

IDENTIFICANDO LAS NECESIDADES DE ALUMNOS EN PROGRAMAS DE FORMACIÓN DE DOCENTES DE INGLÉS EN MÉXICO: PROYECTO INTEGRAL DE ANÁLISIS DE FACTORES QUE AFECTAN LA EFICIENCIA TERMINAL Vol.1

Looking into learner needs in Mexican ELTed: PIAFET Project Vol. 1

Rebeca Elena Tapia Carlín
Hilda Hidalgo Avilés
Mariza Guadalupe Méndez López
Editoras



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA
FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

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Facultad de Lenguas

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PRÓLOGO

Omar Bravo Gómez

Presidente de la Red de Cuerpos Académicos

Director de la Facultad de Lenguas Extranjeras de la Universidad de Colima

En México como en muchos países se enfrenta un serio problema en la capacidad de absorción ó ingreso al nivel superior universitario específicamente en el ámbito público, lo que significa que muchos jóvenes se quedan sin estudiar, sin embargo los que sí logran incorporarse a algún programa educativo en las Instituciones de Educación Superior (IES) a grandes rasgos más de la mitad no logra concluir sus estudios, considero que este es un problema aún más grave por todas sus repercusiones tanto económicas como sociales. Cabe especificar que estos no son los únicos problemas de la educación. Ante esto los gobiernos de los países mediante sus sistemas educativos han implementado una serie de estrategias encaminadas a demandar resultados cuantitativos entorno a estos problemas muchas de estas condicionadas al aspecto de financiamiento a las IES.

Por su parte las IES se han dado a la tarea en primer lugar de atender por convicción propia todos los problemas a los que tiene que dar respuesta y después a cumplir con las demandas a las que se refieren las políticas educativas, como muestra de la búsqueda de soluciones se destaca el desarrollo de trabajo colegiado y éste generado no únicamente al interior de cada institución si no más bien a nivel interinstitucional, en la búsqueda de sinergias, de objetivos comunes encaminados a la profesionalización, a la mejora de la calidad, a la respuesta del compromiso social. Es así como surge la Red de Cuerpos Académicos en Lenguas Extranjeras (RECALE) entre un grupo de académicos que motivados por el deseo de mejorar el área de lenguas extranjeras en México presentan la propuesta de conformar una red nacional entre la universidades públicas del país que tengan PE del área de lenguas extranjeras y por ende cuerpos académicos todo esto en el marco del 2do Foro Nacional de Estudios en Lenguas organizado por la Universidad de Quintana Roo campus Chetumal, previa convocatoria enviada a las dependencias del área se invitó al evento y en específico a la presentación de la propuesta de conformación de la red; pudiéndose identificar como fecha de creación de la RECALE el 6 de octubre de 2006. Con fecha del 7 de junio de 2008 en la Ciudad de Guanajuato y gracias al esfuerzo y apoyo del Dr. Douglas Goodwing de la Universidad de Guanajuato y el Dr. Alfredo Marín de la Universidad de Quintana Roo así como los Doctores Rectores de dichas instituciones, se dio inicio con la firma formal del Convenio de Cooperación Interinstitucional para el establecimiento y operación de la RED DE CUERPOS ACADEMICOS EN LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS (RECALE) para que después en sistema de firma por valija firmaran los Rectores de *La Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes, la Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas, la Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, la Universidad Autónoma de Nayarit, la Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, la Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, la Universidad Autónoma de Tlaxcala, la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, la Universidad Autónoma del Carmen, la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, la Universidad de Colima, la Universidad de Guadalajara, la Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango, la Universidad de Sonora y la Universidad Veracruzana* siendo éstas las primeras IES que para ese año dieron inicio a la conformación bajo el siguiente objetivo general y objetivos específicos:

I. Objetivo General

La RECALE tendrá como Objetivo General fortalecer la Competitividad Académica de los Programas Educativos atendidos por los Cuerpos Académicos involucrados, asimismo, fortalecer la Capacidad Académica de los cuerpos académicos que forman parte de la red.

Para el logro del objetivo General de la Red, las Universidades participantes acuerdan establecer los siguientes:

II. Objetivos Específicos.

1. Desarrollar proyectos interinstitucionales de investigación en el área de lenguas extranjeras.
2. Promover la figura del profesor visitante entre las Instituciones de Educación Superior (IES) participantes (estancias cortas, semestrales y anuales – años sabáticos) para nivel licenciatura y maestría.
3. Promover la movilidad estudiantil entre las Instituciones de Educación Superior participantes.
4. Facilitar la participación de estudiantes de diferentes IES en proyectos de investigación con financiamiento interno y/o externo.
5. Promover la creación de espacios para la publicación de los productos derivados de las Líneas de Generación y Aplicación del Conocimiento.
6. Impulsar la participación colegiada en diversos eventos nacionales e internacionales de índole académica.
7. Desarrollar instrumentos de evaluación de ingreso y egreso para los Programas Educativos que forman parte de la red
8. Participar en el establecimiento de los criterios de evaluación de los Programas Educativos en lenguas recomendados por los Comités Interinstitucionales para la Evaluación de la Educación Superior (CIEES) así como los criterios para la acreditación de los mismos.

Posterior a esta firma del convenio se fueron sumando más instituciones lo que hizo necesario elaborar un nuevo documento conocido como adenda en el que los Rectores de estas últimas IES incorporadas plasmaron su refrendo al proyecto de la RECALE mediante su firma siendo éstas las siguientes IES: la Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, la Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. A finales del 2010 al interior de la red se aprobó la incorporación de la Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco y cuya incorporación oficial mediante firma está en trámite, con esta última incorporación se ha logrado conformar a 22 Universidades Públicas de México en la RECALE.

Como toda asociación de este tipo, esta normada por una serie de estatutos y con una organización interna definida por un comité ejecutivo el cual está conformado por Presidente, Secretario y tres vocales. A la fecha la RECALE ha tenido dos Presidentes cada uno con dos períodos de dos años de nombramiento siendo éstos el Dr. Alfredo Marín Marín de la Universidad de Quintana Roo (2006 - 2010) y el Lic. Omar Bravo Gómez de la Universidad de Colima (2010 – 2012) aún vigente.

La RECALE desde el principio ha generado una familia dentro del área de lenguas extranjeras en México, ha mantenido fuertes lazos académicos y personales entre sus integrantes, ha facilitado procesos de gestión académicos, ha generado trabajo colegiado, ha permitido organizar eventos académicos conjuntos, ha abonado a la profesionalización de nuestra área. Los mismos integrantes han asumido el compromiso de atender los objetivos destacando el que se refiere a promover la publicación derivada de trabajos generados al interior de la red, ya que se ha entendido la importancia que tiene el hacer difusión de los resultados que se obtienen al generar conocimiento y la búsqueda de su aplicación, se han venido trabajando proyectos interinstitucionales al interior de la red por parte de académicos que han propuesto proyectos de relevancia e importancia para la red y que han tenido eco sumándose otros académicos de diferentes IES tal como es el caso del proyecto Proyecto Integral de Análisis de Factores que Afectan la Eficiencia Terminal en Programas de Formación de Docentes de Lenguas en Universidades -Públicas en México (PIAFET) el cual fue propuesto y muy bien coordinado por la Dra. Rebeca Tapia Carlin de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, dicho proyecto es de los más jóvenes al interior de

la red y de pronto resultados, proyecto que es muy pertinente dado la importancia del tema tal y como lo exponía al principio de este breve prólogo, es decir se ha dado atención a esta problemática mediante un análisis de las causas que originan los bajos resultados en indicadores de competitividad académica relacionados a la eficiencia terminal de programas educativos de lenguas extranjeras. No tengo duda de que estos resultados del avance de dicho proyecto plasmados en este importante libro, generan un excelente bagaje de información que permitirá definir políticas de acceso a los programas educativos del área, así como de un mejor seguimiento por parte de la actividad tutorial en los alumnos que se identifiquen prospectos a abandonar sus estudios, así como de estrategias didácticas necesarias a complementar las debilidades y a asegurar las fortalezas en el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. De alguna manera será este escrito un buen aporte para atender las recomendaciones que hacen los diferentes organismos evaluadores y acreditadores de los programas educativos en México como los son los Comités Interinstitucionales de Evaluación de la Educación Superior (CIEES) y los Consejos para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior (COPAES) y muy específicamente el Consejo para la Acreditación de Programas Educativos en Humanidades (COAPEHUM) de quienes se ha tenido recomendaciones de mejora y también apoyo para la gestión de mejores condiciones de operatividad de los programas educativos. Quiero externar mi más sincera felicitación a todos los participantes que han hecho posible este libro, en especial a la comunidad de la Facultad de Lenguas de la BUAP, es para mi sinónimo de orgullo el pertenecer a una red que busca fortalecer la calidad de la educación superior en México, evidenciar la importancia que tiene para la sociedad y el país en su conjunto.

INTRODUCCIÓN

Rebeca Elena Tapia Carlín (BUAP)

Hilda Hidalgo Avilés (UAEH)

Mariza G. Méndez López (UQROO)

El Proyecto Integral de Análisis de Factores que Afectan la Eficiencia Terminal en programas de formación de docentes en Lenguas (PIAFET), es un proyecto que surge al interior de la Red de Cuerpos Académicos (RECALE) a iniciativa del Cuerpo Académico Docencia e Innovación Profesional de la Facultad de Lenguas de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. El objetivo del proyecto es integrar a los Cuerpos Académicos y Grupos de Investigación de programas de formación de docentes de lenguas en México en un proyecto que permita entender cuáles son los factores que afectan la eficiencia terminal en dichos programas y buscar formas de atenderlos para buscar estrategias que permitan mejorar la eficiencia terminal en dichos programas. Este texto representa la primera publicación de la RECALE.

El proyecto PIAFET tiene cuatro etapas ubicadas en cuatro años a partir de agosto de 2009: la primera inicia identificando el perfil de ingreso de los alumnos a las licenciaturas. La segunda buscando explorar formas de atender a las necesidades de los alumnos. La tercera implementando éstas y la última evaluando las formas de atender a ellas y analizando el perfil de egreso de los alumnos de dichos programas. Esta publicación reporta la investigación generada a nivel nacional en torno a la primera etapa.

El libro está organizado en tres secciones, la primera reporta estudios vinculados al dominio de la lengua inglesa, la segunda incluye estudios relacionados con factores afectivos y la tercera incluye investigaciones en donde ambas temáticas se integran. A continuación se describe la importancia de estos factores en la eficiencia terminal en programas de formación docente en universidades públicas de México. Esperamos que este texto sea de utilidad y sirva de inspiración para continuar realizando investigación tanto en México como en otros países vinculada a los procesos educativos en programas de formación docentes de lenguas.

Dominio de idioma

Es bien conocido que dada la importancia del idioma inglés en diferentes áreas del conocimiento, como política, educación, tecnología, entre otras, su status de *standard* ha cambiado a *lengua internacional* o *lingua franca*. Por tal motivo y con la intención de dar respuesta a esta demanda, muchas instituciones de educación superior en México incorporaron la enseñanza y aprendizaje del idioma inglés en su currículum a principios de los años noventa. Lo anterior dio origen a la existencia de licenciaturas en Enseñanza de la Lengua Inglesa o Enseñanza del inglés para poder contar con el personal capacitado para impartir el idioma inglés en los diversos programas educativos. Existe una gran heterogeneidad del nivel de inglés de los programas educativos que ofrecen una licenciatura en enseñanza de la lengua inglesa. Es decir, en algunas universidades se establece un cierto nivel de inglés como requisito de ingreso, permanencia y egreso. En la mayoría de ellas, sin embargo, solo se establece un cierto nivel de inglés como requisito de egreso y/o titulación. Como resultado los estudiantes de estos programas educativos egresan con diversos niveles de inglés. Es necesario dar seguimiento al nivel de inglés de los estudiantes a través de exámenes estandarizados como el TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) que permiten detectar el progreso de los estudiantes para asegurar que al final de su estancia en un programa educativo su nivel de inglés corresponda a los objetivos establecidos. Esta medida es importante para dar seguimiento al nivel de inglés de los estudiantes semestre tras semestre para atender sus necesidades.

Factores Afectivos

La influencia de los factores afectivos en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera es algo que aquellos que han pasado por ese proceso no pueden negar o estar en desacuerdo. La investigación en educación coincide en la influencia de los factores afectivos en el éxito o fracaso al aprender una lengua extranjera (MacIntyre, 2002; Hascher, 2010; Aragão, 2011, Mercer, 2011). Diversos estudios en esta área han resaltado la importancia fundamental del contexto, experiencias de aprendizaje previas y factores externos tales como los compañeros

de clase o regulaciones administrativas en los sentimientos y emociones experimentadas al aprender una lengua extranjera. A pesar de que los profesores de lenguas no tienen control sobre algunos factores externos que pueden afectar el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, hay lineamientos que pueden ser empleados para minimizar el impacto de situaciones negativas que puedan impedir que los estudiantes no culminen su licenciatura. Es por esto que es de suma importancia entender los procesos afectivos al aprender una lengua ya que éstos nos pueden dar conocimiento para comprender las reacciones de los estudiantes durante la instrucción de la misma, así como nos puede proveer de entendimiento para hacer que todo proceso de aprendizaje sea exitoso. La investigación en factores afectivos ha revelado que los estudiantes experimentan tantas emociones positivas como negativas; es por esto que los profesores de lenguas deben ayudar a que sus estudiantes minimicen el impacto negativo de las experiencias emocionales en su proceso de aprendizaje y promover emociones positivas que apoyen este proceso y re-energicen su motivación (Méndez, 2011). Esto puede implicar un reto para profesores en práctica que piensen que no está dentro de sus responsabilidades el atender las demandas afectivas de sus estudiantes, como lo reflejan las críticas recibidas durante la inclusión de los métodos humanistas en la enseñanza del inglés (véase Gadd, 1998). El aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera es un proceso repleto de emociones positivas y negativas por lo que un apropiado manejo de estas emociones por parte de los estudiantes, ayudados por sus profesores, es necesario para que estas emociones puedan ayudarlos a lograr sus objetivos y no estar en contra de éstos.

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SECTION 1 – LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

This section presents three studies about Language Proficiency in tow different Public Universities.

Within the basis of the Convention of the National Network of Academic Teamwork referred as (RECALE), emerges an integral project to analyze factors affecting the graduation rate in language teaching education programs, named PIAFET. This project is directed by the academic research group "Docencia e Innovación Profesional" from the University of Puebla.

Three factors are discussed in these articles: The proficiency level of English language that students achieve, when entering their career to become English teachers, the domain of English in the development of oral skills in low-level proficiency LEI-BUAP undergraduate students from the 2009 cohort and the English Language Meta IV-Skills Development / LEI-BUAP to improve TOEFL scores.

El nivel de inglés al ingreso de los estudiantes de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés en la Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero

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Resumen

En el marco del convenio de la Red Nacional de Cuerpos Académicos (RECALE), surge el Proyecto Integral para analizar los factores que afectan la eficiencia terminal en programas educativos de formación de profesionales en la enseñanza de lenguas, denominado PIAFET y encabezado por el Cuerpo Académico “Docencia e Innovación Profesional de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. Entre los factores que se analizan en el PIAFET, se encuentra el nivel de dominio del idioma inglés de los futuros profesores de ese idioma. En este sentido se presentan en este artículo los resultados del nivel de lengua con el que ingresan los estudiantes a la carrera, los instrumentos utilizados para su evaluación y la descripción de los puntajes logrados en las cuatro habilidades lingüísticas.

Al Cuerpo Académico “Innovación y Educación” de la Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero le corresponde investigar estos factores con la cohorte 2009-2013, la cual corresponde a la novena generación de Licenciados en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés (LEI), que ingresó con el Nuevo Plan de Estudios implementado en el año 2009 en este programa educativo.

Abstract

Within the basis of the Convention of the National Network of Academic Teamwork referred as (RECALE), emerges an integral project to analyze factors affecting the graduate rate in educational programs of professional training in the teaching of languages, named PIAFET. This project is directed by the academic teamwork "Docencia e Innovación profesional" from the University of Puebla. One the factors discussed in the PIAFET project, is the proficiency level of English language that students achieve, when entering their career to become English teachers. This article presents the results of the instruments applied to candidates, describing the evaluation process of the four skills, in this educational program.

The academic teamwork “Innovación y Educación” from the University of Guerrero, reports the results obtained with the ninth generation of graduates, belonging to the 2009-2013 cohort. These students entered the career along with the implementation of a new curriculum initiated in year 2009, in the educational program known as LEI.

Introducción

En la actualidad, es común encontrar en las diversas instituciones del sistema educativo mexicano, que a la enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés se le atribuye gran importancia y en la mayoría de los casos, se considera a este idioma como una asignatura obligatoria. En el caso de los programas

educativos de licenciatura en la enseñanza del idioma inglés –referidos como LEI o LEII-, esta asignatura no solo es obligatoria sino que, como insumo básico en la formación de profesionales en el área, se encuentra bajo constante evaluación desde el ingreso de los estudiantes a la carrera. Los estudios de evaluación de la competencia lingüística –aunque exigüos en nuestro país- son un referente fundamental para el análisis de los factores que pudieran afectar la eficiencia terminal en los programas del área por lo que resulta imprescindible conocer las características de los instrumentos y formas de evaluación, utilizados en programas de LEI.

Al respecto Pastor Cesteros (2003:518), señala que *“el concepto de evaluación ha ido transformándose paralelamente a como lo han ido haciendo los distintos enfoques metodológicos”*. Destaca que cada enfoque presenta una serie de objetivos, contenidos y propuestas para poner en práctica del método y que se basan en aportaciones de la teoría lingüística, psicológica y pedagógica, donde se incluyen aspectos relativos a la evaluación -haciendo para una mejor comprensión- las siguientes tres distinciones:

En primer lugar destaca el conocido ‘método tradicional’, donde la evaluación se reduce a un examen final que verifica los conocimientos lingüísticos adquiridos por el alumno, generalmente de manera escrita. En este método, la enseñanza favorece un modelo de estructuras gramaticales y la lengua se convierte en un fin en sí mismo, que exige una reflexión metalingüística y que se ejemplifica a menudo con modelos literarios. Esta situación implica que los instrumentos de evaluación consideren criterios morfológicos y sintácticos y se reduzcan al uso de pruebas de traducción y dictado para comprobar que se ha aprendido el vocabulario y las reglas ortográficas.

En cuanto al método audio-oral, que tiene bases estructuralistas y conductistas, se propone un sistema de gramática descriptiva con énfasis en las estructuras lingüísticas básicas de la lengua meta -privilegiando así- las destrezas orales sobre las escritas. Desde este enfoque, la evaluación es considerada más rigurosa, basada en pruebas objetivas, que funcionan mediante un gran número de preguntas, y el establecimiento a priori de las respuestas aceptables y el valor otorgado a cada una de ellas. La evaluación se convierte así, en un instrumento o técnica de carácter científico objetivo que favorece la parte oral, las estructuras lingüísticas y el vocabulario.

En tercer lugar por ser más reciente, se encuentra el enfoque comunicativo, en el cual se considera a la evaluación como un medio eficaz de mejora del proceso de aprendizaje, que prioriza la función formativa del proceso de evaluación a fin de tomar decisiones para mejorar la enseñanza aprendizaje. Pastor Cesteros (2003) señala aquí, que la lengua meta es considerada un instrumento de comunicación potenciando así el uso de la misma. Esta situación traslada el concepto de evaluación tradicional de juzgar conocimientos, de medir contenidos lingüísticos y funcionales a una tarea más compleja e integral, y enfocarse a valorar actitudes, habilidades y destrezas para interactuar con otros en una lengua extranjera.

Entre los instrumentos para evaluar la competencia lingüística de los estudiantes que ingresan a las Instituciones de Educación Superior del país (IES), se encuentran: Nelson English Language Test (NELT); Key English Test (KET); Preliminary English Test (PET); y Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) entre otros, -además de los exámenes institucionales- que en su mayoría están basados en los modelos mencionados y que toman en cuenta los niveles establecidos en el Marco Común de Referencia Europeo (MCRE).

De aquí que encontremos que la evaluación de una segunda lengua se realiza generalmente a través de distintos tipos de pruebas, entre las que se distinguen:

a) Las *de aptitud lingüística*, que miden la capacidad del sujeto para adquirir una segunda lengua. Esto implica la medición de capacidades como la de memorización, la de inducir significados, la capacidad para codificar la gramática y la fonética de la lengua que se está aprendiendo.

b) Las *de proficiencia*, que miden los conocimientos que se poseen de una segunda lengua, de modo general, al margen de la realización de ningún programa concreto de enseñanza. Destacan aquí, el TOEFL como versión americana y el KET/PET que representa la versión británica.

c) Las *de rendimiento*, que evalúan los conocimientos adquiridos tras la realización de un determinado curso en la lengua meta y miden cuánto ha aprendido el estudiante de acuerdo con los objetivos propuestos en un programa y a partir de unos determinados materiales didácticos. Suelen realizarse al final de una unidad, de un trimestre, de un curso y permiten comprobar el nivel real de adquisición de los alumnos, así como el consiguiente éxito o fracaso de la práctica docente.

d) Las *de nivel*, que son las que permiten clasificar y ubicar a los estudiantes, precisamente en el nivel apropiado de un curso o programa de estudios. De la eficacia de estas pruebas dependerá el desempeño futuro del grupo y evitar desequilibrios en el conocimiento y uso de la lengua entre los aprendices, (ibídem).

Finalmente, el trabajo de Lemus, Durán y Martínez (2008), destaca el gran problema que enfrentan los programas de licenciatura en lengua inglesa en cuanto al bajo nivel de dominio o competencia lingüística con el que inician la mayoría de los estudiantes al ingresar a este tipo de carreras, factor que sin duda afecta las tasas de eficiencia terminal en los mismos. De aquí deriva la importancia de conocer los procedimientos de ingreso para evaluar la competencia de los aspirantes y considerar las experiencias de otras IES a nivel nacional.

Cabe señalar que en el programa de licenciatura en la enseñanza del idioma inglés (LEI) de la Unidad Académica de Lenguas Extranjeras (UALE) se aplicaron como parte del proyecto PIAFET, los instrumentos de Inventario de Inteligencias Múltiples derivado del trabajo de Howard Gardner (1980) y adaptado por Romero y Joya (2008), así como el Inventario sobre las creencias del aprendizaje de idiomas de Horwitz (1988), que complementan el análisis de los factores relacionados con la competencia lingüística pero que no se presentan en esta primera etapa del proyecto.

Metodología

Para la realización de esta etapa del proyecto se llevó a cabo una investigación exploratoria descriptiva, utilizando la aplicación de un examen institucional equivalente al Key English Test (KET) de la Universidad de Cambridge. Este examen, se aplicó a toda la población de aspirantes al programa -95 en total- sin embargo, se reportan los resultados obtenidos sólo por los aceptados como alumnos de nuevo ingreso. La cohorte está conformada por 48 estudiantes, debido a que el hasta el año 2009, el programa educativo sólo recibía un grupo anualmente. De estos alumnos 24 son hombres y 24 son mujeres, y la edad promedio es de 25 años. Cabe destacar que en esta cohorte, el 30% de estos alumnos (14) trabajan, algunos de ellos son maestros en servicio y otros

trabajan en actividades relacionadas con el turismo, mientras que el 70% restante solo se dedica a sus estudios.

Para la obtención de la información, se aplicó un examen tomando en cuenta las cuatro habilidades lingüísticas: *Reading & Writing*, *Listening* y *Speaking* y considerando el valor de cien como puntuación máxima. Lo anterior, en virtud de que los requisitos de ingreso desde el inicio del programa en 2001, han sido la aplicación del EXANI-II y del KET institucional que mide las cuatro habilidades.

Cabe mencionar que el examen KET, en lo que respecta a la habilidad *Reading & Writing*, generalmente se administra en un tiempo máximo de una hora con veinte minutos. En lo que respecta a la habilidad *Speaking*, comúnmente se hace una conversación en parejas frente al examinador oral y ésta sección tiene una duración de 10 minutos por sustentante. Finalmente, para la habilidad *Listening*, los alumnos escuchan dos veces el audio correspondiente y se administra en un tiempo aproximado de 20 minutos, para hacer un total en tiempo para evaluación de las cuatro habilidades, de 1 hora con 50 minutos.

Resultados

Los resultados de la aplicación del examen institucional KET para la cohorte generacional 2009-2013, se concentran en la siguiente tabla donde se pueden apreciar los puntajes obtenidos por los estudiantes aceptados de nuevo ingreso en cada una de las habilidades lingüísticas. Es importante señalar que no se consideró pertinente ordenar los promedios finales de los alumnos, dado que lo que interesa conocer es esencialmente su nivel de competencia por habilidad.

Tabla 1. Puntuación obtenida de los alumnos de acuerdo a sus habilidades.

Alumnos	Reading & Writing	Listening	Speaking	Final Average
1	90	84	100	91
2	84	80	90	84
3	69	40	70	59
4	95	80	90	88
5	62	30	80	57
6	70	48	80	66
7	85	48	100	77
8	78	76	100	84
9	90	72	70	77
10	78	72	90	80
11	93	92	100	95
12	78	80	100	86
13	89	52	100	80
14	70	32	80	60
15	60	52	70	60
16	69	60	80	69
17	93	88	100	93
18	85	88	80	84

19	65	57	100	74
20	73	76	80	76
21	89	80	90	86
22	89	84	100	91
23	53	44	70	55
24	89	84	100	91
25	82	32	90	68
26	87	72	100	86
27	73	56	100	76
28	84	48	80	70
29	76	44	80	66
30	58	36	100	64
31	73	52	70	65
32	75	48	80	67
33	85	80	100	88
34	90	80	100	90
35	69	56	80	68
36	49	32	70	50
37	84	76	100	86
38	84	29	90	67
39	80	84	100	88
40	78	64	85	75
41	93	88	100	93
42	78	48	100	75
43	87	80	100	89
44	82	76	100	86
45	84	56	90	76
46	84	40	90	73
47	80	64	90	78
48	80	60	100	80

Fuente: Elaboración propia.

Discusión e interpretación.

Los resultados nos muestran que del total de la población de la cohorte la habilidad en la que más destacaron los que ingresaron fue la oral, donde 42 estudiantes obtuvieron una calificación entre 80 y 100 puntos que es bastante aceptable y representa el 87% de la población.

Por lo que respecta a la habilidad de lectoescritura se puede observar que 27 alumnos obtuvieron puntajes entre 80 y 90 puntos, lo cual también consideramos aceptable pues representa el 56% de la población.

En cambio la habilidad donde se denota mayor debilidad para los estudiantes a su ingreso fue la auditiva en la cual solo 15 de ellos obtuvieron puntajes que no alcanzaron el 90 de calificación y que representaron el 31% del total de alumnos.

En cuanto a los resultados parciales por categorías o habilidades antes señaladas, el número total de alumnos que ingresaron con un promedio aceptable entre 80 y 90 puntos fueron 22 y representan el 46% de la población, considerando este resultado no satisfactorio.

Con la intención de hacer más notable estos resultados se presenta la siguiente tabla, donde se pueden observar los resultados parciales y totales de las cuatro habilidades lingüísticas obtenidos por los alumnos de la generación 2009 - 2023.

Tabla 2. Totales parciales en cada habilidad lingüística

Habilidades Lingüísticas evaluadas	Alumnos con promedio aceptable	Porcentaje sobre el total
Reading & Writing	27	56%
Listening	15	31%
Speaking	42	87%
Alumnos con puntaje aceptable en las cuatro habilidades	22	46%

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Con respecto a las habilidades de “Reading & Writing”, se encontró que el 44% del total alumnos obtuvieron puntajes insuficientes, esto representan 21 alumnos. En cuanto a la habilidad de “Listening” se encontró que 33 alumnos no mostraron suficiencia en la misma, ya que obtuvieron un puntaje muy por debajo del promedio establecido, esto representa el 69% de la población. En relación a los resultados de la habilidad de “Speaking”, se encontró que sólo el 12% de alumnos no lograron la suficiencia requerida, representando 6 alumnos.

Por otro lado, en la tabla se indica que el 46% de alumnos que ingresaron en el año 2009, se ubicó ligeramente por debajo de la media con un nivel suficiente en todas las habilidades. Mientras que por el otro lado esta misma situación señala que el 54% de alumnos que ingresaron en esa generación tienen un nivel insuficiente en las cuatro habilidades, respecto al mínimo requerido en el perfil de ingreso.

Cabe hacer notar que pocos alumnos cuentan con el nivel suficiente del manejo de las cuatro habilidades, (Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking), situación que resulta preocupante, ya que el dominar estas habilidades resulta preponderante para el desarrollo de la competencia lingüística, partiendo del hecho de que quienes ingresan a programas de Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés, deben mostrar un determinado dominio en el cien por ciento de habilidades para garantizar que desarrollarán dicha competencia lingüística a niveles aceptados de acuerdo a lo establecido en el Marco Común de Referencia Europeo.

Conclusiones

El presente trabajo proporciona evidencia de que la mayoría de los estudiantes que ingresan al programa educativo LEI de la Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, presentan un bajo nivel de dominio del idioma inglés. Aun cuando encontramos un porcentaje considerable de los que ingresan con un buen nivel de producción oral (speaking), no es así en el resto de las habilidades. Situación que, como lo señalan Lemus, Durán y Martínez (2008), no es exclusiva de un estado o región sino que se percibe como problema de todas las IES del país. Por ello la importancia de los proyectos interinstitucionales que se realizan a través de la RECALE, como plataforma de análisis y búsqueda de mejores acciones ante problemáticas compartidas particularmente en la formación de profesionales en la enseñanza del idioma inglés y otras lenguas.

Por otro lado, si bien es cierto que las recomendaciones de investigaciones similares a nivel nacional apuntan a la utilización de pruebas estandarizadas que permitan mayor objetividad, este trabajo también pone de manifiesto, la necesidad de reconstruir un contexto comunicativo en dichas pruebas, como lo señala Pastor Cesteros (2003), si el enfoque que se privilegia más prometedor en la enseñanza de lenguas es el comunicativo, se hace necesaria una evaluación comunicativa que no favorezca alguna habilidad o función en específico, sino que sea una evaluación integral de actitudes, habilidades y destrezas – lo que se conoce como competencias- que permitan a los aprendices de idiomas comunicarse de manera eficaz en una lengua extranjera. Asumiendo aquí el riesgo de subjetividad implícita y el cuestionamiento que puedan tener este tipo de evaluaciones en cuanto a su validez, las complejidades de su elaboración, los costos y tiempos requeridos para ello.

Por último podemos señalar que, elevar el nivel de competencia lingüística de los estudiantes del idioma inglés o de cualquier otra lengua extranjera, depende no solo de un enfoque integral sino de una evaluación congruente con dicho método, situación que resulta esencial en programas de licenciatura en enseñanza del idioma inglés.

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Assessing oral skills development in low-level proficiency students in LEI-BUAP

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Abstract

This is a research study on the domain of English in the development of oral skills in low-level proficiency LEI undergraduate students from the 2009 cohort via a needs analysis. It will entail to carry out an examination which will make possible to know their level of language proficiency and their possible deficiencies. The present research paper is a quantitative-qualitative longitudinal, descriptive study. The techniques will be non-participant class observation and interviews. These allow to know the concerns about the course in general and to confirm the low-level proficiency in learners.

Introduction

In early 2006, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla embarked in a process to redesign all BA study programs. This curricula development was not without a philosophical frame based on humanistic theories, cooperative learning, critical thinking and the social construction of knowledge. Such frame was named Modelo Universitario Minerva. A group of experts in education and subject matter contents from Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla participated in the design of curricula for each and every BA offered at this university. Care was taken that such new programs approached the teaching and learning from the philosophical frame that Modelo Universitario Minerva was based on. The Language Department at Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla offers two BAs in language teaching, one in French Language teaching and another one in English Language Teaching. This paper is concerned only with the context of the BA in English Language Teaching.

Formerly known as LEMO English (Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas Inglés), the BA in English Language Teaching was re-named LEI (Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés), which expressly indicated it was a BA in ELT. According to the finished program (2008) based on Modelo Universitario Minerva from Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, graduate students are expected to have developed linguistic skills that allow them to successfully perform professional activity, namely foreign language teaching as well as other professionally related contexts such as presenting and academic writing. Linguistic performance, it was decided at the Language Department, would be measured against the parameters marked by the Common European Framework of Languages (2001), and the expected linguistic performance for LEI graduate students was set at B2 level (LEI Program, 2008). This paper focuses on the oral production component of such linguistic proficiency.

General Objective for a 5-year Span

The objective of this paper is to assess the development of oral skills in low-level proficiency LEI undergraduate students from the 2009 cohort via a needs analysis. Such needs analysis will be based on what the Common European Framework of Languages states they should be able to do with the language orally at level B2.

General Objective for Year One

- To identify the LEI undergraduate students from the 2009 cohort whose low-level proficiency is evident in their oral language skills

Rationale

As a graduate student from a BA in English Language Teaching, he/she has to develop the ability to produce the foreign language orally. Oral language production will not only require this kind of language user to display a wide lexical repertoire, but to do so in ways that it is culturally, pragmatically and phonologically proficient. In the context of a prestigious public university which has recently made efforts to improve its BA programs, a quality BA in ELT graduate will naturally be expected to be a fluent oral language user at B2 level of the CEF. Fluent oral language use can not only assure quality foreign language teaching but also effective participation in professional contexts such as presenting, hosting and collaborating. What is more, fluent oral language use may well be a determining factor in access to employment. Considering the likely possibility that job interviews that undergraduates will participate in may be run in the foreign language, fluent oral language use becomes crucial.

