

2010

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# A study of the Implementation of a Professional Development Portfolio Program as a Method to Introduce Performance Based Instruction in an Ecuadorian Bilingual Private School

Rafaela Menoscal de Guerrero

Trabajo Final para la obtención del Título de Magíster en  
Educación Superior, con mención en las nuevas tendencias en  
la formación de profesores de inglés  
Res. CONESUP RCP. S04-N° 111.04

Guayaquil, December 2010







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### **Abstract**

This action research explores the effect of a collaborative process that uses teachers' professional development portfolios to promote reflection and improvement in teaching and learning to speak English. The subjects of the research were ten high school teachers from a Catholic girls' private school in Guayaquil, Ecuador, who during a ten month period; planned, implemented and assessed speaking activities coherent with performance-based methodology. The portfolio described in this intervention was evidence of the understanding and use of methodology, which requires planning, teaching and assessment based on performance based objectives. Evidence provided by the teachers in their portfolios as well as during teacher-led conferences and a final interview confirms that they have improved their practices of teaching English speaking by planning focused on performance based objectives (PBOs), implementing activities coherent with them and using PBOs assessment criteria to evaluate their students performances. Findings also show that portfolios are an important tool for professional development and that they help administrators by providing evidence of teachers' skills and knowledge, and also of their training needs.

Keywords: Portfolio process, performance based instruction, performance based objectives, teaching practices, collaboration, reflection.

## Dedication

To my husband and daughter for their infinite patience and unconditional love, to my parents and brother who have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to give recognition to the people who helped me during the process of working in this project. I want to thank Universidad Casa Grande for the fantastic work they do to instilling teachers a passion for teaching and learning. My teachers during the courses of the masters' program were a living example of that passion.

I would like to give special recognition to the ten teachers who were part of this study. Thank you for allowing me to work with you and for helping me learn from you and your students about the way teachers learn.

Finally, I want to thank my thesis director, Karen de Nieto, for having patience with me and being ever so generous. Her advice and even her pickiness at times helped me give form to my own learning processes. I would even give special thanks to her husband who during those mornings working on the project warned us about “karoshi” or death due to overwork.

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*“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”*

*(Confucius)*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The teaching profession requires constant revision and up-dating. Teachers can no longer be passive and assume that they have learned all they needed to know. Modern studies in education show a strong link between teachers' preparation and students' academic performance. Additionally technology has brought with it rapid access to information that enables teachers to confront the challenge of helping students learn not only while in school but also when they leave it. Educators can no longer ignore that the modern job market requires people who not only know, but who can perform, who can show their skills at work and who are proactive. This reality implies that educators must assume the responsibility of constant learning and development and reflect upon what they do in their classrooms.

Scholars have emphasized the importance of educators' reflecting upon their teaching practice and the analysis of their attitudes towards language teaching and learning as a basis for learning enhancement (Nunan, Richards, & Lamb, 1996). Linda Darling Hammond (2006) suggests, among other strategies, professional development portfolios. This study implemented the use of this strategy, based on the assumption that it will aid teachers' reflection, and result in improved practices (Zubizarreta, 2009).

English teaching has experienced increased development in Ecuador. As in many other countries the importance of learning this language has been a goal of important private



schools in the country, resulting in the need for better training. English teachers' training has followed, in Ecuador, the same trends found in other countries. Teachers have gone from the classical grammar based method to communicative language teaching and performance based instruction generally based on TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) standards. (Richards & Rodgers, 2002) It is necessary to mention that English teachers' training has been severely criticized by educators of other fields for going from improvisation to eccentric innovation. It is a reality that until recently most English teachers were professionals of other areas who knew English and who started working without any academic background in education. This phenomenon has created in bilingual schools and institutions the need to train teachers while in-service, in the new methods and strategies that will guarantee a successful English learning experience. These in-service training programs intend to promote action and reflection to improve language teaching and teachers' learning.

Professional development portfolios have been successfully used in different education programs in the United Kingdom, Australia and in the United States in the preparation of student teachers. They are as described by Wolf (1996), as "a collection of information about teachers' practices." (p.34) Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) add that "portfolios can provide opportunities for teacher candidates to examine and analyze videotapes of teaching, student work samples and performance assessment entries" (p. 126) Studies in the countries previously mentioned have shown that portfolios organized around specific tasks or performances can develop a conceptual framework about teaching thus improving teaching practices. But, the question is can they be used in Ecuador to train in-service teachers.

This action research attempted to answer that question. It was carried out in the secondary level English area of a bilingual private Catholic girls' school in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador. The school is ISO certified and has gone through a successful

authorization process to acquire the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization's Diploma Program. Mentioning this is important because it evidences the institution's commitment to excellence. The teachers who were part of the study are usually open to any professional development opportunity and have shown they are eager to learn about different methodologies that promote authentic learning. They have been exposed to different types of training being the majority of which consists of traditional lectures, isolated from context or school needs.

In year 2008, the secondary English area coordinator conducted in-service training sessions focused on the application of the methodologies, guidelines and format of the IB External assessment, which consists of two written tests. Teachers incorporated these methods in their classrooms as well as in their written evaluations but omitted listening and speaking. Listening and speaking are directly linked; however the types of activities teachers planned consisted of isolated speaking and listening exercises, disconnected from the units being studied. Teachers' traditional methodology has focused more on knowing content than on practical use. Thus, this intervention has been contextualized in speaking and listening classes. The methodology teachers must apply requires them to focus their practices (planning, implementing, and assessing) on performance based objectives (PBOs) that do not currently guide teaching oral fluency. The program lacks connectivity to other EFL (English as a Foreign Language) activities and has been implemented for years as isolated graded activities that require students to speak without any learning purpose, not to mention any feedback.

The present study analyzed whether a reflection process using portfolios aids two groups of secondary level English teachers to improve their teaching practices. One group included seven literature teachers, and the other group consisted of three teachers of subjects given in English, such as science, geography, environmental science, economics and current events. A

total of ten teachers, all female, participated in the intervention. The study attempts to serve as a guide to educate future teachers to focus more on doing than on knowing which is at the core of language learning.

## **II. Literature Review**

### *The Issue of Helping Teachers Learn*

For decades administrators and educators have been concerned for the way to improve academic programs. From the fifties through the eighties researchers held the assumption that the external socioeconomic and cultural aspects to which the learners were exposed, had a major impact on their capacity to learn. In recent decades scholars interested in education reform have identified teachers' professional performance as a variable that may have a greater impact on the learning taking place in classrooms all over the world. According to education experts Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) "Many people do not understand what successful teaching requires, and do not see teaching as a difficult job that requires rigorous training" (p.112). People in general and very often teachers themselves believe that teaching only takes knowing the subject matter that students should learn, having good class management, or replicating what their good teachers did when they were taught. So, the questions here are: How can teachers improve? How can they learn? Teachers can improve through sustained professional development opportunities that meet their real interests and needs. School leaders should decide to allow teachers a voice regarding their real professional education needs, as Roberts Evans states: "Teachers who are empowered to make decisions about their school will structure their classrooms to empower students in the learning process, encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their own education" (p. 2) *He also asserts:* "A key point...is that empowerment's true target is not teachers or any other constituency, but the school...To achieve it requires an authentic leader to take the primary role in both shaping the framework and nurturing the capacity of others to help shape it" (as cited in Mohr & Dichter, 2002, p.2) Thus, another question arises: How can administrators facilitate teachers' professional development while in-service?

*The Issue of Learning While In-service*

Research has shown a strong connection between teachers' training and students' academic success (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). Sparks (2002) adds that professional development must respond to the teachers' current needs therefore it should be contextualized in their job-site. Traditionally teachers' training sessions have consisted of lectures in which the trainer advocates that hands-on learning take place but provides little input on how to do it, much less how to assess the impact of this type of training on students' performance. Teachers deserve more active learning because students deserve great teachers as stated by Professor Anita Lundvall on July 4, 2008 in her Supervision of EFL Programs class. In accordance with this view we must keep in mind what Wasley-Hampel and Clark (1997) list as keys to fostering teacher learning: time, collegiality, analytical capacity and expertise. Darling-Hammond and Baratz Snowden (2007) explain that successful training experiences must possess the following characteristics: clarity of goals, modeling of good practices, frequent opportunities for practice with continuous formative feedback and coaching, multiple opportunities to relate classroom work to theory, teacher responsibility, and structured opportunities to reflect on practice. Darling-Hammond (2006) adds that among other things, common features of a good professional development program include: case study, methods, teacher research, performance assessment and portfolio evaluation (p. 120). Diaz-Maggioli (2003) mentions among proven professional development strategies: peer coaching, dialogue journals, mentoring, participatory practitioner research and professional development portfolios.

*Professional Development Portfolio: a Learning Tool*

Professional development portfolios, gave form to the intervention in this study. Knowing that professional development is an ongoing process that requires consistent supply

of information about the individual's progress (Shore, Foster, Knapper, Nadeau, Neill, & Sim, 2006), the teaching portfolio serves a central formative assessment role. Portfolios are used as a means for language development by students and teachers of languages in Europe. Such is the case of the European Language Portfolio, which functions include: to be used as a tool for learning and promoting autonomy in the process, and to be used as a tool for assessing and recording (Council of Europe, 2001). Darling Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) describe the portfolio as "...a tool for teacher-education programs that is a collection of materials from the teacher's work, such as lesson plans, assignments, samples of student work, and videotapes of the teacher in action...to help teachers document their mastery of the standards of teaching practice" (p. 126) Portfolios were originally developed to be used as a means to evaluate students, but now professional development portfolios provide a way for professionals to focus on and document their own development in specific areas. A portfolio is a systematic collection of teaching materials and reflections. According to Darling-Hammond (2006):

In making a portfolio, teachers select and reflect on artifacts of their practice collected over time and from multiple sources as evidence of their thinking, learning, and performance. Portfolios can include documents derived directly from teaching –copies of lesson or unit plans, syllabi, student handouts, assignments, tests, samples of student work (with or without teacher's feedback) as well as photographs, video tapes, and audiotapes of classroom activities ranging from bulletin boards to taped lessons, conferences with the students and the like. There may also be documents requiring additional work on the part of the teachers such as teachers' logs or journals (p. 142)

Consequently, the process of making a portfolio is as important as the portfolio itself for its focus on learning. Portfolios contribute to sophisticated learning by exploring how strategies of reflective practice, especially aided by some kind of coaching or mentoring, can promote

teachers learning. They improve teachers' autonomous learning, organization and metacognition. (Klenowski, 2000)

Among the limitations of portfolios Russel and Butcher (1999) state "they require more time than any other form of assessment" (p.9). Holmes (2008) concluded, "There are issues around how portfolios are used once they have been created. Their value is reduced if they are not shared with others for feedback and input." He further recognizes that portfolios have the potential of being both summative and formative. She cautions

"Another potential limitation is the place which professional development portfolios might occupy within the context of your school. Ideally they should be linked to the bigger picture of whole school improvement and the raising of standards of teaching and learning. If they are kept quite apart from that focus, their potential will necessarily be limited" (p. 1)

Another problem encountered in the use of portfolios is that they have been used mainly to collect and evaluate student work at the end of a course. The result of this practice is that learners have had a tendency to use them as display products so that learning takes a secondary place to favor the document's presentation (Zubizarreta, 2009). These possible problems were taken into consideration as the intervention in this study was implemented keeping in mind Zubizarreta's recommendations:

More significant learning is likely to occur if the portfolio maker is encouraged to come to terms self-consciously over the duration of training with essential questions about learning itself such as:

- How have such products as those collected in a portfolio over time contributed to significant higher-order thinking?

- What has the student learned from the process of generating the work and from collecting it, selecting it, analyzing its value, pondering its integration and future applications?
- How does the work fit into a larger framework of lifelong learning that goes beyond simply completing graded assignments?
- Why was the work valuable in the learner's overall cognitive, social, ethical, spiritual development?

These questions invite learners to exercise critical reflection, which should be a component of any learning portfolio.

*The issue of Learning to Become a Reflective Teacher*

Schön (1987) introduced the concept of reflection as a way of insightfully analyzing one's own performance in any discipline while being coached by someone with more experience. Reflective practice is the active involvement of looking critically at one's practice and it may consist of the following stages:

1. Beginning with an experience
2. Spontaneously interpreting the experience
3. Naming the questions from the experience
4. Generating possible explanations
5. Presenting a full-blown hypothesis
6. Experimenting with or testing the hypothesis (Fox, White, Kidd, & Ritchie, 2005)



Schön (1987) defines two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The first one refers to the type of reflection that will happen while working on something, the type that allows us to re-shape experiences as we live them. The second type refers to the type professionals do when the experience has passed, it is about analyzing the “lessons learned.” Reflection can be achieved through a variety of approaches which include action research, case studies, ethnography and journal writing. This last approach was chosen for this study as it is an easy to handle tool for promoting reflective inquiry and for giving feedback commonly used by mentors in professional development programs (Richards & Ho, 1998). However some limitations in the use of journals have also been identified by different researchers. Among the most important limitations are the fact that it is time consuming for learners and mentors, the incapacity of the learners to move from the descriptive level to a more reflective mode of writing, and a tendency for writers to make unfocused comments. (Jarvis, 1992; Barkhuizen, 1995 & Burns, 1995)

#### *Learning from colleagues and coaches*

For reflection individual processes such as journal writing are not enough. There is the need for collaboration and mentoring. It is necessary to help learners connect individual pieces of gained knowledge to a larger picture of learning. According to Zubizarreta (2009), “Collaborators and mentors –whether peers or teachers are vital agents in moving learners toward more meaningful knowledge and insights” (p. 14) Collaboration is defined by DuFour, DuFour, Eaker and Many (2006) as “...a systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results” (p. 214) Collaboration invites people to make decisions, to communicate and exchange ideas, thus improving ways of doing things. Different scholars agree that a common characteristic of professional development is collaboration and collegiality for problem solving, analyzing, and program evaluation (Hawley, 1993; Goodland

1988; Allington and Cunningham, 1996). Gray (1989) defines collaboration as "...a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible" (p. 5). He further describes collaboration as an emergent process which has three phases: problem setting, direction setting and implementing (p. 15). Collaboration must be seen as a process and not as a way of doing things, a process in which all the stakeholders participate towards the same goals. Collaboration is very often a process of learning with and from others. Ordóñez (2004) asserts, "Building knowledge is individual and produces visible individual performance results, but the process occurs and is stimulated naturally in the interaction with other learners and in collaborative work. But collaboration is a means to an end, not the end itself" (p. 11) Therefore it is of extreme importance that teachers are allocated time to meet and establish learning priorities and also to meet to share practices and help each other improve (DuFour et al., 2006)

This help could also come from a facilitator. Smith and Gillespie (2007) assert that in-service teachers need assistance to overcome their natural reluctance to share their concerns about students' work with other teachers in the sharing or inquiry group. Kazemi and Franke (2003) found that teachers needed to learn how to examine student work together, with a facilitator structuring teacher meetings to help them focus specifically on the details of student work. Richardson and Placier (2001), in their study of middle school teachers in six American schools participating together in inquiry groups to implement changes in reading instruction, found that such groups go through stages of development (introductory, breakthrough, empowerment), and that a trained facilitator can help guide such groups through initial stages. McDonald (2001) described a variety of protocols or methods for studying student work such as the Collaborative Assessment Conference and other examples available in the National School Reform Faculty web site.

*Performance Based Instruction*

Nevertheless all the strategies mentioned (reflection portfolios and journals, collaboration and mentoring) seek teacher learning and change in the context of the English classroom, a change that requires teachers to part from following the book to the detail to plan and assess performances that show what their students can do and that resemble those found in the real world. Because the goal of the intervention in this study was to help teachers learn to plan, implement and assess performance based objectives, a definition of Performance Based Instruction (PBI) is in order. As defined by the ASCD (the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), “Performance-based learning and assessment represent a set of strategies for the acquisition and application of knowledge, skills, and work habits through the performance of tasks that are meaningful and engaging to students” (Hibbard et al. 1996, p.1) In performance based instruction, goals are specified and agreed upon based primarily on state standards. Wiggins (1993) describes performance based instruction by saying that it involves work that requires students to apply contents and skills in real contexts. Perkins (2003) asks educators, “When students understand, what have they accomplished?” (p. 69) He adds, “To understand is the ability to think and act with flexibility parting from what we know” (p.70) No longer can understanding be viewed as the mere memorization of contents, but they are also the flexible performances students show when they understand those contents. In a traditional classroom students may identify the parts of a newspaper, they may recall that the first paragraph in any newspaper article answers the 5W-How questions; but in a performance based class the students will be asked to write the article or publish a newspaper.

How does performance based instruction look in the context of a language class? An English teacher will have to forget about fulfilling units and schedules to evidence that his or her students are able to use the language to communicate. As stated by Brown (2005),

“Performance-based instruction requires teachers to consider what is essential in English language learning. They should ask themselves questions such as: are expressed goals and objectives for English appropriate and realistic? Do students demonstrate only display knowledge of English while lacking the ability to use the language independently?” (p. 1)

Students will have to demonstrate competence using the language. In order to achieve it, teachers must first define performance based objectives; then, design, implement and assess their classes and activities according to them.

### *Looking at Teachers' Learning*

Normally teachers do what they know has worked well in the past and what they know will work in the future. But, how can a professional development culture that goes from random, non theoretical and passive to sustained, active, and theory-based be created? In order to answer this question we must look at how teachers learn. Teachers learn while doing. Brown (1994) asserts:

Every time you walk into a classroom to teach something, you face different issues, and if you are a growing teacher, you learn something. You find out how well a technique works, how a student processes language, how classroom interactions can be improved, how to assess a student's competence, how emotions enter into learning, or how your teaching style affects learners. The discovery goes on and on –for a lifetime. (p. 425)

Brown's assertion is ideal but what really happens is that most teachers focus initially on themselves –what others think about them as teachers and their ability to control the classroom– and then eventually on students and their learning. Teachers need to realize that they need to understand that teaching is not about what they learned when they were students so a successful professional development program should start by confronting preconceptions teachers have (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). According to the American

Educational Research Association, to be effective, professional development must provide teachers with opportunities to apply what they learn to their teaching; they must be able to perform (American Educational Research Association, 2005, p. 2) Perkins (2003) describes learning as understanding and being able to perform flexibly in new contexts. This way learning is made observable. Boix-Mansilla & Gardner (2003) propose a framework to analyze these performances of understanding that includes four dimensions: knowledge, methods, purpose and form; and four levels: naïve, novice, apprentice and master. Beginning levels (naïve and beginner) tend to view knowledge and performances as simple and mechanical. Advanced levels (apprentice and master) view knowledge and performances as more complex and they perform with some guidance in the case of the apprentice or autonomy in the case of the master. Table 1 shows the dimensions and levels summarized. So, professional development programs should include opportunities for teacher to show the way they perform in these dimensions and in what level.

### *Learning by Doing*

Portfolios can provide the opportunities mentioned previously because the combination of reflection and documentation that teachers are required to do can evidence teachers' improvement or change while implementing performance based instruction. Kolb (1984) built upon the earlier work of Piaget, Jung and Lewin to develop a theory of experiential learning which states that "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 38). Kolb's model of learning consists of four stages:

- Concrete experience ("DO")
- Reflective observation ("OBSERVE")
- Abstract conceptualization ("THINK")
- Active experimentation ("EXPERIMENT")

For this study, teachers were given the opportunity to experience, observe what they taught through their portfolios, reflect upon the experience individually and in collaboration, and plan and experiment with performances of speaking English in order to improve their practice and their students' competence in the use of spoken English.

**Table 1 – four Dimensions of Understanding and Levels (summarized from Boix-Mansilla and Gardner, 2003, p. 244-256)**

<b>Framework for Understanding – Four Dimensions of Understanding and Levels</b>			
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Purposes</b>	<b>Forms</b>
<b>A. Transformed Intuitive Beliefs</b>	<b>A. Healthy Skepticism</b>	<b>A. Awareness of the Purposes of Knowledge</b>	<b>A. Mastery of Performance Genres</b>
Naïve – intuitive beliefs dominate	Naïve – the world “is as it is”	Naïve – Awareness of the purposes of knowledge	Naïve – Unaware that there are accepted ways of showing expertise
Novice – some disciplinary knowledge	Novice – there is the need to back up statements but information is not used to question content presented in the discipline	Novice – Can see there are important questions but still do not understand why	Novice – able to follow instructions
Apprentice – disciplinary knowledge taking hold and competing with intuitive beliefs	Apprentice – beginning to see that knowledge is created by humans and can be questioned but may become hyper critical or simply repeat the skepticism of others	Apprentice – can see importance of big questions and connect them back to what they are learning when prompted	Apprentice – understand instructions and are aware of one set of rules when they start to learn another set
Master - the discipline dominates and common sense or intuitive beliefs are used to inspire future disciplinary knowledge	Master – knowledge is contestable and is best when constructed using multiple methods versus only a single method	Master – can independently look for essential questions, puzzle through why they are important in people’s lives, and understand how some knowledge accumulation can have negative effects at times	Master – move easily from one set of performance skills or criteria to another, has ownership of own way of doing things within accepted rules, and can create new ways of doing things
<b>B. Coherent &amp; Rich Conceptual Webs</b>	<b>B. Building knowledge in the domain</b>	<b>B. Multiple Uses &amp; Consequences of Knowledge</b>	<b>B. Effective Use of Symbol Systems</b>
Naïve – no differentiation between examples and generalizations	Naïve – the only way of gaining knowledge is through trial and error	Naïve – can perform tasks as told	Naïve – symbol systems are used but do not communicate a clear message
Novice – connections between examples and generalizations are made based on rehearsal answers	Novice – starting to see that there are other ways of figuring out what works but just go “by the book” for now	Novice – can see consequences or make connections to real world when prompted	Novice – overreliance on one system
Apprentice – while not seamless, can move between examples and generalizations as needed	Apprentice – can see how useful different methods are for building knowledge but get stuck on using just one method	Apprentice – can use knowledge in new ways and relate knowledge to real world problems	Apprentice – can use more than one symbol system when asked and showing mastery of one system to the point of being able to be flexible and creative
Master – ideas are organized can move easily between specifics and broader concepts, and new interpretations can be made	Master – use variety of methods from the profession to create dependable knowledge and even see how new methods can come from “public, rational argument”	Master - can use knowledge in new ways to make predictions or improvements and can see the world through the discipline’s lenses	Master – can use symbol systems effectively and persuasively to communicate ideas and can flexibly use them in creative ways
	<b>C. Validating knowledge in the domain</b>	<b>C. Ownership &amp; Autonomy</b>	<b>C. Consideration of Audience &amp; Context</b>
	Naïve – no criteria for validation	Naïve – do not see a need for own personal view of the profession	Naïve – unaware of audiences and surprised that miscommunications occur
	Novice – validation based on textbooks or recent experiences	Novice – can see personal philosophies of those in authority and can be creative when prompted	Novice – aware of audience but expects audience to adjust to them and miscommunication is the audience’s fault
	Apprentice – validations is important but unsophisticated	Apprentice – can use knowledge on their own but do not take into consideration that others have different views	Apprentice – can take audience into consideration when reminded but still think good intentions equal good communication
	Master – use of multiple methods of validations, see how validation criteria is based on worldviews, and can question criteria	Master – authorized to use knowledge, understand they have a point of view, and able to see consequences from different points of view	Master – different worldviews are taken into consideration, listening is seen as a part of communication, context is used to enhance communication, and realizes that communication can engage other people’s deeply held beliefs

### **III. Description of the In-Service Professional Development Process Innovation**

This action research project was initiated due to the desire of the teaching staff to improve certain aspects of their teaching such as learning to teach their students to improve their writing and being able to improve their oral expression classes, among others. The area teachers have also manifested during the area meetings their desire to become more flexible. When asked about this, they described being flexible as being able to plan classes that prepare their students for the job market, to be able to plan and implement classes that part from following their books in sequential order, to be able to design creative classes that bring into the classroom more creative activities and materials. Based on the literature review (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Klenowski, 2000; Kolb, 1984; Zubizarreta, 2009) and an intervention previously carried out in the primary grades to improve teaching practices by using teaching portfolios to introduce constructivist methodology, the Delta Secondary English teachers wanted to:

1. Plan learning environments that prepare students for real life performances (Brown, 2005; Perkins, 2003; Wiggins, 1993)
2. Learn to become more active participants of their own learning and professional development. (Schön, 1997; Smith & Gillespie, 2007)

The area faculty decided to carry out an in-service professional development portfolio process program (PDP) to help teachers observe and reflect on their own learning. The program took place over a period of ten months. Through this program teachers were encouraged to:

- Use performance based objectives (PBOs) to facilitate learning in the EFL classroom.
- Reflect upon teaching practices and ways to improve them



Before the intervention started, it was necessary to connect to the teachers' prior knowledge by exploring what they thought of their oral skills teaching practices (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007) at the beginning of the school year 2009 - 2010. An individual strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis was carried out (See appendix 1). Because very specific processes and evaluation criteria were to be introduced, a pre-test was given to create a baseline of the teachers' use of the evaluation tools thus enabling the researcher to measure progress using PBOs after the intervention. Three specific criteria were used to determine their ability to assess performances: language, cultural interaction, and message became the standards with which the students' oral presentations were measured (See appendix 2). These criteria seek to develop skill and confidence when using the language, sensitivity towards the interlocutors, and the capacity to transmit clear messages which are characteristics of good communication.

