

THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS ON THE TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND
TEACHING

By

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NOTE OF LIABILITY

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Abstract

In the presence of foreign language assistants in the classroom, teachers and students can adopt different behavioral patterns that can be translated into positive or negative attitudes.

This research named “the influence of foreign language assistants on the teachers and students’ attitudes toward foreign language learning and teaching” points to the role played by the presence of the native assistants in the classroom and how this affects the students’ success and teachers’ learning and teaching processes.

The main objective of this research is to determine how the foreign language assistance can lead to a change on the teachers and students’ attitudes towards the foreign language, for that matter, both qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures will be applied to make it more reliable and consistent.

Some of the concepts studied in this research are, anxiety, social distance, motivation, risk taking and attitude concerning students and teachers respectively. This last factor is considered as relevant since it can interfere in the success or in the failure of the learning and teaching achievement as it has been defined by many authors. As a conclusion, the foreign language assistants’ good attitude fosters a positive behavior in students and teachers contributing to their learning and teaching success.

Chapter One Introduction

The learning and teaching processes include many variables. These variables can exert a great influence on the effectiveness or failure of these processes. One of these variables is the attitudes that teachers and students have, and these can be influenced by different factors that are important to consider. One of these factors is the presence of foreign language assistants in the classroom who can give significant support to the language learning and teaching processes and who will be the focus of this research.

As the processes of teaching and learning are affected by internal and external factors, this field research will deal with some of these features; besides, it will be carried out a study about the different theories that support the influence of such factors in the way in which students and teachers react to the presence of foreign language assistants.

This project will be developed in three main parts; the first one describes the problem that will be presented and worked along this project and the objectives that are intended to be achieved. In the second part, it will be presented the literature review, which corresponds to the theories that help to understand all the aspects related to this issue and that contribute to discover the influence of foreign language assistants of English on the attitudes that students and teachers adopt toward the learning and teaching processes. The third part describes the population with who is intended to work and the different procedures that are going to be used in order to collect the data.

The Problem Statement

How does the presence of foreign language assistants affect the teachers and students' attitudes towards teaching and learning at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño?

The Problem Description

The problem arises from personal experiences, in which it has been realized that teachers and students adopt different attitudes that in some cases are positive or negative in regard to the presence of foreign language assistants of English in the classroom. These attitudes are influenced by different factors that can affect the language learning and teaching processes in some way.

Some aspects that have been noticed in the classroom are that the presence of foreign language assistants causes different kinds of behaviors in students. Some people remain in silence in order to be unnoticed, some others prefer not to participate and avoid making mistakes; on the contrary, others become more active, try to make questions and take opportunity of each moment to speak, and some others remain indifferent in front of the situation and they talk when they are asked to do it.

By developing this research, it is intended to find out the importance of foreign language assistants of English in the Linguistics and Languages Department and how they have influenced the people involved in the learning and teaching processes. Besides, describing the effect they have in teachers and students, this study attempts to make students and teachers realize the importance of taking advantage of these foreign language assistants, so that they see them like a useful resource that can help in learning and teaching a language.

Additionally, it is expected that teachers and students receive their assistance with a positive attitude taking into account that this might benefit students in acquiring a higher proficiency level and teachers to improve their knowledge and current level.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the focus of this research is on the theory of Gardner, which says that attitudes play an important role in a successful language learning process; besides, it is based in many other theories about this area.

Justification

Attitudes are relevant in the process of learning and teaching a foreign language, in the way in which they can interfere in the success or in the failure of its achievement. Attitudes can dispose or predispose students at the moment of starting the foreign language learning process or maintaining their interest to continue learning it; in addition, when learners create positive attitudes to language resources such as the foreign language assistance, they increase their degree of motivation and when they are motivated their disposition to learn the foreign language increases so that they take the initiative and advantage of every opportunity to improve their language skills.

This topic can interest people because on the one hand, this research can contribute to identifying the different factors that affect the learners' positive attitudes towards the native speakers and, therefore, the foreign language learning process. Then, people will be able to manage these factors in their favor so that, together with the foreign language assistants' presence and their help, students attain higher proficiency levels in the foreign language and on the other hand, through the findings obtained in the research, the students' dropout rate can decrease.

The types of people that can be interested in this topic are teachers, students or instruction programs and universities because these are places that use foreign language assistants in their classrooms; moreover, this research could provide them with important information about their usefulness and profit. This research could be considered relevant for all people, given that positive attitudes will engage a constructive environment and, therefore, learners and teachers will take advantage of these aspects in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, a very significant aspect that makes this research important is that there are no previous studies concerning the impact that foreign language assistants have had in foreign language classrooms and specifically at the Linguistics Department.

As the relevance of this topic is crucial in foreign language learning and teaching processes, we would like to look for conditions or situations that contribute to use the presence of foreign language assistants in a greater degree in the classroom and creating an attitude change so that students begin to perceive the language as something positive and useful.

Objectives

General

To determine the influence of foreign language assistance on the teachers and students attitudes towards the foreign language.

Specific

- To establish the factors that influence the behavior that students and teachers adopt toward the presence of foreign language assistants of English in the classroom;
- to determine the ways that students and teachers perceive the idea of sharing classes with target assistants and

- to set up some strategies that can be adopted to influence a change from negative into positive attitudes toward the presence of foreign language assistants of English in order to enhance appropriate learning conditions for students.

Research Questions

The General Question

What is the influence of the presence of foreign language assistants on the teachers and students attitudes toward teaching and learning?

Specific Questions

- What are the factors that interfere in the behavior that students and teachers adopt toward the presence of foreign language assistants of English in the classroom?
- What aspects of the presence of foreign language assistants affect the development of a successful learning and teaching processes during a class?
- What are the strategies that can be adopted to influence a change from negative into positive attitudes toward the presence of foreign language assistants of English in order to help students to increase their language proficiency level?

Limitations

One possible limitation can be that foreign language assistants or teachers of English and French do not allow us to observe classes. A possible solution to this limitation could be explaining foreign language assistants or teachers of English that we are not going to interrupt their classes.

Another limitation can be that there is a lack of literature on team-teaching in the field of foreign language education because it has recently received attention. One possible solution

can be that we support our research on some few studies made in other countries and base it on theories and concepts that concern and are related to this subject.

An additional limitation can be that the foreign language assistants only stay in the University of Nariño for a year and probably their departure can take place at the same time that we are developing our research, so we cannot finish our research with them. One possible solution can be that we start making the observations time before we had planned to do it.

Definition of Terms

Authentic Materials

This term refers to real materials in the sense that they are not created for students as the target audience but for native speakers. By using them, teachers or foreign language assistants present students with actual everyday language, just as it appears in real life (Julio Foppoli, (n.d.)). One example is a radio news report brought into the class through which students can discuss the topic it talks about, so students are exposed to real discourse (Widdowson's, 1990). Besides, they inform students about what is happening in the world; as a result they have an intrinsic educational and cultural value (Sanderson, 1999).

Communicative Competence

“A definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community” (Hymes, 1972). According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence is described as a synthesis of knowledge of fundamental grammatical principles, knowledge about how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions and how they can be integrated to form a discourse.

Foreign language assistants

A foreign language assistant is a native speaker of a foreign language. He or she is a member of the language department of a school, institution or university and works with the teacher by being a support in the language teaching; for instance, a language assistant is not a completely developed teacher, although there are some exceptions.

Foreign Language Learning

Foreign language learning is defined as the learning of a nonnative language in an environment in which English is not an official language and usually takes place in the classroom. Foreign language learning is differentiated from second language acquisition in that, it refers to the learning of a nonnative language but in the environment in which it is spoken and it may take place in classroom or in the environment where students have opportunities to interact with speakers of the language which they are learning.

Chapter Two Literature Review

One of the alternatives for analysis to find out the influence of the presence of foreign language assistants on the attitudes that learners and teachers adopt toward it, is to do a research about theories that concern all these aspects. They will help to understand all the implications, the causes and consequences that will be present in the field research and at the moment of putting it into practice. The following theories will display the role of the foreign language assistants, the description and definition of some of the most important factors and theories that have influence on both teachers and students.

Foreign Language Assistants

Foreign language assistants or native speakers work with the teacher and with the students in the classroom and the main role that they perform is in conversation and extra help, so they encourage students to participate in discussion activities, they promote interaction and provide authentic materials on particular topics as a good source for reading or listening native speaker speech. Some materials that they can offer to students are magazines, newspapers, games, recipes, websites or family photographs that can be used to provide particular information about culture, music, brochures, television recordings and advertisements. Besides, the foreign language assistants can help to prepare students for a determined oral or written examination.

The foreign language assistants are a very useful resource since on the one side, they as native speakers, have fluency and a high proficiency in the foreign language. Through interaction they can help learners to keep language in usage; with their experience or with their own culture and in some cases with other cultures where the foreign language is spoken they can provide cultural insights to teachers and students. On the other side, they are usually closer in age to students than the average of teachers is, and this fact can help the learners to increase their motivation (Swartz, 2009).

Taking into account what a foreign language assistant is, it is important to establish a difference between the foreign assistants and the teachers that were born in the same context in which they teach.

Differences between Native and Non-native Teachers

Native- and nonnative-speaking teachers show a big variation in the classrooms, first, because they adopt different behaviors when teaching a second or foreign language and second, because they use the language in a very distinctive way. According to Péter Medgyes (1992) this dissimilarity does not imply that the non- native teacher is less proficient than a native one.

The majority of language institutions prefer to hire native teachers for many reasons, first and mainly because students like the idea of practicing conversation with a native speaker because they provide a huge colloquial vocabulary and because they can help them with pronunciation problems; however, a non-native teacher also represents an advantage over native since non-native teachers possess knowledge of both the English language and the students' mother tongue, resulting in a very favorable advantage for teaching grammar. In

conclusion, native speakers can result very useful as non-native teachers but in some cases can represent a disadvantage for students and teachers (Machado, 1997).

Before continuing, it is of great importance to consider who a native speaker is. From the view of Edge (1988), speakers of English (native or non-native) are continuous learners of it; therefore, what actually exist is more or less proficient speakers of English progressing in proportion to their learning. This process of increasing the English knowledge is affected by some factors such as the education received and the place of birth which plays a significant role; but, despite the fact that non-native speakers can reach high levels of proficiency, it is considered that non-natives cannot turn into natives, mainly due to their dependence since what they do is an imitation of some type of native use and there will always be a lack of originality and creativity.

