

**UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA**

**ENGLISH TEACHING**

**THESIS TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF  
LICENCIATURA EN ENSEÑANZA DEL  
INGLÉS**

**THE USAGE OF LINKED LEARNING TO TEACH  
ENGLISH ORAL SKILLS TO 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
STUDENTS OF COLEGIO TÉCNICO  
PROFESIONAL DE MERCEDES NORTE,  
HEREDIA**

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**September 2018**

DECLARACIÓN JURADA

Yo Manrique Montero Obregón, mayor de edad, portador de la cédula de identidad número 4-0220-0424 egresado de la carrera de Enseñanza del Inglés de la Universidad

Hispanoamericana, 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, juro solemnemente que mi trabajo de investigación titulado:

The Usage of Linked Learning to teach English oral skills to 7th grade students of Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, Heredia.

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. en fe de lo anterior, firmo en la ciudad de San José, a los 7 días del mes de diciembre del año dos mil 18.



Firma del estudiante

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## CARTA DEL TUTOR

San José, 17 de septiembre de 2018

**Departamento de Registro  
Facultad de Educación  
Enseñanza de Inglés  
Universidad Hispanoamericana**

Estimado señor/señora encargada:

El estudiante Manrique Montero Obregón, cédula de identidad número 402200424, me ha presentado, para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado **THE USAGE OF LINKED LEARNING TO TEACH ENGLISH ORAL SKILLS OF THE STUDENTS OF 11TH GRADE OF COLEGIO TECNICO PROFESIONAL DE MERCEDES NORTE**, el cual ha elaborado para optar por el grado académico de Licenciatura.

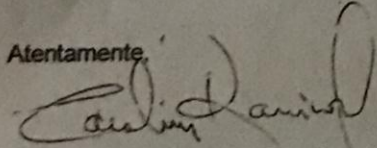
En mi calidad de tutor, he verificado que se han hecho las correcciones indicadas durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación: antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos; conclusiones y recomendaciones.

De los resultados obtenidos por el postulante, se obtiene la siguiente calificación:

a)	ORIGINAL DEL TEMA	10%	10%
b)	CUMPLIMIENTO DE ENTREGA DE AVANCES	20%	20%
c)	COHERENCIA ENTRE LOS OBJETIVOS, LOS INSTRUMENTOS APLICADOS Y LOS RESULTADOS DE LA INVESTIGACION	30%	28%
d)	RELEVANCIA DE LAS CONCLUSIONES Y RECOMENDACIONES	20%	18%
e)	CALIDAD, DETALLE DEL MARCO TEORICO	20%	18%
	TOTAL		94%

En virtud de la calificación obtenida, se avala el traslado al proceso de lectura.

Atentamente,

  
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**Cédula identidad NO. 1-573-152**

UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

Entregado por: \_\_\_\_\_

Recibido por: Yuseth

Fecha: 17/9/18

## CARTA DE LECTOR

Heredia, lunes 5 de noviembre del 2018

Universidad Hispanoamericana  
Sede Heredia  
Carrera

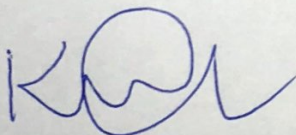
Estimado señor

El estudiante Manrique Montero Obregón cédula de identidad 4-0220-024 me ha presentado para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado el “THE USAGE OF LINKED LEARNING TO TEACH ENGLISH ORAL SKILLS 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS OF COLEGIO TECNICO PROFESIONAL DE MERCEDES NORTE, HEREDIA”, lo ha elaborado para obtener su grado de Licenciatura en la enseñanza del inglés.

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.



**M.Ed. Karla Avalos Charpentier**  
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## CARTA DE REVISIÓN FILOLÓGICA

Los suscritos, Elena Redondo Camacho, cédula de identidad número 3 0447 0799 y Daniel González Monge, cédula de identidad número 1 1345 0416, en calidad de filólogos, revisamos y corregimos el trabajo final de graduación que lleva por título *The usage of Linked Learning to teach English oral skills to 11<sup>th</sup> grade students of Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, Heredia*, sustentado por Manrique Montero Obregón.

Hacemos constar que se corrigieron aspectos de forma, redacción, estilo y otros vicios del lenguaje que se pudieron trasladar al texto.

Esperamos que nuestra participación satisfaga los requerimientos de la Universidad Hispanoamericana.



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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents, that have always been on by my side, for the support and motivation to continue and never give up during this process.

## **GRATITUDE**

First, thanking God for life and the opportunities to fulfill this goal. To my parents for the effort and dedication they always gave me to fulfill my dreams. To my teacher for all the wisdom and help during this project

## INTRODUCTION

This investigation has the purpose to analyze the importance of communication, specifically English oral skills, in addition, the opportunity that students are given by internships and simulated workplaces to use English and practice communicating verbally, therefore to express themselves in English. Every day, the demand of professionals with proper English language proficiency is increasing, so English becomes an important subject to pay attention. Furthermore, this research provides a proposal that help students to improve their oral skills, to facilitate their incorporation to the technical job market.

Linked Learning through its strategy, Work-based Learning, provides the necessary tools and material to prepare students and guidance in specific fields looking for a career to focus on. At the same time, this strategy teaches how the company works and the requirements to fit in a technical job market.

Companies, specially recruiters, at the time to choose candidates for any position, want people who can read and understand instructions, reports, letters, memos, notices and other any form of official documents in English. Besides, the ability to express formal, oral and written communication is considered very important by the prospective employers.

English language is necessary for an employee to be a good presenter, negotiator, and convener of meetings. One of the deficiencies found by the employers and recruiters in candidates for different jobs is the lack of oral as well as written

communication skills. Based on that, the proposal is going to provide the skills needed to increase the chances of getting a job. In addition, Work-based Learning approach provides the opportunity to students to express themselves orally, because they only pronounce isolated words and disconnected sentences, making their production poor and meaningless. Since speaking is required in academic and professional performances, the lack of oral production skills becomes a serious disadvantage when compared to private school students.

The use of a real-life simulations, which includes the application of some communicative and interactive tasks, helps to improve oral skills and simulate a real work experience. Bearing in mind Work-based Learning and communicative and interactive views, learners can approach speaking to negotiate meaning and to establish social relations with others. This is very important, because students can practice in real life situations.

## **CHAPTER 1. INVESTIGATION PROBLEM**

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1.1. Historical background

Based on history, it is important to know the beginning of the education in Costa Rica, the first institutions that impart English and offer quality Education. In 1989, the Scientific High Schools were inaugurated at the Universidad de Costa Rica, the Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica and the Universidad Nacional. They also initiated the Bilingual Experimental High Schools, whose main objectives are to offer an academic education of excellence with an added value in the English as a second language, and enrich the bilingual academic training with a special training in computing and business management (Marín, 2012).

This reference provides information about the first institutions dedicated to English teaching in Costa Rica, as well as the most important objectives to teach English, besides some specific areas in which students specialized back then. This informs about the beginnings of English teaching and the strategies. It also provides valuable information on the historical facts that are part of a chronology of how English Teaching was introduced to Costa Rica.

According to Marín (2012), it is important to note that for 1997, the National English Counsel published a document entitled *Guidelines for the Director of Educational Institution on the process of teaching English in class III Cycle and Diversified Education*. This emphasizes the correspondence that the English studies program has with the Educational Policy towards the XXI century: Proposals and realizations and the recommended methodological procedures are registered, where

it is insisted that the English lessons must be given in that language. The classes must be active and the communicative approach must be used and consider the evaluation of the learning, including the four linguistic skills.

### **1.1.2. Problematization**

In Costa Rica, the only way to evaluate English is through Bachillerato, that focuses mainly in reading, writing and grammar. This investigation detects that there is no way to evaluate oral skills. Students spend 11 years comprising primary school and high school, but these grammar test and reading comprehension drills do not help students to practice oral skills. Based on the survey and observation done in Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, it is important to improve oral skills specially in production such as fluency, because this is what is established in the national English plans regarding the evaluation of oral ability. Therefore, oral skills are very important, mainly because is the way we communicate and interact with other people, and according to the research or Work-based Learning, mentoring and simulated workplaces are one of the main activities in which oral skills are required.

The following questions arise: What benefits does Linked Learning provide to mitigate the deficiencies? What sub oral skills need to be strengthened through Linked Learning?

The variety of activities that Work-based Learning offer is very useful for the students, each activity has characteristics that help students to strengthen English oral skills.

Work-based Learning is an extremely valuable strategy. It provides exposure to real work situations and teaches professional skills, necessary to develop a career (Casparly & Warner, 2016).

### **1.1.3. Justification**

#### **1.1.3.1. Present**

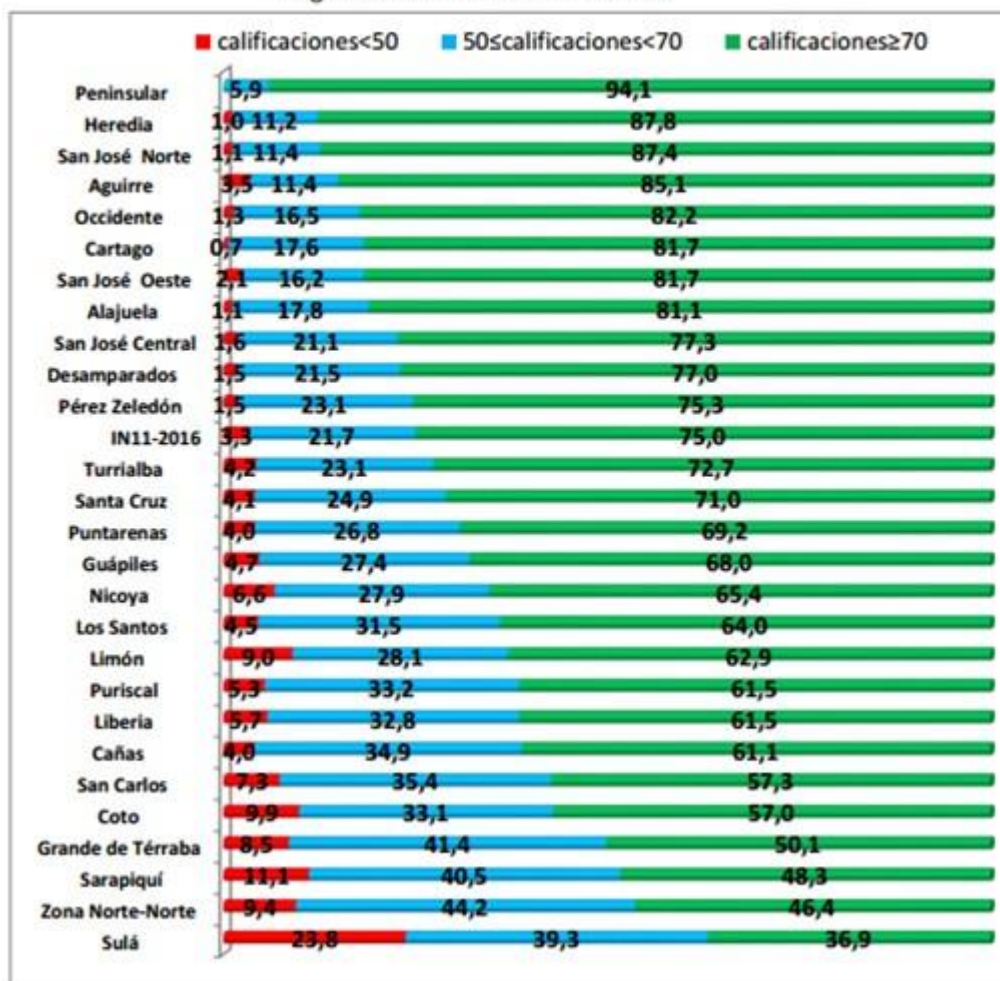
The reason of this investigation is to improve English oral skills in the students of 11<sup>th</sup> grade of Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, in the class *English for communication*. The idea is to propose a strategy to strengthen oral skills and provide some activities.

About this, the Informe Nacional de Bachillerato de la Educación Formal 2016 (2017) states:

The national English test consists of 70 items. The representativeness of the general objectives of the Study Programs is determined by the country's teachers who teach this subject at the eleventh- or twelfth-year level, through a national consultation conducted by the Management and Quality Assessment Department (p.49).

This statistical report demonstrates that the objectives established by the National English Plan of the Ministry of Public Education in terms of oral skills, are not considered as an object or measurement or evaluation, thus influencing its linguistic development.

**Gráfico 15**  
 Porcentaje de examinados según categorías de rendimiento por región educativa  
 Inglés IN11 de Bachillerato 2016



Fuente: Base de datos, Departamento de Evaluación Académica y Certificación, DGECC.

This graphics shows clearly the results by zone within the country, there are good results in Bachillerato, but this statistical report only considers writing, reading and grammar skills. This investigation pretends to offer a proposal to improve oral skills with the strategy Work-based Learning. This graphic justifies the need to work in oral skills. It is important to support the problem. Students proved that writing and reading skills are under control, the problem is the lack of oral skills evaluation.

### 1.1.3.2. Importance

English language provides a lot of opportunities for the students. Based on this investigation, it is an essential part for Work-based Learning. The improvement of the oral skills brings new ideas on how strengthen communication to incorporate to a job market.

The MEP National Plans of English establishes that:

Offering students, a second language that allows them to communicate within a broader socioeconomic context within and outside of Costa Rica. Provides a combination of both physical and intellectual linguistic skills with personal and social development. It offers better opportunities to develop oral and written communication skills (MEP, 2011, p.14).

There is a contradiction with the stipulated on national plans, because if this ability is considered as one of the purposes of the teaching of English, it is not being considered at the time of the English speech evaluation, within the same line and based on the principles of oral skills assessment (MEP, 2016).

Based on this information, this principle is not being considered most of the time, the evidence is in the observation about oral skills indicators, in which students did not have too much activities to practice and show their oral skills.

The need for oral ability to be considered as an evaluation item is extremely important. The incorporation of this skill to the final evaluation of the students will provide tools that allow them to face the technical job market.

### **1.1.3.3. Novelty**

Linked Learning is an innovative approach to high school reform that seeks to prepare students for a job market through a real-world application in the any workplace.

This strategy provides students with the necessary preparation and activities that involve real-life simulations to live experiences close to technical areas. The idea is to get background information to different careers related to the technical job market.

A vital component of the learning experience in any Linked Learning path is Work-based Learning. Work-based Learning allows students to apply their classroom learning in professional environments and gain real-world experience in the process. Students learn what it takes to thrive in the professional world through partnerships with local employers that offer internships, mentors, jobs and similar opportunities (Linked Learning, 2017).

The purpose of this research is to promote the Linked Learning through its Work-based Learning strategy to increase the oral skills of English speakers, necessary for the incorporation into the labor market in 11<sup>th</sup> grade students of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte.

### **1.1.3.4. Inputs**

Work-based Learning provides innovation helping to improve English learning. The way to improve this ability is the incorporation of activities that encourage

interaction and direct contact with areas of interest for each student. Work-based Learning presents benefits such as the following:

Work-based Learning is flexible: you can adapt it to your work in addition to the acquisition of specialized knowledge that provides higher preparation and will help the student, and a future company will have employees who have the confidence and ability to evaluate existing business practices and alternative approaches. This can help incorporate operational improvements and best practices within your business and encourages the student to work on oral skills. It is a very well-structured strategy and provides what is necessary to improve the communicative part of the students.

#### **1.1.3.5. Impact**

Work-based Learning is an ambitious strategy and can provide the necessary tools to increase oral skills, as well as the opportunity to have direct contact with a future job.

This strategy prepares students, because it provides exposure to real work places and teaches professional skills (Casparly & Warner, 2016). Additionally, Work-based Learning strategy based its approach on real-life simulations. The exposure to workplaces gives students the practice needed to work in the area chosen to develop a career. It also provides important interactions with professionals, which is an excellent way to understand processes, industry performances and convey experiences.

This indicates the impact that you want to achieve, the focus on Work-based

Learning is based on different learning. The fact of being exposed to real work and professional contact impacts the communication and the professional part that the student intends to follow in the future. Work-based Learning allows students to live a work experience.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This investigation pretends to evaluate oral skills on students of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, and the lack of incorporation to the technical job market, therefore the question:

What oral English-speaking skills do the 11<sup>th</sup> year students of Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte lack, regarding oral skills, to enter the labor market successfully?

## **1.3. INVESTIGATION OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.1. General objective**

Design a proposal using the information collected about Linked Learning through its strategy Work-based Learning, to help increase the oral skills needed to incorporate students of *English for communication* of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte to the technical job market.

### **1.3.2. Specific objectives**

- Determine what strategies English teachers use to prepare students in oral skills in English.

- Identify the oral skills students have in 11<sup>th</sup> grade in the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte.
- Investigate strategies related with Work-based Learning for improving oral skills.
- Examine the efficacy of the Work-based Learning activities.

## **1.4. SCOPES AND LIMITATIONS**

### **1.4.1. Scopes**

This investigation aims to increase oral skills in English through Work-based Learning. The idea is that students have contact with work situations that prepares them for the technical job market. Another point about Work-based Learning is the reinforcement of English oral skills, which is an essential skill to fit in the technical job market.

## **1.5. LIMITATIONS**

During this process, one of the limitations is the inconvenience by the time to get information from the school, since those were somehow private or confidential or simply, they did not want to help with this investigation. Another limitation, the instruments, the school did not want to grant permission for applying either, the survey or the observation, due to different situations such as holidays, vocational fairs and availability.

For example, due to the organization of the school, there were certain

inconveniences to schedule the observation that was made. About the historical context, a lot of information could not be collected because there were not people in charge of supplying it.

## **CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## 2.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Colegio Técnico Profesional Mercedes Norte is a public school which offers the III Cycle of Basic General Education and Technical Diversified Education, giving young people the opportunity to graduate as a Bachiller and at a medium technical level in various specialties.

The Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte has a mission to provide quality and integral Education to all students. This institution seeks for integral education and significant learning in all subject backed up for important values to adapt students to the current society.