The intervention required the participant teachers to act both individually, during the portfolio construction and when reflecting in their journals; and collaboratively, during the training sessions. Their role was that of teacher-learners who are active about their professional development processes. The role of the researcher was best defined by Professor Kari Miller in a lecture on October 4, 2008, to her Training Workshops class, she indicated a facilitator is a person who might be part of the team, who is not an expert on the topic and who will be learning along with the trainees.

The process using professional development portfolios (PDP) to plan, implement, and assess Performance Based Objectives (PBO's) consisted of the following strategies:

1. Collaborative processes:

- A workshop (See appendix 4) to learn to plan using Performance Based Objectives. The teachers worked in pairs during the workshop in a new

planning format (See appendix 5) and exchanged their initial plans with other pairs for feedback on how to improve them. Then, they worked individually for a week to improve their plans and set personal teaching objectives before sending them to the facilitator via e-mail. E-mail feedback was given to the teachers before implementing their plans.

- Regular area meetings (eighty minute meetings scheduled weekly) in which the following items were covered:
  - Basic information about Performance Based Instruction and Communicative Language Teaching (See appendix 6)
  - Practice sessions with the Performance Based Rubric and IB students' individual oral samples. (Teachers listened to the recordings, evaluated the student's performance and then compared the scores they gave the student to the scores given by an IB evaluator).
  - Collaborative Assessment Conferences (See appendix 8) to learn about and reflect on implementing PBOs by analyzing a Delta student's individual oral presentation in a video.
- Informal ongoing interactions in the halls or in facilitator's office.
- A Teacher Led Conference in which teachers presented the portfolio containing evidence of their planning, teaching and assessing according to PBOs. Teachers presented their portfolios to the English Area Coordinator following a pre-established protocol (See appendix 7) while the researcher videotaped them.
- A final structured interview (See appendix 9) with the researcher/facilitator and presentation of their portfolio to analyze learners' perspectives.

2. Reflective processes included:

- Pre and post – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of the teachers English speaking teaching situation and preconceptions.
- The actual making of their portfolios which should include PBO based plans, regular plans, samples of activities, journal entries, and teachers’ videos of their students’ presentations.
- Reflecting in a journal and in self-assessment sheets included in the portfolio
- Reflecting during the TLC and final interview.

Program Stages. The program was executed in four stages: (1) exploratory, (2) introductory, (3) implementation and, (4) assessment stages.

1. Exploratory Stage. Prior knowledge must be explored in any well-structured professional development program. The researcher must also find out the participants preconceptions about teaching oral proficiency. In order to do so, participant teachers were asked to work on a SWOT analysis of their current teaching situation (See appendix 1). A pre-test on the use of a PBOs rubric helped the researcher establish a baseline in the use of the assessment criteria and to connect to prior knowledge about evaluation of oral interaction (See appendix 10).
2. Introductory Stage. During this stage teachers were introduced to PBO’s using the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program planning and evaluation tools for English. The teachers needed to be able to incorporate in their classes three types of oral presentations that their students would be expected to carry out: the individual, the small group and the whole class presentations (See appendix 3). These presentations revolved around the contents studied in class, for example, a debate on environmental issues in the environmental science class (whole class presentation), a case study discussion about the use of natural resources in Ecuador

in the geography class (small group presentation) and an oral presentation about their favorite poet in the literature class (individual oral presentation.) But, they also needed to understand the criteria that would be used to evaluate their students' performance. Two collaborative practice sessions were held. During them, the recordings of two different students' individual presentations were used in order for the teachers to evaluate their performances using the three recommended criteria (See appendix 2): language, cultural interaction, and message. After the teachers made independent evaluations, they shared their individual results and compared them to the grades given by the IB examiners.

In a workshop, teachers were asked to work in pairs to plan oral activities using a plan format recommended by IB (See appendix 4 and 5). They were instructed to design a speaking lesson plan connected to the units they were working on. The plan format required them to set teaching objectives and communicative performance based objectives. Teachers sent plans via e-mail for feedback related to their use of PBO's. During this session they were also instructed to write in their journals their expectations for the year's training and how they had applied (or not) any previous training received. Written commentaries were given on the ideas presented in the journal.

This stage also included a final session to reinforce the teachers' understanding of PBI and review some of their ideas while implementing the program. (See appendix 6)

3. Implementation Stage. During this stage the literature teachers were expected to plan, implement and assess individually the three types of oral activities. The subject matter teachers were asked to plan, implement and assess the small group and the whole group presentations. While designing, implementing and assessing

these, they made their portfolio by collecting evidence of their work as well as by keeping impressions of their execution in their journals which were collected three times and returned with facilitator's written feedback. Teacher led portfolio presentations were held and videotaped during this stage in the middle of July. They presented the contents of their portfolios (plans, material, reflections and videos of their students' performance) to their area coordinator following a pre-established protocol (See appendix 7). Old goals were retained or new ones were established. Teachers were also encouraged to answer some of the questions asked during the conferences in their journals.

One collaborative session in which teachers analyzed a videotape of a student's individual presentation using the Collaborative Assessment Conference (CAC) was also part of this stage (See appendix 8).

4. Assessment Stage. This stage was dedicated to reflection about the intervention and evaluation of its impact. It consisted of a post-test, identical to the pre-test (See appendix 10), to assess accuracy in using the oral assessment criteria, semi-structured interviews to explore the participants' perspective of the PDP process at the end of the experience (see appendix 9, SWOT analysis to explore the participants' perspective about any change in their practices that may have taken place as result of the intervention (see appendix 12), and a collaborative session to review professional development program and plan objectives for 2010 (see appendix 17). Table 2 illustrates the implementation stages previously described.

**Table 2 – Professional Development Program using Portfolios March 2009 – January 2010**

PD Background

2006– Writing process – stages (3 workshops and mentoring Area Coordinator in Primary and Secondary)

2006 – Writing process – elaboration, assessment and feedback (3 workshops for Primary and Secondary with follow up observations)

2007 – PD on “Seeing Learning” based on Carol Rogers article (5 workshops for Primary and Secondary plus journals)

2008 – PD Using Portfolios to introduce Constructivist Teaching Practices (5 months in Primary)– IB methodology for English B writing classes (weekly workshops during the school year - Secondary)

Portfolio Tasks and Concepts			Sources of Support		
Stage	Tasks	Concepts	Portfolio	Facilitator/Researcher	Other sources
Exploring Prior Knowledge – Creating a Baseline (March 17 - 20)	SWOT analysis current teaching situation  Pre-test using IB training material (recordings, evaluation criteria)		Individual SWOTs  IB rubric and scores given	<u>Passive support</u> - general instructions given	Colleagues
Introductory Stage (April - May)	Collect materials:  - Plans done in pairs  - Journal entry on training expectations  - Journal entries on processes  - Individual plans	Introduction of concepts  Language, cultural interaction, and message  Inquiry (Enduring Learning) Communicative Objectives and Performance Based Instruction  Performance Based Instruction (PBI)	IB rubric and scores given  Planning and feedback  New plans	<u>Active support</u> in order to facilitate learning of concepts  1 Collaborative session on PBOs planning and assessment (PPT)  1 Workshop: Planning PBOs Together using plan format with inquiry sections (Big ideas) to link speaking lesson to unit studied, communicative performance based objectives. Peer feedback during workshop Facilitator feedback on plans via email. Facilitator feedback written on journals  2 Collaborative sessions to practice using PBOs (language cultural interaction message)  1 Collaborative session: focused on learning to set communicative PBOs (PowerPoint presentation )	Planning together with colleagues  Teacher’s manuals  Modular plans  Internet

Professional Development Portfolio Process

<p>Implementation (May - Nov)</p>	<p>Collect materials: - Individual plans (May-November)</p> <p>Make portfolios – plan 3 types of activities (literature teachers), 2 types (subject teachers) collect evidence of design, implementation and assessment</p> <p>Portfolio presentation (July)</p> <p>Reflections in journals</p> <p>New or reset goals (journal) (May - November)</p>	<p>Working with concepts: Inquiry (Enduring Learning or Big Questions)</p> <p>Communicative Performance Based Objectives</p> <p>Assessment criteria: language, cultural interaction, message</p>	<p>Plans</p> <p>Materials used in lessons</p> <p>Student performance recorded on video</p> <p>Rubrics used</p> <p>Self-assessment sheets</p> <p>Journals</p> <p>Session material</p>	<p><u>Passive support</u></p> <p>Informal conversations</p> <p>Teacher Led Conferences (July) – T’s showed portfolios and evidence of learning to area coordinator and confirmed or reset goals. (May - November)</p> <p>4 Collaborative Sessions: Regular area meetings were some of the concepts were discusses</p> <p><u>Active Support</u></p> <p>Facilitator feedback written on journals</p> <p>Collaborative Assessment Conference (CAC) based on video of a student’s individual oral</p>	<p>Teacher’s manuals</p> <p>Colleagues and Area Coordinator</p> <p>Internet</p>
<p>Assessment (Nov – Jan 2010)</p>	<p>Post Test (November)</p> <p>Reflections (journal)</p> <p>Post-SWOT (January)</p>	<p>Assessment of learning using concepts</p>	<p>-Scores given on PBOs rubrics</p> <p>-SWOTs</p> <p>- Reflections</p> <p>- Teaching objectives for 2010</p>	<p><u>Active support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Semi-structured interviews – participant perspective of process</li> <li>- Evidence of Learning</li> <li>- Collaborative session to plan 2010</li> </ul>	<p>Colleagues</p>

#### **IV. Research Questions**

According to the objectives of the professional development portfolio program, by the end of eight months teachers would be able to:

1. Use performance based objectives (PBOs) to facilitate learning in the EFL classroom.
2. Reflect upon teaching practices and ways to improve them

Based on these objectives the following research questions were established:

Research questions:

General:

- What was the effect of using professional development portfolios to facilitate teachers learning to implement performance based objectives?

Specific:

1. What did teachers learn about using PBO's as a result of the PDP program?
2. What aspects of the PDP contributed to teachers' learning?



## **V. Methodology**

In order to answer the two specific research questions a qualitative action research study was conducted to explore and describe the impact of the ten months of professional development intervention using portfolios to improve teaching practices on the cohort of secondary English teachers. This design of the action research intervention was derived from previous research on the use of portfolios to generate reflection and improvements in teaching practices (Darling-Hammond L. , 2006) and the theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), which supports a learning cycle that includes an experience, reflection, experimentation and the construction of meaning. Action research is appropriate for it is contextualized in real school needs. When school-based action research projects are focused, connected to school program and vision, supported by administrators, and have sufficient allocated time and resources, they can have significant success in improving students' academic performance (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, p. 2). The analysis of portfolios focused on changes in teachers' practices over time. The teacher led conference and the final interview provided teachers' perceptions of their learning. The analysis of the teachers' results on a pre and post-test using performance based assessment criteria corroborated change. Table 3 illustrates the methods used in the study.

**Table 3 – Methodology**

<b>General Research Question: What was the effect of using professional development portfolios to facilitate learning to implement performance based objectives?</b>			
<b>Specific Questions</b>	<b>Evidence – data to be analyzed</b>	<b>Data analysis – Instruments</b>	<b>Data reporting Categories</b>
What did teachers learn about using PBO's as a result of the PDP program?	<p><b>SWOT analysis</b> pre-post</p> <p><b>Portfolio:</b> plans (do they plan performances?)</p> <p><b>Videos</b> - does the oral interaction in class focus on performances?</p> <p><b>Journal</b> – Are their reflections and concerns related to facilitating doing?</p> <p><b>Interview transcript</b></p> <p><b>Results of IB Oral Exam practice test</b></p>	<p><b>Gardner / Boix-Mansilla</b> levels of understanding PBO's to determine patterns of change in the Eng Area re planning, teaching performances rather than knowledge.</p> <p>Naïve Novice Apprentice Master</p> <p><b>IB oral exam assessment criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Product categories:</b></p> <p>Learning to plan PBOs</p> <p>Learning to teach PBOs</p> <p>Learning to assess PBOs (PBOs rubric)</p> <p><b>Means</b> for Eng Area and % <b>overall change</b> and % for each criteria.</p>
What aspects of the PDP contributed to teachers' learning?	<p><b>Researcher perspective Portfolios</b> (evidence of reflective process – reflection is connecting theory to practice)</p> <p><b>Video transcripts of TLC and</b> (evidence of collaborative process – interaction for the purpose of learning.)</p> <p><b>Participant perspective final Interview transcript–</b> What did they say about PDP process? Organize as answers to pertinent questions.</p>	<p><b>Researcher perspective</b> of PDP (Portfolios and transcripts)</p> <p><b>Participant perspective</b> of PDP (interview)</p>	<p><b>Process Categories</b></p> <p><b>(Code LR) Learning by reflecting</b></p> <p><b>(Code LC) Learning by collaborating</b> Collaboration levels – might be determined by a level of autonomy in the learning process.</p> <p><b>(Code LD) Learning by Doing</b></p>

## **Participants**

The participants of this action research include ten female teachers of the Secondary English department of a private Catholic school for upper middle class girls in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The group is composed of seven literature teachers and three subject matter teachers, (including science, geography, current events and business). All ten teachers possess a high level of English fluency. Six of them possess education degrees. Eight out of the ten teachers have completed the TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) modules. All of them have more than two years of teaching experience. According to baseline data their use of PBO's to assess oral interaction averages seventeen out of thirty, which implies they lack an optimal understanding of the assessment criteria used to evaluate performances (See appendix 9).

## **Categories**

The qualitative design chosen to answer the research questions focused on describing the effect of a professional development portfolio process on ten teachers in order to promote change from text based instruction to performance based instruction and to find any other learning that may have taken place. The following categories were identified:

1. *Product categories* refer to tangible products or results that are created or reached during the intervention and that evidence change in teaching practices. The portfolio documents must show evidence of the implementation of performance based objectives (PBOs) including:

Planning                      - Learning to plan with PBOs (the incorporation of PBO's and coherent information and activities in the teachers' plans)

Implementation - Learning to teach with PBOs (the incorporation of PBI's methodology as evidenced in students' videos)

Assessment - Learning to assess with PBOs (understanding and adequate use of the assessment criteria)

2. *Process categories* evidence the actions and efforts taken during the ten month period to achieve learning. These actions include the process of understanding performance based instruction (PBI) through the implementation of PBI and the reflection upon the evidence collected in their portfolio and in the collaborative sessions carried out with peers, coordinator and facilitator. Processes make products useful and sustainable and analyzing them helped the researcher understand why teachers learned. In this category the following behaviors were analyzed:

Researcher's perspective:

- Learning by reflecting (in the journals, self-assessment sheets) which should demonstrate sustained thinking about their experience in order to achieve a deeper understanding of their practice. The type of thinking that involves higher order thinking skills.
- Learning by collaborating (during workshops, collaborative sessions, teacher led conference, collaborative assessment conference) which should demonstrate whether two or more people can construct shared understanding of theory from conversations and shared experiences.
- Learning by doing (teachers' performances coherent with PBI) which should be evidenced in the teachers' decisions and actions while implementing PBI.

Participants' perception of the learning process and results as stated in a final interview.

The data were generated from the portfolios, teacher-led conference videos' transcripts, and transcripts of the final interview.

### **Data Collection Instruments and Procedures**

This qualitative study describes the effect of a professional development portfolio process during the course of a ten month intervention. In order to answer research question one data were generated to provide evidence of teacher behavior change related to planning, implementing and assessing with Performance Based Objectives (PBO's). In order to answer the second question which assesses the professional development portfolio process data were generated to ensure the analysis of the perspectives of the researcher and participants. The data collection instruments included:

*Pre and Post SWOT Analysis Sheets* The pre-SWOT analysis was done at the beginning of school year 2009 – 2010 on March 17. Through this analysis, the researcher explored teachers' ideas about their pre PDP involvement in teaching oral proficiency situations and preconceptions. The post-SWOT analysis, done in January 4, sought to determine whether teachers' preconceptions or ideas and attitudes changed after their participation in the PDP.

*Data Collected from Portfolio Documents.* These included two lesson plans for an oral proficiency class connected to the unit being taught, examples of the activities and resources used in the implementation of the plan, CDs of students' work videos, a journal with independent and guided reflections, self-assessment reflection sheets, and, sample rubrics used for assessing students' performances.

*Transcripts of the Teacher Led Conference.* The video recordings of ten teacher-led conferences (TLC), carried out in July, were transcribed. The conference is also thought of as an important moment of reflection on the side of the teacher and collaboration with their coordinator. Teachers were requested to present to the English area coordinator their portfolios and the evidence of what they had accomplished in their implementation of PBI following a pre-established protocol (see appendix 7).

*Transcripts of the Final Interview.* Video recordings of ten semi-structured interviews held in January at the end of the intervention were also transcribed. The semi-structured interview was chosen to allow the researcher to explore teachers' leanings with flexibility. The interview helped the researcher analyze the participants' perspectives of the portfolio based professional development process and their learning (See appendix 9 for the interview guide).

Technical problems arose during both types of recordings and were basically due to the lack of the appropriate equipment. The researcher solved recording difficulties by using the resources provided by the teachers' laptops. The twenty videos were transcribed by the facilitator between January and July 2010 and provide insight into the teachers' learning and reflection processes. Table 4 indicates the dates and length of the interviews.

Table 4 – TLC and Final Interview Dates and Lengths Data Collection

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Teacher Led Conference (TLC) Dates and Times</b>		<b>Semi-structured Final interview Dates and Times</b>	
<b>T1</b>	Jul. 15, 2009	26:00	Jan. 22, 2010	15:16
<b>T2</b>	Jul. 17, 2009	23:43	Jan. 22, 2010	15:08
<b>T3</b>	Jul. 14, 2009	36:13	Jan. 21, 2010	15:04
<b>T4</b>	Jul. 14, 2009	34:24	Jan. 21, 2010	20:01
<b>T5</b>	Jul. 15, 2009	23:38	Jan. 21, 2010	23:33
<b>T6</b>	Jul. 16, 2009	39:18	Jan. 25, 2010	21:06
<b>T7</b>	Jul. 15, 2009	25:13	Jan. 21, 2010	20:56
<b>T8</b>	Jul. 16, 2009	20:54	Jan. 25, 2010	15:18
<b>T9</b>	Jul. 14, 2009	20:15	Jan. 25, 2010	15:12
<b>T10</b>	July 16, 2009	21:28	Jan. 21, 2010	25:47

*Pre and Post Tests Using PBOs rubric.* The results of these tests will serve as triangulation of the analysis of the data obtained in the SWOT analyses, portfolios documents and transcripts of TLC and final interview. The post-test will be analyzed for total and partial results on each of the criteria in order to determine changes and future training needs. Averages of scores obtained in each criterion will help the researcher see the teachers' understandings as a group and which criterion will need further study. The general score will allow the measurement of the success of the intervention.

Table 5 - Data collection agenda.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT	DATE
<b>PRE-SWOT ANALYSIS</b>	March 17, 2009
<b>PRE-TEST – USE OF PBO’S RUBRIC</b>	March 19, 2009
<b>PORTFOLIOS (TLC)</b>	July14-16, 2009
<b>POST-TEST – USE OF PBO’S RUBRIC</b>	November 17, 2009
<b>POST-SWOT ANALYSIS</b>	January, 2010
<b>PORTFOLIOS</b>	January, 2010

### Reliability and Validity of the Study

According to Mason and Bramble (1997), research that is relevant has immediate utility, practicality, and relationship to the real, everyday issues (p. 435). Action research seeks to solve real problems therefore the role of the researcher should be that of a facilitator not a director who takes decisions. Burns (1999) adds that “qualitative approaches do not seek to generalize beyond the research context and focuses on the process as well as the outcomes” (p.22) Reliability in action-research has the purpose of generating understanding, then the most important test of any qualitative study is its quality.

Patton (2002) asserts that validity and reliability are two features with which any action researcher should be concerned as he or she designs a study, analyzes results and judges the quality of the study. Lincoln and Guba add that validity and reliability answer the question “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” (As cited in Golafshani, 2003), Healy and Perry assert that:

The quality of a study in quantitative and qualitative research should be judged by its own paradigm's terms. For example, while the terms Reliability and Validity are



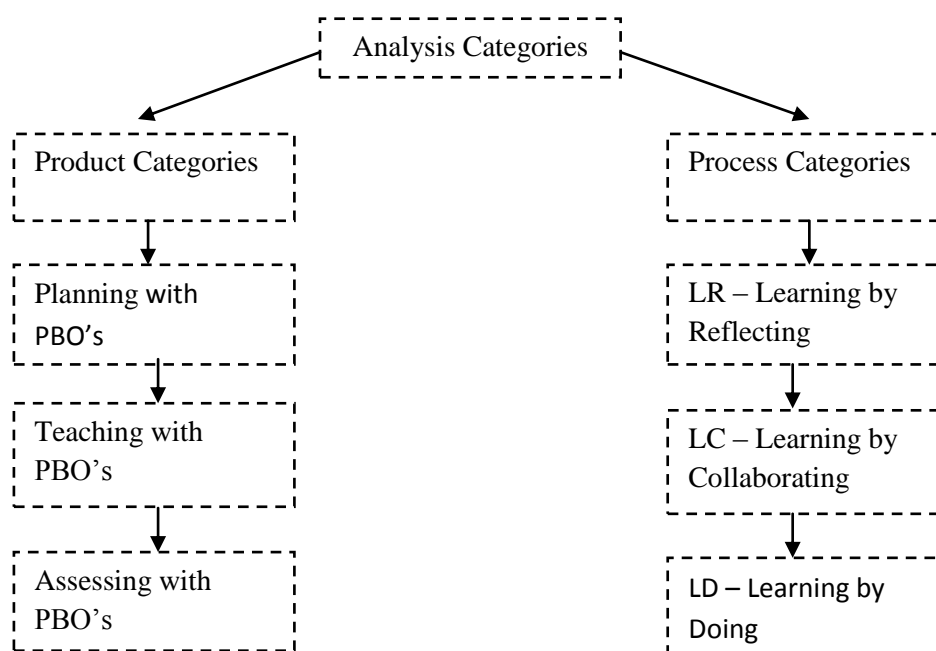
essential criteria for quality in quantitative paradigms, in qualitative paradigms the terms credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be the essential criteria for quality (as quoted in Golafshani, 2003, p.602).

