

BILINGUALISM IN EFL SETTINGS

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September, 2008

Qualification

Signature

San Juan de Pasto, September 09, 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to professors Gabriel Obando and Aaron Rogers for their knowledge and help.

Thanks to our friends who were an important part in our life.

And especially to professor Ana Clara Sanchez for her support and dedication.

DEDICATED TO

*I am grateful for my parents,
my skills and the knowledge .
I am grateful for my professors,
my friends and my lover;
and especially I am grateful
for you...*

Alexander G.

DEDICATED TO

*Thanks to God for giving me life,
thanks to my family for
their love and support.*

Carolina

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ABSTRACT

The Colombian Government has set a program which intends that citizens communicate and be able to use English for different communicative purposes. It means, at any place where people find necessary to use English.

Colombian conditions make researchers think about the possibility of applying that program. The main limitations are related to the time schools' directors devote to the teaching of English, the materials used in class, outside practice, the language itself and some others, such as, large classes and discipline problems.

This study will provide information about those aspects above mentioned and will draw some recommendations that would be useful for future teachers and teachers when considering Bilingualism in EFL settings.

RESUMEN

El gobierno colombiano ha diseñado un programa el cual pretende que los ciudadanos se comuniquen y sean capaces de usar Ingles para diferentes propósitos comunicativos. Es decir, en cualquier momento, cuando las personas lo consideren necesario.

Las condiciones de Colombia hacen que los investigadores piensen en la posibilidad de aplicar este programa. Las principales limitaciones están relacionadas con el tiempo que los directores de las escuelas dedican a la enseñanza del Ingles, los materiales usados en la clase, la practica fuera del salón, el mismo idioma, y otros tales como grupos numerosos y los problemas de disciplina.

Este estudio proporcionará información acerca de los aspectos ya mencionados y planteará recomendaciones que serán útiles para los futuros docentes cuando consideren el uso de metodologías bilingües en un lugar donde el Inglés se estudia como lengua extranjera.

INTRODUCTION

Around the world many different programs have been applied with the purpose of achieving learner's proficiency in a second language. This made language policies change from a focus on passive learning to one of active learning where the center of the class is the student, not the teacher, and where interaction in the second or foreign language (L2) among students is encouraged. Bilingualism, which refers to the use of two languages by an individual or a speech community (Ellis, 1994), appears as one of the most suitable options to be adapted to the classroom setting by foreign language educators in order to provide learners with a high level of knowledge and proficiency in a second language.

In some countries like Canada, Australia and the United States there has been a great investment in research, time and financial resources to develop and apply bilingual programs with satisfactory results.

In Colombia, to have citizens who are proficient in two languages has also become an important goal; this is why the Ministry of National Education set the National Program of Bilingualism as a way to attain this purpose. The main objective of the Colombian Program is that

citizens become able to communicate through English with international comparable standards and interact with native speakers with a degree of fluency and spontaneity (MEN, presentation, 2006).

However, achieving Bilingual proficiency and citizens with a high level of English knowledge in a setting like Colombia seems to be fairly difficult or not feasible under the current educational conditions present in our country.

This study will first focus on providing an explanation of the term Bilingualism, its types, foundations and some ideas that have been discussed about this issue. Similarly and in order to have a complete vision of the nature of bilingual aspects like methodologies, the conditions of Colombian education, beliefs, the feasibility to develop bilingual education in a Colombian city like Pasto and the disapproving of the statement that teachers are the only ones responsible for the success of the program will be discussed during the development of the research.

JUSTIFICATION

The purpose of this study is to present some concepts and basic ideas that will help students and teachers analyze, understand and know more about Bilingual Education in our country, this study intends to be a guide for educators, students, administrators and policy makers to have a critical view of the educational policies and programs developed in Colombia.

The Bilingual program by the Colombian Ministry of National Education (MEN) establishes a pretentious goal such as obtaining bilingual citizens in the next ten years; this program requires the enhancement of English Communicative Competence in the whole educational system and the reinforcement of national competitiveness of Colombian citizens ([http:// www.mineducacion.gov.co](http://www.mineducacion.gov.co)).

However, these goals were arranged without having a deep and consistent research to support it and this causes that nowadays there still exists a misconception about what bilingualism really means. This study will attempt to clarify these ideas.

As Rey de Castro and Garcia (2005) affirm, the majority of Colombian people think that bilingualism is then primarily understood as Spanish with English, or "English only" (ASOCOPI newsletter, 2005).

It is evident the program was set without revising the previous studies and researches concerning Bilingualism

developed in other countries. Besides, the studies carried out in Colombia do not represent what bilingualism really means because most of them are not focused and the basis of the studies is on criticizing teachers' skills rather on emphasizing the necessary conditions needed to obtain a bilingual country or on the psycholinguistic processes that take place when learning a second language. This study will deal with these elements making the concept of bilingualism more accessible and clear for future teachers, teachers and administrators.

This study entitled Bilingualism in EFL Settings is mainly focused on explaining key aspects of Bilingualism and giving a clear description of the appropriate conditions present in bilingual settings that we might try to consider before developing an adequate bilingual program in Pasto.

This study is also relevant since it shows that universities, teachers, student-teachers and those involved in educational processes participate and provide guidelines to guarantee the continuous improvement of Colombian education, since many times administrators or people involved with the government seem not to have the necessary academic background to provide good guidelines about

education. This study is a sample of effort, dedication and analysis carried out in research at the University of Nariño.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Problem Statement

The study conducted by the Ministry of National Education (2003-2005) affirms that Bilingual strategies have not been successfully applied in Colombia because there is a lack of foreign language proficiency in a large group of English teachers.

In fact, in the study it is claimed that only 11% of high school teachers from different Colombian cities have an acceptable level of English proficiency (altabletero, No 37 Octubre-Diciembre, 2005).

Besides, the study conducted by the Ministry of Education tends to demonstrate that teachers and educators are directly responsible for the success of the program as the Minister of education Cecilia Maria Velez affirms:

"El ideal de tener Colombianos capaces de comunicarse en Ingles con estándares internacionalmente comparables ya no es un sueño, es una realidad y sólo podemos llegar a cumplir los propósitos establecidos si contamos con maestras y maestros convencidos y capaces de llevar a los niños y niñas a comunicarse en este idioma" (Vélez María Cecilia, Ministra de Educación, Noviembre, 2006, Colombia)

Nevertheless, this assumption is not only irresponsible but also unfair because although teachers' knowledge and capacities are an important part for developing bilingual education it is not the main problem that must be solved in Colombia and through the development

of this research this idea will be dismissed by presenting the real conditions that surround foreign language teaching in Colombian high schools.

Research Question

Are English student - teachers from the University of Nariño prepared to face the educational policies in terms of foreign language teaching and develop a bilingual program under the current educational conditions in Pasto?

Hypothesis

The current educational conditions in Pasto are not appropriate for applying and developing bilingual programs. Issues such as time allocation, resources, exposure to the language and motivational factors are still a problem in the Colombian context, and although student - teachers at the University of Nariño are informed about some main aspects of bilingualism, it seems not to be enough in order to make Pasto become a bilingual city.

Significance

The study *Bilingualism in EFL Settings* provides factual information about the aspects affecting second language teaching. Based on different authors' ideas, surveys, readings and articles, actual information

surrounding bilingualism in an EFL setting like Pasto will be provided.

Objectives

To determine if English student - teachers from the University of Nariño are adequately prepared to face the educational policies in terms of foreign language teaching and apply a bilingual program under the current educational conditions in Pasto.

Specific Objectives

To define Bilingualism, its meaning and types through an extensive and adequate review of literature that can be useful for teachers and students.

To examine the conditions that may allow Colombian citizens to get an upper level of English proficiency.

To collect information that describes the conditions surrounding second language teaching in an EFL setting like Pasto.

To collect information that indicates student - teachers' actual knowledge regarding bilingualism.

Delimitations

Population

People involved in the development of this research paper are English students-teachers from University of Nariño.

The average age is between 20 to 25 years from both genders. Most of them were born in Pasto and they belong to a medium class. They are in an English and French program and an English and Spanish program. All these students are in the last semester so they have experience in teaching theories and methodologies.

Another group involved in this monograph are teachers from schools in Pasto. These institutions were selected according to their type, five (5) private and eight (8) public schools.

Geographical

This research paper will be carried out in the University of Nariño located in Pasto, near the neighborhood Las Acacias, in a range of time from August 2007 and September 2008, where students are in the last semester of the programs above mentioned.

Limitations

For the development of this research paper, it was necessary to visit different schools in Pasto and apply a survey in order to obtain information about language teaching; however, some school principals disagreed with the idea of sharing information about their policies and it

was required to visit some other schools where data collection was possible.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Bilingualism

There are a vast number of authors who have defined the term bilingualism referring to political situations, geographical delimitations, educational policies and immigration processes among others. It is said that bilingualism is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that should receive much scholarly attention. Given that the Colombian government is attempting to implement a bilingual program in Colombia, it is important to define this term extensively in order to find out if bilingualism is suitable to be developed in Colombia.