Early detection of low-level proficiency in oral skills undergraduates could, therefore, determine the design of prevention strategies that have a positive effect on the development of such oral skills. It is hoped that careful study of such students will provide us with valuable information about their development throughout the BA program and the ways in which their teachers have tried to help them improve their oral skills. For this paper, it is essential to help identified undergraduates, teachers and the Language Department to determine the causes for their particular case as well as the possible routes to solutions.

It is also hoped that, on the one hand, seeing to it that undergraduates are identified and taken care of, the dropout rate could be decreased. On the other hand, the number of undergraduates who are promptly hired may increase in the light of greater quality studies resulting in more visible competences.

Literature Review

Among the entry requirements for LEI undergraduates, they are expected to be at A2 band, also known as Waystage. According to the Common European Framework of Language (2001), the language user can:

Initiate, maintain and close simple, restricted face-to-face conversation; understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort; make him/herself understood and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations, provided the other person helps if necessary;

communicate successfully on basic themes if he/she can ask for help to express what he wants to; deal with everyday situations with predictable content, though he/she will generally have to compromise the message and search for words; interact with reasonable ease in structured situations, given some help, participate in open discussion though it is still fairly restricted.

Ideally, freshmen students at LEI, the BA in ELT, should all be able to do as listed above. This scenario would prevent the language classroom from being extremely mixed ability in that some students may be just too below the entry requirements and therefore unable to perform and develop linguistic abilities, namely oral skills, successfully. However, it had been noticed that the 2009 LEI cohort was in clear potential of having some well under the ideal oral performance level students, most of them distributed in the twelve Taller 1 classes in the Fall term, 2009. For that reason, this study is focused on as early as possible detection of such students in order to learn about the seriousness of the problem and to decide on relevant action to take.

Anaconda (1993) defines low level school performance as a powerful limitation for the assimilation of concepts, the development of skills and in general the school achievement and learning processes. It is difficult to determine and identify the factors that have a major influence on general school achievement and learning processes. According to Ford (1996), these can be classified in social factors, family-related factors, academic factors and psychological factors. Examples of each type include the following:

❖ Social factors

Limited or no active participation, socializing with other low-level proficiency learners, vulnerable living conditions, family-related factors, stress due to family problems, drop-out or low school achievement parents, too low or too high academic expectations from parents, low socioeconomic background, and limited or poor communication between parents and school authorities

❖ Academic factors

Low academic expectations of learner success from school teachers, limited or no professional commitment on the part of teachers, hostile school environments, too high academic levels, little individual student attention, undertrained teachers, limited topic knowledge or skill, learning styles, lack of learning strategies, previous school achievement and performance, psychological factors, little intrinsic motivation, negative attitude, low self-esteem, low self-attribution/efficacy concept, forced participation, evaluation or testing-related anxiety, intellectual aptitude, personality.

Similarly, González (1998) and Lozano (2001) point out that the factors that could explain such low school achievement can relate to personality and intelligence factors, aptitude and academic stories, learning styles, social background, life aspirations and expectations, teaching methodology and teaching-learning conditions among others. These authors complement the typology offered above including the following variables:

❖ Identification

Gender and age

❖ Pedagogical

Unclear definition of learning competences, teaching methodology, and evaluation strategies.

We also offer the factors identified by Tejedor (2007) to provide a more comprehensive series of traits and behaviors that could help this project identify low-level proficiency students amongst their peers.

❖ Learner-inherent factors

Limited or deficient academic preparation to access tertiary level studies, specific skills and aptitudes necessary for a given major not sufficiently or inadequately developed, attitude-related traits, lack of learning strategies, learning styles not matching chosen studies, curriculum-inherent factors, unclearly or never specified learning objectives, unrelated subjects in the studies program, and unreliable admission processes/systems.

We should, with the help of the above characteristics, be able to determine a student profile that we are able to spot and confirm for the purposes of this project.

Methodology

The present research paper is a quantitative-qualitative longitudinal, descriptive study. This chapter focuses on describing the methodological design that was used to collect data during the first year of the five-year period that has been assigned to the whole of the investigation. A brief description of the context and who the participants of this study are is given. The techniques and instruments are later described; finally the procedures used are outlined.

Context

Data collection took place within the facilities of the Language Department at BUAP. The Language Department is physically off the main campus, which may give it the status of a self-standing unit. Most of the language courses and study programs it offers are delivered in its facilities, on 2003, 24 Norte Street, Humboldt. Weekdays and weekend language courses are open to the community, from children's language courses to advanced, purpose-driven courses for adults in eight different languages. The Language Department has a MA in English Language Teaching, an open BA in English Language Teaching and two BA programs, one in French Language Teaching and another one in English Language Teaching. This research is situated within the frame of the BA in English Language Teaching, generation 2009.

Participants

There are two groups of participants considered for this study: (a) Freshmen generation 2009 who were enrolled in a specific subject/course, "Taller 1," during the fall 2009 term; and (2) teachers who were in charge of a group of students taking a specific subject/course, "Taller 1." The

subject/course known as “Taller 1” is the first in a series of courses BA students take as part of their program. “Talleres” are meant to have students work on specific language skills. “Taller 1,” for instance, it is explained in the program, would focus on developing students’ English aural skills – listening and speaking. While other subjects may not have students necessarily produce the language orally most of the time, we assumed that “Taller 1” would require learners to produce the language orally for most of the class time. For this investigation, it was believed that “Taller 1” students whose oral skills development was too slow or painful would be spotted more easily.

Participant students: 234 students enrolled in “Taller 1.” These 234 students were distributed in 12 groups of between 24 and 31 students each.

Participant teachers: A total of 11 teachers participated in this study. Ten teachers were each in charge of a “Taller 1” group, and one was in charge of two “Taller 1” groups.

Techniques

Non participant class observation: Non-participant class observation was used so that the environment to be studied would not be affected by issues concerned with belonging to the community where participants all lived and interacted. This class observation took place once in each one of the 12 “Taller 1” groups during class time, late in October and early in November 2009. Each one of the 12 sessions was video recorded using a small, non-intrusive camera. Recorded sessions last between 35 and 50 minutes. Sessions were viewed three times, each time by a different researcher with a pre-determined viewing purpose.

Interviews: Participant teachers were interviewed twice, early in December 2009 and early in May 2010. The first interview had to do with each teacher’s personal assessment of their group as a whole and concerns they had about the course in general. The objective of the second interview was to have the teacher confirm whether the students who had been identified by the researchers as low-level proficiency learners were in fact so. The second interview involved showing the students on the recorded session to the teacher in charge of the group and the official document where names and final grades are stated for each group. Both the first and the second interview were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Instruments

Viewing guides

In order to do the data gathering procedure, three observation guides were designed to find out the most relevant details dealing with the research. These guides were developed based on general guidelines proposed by Wajnryb (1992).

- First guide: About the lesson. A first viewing guide consisted on a form to register statistical data such as total class time, number of male and female students in the recorded session and type of classroom activity. This viewing instrument also included a section to draw a sketch of the classroom. Important visual data such as groupings and seating arrangements used, use of space and whether the teacher and/or students moved around was registered here (see Appendix A).
- Second guide: About possible candidates. A second viewing guide consisted on two inventories, one on attitudes and behaviors displayed by possible candidates to be identified

as low-level oral skills proficiency students; and another one on characteristics of oral production of such students (see Appendix B).

- Third viewing: to confirm details, fill in missing information or determine hard to spot candidates.

Sets of guiding questions for interviews

Interview guides were designed for teachers to validate low level proficiency students. The interview was chosen because this technique allows for direct inquiry via face-to-face interaction with primary sources, in this case, interviewees. Such interaction can also allow for reformulation of questioning, paraphrasing of exchanges and even a comfortable, relaxed relationship between interviewer and interviewee that may well result in deep and specific information in a straight forward manner (Richards, 2003). Three researchers carried out interviews while two other researchers transcribed the interviews.

First set of guiding questions

Interviews with participant teachers were carried out in Spanish, as this is the mother tongue of both interviewers and interviewees. In addition, it was felt that doing the interviews in English might have put interviewed teachers under unnecessary language alert. Participant teachers were interviewed by one of the researchers. A set of guiding questions was designed for each of the three interviewers to use during the interview. The questions were divided in three sections (see Appendix C). First, greetings and warming up questions to help interviewees feel at ease. Then, interviewees were asked to say in their own words what the main purpose of the course they had just finished with the observed group was. Interviewees were asked to contrast and reflect about the final grades and the actual performance of students in the course. Finally, they were asked to determine whether there were students whose oral performance was below average and what they would recommend for those students. The instrument subdivides questions as two possible scenarios were foreseen in the light that failing and passing grades may or may not reflect actual students performance: the official document (1) will contain failing grades or the teacher would think of grades as non-satisfactory, or it (2) will not display failing grades but the teacher may still think of some students lacking language proficiency.

Second set of guiding questions

This set of guiding questions includes cues for the interviewer so that she would know what aids and materials to show the interviewee (see Appendix D). After general greetings and offering the interviewee a copy of his/her recorded session, the interviewer showed the viewing formats that researchers used to spot low-level proficiency learners. The interviewer explained how these formats were organized, how they were used and what they contain. There was a viewing format per student so if, for instance, there was a session where four students were identified as low-level proficiency learners, the interviewee would be shown four formats; and if there were two students, there would be two formats only.

Procedures

October – November 2009. Groups to be video recorded were identified within the premises of the

Language Department. Teachers in charge of all 12 groups were contacted personally to ask them for a day and time to allow one of the researchers to video record a session. It was agreed that the video recording would last about an hour. Being a two-hour session, a researcher would come into the classroom about 20 minutes after the session had started. The intention was to allow for teachers in charge to warm up the class. Students, it was thought, would be more active or already performing some kind of aural activity by then.

Three researchers produced the recordings, that is to say, while one researcher recorded a group, another teacher recorded a different group. See appendix E for dates when groups were video recorded.

Viewing instruments were developed. A first viewing guide consisted on a form to register statistical data such as total class time, number of male and female students in the recorded session and type of classroom activity. This viewing instrument also included a section to draw a sketch of the classroom. Important visual data such as groupings and seating arrangements used, use of space and whether the teacher and/or students moved around was registered here.

A second viewing guide consisted on two inventories, one on attitudes and behaviors displayed by possible candidates to be identified as low-level oral skills proficiency students; and another one on characteristics of oral production of such students.

November – December 2009. Another instrument, a set of guiding questions to interview the 11 teachers of the 12 groups was designed, proofread and finalized. A calendar of interviews was also agreed with the 11 teachers and interviews were conducted by three researchers, on a one-to-one basis. Interviews were audio or video recorded. Interviews were conducted on the following dates:

January – February 2010. Interviews were transcribed by two researchers while three other researchers watched recorded sessions and filled in the statistical viewing guide about the lesson.

March – April 2010. Transcribed interviews were discussed to decide where they touched on similar topics. Recorded sessions were viewed to spot low-level proficiency students in each group. A second viewing guide consisting of two inventories of behaviors and oral production characteristics were used for such purposes. A new set of guiding questions was prepared to interview the 11 teachers who had been in charge of the 12 Taller 1 groups was designed. The objective of this second meeting with the 11 teachers was to confirm whether the students identified by the researchers as low-level proficiency were so. Talking to the 12 teachers would also help “to see” students researchers could have overlooked.

May 2010. Meetings with the 11 teachers were arranged and interviews conducted. For this second interview, one or two researchers would be interviewing one teacher. The interview used the following instruments: a set of guiding questions/actions for interviewer, the teacher’s official document with final grades, an inventory of behaviors and oral production characteristic for each identified student and a camera to show the identified students to the teacher in the video recorded session. This second interview/meeting was audio recorded and transcribed.

June – July 2010. Researchers used the transcribed interviews, the notes each teacher made on identified students inventories, the notes on the official document of final grades and the video recorded session to determine names and faces of students identified and confirmed as oral skills low-proficiency students. Final list consists of 39 students.

Results

By looking at the official grades document, called “acta” (see Appendix F), it can be seen that there were 327 enrolled students. The days sessions were video recorded, 93 students were absent and do not appear in videos. The total of students who participated in the study, 234, corresponds to 71% of the total population officially enrolled.

Then, teachers were interviewed twice to identify low-level proficiency students in the videos.

Number of students		
Group	In oficial document	Observed/Recorded
1	29	18
2	30	17
4	28	20
5	27	20
6	25	21
7	25	19
9	29	17
10	24	17
11	31	20
12	26	20
14	25	23
15	28	22
total:	327	234

Since we could also see what final grades students obtained by the end of the Taller 1 course, we also compared the number of students who did not get a satisfactory mark in the official document, called “acta” (see Appendix F), to the number of students we identified as being low-level proficiency learners.

Low-level proficiency students		
Group	In official document*	Observed/Recorded
1	3	3
2	13	5
4	2	No students
5	13	2
6	4	No students
7	9	No students
9	15	9
10	5	7
11	3	1
12	4	2
14	2	No students
15	11	5
total:	84	34

*Students considered in this list show marks 5, 6 and 7. It was thought that learners who were given marks lower than 8 would find it hard to participate in aural activities. Alternatively, students who show marks 5 in official document were not considered as they, as explained above, could have dropped off the course, failed because of many absences or simply dropped out of school.

Official document marks: Number of students per mark			
Group	Five (5)	Six (6)	Seven (7)
1	3	0	0
2	4	3	6
4	2	0	0
5	5	3	5
6	2	0	2
7	1	2	6
9	4	4	7
10	4	0	1
11	2	1	0
12	3	0	1
14	1	0	1
15	5	0	6
total:	36	13	35

As it can be seen, 25.6% of students would be thought of as being low-level proficient in aural skills by looking at the official documents or “actas”. In other words, 25.6% of 327 students got marks

lower than 8. Similarly, 14% of those 327 students got marks 6 or 7.

Considering observed students, on the other hand, reduces the percentage substantially. A 14.5% of 234 students, that is, 34 students were initially identified as being low level proficient in aural skills.

By observing videotaped sessions and confirming identified students with teacher assigned to that group we identified 39 students distributed in the 12 groups as follows:

	GROUP	STUDENT ID	MARK
1	001	200906885	05
2	002	200909930	07
3	002	200911975	06
4	002	200936023	07
5	004	200906226	10
6	004	200924268	08
7	004	200906554	09
8	004	200935404	08
9	004	200900165	08
10	004	200917841	08
11	005	200906217	06
12	005	200935692	05
13	005	200939951	05
14	006	200924200	07
15	006	200911153	07
16	007	200911779	07
17	007	200922316	06
18	007	200925907	07
19	007	200902433	07
20	007	200917899	07
21	007	200939241	07
22	009	200927792	05
23	009	200907791	06
24	009	200914223	06
25	009	200925413	08
26	010	200921337	07
27	010	200915711	08
28	010	200911441	09
29	011	200903345	09
30	011	200917975	08
31	011	200912230	06
32	012	200937426	07
33	014	200934449	08
34	014	200908690	08
35	014	200940580	05
36	014	200929108	08
37	015	200930429	05
38	015	200928522	07
39	015	200918725	07

Discussion

Possible factors influencing low-level oral proficiency in identified students

The time, days and frequency with which the course took place were noted as a factor that played against some of the 39 students identified in our final list, not to mention the number of students per group and how much attention they could have received from teachers and/or peers.

“Si, pero aparte son grupos de veinte... de veintiocho a treinta alumnos, así como que se

complica. Aparte otro factor es que la materia les fue asignada lunes y viernes, entonces el tiempo en el que...yo disponía para trabajar con ellos era muy espaciado” (teacher 11)

In addition, teachers expressed, some students were put through a heavy study load and did not do as well as they could have. The programs could have also been too new for both teachers and students so the contents were approached trying out a number of different techniques, which made the subject rather challenging.

“...creo que bueno, algo de estas dificultades administrativas, de las cuales le hablaba yo, es que su horario estaba muy cargado, había alumnos que tenían doce horas de clase al día, entre que estaban tomando exactamente a lo mejor el curso que necesitan, pero tomaban ese curso, tomaban Lengua Meta, tomaban los Taller 2, tomaban DHTIC’s, pues este yo creo que no se puede servir a diez amos al mismo tiempo de manera completa ¿no?” (teacher 15)

“y había chicos que pues nada más..., yo creo que no veían..., no terminaban de ver el objetivo o el punto del por qué estaban tomando esta clase.” (teacher 11)

Concerns about confirmed low-level oral proficiency students

As it can be seen from the results, an 11.9% of the 2009 cohort was identified as low-level proficiency in oral skills students. These 39 students were of great concern for the teachers in charge for several reasons. First, some teachers were somehow put through a strong dilemma as they would feel these students were not achieving expected outcomes despite their efforts.

“... definitivamente alcanza una calificación reprobatoria aunque haya hecho un esfuerzo no cumplieron con lo que estaba pidiendo ¿no?” (teacher 2)

“... en el caso del taller, aunque trabajamos por proyectos hubo alumnos que no llegaron a los resultados satisfactorios, no definitivamente quizá por la actitud, quizá por el perfil de ingreso que ya tenían, medio tenían la disposición pero no era suficiente y hubo alumnos que no obtuvieron los resultados que yo deseaba” (teacher 4)

“Es que ese es el dilema que encontramos o sea no tienen el nivel de proficiencia que nosotros esperábamos pero sin embargo hicieron un esfuerzo... esfuerzo enorme entonces avanzaron de un nivel muy básico a empezar con un nivel básico ya de contestar preguntas, etc, etc. Pero no es el nivel que nos habíamos... nuestra meta que habíamos fijado.” (teacher 2)

“... pero si hubo alumnos que no obtuvieron el nivel y que definitivamente va a afectar en su calificación” (teacher 4)

Language aptitude and not being sufficiently informed about the chosen major were also described as having a major impact on how students performed orally in class. Some teachers clearly illustrate what Anacona (1996) describes as the effect that being misinformed or having a negative attitude towards the language courses can have on language learners.

Pero el que nosotros tengamos la herramienta de cómo hablar y de que sepamos cómo utilizarlo es mucho muy importante porque vamos a ser maestros de inglés. Pues los voy a tener que reprobador porque para ser maestro de inglés necesita tener un dominio más alto,

de dominio del inglés (teacher 2)

Creo que han perdido el miedo, creo que esa es una ventaja... creo que ninguno de ellos ya tiene miedo en hablar como al principio y eso es una buena señal. Yo creo que si siguen por ese camino van a lograr mejorar bastante. (teacher 5)

“Actitud de..., disposición a trabajar, ya teniendo eso creo, creo que el alumno con esfuerzo puede llegar a, a mejorar su comprensión y expresión oral, entonces ese sería como otro requisito que el alumno estuviera dispuesto a trabajar. Los dos requisitos tanto esfuerzo como actitud, no los vi en la alumna, osea la alumna dijo que ella “estoy más allá de todos estos niveles y no me voy a quedar, entonces básicamente esos serían los dos... hay personas que tienen actitud para lenguas y otros que no, entonces la actitud puede ser un elemento importante para desempeñarse en el taller 1” (teacher 4)

More importantly, teachers were worried that students would simply not fulfill the required profile, that is, that they did not have the minimum linguistic requirements to keep up with their studies and later perform well professionally. All teachers point out that one of the expected requirements for the incoming freshmen was to be at A2 band of the Common European Framework of Languages, at which language users are able to “understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance and can communicate in simple and routine tasks with simpler and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters” (CEF, 2001). Their students in “Taller 1,” they recall, were either way too advanced for this required level, or hardly had an A1 level, being this a problem during the course.

“no tenían el nivel A2 que se estaba esperando, entonces pues nos dimos cuenta de que los alumnos tenían un nivel mucho menor, por lo tanto, se tuvieron que hacer algunas alteraciones o modificaciones para poder adaptarnos a las necesidades de los alumnos” (teacher 12)

“Pues como requisito debería ser que tuvieran... que tuvieran un... nivel... aceptable del idioma inglés, porque algunos entraron con un nivel muy básico, demasiado básico, tan básico que podría decirse que era de cero y entraron prácticamente a ver que era la carrera. Entonces creo que sí debería venir con ciertas bases tanto lingüísticas como de desenvolvimiento para que pudieran desarrollarse mejor en el taller”. (teacher 10)

“... “Porque teníamos alumnos que llegaron en ceros y obviamente los demás que estaban en nivel A1 que era lo que estábamos esperando pero también llegaron alumnos que tenían un nivel muy alto entonces era muy complicado trabajar con ellos porque los grupos eran heterogéneos gente que tenía cero hasta gente que tenía casi 600 puntos en el TOEFL” (teacher 6)

“Sin embargo, el programa lo estaba pidiendo ya con nivel de acuerdo al marco común europeo, del cual pocos traían ese nivel intermedio... Yo creo, que debería haber un examen de ubicación... es que... fue todo el cambio... entraron... hubo más matrícula y al mismo tiempo exigieron mas nivel... un alto nivel de conocimiento del idioma inglés... Si un examen de ubicación o que entren... que al principio se detecte estos alumnos” (teacher 5)

Final marks and confirmed low-level proficiency

This paper does not analyze how students were evaluated by their “Taller 1” teachers. We only rely on our available sources of data – observed-in-class learners, teachers’ views of the whole group at the end of the course and triangulation of identified-in-video students with teacher of that class – to describe how both views, final scores and list of identified students, compare. As it can be seen from our final list, identified students (who were observed by researchers as being low-level proficient in aural skills and later confirmed by group teachers) display both satisfactory and unsatisfactory marks. This contrastive analysis between final grades and identified low-level proficiency students acknowledges, on the one hand, that these were the grades achieved by learners and, on the other that these were the grades assigned by teachers.

As teachers explain in interviews, marks do not actually or necessarily reflect how proficient in aural skills students really were, and further research on (1) how aural skills are assessed by individual teachers and (2) how evaluation criteria results in required, numerical grades to be stated in an official document (see Appendix F) at the end of courses would be necessary to fully document the present study.

Final grades, several of the interviewed teachers acknowledged, tell us very little about learners’ actual performance in aural skills. It became pretty clear that each teacher had his/her own evaluation criteria. In other words, groups were all evaluated differently. Most teachers considered individual students’ needs to evaluate their own group and even each one of their learners.

“aquí yo tuve que adaptar los objetivos, los materiales y las formas de trabajo con lo cual no afecto la calificación numérica porque toda evaluación debe tener validez y confiabilidad” (teacher 1)

“... todos son buenos en su nivel por decir, pero como podemos poner a competir a unos con otros ¿sí?” (teacher 2)

“... lamentablemente numéricamente... su evaluación sumativa que también nos pide la escuela obviamente hubo dos reprobados ... tres reprobados” (teacher 5)

On the one hand, evaluation criteria was on the side of a good number of low-level proficiency students in that they handed in all the required assignments, participated sufficiently and/or showed a studious, hardworking attitude that teachers acknowledged with good marks and/or approval.

“entonces ya fue paso a paso como ellos fueron subiendo su nivel y ellos traían su tarea y traían cosas... me platicaban lo que hacían en el [Self-access center] cosa que primero no entraban pero terminaron yendo al [Self-access center] eso los ayudo mucho y lo vi... vi su desarrollo” (teacher 5)

“... lo que se tiene que hacer con algunos alumnos en especifico ... sacarlos porque si pueden” (teacher 5)

Alternatively, some low-level proficiency students were evaluated against themselves by their teachers. In other words, some teachers considered students strived hard and put a lot of effort on

moving up just bits.

“no puede haber un avance uniforme por que los alumnos no llegan de manera uniforme...yo no puedo evaluar igual al que sabe más, que al que llegó en ceros” (teacher 15)

“Pero cómo reprobar a un alumno que entró de ceros y que hizo un esfuerzo enorme la pregunta que yo me hago, si estos alumnos hicieron su esfuerzo y pasaron ¿los repruebo o no los repruebo? no alcanzan el nivel que nosotros deseamos; sin embargo, para como entraron o sea realmente se desarrollaron, realmente tuvieron un avance” (teacher 2)

“...un niño que venía muy mal, venía en ceros prácticamente pero realmente su actitud fue sorprendente tuvo un avance impresionante porque venía literalmente en ceros... y la verdad es que si fue sorprendente lo que logro avanzar” (teacher 5)

“si consideramos que entraron de básico, básico bueno lo que alcanzaron yo creo que hicieron un gran esfuerzo...” (teacher 2)

“Si, de hecho no hubo reprobados, pero si hubo quienes sacaron seis y la razón es muy simple realmente ahí la calificación tuvo que ver digamos desde perspectiva... tuvo mucho que ver el esfuerzo” (teacher 5)

Acknowledging efforts, some teachers agreed, helps to increase self-esteem and motivation, which, from what teachers say, many of the identified students seemed to be in good need of.

“Pues de entrada, el hecho de que mantengan su actitud realmente de avance, que ojala no se les baje la moral y que realmente mantengan una actitud de aprovechamiento” (teacher 6)

“Si... si se reflejaron porque finalmente tuvieron calificaciones bastante bajas de alguna manera del segundo grupo... pues obtuvieron... lograron pasar porque se notó el esfuerzo... porque hicieron un esfuerzo muy grande pero definitivamente no alcanzaron el nivel... si se notó en las calificaciones” (teacher 6)

As a result, about half of the learners who were identified and later confirmed by their own teachers as low-level in oral proficiency students, passed the course with satisfactory marks – 7 and over.

Action taking by identified low-level oral proficiency students

Students identified as low-level oral proficiency learners, teachers say, displayed behaviors that held back their better result attainment. Absenteeism, a form of avoidance (Arnold, J and H. D. Brown, 1999), contributed to some of them not fully integrating in activities and not feeling part of the group, for instance.

“entonces... pues se le trato de apoyar pero él no tuvo la disponibilidad o el tiempo quizás ¿no? para poder venir y mejorar porque él sabía que tenía problemas... no asistía clase, por supuesto” (teacher 14)

ya al final estaban de que no pude... yo sé que no le eché ganas, yo se que falte a muchísimas clases (teacher 5)

"...estos alumnos tenían otra carrera o este... o ya estaban laborando o situaciones de ese tipo, que no les permitía llegar en ese horario que nosotros teníamos... entonces por eso tuve problemas con algunos de esos alumnos en cuanto a su asistencia... ellos me decían, "Bueno maestra y si yo sólo les cumplo con las tareas, se las traigo o hago los trabajos"..." (teacher 12)

Many teachers coincide in pointing out how much personality factors seemed to be having a strong influence on classroom performance. According to teachers, it was extreme shyness and over self-criticism that played against a good number of low-level oral proficiency students.

"... algo que les influye es su timidez y hay que tratar de jalarlos para que puedan participar, finalmente el taller es eso...entonces si no hablan, no hablan y entonces no tienen el nivel para avanzar" (teacher 14)

"... hubo otros ocho que te digo no... no querían, no podían y tenían un pánico pero es porque también desde el español platicando con ellos no quieren hablar les cuesta trabajo, tienen miedo, no se enfrentan, no toman las cosas tranquilo" (teacher 5)

y tal vez éste no es requisito, no sé si sea como un complemento, como un apoyo aparte de asesorías o tutorías para estos chicos que tienen mucho más problemas." (teacher 11)

"... es mas de actitud porque lo he observado siempre con los grupos ... que tienen problemas pero no buscan formas de solucionarlas ¿no? y si ... yo siempre les he dicho aunque el maestro sea... o tengas al mejor maestro del mundo si tu no traes la actitud y las ganas de aprender..." (teacher 14)

Generation of hypothesis

The above discussion can be summarized in the generation of the following hypothesis about the students listed as a result of this research.

H1. Identified students were not sufficiently informed / misinformed about entry requirements. H2. Identified students were not sufficiently informed / misinformed about the out coming profile – students were not aware they would become English Language Teachers. H3. Final marks were a source of motivation / discouragement to identified students. H4. Specific personality traits of identified students inhibit oral proficiency development.

Objectives for follow up research

In order to confirm or discard the above hypothesis and contribute with valuable information for the Language Department at our university, a follow up research is intended to take place during the academic year 2010 – 2011. Researchers involved in this study are ready to approach the 39

identified students to:

Determine whether students have taken some sort of action to alleviate their situation. Channel students into services, programs and courses offered at the Language Department that suit their specific needs. Determine which students may be in need of academic support and/or professional help. Determine which students need to be talked out of pursuing their studies at the BA in ELT.

Limitations of the study and directions for further research

A limitation of the present study is that researchers involved were not based in the premises where “Taller 1” sessions were video recorded and were therefore not able to record each group more than once. More video recorded sessions per group could have been helpful to (1) video record the whole of the student population and (2) determine which students really find it hard to speak in the target language in their “Taller 1” course. As a result of this, 93 students were not considered for the present study as they were not in class the day groups were video recorded, therefore, our list may still be missing low-level oral proficiency students. Even though teachers in charge were asked to remember if there were students whom they considered should be included in the list, remembering may not have been too exact.

Further research on (1) how aural skills are assessed by individual teachers and (2) how evaluation criteria results in required, numerical grades to be stated in an official document at the end of courses is necessary to fully document the present study. Although we base identification of low-level oral proficiency learners in observation and teachers’ perceptions about them, it would have been very informative to see how the 11 different teachers who were in charge of the 12 groups evaluated their students and for what reasons they chose those alternatives. Although we video recorded one session only and that the program was available to all 11 teachers, we could observe a wide variety of learning and teaching activities. This variety and different forms of evaluation a few of the interviewed teachers commented on lead us to think that learners in each group were evaluated fairly differently by their teachers. Directions to replicate the present study in the future include, therefore, asking teachers in charge for access to and about the forms of evaluation and assessment they plan to use / actually used with their “Taller 1” groups.

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Appendix A

Sample format filled in.

Sección: 001	Fecha: 28 oct 09	Día de la semana: miércoles		Horario: 11:00 – 13:00	
Número total alumnos en sesión: 18		Alumnos:	1	Alumnas:	17
Alumnos que no hablaron o casi no participaron:		Alumnos:	0	Alumnas:	3
Tipo de actividad que se realizó				Tiempo en minutos	
Vocabulario (repetición, pronunciación significados)				5 min	
Dinámicas				8 min 30 seg	
Pequeñas conversaciones y entrevistas				25 min	
Ejercicios escritos				4 min	
Ejercicios de vocabulario				22 min	
Modalidad de trabajo para los alumnos					
Individual					
En parejas					
Todo el grupo (ejercicios entre todo el grupo al responderlos)					
Distribución del tiempo					
Minutos asignados específicamente a la producción oral de los alumnos:				33 minutos de toda la clase	
NOTA: intervenciones cortas y respuestas cortas; pequeñas conversaciones en dinámicas					
Tipo de interacción			Tiempo en minutos		
ALUMNO – MAESTRO			13 minutos		
ALUMNO –ALUMNO			25 minutos		
NOTA: Alumnos y profesor hablan en español					
Condiciones físicas y distribución de espacio (diagrama del salón)					

Appendix B

Sample guide

GUIA DE OBSERVACIÓN CON LA AYUDA DE DOS INVENTARIOS

Inventario de comportamientos para la detección de alumnos de bajo rendimiento en la habilidad oral en LEI-BUAP.

Sección:	Alumno: (A)
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El alumno / La alumna:

- ☐ Se sienta y oculta detrás de compañeros
- ☐ Se ocupa en escribir, buscar entre sus cosas, etc. Cuando el maestro hace alguna pregunta
- ☐ Se esconde, se hace notar lo menos posible
- ☐ Se ubica físicamente lejos del maestro / pizarrón / de donde se originan las preguntas
- ☐ Evita las oportunidades que se les da para hablar
- ☐ Cede el turno de hablar a sus compañeros
- ☐ Evita el contacto visual / no fija la vista en el maestro
- ☐ Llega tarde a clase a propósito
- ☐ Reunidos en grupo, se sienta de lado o de espaldas al maestro para evitar contacto visual

Inventario de características de la participación que realizan alumnos de bajo rendimiento e la habilidad oral en LEI-BUAP cuando sí participan en la sesión.

El alumno / La alumna:

- ☐ Habla en voz muy baja
- ☐ Da respuestas monosilábicas
- ☐ Busca que sus compañeros o interlocutor proporcione las palabras
- ☐ Declina o cede el turno inmediatamente
- ☐ Tarda mucho en contestar / decir algo

Los alumnos que presentan alguno o todos los elementos de los inventarios serán ubicados en el diagrama del salón. A continuación se hará una descripción detallada de los alumnos detectados como de bajo rendimiento en la habilidad oral en LEI-BUAP.

(Color de vestimenta, ubicación, comportamiento, participación, interacción con otros, etc.)

Corroborado y por qué	No corroborado y por qué	Faltante

Appendix C

First set of guiding questions for December 2009 interview.

- Saludos / preguntas sobre el término de semestre
- ¿En qué consiste el taller 1?
- ¿Cuál es el objetivo general?
- ¿Cuáles eran los requisitos básicos del alumno para desempeñarse adecuadamente en este taller?
- ¿Considera que su grupo en general cubría estos requisitos básicos?
- ¿Podría mencionar un número aproximado de alumnos que no tenían el perfil pero lograron alcanzar el objetivo del taller?
- ¿Hubo alumnos que no tuvieron el perfil y que no lograron el objetivo del taller?
- ¿Cómo se reflejó esto en una calificación numérica?

