to share their own experiences, traditions, and perspectives, transforming diversity into a strength rather than a challenge.

Then, it is also recommended to maintain a supportive and organized classroom environment where students feel safe to participate, make mistakes, and express themselves freely. This type of environment is essential for developing both fluency and confidence. Teachers should encourage collaboration, peer support, and respectful interaction, as these elements were key to the success of this project.

Finally, future research could explore the long-term impact of PBL on students' language development and intercultural competence, as well as its application in other educational levels or contexts. This study demonstrates that when teaching strategies are meaningful, well-structured, and connected to students' realities, learning becomes a transformative experience.

Chapter VI
The Proposal

6.1 Name of Proposal

The title of the current proposal is “*Voices Across Cultures: Learning English Through Project-Based Intercultural Experiences.*”

6.2 Description

This pedagogical proposal, *Voices Across Cultures: Learning English Through Project-Based Intercultural Experiences*, is designed to promote intercultural awareness and English language fluency among sixth-grade students through the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL). The proposal is grounded in the belief that language learning becomes more meaningful when students use English as a tool for communication, collaboration, and cultural expression rather than as an isolated academic subject.

The proposal integrates intercultural themes into structured projects that encourage students to explore their own cultural identities, learn about their classmates’ backgrounds, and interact respectfully in English. Through collaborative tasks, presentations, discussions, and reflective activities, students are provided with opportunities to develop confidence when speaking, reduce hesitation, and communicate more naturally in English. This proposal responds to the specific needs of a culturally diverse public-school context, where limited instructional time and scarce resources require innovative, student-centered teaching approaches.

6.3 Place to be Developed

The proposal is meant to be carried out at La Trinidad de Moravia School, a public primary school located in the district of La Trinidad, canton of Moravia, province of San José, Costa Rica. The project will be developed with sixth-grade students during their regular English lessons in the first quarter of the academic year; however, this proposal can be applied in any educational establishments such as public or private schools.

6.4 Organization

La Trinidad de Moravia School is a public educational institution governed by the Ministry of Public Education (MEP). The school serves a community characterized by economic challenges and a growing population of immigrant families from countries such as Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela. As a result, classrooms are culturally diverse, with students bringing different traditions, accents, and life experiences.

The school operates with limited material and technological resources, which poses challenges for English language instruction. However, the institution benefits from committed educators and a strong sense of community. These characteristics make La Trinidad de Moravia School an appropriate setting for implementing a PBL-based proposal that values diversity as a learning resource and promotes inclusion, empathy, and collaboration.

6.5 Involved Population

The target population of this proposal involves students from 6th grade. The group includes students from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, with varying levels of English language proficiency. It also involves the English teacher, who acts as facilitator and

guide throughout the project, and benefits the school community by fostering a more inclusive and respectful classroom environment.

6.6 Objectives of the Proposal

6.6.1 General Objective

To promote intercultural awareness and improve English language fluency among sixth-grade students at La Trinidad de Moravia School through the implementation of Project-Based Learning activities in 2026.

6.6.2 Specific Objectives

- To encourage students to understand, respect, and value cultural diversity through collaborative intercultural projects.
- To strengthen students' English-speaking fluency by fostering confidence, natural language use, and effective communication.
- To create meaningful learning experiences that motivate students to use English as a tool for interaction and cultural expression.

6.7 Chronogram of Activities

The following set of activities has been designed to promote the development of intercultural awareness and improve English language fluency among sixth-grade students at La

Trinidad de Moravia School, based on the findings and needs identified throughout this research. The activities are flexible and may be adapted according to the characteristics, interests, and learning pace of each group. The chronogram presented below outlines the progressive implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) activities that integrate intercultural themes, collaborative work, and authentic use of English. Throughout the proposal, students are encouraged to work in pairs and small groups to explore cultural topics, share personal experiences, and communicate meaningfully in English. This allows learners to build confidence, reduce hesitation when speaking, and develop respect and appreciation for cultural diversity while actively engaging in the learning process.