Gleason (2005), for example, states that bilingualism is defined as involving two languages, a person who speaks two languages (Gleason, 2005). Sutherland (2006) claims that if someone wants to talk about bilingualism he/she needs to consider geographical proximity of languages, for instance Mexico and USA (Spanish and English) or Colombia and Brazil (Spanish and Portuguese). Therefore, it is said that bilingualism primarily means languages in contact. In addition for the British Council being bilingual means being able to communicate almost perfectly in two languages and also knowing something about both cultures.

Types of Bilingualism

There are different types of bilingualism. Lambert (1974) for example distinguishes *additive* and *subtractive bilingualism*. In the former learners maintain their L1 to their linguistic repertoire. In such cases, learners may become *balanced bilinguals*. This is likely to occur when learners have a positive view of their own ethnic identity and of the target-language culture. In the case of *subtractive bilingualism*, learners replace their L1 with the L2; failing to develop full competence in their mother tongue or, in some cases, actually losing competence that has already been acquired. The types of bilingualism depend on some factors like age of acquisition and skills, for example:

Classification according to the age of an individual:

Early Bilingual

This group can be further subdivided into:

Simultaneous Bilinguals

Both languages are acquired simultaneously.

Sequential Bilinguals

The second language (L2) was acquired after the first one (L1).

Classification according to skill:

There are no clearly defined levels of bilingual skills, but it is rather a continuum, ranging from:

Passive Bilingual

A person who is a native speaker in one language and is capable of understanding but not speaking another language.

Dominant Bilingual

A person being more proficient in one of the two languages (in most cases native-like).

Balanced Bilingual

Someone who is more or less equally proficient in both languages, but will not necessarily pass for a native speaker in both languages.

Equilingual

If somebody passes in any situation in both languages for a native speaker, i.e. he or she is indistinguishable from a native speaker. This is the strictest kind of defining bilingualism. Unfortunately, it is very often the inherent semantics some people and even some scientists bear in mind, when they talk about bilingualism.

Moreover, Ellis (1994), states that when a person is bilingual he / she is competent to speak, understand and perform two languages in communicative contexts. Then, this person becomes communicatively competent. Hymes' theory of

Communicative Competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community. In Hymes' view, a person who acquires Communicative Competence acquires both languages and ability for language use with respect to:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible.
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available.
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated.
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails. (Hymes, 1972: 281)

Based on this idea, it is possible to affirm that when a person controls two languages with the same degree of proficiency this person becomes communicatively competent.

Nevertheless, to achieve this, someone's abilities are not the only factor that influences the development of proficiency in the L2. It is also crucial to consider the appropriate conditions and the factors affecting the language learning process because even if the teaching and

learning conditions change in Colombia, the purpose of achieving bilingual citizens may not be feasible. Some internal and individual characteristics can affect each person's performance.

Factors Affecting Second Language Learning

Some of these factors that might also have been disregarded by the Colombian government are explained as follows

Personality

A number of personality characteristics have been proposed as likely to affect second language learning, extroversion, assertiveness, adventurousness and inhibition are factors often considered to be a problem for adolescents who are more self-conscious than younger learners. Several other personality characteristics such as self-esteem, empathy, dominance, talkativeness as responsiveness have also been studied. (Lightbown and Spada, 1992).

Motivation and attitudes

In general terms, motivation refers to the effort learners put into learning a L2 as a result of their need or desire to learn it. In one theory of motivation, Gardner and Lambert (1972) distinguish "instrumental motivation"

which occurs when a learner has a functional goal (such as to get a job or pass an examination), and "integrative motivation", which occurs when a learner wishes to identify with the culture of the L2 group. Other types of motivation have also been identified, including (1) "task motivation" or "intrinsic motivation" – the interest that learners experience in performing different learning tasks (2) resultative motivation – the motivation that results from success in learning the L2 (Ellis, 1994).

Some other factors relating to motivation are those explained by Ur (2006) such as positive task orientation, ego - involvement, need for achievement, high aspirations, goal orientation, perseverance, tolerance of ambiguity, factors that are present in the most successful learners.

Age

The decision about when to introduce second or foreign language instruction must depend on the objectives of the language program in the particular social context of the school. When the objective is native - like performance in the second language, then it may be desirable to begin exposure to the language as early as possible. The research evidence is fairly strong that only those who begin second language learning at an early age will be indistinguishable

from native speakers. However, even in cases where such high levels of skill are targeted, it is important to recognize certain disadvantages of an early start, especially when an early start in second language means that children have little opportunity to continue to develop their knowledge of their first language. (Lightbown and Spada, 1993).

Time

"One or two hours a week - even for seven or eight years - will not produce very advanced second language speakers. This "drip-feed" approach often leads to frustration as learners feel that they have been studying "for years" without making much progress. Sadly, they are sometimes right about this". (Lightbown and Spada, 1993).

Authentic Material

Much of the richness of language instruction is derived from supporting materials. And today such materials abound for all levels and purposes (Brown, 1994). Students also need to deal with "real" or "authentic" material if they are eventually going to be prepared for language use outside the classroom (Lightbown and Spada, 1993).

Practice and Imitation

Some second language learners may find that they benefit from opportunities to imitate samples of the new language, an imitation is clearly important in developing proficiency in pronunciation and intonation. They could recite bits of perfectly accurate language, but the lack of practice in genuinely meaningful interaction left many learners with little more than a collection of sentences, waiting for the moment when those sentences would be useful (Lightbown and Spada, 1992). Here, it is important to develop "creative construction" which is the subconscious process by which language learners gradually organize the language they hear, according to the rules they construct to understand and generate sentences (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982).

Context

English is taught from elementary levels in private schools, but the situation is not the same for the public sector or for public schools who serve the needs of a good number of people (Cardenas M.L, 2006). That is why huge differences are frequently found between public and private schools.

The factors above mentioned are some of the most prominent involving language learning and all of them should be considered and revised before applying a program that is focused on the development and improvement of a foreign language.

The National Program of Bilingualism 2004 - 2019 (NPB)

The Colombian government has established a national program aimed to the enhancement of English communicative skills; the main purpose of the program is that:

“Colombian citizens will be able to communicate through English with internationally comparable standards. This will contribute to the insertion of the country in the processes of universal communication, the global economy and cultural openness” (MEN presentation, 2006).

However, the program still presents some problems that have been studied and analyzed; for example, the focus is on one particular language - English. As Silvia Valencia (2005: 1) cited by De Mejia Anne Marie explains,

“As a result of globalisation and widespread use of English worldwide, the term ‘bilingüismo’ has acquired a different meaning in the Colombian context. It is used by many . . . to refer almost exclusively to Spanish/English bilingualism. This focus on Spanish/English bilingualism now predominates and the other dimensions of multilingualism and cultural difference in Colombia are often ignored. The existence of other languages in different regions of the country is overlooked, particularly the languages of indigenous Colombian populations. The teaching of other modern languages (e.g. French . . .) has also been undermined by the spread of English and by people’s increasing desire to ‘invest’ in English”

This situation neglects native indigenous languages and imposes English as the only possible language to be learned and the situation is more problematic if it is considered that English is not the natural code to mediate communication in Colombia and people do not have real needs to use this language outside academic context.

Another issue that affects the development of the NPB is the adoption of the Common European Framework (CEF) as reference for foreign language teaching as Sánchez and Obando 2008 claim,

“Because Colombian standards for foreign language teaching are barely structured, attention has been given to foreign models. In general, standards have been obtained by importing the ones that were developed in other places, under different circumstances and contexts. Although those standards are valid and reliable for foreign academic communities, it does not mean that they would fit the particularities of our institutions, language learners and so on”.

The difference between Colombia and Europe in terms of language teaching is the main reason to reconsider the implementation of the CEF levels as indicators of the Colombian Program of bilingualism.

According to the Minister of National Education, the most important advance referring to bilingualism is *the Immersion Program*, which consisted of taking teachers from different Colombian cities to San Andres Island and

exposing them to "Standard English". It was supposed this "multilingual context" could provide teachers some features of "real" English and then they can improve their academic and oral skills (Altablero N0 37, 2006). Although some teachers were satisfied with the idea of going to San Andres, it is evident that there is a misleading idea of what immersion programs really mean. Canada, for example, has an appropriate educational system based on immersion programs; its policies are based on supplying real necessities from their environment, due to the fact Canadian people are exposed to both languages English and French, citizens must be able to establish daily conversations among them, without any effort. Their teaching methodology is mainly based on immersion educative programs where the L2 is not taught as a separate subject, it is taught by using it as a medium of instruction for teaching the content of other school subjects (Ellis, 1994).

There are various types of immersion, Cummins (1988) points out the term "immersion" as a variety of programmes for minority students. He distinguishes "L2 monolingual immersion programs for minority students" which provide English - only instruction directed at classes consisting

entirely of L2 learners; "L1 bilingual immersion programs for minority students", which begin with L1 - medium instruction, introducing L2 - medium instruction sometime later; "L2 bilingual immersion programs for minority students", which emphasize instruction in and on the L2 but which also promote L1 skills. He also notes that, misleadingly, even submersion programmes have been referred to as "immersion" (Ellis, 1994). So, it is imperative that the Colombian government is starting to invest in research and in the development of programs that really help citizens to achieve the goal of becoming bilingual. Immersion programs such as the one carried out in San Andres Island is not only unproductive but also it is a waste of time, economical resources and effort from the teachers and the government.