But how does the action researcher ensure the validity and as a result the reliability of his or her research? First, the researcher must have in mind that action research is carried out in a specific context and does not attempt to generalize results to larger contexts (Burns, 1999, p. 160). Second, the researcher must use triangulation, which in the social sciences refers to the strategy of cross examining information from different perspectives (Cohen & Manion, 1989, p. 254). Triangulation can combine different methods (quantitative and qualitative) and data to reinforce the validity of a study. Consequently, the triangulation of the information collected in the portfolios, TLC transcripts, SWOT analyses, and the pre and post tests using the PBOs rubric determine whether the results are significant and viable in the context of the study.

### **Data Analysis Instruments and Procedures**

In order to answer research question one (What did teachers learn about using PBOs as a result of the PDP program?) and two (Was the professional development portfolio process responsible for the learning?), a longitudinal analysis of the process for each of the teachers was carried out in order to classify and code emerging categories as a means to determine patterns of change. Table 6 illustrates the categories defined.

Table 6 - Analysis Categories



*Category 1: Product or Results.* This category sought to answer research question one (What did teachers learn about using PBO's as a result of the PDP program?)

The researcher aim was to find out the level of understanding of performance based instruction the teacher had achieved and to determine NY pattern of change in the English area related to the process of learning to plan, teach and assess performances. The data to be analyzed were derived from the portfolio documents, which included: pre and post SWOT analysis of teaching speaking situation, sample plans (at least two), teacher made videos of their students' performances (focus on classroom interactions – whether the T's feedback and student comments/questions are related to doing real life things rather than knowing), journal reflections that focus on facilitating performances, and transcripts of the interviews to find out participants' perspectives of the results achieved.

The content analysis of the documents presented in the portfolios was aided by the use of a rubric modeled after Gardner and Boix-Mansilla's (2003) levels of understanding in order for the researcher to determine poor to outstanding performances in teachers, and

patterns of change in teaching oral proficiency in the English area. The last two levels apprentice and master would be the desired levels teachers would achieve by the end of the intervention. Table 7 shows the rubric.

Triangulation was accomplished by incorporating different methods: a pre and post test on the use of PBO's assessment criteria and the analysis of the final interviews' transcripts. The pre and post tests were analyzed according to what would be an acceptable margin of error (ME). An acceptable ME on the total score would be minus or plus three ( $\pm 3$ ) and minus or plus one ( $\pm 1$ ) on the subscales.

*Category 2: Process.* This category was used to answer research question two (What aspects of the PDP contributed to teachers' learning?).

Researcher's perspective: The researcher aimed at finding out what was the impact of the professional development process on teachers' learning and also what aspects of the program seemed to have the strongest influence on teachers' practices. The researcher hoped to discover promising practices that could be sustained in the secondary English area of this girls' Catholic private school. The following processes were studied through the analysis of portfolio documents and the transcripts of the teacher led conference and final interview:

*Learning through Reflection (LR).* Reflection consists of connecting theory to practice (Schön, 1987; White, Kid & Ritchie, 2005). The portfolio documents and information from transcripts of the teacher led conferences' (TLCs) were analyzed in order to find evidence of learning through reflection.

*Learning through Collaboration (LC).* Collaboration is "a systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results" (DuFour et al., 2006, p.214). The

transcripts of the teacher led conferences (TLCs) will be studied to identify examples of interactions for the purpose of learning.

*Learning by Doing* (LD). Teachers were asked to implement performances in their classes and at the same time they were asked to perform flexibly. Perkins (2003) describes learning as understanding and being able to perform flexibly in new contexts. Kolb (1984) described a process that included stages of action, observation, thinking and experimentation. Portfolio documents were analyzed to find evidence of implementation. Transcripts of the teacher led conferences were analyzed for evidence of teacher-students interactions that promoted learning by doing.

Participants' perspective of Learning with Portfolio. Triangulation was carried out by analyzing the transcripts of the final interview (see appendix 9). The two objectives of the Portfolio Professional Development Program were to use performance based objectives (PBOs) to facilitate learning in the EFL classroom and to reflect upon teaching practices and ways to improve them. The working assumption explored in this phase was that portfolios would help teachers become more autonomous in the learning process. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow the researcher flexibility in determining how participants compiled their portfolios, how portfolios contributed to their learning, what was learned and how this learning might connect with teachers' future learning.

Table 7 - PBO's Levels of Understanding Rubric

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	Gardner – Boix-Mansilla, 1998	SCHOOL'S SPEAKING PROGRAM
<b>Naïve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intuitive knowledge</li> <li>• Random ideas which are not well integrated with experience</li> <li>• Little reflection in the way knowledge is expressed</li> <li>• Topics are not complicated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's intuitive or Folkloric beliefs about teaching speaking prevail</li> <li>• Plan lacks clarity of Purpose and audience with no understanding of PBOs</li> <li>• Activities are disconnected from PBOs</li> <li>• Assessment disconnected from PBOs focus on accent and grammar</li> <li>• No evidence of an attempt to explain assessment criteria</li> <li>• Views implementation simple and easy to carry out (mechanical)</li> <li>• Does not see connections between PBOs and other skills such as writing and reading</li> </ul>
<b>Novice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical rituals</li> <li>• Simple or previously rehearsed connections between few concepts and experience</li> <li>• Reflection is guided externally in a step by step fashion</li> <li>• Topics are not complicated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's nascent grasp of the nature of speaking</li> <li>• Plans still mechanistic and tentative with some understanding of PBOs</li> <li>• Activities are performances required by the book or the program</li> <li>• Assessment is superficial, rubrics used are from web pages (Ex. Rubistar) or other teachers</li> <li>• No evidence of an attempt to explain grading criteria</li> <li>• With support starts viewing implementation as a more complex process</li> <li>• With support starts seeing connections of PBO's with other skills</li> </ul>
<b>Apprentice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible use of disciplinary concepts and ideas</li> <li>• Rarely supported connections between concepts and experience</li> <li>• Reflection is often inspired by what experts are doing in the field of knowledge but there's evidence of flexibility and self-inquiry</li> <li>• Topics are complex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate use of language teaching concepts and most claims are supported effectively with examples and sources</li> <li>• Plans exhibit clear and viable PBOs and focus on learners</li> <li>• Activities are mostly real performances though they may include a few activities disconnected from PBOs</li> <li>• Assessment is according to the PBOs rubric but mechanical</li> <li>• Shows some attempt to explain assessment criteria</li> <li>• Views implementation as a complex task that needs careful considerations</li> <li>• Independently starts seeing connections between PBOs and other skills</li> </ul>
<b>Master</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible and creative use of disciplinary concepts and ideas</li> <li>• Concepts and experience are integrated. Connections are clear and spontaneous</li> <li>• Reflection leads learner to use concepts with flexibility and create new associations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible understanding of language teaching foundations and interdisciplinary integration.</li> <li>• Plans exhibit clear sense of purpose and need for connections to support learning</li> <li>• Activities are connected to PBOs and show creativity and integration</li> <li>• Assessment is flexible and has been adapted to contents studied.</li> <li>• Shows students' scaffolding to understand assessment criteria</li> <li>• Knows implementation is complex and needs careful considerations</li> <li>• Clearly sees applications of PBOs with other skills</li> </ul>

## **VI. Results**

This action research project explored the effect of a collaborative process that uses teachers' professional development portfolios to promote reflection and improvement in teachers' practices in the context of their English oral proficiency classes. The methods selected to study the effect of the intervention were qualitative. The results include:

- Research question # 1: What did teachers learn about using PBOs as a result of the PDP program?

Before the intervention a strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis was carried out in order to find out teachers' preconceptions about teaching oral proficiency. This analysis showed that nine of the teachers considered themselves creative and attempted to include activities of interest to the students. They mentioned having a good knowledge of the subject and good texts, among other strengths. They thought they had lack of planning time and continuity to carry out their plans. They did not necessarily know how to give good speaking instructions and saw the number of students in their classes (an average of 25) as a weakness of their instruction. Four teachers mentioned lack of creativity as well. They thought obstacles to their teaching oral proficiency were the students' differing English levels and their unwillingness to speak in English, their lack of interest, and their difficulty in learning from their mistakes. But teachers saw opportunities in students' willingness to discuss topics of their interest and in the discussions generated in the class. (see appendix 1)

### **Planning PBOs**

Teachers' plans were analyzed for consistency with performance based instruction. Wiggins (1993) describes performance based instruction as involving work that requires students to apply contents and skills in real contexts. Based on Gardner and Boix-Mansilla's (2003) levels of understanding (naïve, novice, apprentice and master) the researcher designed a rubric to be able to analyze plans' contents. (See table 7)

Before the innovation teachers used the institution's modular plan (See appendix 13). During the program teachers were requested to work on a different format the researcher called the PBOs format (See appendix 5) which was focused on oral proficiency and included important inquiry questions. Teachers' initial PBOs plans were compared to the ones done after facilitator and peer feedback were provided. The following examples compare the different levels of planning a literature unit:

*Naïve Level:*

Topic: Confronting Challenges. Inquiry into: How to write a good speech?

Objective: Write a dialogue using flashcards

Activities: Read a short story. Analyze elements of plot

*Novice Level:*

Topic: Confronting Challenges. Inquiry into: How do different characters confront challenges?

Objective: Analyze how characters from a story confront challenges

Activities: Read story from textbook and analyze the different ways characters face problems

Activity # 5 from textbook (Work in pairs to write a dialogue between two people who face a challenge in different ways and present it to the class)

*Apprentice Level:*

Topic: Confronting Challenges. Inquiry into: How do different people (characters) confront challenges? How does facing challenges help us learn about ourselves?

Objective: Express ideas and feelings about confronting challenges verbally

Activities: Read two different stories about characters confronting challenges

Work in groups to analyze the types of characters from the stories and discuss the different ways characters have confronted challenges.

Work individually to write the outline of a presentation about a moment in which students confronted a challenge.

Give presentation

*Master Level:*

**Topic:** Confronting Challenges. Inquiry into: Why does facing challenges play an important role in literary works? How does reading and talking about the way characters confront challenge help us?

**Objectives:** Analyze how different authors have treated the topic of confronting challenges and discuss these ideas

Be able to express and support ideas with relevant information about different ways authors illustrate the theme of confronting challenges.

**Activities:** (After having read two short stories, a newspaper article and a magazine article about confronting challenges.) Work in groups of four to discuss the different ways the topic was treated. Use specific references from the text to support your claims. Present group's ideas to the rest of the class. Be ready to answer questions about your presentations.

The analysis of the plans showed eight teachers exhibited a naïve level of understanding of PB0's planning (T1, T2, T3, T5, T7, T8, T9, T10), and two teachers evinced a novice level of understanding (T4, T6). These plans in seven cases, included only content focused inquiry questions, objectives or activities, activities that do not reflect real speaking performances, and little understanding of performance based objectives or activities.

*Initial Plans Representing Naïve Level*



These eight teachers exhibit lack of knowledge of speaking real performances. They are either too focused on the content they have to cover or focus on any other skill such as reading or writing. The inquiry questions from the samples also illustrate the teachers' concentration on contents. And even those performances associated with other skills should be analyzed for how real they are.

#### *Planning Individual oral presentations*

The following examples demonstrate teachers' lack of understanding or performance based individual indicators in the oral proficiency class. The teachers are still focused on teacher based activities or in the planning stage of the individual presentations:

T1 – Inquiry questions: How do we use sensory details? How do they enhance our description / presentation? What's the difference between "show" and "tell?" How should I give an oral presentation?

T3 – Objectives: Analyze plot structure/Analyze proposition and subplots

Activity: Students will choose 3 pictures to create a story.

Objective: To express a moment visually

#### *Planning Small Group Presentations*

None of the examples below describe speaking performances and they miss the natural context a group could provide to real conversations even in an academic environment. They are content or book based activities:

T8 and T9 – Objectives: Identify characteristics of predators. Determine the interaction among members of the species. Determine the relationship to other species. Identify specific situations that allow humans to survive.

Activities: Read the information from pages 220 – 221 in the book. Identify characteristics. Classify predators as specialists or generalists. Read the information from pages 218 – 219 in the book. List specific resources for which our species compete. Write a short description about the availability of these resources. Write descriptions of pairs of organisms that exhibit different types of interactions.

### *Plans Representing Novice Level*

By the end of the PDP program six teachers had reached novice level (T1, T2, T3, T8, T9, T10). Their plans show a nascent grasp of the nature of speaking, plans are still mechanistic and tentative, there is some understanding of PBO's, and activities are performances required by the book or program.

### *Planning Individual Oral Presentations*

T1 – Topic: “On the Edge” Inquiry questions: What causes people to be on the edge? How do people react when they find themselves on the edge? What can we learn from the experience? Objectives: be able to reflect on their personal experience, be able to express their feelings in a fluent, accurate description, give spontaneous answers to questions about their experience Activities: Brainstorm situations in which students were “on the edge,” write in a paper experience using sensory details that show the audience how they felt, illustrate experience, give a three minute oral presentation of experience aided with illustration.

In this example the teacher is beginning to understand the nature of speaking. Her inquiry questions could be discussed orally in her class, though she fails to make them part of her activities.

### *Planning Small Group Presentation*

T2 - Topic: Discussing About a Collective Issue. Inquiry questions: What is a collective issue? What makes a good discussion? How to reach consensus? What is assertiveness?

**Objectives:** Be able to have a substantive discussion about a collective issue, be able to write about a collective issue be able to share reflections to explain their own approach to the problem

**Activities:** Write about an assigned issue from their point of view, work in groups to decide on an approach to the problem, present ideas, answer questions about presentation, ask questions about other groups' presentations.

This teacher is also starting to understand how to connect speaking activities with her subject, but, one of her inquiry questions seems disconnected from the rest which focus on collective issues. Though her objectives are not wrong she fails to allow her students the chance to decide what is a collective issue to them by assigning one of her own.

Three teachers had reached apprentice level (T5, T6, and T7) which shows plans that exhibit clear and viable performance based objectives and focus on learners and activities that are mostly real performances though they might include a few that are disconnected from PBO's.

### *Plans Representing Apprentice Level*

The following two examples of teachers in the apprentice level show an improvement in the quality of their inquiry questions and objectives. They focus on more real activities. There seems to be connections between PBO's and their class activities. Still their plans do not give a clear idea of how they will use the inquiry questions in their classes.

#### *Apprentice Teacher Planning Small Group Oral Presentation*

T6 – Topic: Significant Moments. Inquiry questions: How do events in our lives mark us? What makes me who I am? How do I relate to others? Why is it important to understand others?

**Objectives:** Discuss moments of reflection, communicate feelings and thoughts orally

Activities: watch a video about a person's significant moment, work in groups to discuss significance of the moment, share ideas from groups, find a personal significant moment and give an individual presentation, answer questions asked by peers and teacher

*Apprentice Teacher Planning Whole Class Presentation*

T7 – Topic: Everybody is different but the same too. Inquiry questions: How important is it to learn about our own culture? What is the reality of our country compared to others?

Objectives: research about different Ecuadorian cultures, give an individual presentation about findings, and answer questions different teachers ask.

Activities: after reading a text about it, discuss what makes different cultures different and alike; discuss what makes Ecuador different from other countries, share own experiences with different cultures within Ecuador, teacher presents different cultures, class discusses them.

*Plans Representing Master Level*

One teacher had reached master level (T4). Her plans evidence flexible understanding of speaking and connections with other skills and activities connected to PBO's which show great creativity and integration. Samples from these plans follow:

*Master Teacher Planning Small Group and Individual Oral Presentation*

T4 – Topic: Significant Moments. Inquiry questions: How do events in our lives mark us? What makes a moment significant?

Objectives: to be able to communicate feelings and thoughts orally, to explain a visual of a significant moment,

Activities: listen to teacher deliver a speech on a significant moment, individually grade teacher's presentation using PBO's assessment criteria, work in groups to analyze teacher's presentation, groups share responses and grades, find a personal significant moment, make an outline for their presentation, deliver individual presentations about significant moments,

ask and answer questions about presenters’ significant moments, grade presenters, discuss positive aspects of the activity and ways to improve it.

Table 8 illustrates the teachers’ level at the beginning of the intervention and by its end. The table shows that 6 of the 8 teachers who were identified as having a naïve level of understanding changed and exhibited a novice level of understanding by the end of the intervention. They are teachers one, two, three, eight, nine, and ten (T1, T2, T3, T8, T9, T10). Two of those teachers moved up two levels and they now show an apprentice level of understanding when planning. They are teachers five and seven (T5 and T7)

The two teachers who had initially exhibited a novice level of understanding of planning, teacher four and six (T4 and T6), changed and became master and apprentice level teachers respectively.

Table 8 – PBO’s planning analysis table

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	SCHOOL’S SPEAKING PROGRAM	INNITIAL PLANS	PLANS BY THE END OF PROGRAM
<b>Naïve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher’s intuitive or Folkloric beliefs about teaching speaking prevail</li> <li>Plan lacks clarity of Purpose and audience with no understanding of PBO’s</li> <li>Activities are disconnected from PBO’s</li> </ul>	T1 T2 T3 T5 T7 T8 T9 T10	
<b>Novice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher’s nascent grasp of the nature of speaking</li> <li>Plans still mechanistic and tentative with little understanding of PBO’s</li> <li>Activities are performances required by the book or the program</li> </ul>	T4 T6	T1 T2 T3 T8 T9 T10
<b>Apprentice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate use of language teaching concepts and most claims are supported effectively with examples and sources</li> <li>Plans exhibit clear and viable PBO’s and focus on learners</li> <li>Activities are mostly real performances though they may include a few activities disconnected from PBO’s</li> </ul>		T5 T6 T7
<b>Master</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible understanding of language teaching foundations and interdisciplinary integration.</li> <li>Plans exhibit clear sense of purpose and need for connections to support learning</li> <li>Activities are connected to PBO’s and show creativity and integration</li> </ul>		T4

## Implementing PBO's

The implementation of performance based instruction was analyzed in the teacher made videos. The researcher focused on classroom interactions, specifically whether teachers' feedback and student comments or questions were related to doing real life things rather than memorizing information or carrying mechanical text based or disconnected activities such as the ones teachers had been carrying out. By the end of the ten month program four teachers were categorized as novice (T1, T2, T3, and T8), five teachers categorized as apprentices (T5, T6, T7, T9, and T10), and one teacher reached the master level (T4) as shown on table 9.

### Novice Level Implementation of PBOs

T2 – Whole class activity on the topic of Solving Problems and Getting Advice: After a student has presented a problem she and a friend had to her classmates, a volunteer asks: “why did you believe what someone you did not know tell you about your friend?” “Why didn't you ask your friend directly?” The teacher asks a volunteer to summarize the ideas presented so far then together they brainstorm possible ways to approach the problem.

Though the students are interested in the presentation and in asking questions about doubts raised by it, the teacher seemed more interested in controlling the time of the activities than in maximizing students' talk time. Also, the problems students worked on were not chosen by them according to their interest. The teacher assigned different issues people normally face to each group.

### Apprentice Level Implementation of PBOs

#### Individual Oral Presentation about Being “On the Edge”

Presenter: “I'm a swimmer and a moment I was ‘on the edge’ was when I had my first competition. I was scared and prayed so much...”

Classmate: “Where was the competition? How old were you?”

Presenter: “At the Olympic Pool, that’s a translation, it is in the Hotel Oro Verde. I was twelve years old.”

Classmate: “Were your parents there? Did they get you nervous?”

Presenter: “Did they get me nervous? Oh, yeah they were there. They did not make me nervous. They were cheering me, specially my mom.”

Teacher: “Why were you praying?”

Presenter: “It was a big competition and I had to swim a 400 meters pool eight times which is not easy, and if you are left behind, that is really humiliating.”

Teacher: “Tell me about what went through your mind while competing.”

Presenter: (fails to answer question)

Even though this seems to be a natural type of conversation, the questions asked by classmates are closed questions that would be answered with simple yes or no answers or one word responses. It seems they had little training in how to ask questions to motivate the presenter to elaborate. The teacher is insecure when asking questions. The two questions included here are interesting to analyze, the teacher is trying to have the presenter elaborate on the emotions and ideas that went through her mind while experiencing this challenging moment (Students had to present a moment in which they felt “on the edge”). Her first question does not succeed in making the presenter elaborate and then her second question, which is better, is left unanswered by the student. The video shows a good general connection between the questions and the presentations and relative natural interactions which could take place in any social space.

Master Level Implementation of PBOs (fragments from T4’s videos)

Individual Oral Presentation about a Significant Moment

Presenter: “I’m going to talk about my significant moment which was going to Disney World with all of my friends. Ever since I was little I had this dream of me going with

my friends on a trip to Disney World. I never thought that it would come true and I never thought that it would be with all of them cause I thought that if it happened maybe it would be with one or two, but I never thought that it would be with my entire class... (describes different events that happened)...we learned to appreciate all we had in spite of how different we are..."

Classmate: "What was the most significant moment from the experience?"

Presenter: "I can't choose one but I can say that I have a group of thirteen friends and we all have strong characters and being able to live with them during that week was special."

Classmate: "When did you realize the dream had become true?"

Presenter: "When I saw the castle in Magic Kingdom and I was surrounded by all my classmates, that moment gave me goosebumps."

Teacher: "You mentioned that this trip was a dream from childhood, do you have any other childhood dreams that you have accomplished?"

Presenter: "Not like that. I hope I accomplish one soon which is to finish school and go on vacations by myself."

Teacher: "Do you have in mind any specific place?"

Presenter: "Not now but I want to go alone."

In the case of this video the student appears to have been guided towards a choice of topic. The moment is presented by the student for its significance which relies on having a childhood dream come true. Students' questions in this example seem also to have had prior guidance and they are more open questions relevant to the presentation. The teacher's initial questions are related to the experiences the student described. Her last two questions (shown above) show a great attempt at exploring other significant moments that the student may have experienced or an interest in her future plans.



Table 9 – Analysis of PBOs Implementation

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	SCHOOL'S SPEAKING PROGRAM	EVIDENCE FROM TEACHERS' MADE VIDEOS
<b>Naïve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher's intuitive or Folkloric beliefs about teaching speaking prevail</li> <li>Activities are disconnected from PBO's</li> </ul>	
<b>Novice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher's nascent grasp of the nature of speaking</li> <li>Activities are performances required by the book or the program</li> </ul>	T1 T2 T3 T8
<b>Apprentice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate use of language teaching concepts and most claims are supported effectively with examples and sources</li> <li>Activities are mostly real performances though they may include a few activities disconnected from PBO's</li> </ul>	T5 T6 T7 T9 T10
<b>Master</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible understanding of language teaching foundations and interdisciplinary integration.</li> <li>Activities are connected to PBO's and show creativity and integration</li> </ul>	T4

### Assessing PBOs

This category was not easy to analyze due to the fact that not all ten teachers had evidence of any form of assessment in their portfolios besides the original rubric given to them by the facilitator. Table 10 shows that by the end of the intervention two teachers had reached the novice level (little understanding of the assessment criteria), teachers seven and eight (T7 and T8); two teachers had reached the apprentice level, which describes teachers who understand the assessment criteria, have somewhat helped their students understand the criteria to be used to evaluate their speaking performances, and have used the PBOs rubric with no change or adaptation to the contents they were covering. They are teacher one and six (T1 and T6); finally, two teachers reached the master level, which is evidenced in the actions they took to make the assessment criteria understandable for their students and in the adaptations made on the rubrics to include contents being studied. They are teachers four and ten (T4 and T10).