Table 4

Chronogram of Activities

Session	Activity	Description
1	Observational Assessment Introduction to the Project Pre-test Application	During the first week, an initial observational assessment is conducted to gather general information about the students' English fluency and participation. The teacher introduces the project, explains what intercultural awareness means, and discusses the importance of respecting cultural differences. Afterwards, the intercultural awareness pre-test is applied to identify students' initial understanding, attitudes, and interaction skills. Simple icebreaker

		<p>activities are used to create a safe and friendly learning environment.</p> <p>This week students participate in guided discussions about culture, traditions, and diversity using simple English. The teacher encourages students to share personal experiences and cultural aspects from their families.</p>
2	<p>Introduction to Culture and Diversity</p> <p>Group Formation</p>	<p>Students are organized into small groups for the project, ensuring diversity within each group.</p> <p>Vocabulary related to culture and respect is introduced through games and visuals.</p> <p>Students begin researching cultural topics related to their group project, such as traditions, celebrations, food, or daily life. The teacher supports students by providing printed materials and guiding questions. The KWL chart is completed in the “What I Know” and “What I Want to Learn” sections to activate prior knowledge and set learning goals. English is used in a supportive and guided manner during activities.</p>
3	<p>Research on Cultural Topics</p> <p>KWL Chart (K & W)</p>	

4	Project Development Collaborative Work	<p>During this week, students work collaboratively to develop their projects. Activities include creating posters, short written texts, drawings, or visual aids. The teacher focuses on encouraging oral participation, helping students use English naturally while working in groups. Emphasis is placed on confidence, cooperation, and respectful interaction.</p>
5	Oral Practice and Rehearsals	<p>Students practice presenting their projects orally. The teacher models pronunciation and provides positive feedback to help students reduce pauses and speak more fluently. Peer feedback activities are included to promote respect and support. The focus is on being understood and communicating ideas clearly rather than on grammatical perfection.</p>
6	Project Presentations Intercultural Exchange	<p>Students present their projects to the class. Each group shares cultural information and personal reflections using English. The teacher observes students' fluency, confidence, and interaction using the observation checklist. Class discussions are held after each presentation to encourage</p>

		questions, comparisons, and appreciation of cultural diversity.
		In the final week, students complete reflection activities, including the KWL chart (“What I Learned”) and an open-ended reflection questionnaire.
7	Reflection and Evaluation	
		The intercultural awareness post-test and final observation checklist are applied to evaluate progress. The project is closed with a group discussion where students share what they learned about English and cultural diversity.
	Post-tests Application	

Source: Developed by Natalia Castillo Jiménez (2026).

6.8 Budget for its Implementation

This proposal is designed specifically for a public primary school context like La Trinidad de Moravia School, where resources are limited. Most activities rely on existing school materials, student creativity, and collaborative work rather than expensive technological tools. Therefore, the budget required is low-cost and feasible, making the proposal sustainable and easy to replicate in similar institutions. The materials required focus on **basic classroom supplies** that support Project-Based Learning and intercultural activities such as printed worksheets, construction paper, markers, glue and scissors, printed images, etc.

6.9 Suggested Bibliography

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Annexes

Annex 1

Natalia Castillo

This initial diagnostic questionnaire aims to examine sixth-grade students' baseline level of intercultural awareness prior to the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) activities at La Trinidad de Moravia School. The instrument focuses on identifying students' ability to understand cultural differences, respect others, and interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds. By collecting this data, the researcher is able to identify students' initial attitudes, perceptions, and interaction patterns related to cultural diversity. The results obtained from this pre-test provide essential information to understand existing strengths and challenges within the group and serve as a reference point for later comparison after the pedagogical intervention.

Instrument 1: (Pre-test) Initial Diagnostic Questionnaire

Topic: Intercultural Awareness

Type: Closed questions

Purpose: To identify students' initial level of intercultural awareness before implementing PBL activities.

Instructions for students:

Read each statement carefully and choose the option that best represents what you think or feel.