The Common European Framework

Since the Colombian government has not invested enough money or research for them to have a clear and contextualized idea of what they want to achieve with the National Program of Bilingualism, it has been necessary to take as basis the concepts proposed by the Common European Framework in terms of English learning and proficiency. Now, the key question is: Are Colombian conditions for

learning a foreign language similar to those present in Europe?

The most obvious answer is no, the conditions for learning a foreign language presented in Europe are very different to those available in Colombia. Economical resources, geographical proximity with the target language, opportunities to practice the foreign language, and academic factors such as appropriate time, and sufficient quality and quantity of materials make the big difference between Europe and Colombia concerning foreign language learning.

In Europe, these are the directions they have developed and applied in order to get an upper level of second language proficiency.

Common European Framework Levels

C2	Proficient user	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources.
C1	Proficient user	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously.
B2	Independent user	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.
B1	Independent user	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the language is spoken.
C2	Basic user	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
C1	Basic user	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.

Although some disadvantages of considering Common European Framework levels as indicators of English proficiency in Colombia have been exposed, as those exposed by Virkkunen-Fullenwider (2005) cited by Melba Libia Cardenas (2006).

“In most countries, university language teachers have had some training in using the CEF, and that the CEF book has been widely available and read by many. Contrary to the European situation, the Ministry of Education did not

provide training in understanding the CEF, did not distribute copies of the CEF book in schools and universities, and did not promote academic spaces to discuss its applicability”.

The Minister of Education continues basing the development of the bilingual program on the CEF, and pretends that Colombian citizens achieve the levels of English proficiency above mentioned. Some other authors like Ayala and Alvarez (2005) cited by Melba Libia Cardenas affirm that:

“ The implementation of the CEF may be quite complex for our setting. Because there are profound differences between Colombia and Europe that are strong enough to question the adoption of the CEF as the support for a national English teaching policy. They believe that the “practice of adopting foreign models as standards needs to be revised” and invite the government, administrators, and the academic community to “be aware of the complexities of educational standardization” (2005:20).”

However, there is no response to these demands and ‘Colombia Bilingüe’ is still based on foreign teaching standards affecting educators, students and school administrators because the need to accomplish levels of proficiency with the actual conditions is causing language teaching to become a superficial task where the goal of teaching is passing exams rather than learning how to communicate in context or learning how to establish

conversations with native like fluency. As Cardenas (2006) claims:

“Decisions have been made and monitored by relying mainly on tests. There has also been an increase of teaching for testing. Many teachers care too much about preparing pupils for exams and the same has been done with teachers. For example in Bogotá, teachers who have completed a 270-hour in-service course are then required to do another on getting prepared for test-taking. It has been observed that the obsession to show numbers of teachers classified proficiency levels goes against the idea of using different evaluation processes and attention not only to the results (test scores, statistics), but to the process as well”.

*Colombian Limitations and Weaknesses Concerning
Bilingualism*

The majority of programs focused on the implementation of a foreign language have high levels of demanding resources and requirements that needed to be solved to guarantee successful results. ‘Colombia Bilingüe’ is not the exception and it presents certain conditions and some necessary issues for it to take place. The Colombian government has been indifferent to these necessities and it has increased the difficulty to adapt to bilingual education, some of the main limitations for bilingualism that take place in Colombia are explained as follows:

Illiteracy, it is a problem that has not been faced, on the contrary, the Ministry of Education takes Spanish for granted and pretends that Colombian people become

proficient in English even they do not in their mother tongue.

Authentic material, Colombian English teachers have to deal with a real problem which is the impossibility to ask students for books or texts that support language instruction. In some cases, there is only one grammar book for all the courses and the materials needed for class development have to be brought by teachers.

Time limitation, this is the most prominent problem in some institutions, only one to three hours a week are devoted to English teaching and the lack of English hours in public schools is not feasible to solve because policy-makers are focused on giving more time to some other subject such as Mathematics and Science.

Large groups, when the objective of a course is to get communicative classes, the fewer students inside the classroom the better class can be developed. However, in Colombian schools, the percentage of students per classroom is over 50 and it makes classroom management more difficult and frequently causes discipline problems.

English teachers, although teachers' skills and training are the characteristics mainly criticized by the Ministry of National Education, it is important to affirm that the

problem is the lack of English teachers rather than teachers' capacities; it is evident in elementary school where there are no English teachers and only one teacher is in charge of working with all subjects of the curriculum.

Cardenas (2006) states that:

English is taught from elementary levels in private schools, but the situation is not the same for the public sector or for public schools who serve the needs of a good number of people. With a limited number of hours for English language teaching, not many resources, large classes, a shortage of qualified teachers, and scarce use of the English language in authentic communication.

Outside practice, in some EFL settings the possibility to practice and use the foreign language outside the classroom is very limited and students feel frustrated because they notice that all they learn is useless and it makes English classes be seen as an unnecessary subject in real contexts (Sutherland, 2006).

All these factors above mentioned, the studies that have been carried out and the absence of a serious research program demonstrate that there are many issues to consider, develop and improve before Colombia becomes a Bilingual country, as Cardenas (2006) affirms:

Rather than a bilingual country, we need to join efforts to raise the standards of teacher and student preparation to be able to communicate in English as well as in the mother tongue. It is then our challenge to work towards better proficiency in language and in teaching. In the same line, we should admit Colombian universities' responsibility in supporting the development of high proficiency levels of

English among prospective teachers. It is also our challenge to care for a strong cross-cultural component in the school curriculum so that teachers promote intercultural awareness.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study was developed with a qualitative and quantitative approach and a descriptive design with the purpose of having a wider view of the topics treated here. According to the collection of the whole information and the coherence of the objectives, this research is not experimental since it is not focused on applying a treatment and does not involve the use of control groups; besides, the main objective of this paper is to provide a description of bilingualism, its methodology and its applicability in a setting like Pasto.

The information collected through questionnaires, tests and interviews will be analyzed and studied by contrasting and comparing it with the theoretical background that will indicate the coherence or not of the Bilingual Program. To guarantee the reliability of the concepts present in the study the reading of books, and articles related to the main topic were necessary.

Participants, Setting and Sample

Participants and Sample

From 336 students from both English and French and English and Spanish programs from the Human Science School at the University of Nariño, 31 students were asked to

participate in the study. 13 private and public schools were also part of the research.

In order to collect data provided by students and schools, two different surveys were applied, which helped the authors to identify students' knowledge about the National Program of Bilingualism and the real conditions present in public and private schools to determine the gap between these two types of institutions.

Setting

The places where data collection took place were The University of Nariño, located in Las Acacias neighborhood, and different schools in Pasto.

Classes of the linguistics and languages program take place in classrooms where there are TVs, VCR and some other educational materials, there is also a laboratory room where students practice the second language and improve their skills.

Schools are located in the center and north-east of the city, in some of the most traditional neighborhoods from Pasto.

Procedure

Data collection

The information for this research was mainly collected by using surveys. Through these, it was possible to identify prevalent knowledge on bilingual methodologies on the part of students. The questions on the survey allowed researchers to gather information on additional aspects of the study such as the conditions surrounding second language learning in schools in Pasto.

Once the information was collected, the data was categorized to facilitate the interpretation of it. The revision of current literature on bilingualism was another element to be considered in the data analysis. Finally, with the support of the theoretical background used in the study and the information obtained from the participants in the study, some conclusions were drawn to determine the applicability or not of bilingual methodologies in Pasto.

Description of the Procedure

The first question of the survey #1 intended to analyze the current knowledge students have about Bilingualism; in the second question, students were asked to mention the people needed to guarantee the success of the program; the third question provided students with a current situation and

implied the agreement or not with this matter; question number four required students to think about the things they considered necessary to develop bilingual education in Colombia; the next question implied that the program could have some advantages and disadvantages, the students were asked to determine which could be those advantages and disadvantages; question number 6 evaluated some basic concepts in second language teaching, students needed to rate from 1 to 5 what they considered was appropriate and what was not in our context; finally, the last question asked students to identify themselves with one of the characteristics mentioned in the survey. This question allowed researchers to determine the level of English proficiency of the future English teachers.

In the second survey teachers and administrators were asked seven questions that have to do with the current and possible conditions inside classroom. Questions 1,3,4,6 and 7 required actual information about second language policies and conditions in the school, questions 2 and 5 required teachers and administrators to present some possible conditions to improve language teaching according to their experience. As the research has a quantitative design it was necessary to give a numerical level to

questions 7 and 8, affirmative responses worth 2 points while negative ones received 1 point.

Validation Criteria

The theories here expressed are based on different sources such as books, journals, articles and research papers, some of the authors quoted on the study are Lightbown and Spada, Celce Murcia, David Brown who have studied language teaching in different areas, some Colombian authors were also cited, such as Melba Libia Cardenas, Ana Clara Sánchez, Gabriel Obando who have analyzed the Colombian reality in terms of foreign language teaching.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. In a few words provide a definition of BILINGUALISM.
 - To create an environment where students learn a second language as if they were immersed in a country where people speak a different language.
 - The teaching of two languages in early ages.
 - An opportunity to develop in schools the use of target language.
 - A project that government is trying to impose us.
 - Ability to speak two or more languages.
 - The use of L2 in teaching.