### Novice Level PBOs Assessment

T7 – She has modified rubric format to facilitate her grading of the student's work. Her rubric uses the same information as the facilitator's rubric with no adaptation to include the

contents she is teaching. There is evidence of her mechanical use of the rubric. Her scores are usually high which might imply little understanding of the evaluation tool. (See appendix 14 – picture 1)

Apprentice Level PBOs Assessment

T6 – This teacher’s portfolio included pictures of the blackboard with her students’ interpretation of what each criterion in the PBO’s rubric stood for. These pictures evidence an attempt to make the evaluation criteria clear to her students. (See appendix 14 – Pictures 3 and 4)

Master Level PBO’s Assessment

T4 – This teacher’s portfolio evidences she has included a space in her class to make sure her students understand the evaluation criteria that would be used to grade their speaking performances. First she has her students discuss in groups how they understand each criterion (see appendix 15 – Pictures 1, 2 and 3). Then she requests her students to assess their classmates’ presentations using the criteria (see appendix 15 – Picture 4) and asks each student to self- assess (see appendix 15 – Picture 5). Finally as a whole class exercise the entire class self-evaluates the activity looking for strengths and weaknesses (see appendix 15 – Picture 6).

Table 10 – Analysis of Assessing PBO’s

LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	DELTA’S SPEAKING PROGRAM	EVIDENCE FROM PORTFOLIOS DOCUMENTS
<b>Naïve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment disconnected from PBO’s focus on accent and grammar</li> <li>No evidence of an attempt to explain assessment criteria</li> </ul>	
<b>Novice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No evidence of an attempt to explain assessment criteria</li> <li>Assessment is superficial, rubrics used are more from web pages or other teachers</li> </ul>	T7 T8
<b>Apprentice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher has attempted to explain assessment criteria</li> <li>Assessment is according to the PBO’s rubric but mechanical</li> </ul>	T1 T6
<b>Master</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher has scaffolded students to understand assessment criteria</li> <li>Assessment is flexible and has been adapted to contents studied</li> </ul>	T4 T10

This category was triangulated with a pre and post test in the use of the grading criteria. The pre-test was given on March 2009 before starting the intervention and in order to create a baseline of the understanding of the evaluation criteria. The post-test was given on January 2010 at the end of the intervention in order for the researcher to find out more information about the effect of the professional development portfolio program. The teachers' results in the pre-test are shown on table 12

Table 12- Pre-Test Results

TEACHERS	A.LANGUAGE	ME	B.CULTURAL INTERACTION	ME	A.MESSAGE	ME	TOTAL	ME
<b>T1</b>	7	-2	6	-4	5	-4	18	-10
<b>T2</b>	4	-5	6	-4	5	-4	15	-13
<b>T3</b>	4	-5	5	-5	4	-5	13	-15
<b>T4</b>	7	-2	7	-3	6	-3	20	-8
<b>T5</b>	6	-3	5	-5	5	-4	16	-12
<b>T6</b>	5	-4	5	-5	3	-6	13	-15
<b>T7</b>	7	-2	7	-3	7	-2	21	-7
<b>T8</b>	4	-5	7	-3	7	-2	18	-10
<b>T9</b>	6	-3	5	-5	6	-3	17	-11
<b>T10</b>	7	-2	8	-2	6	-3	21	-7
<b>AVERAGES</b>	6	-4	6	-4	6	-3	17	-11
<b>PBO EXAMINER</b>	9		10		9		28	

Acceptable Margin of error for total score -3, for sub-scales - or + 1

The highest grade assigned in these tests which is 21, shows a margin of error (ME) of -7. This score is unacceptable and evidences the need for training teachers to look at PBOs. All of them tend to grade too low. The table also shows a margin of error of -4 and -3 in the subscales. An acceptable margin of error in these would be -1.

The post-test results evidence improvement in the teachers' understanding of criterion A and C, which is consistent to their preconceived beliefs about learning English. Criterion A, language, requires teachers' understanding the extent to which their students speak the language fluently and accurately. Their traditional methods have focused on the correctness of the grammar used while speaking and the pronunciation and fluency of the speaker. Criterion C, message, requires teachers to understand whether their students are able to communicate their ideas or message accordingly to the task and maintain a coherent

conversation. Traditionally their training has required teachers to play close attention to the instructions or prompts they give. The margin of error in each of these sub-scales is an acceptable -1. On the other hand, the results for criterion B, cultural interaction show the need for further training in understanding its characteristics. Cultural interaction evaluates the students understanding of the context in which they speak, the social and cultural rules and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants), that is understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason. This requires that teachers understand real speaking performances in the context of their subjects. The results and margins of error (ME), shown in Table 13, leave the facilitator with the need to carry out more practices and discussions about this criterion with the cohort of secondary English teachers. The average of the total scores, confirms the need for more practice using the PBOs rubric. A paucity of no evidence in most of the portfolios confirms this interpretation.

Table 13 – Post-test Results and Margins of Error

TEACHERS	A.LANGUAGE	ME	B.CULTURAL INTERACTION	ME	A.MESSAGE	ME	TOTAL	ME
<b>T1</b>	9	0	8	-2	9	0	26	-2
<b>T2</b>	9	0	9	-1	10	+1	28	-2
<b>T3</b>	8	-1	6	-4	8	-1	22	-6
<b>T4</b>	9	0	9	-1	9	0	27	-1
<b>T5</b>	9	0	9	-1	8	-1	26	-2
<b>T6</b>	8	-1	9	-1	8	-1	25	-3
<b>T7</b>	6	-2	7	-3	8	-1	21	-7
<b>T8</b>	6	-2	6	-4	7	-2	19	-9
<b>T9</b>	8	-1	8	-2	8	-1	24	-4
<b>T10</b>	8	-1	9	-1	8	-1	25	-3
<b>AVERAGES</b>	8	-1	8	-2	8	-1	24	-4
<b>PBO EXAMINER</b>	9		10		9		28	

Acceptable Margin of error for total score -3, for sub-scales - or + 1

Finally, by the end of the intervention six teachers exhibited an acceptable margin of error (ME) in the score they assigned (T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, and T10) and four of them exhibited unacceptable ME's (T3, T7, T8, and T9). These last four teachers tended to grade their students too low. These results corroborate the qualitative analysis of the documents

found in their portfolios. The first six teachers reached apprentice or master levels of understanding of PBOs assessment. In the case of the last four, two of them, teacher three (T3) and teacher nine (T9), presented no evidence of PBOs assessment. Teachers seven and eight (T7 and T8) evidenced a few samples of the rubrics they used. They had reached the novice level according to the evidence in their portfolios.

The teachers were asked to analyze their perception of their teaching oral proficiency at the end of the intervention in January 2010 using the SWOT format they had used in March 2009. The new SWOT analysis evidences change only on what teachers consider strengths. Nine of them now see themselves as more aware of the connections between subject matter and speaking activities and see the advantages this brings. They mention having a clearer view of the need to intentionally assess speaking production in their subjects and also a better knowledge of an expected outcome (performance) and purpose for speaking activity. They still saw some of the same weaknesses, opportunities and threats (see appendix 12).

During the final interview the ten teachers were asked directly, “What if anything did you learn by making the portfolio?” Their answers to this question seem to focus more on the portfolio making process than on the learning of PBOs itself, which can be understood as their focus on how others perceive them through what they do rather than how they improve their students’ learning. According to Richards (2000) and Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007), it is usual in teachers’ initial stages of development to focus more on their work and personality rather than on the role of the subject they teach or any form of pedagogical knowledge. Most of the teachers’ answers focus on learning about the formality or organization of the materials they presented in their portfolios than any learning related to teaching speaking. Only four teachers’ answers refer to teaching or teaching oral proficiency performances. Here are some of their responses:

What if anything have you learned by doing the portfolio?

T2 – “To prepare my speaking classes better. I had the intention at the beginning of the year, but this training has been great.”

T4 – “About my students’ processes and my own processes of learning. Speaking classes should be better planned, that we cannot disconnect speaking classes from the contents that we are studying and that the speaking activities we choose should resemble the real world. I also learned a way to grade my students’ speaking that can be adapted to different contents.”

The data analyzed to answer research question one (What did teachers learn about using PBO’s as a result of the PDP program?) show that planning and implementing constitute the areas of greatest change. Assessment using PBOs has improved as a result of the professional development portfolio program, but it is still not optimal and will require more training and practice.

- Research Question # 2: What aspects of the PDP contributed to teachers’ learning?

The researcher’s objective in asking this question was to find out what was the effect of the professional development process using portfolios on the ten secondary English teachers, with a particular interest in studying what aspect of the program seemed to have the strongest influence: learning through reflection, learning through collaboration or learning by doing.

Learning through Reflection (LR)

Reflection in the context of this study should be about connecting PBO’s to their teaching practices. According to Schön (1987) reflection is insightful analysis of our professional practices. He further describes reflection-in-action, which is done during the experience, and reflection-on-action, which is done after the experience. White, Kid and

Ritchie (2005) state that reflection is part of an experience, it is about interpreting it, asking questions about it, finding possible explanations and testing those hypotheses. Reflection moments took place at the beginning of the intervention, when the teachers were asked to write about their expectations for the announced training, during the introductory and implementation stage of the program in order to record what they were experiencing, and when they were organizing portfolios. The teachers' reflections in their journals and the self-assessment sheets, as well as any other reflective documents from their portfolios were analyzed.

#### Evidence of Learning through Reflection from Portfolio Documents

##### Journals Samples of Reflection for the Purpose of Learning

Nine teachers presented their journals. Teacher one (T1) did not present a journal due to time constraints. Most of their entries are descriptions of teaching situations or, in the case of the three subject teachers, remaining questions about how to implement speaking in their class, which for most teachers implies a lack of understanding of the role of reflection in their professional development.

T4 – “The students consider oral expression a weakness, so I am confronted with an opportunity to improve and really look forward to the help I’m getting through this training. At the beginning I described my class as really reluctant to speak in English and that they try little to communicate with me, the teacher. This has changed; it is funny to see girls who lack a lot of vocabulary try their best to do it. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that I try to connect their interests to whatever topic we are studying. The performances required are more real also whether they present a significant moment or discuss why they like or dislike a poem. I guess being more

‘communicative’ pays because I’ve seen them happy and enjoying the class and they have expressed this to their tutor.”

Only one teacher (T10) writes about the actions she plans to take to sustain the implementation of speaking PBOs.

T10 – “What role does oral communication has in the context of an economics class?... If a student can read a local newspaper and identify what’s happening and hold a conversation with formal economic terms, that’s the communicative optic of my subject...This requires from me some steps: Step A – Change annual plans. Step B – include in modular plans at least monthly space for economics discussion.

The examples from teachers’ journals show characteristics identified by Schön (1987), and White, Kid and Ritchie (2005). Teacher two (T2) ponders about the value of connecting activities to students’ interests, realizes it takes more time than expected and connects the activities with the contents being studied (3<sup>rd</sup> person narration). Teacher four (T4), as well, is connecting her speaking classes to her students’ interests, the main one, improving speaking skills, which had been identified as a weakness. She mentions her students are more motivated and care about being able to communicate, even the ones with little vocabulary, and it is due to the more real performances she requires of them. Teacher seven (T7) is very candid about her feelings of frustration while implementing PBOs and how she is moving along even though there are things she needs to improve still. She is concerned about the questions that are crucial to speaking interaction. She thinks she is not good at asking them and questions whether a list of possible questions pre-set will help her. Something important to notice in this teacher is that she questions herself as to how natural or real having the pre-set list would be. Teacher ten’s (T10) initial journal entries are mainly concerned with the implementation of speaking activities in her two-hour a week class. At the beginning of the



intervention she did not see the space for it. By the end of the program she realizes oral communication has an important space in the world of economics. This finding is so important to her that she thinks about re-doing her annual plan and allotting more speaking time in her class.

#### Teacher-Led Conference Reflection Moment

In order to be as objective as possible the researcher selected information from the conference that comes from the teachers' explanations of the videos they decided to present. This decision is based on the fact that any other response was somewhat elicited by the interviewer, the English area coordinator.

T1 - "I like two things about that presentation, I don't know... maybe because it was the first one but the class was a hundred percent quiet. I don't know why that is so important to me and I need time for me to work... but that is something I need, not necessarily my students, that's why I'm learning... I was able to do some good questions, but some others I realized that on the girls that were not that fluent or that had any trouble or difficulty during their presentation, I was not able to keep on a conversation with them. I don't know why... I had examples of that... I don't know if I was nervous for them; I haven't reflected that much on those two presentations. I made more questions of... like short answer questions; they were not able to develop the whole conversation."

T6 - "I have to say something. I always knew that whenever you ask questions to your students, they have to be questions in which they can produce language, not just answer yes or no. In all of the questions I asked to all my students, I asked both types of questions because I thought they were going to feel more secure if I asked them yes/no questions like the ones I asked her..."

In these two samples we can see some evidence of PBOs implementation in teachers' reflections about them. Teacher one (T1) candidly accepts she is really concerned with having the rest of the class in perfect silence while individual students perform. This is coherent with some of her journal entries. Classroom management is an important concern for her. She critiques her questioning technique. She realizes it is important to ask questions that motivate students to produce more spoken language, not the simple confirmatory ("yes" or "no") questions. Teacher six (T6) does not rule out closed questions and understands they can be used to ease their students' stress while giving an oral presentation.

#### Self-assessment Sheets

Self-assessment sheets were part of their portfolio. They had a free format in which teachers self-evaluated what they did well, what they could improve and what they would like to work on. Some teachers wrote them and others typed them. Most of them are brief and refer to previous experiences. Most of the teachers primarily listed they wanted to improve their questioning technique, among other things. Here's an expert from one of them:

T6 – I have always known I am a demanding person and a teacher. I know I need to be the same way with myself, but the point is after having challenged myself realizing I could have demanded much more from me frustrates me. I believe this has to do with the fact it is hard for me to organize myself...Planning, implementing and assessing speaking and listening activities has been complicated for me ...Students definitely need to have practice speaking...This has become my main goal now. I just hope I can manage time to do it.

## Other Portfolio Documents

T10 – included in her portfolio a PowerPoint presentation she intended to use during her teacher-led conference. It explains her understanding of speaking performances in the context of an economics class.

### *Learning through Collaboration (LC).*

Collaboration as stated by DuFour et al. (2006), “is a systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results” (p.214) Transcripts of the teacher led conferences (TLCs) were studied to identify examples of interactions for the purpose of learning. This collaboration can take place with another teacher, coordinator or facilitator or in a big group of teachers. There were several moments of collaboration during the program.

### *Planning with a Partner and Receiving Feedback from peers*

T4 – “It was great to plan with someone else. I think that up to a point we complemented each other...I hadn’t notice how important the facilitator’s feedback was until I started implementing the plan, specially a question she asked about how I was going to teach the criteria, so I made arrangements to change for things that I hadn’t included.”

T5 – “I loved planning with T1...I need more input when planning...so I love to sit down with other teacher and do it, because sometimes I can come up with something that she doesn’t and other times is the other way around. I had some ideas and maybe they were really rough so she helped me to clarify them.”

Although most teachers enjoyed planning together they only did it at the beginning of the experience in order to facilitate their learning of the new methodology. Throughout the

rest of the intervention they planned individually. New teachers probably benefited more from planning with more experienced teachers (Teacher three and Teacher seven were examples of this).

#### Collaborative sessions

Ten collaborative sessions were part of the intervention. During them teachers practiced assessing students using PBOs, analyzed videos of teachers' implementation of PBOs, and discussed their understandings of performance based instruction and the grading criteria. They took place during regular area meetings for two class hours on Tuesday. Transcripts of the teacher-led conference were analyzed for evidence of collaboration for the purpose of learning.

T2 – “The sessions when we graded students using the PBOs rubric and the afterwards discussions were very helpful. Assessing was totally different from what I had learned...For instance before, I paid attention to accent and we noticed it was not important...then fluency, it doesn't matter if they speak fast or slow, the important thing is to be able to communicate well. I have changed my way of assessing oral activities.”

T6 – Finds the collaborative sessions helpful. She says, “Having these practices grading students made me realize that whatever they produced as rehearsed is not real...so I got to understand that whatever I wanted to do for my oral presentations with my students, I needed to find a way to make them real. I wanted to see the language that they could produce, and I could get it with analysis of the examples that we heard and the teachers' questioning.”

Teachers in general thought the collaborative sessions in which they practiced using the PBO's rubric were most helpful. The afterwards discussion of the ways they had decided

on the grades and posterior confrontation with the PBO's examiner assigned grade had a strong impact on the way they had perceived grading speaking in the past. Teacher two (T2) mentions some of the old practices such as paying too much attention to pronunciation and speaking speed. Teacher six (T6) realizes that the planned oral presentations that were a common practice of the past did not provide real language. She realizes real language is about natural interactions where communication exchanges in the form of questions and answers are important. Teacher nine (T9) mentions the importance of learning from others when she mentions that listening to the other subject teachers' ideas helped her clarify her own. Her last comment implies that the sessions helped her understand what real performances are.

*Learning by Doing (LD).*

Perkins (2003) describes learning as understanding and being able to perform flexibly in new contexts. Kolb (1984) described a process that included stages of action, observation, thinking and experimentation. Portfolio documents and teacher made videos of students' presentations were revised to find evidence of doing PBOs. Teachers were expected to implement performance based instruction in the context of their classes.

T1 – though there are good connections with the contents being learned, her videos evidence a novice level of understanding of real performances because in some presentations there were missed opportunities to evaluate oral proficiency through real interactions.

T4 – Her portfolio shows a master level of implementation. She does not only include materials with guidelines to deliver a good speech, it also evidences a great attempt at helping her students learn to self-assess and peer assess which are by themselves important real performances.

All of the teachers presented videos of their students' performances as evidence of facilitating doing performances. Some of these presentations were not necessarily good examples of real performance. Such is the case of teacher three (T3), who presented student made videos with no natural interaction and Teacher nine's (T9) examples of her students mini-debates. Teachers four and six (T4 and T6) offered evidence of their students' interpretations of the PBO's rubric, which demonstrate an attempt at helping them understand the evaluation criteria. Teachers one, six, seven and eight (T1, T6, T7, and T8) presented the grades they had given their students on their presentations.

#### Participants' perspective of Learning with Portfolio.

Analyzing the transcripts of the final interview (see appendix 9) served as triangulation for the information on the researcher's perspective. The two objectives of the Portfolio Professional Development Program were to use performance based objectives (PBOs) to facilitate learning in the EFL classroom and to reflect upon teaching practices and ways to improve them. Portfolios should have helped teachers to become more autonomous in this learning process. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher flexibility in finding out how participants made their portfolios, how portfolios contributed to their learning, and how this learning could connect with future learning.

Teachers' answers are organized according to the interview's questions:

1. Describe how you prepared your portfolio.

Most teachers gathered their plans and the material given at the collaborative sessions to include in their portfolios. All of them included at least one video of their students' performances. None of the teachers mentioned gathering materials in order to evidence PBO's implementation. T1 was the only teacher who did not include a journal among other

portfolio documents for the reason previously given. All the portfolios are different in the ways they are organized which reflect the teachers' different styles.

T4 – “Well, I started saving the materials you gave us on the types of activities we had to carry out with the students, the criteria, the IB learners' attributes, the materials on PBOs, and then I filed the plans that we made together and the corrections I did along with any handout or material I used. Then, I also filed my students' videos, or samples of the work they did.”

2. What did you feel confident about and what was difficult?

Most teachers mentioned it was hard to find the time to sit down and put together the portfolio. Some of them have mentioned that they have learned to become more organized by doing a portfolio. In general terms it is evident they have concentrated in collecting evidence of their planning that of any other teaching practice (implementing, assessing or reflecting).

T5 – “Well, for me the hardest thing was when we had to fill out the lesson plan, the inquiry section and for me it was the hardest thing and the finding of the activity like the one we presented the last time, the individual speaking activity, for me the hardest thing to do with that activity was kind of finding what to do with the rest of the class for example”

3. What, if anything, did you learn by doing the portfolio?

Teachers responses vary from a focus on the learning achieved by the actual making of the portfolio (such is the case of those teachers who learned to become more organized or “that it is important to do things timely”) to the main focus of the professional development portfolio process which is to learn to implement PBOs in an oral proficiency class. Five teachers' answers related to the oral proficiency classes (T2, T4, T5, T7 and T9). They mentioned being able to improve their speaking classes, being able to learn to use the PBO's rubric, to make better connections between speaking and their subjects, to learn about their students

learning processes, to learn about themselves as teachers, about their teaching methods, to self-assess and to learn to ask more challenging questions. Five teachers' answers relate to the process of putting together the portfolios (T1, T3, T5, T6 and T10). They mentioned learning to be more organized, learning the need to have evidence of student work, which is also evidence of the teachers' work, be able to improve and to keep things natural and simple. This last response could be connected to real performances in any area that should be natural.

T4 – “It is a work in progress but I think I have learned a lot about my students' processes and my own learning processes. I've realized that speaking classes should be better planned by us teachers. That we cannot disconnect speaking classes from the contents that we are studying and that the speaking activities we choose should resemble the real world. I also learned a way to grade my students' speaking performances that I find can be easily adapted to different contents.”

T5 – “to be more organized and to be able to improve...the portfolio process helps you look back at what you did with the class so it does help you improve in watching the videos, it allows you to see what you did wrong and what you did correctly...you learn about yourself, about your teaching and methods, your planning, and how it comes out with the class because sometimes you plan something then it doesn't come out the way you thought it would.”

#### 4. How do you know you learned?

Most of them refer to evidence that is the actual implementation of PBOs. They believe being able to carry out the three types of activities constitutes evidence of learning. Some of them mention they see a change in their classes, a change that comes from doing things more intentionally and with better connections to the other contents they teach. One teacher, teacher seven (T7) even mentioned knowing she had improved when she invited fellow



teachers to her students' oral presentations to ask questions. As she compared their questions to her own, she realized she had improved.

T4 – “Well, because I am doing it. I could carry the three activities with some minor problems to be solved. To be honest at the beginning I didn't know how to handle the rest of the class while one student presented. I solved it by making the audience part of the questions and in the meantime they learned to make good questions, I think they did. But as I did the first type, the individual presentation I felt more confident and saw a way to do the rest. I saw some of the teachers planning speaking presentations that were more connected to their units on regular basis throughout the year. A couple of them were experimenting a lot. And I saw them including more speaking activities throughout the year. I also feel more confident using the criteria: language, cultural interaction and message and I think I learned because in that test at the end of the year I could get closer to the real scores given by the examiner on the tape.”

5. What did you do that helped you learn this?

Most answers to this question relate to giving time to plan and implement either one of the three types of presentations. Others mentioned their intentions and attitudes as an important factor to promote change. The majority of the teachers see the value of putting the portfolio together as an important aid in the learning process, though most of them admit giving it little time.

T7 – “Having to focus my plan on oral activities and having to link it to the topic we were working on. I don't know if I did this much better than the first time but I feel much better.

6. What do you think I wanted you to learn through doing the portfolio? Did it make sense to do portfolio to learn it?

Most of the teachers realize the intention of the program was to improve their oral proficiency classes using performance based instruction. They found the portfolio useful in making them track their progress even though they did not necessarily enjoy making a portfolio or have time and organization skills necessary to make it.

T6 – “Well, I think that I learned pretty much what the PBOs rubric on English is requiring, it’s not requiring a harsh plan that we have been used to. We have a content based plan, annual plan and with demanding objectives. This one does not require that and I didn’t think so at the beginning. I thought that this was going to be much more content-bases as what we’ve had, but I understand now... I thought that it was more content-based than performance...yes, it evidences progress and the end result”

Goal setting was part of the program. Teachers set different goals in their plans. Most of them concentrated on improving the questions they made to motivate their students to speak, giving timely feedback, and improving their scores on the PBOs assessment practices. Not every teacher kept track of the goals she chose to work on. The following two questions relate to the goals set.

7. You set learning goals (show learning goals) for this project. Some teachers think the goals are useful – others don’t. How do you feel?