Taking into account these considerations about native English speakers and non-native, there are some features involving the English language teaching profession, features as the survey carried out by Medgyes in collaboration with Reves with 220 NESTS (native English speaking teacher) and non-NESTS working in 10 countries, which stood that non-NESTS present some considerable difficulties that could determine the adequacy of the teaching process in the classrooms. It means that, although every non-NEST is different in all aspects regarding language use, it was found that they demonstrated more disadvantages concerning almost all areas of language use as, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening comprehension, grammar, and idiomatic English than NESTS.

But on the other side, it was also revealed that non-NESTS presented some strengths that can be considered as advantages in front of NESTS, first, non-NESTS provide an example of successful learners according to the extent to which they are proficient; second, they were

more able to predict possible language difficulties in the students because they had already experienced them and finally they possessed a great quantity of language information that can be useful at the moment of teaching it.

As a final point, there were some other features which favored both parts, NESTS and non-NESTS. In the teaching process not only the language competence is involved but also other aspects as the personality ones; therefore, it must be considered that such variables as experience, age, sex, aptitude, charisma, motivation, training, and so on, play also a very crucial role in the teaching profession. As a result, it is only the language competence, which represents an unfavorable point for the non-NEST, but, which can be overcome just if the process of learning for improving and increasing the knowledge is taken with responsibility in order to become a more accomplished user of English; consequently both NESTS and non-NESTS have the same opportunity of achieving professional success since both have their respective strengths and weaknesses and what is a limitation for one can be a potentiality for the other.

Taking into account that foreign language assistants work with teachers and students, it is important to consider the role of collaborative work within the foreign language teaching and learning processes.

Collaborative Work

According to the view of Austin and Baldwin (1991), collaborative instruction is effective when it involves the identification of similar goals, coordinated efforts, and outcomes based on shared responsibilities. In some of their studies, it was demonstrated that both students and teachers got benefits by working through collaboration since on the one hand, students increased their motivation and interest and gained valuable cultural knowledge

because of the variety of foreign language accents and teaching styles to which they were exposed and on the other hand, teachers had the opportunity to do professional exchanges in order to sustain the coherence of the course.

As well as the concept of collaborative work, it was also suggested the terms “team teaching” and co-teaching. Team teaching is explained as any form of collaboration between two or more teachers in order to improve classroom teaching to enhance learning (Alimi, Kassal & Azzez, 1998) and “co-teaching, defined as two or more educators sharing instructional responsibility for students assigned to the same classroom” (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2008 cited by Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010, p. 10-11), or defined by Brumby and Wada (1990) cited by Tajino & Tajino (2000), as an attempt made in cooperation by Native speaking EFL teachers (NESTS) and non-native EFL teachers (N-NESTS) to engage all the classroom’s participants in communicative activities. As a result, Team-teaching has to develop students’ abilities to understand a foreign language, to express themselves in it, to encourage a positive attitude toward communicating in it, and to intensify the interest in language and culture.

As stated by Tajino (1998), team teaching is more successful when it is also team learning since teachers and students are encouraged to interact and learn from each other by exchanging ideas and cultural values. On the one hand, conflict, tension, and personalities are all necessary aspects that influence the process and outcomes of any collaborative effort, so, as Brumby and Wada (1990) cited by Tajino & Tajino (1998) said, although the two teachers working together can require more commitment and extra work outside the classroom, it can be twice more effective and can contribute to the achievement of the objectives mentioned above if teachers work jointly in preparing lesson plans for the classes, providing input, giving practice and evaluating after classes.

On the other hand, as Medgyes argued, if there is a good balance between the NESTS and N-NESTS, both complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses; therefore, a better EFL environment will be achieved.

Some data obtained from a study developed by McClure and Cahnmann-Taylor (2010), suggested that co-teaching is a social work considering hierarchical relations of power, status, language, race, and ethnicity as significant social aspects in the co-teaching process.

Depending on the way in which team-teaching is worked, it can affect language pedagogy and professional development, so if team-teaching is developed in an adequate way, it is possible to get successful outcomes in the teaching and learning processes but if on the contrary it is not, then there will be some difficulties because the Native speaking EFL teachers or foreign language assistants are not trained to lead the class, they do not have experience as an educator in foreign classrooms and have little depth knowledge of the English language.

As it can be noticed, as some researches have shown, some problems can also appear in the classroom; it seems that the NEST and the Non-NEST are confused about their role in the classroom. In 1998, in a study developed in a Japan secondary school, it was found that native and non native teachers seem to be confused about their roles and feel anxious about team-teaching. For example, Wada, the principal designer of the Japanese English Teaching Programmed in which team-teaching was introduced, recognized this confusion and suggested that the strongest reaction has been from the non native EFL teachers who are generally worried about it (Wada, 1996 cited by Tajino & Tajino, 2000).

Consequently, it is important that both teachers take into account that they can work together in different ways and that 'team' can be considered as any possible combination of

participants in order to promote authentic communication in the classroom and content development in the most inclusive and efficient way (Creese, 2005; Davison, 2006 cited by McClure, 2008 & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). The current implementation of team-teaching as an instructional practice may change depending on local contexts (Friend & Cook, 2007 cited by McClure, 2008 & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010).

One place in which the team teaching approach was implemented was Nigeria, the experiment was developed in the following way: three teachers attended classes together, while one of them taught, the other one started group discussions and the other one made sure that all students develop the assigned tasks. At the end of this study they proved through tests that all students improved in many language aspects; but researchers have found that depending on the activities and objectives for the class, the team can be reformulated in a number of ways through different situations that require a critical reflection, voluntary teacher commitment and an active dialogue between them (Tajino & Tajino, 1998).

One way in which the team can be reformulated is a situation where both teachers (native and non-native) decide on a lesson topic and lead the lesson, in this manner, it is possible that students with limited English language ability show a negative attitude toward communicating with the NEST and it is probable that the students get confused because of their low language level and prefer to keep quiet, in this way, it will cause an annoying attitude and a little feeling of frustration from the part of the foreign language teachers.

Another way in which students and teachers could work is when students prepare a topic with the help of the non-NEST and take the initiative in communicating with the NEST about this topic; besides, due to the little shared preparation that teachers have to do in lesson planning, the problems associated with the cooperation of teachers on this stage could end.

Another team teaching situation can be one in which the NEST and the learners work together by helping each other as integrants of the same team. The students in this situation could be persuaded to help the NEST in learning something that they know very well, so, the students will play the role of facilitators and can have an opportunity to develop a positive attitude toward communicating with the NEST, and to learn more about his or her linguistic and cultural background.

Finally and additional combination can be one in which both native and non native teachers and students work together as a team. In this situation, the learners have to develop a task with the help of the teachers, so that they belong to the same team and have to interact with each other in order to complete the task and improve their communicative competence, in this way, both teachers will act as language informants and as members of the same group of the students. This fact would stimulate classroom communication and help the students to experience various types of genuine, authentic communication (Tajino & Tajino, 1998).

Factors that Influence the Acquisition of a Second Language

There are many different aspects which play an important role in learning a second language. These factors can be categorized as intrinsic and extrinsic and they can have influence in the speed and in the way in which the foreign language is learned. In the intrinsic factors we can find age, personality, motivation, experiences, cognition and native language, and in the extrinsic factors, curriculum, instruction, motivation, access to foreign language assistants, culture and status.

Other important factors that can influence the process of teaching and learning a foreign language are attitudes, anxiety and social distance.

Attitudes

There are two ways of approaching the definition of attitudes. The first one that concerns the students' attitudes and the second one that is more related to teachers. In both cases, an attitude is the way in which a person thinks, feels and behaves toward something that could be positive or negative; so, there is a strong relationship between attitudes and behavior since attitudes are more likely to lead to this behavior.

In the former situation, as Brown (2000) pointed out, attitudes are cognitive and affective and they can control how students approach learning a language because they are developed early; that is, when students have to interact with people from a different culture; in other words with foreign language assistants of the new language, they have to master it.

In the later case, attitudes refer to the beliefs that teachers have about education, their rapport with students, parents and colleagues, their sense of humor, their level of vocation, work ethic, their general motivation, their willingness to be part of extra curricular activities, their personality and their ability to generate enthusiasm. It is relevant to consider that teachers are role models in these aspects; therefore, attention should be paid to these variables during the teaching process due to their powerful effects on the climate of the classroom and the learning process.

In general, as both approaches showed, attitudes are developed according to the ABC model which refers to the affect, behavior and cognition. The first one consist of an emotional response that expresses the preferences that an individual has toward a target language; the second refers to the behavioral tendency that an individual adopts toward the language and the last one is the cognitive response that constitutes the individual's beliefs. Most attitudes are the result of either direct experience or observational learning from the environment.

Brown (2000) stated that attitudes are influenced by many aspects. They can be affected by peers, the social context, motivation, the role of the teacher, the interaction with people who have social and cultural differences and by parents. The assumption of Gardner about this last aspect agreed with the opinion of Brown; Gardner said that the attitudes of students' parents who are studying a foreign language influence the attitude that the students have towards the foreign culture and therefore toward the second language learning.

However, the hereditary variables may also affect attitudes, and they can do it in an indirect way. One of these variables can be presented in outgoing people, since they inherit the disposition to become extrovert individuals and this may affect one's attitude to certain styles of life.

Regarding the learning situation, one of the most important models in the field of attitudes is that of Gardner (1993), in which he emphasized the motivation and attitudes as the primary factors that can have influence on it. The theory of Gardner proposed the Socioeducational model of second language acquisition in order to encourage teachers to consider motivation and positive attitudes in the classroom as the two most strongly associated factors with learners' L2 achievement. Gardner and Macintyre (1993) argued that the techniques and subjects that are included in the class have influence in the students' degree of success, and in the feelings that they experience after being part of the class.

On the one hand, Gardner (1993) explained that there are some key factors that interfere in the language achievement, they are, motivation and the aptitude that students have in learning a language. On the other hand, Brown (2000) affirmed that there is a connection between attitudes and successfully learning a second language.

Brown held that the students' potentiality to learn and improve their proficiency can increase when attitudes towards the foreign language, the self and the foreign language assistants are positive and motivation runs high, but on the contrary, when students have negative attitudes, they can impede the learning of that language to take place, although many other variables can be implicated. For example, Ellis (1994) stated that the attitudes that the learners have toward the foreign language, its speakers, the foreign culture, the social value of learning a foreign language or the students' attitudes towards themselves as integrants of their own culture can also exert a strong influence on the students' capability to learn a target language.