Opción uno: Hubo reprobados o alumnos que el profesor considera de calificaciones poco satisfactorias • ¿Por qué cree usted que estos alumnos reprobaron / obtuvieron calificaciones poco satisfactorias? • ¿Qué considera usted que van a necesitar estos alumnos para compensar estas deficiencias? • ¿Hay algo que usted quisiera sugerir?	Opción dos: No hubo reprobados en el grupo • ¿Considera o concluye usted que en su grupo no hubo ningún alumno de bajo rendimiento o aprovechamiento? • ¿Considera que tendrán éxito en su ruta crítica LEI?
---	---

Appendix D

Para dirigirse al entrevistado:

Buenas tardes... ¿cómo ha estado?

Recuerda la videgrabación que nos hizo favor de autorizar y la entrevista que amablemente nos concedió, pues tenemos aquí parte de la información recabada y queremos compartirla con usted.

Tenemos aquí el video de su clase para mostrárselo, ¿le interesaría una copia? ...queremos ver si nos puede ayudar a corroborar la información que tenemos hasta el momento, no le tomaría más de 10 minutos.

Indicaciones para el entrevistador:

Mostrar vaciados, explicar cómo están organizados y en qué consisten

El formato es por cada alumno

Se identificaron características o patrones en cada uno de ellos

Si hizo una descripción física para ubicarlo y mostrárselos en la videgrabación.

Se muestra la videgrabación y se le muestra el concentrado/vaciado del alumno para que corrobore o no la información recabada.

Se llena el cuadro debajo del concentrado/vaciado del alumno en donde se corroboran o no los datos.

Appendix E

Group	Recorded
001	28 oct.
002	29 oct.
004	28 oct.
005	6 nov.
006	26 oct.
007	28 oct.
009	10 nov.
010	3 nov.
011	26 oct.
012	28 oct.
014	27 oct.
015	4 nov.

Appendix F

Official documents “actas”



FOLIO : 2009201159111		Fecha : 10-12-2009	
		P7.1,3A	
PERIODO : 200920 Otoño 2009 Minerva	PROFESOR : GUERRA - COIX JOSE ISABEL		
NRC : 11591	CLAVE DE CURSO : EINM-003SE	CCION : 009	CVE PROFESOR : 100209522
UNIDAD ACADEMICA : EL Facultad de Lenguas			
NIVEL : Licenciatura	LM		
CARRERA : EIN Lic. Enseñanza del Inglés			
MATERIA : Taller Inglés I			
CAMPUS : Centro	FIRMA:		

No	Matricula	Nombre	Calificacion	Ord	ExtOrd
001	200923150	ALAMILLO ALFARO ALMA CELESTE	CINCO 05		X
002	200927792	BARRERA JUAREZ JUAN DAVID	CINCO 05		X
003	200909501	CALDERON BONILLA YESSICA	SIETE 07	X	
004	200906848	CASTAÑEDA BENITO EDUARDO	DIEZ 10	X	
005	200924161	COYOTECATL FLORES ARTURO	OCHO 08	X	
006	200933799	DE LIMA LINARES WENDY	SIETE 07	X	
007	200937689	FRANCO ARAUJO CARLOS	SIETE 07	X	
008	200939829	GARCIA RAMIREZ NAYELY JANETH	DIEZ 10	X	
009	200913986	GOMEZ BENITEZ JOSE CRISSTIAN	NUEVE 09	X	
010	200928682	HERNANDEZ GARCIA SURIZADAI	DIEZ 10	X	
011	200915885	HERRERA RAMIREZ ANA KAREN	SIETE 07	X	
012	200922618	JARAMILLO ROJAS GERARDO ABRAHAM	OCHO 08	X	
013	200919863	LEON SANTIAGO CATIRLI MARICELA	OCHO 08	X	
014	200924600	LOPEZ CANDELARIO ANA SILVIA	SEIS 06	X	
015	200907791	LUNA LOPEZ ANA CRISTINA	SEIS 06	X	
016	200904893	MARTINEZ GALINDO ALEJANDRA	SIETE 07	X	
017	200929158	MARTINEZ RODRIGUEZ CRISTHIAN	DIEZ 10	X	
018	200935411	MENDEZ MERCHANT MARIA NEREYDA	OCHO 08	X	
019	200929232	MEZA LIBERATO DEISY ROXANA	SEIS 06	X	
020	200935247	MORALES MONTES ABIGAIL	CINCO 05		X
021	200929098	MORFINEZ CORTES EDGAR	CINCO 05		X
022	200929575	PEREZ LOPEZ GUSTAVO	SIETE 07	X	
023	200913383	RAMOS ZEMPOALTECATL JESSICA	OCHO 08	X	
024	200925978	REYES CRUZ JOSE JAVIER	DIEZ 10	X	
025	200921689	ROSAS MEDINA ERIK KEVIN	NUEVE 09	X	
026	200914223	SANCHEZ POTENCIANO MARIA FERNANDA	SEIS 06	X	
027	200931372	SUAREZ BRAVO JOSE MARIA	OCHO 08	X	
028	200923103	VALENCIA AGUILAR YESENIA	SIETE 07	X	
029	200925413	VELAZQUEZ CABRERA ELIZABETH	OCHO 08	X	



DIRECTORA DE ADMINISTRACION ESCOLAR:	DOC. MARIA CRISTINA LAURA GOMEZ AGUIRRE
Unidad Académica	

Appendix F

Official documents “actas”

SECCIÓN 1 - PROFICIENCY

PERIODO: 200920 Otoño 2009 Minerva PROFESOR: ZEPEDA - FERRER INES GERARDO

FOLIO: 2009201158111 Fecha: 10-12-2009

P7.1,3A

NRC: 11581 CLAVE DE CURSO: EINM-003SE CCION: 001 CVE PROFESOR: 100064533

UNIDAD ACADÉMICA: EL Facultad de Lenguas

NIVEL: Licenciatura LM

CARRERA: EIN Lic. Enseñanza del Inglés

MATERIA: Taller Inglés I

CAMPUS: Centro FIRMA:

No	Matricula	Nombre	Calificación	Ord	ExtOrd
001	200902739	CAMACHO FLORES MARICARMEN	DIEZ 10	X	
002	2009037378	CASTILLO PLIEGO DIEGO ANTONIO	NUEVE 09	X	
003	200918363	CORDERO BELLO NAYELI PAOLA	NUEVE 09	X	
004	200906685	CRUZ MARTINEZ ALBA ROSA	CINCO 05		X
005	200933954	ESCALONA CORTES TERESA YURIDIA	NUEVE 09	X	
006	200903594	FLORES MORALES YAZMIN	NUEVE 09	X	
007	200901171	GARCIA GONZALEZ ZILA ITZEL	DIEZ 10	X	
008	200923297	GONZALEZ ESPINOSA HERMINIA	OCHO 08	X	
009	200928583	GUAJARDO REYES MARIANA	CINCO 05		X
010	200919842	GUZMAN MEZA BRENDA PATRICIA	NUEVE 09	X	
011	200912593	HERNANDEZ ESPINOZA YANELLI FABIOLA	DIEZ 10	X	
012	200934653	HERNANDEZ VALENCIA LESLIE	NUEVE 09	X	
013	200934795	DIMENEZ MORENO GABRIELA ALEJANDRA	NUEVE 09	X	
014	200928996	LOPEZ LOPEZ BIAANI	DIEZ 10	X	
015	200934909	LOPEZ RAMIREZ MARIA DEL SOCORRO	CINCO 05		X
016	200901999	LUCERO ALTO CELSO MARIO	DIEZ 10	X	
017	200918890	MARQUEZ MENDOZA JAIME	NUEVE 09	X	
018	200911167	MEDINA VAZQUEZ PATRICIA EDITH	OCHO 08	X	
019	200909314	NAVARRO MARURI DEMIT AZLEY	DIEZ 10	X	
020	200914148	PEREZ AGUIRRE ITZEL CAROLINA	DIEZ 10	X	
021	200906133	RAMIREZ CASELIN VIRIDIANA	DIEZ 10	X	
022	200911201	REYES PEREZ GENDY YESENIA	NUEVE 09	X	
023	200921088	RODRIGUEZ HERNANDEZ LILIANA	NUEVE 09	X	
024	200911300	SANCHEZ PEREZ DULCE VICTORIA	NUEVE 09	X	
025	200917856	SANTOS JUAREZ CECILIA	OCHO 08	X	
026	200912095	TEXTLE XOAMPIL ROSA MARIA	DIEZ 10	X	
027	200908591	VALLE HERNANDEZ CINTHYA VERONICA	DIEZ 10	X	
028	200930261	VAZQUEZ AGUILAR URSULA IVONNE	NUEVE 09	X	
029	200906649	ZAMITIZ PENA YULIANN IVETTE	NUEVE 09	X	

11 DIC 2009

DIRECTORA DE ADMINISTRACION ESCOLAR: LIC. MARIA CRISTINA LAURA GOMEZ AGUIRRE

Unidad Académica

Lenguas: Para impulsar este eje, los académicos implementarán estrategias para que el estudiante desarrolle habilidades para comunicarse a través de la expresión oral y escrita en una segunda lengua y en la lengua materna, para la comprensión de textos, y/o artículos, estancias en otros países, participación en comunidades virtuales, videoconferencias, intercambio académico, entre

otros.

Es importante señalar que este eje está orientado en tres dimensiones: a) Comunicación, en la que se impulsa el desarrollo del vocabulario, referido a los ámbitos social, científico-técnico o artístico; b) Producción (hablar y escribir) significa que los estudiantes de manera progresiva dominarán la lengua que les va a permitir la adquisición de todos aquellos elementos necesarios para hacer más efectivos sus aprendizajes, a través de la expresión oral o escrita a la hora de verbalizar o de comunicar los resultados del aprendizaje en cualquier ámbito de conocimiento; c) Comprensión (escuchar y leer) implica que el estudiante desarrolle la capacidad de usar conocimientos y habilidades, a través de la lectura, captando el sentido de textos escritos y de mensajes verbales, de uso habitual.

CRIOLLO ET AL. (2008) Programa Educativo de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés Generación 2009.

Estrategias para mejorar puntaje en el examen TOEFL

*María Amelia Xique Suárez
Josué Cinto Morales
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*BUAP-CA8 “Colaboradores y Miembros del C.A. Docencia e Innovación Profesional”
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Resumen

La presente investigación muestra los resultados que se obtuvieron con los alumnos de las asignaturas: Lengua Meta IV-inglés y Desarrollo de Habilidades de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés de la Facultad de Lenguas de la BUAP después de haber desarrollado una estrategia para mejorar en el Examen TOEFL que aplica el Departamento de Evaluación de esta facultad para llevar un seguimiento del puntaje y nivel obtenido por los alumnos al terminar el curso de Lengua Meta-Inglés.

Introducción

El TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) es un examen que evalúa la habilidad de los individuos para los cuales el inglés no es su lengua materna para comprender, utilizar y expresar este idioma. Con la aplicación de este examen se intenta asegurar a las instituciones que el alumno será capaz de comunicarse dentro de un ambiente universitario y de comprender los conceptos presentados durante el programa (<http://www.posgradosnet.com/admisiones/toefl.php>). Sus resultados son aceptados como prueba del nivel de conocimiento del idioma inglés por más de 6.000 escuelas y universidades en 110 países, que exigen una puntuación mínima en este test para que los estudiantes internacionales puedan acceder a su programa. No en vano, es el test de inglés más usado en todo el mundo” Fundación Erikoski (s.f.)

Existen dos tipos de exámenes TOEFL: el **TOEFL® Institucional** que se aplica en papel y el **Internacional** o **TOEFL® Internet Based Test (iBT)**. “La versión institucional sirve para propósitos muy específicos que van desde evaluar el nivel de inglés de una persona en una institución al concluir un curso específico hasta ubicar a alumnos en ciertos niveles dentro de una institución o programa. Por otro lado, el internacional permite, especialmente, entrar a programas académicos en universidades y escuelas en el extranjero aunque en algunas universidades se acepta el examen institucional para ingresar. La versión institucional dura aproximadamente dos horas y media mientras que el internacional dura aproximadamente cuatro horas y media. La versión institucional es en “papel y lápiz” mientras que el internacional es por computadora a través de Internet. La versión institucional evalúa habilidades del idioma receptivas y de gramática mientras que la versión internacional evalúa habilidades del idioma tanto receptivas como productivas sin evaluar la gramática en una sección en particular. En la versión internacional, la persona puede tomar notas y hay un descanso obligatorio. Además, contiene secciones que evalúan solamente una habilidad del idioma de manera independiente y también secciones que evalúan varias habilidades del idioma de manera integrada” (CELETEC, s.f.).

De acuerdo a Hernández, Salazar y otros (s.f.) las secciones en las que se estructura el examen institucional son:

a) “La sección Uno de Comprensión Auditiva esta compuesta por tres secciones: A,B, y C. La parte A consta de treinta conversaciones cortas, cada una con una pregunta. En las conversaciones intervienen dos personas y una tercera persona hace la pregunta”. Por otra parte, la sección B consta de conversaciones largas que giran alrededor de temas académicos. después de cada conversación, se hacen tres o cuatro preguntas. En lo que se refiere a la sección C, esta incluye

exposiciones normalmente de un profesor sobre temas también académicos. En total se hacen 20 preguntas” (Hernández R; Salazar, J. F; y otros. s.f).

b) La sección dos de estructura Gramatical y expresión escrita evalúa la destreza gramatical en 40 reactivos. consta de dos partes: estructura y Expresión escrita. La primera parte se evalúa en formato de opción múltiple en donde el alumno debe identificar el error en 120 reactivos. Hernández, Salazar y otros (s/a) mencionan que en esta sección los temas gramaticales que se evalúan son: 19% en la forma y función de las palabras con 17.5%; las cláusulas independientes con un 13% , con un 8.3 por ciento las preposiciones, con un 6% el paralelismo, con un 5%: singular y plural de sustantivos, voz pasiva, elección de palabras (word choice) y cláusulas adjetivales reducidas entre otras.

c) La sección tres de comprensión lectora consta de cinco pasajes. Cada pasaje es una lectura relacionada con algún tema académico (Biología, arquitectura, geografía, entre otras). los pasajes tienen entre 10 y 11 preguntas que evalúa diferentes habilidades: identificar la idea principal, del texto, identificar detalles, hacer inferencias, identificar el tono del texto entre otros.

Problema

En la Facultad de Lenguas de la BUAP actualmente se cuenta con tres programas a nivel licenciatura: la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza de Lenguas Modernas (LEMO) que está por terminar y las Licenciaturas en la Enseñanza del Francés (LEF) y la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) pertenecientes al Plan Minerva que inició en otoño de 2009. En estos programas se preparan futuros docentes en la enseñanza de la lengua extranjera francés o inglés respectivamente. En el caso de los alumnos de LEI, dentro del Plan de Estudios deben cursar cinco cursos de Lengua Meta (I, II, III, IV, V) durante cinco cuatrimestres además de dos asignaturas que están en coordinación con la Lengua Meta en los cuales se refuerza de forma separada las competencias de expresión oral y comprensión auditiva (Talleres I, III) por un lado y por otro las competencias de expresión escrita y comprensión lectora (Talleres II, IV) y finalmente el taller de Escritura Académica (Academic Writing).

El programa de la licenciatura está contemplado de tal manera que los alumnos pueden terminar la carrera en tres años y medio, cuatro o cinco años y si su promedio general es de 8.5 a 10.0 sin materias recursadas, entonces los alumnos pueden obtener el grado de licenciado por titulación automática. Uno de los requisitos para titularse de esta manera es presentar el Examen TOEFL Institucional y obtener mínimo 550 puntos. Por tal motivo, los profesores que imparten Lengua Meta III, IV y V principalmente, exigen a sus alumnos que presenten este examen en el Departamento de Planeación y Evaluación Académica (DEPEA) de la misma facultad para que se vayan acostumbrando al tipo de ejercicios que encontraran en el examen TOEFL Institucional cuando lo presenten y poder obtener fácilmente los puntos requeridos para titularse de manera automática una vez cubierto el 100% de los créditos.

Los alumnos deben presentar el examen TOEFL en el (DEPEA) al inicio y al final de cursar la materia de Lengua Meta. Una vez finalizado, ellos deben anotar en un formato lo siguiente: 1) los resultados que obtuvieron en las tres partes en que está dividido el examen TOEFL(a) **Listening Comprehension;** b)**Structure and Written Expression;** c) **Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension**) además del **puntaje total** y los **problemas** que el examen detectó como debilidades de los estudiantes(ver anexo 1). Cada alumno entrega el formato con los resultados al DEPEA y a su profesor y hasta ahí termina su participación. La información es utilizada por el este Departamento para, entre otras cosas, llevar un seguimiento de cómo va aumentando el puntaje de cada alumno así como de su aprovechamiento.

En lo que respecta a los alumnos, estos no son conscientes del resultado que obtuvieron en el TOEFL. Algunos recuerdan el puntaje total que obtuvieron pero no en que parte del examen obtuvieron menos o más puntaje y mucho menos de los temas en los que el examen les detectó presentaban problemas por lo que no reflexionan respecto a las estrategias que podrían utilizar para aumentar su puntaje en el examen y mejorar en la asignatura de Lengua Meta. Incluso, salvo si el profesor se los requiere, olvidaran anotar esos datos y no desarrollaran estrategia alguna para solucionar esos problemas.

Es casi seguro que, cuando presenten otra vez el examen, mejoren pero ellos no llevarán un seguimiento de qué tanto aumentaron su puntaje tanto de las partes que compone el examen como del puntaje total y los problemas que el examen identificó en la primera vez. Los autores de esta investigación consideran que como profesores de la lengua Meta, es importante tratar el tema con los alumnos para concientizarlos respecto a las estrategias que pueden utilizar para, primero centrarse en los problemas que el examen identificó y segundo, mejorar en su puntaje. Esto es lo que se trabajó con los alumnos de la clase Lengua Meta IV sección 005 y el grupo de Desarrollo de habilidades sección 004 el cual estaba conformado por alumnos de diferentes secciones de la asignatura Lengua Meta IV. **El objetivo:** que los alumnos trabajaran en forma **colaborativa** para que, mediante revisión teórica y ejercicios solucionaran los problemas que el examen TOEFL les arrojó como sus debilidades, y poder incrementar su puntaje.

Marco Teórico

En el constructivismo social se menciona que el trabajar en equipo genera que el aprendizaje sea más significativo ya que si alguno de los miembros del equipo no entiende algún tema en particular, el resto puede apoyarlo de diferentes formas con diferentes medios para que ese compañero pueda solucionar sus dudas ya que se incorporan tanto la colaboración y la interacción social en este proceso: “In cognitive constructivism, ideas are constructed in individuals through a personal process, as apposed to social constructivism where ideas are constucted through interaction with the teacher or other students” (Powell, K. C., and Kalina C. J; (s/a): 241). Vygotsky (1962 en Carretero, 1996) quien es considerado el padre de este tipo de constructivismo creía que la interacción social es una parte integral del aprendizaje. Vygotsky (en Carretero, 1996) también aporta la teoría de la Zona de Desarrollo Próximo, donde dentro del nivel de desarrollo potencial se destaca la importancia de trabajar con alguien con mayor capacidad de desarrollo para que el aprendizaje sea exitoso y significativo ya que, si bien el alumno puede mejorar repasando por si mismo (nivel de Desarrollo Real), el trabajar en forma colaborativa dará mejores resultados. Esta zona ha sido considerada como la zona donde el aprendizaje ocurre cuando un sujeto es apoyado por otro más capaz. Powell, K. C., y Kalina C. J; (s/a) mencionan que muchos teóricos y educadores han probado que esta teoría realmente funciona ya que los alumnos aprenderán más fácilmente en esta zona cuando otros se encuentran involucrados, además como Carretero (1996) declara, si el otro es más competente, el aprendizaje será más significativo. Vygotsky (en Carretero, 1996) también menciona dicha propuesta en el Modelo de Expertos y Novatos. Otro concepto que cobra relevancia en esta investigación es el del **andamiaje** “la idea de que un adulto significativo (o un par –como compañero de clase- medie entre la tarea y el niño se le llama andamiaje”.

Metodología

Los sujetos

El proyecto duró un cuatrimestre. Los grupos de lengua Meta IV sección 005 y la clase de Desarrollo de habilidades sección 004 participaron en el proyecto porque son dos secciones que estaban a cargo de los autores de esta investigación. El grupo de Lengua Meta estaba formado por 20 alumnos, el 90% pertenecían al sexo femenino y el 10% al masculino. La edad oscilaba de los 20 a los 23 años. La asignatura de Desarrollo de Habilidades estaba conformada por 25 estudiantes los cuales pertenecían a diferentes secciones de lengua Meta IV en ese periodo. El 76% eran mujeres y el 24% eran hombres. La edad oscilaba de los 20 a 23 años.

Primer paso

En el Periodo de Primavera de 2011, los alumnos de las asignaturas de Lengua Meta IV presentaron el examen TOEFL en dos ocasiones: al inicio y al final del cuatrimestre. A los alumnos de Lengua Meta IV, sección 005 se les pidió que anotaran los resultados que obtuvieran en el examen así como los problemas que el examen les detectó como debilidades. A los alumnos de Desarrollo de habilidades no se les requirió la información porque se pensaba que su profesor de lengua Meta les solicitaría esos datos y por lo tanto, la tendrían a la mano. Como ya se mencionó anteriormente la materia de Desarrollo de habilidades estaba conformada por alumnos de cuatro secciones de Lengua Meta IV.

Al momento de pedirles la información, los estudiantes de LM IV contaban con ella pero no los de la asignatura de Desarrollo de Habilidades ya que ninguno de sus profesores les indicó que la anotaran, por lo que nos dimos a la tarea de recuperarla en el DEPEA para proporcionársela a los estudiantes y pudieran darse cuenta en qué habilidad tenían mayor debilidad.

Los resultados del **primer examen** mostraron que en ambas asignaturas el 40% de los alumnos obtuvieron puntaje de 400 a 449 y sólo el 20% de 500 a 550 puntos.

Una vez entregado los datos a los alumnos, se les hizo las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Para qué te sirve esa información?
2. ¿Qué harás con la información?

La mayoría de los alumnos de ambas asignaturas respondieron que la guardarían para compararla con los resultados que obtuvieran la próxima vez que presentaran el examen pero ninguno pensó en idear alguna estrategia ya sea de manera individual, en parejas o en equipos para centrarse en los temas que el examen identificó que presentaban problemas. Tampoco pensaron en actividades para practicar y desarrollar la parte o partes donde obtuvieron menor puntaje. Una vez obtenida esa información nos dimos a la tarea de presentarles el proyecto.

La estrategia

Basándonos en la teoría del Constructivismo social, en ambas secciones se formaron equipos de 4 alumnos para que entre ellos se apoyaran para solucionar los problemas que tuvieron en el examen TOEFL y mejorar en las tres partes del examen así como aumentar su puntaje.

Las indicaciones que se les dio a los equipos fueron las siguientes:

1. Reunirse y comparar el puntaje obtenido e identificar la sección del examen donde obtuvieron menor puntaje.
2. Identificar aquellos temas que el examen TOEFL les reportó como debilidades y enlistar en cuales coincidían.

3. Planear actividades que les ayudaran a resolver esos problemas durante todo el periodo de Primavera 2011.
4. Entregar reporte por escrito al profesor respecto a las acciones a tomar para mejorar en el examen TOEFL.
5. Entregar reporte por escrito cada 15 días para informar respecto a los avances para llevar un seguimiento.
6. Presentar el examen TOEFL al final del curso.
7. Realizar una evaluación comparando los resultados tanto del primer examen como del segundo.
8. Entregar un reporte final mostrando los resultados de ambos exámenes, además de informar respecto a la experiencia vivida.

Resultados

Reportes: en general, la mayoría de los alumnos entregó sus reportes en tiempo y forma. En el primer informe reportaron tanto el puntaje total que obtuvo cada uno de los integrantes así como los puntajes en cada una de las tres partes del examen TOEFL Institucional, además de los temas que el examen les mostró donde estaba cada uno más débil tanto en forma individual como por equipo. También realizaron un plan con fechas y hora en que se reunirían para trabajar en los problemas que tenían en común o individualmente.

En los siguientes informes, los equipos incluyeron las actividades con referencia bibliográfica de los temas que trabajaron en conjunto además de expresar su opinión respecto al trabajo que realizaban en forma colaborativa y lo motivados que estaban aunque también expresaron que en ocasiones por tomar otras materias en diferentes horarios en ocasiones tenían problemas para reunirse y poder trabajar con profundidad en los temas. También informaron los problemas que enfrentaron con algunos compañeros que no se integraban del todo con el proyecto y la forma en que lo solucionaron.

Respecto al puntaje que obtuvieron al final del cuatrimestre en el examen TOEFL Institucional, fue el siguiente:

En el caso de los alumnos de la asignatura de Desarrollo de habilidades, el 49% obtuvo puntaje de 400 a 449 puntos TOEFL. En comparación con el primer examen sí hubo un incremento, sin embargo disminuyeron en cuanto al porcentaje de los que habían obtenido de 500 a 550 ya que en el primer examen que presentaron el 20% había obtenido más de 500 puntos, mientras que en el segundo examen sólo el 5% obtuvo este puntaje. Esto se puede deber a que los alumnos no se veían muy seguidos para trabajar juntos ya que pertenecían a diferentes secciones de Lengua Meta y sólo compartían una materia en la cual se encontraban dos veces a la semana más las sesiones que concertaban fuera de clases.

Sin embargo, el trabajar en forma colaborativo fue de gran apoyo para los equipos ya que el 12% de alumnos que habían obtenido menos de 400 puntos en el primer examen se reduce para insertarse en el de 400 a 449, mientras que el puntaje de los alumnos que obtuvieron de 500 a 550 aumento de un 4% a un 12.5%.

En el caso de la asignatura de Lengua Meta, el aumento fue significativo ya que más del 60% de alumnos obtuvieron de 400 a 449 puntos TOEFL aunque también disminuyó el porcentaje de alumnos que obtuvieron de 500 a 550 puntos. Lo ideal hubiera sido que aumentaran en el puntaje siguiente o que un porcentaje mayor obtuviera más de 500 puntos ya que estos alumnos tenían más oportunidad de trabajar en equipo porque compartían la misma Lengua Meta y por lo tanto más

horas en comparación de los estudiantes de la materia de Desarrollo de Habilidades. Cabe resaltar que los alumnos que en el primer examen obtuvieron menos de 400 puntos desaparecieron para insertarse en la siguiente clasificación.

Conclusiones y recomendaciones

El hacer que los alumnos trabajaran en equipos para solucionar sus problemas respecto al Examen TOEFL Institucional fue benéfico para todos ya que los resultados muestran que la estrategia realmente funcionó aunque no con todos. Una de las probables causas por lo que no funcionó con todos es que las condiciones en la aplicación del examen fueron diferentes en las dos ocasiones que los alumnos presentaron el examen. La **primera vez**, los alumnos contestaron el examen en uno de los laboratorios de autoacceso de la facultad, donde estaba el grupo junto con su profesor y un auxiliar del DEPEA y no había distractores externos. Por lo que, si los alumnos enfrentaba alguna complicación con el examen, inmediatamente se les auxiliaba. La **segunda vez**, las condiciones fueron diferentes ya que los alumnos fueron enviados al Departamento de Evaluación a presentar el examen por lo que no tuvieron las mismas condiciones ya que aunque este departamento tienen aproximadamente 15 computadoras, estas no fueron suficientes para todos los alumnos que tenían que presentar el examen y además en opinión de los alumnos, las maquinas presentaban problemas técnicos que no fueron solucionados en su momento por lo que no pudieron terminar el examen en tiempo además de que, aunque utilizaron audífonos para la parte auditiva, eran distraídos por la gente que iba a ese Departamento a solicitar información.

Esto fue corroborado ya que dos alumnas que había presentaron el examen la segunda vez, obtuvieron menos puntaje que en el primer examen pero también notaron que el tiempo no fue, por alguna razón, el mismo que en el primer examen por lo que lo presentaron una tercera vez y el incremento en el puntaje fue significativo, cabe mencionar que en el DEPEA se manejan diferentes versiones del examen TOEFL. Tomando en consideración la información se piensa que si se hubiera planeado la aplicación del examen tomando en consideración las mismas condiciones que en el primer examen, los alumnos hubieran aumentado su puntaje significativamente.

También se comprobó que el trabajar en forma colaborativa realmente funciona ya que los alumnos, además de haberse apoyado para solucionar o mejorar en el puntaje y en los temas que el examen les detectó, también aprendieron a trabajar en equipo y a buscar solución mediante el dialogo a los inconvenientes que se encontraron en el proceso.

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SECTION 2 – AFFECTIVE FACTORS

This section presents three studies about affective factors in three different Public Universities.

Language teachers need to educate the affect of their students if they want them to learn the language. Teachers can be more productive, positive, and can improve their development if they work collaboratively.

When studying the affective factors, the most important among them are attitudes, motivation, anxiety, beliefs, personality traits and learning styles.

These studies also focus on the investigation of students' beliefs on Second Language Learning, their preferred kind of intelligence and self-esteem assessment.

Reflecting on affective needs in ELT ed: Collaboration in two freshman courses

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Abstract

This present research focuses on reflecting on Affective Needs in ELT ed: Collaboration into Freshman Courses.

This article shows the results obtained after analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative work in two EFL courses in a BA in ELT at BUAP.

The instruments to conduct this study were teacher diaries and notes from their weekly meetings to complement the diaries. These instruments allowed the researchers to know the concerns about affective needs and peer tutoring from the participants and found suggestions for each of the areas.

Introduction

Cross (2003) states that language teacher education is crucial because “the quality of teaching determines to a great extent the quality of education” (p. 41). Furthermore, Wallace (1991) mentions that teacher education courses should be broadly educative and professional to generate trainee personal, intellectual and professional growth. This chapter presents a study where two teacher educators worked collaboratively to initiate this growth in a group of freshman trainees by developing simultaneously their language skills and professional know-how as a multidimensional whole as suggested by Jaatinen (2007). The collaboration emerged spontaneously and the group of participants was enthusiastic.

Pre-service teachers can develop and learn better if they work with their peers. Jaatinen (2007) mentions that it is important to narrate, listen to and encounter the ‘other’ as means to have a dialog encounter and learn from each other. She goes on saying that “listening provides the basis for better understanding of life and practicing it thus improves our life skills” (p. 93).

Learning together implies collaboration. Matsuda & Matsuda (2004) point out that collaborative teacher development not only makes pre-service and in service learning more positive and productive, but also helps teachers to develop the ability to work collaboratively which may be needed in their future careers.

When language teacher educators are told to identify learner needs, they usually think about the need to teach their learners both declarative and procedural knowledge as suggested by Pasternak & Bailey (2004), that is, teacher educators are aware of the need of their learners to learn knowledge about the language and about how to teach it.

But as teacher educators we have seen that our students also have affective needs, which are not often taken into consideration by their teachers. We have seen that our learners arrive to our programs looking for ways to learn the language and at the same time they want to make friends. Human beings are social by nature, and as highlighted by Linn et al (2004) Erik Erikson’s stage of young adults (19 to 24 years old) is characterized by the interest in making and keeping friends as

well as keeping good relations with them. As nonnative English teachers, we have had the experience of learning English as a foreign language and we may be able to anticipate and prevent language difficulties and we can be more empathetic to the needs of learners including the use of the mother tongue in the language classroom as suggested by Medgyes (1999).

The aim of this paper is to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative work in two EFL courses in a BA in ELT at the Autonomous University of Puebla. The study was conducted during the fall of 2009 in the course of Target Language 1 and in Workshop 1. The main instruments used were teacher diaries written on a weekly basis by the two teachers giving these courses as well as some notes from their weekly meetings to discuss the progress of the learners.

Reflection in teacher education

Teacher education programs aim to educate professionals. This education requires then, to help learners to become reflective professionals (Wallace, 1991). Loughran (1996, p. 14) defines reflection as “the purposeful act of thinking which centers on ways of responding to problem solving situations in teaching and learning”. Richards and Rodgers (1996) recommend reflection because they claim that much of what happens in the classroom is unknown to the teachers. Wallace (1991) suggests teachers to reflect in order to improve their teaching, and to integrate theory with practice. Bailey et al (2001) recommend teacher diaries to register reflection about their courses. Bailey & Oschner (1983) define diary studies in second language learning or teaching as an account of a learning experience narrated by the learner or the teacher. Diaries are used as instruments to collect data and conduct research.

Affect and collaborative work

According to Moskowitz (1978, p. 14) “affective education is effective education”, that is, language teachers need to educate the affect of their students if they want them to learn the language. This scholar also mentions that affective education relates to help learners develop and maintain good relationships, show concern for others and receive this as well. Christison (2002) also recommends teachers to take into consideration feelings and emotions in language learning. According to Dewey (1938) students learn from experience. Thus experiencing collaborative work can help students to learn collaboratively. Hedge (2000) states that group and pair work encourages cooperative learning and collaborative work, which reduces dependence on the teacher. Besides, Smith (1996) notes that teachers have reported that their most successful classes have been those in which students make friends with their classmates.

Context and participants

The Autonomous University of Puebla (BUAP) is a public university in central Mexico. The program where the study was conducted is a BA in ELT. The courses where the study took place were the Target Language 1 (TL1) and Workshop 1 (W1) over a period of 16 weeks, that is a regular term. TL1 was an EFL 4 skill beginner course and W1 was a course aimed to develop oral skills: listening and speaking.

