




## Pictograms in the strengthening of the oral language of children in Kindergarten II

### Los pictogramas en el fortalecimiento del lenguaje oral de los niños de Inicial II


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#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyse the impact of pictograms on the strengthening of oral language in students of the Filomena Mora de Carrión School of Basic Fiscal Education in the city of Loja, Ecuador. Using descriptive methodology, the population sample consisted of 23 students. The initial results obtained regarding the development of oral language show that 30.43% and 43.48% present difficulties in the dimensions: form, content and use, in aspects such as omission and substitution of phonemes, limited vocabulary, deficiency in comprehension and spontaneous oral expression, considering that these are essential linguistic skills for an effective development of oral language. These interventions should be designed and implemented with an approach that considers the individual characteristics of the students and the specific dimensions of language that require strengthening, thus contributing to a more equitable and effective development of oral language.

**Descriptors:** educational policy; language development; early childhood education. (Source: UNESCO Thesaurus).

#### RESUMEN

La investigación tiene por objetivo analizar el impacto de los pictogramas en el fortalecimiento del lenguaje oral en estudiantes de nivel inicial II de la Escuela de Educación Básica Fiscal Filomena Mora de Carrión de la ciudad de Loja, Ecuador. De metodología descriptiva, la muestra poblacional fue de 23 estudiantes. Los resultados iniciales obtenidos con respecto al desarrollo del lenguaje oral, denotando que el 30,43% y el 43,48% presentan dificultades en la dimensiones: forma, contenido y uso, en aspectos como omisión y sustitución de fonemas, vocabulario limitado, deficiencia en la comprensión y expresión oral espontánea, considerando que son habilidades lingüísticas imprescindibles para un desarrollo eficaz en su lenguaje oral. Estas intervenciones deben ser diseñadas y aplicadas con un enfoque que considere las características individuales de los estudiantes y las dimensiones específicas del lenguaje que requieren fortalecimiento, contribuyendo así a un desarrollo más equitativo y eficaz del lenguaje oral.

**Descriptor:** política educacional; desarrollo del lenguaje; educación de la primera infancia. (Fuente: Tesaurus UNESCO).

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## INTRODUCTION

In the field of inclusive education, teacher competences play a key role in ensuring equity and quality in learning for all students, including those with special educational needs. Teacher training and professional development in this area is crucial to address the challenges presented by diversity in the classroom. According to (Al-Dababneh & Al-Zboon, 2022), incorporating assistive technologies into the curriculum for children with specific learning disabilities significantly enhances teachers' professionalism and beliefs in inclusive settings. This perspective aligns with the research of (Almalky & Alwahbi, 2023), who show that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia are shaped by their direct experiences and the inclusive practices they have been involved in.

The development of oral language in infants represents one of the fundamental competencies in the process of knowledge acquisition and comprehensive early childhood education. This skill is not only linked to the ability to communicate effectively, but is also a determinant in children's cognitive and socio-emotional development, forming the basis on which more complex competencies are built in later stages.

Therefore, the acquisition of oral language in the infant stage is crucial, because it significantly influences cognitive, social and emotional progress, vital aspects for integral development. The child begins the communicative act through visual contact, gestures and body movements, and eventually begins to emit sounds and pronounce various words (Yépez & Padilla, 2021). This fascinating stage occurs through interaction with the environment, making it possible to acquire new words and when this process is carried out properly, the vocabulary expands considerably, allowing the child to express him/herself with greater skill and coherence.

Through this skill, the child becomes immersed and involved in the social environment, learning from it for personal development and academic success. At the same time, it allows them to understand information, acquire new knowledge and perform adequately in different learning environments. It also fosters key skills such as abstract thinking and problem solving, enabling them to deal effectively with challenges in everyday life. Limited language development is a problem that leads to the search for and adaptation of new techniques, in this framework, the usefulness of pictograms is considered as a versatile educational resource to overcome language barriers (Haro-Astudillo et al., 2024).