When learners with positive attitudes are successful in the learning activity, the attitudes become stronger, while students with negative attitudes may not succeed at the moment to progress and these attitudes can become even more negative in their language learning attitudes. These ideas corroborate the fact that attitudes and motivation are factors involved in the process of learning, as Gardner (1985) said, "attitudes are a component of motivation which refers to the combination of effort plus the desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language" (p. 10), although it is also significant to take into account anxiety since it is also considered an emotional factor that influences this process.

Anxiety

This factor is considered as a part of motivation and personality. On the one hand, motivation is related to anxiety in that if a student is not anxious, probably he or she is not going to make an effort to achieve something because he or she is not motivated; on the other

hand, anxiety is related to personality in that if the learner experiments high motivation with a little subjective hope of achievement, his or her anxiety is going to increase.

Anxiety can be divided into social and general anxiety. The first one refers to the positive impression that the student wants to maintain upon other people such as teachers, interlocutors or classmates. The second one refers in general to the appropriate balance that students should sustain, which means that low levels can help him or her, but high levels can produce the contrary effect and can hurt the student since as students become older the level of anxiety with regard to learning can increase and ending up stronger and harder to overcome.

According to some studies and situations, it is possible to take into account many considerations concerning anxiety; for example, in one study with an adult language learning situation that was developed by Bailey's (1983) cited by Gass & Selinker (1994), showed that "anxiety depends on the situation in which learners find themselves" (p. 258) and for this reason it is better not to generalize the relation between language learning success and a motivating factor.

In contrast, Geen (1991) cited by Gass & Selinker (1994), noted that "Social anxiety inhibits behavior producing disengagement, avoidance of social situations, withholding of communication or breaking of eye contact" (p. 258) and according to him it seems to have an effect in the second language learning, particularly for the acquisition models or teaching methods that depend on interaction. As a result, there are several assumptions that have influence in the second language learning process in terms of anxiety.

As there are several situations that conduct the student to feel anxious, Davies & Rinvoluceri (1990) cited by Turula (2002) said that it is important to note that the teacher and the students can be responsible in provoking this feeling although he or she does not realize

about it. Teachers sometimes show their agreement or disagreement verbally or by using their body language. The later is one of the most powerful manifestations since the teacher is not usually conscious about what he or she makes when correcting students.

The teachers' corrections can be developed explicitly or by indicating the kind of error and giving students the opportunity to correct themselves. On the one side, the first option used by some teachers can produce students feel like judged in the classroom; on the other side, the second option makes students feel capable of self correction and therefore not to experience anxiety.

Another situation in which learners can feel anxiety as Shavelson & Stern cited by Turula (2002) stated, is when teachers isolate them during the class, one way in which teachers can do this is demonstrating favoritism toward some students at the moment of encouraging them to interact; some other teachers do not use the name of them when asking questions what makes students to feel as isolated or as if they were not receiving assistance from the teacher, and there are some others who over control the class and do not allow the students to take part of it, causing frustration and dissatisfaction. In contrast, students can also make their classmates to feel uncomfortable when they show their disapproval, impatience or when they mock one another at their attempts to produce the foreign language.

Summarizing, anxiety is a factor that need to be controlled when students experiment a high degree of it. It is possible that it becomes more difficult for them to succeed in the learning activity, while a low degree of it can help them to sustain the interest on it.

Social Distance

There are many instances when a second language learner does not feel an affinity with the target language community, in this way, students create a social distance from foreign

language assistants that may cause a diminished amount of language which learners are exposed to in the environment. In this way, Schumann's (1978a, 1978b) cited by Gass & Selinker (1994), acculturation model is very important since, it refers to social and affective variables that are made up, therefore as Schumann said "if learners acculturate, they will learn; if learners do not acculturate, they will not learn" (p. 237) and in situations in which there is an emphasis on preserving ones' own life-style and language, less contact there will be, and then less learning will be predicted.

By taking into account this model, it is also argued that there are also affective factors that have influence on the learners such as the language shock in which some studies that took place in second language settings suggested that learners prefer not to speak because they think it is not comical to make mistakes at the moment of trying to speak the language that they are learning, so students feel they can seem fool at doing this and that these situations can interfere in a negative way with their ability to speak.

Furthermore, it is shown that there are students that say they want to learn a language but when they have the opportunity to be exposed to input or to practice with foreign language assistants, they prefer not to do it, so their acts demonstrate the contrary that is they do not want to learn at all. In addition, in the different findings of some studies it was also demonstrated that acculturation cannot be so strongly associated to linguistic development because there are some cases in which students get involved in interactive situations with foreign language assistants and they still present some problems in some areas of language such as grammar, thus, it is shown that there are personality variables that interact with acculturation and suggest that there is not a strong causal relationship between social and language learning.

Taking into account the consideration above, it is important to consider other factors such as:

Motivation

This psychological variable can be defined by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) cited by Dörnyei (2000), like “the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out” (p. 9). In this way, as they said, motivation directs the choice of a particular action, the persistence and the magnitude of the behavior that a person has toward that action and the effort that the individual expends on it.

Additionally, motivation is viewed as an essential part of a model of language learning. Because of its value to language learning, there is a great interest in the creation of a motivation model that can contribute to the development of methodological applications to improve the teaching and learning of a second language; consequently, there have been many studies like that of Yashima (2002) cited by Elyildirim and Ashton (2006), that found that motivated learners have greater self-confidence in the foreign language and for this reason they had a greater willingness to communicate.

Other researches have shown that there are some aspects that can challenge the grading on motivation. On the one hand, as Schumann argued in his book “the Neurobiology of affect in language” cited by Dörnyei (2000), the cognitive and the emotional influences on human behavior play an important role in second language acquisition, he clarified that the main one is carried out by emotion while cognition takes a second place.

On the other hand, it has been recognized that all the environmental characteristics have had a great influence on the behavior, cognition and the achievement of a certain goal. For example, Dörnyei (2000) considered that motivation can not be thought as an isolated concept because all the human actions are always to be tied to a physical and psychological context, so it is important to take into account the individual's immediate environment and the broader sociocultural context; therefore, a combination of the individual and the social perspectives is needed. Additionally, Weiner (1994) cited by Dörnyei (2000) stated that the individual's social environment is directly associated to social motivation due to the interpersonal nature of the human being; in contrast, personal motivation does not require any external factor to be affected and it varies from one individual to another.

Atkinson (1964) cited by Williams (1994), has been one of the authors who argued that it is important to take into account achievement motivation in which people are different from others in their need to achieve or be successful, and that this fact has important implications for their learning stories. Atkinson said that achievement motivation can be determined by the relative strength of the tendency to accomplish a task and the strength of the tendency to avoid engaging in a particular task because of the fear of failure. Thus, in focusing on these reasons, people act in different ways but it is relevant to consider that there are also internal and external factors that can interfere on this behavior.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. There are some authors that talk about these two terms, according to Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (1989) cited by Williams (1994), extrinsic motivation is presented in a person whose only reason for performing an act is to obtain something outside the activity itself; for example, a person who is studying for passing an exam or obtaining economic rewards, while intrinsic motivation exists in a person that does

something because he or she enjoys it and it generates interest on him or her; for example, there are people who like to listen to music or reading a newspaper for improving their language proficiency. It is of significant importance that most of the actions that we do in our daily life are carried out by a mixture of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and as said by some teachers at the moment of learning a language, both have a role to play and for this reason they are linked.

According to Brown (2002) cited by Richards & Renadya, in his twelve principles on which classroom practice is grounded, extrinsic motivation implies that “all human beings are universally driven to act or behave by the anticipation of some sort of reward, tangible or intangible, short-term or long-term” (p. 12) and is administered by someone else. On the contrary, intrinsic motivation arises from needs, wants or desires within a person and the behavior itself has the potential to be self-rewarding, in this way as Brown (2002) said external rewards are unnecessary in this situation. Besides, if learners are intrinsically motivated, they will be disposed to invest their time, attention and effort to learn the second language. As a result, these are some factors which have implications in the successful learning of a second or foreign language.

This concern about motivation can be best achieved if both students and teachers are aware of the potentialities that it can bring into the learning and teaching processes since the teachers' enthusiasm and commitment are meaningful aspects that interfere with the learners' motivation to learn. If a teacher is motivated to teach, there is a high probability that students become motivated to learn, for this reason, it is significant that firstly teachers raise this motivational awareness in order to use their skills in motivating students by considering their characteristics, needs, priorities and some personal factors.

Personality Factors

Another important characteristic about personality is that language learning has been focused on global factors seeking to determine whether a personality type correlates with overall language learning success; but according to Larsen-freeman and Long (1991) cited by Gass and Selinker (1994) it is necessary to see more carefully at how personality affects a only person in a specific situation, rather than searching for a global and general influence.

Extroversion and Introversion

In our real life there are some stereotypes about how people are, and they tend to be classified depending on their personalities as introvert and extrovert people. An introvert person is somebody who is quiet and prefers to be concentrated in their own feelings and thoughts rather than being with other people, by the contrary an extrovert is a person who is always sharing with other people. These are stereotypes that in some way can have influence and implications at the moment of learning a second language successfully, although one could think that one stereotype is better than the other, it is not true since both have advantages for learners; for example, while extroverts engage in talking and social activities, introverts are good for thinking and reflection.

Risk Taking

This factor has been considered important in second language learning since if a student is a good risk taker he will probably be successful in his process of learning. As said by Beebe (1983) risk taking is “a situation where an individual has to make a decision involving choice between alternatives of different desirability; the outcome of the choice is uncertain, there is a possibility of failure” (p. 38). In other words a student who takes risks is

willing to make decisions and actions that will affect his or her process of learning in a positive way. These aspects support the idea that personality factors affect language learning.

Relationship between the previous theories and the field research

The proposal developed by Gardner and his Socioeducational model forms the basis for the development of this research. This theory emphasizes that attitudes understood as the way in which a person thinks, feels and behaves toward something and motivation as the factor which involves effort and a desire of a person to do something in order to achieve a goal, can affect foreign language learning and the success that the students can attain according to their positive or negative attitude and how motivated they are.

Taking into account this notion it can be realized that on the one hand, foreign language assistant' attitudes have a great influence in the behavior that students adopt toward English subject since the way in which foreign language assistants behave and the techniques that they use at the moment of teaching this subject cause the development of a positive or negative feeling from the part of the students after they have been part of the class, on the other hand, as said by Brown the anticipation of some sort of reward, will drive the students to behave, so in this case, it is the foreign language assistant who is going to provide students an extrinsic motivation that will lead students to keep an interest in the class and as a result, learners will invest more time and effort to accomplish the task in order to get the reward.