Areas Evaluated:

- Ability to understand cultural differences
- Ability to respect others
- Ability to interact with people from different cultures

Initial Diagnostic – Intercultural Awareness (Pre-Test)

Scale:			
1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	Score:
1	I understand that people from different cultures may think or act differently from me.	
2	I believe that cultural differences make people interesting and valuable.	
3	I respect classmates even if their traditions or customs are different from mine.	
4	I feel comfortable listening to opinions from classmates with different cultural backgrounds.	
5	I try to understand why people behave differently instead of judging them.	
6	I can work in a group with classmates from other countries or cultures.	
7	I respect different accents or ways of speaking.	
8	I believe everyone deserves to be treated with respect, no matter where they come from.	
9	I am willing to learn about other cultures in my classroom.	
10	I feel confident interacting with classmates who have different cultural backgrounds	

Additional Comments:

Annex 2

Natalia Castillo

This post-test questionnaire is designed to measure changes in students' intercultural awareness after participating in Project-Based Learning activities focused on intercultural themes. The instrument evaluates students' progress in understanding cultural differences, respecting others, and interacting confidently with classmates from different cultural backgrounds. By comparing the results of this post-test with those of the initial diagnostic questionnaire, the researcher can determine the extent to which the PBL intervention influenced students' attitudes and perceptions. The collected data allows for the identification of growth in intercultural awareness and provides evidence of the effectiveness of the instructional approach implemented during the project

Instrument 2: (Post-Test): Intercultural Awareness Questionnaire**Topic:** Intercultural Awareness**Type:** Closed questions**Purpose:** To measure changes in students' intercultural awareness after the PBL intervention.**Instructions for students:**

Read each statement carefully and choose the option that best represents what you think or feel.

Areas Evaluated:

- Ability to understand cultural differences
- Ability to respect others
- Ability to interact with people from different cultures

Initial Diagnostic – Intercultural Awareness (Pre-Test)

Scale:			
1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	Score:
1	I understand cultural differences better than before.	
2	I value cultural diversity in my classroom.	
3	I respect classmates' traditions and opinions more than before.	
4	I feel more comfortable sharing ideas with classmates from different cultures.	
5	I try to understand others' perspectives before judging them.	
6	I can collaborate easily with classmates from different cultural backgrounds.	
7	I respect different accents and ways of speaking English.	
8	I treat my classmates with respect regardless of their cultural background.	
9	I enjoy learning about other cultures through projects.	
10	I feel confident interacting with people from different cultures.	

Additional Comments:

Annex 3

Natalia Castillo

This observation checklist aims to examine students' English language fluency in authentic classroom situations prior to the implementation of the Project-Based Learning intervention. The instrument focuses on students' confidence when speaking, their ability to be understood without excessive effort, and their use of English with few pauses and natural flow. Additionally, it allows the researcher to observe participation patterns, oral interaction, and students' willingness to communicate in English. The information gathered through this initial observation helps identify key difficulties and strengths related to oral fluency and establishes a baseline for evaluating improvement after the intervention.

Instrument 3: Observation Checklist – English Language Fluency (Initial)

Purpose: To observe students' English fluency before the PBL implementation.

Evaluator: Teacher/Researcher

Criteria Evaluated

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
1. Shows confidence when speaking English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Participates orally without fear of making mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Is understood by peers without frequent clarification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Uses appropriate pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Speaks with few pauses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
6. Uses English naturally during activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Maintains the flow of communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Uses basic vocabulary appropriately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Additional Comments:

Annex 4

Natalia Castillo

This post-observation checklist is used to evaluate improvements in students' English language fluency after completing the Project-Based Learning activities. The instrument examines changes in students' confidence when speaking, clarity of expression, natural use of language, and overall communicative flow during oral interaction. By comparing the data obtained from the initial and final observations, the researcher can determine whether students demonstrate measurable progress in oral fluency. This instrument also provides qualitative evidence of how PBL activities contributed to creating a supportive environment that encourages active participation and meaningful communication in English.

Instrument 4 (Post-Observation Checklist): English Language Fluency

Purpose: To evaluate improvement in fluency after PBL activities.