- A process in which a person develops certain skills in a language different to the L1.
- A social condition of a specific group of people in which they are able to use two languages.
- A process where ESL learners achieve the capacity to speak two languages with the same proficiency.
- The use of two languages at any moment.
- It is the domain of more than one language in the same society for different purposes.
- It is a process which aims to make people use two languages equally.

2. Who should be involved in the process of achieving Bilingualism?

- Everyone
- Students, teachers, administrators and government.
- Secretaria de educación.
- People working in schools and universities.
- Parents, native speakers and society.
- Foreign language teachers and students.
- Future teachers, teacher's trainers.
- Educational institutions and people in general.

3. Do you agree with sending teachers to San Andres to expose them to Standard English?

- No, there is not Standard English.
 - No, because they don't interact with culture.
 - No, they should be exposed to real language in context.
 - It depends on teacher's attention, creativity, the process of learning they want to follow or achieve.
 - It is not the best way or the best place to this purpose.
 - That place does not provide Standard English to teachers.
 - Yes, it's a great opportunity to acquire a better level of proficiency.
 - Not only to San Andres but also everywhere in order to be exposed to standard and not standard English.
 - No, it's better real immersion programs.
4. Make a list of things or issues that must be provided in order to apply BILINGUALISM in Pasto.
- Appropriate aids.
 - Well-trained teachers.
 - More English classes.
 - Materials, books, realia.
 - Labs.
 - Motivation.

- English must be taught only by English teachers.
 - Good standards.
 - English classrooms.
 - Native speakers.
 - To apply CBI.
 - Economical resources.
 - A big project managed by education secretary, high level preparation of English teachers and a complex process with students.
 - Adequate places to practice English, more frame time, authentic materials and resources.
 - Leave teaching to teachers.
 - Develop a sense of belonging in language teachers.
 - Use English as a language to teach others subjects at schools.
5. What would be some advantages and disadvantages of applying BILINGUALISM in Colombia (especially in Pasto)?
- ADVANTAGES:
 - Opportunities to learn more about other cultures.
 - Opportunities to travel to another country.
 - To get a job.
 - To improve our culture.

- All students can speak English.
- Useful for carry out new projects.
- A better qualification of professionals.
- Students must be very well prepared to apply for scholarships abroad.
- Student can learn a real immersion in a real environment.
- DISADVANTAGES:
- The necessity of changing institutional curricula.
- To lose our culture.
- There is not a context to apply this.
- There are not prepared teachers.
- Teachers should be proficient in language teaching.
- To lose the mother tongue.
- It could be a long process.
- People may lose their feeling of belonging to this culture and space.
- There are not appropriate conditions.
- Not all people want to learn English.
- The lack of materials.
- Lack of respect of ethnic groups and their rights.

6. Rate from 5 (excellent) to 1 (deficient) the current conditions present in Pasto that would help to apply BILINGUALISM.

ISSUES	SCORE				
	1	2	3	4	5
TEACHERS´ TRAINING	3	3	16	7	2
MATERIALS	10	8	9	2	2
SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES	14	7	5	3	2
TIME AND SCHEDULE	14	8	5	0	3
EXPOSURE TO L2	17	7	1	1	4
STUDENTS´ MOTIVATION	6	12	9	1	2
PRACTICE OUTSIDE CLASSROOMS	19	6	2	1	2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS INSIDE CLASSROOM	14	7	4	5	1

7. Tick (✓) one of the characteristics you are identified with as an English student-teacher.

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY					
A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
0	5	8	9	3	4

PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS ANSWERS INTERVIEW

QUESTIONS	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Number of hours you have a week	4	5	4	5	2
Number of English hours you would like to have	6	8	4	5	3
Number of students you have per classroom	40	45	40	22	40
Number of students you would like to have per classroom	25	45	25	22	30
Number of English teachers	5	5	6	12	6
Is the teacher's B.A. related to second language teaching	1	1	1	1	1
Educational resources	Books	Books	Books	Books	Books
	Tapes	Tapes	Tapes	Tapes	Tapes
	PC	PC		PC	
	TVs	TVs	TVs	TVs	TVs
	DVD	DVD	DVD	DVD	DVD
		Lab.		Lab.	

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS ANSWERS INTERVIEW

QUESTIONS	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5	School 6	School 7	School 8
Number of hours you have a week	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3
Number of English hours you would like to have	5	5	3	6	4	5	5	6
Number of students you have per classroom	48	45	42	40	38	35	50	37
Number of students you would like to have per classroom	30	20	25	15	30	15	20	15
Number of English teachers	2	3	3	4	5	3	3	3
Is the teacher's B.A. related to second language teaching	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Educational resources	Books	Books	Books	Books	Books		Books	Books
		Lab.	Lab.	Lab.				
			Tapes	Tapes	Tapes	Tapes	Tapes	
			PC	PC	PC		PC	
	TVs		TVs	TVs	TVs	TVs		
	DVD		DVD	DVD	DVD	DVD	DVD	

Ethical Issues

During the data collection and in the whole study the authors respected personal opinions and beliefs of the people who were interviewed, besides it was necessary to ask for permission in the schools and the university to carry out the surveys. The names of the schools have been omitted with the purpose of maintaining an objective analysis.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Survey # 1

Student - teachers from the University of Nariño

Question number 1: In a few words provide a definition of Bilingualism.

It is believed that students know about some basic aspects of Bilingualism, however some other students have a misconception about this term because there is not enough information or analysis of this topic.

Question number 2: Who should be involved in the process of achieving Bilingualism?

There is a clear concept that the success of the program depends on everyone who is involved in second language teaching and students agreed that it should be the starting point of the program.

Question number 3: Do you agree with sending teachers to San Andres to expose them to Standard English?

Most of the students disagree with this topic, however some few students have a misconception and misunderstanding of real immersion programs and they appear to be confused about this matter.

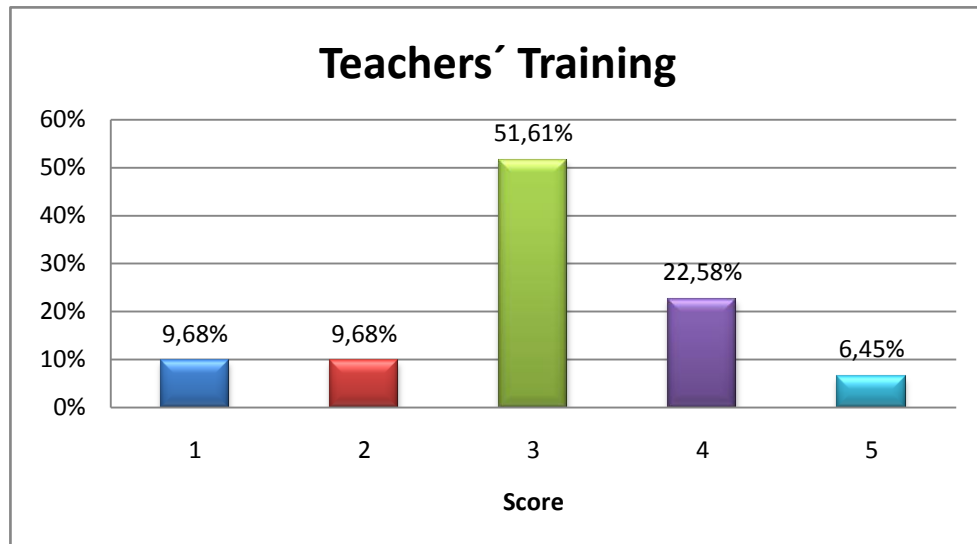
Question number 4: Make a list of things or issues that must be provided in order to apply Bilingualism in Pasto.

Many concepts and ideas are placed but all of them are related to one big item that is learning conditions and resources.

Question number 5: What would be some advantages and disadvantages of applying Bilingualism in Colombia (especially in Pasto)?

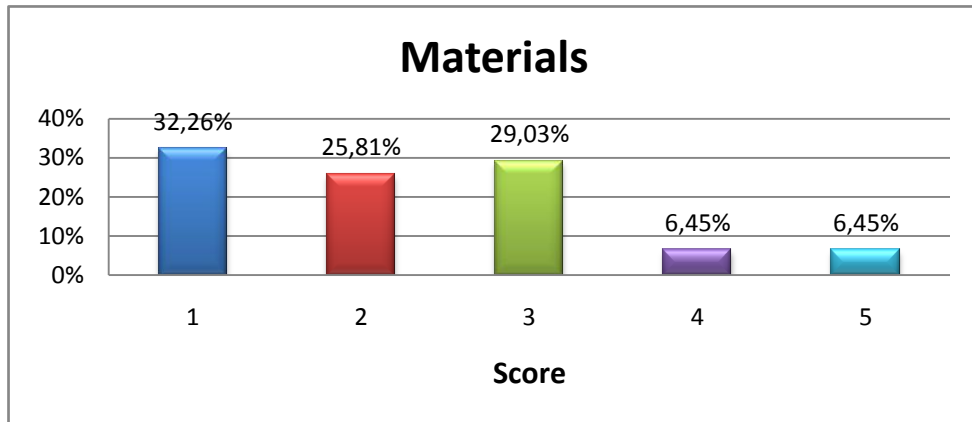
Students consider the program could have many advantages and it could be helpful for many educational and social purposes; on the other hand the most prominent disadvantage is the loss of the culture and identity.

Question number 6: Rate from 5 (excellent) to 1 (deficient) the current conditions present in Pasto that would help to apply Bilingualism.

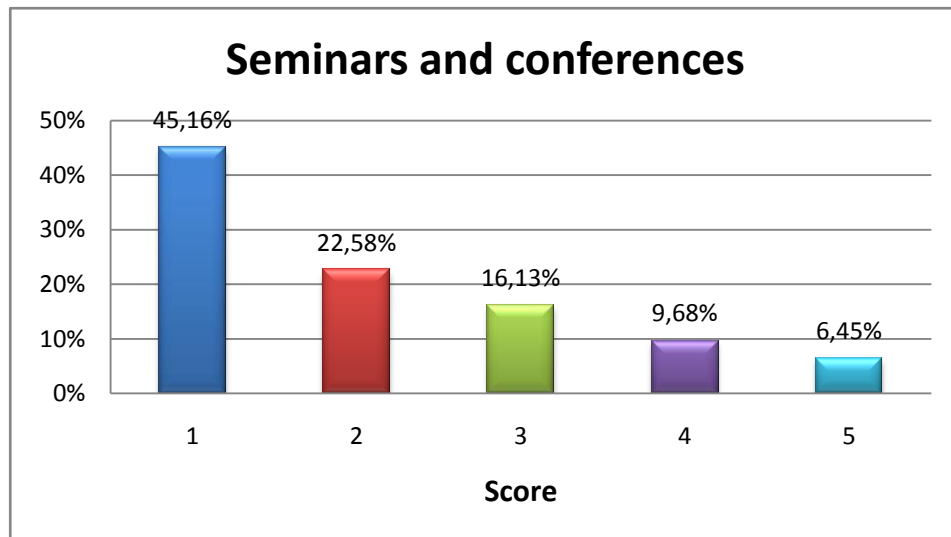


The graph shows that students consider teacher's training a matter to be improved in order to have an appropriate

program development. Due to the fact that only 6.45% of students consider that teachers' training is appropriate enough to deal with bilingual methodologies.

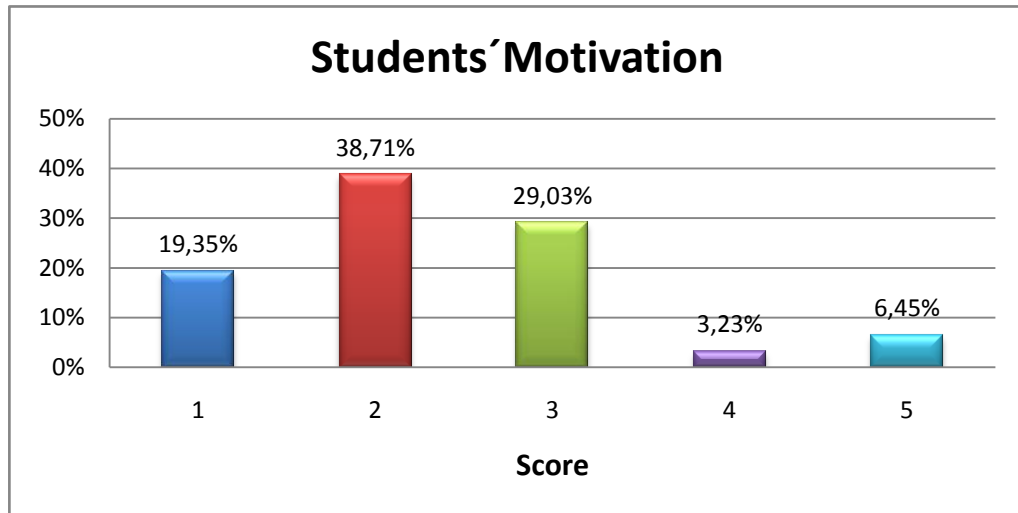


It is evident that authentic materials are a frequent problem for English teachers, 32.26% of students consider necessary to revise this matter before applying Bilingualism in Colombia.

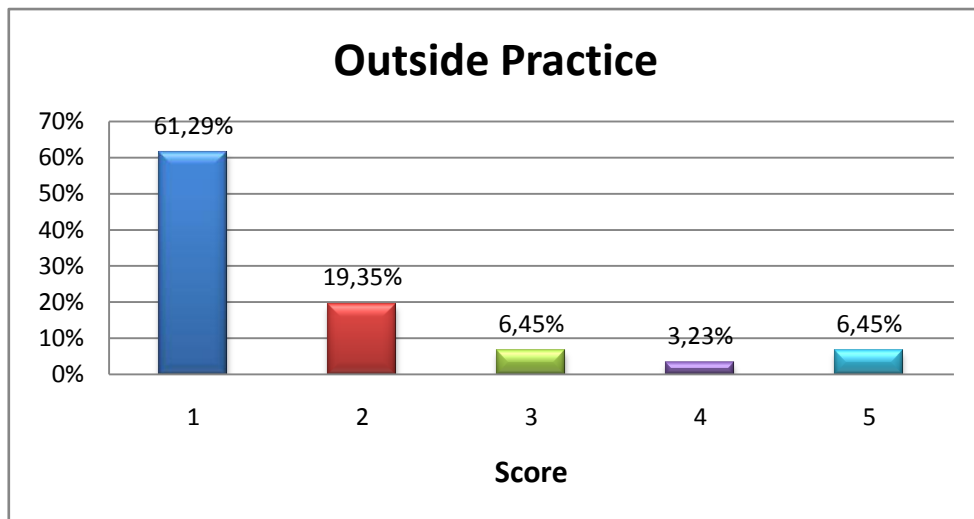


Although universities and schools are aware of the importance of teaching updating it is not common to find

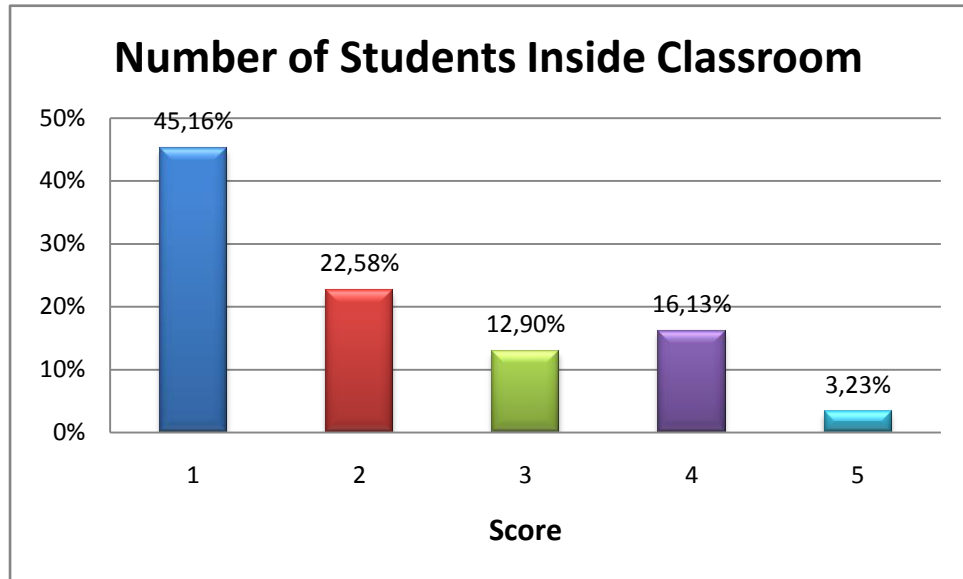
these types of events in our context and this is why teachers continue basing their classes on grammar translation methods.



In some schools, it is clear that no matter how good a teacher is, the results are not satisfactory and it is because students are not motivated to learn; in fact, this is a very common problem and many teachers frequently complain about this situation.

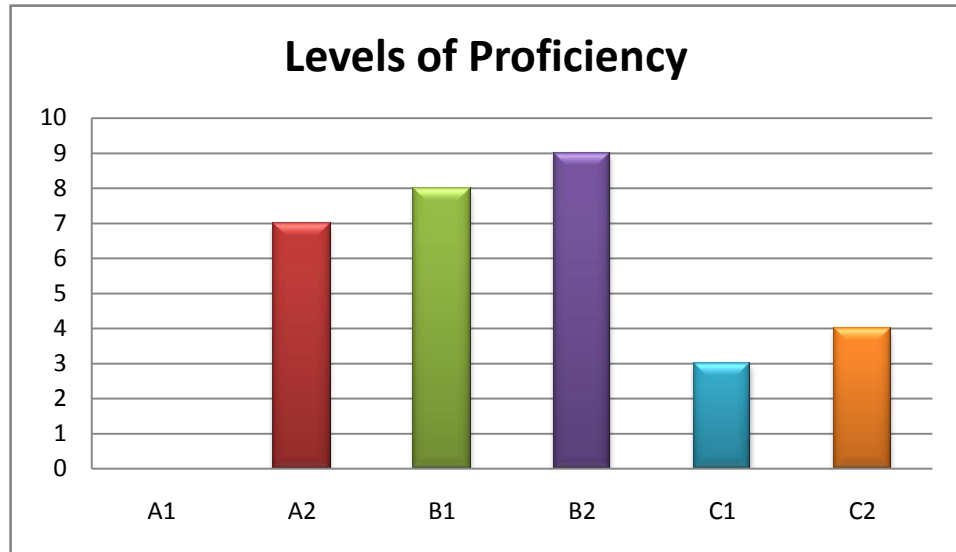


As an EFL setting this is one of the most regular problems English teachers have to face because after finishing the classes students do not find situations or contexts that encourage them to use the target language.