In addition to the extrinsic motivation that foreign language assistants can promote, they can also help students to develop intrinsic motivation through persuading students about the benefits of learning a second language like English, although it comes from the own students' needs, desires and wants.

Consequently, the role of attitudes and motivation of the foreign language assistants in the classroom can influence and affect in some way the development of the foreign language learning and teaching processes. Furthermore, the fact that all people are different in many aspects such as in their personalities gives rise to certain personality types such as the introvert and the extrovert people.

This classification has implications in the process of learning a foreign language and in this case, these personalities can interfere in the attitude that each student adopts with the presence of the foreign language assistants since depending on their type, extrovert or introvert, students behave in a certain way. Those types also interfere in the learning process. Both extroversion and introversion have their own benefits since each time that foreign language assistants get students in a communicative activity, extrovert people feel better and take more advantage from their talking with their classmates taking more risks for practicing the language, while introvert people raise more inhibitions about talking and prefer not to take risks to avoid mistakes, they get more benefits in tasks that require they work by themselves such as in writing tasks.

As we could see, in cases where students are extrovert, the probability to take risks was bigger than in introvert students, for instance they prefer to avoid social situations and for that reason social distance is created. It affects the development of communicative competence since students do not take advantage of the opportunities that they have to talk and therefore to practice the language. Besides, the fact that this kind of students will be engaged in situations where they have to interact with people produces that their anxiety increases and therefore their desire to avoid social situations persists, as in this case, in which foreign language assistants' role is to encourage students in speaking as much as possible.

Another important situation to take into account is that in which teachers work in a collaborative way with the foreign language assistants since this situation can guide students to have a higher degree of motivation because they have the opportunity to be exposed to different kinds of input and conversely students can learn more and develop an awareness of the different kind of speech to which they can confront some day.

Taking into account the preceding theories and the relationship with the research topic, the fact that a foreign language assistants will be present in a language classroom and that he or she works with the teacher in the teaching process has various implications in the attitudes of students and in the interference that it can cause at the moment of learning and get success in this process of learning a foreign language; consequently, it is relevant that all the factors that have influence in the students and teachers' attitudes and therefore in the process of learning are analyzed and worked, so that students take more advantage of the presence of the foreign language assistants and get more benefits in their development of the communicative competence.

Chapter Three Methodological Design

After revising the theoretical framework of this research paper, it is important to present the population and the procedure that is going to be developed to achieve the proposed objectives.

Population and Sample

According to the subject of study of this research paper, foreign language assistants, the most appropriate population to develop the investigation is the University of Nariño, with young adults both men and women who are native speakers of Spanish and who are studying English and French. In order to make the required observations, it is thought that the most suitable sample is the second, fourth, and eighth semesters of English and French day Program. Besides, we also think that the sixth semester of Spanish and English night Program is appropriated. The respective teacher in charge of the English subject matter of each semester will be also observed. We consider that they are relevant to compare the different

opinions and situations regarding the presence of the foreign language assistant in the classroom.

Data Collection Procedures

The Investigation instruments that will be employed for the collection of data are:

- *Guides with statements*
- *Photographs*

The way in which it is planned to apply the above instruments to collect the data are the following procedures:

Statements

Some guides with statements that can be answered through yes/no/sometimes options will be used to gather information in a quick while the observations are made.

Observation Guides

It is expected to attend English classes with the presence of the native speaker where some statements previously written will be confirmed; besides some field notes will be taken during the observations.

Photographs

Some photographs will be taken in order to provide evidence of the classroom in which it is planned to work.

The above data collection techniques are considered for being the principal ones used in this type of qualitative research.

Validity

The validity can be confirmed because there is correspondence between the procedures and instruments that will be used since we combine both qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures. Consequently, the data can be more reliable and consistent because of the information presented in this monograph and the different means used to gather it. Besides, some classes will be recorded and some photographs will be taken to prove what we are going to write about these observations that will be applied to students, foreign language assistants and teachers of the University of Nariño.

Chapter Four Data Analysis

Data analysis is an important stage of the research process and is considered a potential treasure-trove when the information presented is accurate. This refers to scientific observations and measurements that after been examined and interpreted can become evidence to address a question. The systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data allow it to be developed into evidence that supports scientific ideas, arguments, and hypotheses. Interpretations are neither absolute truth nor personal opinion, rather they are suggestions, or hypotheses based on a foundation of scientific information, logic and personal expertise.

In this chapter we will present some information provided by students, teachers and foreign language assistants, their opinions and their behavior related to their attitude in front of foreign language assistants in the classrooms. For the development of this research some observations were applied during the classes of foreign language assistants with the presence

of teachers in some cases. The observation format consisted of 20 items which were applied in each semester. In order to analyze the statements that were included in the observation format it was assigned 3 options, yes, no and sometimes.

The information obtained from teachers, students and foreign language assistants is described and analyzed taking into account every statement of the observation format; some categories will be created according to the different aspects involving the development of an English class so that the data analysis can be understood and used by anyone.

Categories of the information format

The format was divided in four categories that will be presented in the statements displayed below, these statements are showed according to the number with which they appear in the observation format: (See appendix)

Attitude.

4. The students start the class with a good attitude
9. The assistant shows a good attitude when teaching
10. The assistant shows an adequate teaching behavior similar to that of a certified teacher.
11. The assistant is respectful toward the students' opinions.
12. The students show respect for the assistant.
14. The students respond to the class requirements.
18. Students end the class with a positive attitude.
19. Teacher leaves the classroom with a good attitude.
20. The teaching assistant leaves the classroom with a positive attitude.

Classroom management.

1. The students arrive punctually.

2. The teacher arrives punctually.
3. The foreign assistant arrives punctually.

Involvement in the class procedure.

5. The class is 100 %managed by the foreign assistant.
6. The class is partially managed by the teacher.
7. The foreign assistant shows preparation of the lesson or topic to be taught.
8. The teacher stays away and does not participate or get involved in the class prepared by the assistant.

Lesson development.

7. The foreign assistant shows preparation of the lesson or topic to be taught.
13. The students show interest during the class, taking notes, participating and answering /asking questions.
15. The topics presented are clear.
16. The topics seem to be interesting for the students.
17. The class is carried out in a dynamic way.

In the following pages the results will be showed through some graphics that will allow us to present the information in an organized way and that will illustrate how the presence of foreign language assistants affected the teachers and students' attitudes towards teaching and learning processes.

These graphics are organized according to the categories already mentioned, in each category some statements from the observation format are presented and they will

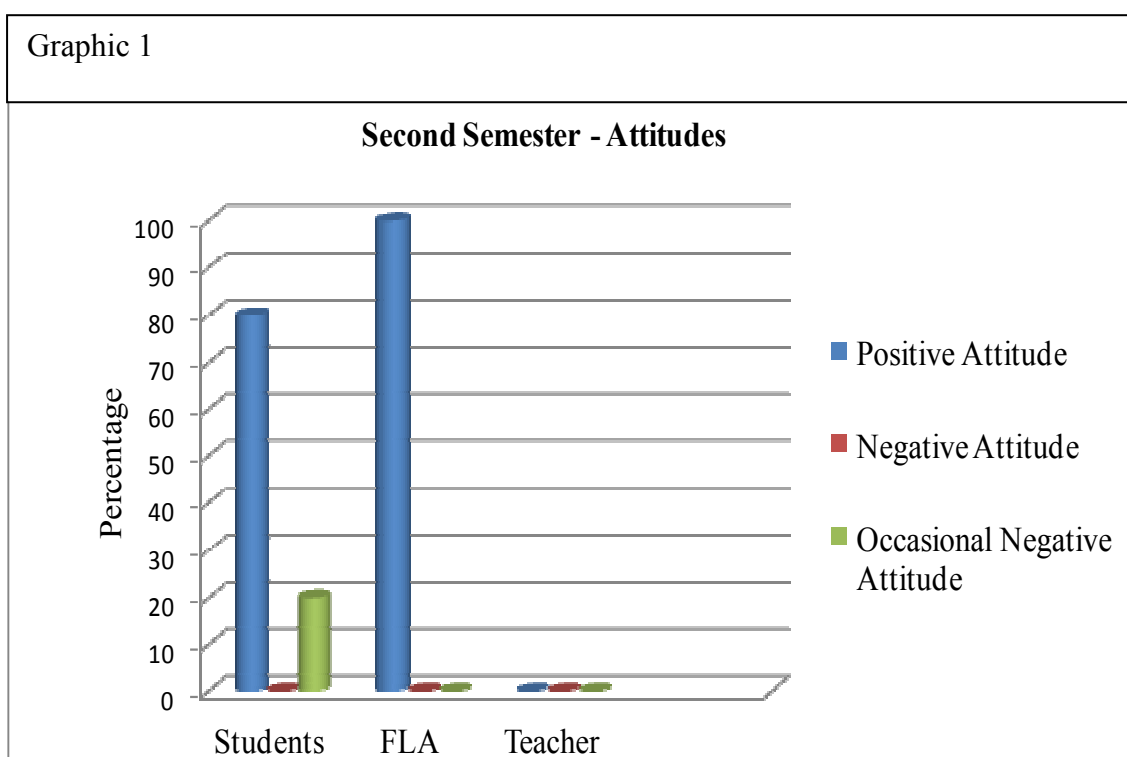
indicate and specify if the aspects considered in each statement deal with the students, teachers or foreign language assistants' attitude, besides these statements reflect the subject toward who the attitude was directed.

In the same way, the statements will display some peculiarities that we could identify during the observations, and before presenting the results, it is necessary to remark that although it was expected that in all the semesters observed, the teacher worked together with the foreign language assistant, we discovered that they didn't work collaboratively but on the contrary, the teachers allowed the foreign language assistant to develop the class on his own.

Analysis of Data

First Category: Attitude

Second semester: students' attitude. The next graphic will give evidence of the data collected about the attitudes that students from second semester of the English and French day Program showed toward the class or the foreign language assistant depending on the statement. (See appendix).



Note. The null result is due to the non assistance of the teacher to the class.

From the results obtained from the observation format applied in the second semester, we can infer that the overwhelming majority of students showed a good attitude toward the class, since from the beginning they entered to the classroom with a positive behavior; they responded to the class requirements and in the same way, they reported a satisfactory attitude when finishing the class and leaving the classroom. On the other hand, less than a half of the sample did not show respect for the foreign language assistant. This lack of respect was evident when some students were talking and did not pay so much attention while the foreign language assistant was developing the class.

While on the other hand the foreign language assistants always demonstrated a positive attitude toward the students, when teaching, and finishing the class.