T4 – “Yes, I wanted to be able to use the grading criteria with flexibility and to make clear connections between the activities I design in my plans. Eh, I think having goals is a smart idea, I mean , we all have goals at the beginning of the year...eh...one way or another, we have them.”

8. Could you work on it?

T4 – “I liked being able to work on my goals this year. Eh...I think the journal also helped me focus on my goals.”

9. Which criterion did you understand better and which one less?

The majority of the teachers stated they find the meaning of the students' message and language easier to grade. This is coherent with the traditional practices they have been carrying out which focus on language and the task. Cultural interaction is the criterion they found most difficult to grade which is also consistent with their results in the post-test. Cultural Interaction is the component of the rubric that illustrates the real performances for it is about the exchange of communication taking place. Good speakers should know the context in which they are speaking, the audience they address, and that communication exchanges should be appropriate to context and subject.

T8 – “Well, because what I teach is more a subject matter, I would say the message because I always try to focus on what they mean or what they want to discuss or share the ideas on making their points about an environmental issue or something, so for me it's more easy to grade the message that they want to transmit than the language thing or the other one...cultural interaction is the one I understand less...it would be the one I cannot focus the most because of the subject, so I concentrate on what they want to say and how they say it more than the cultural interaction they may have”

10. What do you feel you have improved during this training?

All of the teachers see improvements in their oral proficiency classes, which are now better connected to the content they are teaching. They also see that these improvements have impacted their attitudes and the students' attitudes towards speaking English in a positive way. Two teachers (T2 and T6) mentioned having learned to accept mistakes. These two rigorous teachers avoided making them and tended “to scaffold their students' work too much” to avoid mistakes. They state in their final interview that they realize now that they can learn from their mistakes and their students' mistakes, also.

T5 – “I try to encourage my students to talk no matter what they are going to say and I try to make them respect what they are going to say and I try like to the other ones respect what they are going to say. I do try, do try to focus on them not on me because that’s something that we kind of tend to do because we focus on our speaking not on their speaking so I try to work more on their speaking and try to force them to practice English. That’s something that sometimes is not easy and that what I think I’ve been working on basically. I’m, I don’t know, a little bit more prepared because I do try to look for things that we are going to discuss in class beforehand not just kind of come up while doing the class. I do go with these questions if I don’t write them down I do have them in my head. I am more prepared to make my students speak which I was not before. Before I just kind of went, I did have my class planned but still it was not the thing because I needed something to make them speak to connect with them or make them connect to the topic which is different now.”

11. What do you think has helped you change?

Most of the teachers mentioned the collaborative sessions as the one component of the program that helped them change and learn. Collaboration is an important characteristic of the group of teachers in this study. It is an easy-going environment in which they share knowledge and strategies. Teachers are used to planning together and working together on projects. Collaboration and group discussions facilitate their learning.

T2 – “Well, the workshops we have been having... the collaborative sessions, the audio tapes that we have been using, so that we are able to use the criteria and that made me feel that I’m on the right track, I’m kind of encouraged to experiment new things or these things, even if they take a long time but I think all that is helping us to improve, and the fact that now I’m self-conscious of what I’m doing in class or I try to

be self-conscious so that I'm able to go back to see what I did good, what I need to improve and make the changes.”

In sum, all of the teachers' understanding of performance based instruction changed somehow as a result of the professional development (PDP) program. Most of them saw the value of the collaborative and reflective processes that were part of the program though they say it is the collaboration that helped them the most.

This study's qualitative analysis helps answer both research questions. Teacher's portfolios are a collection of evidence to provide feedback and facilitate performance based instruction shifted from content based learning which has been part of their traditional methods. The ten teachers learned at different levels how to implement PBOs. Just as it was important to find the answer to the question of what they learned, it was important to find out how they learned. Teachers learn by reflecting about their practices, by collaborating with other teachers, thus becoming learning partners, and for most they learn by doing what they are expected to learn.

## **VII. Discussion**

What was the effect of using professional development portfolios to facilitate learning to implement performance based objectives? The results of this study prove that the problem of having oral proficiency classes disconnected from the units being taught was solved by the end of the intervention and there is evidence that teachers continued improving their classes 12 months after the intervention was carried out (year 2010). The researcher and area coordinator are still concerned about the training of new teachers who did not participate of the intervention.

The study also corroborated that a professional development portfolio is an optimal pedagogical strategy for in-service teachers' development (Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden, 2006; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Klenowski, 2000; Kolb, 1984; Zubizarreta, 2009).

Portfolios helped the researcher see what was important to the teachers (the contents of the portfolios have more evidence of planning and implementing, than evidence of assessment). Through portfolios, teachers could slow down to see what they were doing. They could focus on their teaching oral proficiency practices and document their development in the learning process. It is a strategy coherent with experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) as it provides the space for teachers to think critically and reflect about their teaching practices, even if they do not see the need to make a portfolio which was manifested by two of them during their final interviews.

Teachers' professional development programs should be constant, connected, challenging and contextualized in their jobs. Evidence in this qualitative study points to the fact that teachers learn best when they are confronted throughout a longer period of time with the opportunity to see what they are doing in order to be able to adapt to their students needs (Richards J. C., 2000, p. xiv). The portfolio process allowed teachers to accomplish this through doing the portfolio, writing in their journals, through the conference in which they showed and explained their portfolios to their coordinator, and the collaborative sessions in which they practiced and discussed PBO's. The process enabled them to have time to plan, reflect about their planning, teach, reflect about their teaching, assess and reflect about the ways they were assessing. The ten teachers from the study were asked to do something new to them but something that would help them understand better the nature of the subjects they teach. They still need to improve their understanding of real performances in the context of their classes, but they are in the process. The challenge lays in the question of "how do we know that our students have learned?" (Perkins, 2003, p. 69)

The same question applies to professional development programs. How do we know teachers have learned? In the context of this study this question translates as "what did teachers learn as result of the PDP program? Portfolios allowed the researcher to see the

depth of knowledge teachers have about the subjects they teach and about their teaching practices, particularly through their planning. Even though the results of the study show that planning improved less than implementation and assessment (see tables 8, 9 and 10) and six teachers are still in the novice level, teachers see planning as more complex, most of their portfolios documents are evidence of their planning and during the teacher-led conference they manifest positive feelings about collaborative planning. Planning at the beginning of the program was text based. Changing the plan format helped teachers get away from their traditional practice of copying in their plans activities found in the textbook. By deciding which were the important questions of the lessons they were teaching and then connecting performance based objectives and activities to them, they gained ownership of their plans. An implication for future training taken from the analysis made of the plans presented is that new teachers probably benefit from collaborative planning while individual planning is important for experienced teachers. Planning is a good professional development tool for interacting with teachers to help them grow. Individual and collegial planning and time allotted to carry it out is a condition for the improvement of the qualities of any program in this school and in any other school.

The analysis of the results evidences the PDP program improved the teachers implementation of PBOs in their oral proficiency classes. Six teachers reached the apprentice or master levels at the end of the intervention. The videos included in the portfolios provided an important insight into what teachers do in the class. All of them succeeded at shifting from a teacher-centered to a student-centered class. Most of them mentioned during the teacher-led conference of the final interview that they noticed they spoke too much and that they realized they needed to allow their students to speak more, even if this involves loosening up their control of the learning environment. In most cases they implemented real speaking performances found in any social, academic or working environment, an aspect that subject

matter teachers still find hard to implement. They will continue to analyze the role that oral communication has in the context of their subjects. Another aspect that was made evident through their video implementation samples was their concern with being able to ask challenging questions that motivated their students to speak. This concern shows a better understanding of what PBOs are. There cannot be good oral communication without questions and answers. They are a natural part of real performances in speaking English, something that was lacking in their previous ways of teaching and assessing oral proficiency.

Another relevant finding during the study was that the structure suggested by the performance based methodology that teachers implemented resembled real performances. The ten teachers were asked to carry out an individual oral presentation, small group, and whole class presentations. Most of them were deeply concerned with the students' individual accountability when working in small groups or with the whole class. They found it hard to figure out ways to keep everyone on task which is coherent with their concern with classroom management and how they are perceived as teachers (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden 2007, Richards 2000) The analysis of their plans, videos and information provided in the conference and interviews shows that the teachers missed opportunities to have small group or whole class orals connected to the contents they were teaching, the three types reflect natural exchanges in real life. The area coordinator will have to continue working on helping them see those opportunities.

In terms of assessment, the PDP program facilitated teachers learning as it is evidenced by the pre and post test results as well as the evidence presented in their portfolios. According to the pre and post test results 60 % of the teachers improved their use of the PBOs rubric (See tables 12 and 13), they show an acceptable margin of error. Two thirds of the teachers who presented evidence of assessment in their portfolios reached the apprentice and master levels of assessment. The systematization provided by the proposed PBO's rubric, which involves



having known performance based assessment criteria to guide their planning and teaching has proven effective. All of the teachers showed some improvement in the use of the rubric, but only two teachers were able to see the potential for adaptation of the rubric given to them. Teachers have stated they will continue using this evaluation system. A main concern is their idea that assessing oral proficiency is about grading a moment and not a process of observing performances improve. And that assessment could take place in different moments with the added opportunity of resorting to the videos they make.

The second research question was: what aspects of the PDP program contributed to teachers learning? In this study three ways of learning were tested: learning through reflection, learning through collaboration and learning by doing. Though the researcher would like to say that it is hard to decide which one had the strongest impact in teachers learning, the evidence points out that it was collaboration which contributed the most to teachers learning during the intervention.

Learning through reflection was a weak aspect of the intervention. The opportunities for individual reflection do not show significant learning insights. The teachers' journal reflections are mainly descriptive, reporting what they did or learned. The SWOT and self-assessment sheets do not show important results. Reflection should have been evidenced in the teachers' decisions to improve PBOs implementation. There is only evidence in one of the journals of a teacher's intention to solve a problem she faced in the implementation of PBOs. Learning was mediated externally through the researcher's questions during the teacher led conferences and final interview. A recommendation to strengthen learning through reflection should be made. The PDP program would have benefitted from having more TLCs and, either individual or collaborative, opportunities to present their portfolios, set goals, seek strategies to accomplish them, and gain more autonomy in the reflection processes of their learning.

Learning through collaboration was the aspect that most contributed to the PDP program. Collaboration was not new to the teachers in the English area. During the 10 collaborative sessions teachers benefitted from the exchange of different ideas, experiences and feedback given to each other. Collaboration was a custom of the area before the intervention, but it was quite informal. There's proof that points to the fact that these ten teachers enjoy working together while planning which is expressed during the TLCs. Most of the collaborative sessions revolved around planning and assessing PBO's. One session was destined to analyze the video of one of the teacher's student's oral presentation. More sessions in which teachers could analyze student work could have aided their understanding of real performances in oral proficiency. Collaboration needs to evolve and turn into a professional learning community (DuFour et al., p.2) that promotes a collaborative culture in the area and in any other area, a culture that implies working together to provide each student with opportunities for learning.

Finally, through doing they became action oriented teachers just as their students when asked to "perform." Learning by doing according to Kolb (1984) develops a deeper understanding and greater involvement. It is the challenge of the teachers and the school to move from the "comfort of the familiar" to meaningful actions that guarantee students' academic achievement, actions that should be based on the school's needs. Action research works in very specific contexts, validity was achieved by the immediate meaning of the action research as defined by the participants (Erickson as cited in Burns, 1986, p.161). Teachers needed to make their oral proficiency class more connected and resembling real interactions. Most of them succeeded at it and continue working on it.

However, during the research there were some limitations that interrupted the intervention and limitations that may have affected the interpretation of the results. Among the first type, the researcher was faced with the loss of two of her study participants in the middle of school year 2009 – 2010 due to their relocation and health issues. The twelve teachers that

participated of this intervention ended up being ten. Among the second type, it is necessary to remember that qualitative research is subjected to the researcher's interpretations of the collected data. Bias was reduced by providing evidence to support the researcher's interpretations. But, in spite of using triangulation methods, the analysis would have benefitted from a second person rating the information to guarantee consistency (Wiersma, 2000, p. 211).

Portfolios are definitely an important tool for professional development that helps administrators by providing evidence of teachers' skills and knowledge and of their training needs. Teacher trainers cannot forget that any success in using professional development portfolios relies on the continual process of action and reflection, tied to time allocation, documentation, rigorous assessment and collaboration (Zubizarreta, 2009, p. 19). The Portfolios combined with collaborative sessions that were part of this study provided important information about teachers learning, information that will sustain in-service teachers' learning in the school where the study took place or that will help other schools if they choose to use them. Concerns about teachers' development will continue to generate adequate strategies whether the focus is a particular methodology (PBI this time), practice (planning or assessment), classroom processes and structures, or even teachers' attitudes.

As less traditional in-service training strategies develop (professional development portfolios, case studies, inquiry, action research, etc.), professional development benefits. The move from traditional methods to facilitating in-school learning is connected to longer term strategies aimed at changing not only teaching practice but also the school culture. For if teacher learning takes place within the context of a professional community that is fostered and developed in context, the effects may be not only teacher development, but the accomplishment of significant and lasting school change that will benefit who matter the most, the learners

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# Appendices

APPENDIX 1

PRE-SWOT RESULTS ENGLISH AREA

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive learning environment</li> <li>- Interest for Ss ideas</li> <li>- Creativity</li> <li>- Prior knowledge</li> <li>- Confident Ss</li> <li>- Good class management</li> <li>- Fluency</li> <li>- Knowledge of Subject</li> <li>- Good Texts</li> <li>- Everyday life examples</li> <li>- Commitment</li> <li>- Use of protocols</li> <li>- Use of assessment criteria (rubrics)</li> <li>- Attempt to personalize classes</li> <li>- Constant encouragement to use language</li> <li>- Practice in other classes</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class management</li> <li>- Ss lack of vocabulary</li> <li>- Not enough time for subject during week</li> <li>- Lack of continuity</li> <li>- Planning time</li> <li>- Different levels of Ss</li> <li>- Lack of resources</li> <li>- Creativity</li> <li>- Organization</li> <li>- Not phrasing questions correctly</li> </ul>
<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ss lack of interest</li> <li>- Lack of time</li> <li>- Some Ss' bad attitudes</li> <li>- Ss speaking Spanish during Spanish class</li> <li>- Ss different levels of English</li> <li>- Resistance (to what?)</li> <li>- Ss do not realize their mistakes therefore do not correct them</li> <li>- Adolescence</li> <li>- Shyness</li> <li>- Spanglish</li> <li>- Bullying</li> <li>- Many students per class</li> <li>- Fear of making mistakes</li> </ul>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class discussions</li> <li>- TOEFL iBT book</li> <li>- Opportunities for Ss to use their own words</li> <li>- Strategies</li> <li>- Time</li> <li>- Good texts</li> <li>- Research projects</li> <li>- Interesting topics</li> <li>- Internet resources</li> <li>- Oral communication skills</li> <li>- Current events relate to subject contents</li> <li>- Some topics are interesting to Ss</li> <li>- Ss participate of exchanges with native speakers</li> <li>- Ss willingness to discuss current issues</li> <li>- Interactive classes</li> <li>- Ss level of English</li> </ul>

- How do I use these strengths to take advantage of these opportunities?
- How do I overcome the weaknesses that will make these threats a reality?
- How do I use my strengths to reduce the likelihood and impact of these threats?
- How do I overcome these weaknesses that prevent me from taking advantage of these opportunities?

## APPENDIX 2

### ASSESSMENT CRITERIA HL

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## Internal Assessment

### Oral Component

#### Criterion A: Language

*To what extent does the candidate speak the language fluently and accurately?*

- *How fluent is the language spoken by the candidate?*  
(*Fluency refers to ease of speaking.*)
- *How correct and idiomatic are the grammar and vocabulary used by the candidate?*
- *To what extent does intonation contribute to communication?*  
(*Intonation refers to the sounds and rhythms of the language that are essential for effective communication. It does not refer to accent. The candidate is not expected to sound like a native speaker of the language.*)

#### Achievement Level

- 0**            **Level 1 is not achieved.**
- 1–2**          **Command of the spoken language is very limited.**
- The production of language is hesitant and not always comprehensible.
  - The use of grammar and vocabulary is often incorrect and/or very limited.
  - Inaccurate intonation interferes with communication.
- 3–4**          **Command of the spoken language is limited.**
- The production of language is comprehensible but with frequent lapses in fluency.
  - The use of grammar and vocabulary is sometimes incorrect and/or limited.
  - Inaccurate intonation sometimes interferes with communication.
- 5–6**          **Command of the spoken language is fairly good.**
- The production of language is mostly fluent.
  - The use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct with some idiomatic expressions.
  - The intonation does not interfere with communication.
- 7–8**          **Command of the spoken language is good.**
- The production of language is fluent.
  - The use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct, varied and idiomatic.
  - The intonation contributes effectively to communication.
- 9–10**        **Command of the spoken language is very good.**
- The production of language is fluent and with a touch of authenticity.
  - The use of grammar and vocabulary is varied and idiomatic, almost error free.
  - The intonation contributes effectively and expressively to communication.

## Criterion B: Cultural Interaction

*To what extent does the candidate interact appropriately and successfully in the conversation?*

- *How sensitive and subtle is the candidate's response to nuances and prompts?  
(Teachers should ensure that their participation in the exchange is sufficient, subtle and complex enough to enable the assessment of the candidate's listening skills.)*
- *How actively and sensitively does the candidate contribute to the conversation?*
- *To what extent does the candidate speak spontaneously, or has the candidate rehearsed the conversation?*
- *How appropriate is the language to the subject and context?  
(Language refers to tone and register.)*

### Achievement Level

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>0</b>    | <b>Level 1 is not achieved.</b>   |
| <b>1–2</b>  | <b>Interaction in conversation is limited.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in simple exchanges are limited and/or inappropriate due to lack of understanding.</li> <li>• Contributions to the conversation are very limited and/or overly rehearsed.</li> <li>• The language is inappropriate to the subject and context.</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>3–4</b>  | <b>Interaction in conversation is basic.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in simple exchanges are limited due to some difficulties with understanding, but they are mostly appropriate.</li> <li>• Contributions to the conversation are limited and/or partly rehearsed.</li> <li>• The language is often inappropriate to the subject and context.</li> </ul>       |
| <b>5–6</b>  | <b>Interaction in conversation is quite successful.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in simple exchanges are competent, with some difficulty shown in more complex exchanges.</li> <li>• Contributions to the conversation are, at times, active and show some spontaneity.</li> <li>• The language is sometimes inappropriate to the subject and context.</li> </ul> |
| <b>7–8</b>  | <b>Interaction in conversation is successful.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in fairly complex exchanges show some sensitivity to subtlety, nuances and prompts.</li> <li>• Contributions to the conversation are active and spontaneous.</li> <li>• The language is generally appropriate to the subject and context.</li> </ul>                                   |
| <b>9–10</b> | <b>Interaction in conversation is very successful.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses in complex exchanges show sensitivity and subtlety to nuances and prompts.</li> <li>• Contributions to the conversation are active, spontaneous and sensitive to others.</li> <li>• The language is consistently appropriate to the subject and context.</li> </ul>               |

## Criterion C: Message

*To what extent is the candidate able to communicate ideas (or message) and maintain a coherent conversation?*

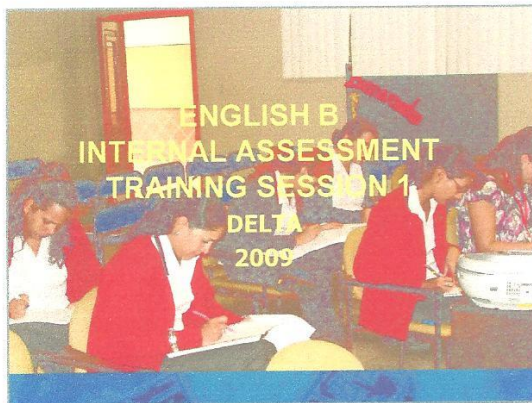
- *To what extent is the candidate able to convey complex ideas and opinions?*
- *How clearly, coherently and vividly are the ideas and opinions presented?*
- *How relevant and complete are the candidate's responses?*
- *How coherent is the conversation?*

### Achievement Level

- 0**      **Level 1 is not achieved.**
- 1–2**      **The candidate handles simple ideas with difficulty.**
- Simple ideas and opinions are presented with difficulty, sometimes incoherently.
  - Responses are generally irrelevant and/or repetitive.
  - The conversation is disjointed.
- 3–4**      **The candidate handles simple ideas with some difficulty.**
- Simple ideas and opinions are not always presented clearly and coherently.
  - Responses are sometimes irrelevant and/or repetitive.
  - The conversation does not flow coherently.
- 5–6**      **The candidate handles simple ideas fairly well.**
- Simple ideas and opinions are presented clearly and coherently.
  - Responses are generally relevant and contain some details.
  - The conversation generally flows coherently.
- 7–8**      **The candidate handles complex ideas well.**
- Both simple and complex ideas and opinions are generally presented clearly, coherently and effectively.
  - Responses are generally relevant and show some imagination.
  - The conversation flows coherently.
- 9–10**      **The candidate handles complex ideas very well.**
- Both simple and complex ideas and opinions are presented clearly, coherently and vividly.
  - Responses are relevant and show insight and imagination.
  - A coherent conversation is maintained throughout.



APPENDIX 3



### PRE-TEST RESULTS

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RIM MARJA	CARLA	CARLOTA	CLAUDIA	DANIELA
LANGUAGE	7	4	4	7	6
MESSAGE	6	7	6	8	5
CULTURAL INTERACTION	5	7	5	6	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>

### PRE-TEST RESULTS

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	GABY	KAT	LUCCIA	MAFER	TERESA
LANGUAGE	4	7	6	5	7
MESSAGE	5	7	5	5	7
CULTURAL INTERACTION	4	6	5	3	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>

### THE THREE CRITERIA

In the context of CLT and PBI the successful use of a language consists of demonstrating competence in three distinct but interrelated areas:

- **Language:** handling the language system accurately (grammar, syntax, etc)
- **Cultural Interaction:** selecting language appropriate to a particular cultural and social context
- **Message:** understanding ideas and how they are organized in order to communicate them appropriately.

### CLT & PBI

During the course of study, and through the development of all language skills, students should be encouraged to develop confidence in the use of the language, sensitivity to the audience and an ability to communicate their ideas clearly.

### What about Listening?

Listening is part of oral interaction and rarely takes place in isolation, it is an integral part of the assessment of oral skills (see "assessment details").

Listening skills are therefore assessed through the ability to respond to and manipulate the spoken language.



### Speaking skills

#### Language

The speaking skills most closely related to language accuracy include the ability to:

- produce the sounds of the language essential for effective communication (NB: students are not expected to produce sounds like a native speaker)
- produce rhythms of language essential for being understood
- use a range of grammatical structures
- use a range of vocabulary
- speak with ease and fluency.

### Speaking skills

#### Cultural interaction

The speaking skills most closely related to cultural or social contexts include the ability to:

- respond with sensitivity to some nuances and prompts appropriate to the culture studied
- use language appropriate to a range of commonly encountered contexts
- contribute actively to a conversation, as it is appropriate to the social and
- cultural context.

### Speaking skills

#### Message

The speaking skills most closely related to the communication of a message, its organization and its coherence include the ability to:

- Maintain a coherent conversation throughout an exchange
- make a coherent speech
- provide factual information on a topic, and respond spontaneously on the same topic
- express attitudes clearly.

### EXPECTED PERFORMANCES: Individual Presentation

- Part 1 – **Presentation** 3 – 4 minutes  
A presentation based on material chosen by the candidate
- Part 2 – **Follow-Up Questions** 3 – 4 minutes  
Teacher asks questions about topic chosen by candidate on part 1
- Part 3 – **General Discussion** 3 – 4 minutes  
General discussion about other topics of interest for the student or that have been addressed in class.

