



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING.

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Resumen.

The literature review on Project-based Learning explores previous studies related to this topic of research and the way it can improve learners' foreign language acquisition and mastery of communicative skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Its flexible nature enhances the approach to working in large groups, bridging the student-research sphere, being a problem-solving technique applied to diverse levels of education, and back-teaching techniques, among others. The authors' views and real classroom experiences provide meaningful insights into how PBL can be suggested, designed, and implemented as an alternative for fostering students' performance at school and even higher education levels and considered to support collaborative, group, and autonomous work through a project foundation in the classroom. The results highlighted from those studies can be applied in foreign language education venues, schools, and universities. PBL can support academic resourcefulness in executing good teaching practices and help teachers commit to quality education for the region's people and other places.

Abstract: project, acquisition, foreign language, skills, literature review.

Abstract.

La revisión de literatura acerca del Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos explora estudios previos relacionados al tema de investigación y la manera que éste puede mejorar la adquisición de lengua extranjera en los aprendices, así como el dominio de habilidades comunicativas tales como: el habla, la escucha, la lectura y la escritura. Su naturaleza flexible permite la aplicación del enfoque en grupos grandes, propiciando una atmósfera entre la investigación y el estudiante, convirtiéndose en una técnica de solución de problemas aplicable a diferentes niveles educativos, entre otras. La posición de los autores y las experiencias reales proveen pautas sobre el diseño e implementación del ABP como herramienta en la escuela e incluso en niveles más altos, asimismo es considerado como un apoyo al trabajo colaborativo y autónomo por medio de proyectos en el aula de clase. Los resultados de dichos estudios pueden ser replicados en diferentes contextos educativos. El ABP puede ser un recurso académico de buenas prácticas de enseñanza, y ayudar

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a los docentes a alcanzar calidad en la educación para las personas de la región y otros lugares.

Palabras clave: proyecto, adquisición, lengua extranjera, habilidades, revisión de literatura

I. INTRODUCTION.

The teaching-learning process of a foreign language may appear like a routine and natural activity, like acquiring a first language; this process is developed through practice and comprehension. This development is not the same for all scenarios and populations in our country. Hence, it is essential to base the teaching-learning process on students' needs by applying methods or strategies that promote significant learning.

PBL technique can provide students with individual and group tools to reflect on their instruction environment and participate with an active role in their learning processes. They may act in a context of self-exploration and discovery where "learners have the right to be involved in curriculum decision-making, that is, selecting content, learning activities and tasks. It is also predicated on the belief that learners learn best if the content relates to their experience and knowledge" (Nunan, 2013). The PBL proposal seeks to rediscover the teacher and students' roles, design and implement resources, and let students learn through a model to get them close to their primary subject and help them with problem-solving and communication skills (Melad, 2018).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW.

The studies related to the research topic of PBL inside the classroom, particularly in teaching a foreign language, are classified according to where the studies took place and the general layout of their methodological features,

such as approach, paradigm, techniques, population, results, and conclusions. They provide significant insight for research on guidelines for conducting a PBL design in foreign language classes.

2.1. International literature review.

Kavlu (2017) tried to identify the theoretical framework that backs the implementation and use of PBL in the classroom, including its advantages and disadvantages in the learner's instruction with 21st-century skills. The research was conducted based on a qualitative paradigm, including an interview with the PBL promoter at all educational institutions in Fezalar. The implementation of PBL was successful at primary and secondary levels. Students not only improved their language abilities but also their communication, thinking, and analysis skills. The study concludes that PBL allows students to transform their traditional and monologue environment ruled by memorization into a modern context based on reality and critical-analytical thinking through authentic material and collaborative work. Its contribution shows the strength of skills in students, their motivation, how they can face challenges in life, and the possibility of implementing this type of teaching in the educational curriculum.