In general, the vast number of students demonstrated a positive attitude toward the class and the foreign language assistant, this fact was probably attributable to the way in which the foreign language assistant worked the class. Students felt comfortable during the lesson because the foreign language assistant began encouraging students to participate and get involved in the activities that he developed; he created a good atmosphere making jokes and developing games like activities that comprehended real life topics that kept the students' interest.

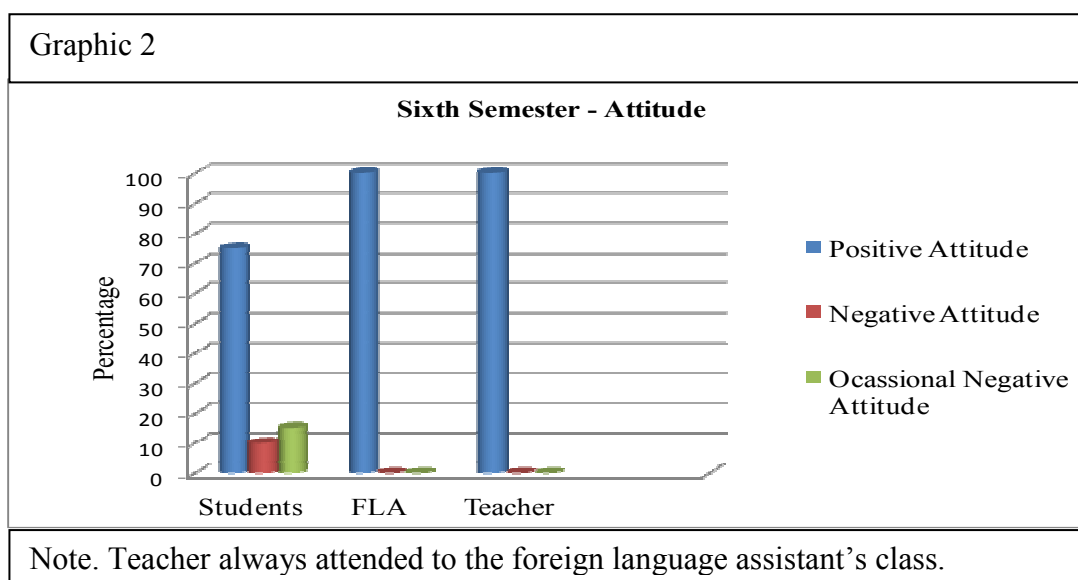
We became aware that all these conditions not only led to a good behavior, but also contributed to the accomplishment of the tasks and helped students and guided them toward a

meaningful English learning. This reflects Gardner and Macintyre (1993) ideas. They argued that the techniques and topics that are included in a class influence the students' feelings and positive attitude that they experience after being part of the class and this at the same time influences their degree of success in the learning.

From this students' attitudes category, we can corroborate that attitude is an important factor in the language learning, since when learners with positive attitudes are successful in the learning activity, they are also successful in the language learning.

As Brown (2000) affirmed; there is a connection between attitudes and successfully learning a second language.

Sixth semester: students' attitudes.



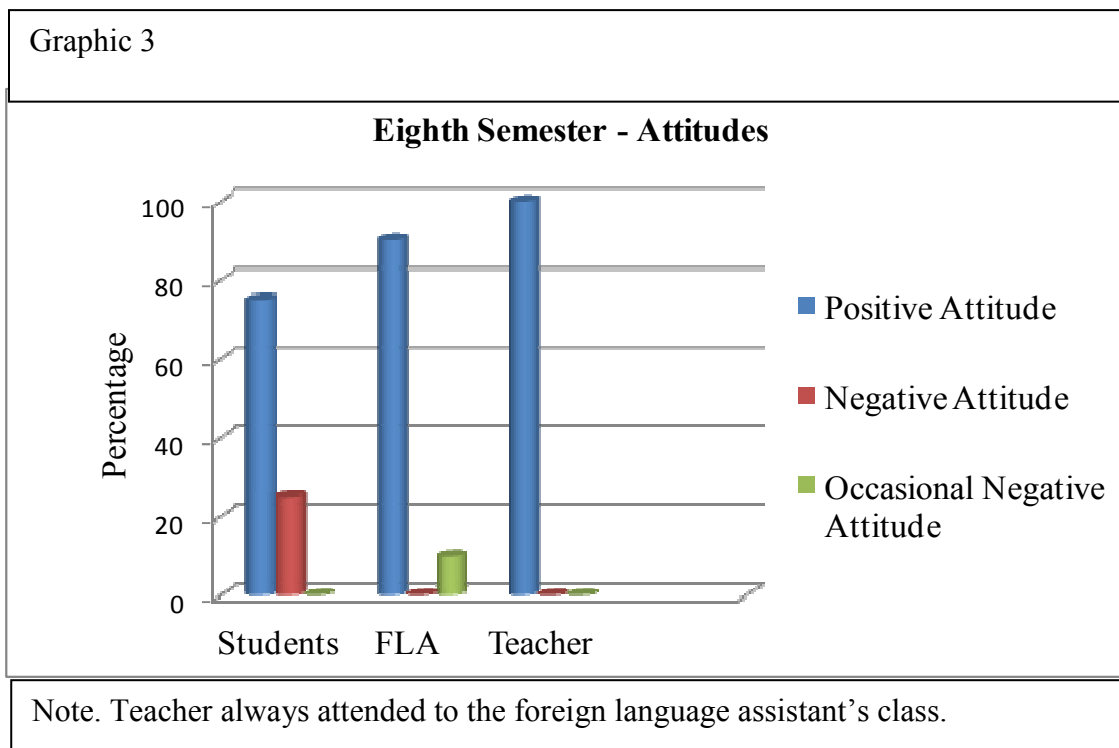
According to this graphic, we can infer that more than the half of the sample of

students of the sixth semester of the English and Spanish night program entered to the classroom with a good attitude and showed respect toward the foreign language assistant. This attitude and respect were exhibited since a great deal of time learners kept in silence and stayed quiet. On the other side, a little percentage of them did not show enthusiasm when going into the classroom, and compared to this last percentage, a little higher amount of students showed a negative attitude in some occasions.

Taking about this fact, we can stand out that during the observations, we noticed that students were a little bit nervous and anxious. Most of them evaded the participation during the class and did not take risks in order to avoid making mistakes and therefore feeling embarrassed. This situation can be the result of social anxiety which refers to the positive impression that the student wants to maintain upon other people such as teachers, the foreign language assistant or classmates. This argument can be supported through the affirmation made by Geen (1991) cited by Gass & Selinker (1994). This author states that social anxiety inhibits behavior producing disengagement, avoidance of social situations, withholding of communication or breaking of eye contact.

On the other side, the positive attitude can also be reflected in the fact that all learners responded to the classroom requirements, that is they had their course book and got concentrated on the assigned task, besides all of them finished their English lesson with a positive attitude. In addition, these results exposed that the foreign language assistant always demonstrated a good attitude at the beginning, during and after the class and he acted as a teacher showing respect for his students' opinions. At this point of the observation we could perceive that the sixth semester was one of the semesters in which the teacher was present during the foreign language assistant class showing a good attitude.

Eighth semester: students' attitudes.



In this semester it could be found out that a big percentage of students entered to the classroom with a good attitude and showed respect for the assistant responding to the classroom requirements along the class and participating when the foreign language assistant asked them to do it. On the other hand, compared with the other semesters a bigger number of learners had a bad disposition to get in the class.

It is necessary to clarify that at first, students were very passive but as the foreign language assistant made some jokes and the class and new activities were developed, the students got involved on them and contrary to their attitude at the beginning of the lesson, at the end, it changed to a positive one.

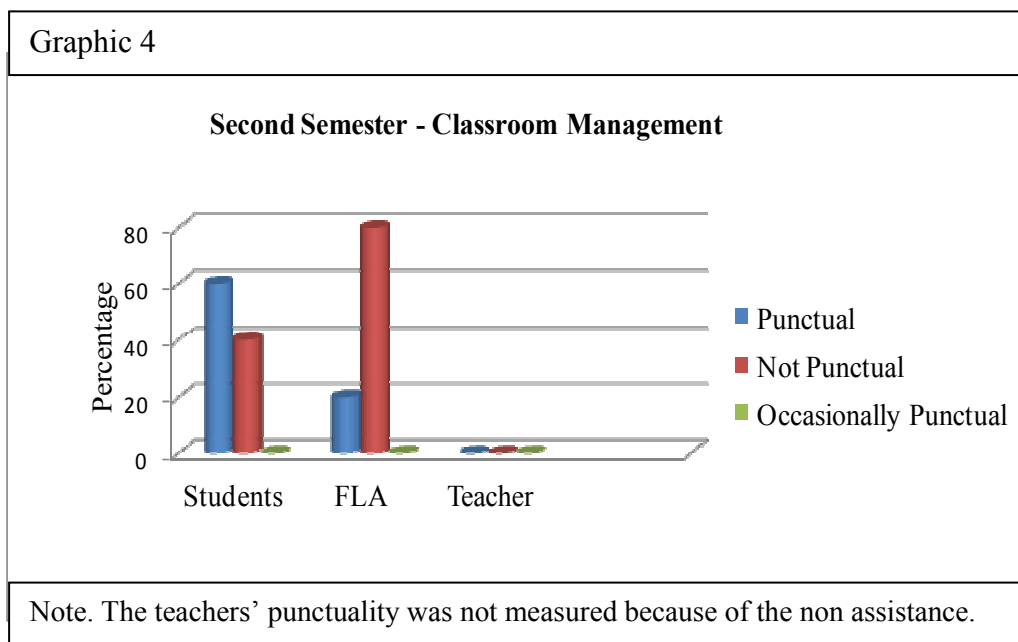
Taking about the foreign language assistant’s attitude, a great deal of time he exhibited a positive one since he usually showed enthusiasm when teaching, and every class he had a right behavior as happened with the other semesters.

Finally, referring to the teacher’s results, it can be supported that the teacher always displayed a good attitude toward the foreign language assistant’s class.