Time can be adapted!

### EXPECTED PERFORMANCES: Interactive Presentations

- Whole Class Activities (debates, whole class discussions, etc.)
- Small Group Activities (discussions, roleplays, video interpretations, interviews, etc.)

### PORTFOLIOS AND JOURNALS!!!! YAY!!!!

- **Portfolios:** A collection of Plans, Activities and evidence of results (photos, video or tapes).
- **Journals:** Included in the portfolios. A space for reflection on the process of planning, implementing (teaching!!) and assessing speaking.

**PERSONALIZE THEM!!!!**

## APPENDIX 4

**WORKSHOP: PLANNING PBO's TOGETHER**

April 14, 2009

Objetives: Teachers will:

1. Work in pairs to plan an individual oral presentation for their students according to performance based objectives.
2. Give feedback to peers on their plans

Time	Objective	Activity	Materials
15'	Engage – Connect to prior knowledge	Ask volunteers to explain what they know about communicative language teaching and performance based instruction	Copies of Communicative Language Teaching material
5'	Introduce new plan format	Explain format and clarify questions teachers may have	Copies of new plan format
40'	Work in pairs to plan one oral expression class	Pair work	Copies of new plan format
30'	Give feedback on plan	Exchange plans with other pairs to give feedback	Plans
10'	Assign homework for next session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make plan corrections and send to facilitator via e-mail</li> <li>• Read materials given on PBI and CLT</li> <li>• Journal entry on expectations for this year's training</li> </ul>	Plans Journals

## **COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students' motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

Margie S. Berns, an expert in the field of communicative language teaching, writes in explaining Firth's view that "language is interaction; it is interpersonal activity and has a clear relationship with society. In this light, language study has to look at the use (function) of language in context, both its linguistic context (what is uttered before and after a given piece of discourse) and its social, or situational, context (who is speaking, what their social roles are, why they have come together to speak)" (Berns, 1984, p. 5).

**Teachers in communicative classrooms** will find themselves talking less and listening more--becoming active facilitators of their students' learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). The teacher sets up the exercise, but because the students' performance is the goal, the teacher must step back and observe, sometimes acting as referee or monitor. A classroom during a communicative activity is far from quiet, however. The students do most of the speaking, and frequently the scene of a classroom during a communicative exercise is active, with students leaving their seats to complete a task. Because of the increased responsibility to participate, students may find they gain confidence in using the target language in general. Students are more responsible managers of their own learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

### **Ten Core Assumptions of Current Communicative Language Teaching**

1. Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.

2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful intrapersonal exchange.
3. Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting and engaging.
4. Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities.
5. Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection.
6. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.
7. Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.
8. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.
9. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning.
10. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing

## **EXAMPLES OF CONTENT AND COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES**

### **Can you tell which is which? Why?**

#### **1) In a health class**

Analyze the nutritional data on a fast food menu to create one healthy meal and one unhealthy meal.

Role play a conversation between a parent and child or two students regarding choosing a healthy meal.

**2) In a current events class**

Synthesize information about a controversial issue by writing an essay that shows either the causes or the effects of the issue according to the student's own knowledge and research.

Share your synthesis with a partner. Explain the most significant cause or effect.

**3) In a literature class**

Justify interpretations and analysis of literature in a small group.

Ask and answer questions about your and your group's interpretations.

**4) In a physics and mechanics class class**

Design and build a working model, using three or more of the simple machines studied.

Explain your model to a partner, naming and pointing to the simple machines used.

**5) In an economics class**

Analyze how people decide what and how much to produce.

Use a tree diagram to explain to a partner how people decide what and how much to produce.

**6) In a chemistry class**

Classify solids and their parts.

Justify orally your classification system to a small group.

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## THE ESSENTIALS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

### Teaching Speaking

Many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. These learners define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire, and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication.

Language learners need to recognize that speaking involves three areas of knowledge:

- Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary): Using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation **LANGUAGE**
- Functions (transaction and interaction): Knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relationship building) **MESSAGE**
- Social and cultural rules and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants): Understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason. **CULTURAL INTERACTION**

In the communicative model of language teaching, instructors help their students develop this body of knowledge by providing authentic practice that prepares students for real-life communication situations. They help their students develop the ability to produce grammatically correct, logically connected sentences that are appropriate to specific contexts, and to do so using acceptable (that is, comprehensible) pronunciation.

### Goals and Techniques for Teaching Speaking

The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency to the fullest. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation.

To help students develop communicative efficiency in speaking, instructors can use a balanced activities approach that combines language input, structured output, and communicative output.

**Language input** comes in the form of teacher talk, listening activities, reading passages, and the language heard and read outside of class. It gives learners the material they need to begin producing language themselves.

**Structured output** focuses on correct form. In structured output, students may have options for responses, but all of the options require them to use the specific form or structure that the teacher has just introduced.

Structured output is designed to make learners comfortable producing specific language items recently introduced, sometimes in combination with previously



learned items. Instructors often use structured output exercises as a transition between the presentation stage and the practice stage of a lesson plan. textbook exercises also often make good structured output practice activities.

In **communicative output**, the learners' main purpose is to complete a task, such as obtaining information, developing a travel plan, or creating a video. To complete the task, they may use the language that the instructor has just presented, but they also may draw on any other vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies that they know. In communicative output activities, the criterion of success is whether the learner gets the message across. Accuracy is not a consideration unless the lack of it interferes with the message.

In everyday communication, spoken exchanges take place because there is some sort of information gap between the participants. Communicative output activities involve a similar real information gap. In order to complete the task, students must reduce or eliminate the information gap. In these activities, language is a tool, not an end in itself.

In a balanced activities approach, the teacher uses a variety of activities from these different categories of input and output. Learners at all proficiency levels, including beginners, benefit from this variety; it is more motivating, and it is also more likely to result in effective language learning.

*Material for this section was drawn from "Spoken language: What it is and how to teach it" by Grace Stovall Burkart, in Modules for the professional preparation of teaching assistants in foreign languages (Grace Stovall Burkart, ed.; Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1998)*

APPENDIX 5  
LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** **INQUIRY**  
**TEACHER:** **INTO:**  
**CLASS:** -  
**UNIT:** -  
-

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:**

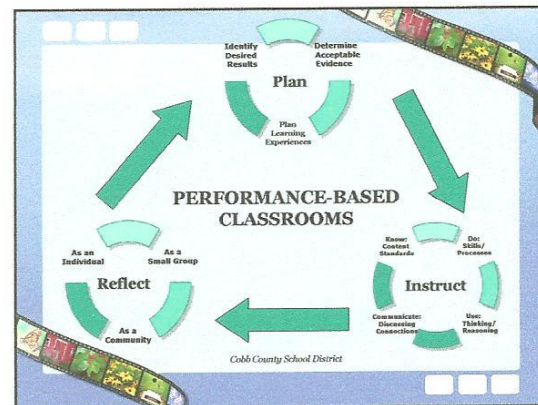
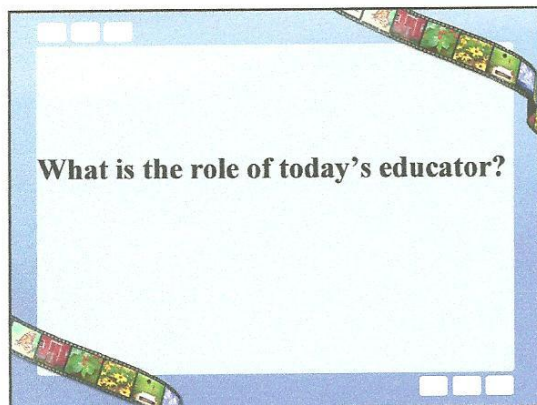
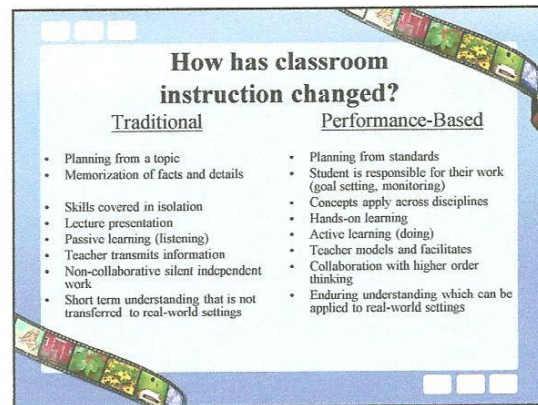
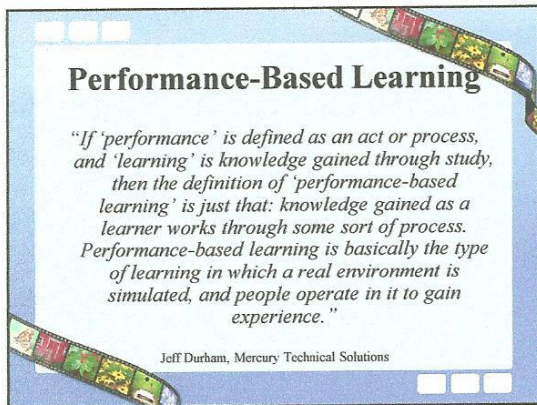
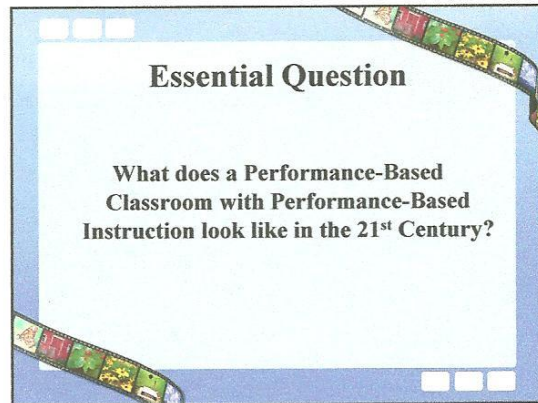
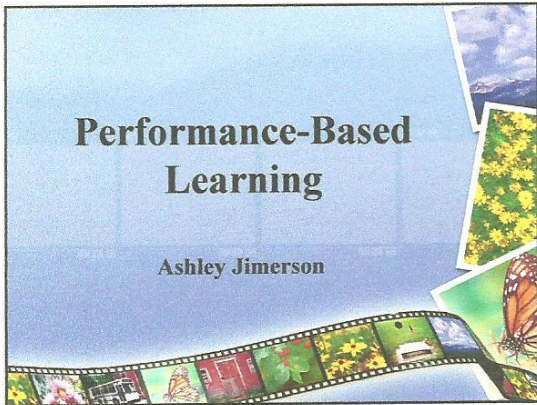
**ACTIVITIES**

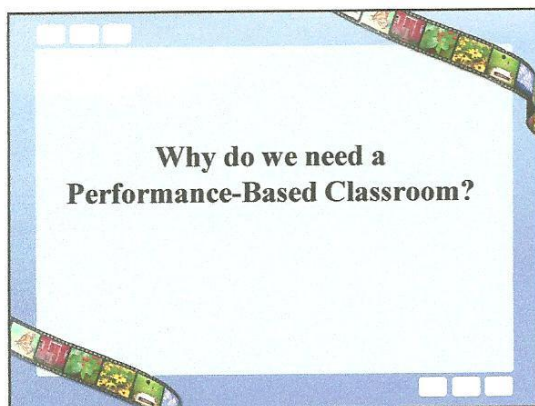
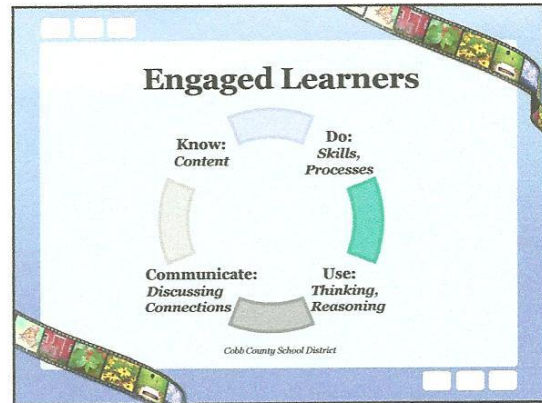
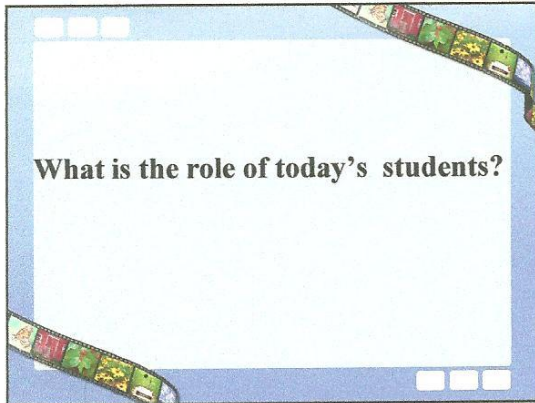
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS

**TEACHING OBJECTIVE:**

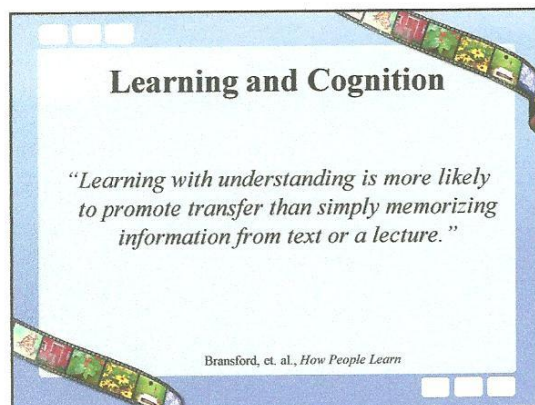
**OSERVATIONS:**

APPENDIX 6





- 
- A presentation slide titled "Performance-Based Instruction" with a light blue background and a decorative filmstrip border. It contains a bulleted list:
- Engaging
  - Simulates real-world experiences
  - Authentic
  - Differentiated
  - Higher-order thinking
  - Promotes collaboration
  - Enduring understanding



- 
- A presentation slide titled "What tools do I need to create a Performance-Based Classroom?" with a light blue background and a decorative filmstrip border. It lists three steps:
1. **Identify desired results:**  
*What do I want the students to know, understand, and be able to do?*
  2. **Determine acceptable evidence:**  
*How will the students show their understanding of concepts?*
  3. **Plan learning experiences:**  
*What activities will engage the students to facilitate and ensure an enduring understanding of the standard?*



### Steps to guide your Performance-Based Instruction

1. State and county standards
2. Performance-based assessments
3. Performance-based tasks

### Assessments

<u>Inauthentic</u>	<u>Authentic</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fill in the blank</li><li>• Select an answer from a set of given choices</li><li>• Answer the questions at the end of the chapter</li><li>• Solve contrived problems</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purposeful writing</li><li>• Scientific investigation</li><li>• Issues debate</li><li>• Primary research</li><li>• Interpret literature</li><li>• Solve “real-world” problems</li></ul>

Jay Mc Tighe

### Differentiate

*“Differentiation in the classroom means designing and implementing curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessments to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.”*

S. Winebrenner

### References

- Bransford, et. Al., *How People Learn*
- <http://billings.msu.edu/~jtd/teach/assessment/assessment.htm>
- Cobb County School District
- [http://www.cctpsd.com/teach/understanding\\_by\\_design.htm](http://www.cctpsd.com/teach/understanding_by_design.htm)
- Jay Mc Tighe, *Understanding By Design*
- Winebrenner, S. (1992). *Teaching gifted kids in the regular classroom.* Minneapolis, MM: Free Spirit Publishing.

## APPENDIX 7

### MY TEACHER LED CONFERENCE PROTOCOL

(Taken from Karen de Nieto's intervention in Primary and based on the process of the PYP Student Led Conference with Parents)

Before the conference you need to reflect in writing using your Portfolio which should include evidence of the methodology and ideas discussed in our training sessions. Before writing your reflection, look at the Workshop materials, your plans, feedback given to them and your students' performance. You are making a self-assessment based on the evidence in your portfolio. Make sure to put your journal, Cds, DVDs or tapes, your plans for each activity, any document you used, and my comments in your portfolio too. Below is the protocol you will follow. Also put this paper in your Portfolio.

Conference date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Welcome my Area Coordinator to the meeting.
2. Show the work in my Portfolio.
  - a. Talk about my planning according to PBI
    - (1) Tell the main objectives from each plan.
    - (2) Share what you have learned, liked or are proud of.
  - b. My evidence (Students' videos or recordings)
    - (1) Tell the main objectives of the activity
    - (2) Share what you learned, liked or are proud of after viewing your video
  - c. My IB learner profile, Self Assessment and journal
    - (1) Tell one strength and the evidence that supports it
    - (2) Share what you learned, liked or are proud of after doing the profile, self assessment and journal
3. Read my Self-assessment
4. Write goals with my Coordinator
5. Thank my Area Coordinator for coming to the conference.

#### ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think the inquiry section was part of the plan format?

2. Did you find a way to connect these questions with the activities designed for the plan?
3. You planned with a partner, how was that interaction? Did you find easy planning together?
4. Was the feedback given to you useful?
5. As you implemented the activities did you consider ways to exercise the attributes described in the IB profile?
6. How did you teach the criteria for grading oral proficiency?
7. Did you take time to stop and think about how your students were processing the contents and skills you wanted them to learn?
8. Did you adapt the plan as you found their learning needs?
9. Did you use any of the ideas discussed in our training sessions?

NOTE: The session will be recorded on video. You will have to answer a few sessions

## APPENDIX 8

### Collaborative Assessment Conference: Overview

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*Excerpted, with slight adaptations, from Looking Together at Student Work by Tina Blythe, David Allen, and Barbara S. Powell (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999)*

A piece of student work has the potential to reveal not only the student's mastery of the curriculum's goals, but also a wealth of information about the student him/herself: his/her intellectual interests, his/her strengths, and his/her struggles. The Collaborative Assessment Conference was designed to give teachers a systematic way to mine this richness. It provides a structure by which teachers come together to look at a piece of work, first to determine what it reveals about the student and the issues s/he cares about, and then to consider how the student's issues and concerns relate to the teacher's goals for the student. The last part of the conversation – the discussion of classroom practice – grows out of these initial considerations.

The structure for the conference evolved from three key ideas:

- First, students use school assignments, especially open-ended ones, to tackle important problems in which they are personally interested. Sometimes these problems are the same ones that the teacher has assigned them to work on, sometimes not.
- Second, we can only begin to see and understand the serious work that students undertake if we suspend judgment long enough to look carefully and closely at what is actually in the work rather than what we hope to see in it.
- Third, we need the perspective of others — especially those who are not intimate with our goals for our students — to help us to see aspects of the student and the work that would otherwise escape us, and we need others to help us generate ideas about how to use this information to shape our daily practice.

Since 1988, when Steve Seidel and his colleagues at Project Zero developed this process, the Collaborative Assessment Conference has been used in a variety of ways: to give teachers the opportunity to hone their ability to look closely at and interpret students' work; to explore the strengths and needs of a particular child; to reflect on the work collected in student portfolios; to foster conversations among faculty about the kind of work students are doing and how faculty can best support that work.

In the Collaborative Assessment Conference, the presenting teacher brings a piece of student work to share with a group of five to ten colleagues (usually other teachers and administrators). The process begins with the presenting teacher showing (or distributing copies of) the piece to the group. Throughout the first part of the conference, the presenting teacher says nothing, giving no information about the student, the assignment, or the context in which the student worked.



Through a series of questions asked by the facilitator, the group works to understand the piece by describing it in detail and looking for clues that would suggest the problems or issues or aspects of the work with which the student was most engaged. They do this without judgments about the quality of work or how it suits their personal tastes. The facilitator helps this process by asking participants to point out the evidence on which they based the judgments that inevitably slip out. For example, if someone comments that the work seems very creative, the facilitator might ask him or her to describe the aspect of the work that led him or her to say that.

In the second part of the conference, the focus broadens. Having concentrated intensively on the piece itself, the group, in conversation with the presenting teacher, now considers the conditions under which the work was created as well as broader issues of teaching and learning. First, the presenting teacher provides any information that s/he thinks is relevant about the context of the work. This might include describing the assignment, responding to the discussion, answering questions (though s/he does not have to respond to all the questions raised in the first part of the conference), describing other work by the child, and/or commenting on how his/her own reading or observation of the work compares to that of the group.

Next, the facilitator asks the whole group (presenting teacher included) to reflect on the ideas generated by the discussion of the piece. These might be reflections about specific next steps for the child in question, ideas about what the participants might do in their own classes or thoughts about the teaching and learning process in general. Finally, the whole group reflects on the conference itself.

The following steps are a working agenda for a Collaborative Assessment Conference. The time allotted for each step of the conference is not fixed, since the time needed for each step will vary in accordance with the work being considered. At each stage, the facilitator should use his or her judgment in deciding when to move the group on to the next step. Typically, Collaborative Assessment Conferences take from forty-five minutes to an hour and fifteen minutes.

## APPENDIX 9

**Research Final Interview Guide** (Questions based on EpC, p. 330): Interview of 10 teachers January 14 and January 29, 2010

### **Objectives:**

- a. Up to what point were the objectives (understanding PBO's) met?
- b. Could differences be due to the portfolio?

Stimulated recall based on a 30 minute conversation including presentation of the portfolio.

12. Describe how you prepared your portfolio.
13. What did you feel confident about and what was difficult?
14. What, if anything, did you learn by doing the portfolio?
15. How do you know you learned?
16. What did you do that helped you learn this?
17. What do you think I wanted you to learn through doing the portfolio? Did it make sense to do portfolio to learn it?
18. You set learning goals (show learning goals) for this project. Some teachers think the goals are useful – others don't. How do you feel?
19. Could you work on it?
20. Which criterion did you understand better and which one less?
21. What do you feel you have improved during this training?
22. What do you think has helped you change?

## APPENDIX 10

## PRE – POST TEST RESULTS

TEACHER	LANGUAGE		CULT. INT		MESSAGE		TOTAL	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
T1	7	9	6	8	5	9	18	26
T2	4	9	6	9	5	10	15	28
T3	4	8	5	6	4	8	13	22
T4	7	9	7	9	6	9	20	27
T5	6	9	5	9	5	8	16	26
T6	5	8	5	9	3	8	13	25
T7	7	6	7	7	7	8	21	21
T8	4	6	7	6	7	7	18	19
T9	6	8	5	8	6	8	17	24
T10	7	8	8	9	6	8	21	25
AVERAGES	6	8	6	8	6	8	17	24
IB EXAMINER	9		10		9		28	

Pre-Test Date: March 2009

Post-Test Date: January 2010

## APPENDIX 11

Teachers' initial plans and feedback (plans done individually and in pairs)

### LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** On the edge

**TEACHER:** T1

**CLASS:** II Bachillerato fima

**UNIT:** On the Edge

#### INQUIRY INTO:

- How do we use sensory details? How do they enhance our description / presentation?
- The difference between "show" and "tell".
- How should I give an oral presentation?