Methodology

The teachers of TL1 and W1 agreed to work collaboratively with almost the same group of freshman students in these courses, so this work was a team teaching experience (Bailey et al, 2001). As these teachers were aware of the importance of the affective needs of learners, they agreed on implementing collaboration through group work and peer tutoring in both courses taking

advantage of students with higher level of proficiency and leadership skills. They also agreed to keep a teacher diary to record their experiences on a weekly basis and to hold meetings to discuss about their experience teaching these courses and to write notes recording the main points discussed in these meetings. The teacher of TL1 combined group work with a project called 'My ideal house'. Learners developed a written report of their project and prepared a power point presentation for the end of the course. The teacher of W1 combined collaborative work with Readers Theater, that is, learners were given scripts of simplified children stories to rehearse them to be presented at the end of the course.

So, the instruments to conduct this study were teacher diaries and notes from their weekly meetings to complement the diaries. The narratives and notes were read and analyzed. Common categories were identified. They are shown and discussed next.

Findings

Affective needs

Both teachers agreed on the fact that their learners had affective needs. The most visible one was the need to make friends and to be accepted and supported by this group of friends. For this reason when they were asked to work in teams they agreed to do it. Teams were formed with the students they wanted to work with in both courses. So, they felt comfortable working in these groups. Teachers could perceive this. In the words of the TL1 teacher:

I could see that most learners integrated easily in teams. As they were doing different tasks for the project they seemed to be happy. They smiled often and I could see that they worked collaboratively. This methodology seems to be addressing some of their affective needs (TL1 diary, week 3).

Peer tutoring

Both teachers agreed to include peer tutoring. They asked each group to have a leader. Furthermore, they suggested students who were going to be the leaders based on their command of the language. These leaders were asked to tutor their classmates to facilitate their learning. In the study conducted with the learners, tutees in W1 reported having learned from their tutors promoting learners' autonomy (Tapia, Castillo y Vélez, 2010). Their teacher's narrative explains this.

Students wanted to take an active role in their learning process. They want to see that they play an important role in this process. By grouping students and assigning them a tutor, I could see that they could learn from each other. Besides, I could see that tutors became more responsible and they were aware of their classmates needs. I could see that tutors tried to help their tutees as much as they could and was very pleased to see that they care for each other (W1 diary, week 12).

Vocabulary building

Learners acquired vocabulary in an autonomous way in both courses. In the project 'My ideal house' they looked for vocabulary to describe their imaginary house in teams of 3 to 5 members. In the Readers Theater, the vocabulary appeared in the script of the children's play that was given to them by their teacher. Both teachers describe how vocabulary was learned in each course. In both cases students learned from each other collaboratively.

Learners were dreaming about having fancy houses without budget limitations.

So, they were designing and describing houses where they had a golf course, a gym and a swimming pool and many comfortable rooms and bedrooms. They talked to each other in their teams and brainstormed about all the words they wanted to use to describe their house. Some students knew some words, but not all of them, so, sometimes they looked for these words in a dictionary or asked me to translate them (TL1 diary, week 6).

I enjoyed seeing the students learning vocabulary by themselves. They looked for them in the dictionary and they usually asked the tutor to help them learn the pronunciation of these new words. So, they helped each other to learn vocabulary. It was only if they could not find a word or did not understand how to pronounce it that they asked me to help them.

(W1diary, week 10).

Difficulties working together

Although most learners integrated easily, there were some minor problems in the implementation of this methodology. Some students did not attend regularly and this affected the work of the teams. In the words of both teachers:

We don't like the fact that some students do not come regularly. This affects the work of their teams; their classmates cannot work well without them. I wonder why they miss classes.

(Notes from the meeting of week 8).

When these notes were discussed together, teachers realized that learners had individual differences and different life histories. Besides, their level of motivation was different and these issues became visible in the classroom.

Conclusions

We found suggestions for each of the areas of the findings. They are discussed next.

1. Affective needs.

Students have affective needs according to their age as pointed out by Erikson. They wanted to make friends so asking them to work in groups allowed them to do so. Most of them integrated and worked well in these groups. Working collaboratively within these groups generated relations among the members of each team. This friendship allowed the learners to have a sense of belonging, to share learning experiences, to learn about each other and to care. We could see that learners enjoyed talking to each other. They often smiled while working together. This has been observed often, not only with this group of participants, but with other groups as well. When students are asked to work in teams they start smiling.

2. Peer tutoring.

Both teachers promoted peer tutoring and it worked well. Although learners were freshman students, both teachers identified students with higher level of proficiency and leadership skills. They acted as tutors and motivated their classmates to learn the language. They exerted their leadership and began to practice language teaching in a real context. They did their best and helped both teachers to teach the language to their peers.

3. Vocabulary building

Learners were able to acquire knowledge and some experience in real context with meaningful experiences. They benefited from project work, and TL1 students brought the vocabulary they wanted. They constructed their own knowledge following a constructivist methodology as suggested by Scholnik et al (2006). On the other course W1, Readers Theater scaffolded student's learning (Farley, 2009). As Farley notes, Readers Theater brought a story to life not only for the audience but also for the readers, and in this case, the actors. Students disguised themselves and rehearsed for months. They were highly motivated.

4. Difficulties working together

There were few problems for learners when working together. Missing students affected their teams. However, we could see that most students benefited from collaborative group work.

This study described the implementation of a collaborative experience between two teachers and their groups. Collaboration among teachers generated coordinated work and helped teachers to reflect and develop professionally as suggested by Bailey et al (2001). Learners benefited from the experience also. They learned from each other, made new friends and transformed their learning into a pleasant experience. They learned how to work collaboratively which will be useful for them as persons and future professionals.

This paper was written inviting another teacher and a thesis student to participate in the reflection of these experiences and the data analysis. So, it reflects 3 types of collaboration: first, among teachers, second, among learners and third, among researchers. In this three types of collaboration we found benefits and we experienced growth. As Bailey et al (2001) note "teachers can learn a lot when working together" (p. 180).

Further research needs to be done in other similar courses to complement the findings of this study. It would be worth to analyze the effect of different variables such as gender, age, learning styles or beliefs in collaborative work. We hope that this study helps language teacher educators to reflect on the importance of affective needs of learners in teacher education courses.

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Anxiety in Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract

Studies about the variables that take place in foreign language classrooms are an ideal means to identify both learners' needs and many of their characteristics present in their interaction with the teacher and classmates. According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1992), there are two main kinds of study variables that influence the process of foreign language teaching and learning: cognitive and affective ones. When studying the affective ones, the most important among them are attitudes, motivation, anxiety, beliefs, personality traits and learning styles. This study focuses on anxiety in the language classroom. It has been shown that this variable affects the development of students, mainly their desire to participate in communicative activities. At one stage in this research, other studies were taken into account dealing with language anxiety, namely those carried out by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and Ortega (2003). Ortega makes a comparison between her own results and the ones of Horwitz; in so doing, she uses the same instrument created by Horwitz to test language anxiety. This study was planned in order to determine the anxiety levels of students of *Facultad de Lenguas de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México* and compare them with results of the two studies mentioned before. This study was carried out in two stages. First, 196 students were tested on the Spanish version of Ortega's scale, based on the one designed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). This scale is known as *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (FLCAS). For the second stage, nine students were selected, according to their results in the FLCAS, four with the highest levels of anxiety and five with the lowest. These nine students answered five questions regarding problems detected during the analysis of the results of the first stage. The questionnaires were applied individually. Finally, in order to gather additional data, interviews were also conducted. The findings reveal that, by and large, students experience the following problem: they are afraid to make mistakes when using the language studied in class as they feel their poor command of the language may make them appear inadequate to their teachers and classmates. The study also highlighted the importance of providing teachers with error-correcting skills and strategies to effectively deal with academic differences among students. Notwithstanding the coincidences in the three studies, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), Ortega (2003) and the one presented here, especially in terms of the anxiety experienced by the language learners, there are differences too. Some of the students of *Facultad de Lenguas de la UAEMex* consider that mistakes give them an opportunity to learn.

Introduction

Anxiety, one of the key affective variables, has been studied as a component of affection, particularly in foreign language classrooms. Casado and Dereshiwky (2001) found that researchers have analyzed anxiety effects on foreign language learning since the seventies, and concluded that despite the substantial advances in teaching methods and techniques, students keep feeling afraid in university language classrooms.

Kristmanson (2000) studies affection as a means to creating an emotional environment that is conducive to learning. He points out that when learning a second, third or fourth language, it is essential to be immersed in a favorable atmosphere, one that provides students with plenty of

opportunities to take risks without feeling intimidated. From the point of view of Ariza (2002), the results derived from the analysis of anxiety-reducing methods show that anxiety is one of the main factors that hinder foreign language students' success. It is therefore crucial to determine the anxiety levels among students of *Facultad de Lenguas* and compare those results with the ones from other studies with a similar focus.

Theoretical context

The most prominent authors whose research centers on foreign language anxiety are Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), who have established the characteristics and types of anxiety that takes place in foreign language classrooms. They have also created their own test, called *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (FLCAS), an instrument still used today to measure this kind of anxiety.

Their starting point is based on the principle followed by several authors, known as *Individual differences research*. According to this principle, the researcher avoids generalizations, but looks closely at those factors generating behavioral and achievement differences among students. Anxiety is taken into account as one of the main factors that prevent students from reaching higher levels of attainment in a foreign language classroom. According to Horwitz and Cope, neither the meaning of this anxiety nor its effects have been clearly defined. Nonetheless, they define it in the following terms: "Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." (1986: 125). From the point of view of the particular situation involving anxiety, the concept is classified into two categories. One of them includes students who are generally anxious, in any given situation; the other, for those who are anxious only in specific situations. The former, according to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986:127) shows a link between anxiety in the language classroom and achievement evaluation in social and academic contexts, which is based on three types of anxiety and difficulties: 1) Communication apprehension; 2) test anxiety; and 3) fear of negative evaluation. They state that these three types of general anxiety "provide useful conceptual building blocks for a description of foreign language anxiety", but propose that "foreign language anxiety is not simply the combination of these fears transferred to foreign language learning". Ultimately, they conceive it as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986: 128).

Empirical context

As it was mentioned before, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) created the FLCAS, an instrument for measuring Foreign Language Anxiety, while carrying on specific anxiety reactions.

Ortega (2003), following the same line of research, translated the FLCAS into Spanish. She considered the same three topics put forward by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and added one more, called *anxiety in front of the classroom*. She emphasizes the implications of a particular context, where the student must meet specific requirements. First and foremost, most of the time students have to communicate with the teacher and their classmates by using an instrument (the foreign language) of which they are far from having full command, which in turn leads to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity. Secondly, by definition, foreign language classrooms imply an interactive process of communication, which generates anxiety of a kind that far exceeds the one experienced in other academic contexts. Ortega (2003) and Horwitz *et al.* (1986) agree that oral communication creates more anxiety than the development of other skills. She used the same scale (FLCAS) with a group of Spanish students, and found their levels of anxiety to be high. In fact, in several cases, they were higher than the ones that Horwitz *et al.* (1986) found among beginners.

Research Methodology

This study was planned in order to determine the anxiety levels of students of *Facultad de Lenguas de la UAEMex*, and compare them with the results of the two studies mentioned before, Horwitz *et al.* (1986) and Ortega (2003).

This study was carried out in two stages. First, 196 students were tested on the Spanish version of Ortega's scale (2003). The scale was applied to students who began their studies and belonged to three different generations. Table 1 shows their distribution.

Group	Number of students
Generation one	74
Generation two	56
Generation three	66
Total	196

Table 1. Number of students who participated in the study, by generation.

With some modifications, to adapt it to Mexican Spanish, the Spanish version of Ortega's Scale (2003) was used. This was done to include Mexican equivalents for words and phrases that were not commonly spoken in Mexico or when they had a slightly different meaning. In order not to let the students know the variable measured by the test, it was decided to change the name of the scale to *English language Learning Scale*., which contained 33 items with five possible answers: **strongly agree (SA)**, **agree (A)**, **neither agree nor disagree (N)**, **disagree (D)**, and **strongly disagree (SD)**. For data processing purposes, the alphabetic answers were changed to 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. The whole test is shown in appendix A. The direction of each item is indicated as follows, according to the rules of Likert Scales. For those items that reveal anxiety, the answers are 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1; those that reveal a lack of anxiety are 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. The interval of the sum of right answers is (33, 165), with a midpoint of 99.

For the second stage, nine students were selected, according to their results in the FLCAS; four with the highest levels of anxiety, five with the lowest. These nine students answered five questions regarding problems detected during the analysis of the results of the first stage (Appendix B). They were asked to talk about the origin of each problem and to think of some ways to prevent it. The questionnaires were applied one by one. Finally, in order to gather additional data, interviews were also conducted.

Results analysis

FLCAS - Total scores

The anxiety scores of the subjects under study are between 43 and 149, with a mean of 88. Diagram 1 shows these results.

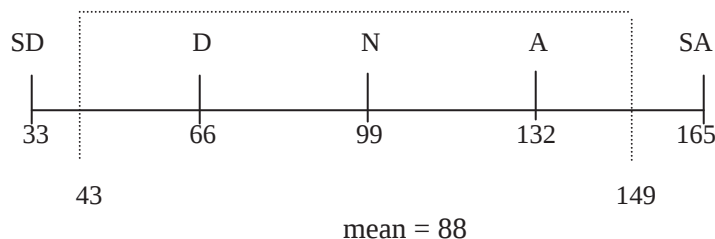


Diagram 1. Scores interval and general mean at Facultad de Lenguas de la UAEMex.

Among the participants, there was only one whose score was in the area of strongly agree (SA), which corresponds to a high level of anxiety. Most of the students showed a low level of anxiety, which accounts for the mean of the group of 88. Nevertheless, 42.86% of the students displayed a lack of definition, as shown by the answer “none of them.”

The results of the scores of the three generations were very similar, with means of: 88, 87, and 89.

FLCAS – Gender Scores

From a contrastive analysis of gender results, it was found that there are clear differences in some of the items, as shown in Table 2. In the anxiety column, a plus sign (+) means lack of anxiety, whereas a minus sign (–) shows the presence of anxiety.

ITEM	Men	Women	Anxiety
I don't worry about making mistakes in language class	32%	48%	-, -
During the language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	40%	51%	+, -
In language class, I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation.	35%	49%	-, -
I would not be nervous when using the foreign language with native speakers	47%	43%	+, -
I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class	57%	37%	+, -
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class	52%	70%	-, -
I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class	14%	29%	-, -
I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class	19%	28%	-, -

Table 2. Anxiety differences between men and women.

Men present lower levels of anxiety than women, mainly when they have to speak in the language studied in class. The highest figures are in the case of one item: *I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language course*, where both groups, men and women, are worried about keeping up with their language courses. In the case of speaking skills, women feel less confident and more nervous and confused than men.

Problematic areas

The main problems revealed in the analysis of the items are described as follows: Students are afraid to make mistakes when using the language studied in class. They are also afraid to speak English in class, or to be evaluated by their teachers and their classmates. They feel insecure to speak English. However, what worries them most is the prospect of failing the language course.

Based on these results, the second stage of the study was designed.

Questionnaire results

The results of the application of the questionnaire show the most likely causes of the problem areas, as described by the students. They also made some suggestions to improve the language class environment. Among the main causes that the students mentioned are the following:

Lack of group homogeneity. In the same group, there are students with different levels of language skills; some of them are more fluent and have better grasp of the language, which enables them to outperform their peers.

Teacher's lack of skill in dealing with students' errors and fear to be criticized. Students dread being criticized not only by their classmates, but also by the teacher. They even pointed out that some teachers may go as far as taking repressive actions when the students make errors.

Students also mentioned their poor command not only of English, but also of their own language, Spanish. In fact, some said they have not learned how to keep a conversation going in Spanish. Consequently, they are afraid of not being understood in both Spanish and English. Testing was mentioned as another reason. Students complained about being tested on language structures that they have not practiced at all. The exams include questions on areas not previously covered by the teacher.

The students made the following suggestions to solve the problems.

Motivating and helping the students to actively participate in class.

Teachers need to develop better error-handling techniques.

Creating an environment where errors are considered normal and are regarded as an opportunity to learn.

Teachers should be sensitive when dealing with students' errors.

Creating a learning-conducive environment where caustic or harsh remarks from students are discouraged.

Promoting cooperation among students, whereby those who are more advanced are encouraged to help their weaker classmates.

Fairer teaching. Teachers' should make a point of helping everyone, not just the more advanced students.

Creating group activities.

Giving feedback to those who obtain lower results.

At the end of the second stage, students also showed their appreciation for this kind of research projects.

Contrastive Analysis

Items that reveal anxiety				
Item and content	Ortega (2003)	Horwitz <i>et al.</i> (1986)	Facultad de Lenguas	Answer
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class	45%	62%	31%	Agreement There is insecurity when speaking in the classroom
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class	72%	41%	60%	Disagreement Exam anxiety
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class	45%	47%	43%	Disagreement Lack of confidence to speak
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class	72%	67%	39%	Disagreement There is pressure to prepare for exams

Table 3. Similarities in the presence of anxiety among the results of the three groups.

The study of Horwitz *et al.* (1986) included 75 university students of Spanish. For its part, Ortega's (2003) study included 33. Our study considered 196. The contrastive analysis was based on percentages, with two columns for each research project. One column with the total of the *strongly agree* and *agree* responses; the other with the total of the *disagree* and *strongly disagree* responses. This was the very same process adopted by Ortega (2003) when comparing her results with the ones of Horwitz *et al.* (1986). Similarly, Horwitz *et al.* (1986) used percentages in the analysis of each item.

Similarities in the presence of anxiety, in the results of the three groups, can be seen in items 1, 8, 18, and 22. Table 3 presents the results.

In the three groups, evaluation anxiety can be seen, as shown in the items that refer to experiencing anxiety while sitting exams and preparing for them under pressure. Students show a lack of confidence to speak in foreign language classrooms. None of the cases present more anxiety in language classrooms than in the other two studies.

The similarities between the results of Ortega (2003) and Horwitz *et al.* (1986) were found in items 2, 11, 12, 16, and 33. Table 4 shows the results.

Item	Ortega (2003)	Horwitz <i>et al.</i> (1986)	Answer	Facultad de Lenguas A D	
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class	69%	65%	Disagreement Anxiety according to the possibility of making mistakes	45%	41%
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes	60%	41%	Disagreement They understand it	41%	20%
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know	46%	57%	Agreement They are nervous in language class	34%	50%
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it	54%	42%	Agreement There is anxiety	30%	53%
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance	66%	49%	Agreement There is nervousness	32%	50%

Table 4. Similarities in the presence of anxiety among Horwitz *et al.* (1986) and Ortega (2003).

In the studies conducted by both Ortega and Horwitz *et al.*, the subjects worried about making mistakes, with 69% and 65%. In the *Facultad de Lenguas*, the percentage is lower, 41%. In this respect, it should be said that students of *Facultad de Lenguas* think that mistakes give them an opportunity to learn. By contrast, the other two groups (Ortega, 2003; Horwitz *et al.*, 1986) show higher percentages of students who say they get nervous to such an extent that they forget all they know, 46% and 57% respectively. In *Facultad de Lenguas*, the percentage is 34%. As for the number of students worrying about being ill-prepared for exams, the percentage of *Facultad de Lenguas* is also lower than in the two other studies.

Additionally, there are similarities between the results of Ortega's research (2003) and this study, as seen in items 10, 15, and 17. Students worry about the consequences of missing their English lessons. They also said they feel bad when they do not understand what the teacher corrects. In all the cases where there are similarities between Ortega (2003) and the *Facultad de Lenguas*, the group studied by Horwitz *et al.* (1986) presents contrasting results.

Facultad de Lenguas shows agreement with Horwitz *et al.* (1986) in item 9. The subjects panic when they have to speak, without preparation, in a language class.

The main difference between *Facultad de Lenguas* and the other two groups can be seen in item 1, about students not feeling sure when speaking in the foreign language class.

Conclusions

The findings reveal that, by and large, students experience the following problem: they are afraid to speak and to make mistakes when using the language studied in class. They feel their poor command of the language may make them appear inadequate to their teachers and classmates; they are afraid of tests too and worry about the consequences of failing their foreign language course.

The study also highlighted the importance of providing teachers with error-correcting skills and strategies to effectively deal with academic differences among students. Notwithstanding the coincidences in the three studies, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), Ortega (2003) and the one described here —especially in terms of the anxiety experienced by the language learners— there are differences too. Some of the students of *Facultad de Lenguas de la UAEMex* claim that mistakes give them an opportunity to learn.

In the case of the instrument, the FLCAS, it is important to consider the design of a new one in order to improve its characteristics and contents, and strike a balance between favorable and unfavorable items of anxiety. Also the new instrument should include four answers instead of five, with the aim of clearly engaging the subjects.

Despite some limitations, the results are significant. Taking them into consideration it is possible to begin and develop a project on foreign language teaching.

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Appendix A

English Language Learning Scale Version 2.0 – 2006

Instructions:

I. Write the answers in the spaces provided.

Name: _____

Sex: _____ Men: _____ Women: _____ Age: _____

Study institution: _____

Generation: _____ Group: _____ Semester: _____ Date: _____

Which is the level of studies of your parents?

Mother: primary__ secondary__ high school__ university__ another one _____

Father: primary__ secondary__ high school__ university__ another one _____

Do you like to attend your English class? Yes__No ____Why?

Do you speak English with any member of your family? Yes ____ No ____

If the answer is “yes”, with whom? _____

II. In the following pages below you will find a series of statements about the English language

Choose the option that best describes your selection, by using this scale:

SA: Strongly agree

A: Agree

N: Neither agree or disagree

D: Disagree

SD: Strongly disagree

Consecutive

SA	Strongly agree	A	Agree	N	Neither agree or disagree	D	Disagree	SD	Strongly disagree
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Items

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class	5	4	3	2	1
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class	1	2	3	4	5
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class	5	4	3	2	1
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language	5	4	3	2	1
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes	1	2	3	4	5
6. In language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	5	4	3	2	1
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am	5	4	3	2	1
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class	1	2	3	4	5

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class	5	4	3	2	1
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language course	5	4	3	2	1
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes	1	2	3	4	5
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know	5	4	3	2	1
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class	5	4	3	2	1
14. I would not be nervous to speak the foreign language with native speakers	1	2	3	4	5
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting	5	4	3	2	1
16. Even if I am well prepared for the language course, I experience anxiety about it	5	4	3	2	1

SA	Strongly agree	A	Agree	N	Neither agree or disagree	D	Disagree	SD	Strongly disagree
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Items

17. I often feel like not attending my language class	5	4	3	2	1
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistakes I make	5	4	3	2	1
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I am called on in language class	5	4	3	2	1
21. The more I study for a language, the more confused I get	5	4	3	2	1
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class	1	2	3	4	5
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do	5	4	3	2	1
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students	5	4	3	2	1
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind	5	4	3	2	1
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes	5	4	3	2	1
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class	5	4	3	2	1
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very confident and relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says	5	4	3	2	1
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language	5	4	3	2	1

SECCIÓN 2 - AFFECTIVE FACTORS

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language	5	4	3	2	1
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language	1	2	3	4	5
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared for in advance	5	4	3	2	1

If you want to write any comment, write it on the lines provided.

Thanks for your answers

Appendix 2

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DEL ESTADO DE MÉXICO FACULTAD DE LENGUAS
COORDINACIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN Y ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO

Elements of English Language Learning

Key: _____

Answer the following questions. Mention what you think the origin of the problems is and make any suggestions to prevent them. Be as honest as you can.

1. Some students are afraid to speak in English language class.

Origin: _____

Prevention solutions: _____

2. They are afraid to make mistakes.

Origin: _____

Prevention solutions: _____

3. Some students are afraid to be tested.

Origin: _____

Prevention solutions: _____

4. They are insecure about their command of English language.

Origin: _____

Prevention solutions: _____

5. They are worried about the consequences of failing their English language course.

Origin: _____

Prevention solutions: _____

If you want to make any additional comments, use the space provided below:

Thanks for your participation

Multiple Intelligences, Students beliefs on Language Learning (BALLI) and Self esteem

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Abstract

This article relates students' beliefs on Second Language Learning to their preferred kind of intelligence, considering a self-esteem assessment. The framework informs on Nine kinds of Intelligence, Multiple Intelligence theory by Howard Gardner, research done on self-esteem and research on beliefs over second language learning. To respond the questions: Is a student's preferred kind of intelligence related to beliefs about Language Learning assessed with BALLI inventory? Is there a relation of beliefs to self-esteem?, the study narrates the development on the first year of a longitudinal exploratory research to find the beliefs of BA in Language Teaching students and their relation to the preferred kid of intelligence and self esteem. The population is the 2009-2 cohort of the Languages School Majors Program, being the sample 75 teacher trainees state wide, and the time covered is the core stage, or first two semesters. The findings are presented through Discriminant Analysis, showing that 92% of the original cases were correctly grouped; that is, their answers to the BALLI inventory are related to their preferred kind of intelligence. The discussion considers self-esteem will be low in the beginning semesters for they are still in or near adolescence, but should improve later in a well-structured environment as are the BA in Language Teaching Programs (Gosling, 2002; Orth, Robins & Trzesniewski, 2009). In this same line of thought, beliefs will change in time due to new knowledge acquired. (Key Words: Multiple Intelligences, beliefs in second language acquisition, self-esteem).

Introduction

What variables account for students' different beliefs as measured by BALLI? Is it related to self-esteem, knowledge on the subject matter, age and maturity, gender, or personal characteristics? There are many questions to ask in relation to this topic, and we expect to answer some during the study time of the cohort considered.

The population to research is 2009-2 cohort; B A in Language Teaching at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) and the sample is 75 students, state-wide 3 campuses, one group in each. It is part of a multiple-variables research started collaboratively with Puebla's Autonomous University (BUAP) in 2009, to determine students needs while completing Language Teaching Programs in Mexican State Universities.

In this research we explore the relation of students beliefs on second language acquisition measured with BALLI (Horwitz, E. 1988, 1999) to preferred kind of intelligence (Multiple Intelligence Theory) and to self-esteem, considering also social identification variables. As researchers we have reported a relationship between students' opinions and their preferred kind of intelligence (Romero, 2004) in a Master's thesis that aimed to explain the differences in students appreciation of a self-access facility, which related significantly (.001); being practical for teachers and administrators in order to assess what seemed disaccording opinions, when trying to improve the center to suit students' demands.

The literature review considers Multiple Intelligence theory by Howard Gardner, Research done on beliefs about language learning, and research about self-esteem. The relation found between Language learning strategies, Language learning beliefs, motivation and proficiency (Ghavamnia et al. 2011) allows for the statement that intra-cultural differences need to be more precisely identified. We present differences by preferred kind of intelligence, regardless of the campus. The methods apply to a longitudinal study, descriptive and correlational, aiming to improve student's performance and the program's terminal efficiency at large. Results are presented as a report of a one-time sample for self-esteem, given Alfa Reliability, using Kendal Tau c correlation coefficient and Discriminant Analysis (Landro y Gonzalez, 2006) that shows grouping by preferred kind of intelligence with .001 significancy.

2. Literature Review

In order to present the existing knowledge about the problem of beliefs on students' language learning and its relation to preferred kind of intelligence and self-esteem, this section will cover an explanation on Multiple Intelligences theory by Howard Gardner, Beliefs in Second Language Learning by Phil Benson, as well as Beliefs and Cultural studies performed by Elaine Horwitz. On self-esteem, there are several statements of research done identifying age and gender differences during development.

Multiple Intelligences

When it comes to second language learning (L2), educators as well as researchers (Carroll and Sappon (1958), Pimsleur (1966), Robbins (2003), Skehan (1998) and others, have observed differences in the rate of acquisition. The differential success has been attributed to several factors of which students' use of cognitive skills, aptitudes, or, in other words, intelligence seems to play an important role.

Intelligence is one of the key concepts of contemporary psychology, defined as the capacity or ability to acquire and use knowledge in order to solve problems and adapt to the world (Woofolk, 2006, p. 107). However, different psychologists have different ideas about the nature of intelligence, and how it should be measured. The measurement of intelligence, especially in bilinguals, has been tinged with bias, as documented in Steinberg, Nagata & Aline (2001) when in the early 20th century, newly-arrived adult immigrants in the U.S. were classified as "feeble-minded" (p. 225) compared to 11-year-old monolinguals due to the immigrants' lack of proficiency in English.

The common ground with many intelligence tests is that language plays a crucial role in their outcome; an examinee has to be able to understand the multiple-choice items to start with. Therefore, the intelligence score traditionally obtained is a number that relies basically on: 1. the student's ability to use logic, and 2. on his/her language skills. Furthermore, the general perception is that intelligence is what the intelligence tests measure (Christison, 1998, p.2). Many tests to measure intelligence do not provide for variety of activities and approaches; the selection of the items may be de-contextualized if they do not follow a process of adaptation and equivalence to other cultures, and may not comply with the requirement of stating a specific definition of an IQ (Brown, 2000, p. 101) given the diversity of definitions. However, a simple number can have profound effects on a person's life in terms of his/her eligibility for certain privileges (educational opportunities and career choices), and in general, that score influences how he/she is perceived by others, including educators, since people with high IQs are usually held in high esteem.

In response to the one-sidedness of the theories of intelligence and their limited scope, Howard Gardner (1983, 1999) introduced a much broader perspective which acknowledges multiple dimensions that characterize human intelligence. Gardner claims each person possesses a blend of intelligences that develop over a lifetime and are also context-embedded and culture-bound (Gardner, 1999, p.45). In the early 1980s, Gardner proposed first seven distinct intelligences (1983), in which he described different ways of knowing; later developing studies to include Naturalistic and Existentialist intelligence. Biological basis and Neuroscience research account for each kind of intelligence identified, including for each a differential: a. Capacity to identify problems, b. Skills used to solve problems, c. Ability to create effective products.

A brief definition for each kind of intelligence is given here:

1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence is the capacity to use words effectively. An individual with linguistic intelligence is able to decode written texts and has competence in different areas of linguistics, such as semantics, phonology, syntax and pragmatics. Other sub-skills include remembering information, and solving word problems. People who are strong in this type of intelligence are convincing debaters. They learn better through written and spoken word.
2. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence refers to the ability of using numbers effectively and reason well. People with this type of intelligence resolve problems using logic, calculations and are good at applying grammar rules, representing graphically many concepts together. They like to experiment and are good at classifying objects, as well as at understanding the principles of cause and effect since they have developed abstract thinking and have acquired ability to predict logically. They learn better by condensed meaning representations.
3. Spatial-Visual Intelligence is the sensibility to space, form, color, line, and shapes. A person with this intelligence can re-create and manipulate reality without the physical referent present and is also good at representing visual or spatial ideas graphically (drawing, painting, using color, art, graphics, maps, plans, etc.). When they study, they prefer to elaborate mental and conceptual maps and they, in general, learn better with pictures, posters, graphs and tables.
4. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence is the ability to use the whole body or its parts to express ideas and feelings. It also includes the ease to use hands to transform and create new elements and solve problems. This intelligence requires coordination of different abilities, balance, flexibility, strengths, speed and sensitivity to measures and volumes, as well as the control over one's body. Furthermore, a good pronunciation is, partly, a result of a coordination of articulators of speech, and the outcome subsequently depends on this specific ability. Teachers can provide students with the opportunity to use this intelligence in activities such as role-plays, acting out an idea, performing a dance, etc. They learn through the senses.
5. Musical Intelligence is the sensibility to sounds, rhythm, stress patterns, intonation and pitch of a language. People with this kind of intelligence can recognize and reproduce songs and melodies and can also recognize alterations in speed, tempo or rhythms. They have sensible hearing. Besides singing or playing musical instruments, people with this kind of intelligence are also good at pronunciation and can beat out the rhythmical patterns of the studied language. They learn better through verse and rhyme.
6. Interpersonal Intelligence is the ability to understand others, how they feel, what motivates them, what their intentions are and how they interact with others. A teacher can help students develop interpersonal intelligence through activities that require them to work in pairs or groups, solve problems and carry over strategies for effective conflict resolution. They are good teacher aids and enjoy leadership. Social experience is their means for learning.

7. Intrapersonal Intelligence consists in self-knowledge. This includes understanding your strengths and weaknesses, and also self-perception as a language learner in comparison to others. People with intrapersonal intelligence reflect on their own learning, set goals and are usually persistent and self-motivated while persuading them. As educators, we can provide students with the opportunity for reflexive feedback. They learn through writing and repetition, follow their own pace and enjoy studying alone.

8. Gardner later added the eighth intelligence, called Naturalist, which consists in the ability to recognize and classify various species of animals and plants and also one's environment, they enjoy Geography. It also consists in recognizing "cultural artifacts like cars or sneakers" (Christison, 2005, p. 6). Such learners prefer to participate in field trips, and in general focus attention on the world outside the classroom.