Second Category: Classroom Management

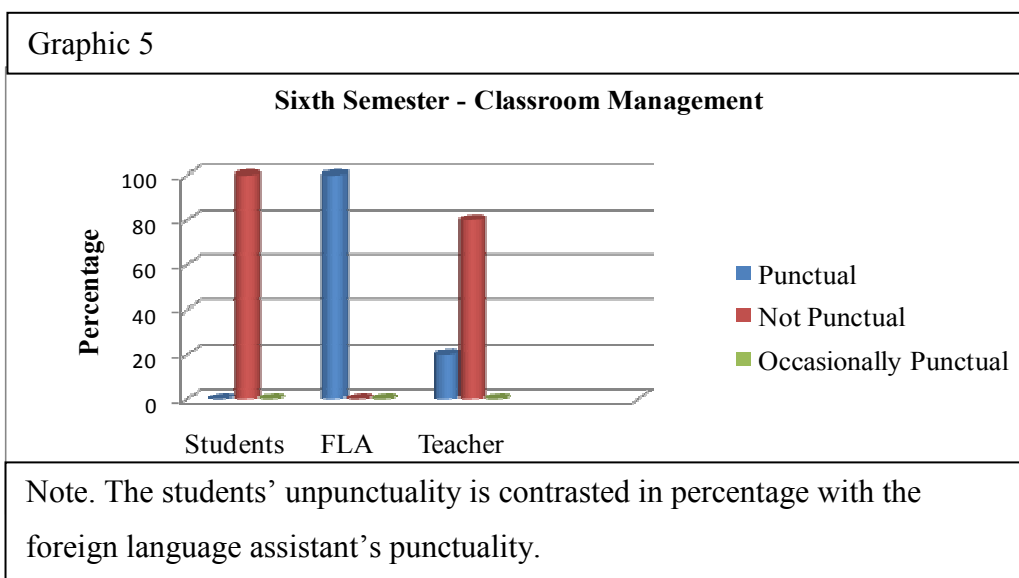
In this category will be presented the results that deal with the punctuality regarding students, foreign language assistant and teachers.

Second semester: students, teachers and foreign language assistants.



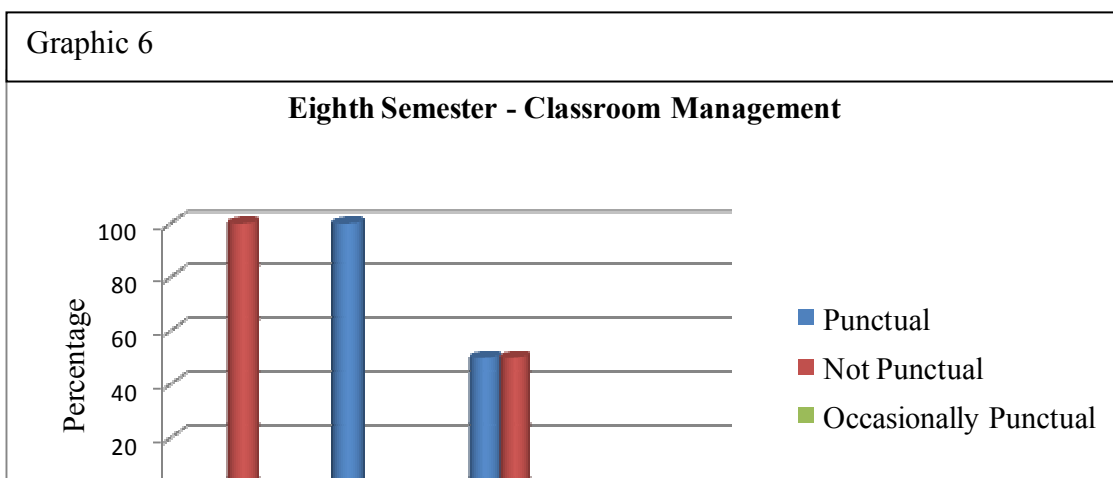
In this category the results showed that more than the double of the learners arrived on time at the English class whereas the foreign language assistant arrived some few minutes late a vast number of times. It is remarkable to say that the teacher never arrived on time because he never attended to class.

Sixth semester: students, teachers and foreign language assistants.



In the results that we got about the punctuality of the students of the night program, we realized that they never arrived punctual at class maybe because the teacher also arrived some minutes late, although it is necessary to clarify that the foreign language assistant was always at time.

Eighth semester: students, teachers and foreign language assistants.



The punctuality in this semester was not an aspect that stood out since the students always arrived late. In the same way, the teacher arrived some minutes later but he entered to the classroom earlier than the students. It is remarkable that the foreign language assistant was always punctual in the classroom.

Third Category: Involvement in the Class Procedure

In the following category the results that concern the preparation of the lesson from the part of the foreign language assistant, and the teacher's participation in the class are presented.

Second semester. In the classroom observations developed in this semester, we could notice that the involvement of the teacher was nonexistent since he was never present when the foreign language assistant had to teach the class. On the other hand, the involvement of the foreign language assistant was evident in the preparation in terms of lesson planning, materials, and general procedure of the class. We can corroborate this through the fact that the foreign language assistant provided material that was different from that of the course book, for example, most of this material involved exercises that helped learners to practice some grammar points, he also used games like activities and through them he tried to introduce new vocabulary. (See appendix).

Sixth and eighth semesters. As in the other courses, the foreign language assistant showed to have the lesson previously prepared. In these semesters of the day and night program, the teachers always attended to the classes. We can remark that in both semesters the teachers rarely got involved in the lesson prepared by the foreign language assistant.

We make this noticeable since they did not work collaboratively developing the class and it has been proved by some studies that when the teacher and the foreign language assistant develop the lesson and both participate in the teaching process like a team, there are more advantages for the learners and the class development can be more successful. This is supported by the studies developed by Brumby and Wada (1990) cited by Tajino & Tajino (1998). They said that when the teacher and the foreign language assistant work jointly in preparing lesson plans for the classes, providing input, giving practice and evaluating after classes, it can be twice more effective. Through team - teaching, both teachers and foreign language assistants can get successful outcomes not only in the teaching but also learning processes.

Fourth Category: Lesson Development

In this category, the results related to the preparation of the topic, its clarity and the interest that students showed toward it will be reported.

Second Semester. In all the classes in which we could observed the foreign language assistant, we verified that he demonstrated one more time his excellent management of the course content since, he always showed his previous preparation of the activities applying different techniques that helped learners to understand and practice the language topic.

He always made sure that all students understood the topic, for instance he usually gave clear directions, several examples not only about the topic but also about the way in

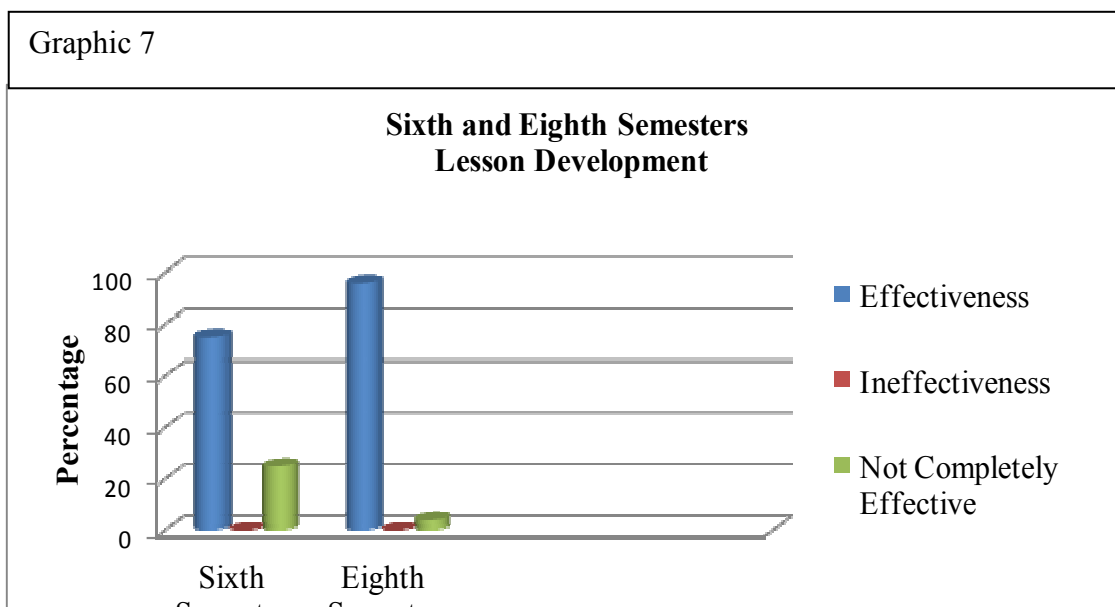
which they could develop an activity, he always tried to get all students involved asking them to participate.

Moreover, he was always checking the students' work while they did an activity and in some cases he became part of some groups participating as one member of the same, in this way there was a constantly interaction in the foreign language that brought several advantages to students.

This way in which the foreign language assistant worked with students can be identified as one of the situations in which a team can be formulated according to a study developed by Tajino & Tajino (1998). In this team teaching situation, the NEST and the learners work together developing a task and helping each other as integrants of the same team; consequently, they had to interact with each other in order to complete the task so that the learners improved their communicative competence.

At the end we realized and corroborated that this fact not only stimulated classroom communication but also guide the class to be very interactive and dynamic. Besides, as the foreign language assistant was very active, he transmitted it to the learners who at the same time were very interested for the activities, asking and answering questions during the class.

Sixth and Eighth Semesters.



The observations made in these semesters let us to support that the overwhelming majority of times, the lesson development was effective. By effective we mean that the foreign language assistant always showed a preparation of the class and the topics. This made that the content was clear for most of the students and as he also prepared several activities that were related to real life, the content also became interesting for some of them. On the one hand, more than half of the students of the sixth semester were involved in the activity, however the foreign language assistant realized that a few learners were not interested and he decided to change the activity to one in which all of them had to participate.

In spite of the changing of the activity and being very dynamic, a small percentage of learners were not so enthusiastic. Some aspects as the ones mentioned before had influence on the lesson development and guided to the ineffectiveness of the lesson development at some point of the class. These aspects did not allow that the foreign language assistant develop the class as he had planned it.

On the other hand, concerning the lesson development of the eighth semester, it can be argued that a great deal of time the lesson development was effective because the majority of students demonstrated interest during the class. The foreign language assistant used his own experiences and examples from real life to get learners identified with them and therefore realized the importance that the topic had in their lives. The few percentage of ineffectiveness

that is shown in the graphic was reflected when students participated but they did it because the foreign language assistant asked them to do it.