We are a High School that includes the III Cycle and Technical Diversified Education, that through a holistic, creative and critical pedagogy; seeks the construction of a meaningful learning that allows the integral formation students like future professionals who stand out by their values, their innovative ideas and their enterprising aptitudes; in a framework of healthy coexistence in a changing society (Colegio Técnico Mercedes Norte, 2012).

Regarding to this, Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte goes in favor of the learning process, it is focus on integral education of professionals in a changing society. As it is established by the institution, “Offer a quality educational service to young people in the province of Heredia, through comprehensive and vocational training; to develop in a society of permanent change, in search of a better quality of life” (CTP Mercedes Norte - Productividad y Calidad 2 años, 2012, p.1).

## **2.2. CONTEXT THEORETICAL CONCEPT**

### **2.2.1. English learning**

Nowadays, we live in a globalized world and is undoubtedly a world that exceeds the limits of a language and, specifically, the English language has become a very important tool for personal and professional development, since it is a requirement to access many sources of employment. English language has been one of the tools used by many companies around the world for their economies, through training linguistics of its inhabitants in areas related to the industries.

About the teaching, it is important to mention that it has become a mandatory subject, so all the students get English at all levels, this shows the importance of this language, however, based on this investigation it is necessary to strengthen oral skills.

English language teaching has covered the whole educational cycles of the Costa Rican curricula. It must be taught from preschool to high school. A clear action that shows the importance of this language is the fact that both rural and urban educational institutions must provide access to English learning, because it was declared as one of the mandatory subjects' students must take to complete their academic programs (Araya & Cordoba, 2014). English language is very important, not only for work reasons but also to communicate to have access to a major knowledge, information and to be updated. The fact that allows the students to communicate, be in contact with other cultures and countries make this an excellent tool to grow professionally.

### **2.2.2. Integral education**

Educational development seeks to expand the opportunities for progress and fulfillment of human beings by promoting the empowerment of their cognitive, physical, social, emotional and cultural abilities adapted to the constant change of the educational reality. Educational evolution must be a process that allows the transformation and improvement of quality of education. Integral Education provides opportunities for students to discover themselves, their gifts, and how they can participate in a meaningful way in our rapidly changing world. It gives students the chance to be creative, contemplative and imaginative while imparting knowledge and skills at the physical, mental and spiritual levels. Students become more curious, innovative, purposeful, and engaged.

The educational service plan development to satisfy the necessities of the society, to produce the population's integral growth in agreement with the modern requirement, to secure the individual and the society's well-being, makes indispensable the existence of an administration system that propitiates and support the necessary institutional changes for an efficient and effective achievement of the institutional objectives (National Inform of the Development of Education Costa Rica, n. d., n. p.).

It is necessary to understand that, despite the importance of the job market, learning about culture and society will give students a complete knowledge. They can know different things that define who they are and how to act in different situations.

Within the education, it is important to make sure that students go to schools, and then high school, as well as provide a quality education that teaches about culture and the importance for life. Education brings a lot of possibilities for the future; the opportunity to access secondary education, college studies, besides being a

person that is capable to make good decisions about careers and job market options.

### **2.2.3. Technical education**

Technical education is growing, the Ministerio de Educación Pública is working to make this modality a priority for the job market and provide options for the future in specific technical areas.

Evolution of Professional Technical Education indicators in Costa Rica, in the period of 2000-2014, states that:

Professional Technical Education in recent years has expanded its coverage around the entire Costa Rican territory and has diversified the educational offer by creating educational services according to the needs of the student population, so that students who attend regularly attend professional technical colleges, as well as those that require different options that fit their living conditions (p.7).

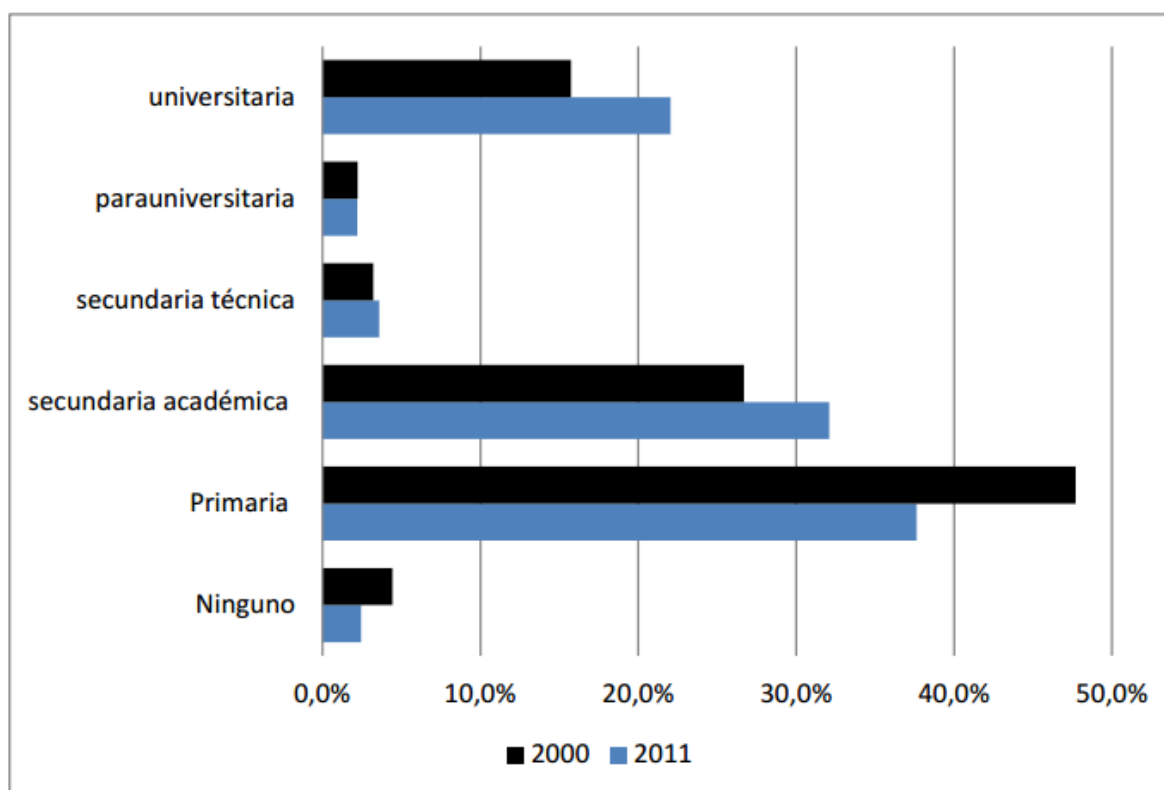
Technical education has grown throughout the years in Costa Rica, the creation of institutions focused in technical areas provide options for the students to decide about a career and have the possibility to get a job. At the same time, those institutions are aware of the students' needs to adapt programs addressed to all population to fit in the areas of interest.

The main objective of technical education is to train people with experience and knowledge levels of university education (Informe Nacional, 2012, p.3).

In addition to the technical side of secondary education, in order to receive the appropriate academic training and getting a degree, the students specialize in a technical area of their choice. This requires an additional year of study compared to

the academic branch, and provides workplace training in the corresponding field, offering paths to both, higher education and the technical labor market.

Technical education becomes a tool that brings together training, vocation and work, allowing preparation and improvement to people through the training of professional skills in certain areas of production.



This graphic shows that there is still significant work to be done between different educational levels, either providing facilities to complement technical training with the academic portion or the institutions of higher education for that studies are recognized at the time of continuing University studies (Informe Nacional, 2012, p.5).

According to this statistic report, Technical Education must improve. These numbers show that Technical Education does not have an impact on students yet. Throughout the years, this kind of education has become an option for a job market.

The Ministerio de Educación Pública has the task to analyze and detect the operation of technical education to include updated programs with Work-based Learning activities to prepare students to face the job market. In addition, the investment in the facilities is very important, because students can have adapted places to practice and learn technical oral skills. The purpose of these changes is to attract students to enter technical high schools and offer them a good set of opportunities related to the job market.

It is very important to involve companies and know the requirements of the students for a future incorporation to the job market, the communication between high schools and industries is essential to know the job market needs and to work in programs to fulfil those needs.

About this, Álvarez-Galván (2015) states that:

One of the biggest challenges faced by the ETFP system in most countries, including Costa Rica, is to involve the business sector and unions more fully in the system, because this participation is fundamental to its effectiveness - by providing a learning based at work and develop relevant programs for the needs of the labor market, among other issues. That means: having structures that can be used to communicate with the business sector and unions and give them a voice in the process of planning the system, as well as in determining the offer. To achieve this, the existence of a central governing body is very important (p.86).

Based on this reference, having a structure and planning systems are going to guide students to understand how the job market works. Also, is going to prepare them in a specific area, so a future adaptation would be easier.

Costa Rica needs to work to improve those programs, as stated previously, the

idea is to include Work-based Learning philosophy to improve oral skills and incorporate activities to access the job market. This is a proposal that can be done gradually by the institution, but it can be a great option for the future of Technical Education.

Besides, there must be room for oral skills, the importance of pinpoint this skill helps the students grow and interact with professionals and this is part of the Work-based Learning approach. There must be learning based on the industries, that is why the strategy Work-based Learning focuses on providing real-life simulation to prepare students to gain experience. Throughout the world it is necessary, but surprisingly difficult, to ensure that Technical Education and Vocational Training are adjusted to the needs of the productive sector. One of the best ways to do this is to take the learning to the workplace. Unfortunately, that does not happen as often or as efficiently as it would be desirable, and in many countries Work-based Learning is sometimes weakly linked to ETEP programs.

Work-based Learning should be fully integrated into programs, as a credit-bearing element and with quality assurance mechanisms. This approach would strongly promote the partnership between employers and providers of ETEP (OCDE, 2014) (Álvarez-Galván, 2015).

This reference summarizes which is the main purpose of this investigation as well as the importance to integrate Work-based Learning as part of the curriculum for Technical Education. This strategy is not being used, despite the awareness of the need to do it to improve learning and provide students a tool that would make easier

the integration to the technical job market and explore options for a possible career.

The national plans continue the same. Students are not reaching the requirements due to a mismatching between the industries and high schools among to the no professional capacitation, this makes difficult to see an improvement in education soon.

The technical school system is where future growth is expected to concentrate. Technical colleges still represent more than a quarter of the enrollment in this level of education, much less than in many OECD countries. But maybe this is not so surprising because the technical middle school route is a demanding track that leads to the Bachillerato. After a previous study by the OECD, collaborations are being developed with employers, both the INA (Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje) and the MEP are establishing programs that include more practical experience at work, while continuous work on the qualification frameworks should, and is expected, be much easier for students to receive credits for their INA degrees within the *formal* education system (Análisis de la OCDE acerca de las políticas nacionales para educación, n. d.).

There must be changes on the technical curriculum, invest time and resources to give students spaces to practice in real life simulation to gain experience, at the same time allows them to interact with professionals to get insights and improve preparation.

Another point about technical education is the relationship with the economy and the interference with the financial environment.

When it comes to work, there is an important link between the technical education and professional training.

The Marco nacional de cualificaciones educación y formación técnica profesional (2018) states that:

The technical education imparted in the new professional technical colleges and vocational training, especially with the creation of the INA in 1965, are oriented towards incipient industrial activities, such as assembly metalworking, plumbing and basic industrial equipment, industrial and building electricity, mechanical precision, automotive mechanics, cabinetmaking and the furniture industry with production in series or similar, graphic production of greater industrial and commercial quality, different from the artisan printing. Beginning of the careers of Administration, among them Accounting (p.12).

This reference explains the areas that there are in Costa Rica and, based on the economics and job market, all the occupations are related to industries, that is why is important to apply Work-based Learning.



Foreign investment has been another factor that Costa Rica needs to consider. The introduction of different areas and the industrialization makes technical education

the solution to fulfill requirements and provide jobs to students. The amount of technical areas that international and national companies has, it is an alert to Ministerio de Educación Pública to open more technical careers to cover new technologies

The Marco Nacional de cualificaciones educación y formación técnica profesional (2018) states that:

Stage of introduction of manufacturing based on technology and high technology, with training requirements that exceed the training obtained by graduates of technical education, especially computers that work with computers (since the mid-nineties to date) (p.13).

It is important to consider certain statistical information about the different institutions that provides technical education in Costa Rica as well the specialties they offer to students that access this modality. Throughout the years, there has been different technical careers such as Accounting, Architectural, Software Development Informatics, Quality-Productivity, Logistics-Distribution, among others.

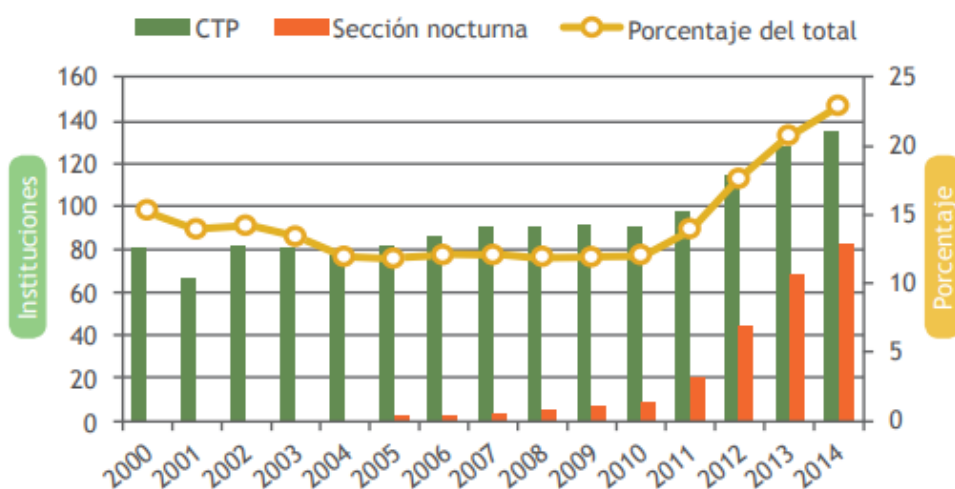
Besides the Ministerio de Educación Pública, another institution that provides technical education is INA (Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje), this institution promotes technical programs in different areas that provides the training oriented to the job market. This is encouraged by the growth of the high-tech industry and economics; great deals of effort and resources have been devoted to the development of technical education.

One of the challenges is to focus in English courses Levels A1 (Basic skills) to C1 (fully bilingual) and change the curriculum of the training programs. Companies

need employees to learn innovative processes or technology that is non-existent in the country and essential to their productive process.

In addition to the previous information and based on recent graphics regarding institutions and enrollment, either in the day shift or night shift, there are different statistical reports to consider about this phenomenon.

Colegios Técnicos Profesionales y Secciones Nocturnas de Costa Rica 2000-2014



This graphics indicates the growth throughout the years of technical education. Costa Rica is clearly trying to make this modality the number one for students to continue studying. Another point to attract students by a specialized training get into technical areas thinking of a future.

Even though technical education is growing, there are certain areas to improve, there should be more investment in technology and innovation as well to increase the young population taking a technical career or specialty. The arrival of transnational companies and the need to cover positions that required high-tech or

scientific skills, makes this education essential for Costa Rica. There are a lot of professionals, but there is need to continue working hard in this area.

A first area of concern is the scientific communities. On the one hand, Costa Rica has a remarkable body of experts in multiple fields, but its scientific communities show problems of generational change, low redundancy and lack of interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration. On the other hand, the scientific communities have an insufficient link with the productive sectors, despite rich experiences of transfer of technological knowledge, especially in the agricultural field (Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación, 2014).

It is important to start working in a generational change, this bring new ideas and updates to programs that help students know the new tendencies in the job market related to technical areas. Costa Rica has a variety of resources to provide students experiences. The lack of connections with productive sectors to get opportunities for students to get to know these files have produce a waste. The scientific part plays an important role in technical education, since most of the careers have strong relationships with spaces to develop scientific components and studies such physics, chemistry and medical, so the connection with industries dedicated to these fields is very important.

It would be useful to emulate the strategies followed by the communities that have shown greater sustainability over time, such as Biomedicine, to adapt them to the areas that, despite having great social and economic relevance, they do not manage to stand out or are withdrawn. This is the case of Agricultural Sciences and

Techno Sciences, disciplines characterized by a high degree of transversely that allows them to impact multiple sectors (Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación, 2014).

Based on this reference, certain areas do not launch yet. Those areas need adaptation and new planning. The goal is to invest, analyze and improve the different technical choices that student must get and understand.

The Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación (2014) states that:

It is important to structure research around topics of interest for national development, whose approach requires multidisciplinary perspectives, and the integration of researchers into international networks. A particularly strong effort must be made to reduce the dependence of research groups on a few relevant actors of mature age (p.54).

According to that, this is related to the importance to include technology in the curriculum and the topics should be included in the national programs. This references also talks about the generational change and the acquisition of new international connections to bring the country to support technical education. In addition, the inclusion of young people in the preparation of students provides fresh ideas about how to approach Work-based Learning.

Another important point is the review of the technical education system and it is necessary to create ways to work in the investment and at the same time open interactions with professionals to get to know the industry and infrastructure. To promote the link between academia and the productive sectors, it is necessary to review the regulatory framework and institutional regulations. Education centers have

a leading role in the scientific research that is carried out in the country, but greater openness is required for the transfer of the knowledge generated. A feasible measure is to make easier the access of the socio-productive sectors to the university infrastructure of I D (Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación, 2014). They must be open minded when it comes to technical education. It is important to promote research that will help students to know the specialties and apply Work-based Learning as a strategy to improve either oral skills or the preparation for the technical job market.

Costa Rica must prepare more professions in technical fields to comply with the job market demand. Nowadays, the need to have technicians is increasing. As mentioned before, the arrival of foreign investments makes this a necessity and, at the same time, time, it opens doors to employment.

Costa Rica must increase the quantity and skills of its scientists, engineers and technicians. The preparation of new specialists and teachers provides technical education, new ideas, technology and connections within industries to get internships for the students.