Pictograms are characterised as graphic representations that have the ability to convey a message visually with or without accompanying text, they are applied to communicate information clearly and are very useful in situations where spoken language is not effective. These simple images are easily understood and interpreted by anyone, making them an ideal medium for universal communication, which can be used in various fields (Llori-Fonseca et al., 2023).

Within the classroom it serves as a link between visual perception and the world of words, while its symbolism represents an initial form of communication that infants learn to interpret (Andrade et al., 2024). It is precisely at an early age when deficiencies in oral language are evident, therefore, they become valuable allies to enhance communication and linguistic skills, enabling verbal expression, the organisation of ideas and the exchange of thoughts in a fluent and complete way. They also contribute to improving the articulation of phonemes, expanding vocabulary, and optimising visual and auditory discrimination (Morocho-Zumba & Cabrera-Berrezueta, 2022).

The implementation of pictograms in educational classrooms is essential to ensure a meaningful and enriching learning experience, in a recreational and motivating environment, where children feel encouraged to participate and interact actively, this tool will allow teachers to teach in a creative and fun way, making it easier for children to learn to speak and express themselves more quickly, which will allow in the future a proper reading and writing (Mendoza-Mera & Delgado-Gonzembach, 2022).



In the Ecuadorian educational context, especially in the Pre-school II sub-level, the need has been identified to implement innovative pedagogical strategies that respond to the particularities of child development and optimise the process of oral language acquisition. Within this framework, pictograms have emerged as a didactic tool with a high potential to strengthen these language skills.

Pictograms, defined as schematic graphic representations that symbolise concepts or actions, facilitate understanding and learning in early stages of cognitive development. Their use in educational settings, particularly in early childhood classrooms, has proven to be effective in mediating the oral language learning process, providing visual support that reinforces semantic memory and encourages verbal production in children. In sub-level 2 of the Ecuadorian education system, pictograms have played a crucial role in promoting oral language development, acting as a bridge between visual comprehension and verbal expression (Haro-Astudillo et al., 2024). This didactic resource has allowed educators not only to facilitate the teaching of vocabulary and basic linguistic structures, but also to intervene in cases of specific language difficulties.

Further research confirms the effectiveness of pictographic stories in the treatment of learning problems related to oral language. These stories, by combining visual and narrative elements, enhance the child's cognitive immersion, which translates into a significant improvement in comprehension and oral expression (Revelo-Quiñonez et al., 2024). The incorporation of these resources into everyday pedagogical practices responds to a critical need to adapt teaching strategies to the particular characteristics of students, considering factors such as age, developmental level and individual needs.

Moreover, the systematic introduction of pictograms in early education for 3- and 4-year-olds contributes to a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment, where students actively participate in the construction of their own knowledge (Morocho-Zumba & Cabrera-Berrezueta, 2022). This approach not only improves children's communicative competence, but also promotes metacognitive skills, such as the ability to self-assess and regulate their own learning. In this sense, the use of pictograms should not only be seen as a tool to develop oral expression, but as an integral resource that facilitates social interaction and collaborative learning in the classroom (Mendoza-Mera & Delgado-Gonzembach, 2022).

Based on the above, the current research aims to analyse the impact of pictograms on the strengthening of oral language in students of initial level II of the Escuela de Educación Básica Fiscal Filomena Mora de Carrión in the city of Loja, Ecuador.

## **METHOD**

The research was descriptive in scope, allowing us to characterise the current state of the study population in relation to the object of research. Likewise, a non-experimental design was chosen, without manipulation of the variables, observing events as they occur in their real context.

The population sample was non-probabilistic and consisted of 23 students from the initial level II of the Escuela de Educación Básica Fiscal Filomena Mora de Carrión in the city of Loja, who were evaluated by applying the Oral Language Test Navarra-Revised (PLON-R) instrument for the initial diagnosis in its three dimensions of form, content and use.