**Your inquiry section should contain relevant questions about the unit's topic ("On the edge"). Check the material I gave you on throughlines. The questions you included here are more related to the objectives of the unit.**

**TEACHER'S OBJECTIVE:** Be able to manage the classroom and provide a quiet environment throughout the student's presentation. *What have you thought of in order to achieve this?*

#### COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:

- Students should be able to express their feelings in a fluent, accurate description by showing and not telling.
- Students should be able to connect a visual aid to their experience and feelings
- Use appropriate gestures and expressions while giving the oral presentation
- Give spontaneous answers

#### ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES <i>Some of your objectives are activities. Focus on the ones above.</i>	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
Understand the assignment  Reflect on personal experience	Explain to the Sts the assignment and the presentation structure. Give then the handout explaining them what is going to be graded. (IB criteria) <i>What will you do to make this clear to them?</i>  Think about a situation in which you were "On the Edge" (3min)	

<p>Write an accurate description. Show don't tell</p> <p>Connect visual aid to their experience</p> <p>Appropriate gestures and expressions</p> <p>Have students give spontaneous answers</p> <p>Connect their experience to similar situations, experiences or subject</p>	<p>Write in a piece of paper your experience using sensory details that show the audience how you felt and how it occurred.(10 min)</p> <p>Illustrate your experience with drawings or pictures that will represent the situation.(10min)</p> <p>Give 3 minute oral presentation using your visual aid.</p> <p>Follow up questions.</p> <p>The rest of the class will be evaluating each other's presentation according to a handout.</p> <p>General discussion. This discussion will be held among the teacher, the student (who is presenting) and another student. Students will take turns and ask one question to the presenting classmate). The rest of the class will be evaluating their classmates performance according to a handout</p>	
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## LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** Unforgettable Personalities

**TEACHER:** T2

**CLASS:** 9th

**UNIT:** One

**INQUIRY INTO:**

-What impacts do characters (people) cause in our lives?

-What makes characters (people) unforgettable?

How will you use these questions in your speaking activities?

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:**

1. Ss will be able to talk about an unforgettable personality.
2. Ss will be able to use first or third person point of view to narrate.
3. Ss will be able to answer questions about topics selected by them.

**ACTIVITIES**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
1. Explore prior knowledge	Make a KWL about first and third point of view.	
2. Compare and contrast first and third person point of view from a conversation	Listen to a conversation. Fill in a Venn diagram.	
3. Choose and unforgettable personality	Talk about what makes a person unforgettable. Choose someone who you think is unforgettable. <span style="color: green;">Will this be a class discussion? Use your inquiry questions on this discussion and connect them to the creation of believable characters in</span>	

	literature.	
4. Introduce criteria	Read and discuss "Internal Assessment, Oral Component" hand out. Think of a way to introduce the criteria that is not the simple reading of the rubrics. Maybe you should consider how the criteria and the contents of this unit connect. Will you adapt the rubric to make it easier for your Ss?	
5. Write an outline of the presentation Don't forget to point out how important outlining or preparing a speech is. How do the criteria take part in planning for the speech?	<p>Mini Lesson: Writing an outline.</p> <p>Brainstorm things that make your person unforgettable.</p> <p>List things in order of importance.</p> <p>Look at informal outline poster. Rewrite your list following the same format.</p>	
6. Explain speaking task	<p>Know what the presentation will be about.</p> <p>Read and understand rubrics. The presentation does not have to be as long as the real IB individual oral. You could have them present for 2 or 3 minutes and then you could ask questions for 1 or 2 minutes about the presentation. What will the rest of the class be doing while individuals present?</p>	

## LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** "Telling stories"

**TEACHER:** T3

**CLASS:** 10<sup>th</sup>

**UNIT:** 1

### INQUIRY

**INTO:**

- How elements of

Literature **help**

**you create stories?**

- How stories can be created  
or adapted with pictures.

- How **can the** sequence in a  
story **can** set the difference

**chronologically.** The questions listed under this section should be important questions about the unit. The questions you have included here are more related to the objectives of the unit. Check the material I gave you on throughlines.

**-Analyze plot structure**

**-Analyze proposition and subplots**

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:** Though your objectives have communicative potential they are not clearly communicative.

- Sts should be able to tell their story using Elements of Literature, plot-conflict-climax-resolution. Do you mean discuss or analyze stories orally using the lit. elements?
- Sts should be able to tell their story using chronological flashbacks sequence

### ACTIVITIES

<b>OBJECTIVES</b> Use the same objectives listed above. You may generate sub-objectives but always connect your activities to the objectives planned.	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>



<p><b>To create a story through pictures.</b>          This objective is not listed above.</p> <p><b>Oral Presentation ( tell the story )</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sts will choose 3 pictures to create a story.</li> <li>2. Sts will have 5 minutes. To create their story plot, students should write down on a line paper and be aware of the sequence.</li> <li>3. Each sts will present their story 3minutes each.</li> <li>4. Each sts will have 2 minutes to follow-up questions given by the teacher, then 2 more min. to discuss General discussion with their classmates. Sts. Will realized how the sequence of the story helped the audience understand the story.</li> </ol>	<p><b>What will you have the rest of the class doing while individual students present. I think you should limit the presentations to two minutes and then the session of questions to one. Thus, the rest of the class should do some kind of analysis of what worked and did not work in their classmates presentations. Perhaps using the three criteria themselves. Or something that focuses on one criterion.</b></p>
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**Learning Objective: To practice the use of IB criteria for oral evaluation.** To practice as in “to get to grade more accurately?” What do you mean? Be more specific.

## LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** Significant moments

**TEACHER:** T4 and T6

**CLASS:** III Dis / III FM / III QB

**UNIT:** Perceptions

**INQUIRY INTO:**

- How do events in our lives mark us?
- What makes me who I am?
- How do I relate to others?
- Why is it important to understand others?

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:**

- How much does it help to discuss about moments that make us reflect? *Is this an objective or an important question that should perhaps be listed on the inquiry section?*
- To be able to communicate feelings and thoughts orally

To express a moment visually *through a collage* I understand it will be used to have Ss explain it orally but only from reading it here that is not obvious.

**ACTIVITIES**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS <i>I really like your activities, but, have you considered doing some teaching around the three criteria? How do the topics chosen relate to them?</i>
<p>Understand what a significant moment is and its effects in one's life</p> <p>Select a significant moment</p> <p>Understand requirements established by IB criteria in an oral presentation</p>	<p>Ss will watch a speech about a significant moment in a person's life and how that marked him or her (1 period)</p> <p>In groups, SS will discuss the following questions based on the video they watched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes a moment significant?</li> <li>• What effects does a significant moment have?</li> <li>• Do you have any significant moments to share? (15')</li> </ul> <p>Groups share responses for the questions Class comes up with a consensus answer for the questions (10')</p> <p>SS find a moment of their own that has been significant in their lives and create a collage of it. Remind them to consider its effects on their own lives and that of others (Finish it as HW) (15')</p> <p>Give instructions for individual oral activity. SS analyze the criteria to be used (IB criteria) in small groups while listening to a presentation</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> period</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> period</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> period</p>

Grade a presentation	previously recorded by the teacher (10' – 15')	4 <sup>th</sup> period
Moderate results	SS grade the presentation they listened to in their groups. (10')	
Organize ideas for a short presentation	As a class, discuss the results and analyze what the presentation needs to have in order to be successful (8')	
Present impact of significant moments	SS create an outline of their presentations based on the moment they chose for their collages (12')	
Grade SS presentations	SS present their moments for two minutes and then teacher and/or classmates for one minute ask questions based on the presentation	
Reflect on learning process	Class grades presentations by filling out a chart that summarizes the three criteria and the ss list	
	SS write on journals what needs to be improved in order to excel in their individual oral presentation	

**Mafer's Learning Objective:**

- To acquire better understanding of the criteria used to score Speaking in the IB. *Acquire better understanding as is being able to use them accurately or being able to explain them well to the Ss?*
- To motivate myself to think of other ways of having speaking activities where ss who are not speaking maintain an integrated position to the presenter. *You are addressing a big topic when it comes to speaking classes: Ss motivation and learning attitude.*

## LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC:** On the edge

**INQUIRY INTO:** This questions

should address important ideas during the development of the unit. The questions you've included here are more related to the objectives of this plan. Check the material I gave you on throughlines.

**TEACHER:** T5

**CLASS:** II Bachillerato Diseño y Quibio

**UNIT:** On the Edge

- What are sensory details?
- How should I act during an oral presentation? (gestures, expressions)
- Based on what is my teacher grading me?

**TEACHER'S OBJECTIVE:** Be able to effectively explain to ss what I'm expecting from their presentations, so that when they do their work, it will be according to my directions. Try to make your teaching objective more focused on Ss's learning.

### COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:

- Students should be able to express their feelings in a fluent, accurate description by showing and not telling.
- Use appropriate gestures and expressions while giving the oral presentation
- Give spontaneous answers
- Students should be able to discuss their topic spontaneously.

### ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
Focus on the same objectives presented above		
Understand the assignment Reflect on personal experience Write an accurate description. Show don't tell Appropriate gestures and expressions Have students give spontaneous	Explain to Sts the assignment and the presentation structure. Give then the handout explaining them what is going to be graded. Will you address the three criteria? How do you plan your Ss to understand them?  Think about a situation in which you were "On the Edge" (3min)  Write in a piece of paper your experience using sensory details that show the audience how you felt and how it occurred.(10 min)  Give 3 minute oral presentation using your visual	<b>You don't need to have the same times that the IB individual oral has. You can go for the three minute presentation and then have a round of questions for 1 or 2 minutes.</b>

<p>answers</p> <p>Connect their experience to a different subject</p>	<p>aid.</p> <p>Follow up questions.</p> <p>Give the rest of the class a rubric so that they can grade their classmates. Once again I'd like to see how you plan for your Ss to understand the criteria and tackle them in a practical way that ensures a successful presentation.</p> <p>General discussion</p>	
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## LESSON PLAN

**TOPIC: Comparison-contrast speech** What's the name of the unit you are currently working on? Isn't it "Unforgettable Personalities"? Your plan should relate to that topic.

**INQUIRY INTO:** The questions listed under this section should be important questions about the unit. The questions you have included here are more related to the objectives of the unit. Check the material I gave you on throughlines.

TEACHER: T7

- How can they express their opinions on a topic?

CLASS: 8<sup>th</sup>

- What skills do they need to make an oral presentation.

UNIT: 1

### TEACHER'S OBJECTIVES

To learn new techniques to apply the IB criteria Have you thought of any strategy? You will have to focus on ways to make your Ss understand the three criteria better.

### COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:

Sts will compare and contrast two suspense stories in writing.

Sts will be able to make an oral presentation based on an essay.

Sts will present their reflection on what they think about the stories. Check the material I'm attaching on PBO's Though your objectives here have communicative potential the focus should be on speaking.

### ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
- Compare the stories read in class	- Discuss the two suspense stories read in class: The Fog and The Hitchhiker. Ss give their opinions on the topic by expressing similarities and differences. How will these be carried out? Will you use a protocol? Or a particular strategy?	<b>Comparing and contrasting are normal performances in our lives. So, what would help your students carry these out orally with success? Think of the strategies they need to learn in order to do this well and how they relate to the three criteria you'll be using to assess your students?</b>
-Prepare the oral presentation	- T will give the instructions on the oral presentation.	
-Give the oral presentation	T will explain what the visual aid should include and how long the presentation should take. Focus on student centered activities. Will you teach the criteria? Will you conduct mini-lessons to guarantee your students' success?	
	- - Ss will pass one by one to the front of the class to give their oral presentation. - The presentation will last 2 minutes.	

	- The teacher will assess their presentation through questions	
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**Even though you've selected a real performance (comparing and contrasting) your plan does not necessarily relate to the unit you are working on. How could you make this oral expression plan more connected to the contents you are working on in your class?**





<p>species.</p>	<p>species compete. Write a short description about the availability of these resources.</p>	
<p>✓ Determine the relationship to other species.</p>	<p>Read the information from pages 222 – 223 in the book. In groups: Write descriptions of pairs of organisms that exhibit different types of interactions.</p>	
<p>✓ Identify specific situations that allow humans to survive.</p>	<p>At home, research the internet for specific situations in history that allowed human survival. Students get together with their groups to prepare a debate on: "Humans must compete in order to survive". Present the debates in front of the class. <i>Have you planned any mini-lesson that might be helpful for your Ss to carry a successful debate?</i></p>	

**LESSON PLAN****TOPIC:** Competition**INQUIRY INTO:**

Your questions are neat and do connect the topic of the unit with the lesson plan.

**TEACHER:** T9

- How do humans compete in

**CLASS:** Environmental Science

order to survive?

**UNIT:** 3 "Understanding Populations"

- What are human needs?

- Are humans predators?

**TEACHER'S LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To learn how to implement the IB grading criteria in Environmental Science. For speaking and writing in general? Maybe you should check with Rossana for specific criteria for the subject Environmental Systems and Societies.

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:**

- ✓ Identify characteristics of predators.
- ✓ Determine the interaction among members of the species.
- ✓ Determine the relationship to other species.
- ✓ Identify specific situations that allow humans to survive.

This are content objectives which should be part of your modular plan. Communicative objectives attain to language teaching. What are your objectives in terms of learning speaking? Your activities should match that communicative focus we are looking for. Also, how do you plan to reinforce your Ss understanding of the criteria? How so they affect the contents being studied

✓

**ACTIVITIES**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
✓ Identify characteristics of predators.	Read the information from pages 220 – 221 in the book. Identify characteristics. Classify predators as specialists or generalists	
✓ Determine the interaction among members of the species.	Read the information from pages 218 – 219 in the book. List specific resources for which our species compete. Write a short description about the availability of these resources.	
✓ Determine the relationship to other species.	Read the information from pages 222 – 223 in the book. In groups: Write descriptions of pairs of organisms that exhibit different types of interactions.	

<p>✓ Identify specific situations that allow humans to survive.</p>	<p>At home, research the internet for specific situations in history that allowed human survival. Students get together with their groups to prepare a debate on: "Humans must compete in order to survive". Present the debates in front of the class. <i>Have you planned any mini-lesson that might be helpful for your Ss to carry a successful debate?</i></p>	
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**LESSON PLAN**

**TOPIC:** EXCHANGE **INQUIRY INTO:**

**TEACHER:** T10 -How interdependence works in

**CLASS:** II Bachillerato society

**UNIT:** WHAT IS ECONOMICS? -How economic concepts work in real life situations

**COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDENTS:**

Identify and describe the difficulties associated with barter *This is more a content objective than a communicative objective. Check attached material on PBO's*

**ACTIVITIES**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS
<p>Engage</p> <p>Identify and describe the difficulties associated with barter</p>	<p>Divide class in groups of 3s. Each group gets two trading cards, one that says country in need of ... and one that says country rich in ... Students as a group need to trade with other groups to satisfy their needs. They have to move as a group and they can trade their cards until they get the card they need. Teams will have 5 minutes to try to fulfill their needs with the trading. After time's up, teacher will ask groups for results, some groups will not achieve their goals.</p> <p>Using the same groups, the ss will discuss what was easy or hard for them in the trading game. They will take notes of their findings</p> <p>Teacher brings up formal concept: Barter and elicits from students why they think barter has not remained the main form of exchange through the ages. Teacher will explain and provide a rubric for presentation. (using IB criteria) <i>In this two phases the inquiry questions become crucial. Do you think Ss will notice it?</i></p> <p>Students working in groups will present their findings to the class using their notes. Other groups will grade based on rubric, and writing their feedback on paper. <i>I am assuming this will be done orally but I'm not sure.</i></p>	
<b>MY LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b>		

*My learning objective for this training would be to figure a way to introduce more student talk time into my daily plans.*

I do know how to plan for a speaking class, how to prepare students for an oral presentation, but actually doing this on a regular basis seems almost an impossible task. Not only because of the time constraints, but also because of the fact that teaching content based subjects usually involves a lot of TTT (teacher talk time) which is at the same time, my biggest challenge! What I want to learn from this training is new ways to have students participate orally in class more actively, using the proper language structure and formal vocabulary required by the subject.

Excellent!! Have you come up with any idea? The term “technical vocabulary” comes to my mind, will you sacrifice a bit of your content teaching time for your Ss to focus on this idea?

NOTES:

- This is a lesson plan for a 2 hour class period, divided in two days, and for a smaller class. The game has already been carried out in other classes, and the class discussion has followed, but the presentation activity was not done. There is only one class left to do this plan.
- Attached are the rubric for the feedback and the cards for the barter game.
- The rubric has no column for the 1-2 marks, to provide encouragement to the students.

APPENDIX 12

POST – SWOT ANALYSIS

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Avareness of connections between subject matter and speaking activities and advantages this brins</p> <p>Clear view of the need to intentiaonally assess speaking production in subjects</p> <p>More comfortable with handing speaking production</p> <p>Teachers who provide a warm environment for students to talk</p> <p>Teachers' team work</p> <p>Great working environment</p> <p>Commitment to teach and learn new things</p> <p>Knowledge of the subject</p> <p>Good knowledge of our students</p> <p>Experienced teachers</p> <p>Creativity to plan classes</p> <p>Better knowledge of an expected outcome (performance) and purpose of a speaking activity</p> <p>Most students are better speakers than writers</p> <p>Love of teaching</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Not enough time for subject teachers to implement speaking activities</p> <p>Unclear instructions given by teachers</p> <p>New teachers lack guidance and learn moving along in the job</p> <p>Lack of organization</p> <p>Interruptions because of institutional activities</p> <p>Lack of ability to ask good questions</p> <p>Students lack of vocabulary</p> <p>Most subjects only have two hours a week</p> <p>Students still partial when grading peers, lack of objectivity</p> <p>Lack of resources</p> <p>Lack of equipment to record Ss performances</p> <p>Time management in class</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Students who love to discuss different issues</p> <p>Constant training</p> <p>Workshops this year</p> <p>Current issues provide good topics</p> <p>Teachers' team work</p> <p>Students' good English level</p> <p>Great feedback from trainers</p> <p>Shared knowledge</p> <p>Opportunities for professional growth</p> <p>Students prefer to work orally that with writing</p> <p>Subjects that are closely related to their own real life situations</p> <p>Access to resources to help apply concepts</p> <p>Technology</p> <p>Better understanding of criteria</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Overloaded teachers</p> <p>Lack of time</p> <p>Lack of knowledge about new programs and their implementation</p> <p>Student's lack of interest in the subjects</p> <p>Lack of organization and an excess of unplanned activities</p> <p>Students' shyness</p>

- How do I use these strengths to take advantage of these opportunities?
- How do I overcome the weaknesses that will make these threats a reality?
- How do I use my strengths to reduce the likelihood and impact of these threats?
- How do I overcome these weaknesses that prevent me from taking advantage of these opportunities?

APPENDIX 13  
MODULAR PLAN

**SUBJECT:**  
**GRADE:**

**TEACHERS:**  
**FROM: TO:**

<b>UNIT NUMBER:1</b>	<b>TITLE:</b>					
	<b>MODULE 1</b>	<b>MODULE 2</b>	<b>MODULE 3</b>	<b>MODULE 4</b>	<b>MODULE 5</b>	<b>MODULE 6</b>
<b>COMPREHENSION GOAL (CONTENTS)</b>						
<b>MOTIVATION</b>						
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>						
<b>EVALUATION CRITERIA</b>						
<b>HOMEWORK/ LESSONS</b>						
<b>DIDACTIC RESOURCES</b>						
<b>OBSERVATIONS</b>						

APPENDIX 14

Apprentice Level Sample of PBOs Assessing

NAME: [REDACTED] ACTIVITY: [REDACTED] DATE: [REDACTED] 1:43

Achievement Level	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Criterion A: Language	Level 1 is not achieved.	Command of the spoken language is very limited. -The production of language is hesitant and not always comprehensible. -The use of grammar and vocabulary is often incorrect and/or very limited. -Inaccurate intonation interferes with communication.	Command of the spoken language is limited. -The production of language is comprehensible but with frequent lapses in fluency. -The use of grammar and vocabulary is sometimes incorrect and/or limited. -Inaccurate intonation sometimes interferes with communication.	Command of the spoken language is fairly good. -The production of language is mostly fluent. -The use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct with some idiomatic expressions. -The intonation does not interfere with communication.	Command of the spoken language is good. -The production of language is fluent. -The use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct, varied and idiomatic. -The intonation contributes effectively to communication.	Command of the spoken language is very good. -The production of language is fluent and with a touch of authenticity. -The use of grammar and vocabulary is varied and idiomatic, almost error free. -The intonation contributes effectively and expressively to communication.
Criterion B: Cultural Interaction	Level 1 is not achieved.	Interaction in conversation is limited. -Responses in simple exchanges are limited and/or inappropriate due to lack of understanding. -Contributions to the conversation are very limited and/or overly rehearsed. -The language is inappropriate to the subject and context.	Interaction in conversation is basic. -Responses in simple exchanges are limited due to some difficulties with understanding, but they are mostly appropriate. -Contributions to the conversation are limited and/or partly rehearsed. -The language is often inappropriate to the subject and context.	Interaction in conversation is quiet successful. -Responses in simple exchanges are competent, with some difficulty shown in more complex exchanges. -Contributions to the conversation are, at times, active and show some spontaneity. -The language is sometimes inappropriate to the subject and context.	Interaction in conversation is successful. -Responses in fairly complex exchanges show some sensitivity to subtlety, nuances and prompts. -Contributions to the conversation are active and spontaneous. -The language is generally appropriate to the subject and context.	Interaction in conversation is very successful. -Responses in complex exchanges show sensitivity and subtlety to nuances and prompts. -Contributions to the conversations are active, spontaneous and sensitive to others. -The language is consistently appropriate to the subject and context.
Criterion C: Message	Level 1 is not achieved.	The candidate handles simple ideas with difficulty. -Simple ideas and opinions are presented with difficulty, sometimes incoherently. -Responses are generally irrelevant and/or repetitive. -The conversation is disjointed.	The candidate handles simple ideas with some difficulty. -Simple ideas and opinions are not always presented clearly and coherently. -Responses are sometimes irrelevant and/or repetitive. -The conversation does not flow coherently.	The candidate handles simple ideas fairly well. -Simple ideas and opinions are presented clearly and coherently. -Responses are generally relevant and contain some details. -The conversation generally flows coherently.	The candidate handles complex ideas well. -Both simple and complex ideas and opinions are generally presented clearly, coherently and effectively. -Responses are generally relevant and show some imagination. -The conversation flows coherently.	The candidate handles complex ideas very well. -Both simple and complex ideas and opinions are presented clearly, coherently and vividly. -Responses are relevant and show insight and imagination. -A coherent conversation is maintained throughout.