Likewise, it is necessary to adapt the offer of vocational training to the demands of the productive and export sector, which implies reorienting the priorities of the policies and programs of technical secondary education and the training of middle and higher technicians, emphasizing, as mentioned before, the accreditation of the curricular offer. Another important action will be the expansion of the network of professional technical colleges, as suggested by the State of Education Report in its

various editions (Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación, 2014). The lesson must have a scientific approach to improve the quality of science of technology and innovation and balance between the academic subjects and the specialties. It is important to mention that the idea is to invest time in this kind of task since they are the ones who prepare students for a future career.

Technology plays an important role in technical education, students must be trained with technological tools that allow them to fit in the job market requirements. In addition, the institutions must update their equipment to fit the needs of the industries nowadays.

Improving the quality of scientific education at the pre-university level requires encouraging methodologies based on inquiry and problem solving, which have yielded good results in the countries with the greatest scientific and technological development. The aim is to promote a balance between conceptual content, the development of the skills of scientific thought such as observation, inquiry and problem solving, and the promotion of scientific and technological vocations. In addition to aspects already discussed in previous sections, referring to the participation of Costa Rican youth in the PISA tests and the effective application of the new Mathematics and Science programs in secondary education, it is necessary to act in other fronts, namely:

- Optimization of didactic resources for teaching science.
- Improvement in learning environments, by expanding the provision of infrastructure (laboratories) in schools.

- Strengthening of initial training and continuous professional development of science teachers (Estado de la Ciencia la Tecnología y la Innovación, 2014).

Therefore, training is very important; all the learning students can have will be an advantage. Integrating scientific approach to planning will increase the possibilities to reach a good level in different fields in a job market. This reference explains the need to optimize programs, didactic materials and infrastructure. This is very important because it improves technical education and strengthen the national programs. Most of the technical areas include math, science, so it is very important to include it in the curriculum.

#### **2.2.4. Oral skills**

The oral skills in English has become an essential element for the development of the English learning. Production is one of the elements that this investigation pretends to evaluate and research through instruments, theory and references.

Domian, Fonseca, Lara & Rodríguez (1997) affirms that:

Given the opportunity to share and explore attitudes, feelings and opinions, and to focus on your learning process by understanding your own style of learning and the continuous development of the skills and abilities necessary to acquire a language (p.15).

Oral skills have a significant impact when it comes to job market. Currently, there are a lot of transnational companies that look for personnel with a high level of English. The development of English oral skills provides the students the possibility to express themselves easily considering Work-based Learning.

The reason is that these companies, due to their status as transnational or multinational companies or even national companies with commercial links abroad - need highly qualified personnel in areas like administration, finances, economy among others; however, they also require that the professionals in these areas also have a broad knowledge and direction of the English language. In most cases, it is requested that the applicant or applicant to a position dominate this foreign language between 80 and 90% in both the written part and the oral part (Quesada, López, Manley & Salas, 2014, p.4).

This justifies that the job market needs to grow constantly, and mastering English language gives an advantage when applying to a position. The knowledge of these requirements will increase the possibilities to develop a career.

To achieve mastery of a foreign language, learners must develop the four principal language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking; to being able to interact orally with others, using the target language effectively. In the context of an English teacher training program, the development of efficient oral skills is an especially significant necessity since students need not to be able to perform accurately, fluently, and spontaneously in any situation. The teachers' role in promoting foreign language acquisition is very important, as they are responsible for providing students appropriate contexts to foster communicative situations that allow them to express themselves and interact in the target language.

### **2.2.5. Linked Learning**

Linked Learning is an innovative strategy that provides students previous preparation to develop a career and a possible job market incorporation. It incorporates real life spaces to practice and gain experience in different areas.

Linked Learning alliance (2017) affirms that:

Linked Learning is a successful approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. The Linked Learning approach integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, Work-based Learning, and supports to help students stay on track (p.1).

Also, Linked Learning through Work-based Learning is very useful because it gives guidance to students through real life spaces. Having these spaces to enrich skills and knowledge is one of the main purposes of this strategy. The capacity to interact and be in contact with a variety of elements regarding their future career is a great advantage. Theory is very important, but the idea of Linked Learning is to apply what students have learned. Putting into practice their knowledge gives them the possibility to experience in simulated real-life spaces and interact with professionals to convey knowledge to the future employees in a specific area.

#### **2.2.6. Work-based Learning**

The possibility to have activities based on real life situations to apply what they have learned defines Work-based Learning. This strategy allows the students to gain experience and commitment about their future.

For Linked Learning students, education is organized around industry-sector themes. The industry theme is woven into lessons taught by teachers who collaborate across subject areas with input from working professionals and reinforced by Work-based Learning with real employers. This makes learning more like the real world of work, and helps students answer the question, "Why do I need to know this?" (Linked Learning alliance, 2017, n. p.).

Putting into practice what students have learned is important because this helps and motivates them to take English, not only as a subject, but also as a future project in terms of technical job market.

### **2.2.7. Career awareness**

This concept is part of the chronology of continuous Work-based Learning. This concept refers to the experiences acquired by students about the path to a future career. When working on this strategy, many factors are considered that help to build a process that culminates with learning and experience in areas of interest. Those factors are teamwork, collaboration, as well as knowledge about culture and context that makes both the student's performance and motivation prevail.

Career Awareness experiences are those that help students build awareness of the variety of careers available and of the postsecondary education expected for these careers. Career Awareness experiences also broaden students' options by helping them become aware of opportunities available across a wide range of industry sectors that they might not otherwise have known or considered (Linked Learning, 2012). According to this, career awareness help students to know the job market and see what areas are available to build a career. This type of Work-based Learning is basic to know industries.

This strategy pretends to give students exposure and previous experience in technical areas as a preparation. This is very important, because is one of the strong points of this proposal. Another point this strategy will provide is a faster adaptation to a new job and the capacity to deliver satisfactory results.

### **2.2.8. Career exploration**

Linked Learning also has essential elements regarding career exploration as well as the preparation. The students submitted to this model are capable to choose and decide what career they want to pursue.

Career Exploration provides students with the opportunity to explore career options in a way that contributes to motivation for learning and informs students' decisions about further experiences and career and educational options (Linked Learning, 2012).

Career exploration is an essential element within Linked Learning. This process provides students with job related activities such shadowing, internship and interviews. It is an important link between students and industries, to consider a future career.

“A quality Career Exploration program is coordinated and designed using many experiences to provide students with the opportunity to explore and refine areas of interest and prepare for higher intensity Career Preparation experiences” (Linked Learning, 2012, p.9).

### **2.2.9. Career training**

When discussing Work-based Learning, this strategy handles a variety of points in terms of evaluation and quality. The objective of these indicators is to ensure a meaningful learning, based on the complete process and work chronology of Work-based Learning. These indicators focus on a table of criteria that highlight the

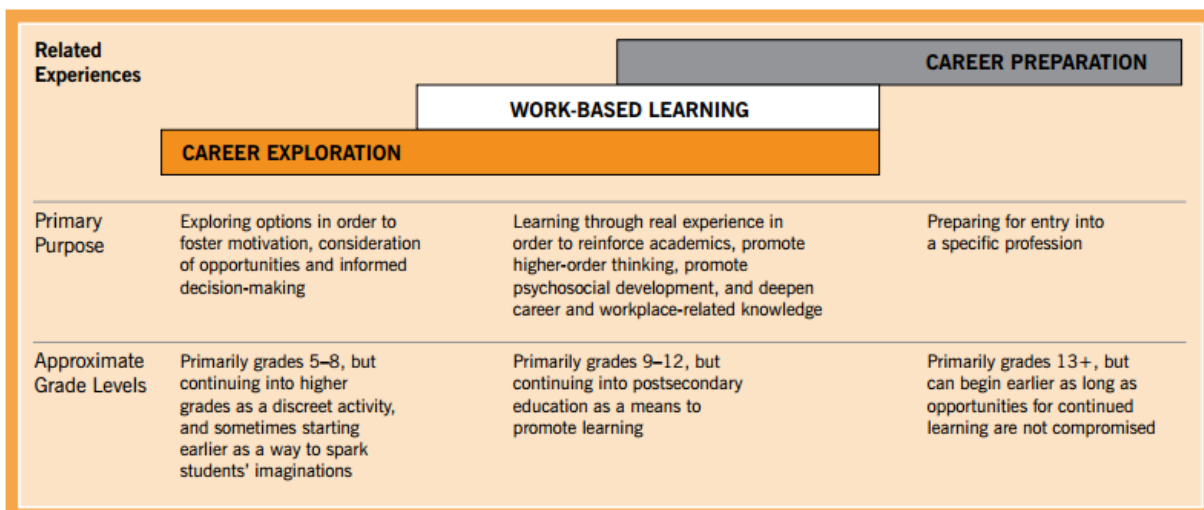
interaction, which goes hand in hand with this research as it includes oral ability which is the approach to cover.

It provides opportunities for the student to interact directly with professionals from the industry and the community in two-way interactions and over an extended period (Linked Learning,2012). The mutual interaction is essential on this strategy. Students should have this first contact with industries in which they can practice, enrich knowledge. Having these opportunities help them decide what to study. It is important to point out that they are going to be sharing with different professionals.

Work-based Learning is a strategy that must also achieve and encourage the student to be involved in activities that guide the path to a career, for that reason it highlights the importance of having professional practices and tutors who transfer necessary experience for the student to develop interaction and communication skills.

Schools develop curriculum that integrates subject-matter learning and extends to Work-based Learning experiences. It is not enough to place students in internships or pair them with mentors. Successful Work-based Learning programs have a curriculum that includes goals for both students and employers and instruction from both academic and industry-related individuals (Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, 2013, n. p.).

The possibility of having knowledge acquired through experience and constant communication make this strategy an excellent way to start thinking of the future.



(Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009)

This chart has important information about the Work-based Learning stages. It shows the processes of all levels. Basically, it covers the approach of the Work-based Learning types of experiences.

### 2.2.10. Linked Learning Teacher's role

Teachers in Linked Learning have different tasks, they are in charge to implement and monitor students' performance when applying the different activities, basically, their job is to collaborate in the student's progress after the activities. Linked Learning naturally encourages greater collaboration among K-12 faculty. Teachers work together to plan and implement cross-disciplinary projects and assessments, develop common work-based experiences, and monitor student performance on project goals. This collaboration fosters greater communication among teachers, as well as deepening their knowledge of how diverse content curriculum elements fit together in practical application (Handbook for Linked Learning Clinical Teacher Preparation, n. d.).

Teachers work as coordinators, they combine and coordinate efforts to assure that Work-based Learning experiences effectively and efficiently help students to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and work habits, so they adapt successfully into the world of work. The functions and responsibilities of teacher-coordinators include program planning, development and evaluation.

### **2.2.11. Linked Learning Student role**

The student's role is put into practice all the guidelines, activities and field work that carry Work-based Learning. Work-based Learning helps a student make career decisions, network with potential employers, select courses of study, and develop job skills relevant to future employment. Through the interaction of work and study experiences, students can enhance their academic knowledge, personal development and professional preparation.

Access and equity presume that the instructional program within each pathway maintains the same high standard of quality and that programs differ only in the industry themes with which they affiliate. Given these conditions, natural interest becomes the fundamental lens through which students learn the content and apply it in a meaningful context (Handbook for Linked Learning Clinical Teacher Preparation, n. d.).

Students work with all the activities and apply the learning. Through Work-based Learning, students will have the opportunity to gain experience and adjust to a new model on how to learn differently. The students will get used to the new strategy. Their role is the adaptation and induction of Work-based Learning. All the planning

and implementation by teachers are going to be evaluated with the student, with the only purpose to improve oral skills.

### **2.2.12. Work-based Learning curriculum**

Curriculum is the combination of instructional practices, learning experiences, and students' performance assessment that are designed to bring out and evaluate the learning outcomes of a course. Linked Learning on its strategy has diverse ways to approach English learning. Essentially, curriculum is what the school is attempting to teach, which might include social behaviors as well as content and thinking skills and different contents.

“ConnectEd provides a wealth of curriculum resources including lesson plans, student handouts, and media and web resources” (Connected studios: Linked Learning in action, 2012, p.1).

The curriculum used in pathways differs from that used in traditional high school programs. Lessons feature real-world industry themes and engage students through both challenging academic and demanding technical instruction. Learning becomes exciting because students see how academic subjects relate to practical applications (Connected California, 2012, n. p.).

Curriculum is an essential part for teaching and learning. An effective curriculum provides teachers and students with a measurable plan and structure for delivering a quality education. The curriculum identifies the learning outcomes, standards and core competencies that students must demonstrate for specific areas of interest. Teachers play a key role in developing, implementing, assessing and modifying the curriculum. An evidenced-based curriculum acts as a roadmap for

teachers and students to follow on the path to academic success.

### **2.2.13. Technical Curriculum**

Technical preparation of students for jobs involving applied science and modern technology is very important nowadays. It emphasizes the understanding and practical application of basic principles of science and mathematics, rather than the attainment of proficiency in manual skills, that is properly the concern of vocational education. Technical education has as its main objectives the preparation of graduates for occupations that are related to science and technical fields.

Linked Learning includes a demanding technical component that delivers concrete knowledge and skills, emphasizes real-world applications, and brings academic and technical learning to life. The focus is on preparing students for high-skill, high-wage employment through courses in cutting-edge areas of study such as biotechnology, green building and design, and animation. Integrating technical and academic content allows students (and teachers) to deeply explore connections—and ultimately enriches student understanding and enjoyment of learning (Connected California, 2012, n. p.).

Technical education is typically offered in post-high-school curricula that is two years in length, is not designed to lead to a bachelor's degree, and is offered in a wide variety of institutions, such as technical institutes, junior colleges, vocational schools, and regular colleges and universities.

### **2.2.14. Community of Practice, Performance-Based Assessments, and Curriculum**

When it comes to learning, people obtain knowledge, acquire skills, develop work habit and practice the application of all three to *real world* scenarios. Curriculum assesses performance based on contents and strategies for the acquisition of

knowledge, skills, and work habits through the development of tasks or English related activities that are essential and captivating for students.

- Building a collaborative, results-oriented culture in which every team member share leadership and is committed to preparing all pathway students for college and career and to improving their individual and collective practice as educators.
- Mapping student learning outcomes to the Program of Study in alignment with district graduation requirements and state standards.
- Creating benchmarks and assessments based on the outcomes, in part by working together to develop benchmarks and adopt common rubrics to judge the quality of student work.
- Developing a curriculum sequence and courses, including single- and multi-disciplinary integrated projects (Building a Linked Learning Pathway, 2012, n. p.).

Finally, it allows teachers to work all the way in teams to explore their environment and the resources in it. It promotes their learning from each other and helps them find new ways of making it interesting for students by interviewing people, making connections beyond the school that can lead to new courses, allowing them to see students in different settings and new ways, or trying out ideas that won't be possible to embrace in a regular class.

#### **2.2.15. Connected curriculum**

The Connected Curriculum refers to the structure of a curriculum program, where learning outcomes from across the nine Key Learning Areas are drawn together to create specific units of work that are planned around the needs of each students. Together, with daily learning and skill development, these units form the basis of the School's Curriculum Program. Connected curriculum has some principles to understand Work-based Learning.

Courses are designed according to **applied learning theory**. They connect to students' lives, present challenging and engaging problems, and make theoretical material interesting through practical application.

- Lessons present students with “essential questions” so that students master rigorous academic and technical content, and use teamwork, critical-thinking, and problem-solving skills.
- Classroom lessons address **state and national academic standards** that lead to high school graduation and success in postsecondary education.

Each integrated curriculum unit addresses technical knowledge and skill standards that have been validated by industry professionals (ConnectEd, 2012, n. p.).

Connected curriculum allows students to experiment by technical contents and practice areas of interest, personal development, self-awareness, and to pursue important technical skills required for a career having a previous experience as a key element. These principles help to know some skills that Work-based Learning can teach. Besides, it provides the application to real-life scenarios to live the experience of working.

#### **2.2.16. Work-based Learning activities**

Work-based Learning had diverse ways to apply all the knowledge and practice based on real life scenarios which is the essence of this strategy, within those activities, this is very important because they have options, so it is a dynamic strategy full of ideas. The fundamental purpose of Work-based Learning activities is to reinforce and expand students' classroom learning, as well as to offer socio-emotional and career-related benefits.

Career-related student competitions are Work-based Learning activities that require students to demonstrate mastery of career-related skills through presentations

or competitions that are juried by professionals. Presentations represent culminations of student effort over time, often involving teamwork. Career technical student organizations sponsor such competitions in the fields of agriculture, business, health, hospitality and industrial technology. Other programs such as Project Lead the Way do the same in engineering-related fields and robotics (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009).

This activity provides students the opportunity to work in their future career. They are given a lot of material to develop different topics within the area of interest. They learn specifics about a future job and how to develop a career.

Internship is the opportunity that employers offer to students interested in gaining work experience. These are sustained Work-based Learning experiences designed to enrich and expand classroom learning, showing students how their learning is applied in the world outside of school, and offering access to tools, equipment, facilities and expertise that generally are not available at school.

Learning objectives are specified, and student performance is assessed. Internships can be unpaid opportunities, often offered as *community classrooms* for students in Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCPs). They also can be paid opportunities, offered as *cooperative career technical education* for students in ROCPs.

In paid internships where students are required to meet the employers' expectations for productive work, these expectations are developed and discussed in advance with the employers, to ensure that they also address the students' learning

goals. In either scenario, students receive class credit for participation (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009).

### **2.2.17. Simulated workplace experiences and enterprises**

The simulated workplace environment gives students the opportunity to take ownership of their individual performance as it impacts the overall success of their education, while progressing in an authentic workplace culture. Simulated Workplace also encourages companies and industries join onsite and give an onboarding process about what they do, so students can choose the career they want to pursue in a near future.