Dewi (2016) projected the techniques using Project Based Learning to improve Speaking Skills in the class. The objectives were to improve students' speaking skills, describe the process and use of PBL, and know students' replies to apply this method in class. It was characterized by a qualitative approach where four phases were introduced: topic selection, project design, planning with gathering information techniques, and presentation of the final product. Results show that speaking skills were improved after the tests, observation protocol, and questionnaires were applied. Moreover, students welcomed the dynamics of work and activities proposed ahead. This technique made them feel happier, motivated, and confident in their English level. The study concludes that PBL is recommended in class to foster speaking skills in students. Its contribution suggests that teachers and researchers use PBL in class as a strategy for problem-solving tasks.

Foss et al. (2019) established that their main objective was to examine PBL effectiveness as a teaching approach in an intense English course for higher education students. It used a qualitative approach to enhance flexibility towards the suggested methodology and design, where

the PBL proposal was to be compared with the traditional curriculum of intensive programs and their limitations. Results showed improved abilities and strengthened skills, particularly when bridging students' educational and personal context (English in use for their daily lives). The study concluded that PBL could be used to assess the student's progress by applying knowledge more than executing mere memorization. Its contribution supports the approach's applicability in problem-solving tasks and creating evident products. It also highlighted PBL's usefulness in class for group work.

Hudiananingsih et al. (2019) sought to study PBL effectiveness in students' performance. It was settled under a qualitative paradigm with two groups of work (experimental and control) with the same level of English, and they compared the application of PBL with conventional instruction. PBL was applied based on pragmatic, constructivist, and learning-action profiles to enhance skill, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Results show the importance of following the procedures when considering planning, development, and assessment steps. Students showed their learning, independent acts, group work, and problem-solving in those phases. It concluded that PBL was partially effective in test results and time for tasks. Future research is recommended to contextualize students in PBL and provide them with extra instruction, which may imply additional time for execution and exploring broader topics.

Kurniawati et al. (2019) describe how PBL fosters communication among students. The research methodology used in the study was a qualitative paradigm, gathering information through observation and video recording. The most important data was linked to testimonials and evidence of the theory during class time and activities. Results show that communication in the classroom increased among the students; they also developed a more solid oral expression performance and promoted moral values during practice, such as respect and tolerance towards different points of view. PBL is highly feasible for promoting classroom communication, interaction, and collaboration. Applying PBL in other areas of knowledge and educational stages is also recommended.

Melad Essien (2018) sought to analyze PBL's effectiveness in the foreign language domain and study all perceptions by participants related to this pedagogical proposal. The study was conducted using qualitative and quantitative

approaches, which included a perception test and a T-test for the statistical hypothesis. Results show improved critical thinking, independent learning, social responsibility, and communicative skills. PBL fostered its application as a learning methodology in the language field. It concluded that PBL enhanced collaborative learning during group sessions. Its contribution focuses on PBL's applicability in varied fields of knowledge, media incorporation, the reinforcement of teacher-student relations during the oriented teaching-learning process, and significant tasks.

2.2. National Literature Review.

Rojas and Rueda (2019) stated their aim to analyze the advantages and challenges of learning English through PBL by Indigenous bilingual students of the region. It was conducted through a research method and systematization (analysis and comprehension) of experiences. Results show, from the students' replies, that they initially felt demotivated for the task they had to do. Also, they did not find a direct relation between this method and the grades obtained in English subjects. Nevertheless, they realized the improvement in their level of vocabulary and sentence structure. It concludes that learning a foreign language is a step-by-step procedure, regardless of the teaching-learning approach used to achieve this purpose. Its contribution presents PBL as a tool to access other topics taken from the context Indigenous students were facing in their environment and communities; for example, English helps offer products at fairs around Colombia.

Aldana (2018) presents a reflection article about shortcomings in educational processes. From it, the author points out the importance of integrating the four skills in teaching a foreign language based on PBL. It used a qualitative approach, considering the direct relation between the participating population and teachers' performance under the national government laws and bilingual education guidelines. After data analysis, results show an improvement in linguistics skills, which, enhanced by PBL, allows students to lead an active role in their learning process from an early age. Endogenous factors like confidence and motivation are also supported when facing real-life challenges. In brief, this study highlights the importance of the teacher's role when educating critical students and providing significant knowledge on behalf of society.