Criteria Evaluated

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
1. Speaks English with increased confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Expresses ideas clearly with little effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Is understood easily by classmates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Uses English with fewer pauses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Shows natural use of language in interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Participates actively in oral activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Indicator	Observed	Not Observed	Comments
7. Uses vocabulary related to project topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Maintains communicative Flow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Additional Comments:

Annex 5

Natalia Castillo

The KWL chart is used as a reflective instrument to explore students' knowledge, expectations, and learning related to intercultural awareness throughout the Project-Based Learning process. This instrument allows students to express what they already know about cultural diversity, what they want to learn during the project, and what they have learned after completing the activities. By analyzing students' responses, the researcher gains insight into students' cognitive and attitudinal development regarding intercultural understanding. The KWL chart also promotes metacognitive reflection and supports the qualitative analysis of students' learning experiences.

Instrument 5: KWL Chart – Intercultural Awareness**Topic: Intercultural Awareness**

Purpose: To promote reflection before, during, and after the project.

Instructions: This chart will help you think about what you already know, what you want to learn, and what you learned about intercultural awareness during this project. Complete each column honestly.

K – What I KNOW: Before starting the project, write what you already know about intercultural awareness. (Ex: how people from different cultures may think, act, or speak, how you treat them)

W – What I WANT to learn: Write what you would like to learn during this project. (Questions you have about other cultures, how to communicate better with classmates)

L – What I LEARNED: After completing the project, write what you learned about intercultural awareness. (New things you learned about other cultures, how your attitude changed, how working with others helped you understand cultural differences)

K	W	L

Annex 6

Natalia Castillo

This Likert scale questionnaire aims to evaluate students' perceptions of Project-Based Learning as an instructional strategy used to promote intercultural awareness and English language fluency. The instrument examines students' opinions regarding their confidence when speaking English, their ability to use the language naturally, their appreciation of cultural diversity, and their overall motivation and engagement during the project. By collecting students' responses, the researcher is able to assess how learners perceived the effectiveness of PBL activities and their impact on both linguistic and intercultural development. This instrument provides valuable quantitative data that complements the findings obtained through observations and reflective tools.

Instrument 6: Likert Scale Questionnaire - For 6th Grade Students**Institution:** La Trinidad de Moravia

Applied by the researcher: Natalia Castillo Jiménez 112490649

Title: The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning to Promote Intercultural Awareness and English Language Fluency in Sixth-Grade Students**Instructions:** Please read each statement carefully and mark the option that best represents your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers will remain confidential and anonymous.

A. PBL and Intercultural Awareness:

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The project helped me understand classmates' opinions different from mine.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The activities helped me appreciate cultural diversity in my classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I interact respectfully with others when working on projects with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. PBL and English Language Fluency:

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I felt more confident speaking English during the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I used English naturally while working with my group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I spoke English with fewer pauses than before.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I was able to express my ideas in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. PBL as a Learning Strategy:

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I enjoyed learning English through projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2	Projects helped me learn better than traditional lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I felt motivated to participate during the project activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Working in groups helped me learn from others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I would like to learn English using projects again.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments:

Annex 6

Instrument 5: KWL Chart – Intercultural Awareness**Topic: Intercultural Awareness**

Purpose: To promote reflection before, during, and after the project.

Instructions: This chart will help you think about what you already know, what you want to learn, and what you learned about intercultural awareness during this project. Complete each column honestly.

K – What I KNOW: Before starting the project, write what you already know about intercultural awareness. (Ex: how people from different cultures may think, act, or speak, how you treat them)

W – What I WANT to learn: Write what you would like to learn during this project. (Questions you have about other cultures, how to communicate better with classmates)

L – What I LEARNED: After completing the project, write what you learned about intercultural awareness. (New things you learned about other cultures, how your attitude changed, how working with others helped you understand cultural differences)

K	W	L
Dances Food art activities	idiomas Food banderas art	La culture is important. Respect others. We all different. CR has different cultures.

Annex 7



Annex 8



Annex 9



Annex 10



Annex 11



Annex 12



Annex 13



Annex 14



Annex 15