Simulated workplace experiences are Work-based Learning activities that simulate work environments in any field. Examples include automotive or construction programs in which sustained industry involvement allows students to develop and apply their skills in the context of industry standards and expectations. Simulations may be necessary when labor laws or logistics make *real* experiences difficult; they are considered Work-based Learning to the extent that they still include direct input and feedback from employers (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009).

Simulation provides a risk-free environment in which a learner can explore, make decisions, and make mistakes without any real consequences. Learners can be placed into a workplace environment which they recognize and are required to observe and make decisions in relation to the specific field and circumstances visible in different scenarios.

### **2.2.18. Technical mentoring**

Mentoring is a process through which an individual offers professional expertise as well as support to a less experienced colleague. A mentor is basically a teacher that guides students in the learning process. Mentoring is very useful for professionals over time. The intent of mentoring is not to remediate weak performance, but rather to shape a career that shows promise. Mentoring is an opportunity to give back to the company and the industry by teaching the next generation of leaders and innovators.

In contrast to career mentoring, whereby outside professionals provide guidance and support to students for their career and personal development, technical mentoring offers direct and systematic outside professional input to students' actual work products. It may occur in the workplace as part of an internship or in a classroom if preferable. It may also occur through videoconferencing or web-based applications, in which case it is sometimes referred to as *virtual apprenticeship*. The use of electronic means to connect professionals and students enables more students to have access to this kind of real input from professionals (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009).

Mentoring benefits both parties involved, as well as the organization. This is because by mentoring you can build up knowledge based on interaction that allows the student to give something back to the organization.

### **2.2.19. Work experience**

Work experience is the activity that explains in deep Work-Based-Learning, because it is the one that offers students career research in real world spaces. Work experience is vital for a complete preparation and produce a huge advanced in what they want to achieve in the future. It is important to stand out that having work experience while completing secondary studies is going to impact positively decision making, regarding a technical job market. This kind of activity could be very effective in terms of the students' growth, all the learning gathered from 12 years of secondary Education along with the technical education prepare them very well to face a career.

Work experience offers students the opportunity to explore careers and understand the nature of work through first-hand exposure to the workplace. Traditionally, means to prepare students for employment, work experience is considered Work-based Learning in this study to the extent that it is connected to classroom curriculum and/or is used to enhance or extend students' in-school learning (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009, n. p.).

After having a work experience, it would be easier for students to choose a career. All the process of Work-based Learning carry accountability for the student's future since the curriculum must comply with contents that contribute to technical learning that facilitate the creation of activities that follow standards, having real life spaces and work experience.

### 2.2.20. Workplace tours

This is a very important activity. Is designed to provide students with work experience and exposure to the workplace. Students will know facilities and processes of the company. This will help them adapt easier to a new work environment.

Work-based Learning Toolkit (2016) affirms that:

A Workplace Tour is a highly structured Career Awareness activity in which students visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. More than a simple field trip or site visit, a Workplace Tour is designed and structured to meet specific learning outcomes, be educationally rich, and build awareness of the business, its industry sector, its role in the economy and the career options it provides. A Workplace Tour is conducted at a workplace for small groups of students and involves preparation and follow-up in the classroom, including research and reflection by students (p.11).

Workplace tour is another modality of Work-based Learning, the idea is to provide real-life experience to apply all the knowledge from High School, at the same time, while interacting with professionals, students will understand that is valuable for their future technical career.

About the design, this activity has different characteristics that has a big impact to the students, because they will have the opportunity to work, learn in real-life simulation and knowing the workplace is an advantage.

Work-based Learning Toolkit (2016) affirms that:

Workplace Tours are designed to:

- Provide exposure to potential careers and jobs
- Build occupational knowledge

- Build knowledge about the education and training needed for entry into the industry § Create awareness of the business's role in the community, as well as its functions, processes and products
- Foster an understanding of the business's workforce and its contributions to the community (p.12).

A Workplace Tour provides benefits to students, employers, teachers and schools. The Importance of Structured Activity in which all workplace tours should include structured activity before, during and after the experience. These activities help ensure that all involved parties have real-life experiences to enriched student learning, planning and preparation, attention to legal and safety details, maximization of learning potential, and communication and support for the student and industry host will help to live a significative experience.

Job shadowing involves spending a short period of time with an expert in the position to observe and learn from him during his daily work. This is a factual learning technique, the new employee acts as an observer, which allows him to have an idea of the work he is going to start doing.

Job Shadowing is a Career Exploration activity in which a student is paired with an employee, observes the workday of that employee, interacts with clients or customers and attends meetings and other appointments with the person they are shadowing. Job Shadows are designed to help students explore a field of interest while developing skills and building occupational knowledge. A Job Shadow occurs over most of the workday, is conducted at the workplace and provides the opportunity for the student to ask questions to the person being shadowed throughout the day (Work-based Learning Toolkit, 2016).

The students see a worker in a certain sector during their workday. In this way, students see the tasks they perform, the work environment, what skills the position is looking for. The objective is to offer technical knowledge to future professionals and guide them in their career. During the shadowing period, students acquire knowledge, responsibility and new skills. Job shadowing is an excellent activity. A shadowing session help many students to know what they can face in the job market and in a technical area.

Work-based Learning types depend upon developing and maintaining positive relationships with the employers who are providing opportunities to the students to be in contact with the product in a specific manner. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address participation all the time.

#### **2.2.21. Work-based Learning characteristics**

The idea of Work-based Learning is that the student can apply the learning and put it into work, the basis of this strategy is the real-life simulations that help gained experience and exposure to face an occupation in the future.

This study concludes that direct employer or community involvement is an essential characteristic of Work-based Learning. This characteristic sets Work-based Learning apart from the applied learning that takes place within career technical education and the Project-based Learning that occurs in academic classrooms. Direct involvement provides students with important exposure to industry or professional standards and makes the experiences authentic. It requires the purposeful linking of

education with the world outside the classroom and active mediation between the culture of school and the cultures of work and community. For students, this intentional mediation provides a bridge from their roles as students to their roles as contributing members of society (Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion, 2009, n. p.).

Based on this reference, the focus is education outside the classroom. This experience will provide exposure. Students will have the opportunity to be in contact with the product in real-life, which is an excellent advantage to get to know the technical process.

Quality is also important, in Work-based Learning, depth experience requires engagement, because students are on job learning, so the adaption to the new environment is essential to understand how to apply the theory to real world.

Work-based Learning in California Opportunities and Models for Expansion (2009) states:

Depth of experience. Work-based Learning also requires in-depth engagement. As a defining criterion, this sets Work-based Learning apart from career exploration, though career exploration may be one of the purposes of Work-based Learning. While workplace tours and job shadowing occur in workplaces and are therefore often listed as types of Work-based Learning, these activities, though valuable, do not build or reinforce technical, academic or workplace skills or build real communities of practice. In addition, labeling these experiences "Work-based Learning" also has implications for quality control. A workplace tour and an internship are as different from each other as a classroom field trip is from a unit of classroom instruction. If the contribution of Work-based Learning to student learning overall is to be examined, it will be important to demarcate exploratory and substantive experiences and evaluate each separately using distinct criteria (p.5).

By examining all the possibilities within the job, students will have the opportunity to explore, interact and analyze the procedures, at the same time having shadowing sessions and tour around the industry will help them to know how a company works.

### **2.2.22. Benefits of Work-based Learning**

Work-based Learning is a very useful strategy. After reviewing the specifics, there are a lot of areas in which this strategy can help to improve oral skills and the incorporation to the technical job market. It is an excellent benefit either for teachers or student to have work experience.

About this Implementation of a Work-based Learning model (n. d.) states that:

Work-based Learning is a significant workforce development strategy. Improved and applied skills lead to better efficiencies; the availability of a better-trained labor pool supports business growth. Students participating in Work-based Learning experience: u Integration of school experiences into the community & workplace u Increased graduation rates u Better preparation to assume responsibility at younger ages u Credentialing/Certification of key skills (p.4)

The usage of Work-based Learning will bring new methodology for technical Education and tools that will help students to have a very important learning experience. Students will have more interest because they will be in contact with the product constantly.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHODS**

### 3.1. Types of investigation

#### 3.1.1. Purpose

This research aims to promote the Linked Learning through its Work-based Learning strategy, to increase the oral skills of English speakers, necessary for the incorporation into the labor market. It is also intended that the student, through the Work-based Learning, have the possibility of exposure to real work places and the development of professional skills. Based on this, it has a theoretical approach, since it will thoroughly investigate the oral skills, and theory-based explains the functioning of Linked Learning in its Work-based Learning Strategy.

About the type of investigation, this fits into critical theory and educational research due to the observation process and the evaluation done to a group, at the same time, during the investigation there was a measure of different points about indicators of English oral skills. In addition, the investigation evaluates a phenomenon that it is happening on the technical education in Costa Rica.

Research methods in Education (2007) states that:

Critical theory and critical educational research. Positivist and interpretive paradigms are essentially concerned with understanding phenomena through two different lenses. Positivism strives for objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability, patterning, the construction of laws and rules of behavior, and the ascription of causality; the interpretive paradigms strive to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors. In the former observed phenomena are important; in the latter meanings and interpretations are paramount (p.26).

The observation is essential, and it is related to the study of behaviors of

students. All this is related to an educational research to understand the students by a questionnaire and the observation.

### **3.1.2. Temporary dimension**

This research work will be carried out in a period between February and June 2018, in a public institution in Heredia, Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte.

### **3.1.3. Framework**

Micro research is of a practical nature, seeks the exhaustive study of a specific case or a set. For the purposes of this research is micro, because it will be done at the institutional level and a specific group of eleventh will be used. No regional or country-level study will be done.

### **3.1.4. Nature**

This investigation has a balance between quantitative and qualitative characteristics. As for the quantitative research, includes statistical reports on the performance of high school tests. It is also quantitative, because of the strategy to promote and because it involves the study of oral ability, it can also highlight the student's exposure to real work places and that has much to do with the student factor involved in activities related to Work-based Learning. All this with a clear purpose of providing detailed descriptions of the social contexts studied. It is proposed that such descriptions will be very consistent with the perspectives of the students in their career awareness in their specific contexts.

### **3.1.5. Character**

This investigation has an explanatory character. A phenomenon is explained within the learning of English in Costa Rica. The oral ability that is part of learning English is contemplated in the national plans of the Ministerio de Educación Pública, but there is no way to measure that ability. It can also be descriptive in the fact that the Linked Learning will be promoted through its Work-based Learning strategy and its components and functioning will be described.

## **3.2. SUBJECTS AND INFORMATION SOURCES**

### **3.2.1. First hand**

The object of the study is carried out in the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, considering 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. The class has 12 students and they are into *English for communication* (logistics). The decision to work with this level is because it is an advanced group with more knowledge and experience, besides they are also about to graduate.

It is very enriching to be able to apply with them certain instruments, besides the exit profile. By knowing the group and the level of the research it will be very important to analyze the oral skills and measure the level through specific indicators. Within this research, the checklist is a very important part and is the first source of information because it provides valuable data of the people in which the research is applied. In addition, a questionnaire will be delivered to students with some specifics about English language, to know their thoughts.

### **3.2.2. Second hand**

Sources for this research are different resources from the Ministerio de Educación Pública, as the national performance report of the national tests of high school, statistical reports, as well as English language national programs.

## **3.3. SELECTION OF SAMPLING**

### **3.3.1. The population**

The population is the channel used to achieve favorable results, because everyone represents an opinion, an approach and is key to decision making, since it is the way in which the population is collected. In this case, the population are the students, and they are the ones submitted to activities, observation and survey to create the statistical reports. This emphasizes the importance that the population has for research, the work that is done with the respective population gives a starting point.

### **3.3.2. The sample**

Thinking about the complexity of working with a large group of people, the sample is the key to narrow that study and choose a manageable number of individuals who still provide the information required for the research.

When you select some elements with the intention of finding out something about a certain population, this group is defined as a sample. That is, it is a part of the whole, of the universe or population and that serves to represent it (Hernández & Hermosillo, 2013, p.2).

The best way to have a management is by means of the sample that helps the result to be very similar and to be narrowed down easily, this can give favorable results when consulting it.

### **3.4. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS TO COLLECT**

This investigation uses a questionnaire to collect information about the student's background on terms of English level. The idea is to use this instrument to know the students and how they see English. The questions are related to the main topic and objectives of this investigation, and are also related to Work-based Learning application.

The third phase follows the identification and itemization of subsidiary topics and involves formulating specific information requirements relating to each of these issues. For example, with respect to the type of courses required, detailed information would be needed about the duration of courses (one meeting, several meetings, a week, a month, a term or a year), the status of courses (non-award bearing, award bearing, with certificate, diploma, degree granted by college or university), the orientation of courses (theoretically oriented involving lectures, readings, etc. or practically oriented involving workshops and the production of curriculum materials) (Research methods in Education, 2007).

The questionnaire reports issues and knowledge of the student's information. This is very useful to understand thoughts and feelings about certain questions. This instrument is easy to sort and analyze the data and to have an overview of the group.

Observation was the other instrument used. The evaluation to a group was essential for this investigation to analyze the group, performance and the daily work. It is very useful to detect student's English level, behavior and the activities in class to align with the investigation's objectives.

A structured observation is very systematic and enables the researcher to generate numerical data from the observations. Numerical data, in turn, facilitate the making of comparisons between settings and situations, frequencies, patterns and trends to be noted or calculated. The observer adopts a passive, non-intrusive role, merely noting down the incidence of the factors being studied (Research methods in Education, 2007).

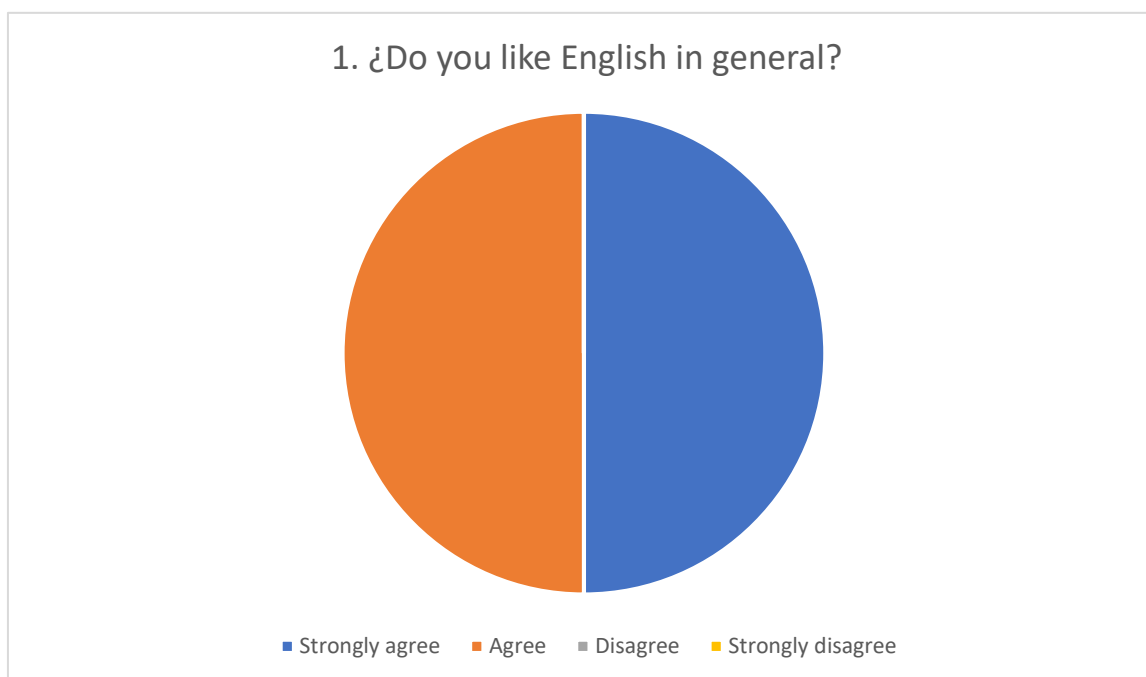
Observation fits perfectly in this investigation. It was very important to see the group, mainly because of the objectives to examine activities and also to match the observation with the problem statement of the skills students are lacking to incorporate to the job market.