Garzón (2018) examines the relevance of PBL and Guided Discovery in different language learning areas centered mainly on vocabulary acquisition. It is framed by action

research that identifies a real problem and proposes solutions while learning English. Tests, questionnaires, diaries, and a final product were developed for data gathering. From this step, results show that vocabulary increased through Guided Discovery and its application. Likewise, introducing PBL-based tasks allows students to enhance their motivation and commit to their learning process. It concluded that Guided Discovery strongly influences vocabulary acquisition, the teacher's role as a means, and the learning environment fostered by the two approaches. Furthermore, Reading and writing skills are also positively influenced.

González et al. (2019) defined an objective to analyze PBL's incidence on the Emotional Filter demonstrated by students in an educational institution. It was settled under a qualitative paradigm and action research, in which field diaries, observation rubrics, and questionnaires were developed. Also, the description of the phenomenon analyzed was conducted. Results show a reduction in the levels of anxiety, from high to medium rate, and motivation, on the contrary, from lower to higher levels. Based on students' opinions and experiences, it concludes that PBL represents a positive incidence factor on oral production and commitment when learning. Students' interventions and participation turned habitual and complete regarding the amount of transmitted information.

Bernal and Monroy (2018) describe PBL's effectivity related to ICT - Information and Communication Technology within the foreign language teaching process to undergraduate students. From distance learning, the students developed mini-projects and used technology in their learning process. Its paradigm focused on qualitative features as it registered students' opinions and perceptions towards their domain of ICT. Results showed the pivotal role of ICT when interacting, working in groups, and developing critical thinking about the real context. It concluded that the development of a project should not be only the teacher's function but the students' contribution as well.

2.3. Local literature review.

Guerrero (2019) shows a link between PBL and virtual technologies. The study was conducted at the national institutional section with branches nationwide. Its aim was framed within the student's autonomy when applying PBL and using virtual tools. It was developed

based on the action research methodology, in which observation, field diaries, and surveys were created for data gathering. Results showed receptivity by the community, the strengthening of autonomous learning in children, and cooperative work in project groups. It concluded that PBL is effective in class; it represents significant learning that promotes problem-solving skills through projects, and practice, experience, and virtual tools support this type of learning.

Revelo et al. (2018) conducted a study among three essential universities in the country. The author stated that the main objective was to make a summary of former studies related to collaborative work and becoming a didactic strategy for programming teaching. It was framed with a research approach based on evidence from the administration field and software engineering. It displayed the following steps: planning, searching for information, selection, assessment, and synthesis. Results were classified into five topics: general aspects, learning approach and types of study, identification of Cooperative Learning Techniques – CLT, brief description of purposes, and other significant proposals by authors. It concluded that cooperative work impacted the technical knowledge-learning processes such as programming and computing. Furthermore, the outlook of different didactic approaches mixed with methodologic proposals like BPL when searching strategies that foster possible solutions to problems that may arise.

2.4. Institutional literature review.

Erazo (2018) stated that the main objective was to analyze the curriculum structure of primary and secondary education in Colombia compared to Finland's curriculum structure. The study was developed under a qualitative paradigm, comparing the two curriculum proposals, and highlighting aspects like types of education, educational proposals, assessment, and literature review.

After the analysis process, results showed no considerable difference between the two curriculum profiles. However, learning through skills contextualized to the context, critical thinking promotion, and teachers' autonomy on subjects are worth mentioning. It concludes that PBL in class can be seen as a teaching and assessment approach at the various levels of education, which can enhance interest in doing research and interdisciplinary work through collaborative work. Finally, socio-affective skills are also considered.