This is a situation that almost all English teachers have to afford and it is normal in our context, due to educational policies, to have classes with 45 to 50 students in the same classroom causing discipline problems and lack of students' attention.

Question number 7: Tick (✓) the characteristics you are identified with as an English teacher.

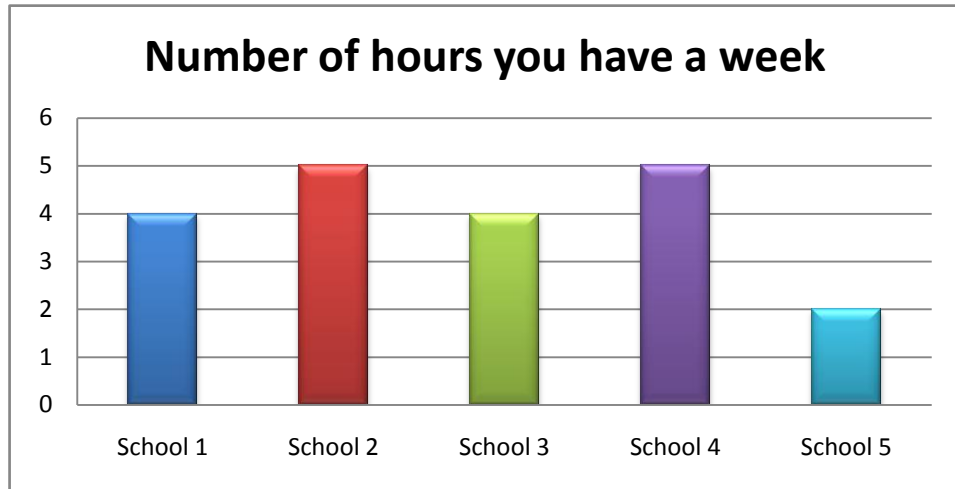


Although The Minister of National Education affirmed that English teachers do not have a high level of English proficiency, it is evident that future English - teachers from the University of Nariño have an appropriate and high level of proficiency and most of them know concepts such as evaluation, assessment and are able to face new educational trends.

Survey # 2

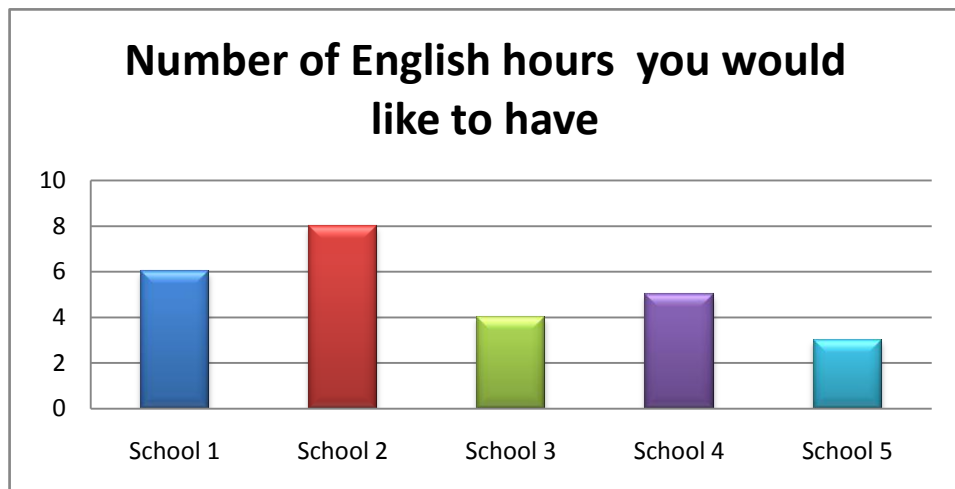
Private Schools

Question number 1: Number of English hours you have a week:



There is a tendency in private schools to guarantee at least 4 hours of English instruction a week and there is a distinction between reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

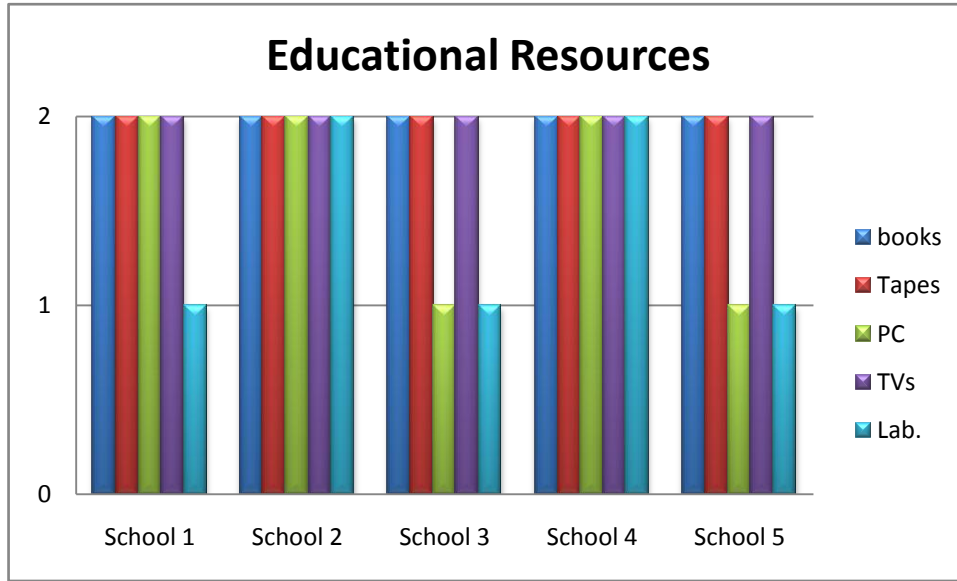
Question number 2: Number of English hours you would like to have.



Although the number of hours is appropriate for class development, school administrators agreed with the idea

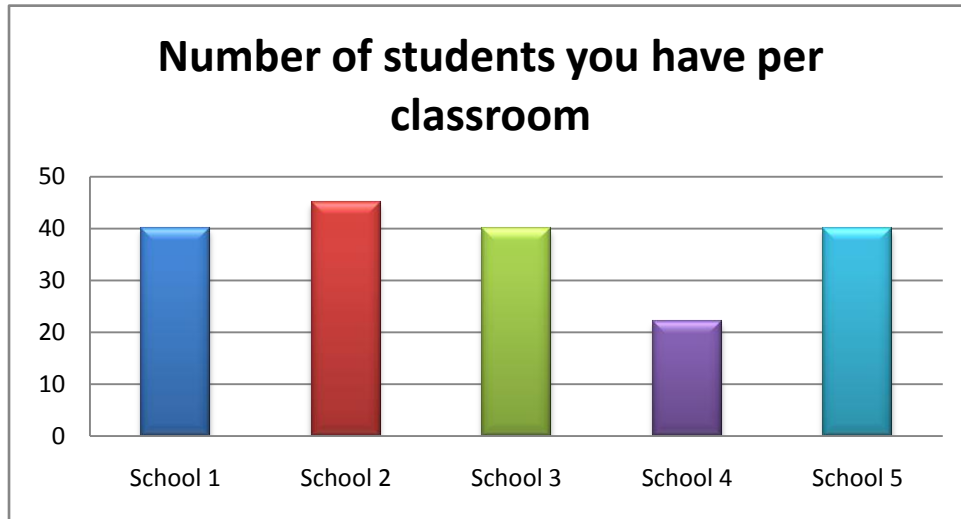
that more hours of instruction will be beneficial for students and teachers.

Question number 3: Materials you have in the institution.



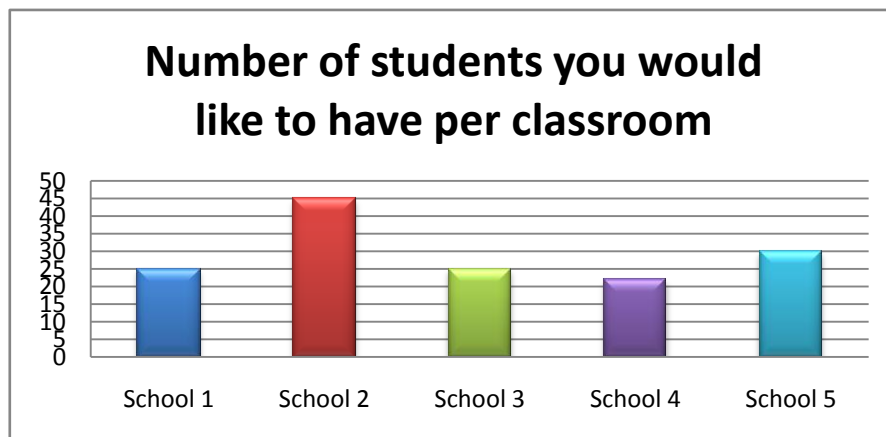
It is school policy to provide students with material and tools that facilitate the learning process, teachers and administrators agreed with the idea that students learn better if they have appropriate materials and resources.