## **CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

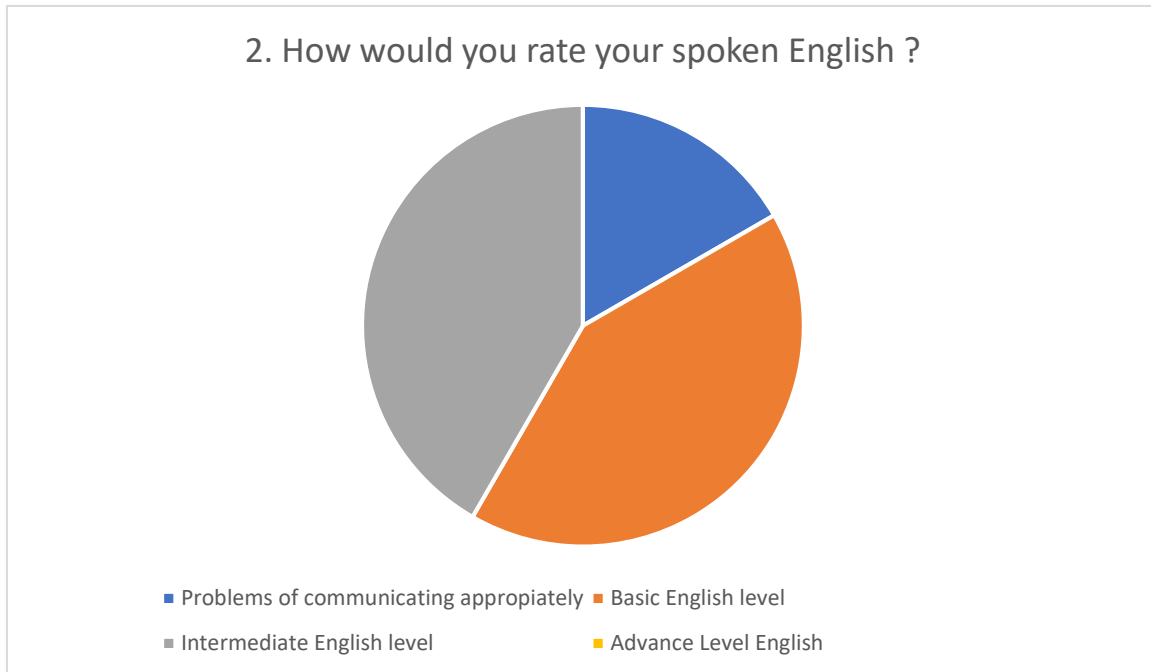
## 4.1. DIAGNOSTIC OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

### 4.1.1. Diagnosis of the situation

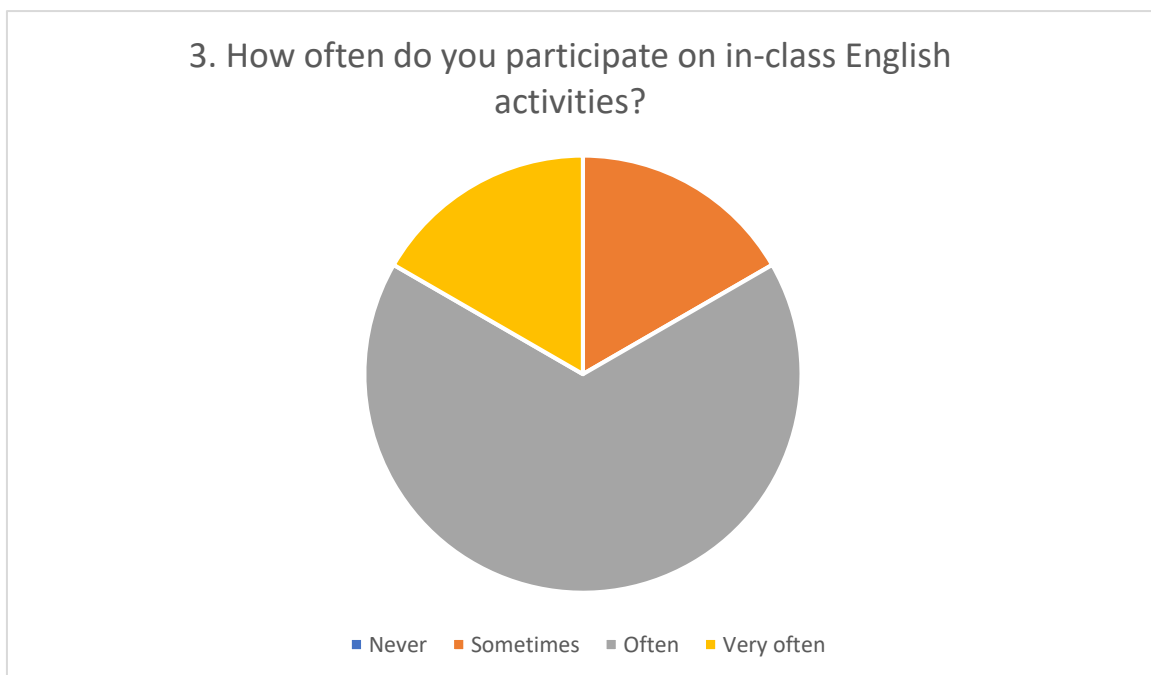
The graphics were completed based on the information gathered when applying instruments. For these purposes, a checklist and survey of questionnaire were applied, each of them has 20 items. This activity was performed in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade level 11-1. The class's name is *English for communication* and the students are into logistics as technical area.



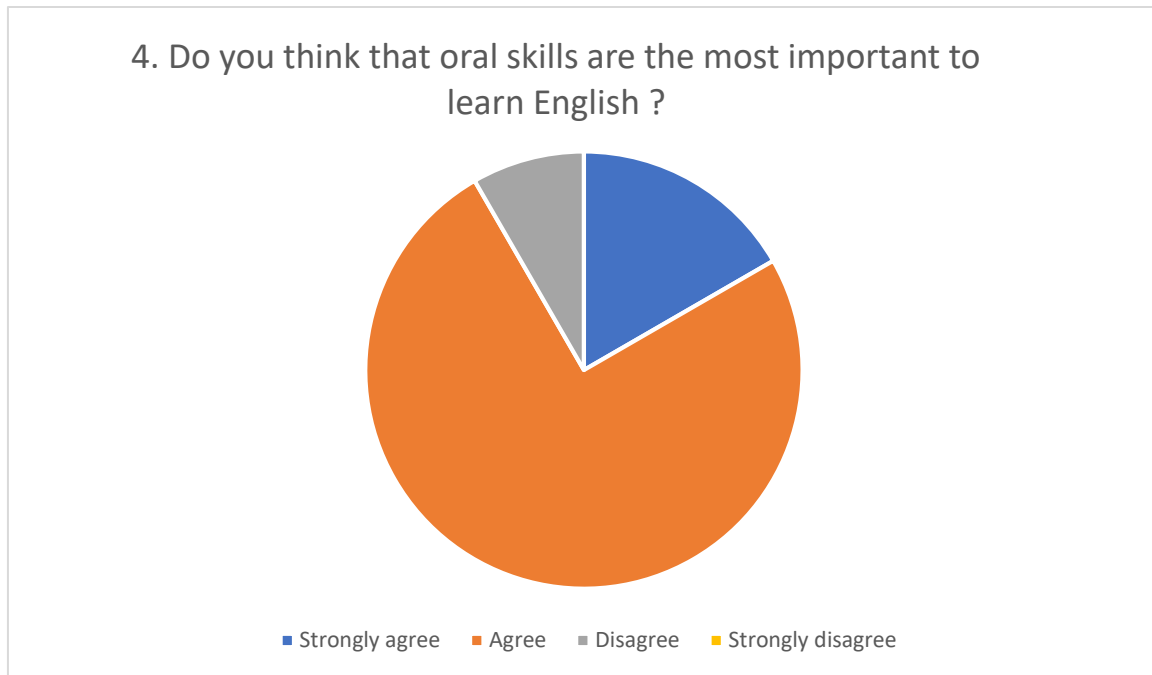
The graphic shows that most of the students of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte like English. It shows 50% of them answered strongly agree and 50% agree, so there are favorable results regarding this question.



The graphic shows that 17% of the students have problems by the time to communicate appropriately, 42% of the students either have intermediate English level or basic English level.

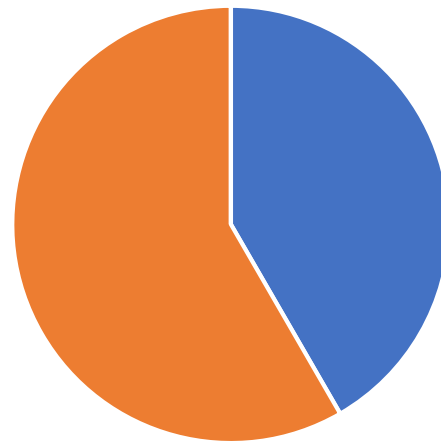


This graphic shows that 67% of the students often participate in English oral skills activities. On the other hand, 17% of the students either do it sometimes or very often, while 0% report never.



The graphic shows that 75% of the students agreed that the English oral skills are more important than the others by the time, to learn English. On the other hand, 17% strongly agreed and 1% disagreed.

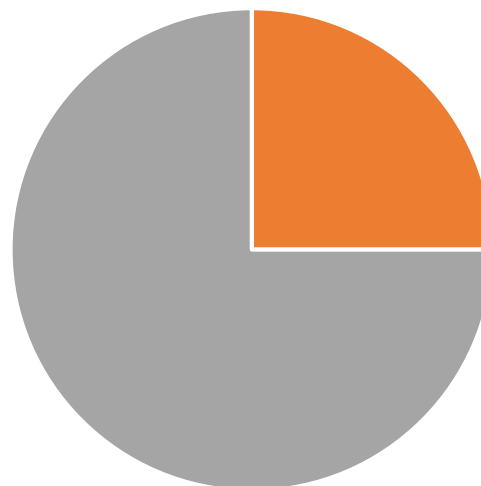
5. What do you think about communicating in English during the class?



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

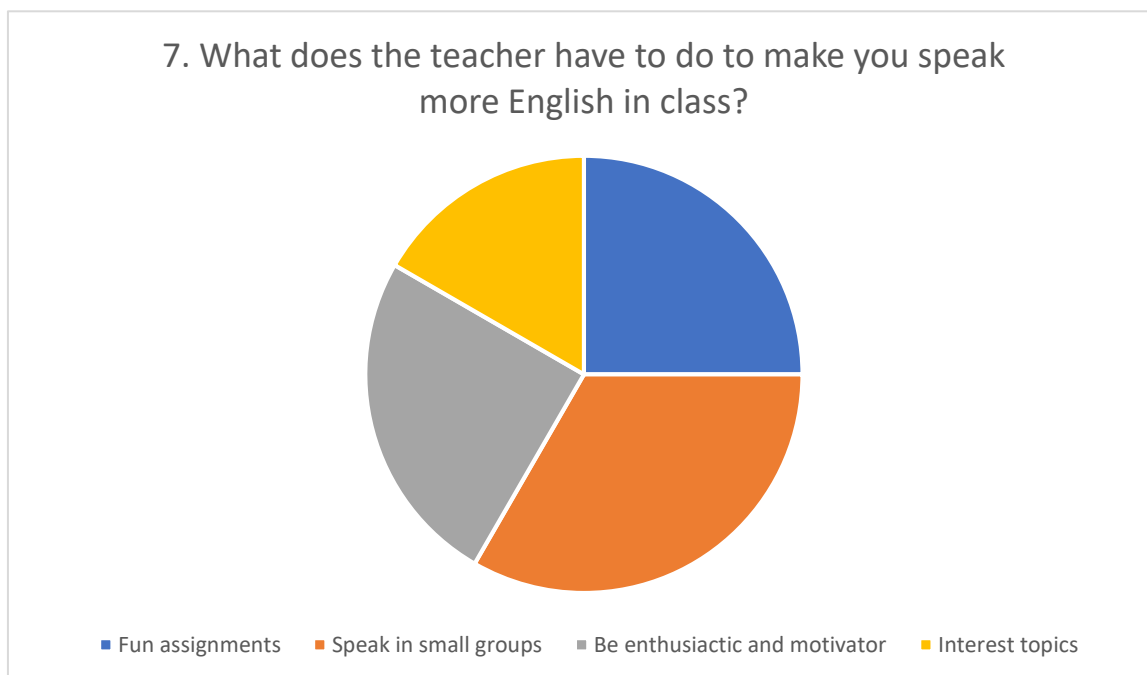
The graphic shows that 53% agreed about communicating in English during the class, 38% of the students strongly agree, while 0% of the students consulted disagree and strongly disagree.

6. How often do yo practice English oral skills?

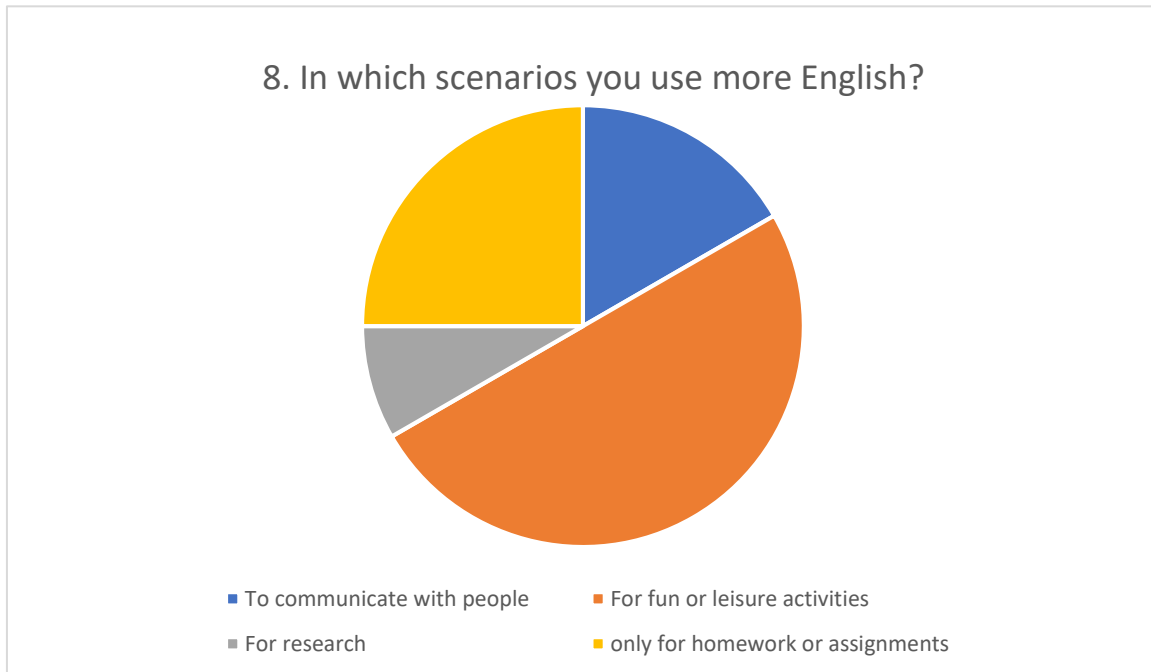


■ Never ■ Very often ■ Often ■ Always

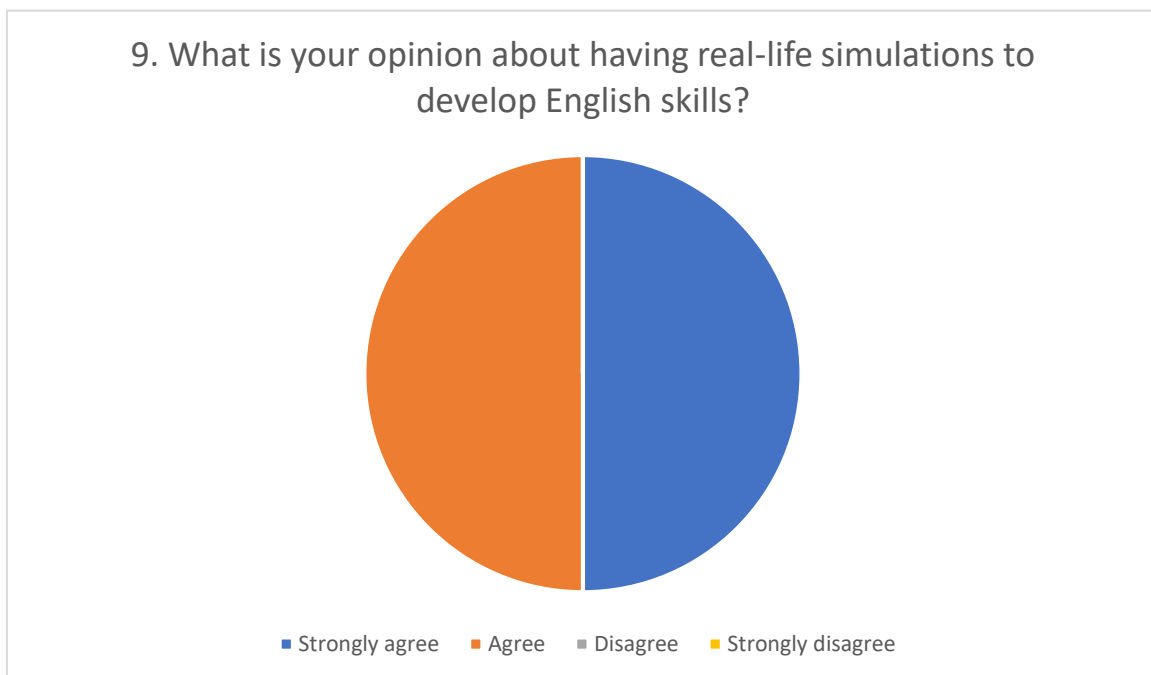
The graphic shows that 75% of the students often practice English oral skills, while 25% practice very often. On the other hand, 0% shows results of always and never respectively.



The graphic shows that 33% of the students think that speak in small groups make them speak in class, 25% shows that they go for an enthusiastic and motivated teacher or fun assignments, while the 7% belongs to interesting topics.

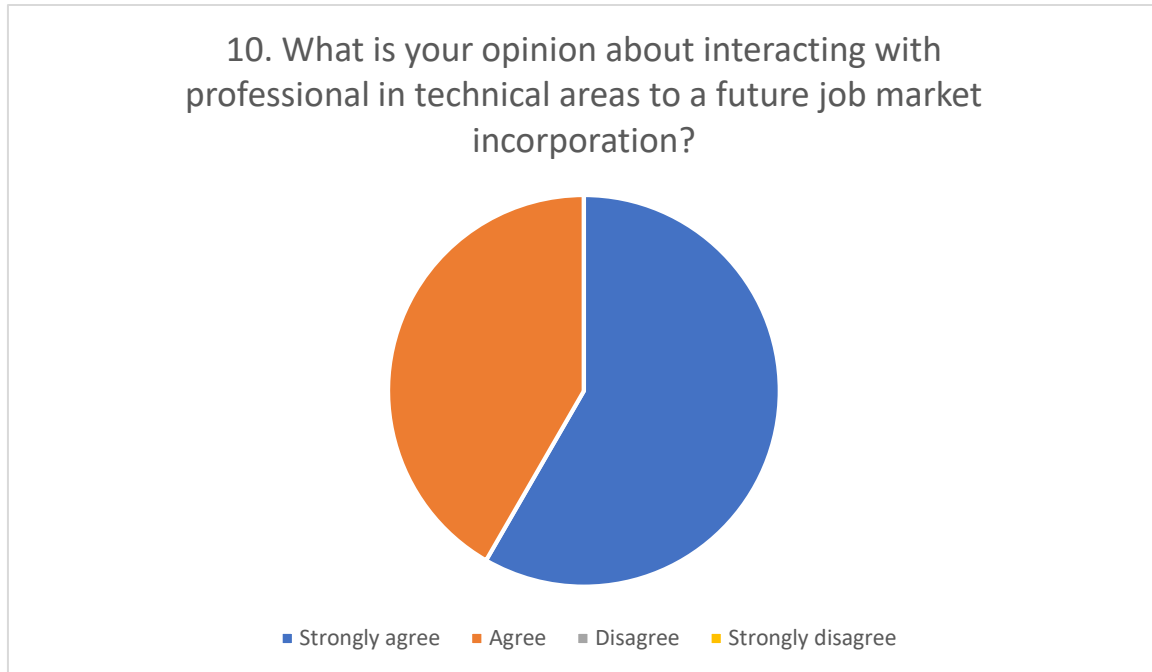


The graphic shows that 50% of the students use English for fun or leisure activities, 25% use English only for homework or assignments, 17% to communicate with people and 8% for research.