Pérez (2020) sought to describe BPL's phases in class, identify the scientific skills in students within the Natural

sciences and Environmental Education areas, and assess the PBL approach to promote those scientific skills. Its methodological proposal was framed qualitatively due to its observation and skills and implementation of scientific competencies during the research process, which will be applied as acquired knowledge. Results showed that research projects require prior knowledge that the teacher may guide and strengthen throughout the tasks being developed. In conclusion, it is pivotal to use didactic strategies in class properly; the teacher and students can play their roles within the teaching-learning processes; this study area requires dynamism in its curriculum program more than a static nature.

III. APLICACIÓN DEL ABP

Based on the studies reviewed, the teacher may face some issues regarding knowledge acquisition when teaching foreign languages in class. Authors state, based on their experience, that PBL's nature and flexibility can help students improve and develop communicative competencies that represent their domain over the skills they must also acquire throughout the academic process like speaking, listening, reading, and writing as well as a range of vocabulary, fluency, and grammar foundation. (fig 1)

3.1 Problems linked to the vocabulary.

According to Vaca and Gómez (2017) and González et al. (2019), anxiety is one of the drawbacks students face in oral production and fluency. It is possibly the fear of being heard, judged, or embarrassed by their peers when communicating or transmitting ideas in public, as well as motivation and low self-confidence in one's linguistic capabilities. The factors above are considered the basics to enhance, construct, and finally acquire knowledge regarding social communication skills and a solid linguistic background, applying a strategy students can feel comfortable with. Bernal and Monroy (2018) and Rojas and Rueda (2019) consider that traditional methods of teaching, those that imply the socialization of a unit with grammar structures and particular topics centered on developing specific tasks and activities, are the kind of classwork that students are used to doing in class. This limiting factor can also represent another reason why students are prevented from exploring and adapting to additional learning approaches, the one that

can enhance their skills and challenge them to take part in a more active role, where fear (speaking in public or feeling ashamed) and traditional instruction are faced throughout PBL implementation. Their language skills are improved at the end of the learning process.

When PBL is implemented in the educational context, its design is oriented to promote deeper learning through the execution of tasks, activities, and guidelines. The skills and competencies to be enhanced individually or in groups foster reflection, collaboration, self-regulation, metacognition, and responsibility for the learning process. Foss et al. (2019) and Hudiananingsih et al. (2019) agree with the idea that understanding and comprehension are part of the skills necessary for the 21st-century, which see Project-based learning as well as Problem-based Learning as part of the curriculum sphere, where students learn from group interaction and collective feedback within the educational process.

3.2 Project-Based Learning (PBL).

As mentioned above, PBL is a methodological resource developed to achieve better education standards when teaching a foreign language and ensure active participation by the teacher and students throughout the process.

In many respects, Peterson (2012) claims that John Dewey was a relevant precursor of the approach in the Educational Reform he took part in at the beginning of the 20th century; he started with his philosophical visions and opinions about the education of that time. In Dewey's publication (1910) *How We Think*, he suggests reflective and critical thinking for solving problems as characteristics of educational instruction and student adaptation to their time and context.

However, William Heard Kilpatrick (1918) broadened this vision in what he would define as project method, and later, he would represent the foundation of what scholars know as PBL nowadays.

Within the educational field, PBL is a learning process focused on the student, where experience from applying knowledge provides tools and means to achieve significant and profound learning. Nonetheless, the teacher's role is also essential for its development and application. Erazo (2018), Kurniawati et al. (2019), and Nurhidayah et al. (2021) show the reality of the dynamics of work that may be evident in group work; in this sphere, intra and inter-relationships may evidence the influence

of cooperative and collaborative scope to do research. The authors state that the teacher is a responsible tutor in charge of the student's learning process (student-centeredness), a guide for students at the meta-cognitive level, and a support when resources are needed. Likewise, they agree that problem-solving tasks should also be guided through thinking, as well as students' research of resources and their interaction with the environment and its members. This is a process that students master through exercise and practice during their professional performance.