The data obtained were processed using descriptive statistics with the support of the SPSS V26 statistical programme and are presented in the results section.

## **RESULTS**

The results of the research are presented:



**Table 1.** Results of the initial assessment.

Level	f	%
Normal	6	26,09
Needs improvement	7	30,43
Delay	10	43,48
Total	23	100

Note. Data obtained from the test that measures the level of oral language development in children of the initial level II of the Escuela de Educación Básica Fiscal Filomena Mora de Carrión.

Table 1 specifies the initial results obtained with regard to the development of oral language, showing that 30.43% and 43.48% present difficulties in the dimensions: form, content and use, in aspects such as omission and substitution of phonemes, limited vocabulary, deficiency in comprehension and spontaneous oral expression, considering that these are essential linguistic skills for an effective development of oral language.

## DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this research reveal a significant prevalence of difficulties in the development of oral language in Pre-Initial II children, specifically in the dimensions of form, content and use, with rates of 30.43% and 43.48%. These difficulties are manifested in specific problems such as phoneme omission and substitution, limited vocabulary, and deficiencies in comprehension and spontaneous oral expression, which are crucial for effective language development.

These findings are consistent with the existing literature, which underlines the importance of early intervention in language development to prevent the consolidation of more severe difficulties at later stages (Andrade et al., 2024). The use of pictograms, in particular, has proven to be an effective tool to support oral language development, acting as a visual mediator that facilitates the acquisition of vocabulary and the structuring of coherent sentences, as evidenced by previous research (Haro-Astudillo et al., 2024; Mendoza-Mera & Delgado-Gonzembach, 2022).

In line with these results, studies such as the one by (Basurto-Solórzano & Mendoza-Vélez, 2023) highlight that play strategies, including those using pictograms, are particularly effective in enhancing oral language expression in young children. These strategies not only allow for better assimilation of linguistic concepts, but also increase children's motivation and interest, which is fundamental for sustained and meaningful learning.

On the other hand, the literature emphasises that difficulties in the form dimension, such as the omission and substitution of phonemes, can be effectively addressed through activities that combine the visual with the auditory, reinforcing the association between the sound and the image of the object represented (Chimbo-Chimbo & Esteves-Fajardo, 2023; Saltos-Barberán & Mendoza-Vélez, 2022). This association is essential for improving phonological accuracy and, therefore, clarity in oral expression.

Deficiency in spontaneous oral comprehension and expression, as observed in 43.48% of the children assessed, also reflects a critical need for intervention. The use of pictographic stories and storytelling strategies has been widely recommended to improve these competencies, providing a rich context of linguistic stimuli that promotes both comprehension and oral production (Benabbes & AbdulHaleem, 2024; Nicolopoulou et al., 2022). These techniques allow children to internalise complex linguistic structures naturally, through repetition and imitation in a playful environment.



In terms of content, research by (Gardner-Neblett, 2024) suggests that the development of narrative skills is a key indicator of progress in the content dimension of language. Children who participate in activities that encourage storytelling, using visual supports such as pictograms, tend to develop a richer vocabulary and a greater ability to structure their thoughts coherently. This approach not only enriches the content of their oral expressions, but also strengthens listening comprehension and verbal memory.

Interventions based on the use of pictograms not only benefit children with language difficulties, but also promote equitable language development among all learners, as noted by (Guaranda-Loor & Samada-Grasst, 2023). These interventions create an inclusive environment that caters for individual needs and encourages the participation of all children in the educational process, which is essential for comprehensive and effective oral language development.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study underline the need to systematically implement pedagogical strategies based on the use of pictograms and other visual resources to improve language skills in Pre-school II children. These interventions should be designed and implemented with an approach that considers the individual characteristics of the students and the specific dimensions of language that require strengthening, thus contributing to a more equitable and effective development of oral language.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest with persons or institutions involved in the research.

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