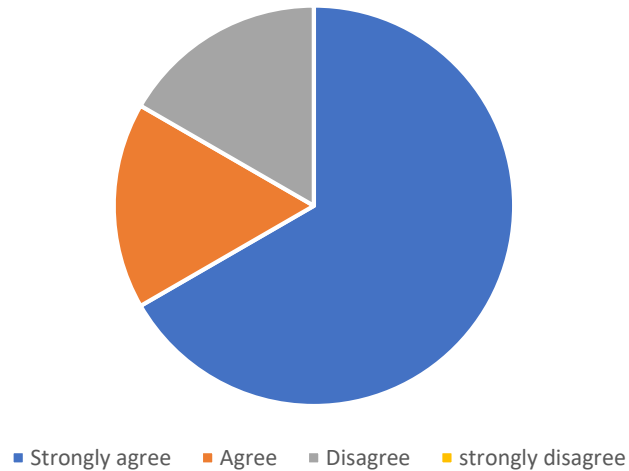
The graphic shows that 50% of the students strongly agree on having real-life

simulations and 50% agree, on the other hand, 0% of the students chose to disagree and strongly disagree respectively.



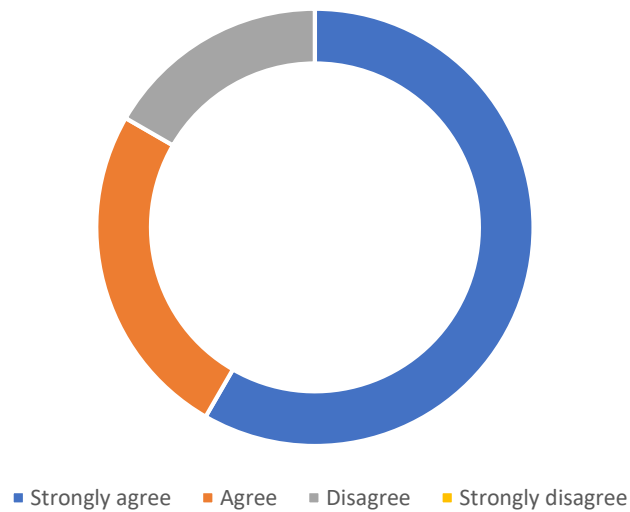
The graphic shows that 53% of the students strongly agree on having real-life simulations and 38% agree, on the other hand, 0% of the students chose to disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

11. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion

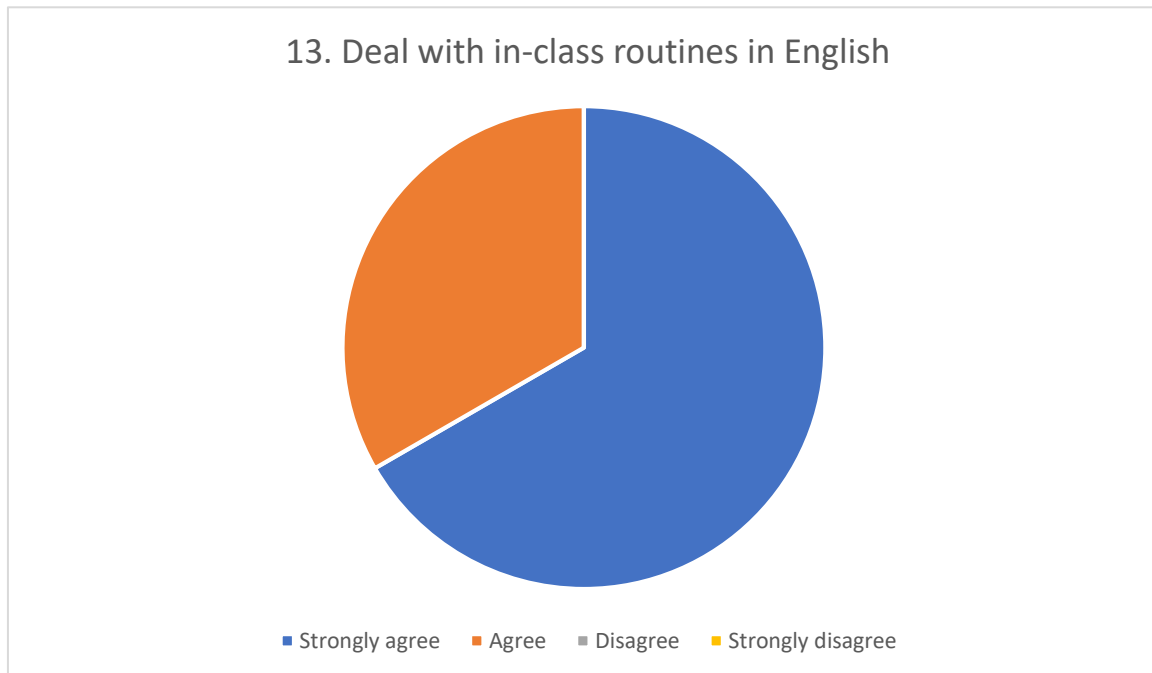


This graphic shows that 67% of the students explain their own ideas and have a good understanding on discussions, 17% of them have certain difficulties showing agree and disagree respectively.

12. Engage in classroom discussion on current events and social issues.

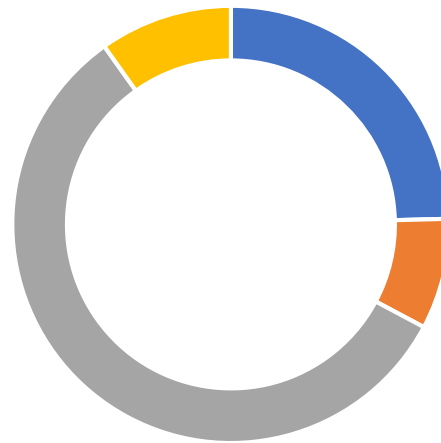


The graphic shows that 58% of the students are engaged on English related activities, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 17% of the students show a less favorable results on English related activities.



The graphic shows that 67% of the students deal with in-class routines in English, while 33% % agree. On the other hand, 0% of the students show a less favorable results on this indicator.

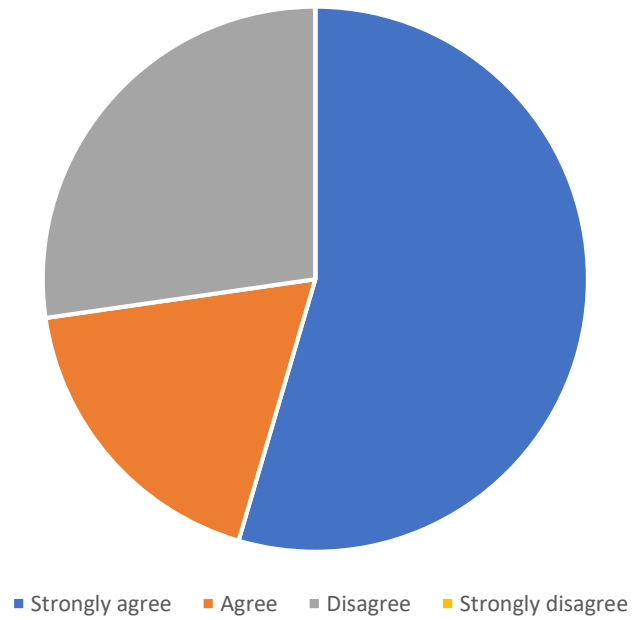
14. Stresses most important points by pausing, speaking slowly, raising voice



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

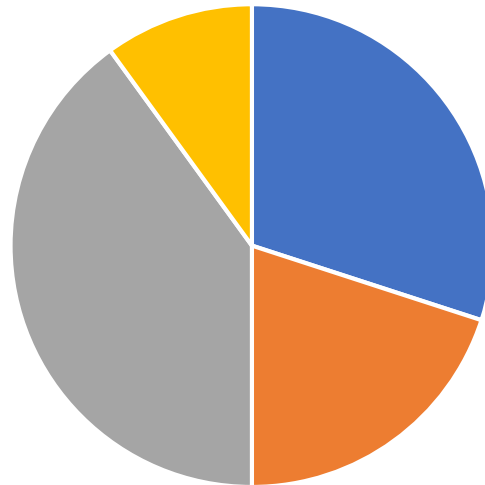
The graphic shows that 57% of the students do not stress most important points by pausing, speaking slowly, raising voice, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 10% and 8% of the students indicate agree or strongly agree respectively.

15. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding.



The graphic shows that 55% of the students ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding, 27% report disagree, while 18% agreed.

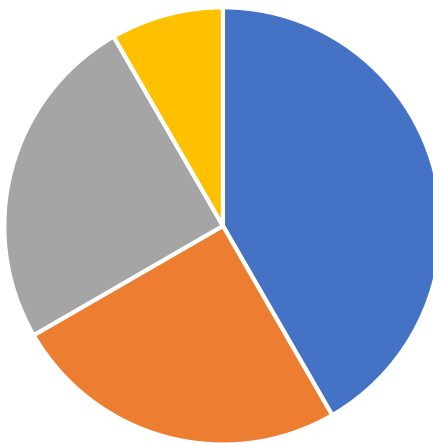
### 16. Verbalizes everything that is presented visually



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

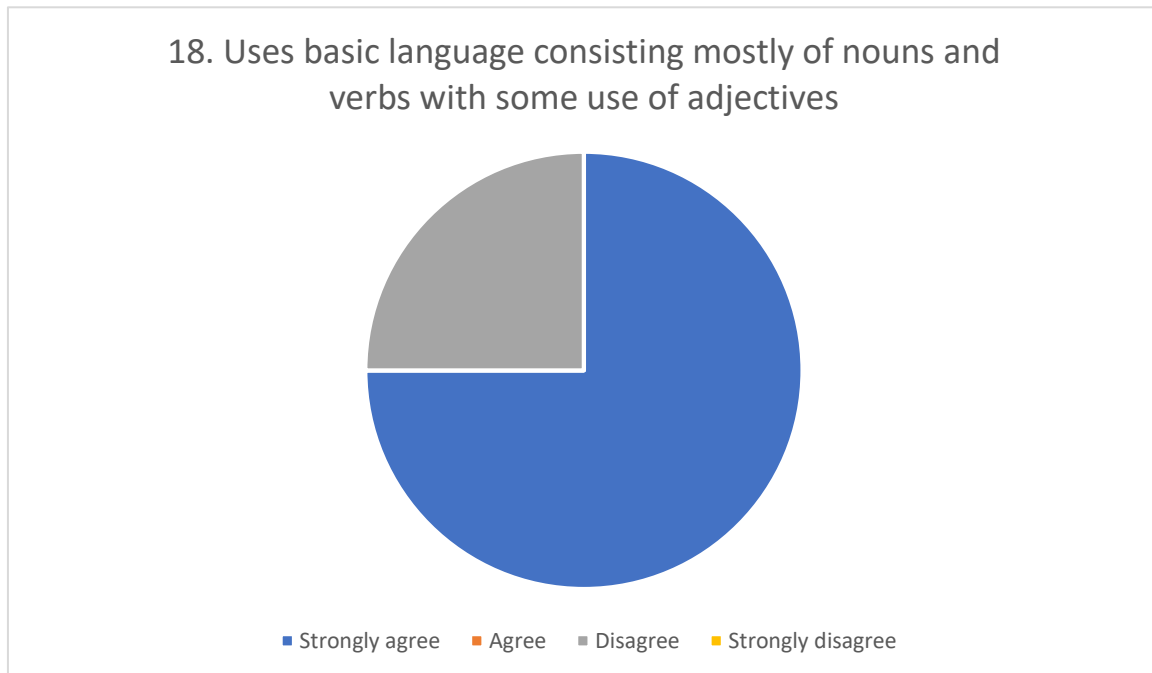
The graphic shows that 40% of the students do not verbalizes everything that is presented visually, 30% report strongly agree, while 20% agree and 10% strongly disagree.

### 17. Offer appropriate elaboration and detail about what speaker says



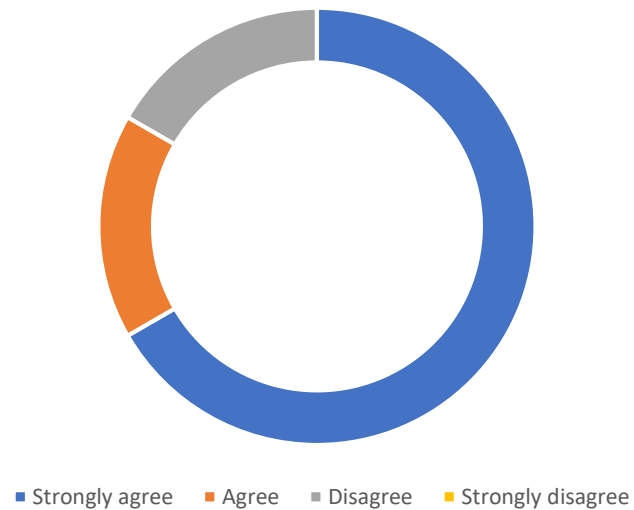
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

The graphic shows that 42% of the students offer appropriate elaboration and detail about what a speaker says, 25% agree, while 25% disagree and 8% strongly disagree.



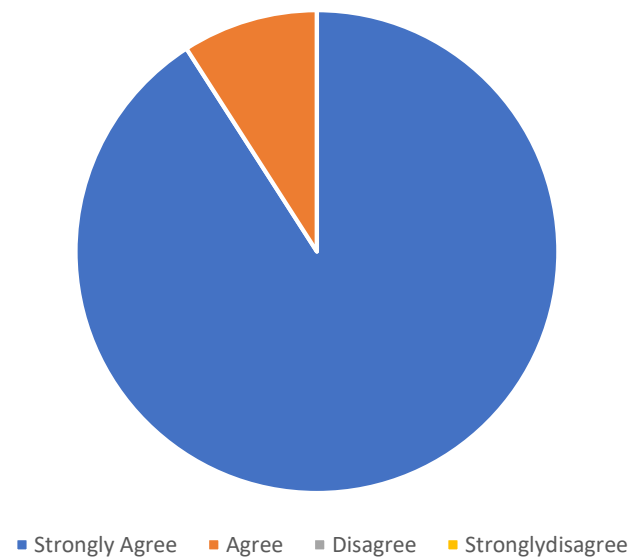
The graphic shows that 75% of the students uses basic language consisting mostly of nouns and verbs with some use of adjectives, 25% disagree, while 0% agree and disagree respectively.

19. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.



The graphic shows that 67% of the students describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly, 17% disagree, while 17% agree.

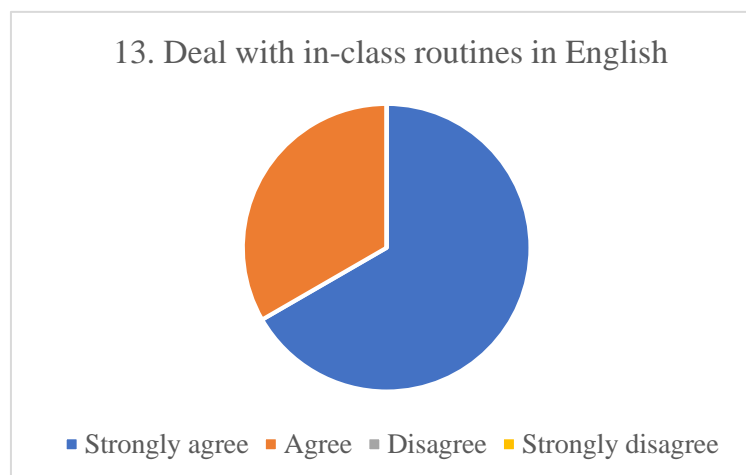
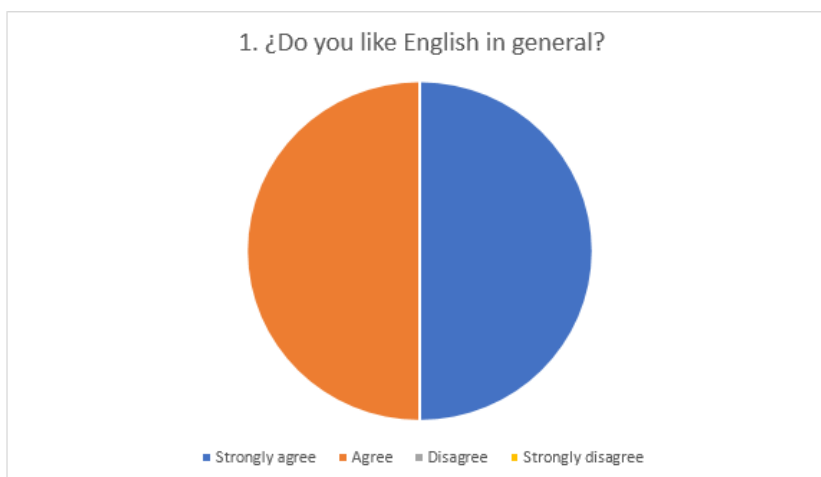
20. Give in-class presentations/demonstrations in English



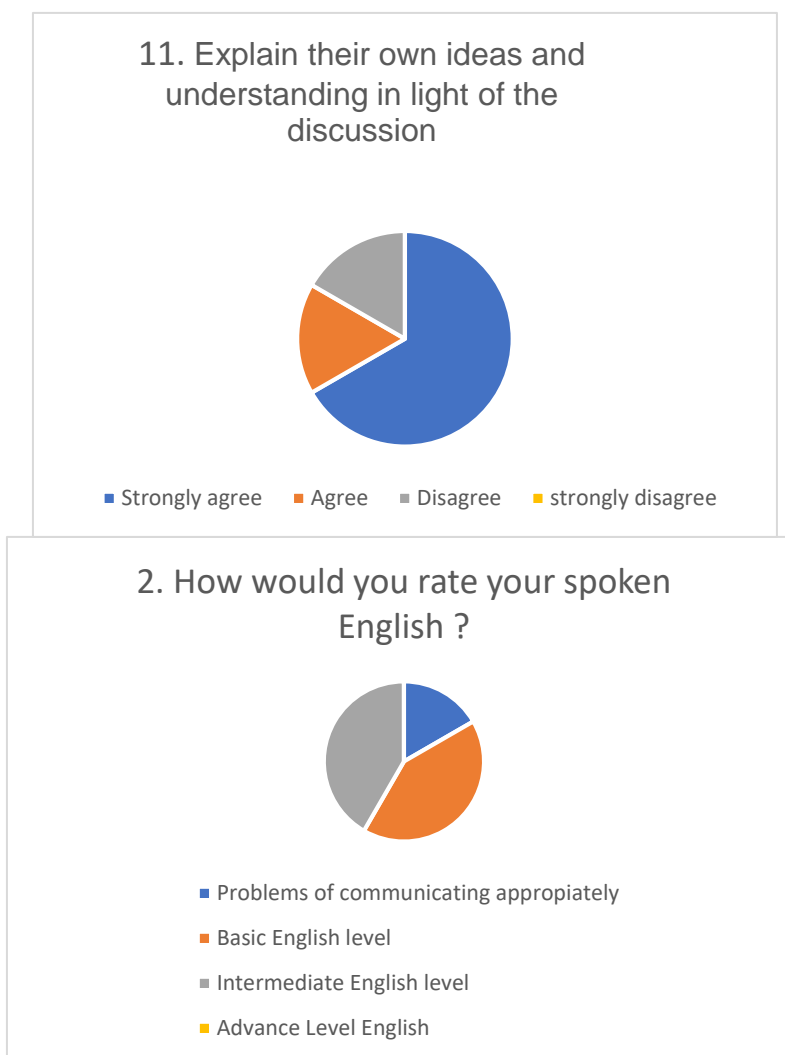
The graphic shows that 91% of the students give in-class presentations/demonstrations in English, 9% disagree, while 0% strongly disagree.

