



# Speaking Camp Informe / Report

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**Universidad de Guadalajara**  
**Coordinación General Académica**  
Foreign Languages Institutional Program

Proyecto experimental en colaboración  
con la University of Jyväskylä, Finlandia

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# Presentación

El presente informe concentra aspectos relevantes del proyecto Speaking Camp y los resultados obtenidos derivados de su implementación los días 13, 14 y 15 de enero de 2017.

El Programa Institucional de Lenguas Extranjeras (FLIP) de la Universidad de Guadalajara reconoce la valiosa aportación de los doctores expertos: Johanna Saario y David Marsh, de la Universidad de Jyväskylä, Finlandia con relación a la evaluación de dicho proyecto piloto y la elaboración del presente informe.

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# Resumen Ejecutivo

La iniciativa original del proyecto "Speaking Camp" fue creada por el Programa Institucional de Lenguas Extranjeras (FLIP) de la Universidad de Guadalajara y posteriormente se enriqueció con la asesoría de expertos en México y Finlandia. Este proyecto piloto fue implementado del 13 al 15 de enero de 2017 y evaluado por la Universidad de Jyväskylä, Finlandia.

El objetivo consistió en conocer el impacto de una "experiencia de campamento del habla" relacionado con el nivel de motivación y voluntad de usar el idioma inglés.

El proyecto tuvo dos objetivos particulares:

1. Impactar en la disposición y voluntad de los participantes en el uso del idioma inglés.
2. Diseñar un modelo futuro que alcance los resultados deseados.

## Fundamento

Los campamentos de práctica del inglés pueden tener distintos grados de éxito; sin embargo, el impacto en el desarrollo del idioma suele ser de corta duración debido a que generalmente las actividades diseñadas sólo invitan a la recepción superficial y la producción del idioma. Una vez que los estudiantes finalizan la práctica en este tipo de campamento, no siempre son capaces de transferir conocimientos en otras situaciones donde se usa el lenguaje. Esta lógica tradicional del campamento se basa en la metodología de “estímulo- respuesta” que conduce, a menudo, a resultados de aprendizaje superficiales.

El Speaking Camp 2017 fue desarrollado por FLIP con base en la metodología “*challenge-production*”, misma que condujo a un aprendizaje significativo. Bajo esta metodología se realizaron actividades que brindaron oportunidades de uso y comunicación en inglés poniendo en acción las mejores prácticas para el aprendizaje de idiomas:

- El aprendizaje depende del fortalecimiento de las conexiones neuronales, mismas

que se vinculan con el tipo de aprendizaje adquirido.

- El estudiante necesita experimentar la sensación de esclarecimiento, que es provocada por la emoción positiva al ver que pueden lograr resultados satisfactorios de aprendizaje usando el inglés. Esta sensación ocurre cuando los estudiantes tienen éxito al desarrollar el pensamiento de orden superior por medio de tareas que extienden la mente.
- El pensamiento de orden superior se genera mediante el aprendizaje enriquecido por una amplia variedad de recursos y tareas específicas que estimulan la creatividad y generan resultados de aprendizaje.
- La variedad de recursos permiten al cerebro estimular las neuronas a través de la gran conectividad entre ellas.
- La conectividad creada a través de tareas reales y relevantes activa el circuito completo de procesamiento y almacenamiento de información y profundiza el aprendizaje, además de la capacidad de construir sobre este en un futuro, por medio de cambios en la organización cerebral.

## Resultados

Las actividades fueron diseñadas para proporcionar oportunidades de aprendizaje auténticas, relevantes y esclarecedoras. Cada una de las actividades fue significativa, inspiradora y con un cierto nivel de exigencia; estas, condujeron a cada uno de los participantes no sólo al logro intelectual de tareas demandantes, sino también a identificar sus propios resultados, esto aunado a la obtención de confianza en sí mismos como usuarios del idioma inglés y futuros estudiantes.

Los resultados muestran que es posible construir un modelo a partir del 2018, en donde los estudiantes de la Universidad de Guadalajara utilicen la tecnología para involucrarse en una experiencia de aprendizaje mixta, es decir: virtual/presencial.

Este modelo reduciría la inversión en costos, incrementaría el potencial de acceso generalizado y lograría objetivos de aprendizaje en inglés de alto nivel. Existen 3 posibles modelos que podrían ser considerados:

## Posibles modelos de implementación a futuro

Con el fin de replicar el proyecto Speaking camp en futuros semestres, se proponen tres modelos de implementación:

**Modelo A:** Experiencia "Sepaking camp" completamente digital

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bajo costo por participante</li> <li>- Acceso a muchos estudiantes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carente de la valiosa dimensión humana (presencialidad)</li> <li>- Carente de un entorno de realidad para lograr el impacto esperado</li> </ul>

=> Más estudiantes, menos costo, impacto dudoso

**MODELO B:** Experiencia "Speaking camp" mixta (virtual/presencial)

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Costo mínimo por participante</li> <li>- Acceso a muchos estudiantes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requiere tiempo de trabajo para su organización</li> </ul>

=> Más estudiantes, costo mínimo, alto impacto

**MODELO C:** Experiencia "Speaking camp" en el sitio

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potencial para un gran impacto</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mayor costo por participante</li> <li>- Acceso a muy pocos estudiantes</li> </ul>

=> Pocos estudiantes, mayor costo y alto impacto

# Executive Summary

The original initiative was created by FLIP (Foreign Languages Institutional Program) of the University of Guadalajara, and then further refined after advisory input from expertise in Mexico and Finland. The pilot was implemented 13-15 January 2017, and evaluated by the University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

The aim was to see if and how a form of 'speaking camp experience' could have a significant impact on UdG student readiness and willingness to use English language. It had two objectives:

1. Impact on participant readiness and willingness to use English language.
2. Design of a future model that achieves desired results.

# Introduction

The original project initiative was created by FLIP and then further refined after advisory input from expertise in Mexico and Finland. The objective of the project was to see if and how a form of 'speaking camp experience' could have a significant impact on student readiness and willingness to use English language.

The project was operationalized through FLIP as a pilot. The pilot was carried out in Ajijic, a unique socio-linguistic community close to Guadalajara in which English is widely used by persons of different international backgrounds.

The pilot was evaluated with two objectives. The first examines the impact the Speaking Camp

had on **participant readiness and willingness to use English** language.

The second looks at the **potential of a future model** that achieves positive impact on student readiness and willingness to use English **through virtual reality solutions**.

Internally, the project was foresight processed by 4 University of Guadalajara English language students (giving ideas on how this type of project could be done in the future using digital input).

Externally, the project was evaluated by a language learning innovation expert Dr. Johanna Saario, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

# Rationale

The traditional English Language Speaking Camp is a firmly established process for immersing students in a situation where they practice speaking English as a foreign language.

This can have varying degrees of success. The impact on developing English language is often short-lived because the activities designed invite only superficial reception and production of the language. In addition, once the student has left the speaking camp situation, they may not be able to transfer any gains into other situations where the language is used.

This can be explained by reference to the educational neurosciences whereby:

- Learning in the brain depends on strengthening neuronal connections which depends on the *type* of learning that takes place
- The student needs to experience *enlightenment* which is triggered by positive emotion where they see that they can achieve demanding learning outcomes using English

- This happens when they succeed through *higher order thinking* with tasks which stretch the mind
- Higher order thinking results from learning through *rich data* on tasks which are rich in detail and which stimulate the imagination in creating learning outcomes
- Rich data enables the brain to stimulate neurons through the richness of *connectivity* between them
- Connectivity created through relevant and real tasks activates the full information processing circuit and *deepens learning*, information storage, and the capacity to build on this at a later time through changes in brain organisation

The FLIP 2017 Speaking camp activities have been purposefully designed to provide a type of learning which is **authentic, relevant** and **enlightening**. The activities were demanding, meaningful, time-adjusted and inspiring. They were designed to lead each student to not only achieve intellectually demanding tasks, but to be able to see what they have achieved, alongside enhanced personal self-confidence

towards themselves as English language users and future learners.

In summary, the traditional Speaking Camp rationale is based on *stimulus-response* leading to often-superficial learning outcomes. The 2017 FLIP Speaking Camp is based on *challenge-production* leading to deep level thinking and English language acquisition.

On the basis of the outcomes of the 2017 FLIP Speaking Camp, it is possible **to construct a model** where University of Guadalajara students use technology to embark on a blended virtual/face-to-face English language learning experience.

This would reduce cost investment, increase the potential for wide rollout and widespread access, and achieve deep level English language learning objectives.

# Observations and Recommendations

## Speaking Camp Instructions & Navigation

- The effective pre-course information and briefings would have been further complemented through clearly produced visual instructions and advice/guidance on how to manage tasks before starting the project on-site.
- The learning objectives should be communicated effectively to all participants, and other stakeholders (e.g. is this to learn words and phrases in English language, or to learn about myself and how I use words and phrases in English language?)
- A competitive element can be successfully introduced through the instructions, particularly with respect to competing against the self (self-competition). However evidence shows that introducing competition between teams in what they can achieve using the English language in a Speaking Camp should be avoided.

## Time on-task

- Managing 11 separate tasks in 1.5 days was achieved but time management per task was problematic, and sometimes stressful for participants.
- Any future time schedule should include time buffers (e.g. 15 minute handover times), and realistic time management.
- In the future it is recommended that there are fewer tasks (e.g. 8 tasks over a 1.5 day period) that are even more cognitively challenging, and which enable the creation of even more sophisticated outcomes.
- A full real-time testing simulation of task processing is recommended prior to implementation of any future Speaking Camp model.
- The use of an instant messaging application (e.g. WhatsApp) was particularly useful in maintaining communications between and with groups.

## Participant Selection

- Participant selection should be based on achieving a high degree of homogeneity (e.g. similar programmes and age). Mixing groups by attracting students from different faculties is recommended, as is ensuring a full gender balance.
- Background information on participants was successfully gathered before the Speaking Camp started. Some examples are:

Figure 1: Most weeks I don't have many opportunities to speak English

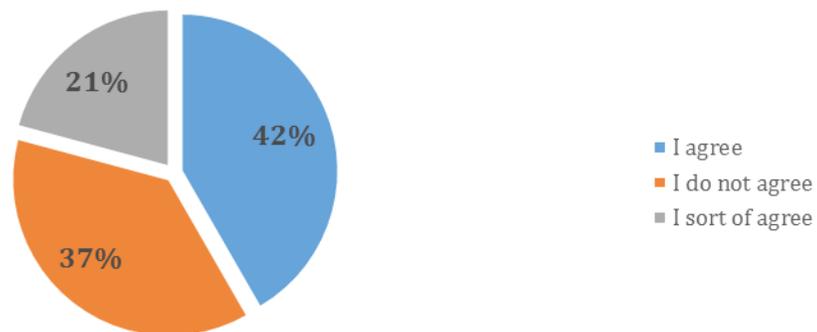


Figure 2: I want to have more opportunities to read, listen to and speak English

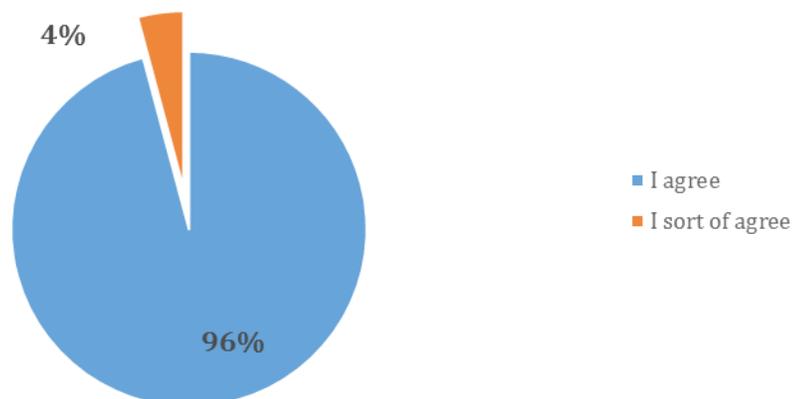
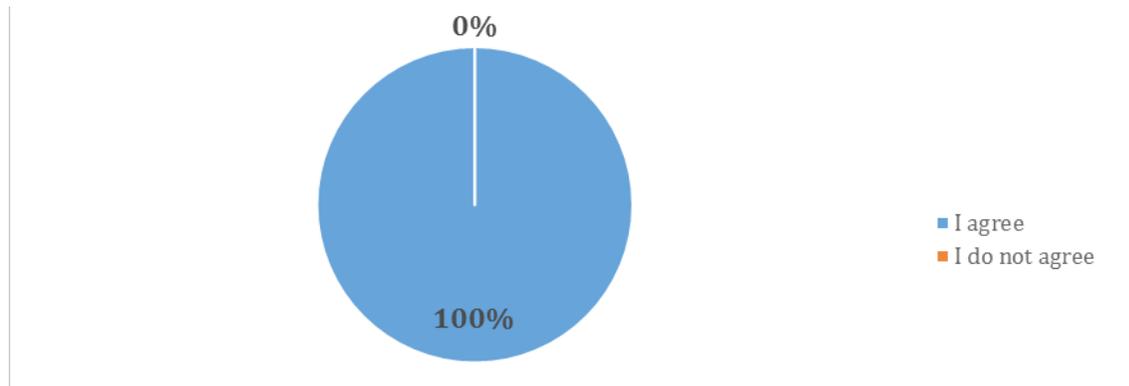


Figure 3: I think that knowing English is good for my future



### Actions to Increase Organizational Efficiency of new Speaking Camp Projects

- The organizational logistics were highly effective. When unexpected critical situations occurred solutions were swiftly and professionally processed.
- It would be advisable that the on-site project coordinators are fully aware of the scientific rationale of the project processes, and that they play an active role with specific responsibilities during the process (e.g. not act as passive observers). This is strategically important for maximizing the 'non-traditional-schooling' nature of this type of learning event, and the building of an innovative learning community.
- If technology is to be used it should be tested before any event, and a full contingency back-up plan operational.

## Quality of Production Outcomes

- The scope of the outcomes produced by students was wide. This included producing different types of communication through audio, visual, graphics, and other means. It also required output in different genre (form, style and subject matter) such as audio-visual news reports, songs, poetry, journalistic articles, documentaries, maps, mind maps, blogs, photographs, video, art and literature.
- Activities were time-limited and authentic, requiring use of digital devices that are an inseparable part of the daily life of the students.
- Tasks also required handling face-demanding interpersonal situations, such as approaching strangers in a street and asking questions of a quasi-personal nature about their opinions, attitudes, life histories; factual analysis (e.g. different lifestyle choices made by Mexican and non-Mexican interviewees: investigative probing, and creative thinking).

## Depth

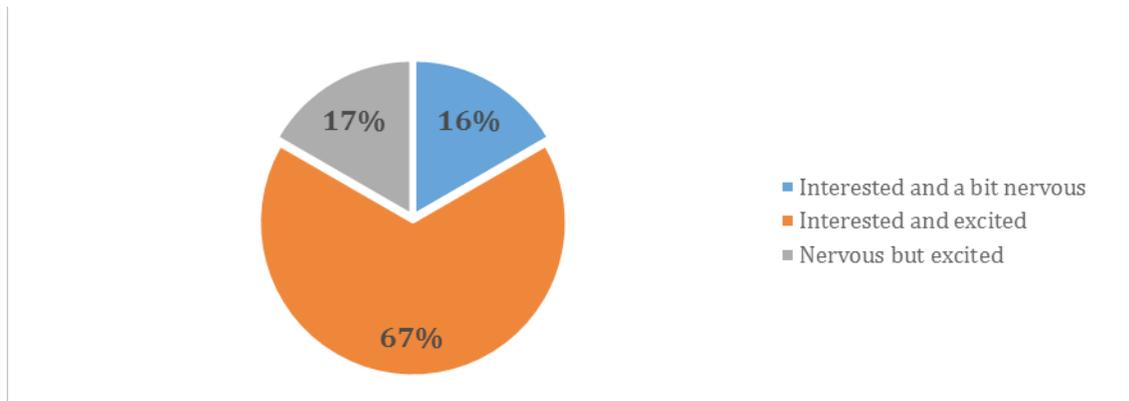
- The tasks invited use of higher order thinking skills, creativity, and innovation. The participants responded to each of these effectively in many of the final outputs.
- What has been achieved in the Speaking Camp differs considerably in terms of quality and creativity if compared with much English language learning use in traditional education where tasks are often simplistic, detached from real life, and involving lower order thinking skills.

## Participant Learning Process Outcomes

Pre-and Post-Speaking Camp questionnaires provide insights into student attitudes before start-up. The full results are in Annexes 1 and 2. In relation to attitudes the following are relevant:

Pre-camp Questionnaire

Figure 4: How do you feel about joining the Speaking Camp?



Post-camp Questionnaire

Figure 5: How do you feel now, about using real-life English as you did in the Speaking Camp?

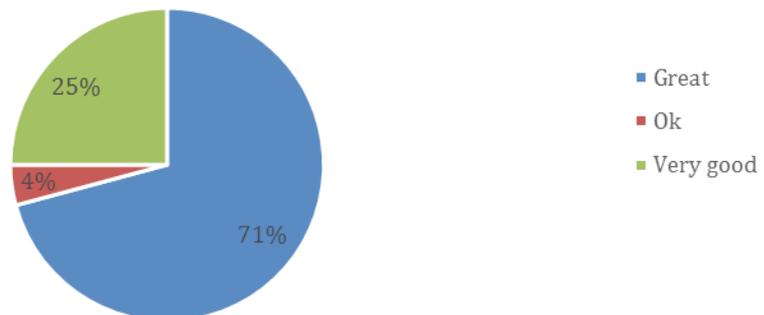
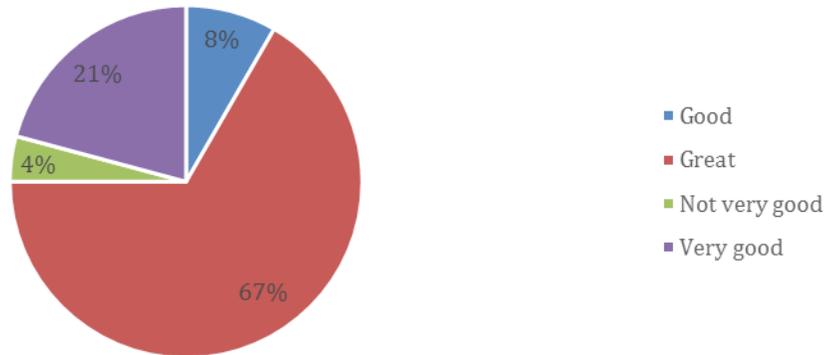
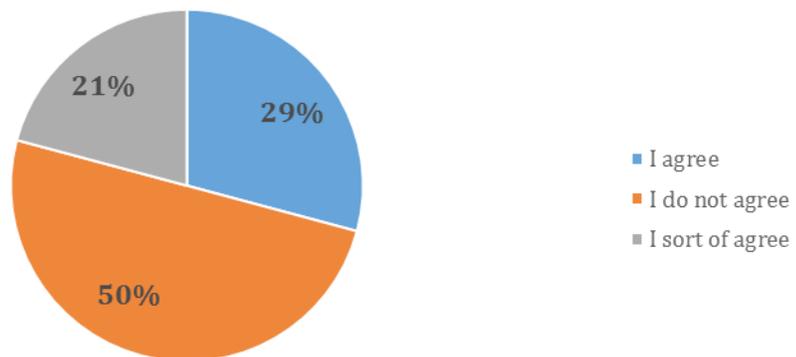


Figure 6: How do you feel about your own participation in the Speaking Camp?



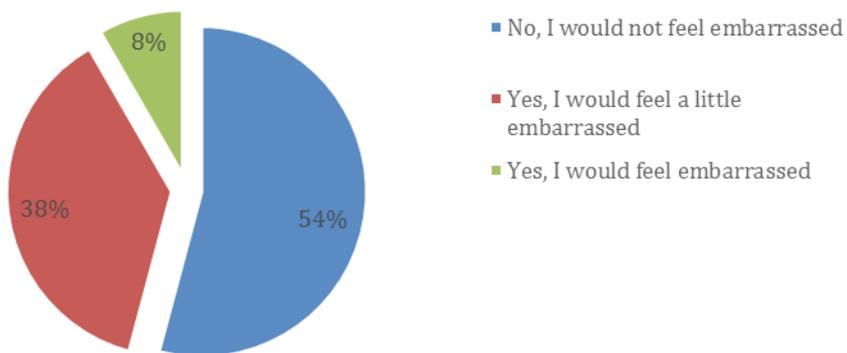
#### Pre-camp Questionnaire

Figure 7: I feel embarrassed when I speak English in front of other Mexicans



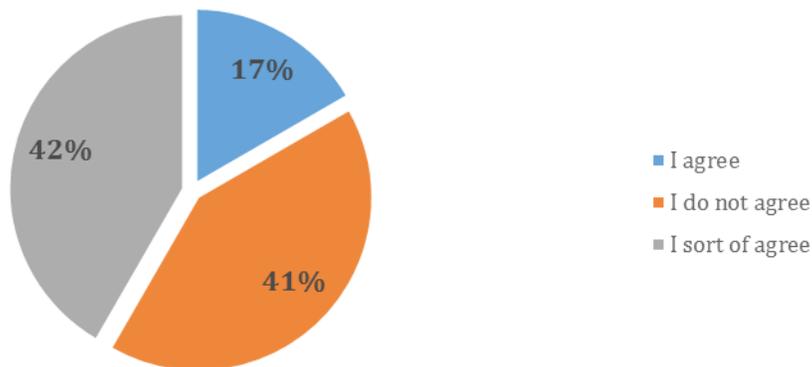
Post-camp Questionnaire

Figure 8: After being in the Speaking Camp, would you feel embarrassed about speaking English in front of other Mexicans?



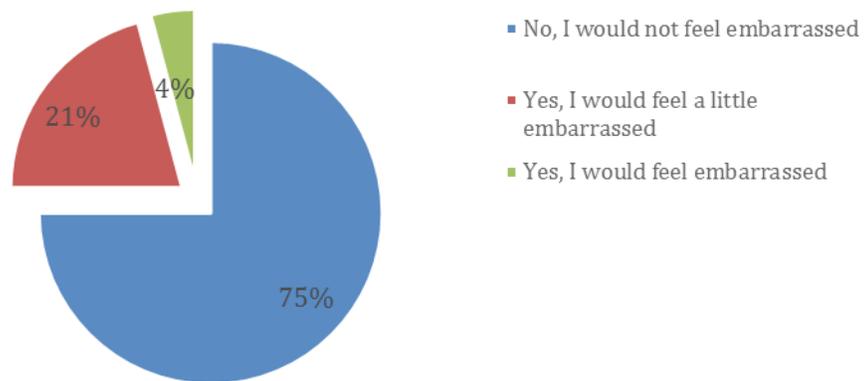
Pre-camp Questionnaire

Figure 9: I feel embarrassed when I speak English to people from English-speaking countries.



## Post-camp Questionnaire

Figure 10: After being in the Speaking Camp, would you feel embarrassed about speaking English to people from English-speaking countries?



Students reported positive impact on affective (e.g. self-confidence and emotions) features of using the English language in real-life situations from the start-up of the process.

These situations involved tasks requiring face-to-face interaction with English-speakers, many of whom were approached directly by students in the streets and parks of Ajijic.

## Future Models

On the basis of this experience there are 3 possible models that could be considered further by FLIP.

### Model A

Fully digital Speaking Camp experience

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low cost per head</li> <li>- Accessed by many students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lacks the valuable face-to-face human dimension</li> <li>- Lacks sufficient reality to achieve impact</li> </ul>

=> More students, less cost, questionable impact

### Model B

Blended Face-to-Face/virtual – Speaking Camp experience

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimal cost per head</li> <li>- Accessed by many students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires some work time to organize</li> </ul>

=> More students, low cost, high impact

### Model C

On-site Speaking Camp experience

+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential for high impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Higher cost per head</li> <li>- Accessed by very few students</li> </ul>

=> Few students, higher cost and high impact

## Student Experiences

Examples of comments by students about the Speaking Camp experience are:

- 'I was (surprised) I could successfully manage this in English'
- 'It was amazing how helpful and friendly the foreigners are'
- 'It was really interesting to see how different these (expatriate) people are'
- 'I felt proud to be Mexican when the (expatriates) told us about so many things they love about being here'
- 'I haven't used English with real (foreign) people before – it was much easier than I had thought'
- 'I did it (smiles)'
- 'At first I was nervous and then it just happened – and it was so easy – and fun'
- 'It was amazing to receive an opinion from foreign people about our country'
- '(The activities) represented real-life communication and interaction with foreign people'
- 'All the activities were interesting and fun'
- 'They were real interaction-activities'
- 'It's a really great project, this trip motivated me to overcome myself and continue to learn the language and learn (about) others'

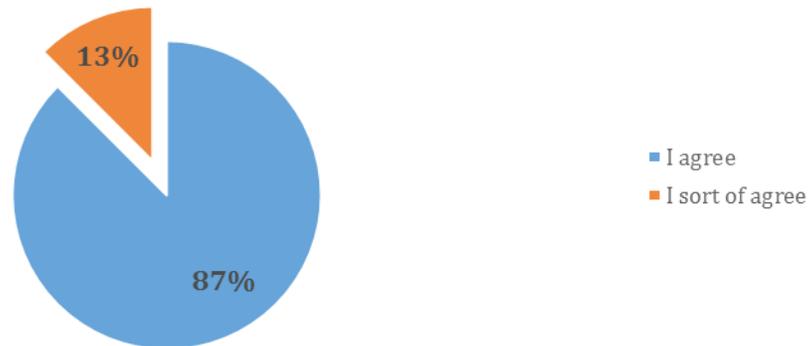
Figure 11: Wall exercise on identifying the feelings here and now.



'I realized I could (lose) my embarrassed feeling'

And one final point is of interest with respect to multilingualism at the University of Guadalajara. Students expressed interest in also learning foreign languages in addition to English:

Figure 12: I would like to learn another foreign language.



## Annex 1: Summary of Student Responses (Pre-Speaking Camp)

1. How many hours do you use the internet each day?	Number of respondents
2-3 hrs	2
4-5 hrs	13
6-8 hrs	3
Most of the day	6

2 How many hours are you in social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram) each day?	Number of respondents
2-3 hrs	15
4-5 hrs	4
Most of the day	5

3. How many hours do you use the internet for academic/studying purposes each day?	Number of respondents
2-3 hrs	15
4-5 hrs	6
6-8 hrs	3

4. How much time do you spend on the internet using English each day?	Number of respondents
About 1 hour	8
Hardly at all	4
More than 1 hour	10
Very little	2

5. Which of these devices do you use each day?	Number of respondents
Computer	6
Smartphone	18

6. How do you feel about joining the Speaking Camp?	Number of respondents
Interested and a bit nervous	4
Interested and excited	16
Nervous but excited	4

7. Most weeks I don't have many opportunities to speak English	Number of respondents
I agree	10
I do not agree	9
I sort of agree	5

8. I think that knowing English is good for my future	Number of respondents
I agree	24
I do not agree	0

9. I feel embarrassed when I speak English in front of other Mexicans	Number of respondents
I agree	7
I do not agree	12
I sort of agree	5

10. I feel embarrassed when I speak English to people from English-speaking countries	Number of respondents
I agree	4
I do not agree	10
I sort of agree	10

11. I want to have more opportunities to read, listen to and speak English	Number of respondents
I agree	23
I sort of agree	1

12. I would like to learn another foreign language	Number of respondents
I agree	21
I sort of agree	3

## Annex 2: Summary of Student Responses (Post-Speaking Camp)

1. How do you feel now about using real-life English as you did in the Speaking Camp?	Number of respondents
Great	17
Ok	1
Very good	6

2. Have you already communicated anything positive about your Speaking Camp experience through social media?	Number of respondents
Yes	17
No	7

3. Was there anything that upset or made you feel uncomfortable during the Speaking Camp experience?	Number of respondents
Yes	3
No	21

4. Would you be interested in joining a more advanced level Speaking Camp in the future	Number of respondents
Yes	24
No	0

5. Would you recommend a speaking Camp experience to other students?	Number of respondents
Yes	24
No	0

6. How do you feel about your own participation in the Speaking Camp?	Number of respondents
Good	2
Great	16
Not very good	1
Very good	5

7. Did you have enough opportunities to practice your English in the Speaking Camp?	Number of respondents
Yes, had some opportunitites	7
Yes, I had a lot of opportunities	17

8. What activities did you enjoy the most?	Number of respondents
Art in the streets	1
Birdlife in Ajijic	2
Eating and Drinking	3
Living close to Chapala Lake	3
My life journey to Ajijic	10
Stories of the international garden	1
The life of the stone	1
Three things to love Ajijic	3

9. What kind of outcomes did you enjoy making?	Number of respondents
Audios	1
Interviews	4
Maps	4
Mindmaps	2
pictures	9
videos	4

10. After being in the Speaking Camp, would you feel embarrassed about speaking English in front of other Mexicans?	Number of respondents
No, I would not feel embarrassed	13
Yes, I would feel a little embarrassed	9
Yes, I would feel embarrassed	2

11. After being in the Speaking Camp, would you feel embarrassed about speaking English to people from English-speaking countries?	Number of respondents
No, I would not feel embarrassed	18
Yes, I would feel a little embarrassed	5
Yes, I would feel embarrassed	1

12. I want to have more opportunities to read, listen to and speak English	Number of respondents
I agree	23
I sort of agree	1

**Annex 3: Relevant Publications**

- Broth, M., & Lindström, F. (2013). A walk on the pier: Establishing relevant places in mobile instruction. In L. Mondada, P. Haddington, & M. Nevile (Eds.), *Interaction and Mobility: Language and the Body in Motion*. (pp. 91–122). Berlin: DeGruyter.
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