Considering the teacher and students' roles in PBL, Permatasari (2013) and González et al. (2019) claim that PBL effectiveness is significant when students engage in real problems. Students' attitudes towards learning increase when things are attractive. The authors support what PBL states as some of their principles: the teacher's role turns from a traditional lecturer or transmitter to a guide for the students. It means a 'transition from traditional teaching methods to Project-based learning,' as Maros et al. (2023) stated in their study about PBL's effectiveness. Additionally, a receptive attitude is assumed to immerse the students in the learning environment, mainly when expressing their opinions, giving ideas, questioning, and collaborating with their peers while interacting. Those characteristics are highlighted when PBL is activated as a feasible teaching strategy in class and possibly more attractive to the whole school community. It is essential to highlight that PBL can be applied to a wide range of subjects in the curriculum.

Another characteristic worth noting when applying PBL is questioning because it represents curiosity, quest, and application of the Program by students supported by the teacher's guide. For Almulla (2020), the factual role of PBL teachers is to use this approach to allow students to address their questions. Patton's view (2012) claims that 'Project-based learning' states students design, plan, and conduct a project that can be visibly displayed such as a product, presentation or publication' (p.13). Supporting Patton's view, other authors among Bello (2012), Kalabzová (2015), and Melad (2018) agree with this last aspect, another motivational factor for the student community and teacher, as well as the institution or school where it takes place.

3.3 PBL's implementation process.

PBL in class can explore not only the linguistic aspect of a foreign language but also become aware of what is happening in the surroundings or students' context. This approach may construct knowledge and awareness in

students so they can understand and give their opinions regarding any topic of interest, namely social, educational, and political fields. Thus, when students interact with their peers, they can expand that knowledge through social interaction and practice.

Again, aimed at students and their interaction in the classroom, Schiro (2012) and Vaca and Gómez (2017) believe that students can construct knowledge from their perspective by working in a collaborative atmosphere with their peers and sharing knowledge, which not only be categorized as new but also a way to support their partners with difficulties or challenges. The community around this idea fosters problem-solving and critical thinking, enriching Dewey's social learning theory through practice. Gone was the traditional instruction, which the teacher imposed and led academic activities. For Kavanagh and Rainey (2017) and Reisman et al. (2018), instruction has become a negotiating process between students and the teacher within a collaborative atmosphere where ideas arise to grow and develop. Education nowadays, according to Bello (2012), Ford et al. (2014), and Pinzón (2014), teachers can link their teaching to culture so that students get engaged with different approaches to learning and correspond to the responsive pedagogy proposed in their academic context as well as understand that English is a need. Teaching a foreign language is not a simple and defined procedure to be applied once or twice, nor is it replicated as the same model for all existing contexts.

3.4 PBL's experience and assessment.

In terms of effectivity, PBL may base its theoretical foundation on additional conceptual frameworks. For example, Significant Learning was first coined by American psychologist David Ausubel. This theory takes us to a reflection on education and social skills in the classroom, but it is not only a matter of concepts but also functions. Notably, the teacher's role is that he/she is aware of the current student's knowledge. From this reflection stage, he/she can adapt strategies or methods to guarantee deep and significant learning by the students. In response, students are expected to show a more active attitude towards their learning process, and their motivation can also increase. Aimed at Maros et al. (2023) view, all teachers must hold a profound knowledge of lessons to maximize students' activities, skills, and effectiveness.

In Salazar's (2012) and Vaca and Gómez' (2017) view, it is said that a significant learning process is represented with information being assimilated and incorporated into the student's cognitive structure where relevant

aspects will define its importance and feasibility. Within the process, students will oversee leading their research tasks; at the same time, they can strengthen their learning when activating what they are studying or revising for the research through group work. Likewise, Diaz and Hernandez (1998) and Kavlu (2017) support the fact that students can select what they consider is essential information from diverse sources; by doing this, students can link prior to incoming knowledge and make mental or conceptual associations to develop content on their own as well. They will explain what they understand from the world surrounding them. This reinforces one of the principles of PBL, which is hands-on work experience, which is the element that triggers learning.