9. In his book, *Intelligence Reframed* (1999), Gardner considers yet another candidate, the Existential Intelligence, which is defined as the ability to "...locate oneself with respect to such existential features of the human condition as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate fate of the physical and the psychological worlds, and such profound experiences as love of another person or total immersion in a work of art" (p. 60). Despite the fact that Gardner has not added this intelligence to an inventory, the authors of the study decided to contemplate it in the questionnaire (Romero, 2010), as it scores reasonably well on the criteria proposed by Gardner himself. He recommended the American Education System to discuss the themes of this intelligence in K-12. Gardner's theory has been very important for ESL/EFL teachers as it enables them to create individualized learning environments, acknowledging differences in learning styles and preferences, and accommodating them in the classroom while planning and executing a varied set of activities. Gardner's perspective on intelligence and its attributes is much more dynamic, and hence encouraging for a learner as it states each person possesses distinct intelligences, which combine in a unique way, some of them more developed than others, but finally all of them capable of being improved with appropriate guidance and carefully planned instruction.

Moreover, Armstrong (1998) suggests teachers should prepare lessons in eight different ways, many of which are collateral and share characteristics. This would increase students' confidence and self-esteem for they will be given the best opportunity to learn by their preferred style as well as to develop other kinds of intelligence, thus multiplying benefits.

Beliefs in Second Language Learning

Learning a second language involves many things. However, prior knowledge, beliefs and attitudes students have towards learning a second language have become an issue of research because these factors affect the language learning process. It has been demonstrated that these variables and their organization have a great influence on how students learn, and how they develop through the whole process of learning. For example, some learners believe that by being immerse in the language and culture they will learn better, so they focus more on communication skills; however others believe that by learning the correct grammar and enough vocabulary they will acquire the language, in this case they will focus more on memorization, analyzing and repetition. All students have different styles of learning, attitudes and behaviors which will hinder or help them achieve their goals. The terms conception and beliefs in learning originates in the area of psychology as "Student approaches to learning", which considers the learner as a whole and recognizes the importance of the learning task and its context. As Marton and Ramsden, 1988, (cited in Benson & Lor, 1999) state, "learning should be seen as a qualitative change in a person's way of seeing, experiencing, understanding, and

conceptualizing something in the real world". To Howard Gardner, learning styles are preferred kinds of intelligence that we use to achieve most effective learning.

There are two concepts that have surfaced through the study made by Marton and Saljo, 1976, (cited in Benson & Lor (1999 p.462) "surface level and deep level". In surface level processing, learners direct attention towards learning the text itself (the sign) while in deep-level processing attention is directed towards the intentional content of the learning material (what is signified). Biggs (1987) also added an "achieving approach" where students use the surface and deep level approach to achieve higher grades. Apart from this, he also developed two instruments that assess approaches to learning: The Learning Process Questionnaire (LPQ) and the Student Process Questionnaire (SPQ). From this study, Biggs concluded that the beliefs students have towards learning are always related to some learning task or context, which means that students formulate strategies to cope with the different learning situations they are exposed to.

Students Representations and beliefs

Students' representations in language learning can hinder or help students reach their learning objectives. Beliefs are constructed according to these conceptions and the situation, and also the approach they choose, to pursue their learning objectives. Teachers need to be aware of the different ways of thinking that students have in order to know if beliefs are functional or dysfunctional (Benson & Lor, 1999). Knowing this can help teachers motivate students and even offer information to allow them to change their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes to learning a language. The success of students in learning depends on how strong their justifications for their beliefs are. White (1999) says that the process of learning has to do with the processes students establish from their mental representations, so that they can participate in the target language. Representations are frameworks that help in the construction of knowledge and take people to approaches and learning of spontaneous rules of action which are valid only while new learning do not transform them. Learning strategies draw from them as from preferred learning styles, a way to view the world. The first studies on *beliefs* appeared in the 80s when Elaine K. Horwitz (1985,1987,1988) from the university of Austin designed a questionnaire of 34 items known as BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) that explores the beliefs of language students, using a Likert 5 point scale which allows participants to express degrees of appreciation. The inventory BALLI researches a series of beliefs on what students think about learning a new language. Horwitz (1987) classifies these beliefs in relation to themes: 1) aptitude towards language learning, 2) the difficulty of language learning, 3) the nature of the process of language learning, 4) teaching and strategies and 5) motivation. Other authors have made adaptations of those beliefs; they have grouped them in different categories. For example, Wenden (1998) has reduced them to three classes: beliefs about the target language use, beliefs about the process of teaching and beliefs about socio affective factors. Other authors that have enlarged the list of categories are, for example, Riley (1997) and Cotterall (1995), who added beliefs about autonomous learning, or Cotazzi and Jin (in Riley, 1997) who explored metaphors as concept frameworks that reflect a system of beliefs about teaching.

Lightbown and Spada (1999) also explore popular ideas, or beliefs about language learning. In their 7th chapter of the book "How languages are learned", they assess to what extent these popular ideas are based on reality.

Different research studies about beliefs, have shown that both variables, attitudes and actions, are strongly influenced by our beliefs which is coherent with social theory that states that attitudes are a predisposition to action and have a cognitive and an emotional component (Morales, 2003). Beliefs

are frequently related to values and kept more strongly (Alexander & Dochy in Wenden, 1999). In a case study (Evrin, Gökçe & Anisa, 2009); it was found that the beliefs of an English teacher were consistent with her classroom practices. In addition, in a study by Peacock (2001), some students enrolled in an English teaching program were tracked for three years. Their beliefs at the beginning of the program and their beliefs at the end of it were contrasted. It was expected that the mistaken beliefs expressed by those students at the beginning of the program could have been modified as time went by and as they acquired more experience and theoretical knowledge about the teaching methodology. Instead, there were no significant changes on their beliefs, what makes us reflect on the actual efforts teacher trainers are doing to form future teachers.

Because of these studies we pay special attention to beliefs, their identification and their assessment since it is clear that they shape the learning processes (White, 1999). Furthermore, it is a fact that the framework provided by Horwitz has been used internationally to find similarities and differences among the beliefs of groups of people from different cultures. However, Horwitz concludes that more research must be done to explain the inter group differences in relation with culture. Wenden (1999) adds that there are significant differences among groups' beliefs that can be explained in relation with the learning context and the individual characteristics. In that respect, strategies adopted by students in learning a new language have been questioned on the basis of the origin of one's choice of a set of strategies over another (Alton, 2006), which remits the readers to intelligences preferred, described from the strategies students use to approach learning.

Self-esteem

Nowadays the constructivist theory emphasizes the integral formation of the students, that is, the inclusion of cognitive learning, as well as the development of skills and the work on attitudes and affective domains, which are seen as important aspects of learning. The self-esteem of the individual will influence his progress in his studies. Corno and Snow (1986, in González-Pienda et al, 1997) have described school learning in three dimensions: cognition, conation and affection. It is the last one we are interested on in this study. According to Woofolk (2006, p. 71), self-esteem is "an affective reaction: the judgment of who you are", and how you feel about the way you perform. If your self-perception is positive, you like the way you do something, then your self-esteem is high and if this perception is negative, then your self-esteem is low (Pintrich y Schunk, 2002). Self-esteem is one of the constructs of personality. If students have a good perception of themselves, they will have a better learning performance. It is then important to know the students' self-esteem to support their strategies towards their self-transformation. Literature on Second Language Acquisition note that age and it's relation to self-esteem have been very controversial (Turner, 1998); as gender differences found, which need a careful detailed research on other variables that influence the personality of individuals. Recently, occupation has also been related to self-esteem (Orth et al, 2009).

Robins (2002) (in Orth et al, 2009) presented a very conclusive research both because of the size of the sample and the age span covered. The study was conducted through the Internet and gathered more than 325,000 responses. The participants ranged from 9 years to 90 years of age. The results showed at least two modes in age high self-esteem presented during human development. With a steady increase from childhood to nine years of age; declining and again increasing in young adulthood until age sixty where it would drop again. Most studies mention gender differences, but this particular one found that the differences in adolescence disappeared in young adulthood and remained similar well through the age of 70, later women kept a higher self-esteem than men, something that does not happen during adolescence.

Pajares (1996) is focused on academic settings and takes already in account self-regulation, a top priority topic in Psychology and Administration. He also relates expectations to self-concept and expresses the similarities of different terms, in this case self-esteem and self-efficacy as the way students perceive their own value and very much related to performance in school as a reinforcement. From there teachers' responsibility shared in students' self-esteem. Furthermore, this becomes a cycle where performance will reflect in future effort and behavior. This concept would be much easier to explore and research if it were lineal and independent, but one must consider the relation of multiple variables in an individual's personality, some will draw from the group, the context, the small family circle or large, etc. A researcher who has worked during a long time with this cycle and the chains that engrain in it is Barry Zimmerman of City University of New York, now undertaking self-regulation research. A point to remember from findings, is that many students are overconfident about their academic capabilities (Pajares, 1996) requiring teachers to do transparent evaluations and work schemes to help students build more realistic representations, since beliefs are shared with the group, thus a whole class may involve itself in this construction.

Methodology

This research is the result of applying BALLI inventory (Horwitz 1999), Multiple Intelligences Inventory (Romero, 2004) and self-esteem scale (MMPI 2007), considering social data about students 2009-2 cohort at the end of the first year of Terminal Efficiency Research Project (PIAFET) convened by Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. It is designed and performed at the School of Languages, state campi of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, in Mexico.

It responds the questions, is a student's preferred kind of intelligence related to beliefs about Language Learning assessed with BALLI inventory? Is there a relation of beliefs to self-esteem? The study narrates the development on the first year of a longitudinal exploratory research to find the beliefs of BA in Language Teaching students and their relation to the preferred kind of intelligence and self esteem

Kind of Research and Sample

It is the initial study from a longitudinal exploratory research to find the beliefs of BA in Language Teaching students and the relation to preferred intelligence and self-esteem.

The sample are 75 language teacher trainees in four groups chosen, one in each campi considering the larger amount of students opting for the BA in Languages Teaching in the core stage of the program, since they will decide finally on the third semester. There are 49 women and 26 men whose ages range from 17 to 44. The population is not easy to be established since a number of students begin a given period the core stage and then they decide their career when registering for 3rd semester; other students starting earlier add up in their groups, which will reflect in the institution statistics. In the 2010-2 semester, 170 students had opted for BA in Languages Teaching out of 285 students in core stage in 2009-2.

Instruments

A Multiple Intelligences Inventory for nine kinds of intelligences. Each kind of intelligence has ten items (learning strategies used), to rate zero, one or two, indicating how true the statement is for the student. Sums will show the larger, preferred kind of intelligence. This inventory was chosen because it was designed for foreign language learners and has been reliable in other studies (Romero 1997, 2004). (Appendix A). An inventory of beliefs about second language learning, BALLI, containing 34 statements in a five point scale. It was designed by Horwitz to find cultural and students teachers differences, and is regarded central for the macro study proposed by BUAP. (Appendix B).

A self-esteem scale of Minnesota Multiple Personality Inventory (MMPI), with 34 items; 24 to assess self-esteem and ten to show reliability on students' answers (5, 8, 11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 23, and 26). It identifies high self-esteem when they obtain 50% or more correct answers, low self-esteem when they obtain 70% or more incorrect answers and doubtful from 51-69% incorrect answers. In the reliance scale, 4-10 mistakes decide rejection as not trustable answers. This scale was chosen for its high proven reliability and international recognition (Appendix C).

Procedure

Initially, researchers gathered to agree on dates, instruments and criteria to be used throughout the study. It should comply with BUAP's planned application of BALLI inventory.

First, application of the questionnaires done in two semesters, first Multiple Intelligences and self-esteem. BALLI applied by the end of second semester.

Second, a data base using SPSS 15 (Statistical program for Social Sciences) created to enter data from different instruments and campuses.

Analysis: Descriptive of variables and relations with SPSS cross-tabs menu of the program displayed results with .05 significance level of Kendal Tau C correlation, where lineal ordinal measures are used; besides identifying groups of answers with Discriminant Analysis. The significance level was chosen on the basis of the exploratory feature of this research and because the sample size is small.

Reliability

Alpha reliability for BALLI answers, inventory, scale and general data was .82, considered good, indicating internal logic and coherence of the answers with respect to the whole group of variables. Variance Analysis was significant at .000 and Hotelling's T squared test indicated that the sample was drawn from a normal population.

Results

The group of 75 participants is conformed by 65.3% (49) females and 34.7% (26) males. The informants were studying their first two semesters of the program; 41.3% (31) of them in Tijuana, 25.3% (19) in Tecate, 22.7% (17) in Mexicali, and 10.7% (8) in Ensenada by the end of second semester.

Age and Self-esteem

In the 17-19 range were 43 students; in 20-22 there were 23 students and over 23 of age there were 9 students. The participants answered a self-esteem test and showed differences by age, increasing together as follows, see Table 1.

Table 1. Students' self-esteem by age

Self-esteem	Dubious	Low	High
17-19	35%	23%	42%
20-22	35%	22%	43%
23 and over	0	44%	56%

Even though the sample at one time span is transversal for the time being, it will later be compared to a final measure that shows changes that occurred during their school life. Differences by age can be seen at this moment, showing dubious and low self-esteem in the lower age group, whereas 42% hold a high self-esteem. In the middle group 43% have a high self-esteem same proportion is dubious (35%); while in the third and older group 56% have a high self-esteem and they are not dubious, considering they have built a better referent to evaluate themselves.

Multiple Intelligences. Discriminant Analysis

This test is applied to find out the possibility of predicting the answers to the BALLI inventory from the preferred kind of intelligence in the participants of this sample. Eight discriminant functions are shown, leaving out Naturalistic intelligence since only one participant chose this as preferred intelligence type in this sample. A larger sample would give additional information for there would be more participants that prefer Naturalistic intelligence. The following data was grouped under Classification Results in Table 2. It shows how many cases fall in each category:

Table 2. Classification results

Preferred Intelligence	Predicted Group									Total
	V-L	L-M	B-K	V-S	Mu	Interp	Intrap	Nat	Exist	
% L-V	100.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
L-M	.0	80.0	.0	.0	.0	20.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
C-K	.0	.0	86.7	.0	6.7	.0	.0	.0	6.7	100.0
V-E	.0	.0	.0	100.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
Mu	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
Interp	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
Intrap	.0	.0	5.9	5.9	.0	.0	88.2	.0	.0	100.0
Nat	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0	100.0
Exist	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0	100.0

From original cases 92.0% were correctly grouped.

Results from Discriminant Analysis are a model in which calculations must be made to predict what group an answer will pertain to; a formula is used to see the strength of discriminant variables that affect the function. For that purpose, Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients can be used to calculate the discriminant score for a given case. The score is calculated in the same

manner as a predicted value from a linear regression, using the standardized coefficients and the standardized variables, from the table of Standardized Coefficients of Canonical Discriminant Functions, keeping the signs in each line and adding by column.

BALLI Inventory and Multiple Intelligences

Only most significant correlations with Multiple Intelligences are shown:

As to item 24 (theme 1) It's easier to speak than to understand a foreign language, Verbal-Linguistic agrees 40%, dubious 40%; Visual-Spatial disagrees in 75% (they work in abstract easily), and so disagrees Bodily-Kinesthetic in 53.3%. On item 32 (theme 2) People who speak more than one language are very intelligent; Verbal-Linguistic, agree 60% only, but Visual-Spatial agree 75%; it could have a relation with the abstract quality of languages as well. On item 34 Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language; Visual-Spatial agree in 75%, 25% undecided, no one disagrees.

26. On (Theme 3) Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating. All types disagree.

13. For (Theme 4) It is ok to guess if you do not know a word in the foreign language. Bodily-Kinesthetic agree in 57.1%, they are active, like to learn through practice. Visual-spatial and verbal-linguistic disagree strongly (75 and 70% respectively, they do master language). Logical-mathematical disagree in 60%, it is not logical for them.

Discussion and Recommendations

A preferred style of learning does relate in a significant way to the opinions and the beliefs we construct. Teachers specifically must make sure that students' beliefs can be modified to put the findings into good work otherwise there is no progress. And, as much as beliefs can be changed, esteem can be improved and students be aware of it, so do changes occur in our preferred kind of intelligence because of the context, the practice and the group. Self-esteem will be built again from adolescence to adulthood and students' own appreciation will rely on more realistic social basis, which must be provided in the classroom. We should be able to work these dynamic properties in students' benefit. Several similarities were found in this research to other studies performed before, both mentioned in Horwitz review (1999) or the bibliography consulted to enrich our point of view. Perceived difficulty of foreign language learning (items 6, 14) rated high, 86.6%, as in Horwitz, meaning time needed to master a language is underestimated. However, a formal and commonly shared measure of mastery has not been mentioned. Moreover, the concept mastery has been given several definitions along time. Researchers really need to retake that old principle of making definition of concepts clear and equivalent. The case of people who after 2-3 months of learning a Language achieve comprehension is rare but reality too. Students here were highly self-confiding agreeing with Pajares statement. Students considered they could learn a foreign language well up to 89.3%. Also, they considered everyone can learn to speak a foreign language well, being then not only indication of high self-esteem, but would also mean that they perceived difficulty is low for students as in Horwitz (1999) French language sample.

In the third theme, students in this sample agreed that learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects. And only 68% consider that they must have cultural knowledge on the foreign language to learn it better. In the fifth theme, the item of better job opportunities when language is well learned and spoken (86.3%) shows this sample takes instrumental orientation also

or should we say a realistic one in a globalized world. One may infer that students are in the globalized era and have acknowledged the desirability of multilingualism.

We mentioned earlier that the authors of this report considered that students will increase their self-esteem just because of age, to date nothing here or in previous studies shows contrary results, and may continue to have such belief which will be assessed in their last semesters of the B A program. We do agree however that reinforcement has an effect at every level of education and all ages and it should be regarded keystone in the classroom situation. Best if the teacher is informed both of students' beliefs as well as preferred kind of intelligence. And finally it is in students' interest to promote a globalized culture of understanding difference as well as similarity, students will benefit when developing other less preferred kinds of intelligence. It is in the method, in the planning and the awareness that teachers can help students achieve this goal. Construction of Representations Collaboratively implies discussing and sharing meanings in the classroom, under knowledgeable teachers guidance (Suthers, Hundhausen, 2001).

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Annex A

INVENTARIO DE INTELIGENCIAS MULTIPLES: Cual es tu estilo de aprender?

Lee cada enunciado rápidamente. Elige cuál es cierto para ti.

2 = muy cierto; 1 = $\pm$ cierto; 0 = no cierto

NOMBRE: _____

Lingüístico-Verbal:

- _____ A. Me gustan los juegos de palabras como 100 Mexicanos Dijeron
- _____ B. Soy bueno para escribir cartas
- _____ C. Si escucho una canción, recuerdo la letra.
- _____ D. Leo los letreros y anuncios en la carretera, en el camión o taxi.
- _____ E. Aprendo más oyendo el radio o una clase que viendo películas o leyendo
- _____ F. Mis materias favoritas en la escuela son lenguaje, historia, y no química ni matemáticas.
- _____ G. Me gusta leer muchas cosas, incluyendo libros y revistas.
- _____ H. Cuando escribo una composición generalmente escribo más que mis compañeros.
- _____ I. Me han dicho que soy bueno para escribir.
- _____ J. Me gusta contar historias y chistes. TOTAL _____

Lógico-Matemático:

- _____ A. Me gusta probar las cosas haciendo experimentos.
- _____ B. En la escuela me gustan las clases de matemáticas.
- _____ C. Busco la lógica y el patrón de lo que estoy haciendo.
- _____ D. Puedo resolver problemas de números en mi cabeza sin usar calculadora.
- _____ E. Me gusta lo que se ha categorizado, medido y analizado de alguna forma.
- _____ F. Antes de construir cualquier cosa, mido, planeo y proyecto lo que voy a necesitar.
- _____ G. Me gusta aprender o entender como funcionan las cosas y las máquinas.
- _____ H. Me gusta jugar ajedrez, canasta y otros juegos de estrategia.
- _____ I. Soy curioso y muchas veces hago la pregunta ¿porqué?
- _____ J. Me gusta leer sobre los descubrimientos científicos. TOTAL _____

Corporal-Kinestésico:

- _____ A. Me gusta jugar a actuar, hacer gestos y mímica.
 - _____ B. Hago un deporte o más.
 - _____ C. Necesito levantarme y moverme, no estar sentado todo el tiempo.
 - _____ D. Cuando hablo muevo mucho las manos, incluso cuando hablo por teléfono.
 - _____ E. Me gusta aprender haciendo o creando algo.
 - _____ F. Me gustan las actividades como acampar, pasear en bote, andar en bicicleta.
 - _____ G. Cuando voy de compras levanto y toco las cosas que me llaman la atención.
 - _____ H. Creo que mi coordinación física es buena.
 - _____ I. Me encanta bailar.
 - _____ J. Me gusta aprender haciendo algo en lugar de leer o escucharlo.
- TOTAL: _____

Visual-Espacial:

- _____ A. Disfruto haciendo crucigramas, laberintos, hallar 7 cosas escondidas.
- _____ B. Prefiero ver un mapa a que alguien me explique como llegar a un lugar.
- _____ C. En la escuela, me gusta más la geometría que el álgebra.
- _____ D. Me gustan los libros con fotografías, tablas y otras ilustraciones.
- _____ E. Recuerdo con facilidad los detalles de algo que ya vi.
- _____ F. Me fijo y observo el color de la ropa.
- _____ G. Me fijo y disfruto de la arquitectura de los edificios.
- _____ H. Disfruto las tareas de hacer tablas y organizadores gráficos.
- _____ I. Siempre llevo mi cámara cuando voy de viaje o a eventos especiales.
- _____ J. Me gusta dibujar y garabatear.

TOTAL: _____

Musical:

- _____ A. La música es parte importante de mi vida.
- _____ B. Canto cuando estoy en la regadera.
- _____ C. Cuando estudio o trabajo murmullo canciones o tamborileo con los dedos
- _____ D. Otros me han dicho que canto bien.
- _____ E. Conozco la tonada de muchas canciones diferentes.
- _____ F. Con facilidad puedo hacer palmas al ritmo de una canción.
- _____ G. Puedo tocar cuando menos un instrumento musical.
- _____ H. Puedo detectar cuando un cantante o músico se sale de tono.
- _____ I. La música me ayuda a escribir y a estudiar.
- _____ J. Apago el radio o la TV sigo escuchando la música de los comerciales. TOTAL:_____

Interpersonal:

- _____ A. Me gusta estudiar y trabajar en grupo.
- _____ B. Me gustan las actividades sociales y estar en clubes.
- _____ C. Cuando tengo algún problema lo hablo con otros antes de actuar.
- _____ D. Soy muy sensible a los sentimientos y estado de ánimo de los otros.
- _____ E. Prefiero asistir a fiestas y otras actividades a estar solo el fin de semana.
- _____ F. Para mí es muy importante hacer y tener amigos.
- _____ G. La gente me dice que soy un buen líder.
- _____ H. Creo que soy una persona que sabe jugar en equipo.
- _____ I. Soy bueno para explicar y enseñar cosas a otras personas.
- _____ J. Si dos amigos discutieron, intento que hagan la paz y se comuniquen TOTAL:_____

Intrapersonal:

- _____ A. Llevo un diario donde anoto lo que pienso y lo que siento.
- _____ B. Me gusta trabajar de manera independiente y a mi propio paso.
- _____ C. Pienso con frecuencia en mis sueños y en mis recuerdos.
- _____ D. Cuando tengo que hacer un proyecto me gusta pensarlo por algún tiempo.
- _____ E. Cuando alguien lastima mis sentimientos me recupero rápidamente.
- _____ F. Me gusta tener tiempo para meditar con tranquilidad.
- _____ G. Me considero una persona que tiene auto-disciplina.
- _____ H. Creo que me entiendo a mí mismo aunque otros no me entiendan.
- _____ I. Puedo mencionar los valores en que se basa mi forma de vivir.
- _____ J. Tengo opiniones y creencias diferentes y a otras personas les parece confuso TOTAL_____

Naturalista:

- _____ A. Me gustan las actividades al aire libre, como caminata y acampar.
- _____ B. Soy bueno para plantar flores y otras plantas.
- _____ C. Me gustan los libros y las películas sobre la naturaleza.
- _____ D. Me gusta coleccionar piedras, hojas de plantas, conchas o plumas.
- _____ E. Reconozco el patrón y el color en lo que veo, escucho y experimento.
- _____ F. En la escuela mi materia favorita es la de Ciencias.
- _____ G. Me gusta tomar fotos y dibujar escenas sobre la naturaleza.
- _____ H. Soy muy detallista hasta en las cosas pequeñas.
- _____ I. Soy bueno para clasificar, categorizar, seleccionar o analizar información.
- _____ J. Me gusta usar binoculares, microscopios o telescopios para estudiar. TOTAL:_____

Existencial:

- _____ A. En ocasiones, me comparo con lo infinito del universo.
- _____ B. Creo que no hemos cuidado lo suficiente el mundo en que vivimos.
- _____ C. Reconozco que el holocausto es parte de la naturaleza humana
- _____ D. He sentido al menos un profundo amor en mi vida
- _____ E. En alguna ocasión perdí la noción del tiempo al observar una obra de arte
- _____ F. Me gusta participar en campañas ambientales
- _____ G. Busco la ocasión y el espacio para sentarme a meditar y reflexionar.
- _____ H. En la escuela asisto a las exposiciones y presentaciones de arte.
- _____ I. Soy un asiduo espectador de las películas sobre el holocausto.
- _____ J. Acostumbro leer temas filosóficos y sobre moral. TOTAL:_____

TOTALES:

Lingüístico-Verbal _____ Visual-Espacial _____ Intrapersonal _____

Lógico-Matemático _____ Musical _____ Naturalista _____

Corporal-Kinestésico _____ Interpersonal _____ Existencial _____

El estilo de aprender **con mayor puntuación total** es **tu estilo preferido de aprender**.

Sin embargo, el autor de la Teoría de Inteligencias Múltiples, Howard Gardner, recomienda que se deben desarrollar todos los tipos de inteligencia. Muchas gracias,

Original de: Ligeia Lamberti (TESOL), Adaptado por: Beatriz Romero (UABC) y Lilia Joya (UNAM), 2008

Annex B

INVENTARIO SOBRE LAS CREENCIAS DEL APRENDIZAJE DE IDIOMAS

(Horwitz, 1988)

I. LEE CADA ORACIÓN E INDICA SI ESTÁS DE ACUERDO O NO CON EL CONTENIDO. ESCRIBE LA LETRA QUE CORRESPONDA SEGÚN TU OPINIÓN EN LA HOJA DE RESPUESTAS PARA CADA ENUNCIADO, EXCEPTO PARA LOS NÚMEROS 4 Y 14, QUE TRAE SU PROPIA CLAVE. GRACIAS.

A - totalmente de acuerdo

B - de acuerdo

C - indeciso

D- en desacuerdo

E- totalmente en desacuerdo

1.- Es más fácil para los niños aprender un idioma extranjero que para los adultos.

2.- Algunas personas nacen con una habilidad especial para aprender una lengua extranjera.

3.- Algunos idiomas son mas fáciles de aprender que otros.

4.- El idioma que estoy tratando de aprender es:

A.- Muy difícil

B.- Difícil

C.- Medianamente difícil

D.-Fácil

E.- Muy Fácil

5.- El idioma que estoy tratando de aprender esta estructurado de la misma forma que mi lengua materna.

6.- Creo que aprenderé a hablar este idioma muy bien.

7.- Es importante hablar una lengua extranjera con un excelente acento.

8.- Es necesario conocer la cultura del idioma que estoy aprendiendo para poder hablarlo.

9.-No se debe decir nada en la lengua extranjera hasta que pueda decirlo correctamente.

10.- Es más fácil para alguien que ya sabe un idioma extranjero aprender otro.

11.- Es mejor aprender un idioma en un país extranjero.

12.- Si escuchara a alguien hablando el idioma que estoy aprendiendo, me acercaría a ellos para poder practicarlo.

13.- Es correcto adivinar el significado de una palabra de la lengua extranjera cuando uno no la conoce.

14.- Si alguien pasa una hora diaria aprendiendo un idioma, ¿Cuanto le tomará a él o ella hablar con fluidez?

A.- Menos de un año

B.- 1-2 años

C.- 3 - 5 años

D.- 5 -10 años

E.- Una hora al día no es suficiente para aprender un idioma.

15.- Yo tengo aptitud para los idiomas.

16.- Aprender un idioma es cuestión de aprender muchas nuevas palabras.

17.- Es importante repetir y practicar frecuentemente.

18.- Siento confianza en mi mismo cuando el idioma frente a otras personas.

19.- Si se te permite cometer errores al principio, será difícil deshacerse de ellos posteriormente.

20.- Aprender un idioma es cuestión de aprender muchas reglas gramaticales.

21.- Es importante acudir al laboratorio de idiomas para practicar.

22.- Las mujeres son mejores que los hombres para aprender idiomas.

23.- Si hablo este idioma muy bien, tendré muchas oportunidades de usarlo.

24.- Es más fácil hablar que entender un idioma extranjero.

25.- Aprender un idioma es diferente a aprender cualquier otra materia.

26.- Aprender un idioma es cuestión de traducir.

27.- Si aprendo a hablar este idioma muy bien me ayudará a conseguir un mejor empleo.

28.- Es más fácil leer y escribir un idioma que hablar y entenderlo.

- 29.- Las personas que son buenas en matemáticas y ciencias no son buenas para aprender un idioma extranjero.
- 30.- Los mexicanos consideran importante hablar una lengua extranjera.
- 31.- Me gustaría aprender este idioma para poder conocer a nativos del mismo.
- 32.- Las personas que hablan más de una lengua son muy inteligentes.
- 33.- Los mexicanos son buenos para aprender idiomas.
- 34.- Todos pueden aprender a hablar un idioma extranjero.

HOJA DE RESPUESTAS

Nombre_____No. De alumno_____

Edad_____Turno_____

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1.____ | 18.____ |
| 2.____ | 19.____ |
| 3.____ | 20.____ |
| 4.____ | 21.____ |
| 5.____ | 22.____ |
| 6.____ | 23.____ |
| 7.____ | 24.____ |
| 8.____ | 25.____ |
| 9.____ | 26.____ |
| 10.____ | 27.____ |
| 11.____ | 28.____ |
| 12.____ | 29.____ |
| 13.____ | 30.____ |
| 14.____ | 31.____ |
| 15.____ | 32.____ |
| 16.____ | 33.____ |
| 17.____ | 34.____ |

Annex C

Escala de Actitudes

Nombre_____ Fecha_____ Grupo_____

Contesta Cierto o Falso por favor en el margen izquierdo

1. Soy una persona importante
2. Pierdo fácilmente las discusiones
3. Definitivamente no tengo confianza en mí mismo
4. Le agrado a la mayor parte de la gente que me conoce
5. No siempre digo la verdad
6. Me parece que soy tan listo y capaz como la mayoría de los que me rodean
7. Definitivamente a veces me siento un inútil
8. No leo diariamente todos los artículos editoriales del periodico
9. Fui una persona lenta para aprender en la escuela
10. En varias ocasiones he dejado de hacer algo porque he dudado de mi habilidad
11. De vez en cuando dejo para mañana lo que debiera hacer hoy
12. Algunas veces me enojo
13. Tiendo a dejar de hacer algo que quiero, si otros creen que eso no vale la pena
14. Mis modales en la mesa no son tan buenos en casa como cuando salgo a comer con otras personas
15. No me siento capaz de planear mi futuro
16. Me siento incomodo cuando la gente me halaga
17. Si pudiera entrar a un cine sin pagar y estuviera seguro de no ser descubierto, probablemente lo haría
18. A veces pienso que no sirvo para nada
19. Me gusta conocer gente importante porque eso me hace importante
20. Tiendo a dejar de hacer algo que deseo cuando los demás piensan que esa no es la manera correcta de hacerlo.
21. No me agradan todas las personas que conozco
22. No puedo hacer nada bien
23. En ocasiones me gusta el chisme
24. La gente puede hacerme cambiar de opinión muy fácilmente, aun cuando ya haya tomado una decisión
25. Con frecuencia me confundo y se me olvida lo que quiero decir
26. En las elecciones algunas veces voto por candidatos que casi no conozco
27. Soy torpe y poco hábil
28. La gente piensa que no soy atractivo(a)
29. Con frecuencia pienso que no soy tan bueno(a) como otras personas
30. Cuando los problemas necesitan solución generalmente dejo que otra persona los resuelva
31. Reconozco que tengo varios defectos que no seré capaz de cambiar
32. Me enojo conmigo mismo(a) cuando accedo demasiado a los deseos de los demás
33. Sé que soy una carga para todos
34. Es difícil para mí aceptar cumplidos

¡Muchas Gracias!

SECTION 3 – LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND AFFECTIVE FACTORS

This section presents three studies about Language Proficiency and Affective Factors in three different Public Universities.

Wide acceptance has been given to the fact that many factors take part in the process of learning of a second or a foreign language. Some of these can be affective factors.

Multiple factors are discussed in these articles: they analyze how language proficiency is determined by the development of learning strategies through emotional experiences; they explore the links between beliefs, language proficiency and multiple intelligences and they aim to understand the impact of students' beliefs about language learning in their language learning process.

The development of language learning strategies through emotional experiences in English language learning

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Abstract

The present research shows the results obtained with a group of 24 students in the third term of the ELT-UQROO programme after the development of language learning strategies through emotional experiences in English language learning.

This study used a qualitative approach, which allowed us to confirm how emotional components motive students to continue with the task of learning a foreign language. The data collection was through learner's emotional journals which reported the factors that pushed students to look for ways to improve their language proficiency.