Chapter Five Conclusions

Our objective in this research was to determine the influence of foreign language assistance on the teachers and students attitudes towards the foreign language teaching and learning. In order to do so, we presented some literature that supported the idea that there were a lot of factors affecting this attitude; we then presented the population with which we decided to work to develop this research. Taking into account the literature review, we agreed to apply an observation format as the main data collection procedure. This format was employed in different semesters from the day and night languages programs. After getting all the information required, we found out that:

As we pretended to establish the factors that influenced the behavior that students and teachers adopted toward the presence of foreign language assistants, we are going to mention those aspects that we could appreciate during the observations. One of these factors was the anxiety that most of the times created a barrier on the learners and avoided them to take risks and participate during the class; another aspect was social distance that inhibited students to interact with the foreign language assistant because of the fear of feeling embarrassed.

Motivation was an additional factor that played an important role since when students were motivated their disposition to learn increased and they took the initiative and advantage of every opportunity to improve their language skills. If Teachers and foreign language assistants contemplate the influence of these factors on the student's behavior and are able to manage them in their favor, students would attain higher proficiency levels in the language learning process.

Another of our aims was to determine the ways that students and teachers perceived the idea of sharing classes with target assistants. Considering this objective, we can deduce that the students perceived this as something favorable for their learning process, it could be corroborated through their attitude and interest showed.

On the other side, according to the teachers who attended to class and their behavior, we can say that they perceived the fact of sharing classes with the foreign language assistants with indifference, since, they allowed the foreign language assistants to manage some of their classes but because it was established by the head of the department, in this way they had neither a good nor a bad reaction toward them or their classes.

Taking as reference the strategies that were intended to adopt to influence a major profit of the presence of foreign language assistants, we propose to formally accept and start to use team teaching as the most suitable strategy.

After team teaching would be accepted by the teachers and they realize about the relevance of collaborative work and the benefits that they can get, their interest would arouse and therefore their attitude would become positive too. This interest and attitude would be reflected in their work and it would be noticed by their students who at the same time would be encouraged by their instructors to exploit the foreign language assistants' presence at its best and as a result it would enhance more appropriate learning conditions for students.

Another important feature that can be concluded is that additionally to the factors already mentioned, there are some other aspects such as the attitude, classroom management, involvement in the class procedure and the lesson development that had influence on the students' learning. So, in the following pages, some conclusions about each subject of study and each aspect mentioned above will be presented.

The first aspect respecting students' attitudes lead to the conclusion that from all the semesters observed, most of the students always demonstrated a positive attitude showing enthusiasm along the class and carrying out the foreign language assistant's demands.

In general, this positive attitude toward the presence of the foreign language assistant provided learners with some benefits. It helped students to maintain their interest to continue learning the language and facilitated the creation of appropriate atmospheres that guided students into an improvement of their language proficiency level. Attitudes were relevant in the process of learning in the way in which they drove learners into success.

As regards the teachers' attitude, we have to acknowledge that although the attitude of the teachers who attended to classes was always positive, they never got involved in the development of the lesson. From this, it is arguable that this good attitude could be more useful if teachers not only express their encouraging good behavior toward the foreign language assistants but also if they make profit of this positive attitude to establish a close educational relationship with the foreign language assistant and they take the initiative in sharing their pedagogical background and accept those new ideas of the foreign language assistant so that they can start working together.

In relation to the foreign language assistant's attitude, we can say that the positive attitude showed by him most of the times led to the positive attitude of the students too. So, we can determine that this attitude was one of the aspects of the presence of foreign language assistants that most contributed to the development of a successful learning and teaching processes.

Additionally, talking about the classroom management category and its main characteristic that was punctuality, it was found out that as higher was the semester, higher was the unpunctuality of the students, and less was the interest showed by them. This aspect influenced the students' learning since they did not take advantage of the full time devoted to the foreign language assistant's class. As a result, we could notice that learners did not exploit the foreign language assistant's presence at its best, for this reason, our main attempt is to make students realize the importance of making the most out of the presence of the foreign language assistants, so that they see them like a useful resource that can guide them to the achievement of their goals in learning the language.

With reference to the teachers' punctuality, it can be concluded that as they were not involved in the development of the class, they did not consider as essential their punctual arrival so, teachers should reexamine their presence in the classroom. They should think over their function in the class. It is better and more beneficial to the students and to the teachers themselves if they become aware of the relevance of the time they devote to the foreign language assistant's class, so, they should participate as other facilitator in the lesson.

Regarding the involvement in the class procedure, it was found out that as the foreign language assistant always demonstrated a preparation of the class, most of the times the lesson was developed in a successful way and this benefited the students' process of learning.

Concerning the lesson development, the overwhelming majority of times, the class was developed in an effective way since the topics were always clear and the class was always dynamic. Due to this fact, the students usually showed to be interested in all the topics that the foreign language assistant exposed, this interest at the same time created extrinsic motivation that guided students into an investment of effort and time to learn the language.

Taking into account the information presented and the benefits mentioned above, we resolve that the fact of incorporating the foreign language assistants in the Linguistics and Languages Department has proved to be something relevant and significant for the attitudes that students showed toward the English learning.

Some of the things in which they have contributed the most are in the development of some specific language skills as the speaking one. This contribution is the result of the tasks that he applied since the foreign language assistant almost always focused on real life activities that encouraged learners to talk in the target language. Besides, he functioned as a source that collaborated students in the recognition of the different accent, intonation, and

stress patterns, in the same way that he helped students to be updated about idioms, collocations and cultural expressions that are useful when learning the language.

This information gives us a sight of the advantages that can be obtained from the support of the foreign language assistants and although it is worth having foreign language assistants in the department, their presence could be more profitable if primarily the limitations that they have as the lack of guidance and support from the Linguistics and Languages Department are taken into account and the recommendations presented in this chapter are also considered.

In summary, this research illustrated that the presence of the foreign language assistants was worth. The foreign language assistant and students' good attitude helped both subjects of study to carry out their role of teaching and learning in an effective way. Along the study, it was found that there were many aspects that were part of the teaching and the learning achievement and through the development of this research we discovered that there were some of them that influenced the attitude of the students and teachers toward the foreign language assistant in a great extent.

However, It is important to take into account that there were some other factors that also influenced this results; for example, Ellis (1994) stated that the attitudes that the learners have toward the foreign language, its speakers, the foreign culture, the social value of learning a foreign language or the students' attitudes towards themselves as integrants of their own culture also exerted a strong influence on the students' capability to learn a target language.

In the same way, we also found out that team teaching was the most suitable strategy to use the presence of foreign language assistants in a greater degree, to fortify the academic

level as well as to strength the students and teachers positive attitude so that students begin to perceive the foreign language assistance as something positive and useful for their careers.

In the meantime, we hope the information presented in this study will inspire future researchers to explore the different aspects that involve this foreign language assistants' field.

Recommendations

For Teachers

These recommendations are created with the aim that the teachers of the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño make the most out of the experience of having with them foreign language assistants in their lessons. The following are suggestions that we considered relevant to take into account:

The first recommendation is that teachers should work together with the assistant during the classes. We make this recommendation since during the observations and taking into consideration the results found, we could notice that although most of the times the teachers showed a positive attitude, they and the foreign language assistant did not work as a team, and in some semesters, the teacher did not attend to his class. So, we suggest that teachers take advantage of the foreign language assistance as well as of their good attitude, to establish a close educational relationship with him taking the initiative to share their pedagogical background and accept those new ideas of the foreign language assistant so that they can start working together. Doing that, the teacher and the foreign language assistant can get benefits from the team teaching theory mentioned in the literature review and proposed in the analysis.

Working through team teaching implies that the teacher and the foreign language assistant make a preparation and lesson planning before the class. Both can discuss the topics,

activities and the techniques most suitable for the semester in which they are working. On the one hand, the foreign language assistant will have more support in their work, since most of them lack a professional degree and the teachers' help will be very valuable due to the experience that they can share and to the advice that teachers can give to the foreign language assistants. Advice regarding lesson planning, lesson development, assessment and classroom management, among others aspects will guide foreign language assistants to develop the class in an effective way.

On the other hand, teachers will have the opportunity to do professional exchanges that will help them to sustain the coherence of the course and both will exchange information and acquire different skills by exchanging ideas and cultural values. These ideas are supported by Tajino (1998) who expresses that team teaching is more successful when it is also team learning since teachers and foreign language assistants are encouraged to interact and learn from each other.

Another suggestion has to do with the fact that teachers should encourage the development of cross cultural awareness in the EFL classroom. Cultural awareness requires continually developing an ability to understand our own culture and that of other people. This fact entails learning about traditional beliefs, meanings of words, phrases, gestures, customs, significant days or holidays, activities and rituals.

Considering this term, and the suggestion proposed at the beginning of the paragraph, it is intended that teachers foster this cultural awareness and promote sociocultural tolerance between the foreign language assistant and the students. This consciousness can be created when teachers help students to entail an understanding and appreciation of the intercultural differences that there are between one culture and other.

This in turn will generate clearer communications through the interaction between the foreign language assistant and students. When they interact, they exchange ideas and experiences that help students to comprehend and appreciate each other points of view. This fact results in the creation of confidence that also help them to build trust and establish rapport. Taking this into consideration, the main intention is that with the teachers' help, students are not only conscious about the meaningfulness that the presence and interaction with a native speaker has but also that students are aware that the differences of culture between them and the foreign language assistants are not a reason for restricting themselves at the moment to interact with the foreign language assistants.

A third suggestion for teachers is that they should encourage learners to take risks. When learners feel a certain level of anxiety because of the fear that they experience when being in contact with the foreign language assistant, this fear can be translated into a lack of risk taking. If students are not willing to make decisions such as participating and engaging into communication with the foreign language assistant, this can result in social distance and language shock; therefore as students do not interact with the foreign language assistant, there will be a diminished amount of samples of language to which the learners can be exposed to and students will have less possibilities to become efficient and competent people in the target language.

In addition, if students do not take risks, they will not exploit foreign language assistants at their highest potential and this will affect their process of learning since according to Schumann's (1978a, 1978b) cited by Gass & Selinker (1994), if there is less contact, less learning will be predicted. It is here, where the teachers play an important role since through this encouragement, teachers can get students to take advantage of the foreign language

assistants instead of avoiding the interaction with them. At the end, the outcomes in the learning process will benefit students since they have put in practice the speaking skill and they have improved their language proficiency level.

For Students

The first recommendation is that students should be open-minded to interact with the foreign language assistant and reflect about the relevance of their presence. It could be suitable that if they have the opportunity to establish a continual communication with a native speaker of the foreign language that they are learning, they should realize that this is a great and maybe the only opportunity that they are being given to practice what they already know and to acquire more knowledge that help them to improve their language skills. Through interaction learners are able to progress in their accuracy, their fluency, to increase their vocabulary, enhance their pronunciation and several aspects that are necessary for being a competent speaker in a country where the target language is used.