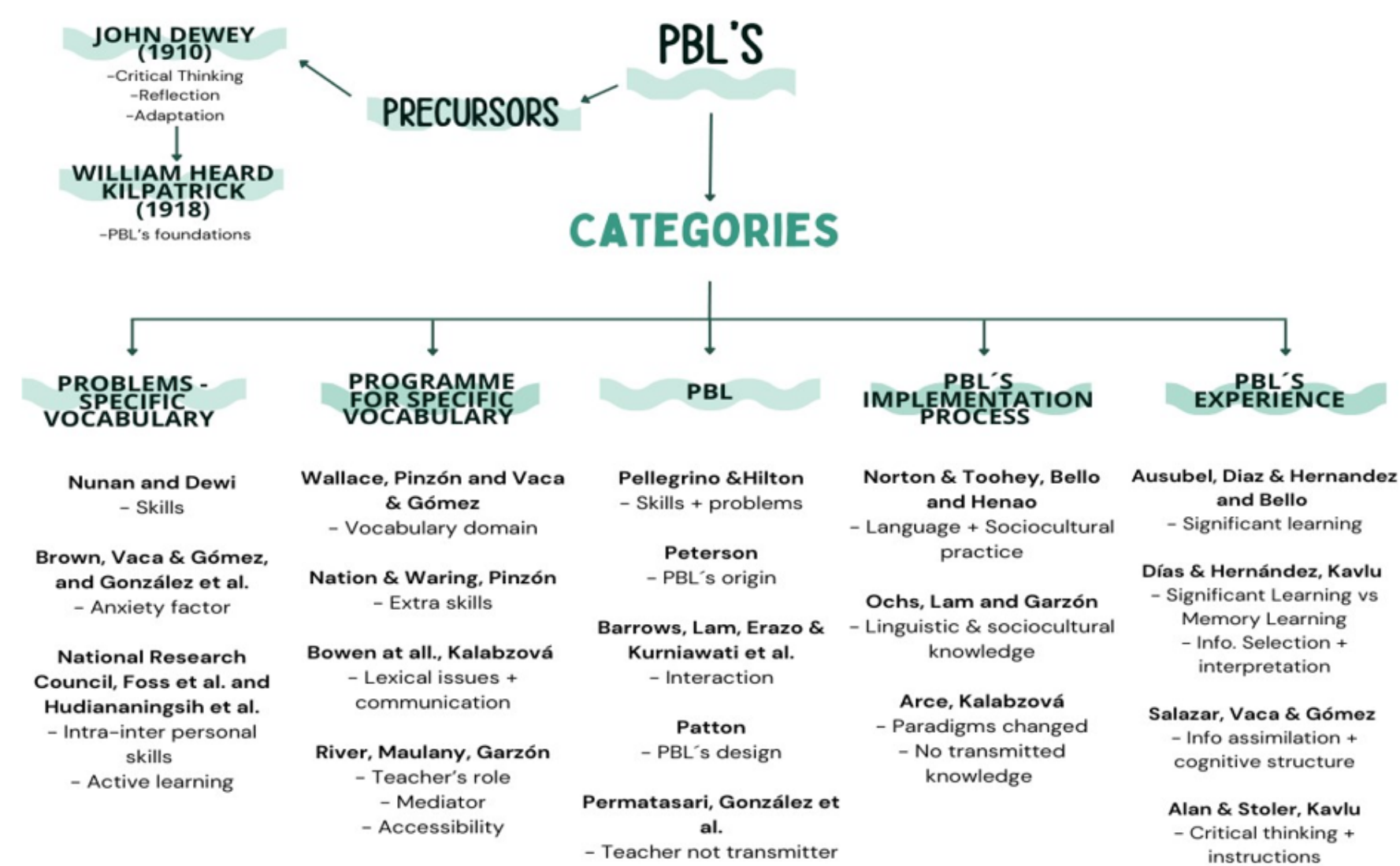
Authors views on former PBL supporters like Dale (1969) and Erazo (2018) claim that projects are considered a means to involve students in a teaching context where they are fully responsible for their learning as well as their peers, learning by doing represents research, application, assessment, and assimilation.