Introduction

Affective factors are considered pivotal elements for the success of foreign language learners (Ellis, 1994; Arnold and Brown, 1999; MacIntyre, 2002; Mercer, 2011). However, cognition has been emphasised in English Language Teaching (ELT) research in spite of the interplay that both dimensions have on learning (Arnold, 1999). Emotions are integral components of affect; however, the investigation of these has been eclipsed in the research agenda in the ELT field. Although the anxiety domain has been considered as the most influential factor in language learning success (Oxford, 1999), different studies have revealed that the emotions experienced during language learning instruction are vast (Garret and Young, 2009; Bown and White, 2010; Imai, 2010; Aragão, 2011; Méndez 2011). Language learners are prone to experience a range of emotions and feelings during the complex process of learning a foreign language due to internal and external factors. Thus the effects of the emotional experiences learners go through during learning can be positive or negative. Although negative emotions may be considered negative for language learning, these have been found to promote language learners development (Imai, 2010; Méndez, 2012). The aim of this chapter is to present the positive effects of the negative emotions experienced by students of the ELT programme at the Universidad de Quintana Roo. Results showed that negative emotions made students use learning strategies in order to improve their language learning process.

Language learning strategies

The Good Language Learner studies (GLL) started in the 1970s when research was carried out to identify the characteristics of GLLs. It began by trying to discover the steps or strategies used by GLLs so teachers could make use of these findings to help less able learners to better their performance. The first studies were those carried out by Stern (1975), Rubin (1975) and Naiman et al. (1978). These studies looked at different kinds of learners in different contexts, but what was interesting was that they were unable to identify a set of strategies used exclusively by good language learners. However, these three studies were able to provide findings on the general characteristics of GLLs. The major finding from these studies was that there were many different pathways to success.

Research on learning strategies has made a distinction between strategies for the use of language and strategies to learn the language (Cohen, 1998). Learning strategies are those tools students made use of in order to enhance or improve their language learning process. Strategies have been used for different purposes: communicate, simulate a situation in English, recall specific information and also there is distinction of strategies for the development of the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Research on the field has developed different taxonomies and proposals to apply them

Strategy training is a tool that all language learners should be exposed to in order to make their language learning process a successful and effective one. Different training frameworks have emerged through the years (Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1998; Chamot et al., 1999; Harris, 2003). However, these frameworks shared general features that can be summarized as follows:

Makes language learners aware of the diverse learning strategies they can make use of in their learning process; include an strategy training component in regular language classes; teach them explicitly through demonstration in specific regular activities; give language learners the opportunity to practice them in class; evaluate the use and effectiveness of these individually; encourage the extrapolation of effective strategies to different skills.

Strategy training should be initiated through an awareness of the existence of these resources so students can develop the commitment and responsibility towards their learning process.

Emotions in foreign language learning

Schumann's (1998) neurobiology theory considers feelings and emotions as crucial to the understanding of second language achievement. According to him, learning a second or foreign language is manipulated by our emotions, and these shape behaviour and perhaps all cognition. In some expressed motives a learner of a foreign language may have, including maintaining his or her self-esteem, getting a good grade, getting a good job, proving he or she possesses the abilities to perform a task, avoiding failure, or pleasing his or her parents or teacher, an emotional component is behind the motive that makes students initiate or continue with the complex task of learning a foreign language. According to Horwitz (1995) placing emphasis on the affective domain in the ELT field is a great opportunity to improve our teaching practices, since 'It is within the power of language teachers to address the emotional concerns of their students' (p. 578). Thus, affective states are considered central to the process of learning a language and closely related to the success or failure of such a task (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 2002).

Emotions are considered to be universal to all cultures (Ekman, 2003). As universal, I believe, is the desire to experience only positive, enjoyable emotions and to avoid those negative emotions that make us suffer or feel uneasy. According to Ekman (2003), emotions are:

...a process, a particular kind of automatic appraisal influenced by our revolutionary and personal past, in which we sense that something important to our welfare is occurring, and a set of physiological changes and emotional behaviors begin to deal with the situation

(p. 13).

In educational settings emotions are important since they can provide us with knowledge to comprehend students' reactions to instruction, and may provide us with insights on how to make it a more effective process. According to the motivation study results of Meyer and Turner (2002),

'...classrooms norms and roles, instructional activities and tasks, and the social structures of the classrooms were reflected in student feelings, beliefs and actions' (p. 110) . Attention to emotions engendered in language learning can help overcome problems of demotivation created by fear or anger which can risk foreign language learners' potential. In addition, trying to evoke emotions that enhance learners' self-esteem and promote empathy can contribute to reenergising students' motivational energy and facilitating language learning.

Method

The results presented in this article were not obtained through a study with the purpose of exploring the development of language learning strategies. However, through the exploration of the emotional experiences students went through for a period of 12 weeks, participants revealed that language learning strategies was a resource used by them with the purpose of enhancing their language learning process. According to Barbour (2008) the use of qualitative methods allows us to gain a deep understanding of the motives behind human behaviour. This could be proved by the natural emergence of the diverse learning strategies; learners made use of, when they faced negative experiences that they considered were threatening their learning development. The study from which the data was obtained used a qualitative approach which allowed us to confirm how the need to complete the ELT programme and move on to employment so they could fulfill not only personal but also familial obligations, led learners to resort to different language learning strategies to advance in their learning process. Although the wider study included the use of three different methods for data collection (personal narratives, emotional experiences journal and a semi-structured interview), this article only reports on the data drawn out from learners' emotional journals.

Setting and participants

This study was carried out at the University of Quintana Roo. A group of 24 students in the third term of the ELT programme was invited to take part in the project. Students were asked to firm a consent form and were informed about the different stages of the study so they could take a decision about participating or not in it. Only 20 (13 female and seven male) students agreed to participate, and voluntarily kept a structured journal for 12 weeks during their second year in the programme.

Data collection methods

This article reports on the data collected through an electronic journal. Students were given an electronic format to capture their emotions and their sources for a period of 12 weeks. Students were advised to write as many journal entries as desired per week in order to keep a map of their emotional experiences. Students were not limited in terms of the type (negative or positive) of emotion to report, or in the number of journal entries to write per week. Every Friday students were responsible for sending their journal entries by e-mail to the researchers. In the journal entries, students became observers of their own emotional experiences and were asked to record these as honestly as possible. Some entries included introspective reflections on their own experience (Bailey, 1983). In this study, the journals were focused on those emotional moments students experienced during classroom instruction that triggered in them an emotional reaction. Journals have been found to be:

Like a checkpoint between your emotions and the world. They are private but allow you to view your feelings from some distance. In a journal you can clarify, release, organize and soothe your feelings. You can experiment without consequences. Journals provide flexibility for approaching and understanding your own emotions. (Jacobs, 2004 p. 3)

Data analysis

Data analysis is an ongoing process which includes reflection and questioning analytically. Although, there are no rigid rules or guidelines about how to do it, most qualitative researchers agree that it is precisely this feature that gives qualitative research its richness. Journals were analysed using a thematic analysis approach in which different stages were done. We began data analysis with open coding. This stage involved reading the journal entries to understand which emotional experiences participants were reporting, what situations were originating these and the results these experiences had on their motivation and learning process. In this stage, we also identify common concepts and recursively reviewed the data set until we could not identify new ones. Next, axial coding was used to identify connections and relations among the different categories emerging from the previous stage. Finally, the main category from which the results presented here was established and named *positive effects of negative emotions*.

Results

The present study examined the emotional experiences students starting their second year of the ELT programme at the University of Quintana Roo in 2009. As mentioned before the purpose of the study was not focused on understanding the learning strategies students made use of to improve their language learning development; however, learning strategies were the tool that most students (17) revealed using in order to face negative emotional experiences. The process revealed by students' negative experiences is extremely interesting because the negative experiences led to two different outcomes. Although some (15) students felt paralysed in class, most of them (17) decided to take an active role in their learning process and to develop strategies to make it more effective.

This article reports the effects of negative emotions in the development of learning strategies that helped students to overcome negative emotions and reload their motivational energy in order to continue in the ELT programme and finish it. The situations identified as pushing students to resort to the use of learning strategies were: students' comparisons with their peers, a group of advanced students who provided a good model for them, future familial responsibilities, determination to succeed, and the goal of obtaining a university degree which could help them to fulfill other needs in their lives. The factors listed above pushed students to look for ways to improve their language proficiency. The constant comparisons students were making with a group of advanced peers fostered in participants of this study learning awareness, learning strategies and motivational strategies.

Negative emotions started to emerge during the first sessions of the course. Students' knowledge was very basic and they started to panic when not able to understand everything the teacher was saying or explaining. Fear, worry and sadness were the three main negative emotions students experienced during the first third of the term. Students reported being afraid of being laughed at while participating in class activities, worried about not being able to understand everything the teachers were explaining, and sad about their lack of vocabulary which restricted their participation in class. Another factor contributing to the experience of negative emotions was a group of advanced students. The ability division in the group pushed low proficient learners to develop their language abilities. It was because of this that students started to develop a sense of responsibility towards their language learning process, which led them to develop learning and motivational strategies from the very first week of the term.

Reflection also seemed to have started early in the term because of a critical incident that students reported in the third week regarding the marking system one teacher used in a writing task. This episode seemed to have marked the course since some students reported feeling different after this

event in class. However, the negative feelings experienced during this event were the ones that pushed them to be aware of their active role in their own language learning process.

Language learning awareness

Although students' realisation of the proficiency difference between them and their peers made them feel sad and frightened, it also made them aware of the time and effort needed to be able to speak fluently:

Well...I have tried to do certain things so I can feel good about myself and do not feel sad or down because I see the advanced students. If they are more proficient it is because they have studied more and I do not have to feel bad about it. On the contrary, I have to make my best effort in my studies. [NATALIA – INTERVIEW]

Thanks to all these experiences in class I am more conscious of the need to invest more time to study at home...I have been looking for web pages to practise and chat with native speakers so I can learn expressions and be able to speak better. [RICARDO – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

Students embraced negative events as learning opportunities because all of them (18) referred to these negative events in class as a way of understanding what they were doing wrong and how to improve in that particular skill. Most students' (17) fear was about their speaking ability because it was the skill that caused their peers to make fun of them. Students started to look for vocabulary to enrich their oral participation, practised their vocabulary by watching USA TV programmes, encouraged peers to practise with them in order to gain confidence, and dedicated more time to reviewing at home the topics covered in class time.

I analysed myself and realised that I have to practise my English every day...I registered in a conversation workshop and started to review every night the notes from my class. [JIMMY – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

Most students (16) reported realising areas in which they were making mistakes, while others started to develop resilience towards negative experiences. Some students (ten) stated that these negative experiences were things they needed to overcome if they wanted not only to pass the course, but also to finish the degree. Students considered these negative experiences as a natural process that needed to be faced if they desired to speak a foreign language. This is clearly expressed in the following references:

When participating in class and making some minor errors, I realised there is nothing wrong with making them...we all have to go through that...and by not taking the mockery or offensive criticisms into account... I think this is the best I have done to feel motivated to make my best effort in the future. [JADED – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

I think in a negative way but thinking carefully ...positive because every time I am at the front saying something or explaining something...speaking in public helps me to overcome this weakness that I need to be a strength in the future...[JANE– JOURNAL/ Weeks 9-12]

Although some (nine) students felt insecure about their abilities to learn a foreign language during the first third of the term, most of them (16) convinced themselves that it was a matter of practice and not a lack of intellectual ability (Covington, 1992). This contributed to students looking for solutions to improve their language knowledge by making use of different learning strategies that could help them to learn in a better way.

Language learning strategies

From experiencing the very first negative events in class, students started to look for ways to make their language learning process an effective one. Students resorted to the use of learning strategies to diversify their approach to learning English. Students reported making use of diverse strategies in order to overcome those learning difficulties they were facing in their daily classes. Some (eight) students reported not feeling upset about the language proficiency of the advanced students but motivated to be able to speak like them in the future. The group of proficient students gave the beginner students a push to try to make their best efforts, as reported by the different ways they used to approach their learning concerns:

I don't have to feel worthless in class just because others participate or understand better than me. I have to make my best effort to be at their level. [NATALIA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

I have to think that I am at a learning stage...I do not have to ask myself what I cannot do at this stage...I have to work on this. [ANGELICA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

I started to listen to conversations in English, to watch movies to practise my vocabulary and pronunciation...and I am also listening to songs in English. [DAYANA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

Language learning strategies were tools students made use of in order to develop their language abilities and their confidence in class. Besides learning strategies, students also resorted to the use of motivational strategies to keep them energised to continue in the ELT programme, as their ultimate goal was to get a university degree and move on to employment in order to fulfil other needs in their lives.

Most (15) students realised that language learning needed the investment of time and effort in order to be successful. Students started to think about how to make their language learning process an effective one, as reported by some study participants:

I realised some of my classmates have taken extracurricular English courses for many years so they understand better and are more fluent ...and I decided to register in an English course and study more... so one day I can be able to express myself as fluently as them. [HANNA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

After my poor performance in my English oral exam ... I decided to register in a conversation course in order to improve my oral ability. [ISABEL – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

A growing awareness of control and commitment led students to assume greater responsibility in their learning process, as expressed by some (11) students:

This week I have to admit I did not feel motivated at all. I feel I am really not organised and I need to order my ideas and study hours. If I can spend all those hours

browsing the web and watching television I should also dedicate time to study...[JADED – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

I had taken the decision to quit my job because maybe it was taking most of my time...but then I decided to analyse my priorities because, after all, it is not my job....it is me because I sometimes feel that I use my job as an excuse not to carry on with my studies as I should. [ASERINA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 5-8]

Students' awareness led them to diversify their language learning approach. Some students (14) undertook reflection after a negative event in which they made an evaluation of the negative event and their motivational sources. This reflection allowed them to think of solutions which transformed into learning strategies. Most (17) of them reported making use of affective, cognitive, communicative, compensation, metacognitive and social strategies in order to help them overcome similar events in future classes:

I am practising my oral ability in my room. I stand in front of the mirror and practice giving a short speech in class. I need to put myself into situations that help me to overcome the fear of speaking in class... [NATALIA –JOURNAL/Weeks 5-8]

Not to hurry to look up the words in the dictionary and try to understand the story by the context. ([KENYA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 5-8]

Well... I asked a student from the last semester to help me review my pronunciation for the oral exam. [ESPERANZA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 5-8]

Besides learning strategies, students started to develop motivational strategies so they could cope with the demands of their foreign language learning process. The negative emotions experienced were short-lived since, after a period of reflection, students reenergised themselves to continue with their learning of English. Students recognised in interviews that emotions had been important for the maintenance of their language learning motivation. Although they considered that both positive and negative emotions were important, they realised that the negative emotions were the ones that pushed them to look for ways to improve their language learning process. Students agreed that their motivation had ups and downs. However, they all (18) considered that a negative event was not going to 'destroy' them. Thus, negative emotions had a positive effect on students' motivation because after experiencing one, students engaged in reflection that led them to develop motivational strategies. These helped them to try again and continue in the ELT programme. Students started to exercise emotional self-regulation, as all (18) reported:

I repressed the negative emotion and started to think in a positive way. [ASERINA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 1-4]

Well... I always try to calm down when I am going to present an oral exam because I do not want to allow nervousness to take over. [ISABEL – INTERVIEW]

Developing motivational strategies

Although students recognised that maintaining their motivation was their responsibility, they also considered that teachers could contribute greatly to it by making classes more dynamic and learning activities more fun. Students reflected on their family values when referring to being motivated. Although all (18) students agreed that maintaining their motivation was their own responsibility, they also stated that their families were a part of this responsibility. They considered that they

needed that affective push from mothers, fathers, siblings and friends to reenergise. Most students (16) resorted to emotional self-regulation and self-encouragement in order to keep their motivation energy at good levels:

Every day when I arrive at class I repeat to myself that everything is going to be all right and I believe it. [RICARDO – JOURNAL/ Weeks 5-8]

Believe in myself...believe that I can achieve my goal of learning English and finishing the degree if I desire...I have to set some goals and complete certain activities that I have planned to learn more every day...believe that I can do it. be prepared to face them. [KENYA – JOURNAL/ Weeks 9-12]

Students' attitudes towards the experience of negative events were very positive. They all recognised that during life they would have to face many negative events so they had to be prepared to face future situation in the best possible way.

Conclusions

The research findings provide strong evidence that, contrary to previous research findings on anxiety in language learning (Horwitz, 2001), negative emotions are not always detrimental to language learning processes. Although negative emotions had the immediate negative effect of lowering participants' motivational energy, they transformed these into positive energy after reflecting on the moral obligations they had to their families. The significant influence of the Mexican context on students' motivation contributed to the positive results of negative emotions in this study. Although students experienced more negative situations than positive ones, they turned these into positive outcomes. As mentioned before, the Mexican context was revealed as a positive enhancer of participants' motivation which contributed to the development of learning awareness, learning and motivational strategies. Thus, it is confirmed that the cultural context in which learners operate can play a major role on ameliorating the effects of negative emotions on language learning processes. The positive learning outcomes derived from the constant experience of negative emotions may have been completely different in another context. Thus, language teachers need to carefully address emotions in their specific contexts in order to enable learners to manage them to their advantage.

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A tri-dimensional study of pre-service teachers of English: beliefs, language, and multiple intelligences

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Abstract

Student success, whether measured by graduation rates or others, is a mix of multiple factors¹. In the case of non native teachers of English, pre-service teachers' perceptions of their possibilities for success as well as their skills for learning as indicated by their *intelligences* may determine their chances for academic achievement. This paper explores the beliefs, language proficiency and multiple intelligences profiles of 20 pre-service English language teachers enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (*Licenciatura en Enseñanza de la Lengua Inglesa* / BA in English Language Teaching) programme. Three different instruments were administered, namely the BALLI (Horwitz, 1988), the KET (Key English Test) and a Multiple Intelligences questionnaire. The findings reveal that though the students are highly motivated and positive about their ability to master the language, their current linguistic skills and predominant intelligences may hinder their chances for success, hence the relevance for implementing the correspondent action plans.

Key Words: Beliefs, graduation rate, language proficiency, multiple intelligences, language learning, academic success

Introduction

This study is part of a larger project (*PROYECTO INTEGRAL DE ANÁLISIS DE FACTORES QUE AFECTAN LA EFICIENCIA TERMINAL EN PROGRAMAS DE FORMACIÓN DE DOCENTES DE LENGUAS EN UNIVERSIDADES PÚBLICAS EN MÉXICO – PIAFET-*), which has as its main purpose to analyze those factors which may hinder students from concluding their BA studies; this in order to identify and propose ways for improving both student teachers performance as well as study programs.

The paper first offers an overview on the theory behind the three dimensions under study followed by the methodology undertaken including information on the context where the research takes place. The main findings that emerged as well as the possible implications are then presented. Conclusions and areas for further research follow.

¹ Factors Affecting Community College Completion Rates (2010). Community College Leadership Forum. Retrieved on line 28th September, 2012. Available at: http://po.linnbenton.edu/completion-agenda-task-force/Factors_Affecting_Community_College_Completion_Rates_cclf.pdf

Beliefs

Second language teachers - said of any language learnt after the mother tongue- bring a myriad of beliefs, assumptions and knowledge to language teaching and learning. Studies have shown that beliefs actually permeate what teachers do in the classroom (Garton, 2004; Richardson, 1996). The beliefs that pre-service teachers bring to SL or FL teacher education programs may limit the "intake" of subject matter taught in professional education courses, and may serve as a filter through which others' teaching performances are interpreted (Peacock, 2001). That said, beliefs play an important role in individuals' behaviour and motivation towards learning a language -- for example, English--, hence affecting the chances for success in doing so. These same beliefs may later impact future teachers' of English practice, making this area of research particularly relevant.

Beliefs about language learning belong in the domain of affective variables, such as attitudes, motivation, and anxiety, and often differ depending on individuals' experiences as well as other factors. These beliefs have a strong influence on how they – said of the learners- behave and act along the process of learning a language and are actually so important that they may overpass the relevance of approaches and materials used for language learning (Stevick, 1980).

As for teacher beliefs, these have been studied in numerous areas of educational research (Arnett and Turnbull, 2007; Barcelos, 2003; Lee, 2005; Pajares, 1992). Some studies reveal that mainstream teachers tend to have different beliefs about English language learning and learners in their classes (Faltis and Hudelson, 1994) and that their pedagogical beliefs are manifested through their instructional practices (Grossman, 1990; Richardson, 1996). The beliefs of teachers are important concepts in understanding their thought processes, instructional practices, and change and learning to teach hence the importance of conducting teacher education research designed to help pre-service and in-service teachers develop both their thinking and their practices.

Harste and Burke (1977), define beliefs as the philosophical principles that guide teachers' expectations and decisions. Others (Nisbett and Ross, 1980; Shavelson 1983) consider beliefs to be filters which are used by teachers to make instructional judgments and decisions. Later definitions are that of Richardson (1996), who sees beliefs as 'psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true' (Richardson 1996 quoted in Peacock 2001:178), and Benson and Lor's (1999) who define them as conceptions of learning.

Regarding how beliefs come to be, constructions concerning this phenomenon propose they result from cultural transmission and shape the ways in which our understanding of the world is constructed thus strongly influencing how individuals shape their perceptions and behaviours (Pajares, 1992). This notion of beliefs/knowledge being socially constructed attributed to Dewey (Dewey 1933, in Barcelos 2003) is still very much in the teaching research scenario. Under this view, teachers' beliefs not only affect their decisions in the classroom, but are in themselves modified by what happens in the classroom and by the teachers' perceptions of these events. In Sakui and Gaies' words '*teachers' knowledge (and beliefs) is situated, interpretive and dynamic.*' (Sakui and Gaies, 2003:154).

Independently of how great a factor a teacher's experience in the classroom may be in shaping or re-shaping his/her beliefs, consideration for the constructs a teacher brings as a learner must be the basis on which later beliefs are re-constructed. This position has been the centre of many research studies involving teacher education programmes (Garton, 2004). Under this perspective, teachers'

beliefs are seen to have their main origin in their experiences as learners, thus the importance of looking into this arena when it comes to pre-service teachers of a foreign language.

Teachers' assumptions about how the foreign language should be learned are likely to affect their way of teaching and surely teachers' beliefs about language learning may influence their effectiveness in the classroom. A pre-service teacher, for example, who believes that learning a foreign language primarily involves learning vocabulary, will spend most of his energy teaching vocabulary (Horwitz, 1988). If, on the other hand, a teacher believes that the learners' role in a language classroom is to listen and speak only when they are asked to answer questions, not much time will be left for students to speak up. Some have thus argued that EFL pre-service teachers should go through a process of 'deconditioning' to rid themselves of preconceived prejudices which would likely interfere with their language teaching (Holec, 1987: 27).

That said, looking into pre-service teachers beliefs becomes of paramount importance, especially at early stages during their formal instruction as teachers. Some studies have shown that undertaking specific action directed to changing beliefs about language learning and teaching, have demonstrated that such change is possible thus improving chances of success for both future teachers and their students (Zheng 2009, Wong 2010). Even though this study is in no way interventionist, the importance of the findings may reside in future projects to further enhance the chances for success of the pre-service teachers in the context where this study takes place.

Language Proficiency

English has moved from being a standard language to a global one because it has become the language of business, technology, education, economy, and politics. Due to this fact, "in many countries, extensive curriculum reforms are taking place as economies build the capacity required to operate in a globalised world. Improving national proficiency in English now forms a key part of the educational strategy in most countries" (Graddol, 2006, p.70)

In globalised economies, "Higher education is becoming globalised alongside the economy, and English is proving to be a key ingredient— partly because universities in the English-speaking world dominate the global league tables, and partly because English is proving popular as a means of internationalizing both the student community and teaching staff" (p.73). Mexico has not been the exception to this event and neither the University of Hidalgo which introduced English in the curriculum at university level in 1993. This was the case for some BA programs in the University of Hidalgo (UAEH) especially those which require students to have a good command of the language due to the characteristics of the BA programs such as Foreign Trade and Tourism. Soon UAEH authorities realized that in order to fulfill the new reform, they needed teachers with a BA degree in English Language Teaching. The Licenciatura en Enseñanza de la Lengua Inglesa (LELI) started in 1999 in order to train students to become English teachers. Some in-service teachers that were already working at the university but did not have a BA degree also enrolled.

As English proficiency came to be seen as a necessary criterion of 'graduateness', universities in many countries began to require students of any subject to reach a certain standard of English proficiency before they were able to obtain their degree. This often aspired to be around IELTS 6.0 but in practice, given the poor starting levels of students and, at times, indifferent motivation, rarely exceeded FCE/IELTS 5.0. This level is not regarded as sufficient for academic study through the medium of English (Graddol, p.96). Students who are accepted in the BA program in ELT however, are expected to master the language immediately because in third semester all the courses are taught

in English. As a consequence, some students drop out of school in second semester because they cannot reach the expected level. Despite this, students who study at LELI are not required to have a certain level of English in order to participate in the selection process; that is, as an entry requirement. They are however, required to reach 550 points on the TOEFL test or FCE B as a graduation requirement.

Multiple Intelligences in the Language Classroom

The Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory is based on the work of Howard Gardner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (1993). MI refers to a learner-based philosophy that characterizes human intelligence as having multiple dimensions that must be acknowledged and developed in education. Traditional IQ or intelligence tests measure logic and language. These tests are based on a test called the Stanford-Binet, founded on the idea that intelligence is a single unchanged, inborn capacity. This idea has been strongly challenged by the MI movement (Richards and Rodgers, 2008). MI proponents believe that all human beings possess a wider range of intelligences, but people differ in the strengths and combinations of them.

The idea of Multiple Intelligences has attracted the interest of many language educators. In his book *Frames of Mind* (1983), Gardner suggests that humans possess not a single intelligence, but a wider range of intelligences. Initially, the author conceived seven intelligences, which are known as the *native intelligences* to add two new intelligences (Gardner quoted in Harmer; 2005). According to this author this model is culture-free and avoids the conceptual narrowness usually associated with the traditional models of intelligence. The seven native “*Intelligences*” are:

- *Linguistic*. The ability to use language in special and creative ways, which is something lawyers, writers, editors, and interpreters are strong in. For a person with a strong linguistic intelligence the relationship between form and content can be very appealing.
- *Logical/mathematical*. This intelligence can be associated with “scientific” thinking. It often comes into play in the analytical part of problem-solving –when we make connections and establish relationships between pieces of information that may seem separate, when we discover patterns, and when we are involved in planning, prioritizing and systematizing. The ability to think rationally, often found with doctors, engineers, programmers, and scientists.
- *Spatial*. This intelligence is mainly dependent on our ability to see, through sound, and through somatic awareness. The perception of space is multi-sensory, even if, in many people, the visual aspect predominates. The ability to form mental models of the world, something architects, decorators, sculptors, and painters are good at. Language uses spatial thinking when it describes time and other concepts in terms of space.
- *Musical*. A person with a well-developed musical intelligence benefits from being in a world of beat, rhythm, tone, pitch, volume and directionality of sound; for language learning many of these features are part of the linguistic realm. A good ear for music, strong in singers and composers
- *Bodily/kinaesthetic*. Characteristic of this intelligence is the ability to use one’s body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for expressive as well as goal-directed purposes. Having a well-coordinated body, something found in athletes and craftspeople.
- *Interpersonal*. The core capacity is the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular among their moods, temperaments, motivations and intentions. Examined in its most elementary form the interpersonal intelligence entails the capacity of the child to discriminate among the individuals around him and to detect their various moods. Highly developed forms of this intelligence are to be found in religious and

political leaders, skilled parents and teachers, and in individuals enrolled in the helping professions as therapists, or counselors. Central to this intelligence is the ability to listen to what the other person seems to be saying, to be able to gain good rapport with another person, and to be adept at negotiation and persuasion.

- *Intrapersonal*. The ability to understand oneself and apply one's talent successfully, which leads to happy and well-adjusted people in all areas of life. In this intelligence, the horizon is where the boundaries of self lie. The ability to abstract oneself and to daydream is good evidence of the intrapersonal intelligence at work.

In 1997 Gardner added two new intelligences: *Naturalist* and *Existential*:

- *Naturalist*. The ability to understand and organize the patterns of nature.
- *Existential*. This intelligence might be manifest in someone who is concerned with fundamental questions about existence, or who questions the complexity about existence. In other words, according to the author: "*Individuals who exhibit the tendency to pose and ponder questions about life, death and ultimate realities*".

If we accept the MI theory in language learning, the fact that different intelligences predominate in different people imply that the same learning task might not be appropriate for all students. Learners with a strong logical/mathematical intelligence might respond well to a complex grammar explanation whereas other learners might need the help of diagrams because of their strength in the visual/spatial area. Learners who have strong interpersonal intelligence might need a more interactive environment if their learning is to be effective. According to Puchta and Rinvolucris (2005) people learn languages much better when allowed to do so within the wide range of perspectives afforded by MI. These authors also point out that if the language teachers are prepared to systematically involve other intelligence areas in their language lessons, the benefits can be seen in terms of:

- Students' motivation. Students' motivation depends partly on how addressed they feel in a class and how meaningful they think the activities are to them. That is to say, if the teaching is focused mainly on the linguistic domain, only the students with a strong linguistic intelligence will benefit; whereas the other students with different intelligences will not. In order to avoid this problem, it is a good idea to use activities that draw on a variety of intelligences so that all the students can feel more appreciated and cared for.
- The language classroom. In the language classroom there is a tendency to regard as intelligent only those students who show a high degree of linguistic ability and who therefore share the intelligence that language teachers are strong in. As a result the students who exhibit different intelligence will feel frustrated. MI deals with learner differences and considers learners as unique and develops instruction to respond to this uniqueness.

The BA in English Language Teaching

The *Licenciatura en Enseñanza de la Lengua Inglesa* belongs to the *Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades (ICSHu)* at the *UAEH*. Founded on 13th May in 1999, the BA opened its doors to the first generation in the July-December term that same year. Its current student population is about 260 students (the number varies slightly each semester) who are distributed in the eight semesters that make up the programme. Approximately 40 students enter the BA each semester; eighteen generations have finished their studies so far.

The BA had its origins on the need for catering for both social and educational needs in the region. A language for international communication and its teaching and learning as well as the inexistence of a similar program in the area, were the main reasons for creating the program, benefiting not only

the state of Hidalgo, but also surrounding states where such programs did not exist. The program has undergone two major evaluation processes: The first one in October 2006, when it reached the first level (Nivel I- I of III, being III the lowest) from the CIESS (*Comités Interinstitucionales de la Evaluación de la Educación Superior*). A second one was the accreditation process which concluded on 6th June in 2011. As for the vision of the program, its undergraduates are well accepted and the program is acknowledged as one of high educational quality whose faculty is currently involved in a number of national and international research projects as well as continuously in touch with the social and productive sectors where the undergraduates assume the role of teachers of English. The main objectives of the program are those of educating professionals capable of structuring, increasing, improving and refining the use of English, as well as having the methodological and pedagogical competencies required, including technological and cultural knowledge to perform as teachers of English with a high sense of commitment to their culture and their society.

It must be said that the subjects which the BA students have to take during their studies are taught either in Spanish or in English as follows: all subjects in first and second semester (with the exception of English I and II), are taught in Spanish. From third semester and on, all subjects are conducted in English. There is no requirement for a particular level of but students who are accepted in the BA program in ELT however, are expected to master the language immediately because in third semester all the courses are taught in English. As a consequence, some students drop out of school in second semester because they cannot reach the expected level.

The Sample

The participants in the study are 20 students of the BA who began their studies in the year 2009 in the August-December term that same year, being the 21st generation. One of the main features observed in the composition of groups at LELI is that a big majority of the students are female. The group understudy is no exception, with 17 females and three males².

Another interesting feature is that not all students in the group went directly from high-school to the BA. This partly explains the difference in ages in the group where 62% of the students are 19; 24%, 17; 9%, 21; and 5%, 18.

On the original residence of students, 14% of the participants in this study actually come from other states, and of those who do come from the state, a good number are from other cities and towns (48%) and only 38% of the total actually live in the capital city (Pachuca de Soto), where ICSHu and LELI are located. As for the high-schools where students come from, only two studied at private schools (data on the English program there was not collected). The rest come from either UAEH's high-schools or other technical high-schools (11), where the focus is not on the social sciences, nor on the humanities. For example, CBTIS, COABEH and CECYTEH, totaling 52% of the students, have a technical profile with students specializing in accounting, computer science, or other areas.

² The size of the sample was determined by the head of the project in that only one generation was to be studied. In the case of this BA program only one group enters the program each semester and the number of students was determined by the size of the group itself.

The instruments

Beliefs

In order to learn about the pre-service teachers' beliefs about language learning, the Horwitz *Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory* (BALLI). The questions in the instrument were translated to Spanish, the native language of respondents, to ensure that the participants' answers would not be altered by any possible misunderstandings of the original questions in English developed by Horowitz; this given the features of the students regarding their level of English as stated previously in this chapter. In the case of the UAEH, the instrument was administered with a group of teacher students in the second semester of their first year at the BA in ELT at LELI.