#### 4.1.2. Interpretation or explanation of the graphics

The graphics help understand the group, what goes on in an English class, the student's behavior and thoughts about English language. It also provides a complete diagnosis on how students and teachers work. Either the checklist or survey allow to have an idea on the student's English level and the interest for the topic. The graphics show favorable results and certain situations in which the strategy proposed in this investigation fit to improve English oral skills.



Based on the answers, 50% strongly agree and 50% agree showing favorable results. This means that most of the students like English, on the other hand, indicator # 6 shows that students deal actively in class routines. These two are connected because, based on the observation and data analysis, there is interest in the subject and evidence that students know routines.



#### 4.1.2.1. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion

This graphic shows that 67% of the students explain their own ideas and have a good understanding on discussions, 17% of them have certain difficulties showing

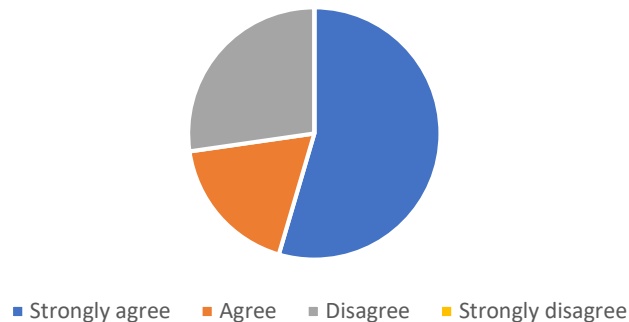
agree and disagree respectively.

#### **4.1.2.2. How would you rate your spoken English?**

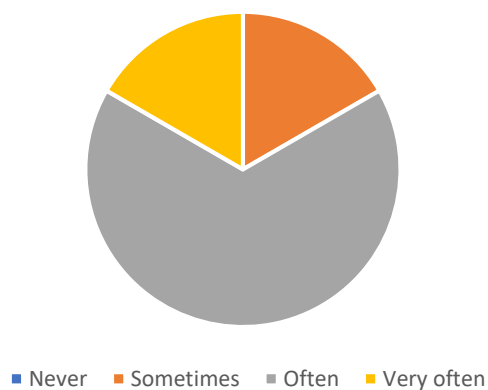
Based on the graphic. It shows 17% of the students have problems by the time to communicate appropriately, 42% of the students either have intermediate English level or basic English level.

By connecting these two points, there is evidence that students have a basic English, but they are reaching intermediate which means that, at this moment, they can explain ideas and understand certain topics without a problem. The observation confirms that level, since most of them communicate suitable during the class.

15. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding.



3. How often do you participate on in-class English activities ?



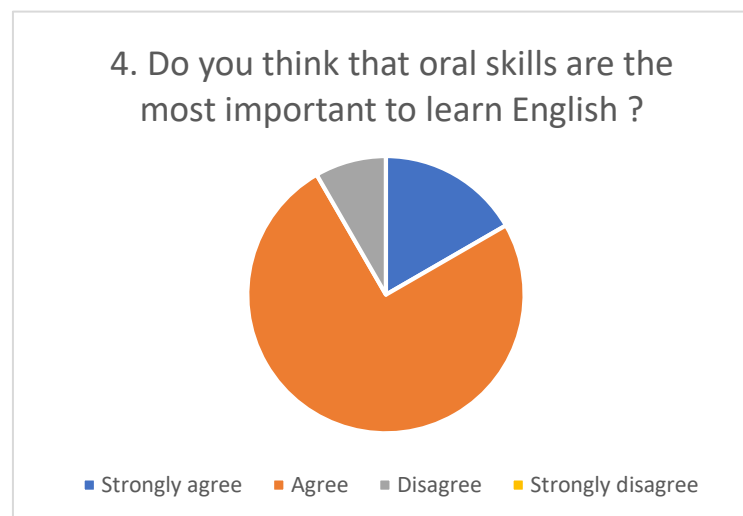
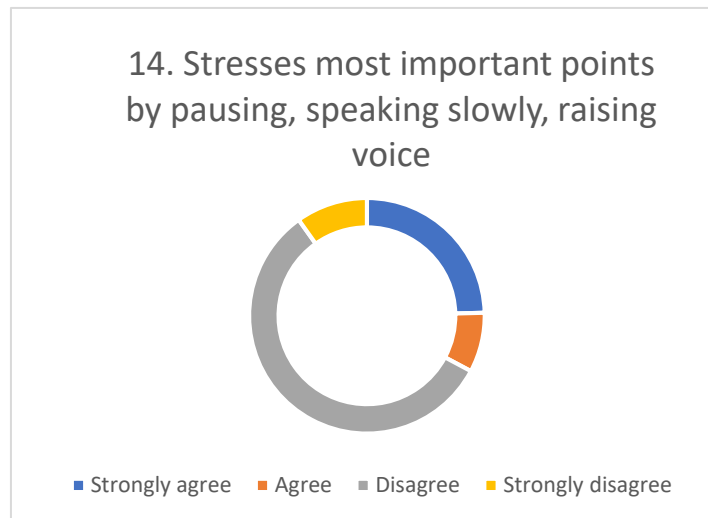
#### 4.1.2.3. How often do you participate on in-class English activities?

This graphic shows that 67% of the students often participate in English oral skills activities. On the other hand, 17% of the students either do it sometimes or very often, while 0% report never.

#### **4.1.2.4. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding**

The graphic shows that 55% of the students ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding, 27% report disagree while, 18% agree.

During the observation, there were different activities in which most of the students participated by asking question and clarifying with teacher vocabulary. They had activities related to the logistics area, so they look for related vocabulary to put into practice.



#### 4.1.2.5. Do you think that oral skills are the most important to learn English?

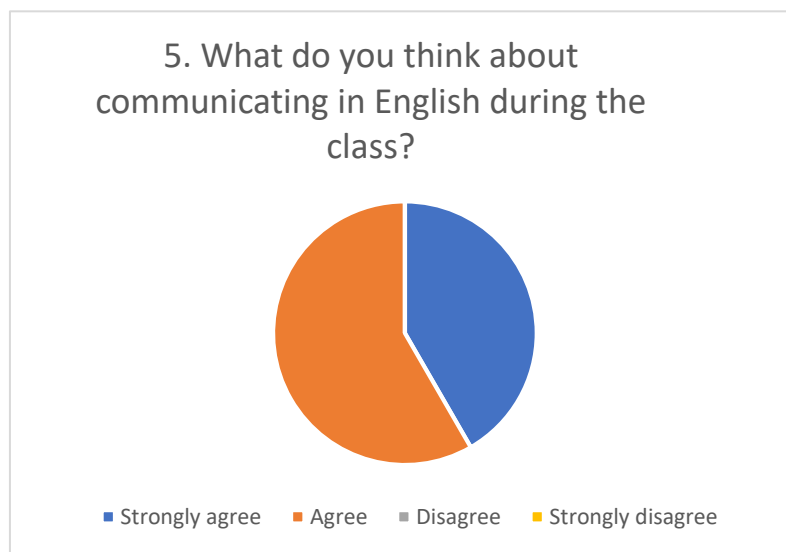
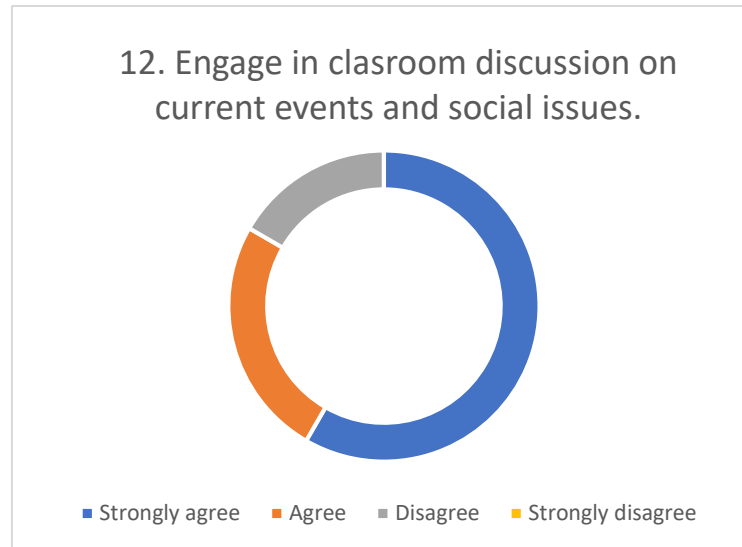
The graphic shows that 33% of the students think that speak in small groups make them speak in class, 25% shows that they go for an enthusiastic and motivated teacher or fun assignments, while 7% belongs to interesting topics.

#### 4.1.2.6. Stresses most important points by pausing, speaking slowly, raising voice

The graphic shows that 57% of the students do not stress most important

points by pausing, speaking slowly, raising voice, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 10 and 8% of the students indicate agree or strongly agree respectively.

It is important to point out that the observation was performed in a class named *English for communication* and the students are into logistics as technical area, so their focus is speaking as main skill. Based on the result, most of the students agree about the importance of the oral skills. This is related to production, since all the activities are intended to encourage communication. On the other hand, there were certain points to improve, such as fluency and pronunciation.



#### 4.1.2.7. What do you think about communicating in English during the class?

The graphic shows that 53% agreed about communicating in English during the class, 38% of the students strongly agree, while 0% of the students consulted disagree and strongly disagree.

#### 4.1.2.8. Engage in classroom discussion on current events and social issues.

The graphic shows that 58% of the students are engaged on English related

activities, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 17% of the students show a less favorable results on English related activities.

According to the results, communicating in English during the class is very important, knowing that, there is evidence that the students practice communicating activities such as debates, discussions. In this case, students discussed about the area the area of interest (logistics).



#### 4.1.2.9. How often do you practice English oral skills?

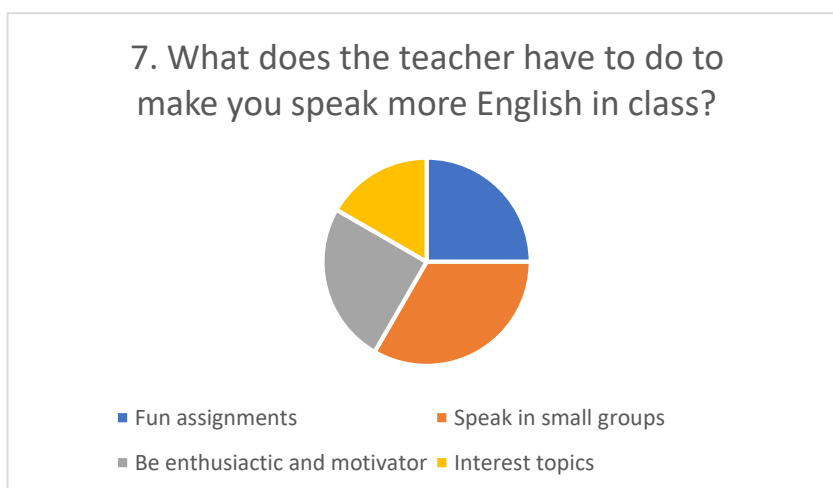
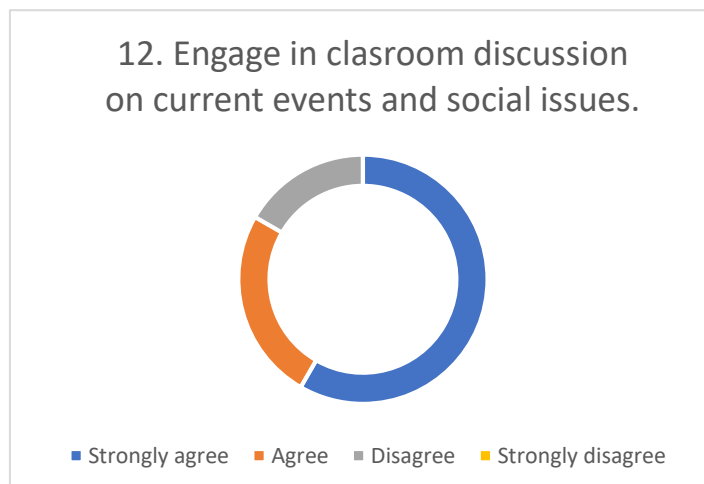
The graphic shows that 75% of the students often practice English oral skills, while 25% practice very often. On the other hand, 0% shows results of always and

never respectively.

#### **4.1.2.10. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly**

The graphic shows that 67% of the students describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly, 17% report disagree while, 17% shows on agree.

There was an agreement about the frequency in which students practice oral skills, since students often practice according to our results, they have the knowledge to describe and express ideas clearly.



#### 4.1.2.11. What does the teacher have to do to make you speak more English in class?

The graphic shows that 33% of the students think that speak in small groups make them speak in class, 25% shows that they go for an enthusiastic and motivated teacher or fun assignments, while the 7% belongs to interesting topics.

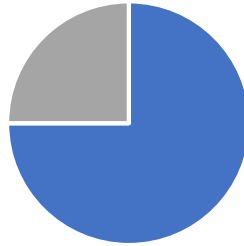
The graphic shows that 58% of the students are engaged on English related activities, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 17% of the students show a less favorable results on English related activities.

#### **4.1.2.12. Engage in classroom discussion on current events and social issues.**

The graphic shows that 58% of the students are engaged on English related activities, while 25% agree. On the other hand, 17% of the students show a less favorable results on English related activities.

Students decided that speak in small groups is the best way for them to improve oral skills, meaning that there is engagement in the activities and during the observation, students work in pairs and talk to each other preparing a small presentation. This connects these two points because there is evidence that they are aware to what they need to improve their English oral skills and most importantly they are applying it.

18. Uses basic language consisting mostly of nouns and verbs with some use of adjectives



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

8. In which scenarios you use more English?



■ To communicate with people  
 ■ For fun or leisure activities  
 ■ For research  
 ■ only for homework or assignments

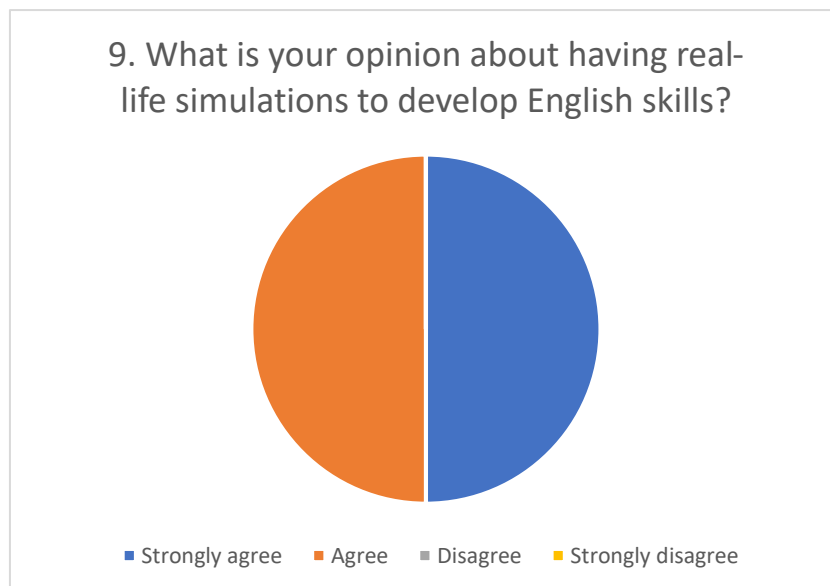
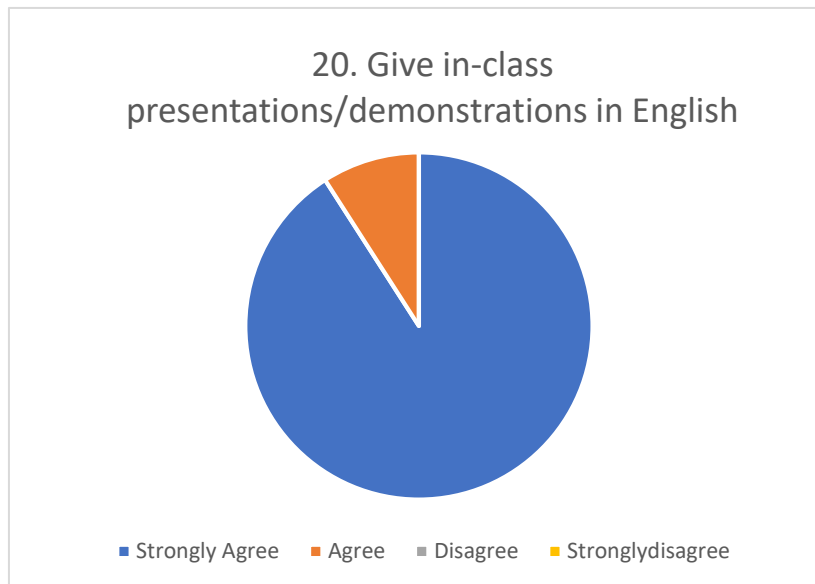
#### 4.1.2.13. In which scenarios you use more English?