Erazo also states that the characteristics projects have got; they are described as follows:

- Projects are aimed at fostering investigative thinking and applying knowledge correctly.
- Projects aim to improve communication among teachers and students by increasing reading, writing, and oral expression.
- Projects aim to replace working memory with long-term memory when reaching three processes: planning, transformation, and revision.
- The projects aim to strengthen interdisciplinary work among teachers from different subjects and collaborative work among students organized in cycles.
- Finally, projects aim to develop emotional competencies, mainly when findings are socialized; they promote respect and tolerance towards other people's views. (p. 103).

The PBL implementation phases can be set and displayed according to timetables, deadlines, and student socialization. The teacher will continue to guide the process, and students will participate by supporting the group. Communication is also recommended throughout the whole procedure.

Figure 1
PBL's representatives and authors



IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

Most of the research above agrees that an interview or a leading conversation should be conducted to gain insight into the PBL experience for the students. Concerning the interview about the experience, one of the standard instruments developed to gather information was a semi-structured interview with open questions on the experience. It allowed the interviewers to register all details about the participants' experiences towards the study and allowed students to expand their responses. Based on the experience of the authors, speakers, and consultants Justin Bariso (2017), Jeff Haden (2019), and Jodie Fox (2021), an interview can be led by a good question, one that provides as much information as possible, the type of question that allows the interviewer display a huge conversation from one question rather than a bunch of them; this question need to be listened

carefully by taking note of every detail as the participants or interviewees are expressing themselves. Finally, it was essential to consider that the interviewer should explain the object and process of the investigation to the students (participants) and the importance of their answers to the study.

For this stage, the analysis was centered on understanding the phenomenon's reality; observation and interaction with participants are crucial because they provide first-hand information related to the study and students' experiences towards the proposed research. Instruments like the semi-structured interview and the field diaries were also expected to offer extra data and become an evidence portfolio. By doing this, information was organized in a structured way to register and organize the data collected.

For the discussion stage, the application of the studies demonstrated the hypothesis of PBL's effectiveness was stated around a project. Then, it was required to validate

it with the information gathered during the study, and the conclusions arose. The qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the research required interpreting the results obtained, and it provided a general understanding to fellow teachers interested in applying a similar proposal when teaching a foreign language on a particular skill.

Those expository approaches give a clear idea about integrated methodology and easy and significant development of PBL. Likewise, it upgrades students' skills, abilities, and strengths within the learning process. The outcome shows that a domain of comprehensible knowledge is developed throughout the beginning and conclusion of the Project. The researchers concluded that another benefit of PBL is the role of the teacher, which can be emphasized as an instructor or enabler, and the cooperative bonds established among the members of the work groups, once more where knowledge, motivation, and autonomy are expanded. Hence, the student's motivation and interest are reachable domains inside and outside the classroom, and it opens spaces and opportunities for them to face challenges or daily life issues.

V. CONCLUSIONS.

The evidence showed an evident transferability of knowledge when applying PBL in the classroom; other characteristics like critical thinking were also evident in some studies, particularly when students lead their projects to solve problems. Instruction and guidance were also helpful in reaching objectives. The evaluation or assessment instruments may require flexibility based on students' context and level. Those studies also showed some limitations concerning self-motivation, materials, time, and cooperative work articulation, although they can be solved when articulating goals and steps.

It is also evident that additional research is required. The PBL approach has its features and structure, but circumstances, populations, and environments will always be different from place to place. The sort of resources, assessment techniques, instruments, phases, and strategies are crucial to planning an adequate PBL atmosphere. For further studies, the PBL approach can be compared to other procedural methods because teaching and learning require constant exploration and imagination; instruction is still necessary.

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