One of these aspects is the intonation which is considered for many students one of the most problematic areas of pronunciation. Most of them find difficult to identify the different patterns of tones, so the key to successful pronunciation learning is that students listen and notice how English is spoken. They can do this keeping in direct contact with the foreign language assistants instead of listening to an audio or video track, doing this, students can learn the way in which these patterns are articulated and they can become aware of how the intonation functions in action.

Another suggestion for learners is that they should take advantage as much as possible of the presence of the foreign language assistant. Students have to keep constant interaction with the foreign language assistant. Team teaching can be the most adequate suggestion. We

advise a situation proposed by Tajino & Tajino (1998) in which the foreign language assistant and the learners work together by helping each other as integrants of the same team. For example, the students could be persuaded to help the foreign language assistant in learning something that they know very well, so, the students will play the role of facilitators and can have an opportunity to develop a positive attitude toward communicating with the foreign language assistant, and to learn more about his or her linguistic and cultural background.

Students also should make profit of the different activities organized by the foreign language assistants. These activities include the different meetings, forums and speaking clubs. Students should realize that these activities are created with the aim to improve their language competence, specially the speaking skill. Learners should considered that they are planned taking into account their schedule and their disposition of time, so the only tool that students need is a positive attitude that encourage them to get involved in all these activities as well as commitment and effort that will help them to succeed in their professional career.

Something else to keep in mind is that students should respect the foreign language assistants in the same way they do with teachers. Being respectful implies many aspects. One of them is listening to the foreign language assistant when he is talking, it shows not only that learners have good manners but also that they have interest on the activities or topics being taught. It is important that students show empathy for the person who is talking and value what he or she says, in this way, they will realize that being in front of a class is not a simple affair.

It is necessary that the audience supports the native speaker through a positive behavior that makes him or her to feel comfortable and that contributes to develop the class adequately as this has been planned. Moreover, as every student wants to be respected, it is relevant that

they think that they will deserve respect but only if they have demonstrated it before. As a result if this recommendation is considered, a respectful environment will be created and it will generate more appropriate conditions for the teaching and the learning processes.

Furthermore, students have to try to be as objective as possible. This means that learners do not have to get carried away by their personal opinions about the foreign language assistants, for example opinions about their physical appearance since, the only thing they have to care about is the contribution that foreign language assistants can do to their language learning.

For the Foreign Language Assistants

Foreign language assistants should also be open-minded in order not to have difficulties in their work. They have to be opened to the different cultural characteristics of our region. They have to be disposed to adapt themselves to our customs, our traditions, the laws and rules of our society and those of the University of Nariño. They have to take into account that they do not have to adopt our beliefs and way of life but, they can adapt and respect it so that their work can be most agreeable and it does not affect their attitude toward the population with which they work.

We refer to attitude since if the foreign language assistants do not try to adapt and be respectful towards the different aspects of our culture, they probably will reject our style of life and they will not feel comfortable in his work environment, so, if they do not feel affinity with it, they could manifest a negative attitude toward teachers and students and it that can interfere in their way of working.

Another recommendation for foreign language assistants is that they should be tolerant toward the teachers' reaction and attitude that can be showed toward them. Foreign language

assistants have to consider that at the beginning of this process, there can be some conflicts and tension. These circumstances can be present because of the teachers and foreign language assistants' confusion of roles and the attitudes that some teachers can adopt. On the one side, Wada, (1996) cited by Tajino & Tajino, (2000) found that native and non native teachers seem to be confused and anxious about their roles when working through team teaching; therefore, if they are not sure about their functions, they also create confusion on their students.

On the other side, an aspect that can cause slight difficulties in the foreign language assistant's work is the fact that some teachers often cannot find easy sharing classes with an assistant. The attitude with which they can behave cannot be the best since teaching the class with other person implies hierarchical relations of power, so, the foreign language assistant should be tolerant and patient with them. Our recommendation for these situations is that the foreign language assistant has a discussion with the teacher in charge of the subject matter so that they can clarify what team teaching implies, provided that, both can agree about their roles in and outside the classroom and at the same time, they can examine the benefits that they can get working together.

The foreign language assistants should exploit the materials brought from their native country. As the foreign language assistants have the opportunity to bring magazines, cds, books, photographs, flyers, brochures or menus, they can use them as realia and authentic materials so that they can relate them to their classes and can provide learners with real samples of their culture and the target language. By doing that, the foreign language assistants would give the students the opportunity to interact using real life materials and real examples of daily life situations.

Depending on the type of materials, the foreign language assistant should focus on several skills. For example, if he or she can decide to take some handouts to the class, they can focus on reading, speaking and writing. The foreign language assistant can study a particular grammar topic through this material; in this case as the handout talks about the world cup, he or she can focus on predictions. First, the foreign language assistant can ask students to read the hand out, later students can be asked to underline the predictions made in the handout. Third, students have to read what they have underlined; next the foreign language assistant has to write the predictions on the board. Then, he or she can discuss the predictions that students feel more and less certain about.

After that, the foreign language assistant asks students to look at the first prediction and to say this one with their own words to the class. After students have participated, the foreign language assistant can focus only on the grammar point, which refers to the predictions and doing that he or she can stand out some adverbs that can be used for example, probably, maybe and so on.

Taking into account that this kind of activities involves interaction and participation of all the students, some discipline problems can arise. We recommend that the foreign language assistant divides the course in several small groups. Then, he or she can pass the handouts around and at the same time the foreign language assistant can assign different roles to each member of the group. For example, one can be the responsible of the time that they spend developing the task; other member has to care about the involvement of all the students in the activity while others students can be in charge of reminding students to talk always in the target language. Taking into account these suggestions, the foreign language assistant would keep all students working and he or she would avoid discipline problems.

For the Linguistic and Languages Department

The Linguistic and Languages Department has to help teachers to become aware about the benefits that they can get working together with a foreign language assistant. The University administrators, the head of the Department and the curriculum committee have the responsibility to help teachers to get willing to work together with the foreign language assistants and encourage them to have a flexible attitude toward the fact of adopting team teaching and collaborative work as a new way of working. Following this recommendation, the Linguistics and Languages Department would help teachers to assimilate the idea of working with a person from other country and culture.

Besides, the Department would obtain advantages not only for the teachers but also for the students and for the English and French program. As a result, as the teacher and the foreign language assistant can contribute with different ideas to the planning and development of the lesson, students would attend to classes that lead them into meaningful learning and both programs of languages as well as the Linguistic and Languages Department will be recognized for having a high quality of teaching and higher results in learning.

One more recommendation is that the Linguistics and Languages Department has to provide more support to the foreign language assistants. The administrators and the head of the Department have to provide help to the foreign language assistants in the creation of the activities organized by them. This support can be given through the facility to access to the different classrooms and necessary tools such as the computers, overhead projectors, and so on. The Linguistics and Languages Department has to become aware that another of their functions and responsibilities is to support the foreign language assistant as well as they do with teachers.

In the same way that they discuss the creation of the curriculum and guide teachers in the preparation of the syllabi, administrators should guide foreign language assistants in the way of planning and developing the speaking clubs and forums. The aim of this recommendation is that these activities get a high degree of success after being discussed and analyzed by the administrators and applied by the foreign language assistants. Taking into account that, the Linguistics and Languages Department should consider that the advantages of supporting the foreign language assistants are also for the department itself, since as mentioned above, the benefits would be for the students' learning and at the same time for the Department's prestige.

Another recommendation is that the Linguistics and Languages Department should think about more tasks through which students can make a higher profit of the foreign language assistants. The head of the department and the curriculum committee have to plan together with the foreign language assistant as many activities as possible. Some tasks in which not only students but also teachers can take advantage of the presence of the foreign language assistants are activities that involve cultural exchanges. One way through which the Linguistics and Languages Department can persuade teachers, foreign language assistants and students to work together is one team teaching situation proposed by Tajino & Tajino (1998).

They advice that both native, non native teachers and students work together in an activity in which the foreign language assistant has to develop a task with the help of the teachers belonging to the same team. The foreign language assistant could be persuaded to help students in learning something that they know very well; for example, they can warn learners about the manners that for students are normal in our culture but that in the foreign language assistants' culture are not approved.

In this kind of activities the role of facilitators can be performed by any member of the team. At the end of the activity, they would have interchanged different cultural aspects; the students would have improved their communicative competence since it would stimulate classroom interaction and help the students to experience various types of genuine and authentic communication; and the Linguistic and Languages Department would have contributed to the teachers and students in making the most profit of the foreign language assistants.

A final recommendation for the Linguistics and Languages Department is that they should help the foreign language assistants to have a better academic and personal experience in our university and the city. The administrators of the University of Nariño can assign one day after the foreign language assistants' arrival to welcome and give them a guidance that deals with those aspects concerning the academic and cultural aspects in our university and city. After that, the Department can organize a warming activity in which the students present some cultural values through theater and typical dancing, in this way the foreign language assistants can learn a little bit about our customs.

Another way in which the Linguistics and Languages Department can contribute to the academic experience of the foreign language assistants is through some meetings where the teachers can use Spanish to share some of their educational experience and can give them some advice about the methodology and techniques to be used with students. In this way, both can get advantages; on the one hand, the foreign language assistants can practice the language and on the other hand, the teachers and foreign language assistants can share and learn from each other.

Finally, in order to assess the foreign language assistants' performance, the administrators can plan a meeting at the end of each semester so that together they can evaluate the positive and negative aspects that were present along the semester. This with the aim of recognizing the strengths and improve the weaknesses in the teaching process.

For other students who want to continue this research

Students who want to continue this research should take into consideration the different limitations that this research has. The students have to become aware of the difficulties that can cause the fact that the foreign language assistants can arrive to work with the university later than it was planned or even in some situations they cannot arrived.

Additionally, the foreign language assistants only stay in the University of Nariño for a year and probably their departure can take place at the same time that students are developing their research. This can become a problem since students cannot begin their research on time or they can have problems when collecting the data and developing the observations or interviews with them, in this way, the student's monograph can be delayed.

Another limitation can be that there is a lack of literature on team-teaching in the field of foreign language education because it has recently received attention. Our recommendation is that students take as a base our research that would allow them to get an idea of the theories they can review, although it can also be recommended to investigate some few studies made in other countries.

Another recommendation for students who want to continue this research should take into account the results of our research to contemplate a new research. Considering how the presence of the foreign language assistants affected the teachers and students' attitudes

towards teaching and learning, students can propose a way in which they can get students and teachers keep on working in the strengthening of this attitude.

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