In Horowitz original study, the BALLI contains thirty-four items and assesses student beliefs in five major areas: 1) **difficulty of language learning** (items 3, 4, 6, 14, 24 and 28); 2) **foreign language aptitude** (items 1, 2, 10, 15, 22, 29, 32, 33, and 34) ; 3) **the nature of language learning** (items 5, 8, 11, 16, 20, 25, 26, and 28) ; 4) **learning and communication strategies** (items 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, and 21); and 5) **motivation and expectations** (items 23, 27, 30, and 31). Subjects are asked to read each item and then to indicate a response ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

Language Proficiency

A KET (Key Elementary Test) was used to identify students' proficiency English level once they were accepted in the BA program. Students were administered the written test on the third week of classes. The test was a sample test and it was administered during their English class by their English teachers. For the speaking exam, a timetable was designed so students took the oral test with two certified oral examiners following the KET exam format. These two examiners are not the English teachers students are taking their lessons with.

The final mark a candidate receives is the total of the marks obtained in each of the three papers (Reading and Writing, Listening, and Speaking). There is no minimum pass mark for individual papers. The Reading and Writing paper carries 50% of the marks and Listening and Speaking each carries 25% of the total marks.

There are fixed values for each KET grade:

- Pass with Merit = 85–100
- Pass = 70–84
- A1 = 45–69
- Fail = 0–44

This means that the score a candidate needs to achieve a KET passing grade will always be 70. Candidates with a score of 45–69 are issued with A1 Level certificates. Grade boundaries are set by considering item statistics, candidate performance, examiner reports and historical comparison, among other things. This ensures fairness and consistency from one examination to another and for each candidate.

Candidates who are successful in KET should be able to satisfy their basic communicative needs in a range of everyday situations with both native and non-native speakers of English. Regarding reading, KET candidates should be able to understand the main message, and some detail, of a variety of short factual reading texts: for example, signs, notices, instructions, brochures, guides, personal correspondence and informative articles from newspapers and magazines. They should

also have strategies for dealing with unfamiliar structures and vocabulary.

Multiple Intelligences

Regarding Multiple Intelligences (MI), a questionnaire was administered to determine the perceived MI preferences of the sample. The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was designed by Liligeia Lamberti (TESOL) and adapted by Beatriz Romero from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) and Lilia Joya from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). The questionnaire comprises an “*Inventory of Multiple Intelligences*” and covers Gardner’s ninth-dimensional model of intelligences and it was administered in Spanish in order to prevent problems related with the level of comprehension of the items by the participants.

The questionnaire consists of nine sections; each section corresponds to one of the nine intelligences: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, and existential.

Each section is composed of ten statements which reflect the respondent’s preferred learning style accordingly to the described Intelligence; a number has to be placed next to each statement: 2 stands for *very true*, 1 for *true* and 0 *not true*; once the questionnaire is completed, the respondent has to sum up the numbers. These numbers reflect the respondent’s strengths and weaknesses in a given intelligence. The intelligence that obtained the highest score represents the strongest intelligence for the respondent and the one with the lowest score exhibits his/her least preferred intelligence. The criterion used for considering a “*strong Intelligence*” was a score of 15 or more.

The Findings

Pre-service teachers’ beliefs about language learning

This section reports the findings obtained in the five original areas identified in the BALLI as done by Horowitz (1988) with the exception of the three questions mentioned above.

On the ***difficulty of language learning*** Table 1 shows the results obtained on items 3, 4, 6, 24 and 28.

Table1. The Difficulty of Language Learning

1	2	3	4	5*
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.				
9	8	3	0	0
4. The language I am trying to learn is: 1) a very difficult language, 2) a difficult language,				

3) a language of medium difficulty, 4) an easy language, 5) a very easy language.

3	11	4	2	0
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6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.

11	7	1	1	0
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24. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.

6	6	2	6	0
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28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.

1	6	5	7	1
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****Note:** 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

The findings in this first show a scenario where the majority of the participants are confident that they will achieve success at learning the language in spite of the difficulty it represents for them (75 % of the students consider the language to be difficult but 90 % of them assert they will eventually learn it). A cross tabulation of the scores showed that the majority of students who expect to "learn to speak this language very well" anticipate that it will take a moderate amount of time (one to two years). Interestingly too, approximately fifty percent of the participants believed that they will ultimately speak the language very well and that two years or less will be adequate "to become fluent." In the case of items 24 and 28, the students' perceptions about the difficulty of the different language skills, more than 50 % of the participants place speaking as less difficult in comparison to reading and writing, yet 25% cannot define which of these (reading and writing vs. speaking and understanding) is harder to achieve In the case of the students' expectations, not achieving their goal within the set time may affect their level of motivation thus decreasing their rate of success.

As for the implications regarding these pre- service teachers' future performance as teachers, it might be the case that these students will imprint their beliefs later as they become teachers of English in the sense that they will consider that the subject their learners attempt is difficult but that they –their students- will succeed. Also, and in relation to the time required to become proficient, these future teachers might – in the light of the unrealistic time set for learning a language- expect their learners to achieve a much quicker domain of the target language if we consider that altogether, beliefs may permeate teaching practice more than any preparation received in this area. Regarding **Foreign Language Aptitude**, the responses to items 1, 2, 10, 15, 22, 29, 32, and 34— which according to Horowitz(1988) concern the general existence of specialized abilities for language learning and beliefs about the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful language learners— , are reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Foreign Language Aptitude

	1	2	3	4	5**
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	9	10	0	1	0
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.	1	9	4	5	1
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	6	8	4	2	0
15. I have foreign language aptitude.	2	14	4	0	0
22. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.	5	1	8	6	0
29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	0	0	10	7	3
31. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	1	3	9	5	2
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language	19	1	0	0	0

*Note: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

From this section, the following findings emerge: The participants have strong beliefs about their aptitude for learning the language (70%) and include the general population in the category of potentially successful learners; participants markedly disagree on the relevance of gender or other abilities as a guarantee for successful language learning and neither attribute a higher intelligence to speakers of more than one language. On “common knowledge” about language learning, findings are similar to those found in other studies (including the original from Horwitz in 1988), where learners give importance to early acquisition of the language over later instruction. Regarding this, it might be that case that the participants feel somewhat unable to achieve proficiency given their level of English and the age at which they actually began to receive formal instruction. In relation to

future practice and given that the participants had not enrolled in core subjects related to the acquisition of a foreign language at the time when the data was collected, this finding reflects their beliefs prior to exposition to theoretical aspects regarding this area; it would only appropriate to administer the instrument once more now that these participants have covered such topics.

The *Nature of Language Learning* BALLI items 5, 8, 11, 16, 20, 25, 26, and 28 (see Table 3 below) include issues related to the nature of the language learning process. Item 8 and item 11 concern the role of cultural contact and language immersion in language achievement. Item 25 determines if learners view language learning as different from other types of learning. Items 16, 20, and 26 on the other hand, assess the learner's conception of the focus of the language learning task; item 5 addresses the students' perceptions of structural differences between the participants' mother tongue and the target language (in the case of this study, English).

Table 3. The Nature of Language Learning

	1	2	3	4	5**
5 The language I am learning is similar in structure to my mother tongue					
	0	3	0	10	7
8. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.					
	0	11	0	1	8
11. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.					
	9	5	5	1	0
16. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary					
Words					
	2	14	4	0	0
20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules					
	3	11	3	2	1
25. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.					
	6	6	2	6	0
26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.					
	0	1	0	14	5
28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.					
	1	7	4	7	1

****Note:** 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

The findings in this third area indicate that the population understudy seems to have similar beliefs to those found in Horwitz original study over 20 years ago. For example, the majority of the participants place emphasis on the importance of acquiring vocabulary and grammar rules as a must for learning the language. In this case, the implications are that not only might they dedicate bigger efforts to these areas of the target language but that this may also permeate their future practice in conducting their learners to such behaviors. However, this is counter parted by responses to item 8, which shows that these future teachers assign relevance to knowing the target language culture but still indicate (*item 11*) that success in language learning very much depends on immersion. Of outstanding importance is the belief held by these student-teachers that learning a language stands far from translating (more than 90% of the respondents). This would indicate that their attention while learning English will not be distracted by their preoccupation for translating. Still, this is an assumption at this point and would require further research. As for the similarities between the mother tongue and English, more than 80% of the participants believe that Spanish and English are different.

Learning and Communication Strategies BALLI items 7, 9, 12, 13, 17,19, and 21 address learning and communication strategies and are probably the most directly related to a student's actual language learning practices. Items 17 and 21 refer to learning strategies, and items 7, 9, 12, 13, 18, and 19 concern communication strategies.

Table 4 Learning and Communication Strategies

	1	2	3	4	5* *
<i>Learning Strategies</i>					
17. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.					
18	1	0	1	0	
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory					
4	11	3	2	0	
<i>Communication Strategies</i>					
7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.					
5	11	0	3	1	
9. You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.					
0	2	0	6	12	
12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to					

them so that I could practice speaking the language.

6	11	3	0	0
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13. It's o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in the foreign language.

3	6	7	2	2
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19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

4	8	3	4	1
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**Note: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

In the area of learning strategies as indicated in the responses of the participants the relevance of practice and repetition for language learning emerges, where more than 90% of the student-teachers see in repeating (*item 17*) a strategy to be employed; practice in the lab (again emphasizing on this-practice) had more than 70%. As for the communication strategies, the importance of having a good accent predominates. This can be assumed as the still native speaker ideal pronunciation scenario but cannot in any way be taken for certain until more research with these same participants on what they consider is excellent accent is done. On the other hand, the importance assigned to accuracy leans to the opposite side, where the respondents overwhelmingly manifest that this should not be a factor limiting their communicating in English even though when their answers regarding their self-awareness at the time of speaking in English does not throw a conclusive response. On makeup strategies (*item 13*) more than 90% of the participants agree on the use of guessing. Finally and on the issue of fossilization, more than 50% of the student-teachers give importance to correction from early stages. All in all, this scenario could throw future teachers of English who imprint the importance of accent and accuracy over other aspects also relevant for becoming proficient in a language.

In the area of ***Motivation and Expectations***, BALLI items 23, 27, and 30 concern desires and opportunities the students associate with the learning of their target language. The results are reported in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Motivations and Expectations

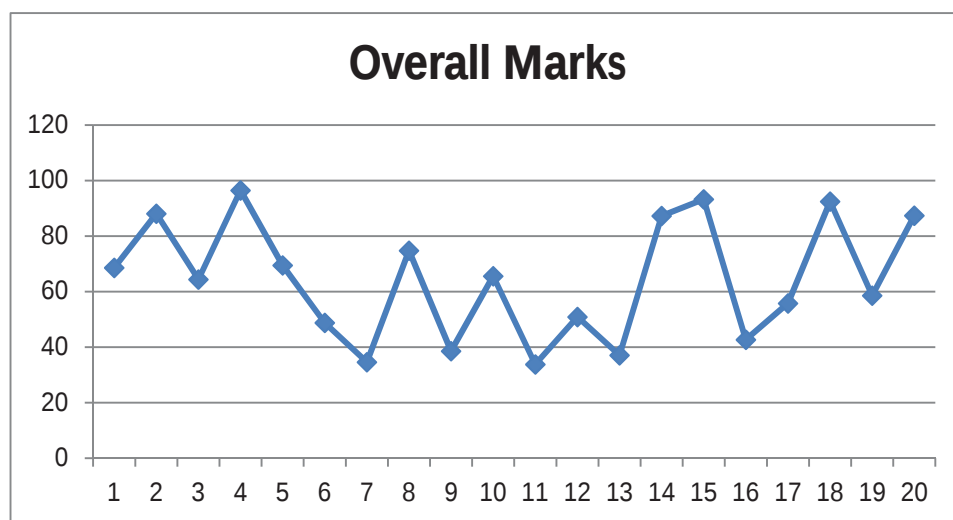
	1	2	3	4	5**
23. If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it					
	9	9	1	1	0
27. If I learn to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job					
	7	12	1	0	0
30. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.					
	5	9	4	1	1

****Note:** 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

According to the responses, the participants associate the target language both with numerous opportunities for using it but most of all for having better jobs. The second is obviously related with the field they are specializing which could explain the divergence with other studies. As for the students' drive for relating with native speakers of English, more than 70% agree here showing their integrative motivation to acquiring the language. Again this may derive from the nature of the studies they are undertaking; still this cannot be concluded until a study into the reasons for their beliefs is conducted.

Language Proficiency

The results reveal that only 35 % (7 out of 20) of the participants had the A2 level³ on entering the BA as it can be seen in the Graphic Overall Marks below (70 is the minimum passing mark for this test). 8 participants achieved between 45 to 69, which placed them at A1.

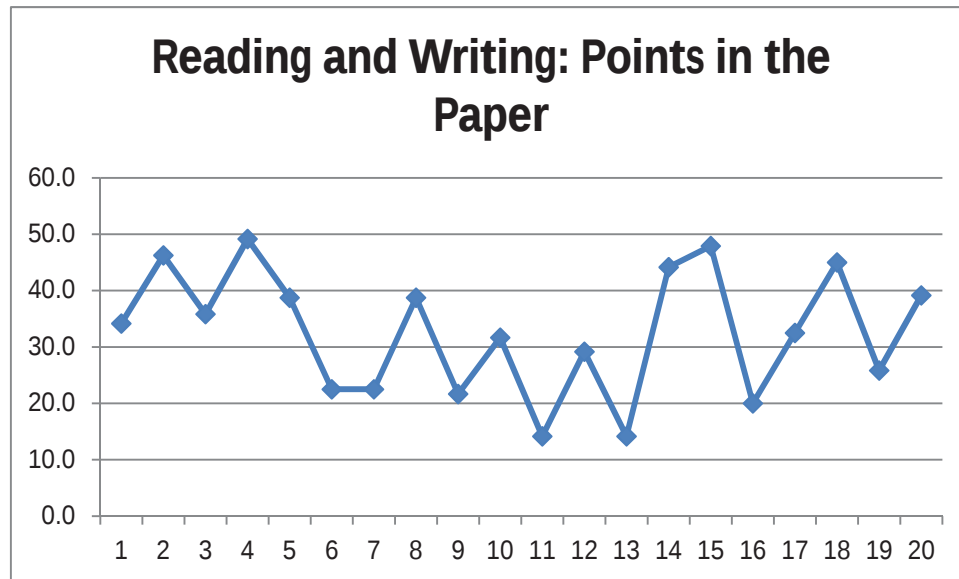


A more detailed look at the marks obtained by the participants reveals that 6 of the pre-service teachers (30% of the sample) would have achieved a Pass with Merit (85 and above). On the participants who obtained marks below the passing one (below 70), this corresponds to 65% (13 out of 20). Of these, 5 participants (25%) had marks between 45 and 69, which would correspond to an

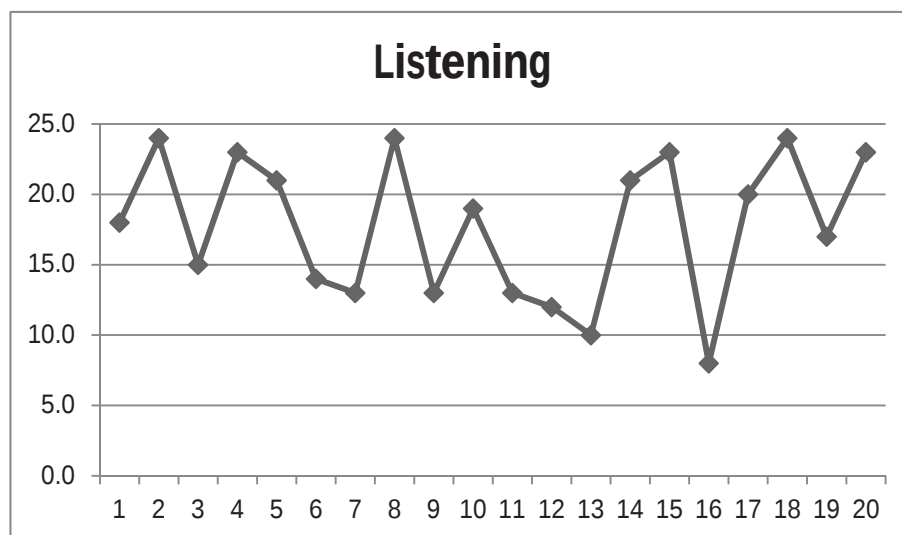
³ From the Common European Framework. A1 describes a language user that Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. A user at A2 on the other hand is described as a someone who can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

A1 level; the remaining 5 (25%) had marks of 44 or below which would have been a Fail had they taken a KET exam.

Regarding a look at the level of the participants on specific skills, on reading and writing paper, 9 of the participants achieved 70% or more (calculated over 60 points in this part of the test). The specific marks for this part of the test can be seen in the graph below.

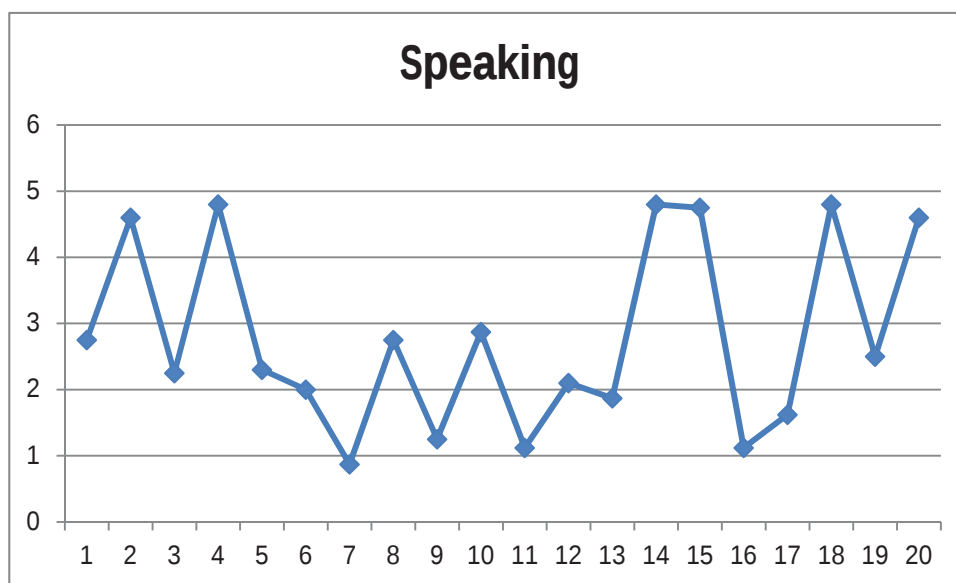


In the case of listening, the results reveal that 11 participants (55%) achieved 70% or more correct answers as it is shown in the graph below⁴.



⁴ In the case of the listening paper, the highest score achievable is 25.

As for speaking, only 6 of the participants achieved a passing mark⁵ (30% of the sample). Three participants were borderline (nearly achieved the 3 points). The graph below shows the specific marks obtained by each participant.



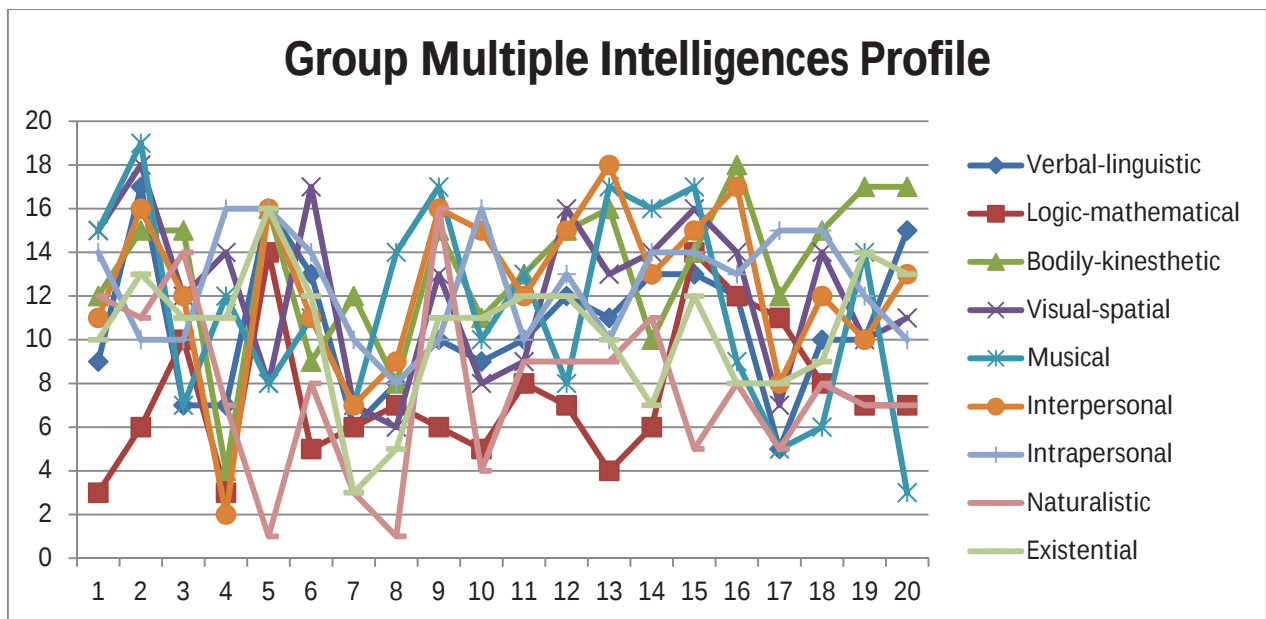
From the findings reported in the previous section it can be concluded that the strongest skills for the students in the sample seem to be listening. At this level, students were able to understand announcements and other spoken material when spoken to reasonably slowly; they were also able to complete sentences using some basic lexical items. The second strongest skill for students is reading and writing which implies that they are capable of understanding simple written information such as signs, brochures, newspapers and magazines; it must be noted that the writing sections depicted problems for producing items of vocabulary from a short definition, select appropriate lexis to complete one-word gaps in a simple text, and transfer information from a text to a form. In the case of speaking, the students who achieved a passing mark and a near passing mark could maintain a simple conversation but had problems completing full sentences. Findings would imply that LELI students need to develop this skill in order to show their ability to complete short everyday speaking tasks appropriately.

The decision for implementing KET as a diagnostic tool for assessing the level of English of the students at the BA and their further chances of academic success requires a more comprehensive analysis but is currently still in practice. "It can only be assumed that the various grades, levels and scores in relation to these tests and other entry measures are the results of decisions of an administrative nature and not on students' ability for university study" (Coley, 1993, p.13 in Dunworth, 2001). Even though the instrument (the KET) is not an entry exam in the case of this study but more an instrument to help diagnose the level of the students, it is in fact used with a predictive value in terms of the possible future success of the learners, including their abilities for university study as the program requires them to use English as the medium for learning.

⁵ The highest mark for the speaking paper is 5 points; the passing mark is 3.

Multiple Intelligences

The overall behaviour of the sample regarding their multiple intelligences as perceived by the participants can be seen in the Graph Multiple Intelligence Profile shown below⁶.

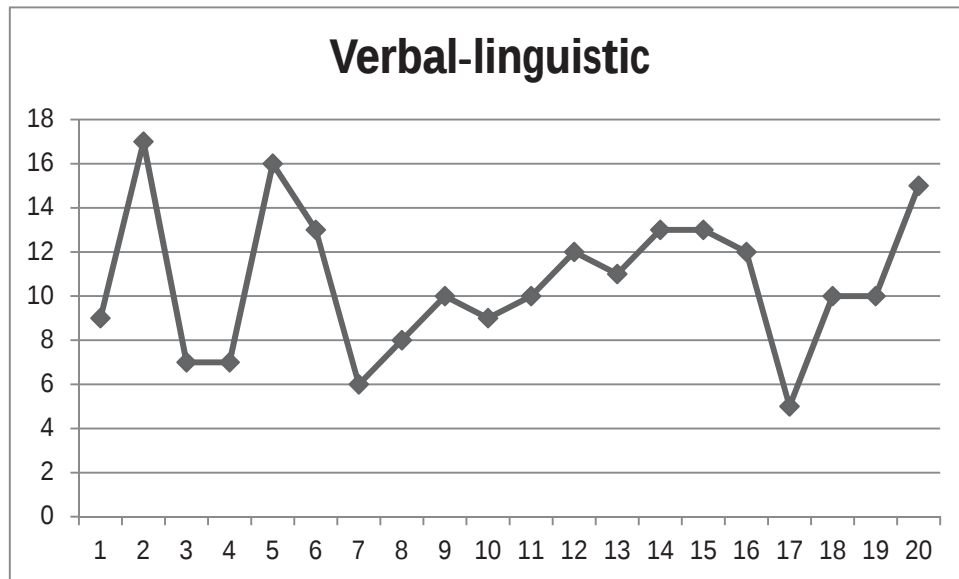


From the graph it can be seen that the participants perceive themselves as being stronger in the following intelligences: Kinesthetic (9 out of 20= 45%); Interpersonal (8 out of 20 (40%); musical (6 out of 20 = 30%) and visual (5 out of 20 = 25%); only 3 students perceive themselves as Intra-personally strong (15%). The following section looks at these findings in more detail in the following order: verbal linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, visual –spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential.

⁶ In order to maintain confidentiality the respondents' were identified by numbers. However their names and numbers were kept so that the researchers could keep track of the research population subjects.

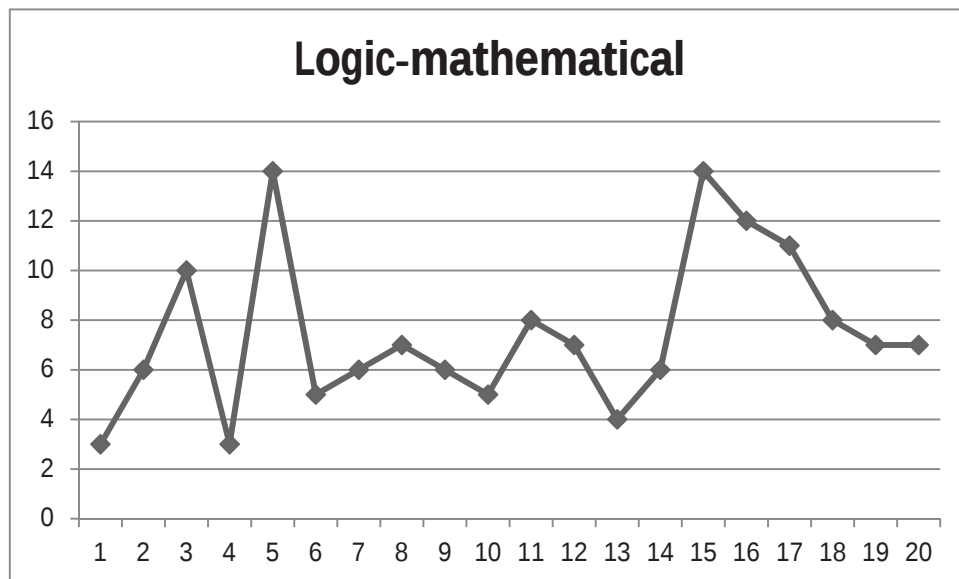
Verbal-Linguistic

It might have been expected to have found the verbal-linguistic intelligence to be predominant among the research subjects– this as the programme has a strong emphasis on this given that it constitutes both the object and the means through which students attain most of their knowledge and skills- . That said, only a few research subjects 13, 15, 20 (15%) perceive themselves as linguistically strong (see the graph below). This intelligence refers mainly to the ability to use language in special and creative ways as well as the ability to look at the relationship between form and content within a sentence.



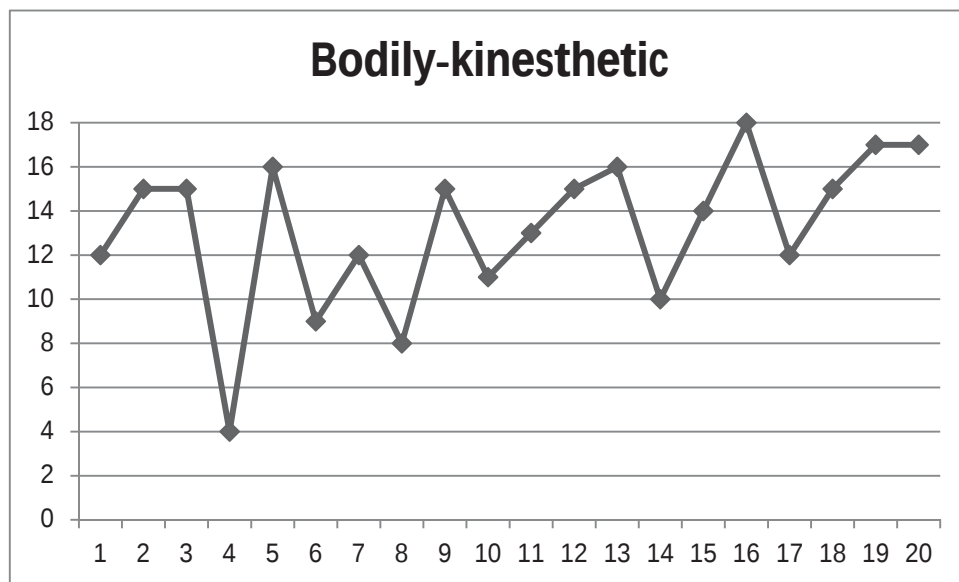
Logical-Mathematical

The intelligence that obtained the lowest score was the Logical/Mathematical (no one of the participants scored their perception at 15 or more). One of the main features of this intelligence is the ability to think rationally, which is an ability that could be expected to be found among professionals who will face the need not only to solve various types of problems as professionals but also the need of making decision in their everyday life. The lack of this intelligence might represent a problem for people who have to make decisions as they move along their studies but also in their praxis as teachers.



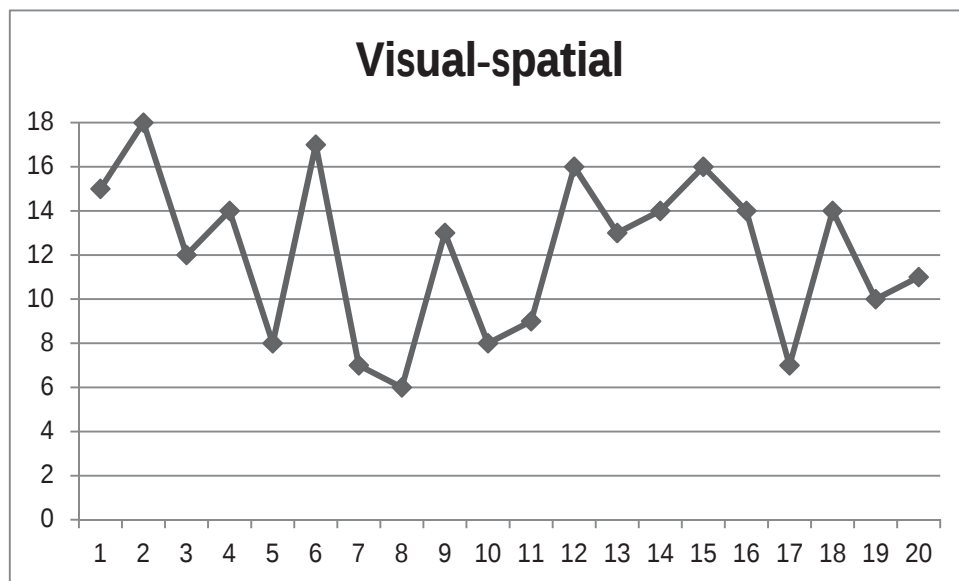
Bodily-Kinesthetic

The predominant intelligence among research subjects was the Bodily/kinesthetic as 9 of the 20 participants perceived themselves at 15 or higher (45%). A characteristic of this intelligence is the ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for expressive as well as goal-directed purposes. This characteristic could be exploited by the students and teachers to improve their communicative competence.



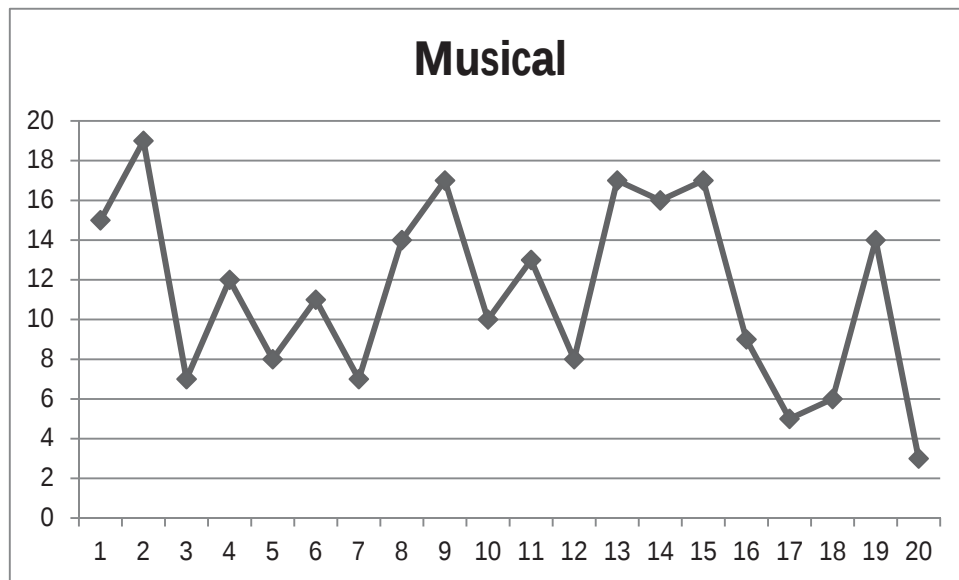
Visual-Spatial

Six of the participants reported themselves as strong in Spatial Intelligence (25% of the sample)- see the graph below. Gardner (Gardner quoted in Puchta and Rinvold; 2005) conceives this intelligence as being mainly dependent on our ability to see, for some people perception of space can be through touch as is in the case of blind people, others perceive this intelligence through sound and somatic awareness. According to this author the perception of space is multi-sensory even if the visual aspect predominates. The strength in this intelligence for language learners is that it will facilitate their understanding of how the English language uses spatial thinking when it describes time and other concepts in terms of space, which in many aspects is quite complex to be understood by non native speakers.



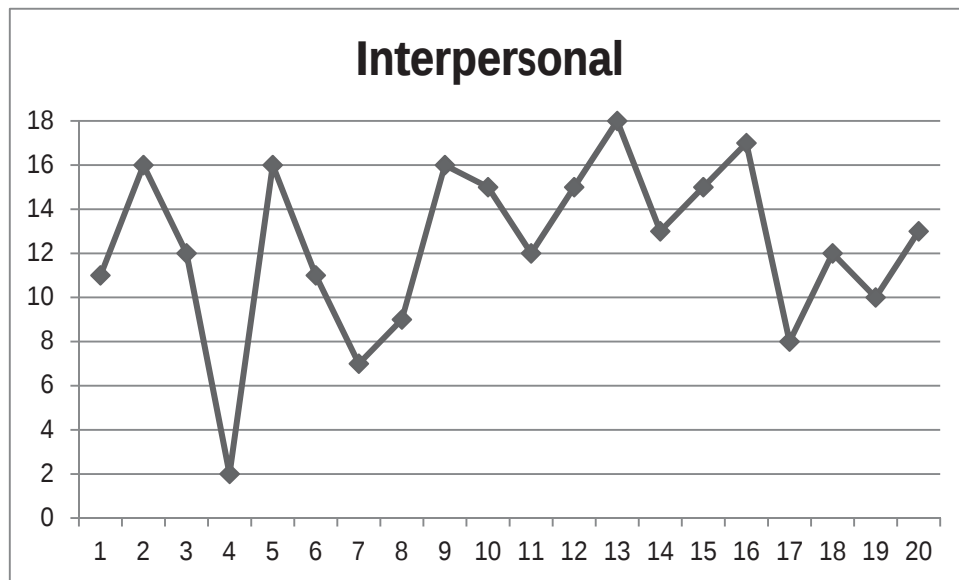
Musical

With regard to the musical intelligence, six (30%) of the pre-service teachers perceived themselves as musically strong (see graph below). According to some authors, among them Puchta and Rinvolyucry (2005) learners with a well developed musical intelligence will face less problems when dealing with the sounds of the language, in terms of pitch, intonation, individual sounds and stress.



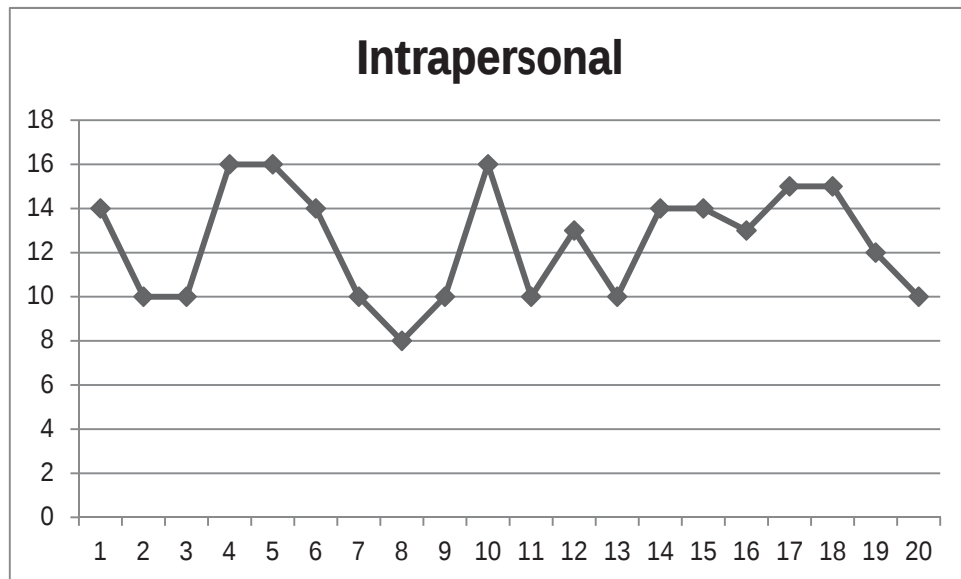
Interpersonal

Eight of the participants (40%) perceived themselves as interpersonally strong- see graph below-. The core capacity of this intelligence is the ability to be able to work well with people; this intelligence is predominant in salesperson, politicians and teachers, and would have been expected to be found in a larger percentage of the sample given the nature of the BA.



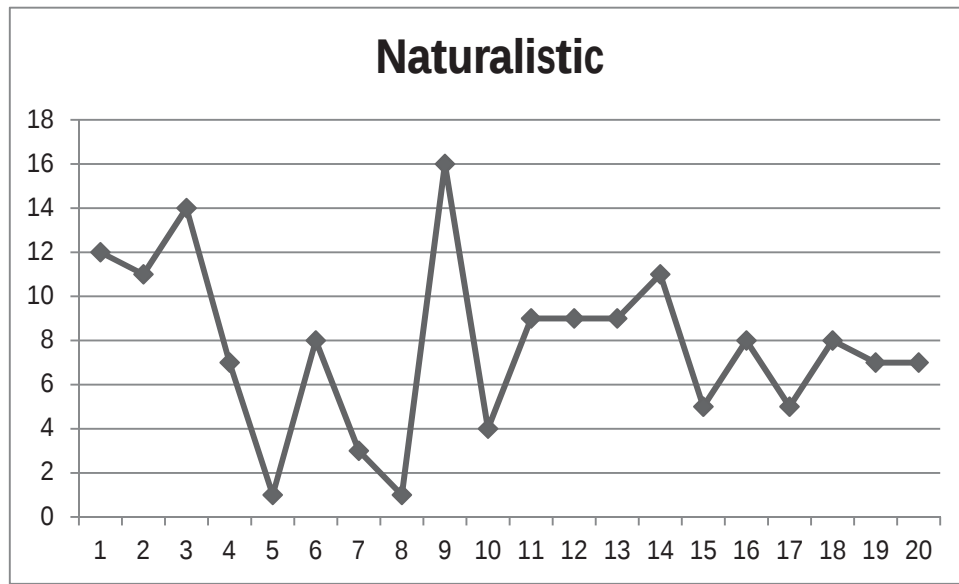
Intrapersonal Intelligence

Intrapersonal intelligence, which has to do with happiness at being on one's own, with joy at knowing oneself, is the second intelligence that obtained the highest score. Student's 18, 4, 13, 5 (25 %) are strong in this intelligence. The lowest score obtained in this intelligence by student 20 was an 8 where the remaining scores are quite even -10s and more than 10s-; this could be interpreted according to the authors that young people are strong in this intelligence, due to their age. However further studies have to be carried out in order to find out if this is the main variable with regard to this research population.

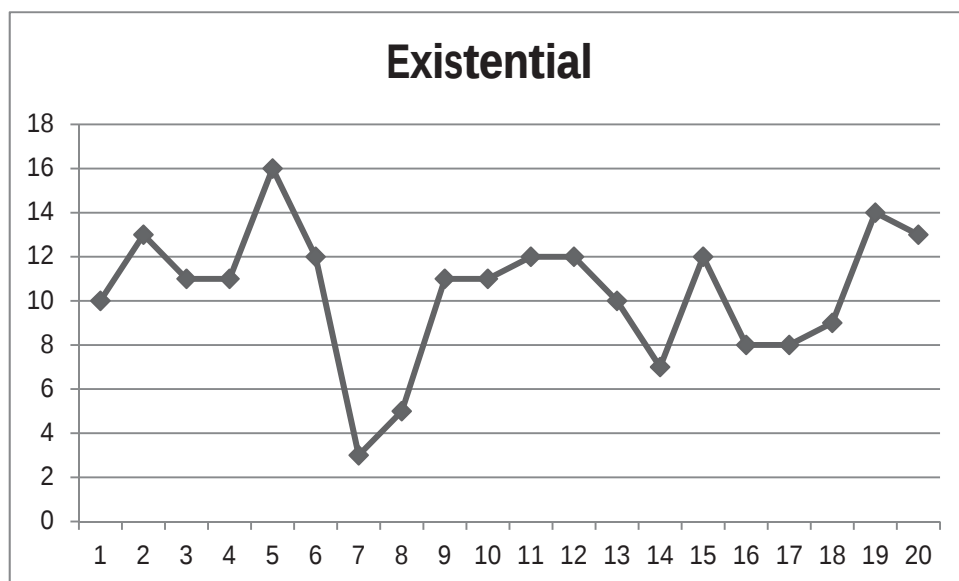


Naturalistic and Existential

The last two intelligences which were added to the seven native intelligences reflect a quite different behaviour between them. Naturalistic Intelligence, obtained the lowest individual scores. Student 2 scored in this intelligence only 1, student 12: 3, students 19 and 10: 4, student 4: 7, 5. In fact only student 14 (4.34%) was strong in this intelligence. This intelligence has to do with the ability to understand and organize the patterns of nature. An implication of this result might be that we as educators have to raise our students' awareness of the need to be in harmony with nature.



The last intelligence, Existential, has to do with perception of what is beyond, what is higher, what is greater than us. Only student 13 (4.34%) perceives himself as strong in this area. The other numbers were quite even; the average score range was between the nines and fourteens with just a 3 for student 12 and 8 from student 2.



Conclusions

On the findings in this study one cannot overlook the fact that the language acquisition process involves many variables and these include not only those which may in fact have a direct influence on successful acquisition of a foreign language, but on those preconceptions which in turn, may in fact interfere, and that are included in the myths that often occupy an important place in both teachers and learners' minds. The findings in this study suggest that such myths (preconceptions) are present in the group under study in this paper.

Brown suggests dispelling seven myths (Brown, 2007, pp55) on language learning when it comes to relating age with acquisition. These are closely related with the relationship between age and language learning and are summarised as follows:

1. Frequency in practicing is of outmost importance for learning a foreign language
2. Imitation is of paramount importance. If you are not a mimic, you will not learn.
3. Practice parts from separate sounds to larger units; such is the natural order in which a foreign language is learnt.
4. Understanding precedes speaking, always, hence making this the right order to present skills to learners.
5. Reading and writing are to be dealt with at advanced stages of language learning. Therefore, listening, speaking, reading and writing must be learned in that order.
6. One should be able to learn a foreign language the same way the mother tongue was learnt: without translation.
7. It is unnecessary to use grammatical conceptualization in teaching a foreign language: if children do not need grammar, why should learners of L2 need it?

This said, it can be concluded that the participants do hold misconceptions about how to learn foreign languages (some more predominant than others). Myths 1, 2, and 6 for example, remind us of the scenario the results in this study throw. Altogether, the student-teachers who participated in this study generally hold beliefs similar to those found in previous ones, such as their underestimation of the difficulty in learning a language. The same can be said for the misconceptions they hold about language learning and the importance of a native like pronunciation. That said, deconditioning these particular beliefs is relevant as the chances for academic success diminish when the results obtained by learners do not coincide with their expectations, hence affecting motivation with the resulting consequences on their learning; this also for future better teaching given how beliefs permeate what teachers do and say in language classrooms.

As for the level of proficiency, it must be said that the KET is limited only to general English and does not have predictive validity in terms of students' abilities in English academic settings. However, "very low levels of language proficiency are in fact correlated positively with academic failure" (Dunworth, 2001, p.165). That said, the results indicate that the risk of the participants in this study to face academic failure is high. It would be ideal to establish a certain level of English as an entry requirement for students who want to study a BA program in ELT to avoid that students abandon school because of their low English level; this way the graduation rate may be increased (the program is currently in the process of being redesigned for which a level-entry requirement has been established). The implications of this scenario have taken the authorities and faculty of the program to implement strategies to support students and periodic follow-up of their level of English takes place. Further research is required to learn about the impact of such strategies.

As for the participants' intelligences, the research subjects perceived themselves as weak in the linguistic and interpersonal area; these intelligences are mainly predominant in teachers and language teachers but would be expected also in strong language learners. Less than 40% (34.7%) of the population is strong in the interpersonal intelligence and only 13.04% in the Linguistic. This last finding is rather ominous as the dominion of the language is a main factor for the success of the future graduates in the case of the participants. This combined with the level of English detected via the exam above mentioned suggest the strong need for implementing a strategic plan to improve the chances of success.

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Creencias sobre la Aptitud para el Aprendizaje de una Lengua Extranjera

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Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla

Resumen

En el ámbito de las lenguas extranjeras se han realizado investigaciones para conocer las creencias de los estudiantes acerca del aprendizaje de una lengua con el propósito de analizar de qué manera estas influyen en su proceso. En este campo relativamente nuevo Horwitz (1987) fue pionera al aplicar su Inventario de Creencias sobre el aprendizaje de Lenguas BALLI el cual fue retomado para esta investigación aplicándose el instrumento Horwitz, (1988) a los estudiantes de la cohorte 2009 de la Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés de la Facultad de Lenguas de la BUAP. La presente investigación es parte del *Proyecto Integral de Análisis de Factores que afectan la Eficiencia Terminal* de la Facultad de Lenguas cuyo objetivo es analizar las creencias respecto al aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera. El proceso de diagnosticar las creencias de los estudiantes ha sido útil para darnos cuenta de que éstas llevan a ciertas conductas de aprendizaje, tanto dentro como fuera de clase. Los datos obtenidos en la etapa preliminar de este trabajo han mostrado que los estudiantes ingresaron a la facultad con creencias obtenidas durante sus experiencias previas con el idioma y que influyen algunas de manera positiva y otras de forma negativa en su aprendizaje. Estos resultados nos permitirán replantear nuestra práctica docente y ayudar a elevar el nivel del manejo del idioma en los alumnos que actualmente es bajo. El presente trabajo muestra los resultados obtenidos respecto a las creencias sobre la aptitud del aprendizaje de un idioma y es la continuación de una investigación que actualmente se encuentra en su segunda etapa.

Palabras clave: creencias, aprendizaje, lengua extranjera.

Introducción

El tema de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje de una lengua ha sido de interés desde la década de los 80, donde la pionera de las investigaciones al respecto es Howitz. Se podría hacer una larga lista de los investigadores que se han dedicado al tema, entre los cuales, por mencionar solo a algunos, se encuentran Ellis (2002), Tanaka (2004), Zhong (2008). Lo interesante es el enfoque con que cada uno llevó a cabo su investigación ya que de esta manera se observan modelos diferentes para abordar el tema tales como: el análisis metafórico, y una variedad de recolección de datos cualitativos, como las entrevistas, diarios e intentos estimulados por recordar; de manera que los estudiantes auto-reportaron sus creencias (Ellis, 2008, p.23). Estos métodos proporcionaron evidencia en el área de la naturaleza de las creencias de los estudiantes, lo cual pone de manifiesto que es posible llevar a cabo una investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa en el campo de las creencias.

Objetivo general

El objetivo de la presente investigación es determinar cuáles son las creencias de los estudiantes de la cohorte 2009 de la Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés y Francés acerca de su aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera, con el propósito de saber más acerca de su concepción del aprendizaje y poder ayudarles a mejorar el mismo, logrando elevar el nivel del manejo del idioma que actualmente se encuentra bajo (DEPEA- Facultad de Lenguas, 2009).

2. Taxonomía de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera.

Desde el inicio de las investigaciones sobre creencias ha habido diferentes intentos por hacer una clasificación de las mismas. A manera de resumen, la siguiente es una taxonomía realizada por Horwitz que ha sido la más utilizada para llevar a cabo investigaciones relacionadas con el tema.

Horwitz (1988) propone analizar las creencias en las siguientes áreas: 1. dificultad. 2. aptitud. 3. naturaleza. 4. estrategia y 5. motivación. Cada aspecto se define a continuación (Kuntz, 1996a, p.3).

Dificultad. Se refiere a las creencias de que algunos idiomas se aprenden con mayor facilidad que otros, al grado de dificultad del idioma que se está aprendiendo, y al tiempo suficiente para hablarlo con fluidez.

Aptitud. La aptitud hace referencia a las creencias del aprendiz sobre su habilidad para el aprendizaje, la confianza en sí mismo para expresarse en el idioma, la facilidad con que aprende, la capacidad de las personas para aprender; la idea de que la nacionalidad, el género y la edad influyen en el aprendizaje, y la creencia de que la inteligencia se demuestra a través del manejo de una lengua extranjera.

Naturaleza. Se refiere a la estructura del idioma, su acento, la cultura, la influencia del país de origen del idioma que se aprende, al grado de dificultad que se le da a las habilidades leer/escribir versus hablar/entender; la diferencia que se marca entre el aprender un idioma y adquirir otro tipo de conocimiento, como el de las matemáticas por ejemplo.

Estrategias. El área de estrategias apunta a los recursos que el estudiante emplea para aprender, como repetir, adivinar, corregir, aprender gramática, aprender vocabulario, memorizar, traducir, asistir al laboratorio y practicar el idioma.

Motivación. Finalmente el área de motivación se refiere a la creencia de que el manejo de un idioma ayudará a obtener un buen empleo, a conocer personas nativas del idioma, y la importancia que se da al manejo de un idioma en la sociedad.

Metodología

Tipo de investigación

El diseño de la investigación se encuentra enmarcado en un estudio descriptivo, ya que el proyecto plantea en su primera etapa la descripción de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje del idioma, además es un estudio longitudinal, puesto que abarca un periodo de cuatro años.

Se trata de una investigación cuantitativa en su primera fase, ya que requiere de la obtención de datos numéricos con el propósito de responder a las preguntas del problema y probar la hipótesis planteada acerca de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje de un idioma.

Escenario de la investigación

La Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) es considerada hoy día como una de las más importantes instituciones de educación superior de su tipo en la formación de profesionales. Actualmente cuenta con más de diez facultades, entre las cuales se encuentra la Facultad de Lenguas, que oferta la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés y la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Francés, y que se crearon en otoño de 2009, basadas en el nuevo proyecto Minerva (BUAP, Modelo Minerva, 2007, p.50-52). La presente investigación se llevó a cabo en esta Facultad.

Sujetos

La población que se tomó en consideración para realizar este estudio descriptivo fue de doscientos treinta y cinco estudiantes que actualmente cursan la licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) y francés (LEF), del cuatrimestre de Otoño 2009. La edad promedio de los estudiantes se encuentra entre los 18 y 20 años de edad. Se presentaron grupos mixtos, con ciento sesenta y dos mujeres, lo cual representa el 69% de la población y setenta y tres hombres, el 31% de la población. En su mayoría proceden del estado de Puebla. La muestra se obtuvo tomando en cuenta el 100 % de la población de la generación 2009, debido a que así está estipulado en el proyecto PIAFET (Proyecto Integral de Análisis de Factores que afectan la Eficiencia Terminal) por lo tanto no se basó en una muestra estadística.

Instrumento de la investigación

Respecto al modelo diseñado por Horwitz es importante destacar que existen 3 instrumentos diferentes, debido a que hace la distinción entre lengua extranjera y segundo idioma. Los instrumentos son para estudiantes de una segunda lengua (ESL), estudiantes de una lengua extranjera (EFL) y para profesores de una lengua extranjera (TFL). Las técnicas de recolección de la información fueron de primera mano. Con el objetivo de colocar las creencias en una tipología más general se utilizó la encuesta BALLI (Belief About Language Learning Inventory, por sus siglas en Inglés), la cual es un cuestionario de 34 preguntas, y la evaluación esta en escala de likert.

El trabajo de investigación se realizó aplicando el cuestionario BALLI (Horwitz,1988, p. 285) para estudiantes de una lengua extranjera el cual contiene 5 secciones: dificultad, aptitud, naturaleza, estrategia y motivación. las respuestas tienen un valor según la escala de Likert, las cuales son: Totalmente de acuerdo=5, de acuerdo=4, indeciso=3, en desacuerdo=2, totalmente en desacuerdo=1. Con estas opciones respondieron en una hoja de respuestas, que a su vez consta de una sección de información general del estudiante, como nombre, matrícula, idioma que estudia, fecha, sección de la materia que estudia, edad y género.

Procedimiento

El procedimiento para la recolección de datos fue a través de la aplicación de una encuesta para conocer las creencias en cuanto al aprendizaje de una lengua. Este cuestionario fue traducido al español debido a que los estudiantes eran de nivel básico, lo cual podría impedir que respondieran algunas preguntas. El cuestionario se aplicó primero a un grupo de 15 estudiantes con el propósito de pilotarlo y fue mostrado a tres profesores debido a que tienen experiencia previa en el tema de estrategias de aprendizaje, para hacer las correcciones pertinentes. Posteriormente se aplicó al grupo determinado para el estudio.

El instrumento se aplicó a una muestra de 235 estudiantes de nuevo ingreso durante la primera semana de actividades académicas, según los horarios de los grupos participantes, del periodo escolar otoño 2009. El tiempo empleado fue de 20 a 30 minutos y para la retroalimentación con los alumnos fue de 15 minutos, el cual fue tiempo suficiente. En algunos casos debido al tiempo el mismo profesor designó lugar y hora para su aplicación. Al inicio se les explicó a los alumnos el propósito de la investigación y se les indicó que el puntaje obtenido no tendría efecto alguno sobre su calificación. Se les motivó a contestar de la manera más sincera ya que el cuestionario no medía su inteligencia o nivel de conocimientos, sino que lo que se pretendía era determinar cuáles eran sus creencias acerca del aprendizaje. Finalmente, se procedió al registro de los datos obtenidos y al procesamiento de la información. Con lo cual se concluyó la primera etapa del presente trabajo y de la cual se presentan los resultados y conclusiones previas.

Procesamiento de la información.

Los datos obtenidos fueron analizados empleando estadística descriptiva, donde se muestra: frecuencia, descripción de los datos con medidas de tendencia central (media, moda, mediana, valor mínimo y valor máximo). Para este trabajo se muestra la tabla 2 con los resultados obtenidos. El procesamiento de la información se llevó a cabo mediante los programas de estadística, STATS y SPSS.

Resultados y discusión

Análisis de los resultados

Para llevar a cabo el análisis de los datos obtenidos en la encuesta, se analizó el promedio obtenido en cada una de las áreas relativas a las creencias de aprendizaje investigadas. Según la tabla de resultados basada en la escala de Likert. Ver tabla 1. en el apéndice.

Información general de las creencias sobre el aprendizaje

La investigación llevó a cabo el análisis de las cinco áreas propuestas por Horwitz: 1. Dificultad, 2. Aptitud, 3. Naturaleza, 4. Estrategia, 5. Motivación y expectativas (Horwitz, 1988). Sin embargo, en el presente trabajo se muestra únicamente el análisis de los datos obtenidos en el área relativa a las creencias sobre la **aptitud** que tienen los estudiantes para el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera. Ver tabla 2 en el apéndice.

Creencias acerca de la aptitud para el aprendizaje de una lengua

Los resultados obtenidos en el segundo grupo de creencias en el inventario BALLI son los puntos concernientes a la **aptitud** del aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera (variables 1,2,6,10,15,18,22,29,32,33,34). Estos aspectos se refieren a la habilidad que los sujetos de la investigación consideran tener para el idioma específico que están aprendiendo actualmente para el caso inglés y francés.

En primer lugar se tiene que un alto porcentaje de los sujetos (41.3% de acuerdo y 9.4% totalmente de acuerdo) creen que se nace con una habilidad especial (variable 2) para los idiomas. Lo cual coincide con la creencia acerca de que ellos mismos consideran tener una habilidad especial para el idioma (variable 15). Un alto porcentaje (62.1%) está de acuerdo en que posee una habilidad especial, sin embargo esta creencia contrasta con las creencias que tienen sobre la aptitud de los mexicanos (variable 33), ya que de manera contradictoria un alto porcentaje (52.3%) manifestó no estar seguro de que los mexicanos tengan la habilidad para el idioma.

Cabe reflexionar acerca de que la mayoría de los sujetos de la investigación por creen que se nace con una habilidad especial y de que ellos mismos creen tener esa aptitud para el aprendizaje. Sin embargo, consideran que los demás mexicanos no la tienen. ¿A que se deberá esta creencia? ¿Qué los motiva a tener tal concepción de la aptitud para el idioma tanto de ellos mismos como de los demás? Consideramos que la respuesta es más cuestión de aspectos culturales e incluso es una idea muy arraigada debido a experiencias previas con el idioma, y que de algún modo influye el hecho de que están estudiando la carrera de la enseñanza en inglés o francés según, el caso, lo que los motive a considerarse diferentes a “otros mexicanos” en cuanto al aprendizaje de los idiomas.

A pesar de esas creencias, se observa que la gran mayoría (74.9% y el 19.1%) está de acuerdo en que a pesar de que algunos no hayan nacido con la habilidad especial para aprender un idioma o que los mexicanos en general no tengan aptitud, si creen que cualquiera puede aprender un idioma. (variable 34). Esto indica que, a pesar de las dificultades que se encuentran en su proceso de aprendizaje, tienen la confianza de que alcanzarán el éxito. Esto se ve reflejado en los siguientes datos: los porcentajes más elevados (54% y 39.6%) están totalmente de acuerdo y de acuerdo en que finalmente aprenderán el idioma muy bien (variable 6). Apenas son unos cuantos sujetos los que no lo creen así. (.9% y el 1.3). Respecto al aprendizaje de un tercer idioma se obtuvo una respuesta contrastante ya que son muchos (10.2% y 35.3%) los que consideran que una vez aprendido un idioma aprenderán otro (variable 10); pero también es elevado el número de entre los que no están seguros de ello (33.6%). La confianza de hablar en el idioma objeto de aprendizaje, (variable 18) es un aspecto interesante. Al respecto la mayoría (46.8%) muestra no tener confianza en ellos mismos para hablar; lo que es un aspecto muy marcado en el aula y es uno de los principales problemas detectados por los profesores de la facultad. Las implicaciones son poca participación de los alumnos en las actividades de clase y fallas muy marcadas en sus exposiciones orales. Esta es quizás una de las creencias más arraigadas en general en las personas que aprenden un idioma y que más influencia tienen de manera negativa en el aprendizaje pues impide el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa de manera eficaz.

En cuanto a otros aspectos relativos a las aptitudes se observó lo siguiente: los sujetos están de acuerdo (87%) en que es más fácil para un niño aprender un idioma que para un adulto (variable 1). De ahí podemos deducir que existe la creencia de que a mayor edad es más difícil aprender. Se observa una clara tendencia a creer que así es. Los sujetos de la investigación son adultos jóvenes. ¿Será que ellos creen que es por su edad que el idioma que están aprendiendo en ocasiones les sea difícil? Consideramos que así es, ellos mismos le atribuyen parte de su fracaso en alguna de las competencias lingüísticas a la edad tardía en la que comenzaron a aprender el idioma que eligieron en la carrera.

En cuestión de género, (variable 22) es alto el porcentaje (71%) que no creen que las mujeres aprendan mejor que los hombres. Cabe resaltar que la población investigada en su mayoría está representada por mujeres. Esto indica que la propia mujer no cree que tenga más habilidad que un hombre para aprender y por otro lado los hombres tampoco creen que una mujer aprenda mejor que ellos.

En cuanto al tema de la inteligencia de la persona que aprende un idioma o que estudia para adquirir cualquier otro tipo de conocimientos, encontramos que los que son buenos para las matemáticas y las ciencias (var 29) también son buenos para aprender un idioma extranjero (73%). Lo que se ve apoyado por la creencia de que cualquiera puede aprender un idioma (94%).

Por otro lado, un tercio de la población (35.3%) cree que si se habla más de un idioma se desarrolla más la inteligencia,(variable 32); pero dos tercios indican lo contrario (28% no esta de acuerdo, 30% está totalmetne en desacuerdo de que sea más inteligente) . Es decir, para los sujetos de esta investigación no existe alguna relación entre el desarrollo de la inteligencia con el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera.

Conclusiones

El propósito de este estudio fue el de identificar las creencias de los estudiantes de inglés y francés como lengua extranjera. El instrumento utilizado fue BALLI por sus siglas en inglés. El estudio se basó en la premisa de que los estudiantes de una lengua extranjera se integran, con creencias, incluso, a veces, ya muy arraigadas y estas son factores determinantes para su proceso de aprendizaje. Cabe recordar, que dentro de los diferentes factores que intervienen en el aprendizaje, se encuentran la inteligencia, estrategias de aprendizaje, actitudes, experiencias, expectativas y las creencias (Sakui y Gaies,1999, p. 474).

El proceso de explorar las creencias de los estudiantes ha sido útil para darnos cuenta de que estas conllevan a ciertas conductas de aprendizaje, tanto dentro como fuera de clase. Los datos de este estudio muestran que los estudiantes ingresaron con determinadas creencias y de que algunas están influyendo de manera positiva y otras de forma negativa. Esto fue posible debido a que la encuesta se aplicó a estudiantes de nuevo ingreso durante la primer semana de clases, por lo que se recolectaron datos con las creencias existentes al momento de su ingreso.

Las implicaciones que tienen las creencias que los estudiantes manifestaron son que algunos estén llevando a la práctica estrategias que favorecen su aprendizaje, y que también están influyendo de manera poco funcional. Esto repercute en los resultados que obtienen en el desarrollo de sus habilidades lingüísticas.

Como se pudo observar en los resultados, se concluye que los sujetos de la investigación creen que a pesar de las dificultades que se encuentran en su proceso de aprendizaje tienen la confianza de que pueden tener éxito.

Se encontró una tendencia a creer que a mayor edad es más difícil aprender un idioma. Dado que los sujetos de la investigación son adultos jóvenes, sería conveniente averiguar hasta qué punto esta creencia repercute en su aprendizaje. Cabe resaltar que la población investigada en su mayoría está representada por mujeres. Los resultados indican que la propia mujer no cree tener más habilidad que un hombre para aprender y por otro lado los hombres tampoco creen que una mujer aprenda mejor que ellos. Esta creencias pueden estar influenciadas por algunos aspectos culturales que se proponen investigar más adelante con el fin de observar si aspectos como el género son factores muy determinantes para el aprendizaje.

Se concluye también que aunque un idioma tenga cierto grado de dificultad es posible que lo pueda aprender cualquier persona. Finalmente se descarta la creencia de que exista una relación entre la inteligencia y el dominio de un idioma.

El siguiente paso es investigar qué tanto estas creencias se manifiestan en la práctica tanto docente como de aprendizaje en el aula. Para lo cual se sugiere la observación dentro del salón de clases tanto de profesores como de los estudiantes para determinar si existe alguna relación entre lo que creen del aprendizaje de la lengua con lo que ellos están haciendo para aprender y conocer qué tanto influyen en este proceso las creencias de los profesores.

Finalmente, en cuanto al instrumento empleado, consideramos que este cumple con el grado de validación y confiabilidad necesaria para llevar a cabo la investigación. Sin embargo, fue necesaria su traducción para la adecuación del contexto de los sujetos investigados. Al realizar el análisis de los datos, consideramos que la escala de Likert del uno al cinco (ver tabla 1 en el apéndice) empleada en algunos casos puede reducirse a solo tres aspectos, ya que los resultados entre *totalmente en desacuerdo* y *en desacuerdo* vs *de acuerdo* y *totalmente de acuerdo*, no mostraban una diferencia significativa para la interpretación de los resultados. Por lo que se propone para investigaciones posteriores emplear una escala del 1 al 3 como sigue: 1 = *de acuerdo*, 2 = *indeciso* y 3 = *de acuerdo*.

Apéndice

Tabla 1. Perfil de resultados Horwitz.

Creencias sobre el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera	Escala de Likert	(Anchura de clase)	Nivel
Totalmente de acuerdo	5	4.5 – 5.0	Alto
De acuerdo	4	3.5 – 4.4	
Indeciso	3	2.5 – 3.4	Medio
En desacuerdo	2	1.5 – 2.4	Bajo
Totalmente en desacuerdo	1	1.0 – 1.4	

Tabla 2. Promedio de las creencias de aprendizaje acerca de la APTITUD.

No. ITEM	CREENCIAS	MEDIA	5 %	4 %	3 %	2 %	1 %
N= 235							
II	APTITUD	3.3					
1	Los niños aprenden más fácilmente.	4.2	45.9	41.2	7.2	3.4	2.1
2	Se nace con una habilidad especial	3.2	9.4	41.3	23	20	5.5
6	Finalmente aprenderé Inglés muy bien	4.4	54	39.6	4.3	.9	1.3
10	Si ya sé un idioma aprenderé otro fácilmente.	3.3	10.2	35.3	33.6	16.6	4.3
15	Tengo una habilidad especial	3.9	19.6	62.1	16.6	1.7	0
18	Confianza en mí mismo al hablar .	3	7.2	23.4	46.8	15.7	6.8
22	Las mujeres aprenden mejor que los hombres.	2	4.7	4.3	19.6	35.7	35.7
29	Los buenos en matemáticas y cs. son malos para los idiomas	2	3	4.3	19.6	41.7	31.5
32	Quien habla más de un idioma es muy inteligente	3	5.5	29.8	28.9	30.6	5.1
33	Los mexicanos son buenos para los idiomas	2.6	1.3	7.2	52.3	28.9	.4
34	Cualquiera puede aprender un idioma	4.6	74.9	19.1	3.8	.9	1.3

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