Appendix 14 - Picture 1

T7 Use of PBOs Rubric

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE DEBATE Aff. #1

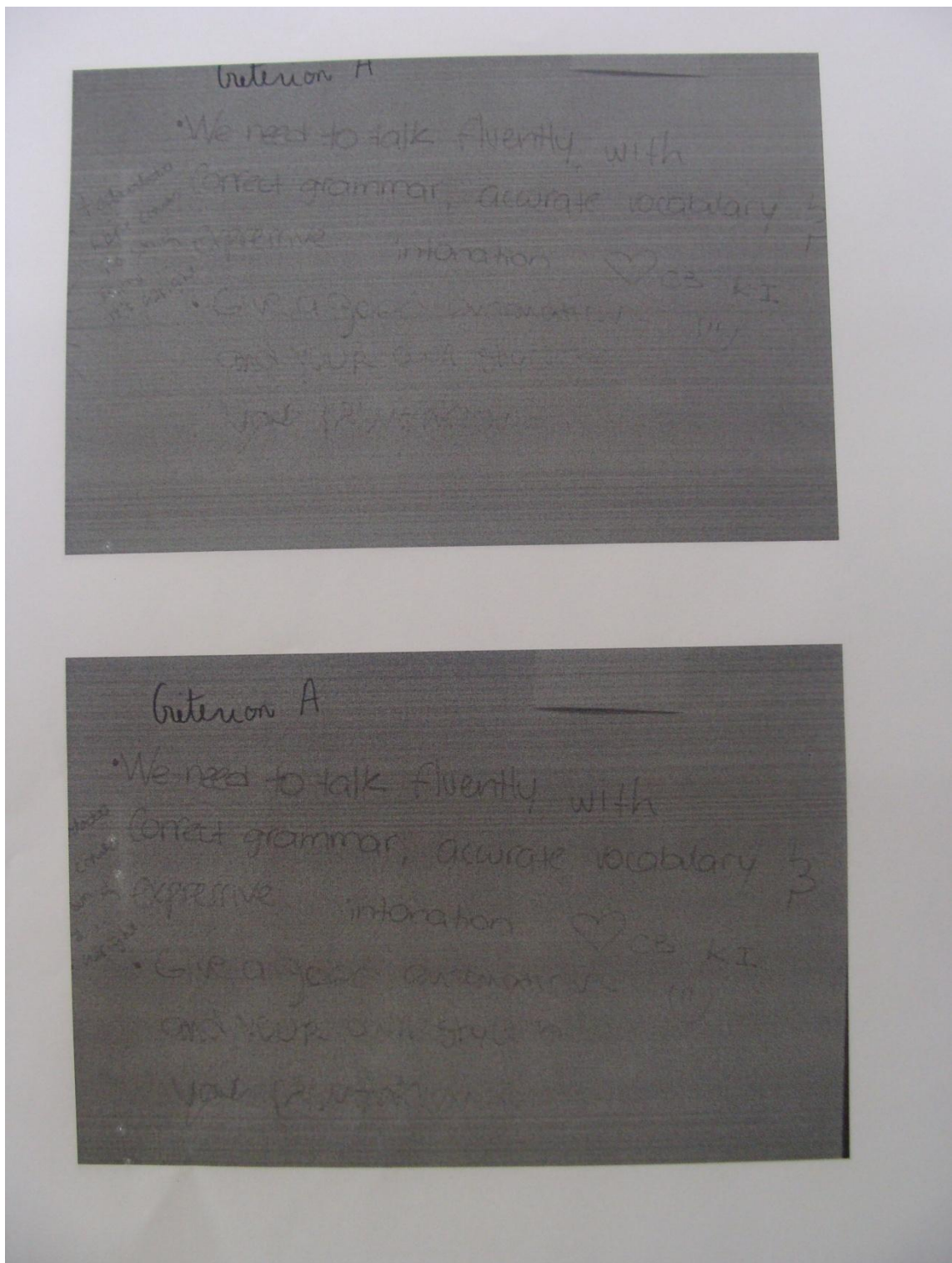
Resolution: "Human Beings must compete in order to survive".

		Time	Student
Affirmative 1	First affirmative speaker gives constructive speech	2 minutes	Ma Jensen-Cason A B C
Negative 1	First negative speaker gives constructive speech	2 minutes	
Affirmative 2	Second affirmative speaker gives constructive speech	2 minutes	Ma Angeleno A B C
Negative 2	Second negative speaker gives constructive speech	2 minutes	
Aff CX Neg	Affirmative member questions negative member	1 minute	Sofia A B C B
Neg CX Aff	Negative member questions affirmative member	1 minute	Ma Cassien A B C
Affirm. Closing	Affirmative member presents Closing Speech	2 minutes	Titi A B C
Negative Closing	Negative member presents Closing Speech	2 minutes	

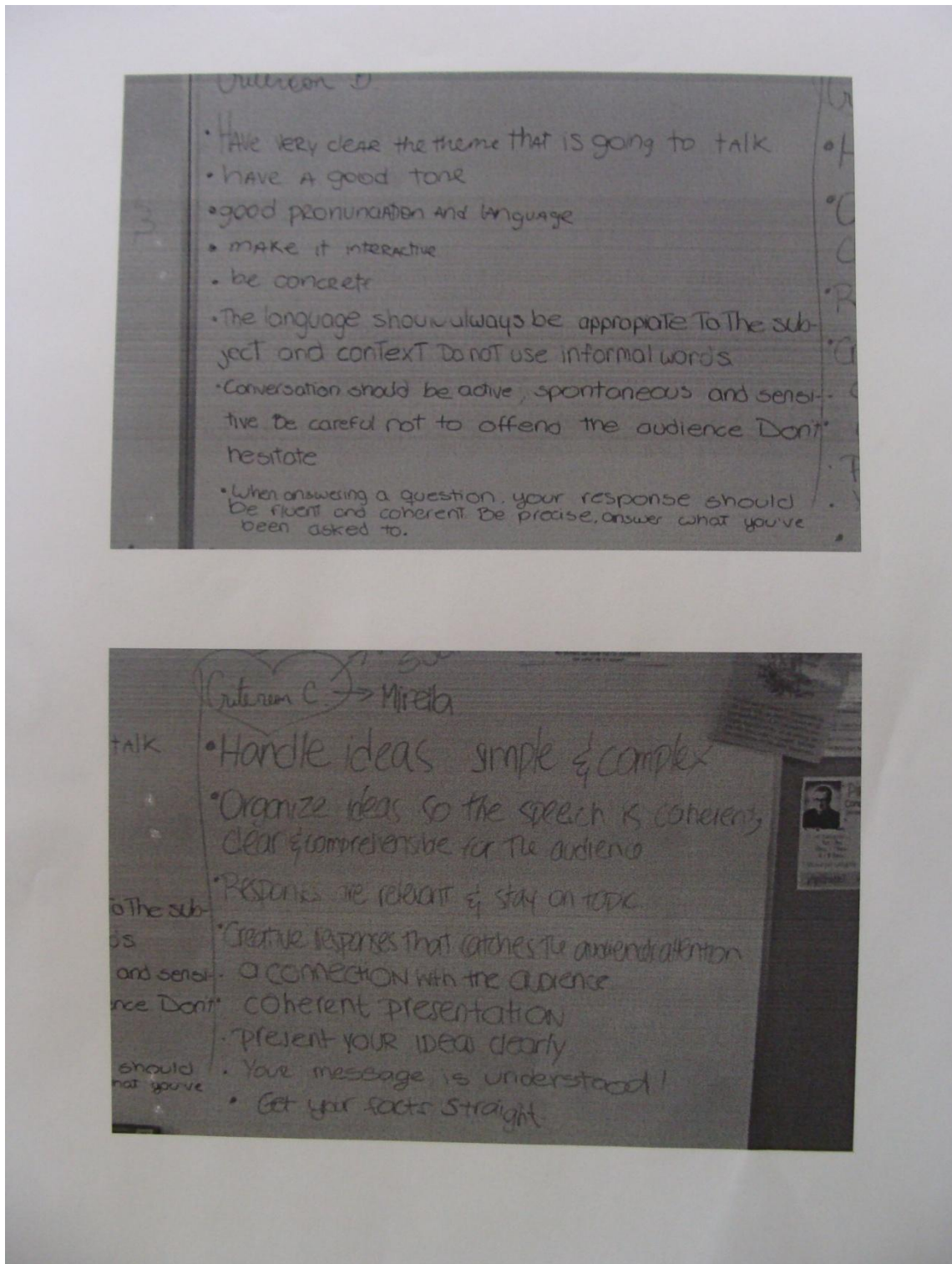
Appendix 14 – Picture 2

T8 Portfolio Sample Assessing PBOs





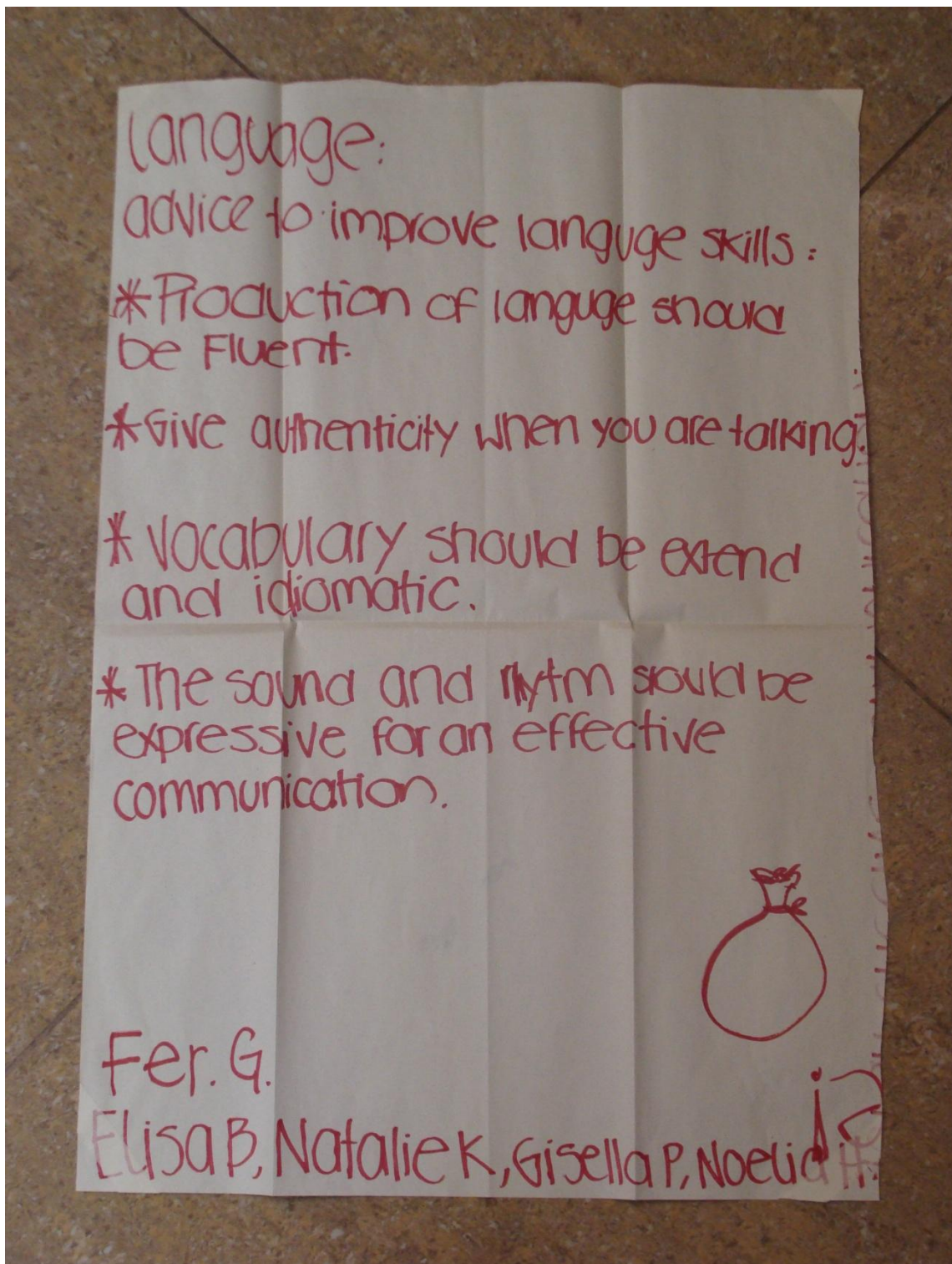
Appendix 14 - Picture 3  
T6 Portfolio Sample Explaining PBOs Assessing



Appendix 14 - Picture 4  
T6's Portfolio Sample Explaining PBOs Assessing



APPENDIX 15



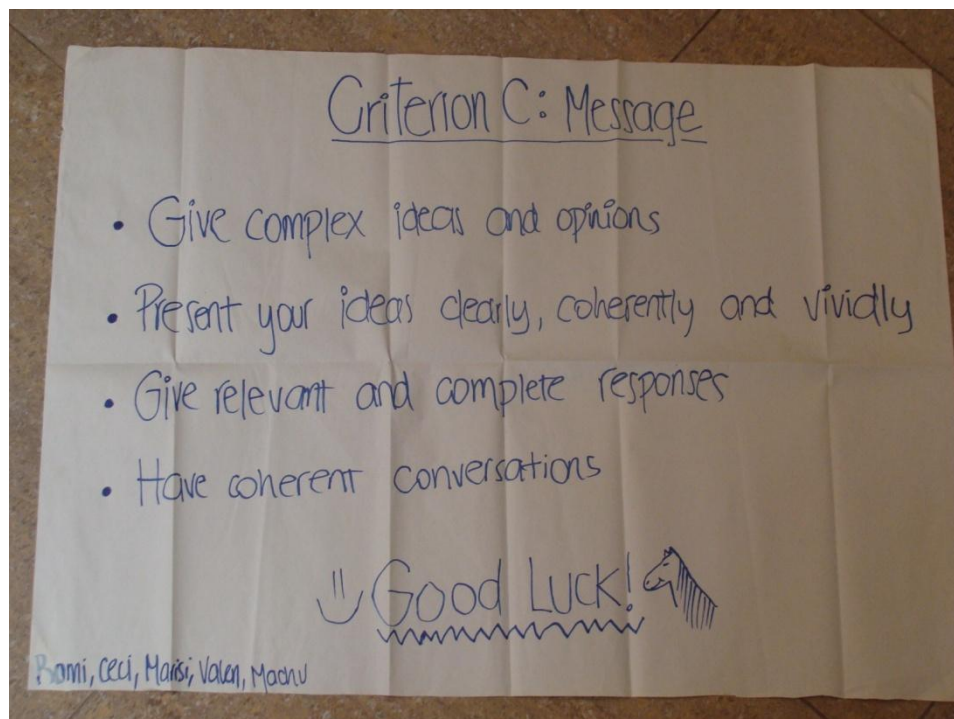
Appendix 15 – Picture 1

T4's Students' Interpretation of PBOs Rubric



Appendix 15 – Picture 2

T4's Students' Interpretation of PBOs Rubric



Appendix 15 – Picture 3

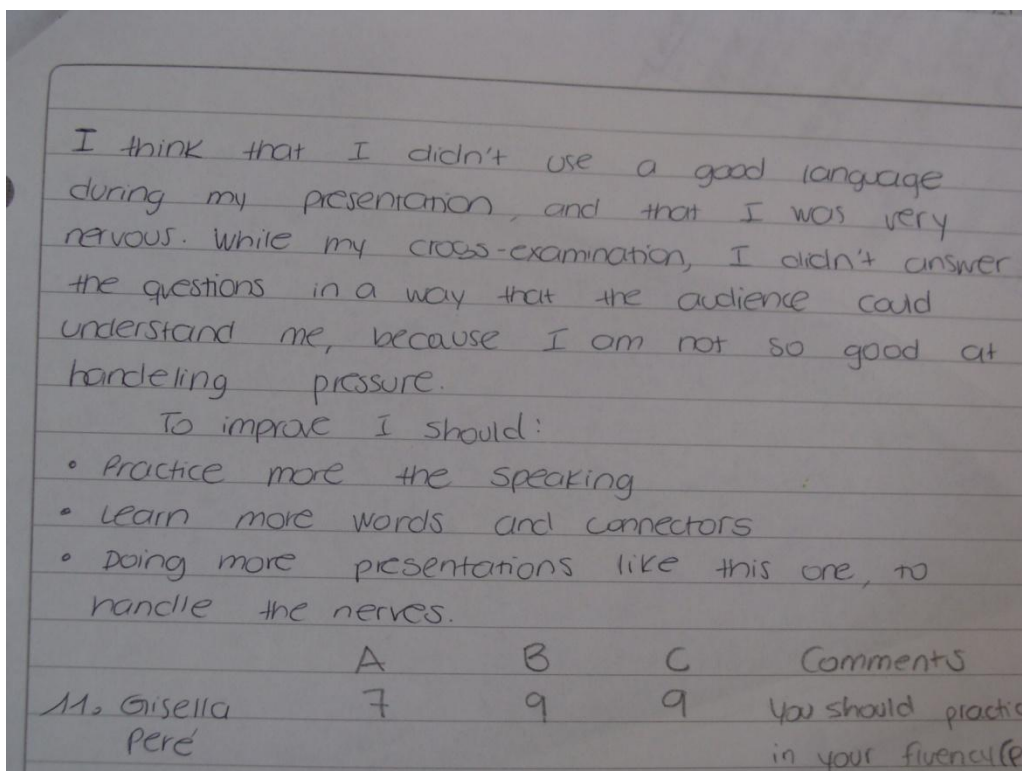
T4's Students' Interpretation of PBOs Rubric



Name	A	B	C	Comment
Katherine Guerrero	10	10	10	• Very entertaining, memorable, good language, Posture.
Marina Chang	8	10	10	• Used the word "really" too much other than that it was very good.
Romina Adam	7	8	9	• Doesn't handle tenses very well, she mixed them. Said the word "like" too much.
Leci Jurado	9	10	10	• It was excellent but she stopped sometimes.
Ma Jose Umpierrez	6	8	8	• She said the word "used" all the time. She didn't know how to express herself on some situations.
Noelia Heres	5	8	7	• She read most of the time, she had a hard time expressing herself. She had trouble with tenses.
Dani Dorado	9	8	9	• She stumbled a little. She was very nervous.
Elisa Barbero	8	9	9	• She mixed the tenses a little. She stumbled a little.
Ma Paula Umpierrez	8	9	9	• She mixed the tenses. She forgot some words. Her significant moment <del>was</del> the best I've heard so far.
Natalie Kuffel	8	9	8	• She got but some times.
Katherine Romero	8	8	8	• It was good but she didn't know how to express herself some times.
Vallen Jara	8	8	8	• She had a hard time with her English, but she really tried.
Gisella Perez	9	9	10	• She needed to speak more fluently.

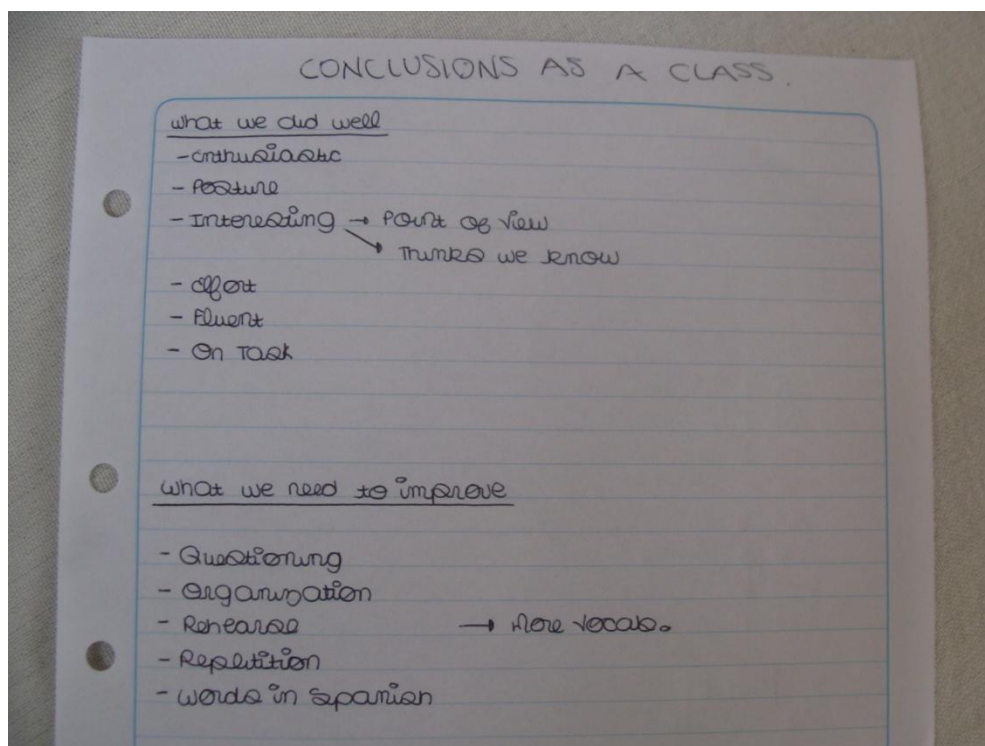
Appendix 15 – Picture 4

T4's Student Using PBOs Rubric to Evaluate Peers



Appendix 15 – Picture 5

T4's Student's Self-assessment



Appendix 15 – Picture 6

T4's Class Self-Assessment



Appendix 16

**PRESENTATION RUBRIC**

Read the rubric carefully, and consider the following when grading the group presentation

- Was the language used fluently and accurately?
- Was the language appropriate?
- Were they able to communicate ideas?

	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Language	Use of grammar and vocabulary is sometimes incorrect and/or limited, with lapses in fluency.	Use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct and mostly fluent.	Use of grammar and vocabulary is generally correct and varied, and flows easily.	Use of grammar and vocabulary is almost error free, and varied. Language flows naturally.
Context	Language is mostly informal and somewhat rehearsed.	Language is sometimes informal and some economic terms are used appropriately.	Language is generally formal and economic terms are used appropriately.	Language is consistently formal and economics terms used are appropriate and varied.
Message	The group was somewhat repetitive and ideas were presented very simply.	The group provided some original ideas in a clear way.	The group provided original ideas in a clear way, and proper tone.	The group provided complex, original ideas, clearly and properly.

**FEEDBACK FOR THE GROUP:**  
**ABOUT LANGUAGE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**ABOUT CONTEXT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

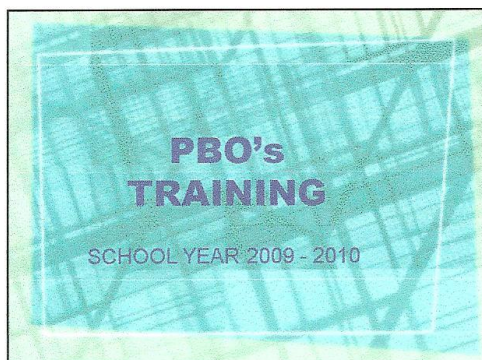
**ABOUT MESSAGE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

T10's Sample of PBOs Adapted Rubric

## Appendix 17



### **OBJECTIVES:**

#### GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

1. Improve Delta's secondary English teachers oral skills teaching practices
2. Reflect upon teaching in order to improve practices

### **OBJECTIVES:**

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. Use communicative performance based instruction in speaking classes
2. Use PBI methodology to design, implement and assess speaking classes.

### **TRAINING PROGRAM**

Consisting of portfolio process, grading practices, collaborative sessions to discuss PBO's methodology and assessment tools, cycles of action and reflection.

### **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

#### SWOT ANALYSYS

PRE-TEST. Grading an IB student's individual presentation using IB criteria: language, cultural interaction and message (BASELINE)

### **PLANNING**

Worked in pairs and individually to design speaking classes using IB planning format

IMPORTANT: Inquiry section (Big Ideas), teaching objectives, communicative objectives, connections between objectives and activities designed.



### IMPLEMENTATION

- Three types of speaking activities:
1. Individual presentation
  2. Small group presentation
  3. Whole class presentation
- Making the portfolio
- TL Portfolio Conferences
  - Collaborative Sessions - Protocols

### ASSESSMENT

- Post –test
- Interviews
- SWOT
- Final Collaborative Session

### QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

TEACHER	LANGUAGE		TEXT INT		MESSAGE		TOTAL	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
BAT	7	9	7	9	6	9	25	27
BIBIOLA	4	9	4	9	3	10	16	28
BIBIOLA	6	8	5	8	6	8	17	24
SIAPRIA	7	8	8	9	6	8	21	25
IBIRI	4	8	5	6	4	8	13	22
IBIRI	6	8	5	9	5	8	16	25
PAWAMIA	7	9	6	8	5	9	18	26
IBIRI	7	9	7	7	7	8	21	24
SABA	4	6	7	6	7	7	18	19
IBIRI	5	8	5	8	3	6	14	24
IBIRI	6	7	6	7	5	8	19	23
<b>AVERAGES</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>

### QUALITATIVE RESULTS

- Plans that show better connections between objectives and activities
- Evident implementation of PBI methodology
- More intentional implementation of speaking lessons
- Better connections between units and speaking activities
- We still need to learn to carry out reflection.
- We need to learn to implement communicative and performance based instruction.

### What is reflection?

Reflection is not thinking about what we did, it is about thinking what we will do next?

Reflection and action are strictly linked.

### REFLECTION PURPOSES

- Reflective thinking •
- Connecting theory to practice •
- Learning from experience •
- Validating the training experience •
- Personal development •
- Understanding of course content •
- Developing a commitment to active participation •

Can you sustain what you have learned?  
Will you use it in school year 2010 - 2011?