The graphic shows that 50% of the students use English for fun or leisure activities, 25% use English only for homework or assignments, 17% to communicate with people and 8% for research.

#### **4.1.2.14. Uses basic language consisting mostly of nouns and verbs with some use of adjectives**

The graphic shows that 75% of the students uses basic language consisting mostly of nouns and verbs with some use of adjectives, 25% disagree, while 0% shows on agree and disagree respectively.

The results show that most of students use English for leisure activities, therefore, students must know some basic language to communicate with each other. Using nouns and adjectives is vital for them to structure sentences and communicate correctly.



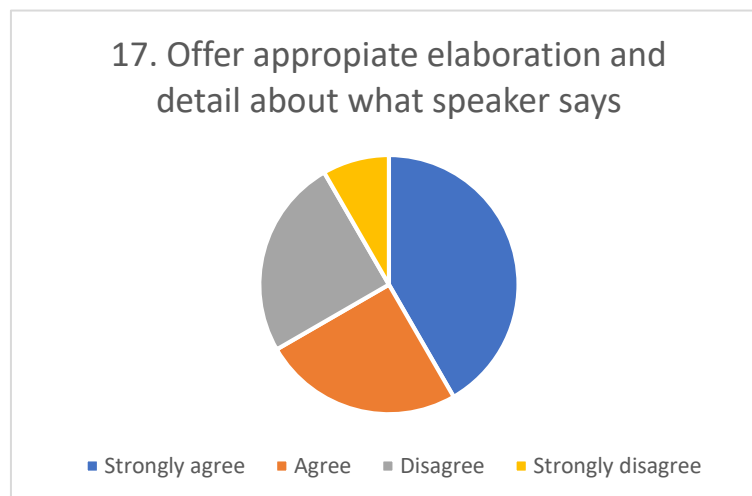
#### 4.1.2.15. What is your opinion about having real-life simulations to develop English skills?

The graphic shows that 50% of the students strongly agree on having real-life simulations and 50% agree, on the other hand, 0% of the students chose to disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

#### 4.1.2.16. Give in-class presentations/demonstrations in English

The graphic shows that 91% of the students give in-class presentations/demonstrations in English, 9% disagree, while 0% disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

Half of the students agree about having real life spaces and the rest disagreed. These two points goes together because students give presentations, during the observation, they demonstrated skills and performed activities related to technical area.



#### **4.1.2.17. What is your opinion about interacting with professional in technical areas to a future job market incorporation?**

The graphic shows that 53% of the students strongly agree on having real-life simulations and 38% agree, on the other hand, 0% of the students chose to disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

#### **4.1.2.18. Offer appropriate elaboration and detail about what a speaker says**

The graphic shows that 42% of the students offer appropriate elaboration and detail about what a speaker says, 25% agree, while 25% disagree and 8% strongly disagree.

Students agreed that the interaction with professionals is very important for a future job. There is evidence that students follow instructions and elaborate activities related to the topic at hand. This is very important, because they are aware of what the teacher says and follow processes in call, so by the time to interact with professionals in technical fields, they will be prepared.

## **CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

- Design a proposal using the information collected about Linked Learning through its strategy Work-based Learning, to help increase the oral skills needed to incorporate students of English for communication of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte to the technical job market

It is evident that students in the English language are not having the opportunity to apply, on real-life simulations, what they have learned. The reason why Work-based Learning takes place, after observing the group, is that it is a strategy that will help improve the preparation to face the job market. In this case, it is important to invest in this strategy thinking in the future. Another important point is the training either students and teachers must have to know the strategy. In addition, the teacher and student's role are an important part of the process. Work-based Learning finds ways for students to prepare and adapt to the job market.

- Determine what strategies English teachers use to prepare students in oral skills in English

Based on the observation done in the class *English for communication* in section 11-1 of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte, there were activities related to technical area, but none of them include Work-based Learning. In fact, certain strategies were common knowledge of a variety of topics.

As a conclusion, teachers must do more activities following the technical approach, meaning that all the class should be focus on studying everything related

with the area. Students have the tools to incorporate to the job market. Nowadays, students have theory which is good, but more practice is needed. This is the situation Costa Rica technical Education is facing in the present. One of the things seen during the observation was the change of activities, one activity was about the technical area and the other one about listening skills, not related to anything technical. There should be consistent, and all the efforts must be put on focusing to class attention.

- Investigate strategies related with Work-based Learning for improving oral skills

Work-based Learning has different strategies. The main one is the real-life simulation spaces that will help students to improve oral skills and, at the same time, prepare them for the job market. There is evidence that the strategy is not being considered, so it was difficult to evaluate something related, the students are studying with an academic approach.

When it comes to Work-based Learning, there are a variety of activities. Technical mentoring is very important and it is part of the teacher's role in Work-based Learning, at the same time, mentoring by the professionals will give students insights of a real experience.

Based on the questions, most of students agreed that having either interactions with professionals or rea-life simulations are useful strategies. During the observation, there were listening activities, but non-related to technical area.

- Examine the efficacy of the Work-based Learning activities

About the efficacy, based on the instruments, the activities were not related to Work-based Learning, therefore, it was difficult to examine activities such as mentoring, simulations and work experience. The class focused in regular activities, excepts for one that students used certain technical vocabulary to create a small conversation with the teacher supervision, but not anything related to Work-based Learning.

- What oral English-speaking skills do the eleventh-year students of the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Mercedes Norte lack, regarding oral skills, to enter the labor market successfully?

Based on the observation, students have a good English level, but there are areas needed to improve, such as production in terms of fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation, during the class activities, students were corrected by the teacher. In general, the group observed has a good level.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

Institutions should provide constant training either to teachers or students. There is awareness about Work-based Learning, but it is no used by High schools nowadays. Teachers should be leaders in investigation and they need to be creative about using new activities, strategies and technology in their classes. Technical mentoring is part of their work, along with the experience they can provide to the student in the learning process. The investment on this strategy is a step ahead for the future. The usage of Work-based Learning will bring benefits for students and the institution as well.

English teaching preparation programs need to be modified to include opportunities for instructors and students to develop skills for the critical analysis of reality and include Work-based Learning. These programs should also prepare students to challenge the technical area processes as well as the job market by work experience.

Activities should entirely relate to technical areas and teacher must work to adapt the class to provide students with a good experience about their career. The class should have visual aids with vocabulary and pictures for students to engage in the class.

There must be more connection between companies and high schools to arrange internships. Internships is work experience. Students taking a technical career should have this opportunity, at the same time, the interaction with professionals is very valuable because they will have a reference on how an industry works and the processes they may encounter.

Based on the observation, teachers should focus to bring materials and put videos about the technical area (logistics, in this specific case), constant training, and engaging with companies and industries. In addition, Work-based Learning planning is important to improve oral skills.

Also, they should bring materials for conducting outreach to businesses or companies, such as engaging businesses in job fairs, interviews, workplace tours, and Work-based Learning programing;

There should be descriptions of a wide range of Work-based Learning models, to increase understanding among the field of the diversity of successful work experience.



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## **CHAPTER 7. ANNEXES**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand the background information about English learning, level and basic information as liking and opinion about certain scenarios.

Please, mark with a (X), the best suited answer

1. Do you like English in general?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

2. How do you rate your level of spoken English?

- a) Problems communicating English appropriately
- b) Basic level of spoken English
- c) Intermediate level of spoken English
- d) Prominent level of spoken English

3. How often do you participate in English-speaking activities in class? (Select a single answer)

- a) Never
- b) Sometimes
- c) Often

d) Always

4. Do you believe that oral ability is the most important when learning English?

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Disagree

d) Strongly disagree

5. ¿Qué piensas sobre comunicarse en inglés durante las lecciones?

a) Muy de acuerdo

b) De acuerdo

c) En desacuerdo

d) Muy en desacuerdo

6. How often do you practice oral communication in English classes?

a) Not so often

b) Very often

c) Often

d) Very often

7. What should the teacher do to speak more English in the lessons?

a) Use fun assignments

- b) Let's talk in small groups
- c) Be enthusiastic and encouraging
- d) Use topics that interest me

8. In which of these scenarios do you use more English?

- a) To communicate with people
- b) For fun and leisure activities.
- c) To look for information
- d) Only for my studies and assignments

9. What is your opinion about having simulations of real situations to develop your English skills?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

10. What is your opinion about interacting with professionals in the technical area for future incorporation into the labor market?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree

d) Strongly disagree

English checklist for Oral Skills Evaluation.

INDICATORS	Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree
a) Explain their own ideas and understanding considering the discussion				
b) Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding. •				
c) Offer appropriate elaboration and detail about what a speaker says				
d) Verbalizes everything that is presented visually				
e) Stresses most important points by pausing, speaking slowly, raising voice, etc.				
f) Deal with in-class routines in English •				

<p>g) Engage in classroom discussion on current events and social issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>				
<p>h) Give in-class presentations/demonstrations in English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>				
<p>i) Uses basic language consisting mostly of nouns and verbs with some use of adjectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>				
<p>j) Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.</p>				

**Work-based Learning Training Plan**

<b>Student Name</b>			
<b>Work-based Learning Position</b>			
<b>Employer/Host</b>			
<b>Supervisor Title</b>			
<b>E-mail</b>		<b>Phone Number</b>	

<p>Type of Work-based Learning Experience <i>(Please choose one)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Apprenticeship</li> <li>○ Cooperative Education</li> <li>○ Internship</li> <li>○ School Based Enterprise</li> <li>○ Service Learning</li> </ul>
<p>Career Cluster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources</li> <li>○ Architecture and Construction</li> <li>○ Arts, A/V Technology and Communications</li> <li>○ Business and Marketing</li> <li>○ Education and Training</li> <li>○ Health Science</li> <li>○ Hospitality and Human Services</li> <li>○ Information Technology</li> <li>○ Manufacturing</li> <li>○ Public Safety</li> <li>○ STEM</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> </ul>
<p>Course sequence of related classes taken <i>(Please List all related coursework to WBL position)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

<p>Continuing Education Goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Business and Industry Training Program</li> <li>○ Two-year college</li> <li>○ Four-year college</li> <li>○ Branch of the military</li> <li>○ Apprenticeship</li> <li>○ Employment</li> <li>○ Other</li> </ul>
<p>Continuing Education Goals= <i>Specific Information</i></p>	<p>When:</p> <p>Where:</p> <p>Program:</p>

<b><u>Content Standards</u></b>	
<p>The student completes the following portion of the content standards-based training plan in collaboration with the mentor and teacher. Each standard should be related to the content of the chosen career pathway. Standards from related course frameworks in the chosen career pathway can be utilized. For each standard, please list methods to develop the skill at the Work-based Learning site along with how the mentor and teacher will assess the skill. Mentors and teachers need to initial to approve.</p>	
<p>Standard#1</p>	

What can I do at the host site to develop this skill?  1.  2.	How will the standard be assessed by the mentor?	Mentor's Initials
	How will the standard be assessed by the teacher?	Teacher's Initials
Standard#2		
What can I do at the host site to develop this skill?  1.  2.	How will the standard be assessed by the mentor?	Mentor's Initials
	How will the standard be assessed by the teacher?	Teacher's Initials
Standard#3		

<p>What can I do at the host site to develop this skill?</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	<p>How will the standard be assessed by the mentor?</p>	<p>Mentor's Initials</p>	
	<p>How will the standard be assessed by the teacher?</p>	<p>Teacher's Initials</p>	
<p>Standard#4</p>			
<p>What can I do at the host site to develop this skill?</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	<p>How will the standard be assessed by the mentor?</p>	<p>Mentor's Initials</p>	
	<p>How will the standard be assessed by the teacher?</p>	<p>Teacher's Initials</p>	
<p>Standard#5</p>			

What can I do at the host site to develop this skill?  1.  2.	How will the standard be assessed by the mentor?	Mentor's Initials
	How will the standard be assessed by the teacher?	Teacher's Initials

**Hazardous Equipment**

Equipment	Use or purpose of equipment


**Required Signatures**

Student Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Work-Based Education Training Agreement and Training Plan Paid & Unpaid Trainees

**Student/Learner Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ School District:

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ School Building:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: Emergency contact:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of safety instruction: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of credit hours to be granted:

\_\_\_\_\_

Concurrent, related academic course\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*For a student in a state-approved CTE program, the above verification must be made by a vocationally-certificated teacher or coordinator.

Type of Placement (check one):

Non-CTE Work-Based       CTE Work-based Learning (Program Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_)

Paid or Unpaid Work-Based  
only)

Paid or Capstone  In-District (gr. 11&12

Special Education Work-Based

Unpaid  Less-Than-Class-Size

**Employer Information (Complete for external placements only – Paid or Unpaid)**

Name of Firm:\_\_\_\_\_Supervisor:\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_Phone:\_\_\_\_\_

City:\_\_\_\_\_Zip:\_\_\_\_\_

Worker’s Disability Carrier:\_\_\_\_\_Policy No.\_\_\_\_

Liability Insurance Carrier:\_\_\_\_\_Policy No.\_\_\_\_

Job Title:\_\_\_\_\_Date Employment Begins: Ends:

\_\_\_\_\_

Hours to be worked:

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Earliest							
Latest							

Avg. Hrs. Per Day\*:\_\_\_\_\_Max Hrs. Per Week\*\*:\_\_\_\_\_Starting

Wage:\_\_\_\_\_

\*Cannot compute to more than ½ of the pupil’s FTE.

\*\*Work and school hours cannot exceed 48 hours per week for students under age 18

**Unpaid Employment Information (Complete for in-district placements only)**

IMPORTANT: **IN-DISTRICT** placements MUST be directly related to one of the following:

State-Approved CTE work-based (Name of related CTE Program: \_\_\_\_\_) PSN from above:

Postsecondary career and employment goals and objectives in the pupil’s transition service plan developed for special education services.

**A copy of the pupil’s transition services plan must be attached and relate directly to placement. Failure to do so will result in lost FTE.**

Position/Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This assignment is: (check one)

for the marking period                       for the semester                       for the school year

Hours to be worked (must occur during scheduled classroom time):

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri

Education Goals

Education/Career Goal(s):

List the education goals related to this placement that align with the student’s career pathway contained in the student’s educational development plan. For unpaid work-based experiences, specific, unduplicated skills must be listed for each 45 hours of placement.

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**\*Attach copy of the EDP or IEP.**

Training Plan (Specific Job Tasks To Be Learned At The Worksite)

For state-approved CTE programs, the training plan must be developed from the related OCTP performance elements as posted on the attached link:

**[http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,1607,7-122-1680\\_2629\\_2733-145785--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,1607,7-122-1680_2629_2733-145785--,00.html)**

Student Responsibilities (Local district determines responsibilities)

1. Complete work assignments in a timely manner.
2. Complete activity log sheets on a regular basis.
3. Complete work hours verification on a regular basis.
4. Be in assigned location on days and times scheduled.
5. Follow school's health and safety work rules.
6. Abide by all policies and procedures of the program,
7. Maintain good attendance in school.
8. Maintain grades in all subject areas.
9. Bring assignment/work

problems to attention of your assigned

teacher/supervisor.

Program Guidelines (Local district determines guidelines)

1. The training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that which would be given in

school where curriculum is followed and students are under the continued and direct supervision of representatives of the school or business.

2. The training is for the benefit of the students.

3. The trainees or students do not displace regular employees, but work under their close observation.

4. The employer who provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees or students; and on occasion, operations may actually be impeded.

5. The trainees or students are not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period, and

6. The employer and the trainees or students understand that the trainees or students are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training.

7. The district-certificated teacher/coordinator makes at least one on-site visit, every nine weeks, to the employer.

8. The employment of the student learner will conform to all federal, state and local

laws and regulations, including those that prohibit discrimination against any applicant or employee because of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, gender, height, weight, marital status or disability.

### **Safety Procedures and Training**

As a school district, we will provide basic work place safety instruction. As part of that instruction, we ask that the student learner use the following safety devices (safety glasses, face mask, vinyl gloves, safety boots) when requested by their supervisor or when warranted by MI-OSHA. This training will include instruction on blood borne pathogens, safe work habits, and fire safety. The student's and coordinator's initials attest that training has been provided and received. **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student initials** \_\_\_\_\_ **Coordinator initials** \_\_\_\_\_

---

Student's Signature

Date

---

Parent's Signature

Date

---

Certificated Teacher's Signature                      Date

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Employer's Printed Name and Signature Date

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION: It is the policy of the school district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, height, weight or marital status in its programs, services or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: