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**THESIS OF THE MASTER'S
DEGREE PROGRAM IN:**

***“TEACHING ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE”***

**Evaluation and improvement
of the ENGLISH STUDIES
PROGRAM
AT UNAN leon**

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Take Two Language Learner's: a Case Study of the Learning Strategies of Two Successful Learners of English as a Second Language with Instrumental Motivation

PERSONAL OPINION

From my view, this paper describes quite precisely the different steps a researcher carried out in a very interesting case study of two 'good language learners' (GLL) of English as a second language, and the learning strategies they both use in order to learn the language efficiently.

The researcher's detailed identification and diagnosis of such strategies have been very appealing to me since they have helped me to reflect on my own considerations as a teacher concerning this issue. As I went through the reading of the whole process, I kept thinking about the complexities of the teaching-learning process of a language and the importance of taking into account students' particular learning styles and the different mental and behavioral processes they go through when struggling with the learning of a foreign language.

Moreover, I have confirmed my own personal conception that success in learning a language involves the combination of a number of factors, which joined together, are fundamental aspects that determine whether or not meaningful learning will take place and to what extent students can succeed in becoming skilled in the target language.

Important aspects affecting successful strategy use and choice such as motivational orientation, (in this case study; instrumental), language aptitudes, personality traits, learning styles, linguistic, educational and cultural background, beliefs about language learning, goals, affective states, and so forth; are all

elements that play a significant role in the learning of a language. Being aware of them is vital for both students and teachers so that necessary changes and adjustments can be made along the teaching-learning process.

On the whole, I would say that reading this paper has been very insightful for me since it has helped me to refresh and consolidate ideas I already had, gain a greater knowledge of terms I had just heard about, and reflect on my role as an EFL teacher and the great responsibility I have in guiding my students towards the fulfillment of their language goals.

PARTICIPANT: Edipcia Chavez

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To our dear teachers and friends, Diane Millar, Ann Coyne, Fernando Cerezal, and Manuel Megias to whom we owe all our preparation and teacher training, and from whom we have learned much more than speaking and teaching English.

To all our children and family in general, for their patience love, support and trust.

To Marcos Hernandez and Adalila Molina who consistently supported our present job.

To all the English teachers who believe in reflective teaching

*Edipcia Chávez Loreda
Michèle Delaplace
Carla Gòmez
July 2004*

INDEX

I- INTRODUCTION

II- JUSTIFICATION

III- OBJECTIVES

1. General objective
2. Specific objective

IV- LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Language programs and language teaching institutions
2. Syllabus, curriculum and curriculum design
 - 2.1 Definition of key concepts
3. Methodological issues and elements of the teaching-learning process to take into account in a language evaluation program
 - 3.1 Methodology, communicative competences and the Communicative Approach
 - 3.2 The second language learners and the factors affecting their language-learning process
 - 3.3 The second language teachers and the factors involved in their performance
 - 3.4 Evaluation research and language programs
 - 3.5 Quality indicators in an institution

V- CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

1. Antecedents of English studies in Nicaragua.
2. Antecedents of English studies at UNAN-Leon.
3. External cooperation programs and their impact on the English Studies
4. Current organization of the English Studies including Año Comun
 - 4.1 General description of the study plan
5. Target population: Students
6. Target population: Teachers
7. Physical conditions: Classroom and multimedia lab

VI- METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

1. Type of research
2. Methods of research
3. Stages of the research process
 - 3.1 Formation of the research team

- 3.2 Identification of the field of study
- 3.3 Diagnosis and formulation of problems
- 3.4 Elaboration of a scheduled plan of activities
- 3.5 Setting of objectives
- 3.6 Data collection process
- 3.7 Compiling, categorizing and coding data
- 3.8 Validation of the information
- 3.9 Analysis and interpretation of data
- 3.10 Resulting outcomes
- 3.11 Recommendations for the course of action
- 4. Data collection instruments
 - 4.1 Surveys
 - 4.2 Class observations
 - 4.3 Diaries

VII- ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND OUTCOMES

- 1. The learners
 - 1.1 Students' background and learning experiences
 - 1.2 Students' motivation, interests and expectations
 - 1.3 Students' personality and interpersonal relationships
 - 1.4 Students' learning styles
 - 1.5 Students' favorite didactic activities
 - 1.6 Students' performance and behavior in the teaching learning process
 - 1.7 Opinion about teachers
 - 1.8 Main difficulties and achievements
 - 1.9 Achievements related to language acquisition
- 2. The teachers
 - 2.1 Teachers' qualification and teaching experience
 - 2.2 Teachers' motivation and values
 - 2.3 Teachers' favorite methodology, teaching style and performance
 - 2.4 Teachers' main difficulties and achievements
 - ds for further training and teacher development
- 3. The teaching-learning environment
 - 3.1 Adoption factors
 - 3.2 Equipment and facilities

4. The English Studies Program, the curriculum, syllabus and materials
 - 4.1 Main similarities and differences with other similar national program
 - 4.2 The “macro-programación document”
 - 4.3 The perception of the general structure of the program and its core components as viewed by its main actors and participants
 - 4.4 Organization of the Studies
 - 4.5 The components of the English Studies Program
 - 4.6 Courses materials and resources
5. Quality standards and quality indicators
 - 5.1 Exit criteria
 - 5.2 Students’ suggestions to improve the quality of the program
 - 5.3 Teachers’ suggestions to improve the quality of the program

VIII- CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Conclusion
2. Recommendations
 - 2.1 The Program structure and organization
 - 2.2 The CRM
 - 2.3 Promotion and advertising policies
 - 2.4 Teacher training, exchanges, and cooperation programs
 - 2.5 The curriculum and teacher training on the curricular components of the Program
 - 2.6 The teachers
 - 2.7 The teaching-learning process and classroom interaction
3. Further Research

IX- APPENDIXES

X- BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

I. INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language (EFL) within the whole educational context in Nicaragua is a relatively recent issue. English as a University major was first introduced in the country in 1968, and the interest in this particular field has gradually increased over the past two decades. Undoubtedly, this renewed interest has been encouraged to a great extent by the rapid and changing needs and demands of the contemporary world. In order to be able to deal with these demands, the mastering of English, the global language, has become a first hand priority for the modern professionals. In Nicaragua, because of the expanding tourist activity, and the growth of international cultural and economical relationships, there is a need for well-qualified experts who are able to communicate proficiently in English. Thus, to meet this urgent need, the preparation of competent, well-trained and qualified English teachers is also a priority for the country.

Within this context, the UNAN Leon, in a constant effort to diversify and adapt its offer of university majors to the real demands and needs of the Nicaraguan society, has been offering a Saturday English Education major since 1993. In 1997, this Education program was extended to a new English major offered to young university students. This regular English Studies Program has been running for 7 years now, and has ever since undergone several curricular changes without any deep, thorough and systematic evaluation.

Since quality, pertinence, efficient management, and transparence have become major concerns at national educational levels, it is of utmost importance for the English Studies Program at the UNAN –León to go through an evaluation process that allows and leads to real changes and improvement of the current program, to the benefits of students, teachers, Faculty and UNAN as a whole. For this purpose, the main objective of this present evaluation research has been to identify and evaluate the achievements, strengths, weaknesses and problems of the English Study Program of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities at the UNAN-Leon.

The present study is the compilation of the education research carried out at the English Department by three teachers of the program. The study is a qualitative and quantitative research to assess the regular English Major. It was developed throughout three semesters, from January 2003 to July 2004.

This program evaluation has been a complex kind of research, as it has been a multifaceted and challenging process, which has involved numerous and diverse aspects of the program. It has also represented a very rewarding effort for the researchers, as it aims at the real improvement, growth and development of the program as a whole by means of a series of conclusions, and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

The whole research process has used several of the main sources of data collection of the research field, such as surveys, interviews, diaries, and classroom observations. Those instruments have been very useful to collect valuable information from the main actors and participants involved in the process, that is to say students and teachers. In addition to this, the different aspects of the program under evaluation, including the curriculum, the situational context, the structure and organization of the program, and the materials and resources have been carefully scrutinized and interpreted.

However, as this kind of evaluation unfolds and opens many doors, a great deal of issues emerges and is identified. Because of the complexity of this kind of study, all the issues that come up as a result of the research process cannot all be addressed immediately, and represent optimal grounds for further research and study in the same field.

The present dissertation is organized as follows: the first section presents the justification of the study, which explains its relevance, importance and significance. The second section states the general and specific objectives of the research. Then, in a third section, the main constructs underlying the objectives of the research are defined, by presenting and summarizing the experts' opinion and contributions in the field. Section four gives the contextual situation and conditions under which the study was carried out, including the national and local context, as well as the description of the current curriculum, and the main target population involved in the research process. Next part, section five, describes the methodology followed by the researchers, that is to say the type of research carried out, the main data collection methods used, and a detailed account of the specific steps and procedures of the whole process. Section six consists of a methodical analysis of data and the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings. This leads to section seven, which is a set of recommendations based on the main outcomes of the research, and addressed to the main actors of the English Studies Program. Finally, the last section, section eight, develops the most important conclusions of the whole study, which reaffirms the central mission of the research and states its main contributions. At the end of the document an appendix section, together with the list of bibliographical references, will be attached.

II. JUSTIFICATION

Throughout the past few years UNAN LEON has been facing the challenge of making curricular changes, adjustments and transformations that are necessary to meet the societal demands and needs of Nicaragua. Consequently, as part of this reform process, it is a priority for UNAN to achieve curricular coherence, to ensure the proper qualification of its staff, and to promote research, as well as to guarantee the social function and insertion (usefulness, relevance, and significance of graduates for the Nicaraguan context), and their suitability.

Within this changing trend, special focus has been placed on the evaluation of the global curricular plans, the human and material resources, the graduates, and the social impact and outcomes of the different programs. Given the special significance of evaluation within UNAN at the present time, this study is aimed at contributing to this reform process by means of an evaluation research focused on the English Studies Program of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities. This Program is currently one of the two major studies of this faculty.

On the one hand, this research is the first major evaluation study ever undertaken in the Faculty. On the other hand, it must be asserted that the English Major is a very recent program that has already undergone several curricular adjustments and changes in its original mission, vision and objectives. Consequently a major and thorough study is needed in order to assess the outcomes and significance of such changes from the point of view of teachers, students and authorities.

In the ELT field in Nicaragua, there are not many similar programs and, at the present time, there are only two other institutions in charge of offering English studies as university majors. Those two other English Programs are located at UNAN and UCA in Managua. The UNAN-Leon English degree covers and has a direct impact on the Western region of the country, as UNAN-Leon is the oldest and most prestigious university in Nicaragua. Ever since it started, UNAN-Leon English Program has gradually gained credibility and leadership within the national context of ELT. It is worth stating at this point that UNAN-Leon English Language Program has clearly made great efforts to contribute to the training and development of qualified professionals in ELT over the past few years. Some of these contributions are the offering of workshops, conferences, lectures and a Congress for English teachers, as well as different kinds of Postgraduate courses, the professional education and training of untrained secondary school teachers, and the organization of the regular English Studies Program. A significant number of students and teachers have thus benefited from this program.

Given the importance and relevance of the English Studies Program, this research gains special significance, as this program has not been evaluated so far and it merits closer examination. Therefore, it is necessary to identify and assess its main goals, its strengths and weaknesses and main difficulties, in order to contribute to the improvement, development and strengthening of the program as a whole.

The specific field this study is aimed at is directly related to the effectiveness of the program, and to what extent its general aims are fulfilled. It concentrates on gaining substantial knowledge concerning a number of different issues such as the general structure and content of the curriculum, and the general organization of the program. Moreover, it focuses particularly on the human aspect, that is to say the impact and effect of the program on ELT students and teachers. The major purpose of the study is to collect and analyze data that will provide valuable insights that will certainly be the starting point to carry out meaningful transformations and changes within the program, to the benefit of teachers, students, faculty and university.

As ELT teachers of the English Department of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities of UNAN-Leon, we are especially concerned with the issues mentioned above since we have been active participants and actors of the design and implementation of the English curriculum. Moreover, we are in charge of putting into practice the different syllabuses and we have direct classroom contact with the students. Consequently, we have special interest to determine how effective the program is and to what extent it fulfils students' and teachers' interests and needs, as well as how the program fits into the whole reform process at UNAN-Leon.

We strongly believe that, by means of this research study we will gain a better and more practical knowledge of the curriculum. These insights we hope we can transform into a useful tool aimed at the improvement of the program as a whole. In addition to this, at the end of this study we will have gained a stronger professional basis, which will in turn contribute to improving the quality of our teaching practice. By achieving this, UNAN Leon will also extend its ELT academic offerings and will reinforce and improve its image, quality standards and leadership as a pioneer institution in the teaching of ELT in the region.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To identify and evaluate the achievements, strengths, weaknesses and problems of the English language program of the English Department at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities, by means of a language program evaluation research.

2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the key factors that affect both positively and negatively the development of the English program.
2. To gather and analyze relevant information about both students' and teachers' needs and performance, about classroom dynamics and available instructional materials for the main components of the English major, by means of a small-scale needs analysis process and research techniques, and to find out how these factors influence the teaching learning process.
3. To assess teachers' subject and professional competence, their needs for professional training, and to what extent these factors influence the quality of the program and students' needs for fulfillment.
4. To explore and evaluate the beliefs, teaching principles, attitudes and motivational levels of both teachers and students towards the teaching-learning process as a whole.
5. To assess the relevance, sequence and consistency of the main curricular components of the program.
6. To determine the general physical context and learning environment for the English program and whether external factors affect, positively or negatively, the teaching-learning process.
7. To provide some practical suggestions about how to address the problems and improve the quality and the standards of the English program to the benefit of both teachers and students.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to focus the approach of the study, it was significantly important to identify and define the main concepts underlying the objectives of the research. To do this, it was crucial to seek advice from the experts in the field, professional experts and linguists that have been deeply immersed in the area of English language development, curriculum development, and classroom research. This analysis was very helpful to find out, understand and delimit important theoretical guidelines that validate the purpose of the study. Also, it was significant to unify our findings, and contrast and compare them with those of similar studies.

As Allwright describes it, consulting expert opinion includes “catching up with the speculative and theoretical literature as well as with earlier research (...) First of all, it tells you what issues have already been thought about and investigated, and should lead you to sort out more precisely whatever you eventually decide to investigate yourself. Second, it should tell you how related questions have been investigated in the past, so that you can make more informed decisions about how to start doing your own study, and about the procedures you will eventually used.” (Allwright, 1991:2)

This literature review process was certainly the starting point to establish the connection between current English language research trends and the aims of our study. It consisted of the analysis of relevant and up-to-date bibliography including, journal articles, books, and magazines of previous studies in the area. This process of literature analysis directed the whole course of action. Furthermore, it led us to draw important conclusions; shedding light on the main concepts that helped to categorize and organize the information obtained through the different data collection methods used in the study.

1. Language program and language teaching institutions

As a starting point it is important to characterize what a language program is in terms of its main components. To begin with, an effective language program should be based on particular learner’s needs. It should include aims and objectives, syllabuses and curriculum, a course organization patterns (entry and exit level, course structure and contents), instructional materials, and an effective evaluation system.

A language program takes place in a particular institution, which provides a program within a given context. As Richard points out, (Richards, 1992: 97) “A language teaching program is typically delivered in an institution such as a university, school, or language institute. Different types of institutions create their own “culture”, that is,

settings where people interact and where patterns emerge for communication, decision making, role relations and conduct”.

Such a language program context relies on an effective team of professionals formed by particular groups of people that should include teachers, trainers and educational specialists, researchers, students and administrative staff.

In the case of the present research, it took place in the public National Autonomous University in Leon in the English Department of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities. The specific situational context will be deeply covered in further chapters of this document. (See chapter V Context of the Research).

2. Syllabus, curriculum and curriculum design

The curriculum is the core part of a language program, contributing to a great extent to the success and outcomes of the final product. As a key component of the implementation of any curriculum, it is necessary to understand and define such important terms as curriculum and syllabus according to the experts on the field.

2.1 Definition of key concepts

2.1.1 Syllabus, curriculum and different types of language syllabuses

A syllabus is a document that encloses a list of specifications within a language program, which may be either content items or process ones. It is a public document that can be available to all the actors and participants involved in the instructional process (teachers, students, parents, administrators, and so forth). “Syllabus is the specification of what is to be taught, in this case in a foreign language program, and the order in which it is to be taught. A syllabus may contain all or any of the following: phonology, grammar, functions, notions, topics, tasks.” (Zaro 1995:189).

According to Penny Ur a syllabus may contain the following characteristics:

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SYLLABUS

1. Consists of a comprehensive list of:

- content items (words, structures, topics)
- process items (tasks, methods)

2. Is ordered (easier, more essential items first)
3. Has explicit objectives (usually expressed in the introduction).
4. Is a public document.
5. May indicate a time schedule.
6. May indicate a preferred methodology or approach.
7. May recommend materials.

(Ur, 1991: 177)

2.1.2 Types of syllabuses

Traditionally, there have been four main principles in which the creation of a syllabus is based on. They are focus, selection, subdivision and sequencing. As a first step, Breen explains that syllabus designers focus upon particular aspects of the target language knowledge and capability in order to prioritize those aspects. Secondly, syllabus designers have to select particular structures sets of functions, or range of communication events. The next step, subdivision, involves the division of the selected content into logical units of work or chapters. The last step, sequencing, is the coherent separation of the contents according to levels of difficulty and the division of elements into pre-requisite and requisite parts in order to move from one learning stage to the other towards a general goal. Sequencing can be either cyclic or accumulative. (Breen, 1987: 83)

Ur provides the following categorization of ten kinds of syllabuses currently used.

- 1) **Grammatical.** It is primarily an inventory of grammatical structures
- 2) **Lexical.** It focuses on vocabulary items (words, chunks, collocations and so forth)
- 3) **Grammatical-lexical.** It combines both grammar structures and lexis
- 4) **Situational.** It is based on real life situations with the corresponding language context (at the airport, at a dentist office)

- 5) **Topic-based.** It focuses on a number of themes related to every day life (sports, food, clothes)
- 6) **Notional.** It deals with basic concepts expressed by language (time, place, colors)
- 7) **Functional-notional.** It is based on a combination of the basic functions of a language (apologizing, clarifying,) and the notions (time, place, colors)
- 8) **Mixed, multi-strand, or multi-syllabus.** These modern types of syllabuses combine different elements of the former types, discriminating topics, tasks, functions and notions, grammar and vocabulary.
- 9) **Procedural.** The focus of this type is the task that needs to be performed (map-reading, story-telling)
- 10) **Process.** This type of syllabus is different, in that it is not pre-established, but negotiated with the students at the beginning of and during a course

(Ur, 1991: 178-179)

Given the importance of a syllabus within a language program, the interpretation of the types of syllabus currently in use may provide valuable clues for a Language Program Evaluation. Undoubtedly the new trends and orientations in the complex field of syllabus design can be very helpful to implement necessary changes.

2.1.3 Curriculum vs. syllabus

The concepts of curriculum and syllabus are often misinterpreted because they are closely interrelated as part of a Language Program. Juan Jesus Zaro differentiates the concepts of curriculum and syllabus in the following way (1995:189); “Curriculum comprises the principles and procedures for the planning, implementation, evaluation and management of an educational programme. Curriculum study embraces syllabus design (the selection and grading of content) and methodology (the selection of learning tasks and activities).

According to this definition, curriculum is a broad and far-reaching concept which refers to all the activities students are involved in, in a particular learning environment, including contents, learning styles, teaching methodologies, learner-teacher interaction, and materials. On the other hand, Richards (2001:39) states: “Syllabi, which prescribe the content to be covered by a given course, form only a small part of the total school program. Curriculum is a far broader concept”.

Nunan presents another view of curriculum processes, defining several types of curricula according to different perspectives. He states “the curriculum can be seen as a plan of action (the planned curriculum), as a description

of what actually happens in classroom (the implemented curriculum), and as an analysis and description of what learners actually learn (the assessed curriculum) “(Nunan, 1988:136).

In other words, what is planned for a course may be quite different from what actually happens in a classroom, and more than that, it differs from the expected results. From our view, syllabus and curriculum are both equally important and essential at the moment of planning, developing and implementing a Language Program therefore careful attention should be devoted to these two major issues.

2.1.4 Bottom up vs. top down curriculum models

Nunan clearly states that it is necessary to distinguish between a traditional and narrow model for curriculum planning, which is based on a three-stage sequence, i.e. planning, implementing and evaluating, and a learner-centered curriculum in which teachers are the “prime agents of curriculum development” (Nunan, 1988:1). Within such an approach, the curriculum is seen as a product of a joint effort between teachers and learners rather than the systematic application of guidelines planned beforehand. In this bottom up rather than top down approach, the design and implementation of a curriculum does not merely have as its main goal the mastery of a great deal of information. Rather than this, it takes into account language acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge. It is learner-based rather than subject-based. To sum up, such a definition of the concept of curriculum “contains procedures for developing goals and objectives and for evaluating these (...) Important in planning, presenting and evaluating outcomes will be joint consultation and negotiation between teachers and learners “(Nunan, 1988:20).

2.1.5 Curriculum development

Curriculum development is an important process. Indeed, the different curriculum development activities consist of constant and continuing processes taking place within the teaching learning process.

Richards accurately defines curriculum development as including “needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, materials design, language programme design, teacher preparation, implementation of programs in schools, monitoring, feedback and evaluation”. (Richards, 2001:41).

Another similar definition of curriculum development is the one proposed by Nunan who points out that an effective curriculum development approach lies on a predetermined succession of steps: “initial planning including needs analysis, grouping learners, goal and objective setting, selection and grading of content”,

implementation (including methodology and materials development), learning arrangements (incorporating learning modes and environments) and finally assessment and evaluation. “(Nunan, 1988:14).

As it can be observed, curriculum development is a multifaceted set of interconnected systems worth bringing together and studying at the moment of evaluating a language program.

Richards continues to add that “curriculum development refers to the range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum. These processes focus on needs analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching, and evaluation”. (Richards, 2001:41)

2.1.6 Products and processes

Among the elements mentioned above as part of curriculum development it is necessary to distinguish between two kinds of elements: Products and Processes. Products are more linked to paperwork as they are documents (programs, teaching materials, all types of texts, syllabuses, and so forth). Therefore, products are easier to analyze at the moment of assessing a program. They are more easily available and practical to go through an assessment process.

On the other hand, processes are more complex to assess, because they involve a number of actors or participants who fulfill different functions and roles within the language program i.e. teachers, learners, curriculum planners, and so forth. It is necessary to get their insights at the moment of evaluating a particular teaching-learning process.

3. Methodological issues and elements of the teaching–learning process to take into account in a language evaluation program.

“One of the most fascinating aspects of human development is the ability to learn languages.” (Lightbown and Spada, 1993, Introduction).

Many theorists, linguists and psychologists, have studied this captivating aptitude and several theories have been put forward to explain how languages are effectively learned and mastered by human beings. For a language teacher, the knowledge of how human beings acquire the main linguistic elements of a language, together with the communicative competence, is a valuable element which can help him / her understand better what is going on in the absorbing world that his/ her classroom is. Indeed, such information, combined with a teacher’s own

experience on the teaching ground, may be the starting point for asking many questions, and for proposing all necessary changes.

The purpose of this section is therefore to tackle briefly, in the first place, methodological issues as a foundation for language teaching practice, by defining the main concepts related to methods and by describing the most significant methods currently used in a language classroom. Secondly, the main factors involved in the teaching – learning process in relation to teachers and students’ performance in the context of an English program will be discussed.

3.1 Methodology, communicative competences and the Communicative Approach

Some approaches tend to separate issues concerning syllabus design from the methodology to be used. This is mainly due to the fact that syllabuses are more concerned with what is to be taught, and methodology focuses more on how to do it. However, we strongly believe that they cannot be separated. Any Language Program is concerned with what is effectively going on in the classroom, and the method used is vital to achieve the outcomes of a particular syllabus. Thus, all the planned elements of a syllabus may suffer some kind of changes depending on the methodology used.

3.1.1 Methodology

For the purposes of this study it is necessary to define important concepts related to foreign language methodology.

3.1.2 Approaches, methods and techniques

“To consider foreign language teaching as a process means that teaching is not static, but that it changes in response to new needs and demands as teachers, applied linguists and educationists can testify.” (Cerezal, 1995:163).

Ways of teaching and learning languages have existed ever since human beings started to learn to communicate. Our ancestors used to learn languages without being aware of how they actually learnt. Given the importance of languages and communication, a number of methodological trends have developed within the linguistics field which come to explain how languages are taught and learned, and what factors are involved in the process.

It is important to clarify the terms and notions used by linguists when they refer to teaching methodologies, such as approach, methods and techniques which all are essential parts of, and influence the teaching-learning process.

The three above mentioned notions are important because they “represent, in fact, three levels of analysis and teacher’s decision-making for teaching and learning English in the classroom.” (Cerezal, 1995: 163).

Approach refers to the theoretical guidelines underlying a particular method. These guiding principles can be related to the fields of linguistics, psycholinguistics, and socio-linguistics. Based on important principles of these three fields, an approach describes how languages are used and acquired by people, and states the necessary conditions for learning to take place. As Cerezal points out “an approach or strategy is the most abstract of all three concepts and refers to the linguistic, psycho- and sociolinguistic principles underlying methods, and techniques”. (Cerezal, 1995: 111).

Method is the practical application of an approach in front of a group of learners within a classroom context. Richards and Rodgers explain that “method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented”. (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:19). In other words a method is, in fact, a broad notion, which involves many other classroom matters, such as types of activities, teachers and learners’ roles, materials, and syllabus organization.

Technique is a more procedural and implementational term. It has to do with specific teaching practices aimed at fulfilling a specific objective in a given instructional context. “Some methods can share a number of techniques and, though some techniques have developed autonomously, the most important ones start from the main methods.” (Cerezal, 1995:164). Therefore, methods, techniques and approaches must be consistent one to another and harmoniously integrated.

Concerning the different method used to teach a language, there is no marked separation between one method and another one. Rather than it seems that a new method takes those elements that are considered the most successful from the previous ones and includes new elements. As Cerezal points out “There is not, broadly speaking, a marked line between different methods, but often an eclectic mixture between methods is present”. (Cerezal, 1995:112).

3.1.3 *Communicative Approach*

One of the most popular methods that have introduced important and relevant changes in the history of language teaching is called The Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching. Cerezal states that “The communicative approach draws upon some changes and innovations coming mainly from applied linguistics, so I am going to give a summary of changes about language nature and its knowledge. Language is considered a social phenomenon by this approach, as it is a means of communication and interaction between members of the community. The goal, then, of FLT is to develop students’ *communicative competence*”. (Cerezal, 1995: 175).

By communicative competence, we understand a system of rules and strategies that students must learn how to master in order to be able to use a language communicatively.

Five main communicative competences have been identified by researchers:

Grammatical competence, referring to the knowledge of vocabulary, sound, and structures.

Sociolinguistic competence, which is the ability to use the language in a given social context.

Discourse competence, which involves putting the elements of the language together so that they make sense in a given conversational exchange.

Strategic competence, which is a set of communicative tactics aimed at re-establishing and restoring communication when it is interrupted, as it commonly happens in real-life communication (e.g. asking for repetition, clarification, and so forth).

Cultural competence is concerned with the learners’ ability to absorb, understand and be receptive to the culture of the target language, which is inherent to the language itself.

The most important dimensions of the concept of communicative competences are the implications that they have for learning and teaching a language. As Brown emphasizes “Given that communicative competence is the goal of a language classroom, then instruction needs to point toward all of its components (...) Communicative goals are best achieved by giving due attention to language use and not just usage, to fluency and not just accuracy, to authentic language and contexts, and to students’ eventual need to apply classroom learning to heretofore unrehearsed context in the real world”. (Brown, 1994: 29).

Another important issue concerning CC is its significance and contribution to syllabus design, which is a major concern when it comes to communicative language teaching. In this sense, there have been a lot of discussions of the nature and characteristics of syllabus models in communicative language teaching in an effort to define what a communicative syllabus involves.

The first syllabus model to be proposed was Wilkins's notional syllabus. (See types of syllabuses above). Richards and Rodger present the following chart by Yalden describing the major current communicative syllabus types.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Reference</i>
1. structures plus functions	Wilkins (1976)
2. functional spiral around a structural core	Brumfit (1980)
3. structural, functional, instrumental	Allen (1980)
4. functional	Jupp and Hodlin (1975)
5. notional	Wilkins (1976)
6. interactional	Widdowson (1979)
7. task-based	Prahbu (1983)
8. learner-generated	Candlin (1976) Henner-Stanchina and Riley (1978)

(Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 164)

Certainly, the communicative approach has brought some relevant elements to language teaching such as types of learning and teaching activities, the roles of teachers and learners, and the roles of instructional materials.

Types of learning, teaching activities and instructional material. There is an indefinite number of activities that suits the communicative approach. "Provided that such exercises enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction". (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 165). Some activities and techniques often used in a communicative language teaching context are information-gap types of activities, language games and competitions, role-plays and problem-solving activities, simulation and task-based communication activities. Within these, instructional materials play an important role too. Cerezal

highlights that “The use of authentic material exposes the students to real uncontrived language, so that the learner is face with language as it is”. (Cerezal, 1995: 124).

Learners and teachers roles. This model opposed the traditional view of teachers and learners. The teacher is no longer seen as the traditional authoritarian figure who conducts everything that goes on inside the classroom, pouring out his knowledge over his/her students. The new vision of communicative teaching teachers often relies on a series of different roles through which he/she performs as a facilitator, group process manager, counselor, and so forth. The learner on the other hand, has a more active and engaging role than in the past. He is perceived as the center and the main responsible of his learning process taking a dynamic decision making role in the classroom. Within this perspective both teachers and learners get involved in some kind of negotiation that takes place constantly and systematically in the classroom.

Such communicative approach assigns special importance to cooperative learning rather than individualistic. Therefore, classroom management has special characteristics like group and pair work, which promote interaction and genuine communication. Group work puts particular valuable in the practice of oral fluency. It fosters learners’ responsibility and independence, can improve motivation and contribute to a feeling of cooperation and warmth in the class. Because of the nature of group collaborative work, students develop social skills as well as language proficiency.

3.1.4 Learner-centered programs, balanced activities approach and task-based models

a. Learner-centered programs

One of the most relevant contributions of communicative language teaching has been the redefinition of the learners’ role in their instructional process. A learner-centered classroom environment provides learners with more freedom and involvement whereas teachers become less dominant and controlling. In a learner-centered classroom students are expected to progress more quickly and more successfully by means of putting into practice their particular strategies, tactics and techniques for learning a language.

A learner-centered program is based on constant and systematic adaptation of teachers to particular classroom characteristics, peculiarities and needs in which and ongoing process of negotiation takes place.

b. Task-based and balanced activities approach

A task-based approach organizes learning in terms of encouraging learners to use their communicative competence to carry out a given number of tasks. Tasks can be divided into two, *communication tasks* and *enabling tasks*. In communication tasks real communication takes place. This has been made possible through students' previous exposure to a number of enabling tasks, which are aimed at facilitating their access to real communication by providing them with the necessary tools (skills, tactics and strategies) to perform the task successfully. (Cerezal, 1995:127).

However, there are always limitations to the creation of an authentic environment in a language classroom context, and at some stages teachers need to make use of more controlled practice. Indeed, when it comes to their teaching praxis, most teachers always make use of a number of procedures, techniques, strategies and activities which come from various and different methodological trends.

Because of this need to use such a diverse approach, teachers should view their methodology in terms of the activities, and therefore their role as planners is essential to ensure that there is sufficient and varied activities offered to students in order to fulfill the course objectives. Johnstone explains this paradigm in the following terms. "A *balanced activities approach* sees the job of the teacher as that of ensuring that students get a variety of activities which foster acquisition and which foster learning". (Johnstone, 1994: 37). This approach provides the basis for optimal students' involvement and therefore learners' interest and motivation rises significantly. "The balanced activities approach, then, sees the methodology as being a balance between the components we wish to include in that approach, and it is an approach that sees the students' continuing interest and involvement in the learning process as being the necessary dominant factor in language teaching". (Johnstone, 1994: 37).

3.2 The second language learners and the factors affecting their language-learning process

There are a number of elements involved in the successful acquisition of a particular language. At the moment of evaluating a Language Program, and student's performance, as well as their success or failure within that program, a teacher researcher should take into account a number of important factors and elements related to the group of learners that have a direct impact on the process as a whole.

Among these elements the most relevant and related to the complex field of learning a language are such characteristics as intelligence and learning styles and strategies, aptitude, personality, motivation and attitude, age, context of learning, background experience and qualifications, availability of time, and so forth.

However, it is very difficult to label a particular student with being influenced by a specific feature. In the context of language teaching, it is particularly important that a teacher researcher gets to know his or her students in order to understand more clearly what is going on in the classroom and in his or her students' minds. These elements are often intrinsically connected in a learner. Some of them are easily available, some others are more difficult to identify because of their psychological nature. In the following section we tackle those, which we consider affect our students more significantly.

3.2.1 Intelligence

Intelligence is a very complex notion. Traditionally, intelligence tests have been designed to measure human beings intelligence and most people have accepted those IQ tests as a way of assessing and defining people's intelligence and aptitudes. Rather than defining intelligence in terms of tests, Gardner's MI (Multiple Intelligence) theory (1985) suggests a different definition of intelligence based on "different and autonomous intelligence capacities that result in many different ways of knowing, understanding, and learning about our world" (Christison, 1998: 2).

As Christison points out, Gardner distinguishes a primary list of seven kinds of intelligences, and has added an eighth category, but this distinction is not meant to be final or finished. She says "the point is not the exact number of intelligences, but simply the plurality of the intellect". (Christison, 1998: 4) The categorization suggested by Gardner includes the Bodily Kinesthetic intelligence, The Intrapersonal and Interpersonal intelligence, the Linguistic intelligence, the Logical-Mathematical intelligence, the Musical intelligence, the Spatial intelligence, and the Naturalistic intelligence.

This approach has relevant implications to the field of languages since it suggests that people learn differently and therefore a teacher shouldn't use the same approach with all learners. To a certain extent, teachers need to be concerned with multiple intelligences in their lesson plans, and in the choice of the activities they implement in their classroom, because, as Harmer suggests, "the same learning tasks may not be appropriate for all of our students". (Harmer, 2002:47).

3.2.2 Motivation and attitude

The distinction between attitudes and motivation has not been clearly defined by researchers. However, it is clear that both are very important and powerful factors that influence students' learning. Attitudes are related to social factors. It is said to be a number of beliefs that the learner keeps, towards specific group members of the target

language, towards the culture, the community and the people who speak the target language, and towards languages in general. Patrick Philpott defines attitudes as “the individual’s reaction to and attempt to face up reality, both outside or inside him/herself. This reaction is shaded and moulded by the individual’s perception (human beings are highly erratic perceivers, often better at picking up bad vibrations than good ones), group pressures (which make students different people in or out of class), self-interest and values”. (Philpott, 1991: 43)

Obviously, students’ attitudes are directly influenced by teacher’s own attitude and vice versa which demands from teachers to constantly enhance and promote a positive attitude in their students by examining their own attitudes towards the different elements and factors involved in the teaching-learning process, for instance students, subject, classroom environment, life in general and so forth.

As for motivation, Jeremy Harmer defines it as “some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action. If we perceive a goal (that is, something we wish to achieve) and if that goal is sufficiently attractive, we will be strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to reach that goal” (Harmer, 1991: 3). Harmer emphasizes on the reasons students have to learn a language and makes the distinction between short-term goal and long-term goals. Short term-goals are those related to what can be achieved in a relatively short amount of time. For instance, passing an exam or the end of the semester successfully. Long-term goals are such goals related to important decisions in people’s life as graduating or getting a job, which can be achieved.

According to linguists there are two kinds of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic Motivation is often being defined as the inner desire to do or achieve something. People get engaged in a particular activity because they want to, and there’s no apparent external rewarding factor to do so. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is driven by a number of outside factors that encourage people to follow certain types of behavior to pursue and achieve their goals (for instance money, prizes, awards, grades, certificates). These kinds of factors are related to material things that provoke some kind of enthusiasm and inspiration in doing something.

Although many theories claim that intrinsic motivation is clearly superior to extrinsic motivation, it is evident that these two kinds of motivation are closely related to each other, often enhancing one another in a learner’s mind.

In the context of a language-learning program, it is particularly important to involve students in decision-making tasks together with their teachers. Traditionally, extrinsic pressures are the elements that have prevailed in an instructional context (parental and societal expectations, school curriculum, tests and exams, and so forth). As Brown accurately points out “the glorification of content, product, correctness, and competitiveness has failed to bring the learner into a collaborative of competence building” (Brown, 1994: 40).

Extrinsic motivation factors can be divided into integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation refers to the situation when the learner wants to learn in order to fit into a particular cultural language community. On the other hand, instrumental motivation is more related to using the language as a tool to achieve a primary goal like getting a job or traveling.

On the other hand, intrinsic motivation can promote and enhance learners' self-motivation and autonomy. According to Brown, some of the classroom essentials that can intrinsically motivate students are learner-centered activities, personal goal setting, task based teaching, peer evaluation, self-diagnosis, long-term goals, content-based teaching, cooperative learning and group work among others.

Attitudes and motivation are obviously vital components in successful language learning settings and for our students "what happens in the classroom will be of vital importance in determining their attitude to the language, and in supplying motivation". (Hammer, 1991: 4). In our particular language-teaching environment, some of the fundamental elements that influence on the students' attitude and level of motivation of our learners are the physical conditions, the instructional materials and resources, the methods used by their teachers and the teachers themselves.

3.2.3 Personality

All teachers have experienced at some point or another how personality traits affect students' performance in a language classroom setting. We have all faced teaching students, who are either extroverted, dominant, and challenge and risk-takers, or introverted, passive, inhibited and anxious, or even troublemakers. These personality differences affect to a great extent the learners' capacity to succeed in learning the target language. Therefore, it is important for a teacher researcher to get to know this diversity of styles so that he/she can assess learners' performance and achievement, and stimulate acquisition by means of a better awareness of his/her students' particular characteristics.

Researchers who have studied this interesting field have suggested other personality variables such as self-esteem, empathy, dominance, talkativeness and responsiveness. However, there seems to be some uncertainty as regards the relationship between such personality characteristics and success in language acquisition.

As P. Lightbown and N. Spada point out, "the major difficulty in investigating personality characteristics is that of identification and measurement. Another explanation which has been offered for the mixed findings of personality

studies is that personality variables may be a major factor only in the acquisition of *communicative competence*.”(Lightbown and Spada, 1993:39).

Indeed, personality is an important element in understanding how students behave, react, interact and learn in a language classroom, however, it is clear that personality is not an isolated factor; rather than that, it is combined with other important aspects that contribute to second language learning, such as students’ particular learning styles and strategies.

3.2.4 Learning styles

In any instructional process, awareness of students’ individual preferences and ways of learning is crucial in order to be able to adapt one’s teaching to fit into the students’ complex ways of learning, that is, their particular learning styles. “A learning style is an individual predisposition to learn in a particular way. The term is used to describe broad, general characteristics or approach to learning, and it is likely that the preferred learning styles of any one learner will be manifest in all aspects of learning, not just in relations to learning foreign languages only”. (Parrott, 193: 40). An important notion of learning styles is directly connected with the term cognitive style. “Cognitive style is a term used to refer to the manner in which people perceive, conceptualize, organize, and recall information. Each person is considered to have a more or less consistent mode of cognitive function” (Ellis, 1985:114)

The nature of these approaches is as diverse as the different kinds of students’ personality traits which makes it very difficult to characterize. Some important distinctions to understand the different varieties of learning styles are the ones made among visual, aural, kinaesthetic, holist, serialist, field dependent, field independent, syllabus-bound, syllabus free, introvert and extrovert.

A visual learner needs to see something in order to learn. On the other hand, an aural learner will be dependent on what he hears once or twice to get knowledge. Other learners rely a great deal on their memory and need to use repetition in order to feel comfortably confident of their learning. For other learners it is not enough to see, hear or memorize information. For them, physical action and movement is necessary to ensure that learning takes place.

The different learners’ learning styles have direct implications in the classroom; therefore these individual variables should be taken into account when it comes to planning and implementing activities within the classroom.

3.2.5 Learning strategies

The various tactics and approaches that learners put into work in their struggle to learn have been a major concern in the field of language research. They have been categorized as strategies, that is to say, “behaviours or concrete mental operations related to a specific goal which are carried out by students at the moment of learning” Also, “strategies are defined as the special thoughts or behaviours that learners use to help them comprehend, retain and/or use the information.” (Valcàrcel, Coyle and Verdù, 1995: 87).

A more concrete definition is the one quoted by Ernesto Macaro, “strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier faster more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations.” (Oxford, 1990: 8)

It is therefore vital for teachers to encourage students to use such learning tools and to train them to be able to apply them successfully at appropriate instructional moments, which will in fact ensure the quality of their learning. In other words, it is a matter of learning to learn.

The definition of what strategies are, how many there are, and how they can be categorized have not been clearly defined since there seems to be opposing views among linguists and language researchers. As a result there has been a number of different ways of classifying strategies. One of the most widely spread classification is the following:

- **Metacognitive strategies:** It is considered as the mental process in which students think about managing, supervising and monitoring their learning process. As an example of such strategies we can mention planning, self -management, problem identification, and so forth.
- **Cognitive strategies:** It is the mental process through which students memorize and manipulate the material to be learned. Examples of these strategies are repetition, comparing, grouping, predicting, summarizing, translating and so forth.
- **Affective strategies:** This is the measurement students use to estimate and control their emotional reactions to learning and decrease anxiety. Self-task and self-reinforcement can be considered good examples of affective strategies.
- **Social-strategies:** These strategies are used for enhancing learning by means of interaction with other people (other learners, the teacher or native speakers) As examples of social strategies we can mention questioning for clarification, asking for information, cooperative learning, and so forth.

The above-mentioned strategies as well as students' individual learning styles have direct implications in the teaching-learning process. Consequently, they should be taken into consideration by teachers at the moment of planning and implementing activities in the classroom.

3.3 The Second language teachers and the factors involved in their performance

3.3.1 Roles of a teacher

Many images and metaphors can be used to describe a teacher. Because of their role and performance in the classroom, teachers have been defined, for example, as orchestra conductors, gardeners, actors, facilitators, organizers, assessors, prompters, coaches, and so forth. The diversity of these images reflects the nature and complexity of the teachers' role within a classroom context. No matter what name is given to his/her function; it is a fact that the teacher is the core of a classroom. As Daniel Madrid states "The success or failure of the foreign language class depends very much on the teacher. We might manage without books or recordings but not without the teacher. He or she is indispensable in the foreign language teaching process when it takes place inside the classroom". (Madrid, 1995: 109).

Among the numerous roles a teacher fulfills within a classroom Madrid highlights the following as major functions of a teacher.

Informant

- Providing suitable input
- Explaining the use of the linguistic elements
- Teaching the cultural elements, etc

Facilitator, mediator and monitor of meaningful learning experiences

Diagnoser of interests and needs

- Talking to students about their interests and needs
- Using questionnaires to find about the students hobbies and their future possible needs
- Taking into consideration the characteristics of the community

Motivator and generator of positive attitudes

Provider of second language acquisition situation

- Using English as much as possible as the language of communication Teaching prefabricated language by means of songs, rhymes, slogans and realia
- Acting out short and easy dialogues, simulations and role-plays

(Madrid, 1995: 124)

As we can see, it is obvious that effective and professionally trained teachers combine numerous inborn qualities together with professional skills in a multifaceted context. As mentioned above, in the process of a language evaluation program, there are a number of factors related to a teachers' performance that play an important role and influence the teaching-learning process significantly, as teachers are key actors in the successful development of any program. Among the factors mentioned by Richards in his list, the following criteria related to teachers should be taken into account: language proficiency and qualification, personality, morale, motivation and attitude, teaching experience, knowledge (skill and expertise, teaching style beliefs and principles), teachers' ability to use reflective teaching, and teacher training and development.

3.3.2 Language proficiency is related to the level of command of the target language teachers have and their awareness of its intercultural aspects. If the learners are to acquire a solid knowledge of the language, teachers need to be proficient enough before entering a particular established language program in order to guarantee its success. On the other hand, there is another dimension related to the teachers' mastering of the language. If a language institution doesn't rely on proficient staff, then the institution will have to invest in language training instead of focusing on pedagogical-didactical issues, which results in a considerable loss of time and money. Consequently, the lack of teachers' subject competence represents a substantial weakness of the whole program.

3.3.3 Personality is concerned with the direct impact teachers have on the learners because of their personal characteristics and qualities. In this respect, Alcaraz and Moody have proposed four basic qualities a teacher should have in order to succeed in his/her role as an educator.

- a) Vocation for teaching
- b) Dynamic and open personality
- c) Humanistic interest
- d) Willingness to receive in-service training

(qtd. in Madrid, 1995: 118)

In addition to the above, there are some other characteristics that teachers should reveal as part of his/her particular personality traits such as charisma, kindness, patience, honesty, appearance, attractiveness, enthusiasm, sense of humor, encouragement, dynamism, self-confidence, assertiveness, and cheerfulness. In other words, teachers should do their best to use their natural individual characteristics in order to provide a happy and relaxing atmosphere, free of pressures and anxiety within the classroom. Indeed, the teachers' own feelings towards the whole process contribute to the creation of a supporting learning environment.

3.3.4 Attitude is closely linked to personality in the sense that it reflects the teachers' beliefs about education in general and particularly about a program. The teachers' attitudes and beliefs exert a considerable influence on their relationship with other teachers, their students and all the staff involved in the program.

3.3.5 Motivation is a complex concept when it comes to define the teachers' enthusiasm and incentive towards the tasks they have to perform as educators. In order to provide a significant source of motivation for teachers, the institutions should supply certain conditions. Among these conditions, several external factors can be mentioned as adequate supporting conditions including equipment, workload, teachers' resource material, teaching facilities, work space, class size and physical conditions, and proper administrative support. Additionally, teachers have to be provided with ongoing support and orientation, adequate materials and course guides, teaching release, rewards and acknowledgements and opportunities for teacher training and teacher development.

Another important source of motivation is a non-threatening environment within the language institution. This means to guarantee a decent salary and the possibility to put into practice their abilities and creativity without being pushed to follow pre-established standardized programs. This also means that administrative staff must have a flexible organizational framework, and keep an open mind towards innovations and changes.

3.3.6 Professional competence and professional knowledge is concerned with the teachers overall general pedagogical skills particularly their ability to plan and put into work their lessons, use textbooks judiciously, create and design applicable and adequate supplementary materials. The teachers' professional competence is closely related to their knowledge of the principles underlying education, up-to-date teaching approaches and classroom management. The professional knowledge is concerned with awareness of the institution general organizational system. This includes knowledge about syllabus and curriculum, goals, testing and assessment methods and the instructional materials they will use.

Richards accurately states the importance of professional knowledge by providing a list of core components:

- **Practical knowledge:** the teacher's repertoire of classroom techniques and strategies
- **Content knowledge:** the teacher's understanding of the subject of TESOL, e.g. pedagogical grammar, phonology, teaching theories, second language acquisition, as well as the specialized discourse and terminology of language teaching
- **Contextual knowledge:** familiarity with the school or institutional context, school norms, and knowledge of the learners, including cultural knowledge, and other relevant information.
- **Pedagogical knowledge:** ability to restructure content knowledge for teaching purposes, and to plan, adapt and improvise.
- **Personal knowledge:** the teacher's personal beliefs and principles and his or her individual approach to teaching.
- **Reflective knowledge:** the teacher's capacity to reflect on and assess his or her own practice.

(qtd. in Richards, 2001: 209-10)

3.3.7 Reflective teaching

From all the above-mentioned core components of teacher knowledge, the term “reflective knowledge “ is a particularly important one for the purpose of the present study because of its direct and practical relevance to assess teachers' professional involvement. Since the early eighties, research has focused on looking for ways to help teachers improve their pedagogical practice. Among all the approaches suggested by researchers, is the one of a reflective teacher and teacher researcher. Teachers become researchers when they begin to reflect critically on their own pedagogical practices. Indeed, reflection has become a key component of teachers' praxis and development, which helps them fulfill this role. It refers to the willingness teachers have to think about their own teaching practice concerning their roles, activities and techniques in the classroom. This means that rather than applying a systematical theoretical framework, the teachers construct their own theory based on their experience in the classroom, which leads to reflection and action.

Reflective teaching is thus a cyclical, permanent process of analysis, feedback and action (adjustments and changes if necessary), where teachers use an ongoing cyclical inquiring attitude in order to “become active agents of their training and competent researchers of the cause and effects of the classroom events”. (Madrid, 1995:121) In other words, this process shows a reflective positive attitude of educators who are open to actions and changes in order to grow as teaching people to a higher level of professionalism.

Such an approach definitely assumes that teaching does not correspond to a predetermined set of prescriptions, but on the contrary to “a dynamic and reflective process, which means a permanent interaction among the curriculum, teachers, students, activities, methodology and instructional materials.” (Cerezal, 1995: 129). As far as a teacher researcher is concerned, Nunan says, “the expression *classroom researcher* clearly represents the new role considered above. Then, instead of an uncritical and eclectic way of teaching, teachers should introduce a constant analysis and interpretation of what is happening in the classroom. Certainly, it is the best way of curriculum, teacher and learner development. (qtd. in Cerezal, 1995:129).

However, the concept of reflective teaching is not an easy one to grasp. Reflection goes beyond routinely thinking about what happens in the classroom everyday. It does not only involve an isolated process-taking place in a teacher’s mind; rather than that it places the reflective action in a wider contextual, cultural and social setting.

3.3.8 Teacher training and teacher development

Within the scope of this research project, it is highly important to highlight those aspects directly related to teachers’ instruction, training and preparation as one of the most important and crucial teachers’ aid. This professional instruction aims at helping them expand and improve their practice by means of the acquisition of teaching tools and techniques. For this reason, the evaluation of a Language Program must include and take great account of such important aspects.

English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction is a field that is constantly in motion and has gone through rapid changes over the last few decades. Therefore, English teachers need to continually and systematically update their knowledge with the latest methodological currents and findings in the area. Moreover, it is highly rewarding for teachers to have long-term goals and grow professionally as well as expanding their roles and responsibilities over time.

In this context, it is important to point out that in order to provide teachers with the professional growth they need, a number of approaches in terms of teacher development have been implemented over the past few decades. Among these approaches, it is relevant to make the distinction between teacher development and teacher training in order to understand better to what extent these two preparation areas provide opportunities for teachers’ growth and improvement. Some of the distinctions that have been provided state that teacher development is perceived as a continuous process that starts from pre-service teacher instruction throughout the entire career of the teacher. On the other hand, teacher training is more concerned with providing the teachers with answers prepared in advance

for particular didactical issues. Teacher training opportunities equally involve trainees as well as experienced teachers. (Tenjoh-Okwen, 1996: 10)

Despite those apparent differences, it is certain that both of these dimensions are equally important to ensure that teachers keep an ongoing training process throughout their professional lives, and really fulfill their roles as educators with high quality standards.

Some of the aspects related to teachers that will be addressed in this research will be concerned with the teachers' appropriate qualifications and training history in the English Department.

3.4 Evaluation research and language programs

Having briefly reviewed, defined and clarified some of the most important terms and concepts related to curriculum development, the next step of this literature chapter is to review the main characteristics, objectives, and procedures of an evaluation research.

3.4.1 Evaluation as a key element of a teaching process

Teaching consists of a number of complex interrelated factors and processes. Such complex processes involve an intricate system of fundamental interconnected elements (needs, goals, teachers, learners, syllabuses, materials, teaching, and so forth). In other words teaching takes place whenever there is a group of learners, united together for a particular instructional purpose in a particular place, under particular circumstances in a formal setting.

Once a language program has been implemented and established it should go through an ongoing process of assessment, monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation is a core part in any instructional process that is expected to be successful and effective. A language program evaluation is concerned with asking and answering a number of important questions about all the different elements that play a significant role within the program.

On the other hand, Alderson (1986, 5) emphasizes that ***Evaluation*** is not a term referred exclusively to ***Testing***. He states the difference this way: "Evaluation is the process of seeking to establish the value of something for some purpose, a test is an instrument for gauging learning outcomes" Also, "Evaluation includes all the practices and instruments involved in gathering and compiling the data necessary to make judgments about the value of a language course or program; this may or may not include students' test results.

Therefore, given the importance of the concept and implications of evaluation, it is obvious that it is an essential procedure in a curriculum development process.

a. What is Evaluation Research?

Richards states that Evaluation Research “focuses on collecting information about different aspects of a language program in order to understand how the program works and how successfully it works” (Richards, 1992: 286)

He suggests a series of questions that needs to be asked and answered once a curriculum is functioning and being implemented.

- **Is the curriculum achieving its goals?**
- **What is happening in classrooms and schools where it is being implemented?**
- **Are those affected by the curriculum (e.g., teachers, administrators, students, parents, employers) satisfied with the curriculum?**
- **Have those involved in developing and teaching a language course done a satisfactory job?**
- **Does the curriculum compare favorably with others of its kind?**

(Richards, 1992: 286)

In addition to this, it is suggested that a language program evaluation should take into account a number of important key issues and areas.

Aspects to take into account in a Language Evaluation Program

- *curriculum design*: to provide insights about the quality of program planning and organization.
- *the syllabus and program content*: for example, how relevant and engaging it was, how easy or difficult, how successful test and assessment procedures were.
- *materials of instruction*: to provide insights about whether specific materials are aiding students learning.
- *the teachers*: for example, how they conducted their teaching, what their perceptions were of the program, what they taught.
- *teacher training*: to assess whether training teachers have received is adequate
- *the students*: for example, what they learned from the program, their perception of it and how they participated in it.
- *learner motivation*: to provide insights about the effectiveness of teaching in aiding students to achieve goals and objectives of the school.
- *the institution*: for example, what administrative support was provided, what resources were used, what communication networks were employed.
- *learning environment*: to provide insights about the extent to which students are provided with responsive environment in terms of their educational needs.
- *staff development*: to provide insights about the extent to which the school system provides the staff opportunities to increase their effectiveness,
- *decision making*: to provide insights about how well the school staff – principals, teachers, and others – make decisions that result in learner benefits.

(Sanders, 1992; Weir and Roberts ,1994)

Similarly to the definition provided above by Richards, Brown (1989: 223) refers to Language Program Evaluation. He defines it as “the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum and assess its effectiveness and efficiency as well as the participants’ attitudes within the context of the particular institutions involved”

3.4.2 Objectives of a language program evaluation

According to Weir and Roberts, (1994: 5), there are two main objectives for Language Program Evaluation, ***Accountability*** and ***Program Development***.

“Accountability-Oriented Evaluation usually examines the effects of a program or project at significant end points of an educational cycle and is usually conducted for the benefit of an external audience or decision maker”.

“Development Oriented Evaluation”, on the other hand, “is designed to improve the quality of a program as it is being implemented. It may involve staff who are involved in the program as well as others who are not and may have a teacher-development focus “. (Weir and Roberts, 1994: 5)

The objectives of such evaluation research programs are to determine whether a particular program is functioning well, and what difficulties of this program need to be focused on. It also aims at getting better knowledge of the teaching-learning process that takes place during the development of the program.

3.4.3 Quantitative and qualitative approaches

In order to achieve a thorough Language Program Evaluation process, both quantitative and qualitative research methods are needed, because one complements the other to collect relevant data.

Quantitative research refers to a kind of research that can be expressed numerically. This is to say that the information collected can be analyzed and presented in terms of statistics, rankings, frequencies or percentages that reflect the central tendencies, patterns and schemes of the information. Such approach makes it easy the presentation of the information in charts, graphs, pies or tables and it is considered as the most accurate, scientific and objective way of reporting the research findings

Qualitative research refers to the kind of research based on the collection of data, which, due to their open-ended nature, is difficult to analyze and present statistically. It is based mainly on non-numerical data that needs to be categorized and coded. Although, this approach can provide valuable insights, it is considered to be time-consuming, more subjective and less accurate and scientific.

For the purposes of a language evaluation program research, elements of both types of research are necessary in order to achieve a more reliable and complete view of the program.

3.4.4 Product and process-oriented approaches

According to J Dean Brown and T. S. Rodgers, other relevant approaches of evaluation studies are more related to the results and the processes in terms of the fulfillment of objectives.

Product-Oriented Approaches refers to “evaluating the degree to which the instructional objectives of a program have been achieved” (2002:247). It outlines the importance of determining the fulfillment of planned outcomes in terms of the degree in which objectives have been met. However, such an approach is not fully reliable since some objectives can be reached to some extent in spite of the weaknesses of a particular language program.

Process-Oriented Approaches also refers to “the degree in which an institution is meeting program objectives”, but at the same time, “should also facilitate curriculum revision change and improvement” (2002: 248).

Therefore, the main actors involved in such a process-oriented approach should be all the main participants of the process itself. An important aspect in successful program evaluations is definitely the involvement of key actors and participants in the process of designing and carrying out the evaluation. Thus, the research process involves students, teachers, curriculum developers, administrators and faculty authorities, among others.

3.4.5 Procedures and issues in conducting evaluation research

The procedures are similar to the ones used in other kinds of research. The main purpose is to get the participants and main actors’ insights on any relevant aspects of the course and to collect any necessary information by means of interviews, diaries and journals, classroom observations, questionnaires, and so forth.

Some of the main issues in program evaluation are those mentioned by Weir and Roberts (1994: 42).

They propose a wider vision of evaluation, characterized by:

- A need for both insider and outsider commitment and involvement to ensure adequate evaluation.
- A central interest in improvement, as well as the demonstration of “product value” of a program or project, or their components.
- An associated commitment to a deeper professional understanding of the processes of educational change, as well as the results of that change.
- Systematic documentation for evaluation processes, both during implementation and at the beginning and end of a program project’s life.

- A willingness to embrace both qualitative and quantitative methodology appropriate to the purpose of the evaluation and the context on the review.

3.4.6 Needs analysis

Within a program evaluation, needs analysis is used at different moments of the curriculum development process, and for different purposes. The objective of needs analysis is defined by Richards as (2001:90) “to collect information that can be used to develop a profile of the language needs of a group of learners in order to be able to make decisions about the goals and contents of a language course”. So, he suggests that the initial stage for curriculum development should be based on an analysis of learners’ needs rather than on a linguistic approach. Richards states that “needs analysis allows for greater numbers of people to be involved in curriculum development, it also enables goals and objectives to be identified, and provides data for evaluation and accountability”(Nunan, 1988:18). Therefore, the linguistic part has gradually taken less importance in language teaching course design than in the past.

Helen Basturckmen in turn defines need analysis as “the identification of difficulties and standard situations by observation of participants functioning in a target situation in conjunction with interviews and questionnaires”.

Richards states “needs analysis may be carried out before, during or after a language program”. There are small-scale and large-scale needs analysis. Needs analysis are implemented for a number of different purposes, among which Richards distinguishes “to help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the needs of potential students”. (Richards, 2001: 52).

Another relevant purpose of needs analysis is to identify the gap between what learners are in the capacity of doing and what they really need to achieve. Because of this, it is crucial to determine what the objectives of a particular needs analysis study are.

Needs analysis provides useful data that can be used in several different orientations among which some of the more relevant and related to the present study are the following:

- It may be used as the basis for the evaluation of an existing language program.
- It may be used as reference for choosing appropriate teaching methods in a program
- It may be the starting point for developing a syllabus and designing adequate teaching materials for a program.

Another very important dimension in needs analysis is the situational factors. It is important to remember that the contexts of language programs are varied and the particular factors involved in a specific instructional setting are often the key determinants for the fulfillment of the program. These factors should be thus identified and this is the focus of what is called situation analysis. “Situation *analysis* is an analysis of factors in the context of a planned or present curriculum project that is made in order to assess their potential impact on the project. These factors may be political, social, economic, or institutional”. (Richards, 2001:52)

Among some of these relevant factors, the ones that are significantly important for the objectives of the present study are:

- ✓ ***Societal factors:*** language teaching experience or tradition in Nicaragua and at UNAN-LEON and community, and institutional resources available to support the program (cable TV, Internet, personal computers, etc)
- ✓ ***Institutional factors:*** these involve two dimensions, the physical dimension (description of the setting and learning environment, available resources and materials, administrative support, and so forth), and the human dimension (all the people involved in the development of the program at all levels).
- ✓ ***Teacher factors:*** As mentioned before teachers are key actors in the successful development of any program. Richards lists the following criteria related to teachers that should be taken into account in a situation analysis:
 - Language proficiency
 - Teaching experience
 - Skill and expertise
 - Training and qualification
 - Morale and motivation
 - Teaching style
 - Beliefs and principles (Richards, 2001:99)
- ✓ ***Learner factors:*** Learners are the key participants in a teaching-learning process. Therefore it is very important to collect as much information as possible about them (background, beliefs and expectations, learning styles, and so forth)

- ✓ **Adoption factors:** these relate to the capacity to understand and accept the needs for changes. Some changes are welcomed while others are thoroughly resisted.

Taking into account all the above elements and dimensions of needs analysis, it provides valuable insights within the context of a language evaluation research which is our main concern.

3.5 Quality indicators in an institution

The evaluation of quality within an institution is a core issue in a language evaluation program as it determines the impact and success of the entire program. Quality standards may vary greatly from one institution to another. Many people frequently believe that excellence in a language institution is exclusively linked to good teachers and quality teaching, and that a good efficient teacher basically makes up for any other missing elements. However, a number of features are commonly taken as reference and studied by researchers to determine the existence of good or bad quality and excellence levels in a language institution. Those indicators cover a number of important aspects of the institution, reflecting the internal organization structures, as well as important human factors, and the general teaching context.

Richards mentions the following elements as essential key indicators of quality in an institution:

- ❖ **A sense of mission.** Schools have to formulate a clear mission statement, which reveals the goals and purposes of a given program. A mission statement “ can serve as a reference point to assess proposals for new initiatives or programs within an institution and to provide a basis for evaluation of its performance over time” (Richards, 2001: 202)
- ❖ **A strategic plan.** Strategic planning is a long-term description of the objectives set by a program, and the definition of strategies that will be implemented to fulfill those objectives. A strategic plan should include definitions of a vision, values, objectives and strategies.
- ❖ **Quality assurance mechanisms.** Any institution should also define a system to make sure that quality is present in all its aspects and practice. There should be clearly defined and formulated standards, accompanied with criteria for regular assessment and corrections if necessary.
- ❖ **A sound curriculum.** This aspect includes the need of a clear, coherent and well-articulated general curriculum in which all the components are interrelated and sequenced in order to avoid curriculum discontinuity. It should be based on the learners’ particular needs coherently. In order to ensure quality in

the teaching materials and tests, there needs to be an ongoing system for the selection, development and regular revision of the assessment processes. Moreover, the quality of the whole teaching learning process and the factors involved need to be carefully monitored and analyzed.

- ❖ **Flexible organization framework.** Flexibility is a necessary feature of any language program. The environment in which teachers and learners are to interact needs to be one that facilitates a good performance with a reasonable degree of freedom and autonomy. In addition to this, the institution must provide a non-threatening system open to changes and improvements in a supportive manner. In this context, there should be space for trust and confidence.
- ❖ **Good internal communications.** As a complement for the flexibility mentioned above, there must be open channels for fluent communication and interrelation among the members involved in a language program. Personality clashes should be avoided at all time, as well as group divisions and abuse of authority. In order to achieve an appropriate degree of communication, it is highly advisable to promote regular staff coordination meetings in which sound input and feedback is constantly encouraged. In addition to this, the whole system should guarantee that there are enough opportunities for decision making in which all members have the chance to contribute to.
- ❖ **Professional treatments of teachers.** It is important that teachers get good employment conditions which include salary, reward systems, job stability, and faculty perks for any necessary extra-curricular activity.
- ❖ **Opportunities for teacher development.** As mentioned above, it is highly important to ensure that teachers have the right conditions for improving their teaching quality by means of a consistent system of professional development and regular teacher training.
- ❖ **Good general teaching context.** This is indeed one of the factors that determine quality more perceptibly, as it covers the specific conditions of the setting and physical environment teachers have to face on a regular basis, as well as the available resources and equipment for the development of the program.

To conclude, this chapter about evaluation research programs and quality indicators emphasizes the central role of teachers together with students in any evaluation process, as well as the importance of taking into account students' interest and needs in order to plan and implement any changes within a particular instructional program.

Evaluation research is certainly a central element in any teaching- learning process, and therefore it is our main focus in this study and analysis of the effectiveness of the English Language program at the UNAN León.

V. CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

In this section, the specific situational context of the research will be thoroughly examined and described. By situational context, we mean the necessary background information about the Language Program being evaluated within the local and national context, as well as the particular elements of the program (the curriculum, the main internal actors and participants, and the learning environment.) In addition to this, the external agents, which have been crucial elements in the design and implementation of the English Studies at UNAN-Leon, will be mentioned.

The study took place in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities of the English Department of UNAN- Leon. The Program being investigated involves the English studies offered by the English Department. The research was carried out during three semesters running from February 2003 to June 2004. The project group is formed by three teachers who currently teach several component of the English Major. The target population includes students from second, third, fourth and fifth year of the studies (124 in total) and eleven teachers of the English Department who agreed to collaborate and be part of the project.

1. Antecedent of English studies in Nicaragua

As for the national context, there are only two other similar programs in Managua. One is offered at UNAN-Managua, and the other at UCA. There are no similar local programs in the region.

The program offered at UNAN Managua graduates students with a degree in Educational Sciences with a special focus in English. This is the oldest program offered at a national level, as it began in 1967 with a degree in TEFL. The original program was directly aimed at meeting the needs of the secondary school system in Nicaragua at that moment to train secondary school teachers, and to revise and update the curriculum, which had been inaugurated in 1968. In order to do this, a Fulbright- Hayes lecturer was sent to propose a four-year curriculum at UNAN-Managua and to design a three-year program for English instruction at secondary school levels based on the audio-lingual approach. Therefore, the new discipline at UNAN-Managua and the recently introduced audio-lingual approach used at secondary schools, started together and kept a strong connection throughout the development of the program. The current program is the result of a number of curriculum changes and adjustments undertaken over the past few decades.

As for UCA, the first English courses offered were inaugurated in the 1960's as "servicios" (The teaching of ESP- English for Specific Purpose- in the different Majors at UCA), and the offering of paid courses to the community. A proper English Major started in 1984, offering a degree in English Translation, and then in 1986 an additional degree in Russian Translation totally financed by the Soviet Union, was offered. These first steps were the basis

for the formation of a language school. At the beginning of the 1990's the Faculty of Language was inaugurated. Nevertheless, the political changes occurring in the country at that moment led to the conclusion of the degree in Russian Translation. Likewise, in 1994, UCA decided to stop offering English Translation Studies, (which was considered an expensive program), and replaced it with a new degree in TEFL.

2 Antecedents of English studies at UNAN-Leon

The program offered at UNAN is very recent. At first, English was taught at UNAN- Leon as ESP in several faculties and programs in the seventies. At that moment there was a small English Department, which was joined in 1988 with the Spanish Department when the Faculty of Education merged with the "Preparatoria" program because of budget cuts. From 1988 to 1993 English was not an independent Department since the head of the Spanish Department was the one in charge of the English section.

Within this situational context, English instruction continued to be limited to the teaching of ESP in the Faculties of UNAN-Leon. It was only in 1993 that a proper Saturday English Major was opened and the English Department was finally separated from the Spanish Department.

The first English program implemented in 1993 was a seven-year program and it was aimed at training 75 "empiricos" secondary school English teachers. It offered a general degree in Educational Sciences with a special focus on English Studies. As there were no previous experiences in the field at UNAN-Leon, the first curriculum was just taken from the similar program offered at UNAN-Managua. It was a replica of the curriculum used at that moment in the English Department of UNAN Managua for their Saturday courses, and only slight changes were made on the spot in order to adapt this program to the context of UNAN-León.

Before opening the English Studies Program, a needs analysis study was carried out in November 1996. This study led to the inauguration of the Program and in March 1997 a regular program of English Studies was opened, with the implementation of a first curriculum designed by the English Department with the professional advice of experts from the Spanish University of Alcala de Henares, offering a degree in General English. This program started with 36 students who had just concluded their secondary school studies. At the same time, a second group of 75 "empiricos" teachers initiated their studies on Saturdays. This new generation of students studied a syllabus, which had been adjusted and improved with the close help of the teachers from Spain. In addition, the syllabus of the regular studies went through several curricular changes as well. (See table 1 and appendixes with the successive detailed study plan of the curriculum).

Table 1. Chronological development of the English studies offered at UNAN-Leon

YEAR	TYPE OF MAJOR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	STUDY PLAN	DEGREE	PERIOD
1993	Saturday English Major for unlicensed English teachers	75	First study Plan for Saturday Educational Major	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	1993-1999
1997	Regular English Major	36	First Study Plan for Regular English Studies	English	1997-2000
1997	Saturday English Major for unlicensed English teachers	74	Second Study Plan for Saturday Educational Major	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	1997-2001
1997	Regular English Major	38	Third Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (Including Año Común Studies)	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	1997-2001
1999	Regular English Major	30	Third Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (Including Año Común Studies)	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	1999-2003
2000	Regular English Major	90	Third Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (Including Año Común Studies)	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	2000-2004
2001	Regular English Major	118	Fourth Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (Including Año Común Studies)	English	2001-2005
2002	Saturday English Major for unlicensed English teachers	35	Third Study Plan for Saturday Educational Major	Educational Sciences with special focus on TEFL	2002-2006
2002	Regular English Major	128	Fourth Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (after Año Común Studies)	English	2002-2006
2004	Regular English Major	126	Fourth Study Plan for Regular Educational Major (after Año Común Studies)	English	2004-2007

3. External cooperation programs and their impact on the English Studies

The English Department of UNAN Leon has been consistently reinforced and supported by the University of Alcalá in Spain within a Cooperation agreement program between these two universities. This cooperation program started in 1993 with the offering of a first postgraduate course to the English Department staff (4 teachers at that time), and several secondary school teachers. From that moment on, several other editions of these courses were offered and this training program resulted in the organization of the first three regional TESOL events (1995, 1997 and 1998, with more than 300 participants and around 50 presentations in all), and the First National Congress for English Teachers in Nicaragua (2002, with more than 200 teachers attending and 42 presentations and 30 presenters). Finally, in 2003 – 2004, a Master's degree program in Teaching English as Foreign Language has been offered in collaboration with the University of Alcalá.

Among the most relevant outcomes reached by this cooperation program, several of them are worth mentioning:

- ✓ The English Department was formed and separated from the Spanish Department in 1993 and there was an increase from 4 to 22 members in a ten-year period.
- ✓ The implementation of the Saturday and Regular English Studies Programs
- ✓ The professional training and preparation of the English Department staff (through the offering of several postgraduate courses and courses abroad):
 - Trained in Nicaragua: 22
 - Trained in Spain and the USA: 6
- ✓ The linking with the University of Nebraska at Omaha UNO
- ✓ The funding of the multimedia English lab, called the Multimedia Resource Center (CRM). The three first phases of the financing and setting of the CRM have been achieved.
- ✓ The constant donation of bibliographical and didactic materials for the Faculty library and the CRM.
- ✓ The substantial and systematic professional advice on curriculum and syllabus design
- ✓ The first Master's Program in ELT offered in Nicaragua. (23 participants from UNAN-Leon, UNAN-Managua, UCA and UAM universities, and Secondary Education)

It is worth stating at this point that this cooperation program between the University of Alcalá and UNAN has been vital in the foundation and strengthening of the overall programs and services offered by the English Department.

4. Current organization of the English Studies including *Año Común*

Nowadays, English is offered to *Año Común* students (all the students who are in the first year of their studies at UNAN-León have to go through a general two-semester course). At the end of this first General Studies Year, all the students have to choose their specific major: students write down two options for the fields they would prefer to major in, and they are accepted or rejected according to their grades in the *Año Común*. Students who choose to major in English go to the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities and they have to study for a four-year period after their first General Studies Year.

4.1 General description of the study plan

The study plan that students have to cover during four years after *Año Común* includes a variety of components in five specialized areas which focus on the reinforcement of the linguistic skills, awareness of cultural aspects of the target language and research, the didactic and methodological aspects, some business administration and some translation components. (See annexes with the current study plan of the curriculum).

The different kinds of syllabuses implemented in the English Studies Program, follow a multifaceted approach. According to the several types of syllabuses described and mentioned in the literature review chapter, it can be said that the syllabus currently used in our program could be identified as being *mixed, multi-strand, or multi-syllabus* given its diverse nature. Indeed, it is a combination of different approaches aimed at providing students with the necessary tools to achieve communicative competence when they finish their studies.

4.1.1 Curricular changes, mission and current plan

Concerning this last curriculum changes carried out, which resulted in the current program, the staff of the English Department went through a consultation process. This discussion involved different actors: the Department staff, the Faculty authorities at that moment, (October 2001), Alcala University support, and the insights of an expert from the English Teaching Fellow program financed by the US State Department and coordinated by the American Embassy.

The mission of this new model for the regular English Studies Program is the following: “The English Major will graduate qualified bilingual professionals who have solid methodological and scientific knowledge, not only focused on linguistic aspects, but also on the mastering of intercultural aspects of the target language, in order to cope with the demands of a globalized world” (taken from the brochure designed in October 2001).

Among the major changes performed, the number of classes in English increased dramatically to more than 1400 hours during the development of the studies. The main reason for this increase of classes in English was to amplify and intensify students' exposure to the target language through the integration of 21 different components, which enable students to move throughout different proficiency levels (from false beginners to upper intermediate levels, as well as reinforce specific skills. At this stage it is important to make a brief description of the structure of this new plan for the English studies Program.

4.1.2 General English courses

The curricular components that train students in the target language are the following:

- ***Integrated English***, from level I to level VII (7 semesters, corresponding to 576 hours). This class provides students with the main necessary basic grounds for the successful acquisition of communicative English. The major focus of this component is a solid and consistent training on the four basic competences of the language (listening, speaking, reading and writing), along with pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar from the false beginner to the upper intermediate level.
- ***Laboratory***, from level I to level IV, (4 semesters corresponding to 256 hours). These classes are carried out in the CRM, and consist of a systematic training of listening and speaking skills using audio-visual resources (recordings and videos).

4.1.3 Classes aimed at strengthening specific skills

- ***Basic Reading Strategies*** (1 semester, 96 hours). This particular component consists of an introductory reading course, which integrates training on the different basic reading techniques, as well as the acquisition of strategies for learning vocabulary.
- ***Basic Writing Strategies*** (1 semester, 96 hours). This component consists of an introductory writing course, which provides students with the basic techniques and strategies necessary for effective writing.
- ***Advanced Reading*** (1 semester, 64 hours). This component provides students with further advanced training on the reading skills necessary for the analysis and understanding of authentic materials, as the ones used in the Literature, Research and Culture courses.
- ***Advanced Writing and Grammar*** (1 semester, 64 hours). The aim of this course is to strengthen students' abilities by means of the systematic training on the academic writing of essays, articles and stories. The component includes the consolidation and reinforcement of advanced grammar structures as well as the study of vocabulary and expressions used at this level of writing proficiency.

- ***Advanced Conversation*** (1 semester, 64 hours) The aim of this course is to train students on advanced conversational skills by means of the systematic exposure to real life spoken English in a variety of contexts.
- ***Phonetics and Phonology*** (1 semester 32 hours). The aim of this component is to provide students with effective training on the various features of the language such as stress, intonation, rhythm and pitch.
- ***Integrating Seminar*** (1 semester, 96 hours). This seminar which takes place during the last semester of the Program consists of an intensive advanced course aimed at the preparation and training of the students for their final graduation exam. It focuses on all the areas that are assessed this exam.

All these classes cover over 1300 hours throughout the 4 years of study.

Another major change was the integration of research courses coupled with computer science courses. These two courses provided students with valuable tools to carry out, design, and present research projects relevant to the field. The global aim of these two courses was to encourage students to be inquisitive and think critically throughout their professional lives.

4.1.4 Other courses that train students on the field of Computing Sciences and Research

- ***Computing Sciences I, II and III*** (3 semesters, corresponding to a total of 192 hours). This component is aimed at providing students with the essential basic tools and knowledge in computing science such as download information from the web, use Internet as a resource center, and write down their research projects efficiently.
- ***Theoretical Basis for Research*** (1 semester, corresponding to 64 hours). This important curricular component involves the main theoretical guidelines for conducting and presenting research projects such as the projects presented at the JUDC (the annual university research week promoted by UNAN), in which students and teachers present their research projects to the community.
- ***Research projects about the culture of English speaking countries*** (1 semester, 64 hours). This course is aimed at develop students' skills by making them conduct small research projects focused on particular cultural aspects of the English speaking countries.
- ***Project Design*** (1 semester, 32 hours). As a final requirement to fulfill their Program, students are required to design and present a project in the last semester of their studies. This project can be focused on any of the following fields:

- ✓ The design of didactic units

- ✓ The translation of an authentic document
- ✓ The implementation of a project in a business context

Another important aspect of the new study plan is the focus on an intercultural approach, which enables students to explore issues related to the history, life and society of English speaking countries. By doing this, students become more sensitive to their own environment, and get to be able to understand and accept cultural differences.

4.1.5 Intercultural components

- ***Socio-cultural communication I and II*** (2 semesters, with a total of 128 hours). The main focus of this area is to develop students speaking and listening skills integrating intercultural aspects of both Nicaragua and English speaking cultures.
- ***Elements of Literature*** (1 semester, 64 hours). This curricular component is based on the reading, interpretation and analysis of authentic literary texts, as well as the writing of literary outlines

4.1.6 Courses that train students in different areas: Translation, Business English, and Education

a) Translation

- ***Translation I and II*** (2 semesters, 128 hours). The translation area consists of two introductory courses aimed at training students on basic translation techniques and strategies for translating texts from English to Spanish.

b) Business

- ***Business English I and II*** (2 semesters, 128 hours). These components consist of two courses based on typical situational business contexts in which the students get training on writing, speaking, listening and reading.

c) Education

This area includes three different courses:

- ***Main methodological and theoretical basis for TEFL*** (I semester, 64 hours). The focus of this component is to introduce students to the main current pedagogical trends and methods with practical examples of the various approaches.

- ***Techniques and Strategies for TEFL I and II*** (2 semesters, 96 hours). With these courses students will be exposed to a number of important teaching strategies and techniques in order to acquire the necessary practical knowledge to teach English at primary, secondary and university levels.

The main reason to include these three areas in the program is to raise students' awareness towards the different fields in which they can develop, work, and get additional postgraduate training in Nicaragua.

4.1.7 Additional courses

In addition to the curricular components mentioned above which constitute the core of the whole program, there are some other areas required by the general curricular reform process at UNAN-Leon which are ***Counseling Service I, II, III and IV*** (4 semesters, with a total of 64 hours), ***Professional Practice I, II, III and IV*** (4 semesters, with a total of 128 hours), and ***Actividades no Cognoscitivas I, II, III, and IV*** (4 semesters, with a total of 64 hours).

- ***Counseling Service.*** The counseling sessions are aimed at helping students discover, understand and use their learning strategies and styles.
- ***Professional Practice.*** This course has a practical dimension in which students put into practice their acquired knowledge by teaching English classes in primary secondary schools and/or institutions. This is carried out under the supervision and guidance of a teacher mentor from the English Department.
- ***Actividades no Cognoscitivas.*** This curricular component has been recently introduced in all Majors at UNAN-Leon as a result of the reform process. It offers several extra-curricular activities or areas such as arts, sports, history, environmental issues and so forth.

Overall, from the researchers' point of view, this program represents a balance of alternatives which is appealing to young students offering them a strong and solid basis in English, the global language, as well as the necessary skills and abilities to cope with the competitive modern global market.

5. Target population: Students

The target population consists, first, of the students majoring in English. The following table (Table 2) gives some important general information about the students of the program, including the total number for each year, their age, sex and places of origin.

Table 2. Target population: Students

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	AGE	SEX		PLACE OF ORIGIN				
			M	F	León	Chinan.	Mana.	Bluef.	Masa.
II year	38	17-26	45.5%	54.5%	64%	21%	9%	3%	3%
III year	35	19-25	61.3%	38.7%	84%	16%	-	-	-
IV year	25	19-24	52.6%	47.4%	89%	11%	-	-	-
V year	26	20-25	45.5%	54.5%	86%	9%	5%	-	-
TOTAL	124	17-26	51%	49%	80.75%	14.25%	3.5%	0.75%	0.75%

There are currently 38 students in II year, 35 in III year, 25 in IV year, and 26 in V year. 49 % of the students are female, and 51% are male. Their ages range between and average of seventeen and twenty- six years old. Their places of origin reflect some diversity, but most of them are from León (80.75%). 14.25% are from other areas of the western region of the country, and only 3.5% are from Managua.

6. Target population: Teachers

As regards the teaching staff, nine teachers are in charge of teaching the main different components of the English studies. For the purpose of this research, we use codes to refer to them such as teacher A, teacher B and so forth. The following table (Table 3) gives general information about these 9 teachers.

Table 3. Target population: Teachers

TEACHER CODE	YEAR OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE	AGE	SEX	PLACE OF ORIGIN
A	12	34	F	Urban area
B	18	40	F	Urban area
C	6	26	F	Urban area
D	16	54	M	Urban area
E	16	42	M	Rural area
F	7	31	M	Urban area
G	24	50	F	Urban area
H	15	39	F	Foreigner
I	23	58	F	Urban area

Among those 9 teachers, 3 of them are male, and 6 are female. Their ages range between 24 to 56 years old. Only one of those teachers is from a rural town 35 kilometers away from Leon; there is one foreigner who has been a resident in Nicaragua since 1988, and the other 7 are all from important cities of the country and live in Leon. All of them are licensed teachers who graduated in English; their years of teaching experience in previous Secondary school jobs, or at UNAN, ranges between 3 and 24 years.

7. Physical conditions: Classrooms and multimedia lab

The teaching environment in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities is shared with several other majors and six other Departments. The classrooms available for English depend on established schedules, according to management decisions usually made vertically from the administrative staff of the Faculty. There are two shifts, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, and again, decision-making policies in terms of allocation of classrooms and shifts are made from the upper levels. In other words, part of the English Major classes take place in the morning shift and the other part in the afternoon shift. This situation causes a number of different problems since the conditions of the classrooms in the afternoon are much less comfortable than in the morning: higher temperatures; tired, restless and distracted students, and more noise and disturbance from the other classrooms.

In addition to the issues with the classrooms, the English Department has a Multi Media Resource Center (CRM), which is still in its development and growth phase (there is audio-visual equipment and materials, but the multimedia area is still missing). The CRM has a double function as audio-visual classroom to teach certain components, and also as a self-access center that allows students to attend according to a scheduled time. This double function as a classroom and a self-access center causes a number of problems as students have limited attendance for self access time. The two shifts make this problem even worse since the lab is regularly used as a classroom in the morning and in the afternoon.

In short, it must be acknowledged that the program under analysis and evaluation in this study is closely linked to the researchers' every day reality and professional lives. Indeed, the particular context as described above represents a multifaceted and interesting research area, given the fact that it is a field within which the researchers are in permanent contact and interaction. The combination of all these elements is indeed optimal grounds for a language evaluation research. Moreover, the issues raised as a result of this evaluation are not only challenging and interesting, but they also represent a motivating area prone to improvement and changes.

VI. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The main objective of this chapter is, first of all, to make the research process clear and comprehensible by explaining in detail how and when the research was carried out according to the general and specific objectives stated above. This chapter includes the specification of the type of research, the description of the methodology chosen, as well as the description of the particular instruments and techniques used in order to gather the necessary information. Moreover, the mechanisms chosen for the validation and verification of the data will be clearly explained. In addition to this, this chapter intends to point out the different kinds of procedures and stages used throughout the development of the research, from planning to implementation, to the data analysis and writing of the final report.

1. Type of research

The English Language Program at UNAN-Leon has been unexamined so far, and the researchers have been involved in the curricular changes implemented ever since it was designed. This combination of factors resulted in the realization of the fact that an evaluation of the English Language Program was needed in order to make judgments about all the important aspects related to our program. The identification and definition of the elements involved in evaluation of language programs such as the ones of the present study have been thoroughly defined and documented in the literature review. (See chapter IV, section 3.4).

Indeed, such evaluations have become increasingly popular among educators and curriculum planners, with the purpose of providing “evaluation reports that demonstrated accountability, that help guide improvement of ongoing projects, and that documented what happened in curriculum projects”(Richards, 2001:297).

2. Methods of research

As for the data collection method, both *qualitative and quantitative* traditions were used. As explained before in the literature review chapter, by *quantitative method* we mean the measurement and analysis of data using mathematical and statistical techniques. Brown and Rodgers describe this method as “any investigative procedures used to describe in numerical terms a setting and the things going on in it” (2002:118). Quantitative research focuses on the examination of the information in the light of statistical rankings, frequencies, tendencies and percentages. This information is presented in the shape of a graphical display of data, such as pies, charts, tables and graphs. This quantitative approach has traditionally been considered a very accurate and scientific method of data analysis.

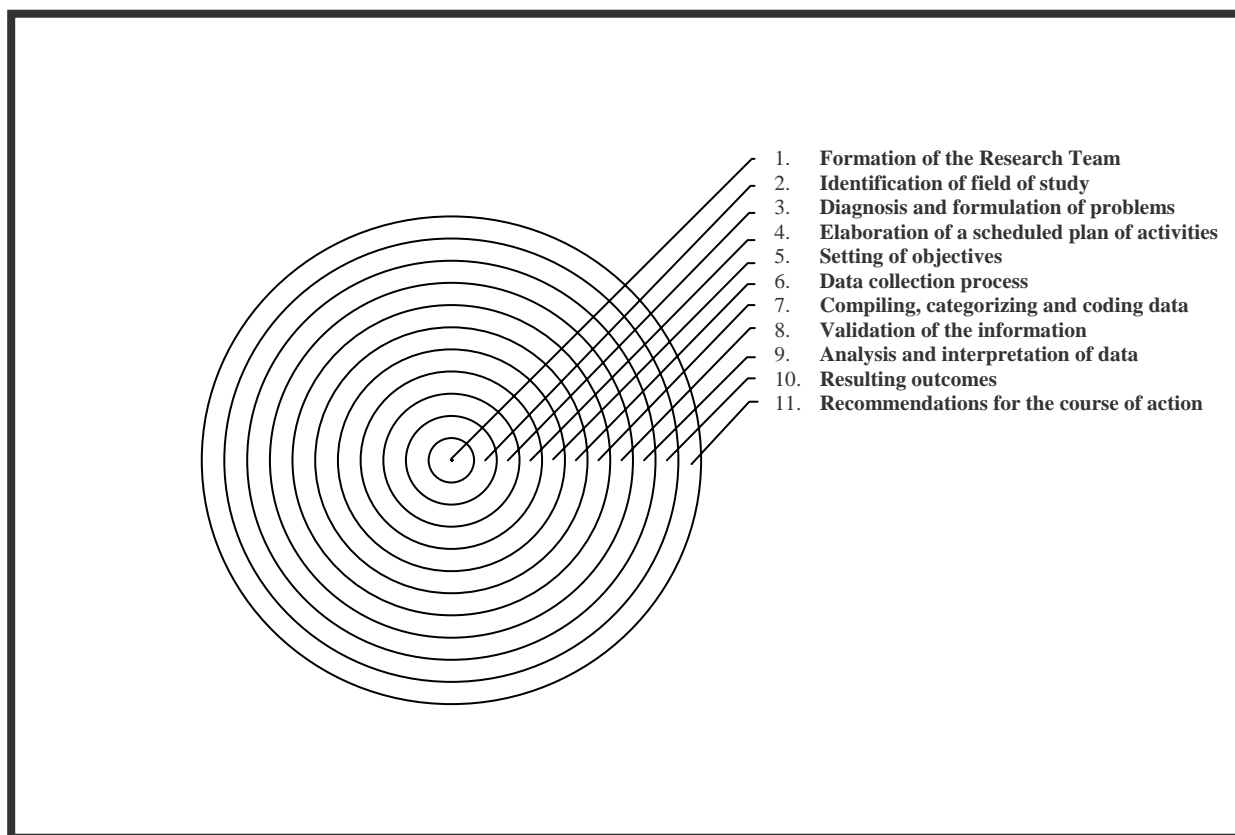
On the other hand, *qualitative methods* concentrate on understanding and interpreting non-numerical data from the point of view of the main agents involved in the research. The main objective of a qualitative approach is to supply the researchers with plentiful, descriptive and explanatory data about what is going on in the different areas of the program being evaluated. The instruments of data collection used within this approach are often the diaries, interviews, recordings, and so forth. Since this approach is based on data examination and interpretation from different sources that are broad, open-ended and subjective, they need to be thoroughly scrutinized, (as it is the case for diaries and interviews), and therefore this process is very time-consuming. However, the information collected using this method is very valuable because of its varied and open nature.

No matter what the distinction between these two methods might be, as Brown and Rodgers accurately state, “the strongest researchers may be those who remain flexible, that is, researchers who are not bound by artificial distinctions like qualitative versus quantitative, ones who will be able to adapt the research methods to the issues they are trying to learn about, and to the places the research leads them.”(2002:18). Indeed, both types of methods can be combined and used in evaluation research in order to get more precise and complete insights about the phenomena under study. In fact, the choice for the research method depended on the general and specific objectives, which guided the course of the study.

3. Stages of the research process

Research in its widest sense is an exploration of experience; therefore the whole process of research should be an organized, systematic and structured course of action with a methodical and planned set of procedures. This approach takes into consideration and integrates the different stages of the study beginning with the formation of the research team and the identification of the field to study, through the setting of objectives, the data collection procedures, the compiling, interpretation and analysis of data, the validation and finally the resulting outcomes and future course of action.

The general scheme of this study can be separated into 11 main steps, which are summarized in the following diagram:



3.1 Formation of the research team

The research group for this study consists of three teachers who are currently permanent teachers in the English Studies Program. The three researchers share some common and similar concerns about their professional field. Moreover, the fact that the three researchers decided to work together on this particular study can be explained and justified by a number of important reasons:

- a) Close and constant contact with the program being evaluated.
- b) Active participants in the decisions, which led to the planning, elaboration and implementation of the English Studies Program.
- c) Strong professional and personal links between the three researchers.

3.2 Identification of the field of study

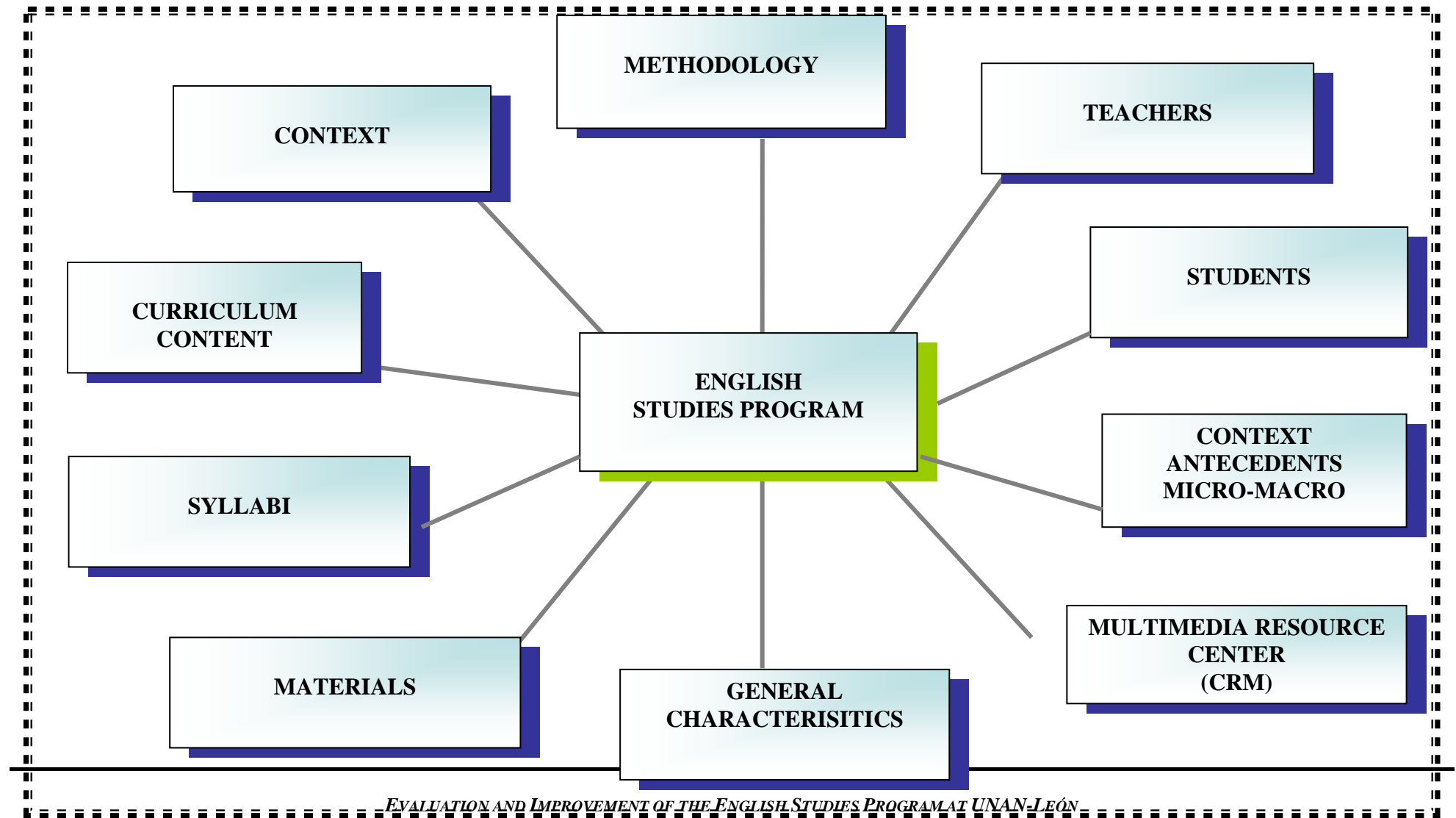
The specific topic of the research was determined after several sessions of active brainstorming, during which the three researchers intended to come up with several interesting proposals. The first step was the identification of a number of problems related to their specific area of interest and professional practice.

3.3 Diagnosis and formulation of problems

After the initial brainstorming sessions, the course of action for the study became clear to the three researchers. This stage involved a global diagnosis process in which the most important issues related to the English studies were brought together, identified and classified. (See diagram 1 of the brainstorming session below)

Diagram 1: Brainstorming session.

RESEARCH TEAM'S BRAINSTORMING SESSION



3. 4. Elaboration of a scheduled plan of activities

For the purpose of organizing the main activities in a planned and scheduled manner, the following plan of action to be followed was designed: (See tables 4,5 and 6)

Table 4. Plan of activities: Semester I

SEMESTER I 2003: DIAGNOSIS, ORGANIZATION, PLANNING, LITERATURE REVIEW AND BEGINNING OF DATA COLLECTION

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Research group meetings	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Contact with teachers, students, coordinators and authorities.		✗	✗			
Consulting related literature	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Definition of problems and main issues of the English Studies		✗	✗			
Evaluation of teaching materials and curricula				✗	✗	✗
Design of interviews			✗			
Design of questionnaires			✗			
Beginning of classroom observations				✗		
Keeping Diaries			✗	✗	✗	
Design of a plan of action and proposals for semester 2						✗

Table 5. Plan of activities: Semester II

SEMESTER II 2003: DATA COLLECTION AND INITIAL ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Research Group Meetings	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Consulting Related Literature	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Data collection: Interviews	✗	✗				
Data collection: Questionnaires		✗				
Classroom observations	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Keeping Diaries		✗	✗			
Initial analysis of data	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Initial compiling and coding of data process	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Elaboration of chronogram of activities for semester 3						✗

Table 6. Plan of activities: Semester III

**SEMESTER I 2004: ADJUSTMENTS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINAL
REPORT**

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July
Meetings with Thesis Advisors	✗						
Consulting Related Literature	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Researching other similar programs (UNAN Managua, UCA)			✗				
Writing of the thesis	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Additional interviews and recordings if necessary						✗	
Compiling and coding quantitative data		✗	✗	✗	✗		
Compiling and coding qualitative data		✗	✗	✗	✗		
Data analysis and interpretation					✗	✗	✗
Results, conclusions and recommendations						✗	✗
Changes and adjustments after advisor's revision						✗	✗
Preparation of presentation of the thesis						✗	✗
Presentation of thesis							✗

3.5 Setting of objectives

After planning the activities and delimiting the main problems and issues to be focused on, the researchers went on with the setting of the general and specific objectives. This stage was indeed very useful to direct the course of action of the study and to outline the kind of information that was needed to collect. (See chapter III for list of objectives)

3.6 Data collection process

This stage was a very crucial and complex one given the amount of information to be collected and the multifaceted nature of the study. At this stage, the instruments for collecting information were designed according to the guidelines obtained from the diagnosis stage. The data collection tools are described in detail later in this chapter.

3.7 Compiling, categorizing and coding data

The multiple, varied and heterogeneous kinds of data collected by means of the chosen instruments needed a thorough and close examination in order to sort them out and divide them into categories. By compiling data

we mean, making sense out of them according to the purpose of the research. This step was very useful to contrast the researchers' assumptions, experiences and ideas with those reflected by the data. At this point it was important to make a distinction between the qualitative and the quantitative data. The former were the most difficult to compile because of their descriptive nature, while the latter needed statistical scrutiny.

3.8 Validation of the information

This important stage consisted of validating the collected information, which means to establish its *credibility* and *reliability*. From the different existing approaches for validating information, the researchers decided to use the validation technique called triangulation. *Triangulation* is the process by which a given situation or an aspect of the same can be observed from different perspectives in order to be able to compare and contrast them. As Brown and Rodgers explain, "if you can examine your data from at least two points of view, you will maximize the possibility of getting credible findings by cross-validating those findings" (2002:243).

As for the present study, several types of *triangulation* as defined by Brown and Rodgers 2002:244) were used in order to validate the collected data. The first type is *data triangulation*, which consists of contrasting the points of view of the researchers themselves (interviewers and observers) with the students' and teachers'. The second type, *methodological triangulation* is carried out using a variety of data gathering procedures like the ones used in the present study.

3.9 Analysis and interpretation of data

Once the data had been grouped, categorized and validated, the researchers were able to find answers to the problems in question. This evaluation process was undertaken following the guidelines of the main constructs as defined in the literature review. This interpretation stage allowed the researchers to discover, identify and detect key factors, which were the first step for explaining and providing answers to the main concerns. The data were gathered and analyzed in the form of visual elements such as graphs, charts, tables and pies. These visual elements present concrete numerical data and are accompanied by written explanations of the phenomena. (See chapter VII)

3.10 Resulting outcomes

Following the data interpretation stage, the findings obtained were clearly explained and described in an accompanying written report. In other words, the main conclusions drawn as a result of the whole study were enumerated. This section also includes the limitations, implications and relevance of the study.

3.11 Recommendations for the course of action

Finally, one of the most significant products of the study was the resulting recommendations and suggestions for the possible changes and adjustments to be made in the program for the sake of its future improvement and development. At the same time the insights gained will be key elements in directing the following course of action. Another interesting result of the study concerns major issues that were identified as problematic. Further research will therefore be needed.

4. Data collection instruments

Research is a problem-solving process which aims at finding concrete solutions and answers to a number of specific problems by means of the collection of data. This data gathering process is possible thanks to the use of different research tools and instruments. Any research process needs reliable and methodical data collection instruments. There are numerous and varied instruments and techniques available for gathering the needed information in order to fulfill the objectives of any given research. Indeed, it is the kind of research the one that certainly determines the choice of adequate instruments that serve the purpose of the particular field of study. According to this, the most helpful and practical tools aimed at collecting the information we were particularly interested in were selected. The following table reflects the kinds of instruments used in the data collection process. (Table 7)

Table 7. Data collection instruments of the research

Type of Questionnaire	Target Population	Month of Administration
Students' general Questionnaires	124	August 2003
Students' specific Questionnaires 1	124	August 2003
Students' specific Questionnaires 2	124	March 2004
Teachers' general Questionnaires	9	August 2003
Teachers' specific Questionnaire	9	August 2003
Researcher-student interview	8	Semester II 2003
Researcher-teacher interviews	8	Semester II 2003
Class Observations	8	July, August, September, October, November 2003
Diaries	51	August, September. October 2003

What follows is a brief description of each tool and a justification of the reason why it was used in our study.

4.1 Surveys

Surveys are defined by Brown and Rodgers as techniques used to collect and illustrate the characteristics, attitudes, points of view and perceptions of any actor and participant that can give valuable information around the purpose of the study. There is a distinction between two kinds of survey research: interview research and questionnaire research. Interviews are the most direct way to obtain information about the studied field. They are usually carried out in a face-to-face format. They represent a helpful tool because of their spontaneous nature. Questionnaires, on the other hand, are written notes, which include open and close-ended types of questions that are administered to the target population whose insights, collaboration and participation are considered valuable to the purpose of the study.

4.1.1 Interviews

Two types of interviews were carried out: A researcher-teacher interview, and a researcher-student one.

- The researcher-teacher interview involved most of the teachers who are currently teaching in the target program. The purpose of this exploratory interview was to get general insights from the teachers. This information was then used to set up important guidelines for the course of action of the research. (See Appendix 13 for a list of the researcher-teacher interview questions).
- The researcher-student interview was appointed to be held with eight students according to several criteria: representatives of the different years of the studies, students considered being weak or strong learners, and students selected by the teachers. (See Appendix 12 for a list of the researcher-student interview questions).

a. The researcher-teacher interview

8 teacher interviews were carried out in order to find out specific information about the English Studies Program on a more personal atmosphere. The kind of questions asked aimed at collecting data related to the teachers' awareness of important aspects of the program such as their personal knowledge and opinion of the program as a whole, its main objectives, the professional profile of the graduates, and the teachers' familiarization with the program. On the other hand, they were asked specific questions about the most and least important components of the program, the sequence and interrelation between them, and their favorite subjects. Another important aspect that was covered with these interviews was the teachers' perception and

knowledge of quality indicators for the exit requirements of the studies, and how they view their own roles as teachers.

b. The researcher-student interview

8 students were interviewed in order to get information from two different kinds of students per year. On the one hand, 4 students who have difficulties in the acquisition of the target language were interviewed. On the other hand, 4 other students who are considered the best students of their groups were also interviewed. The questions asked were focused on the students' awareness of the English Studies Program, its curriculum and objectives and their knowledge of the professional profile of the studies. Moreover, students were asked to provide information about the resources of the Department and their use and attendance to the English Lab (CRM). Finally, there were questions related to the most and least important components of the program, the sequence and interrelation between them, and their favorite subjects.

4.1.2 Questionnaires

Concerning the questionnaires, 5 different kinds of formats were designed, with the objective of collecting information from different sources.

- A general one administered to the students of the II, III, IV and V year of the English Studies Program.
- Another questionnaire consisting of six smaller questionnaires used to examine particular aspects of six of the main and most important curricular components of the English Studies Program.
- Another questionnaire was designed to get information from the students about the physical conditions in which their instruction takes place.
- Concerning teachers, there was a general questionnaire used to get their insights about different aspects related to the English Studies Program.
- Finally, there was also another questionnaire designed for the teachers in order to collect information about the materials they currently use to teach their different lessons. (See Appendix 9 for copies of the questionnaires)

a. Students' questionnaires

- **Students' general questionnaire**

These questionnaires aimed at finding out relevant information of different aspects related to their English Studies. There were two kinds of surveys, one for II year students and the other for III, IV and V year. The distinction between the two kinds of surveys was based mainly on the assumption that III, IV, and V year students know more about the organization of the English syllabus than II year students do. Therefore, the questions of these surveys were much more specific for the ones in the highest levels.

Overall, we asked students about their perception of the English curriculum, their motivations to study English, the areas and/or skills they consider more important, their opinions about the material used by the teachers in every component, and the teachers' methodology. In addition to this, students were asked specific questions about the way they view the interpersonal relationships with their teachers and the role students think teachers play in the teaching-learning process and the relationships within the students of every group. On the other hand, students were also asked questions about the difficulties they have experienced as English students, their greatest achievements along the process, and the suggestions to improve the quality of the English Studies Program. Finally, the last questions were related to students' learning strategies, didactic preferences, favorite areas, skills and subjects, and in which circumstances they practice the language outside the classroom.

- **Students' specific questionnaires**

Two specific questionnaires were answered by students:

Questionnaire number one focuses on specific components of the English Studies Program, considered the most important ones. The aim of asking particular questions about those courses was mainly to get students' perceptions about their expectations for each class, the level of difficulty, the materials used, the contents and their main achievements. The questionnaire also asked questions about the teachers' methodology and mastering of the target language. Students were encouraged to give specific suggestions to the teachers in charge of teaching these courses.

Questionnaire number two aims at obtaining data about the external conditions of the teaching-learning environment. There are questions about space, acoustic, ventilation, visibility, furniture and comfort in general. In addition to this, there are questions aimed at finding out students' opinions about the conditions at the CRM concerning self-access time, lab classes, audiovisual resources, schedules and attention in general.

Finally, students were asked to provide information about schedules, number of students per class and bibliographical support.

b. Teachers' questionnaires

- **Teachers' general questionnaires**

These general questionnaires aimed at collecting specific information about the teachers' experience and training as well as their performance and responsibilities as teachers. They were also asked to give their opinion of the curriculum of the English Studies Program (weaknesses and problems), and of their need and willingness to introduce changes and innovations in the program. In addition to this, they were requested to provide information about the courses they have taught in the program, the materials they have used in those courses, and their preferred methodological approaches. Finally, the teachers provided information about their personal motivation to teach in the program, and the values they consider should be promoted in an integral curriculum.

- **Teachers' specific questionnaire**

As regards these questionnaires, the main purpose was to gather relevant information concerning the teachers' perception of the most and least important components of the English Studies Curriculum. In addition to this they provided valuable information about the didactical materials and bibliographical references teachers have used for teaching the different courses of the English Studies Curriculum.

4.1.3 Class observations

Classroom observations on the whole are intended to collect information about what actually happens inside the classroom. Class observation provides adequate and reliable data about behaviours, events and/or situations, which are integrated within a given context. Class observation needs to be carefully planned according to a scheduled time, with the participation of both the observer and the main actors involved in the instructional setting.

According to Brown and Rodgers, there are over 200 existing observation instruments or "grids" (2002). Nevertheless, in the case of this study, the researchers designed their own grid based on a number of different sources and with diverse pre-established purposes. The observation sessions aimed at shedding light on the instructional process focusing particularly on aspects related to the teaching process as a whole. The observed

teachers had full knowledge of the observation guide used by the observers and agreed to collaborate .The main target areas under observation were,

- a) Language Teaching Skills
- b) Language and Linguistic Knowledge
- c) Interpersonal Relationships/Attitudes
- d) Classroom Interactions

(See Appendix 17).

In total, 8 classroom observations were carried out during the second semester 2003 as it is described in the following table (See table 8)

Table 8: Class observations

No. of observation	Curricular Component	Year	No of Students	Teachers' Code	Date of Observation
1	Laboratory	IV	25	A	May 8 th
2	Socio-Cultural Communication	IV	25	B	May 12 th
3	Reading	II	38	A	May 16 th
4	Integrated English	III	35	H	May 19 th
5	Special Didactics	IV	25	D	May 26 th
6	Writing	II	38	G	August 29 th
7	Socio-Cultural Communication	IV	25	F	September 4 th
8	Laboratory	III	25	E	September 30 th

4.1.4 Diaries

A diary is a piece of writing regularly written by a person in an individual way to reflect on his/her language learning or teaching experience. Diaries are traditionally considered valuable tools for research purposes and are subject to analysis for recurring models or prominent and significant events. (Bailey, 1991). This data collection method was used to document students' learning experiences, which were considered important for the purposes of the research.

The type of diaries used in this research was the learner's introspective diary. The diaries were written by students of IV and V year of the English Studies during the second semester of 2003. Students were encouraged by the teachers to write and express the feelings, opinions, main objectives, problems and

achievements they had experienced during their time in the English Studies Program. The diaries were systematically read and answered by the teachers in a friendly and responsive manner in order to ensure that students felt confident and free enough to express their thoughts.

In this chapter we have outlined the main methodological tools and approaches used to collect information for this study. According to the scheduled plan of activities, the huge amount of gathered data were then coded, classified and categorized, ready for their interpretation. The next chapter will present the concrete findings of this study. It will focus on the analysis of the collected data based on the objectives of the research and the constructs defined in the Literature Review chapter.

VII. ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND OUTCOMES

The main purpose of this chapter is to provide an accurate report, analysis and interpretation of all relevant information collected by means of the instruments mentioned in the previous chapter. In order to describe and evaluate the English Studies Program, as formulated in the objectives, the concrete answers and results of the study will be presented in details. The procedures of the present analysis follow the approach suggested by Richards in which a program under evaluation should go through an analysis of all “the interlinked system of elements (i.e., needs, goals, teachers, learners, syllabuses, materials and teaching)” which are known as the keys factors of a second language curriculum.

One of the main criteria for undertaking the proper selection and concentrating on concrete aspects among the numerous data gathered in the collecting process, is the importance, relevance and interest this information can imply to the EFL area in the region, as well as for the main actors and participants involved in the program.

According to Coll and Palmer, there are two suggested models for presenting the results of a research. The first one is to present the sections of Results, Discussion and Outcomes separately. The second one consists of joining these three sections. In fact, the Results section “analyses data in a descriptive way while the Discussion and Outcomes parts are based on the analysis of these data from the point of view of the researchers”. In other words, “whereas the Results section is totally objective and limited to present the findings of the research, the Discussion and Outcomes sections present the writer’s individual interpretation of the study carried out” (Coll and Palmer: 148) From our point of view, the section which focuses on the mere reading of the data (results) is the starting point of the interpretation and personal conclusions of the researchers. These sections are therefore closely interlinked and indivisible. In this chapter, the results will be presented, then carefully and systematically discussed, in order to draw the necessary logical conclusions. In other words, Results, Discussion and Outcomes will be linked and presented jointly.

In order to present the findings, the cyclical framework described by Coll and Palmer, which involves three basic steps, will be followed: (Coll and Palmer: 151)

- Step 1: Summary of Results from which the main conclusions are drawn.
- Step 2: Possible explanations and assumptions of what the results suggest, together with the theoretical reference or the reference to results previously mentioned.
- Step 3: Further explanations and discussions linked to other possible fields and facts.

This basic cycle is repeated as many times as necessary according to the amount of analyzed information. The model moves gradually from specific to general aspects.

The present analysis will focus first on the key participants, learners and teachers. Then it will deal with the institutional factors and with the curriculum and syllabus of the program under evaluation. Finally, the quality standards according to the quality indicators mentioned in the Literature Review chapter (Chapter IV) will be outlined. At the end of the chapter, the limitations of this study will be analyzed and mentioned.

1. The learners

The first results that will be presented, discussed and analyzed will group all the data obtained from the main target population of the studies, the students. In the chapter about the Context of the research, the general characteristics of the students of the English Studies Program, (year of studies, number of students, ages, sex and place of origin), have already been presented (See table 1 page 39).

In this section there will be a thorough examination of students' background and learning experience, perception of the program as well as their motivation, interest and expectations. Then, the students' personality and interpersonal relationships, learning styles and learning strategies, favorite didactical activities, and performance and behavior in the classroom will be scrutinized. Finally, their opinion about teachers and the main difficulties and achievements will be presented and discussed.

1.1 Students' background and learning experience

All 124 students had previous basic contact with the target language at secondary school levels, as it is a required subject at this level. The majority of them had taken English courses at *Año Común* (except for the V year students who followed a different curriculum). Concerning their performance of the target language, the teachers agreed on saying that all groups presented the characteristic of mixed ability groups. This is mainly due to several factors:

- ✓ they studied in different secondary school systems (private vs. state schools or urban vs. rural)
- ✓ they come from different social strata
- ✓ they had had different opportunities to study English privately
- ✓ they had different approaches and training on learning strategies

1.2 Students' motivation, interests and expectations

The students' levels of motivation within the English Studies Program vary greatly from student to student and it is also different from year to year.

According to the results, after *Año Comun* studies, students select the field they want to major in and they apply for their two favorite areas. The selection criteria depends on their performance and grades at *Año Comun* and not all students achieve the entry criteria for their preferred area. Therefore, many students have to choose other areas to which they were not really motivated.

The following two tables clearly show what the surveyed 124 students' two top choices were.

Table 9. Students' selected first majors

UNAN-LEON SELECTED FIRST MAJORS	II YEAR	III YEAR	IV YEAR	V YEAR	TOTAL
English	48.5%	16.1%	31.6%	36.4%	33.15%
Medicine	12.1%	19.4%	15.8%	13.6%	15.20%
Scientific Majors	18.2%	38.7%	15.8%	27.3%	25%
Business/Economy	12.1%	6.5%	31.6%	0%	12.55%
Agroecology/Veterinary	3%	6.5%	5.3%	0%	3.7%
Tourism	0%	3.2%	0%	0%	0.8%
Law	6.1 %	9.7%	0%	22.7%	9.6%

Table 10. Students' selected second majors

UNAN-LEON SELECTED SECOND MAJORS	II YEAR	III YEAR	IV YEAR	V YEAR	TOTAL
English	75.8%	93.5%	73.7%	86.4%	82.35%
Medicine	3.0%	3.2%	0 %	4.5%	2.67%
Scientific Majors	15.2%	3.2%	10.5%	4.5%	8.35. %
Business/Economy	3.0%	0%	0%	%	0.75%
Agroecology/Veterinary	0%	0%	0%	4.5%	1.12%
Tourism	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Law	3.0%	0%	0%	0%	0.75%
No answers	0%	0%	15.8%	0%	3.95

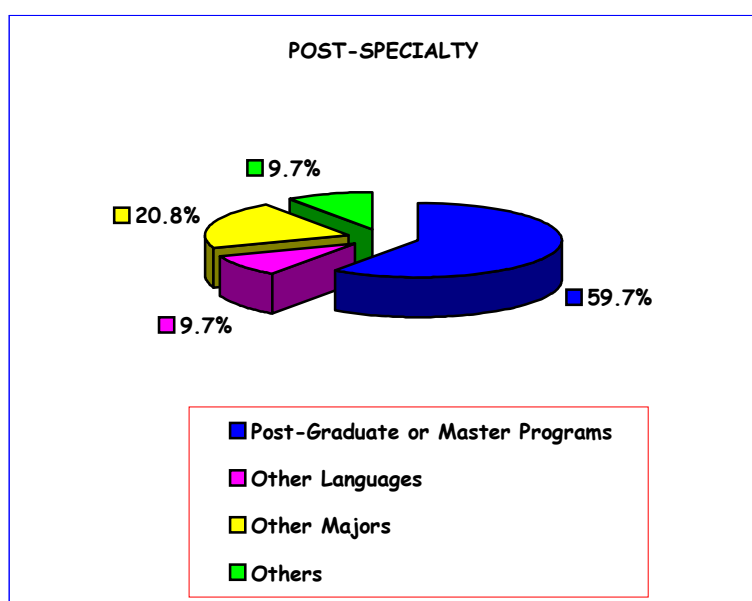
These results indicate that only 33.15% of the surveyed students wished to study English, whereas 66.85% had selected other majors. It is interesting to notice that 25% of the students wanted a scientific area (the newly opened computer engineering science is very attractive to young university students).

Nevertheless, their motivation to study English as a second option is clearly evident in the second table (82.35% of students). From these results we can conclude that for most of the surveyed students, majoring in English was not their first choice, but it was among their preferences. This is mainly due to the fact that most of them consider English a very important area.

To explain the importance of English from students' point of view, the following reasons are mentioned:

- ✓ Universal language
- ✓ Culture
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Globalization
- ✓ Traveling
- ✓ Professional Development

On the other hand, the researchers observed that another issue closely related to the students' motivation towards their studies, is the possible future post-specialty field in which they can continue their professional training. The questionnaires' results showed that all students have clear pre-established plans in this sense. These potential fields are shown in the following pie:

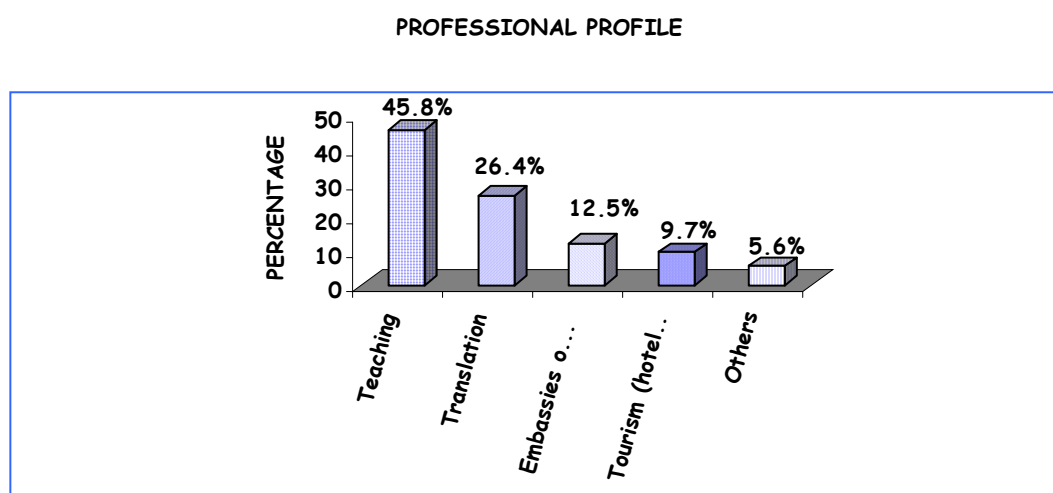


The results show that the two main tendencies are

- ✓ Studying a Postgraduate Course or Master's Program (59.7%)
- ✓ Studying other university Majors (20.8%)
- ✓ Studying other languages (9.7%)
- ✓ Others (9.7%)

From these data it can be concluded that most students are aware of the importance of an on-going professional future training. Indeed, very few students would be satisfied with only one basic university degree in EFL, which also reflects their motivation towards further training in their chosen area in order to strengthen and widen their skills, or their wish to expand their professional formation to other connected fields. It is not surprising to see that students are quite aware and convinced of how English can be linked with other professional fields in order to expand their knowledge to other areas and compete professionally in our modern world. This point is further supported by students' future professional preferences.

Students' expectations of the possible professional areas in which they can develop are reflected in the following bars:



The professional positions students would like to hold are, for the most part, in the teaching area (45.8%), followed by the translation and interpretation fields (26.4 %); 27.8% also express their interests in working at places like embassies, NGOs, hotels, airports and other places associated to the national and international business world and tourism.

To sum up, it is obvious that the motivations that drive students towards studying English are both intrinsic and extrinsic. They are also closely related to, on the one hand, the modern needs of Nicaraguan context and, on the other hand, to the challenges and demands of the changing international context. The results suggest that the English Studies Program has to find the way to meet efficiently students' demands and expectations of further training in their field or additional professional preparation. Such an approach would certainly make

the program more dynamic and attractive, and would decisively contribute to motivate young students towards the study of English. On the one hand, in any future changes to the curriculum of the English Studies Program, the students' range of needs and professional plans should be considered. For example, more courses related to Special Didactics, ESP, working in International Business, applying for post-graduate studies could possibly be added as valid options for our students. On the other hand, the Department policy for offering Post-Graduate Courses and Masters' Program needs to be constantly maintained and extended. In order to do this, contact with sister universities need to be made, and existing cooperation programs have to be efficiently managed, supervised and strengthened.

1.3 Students' personality and interpersonal relationships

When asked about their interpersonal relationship in the program, students' opinions vary greatly from year to year. The results show that only the IV year students have good interpersonal relationships within the group (89.5 %); this is indeed the group with the smallest group of students (19). On the contrary, the three other groups of students, II, III and V provided more divided opinions about their relationships. For instance, the V year students, 12 out of 22 students have a negative perception concerning their interpersonal relationship on the group; as for the III year students, 14 out of 31 students were dissatisfied with their relationships in the group; finally, the II year students results show that 21 out of 33 students didn't really like the kind of relationship they had among peers.

From these results, added to the teachers' knowledge of the different groups, it can be concluded that the relationships in the groups were particularly affected by some kind of group antagonism and divisions. This result is also confirmed by the classroom observations and the teachers' own experience, which confirmed the existence of classroom territoriality and student tendency to sit always at the same place and work always with the same people. The possible reasons might be that some students tend to establish stronger relationship with those whose personality is somehow similar to their own (the shy and introverted group, the extroverted and hyperactive ones, the religious –oriented ones, sex territoriality, and so forth).

Moreover, a certain degree of divisionism can be observed by the teachers as result of the mixed-ability situation within the different groups (those students with higher command of the target language who have a better performance tend to form a private "island" in the classroom and are often envied by the group of the weakest students). There are also conflictive and dominating personalities in each group, who are generally the group leaders and are not so tolerant and open to their peers' different opinions and particularities.

This particular situation can have a number of different implications when it comes to students' performance, the general classroom atmosphere and the teachers' management of the group. As a result of all this, better

peer relationships need to be promoted in the program, in order to be sure that a positive classroom atmosphere is generated at all time.

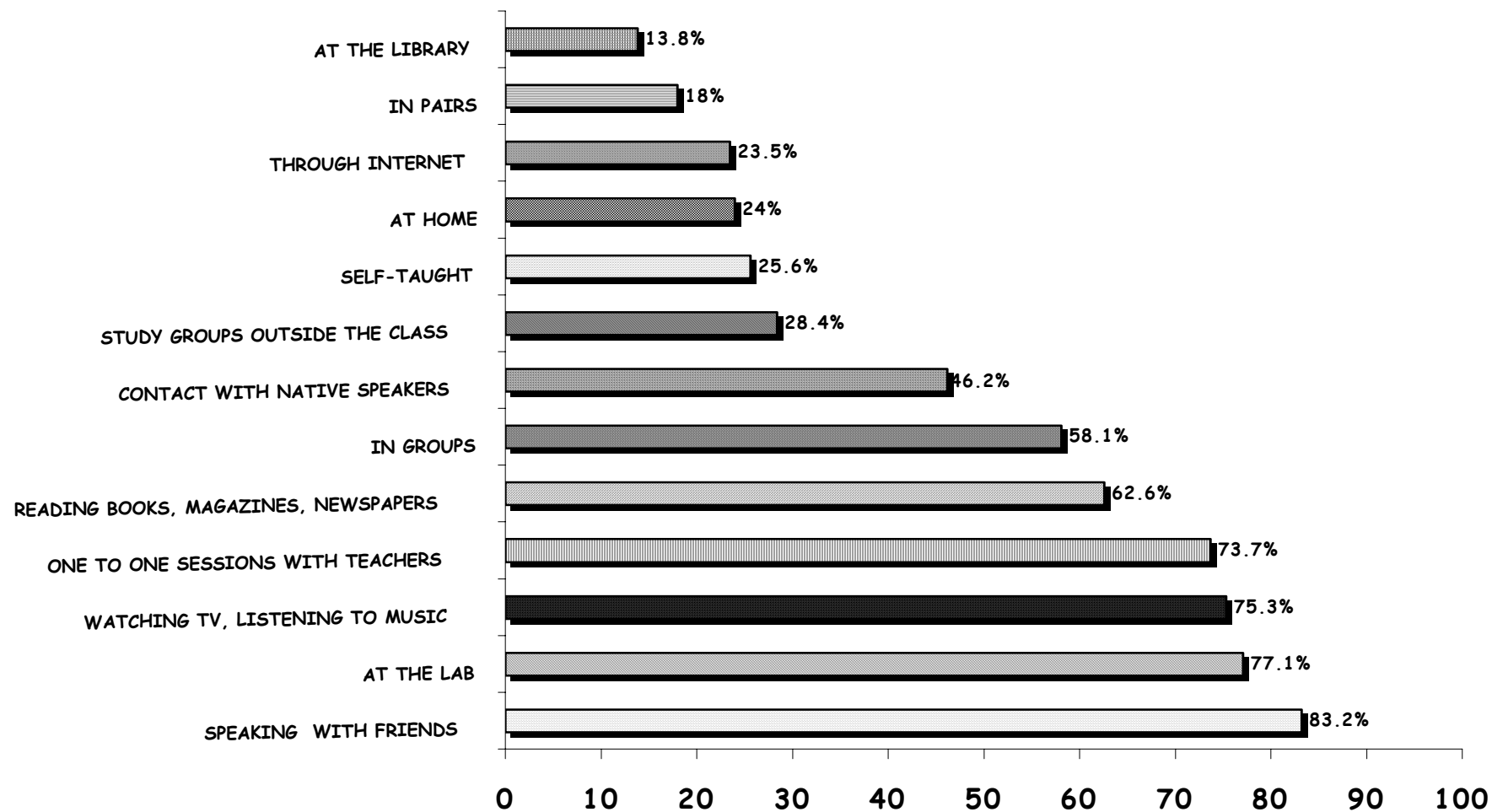
1.4 Students' learning styles

Learning styles are considered key factors to successful acquisition in every field. Therefore, we included a closed-ended question aimed at finding out what particular learning strategies students use along their language acquisition process. We gave students several options, which included the particular ways of studying they might use according to our own perception. Students could check as many as they wanted. Each option was a variable, and for statistics purposes, the charts grouped the answers as “Yes” and “No.” (See appendix 7). These included learning activities such as self-study at the lab (CRM), study groups in the classrooms, one-to-one sessions with teachers, contact with native speakers, watching TV and listening to music, reading books, magazines, and newspapers and finally speaking English with friends or relatives. The following table indicates the favorite learning strategies and ways of studying of all the students of the English Studies Program. (See table 11)

Table 11. Students' learning styles and ways of studying

No.	LEARNING STYLES AND WAYS OF STUDYING	II year	III year	IV year	V year
1.	Self-taught	21.2%	22.6%	31.6%	27.3%
2.	At home	15.2%	25.8%	36.8%	18.2%
3.	In the library	15.2%	16.1%	10.5%	13.6%
4.	At the CRM	75.8%	77.4%	73.7%	81.8%
5.	In groups in the classrooms	18.2%	58.1%	78.9%	77.3%
6.	Study groups outside the classroom	27.3%	29.0%	21.1%	36.4%
7.	In pairs	27.3%	25.8%	5.3%	13.6%
8.	One to one sessions with a teacher	63.6%	87.1%	57.9%	86.4%
9.	Contact with native speakers	42.4%	45.2%	47.4%	50%
10.	Watching TV, listening to music	69.7%	80.6%	73.7%	77.3%
11.	Through Internet	21.2%	19.4%	26.3%	27.3%
12.	Reading books, magazines and newspapers	60.6%	64.5%	52.6%	72.7%
13.	Speaking English with friends	81.8%	90.3%	78.9%	81.8%

LEARNING STYLES AND WAYS OF STUDYING



As shown in the bar chart and table above, for a great majority of students the favorite learning strategies and ways of learning are speaking English with friends, learning English with the audiovisual means at the CRM, watching TV and listening to music, and one to one contact with teachers. The results also showed that students appreciate reading books, magazines and newspapers in English, and working in groups in the classroom. Obviously, students prefer those learning activities in which they can have contact with other people they like (friends) or can get valuable help from (the teacher). Moreover, personalized attention from the teachers seems to be very appealing to them as they can get direct answers from the teachers on a more personal basis. In addition to this, these young students are specially attracted by modern technology as they express their preferences in using the multimedia resources at the English CRM such as documentaries and films on videos and DVD's. They are also fond of using recorded and written material designed for self-study purposes.

On the other hand, the least favorite learning activities rank from studying at the library, through working in pairs, using Internet, studying at home and studying on their own. The possible reasons for this unusual lack of interest in pair work activities might be the fact that some teachers group them with other classmates who are not their friends, or that they know they get easily distracted. On the other hand, the Faculty library is usually very crowded, as *Año Común* students also share the Faculty facilities. As for using Internet, there is a logical economical constraint, which limits students' access to this particular resource. The faculty library is not connected to Internet so far. Another possible explanation is that most of our students are still illiterate in using and managing computers.

As for studying at home and alone (individual work), the studying conditions students may have at home are generally not appropriate for them as most of them come from large families and live in small houses. The fact that students don't like working on their own reflects some cultural characteristics: Nicaraguan students are used to a communal and collective kind of life, and consider individual work boring.

However, these results vary significantly from one year to the other in specific study preferences. For instance, the level of difficulty and demands of the courses of IV and V year might be a determinant factor in the predilection students have to study in groups as they have to present research projects and literature outlines. On the one hand, students need their classmates' input and value the help they get from one another. On the other hand, the fact that they have been together during the previous years of their studies, has made them get to know each other better and have more opportunities to interact than the students in the two first years of the studies.

There are also significant differences in the preference for reading activities between the II, III and IV year students and the students of the V year. Again, one of the reasons for this is that IV and V year students are aware

of the importance of reading in order to get access to authentic information; they also get reading training in the Literature course. As they have a better command of the target language, they feel more confident with their reading skills. On the contrary, II and III year students tend to find reading more boring and difficult.

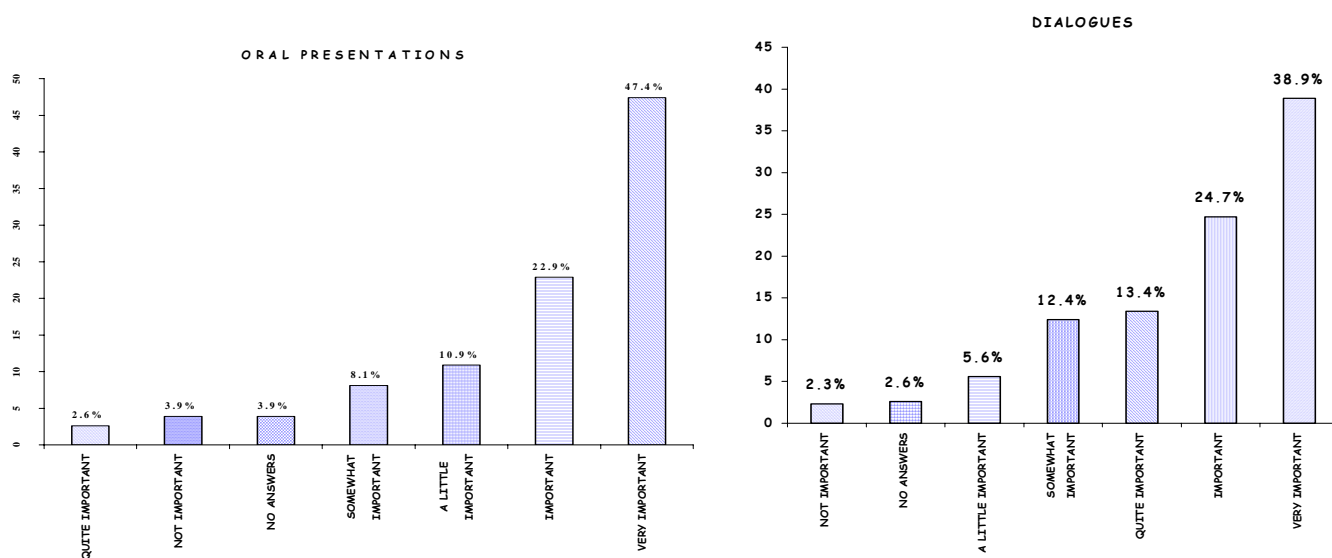
To sum up, the students of the English Studies Program show very definite favorite learning activities common to the different levels and connected to audio-visual technology and group interaction. They are not keen on activities that are individual, home-based and that involve some kind of economical investment. In the following sections, students' particular opinion about the CRM and the teachers' role and attention will be examined in order to find out if their expectations are met in terms of their favorite learning ways.

1.5 Students' favorite didactic activities

Since students are exposed to a number of different approaches and teaching styles, which also involve the use of different classroom dynamics and activities, we were interested in finding out which ones students preferred the most and which ones were the least important for them. In this sense, the general survey included a specific question that gave students the possibility to rank a list of activities labeling them as very important, important, quite important, somewhat important, a little important, and not important. The activities included games, songs, movies, dialogues, debate groups, written comprehension questions, role-plays, competitions, quizzes and questionnaires, activities with visual aids, and oral presentations.

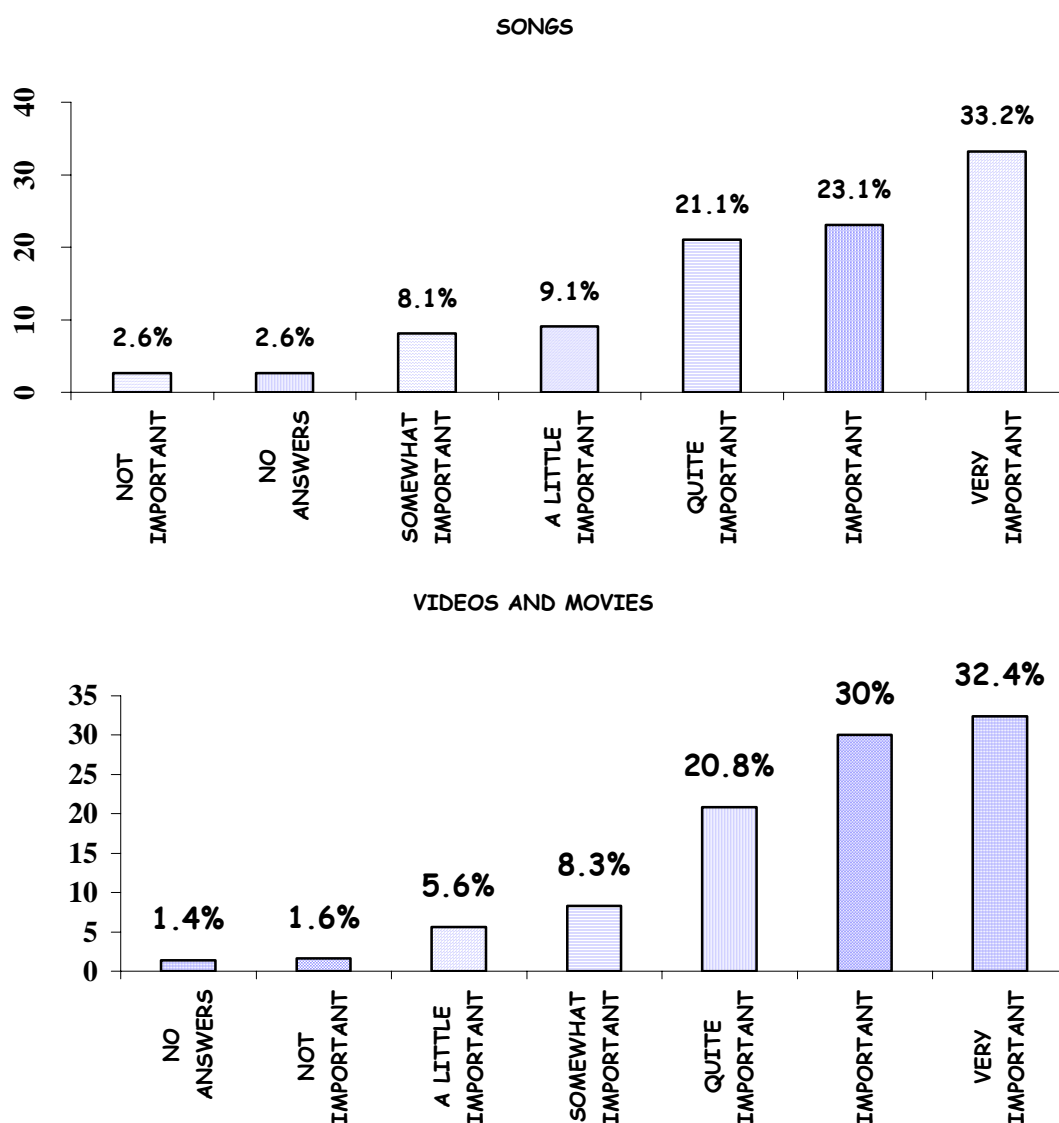
The following graphics show the tendency in terms of the most important and the least important didactic activities:

a. Oral presentations and dialogues



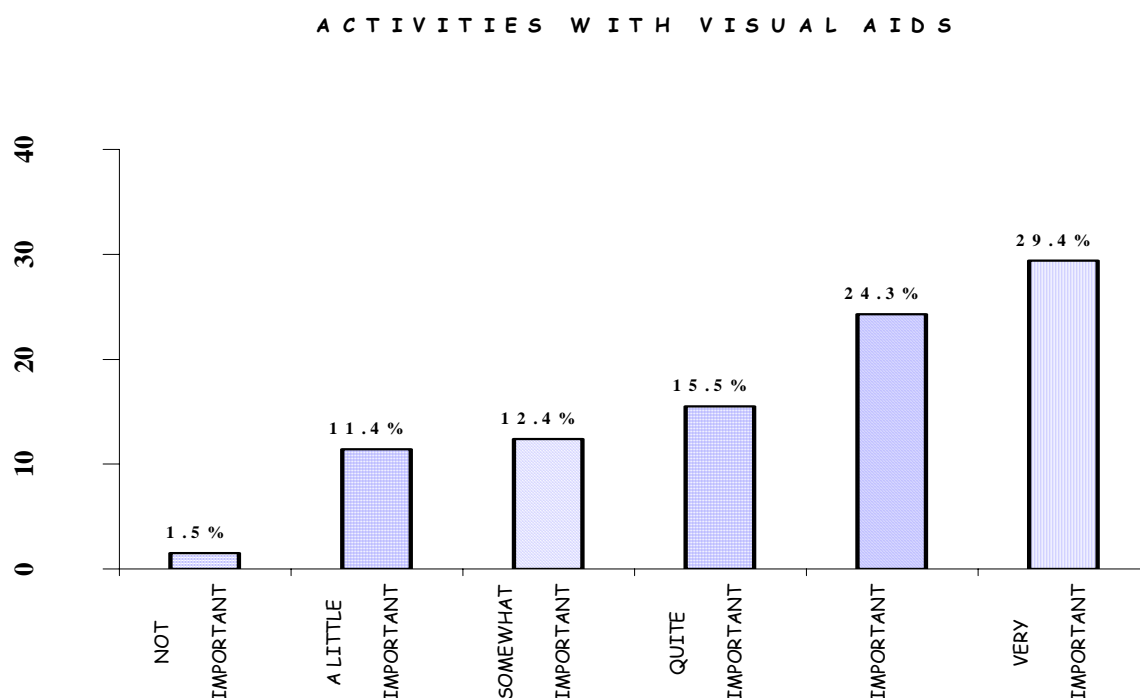
Many of the activities the students perform during the development of their English Studies in many of the components of the program are oral performances and dialogues. From the results, we found out that these are their favorite learning tasks as reflected in the charts (Oral presentations: 47.4%, dialogues: 38.9%). This preference shows students' real concern about their speaking abilities, which is the ability that really proves their communicative competence. Students are quite aware of the importance of strengthening their speaking skills by means of oral presentations, dialogues and any conversation task. Teachers should take into account students' predilection for these kinds of activities at the moment of planning their lessons. Moreover, given the importance and significance of speaking activities to students, there should be a special focus on teacher training in this specific area as well as ways of implementing such activities in large classes

b. Songs, videos and movies



Students' preferences in terms of listening to songs (33.2%) and watching videos and movies (32.4%) show students' interest in strengthening their listening skills by using audiovisual means and resources. This particular fondness is consistent with students' inclination to use the CRM self-access time. Given the importance of the CRM for the students of the English Studies Program, it should be a priority to optimize its resources.

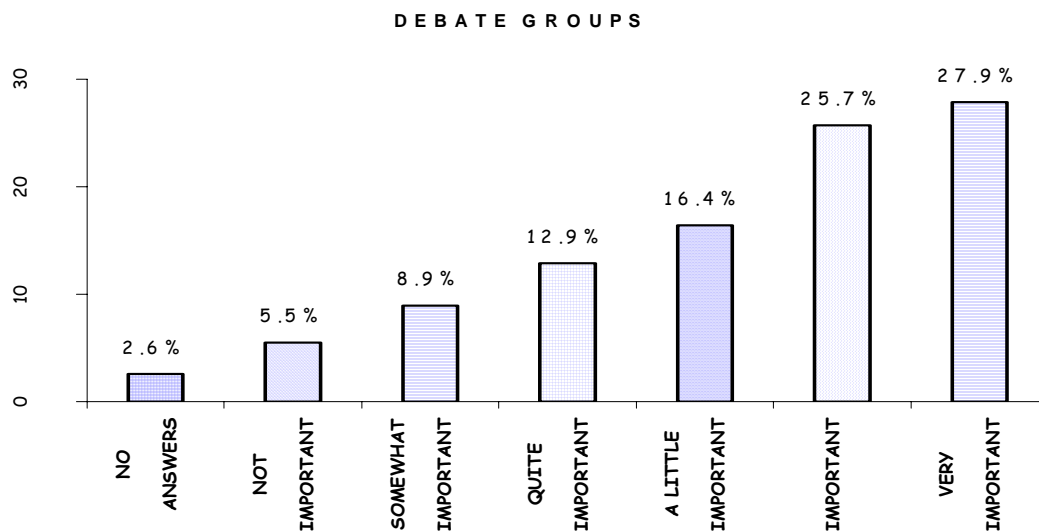
c. Visual aids



29.4% of the students rank visual aids in the third place in order of importance. The use of pictures, drawings, photos and any kind of visual support is highly useful for a number of reasons. First of all, it introduces an element of motivation and variety into the classroom. Second, it provides the lessons with visual elements that facilitate students' comprehension and learning. Finally, as mentioned in the literature review section chapter IV, visual learners benefit significantly from the graphic nature of visuals. Therefore, the use of such elements should constitute an essential part of teachers' resource banks.

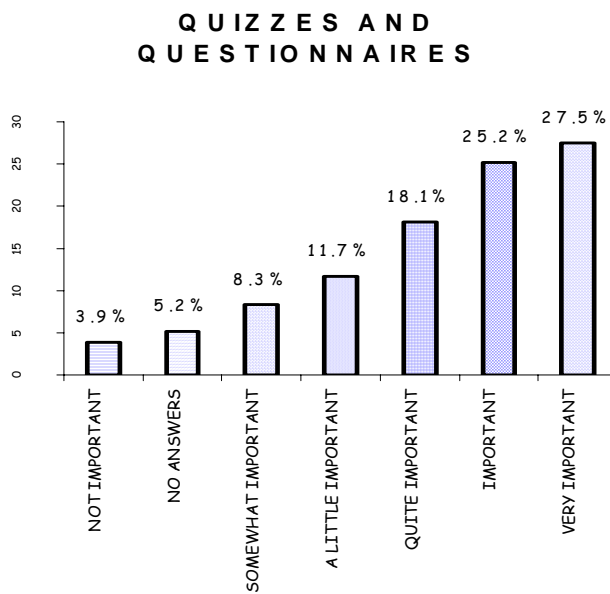
The different learners' learning styles have direct implications in the classroom, therefore these individual variables should be taken into account when it comes to planning and implementing activities within the classroom.

d. Debate groups

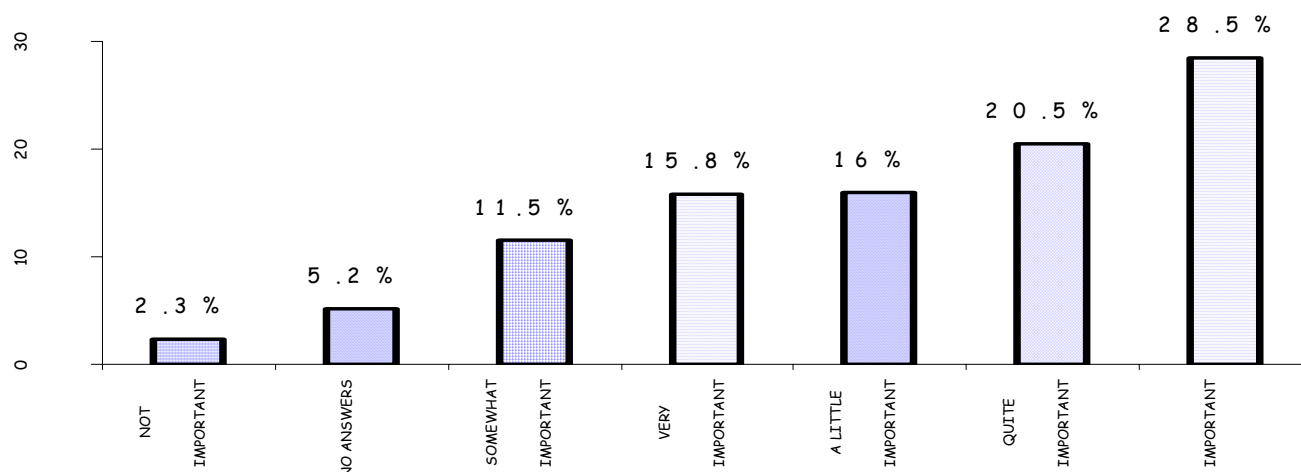


As for promoting debate groups for discussion inside the classroom, 27.9% of the students say it is important. Surprisingly enough, debates are not so popular as dialogues and oral presentations. This may be due to the size of the classes and to the fact that in order to participate in debates students have to use a variety of communicative strategies such as arguing, agreeing, disagreeing, and so forth. Certainly, this could be an interesting area for further consolidation and development in order to encourage teachers to integrate these kinds of speaking tasks into their lessons.

e. Quizzes, questionnaires and written comprehension questions



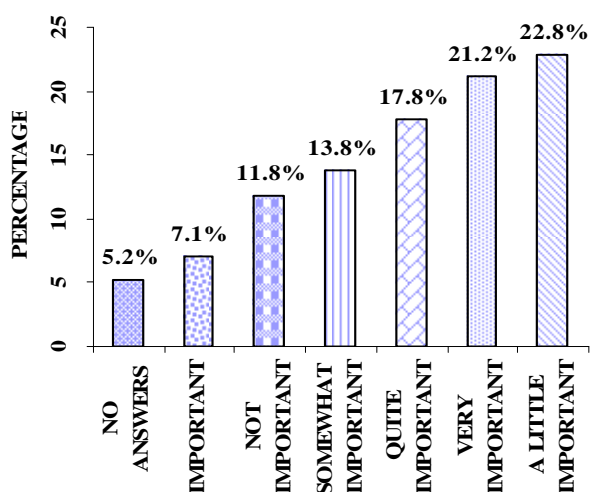
W R I T T E N C O M P R E H E N S I O N Q U E S T I O N S



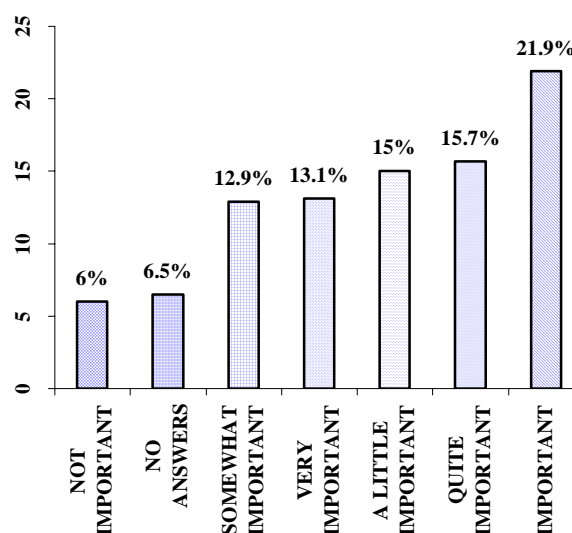
These bar charts indicate that 27.5% of the students mention quizzes and questionnaires and 15.8% mention written questionnaires as very important didactical activities. It is obvious that written assignments are tasks that some students feel comfortable with. This is probably due to the fact that they are traditional instructional tasks with which students are quite familiar.

f. Games and competitions

GAMES

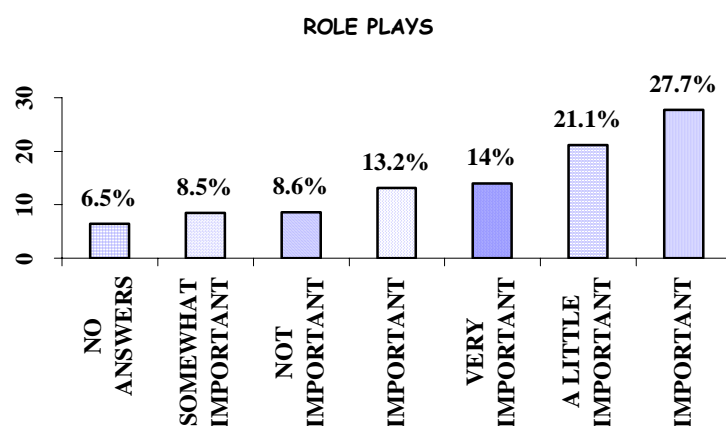


COMPETITIONS



Surprisingly enough, games and competitions are not among the most favorite activities. Only 21.2% of the students say that games are important in the language classroom; competitions are the least important of all the didactical activities (13.1%). A possible reason for this might be that students are not quite familiar with the use of games and competitions as part of the activities teachers use in the classrooms. Maybe, for some students, games are too informal and represent a loss of time, not worth doing as part of the instructional tasks, as there are more serious and formal aspects. In fact, the classroom observations carried out showed little proof of the use of games and competitions in the classroom. However, it is a fact that they are valuable motivational tools that help teachers create a nice and comfortable learning environment, which also promote students' interaction, sharing and exchange, without mentioning the helpful dimension in terms of language acquisition and learning. It is thus highly recommended that teachers use games and competitions as part of their daily teaching praxis. In order to achieve this, there should be a purposeful intention to provide teachers with useful suggestions and ideas that would help them use games more frequently.

g. Role-plays



Again, it is quite surprising that students don't show any particular interest in learning by using role-plays. As the results show, only 14 % of them rank role-plays as very important. From this we can conclude that students are not particularly fond of using role-plays. Either students are not quite familiar with role-plays because teachers do not use them frequently, or students might not like them because there is the risk that they learn the dialogues by heart, which affects the spontaneous nature of the conversational exchanges. However, it is a fact that role-plays when carried out effectively are very effective tools in the reinforcement and consolidation of speaking skills.

1.6 Students' performance and behavior in the target language

Students' different learning styles and favorite activities logically lead to analyze their specific behaviours and performance in a classroom situation. Information about this issue has been taken mainly from the classroom observation sessions, the specific questionnaire and the diaries.

1.6.1 Students' participation in class

First, some information was obtained from the questionnaires and the diaries. Students were asked whether they felt satisfied or not with their participation in the classroom. The answers varied according to the class, and to the year of studies.

Indeed, students are not always satisfied with their involvement in the classroom activities. For instance, in one case (Socio Cultural Communication), 75% of the students communicated their dissatisfaction regarding their participation in class. This particular situation depends on a number of factors: characteristics of the class, teacher, teacher material, activities themselves and so forth. This was complemented with the actual comments students wrote in the questionnaires, which shed light on the particular reasons they put forward to explain their lack of participation.

Regarding their participation in class, students argue that:

- ✓ Sometimes the materials used by the teachers in the class are not appropriate, because they are not challenging enough for them. Moreover, teachers should add systematically extra motivational activities (music, debates, role plays, games, more videos) to encourage students to get involved and participate more.
- ✓ The level for some classes is not the appropriate one (either too easy or too difficult).
- ✓ The frequencies for some classes are sometimes insufficient, so teachers should try to maximize the class time.

The students' diaries also present some important explanations about their personal feelings and reasons as regards their participation in class. A V year student states: *"I don't give make enough efforts. I like this class but sometimes I feel confused because I don't know if everything in my English is bad .I am doing more or less and I feel disappointed about myself"*.

Another student says:” *I feel very worried because my participation is very poor, and I can’t fail the class. I understand the class, but sometimes I try to put my ideas in order. However it is difficult sometimes for me. It’s Ok, I need more practice in my abilities. It’s perhaps teacher’s support which is insufficient.*”

In the first case, the student clearly points out that her feeling insecure and inhibited is one of the reasons why she is not satisfied with her participation. In the second case, the student evidently makes efforts to participate and recognizes that he needs to practice more. He seems to expect more motivation, encouragement and support from his teacher.

1.6.2 Students’ performance and behavior in class

The situation expressed in the questionnaires and diaries had to be completed and/or contrasted with the data obtained by means of the observation of particular instructional sessions. Among the aspects of the class that the teachers observers had to focus on, there were a number of specific samples of students’ behaviors and reactions (asking and answering questions, period of silence, laughter, excitement, and so forth). In addition to this, the observers had to find out whether the students looked interested in the class and whether or not every student was involved in the activities at some point.

The research team observed 8 different classes in total, as samples of the teaching-learning process. As for students’ involvement and interest in the activities, in five of the classes observed, a satisfactory level of students’ involvement could not be detected. In the observation guide, the observers rated this aspect as “*room for growth and development is needed*”. As for the other three observations, the levels of student’s involvement ranked from “*acceptable*” to “*competent*”

As for classroom interaction, another striking aspect of the observation sessions is the fact that in all eight classes, only a limited number of students asked questions spontaneously in order to clarify some doubts. In this sense only 10 questions were detected in all 8 sessions. This absence of questions could be due to students’ lack of interest for the content of the class, or inhibition at the moment of speaking. Anyway, teachers could easily remedy this undesired situation by dedicating a moment of the class to a question and answer exchange, in which students know they can clarify any doubts, ask for more explanations and express their feelings.

Only 3 observation sessions gave real proof of spontaneous and enthusiastic interaction, on the other hand, the other 5 classes didn’t show any period of laughter and excitement. In 50% of the classes observed, there were periods of silence and confusion at some point. In the other classes, no such phenomena could be observed. This data demonstrate that, as far as classroom interaction is concerned, there are some serious limitations in some

cases. This disturbing situation, again, could be successfully addressed by teachers, provided they pay close attention to the kind of interaction that takes place in the classroom. Such means as regular observation sessions by inviting a colleague to observe a particular aspect of a class could be very helpful to improve students' interaction. This could contribute to raise considerably students' interest and involvement in the class. It would also be very gratifying and rewarding for teachers, as they would gain significant professional development, without mentioning the fact that the relationship with the students would be also notably strengthened.

1.7 Opinion about teachers

Another important aspect of the information given by the students is related to their perception of the teacher's methodology, their relationships with students and the role they play in the teaching-learning process.

1.7.1 Students-teachers relationships

In relation to the way students view their relationship with the teachers, 89 students (83.6%) provided a positive general opinion, whereas 12 of them (13.6%) expressed a negative opinion, and 4 (3.6%) didn't give any answer. These interesting results show that the great majority of the students are satisfied with the kind of relationship that currently exists between teachers and students in the English Studies Program.

1.7.2 Teachers' roles in the classroom

a. Students perception of the ideal teacher

As regards the teachers' roles, we wanted to find out how students perceive teachers roles. For this purpose, the question about the teachers' roles included categories such as "friend", "mentor", "guide", "authority" and "pressure". The following table shows students' perception of their teachers' roles.

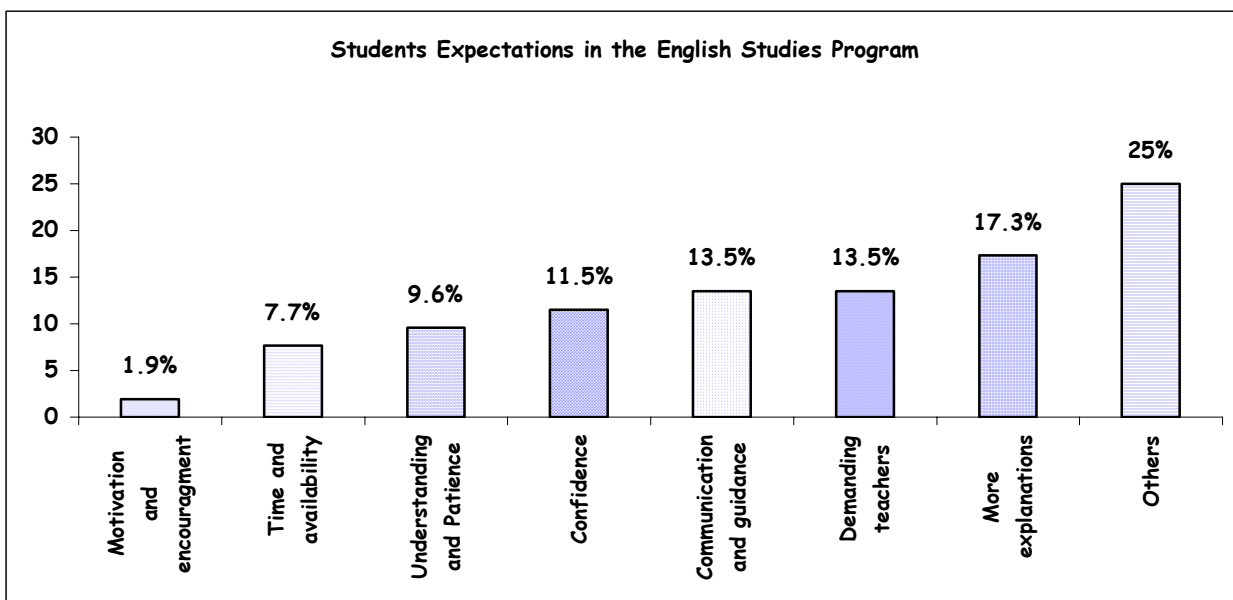
Table 12. Teachers' roles

Teachers' roles	II	III	IV	V	Total
A friend	51.5%	45.2%	36.8%	59.1%	48.15%
A mentor	9.1%	22.6%	26.3%	4.5%	15.62%
An authority	0%	3.2%	15.8%	0%	4.75%
A guide	39.4%	29%	15.8%	36.4%	30.15%
A pressure	0%	0%	5.3%	0%	1.3%

According to the results, most of the students consider that teachers should be friends (48.15%) whose role is to guide them and mentor them in the classroom. Only a minority (6%) considers their teachers should be an authority or pressure. Obviously our students are not traditional as they are familiar with the modern methodological trends, which insist on teachers' roles as friends and on cooperative learning, rather than on more traditional approaches in which a teacher is considered as the main authority and central person in the classroom.

b. Students' expectations from their teachers

It is important at this point to find out whether teachers fulfill and satisfy students' needs and expectations. For this purpose, in the general questionnaire, students were asked to define and explain what exactly they expect from their teachers. The following bar chart clearly shows the different criteria students provided to determine their teachers' roles and the help they need from them.



Among the different criteria, students point out that they need more explanations (17.3%), followed by the need of better communication and guidance (13.5%); they also state they need more demanding teachers (13.5%); finally, they express their wish to get enough levels of confidence with their teachers. Some other criteria mentioned by the students are related to understanding and patience (9.6%), the time and availability they want from their teachers (7.7%), and motivation and encouragement in general (1.9%). Among the other expectations they mention harmony and friendship, being open to communication, sincerity, sense of humor, teachers' interest for their problems, flexibility, and so forth.

In other words, students generally consider these criteria as key elements to really get help and support from their teachers.

The results obtained in the personal interviews shed more light on this particular issue. As one IV year student points out, “teachers’ support is not really good (...) Students have no teachers’ confidence.” Another IV year student states “on the whole students don’t have a good opinion about the way teachers support them.”

It is clearly evident that students are aware of the fact that they do need their teachers’ assistance and aid in order to get consistent and satisfactory training. It is also obvious that students’ perception of teacher support is not always positive. Indeed, students are very concerned about their teachers’ support, and they show this concern in the variety of answers and kind of teachers’ functions they perceive as necessary. As a previous statistical result indicated that 86.4% of the students value and appreciate personalized attention from their teachers, therefore it would be a good idea to promote more one-to-one sessions with the teachers, in which they pay special attention towards fulfilling these needs and demands.

1.7.3 Teachers’ methodology

a. Students’ perception of teachers’ methodology

In terms of methodology, the answers provided by students were categorized as “use of adequate and inadequate methodology”. Again, students’ global opinion about the teacher’s methodology is generally positive (82.86%). Only 17.13% of the students consider that their teachers in general use inadequate methodology.

It is important to complete this information taken from the general questionnaires with the opinions expressed by students in their interviews. Interestingly enough, one V year student states in his oral interview that “some teachers do not have the appropriate didactic and pedagogical knowledge”. As for the IV year, another student says in his interview that: “The teachers’ methodology is good, but could be better.” Another IV year student adds: “The teachers’ methodology is not adequate, sometimes.” As for the opinion of a II year student, she says: “The teachers’ methodology is good. Every teacher has his/her own teaching style.”

There seems to be some differences between the ways students view their teachers’ methodology in general depending on the year they study in. According to the interviews, the V and IV year students are more critical than the II year students. The reason for this difference may be that IV and V year students are more aware of all the elements implied in what could be described as “an adequate methodology”, as they have more experience, and have received more general and specific didactical classes. In addition to this, these students have already had

real professional training in secondary schools at this point. They are thus more analytical about their teachers' approaches.

However, this information about teachers' general methodology, provided in the general questionnaire, needs to be confirmed and /or contrasted with students' perception of the particular methodology used by the teachers who teach the main curricular components of the program. The six specific subjects, which were chosen as samples and for which students were asked to give their perceptions, were the following:

- Integrated English (III and IV year)
- Advanced Writing (V year)
- Reading (II year)
- Literature (V year)
- Laboratory (IV year)
- Socio Cultural Communication (Conversation) (IV year)

Again, students were asked to give their opinion about teachers' methodology with an open-ended question. For the 4 areas of Advanced Writing, Integrated English, Reading and Literature, the results are, again, positive: students rank their teachers' methodology as follows:

- "Excellent": 26.8%
- "Very good": 38.7%
- "Adequate and good": 34.5%

As for the areas of Laboratory and Socio-Cultural Communication, students give the following answers:

- Socio Cultural Communication: -Adequate (95%) - Inadequate (5%)
- Laboratory: -Adequate (69.2%) -Inadequate (15.4) -No answers (15.4)

Consequently, there seems to be more concerns about the teachers' methodology in the area of Laboratory. As for the 15.4% of the students who didn't give any answers, this could possibly be understood as negative answers (students sometimes prefer to remain silent and not criticize their teacher, which is quite understandable).

In short, in their general questionnaires, students agree in stating that they are globally satisfied with their teachers' methodology. However, the perceptions of II year and IV and V year students vary. IV and V year students, who are in higher levels, are more critical and demanding as regards their teachers' methodology. When asked to give their opinions about targeted classes in the specific questionnaires, students show more varied

perceptions about the methodology used by the teachers. According to the results, students' opinion about the methodology used in the Laboratory class is particularly divided. A possible reason to explain this difficulty is that this particular class is perhaps more complex to handle for a teacher, because of the necessity of using good audio-visual materials (cassettes and videos), combined with an adequate approach. Therefore, the laboratory teachers need support and help in order to improve their methodology, and some specific training for Laboratory teachers should be promoted.

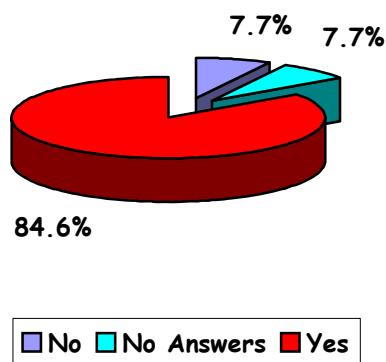
b. Students' suggestions and recommendations to improve teacher's methodological approach

To complete students' perception about their teachers' methodology, it was important at this stage to define and determine what specific suggestions students' have in order to improve the teachers' methodology and classroom dynamics in general.

1.7.4. Use of English in class

In this sense, one of the most significant demands from the students is related to the use of the target language in class. The following pie reflects students' opinions about this issue:

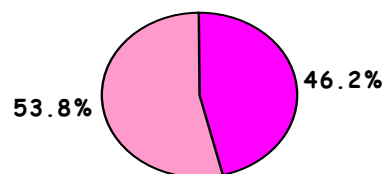
Importance of using the target language in class in the English Studies Program



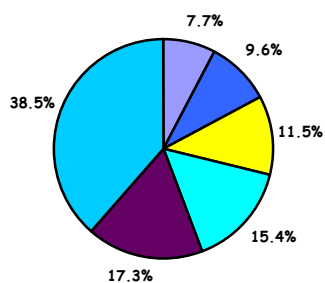
There is strong evidence (84.6%) that students consider the exposure and use of the target language in all classes a very important element in order to succeed in the acquisition of the target language.

Students give specific suggestions to improve teachers' methodology and classroom dynamics in the main targeted curricular components mentioned above.

Suggestions for improving Integrated English



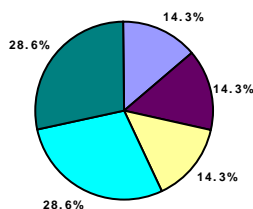
■ Satisfactory ■ Not enough (should be obligatory)



■ No answers

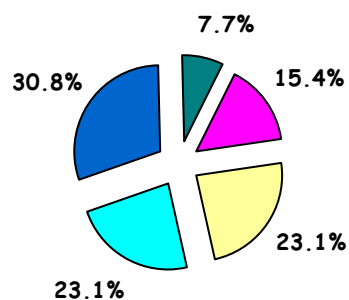
■ More focus on listening and speaking
■ More focus on specific topics

Suggestions for improving Literature

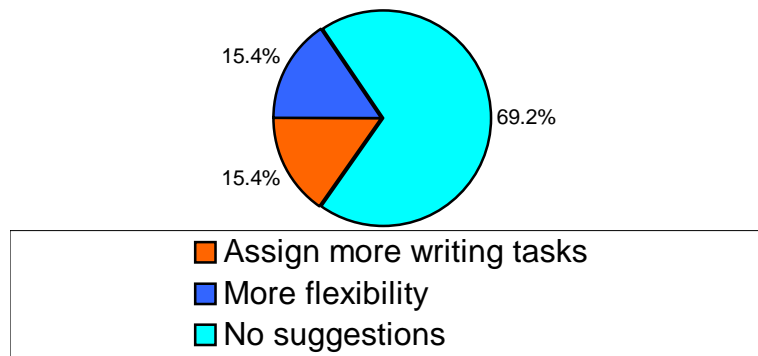


■ More explanations ■ Oral expositions
■ Others ■ No suggestions
■ No answers

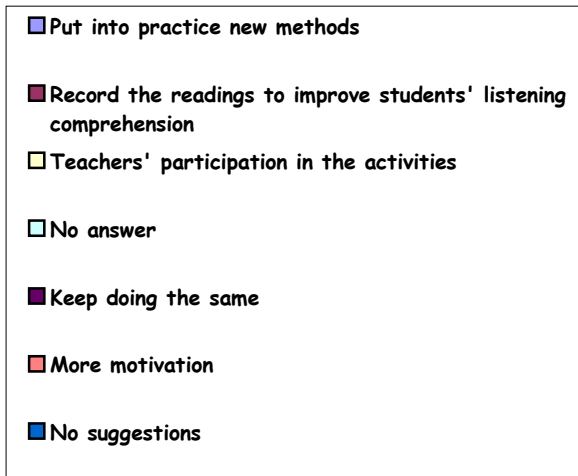
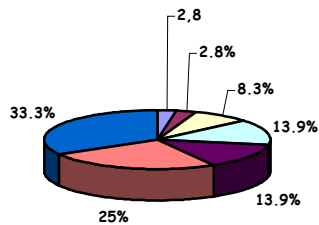
Suggestions for improving Laboratory



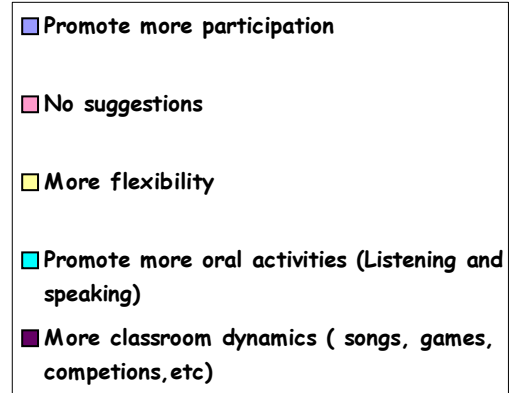
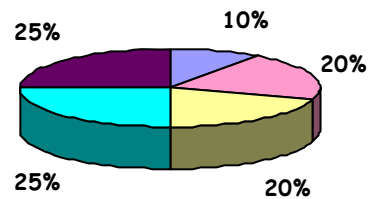
■ Improve Materials
■ No answers
■ More Dynamic Classes (Games, songs, videos)
■ Promote more Classroom Debates
■ Promote more Participation



Suggestions for improving Reading



Suggestions for improving Socio-Cultural Communication



Among the suggestions that come out repeatedly, we can mention that students want teachers to promote more participation in class. They also ask for more dynamic classes, in which more varied and active classrooms activities are included. They mention the use of videos, songs, games and competitions as necessary and important. In addition to this, students particularly demand more focus on speaking and listening activities. They suggest more debates and more classroom oral presentations. And finally, in two of the components, students insist on more flexibility from the part of the teacher.

From these results, it can be concluded that students are aware of the fact that in order to achieve communicative competence in the target language, teachers should systematically include activities in which students have the opportunity to put into practice both the receptive and productive skills in a very dynamic, active and innovative way. In the particular case of the laboratory classes, it is obvious that there is insufficient use of the target language, as 53.8% of the students' insights state that it should be an obligatory requirement of the class.

To sum up, given the importance students put on communicative activities and games, a number of steps should be taken by teachers in order to integrate more classroom dynamics as students have strongly suggested. Teachers should go through a constant and systematic revision of their methodological approach in class, as routinely teaching easily becomes a threat and a pressure for every teacher. In order to facilitate this effort, the library and CRM resources need to be up-dated and available for teachers to use at any time. Moreover, the English Department should encourage the teachers' participation in any kind of national and regional Teacher Conferences in EFL, and make sure this knowledge is shared and transmitted from teacher to teacher.

1.7.5 Teachers' knowledge

Another interesting result is related to the teachers' knowledge according to students' perceptions. All of them generally consider that their teachers know and master the content of the classes in the same six basic areas, apart from the class of Laboratory. For this specific curricular component, 69.3% of the students agree, whereas 23.1% disagree, and, again, 7.7% don't give any answers. This particular information indicates that one of the possible explanations students give for the inadequate methodology perceived in the laboratory class could be that the teachers don't always master the content of this particular class.

1.7.6 Teachers fulfill students' expectations.

When asked about whether or not teachers fulfill students' expectation in the same areas, the following table indicates students' opinion. (See table 13)

Table 13. Are students' expectations fulfilled?

CURRICULAR COMPONENTS	YES	NO	SOMETIMES	NO ANSWER	TOTAL
○ Integrated English	69.2%	3.8%	15.4%	11.5%	100%
○ Advanced Writing	100%	-	-	-	100%
○ Reading	-	-	-	-	-
○ Literature	100%	-	-	-	100%
○ Laboratory	53.8%	23.1%	7.7%	15.4%	100%
○ Socio Cultural Communication	65%	5%	25%	5%	100%

As shown in this table, students' opinions are again divided, depending on the particular classes. Three classes show differences of opinion, Integrated English, Socio Cultural Communication and Laboratory. The results indicate that some students have higher or different expectations in those three classes. Further information is therefore needed in order to find out what students' expectations in those particular fields are.

1.8 Main difficulties and achievements

In the general and specific surveys as well as in their diaries, students express the main difficulties and achievements they have experienced throughout the development of their studies.

1.8.1 Difficulties related to language acquisition

Students' diaries shed interesting light on the difficulties they have had along the whole process. As a IV year student states *“personally my main difficulty is speaking, at the same time writing is difficult for me. I mean I am not the best one in reading and listening, but they're skills in which I am better. That's maybe because I don't practice writing frequently and when I speak English I get nervous”*

Another student expresses a similar idea. *“ My main difficulty is my speaking, I want to speak so fast. However I know I need to practice more. Also when we are listening, I understand many words or phrases, but some times the tape recorder has problems and that makes comprehension impossible”*

A third student adds, *“ my main difficulties have been listening and speaking, also understanding the way of explaining that teachers have”*.

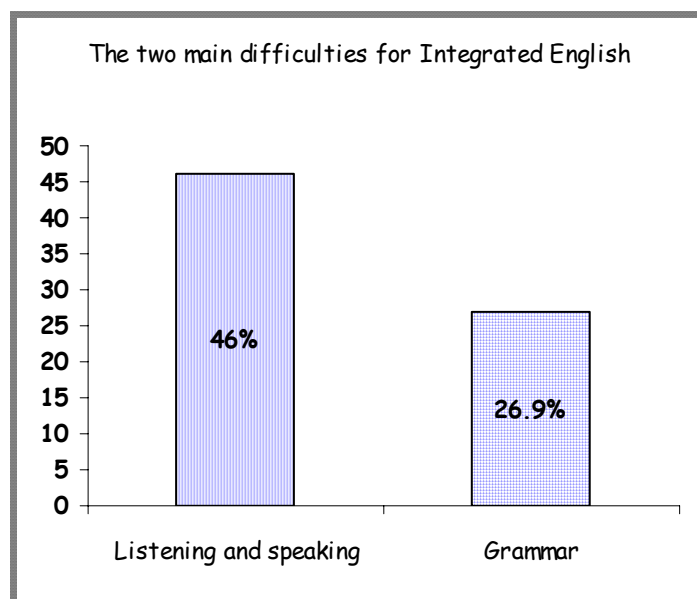
Finally, a classmate also explains the following: “ *In every class, my main difficulty is LISTENING, because the native English people speak very fast and I don’t understand what they want to say. In some cases I understand the first part, and I forget the last part or I don’t catch the information because they join words, and they use many contractions, and when they use these forms I don’t understand because I am not familiar with this pronunciation. SPEAKING is another difficulty because my speaking is not fluid. When I speak, I feel I stop thinking about the topic.*”

Some of the recurrent general difficulties they mention in the diaries are related to speaking and listening. Students evidently transmit their concern about being able to really understand and communicate with others in the target language. They realize that some possible reasons for this difficulty stem from the fear students have to speak and the weaknesses in mastering the phonetic elements of the language.

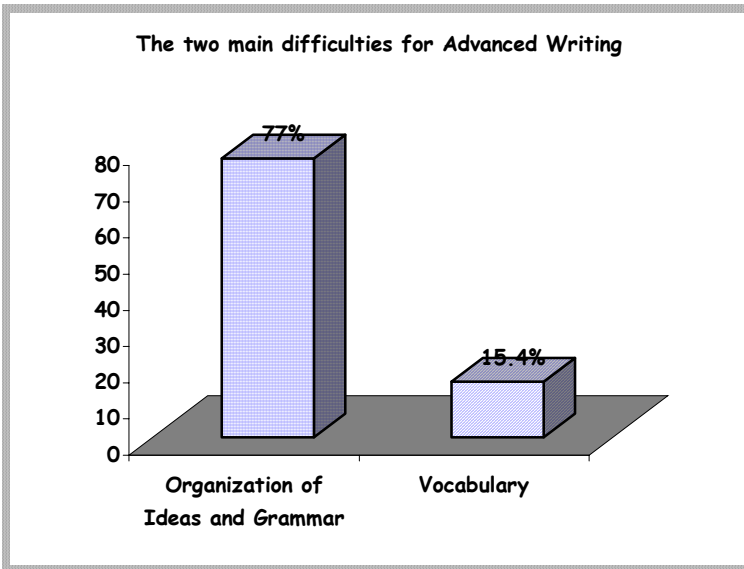
It is important to contrast and compare these results with the ones obtained by means of the general and specific surveys, interviews and questionnaires.

The following bar charts indicate the main difficulties students experience concerning their language acquisition.

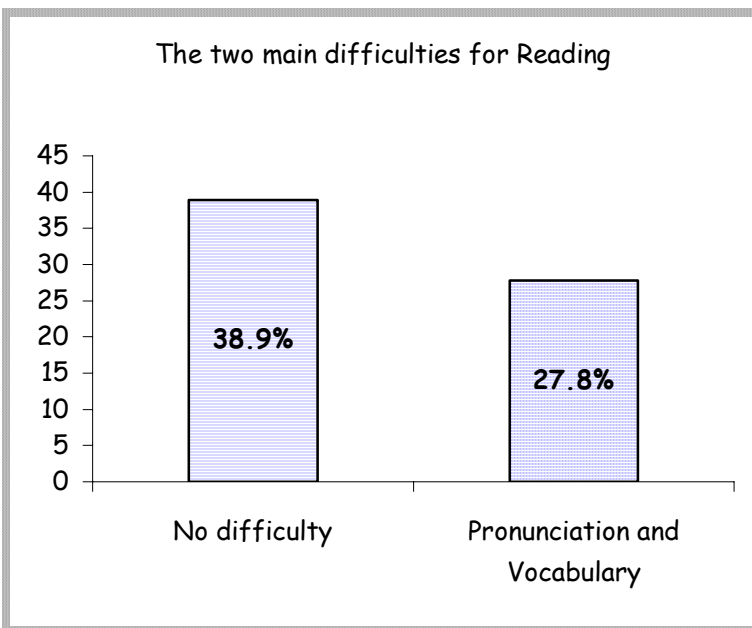
As can be observed, most of the information provided is directly associated to the acquisition of the target language in general, and the different areas each specific class focuses on.



Concerning Integrated English (III and IV year) listening and speaking (46%) are the areas that present more difficulties to students, followed by grammar (26.9%), which is also one of students’ important concern.

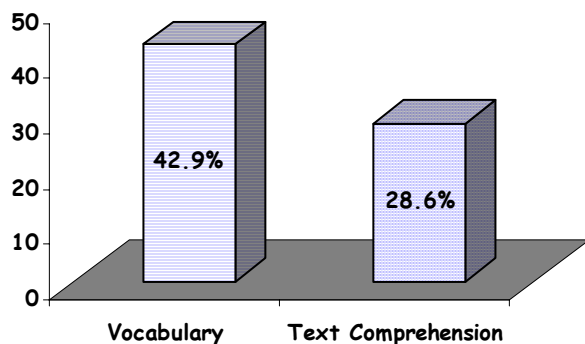


Advanced Writing (V year), on the other hand, also shows difficulties related to the contents of this particular component such as, students' main difficulties are the organization of ideas in paragraphs and grammar (77%) followed by vocabulary (15.4%).



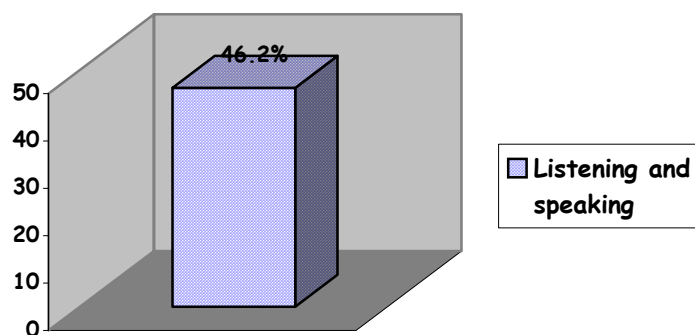
As for Reading (II year), pronunciation and vocabulary are the main problems identified by students (27.8%). Surprisingly enough 38.9% of students say that there is no difficulty at all with this class.

The two main difficulties for Literature



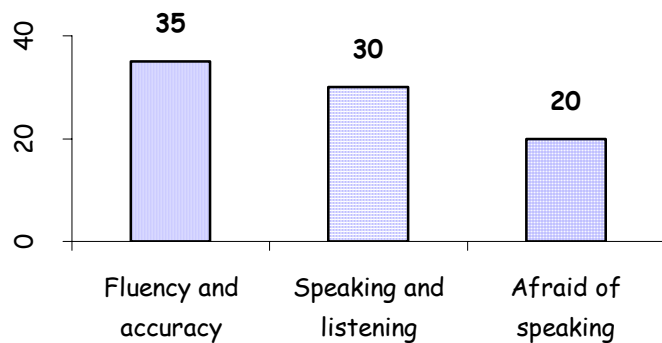
Literature (V year) presents a number of difficulties mainly related to vocabulary (42.9%) and text comprehension (28.6%).

The two main difficulties for Laboratory



Students' main difficulties in Laboratory (IV year) are the listening and speaking areas (46.2%).

The three main difficulties for Socio-Cultural Communication



Finally, for the class of Socio Cultural Communication (IV year), students express they have problems with fluency and accuracy (35%), speaking and listening (30%); 20% are afraid of speaking.

To sum up, the main difficulties stressed by students in the specific areas of the curriculum above mentioned directly confirm the information obtained in their diaries. Listening and speaking are mentioned as being a source of great difficulties in three areas; vocabulary also seems to be a source of concern for our students, as it also appears three times; grammar is also a source of apprehension, as it is cited twice. II year students don't mention as many difficulties as the II, IV and V year students. As a result of all this, the teachers of the different components of the program should be particularly attentive and devote their effort to help students overcome their weaknesses. In the particular case of Listening and Speaking, it seems important to encourage students to gain more confidence to put them into practice. Special care should be taken when it comes to make important decision about the contents, materials, and the training of the teachers in charge of teaching these classes.

1.8.2. Other kinds of difficulties

Furthermore, most students of the English Studies Program face a number of limitations and difficulties because of significant economical problems. As one IV year student wrote in her diary "I don't receive enough support I need for my university studies because sometimes my parents help me when they can or have money. I am not the only one who studies at university, I have three more brothers that study: two of them are university students and one is studying in secondary school. Only my dad works and my mom is a housewife. I understand my parents and I know they want the best for me and I know I have to accept what I have". These economical problems are recurrently mentioned in the surveys and diaries. The implications of these problems directly influence students' studying conditions and consequently their performance. Students constantly complain about the fact that they have to pay for transportation, food, classroom materials (books, dictionaries and photocopies) and so forth. A few of them even have to work in order to be able to pay for their studies. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that students experience a hard struggle that makes concentration very difficult.

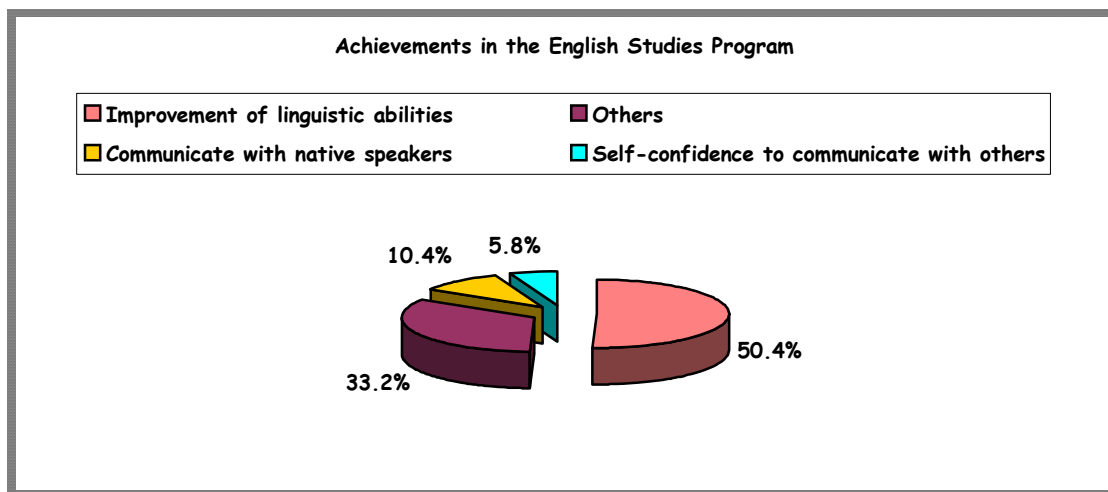
1.9 Achievements related to language acquisition

Most of the students' major achievements were associated with the improvement of their linguistic skills. As a student of the IV year states " *my main achievements are several: I have gotten information about grammar and it has enriched my knowledge. I can write better and my reading is good. I try to understand listening and I catch some information. I have self-study time because I am in IV year and I need to know more*".

Another student expresses " *my achievement is that I understand a little more than I did before and my writing is better*".

Among their main achievements, students mention their satisfaction with the general improvement of their skills, above all listening and speaking, which constitute the main challenge for them. They are also pleased with the fact that they organize their study time more efficiently, as they are aware of the importance of dedicating more time to their studies and tasks.

This information can be confirmed and enriched by the data obtained in the general and specific surveys. Other kinds of achievements are also mentioned, which are connected to the real use of their communicative skills in real communicational exchanges.



Most of the students (50.46%) experience a feeling of fulfillment when it comes to the development and improvement of their linguistic skills. They are pleased to see that they can practice their newly acquired skills with native speakers (10.4%). Among the other factors mentioned (33.2%), students come up with very interesting answers. For instance, their motivation and interest levels towards their studies has risen considerably as they get more and more involved. They give special importance to affective elements. For instance, they feel that they have gotten closer to their teachers and have also made friends with their classmates. In many cases a self-realization feeling is perceived as they say they are reaching their goals. In addition to this, they convey general satisfaction for acquiring knowledge in culture (they get to know the people and culture of other countries), didactics (they learn the language and how to teach it) and other fields.

The achievements mentioned above represent a meaningful source of information for the teachers, as they can make some important deductions about the particular areas in which students have succeeded and expressed their satisfaction. This information can have a number of important implications for teachers, since students have directly addressed issues, which represent aspects they have to strengthen. It is highly rewarding for teachers to

find out that there are ways of overcoming students' numerous difficulties. There should be special interest in identifying, all the way, student's difficulties, in order to address them efficiently from the very beginning.

2. The teachers

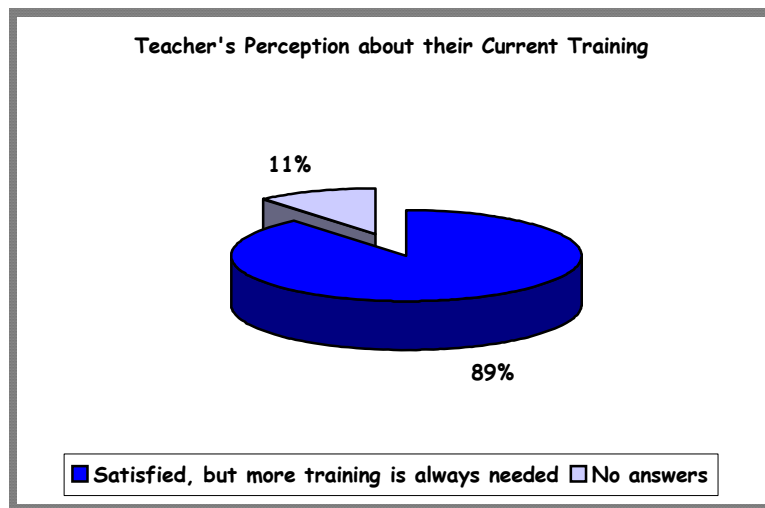
The second set of results that will be presented, discussed and analyzed will group all the data obtained from the second main target population of the studies, the teachers. In the chapter about the Context of the research, the general characteristics of the teachers of the English Studies Program, (age, place of origin, sex, years of experience), have already been presented (See table 3 in chapter V).

In this section there will be a thorough examination of teachers' professional competence and knowledge, as well as their motivation, attitudes, main values, beliefs, principles and responsibilities in the Program. Their favorite methodologies and approaches, teaching style and performance will next be discussed. Then, the teachers' particular knowledge and evaluation of the curriculum will be presented. Finally, their main difficulties and achievements will be tackled.

2.1. Teachers' qualification and teaching experience

The targeted teachers who currently teach in the English Studies Program are 9. For the purposes of the studies and in order to keep their anonymity each teacher was assigned a code (Teacher A, teacher B....) Regarding their teaching experience, 7 teachers have more than ten years of experience in TEFL and 2 of them have less than ten years of experience. It can be said that there is a kind of balance in terms of teachers' seniority and years of experience. As regards age, the average is 41 years old. 3 teachers have a Master's in General Didactics, 1 in Translation and 4 are currently pre-masters. The other 2 teachers are not involved in any kind of Master's Program at the moment. Nevertheless, all teachers have been involved in training courses on methodology offered by the Faculty as part of the Didactic English Program with the cooperation of Alcala University. 5 teachers have had the opportunity of traveling abroad and visiting foreign universities for short teacher training sessions, 2 in Spain and 3 in the United States.

About this issue, teachers were asked whether they were satisfied or not with their current methodological skills and training. The following graph reflects their needs in this sense:



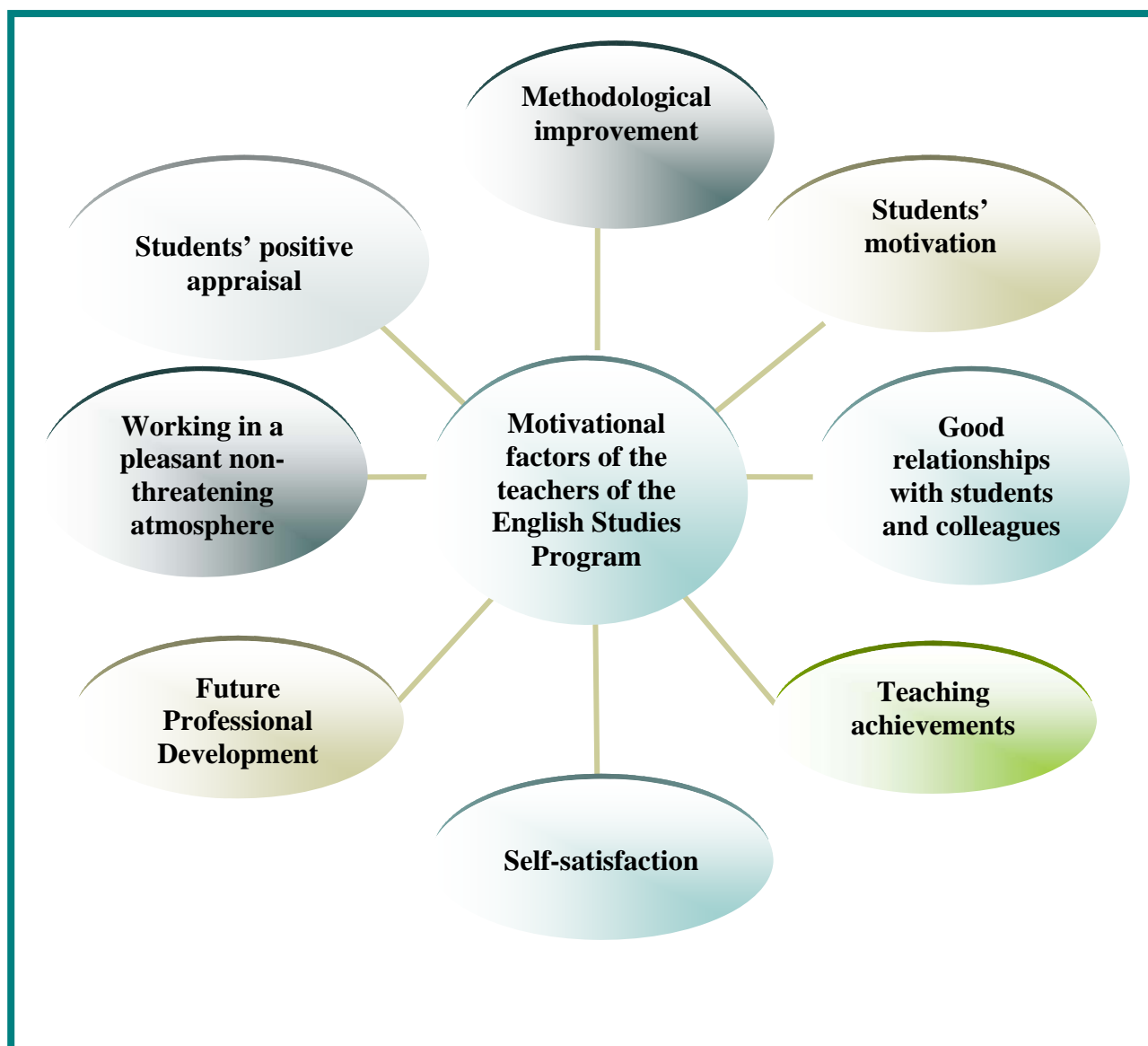
The general insights obtained were that the majority of teachers, 89%, consider that even though they have had training and are satisfied, it is always necessary to refresh and update their knowledge. Only one teacher, 11%, did not provide any answer.

Interestingly enough, it can be said that concerning teacher training of the English Department teachers, the situation is positive and encouraging as most teachers have had different opportunities to get training in different areas, but mainly in Methodology, Didactics, Curricular Design and research. Nevertheless, the important conclusions drawn from this information are that most teachers of the English Studies Program are aware of the need for a permanent and ongoing training process throughout their professional lives.

2.2. Teachers' motivation, main values, attitudes, beliefs, principles and responsibilities

The interviews and questionnaires were decisive for collecting the necessary information about teachers' motivations. Teachers were directly asked to state the factors that constitute sources of motivation for them in the English Studies Program. Among those factors they mention there is evidence that teachers are driven by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The following diagram reflects the most important motivational factors that drive the English Studies Program teachers.

TEACHERS' MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS



Most teachers perceive their professional practice as being significantly driven by students' positive feedback and encouragement. Also, teachers are particularly perceptive of students' motivation, which in turn makes them feel encouraged to teach. On the other hand, there is a self-gratification and reward element involved in teachers' motivation as several of them state that teaching was the field in which they wanted to develop professionally. Furthermore, establishing good relationships with students and colleagues as well as working in a pleasant non-threatening atmosphere is especially important for them. Finally, there seems that teachers are powerfully

inspired by the achievements they have already reached in their teaching practice, the professional goals they have for the future, and their needs to continue to improve their methodological practice.

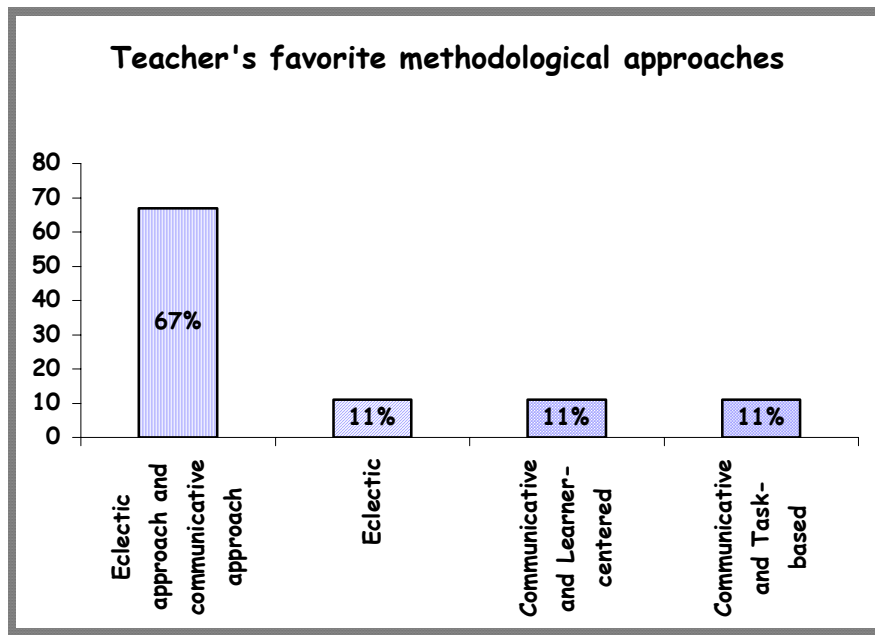
As for teachers' beliefs concerning the values they consider they have to transmit to their students, a number of issues emerged when teachers were asked a specific question about this. For instance the recurring answers were that there should be special emphasis on respect first, then responsibility, tolerance, solidarity and cultural values. On the other hand, some teachers consider that students training should also focus on self-study values.

Regarding their responsibilities, teachers were asked what they consider their tasks are as teachers. Some teachers perceive their responsibilities in terms of the accomplishment of their duties as teachers. For instance punctuality, excellence, academic quality, staff meeting, and so forth are given as example of responsibilities. Other teachers see their responsibility in terms of teaching values to students and transmitting knowledge. There are some others who define their duties in terms of the specific role they play in the classroom, as an advisor, counselor, mentor, friend, guide and facilitator.

To sum up, this information about teachers' roles and responsibilities can be compared and contrasted with what students expect from their teachers and the way they perceive them. Whereas for most teachers their central role is the fulfillment of their duties as teachers (the teaching and learning process itself), and the commitments they have with the institution, the students express their desire of counting on their teachers as friends, in the first place. So, it seems that teachers logically consider their duties as teachers from a more professional point of view. On the contrary, students tend to be more affectively bond to their teachers, and therefore would like to have a closer relationship with them.

2.3 Teachers' favorite methodology, teaching style and performance

Teachers' methodological approaches are reflected in the questionnaires and interviews. The classroom observations also supplied the researchers with valuable information about the teachers' current teaching practice. The following graphic shows teachers' main preferences as regard the methodological approaches they use in their classes in the English Studies Program.



As shown above, the approach, which is mentioned by 89% of the teachers repeatedly, is the communicative approach. Obviously this is the approach that most teachers make use of. However, no teachers use this approach in isolation, but they combine it with several other methods. According to the results, 67 % say they combine the communicative approach with an eclectic approach in general, whereas 11 % combine the communicative approach with a learner-centered methodology, and 11 % mix features of the communicative approach with a task-based orientation.

From the information above mentioned it can be inferred, first, that most teachers of the English Studies Program are familiar with the latest current methodological trends in TEFL. Second, it is comforting to find out that teachers do not mention traditional old-fashioned methods (mainly the Grammar Translation Method). Third, teachers are quite aware of the benefits and needs of combining and integrating features of different methods in order to provide the classes with the necessary variety, taking the best out of each method.

Nevertheless, this information needs to be contrasted with students' requirement for more dynamic and participative class, which enhance speaking and listening activities. There is an obvious contradiction between what teachers say they do in their classrooms, and with what students say they would like their teachers to do.

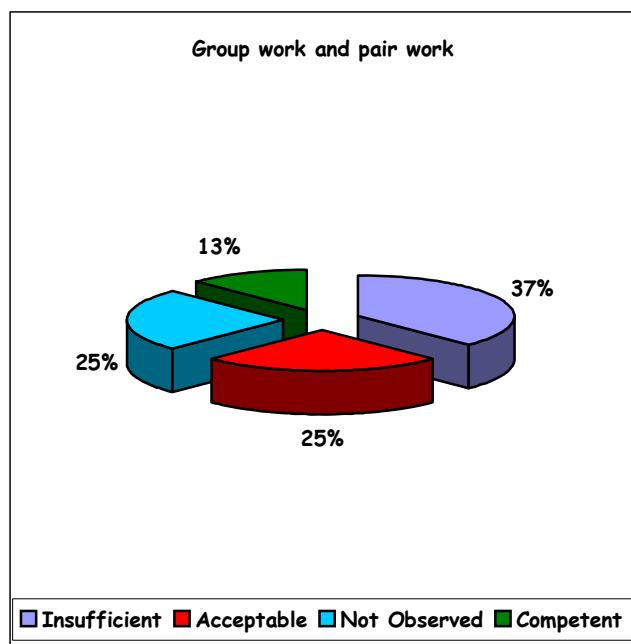
In order to complement this information, the 8 classroom observations carried out are key elements in this issue. The classroom observation guide aimed at directing the observers' attention towards some aspects,

which are important features of a communicative, participative and student-centered classroom. For instance, the use of group and pair work, the use of visuals, realia and authentic materials, information gap components, warm-ups and fillers, enough variety in the class, use of target language and teacher talking time, free practice, games and so forth. The categories used by the observer to rate the amount of times each particular aspect was observed during the classes were the following:

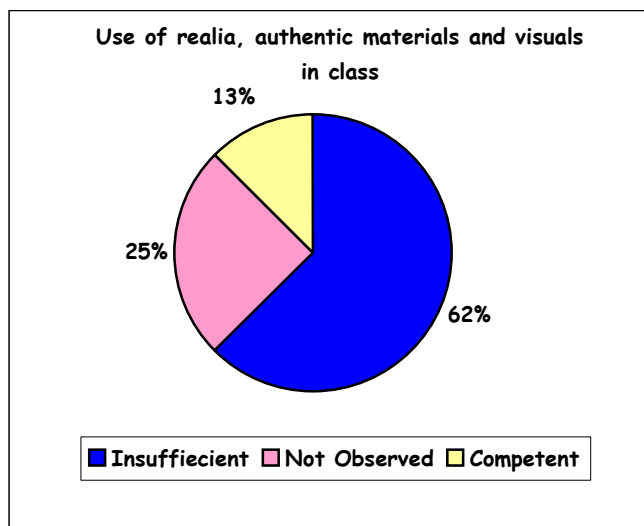
Table 14. Categories for classroom observations

NA	Not applicable or not observed
1	Room for growth and development (insufficient)
2	Acceptable
3	Competent

The following graphics illustrate the results obtained in the classroom observation sessions. They present different results, according to the aspects of the classroom, which were targeted and observed by the invited teachers.

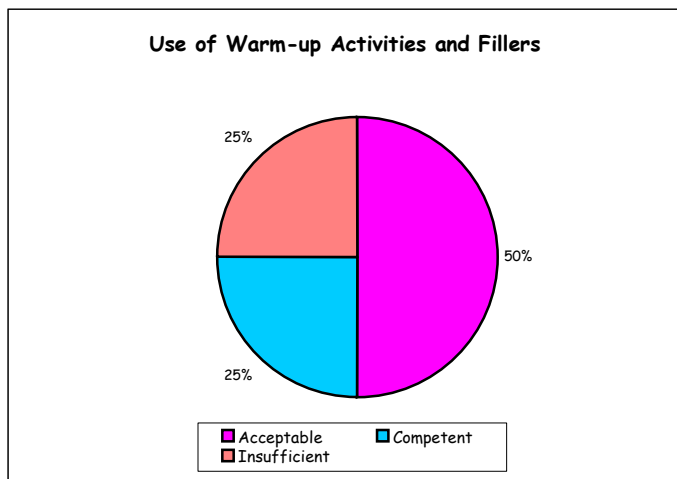
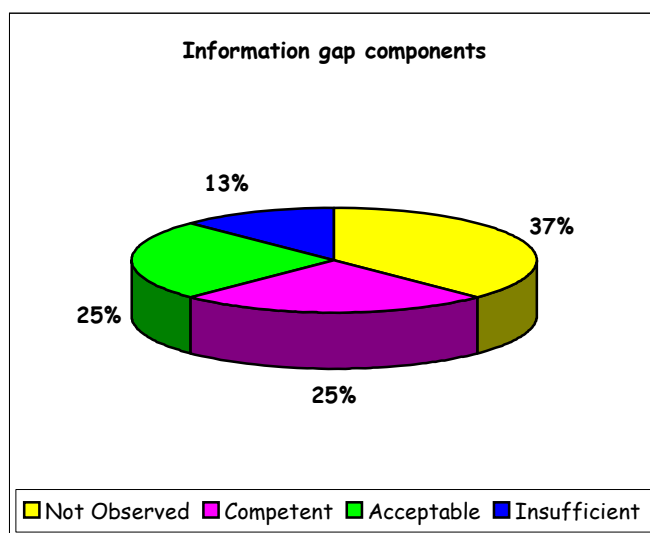


Regarding group and pair work, the findings show that only 13 % of the teachers (1 teacher) really organize group and pair work in the sessions; 2 teachers' (25%) classroom management in terms of grouping students in pair or groups was acceptable. It is worrying to observe that 62% of the teachers did not really use group and pair work (5 teachers).



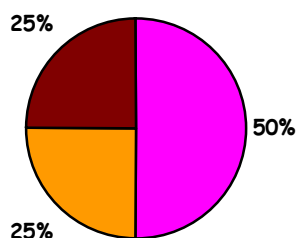
As regards the use of visuals, realia and authentic materials in class, again, only 1 teacher is really competent in this particular use of resources (13 %); in 7 of the cases, (87%) the use of these materials was either not observed or insufficient.

As far as information gap components are concerned, it was observed that 50 % of the teachers (4 teachers) used this kind of communicative activity in an appropriate way; the other 50% used these elements insufficiently, or did not use them at all.



Positive results are obtained when it comes to the use of warm-up activities and fillers in class. In 75% of the cases (6 teachers), there is an acceptable and competent management of these short activities, whereas only 25% (2 teachers) were rated as having an insufficient use and integration of warm-up activities and fillers in the classrooms.

Teacher introduces enough variety in class



Acceptable Competent Insufficient

Regarding variety in the class, 75 % of the teachers (6 teachers), introduced enough variety in their classes in general, and only 25 % (2 teachers) were considered as presenting insufficient number of varied activities and tasks.

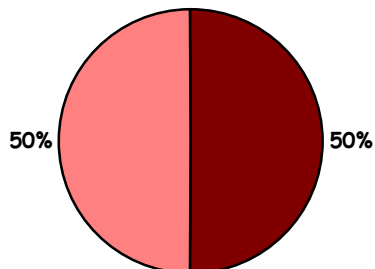
The use of the target language in class is considered good and appropriate as, in 87 % of the cases, that is 7 teachers, the target language was constantly used from the part of the teacher. Nevertheless, in one case (13%), students were no exposed enough to the target language.

Use of the target language



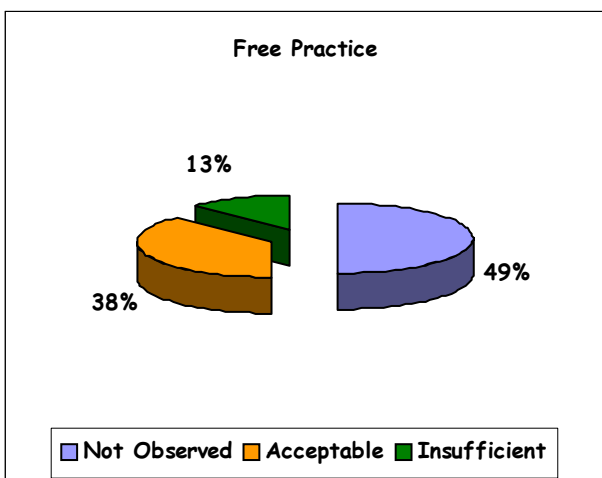
Competent Insufficient

Teacher talking time



Insufficient Acceptable

The teacher talking time in class was too long, in 50% of the cases (4 teachers), and acceptable in the other 50%.



As regards students' opportunities to practice the language in class, it is striking to notice that in 62% of the cases (5 teachers), there was either no evidence or insufficient integration of this particular aspect. Only 3 teachers (38%) showed real evidence that they integrate free practice as part of their lessons.

Finally, concerning the organization of games in class, 5 teachers planned and implemented enough games in class (62 %), whereas 3 teachers (38 %) did not really provide evidence of using such communicative activities.

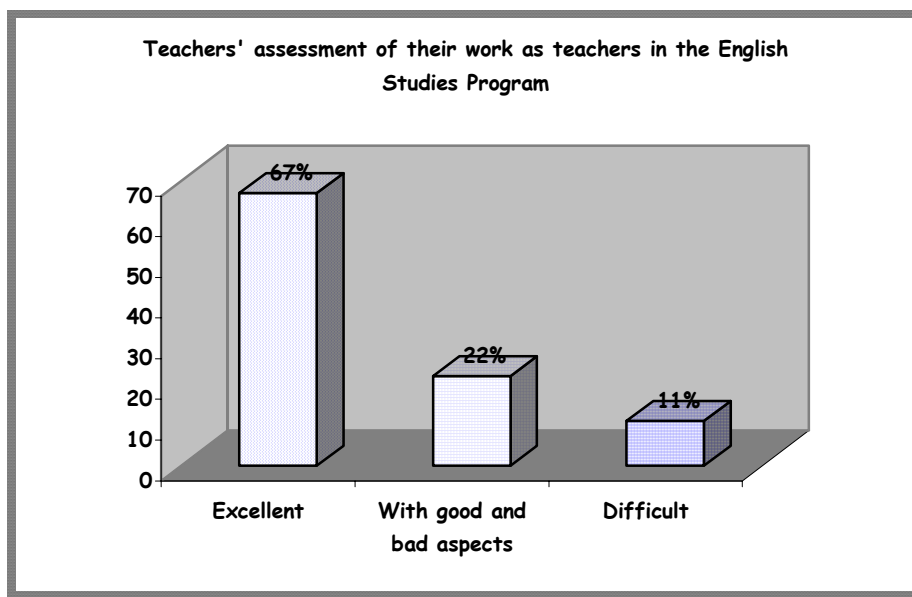


To sum up, positive results are obtained as regards the use of varied activities, such as warm-ups and games. Teachers' target language time in class is satisfactory. However, the results are very worrying when it comes to the amount of time the teachers talk in class, and the use of typical communicative activities and resources (realia, authentic materials and visuals). Moreover, it seems that teachers do not often organize pair and group work in their classes. Free practice of the language is a really important aspect of a communicative approach and, again, teachers don't introduce enough opportunities for students to manipulate the language freely.

In spite of the fact that most teachers claim to use the communicative approach in class, there is evidence of a deficient integration of many of the important features of this approach. These findings confirm students' need for more communicative activities, which really develop and reinforce their listening and speaking skills.

2.4 Teachers' main difficulties and achievements

In the questionnaires, teachers were asked to describe and evaluate their experience in general in the English studies Program. The answers to this particular question are reflected in the following graphic:



The results show that 67 % of the teachers (6 teachers) think their work as teachers has been excellent and gratifying. On the other hand, 2 teachers (22 %) give more balanced answers, explaining that their experience has included good and bad aspects. 1 teacher (11%) says his experience has been negative. The main difficulties and achievements of the teachers will be presented and discussed in the following sections.

2.4.1 *Difficulties*

Teachers list a number of different difficulties, which are related to several main fields, among which they mention their relationships with colleagues, authorities and students, the curricular organization and structure of the Program, and materials, resources and space.

- **Relationships with colleagues, authorities and students**

There are problems of personality clashes and attitudes in the English Department, according to teacher's answers. Some teachers complain about not having an adequate and harmonious job atmosphere in which they can work properly. The negative attitudes and lack of tolerance makes it hard to create a motivating, pleasant and positive working environment. Moreover, these attitudes have negative impact on team work, and some teachers strongly think that team work should be promoted and encouraged among the staff.

On the other hand, some teachers complain about the position of the Faculty authorities when it comes to decision making policies, which are, most of the time, carried out in a vertical, top – down manner. Some teachers resent the fact that, in many occasions, important decisions have been made without taking into account the experience, opinion and knowledge of the Department staff. In addition to this the teachers repeatedly complain about not having adequate support and help from the authorities of the Faculty and administrative staff.

Finally, some teachers think that the students don't take their studies seriously enough, and that they don't value the importance of their career. Teachers say that this is a great mistake, because their motivation is limited to achieving the passing requirements from one level to the other, without any broader vision. On the whole, this negative attitude affects the prestige of the institution, as well as the reputation and status of the teachers.

- **Curricular organization and structure of the Program**

Many teachers point out that they have experienced numerous difficulties in relation to the curricular organization of the Program. They list a number of inconsistencies and weaknesses, such as the problem of not having written guidelines for the components of the Program as a whole. This leads to a number of other problems, among which they mention the following

- ✓ Lack of a general framework of the studies in the form of a document, which states clearly the mission, vision, and other important characteristics of the Program.
- ✓ Sequence, balance and interrelation between the different components are missing
- ✓ Individual course descriptions should be consistently written and descriptive in terms of stating clearly what each component focuses on.

- ✓ Too many curricular plans have been implemented and used at the same time, which tends to confuse teachers.
- ✓ Selection of materials is inadequate and deficient
- ✓ Lack of coordination from one teacher to another when it comes to give each other feedback about the courses.

- **Materials, resources and space**

Some teachers point out that classroom facilities are not suitable and do not offer student and teachers the necessary conditions in which the teaching and learning of a language can take place.

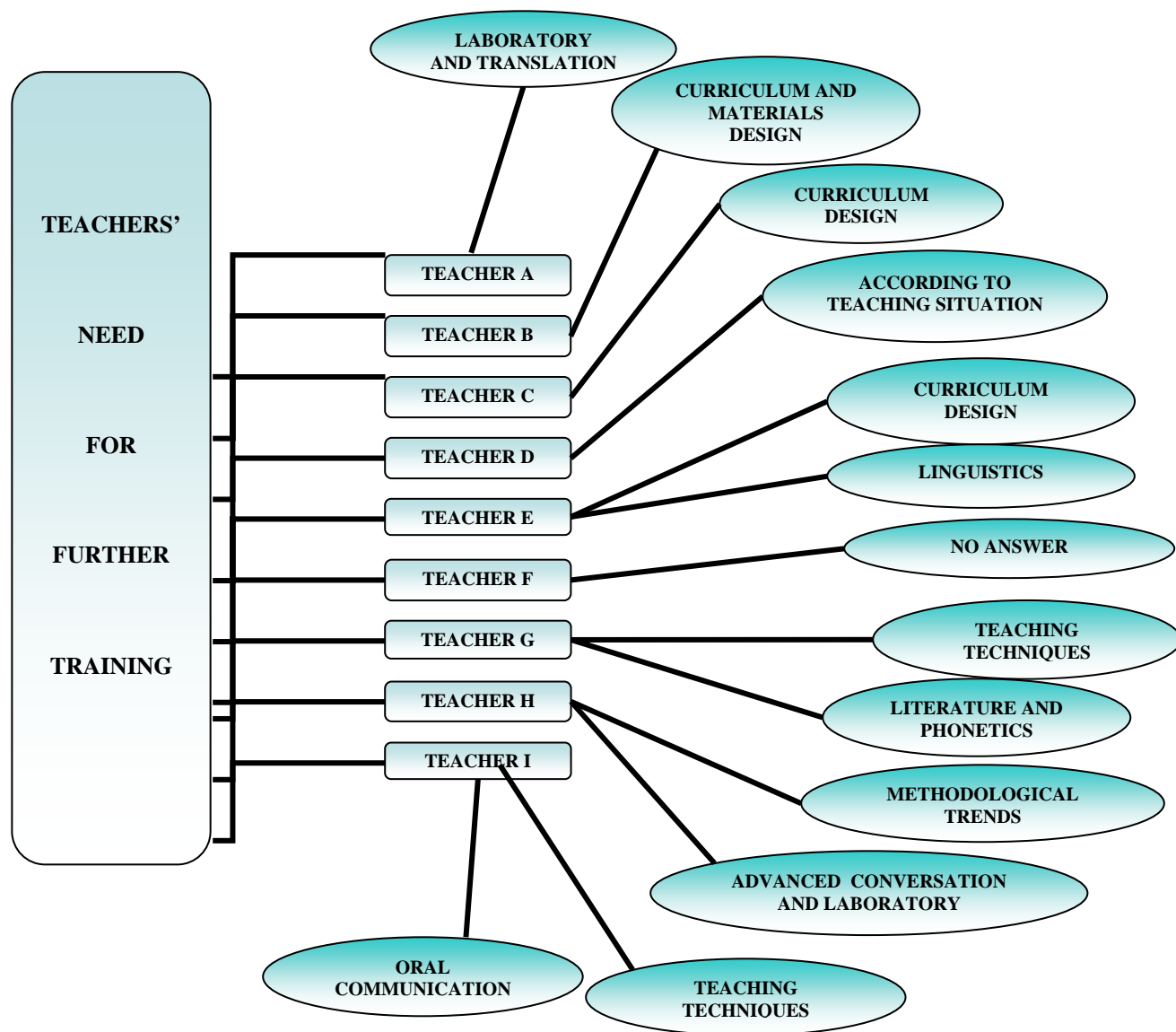
2.4.2 Achievements

Among the reasons teachers give to explain their answer about their main achievements in the English Studies Program, they put forward the fact that working for UNAN has opened the doors of professional growth and development for them. They have gained knowledge, thanks to consistent training in methodological and scientific issues. In short, this has been a wonderful and enriching experience for most of them. Teachers rate their achievements in three main fields, teacher training and development, students' successful acquisition and teachers' general organizational skills. Generally speaking they seem to value their achievements regarding teacher training as the development of their linguistic, methodological skills, and specialized areas.

2.5 Teachers' needs for further training and teacher development

In terms of teacher training and development, teachers list the different fields and areas in which they would like to receive further training as part of their involvement as teachers of the English Studies Program. The following diagram shows their inclination and needs about this matter.

TEACHER'S NEEDS FOR FURTHER TRAINING



3. The teaching-learning environment

3.1 Adoption factors

As regards teachers' willingness to introduce and implement changes and innovations within the program, all of them (100%) agree that they are necessary and welcomed. Among the arguments they provide it is worth mentioning the following:

- It is necessary to implement changes in a transparent way with responsibility and the participation of all teachers
- It is important to evaluate the present outcomes first to determine the weaknesses and problems of the Program
- All changes are good mostly because the Program is a very recent one
- It is necessary to take big steps towards quality standards and guarantee that there is teachers' consensus and agreement in the implementation of any changes introduced.
- Intelligent, relevant and necessary changes should be introduced but only after a five-year period of the implementation of the plan and once the program has been evaluated.
- A previous analysis of the program has to be carried out in order to make significant changes

It is important to note that the teachers of the English Studies Program recognize the necessity of changes and are not resistant to implementing them. Nevertheless, there should be a number of conditions met before carrying out any kind of adjustments.

When being asked about the areas in which changes and adjustments should be introduced in the program, teachers identify the following:

Table 15. Teachers' identification of areas for changes and adjustments

AREAS THAT NEED REVISION AND CHANGES	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	TOTAL
Curriculum	×	×	×		×		×		×	6
Contents of each class	×	×	×		×			×	×	6
Students' motivation	×	×						×		3
Teacher training	×	×		×	×	×	×	×	×	8
Allocation of hours for each class		×	×		×		×		×	5
Organization of the classes per year	×	×			×	×	×		×	6
Organizational and Administrative issues					×			×		2
Others		×			×					2

As shown in this table, teachers have definite ideas about the areas in which revision and changes should be implemented. Teacher training comes first (mentioned 8 times), which represents 89% of the teachers. The teachers explain that teacher training is necessary because of low quality standards and lack of quality in the teaching of the lessons. Next areas in which 67 % of the teachers suggest special focus should be put on are curriculum, contents of each class, and organization of the classes per year. Regarding the allocation of hours per year, 56% of the teachers consider that this area should be revised. For 2 teachers it is necessary to revise organizational and administrative policies. Finally, among the additional areas in which 2 teachers mention there should be revision and changes are materials, and the assignment of components according to teachers' specialized area

These data clearly indicate that, for most teachers teacher training is a priority in order to achieve excellence and quality in the English Studies Program. On the other hand, adjustments of the curriculum are repeatedly mentioned in terms of general organization and contents. In order to complement this information, more insights will be provided in the chapter about the curriculum and syllabus of the program.

3.2 Equipment and facilities

In the surveys about the teaching learning environment, students were asked questions about the factors that may have a positive or negative impact in their learning process. Important data were collected about students' perception of the classroom, CRM and library conditions.

3.2.1 Classroom conditions

Students were asked whether or not their actual classroom provided them with the adequate conditions for their language acquisition. The following table indicates the negative or positive perception of each group about this issue.

Table 16. Students' opinion about classrooms' conditions

Conditions	II	III	IV	V
Space	Yes: 71.9%	No: 96.7%	Yes: 91.3%	Yes: 80%
Lights	Yes: 93.8%	Yes: 53.3%	Yes: 91.3%	Yes 93.35
Sound	No: 62.5%	Yes: 56.7%	No: 52.2%	No: 73.3%
Ventilation	No: 68.8%	Yes: 56.7%	Yes: 91.3%	Yes: 100%
Visibility	Yes: 78.1%	Yes: 56.7%	Yes: 91.3 %	Yes: 93.36
Comfort	No: 59.4%	No: 96.7%	Yes: 73.9%	Yes: 53.3%
Furniture	No: 68.8%	No. 46.7%	Yes: 60.9%	Yes: 73.35

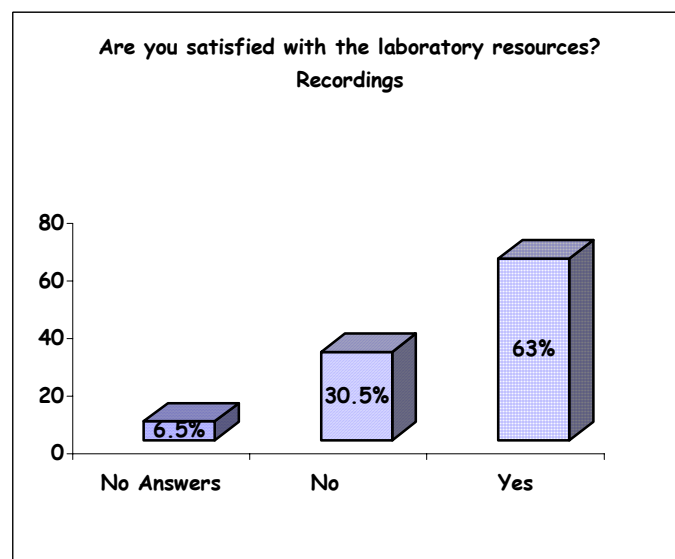
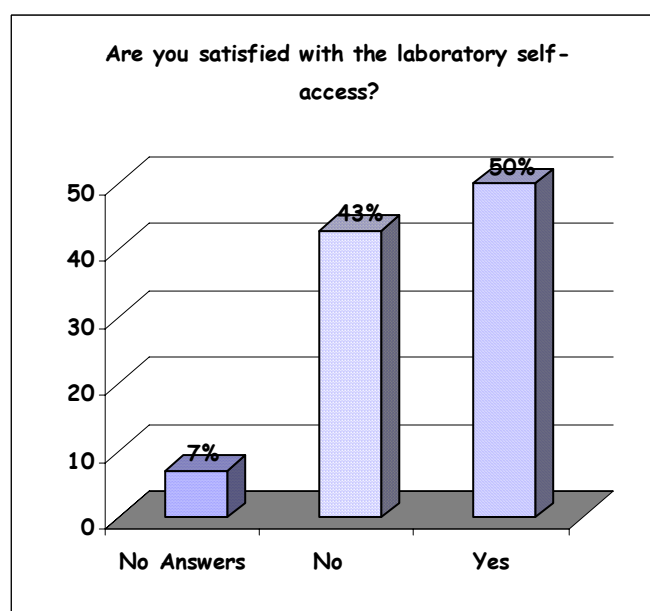
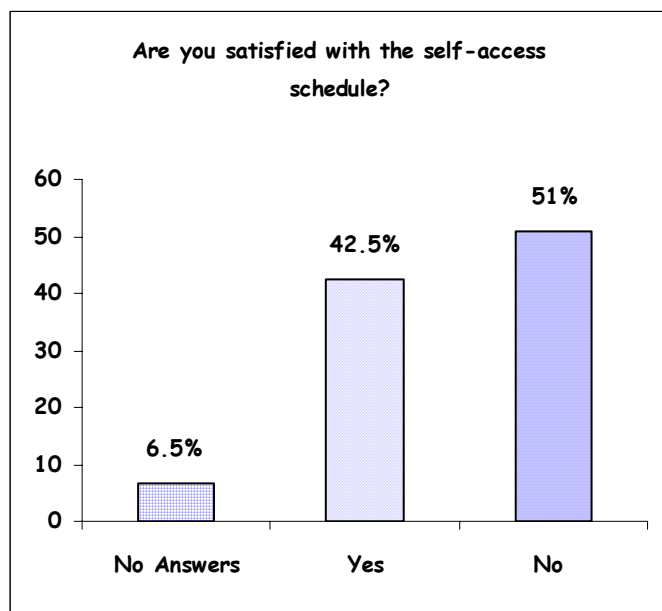
The information varies again according to the year students are in. For example, when the questionnaire was answered by the students, the classroom assigned to the III year students was the Biology lab, while IV year students were assigned a huge classroom. The results show that IV and V year students are globally satisfied with their classroom conditions, whereas II and III year students are more critical. The Biology lab assigned to the III year got an almost unanimous refusal from the parts of the students, but they don't complain about the sound, light, visibility and ventilation conditions. The spacious classroom assigned to the IV year obviously causes many problems in terms of the sound, because the teacher has to make big efforts to be heard.

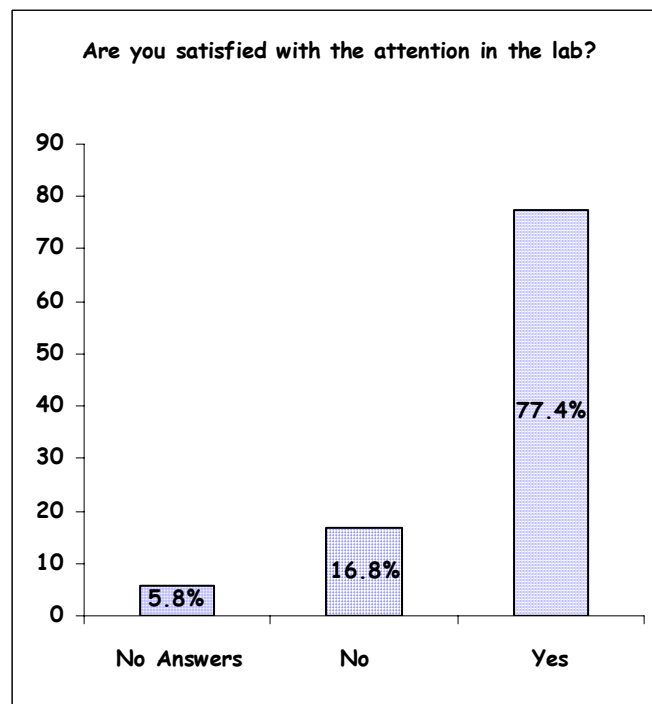
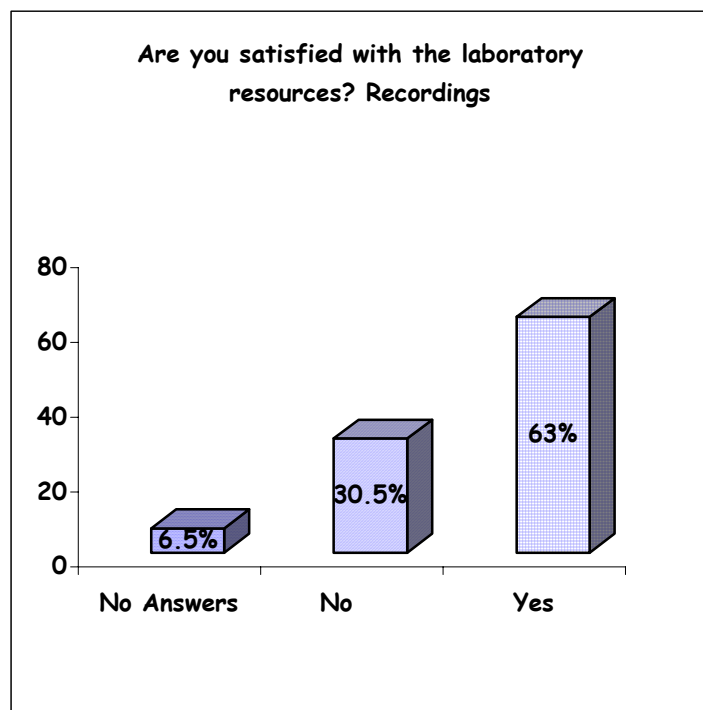
As a result of this, it can be deduced that students in general don't worry about the physical conditions in which the learning takes place, unless hoses conditions are really too bad. They logically are more concerned about some other crucial aspects of their learning environment, such as the ones that will be discussed below.

3.2.2 CRM and library conditions

a. The CRM

The information about the CRM focuses on the self access time and organization, the laboratory classes and the available resources such as the audiovisual materials. Students' points of view about these issues related to the CRM are shown in the following graphics:





The 6 graphics above show that students are generally satisfied with the conditions offered for the development of their English studies in the CRM. The only aspect in which 51% of all the students say they are not satisfied is the self-access organization and schedule. Interestingly enough, again, IV and V students' perception of the conditions offered by the CRM differ significantly from the ones of the II and III year. For instance, 53.3% of the V year students demand better video resources and 46.7 % more recordings. As for the IV year students, their dissatisfaction is about the organization of self-access.

Among the negative aspects students indicate regarding the functioning of the CRM, they argue that:

- ✓ They need more space
- ✓ It shouldn't be used for teachers' meetings
- ✓ Schedule times need to be fixed and organized
- ✓ There should be more innovations and materials designed
- ✓ It needs a better general organization
- ✓ Lab classes shouldn't interfere with self-access time
- ✓ It doesn't give all the necessary services
- ✓ It needs more equipment and resources

- ✓ The person in charge does not know how to help students when they are looking for specific information or specific topics.

To sum up, it is clear that most students value the CRM resources as important elements in their studies. Their worries are reflected mostly on a better-organized self-access time and schedules. Concerning the differences of perception among the students, according to their different levels it is important to point out that students in the higher levels are more critical and demanding because of a number of reasons. First, they have been in contact with the Program for a longer time, and therefore they have more judgment criteria. Second, they have been affected by staff changes (three different people have been consecutively in charge of the CRM). Third, they have a greater need of the CRM resources, as they are closer to the end of their studies, which encourages them to use the resources more often. Consequently, there should be more and greater efforts devoted to the improvement of the CRM as a whole.

b. The library

Regarding the faculty library resources the following chart reflects students' level of satisfaction about the amount and availability of resources and materials.



As shown in the graphic, 62.3% of the students of the English Studies Program are generally satisfied with the bibliographical resources and the service offered by the library, whereas 32.7% of them say that they are unsatisfied.

However, the actual arguments that students who are not satisfied express are worth taking into account:

- ✓ They need more books available
- ✓ Updated and more interesting books are necessary

- ✓ Students need more visual access to the books.
- ✓ Students require more books for reinforcing their listening and speaking skills
- ✓ The access to books for students should be as easy as for teachers
- ✓ Many important books are not easily available because there are not enough copies
- ✓ Library should give more time when lending books to students

In short, despite the fact that most students are satisfied with the conditions and materials offered by the faculty library, the ones who express some complaints mention very important elements that should be taken into account in order to strengthen the library resources and conditions.

4. The English Studies Program, the curriculum, syllabus and materials

4.1 Main similarities and differences with similar national programs

When UNAN-Leon English Studies Program was compared and contrasted with the other two programs that are offered at national levels (UNAN and UCA in Managua) there were some meaningful similarities and differences. To begin with UNAN-Leon program and UCA are similar in terms of the professional fields in which students can develop after graduating. Similarly to UNAN Leon program students can work for NGO's, airports, travel agencies, business and hotels in addition to schools and universities. UNAN-Managua program, on the other hand, has an exclusive educational approach as graduates are supposed to work as teachers at primary, secondary and university levels.

As for the main characteristics of the three majors we can find more similarities than differences in terms of the main areas in which the studies focus on.

The English Studies Program has been described in details in the chapter about the Context of the study. (See chapter V see chapter V, section 4.1 General description of the study plan).

The program at UNAN-Managua focuses on three main areas which are:

- General Instruction that involves subjects like General Mathematics, Geography, Philosophy and so forth.
- Psycho-pedagogical instruction in which they include General and Special Didactics, General Pedagogy, Psychology of Learning and so forth.
- Specialized Instruction, which includes all the courses that focus on the linguistic skills themselves.

As for the program at UCA it focuses on four main areas:

- Linguistic instruction in which they include courses such as Reading, Grammar, Conversation, Integrated English and, so forth
- Basic Pedagogical and Psychological instruction, which includes Methodology, General Pedagogy, Acquisition and Learning of Languages, and so on.
- General Instruction in several different fields which aims at widening students' cultural knowledge, which is necessary for teaching. Some of the courses they offer are Culture in English speaking countries, Mesoamerican Culture and Identity, Contemporary Social History, Ethics and Human Rights. Languages II and III, and so forth.
- Research Techniques, which aim at providing students with the necessary tools to facilitate their professional development. The two specific courses are Methods and Techniques for Pedagogical Research and Research on Teaching English.

The UCA English Studies Program is the most similar to UNAN-Leon program in terms of the division of the areas in which the studies focus on. It can be seen that the research area is not so strong at UNAN- Managua because it only includes one class, whereas both UNAN-Leon and UCA program include 3 classes. Another similarity in the three programs is that all of them include pedagogical instruction and training as well as courses on inter-cultural awareness. However it is noticeable that the pedagogical training is stronger at UNAN-Managua and UCA with 10 and 9 different classes respectively whereas UNAN-Leon program only includes 3 courses. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the exit criteria for the three programs are quite similar as all students can choose between an "Examen de Grado" and a "Monografía" in order to be able to graduate.

On the other hand, there are a number of differences which are worth mentioning. UNAN-Leon includes 4 Professional Practice components whereas UNAN-Managua includes 1 and UCA includes 2. UNAN-Leon program is the only one that includes 2 specialized classes (ESP) in Business English. Another main difference is that UNAN-Leon program is the only one that gives its students the opportunity of undertaking small research projects on a field of their choice before graduating (Design of Didactics Units, Translation, and Business English).

Another important is that UCA program includes the study of two other languages, French and German. This program also includes other courses with a religious, gender and human rights awareness.

To sum up, it is clear that the three programs don't differ in so many aspects, rather than that they all seem to be quite solid and well established programs.

4.2 The “Macroprogramación “ document

The latest curricular adjustments of the English Studies Program were carried out in October 2001 and they are not reflected in the formal document called “Macro-programacion de la Carrera de Licenciado en Ingles”. For instance, the mission, vision and professional field statements in this document do not reflect the current structure and orientation of the program as it was written in September 1998 and has not been revised and modified ever since. Many other sections and parts of the document are either missing or unclear and confusing. In fact all the adjustments and changes that have been carried out are not included in the document and are reflected on separate papers that were approved by the Faculty Council before their implementation. (See proposals in Appendix 1).

Therefore there is an urgent need for updating the old document introducing the changes in order to count on a complete and formal document which is the legal basis for the existence of the English Studies Program within UNAN-Leon.

4.3 The perception of the general structure of the program and its core components as viewed by its main actors and participants.

At this stage of the data analysis report, it is necessary to complete all the above-mentioned information with students’ and teachers’ general perception of the program in general and the curriculum, as well as its particular classes. All the data that are mentioned in this part of the study were obtained in the different questionnaires, interviews and in the students’ diaries.

4.3.1. Students’ perception of the Program

This information is particularly important for the researchers, as it reflects students’ general opinion about the English Studies Program and, particularly, their perception of the curriculum.

II year students were asked a specific question in order to find out whether those students, who had just finished Año Comun, had a good previous knowledge of the program. (III, IV and V year students are logically more familiar with the program because they have been immersed in their studies longer time). Indeed, only 30.3% of the 33 II year students demonstrated to know the program well; on the other hand, 48.5% said they didn’t know the program, and 21.2% answered that they had little knowledge of it. This abnormal lack of information about the program may be due to an inconsistent advertising policy from the part of the English Department, at the moment of promoting the English Studies Program. A promotion, information and orientation campaign is organized every year in each Faculty in the II semester in order to transmit to Año Comun students all necessary

information about the different majors offered by UNAN, and to answer any doubts or questions those students have. The curriculum, syllabus, vision, professional possibilities and so forth... are displayed and explained to the 1800 Año Comun students by teams of students and teachers of each major. The general purpose of this campaign is to direct Año Comun students and help them decide which major they will want to study. This orientation campaign is therefore of utmost importance, and needs to be carefully planned and executed. The fact that 69.7 % of II year students say they have little or no knowledge of the program could be the proof of an insufficient or poorly executed promotion campaign. Therefore, students seem to need an orientation session explaining the program and curriculum in detail when they first enter the program.

As for students' general opinion about the program, the percentages between positive and negative opinion varies according to the different years, but students' positive opinion generally prevails, as shown in the following table. (See table 17 below).

Table 17. Students' perception of the English Studies Program

YEAR	GENERAL PERCEPTION OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR	
	POSITIVE OPINION	NEGATIVE OPINION
II	93.9%	6.1%
III	80.6%	16.1%
IV	57.9%	31.6%
V	81.8%	18.2%
TOTAL	78.5%	18%

Curiously enough, II year students have the best opinion about the Program; the III year students also have a good opinion, whereas the IV year students' negative opinion is the strongest of all (31%); but the V year students are generally satisfied. Overall, the students who think positively (78.5%) state the following reasons:

- ✓ They are aware of the integrated nature of the curriculum, and they recognize that the Program follows a very complete plan and it has good curricular components. Generally speaking, they are satisfied with the teachers and their methodology.
- ✓ They also acknowledge the fact that the Program doesn't only provide them with the opportunity to study English at a very low cost. It also enables them to fit into society and to fulfill its needs, by training them in different professional fields.
- ✓ The Program offers them further possibilities of future professional development at university levels.

On the other hand, the students who have negative comments about the English Program Studies (18%) argue that:

- ✓ The Program needs better-qualified teachers overall, because some teachers do not have a good methodology. Teachers should be more demanding and their approach should be more communicative. They should introduce more dynamic activities in their class. Moreover, they should speak only English in class.
- ✓ Teachers should always be selected for the class they teach according to their expertise fields.
- ✓ The program needs evaluation and adjustments: some components are not necessary (i.e. Actividades no Cognoscitivas) and are a waste of time. Others need more time and reinforcement (ex: Vocabulary, Phonetics)
- ✓ On the one hand, students don't have strong enough basis after the Año Comun, which makes their initial learning more difficult. On the other hand, they consider that instruction in the first two years of the program is too weak and not challenging enough.
- ✓ The Program doesn't provide students with enough speaking practice and communication opportunities. A proof of that is that the V year students do not have the right level of linguistic knowledge. Students need more training on the use of computers as well.
- ✓ Some organization issues need to be restructured. For instance, self access time at the lab should be compulsory.
- ✓ The Program doesn't always offer the necessary conditions. For example the self-access center needs more materials.
- ✓ There is not enough publicity, since many students don't have a good knowledge of the Program.
- ✓ The Program needs to promote more local and national events in the field

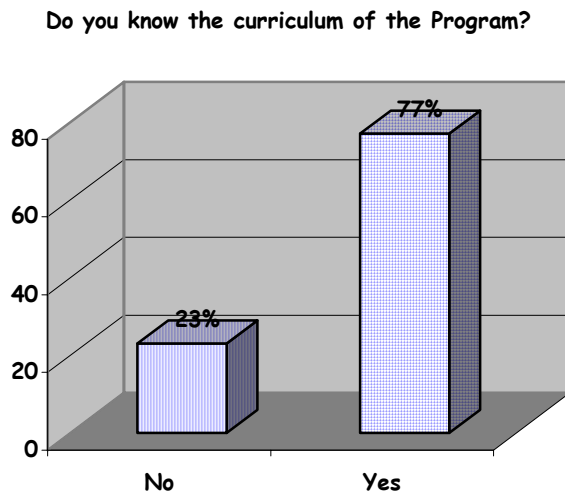
It is surprising to note that students mention many more negative aspects than positive ones, and that their perception of the problems and weaknesses of the Program is much more critical and accurate than their judgment of its strengths. These general observations students make about the English Studies Program indicate that they identify a number of problems in different central aspects of the Major, including teachers' methodology, some components of the curriculum and some organizational and advertising aspects.

4.3.2 Teachers' perception of the program

It is important to contrast the information about students' perception with the teachers' opinion about the English Studies Program.

It was important to find out, in the first place, how well the teachers are acquainted with the latest curricular adjustments of the Program.

:



This graphic indicates that 77% of the teachers (7 teachers) know the curriculum well, whereas 23 % of them (2 teachers) say they don't.

Regarding teachers' general opinion about the Program, 77% of the teachers (7 teachers) appear to be satisfied with the Program.

Among the positive comments teachers mention about the curriculum in general, it is worth mentioning that they consider it a quite consistent and solid curriculum. Some teachers say this plan

represents one of the best that have ever been designed for the English studies, since it has taken into account an evaluation of the most positive elements of the previous plans in order to carry out adjustments. Many of the teachers state that at this point of the program, it is important to assess its difficulties and problems, as an ongoing process of evaluation and revision is necessary for any program of this kind.

Among the negative aspects which need revision and analysis, most of the teachers' concerns are related to the organization of the components of the studies. About this issue, they state the following:

- ✓ There is a lack of agreement among teachers on what is to be taught for some components.
- ✓ No changes should be carried out without a previous and careful analysis and evaluation of the present situation.
- ✓ On the other hand, gradual and intelligent changes are welcome.
- ✓ The changes always need to be consulted with students and teachers.
- ✓ Each component should be carefully sequenced in relation to the previous and the following one (for instance it is the case for the class of Integrated English, Laboratory, Socio Cultural Communication, and so forth).
- ✓ There is no systematic and logical follow up of the contents for these classes, and the teachers tend to teach according to their own isolated criteria.

- ✓ Teachers who teach the same group normally do not communicate so that there is no repetition of contents.
- ✓ The amount of hours per component is not always well distributed and balanced, as some components have not enough class time (Laboratory), and others are too much.
- ✓ The teaching of the specialized areas, for example Literature, Business English or Sociolinguistic need to be strengthened.
- ✓ The components that are not taught in the target language need to be eliminated.

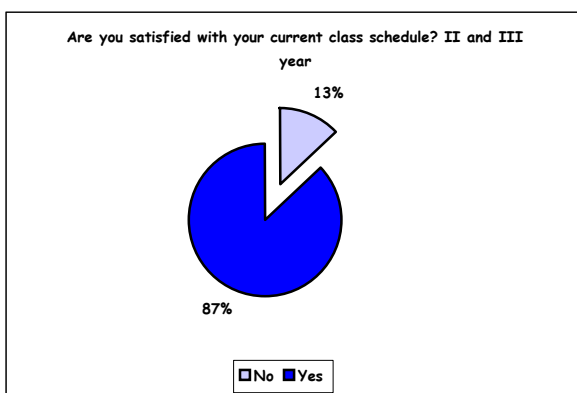
To summarize all the teachers seem to agree in what needs to be done. For most of them although the Program has good and strong aspects and has achieved improvements in terms of integration of skills and training on different areas, most of them agree in that the Program needs to go through a thoroughly and systematic revision. They all welcome adjustments aimed at complementing the program and reinforcing its positive aspects.

4.4 Organization of the Studies

With regard to the organization of the studies as perceived by students, students were asked a number of questions related to class schedules and the number of students per year.

4.4.1 Class schedules

It was important to find out whether or not students think the organization of the classes schedules facilitate their language acquisition process. The results are shown in the following graphic:



As it has been already mentioned in the chapter about the Context of the research, the students of II and III year have morning classes whereas the IV and V year students have afternoon classes. The fact that 87% of II and III year students are satisfied with their schedules and 73% of the IV and V year are not satisfied clearly indicates that students prefer the morning shift for their classes.

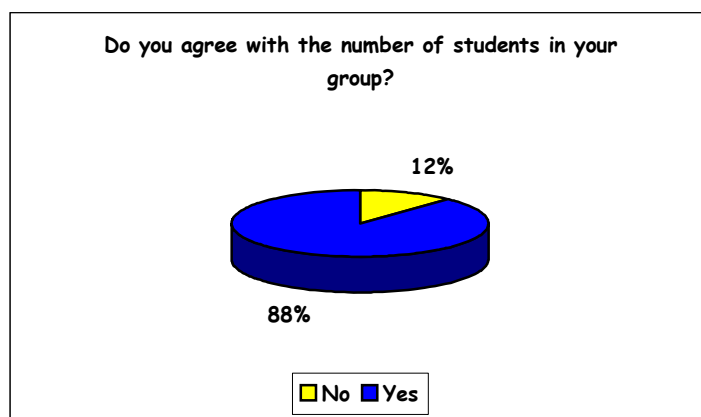
Among the reasons they state for not feeling comfortable with the afternoon shift are:

- ✓ Heat is unbearable in the afternoons and affects their concentration levels whereas since the morning is fresher they are more attentive and receptive.
- ✓ They feel tired, restless and unmotivated at this time of the day
- ✓ It is the less adequate time and conditions for any kind of learning.
- ✓ Changes of class schedule from one semester to the other affect their adaptation

These data imply that 50% of all the students of the English Studies Program do not study under the appropriate conditions because their schedules are not organized taking into account all the factors mentioned above. Consequently, special care should be always taken when it comes to plan and organize students' timetable.

4.4.2 Number of students per group

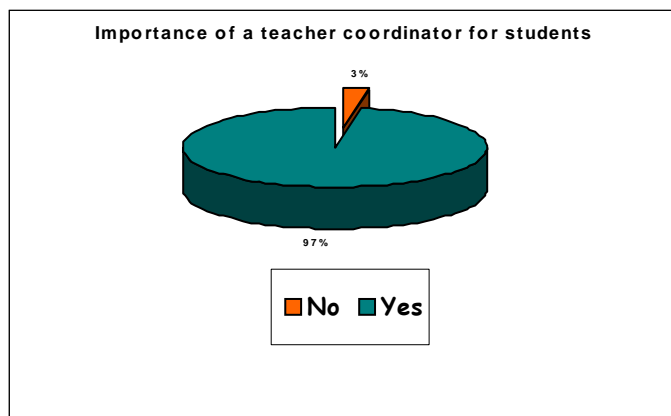
Another important datum is associated with the number of students each group has. The following graphic shows students opinions in this sense:



When being asked whether or not they consider the number of students appropriate, surprisingly 88% of all the students say that they are satisfied. Despite the fact that the average number of students is comparatively high (31), students do not consider this fact an obstacle for their learning.

4.4.3 A teacher coordinator per year

Concerning the support students receive from the teachers who coordinate their groups (there is one coordinator per year), students were asked whether or not this was helpful and relevant for them. Their answers are shown as follows:



As indicated in this graphic, 97 % of the students appreciate the help and support of the teacher coordinator. Among the most important reasons they state are the following:

- ✓ It is very important in order to help them solve any kind of difficulties and problems.
- ✓ He/she is like a guide who is closer to them
- ✓ They can talk to him/her in a more confident way

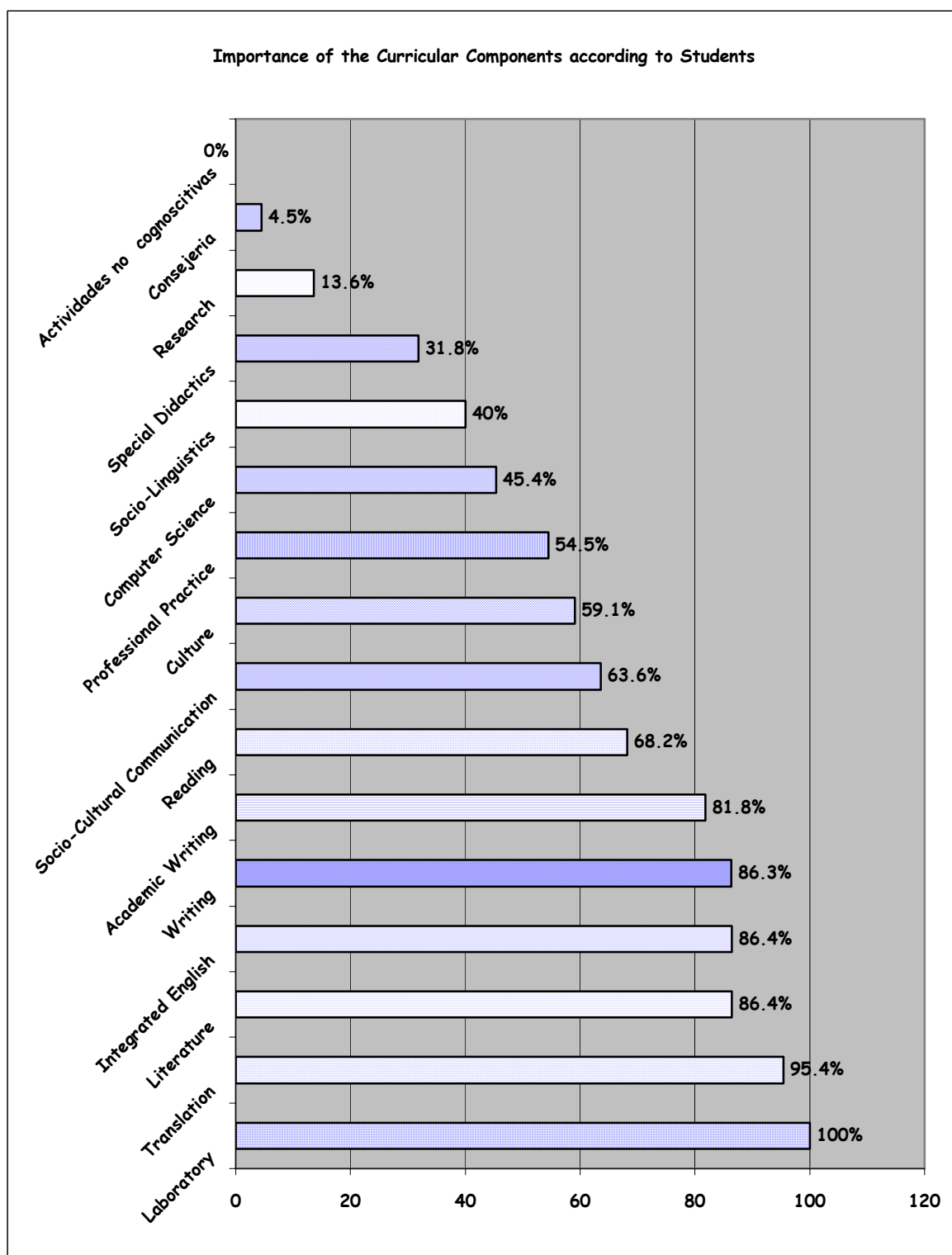
Teachers who coordinate each group play an important role from the students' point of view, as they seem to need a closer contact with a specific teacher who can listen to their problems and help them overcome their difficulties. Given the fact that students have been repeatedly asking for more contact with the teachers throughout the data analysis, this is an essential element that teachers should take into consideration so that they purposely attempt to strengthen their relationships with students.

4.5 The components of the English Studies Program

In order to find out and contrast students' and teachers' perception about how important they consider each component of the program, there was a set of questions about 16 classes which they had to rank from very important (5) to not important at all (0).

4.5.1 Students' classification of the importance of the components

The way students categorize the different curricular components according to their importance are shown in the following bar chart:



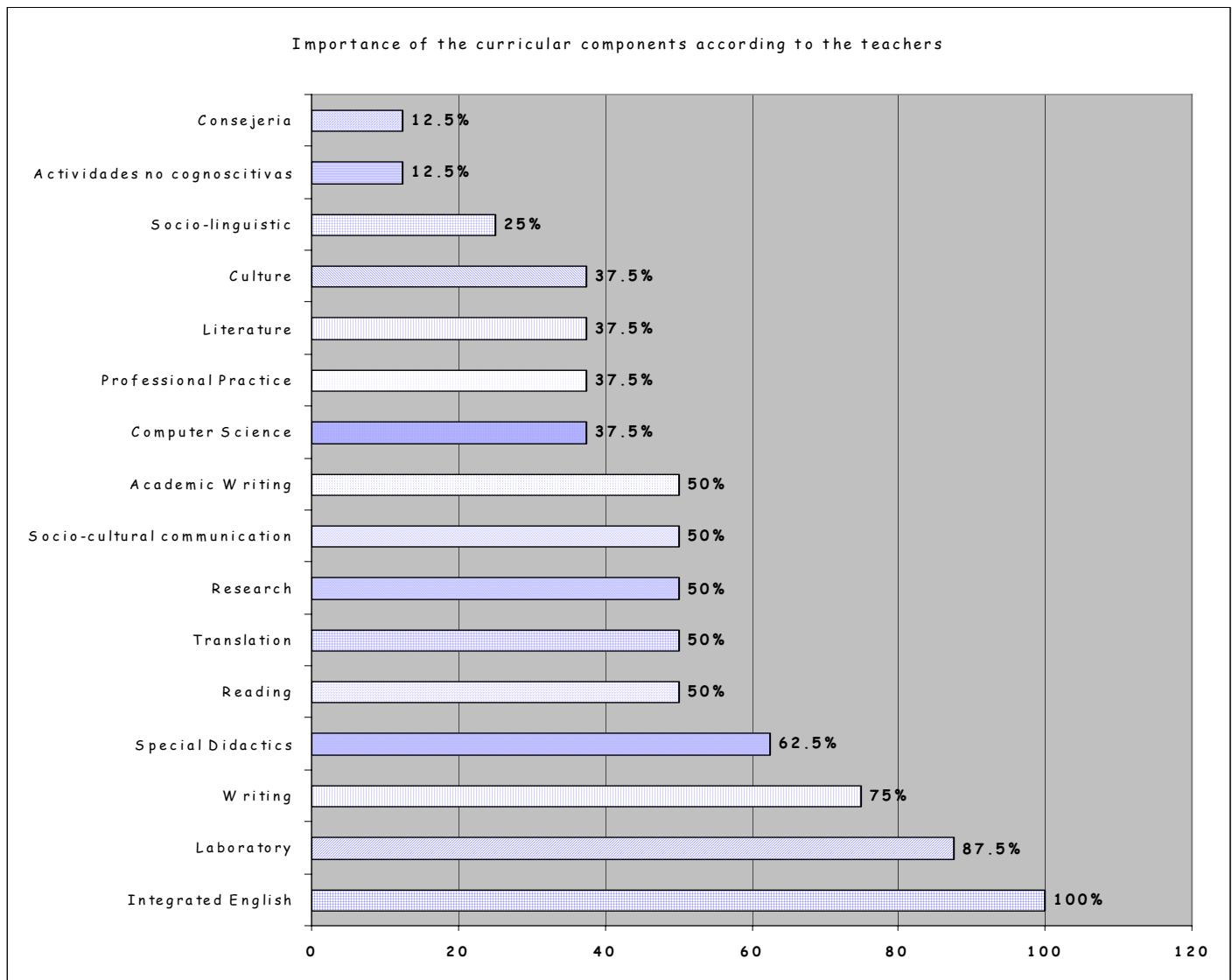
From these data the way students perceive the importance of each of the components of their language Program can be determined. Laboratory comes first with 100% followed by Translation (95%), Literature and Integrated English (each 86.4%), Writing (86.3%) and Academic Writing (81.8%). Reading counts up 68.2% of students' approval and Socio-cultural Communication 63.6%. In the particular case of Professional Practice students consider this class as being rather meaningful and important (59.1%). In their interviews, students say that Professional Practice is good because they have the opportunity to put into practice their linguistic knowledge. However, they need more information about this class and they suggest it should be better organized in terms of consistency, adequacy and connection with their professional field. Finally, there are some components such as Counseling and "Actividades no Cognoscitivas" which students' do not consider important at all.

These results shed interesting light on students' perception of the different courses of the English Studies program. It can be confirmed that listening and speaking skills are a priority for students as the Laboratory class is the most important of all the classes for them. Surprisingly, enough there is also a clear inclination to specialized areas such as Translation, Literature, and Academic Writing. On the other hand, important classes as Research do not appear to be a part of students' likes and interest. This may be due to the fact that students' are not aware of the importance of conducting research. Therefore teachers should promote more investigative activities in their classes by means of small-scale research projects.

It is important to notice that students show a unanimous rejection towards the Counseling and "Actividades no Cognoscitivas" courses. Among the possible reasons for this, we can mention the fact that these classes are usually taught in Spanish, and that most students dislike the topics chosen for the extra-curricular activities (Architecture, Protection of the environment, Theater and so forth). In general students think that these areas are useless and irrelevant for their studies. Consequently, it would be a good idea to take into account the students' insights about this matter, as it is crucial for their motivational levels that they feel satisfied with the organization of their studies.

4.5.2 Teachers' classification of the importance of the components

Students' insights about the classification of the curricular components according to their importance need to be contrasted and compared with teachers' opinions about the same issue. Teachers were asked exactly the same question as students and again they had to rank the different classes according to their order of importance from the most important to the least important. The following bar chart shows the results of their categorization:



The results reflect teachers' unanimous decision that Integrated English is one of the most important components of the curriculum (100%). Laboratory comes in the second place with 87.5%, followed by Writing (75%) and Special Didactics (62.5%). On the other hand, courses like Reading, Translation, Socio-Cultural Communication, Academic Writing and Research are placed by teachers in a middle position in order of importance with 50%. Again, similarly to students, teachers consider that "Actividades no Cognoscitivas" and "Counseling" are the least important classes of the studies (12.5%) for both classes.

From these results it can be deduced that Integrated English and Laboratory are considered key elements for the fulfillment of the objectives of the English Major. These components are taught throughout most of the semesters

of the studies. It is important to point out that, in the interviews, similar conclusions were drawn about these classes as teachers say that Integrated English is considered to be the most consistent component in terms of the materials and the contents. In fact, Integrated English is the only detailed program that was designed by a team of teachers supported and assisted by a Canadian Specialist. Regarding the Laboratory class, teachers share students' perception about the significance of this class to develop and improve the listening and speaking skills.

Interestingly enough, teachers provide the same insights as students when it comes to rank the importance of "Actividades no Cognoscitivas" and "Counseling". Certainly, the teachers rate these two components as unimportant and consider that they are unrelated to the English Studies. Again in the interviews, teachers explain their reasons stating that the fact that these components are including in all studies of UNAN should be reconsidered for fields like English where these classes do not play a relevant role in the students' acquisition of the language. For the teachers these components are a waste of precious time that could be used to either integrate other areas, or reinforce other essential component like Integrated English or Laboratory

4.5.3 Selection of teachers

Concerning the selection of teachers to teach the different classes of the program, valuable information is given in students' diaries, as well as students and teachers' interviews. Among the insights obtained from the students, it can be inferred that there is a general feeling of disappointment and frustration. As one student says " Sometimes teachers are not the appropriate to teach specific components because they do not master the content of the class". Another student complains about the change of teachers. He says, "Changes of teachers after seven semesters affect us a lot". A third students states "Teacher selection is very bad. Sometimes teachers do not have a good knowledge about the subject they are teaching. It would be good to take into account teachers' qualification in a specific subject. The head of the English Department has the responsibility of selecting and appointing the teachers according to their knowledge, experience and teaching mastery".

Students' negative perception about the selection of teachers is shared to some extent by the teachers. The general opinion about this issue is that teachers who have never taught a particular component should not be assigned, mostly in the highest levels where students can easily recognize whether or not the teacher knows the subject well. Doing so results in dissatisfaction for both teachers and students and in a considerable decrease in terms of methodology, level of difficulty of the contents, teachers' control of the group, and students' acquisition.

They state that the selection of teachers for teaching specific specialized components should be strictly controlled, taking into account the following criteria:

- ✓ Experience
- ✓ Expertise area and knowledge
- ✓ Training on the specific field (training in foreign universities)
- ✓ Motivation
- ✓ Seniority
- ✓ Number of teaching hours

To summarize, the results undoubtedly indicate that the selection of teachers to teach the different classes in the English Studies Program is not always adequate and does not follow consistent criteria, as the ones indicated by the teachers themselves.

4.5.4 Courses interrelation, scope and sequence

When it comes to the sequencing, interrelation and connection of the classes of the curriculum, there are important conclusions drawn from the analysis of the teachers and students' interviews. In general, it is perceived that teachers and students are not really satisfied with the current general organization of the components as they say there is no logical sequencing between the components and the contents to be taught are not pre-established. Thus, a serious problem of discontinuity from one class to the other can be observed. Moreover, there is a lack of communication and feedback at the end of each semester, and as result of this there is no quality control of students' real knowledge when moving from one level to a higher one.

This problem is partially due to the fact that contents are not determined beforehand as there are no guidelines for each class. The teachers tend to decide by themselves the contents they will cover according to the choice of books and course materials they find available. This situation leads to a number of problems such as the risk of not using the appropriate materials for a specific group in terms of level of difficulty and suitability, without mentioning the fact that some course materials are not updated, attractive and appealing to students.

Consequently, it is highly recommended to establish general guidelines for each of the components in terms of the objectives, contents, activities, materials, level of difficulty and evaluation. It is also suggested some kind of systematic and qualitative written evaluation per class at the end of each semester in the form of a report. With this feedback teachers can have better levels of communication in terms of the specific aspects that need to be covered as a follow up of any particular class. The following section will shed more light on the particular issues of courses materials and resources.

4. 6 Courses materials and resources

4.6.1 The materials used by teachers

The kind of materials used to teach the different components is another important issue within the curriculum of the English Studies Program. Teachers were asked what are their main bibliographical resources for the components they teach. The following is a list of the actual books mentioned by the teachers:

- **Integrated English:** *English File 1 and 2, Cutting Edge, Transitions 1 and 2, Explorations 1 and 2, Cambridge*, combined with complementary materials as *Pair Work, Five Minute Activities, Tandem Plus, Grammar books*, and so forth.
- **Laboratory:** *Let's Talk, Cambridge, Connect with English, Tapestry, North Star and Interchange*.
- **Reading:** *Cambridge, Interactions Access, Password 1, Reading Between the Lines, Reading Techniques*.
- **Writing:** *Weaving it together, Tapestry 1, Writing in English, Techniques for Writing Academic Writing, Writing Dossiers from Alcala Program, Writing from Within, Introduction to Writing, From Writing to Composing*.
- **Socio-cultural Communication:** *Let's talk, Inside out, Interaction Access, Tapestry*
- **Research:** *Practical research, Methodology of Research, classroom Research, Social Research, Dossiers from Alcala*.
- **Special Didactics:** *How to teach English, Teach English, English for the Teacher, Testing, Language Learning Strategies and Dossiers from Alcala*
- **Socio-Linguistics:** *An Introduction to Language, Tapestry, Take it Easy, TOEFL book*

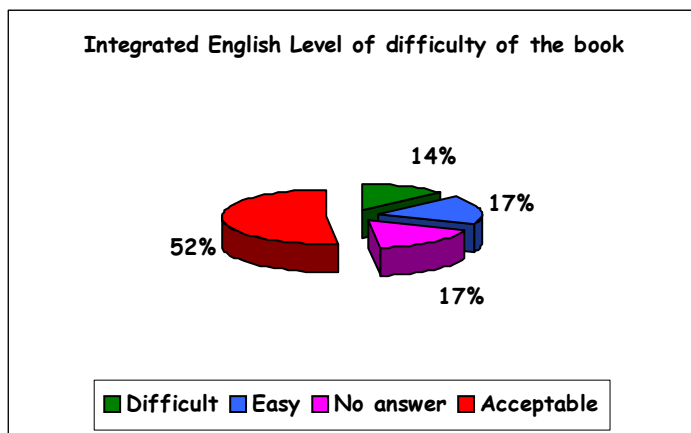
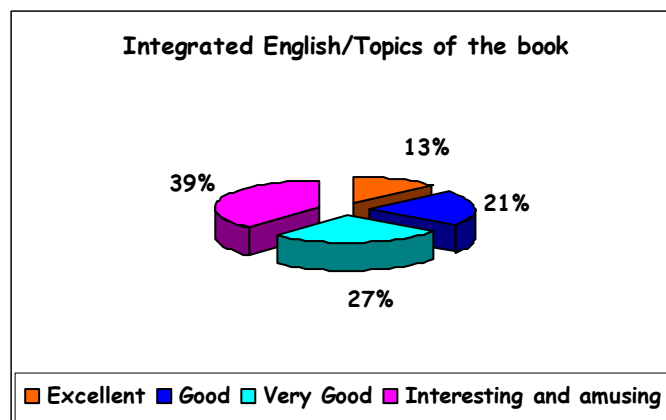
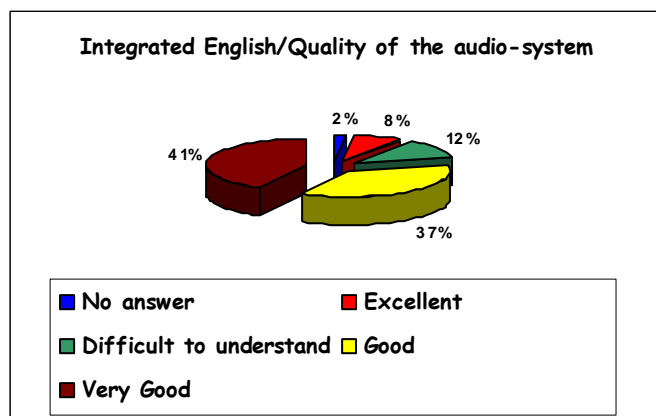
In addition to the above, the teachers also use pamphlets designed for the classes of Culture, Translation, Literature, Academic Writing and Research. From the list above it can be noticed that some series of books are repeated for several classes. Teachers select independently the materials they think are the most appropriate since there are no established textbooks or bibliography (except for Integrated English). Sometimes, teachers select books for one component that is not adequate for the characteristics of the class. For example, *Let's Talk 1 and 2* is used for the Lab classes in II and III year. Some other teachers use the same series to teach a different component in the higher levels (*Let's Talk 3* for Socio-Cultural Communication in IV year). This lack of standardized criteria for the materials and the contents results in inconsistent syllabuses. As suggested above, the guidelines that should be written for each component should also include a list of books, didactic materials and extra materials teachers can use to teach each component. It is also important to point out that if teachers develop the habit of always using the same books in class, there is a risk of routinely teaching, marked by a lack of creativity. Books and materials should constantly be renewed and up-dated, and teachers should take from them

those particular activities that really fit the students' needs for each level. In addition to this, teachers must be able to develop and design their own materials.

4.6.2 Students' opinion about the materials

After presenting the list of materials, it was important to collect students' opinion about the materials used by teachers in some of the core curricular components of the English Studies Program. For this purpose, the surveys included questions to find out students' opinion about the quality of the didactic resources used for the main classes taking into account the particular features of each class.

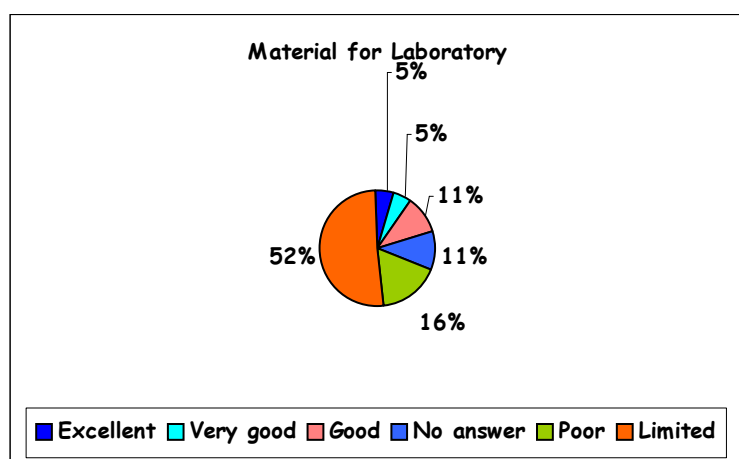
- As regards **Integrated English**, students were asked to express their opinion about the books (English File 2 and Transitions 2), the topics and the quality of the recordings. The results are reflected in the following graphics:



52% of the students think the level of difficulty is adequate for them, 17% find it too easy and 14% too difficult. As far as the topics are concerned, all their comments are positive, ranking from good, to very good, interesting, amusing and excellent. Only 12% of the students think that the recordings are difficult to understand because of the speed or the different accents students are exposed to. In fact, the comments students give vary according to the different teachers who teach the class, as students tend to confuse their analysis of the materials with their opinion about the teacher.

Most students approve the books used in the Integrated English class. This is not surprising since the series is recent and up-to-date material, which includes a wide variety of learner centered, and task-based activities. The books integrate many aspects, skills and sub-skills of the language and expose students to a wide range of accents and pronunciation.

- For the **Laboratory** class, students were asked to rank the materials used in the class from excellent to very good, good, limited and poor.



The results show that most student consider the materials of the Lab class as being poor (68%) and limited, while only 21% rank the material between excellent and good.

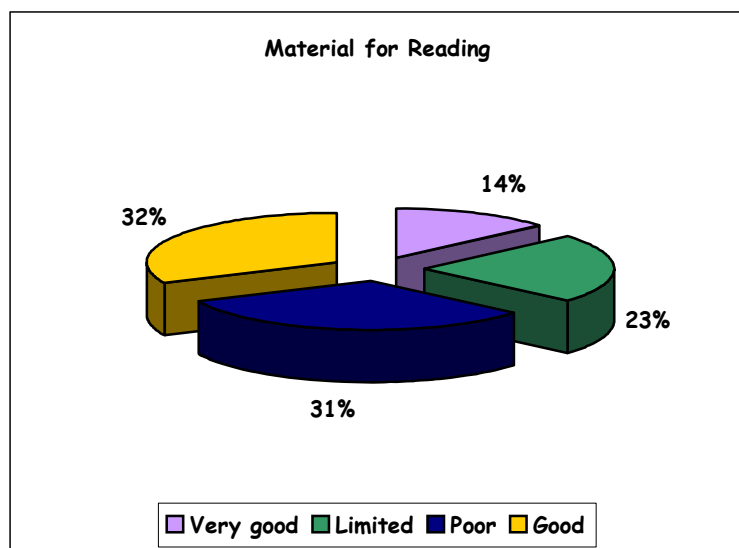
The students state a number of reasons for criticizing the material:

- They are obsolete, superficial and old-fashioned
- They say they need to complement their lab classes with the use of computers.
- The lab classes are not presented as they should be (it is like a normal class most of the time)
- There should be more listening and speaking activities

- Students find the audio materials too simple and boring (Connect with English)
- They have not really used good materials, just “a few pages”
- Materials are too diverse and do not have any sequence

In short, the comments about the materials used by teachers of the lab class indicate that most students are not satisfied with the choice and adequacy of materials, and they ask for more listening and speaking activities, more variety, and the use of computers in class. Students also seem to be very aware of the fact that the lab classes have a different nature than the other components, and they complain about the class being taught as a formal class. They are much more demanding when it comes to the kind and amount of materials. This may be due, in fact, to the proper characteristics of a Laboratory class, for which teachers need to design their materials, as no books really meet the needs of this particular class.

- Regarding **Reading** once again students were asked to rank the materials using the same categories mentioned above.

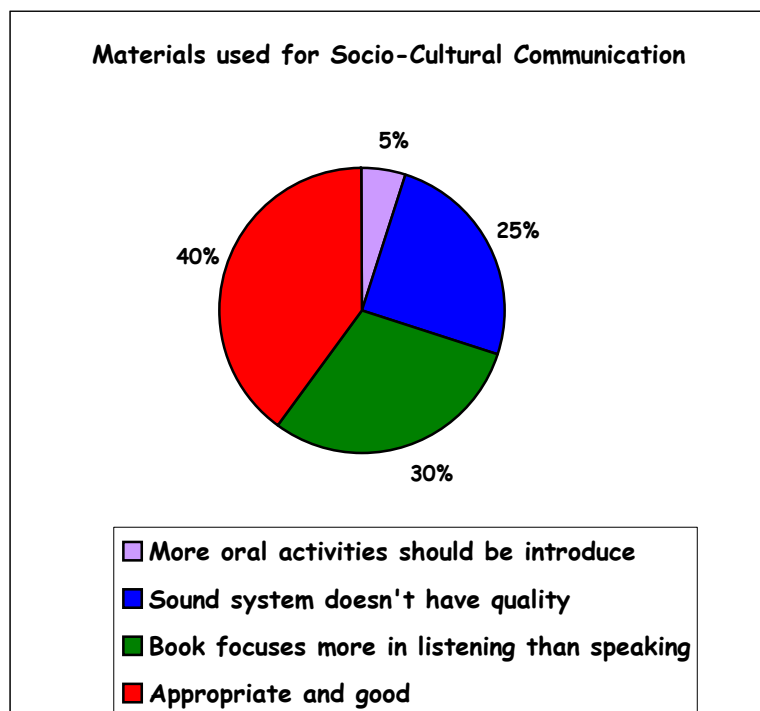


This graphic clearly shows that only 46 % of the students state that the materials are either good, or very good; on the other hand, 54% of them say that the materials are either limited or poor.

From the teachers' point of view, and according to the list above mentioned, there is also a lack of good materials, as there is only a very limited selection of books available for this particular skill. This limitation gets worse, taking into account that the reading class is not particularly an active, communicative kind of class.

- As far as **Socio Cultural Communication** is concerned, the kind of questions asked to the students was different. They were asked to rate this curricular component taking into account different aspects, such as

the quality of the sound system, the amount of oral activities, and the book. The following graphic shows students' opinion:



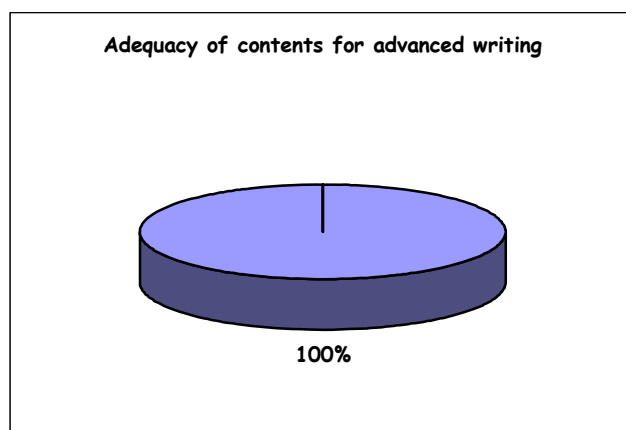
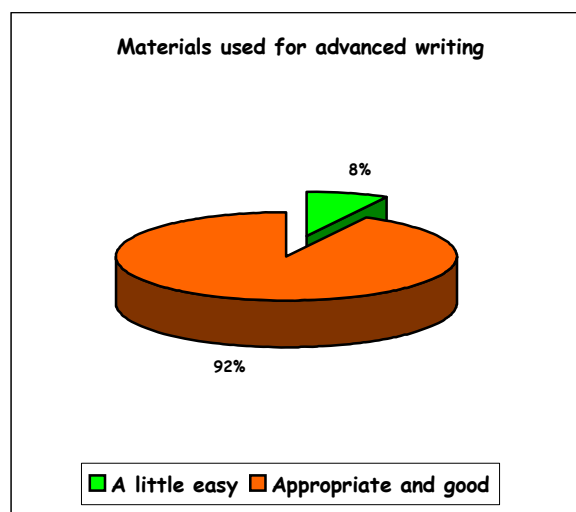
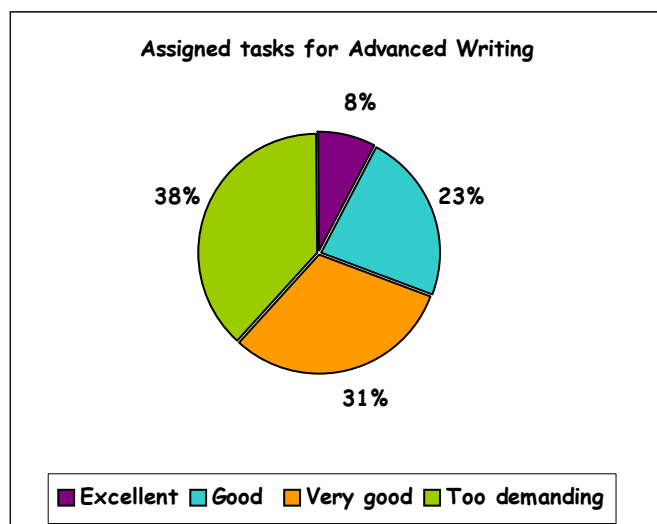
The results indicate that only 40% of the students think that the materials are appropriate and good, and 30 % complain that the book focuses more on listening than speaking. 25% of them criticize the quality of the recordings and sound system, and 5 % state that more oral activities should be introduced.

Students explain the following:

- ✓ The exercises consist more on listening and writing activities; however, they also need to reinforce the speaking skill
- ✓ The cassettes are not always clear enough

It is clear that students value a good balance between listening and speaking activities, as they identify this class as a communicative conversational class, aimed at strengthening students' oral competence. However, although a few students complain that the level of difficulty is too high, according to the materials used by the teacher, it is considered that it is appropriate to the level, which confirms students need to make a greater effort on self access time in the lab, for example. Given the communicative nature of the class, it is highly recommended to support students' acquisition by promoting conversational exchanges with native speakers by means of regular visits to the class. In addition to this, teachers should be very concerned with complementing the material offered by the books with extra materials either taken from other sources or designed by themselves, in order to avoid routine, monotony and boredoms, and at the same time fulfill students' expectations and needs.

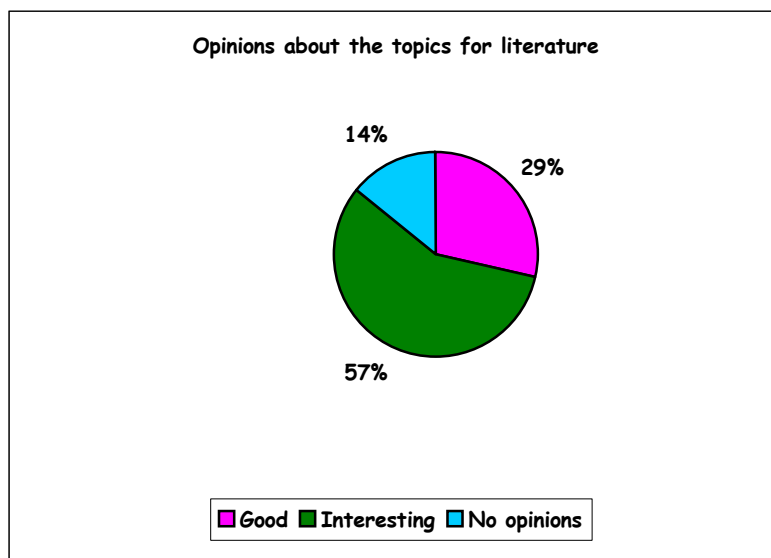
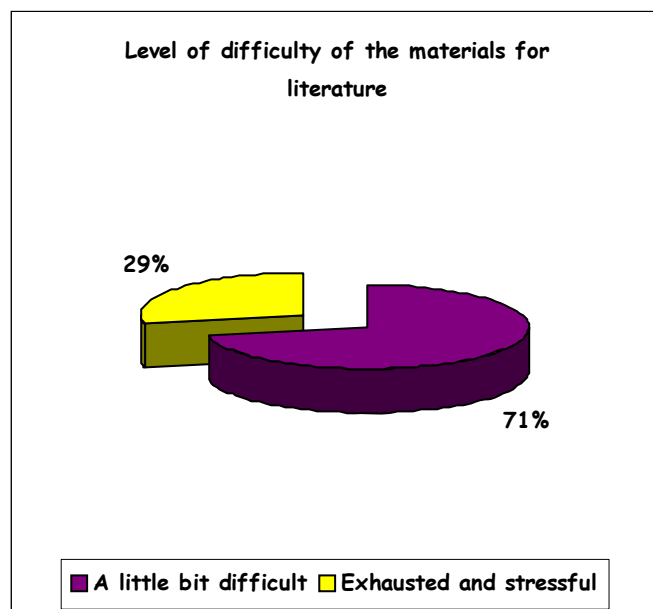
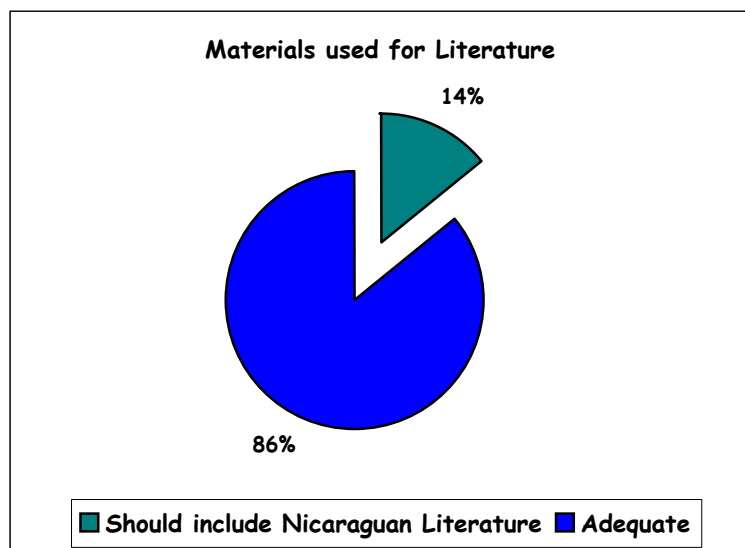
- As regards **Advanced Writing**, the questions were related to the adequacy of contents of the materials, and the tasks assigned.



In relation to the materials 92% of the students state that they are appropriate and good, whereas only 8% (1 student) says that they are a little easy for him/her. All the students (100%) say the contents are adequate and fulfill their needs. As for the assigned tasks, 8% of the students say they are excellent and 54% of the students rank them from very good and good, whereas 38% say they are too demanding. This may be due to the fact that students take this class in the V year of their studies and they have to be able to write fluent and well organized pieces of writing of different kinds; essays, articles, letters, and so forth. Obviously, the demands of the class are very high as it aims at preparing students for their final exam (which includes the writing of an academic essay). The probable reasons for the problems students face in relation to Academic Writing, could be the lack of

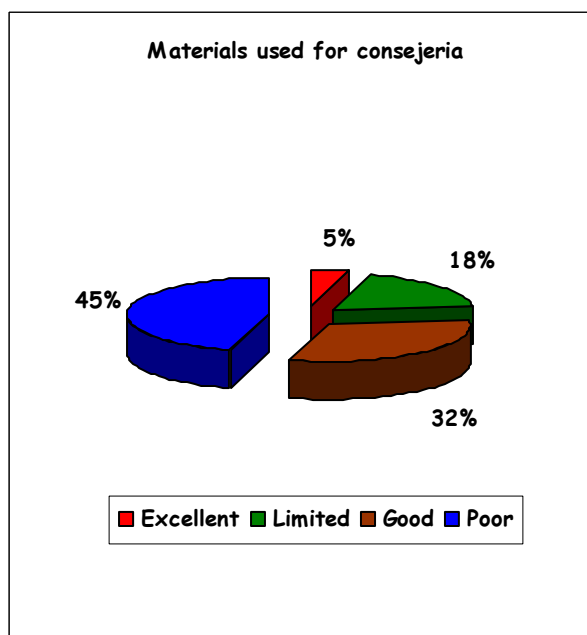
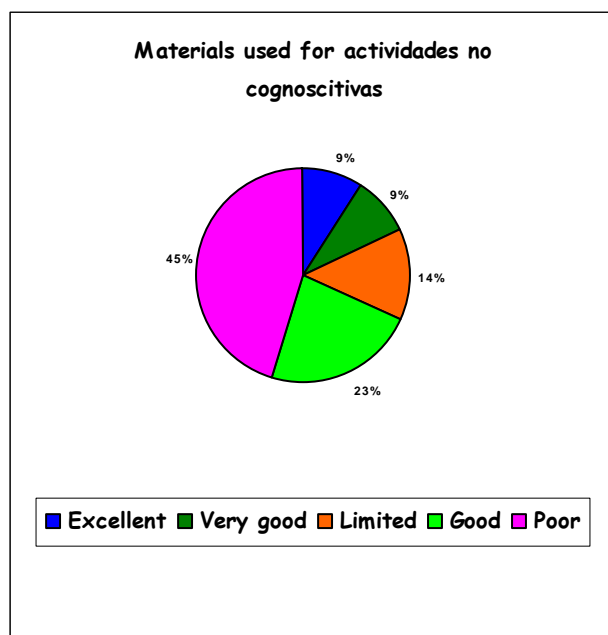
background experience in writing (even in their native language), and the fact that the program focuses more on advanced writing at the end of the studies. Therefore, it is highly recommended to provide students with the basic linguistic and organizational tools for writing at the right times of their learning process. In addition to this, teachers should create and promote the habit of writing by means of journals and diaries writing in order to facilitate students mastering of academic writing.

- Regarding **Literature** the questions about the materials used in the class were related to the level of difficulty and adequacy of topics. The following graphics show the results:



As it can be observed, 86% of the students consider the materials appropriate. However, 14% consider the class should also include Nicaraguan literature. The topics are generally considered good (29%), and interesting (57%). Nevertheless, as far as the level of difficulty of the materials is concerned, 71% of the students perceive that the materials are a little bit difficult to handle and 29% say that the class materials contribute to increase their anxiety levels and stress. This may be due to the fact that the requirement to pass the class is the writing of a literature outline consisting on the analysis of a novel or a play from the point of view of the characters, setting, plot and main themes. This class is taught in combination with the Academic Writing class and therefore students' load of work gets too heavy and students get tired.

- When it comes to the classes of **Actividades No Cognoscitivas** and **Counseling**, students' general opinion about the materials used in these classes reinforce both students' and teachers' negative perception about this class, which they consider unnecessary and a loss of time. Students' opinions are reflected in the following pies:



When asked about the materials used in these two curricular components, 45% of the students answered that the materials were poor and 14% limited, whereas only 23% considered the materials good. For Consejeria, the answers were poor (45%), limited 18%, good (32%) and excellent (5%). Again, as students and teachers unanimously complain about the contents, materials, organization of these curricular component, a serious

evaluation and revision should be carried out, in order to determine to what extent it is worth keeping these components as parts of the English Studies Program. A possible solution could be to give these classes a focus on English activities they can perform as part of their language acquisition tasks, for example cinema, theatre and songs sessions, under the responsibility of English teachers.

To conclude this section about the English Studies Program curriculum, syllabus and materials, the results clearly indicate that in spite of some strong positive aspects, some changes and adjustments need to be carried out in terms of curriculum organization and contents, materials and general structure of the different syllabuses of the program.

5. Quality standards and quality indicators

As stated in the Literature Review (see chapter IV), the assessment of quality is a core issue in a Language Evaluation Program. Indeed, quality reflects the impact and success of the whole program. It was therefore crucial to get students' and teachers' insights about this important aspect in order to determine whether the English studies Program meets the necessary criteria for quality.

5.1 Exit criteria

Without any doubt, the product and final impact of a language program can be measured by the suitability and professional quality of its graduates in relation to its original objectives, mission and vision. In this sense, it was very important to get to know teachers' perception about whether or not the exit requirement ("Examen de Grado" or "Monografía" in English) really measures and evaluates the professional quality of the students once they have completed the English Studies Program.

In order to determine this, teachers were asked to express their opinion about what they think the best way of measuring students' knowledge, communicative competences and performance. In addition to this, teachers were also asked to provide insights about how the quality of the exit criteria can be guaranteed.

All teachers seem to agree with the existing system for students' graduation. They believe that the current "Examen de Grado" is the best way to evaluate students' real linguistic performance in all skills, at least at upper intermediate levels. This exit exam ensures that students have really acquired the following skills:

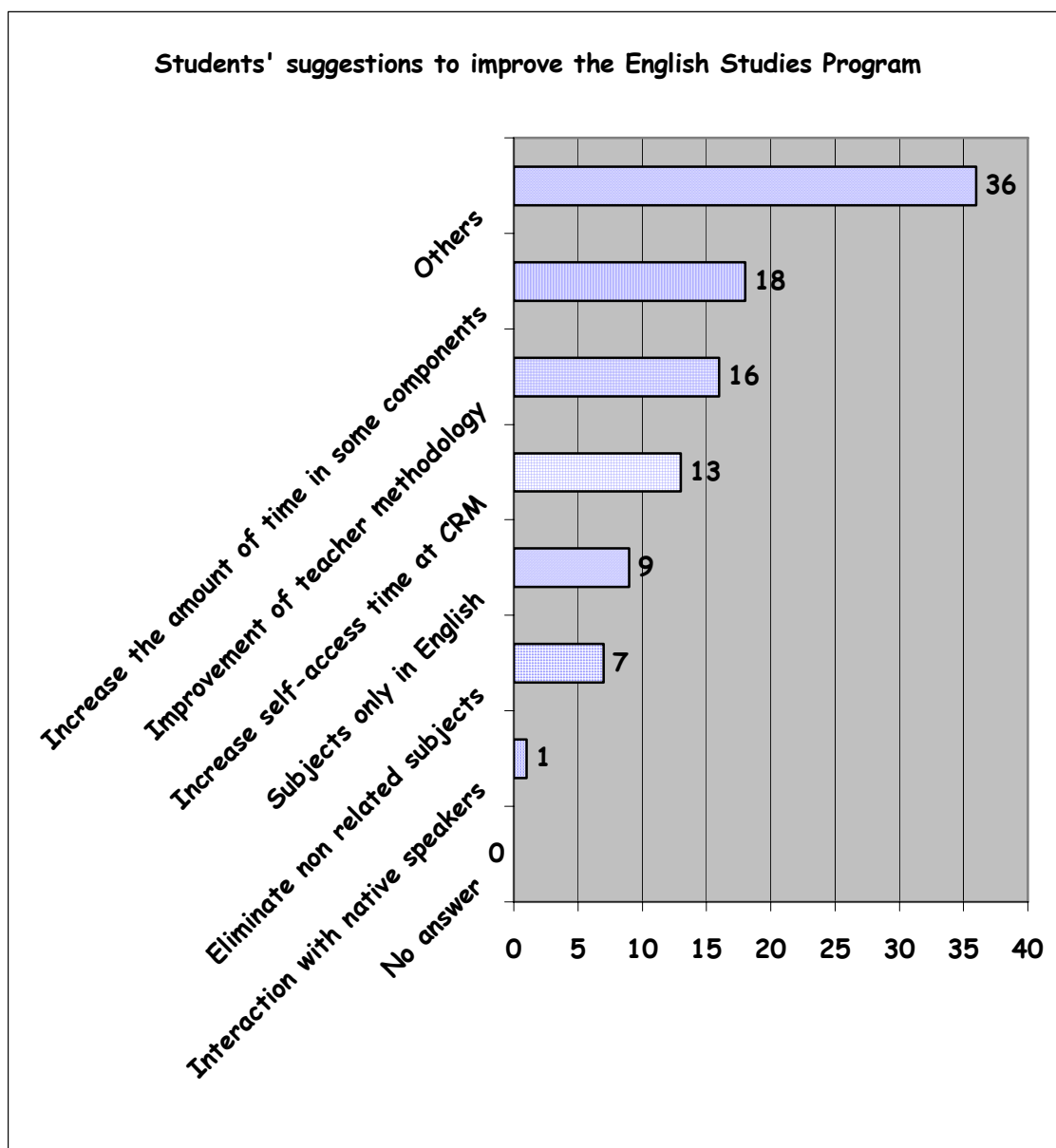
- ◆ Adequate listening abilities that allow them to be successful communicators (understand and be understood)
- ◆ Acceptable writing skills to be able to perform real life writing tasks such as writing letters, articles, letters, summaries, or be able to successfully pass standardized exams for studying in foreign universities (E.g. TOEFL).
- ◆ Appropriate reading skills to read and analyze written texts critically.
- ◆ Competent communicative abilities in order to be able to keep conversations in a variety of real life contexts
- ◆ Satisfactory knowledge of syntactic and grammatical structures at upper intermediate levels

However, teachers say that there are problems with the organization of the exit exam and that some areas should be revised and adjusted. For instance, as far as speaking is concerned, some teachers think that asking students a simple question about a particular topic to assess their oral performance is not enough to find out whether or not they are proficient speakers. Other teachers think that in order to provide a fair and relaxed atmosphere for students when they take this exam, there should be an entire organizational process in terms of coordination and previous training of the evaluators in order to avoid miscommunication and set up rules and procedures that all teachers should follow.

Because of the significance of this exit requirement it is therefore necessary to make sure this crucial stage has the required quality and at the same time represents a fair, valid and objective process to measure students performance and knowledge. As researchers are aware that this aspect of the program is fundamentally important and crucial, it is highly recommended to carry out a further research project on this issue in order to get more insights and assess deeply the efficiency and suitability of this exam.

5.2 Students' suggestions to improve the quality of the Program

Students' surveys included a question aimed at finding out their suggestions to improve the English Studies Program. This question is very important as students are in a favorable position to assess the whole process and provide relevant feedback. The following bar charts indicate the main areas in which students suggest improvement and changes.



As shown in these charts, 18% of all the students of the English Studies Program suggest that the amount of time for some important components should be increased, and 7% say that classes unrelated to English should be eliminated. On the other hand, 16% of students think that there should be a substantial improvement in methodology by means of teacher training. 13% believe there should be an increase in self-access time at the CRM. Finally, 36% give other kinds of suggestions among which we can mention the following:

- ✓ Change some teachers, because they need excellence in the academic training of teachers
- ✓ Improve teacher training in specialized areas
- ✓ Classes should be more dynamic and active

- ✓ Better attention from teachers (tutorial sessions)
- ✓ Teachers should be more demanding
- ✓ Help and guide students consistently throughout the entire program so that they get to acquire the language successfully.
- ✓ Balance the curriculum in order to avoid too many difficult classes in IV and V year
- ✓ Some classes like writing should be taught from the very beginning levels.
- ✓ Improve the physical conditions and resources of the Faculty
- ✓ Assign classrooms specifically for the students of the English Studies
- ✓ Provide the classrooms with audiovisual equipment so that the lab can be used entirely for the self-access.
- ✓ Improve the administrative organization of the English Department
- ✓ Improve and strengthen staff relationships

On the whole the suggestions mentioned above are quite similar to the insights students provided about their difficulties in section 1.8 of this same chapter. It is clear that students have very definite areas in which they demand better quality. For the most part their suggestions are directly connected with the improvement of teachers' attention and methodology. In addition to this they make special emphasis on some organization and administrative issues such as self-access time at the CRM. Furthermore, another important area in which students suggest improvement is the curriculum structure, organization and balance. Finally, there are serious concerns about the physical conditions of the faculty in terms of classrooms conditions and equipment

As it was already mentioned, since they have been the main participants of the entire educational process, students are in an optimal position to suggest improvement in the areas in which they consider significant changes are needed. The students' suggestions were valuable sources, and were taken into account in the list of recommendations that follows this chapter. (See chapter VIII section 2).

5.3 Teachers' suggestions to improve the quality of the Program

In the surveys and interviews, teachers express a number of concerns and state some important suggestions to increase the quality of the English Studies Program. In fact, one of their main concerns is that student's levels after graduation are not up to the quality society demands and expects. To illustrate this problem, some of the teachers say that the local authorities of the Ministry of Education, the potential employers of English teachers, have some doubts concerning the professional quality of UNAN graduates because they say their linguistic skills are not good enough.

Quality standards are therefore a key issue for the program according to teachers, and most of the suggested changes and adjustments should be carried out with the definite purpose of quality and excellence improvement. Teachers suggest substantial improvement in the following aspects:

- ❖ Mission, vision and objectives: The mission and vision statements in the old document called “macro-programación” need to be restated and updated in order to match the current orientation of the Studies. In order to consolidate the foundation of the program, short and long term goals should be set in the form of a strategic plan, with the general purpose of developing and strengthening the English Studies Program.
- ❖ Quality assurance mechanisms: The English department should be specially concerned with defining an efficient and adequate system aimed at ensuring the quality of the English studies Program, by means of an agreement and consensus of all the English department staff in which quality standards have to be defined and formulated.
- ❖ A sound curriculum: Changes and adjustment need to be carried out in a progressive and gradual manner, based on students’ real needs, and with previous evaluation, analysis and monitoring. Internal coherence (interrelation and sequence) in the curricular components has to be achieved in order to avoid curricular discontinuity. The weak aspects as presented by teachers and students in the previous sections of this research should be addressed efficiently, and the strong aspects must be reinforced. This revision process should include an ongoing evaluation of the teaching materials in order to provide students and teachers with the necessary materials.
- ❖ Flexible organization framework: This is a necessary feature of an efficient and well-managed program, which guarantees a positive teaching-learning environment. The main participants and actors need to interact in an atmosphere of trust, autonomy, and responsibility. In addition to this, intelligent initiatives should be welcome and promoted. Good internal communication channels have to be open and maintained at all time.
- ❖ Professional treatments of teachers: Teachers need to count on a highly professional treatment in which they can feel valued and encouraged. An on-going teacher training system has to be running in order to make sure teachers can direct their own professional development to higher levels, as well as fulfill students’ needs for quality teaching learning process.
- ❖ Good general teaching context: Finally, the institution should guarantee the appropriate physical teaching environment, with all the conditions necessary for teaching and learning a language: equipment, resources and materials, classrooms, CRM.

Similarly to what students suggest, the teachers are very concerned about all these central aspects of the English Studies Programs.

Consequently as the result of all the findings which have been presented, analyzed and interpreted in this chapter, the researchers have compiled a set of recommendations based on the main issues raised throughout this Language Evaluation Program.

VIII. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the results obtained in this research by means of a process of data collection and analysis have shed light on many positive and negative aspects of the English Studies Program at the Faculty of the Educational Sciences and Humanities of UNAN-Leon. The findings have arisen significant issues concerning the main aspects of the Program: its organization and structure, curriculum, main actors and participants, as well as its situational context. As a result of this, the insights of both teachers and students have contributed to assess the Program according to relevant quality indicators.

In conclusion, the research findings of this study have provided some evidence that the English Studies Program has many strong and positive aspects as a whole. Nevertheless, many problems, difficulties and weaknesses have been identified as well. The researchers have found that a number of different issues need to be addressed in order to increase the quality and excellence of the Program. Although the curricular components are all relevant to the study field, and many important changes have already been successfully undertaken, there should be a continuity of the work that has been carried out. Many parts are still missing and some curricular adjustments are necessary. On the other hand, the findings also point out serious constraints in terms of organizational and contextual issue. Some limitations have also been identified regarding the teaching learning process and the complex world of classroom interaction. The research has provided valuable information about the roles of teachers and students ' performance in the Program.

Certainly, the present results have important implications for the educational practice of the teachers of the English Studies Program in the sense of the identification of its main strengths and weaknesses. The strong aspects need to be reinforced, and the problems need to be efficiently addressed, which in turn will contribute to increase the quality and prestige of the Program.

From the point of view of the researchers, this study has been a highly rewarding, interesting and enlightening experience. Some of the main dimensions and contributions are related to our professional field, as we have gained substantial knowledge of the Program itself. Others are related to human relationships and teacher student interaction and contact. In fact, we have gotten closer to our students as we have showed a genuine interest in their points of view in general and their opinions about the limitations they face. Moreover, we have also had the opportunity to share our concerns with our colleagues, and consequently this has led us to identify and put

together common fields of interest. Finally, we have significantly expanded our general knowledge as far as research techniques and bibliographical review are concerned. One of the most significant personal benefits has been the fact that we have grown as critical, analytical and reflective teachers, able to address both the positive and negative by means of conducting a research project.

The researchers are aware that any research of this kind has some limitations due to its complex and multifaceted nature. For instance, we have found many contradictions in students' insights, which made the analysis of data and identification of the key issues a real problem. Another significant limitation deals with time constraints and the work load of the researchers. Finally, the lack of support and interest from the part of the authorities has to be mentioned as a serious limitation as well.

With regard to future follow-up studies, there are many interesting aspects in which further research is needed. Some of the difficulties, problems and weaknesses need to be addressed immediately, whereas others have a long-term nature and will therefore need to be carefully evaluated and analyzed by means of further investigation.

We strongly believe this research has carefully followed all the procedures and steps suggested by experts in the field of research and language evaluation programs. Consequently, we hope that the findings of the study and the following final recommendations are seriously taken into account to improve and strengthen the English Studies Program to the benefits of both teachers and students and UNAN-Leon as a whole.

2. Recommendations

The following recommendations were brought up as a result of the analysis of the most significant findings of this study. They focus on all the aspects of the program mentioned above and are organized as proposals and suggestions to improve and strengthen the most significant issues of the English Studies Program at UNAN-Leon. The recommendations are grouped in sections, and some of them are followed by the justifications, which refer to the particular data and outcomes where they were taken from in the data analysis and results chapter.

2.1. The Program structure and organization

The following series of recommendations is aimed at providing valuable suggestions to overcome the problems related to the program organization and structure as a whole.

■ High quality and excellence should be a priority in the English Studies Program by means of the implementation of a philosophy of quality that underlies all the different complex aspects of the Program (Curriculum, organization, teaching –learning process, materials and environment).

■ A solid and well-managed system aimed at determining quality standards as well as at maintaining and evaluating them should be established with the participation and consensus of all the participants involved in the process.

■ The general organizational framework and professional treatment should be flexible enough and open to changes as well as to teachers' ideas and contributions, in a general non-threatening atmosphere of trust, autonomy and responsibility.

■ The institution should provide a more suitable situational context so that all the participants in the Program work together, counting on the appropriate physical instructional environment, with all the conditions necessary for teaching and learning a language.

■ Staff meetings should be regularly promoted in order to encourage fluid communication among teachers.

■ Students' classes and activities should be organized at appropriate times taking into account students' best moment to concentrate.

Students have expressed that they are dissatisfied with the afternoon shift, which negatively affects their concentration levels. Their opinions should be taken into account at the moment of planning the academic semester.

■ There should be classrooms assigned for the English classes where audiovisual equipments are kept permanently in order to avoid using the lab for the classes.

2.2 The CRM

The following recommendations deal with the organization, attention, resources and equipment at the CRM. These suggestions are based on students' insights and teachers' perception about this important part of the English Studies Program.

■ The CRM general organization needs to be revised and reorganized in order to strengthen the self-access area to meet students' expectations and needs.

■ The lab resources, equipment and materials should be strengthened and constantly updated in order to meet students' growing needs and avoid routine teaching with the same books.

■ The person in charge of the lab should be a teacher trained on material development and he/she should speak fluent English in order to be able to help students. Such training should be a systematic, permanent and ongoing process.

Students have a definite preference and inclination to the use of the audio-visual resources at the CRM in self-access time. However, they complain about many aspects related to the CRM. Given the helpful nature of these resources from both students' and teachers' points of view, it is important to strengthen all the organization, attention, resources, materials and equipment at the CRM.

2.3 Promotion and Advertising Policies

The following recommendations aim at the improvement of the advertisement and promotion policy of the English Studies Program, particularly with Año Común students and II year students, and also with the university community in general.

■ Orientation campaigns for Año Común students should be efficiently organized, planned and implemented in order to promote the English Studies Program.

■ Orientation sessions for II year students who are new in the program should be systematically oriented in order to make the mission, vision and objectives of the Program clear for all students, as well as present a detailed explanation of the curriculum. This would increase students' understanding of the Program and contribute to raise their motivational levels.

According to students, they are very often confused and misguided about the nature of the Program, or they don't handle the necessary information. Well-organized and high quality promotion campaigns are valuable tools for advertising the Program and raising awareness of the importance of learning a language.

2.4 Teacher training, exchanges, and Cooperation Programs

The following series of recommendations focus on the significance of Cooperation Programs for the growth, consolidation and strengthening of the Program. Some suggestions are also provided about the need for an ongoing teacher training process.

■ English Department teachers' participation in any kind of TEFL national and regional conference should be encouraged and promoted on a regular basis.

■ The transmission and sharing of knowledge teachers acquire after a conference or training should always be ensured.

■ The English Department should promote systematically and regularly the visits of native speakers to the classrooms in order to have students practice their listening and speaking abilities.

■ Cooperation programs should be efficiently run and maintained in order to meet teachers' and students' expectations of Post-graduate courses and Masters' Program, and to make the whole Program more attractive and interesting.

Teachers and students express many different expectations on future professional training and post-graduate courses, as they are quite aware of the necessity to expand their professional knowledge. The continuity and expansion of the existing Cooperation programs is highly recommended as such programs have substantially contributed to the success and prestige of the English Studies Program.

2.5 The curriculum and teacher training on the curricular components of the Program

The following recommendations deal with one of the most important and central aspect of the program, the curriculum and curriculum development, with the definite purpose of continuity and improvement of the current plan towards the achievement of higher quality standards.

■ The English Studies Program should urgently count on a formal written document in which the mission, vision and objectives of the program are clearly stated in order to consolidate the foundation of the Program.

The actual document is outdated and does not reflect the current situation of the program. Moreover, many parts are missing. Updating the document should be a top priority for the Program.

■ Clear and consistent guidelines should be established for every curricular component in terms of contents, materials, activities and methodology, in order to avoid curricular discontinuity.

■ The core curricular components of the same level should be interrelated (Integrated English, Laboratory and Socio-Cultural Communication) in order to avoid repetitions of contents.

■ The different components of the curriculum should be evaluated in order to find out which key areas need to be improved and strengthened (Integrated English and Laboratory), and which areas are not relevant within the Program (Actividades no Cognoscitivas and Consejería). Such an evaluation process should be the basis for substantial changes and improvement.

■ The necessary curricular changes and adjustments should be carried out in a progressive and gradual manner, based on students' and teachers' real needs, provided there is a previous evaluation and analysis process with the participation of the main actors.

Students and teachers express a number of inconsistencies in the sequencing, coherence and interrelation of the different curricular components of the Program. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to go through a revision process in order to set up consistent guidelines for the curriculum of the Program. All the teachers involved in the Program, taking into account students' insights and needs, should carry out the revision process.

■ The current system of book selection for the different courses should be revised thoroughly in order to avoid repetitions of books, and inadequacy of materials for each level.

■ A consistent training program based on teachers' needs and on the different components of the English Studies Program curriculum should be established in order to achieve professional quality and excellence.

■ The design of didactical materials by teachers for all the courses should be encouraged by means of workshops/ group training on didactical units design.

■ The selection of teachers to be in charge of teaching specialized areas should be carefully carried out taking into account a number of factors such as experience, personal training on specialized areas, motivation and so forth, to the benefit of the students.

■ The teachers who teach the specialized areas (Literature, Linguistic, Business English, Culture and Translation) should be trained in order to strengthen the teaching learning process and increase the quality of these curricular components.

Students have repeatedly express their dissatisfaction with the manner teachers are selected to teach specific components, and teachers are also aware of this problem. Strict selection criteria should be considered at the

moment of assigning a particular class to a teacher. Moreover, teacher should continue to strengthen their knowledge of specific areas by means of the implementation of a policy of expertise, and teacher training.

- Professional Practice training should be revised and strengthened.
- The Laboratory classes in terms of contents, materials and methodology should be substantially improved.
- Further research as regards the Laboratory class needs to be promoted and carried out in order to find out what is going on in this specific area.
- Training concerning the Laboratory class needs should be promoted in order to help teachers improve their methodology and encourage them to design didactical units for the Laboratory class, in groups.

Students have expressed their concern about the Laboratory class, underlining a number of difficulties in terms of contents, materials, sequencing and teachers' methodology. These problems should be addressed as soon as possible, in order to meet students' needs about listening and speaking skills.

- All teachers should receive additional training in group dynamics and strategies in order to promote better peer relationships in the groups and more cooperative classrooms.

Teacher training in general is a priority to achieve excellence and quality in the Program. Teachers are aware of the necessity of going through a continuous training process, and the areas mentioned by them should always be taken into account at the moment of planning teacher training sessions.

- The possibility of including alternative components should be considered, in order to strengthen the training on specialized areas (for instance classes such as Didactics, ESP, International Business, Computing Sciences, Translation, and so forth.)

The students' range of needs and professional plans should be taken into account in order to motivate them towards their studies and future professional development.

- The teachers Evaluators of the final Examen de Grado should always receive a previous training workshop on order to organize, synchronize and coordinate the test, and agree on rules and procedures.

In order to establish a fair, valid and objective exit system, teachers point out that there needs to be an efficient and well-managed organization of the whole process.

2.6 The teachers

This set of recommendations is aimed at providing valuable suggestions concerning the main actors and participants of the Program, the teachers, in order to enhance their contribution to the quality of the program.

- Team work should be constantly promoted and encouraged among the staff.

- Peer observations should be organized among colleagues in order to help one another by giving important insights about a number of aspects of classroom interaction.

Given the needs of getting to know more precisely what is actually happening in their classrooms, it is important to organize peer observations in order to address specific classroom problems, as well as promote sharing and help among the teachers. This could contribute to raise the quality of the classes and students' satisfaction.

- Teacher should provide students with personalized assistance and help throughout the development of their studies.

The results visibly indicate that students need more encouragement, motivation and support from their teachers, as well as personal attention. Students have clearly expressed their wish to get closer to their teachers and establish better relationships with them.

- Teachers should speak English in all the classes in order to increase the amount of time students are exposed to the target language.

Students have unanimously indicated that the target language should be used 100 % in class, even in II year.

- Teachers should always worry about their students' difficulties in order to help them overcome their problems by means of regular and systematic feedback at different times of the learning process.

Rather than working in isolation, teachers should constantly communicate so that there are interrelation of components and the contents of each class complement the others.

2.7 The teaching-learning process and classroom interaction

These suggestions are based on both students' and teachers' insights and perceptions of the teaching learning process which takes place in the English Studies Program.

- The teachers should improve classroom dynamics in general by introducing in their classes more variety of communicative activities such as games, competitions and so forth.

Students learn better when they are exposed to enough variety in the classroom, and they have provided data, which indicate that they wish their classes, were more fun, communicative and participative. Teachers should thus focus purposely on implementing more interactive activities, which promote students' interaction, sharing and exchanges.

- Students' personal preferences and learning styles should be taken into account in order to increase their motivational levels and improve their performance in class.

Students have shown very definite favorite learning styles, in which a number of factors are involved, such as audio-visual technology, group interaction and conversations, and so forth. Therefore, teachers should always be aware of the students' individual variables at the moment of planning and implementing classroom activities.

- Listening and speaking activities should be enhanced by providing students with numerous opportunities to practice the target language.

Students have clearly indicated that they are not satisfied with the amount of exposure and practice they have in terms of listening and speaking activities, which are the areas where they have more difficulties. Teachers should place a special focus on increasing such activities inside their classrooms.

- The teachers should encourage students to write journals, diaries and so forth from the very beginning of the learning process in order to help them acquire the basic tools necessary for this skill.

3. Further research

Even though the present study has identified a number of important issues and has provided a set of recommendations and suggestions in order to increase the quality of the Program, other numerous aspects need to be tackled. Consequently, from the researchers' point of view, follow-up studies could be carried out in the suggested fields below:

- ❑ **The Laboratory class:** A follow-up of the present study could examine in greater detail this curricular component, which both students and teachers have identified as one of the most important component of the Program. This study could be focused on a number of issues such as contents, sequencing, interrelation with other components, teachers' methodology and material development.
- ❑ **Exit criteria:** It is worthwhile to investigate the field of the "Examen de Grado", as it is the exit criteria of the Program. This research could tackle many issues connected to organization, participation and training of evaluators and a whole revision and analysis of the current system.
- ❑ **Curricular components:** Given the amount of insights that can be obtained from both students and teachers, small-scale classroom action-research for the main curricular components of the Program is highly recommended.
- ❑ **Classroom interaction:** Many aspects of classroom interaction require further investigation in order to strengthen the teaching-learning process in the English Studies Program.

IX.APPENDIXES

- 1- Ajustes y cambios a la Carrera de Inglés**
 - a. Document 1**
 - b. Document 2**
- 2- Propuesta curricular 2002-2006**
- 3- Plan de estudio**
- 4- Brochure de la Carrera**
- 5- Plan de estudio UNAN-Managua**
- 6- Plan de estudio UCA**
- 7- General questionnaires (students)**
- 8- General questionnaires (teachers)**
- 9- Questionnaire about materials used for class (teachers)**
- 10- Questionnaires about situational context and resources (students)**
- 11- Questionnaires for specific classes (students)**
- 12- Questions for students' oral interviews**
- 13- Questions for teachers' oral interviews**
- 14- Matrix of students' oral interviews**
- 15- Matrix of teachers' oral interviews**
- 16- Matrix of teachers' questionnaires**
- 17- Class observation grid**

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**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE NICARAGUA-LEON
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS**



**PROPUESTA DE AJUSTES Y MEJORAS A LA
CARRERA DE INGLÉS**

León, Nicaragua 2001

INTRODUCCIÓN

El consejo técnico del departamento de Inglés, después de un periodo de evaluación y estudio exhaustivo de la carrera de Inglés, da a conocer la siguiente propuesta de ajustes y mejoras, con el fin de introducir nuevos aspectos que consoliden esta carrera en sus modalidades sabatino y regular dentro del marco de la reforma universitaria y de las demandas de la sociedad actual.

Los ajustes propuestos van en función de :

- Introducir elementos motivadores y atractivos para los estudiantes, tomando en cuenta sus inquietudes.
- Integrar clases innovadoras que ayuden a una formación integral del profesional de Inglés.
- Completar el mapa curricular de la carrera de Inglés para lograr mayor cohesión y secuenciación, articulando las asignaturas alrededor de cinco ejes horizontales, y de los ejes verticales .
- Establecer y mantener un estándar de calidad que garantice la formación de un profesional calificado y realmente bilingüe.

JUSTIFICACIÓN

La carrera de Inglés se justifica plenamente por la gran necesidad que tiene la sociedad nicaragüense de tener maestros de Inglés altamente calificados, en el momento en que el estudio de los idiomas extranjeros y la comunicación inter-cultural están siendo revalorizados dentro de un mundo globalizado. Más que nunca, es necesario formar profesionales bilingües con bases sólidas en aspectos científico - técnicos, metodológicos, humanísticos e investigativos.

Por otra parte, cabe mencionar que el departamento de Inglés se ha venido afirmando como centro formador de formadores, tanto a nivel de pre-grado como de postgrado; muchos estudiantes egresados de la carrera de Inglés vuelven para complementar sus estudios con los programas de postgrados organizados por la Facultad (postgrados de Alcalá de Henares y Unión Europea).

Por lo tanto consideramos de gran importancia la reapertura de un primer año de Inglés en los cursos por encuentro (sabatino) dirigido, especialmente, a profesores empíricos en ejercicio en centros de secundaria o universidades privadas.

Es también de trascendencia revisar y mejorar los actuales programas de la carrera de Inglés regular, con el fin de mantener y consolidar esta carrera abierta a jóvenes estudiantes del II año provenientes del año común, para lo cual se han hecho los ajustes de actualización y mejora pertinentes.

Finalmente consideramos oportuno ofrecer la posibilidad de conseguir el Título de PEM (Profesor de Educación Media en Inglés) a los estudiantes de tercer año de la carrera de ambas modalidades.

Por otra parte, es importante que exista uniformidad y correspondencia paralela entre los componentes de ambas modalidades, regular y sabatina.

DESCRIPCIÓN DE LOS CAMBIOS Y MEJORAS

Cambio del nombre de la carrera :

Frente a la no opción de los estudiantes del año común por los títulos de Licenciaturas en Ciencias de la Educación , se estudio la posibilidad de ofrecer un titulo de Licenciado en Inglés con mención Educación con el fin de resaltar la parte que corresponde al estudio del idioma Inglés en si . Creemos que tal titulo les parecerá más motivador y amplio a jóvenes estudiantes, aunque reconozcamos que el cambio solamente consiste en cambio de nomenclatura. Sin embargo pensamos que esto les permitirá acceder a mejores oportunidades de trabajo en diferentes campos ocupacionales.

Perfil de la carrera :

El licenciado en Ingles con mención educación egresado de nuestra facultad estará en la capacidad de desempeñarse como :

- Profesor de educación Media en Ingles (PEM)
- Profesor Licenciado de educación media y/o superior
- Director de centros educativos de primaria y secundaria
- Delegados y Técnicos del Ministerio de Educación
- Asistente bilingüe de organismos extranjeros (ONG u otros)
- Asistente de traducción e interpretación bilingüe
- Recepcionista bilingüe
- Guía bilingüe de delegaciones extranjeras

Cambios en ciertas asignaturas :

El currículo esta basado en cinco ejes :	Formación en la lengua inglesa
	Formación lingüística
	Formación pedagógica
	Cultura
	Investigación

Cada asignatura pertenece a un eje especifico y tiene una secuenciación lógica y consistente en la estructuración por cada semestre.

Computación : Debido a la demanda de los estudiantes y a una necesidad actual, se introducen mas horas de Computación .

Investigación : Como herramienta esencial para un profesional de la educación moderno, se introducen mas elementos de investigación , con el fin de que puedan utilizar también estos elementos investigativos en otras áreas de su aprendizaje (cultura, literatura, elaboración de unidades didácticas, monografía en caso de opción).

Principios de la investigación

Investigación Educativa en la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje del Ingles.

Formación pedagógica : se complementa la formación pedagógica general actual, con una serie de asignaturas innovadoras y actualizadas en cuanto a la enseñanza de idiomas :

Métodos y Enfoques en la enseñanza del Ingles

Técnicas de la Enseñanza del Ingles

Planeación y evaluación de clases de Ingles

Enseñanza Integrada de las cuatro habilidades del Ingles

Diseño y evaluación de unidades didácticas en Ingles

Formación en la lengua inglesa :la formación básica y avanzada en cuanto al dominio lingüístico de las habilidades del ingles esta asegurada con la asignatura de Ingles Integral en todos los semestres de la carrera, con el máximo de horas posibles. (VII semestres de Ingles Integral en la carrera regular, y IX en el sabatino).

Por otra parte, el Centro de Recurso Multimedia de Ingles (CRM), cumplida su primera fase de instalación, y en espera de su segunda fase, garantiza la asignatura de laboratorio en varios semestres. Se complementa esta asignatura con horas de auto-acceso, donde los estudiantes deben acudir de manera obligatoria y autodidacta , como parte de su pensum..

Requisitos para ingresar a la modalidad sabatino :

La carrera de Ingles sabatina se dirige exclusivamente a profesores de ingles en ejercicio, lo cual se verificará mediante una constancia de trabajo.

Para garantizar la homogeneidad de conocimientos de los candidatos , se organizará un examen de admisión a la carrera y una entrevista personal, los

cuales valoraran sus conocimientos lingüísticos básicos y niveles de motivación.

Formas de culminación de la carrera :

PEM : Podrá optar para el diploma de profesor de Educación media en Ingles todo estudiante que haya aprobado los tres primeros años de la carrera, regular y sabatino.

Con el objetivo de establecer parámetros de estándar , los aspirantes a la licenciatura tendrán además que realizar un examen de suficiencia que estará basado en el examen **TOEFL** aprobado con 300 puntos mínimo para evaluar el nivel de dominio real alcanzado. En caso de reprobación tendrán otras oportunidades para mejorar su puntaje.

LICENCIATURA : Podrá optar para el Diploma de Licenciado en Ingles con mención educación todo estudiante que haya aprobado los cinco años de la carrera.

Como forma de culminación de estudio, tendrán opción a realizar una Monografía con enfoque educativo escrita en idioma ingles, o a realizar el examen de Grado que contempla la evaluación de las habilidades lingüísticas además de la defensa oral de las Unidades Didácticas elaboradas en el ultimo semestre de la carrera.

PLAN DE ACCION

Agosto 2001 – Febrero 2002 : reajuste de los planes y elaboración de micro-programaciones de las asignaturas de la carrera .

- ❖ Se pretende trabajar en función de la revisión y mejora de los programas de cada asignatura existente en la actualidad, con el fin de establecer una secuenciación lógica y consistente entre cada semestre. Esto es particularmente importante para la asignatura de Ingles Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación socio cultural, ya que se observaron en los años anteriores muchas inconsistencias en la impartición de estas asignaturas por falta de un programa bien definido .Estas asignaturas están interrelacionadas, por lo cual es importante que tengan una correspondencia y enlace lógicos (Ingles Integral I, Laboratorio I) para mayor provecho y aprendizaje. De esta manera los docentes que impartirán estas asignaturas tendrán una guía básica de contenidos y bibliografía, en el marco de los cuales podrán decidir con toda libertad los materiales a utilizar.

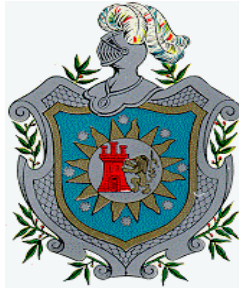
Agosto 2001-febrero 2002 : Reestructuración , actualización y mejora del documento de la macro-programación de la carrera de Ingles.

- ❖ El documento actual de macro-programación de la carrera de Ingles presenta serias deficiencias a nivel de actualización redacción y pertinencia . Por tanto se hace necesario trabajar en función de introducir los elementos actuales de mejora, así como las correcciones necesarias.

Agosto 2001- Noviembre 2002 : Estrategia de divulgación y propagandización de la carrera de Ingles regular y sabatino.

- ❖ Se pretende promover la carrera de Ingles en ambas modalidades a través de una campaña estratégica bien organizada y dirigida, con el fin de dar a conocer de una manera motivadora y atractiva el perfil de la carrera , sus características , componentes curriculares y dinamismo.
Se organizaran : murales informativos, volantes y panfletos, charlas, visitas al laboratorio, visitas a centros escolares y encuestas a profesores de Ingles empíricos.

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARGUA
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS**



**PROPUESTA CURRICULAR PARA LA CARRERA
DE INGLÉS REGULAR (2002 – 2005)**

Octubre, 2001

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS**

**PROPUESTA CURRICULAR PARA LA NUEVA CARRERA DE INGLÉS
REGULAR (2002-2005)**

Introducción:

El presente documento representa la propuesta del Departamento de Inglés del currículo de la Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés que la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación y Humanidades ofrece en el nuevo ciclo académico del año 2002.

La propuesta se basa en el entendimiento de que dentro de esta carrera es importante **desarrollar habilidades de dominio del Idioma Inglés en los estudiantes, enseñarles principios básicos de investigación para que puedan continuar aprendiendo y proveerlos de entrenamiento básico en diferentes campos ocupacionales** en los que pueden hacer uso del Inglés de manera que obtengan empleo después de graduarse.

Habilidades de Dominio del Idioma:

Obviamente cuando se ofrece una Licenciatura en Inglés, es muy importante egresar graduandos que puedan hablar, **comprender, leer y escribir en Inglés al menos a un nivel intermedio superior ó avanzado**. Si bien es cierto que los estudiantes reciben Inglés tanto en secundaria como en el Año Común la mayoría de los estudiantes que ingresan al programa tendrán un nivel de Inglés muy básico. Por tanto la primera prioridad de este currículo es **ofrecer un número suficiente de horas de Inglés General para que los estudiantes puedan alcanzar el nivel necesario antes de graduarse**. A fin de garantizar un aprendizaje significativo es necesaria la construcción de significados a partir del conocimiento que los estudiantes obtuvieron en la escuela secundaria y en el Año Común de una manera continua para lo cual se propone ofrecer **21 componentes curriculares de clases de Inglés general con un total de 1.472 horas en toda la carrera**. Estos componentes curriculares cubrirán las cuatro habilidades primordiales: **Compresión auditiva, Expresión Oral, Compresión de Lectura y Expresión Escrita** así como **adiestramiento sobre el uso efectivo del Laboratorio de Inglés**.

Para comprobar el nivel adecuado de Inglés por parte de los estudiantes en las cuatro habilidades se propone como forma de culminación de estudios, la realización de una **Monografía en Inglés ó un Examen de Grado**.

Principios básicos de Investigación:

Un concepto Educativo muy importante del siglo XXI es el de desarrollar las habilidades de los estudiantes a fin de **que continúen su aprendizaje durante toda la vida**. En el mundo actual se reconoce ampliamente la necesidad de que los estudiantes modernos no solo deben aspirar a obtener una licenciatura si no a **continuar investigando y aprendiendo nuevo material en su campo a fin de ser profesionales calificados**.

Debido a esta importante razón se han incluido **tres clases de computación y dos clases de Investigación Científica dentro de la carrera**. En estas cinco clases los estudiantes aprenderán **habilidades básicas en el campo de la Informática y Principios básicos de Investigación para que aprendan como y donde obtener información específica del Internet y de otros recursos**. Los estudiantes presentarán **proyectos de investigación** y por ende aprenderán las destrezas de presentación orales que son tan importantes en muchas diferentes carreras.

Entrenamiento en tres Campos Ocupacionales:

Si bien es cierto que todos los graduandos deberán tener un nivel excelente de Inglés General, en el actual mercado ocupacional competitivo y exigente esto no es suficiente.

Los futuros graduandos no solo necesitan un alto nivel de Inglés sino también las habilidades y el conocimiento necesario para que puedan obtener empleos profesionales al graduarse.

Con frecuencia en otros países los estudiantes solamente reciben una Licenciatura en Inglés General sin ningún entrenamiento en campos específicos. Sin embargo, en estos países también hay numerosas oportunidades de tomar una variedad de cursos de postgrado de corta duración en temas específicos después de graduarse. La dificultad actual para Nicaragua es que hay un número limitado de cursos de postgrado disponibles para los graduandos.

Por lo tanto es imperativo incluir capacitación ocupacional básica en la Carrera de Inglés. Al exponer a los estudiantes a una variedad de opciones ocupacionales ellos estarán mejor preparados para escoger después de graduarse.

Comprenderán las bases de cada campo de manera que puedan decidir en que área profesional desean continuar sus estudios de postgrado. Adicionalmente al brindar a los estudiantes la oportunidad de adquirir habilidades básicas en diferentes campos ocupacionales, ellos estarán mejor preparados para entrar al mercado laboral altamente competitivo que existe en Nicaragua.

En base a esto, se propone ofrecer instrucción básica en tres campos ocupacionales en los cuales es posible que los estudiantes encuentren trabajo: **1) Traducción, 2) Inglés Comercial e Industrial y 3) Educación**.

PERFIL OCUPACIONAL

1) TRADUCCIÓN:

Una posible opción para los futuros graduandos con una Licenciatura en Inglés es la de llegar a ser traductores. En esta área los graduandos pueden trabajar con **organismos gubernamentales o no gubernamentales o con diferentes compañías comerciales para desempeñarse como traductores de documentos escritos o traducciones orales.**

Los tres componentes curriculares son: **Traducción I, Traducción II y Literatura.** **Traducción I y II** capacitará a los estudiantes en técnicas básicas de interpretación y literatura, expondrá a los estudiantes a expresiones idiomáticas y literarias más complicadas que se usan comúnmente en Inglés.

2.-) INGLES COMERCIAL E INDUSTRIAL:

Un segundo campo ocupacional para los futuros graduandos es trabajar en ambientes de negocios internacionales. En esta área los graduandos podrán desempeñarse **como secretarios (as) bilingües, asistentes administrativos o representantes internacionales en diferentes compañías globales.** Para instruir a los estudiantes en este campo se propone incluir tres componentes curriculares en la carrera. Estos son : **Inglés Comercial é Industrial I y II, e Investigación en la Cultura de Países Anglófonos.** En Inglés Comercial é Industrial I y II los estudiantes aprenderán una variedad de habilidades como escribir cartas de negocios, memorandos y correos electrónicos. Podrán sostener conversaciones telefónicas en Inglés, participar en reuniones de negocios y dar presentaciones formales. En el componente de Cultura podrán practicar sus habilidades de investigación mientras aprenden más de la cultura de países de habla Inglesa. Este conocimiento les ayudará a conducir transacciones de negocios con hablantes nativos.

3.- EDUCACIÓN:

El tercer campo ocupacional para los futuros graduandos es el trabajar como profesores de secundaria o a nivel universitario. Si bien es cierto que esta opción puede no ser la más atractiva para los estudiantes, es importante reconocer que en realidad esta es la opción más probable para los futuros graduandos.

La necesidad de profesores de Inglés calificados y capacitados está creciendo rápidamente en León y en toda Nicaragua. Por ejemplo, dentro de la UNAN-LEON se proyecta que si un número determinado de facultades incluye Inglés en sus currículos se necesitará aproximadamente de 20 a 50 profesores de Inglés nuevos en un futuro cercano.

De hecho, la propuesta del proyecto para continuar la expansión del Inglés en las diferentes facultades que nos ha solicitado el Dr. Medina, está siendo severamente obstaculizado por la carencia de profesores adecuadamente capacitados. Por tanto, a fin de hacer frente a esta importante opción de la carrera de Inglés se propone incluir tres componentes curriculares. Estos tres componentes son : **Métodos y Enfoques en la Enseñanza del Inglés y Técnicas en la Enseñanza del Inglés I y II.** Con estas asignaturas

los estudiantes aprenderán métodos pedagógicos básicos, principios y técnicas de enseñanza y didáctica de Inglés para que puedan enseñar Inglés a nivel de secundaria o de Universidad.

ULTIMO SEMESTRE:

En el último semestre de la carrera proponemos ofrecer un componente curricular llamado: **Elaboración de Proyectos**. En esta asignatura los estudiantes pueden concentrarse en una de las áreas antes mencionadas de acuerdo a su preferencia y tendrán que llevar a cabo un pequeño proyecto de Investigación en este campo. De esta manera ellos pueden obtener habilidades más avanzadas en una área particular, al mismo tiempo tienen la oportunidad de trabajar en grupos más pequeños con un profesor. Además de esto, en el último semestre se ha incluido el componente: **Seminario Integrador** para que los estudiantes tengan tiempo de prepararse adecuadamente para su Monografía o Examen de Grado.

CONCLUSIÓN :

En general, creemos que este currículo representa un balance de opciones atractivo para los futuros nuevos estudiantes. **Les ofrece una buena y sólida base en Inglés como idioma global, así como instrucción básica en tres importantes opciones ocupacionales.** En total recibirán 17 componentes curriculares de Inglés general. De esta manera al graduarse con una licenciatura de Inglés, los estudiantes de la UNAN-LEON tendrán suficientes niveles de Inglés general para integrarse a cualquiera de los campos ocupacionales ya mencionados **y/o para aplicar a becas de postgrados como las que ofrece el programa Fulbright.** Además recibirán 3 componentes curriculares por cada campo ocupacional para un total de 9. Por lo tanto los graduandos también tendrán una variedad de habilidades que puedan aplicar en muchas situaciones diferentes en el competitivo mercado laboral del mundo moderno. En general, al proveerles de una sólida base en Inglés general junto con el entrenamiento ocupacional en diferentes opciones una mayor cantidad de graduandos tendrán éxito en la obtención de trabajos profesionales. Esto a su vez aumentará sustancialmente la reputación y el prestigio de la Licenciatura de Inglés de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación y Humanidades de la UNAN-LEON.

HABILIDADES ADQUIRIDAS POR AÑO

II AÑO :

- Comunicar a un nivel elemental en idioma inglés
- Leer y comprender lecturas básicas
- Escribir pequeñas composiciones
- Entender y responder a preguntas sobre información personal
- Manejar programas básicos de computación

III AÑO

- Comunicar a un nivel intermedio I en idioma inglés
- Redactar cartas de negocios
- Efectuar comunicaciones bilingües en el campo de los negocios y llamadas telefónicas internacionales
- Comprender ideas principales en reuniones de negocio bilingües
- Elaborar proyectos / trabajos de investigación basados en aspectos de civilización
- Manejar una amplia variedad de programas de computación

IV AÑO

- Comunicar a un nivel intermedio II en Inglés
- Traducir documentos básicos en diferentes campos
- Redactar memos, emails, correspondencia comercial bilingüe
- Hacer presentaciones sobre temas de negocio
- Redactar artículos y ensayos académicos
- Dominar las corrientes metodológicas básicas

V AÑO

- Comunicar a un nivel avanzado I en Inglés
- Dar clases de Inglés en escuelas secundarias y/o Universidad
- Elaborar propuestas de Unidades Didácticas para planes de secundaria
- Elaborar proyectos de Inglés Comercial
- Elaborar macro traducciones bilingües
- Traducir comunicaciones orales
- Leer, comprender, interpretar obras de literatura en Inglés

PLAN DE ESTUDIOS (2002 – 2006)
TURNO DIURNO
TITULO: LICENCIADO EN IDIOMA INGLÉS

PRIMER AÑO: AÑO COMUN

SEGUNDO AÑO :

Primer semestre

Horas / Semanales

Eje :Estrategias para el Aprendizaje del Inglés – Enfoque Lectura.....	6 horas
Inglés integral I.....	6
Laboratorio I.....	4
Computación I	4
Actividades no Cognoscitivas I.....	1
Consejería I.....	1
TOTAL	22

Segundo semestre

Eje : Estrategias para el Aprendizaje del Inglés – Enfoque Escritura	6 horas
Inglés integral II.....	6
Laboratorio II.....	4
Computación II.....	4
Actividades no Cognoscitivas II.....	1
Consejería II.....	1
TOTAL	22

TERCER AÑO

Primer semestre

Eje: Principios de la investigación.....	4
Inglés integral III	6
Laboratorio III.....	4
Computación III.....	4
Fonética y Fonología.....	2
Consejería III.....	1
Actividades no Cognoscitivas III.....	1
TOTAL	22

Segundo Semestre

Eje: Investigación Cultural de los países Anglófonos	4
Inglés integral IV	6
Laboratorio IV.....	4
Inglés Comercial e Industrial I.....	4
Consejería IV.....	1

Actividades no Cognoscitivas IV.....	1
Practicas Profesionales I.....	2
TOTAL	22

CUARTO AÑO

Primer semestre

Eje : Comunicación Socio Cultural I	4
Inglés integral V.....	4
Inglés Comercial e Industrial II.....	4
Lectura Avanzada en Inglés.....	4
Métodos y Enfoques en la Enseñanza del Inglés	4
Practicas Profesionales II.....	2
TOTAL	22

Segundo semestre

Eje: Comunicación Socio Cultural II.....	4
Inglés integral VI.....	4
Traducción I	4
Estilística y Gramática Avanzada en Inglés.....	4
Técnicas en la Enseñanza del Inglés I.....	2
Practicas Profesionales III.....	2
TOTAL	22

QUINTO AÑO

Eje : Elementos del Ingles Literario.....	4
--	----------

Primer semestre

Inglés integral VII.....	4
Traducción II.....	4
Conversación avanzada.....	4
Técnicas en la Enseñanza del Inglés II	4
Prácticas Profesionales IV.....	2
TOTAL	22

Segundo Semestre

Seminario Integrador	6
Elaboración de Proyectos :	2
➤ Unidades Didácticas	

- Traducción
- Inglés Comercial e Industrial

TOTAL

8

FORMAS DE CULMINACIÓN DE ESTUDIO:

- Presentación y defensa de monografía o
 - Examen de Grado

en ambos casos el idioma de presentación será en Inglés

MAPA CURRICULAR DE LA LICENCIATURA EN IDIOMA INGLES (2002-2005)
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE NICARAGUA – LEÓN –DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS

SEMESTRE /AREA	PRIMER SEMESTRE	SEGUNDO SEMESTRE	TERCER SEMESTRE	CUARTO SEMESTRE	QUINTO SEMESTRE	SEXTO SEMESTRE	SÉPTIMO SEMESTRE	OCTAVO SEMESTRE
FORMACIÓN EN LA LENGUA INGLESA	INGLES INTEGRAL I	INGLES INTEGRAL II	INGLES INTEGRAL III	INGLES INTEGRAL IV	INGLES INTEGRAL V	INGLES INTEGRAL VI	INGLES INTEGRAL VII	SEMINARIO INTEGRADOR
	LABORATORIO I	LABORATORIO II	LABORATORIO III	LABORATORIO IV	LECTURA AVANZADA EN INGLES	ESTILÍSTICA Y GRAMATICA AVANZADA EN INGLES	CONVERSACIÓN AVANZADA	
	ESTRATEGIAS PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLES ENFOQUE LECTURA	ESTRATEGIAS PARA EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLES ENFOQUE ESCRITURA	FONÉTICA Y FONOLOGIA					
INGLES COMERCIAL E INDUSTRIAL				INGLES COMERCIAL E INDUSTRIAL I	INGLES COMERCIAL E INDUSTRIAL II			
				PRACTICAS PROFESIONALES I				
FORMACIÓN PEDAGÓGICA	CONSEJERIA I	CONSEJERIAII	CONSEJERIAIII	CONSEJERIA IV			PRACTICAS PROFESIONALES IV	
					METODOS Y ENFOQUES EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLES	TÉCNICAS EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLES I	TÉCNICAS EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLES II	
TRADUCCION						TRADUCCIÓN I	TRADUCCIÓN II	
						PRÁCTICAS PROFESIONALES III	ELEMENTOS DEL INGLES LITERARIO	
INVESTIGACIÓN Y CULTURA	ACTIVIDADES NO COGNOSCITIVAS I	ACTIVIDADES NO COGNOSCITIVA SII	ACTIVIDADES NO COGNOSCITIVAS III	ACTIVIDADES NO COGNOSCITIVAS IV	PRÁCTICAS PROFESIONALES II			
			PRINCIPIOS DE LA INVESTIGACION	INVESTIGACIÓN CULTURAL DE LOS PAISES ANGLOFONOS	COMUNICACIÓN SOCIO-CULTURAL I	COMUNICACIÓN SOCIO-CULTURAL II		ELABORACIÓN DE PROYECTOS
	COMPUTACIÓN I	COMPUTACIÓN II	COMPUTACIÓN III					
HORAS	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	8

Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés



Visión de la Carrera

El profesional de la Licenciatura en Inglés de nuestra facultad poseerá amplios conocimientos en el dominio del idioma y estará preparado para realizar trabajos de Docencia, Investigación y Traducción.

Misión de la Carrera

La Licenciatura en Inglés formará profesionales calificados bilingües con bases sólidas en aspectos científicos-metodológicos no solo enfocados en el aprendizaje del idioma sino también el dominio en aspectos de comunicación Inter.-cultural para desempeñarse en un mundo globalizado.

Perfil de la Carrera

El egresado de nuestra carrera estará en capacidad de desempeñarse como:

- Profesor de Inglés en educación media y superior.
- Asistente bilingüe de organismos extranjeros y nacionales.
- Recepcionista bilingüe.
- Representante bilingüe de casas editoriales
- Asistente de traducción e interpretación bilingüe.
- Guía bilingüe.

Requisitos de Ingreso

- Haber aprobado el Año Común.
- Alcanzar el promedio en orden descendente a partir de 100 puntos.

Plan de Estudios General

- 90% de clases en Inglés para un total de más de 1400 horas de Inglés en toda la carrera.
- El plan incluye clases de Computación é Investigación.

- Clases de Laboratorio que incluyen entrenamiento en como usar efectivamente el CRM (Centro de Recursos Multimedia). El CRM cuenta con: Un televisor con VHS, una área auditiva, una computadora, y una área de bibliografía.

Requisitos de Egreso y Titulación

Haber cursado y aprobado cada asignatura del plan de estudio de la carrera. Las formas de culminación para obtener el Título de Licenciado en Inglés son: **Monografía** escrita en idioma Inglés o **Examen de grado**.

Información

Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación y
Humanidades Departamento de Inglés,
Teléfonos : 311- 4518
311- 2588
Ext 2227

***It's now or never...
Make your decision!***

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LA UNIVERSIDAD”**

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL
AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA
EDUCACIÓN Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS**



Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés

English is the Key!
Noviembre 2003

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE NICARAGUA

PLAN DE ESTUDIOS CURSOS REGULARES 1999

APROBADO _____ FACULTAD/CENTRO: CC.Educ. y Hum. TITULO: Lic.en CC. Educ. con mención en Ingles. TOTAL DE HORAS: 3210

RECTOR UNAN-MANAGUA. CARRERA: Ingles. TIEMPO DE ESTUDIOS: 5 años.

TOTAL DE CREDITOS: 210. _____ DE _____ ORIENTACION _____

I. PLAN DEL PROCESO DOCENTE

Código	Asignaturas	Total de Horas	Créditos	Requisitos	Código	Asignaturas	Total de Horas	Créditos	Requisitos
	SEMESTRE I 1. Matemática General 2. Español General 3. Geografía de Nicaragua 4. Ingles Integral I	4 4 4 10	4 4 4 10			SEMESTRE II 5. Historia de Nicaragua 6. Introducción a la Filosofía 7. Psicología General 8. Ingles Integral II	4 4 4 10	4 4 4 10	Ingles Integral I
	SEMESTRE III 9. Psicología del Aprendizaje 10. Pronunciación 11. Ingles Integral III	4 4 14	4 4 14	Ingles Integral II		SEMESTRE IV 12. Pedagogía General 13. Ingles Integral IV	4 18	4 18	Ingles Integral III
	SEMESTRE V 14. Didáctica General 15. Metodología de la Investigación 16. Ingles Integral V	4 3 15	4 3 15	Ingles Integral IV		SEMESTRE VI 17. Evaluación Educativa 18. Seminario de Formación Integral 19. Ingles Integral VI 20. Lectura	5 3 10 4	5 3 10 4	Ingles Integral V
	SEMESTRE VII 21. Seminario de Educación 22. Gramática 23. Didáctica Especial I 24. Escritura	4 6 6 6	4 6 6 6	Ingles Integral VI Ingles Integral VI		SEMESTRE VIII 25. Didáctica Especial II 26. Lingüística I 27. Evaluación de las habilidades del Idioma 28. Conversación	6 6 6 4	6 6 6 4	Gramática Didáctica Especial I

CENTRO SUPERIOR DE IDIOMAS UCA

Tiene más de 30 años de experiencia, es el único centro multilingüe del país. Ofrece cursos sabatinos libres de alemán, español para extranjeros, inglés, italiano, francés y japonés, también servicios de traducción, en español, inglés, francés, alemán, portugués, italiano, ruso, búlgaro, sueco y mismito. Edita textos en francés, inglés, español y portugués, y presta servicios de interpretación simultánea del inglés al español y otros idiomas de la Unión Europea. Ofrece oportunidades de especialización en el ámbito de la traducción e interpretación especializadas a traductores, intérpretes y otros profesionales interesados.

PLAN DE ESTUDIOS UNIVERSIDAD CENTROAMERICANA

Título que otorga:

Licenciado/a en Enseñanza del Inglés

Tipo de curso:

Diurno

Duración de la carrera:

12 cuatrimestres

Requisitos de Ingreso:

Prueba Diagnóstica

Requisitos a cumplir en el primer año de la carrera:

Curso de Informática General

Requisitos de Egreso:

Monografía, 70 puntos de índice académico para egresar de la carrera o examen de grado.

Perfil Académico Profesional

El licenciado/a en Enseñanza del Inglés tendrá:

- Un dominio conceptual y práctico de la lengua inglesa para poder desempeñarse en cualquier nivel de enseñanza de idioma.
- Conocimientos pedagógicos y psicológicos básicos que le faciliten el desempeño efectivo de su labor docente.
- Conocimientos generales de diferentes campos del saber humano que le permitan tener la base cultural necesaria para la realización de la docencia.
- Técnicas de investigación que le ayuden a mejorar su práctica y superación profesional.

Campo Profesional

Sector Educativo

- Centros de educación.
- Centros de capacitación.
- Academias y centros de idiomas.
- Clases privadas.

Sectores que requieran el inglés como instrumento de comunicación y trabajo

- Organismos gubernamentales y no gubernamentales.
- Banca y comercio.
- Aeropuerto y agencias de viajes.

- Empresas turísticas y hoteleras.

Plan de Estudio

Taller de Introducción a la Lectura y Redacción del Inglés

Taller de Gramática del Inglés I

Introducción a la Investigación Científica

Taller de Conversación en Inglés I

Introducción a los Estudios de Género

Reflexión Teológica

Desarrollo de Habilidades Sociales

Comunicación Asertiva

Taller de Conversación en Inglés II

Taller de Lectura y Redacción en Inglés I

Taller de Fonética (T)

Cultura e Identidad Mesoamericana

Taller de Gramática del Inglés II

Cultura de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa (T)

Taller de conversación en Inglés III

Taller de Gramática del Inglés III

Psicología del Desarrollo y del Aprendizaje

Taller de Lectura y Redacción en Inglés II

Historia Social Contemporánea

La Cultura en el Lenguaje (T)

Redacción y Gramática Avanzada en Español

Pedagogía General

Didáctica General

Taller de Lectura y Composición en Inglés

Taller de Gramática del Inglés IV

Taller de Conversación en Inglés IV

Introducción a la Lingüística

Metodología de la Enseñanza del Inglés I

Historia del Pensamiento Filosófico

Ética y Derechos Humanos

Francés I

Alemán I

Taller de Proficiencia (T)

Seminario de Negociación y Resolución de Conflictos

Metodología de la Enseñanza del Inglés II

Introducción a la Estadística

Cátedra de la Realidad Nacional

Francés II

Alemán II

Adquisición y Aprendizaje de Idiomas

Lingüística Aplicada

Filosofía de la Educación

Francés III

Alemán III

Práctica Docente I

Metodología de la Enseñanza del Inglés III

Métodos y Técnicas de la Investigación Pedagógica

Francés IV

Alemán IV

Estudio Independiente (T)

Introducción a la Traducción (T)

Investigación sobre la Enseñanza del Inglés (T)

Práctica Docente II

Medio Ambiente, Población y Desarrollo Sostenible

ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES

Estimado estudiante: La presente encuesta tiene como objetivo recopilar información relevante sobre la Carrera de Inglés que actualmente cursas. Tus respuestas son sumamente importantes para el desarrollo de nuestra investigación educativa y para la mejora curricular. Agradecemos tu colaboración.

Año Académico: III / IV / V

Sexo: _____ Edad: _____

Lugar de origen _____

Lugar donde vives actualmente _____

- 1- ¿Cuales fueron tus opciones al ingresar a la universidad?
- 2- ¿Cuáles son tus motivaciones para estudiar Inglés como carrera?
- 3- ¿Por qué consideras Inglés un área importante?
- 4- ¿ En que campo esperas desenvolverte al concluir tu Licenciatura?
- 5- ¿ Quisieras continuar tus estudios de Inglés después de tu graduación, o en alguna otro campo afín? Cual?
- 6- ¿ Cuales son tus impresiones generales de la carrera?
- 7- ¿ Que te parece el plan de estudio que cursas?
- 8- ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes?
(Si no has recibido una asignatura aun, escriba” Not yet” a la par).

0	Nada importante
1	Poco importante
2	Algo importante
3	Bastante importante
4	Importante
5	Muy importante

- ☐ Inglés Integral
- ☐ Laboratorio
- ☐ Lectura
- ☐ Escritura
- ☐ Actividades no cognoscitivas
- ☐ Consejería
- ☐ Computación
- ☐ Traducción
- ☐ Cultura
- ☐ Investigación
- ☐ Literatura

- ☐ Comunicación socio-cultural
- ☐ Escritura académica
- ☐ Didáctica
- ☐ Socio-lingüística
- ☐ Practicas profesionales

9- ¿Qué opinas del material utilizado en cada clase? Explica.

- ☐ Inglés Integral_____
- ☐ Laboratorio_____
- ☐ Lectura_____
- ☐ Actividades no cognoscitivas_____
- ☐ Consejería_____
- ☐ Computación_____

10- ¿Qué opinas de la metodología de los profesores de manera general? Explica.

11- ¿ Como valorarías las relaciones interpersonales con los docentes?

12- ¿ Para ti, el docente de Inglés es:

- ☐ Un amigo
- ☐ Un tutor
- ☐ Una autoridad
- ☐ Un guía
- ☐ Una presión

13- ¿ Como valorarías las relaciones interpersonales entre los estudiantes de tu grupo?

14- ¿Cuales han sido las mayores dificultades encontradas en el transcurso de tu carrera? Especifique.

15- ¿ Cuales han sido los mayores logros alcanzados en el transcurso de tu carrera?

16- Si pudieras cambiar o mejorar algo en la carrera; ¿Cuál sería tu sugerencia?

17- ¿ Como consideras que aprendes mejor el Inglés? Puedes marcar varias.

- ☐ Solo (autodidacta)
- ☐ En tu casa
- ☐ En la biblioteca
- ☐ En el laboratorio
- ☐ En grupo

- ☐ En círculos de estudio
- ☐ En pareja
- ☐ Con la ayuda de tus profesores (tutorías)
- ☐ Aprendizaje informal (contacto con anglo-hablantes)
- ☐ Viendo televisión, escuchando música
- ☐ A través de Internet
- ☐ Leyendo libros, revistas, periódicos en Inglés
- ☐ Hablando con amigos en Inglés

18 ¿Qué actividades didácticas prefieres para aprender Inglés?.

0	Nada importante
1	Poco importante
2	Algo importante
3	Bastante importante
4	Importante
5	Muy importante

- ☐ Juegos
- ☐ Canciones
- ☐ Películas (videos)
- ☐ Roleplays (diálogos)
- ☐ Grupos de discusión y debates
- ☐ Preguntas de comprensión escrita
- ☐ Dramatizaciones
- ☐ Competencias
- ☐ Quizzes y cuestionarios
- ☐ Actividades con medios visuales (fotos, ilustraciones. etc)
- ☐ Presentaciones orales (Exposiciones)

19-¿ Que áreas y destrezas del Inglés te parecen más importante para aprender a dominar el idioma?

0	Nada importante
1	Poco importante
2	Algo importante
3	Bastante importante
4	Importante
5	Muy importante

- ☐ Literatura
- ☐ Traducción
- ☐ Investigación
- ☐ Didáctica
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Gramática
- ☐ Vocabulario
- ☐ Fonética
- ☐ Cultura
- ☐ Prácticas Profesionales

20-¿ Usas el idioma Inglés fuera del aula? En que circunstancias.

21-¿En que clases consideras que aprendes mas?

ENCUESTA A PROFESORES

“ Teachers are a key factor in the successful implementation of curriculum changes. Exceptional teachers can often compensate for the poor-quality resources and materials they have to work from.”

Curriculum development in Language Teaching. CLE. Jack C. Richards CUP, 2001, p.99.

Años de trabajo en la UNAN: _____

Años de experiencia previa en educación: _____

- 1- ¿ Como ha sido tu experiencia como Profesor de Inglés?
- 2- ¿ Era tu vocación llegar a ser profesor de Inglés?
- 3- ¿Cuáles son los principales métodos de enseñanza que crees son los mas efectivos y que aplicas en tus clases? Por que?
- 4- ¿Qué valores consideras deberían promoverse dentro de un currículo integral de Inglés?
- 5- ¿Tienes un buen conocimiento del pensum de la carrera de Inglés? Expresa tu valoración del pensum actual.
- 6- ¿Podrías nombrar las principales debilidades y problemas que has encontrado en la carrera?
- 7- ¿Consideras necesario introducir cambios y/o innovaciones en la Carrera de Inglés? Cuales? Explique.

8- ¿Estarías dispuesto a cambiar e implementar los cambios?

9- ¿ En que áreas consideras necesario investigar e introducir cambios?

- ☐ Pensum de la carrera
- ☐ Contenidos de cada componente
- ☐ Comportamiento de estudiantes
- ☐ Motivación de estudiantes
- ☐ Capacitación de profesores
- ☐ Cantidad de horas por componente
- ☐ Distribución de los componentes por año
- ☐ Aspectos organizativos y administrativos
- ☐ Otros: -----

10- ¿ Que componentes has impartido en la carrera?

11- ¿Mencione los principales libros que consultas y/o utilizas para tus clases.

12- ¿ Consideras que el material que utilizas es efectivo y da óptimos resultados? Por que? Por que no?

13- ¿ Como valoras tu desenvolvimiento en la carrera de Inglés?

15- Describe tus responsabilidades con los estudiantes.

16- ¿ Estas satisfecha con tus capacidades metodológico-lingüísticas actuales, o consideras que necesitas mas formación?

17- ¿En que campo te gustaría una capacitación adicional?

18- ¿Cuáles son tus principales logros como profesor de la Carrera de Inglés?

ENCUESTA A PROFESORES SOBRE MATERIALES UTILIZADOS EN LAS DISTINTAS ASIGNATURAS

“Teachers are a key factor in the successful implementation of curriculum changes. Exceptional teachers can often compensate for the poor-quality resources and materials they have to work from.”

Curriculum Development in Language Teaching. CLE Jack C. Richards CUP, 2001, p.99.

Años de trabajo en la UNAN: _____

Años de experiencia previa en educación: _____

1. Categoriza los diferentes componentes de la carrera de acuerdo al orden de importancia sugerido en el siguiente cuadro

0	Nada importante
1	Poco importante
2	Algo importante
3	Bastante importante
4	Importante
5	Muy importante

- ☐ Inglés Integral
- ☐ Laboratorio
- ☐ Lectura
- ☐ Escritura
- ☐ Actividades no cognoscitivas
- ☐ Consejería
- ☐ Computación
- ☐ Traducción
- ☐ Cultura
- ☐ Investigación
- ☐ Literatura
- ☐ Comunicación socio-cultural
- ☐ Escritura académica
- ☐ Didáctica
- ☐ Socio-lingüística
- ☐ Practicas profesionales

2. Durante el tiempo que has impartido los diferentes componentes de la Carrera de Inglés ¿Que libros has utilizado? En caso de elaborar tu propio material; ¿Cuáles son las principales fuentes bibliográficas que utilizas? Si no has impartido determinado componente, favor dejar el espacio en blanco.

☐ Inglés Integral

☐ Laboratorio

☐ Lectura

- ☐ Escritura
- ☐ Actividades no cognoscitivas
- ☐ Consejería
- ☐ Computación
- ☐ Traducción
- ☐ Cultura
- ☐ Investigación
- ☐ Literatura
- ☐ Comunicación socio-cultural }
- ☐ Escritura Académica
- ☐ Didáctica
- ☐ Socio-lingüística
- ☐ Practicas profesionales

ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES DE LA CARRERA DE INGLES
CONDICIONES EXTERNAS QUE INFLUYEN EN EL PROCESO DE ENSEÑANZA
APRENDIZAJE

1- Consideras que el aula actual en que recibes tus clases presta las condiciones adecuadas para tu aprendizaje en cuanto a:

- a.) Espacio físico? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- b.) Iluminación? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- c.) Acústica? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- d.) Ventilación? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- e.) Visibilidad ? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- f.) Comodidad ? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- g.) Mobiliario? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

2- ¿Consideras que tu horario actual facilita la adquisición del idioma?

SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

3- ¿Piensas que el Departamento de Ingles cuenta con una organización adecuada en relación a la estructuración del semestre?

SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

4- ¿Estás conforme con la cantidad de estudiantes de tu año?

SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

5- ¿Piensas que es importante tener un profesor coordinador de tu año?

SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

6- ¿Estás satisfecho con el apoyo bibliográfico que te brinda la Facultad para tus estudios en la carrera?

SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

7- ¿Estás conforme con el servicio brindado por el Centro de Recursos Multimedia (Laboratorio de Inglés) en cuanto a:

- a. Self-access? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- b. Clases de Laboratorio? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- c. Videos? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- d. Grabaciones de audio? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- e. Libros de consulta ? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- f. Atención ? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- g. Horarios? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____
- h. Organización en general? SI ☐ NO ☐ ¿Por que? _____

ESCRITURA AVANZADA

CUESTIONARIO

- 1- ¿Consideras que la clase de escritura avanzada es importante para tus estudios del Idioma Inglés?
- 2- ¿Que esperas obtener de la clase al finalizar el semestre?
- 3- ¿Consideras la clase apropiada para tu nivel o la encuentras demasiado fácil o demasiado difícil?
- 4- ¿Consideras apropiadas las actividades de la clase para ayudarte a mejorar tus habilidades de escritura?
- 5- ¿Crees que el material utilizado es apropiado para la clase y te ayuda a mejorar tus destrezas?
- 6- ¿Consideras que los contenidos son adecuados para la clase?
- 7- ¿Cual es tu valoración de las tareas asignadas?
- 8- ¿Cuáles son las dificultades principales que encuentras en el desarrollo de tus habilidades de escritura?
- 9- ¿Cuáles son los logros que has alcanzado durante el tiempo que se ha desarrollado la clase?
- 10- ¿Estás satisfecho con tu participación en la clase? Porqué o porqué no
- 11- ¿Durante el tiempo que se han desarrollado las clases, ¿Crees que se alcanzan los objetivos de cada clase?
- 12- ¿Cual es tu valoración de la metodología del profesor?
- 13- ¿Crees que la profesora domina los contenidos de la clase?
- 14- ¿Que le sugerirías a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica de la clase?
- 15- ¿Consideras que la profesora te brinda la ayuda que necesitas para asimilar la clase?

COMUNICACIÓN SOCIO-CULTURAL

CUESTIONARIO

1. ¿Consideras que la clase de comunicación socio-cultural es importante para tus estudios del Idioma Inglés? Explica.
2. ¿Que esperas obtener de la clase al finalizar el semestre?
3. ¿Consideras la clase apropiada para tu nivel o la encuentras demasiado fácil o demasiado difícil?
4. ¿Consideras apropiadas las actividades de la clase para ayudarte a mejorar tus habilidades comunicativas?
5. ¿Cuales actividades prefieres en el desarrollo de la clase: Trabajo en parejas, grupos o individual. Justifica.
6. ¿Crees que el material bibliográfico y de audio utilizado es apropiado para la clase y te ayuda a mejorar tus destrezas orales? Porque o porque no.
7. ¿Consideras que los contenidos son adecuados para la clase? Explica.
8. ¿Crees que es importante que la profesora asigne tareas para realizarse en el tiempo de auto-acceso del laboratorio. Explica
9. ¿Cuáles son las dificultades principales que encuentras para comunicarte en Inglés?
10. ¿Cuáles son los logros que has alcanzado durante el tiempo que se ha desarrollado la clase?
11. ¿Estás satisfecho con tu participación en la clase? Porqué o porqué no
12. ¿Cual es tu valoración de la metodología de la profesora?
13. ¿Crees que la profesora domina el idioma y los contenidos de la clase?
14. ¿Que le sugerirías a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica de la clase?
15. ¿Consideras que la profesora te brinda la ayuda que necesitas para asimilar la clase?
16. ¿Consideras necesario que la clase sea completamente en Inglés?

LECTURA CUESTIONARIO

- 1-¿Consideras que la clase de lectura es importante para tus estudios del Idioma Inglés?
- 2- ¿ La clase es actualmente lo que tu esperabas?
- 3- que fuera? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
- 4- ¿Consideras que los tópicos de cada lectura son interesantes, se adecuan a tus intereses?
Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
- 5- ¿ En que tipo de lectura te gustaría trabajar? Marca con un check tus opciones.
 - a. Artículos periodísticos
 - b. Lecturas de ficción
 - c. Lecturas científicas
 - d. Cuentos, historietas
 - e. Estudiar en un texto específico
 - f. Artículos relacionados con el deporte
- 6-Marca con un check los tipos de ejercicios que realizas en la clase de lectura:
 - ☐ Encontrar la idea principal del texto
 - ☐ Leer el texto rápidamente para captar la idea general (skim)
 - ☐ Leer el texto lentamente para entender detalles específicos (scan)
 - ☐ Encontrar palabras desconocidas en el texto
 - ☐ Comprender la organización del texto
 - ☐ Preguntas de comprensión
 - ☐ Entender la actitud y el propósito del autor
 - ☐ Comprensión en general
 - ☐ Ejercicios de vocabulario
- 7-¿Consideras que las actividades que seleccionaste están de acuerdo a tu nivel de ingles?
- 8-Marca con un check las actividades metodológicas que el profesor utiliza en la clase de lectura.
 - ☐ Warm-ups
 - ☐ Trabajos en grupo
 - ☐ Trabajos en pareja
 - ☐ Trabajo individual
 - ☐ Competencias
 - ☐ Exposiciones
- 9-¿Qué opinas de la dinámica de la clase?

10-¿Piensas que la clase de lectura será de tu utilidad a lo largo de la carrera?

11-¿ Piensas que has alcanzado algún logro específico, has mejorado tu vocabulario, tu comprensión lectora, tu pronunciación y gramática? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?

12-¿ Que dificultades específicas encuentras en la clase?

13-Consideras que el nivel de participación de los estudiantes en la clase es:

- ☐ Excelente
- ☐ Muy bueno
- ☐ Bueno
- ☐ Regular

14-¿Cual es tu valoración de la metodología del profesor?

15-¿Crees que la profesora domina los contenidos de la clase?

16-¿ Que le sugerirías a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica de la clase?

17-¿Consideras que la profesora te brinda la ayuda que necesitas para asimilar la clase?

LABORATORIO

CUESTIONARIO

- 1- ¿Qué tan importante es para ti la clase de laboratorio?
- 2- ¿Qué opinas del material usado en la clase?
- 3- ¿Consideras que dicho material está adecuado a tu nivel de inglés o piensas que es muy bajo o muy alto?
- 4- ¿Consideras que la frecuencia de la clase es la suficiente como para un buen desarrollo de las habilidades de escucha y expresión oral?
- 5- Marca con un check las actividades realizadas en clase.
 - a. Warm-ups
 - b. Trabajo en grupo
 - c. Trabajo en pareja
 - d. Trabajo individual
 - e. Grupos de discusión
 - f. Role-plays
 - g. Presentaciones
 - h. Ejercicios de escucha
 - i. Entrevistas personales
- 6- ¿Qué otras actividades te gustaría realizar para mejorar tu escucha y tu expresión oral?
- 7- ¿Qué opinas de el uso del idioma inglés dentro del aula de clase?
- 8- ¿Consideras que los objetivos de la clase están encaminados a la mejora de tus debilidades?
- 9- ¿Qué tan útil puede ser la clase de laboratorio en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés?
- 10- ¿Cuáles son los logros que has alcanzado durante el tiempo que se ha desarrollado la clase?
- 11- ¿Cuáles son las principales dificultades que has encontrado en la clase?

12- ¿Cómo consideras el nivel de participación de los estudiantes?

- ☐ Excelente
- ☐ Muy bueno
- ☐ Bueno
- ☐ Regular

13- ¿Cual es tu valoración de la metodología de la profesora?

14- ¿Crees que la profesora domina el idioma y los contenidos de la clase?

15- ¿ Que le sugerirías a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica de la clase?

16- ¿Consideras que la profesora te brinda la ayuda que necesitas para asimilar la clase?

17- ¿ Consideras necesario que la clase sea completamente en Inglés?

ELEMENTOS DE LITERATURA

CUESTIONARIOS

- 1- Que es para ti la clase de literatura? Escriba una definición y descripción.
- 2- Crees que son suficientes/ demasiado las horas /semana para la Literatura?
Por que ?
- 3- Cuales son tus mayores dificultades en esta asignatura? Explica.
- 4- Cuales son tus prioridades en esta asignatura? Explica.
- 5- Te gusta el material (libro) utilizado ? Por que?
- 6- Que nivel de dificultad encuentras a este material y a la clase en general?
- 7- Que te parecen los temas que cubren este folleto?
- 8- Escribe varias características importante del folleto que se usa en la clase de Literatura:
- 9- Clasifica los elementos de la clase de Literatura según su importancia
(5= más importante/ 0 = no importante)
-----explicaciones teóricas
-----lectura completa de “short stories’
-----lecturas (cortas) de extractos de textos literarios
----- lecturas (cortas) de extractos de obras teatrales
-----discusiones y debates en clase sobre las lecturas
-----ejercicios escritos varios sobre las lecturas(resúmenes/ descripciones)
- 10- Como evalúas el nivel de dificultad de esta clase? (Marca con X)
----- demasiado fácil ----- difícil
----- fácil ----- muy difícil
----- normal y adecuado ----- demasiado difícil
----- un poco difícil para mi

11- Estas satisfecha/o con este nivel de dificultad, o desearías cambiar algo ?

Por que?

12- Cual es tu valoración de la metodología de la profesora? Explica.

13- Crees que la profesora domina el idioma Inglés?

14- Crees que la profesora domina los contenidos de la clase? Explica.

15- Que papel esperas de tu profesora para ayudarte en esta clase? Por que?

Específica.

16- Crees que la profesora cumple con este papel? Explica.

17- Que podrías sugerir a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica en esta clase?

18- Si pudieras cambiar algo en esta clase, que cambiarías?

19- Que esperas obtener de esta clase al finalizar el semestre?

INGLES INTEGRAL

CUESTIONARIOS

- 1- Que es para ti la clase de Ingles Integral? Escriba una definición y descripción.
- 2- Crees que son suficientes/ demasiado las horas /semana para el Inglés Integral? Explica.
- 3- Cuales son tus mayores dificultades en esta asignatura? Explica.
- 4- Cuales son tus principales logros en esta asignatura? Explica.
- 5- Que es lo que te gusta mas del libro (material) de clase?
- 6- Que es lo que te gusta menos del libro (material) de clase?
- 7- Evalúa el nivel de dificultad de este libro.
- 8- Que te parecen los temas que cubren este libro?
- 9- Que te parecen las grabaciones audio de este libro? Por que?
- 10-Que acento inglés consideras importante escuchar y aprender?
 - ☐ Británico
 - ☐ Americano
 - ☐ Ambos británico y americano
 - ☐ Británico, americano y otros
- 11-Clasifica los aspectos de la clase de Inglés Integral según su importancia (5= más importante / 0 = no importante)
 - reading -----vocabulary
 - speaking ----- pronunciation and phonetics
 - grammar -----homework
 - writing
 - listening
- 12-Como evalúas el nivel de dificultad de esta clase? (Marca con X)
 - demasiado fácil ----- difícil
 - fácil ----- muy difícil
 - normal y adecuado ----- demasiado difícil
 - un poco difícil para mi

- 13- Estas satisfecha/o con este nivel de dificultad, o desearías cambiar algo ?
Por que?
- 14- Cual es tu valoración de la metodología de la profesora? Explica.
- 15-Crees que la profesora domina el idioma Inglés?
- 16-Crees que la profesora domina los contenidos de la clase? Explica..
- 17-Que papel esperas de tu profesora para ayudarte en esta clase? Por que?
Específica.
- 18-Crees que la profesora cumple con este papel? Explica.
- 19-Crees que se deben introducir algunas modificaciones en relación a la manera en que se enseña Inglés Integral? Que sugerirías a la profesora para mejorar la dinámica de esta clase?
- 20- Que esperas obtener de esta clase al finalizar el semestre?

ENTREVISTAS A ESTUDIANTES
(S. STUDENTS II AND III YEAR))

1. ¿Que te motivó a estudiar Inglés como carrera?
2. ¿Qué dificultades has encontrado a lo largo de tu carrera?
3. ¿Cuáles consideras tus mayores logros en el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés hasta la
4. fecha?
5. ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje has aplicado durante el desarrollo de tu carrera que te han permitido ir mejorando tu adquisición del idioma? Menciona algunas.
- 1- ¿Consideras que el Pensum de la Carrera de Inglés está bien estructurado? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes? Especifica
7. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras menos importantes? Especifica
8. ¿Consideras importante que las clases que tienen continuidad a lo largo de la carrera (Inglés Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación Socio-Cultural, Traducción, Didáctica Especial del Inglés) tengan secuenciación lógica de contenidos, sistematicidad, solidez, y material bibliográfico apropiado? Especifica.

√ Inglés Integral
√ Laboratorio
√ Comunicación Socio-Cultural
√ Traducción
√ Didáctica Especial
9. ¿Qué parámetros consideras deben ser tomados en consideración para asignar a los profesores que imparten las diferentes asignaturas en la carrera? Especifica
10. ¿Consideras que la metodología de los profesores que te han impartido clases hasta ahora ha sido la más adecuada?
11. ¿Consideras que has recibido suficiente apoyo por parte de los profesores del Departamento que te han impartido clases hasta el momento?
12. ¿Consideras importante el uso de auto-acceso al laboratorio? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?

13. Personalmente; ¿Haces uso del tiempo de auto-acceso al laboratorio? ¿Con que frecuencia y de que manera?
14. ¿Crees que el Departamento de Inglés cuenta con los suficientes recursos (libros de texto y de consulta, medios audiovisuales, etc.?)
15. ¿Estás familiarizado con el perfil de la Carrera de Inglés? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
16. ¿Sabes en que consisten las prácticas profesionales de la Carrera de Inglés y de que manera se vinculan con el perfil profesional de la misma?
17. ¿Si no tienes suficiente información para responder las dos preguntas anteriores; ¿Cuál crees que sea el motivo? Especifica

ENTREVISTAS A ESTUDIANTES
(W. STUDENTS II AND III YEAR)

1. ¿Que te motivó a estudiar Inglés como carrera?
2. ¿Qué dificultades has encontrado a lo largo de tu carrera?
3. ¿ ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje consideras que has aplicado durante el desarrollo de tu carrera? .
4. ¿Estás familiarizado con el Pensum de la Carrera de Inglés? Si la respuesta es afirmativa; consideras que está bien estructurado?
5. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes? Especifica
6. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras menos importantes? Especifica
7. ¿Consideras importante que las clases que tienen continuidad a lo largo de la carrera (Inglés Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación Socio-Cultural, Traducción, Didáctica Especial del Inglés) tengan secuenciación lógica de contenidos, sistematicidad, solidez, y material bibliográfico apropiado? Especifica.

√ Inglés Integral

√ Laboratorio

√ Comunicación Socio-Cultural

√ Traducción

√ Didáctica Especial

8. ¿Qué parámetros consideras deben ser tomados en consideración para asignar a los profesores que imparten las diferentes asignaturas en la carrera? Especifica
9. ¿Consideras que la metodología de los profesores que te han impartido clases hasta ahora ha sido la más adecuada?
10. ¿Consideras que has recibido suficiente apoyo por parte de los profesores del Departamento que te han impartido clases hasta el momento?
11. ¿Consideras importante el uso de auto-acceso al laboratorio? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
12. Personalmente; ¿Haces uso del tiempo de auto-acceso al laboratorio? ¿Con que frecuencia y de que manera?

13. ¿Crees que el Departamento de Inglés cuenta con los suficientes recursos (libros de
14. texto y de consulta, medios audiovisuales, etc.?)
15. ¿Estás familiarizado con el perfil de la Carrera de Inglés? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
16. ¿Sabes en que consisten las prácticas profesionales de la Carrera de Inglés y de que manera se vinculan con el perfil profesional de la misma?
17. ¿Si no tienes suficiente información para responder las dos preguntas anteriores; ¿Cuál crees que sea el motivo? Especifica

ENTREVISTAS A ESTUDIANTES
(S. STUDENTS IV AND V YEAR))

1. ¿Que te motivó a estudiar Inglés como carrera?
2. ¿Qué dificultades has encontrado a lo largo de tu carrera?
3. ¿Cuáles consideras tus mayores logros en el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés hasta la fecha?
4. ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje has aplicado durante el desarrollo de tu carrera que te han permitido la adquisición exitosa del idioma? Menciona algunas.
5. ¿Consideras que el Pensum de la Carrera de Inglés está bien estructurado? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes? Especifica
7. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras menos importantes? Especifica
8. ¿Consideras que las clases que tienen continuidad a lo largo de la carrera (Inglés Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación Socio-Cultural, Traducción, Didáctica Especial del Inglés) tienen secuenciación lógica de contenidos, sistematicidad, solidez, y material bibliográfico apropiado? Especifica
 - √ Inglés Integral
 - √ Laboratorio
 - √ Comunicación Socio-Cultural
 - √ Traducción
 - √ Didáctica Especial
9. ¿Consideras que los profesores a cargo de las distintas asignaturas que has recibido son los más adecuados para impartirlas? Especifica
10. ¿Consideras que la metodología de los profesores que te han impartido clases ha sido la más adecuada?
11. ¿Consideras que has recibido suficiente apoyo por parte de los profesores del Departamento de Inglés en la mejora de tus habilidades lingüísticas?
12. ¿Consideras importante el uso de auto-acceso al laboratorio? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?

13. Personalmente; ¿Haces uso del tiempo de auto-acceso al laboratorio? ¿Con que frecuencia y de que manera?
14. ¿Crees que el Departamento de Inglés cuenta con los suficientes recursos (libros de texto y de consulta, medios audiovisuales, etc.?)
15. ¿Estás familiarizado con el perfil de la Carrera de Inglés? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
16. Si la respuesta anterior es positiva, ¿Consideras que las Prácticas Profesionales se corresponden con el perfil ocupacional de la Carrera?
17. ¿Si no tienes suficiente información para responder las dos preguntas anteriores; ¿Cuál crees que sea el motivo? Especifica

**ENTREVISTAS A ESTUDIANTES
(W. STUDENTS IV AND V YEAR))**

- 1- ¿Que te motivó a estudiar Inglés como carrera?
- 2- ¿Qué dificultades has encontrado a lo largo de tu carrera?
- 3- ¿Qué estrategias de aprendizaje consideras que has aplicado durante el desarrollo de tu carrera?
- 4- ¿Consideras que el Pensum de la Carrera de Inglés está bien estructurado? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
- 5- ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes? Especifica
- 6- ¿Qué asignaturas consideras menos importantes? Especifica
- 7- ¿Consideras que las clases que tienen continuidad a lo largo de la carrera (Inglés Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación Socio-Cultural, Traducción, Didáctica Especial del Inglés) tienen secuenciación lógica de contenidos, sistematicidad, solidez, y material bibliográfico apropiado? Especifica

√ Inglés Integral

√ Laboratorio

√ Comunicación Socio-Cultural

√ Traducción

√ Didáctica Especial

- 8- ¿Consideras que los profesores a cargo de las distintas asignaturas que has recibido son los más adecuados para impartirlas? Especifica
- 9- ¿Consideras que la metodología de los profesores que te han impartido clases ha sido la más adecuada?
- 10- ¿Consideras que has recibido suficiente apoyo por parte de los profesores del Departamento de Inglés en la mejora de tus habilidades lingüísticas?
- 11- ¿Consideras importante el uso de auto-acceso al laboratorio? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?
- 12- Personalmente; ¿Haces uso del tiempo de auto-acceso al laboratorio? ¿Con que frecuencia y de que manera?

13- ¿Crees que el Departamento de Inglés cuenta con los suficientes recursos (libros de texto y de consulta, medios audiovisuales, etc.?)

14- ¿Estás familiarizado con el perfil de la Carrera de Inglés? Si, ¿Por qué? No, ¿Por qué?

15- Si la respuesta anterior es positiva, ¿Consideras que las Prácticas Profesionales se corresponden con el perfil ocupacional de la Carrera?

16- ¿Si no tienes suficiente información para responder las dos preguntas anteriores; ¿Cuál

crees que sea el motivo? Especifica

ENTREVISTA A PROFESORES

1. Después de seis años de funcionamiento de la carrera de Inglés diurna, ¿cual es tu valoración de la misma?
2. Para ti, ¿cuales son los objetivos principales de la carrera, y consideras que se cumplen?
3. ¿Sabes cual es el perfil de la carrera diurna?
4. ¿Estas familiarizado con el Pensum de la carrera?
5. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras más importantes? Especifica
6. ¿Qué asignaturas consideras menos importantes? Especifica
7. ¿Consideras importante que las clases que tienen continuidad a lo largo de la carrera (Inglés Integral, Laboratorio, Comunicación Socio-Cultural, Traducción, Didáctica Especial del Inglés) tengan secuenciación lógica de contenidos, sistematicidad, solidez, y material bibliográfico apropiado? Especifica.
8. ¿Qué componente te gusta mas impartir y por que?
9. ¿Qué factores influyen en tu motivación como profesor (a) de la carrera?
10. ¿Cuáles son las dificultades primordiales que consideras se encuentran en la carrera en cuanto a materiales, organización, etc.?
11. ¿De que manera consideras que influye la actitud de un profesor en el proceso de aprendizaje de sus estudiantes?
12. ¿Qué parámetros se deberían tomar en cuenta a la hora de asignar las clases a los diferentes profesores?
13. En tu opinión, ¿Cuáles deberían ser los criterios de calidad que rijan la Carrera de Inglés y como medirlos?
14. En tu opinión, ¿Cuál seria la mejor manera de culminar los estudios en la Carrera de Inglés, y como debería garantizarse la calidad de la misma?

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
IV AND V YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

[illegible]

[illegible]

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
IV AND V YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
IV AND V YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)

[illegible]

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

[illegible]

MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

WEAK STUDENT
QUESTIONS TOGETHER
4 AND 7
8, 9 AND 10
11, 12 AND 13

STRONG STUDENT
5 AND 8
6 AND 7
9, 10 AND 11
12,13 AND 14

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

**MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE STUDENTS' ORAL INTERVIEWS
II AND III YEAR (WEAK AND STRONG STUDENTS)**

MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES AND ORAL INTERVIEWS

TEACHER	TEACHERS' BELIEFS			PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS	PERCEPTION OF THE CURRENT CURRICULUM	PROBLEMS AND WEAKNESSES	CHANGES AND INNOVATIONS NEEDED	TRAINING NEEDED
	(METHODS)	(VALUES)	(ROLES)					

MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES AND ORAL INTERVIEWS

MATRIX USED TO ANALYSE TEACHERS' ORAL INTERVIEWS

TEACHER	MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR	ARE OBJECTIVES FULFILLED?	PROFESSIONAL PROFILE	PREFERRED TEACHING AREAS	MOTIVATION SOURCES	INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDE	CRITERIA TO APPOINT TEACHERS	QUALITY CRITERIA OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR

OBSERVATION GUIDE

Teacher's Code: _____ Observers' names: _____ / _____
Class: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

NA = *Not applicable or Not observed*
1 = *Room for growth / development*
2 = *Acceptable*
3 = *Competent*

A- LANGUAGE TEACHING SKILLS

- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|
| 1. The objectives of the lesson were clear to the learner. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. The class understood what was wanted at all times | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. All the instructions were clear. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. The teacher provides appropriate content, level and amount of work. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. The teacher displays good timing, pacing, flow, transition, progression. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Materials and learning activities were appropriate. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. There was enough variety in the lesson. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. There was teacher skill in organizing group work | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. Students groupings and sub-groupings were appropriate | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. The teacher did not talk too much. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. Error correction and feedback was appropriate. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. General classroom management was good. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. The teacher initiates lesson with warm-up or revision activities. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. The teacher carried out comprehension checks. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. The teacher used realia and authentic materials. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. The teacher used visuals (pictures, photos, drawings, etc.) | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 17. The teacher organized games. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. The recorded materials were interesting and clear. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19. There were opportunities for controlled practice of specific language points. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. There were opportunities for free practice of specific language points. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 21. Learners were required to share information (there was an information gap component to the lesson). | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 22. The activities were challenging but not threatening. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 23. Learners were required to do something (solve a problem, come to a conclusion, complete a task). | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 24. Learners were required to cooperate. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 25. There was an evaluation component to the lesson. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 26. Every student was involved at some point. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 27. All students were interested in the lesson. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |

B- LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE

- | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|
| 1.The teacher has adequate level of language (fluency, pronunciation and accuracy) | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.The teacher uses natural and comprehensible language. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.The teacher is able to present linguistic rules clearly and appropriately. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. The teacher presents appropriate amount of structured material. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. The teacher responds effectively to students ‘questions on linguistic points. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6.The teacher uses target language most of the time. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |

C- INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS /ATTITUDES

- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|
| 1. The teacher is dynamic, enthusiastic and confident about his/her teaching, the students and the subject matter. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. The teacher creates a positive, secure, comfortable classroom ambiance (e.g. where students can take risks). | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. The teacher knows students and their names. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. The teacher listens to and understands what students are saying. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Teacher promotes good students’ relationships (encourages pair and group work, collaboration, sharing, etc) | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Students were enthusiastic all the time. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 |

D- CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Place a tally mark against the following events each time they occur.

	Tallies	Total
1. Teacher asks questions		
2. Teacher explains a grammatical point		
3. Teacher explains meaning of a vocabulary item		
4. Teacher explains a functional point.		
5. Teacher explains points related to the content/ (theme/topic of the lesson).		
6. Teacher gives instructions/directions.		
7. Teacher acts as a facilitator and circulates among the groups.		
8. Teacher praises.		
9. Teacher criticizes.		
10. Learner asks questions.		
11. Learner answers questions.		
12. Learner talks to another learner.		
13. Period of silence or confusion.		
14. Period of laughter and excitement.		

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