Question number 4: Number of students you have per classroom.



The number of students inside classrooms is still a problem in private schools and according to schools administrators it is due to financial requirements that it is necessary to have more students per classroom.

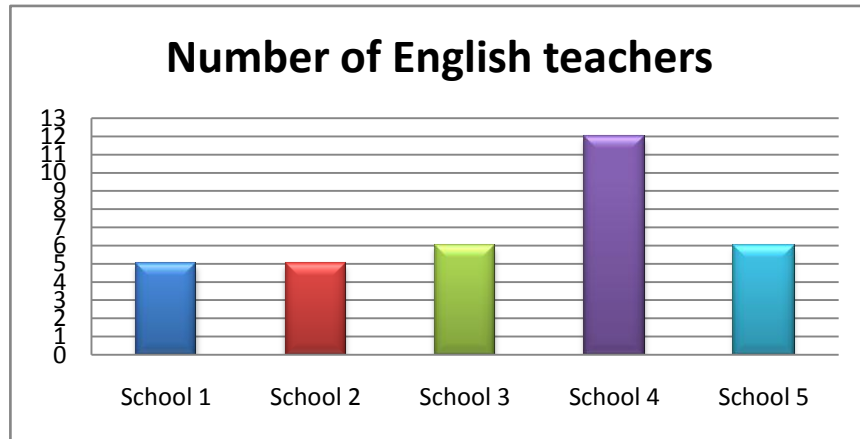
Question number 5: Number of students you would like to have per classroom.



Although teachers and administrators are conscious about the number of students, they affirm "this is not a problem

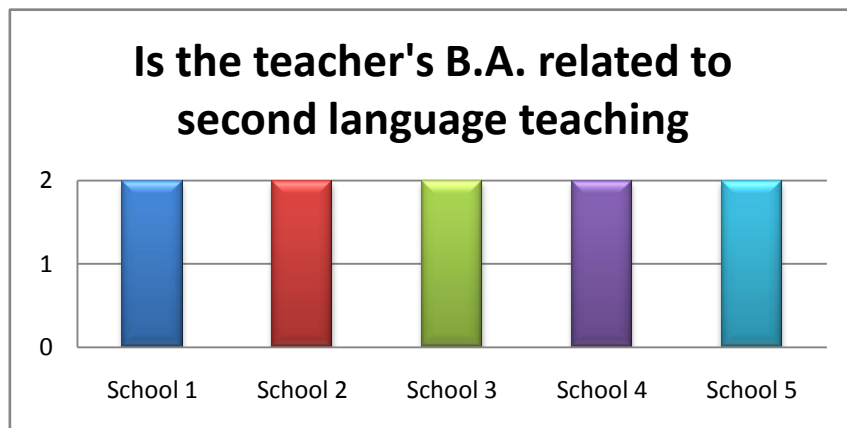
for developing their classes” besides there are clear rules about discipline problems in the institution.

Question number 6: Number of English teachers.



As it was mentioned above, in most of the private institutions there is a distinction between productive and receptive skills, that is why more English teachers are required and they usually share material and concepts about their profession.

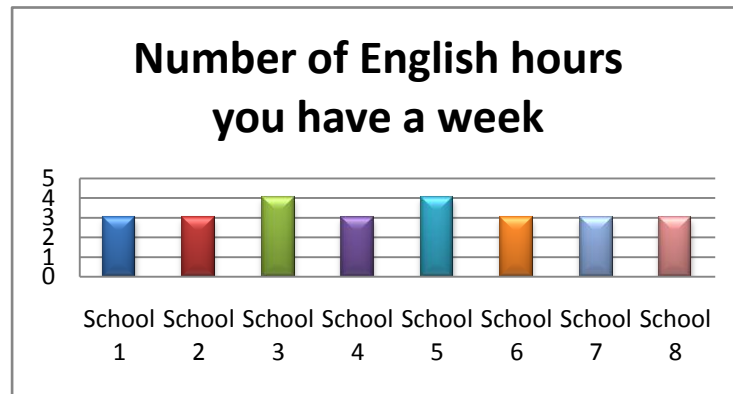
Question number 7: Is the teachers' B.A. related to second language teaching?



It is policy in the private schools mainly to hire people who has a degree on second language teaching, according to the principals "only professional people work in their institutions"

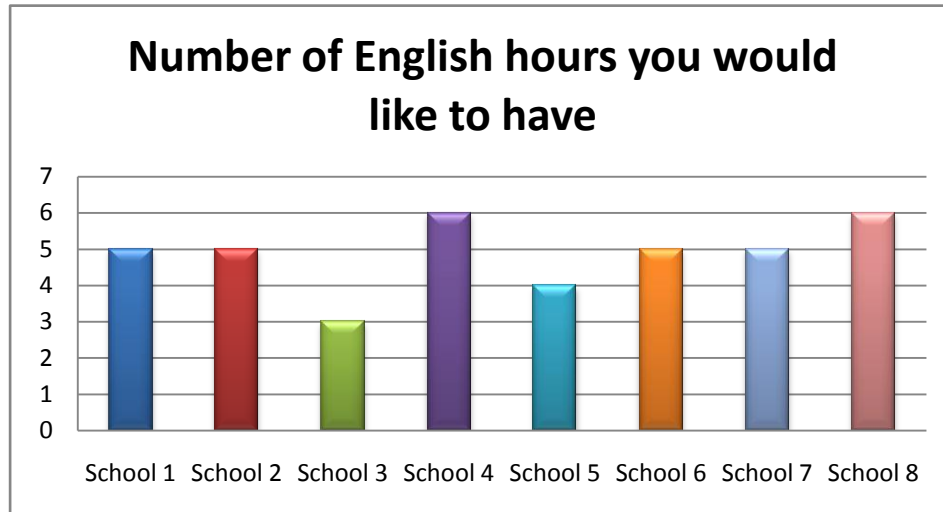
Survey # 2 PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Question number 1: Number of English hours you have a week.



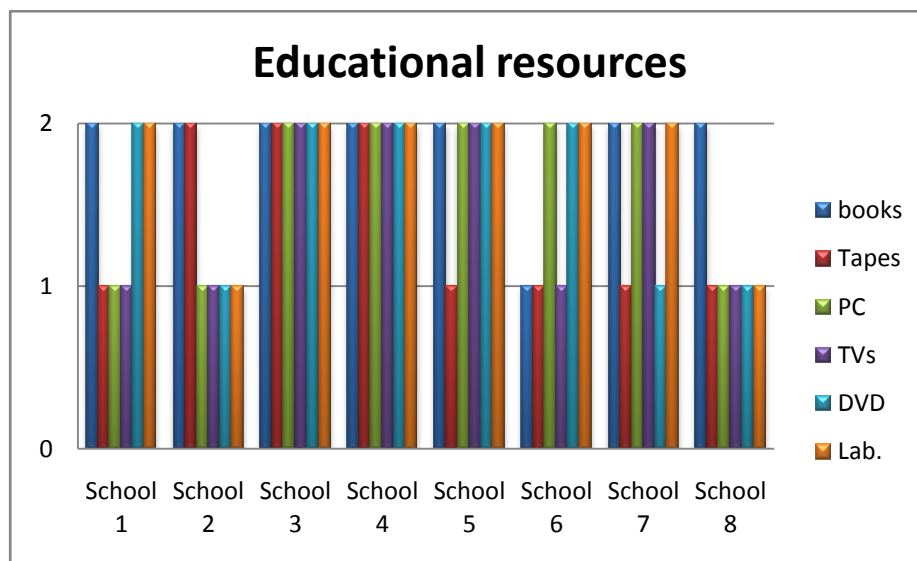
A maximum of three hours a week is devoted to language teaching in public schools; according to administrators, it is because it is necessary to accomplish within a certain time requirements for other subjects.

Question number 2: Number of English hours you would like to have.



Most teachers affirm that an appropriate frame time for English classes would be 5 to 6 hours a week; however, school policies are strict and it is not possible to devote more time to second language teaching.

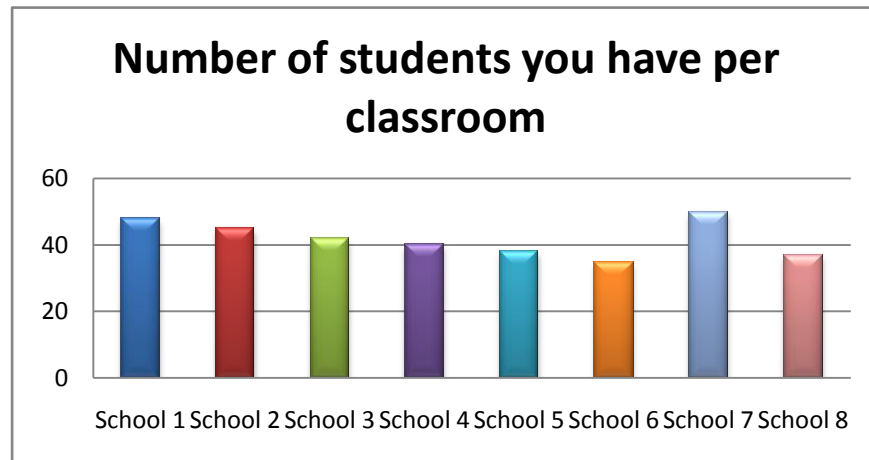
Question number 3: Material you have in the institution.



The most common material found in public institutions is books and, although in some schools there are resources and materials, teachers affirmed that sometimes it is difficult

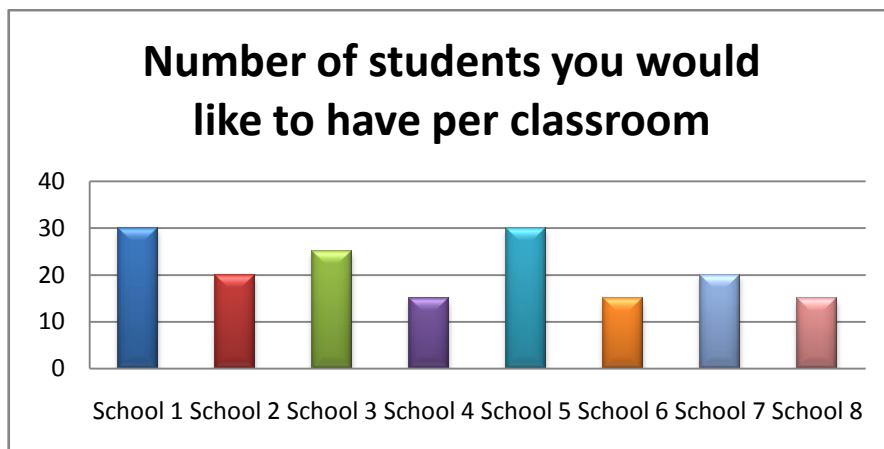
to find them in appropriate conditions or that they are used for purposes different to language teaching.

Question number 4: Number of students you have per classroom.



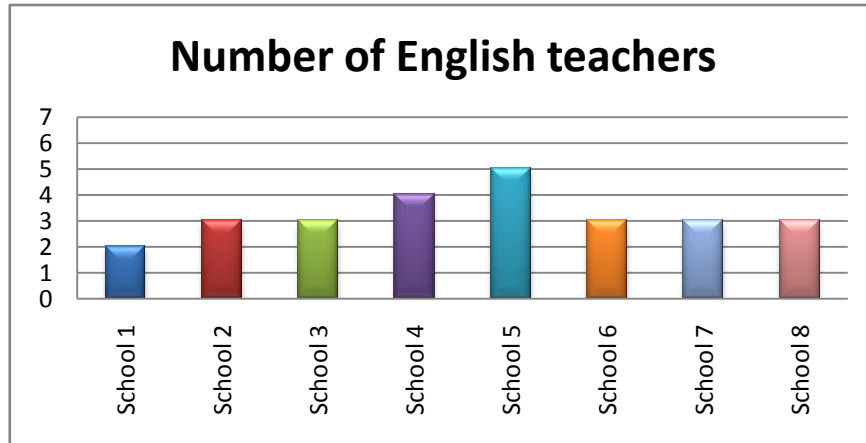
As public schools need to accomplish external rules and policies, it is common to find from 48 to 50 students in a small classroom where there are not conditions for teaching or learning.

Question number 5: Number of students you would like to have.



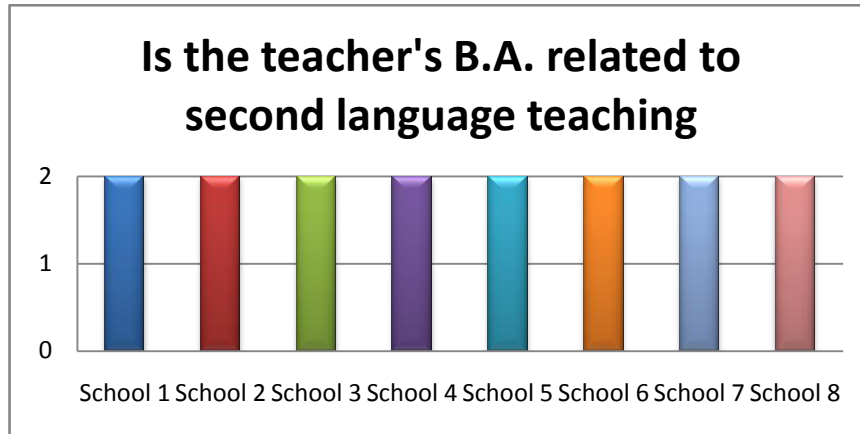
Most teachers agreed that the fewer students inside the classroom the better class can be developed and they stated that a number from 15 to 30 is appropriate for working in communicative classes.

Question number 6: Number of English teachers.



In some public institutions, there is only one teacher who is in charge of all subjects, especially in elementary level; for high school, the number is still limited and teachers affirmed "Sometimes it is not possible even to remember students' names"

Question number 7: Is the teacher's B.A. related to second language teaching?

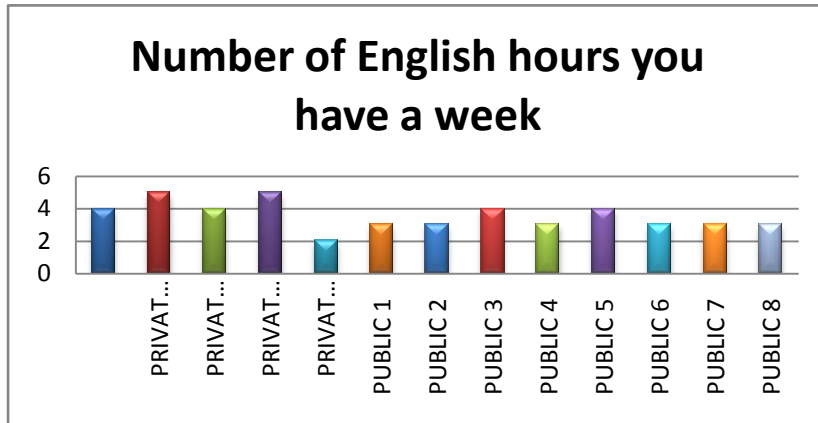


In public schools, administrators are clear about the importance that English teachers should be those who teach English; however, it is common that, as a result of internal arrangements, some teachers that have nothing to do with second language teaching fulfill their schedule with English classes.

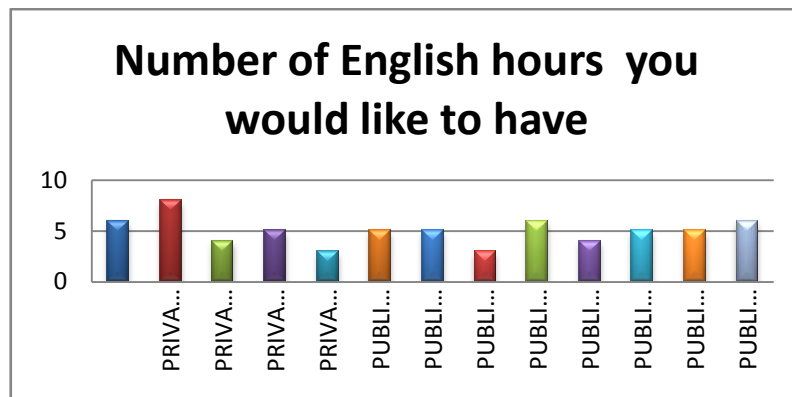
Comparison between Private and Public Schools

There is a huge gap between the private and the public sector in terms of language instruction, while in private schools the amount of hours increases every school - year, in public schools the quantity of English hours tends to be reduced.

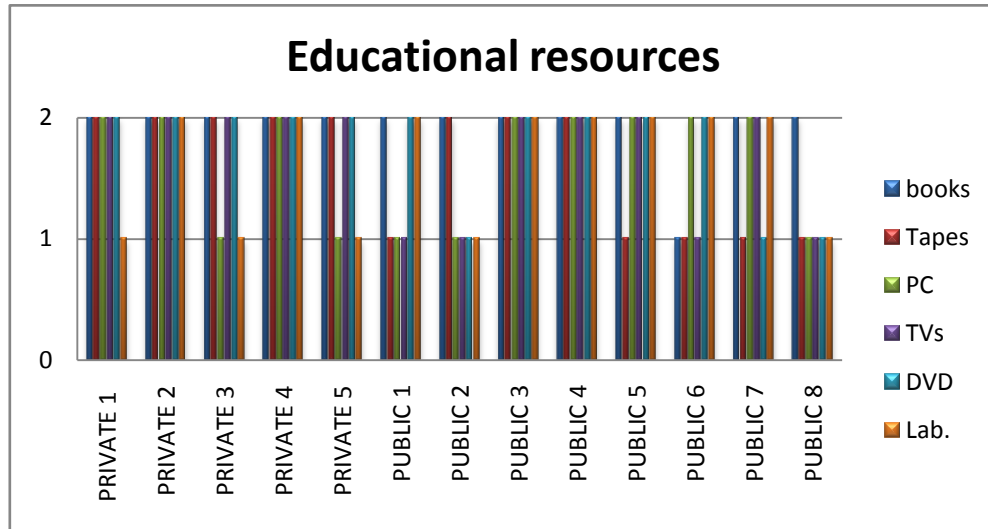
Question number 1: Number of English hours you have.



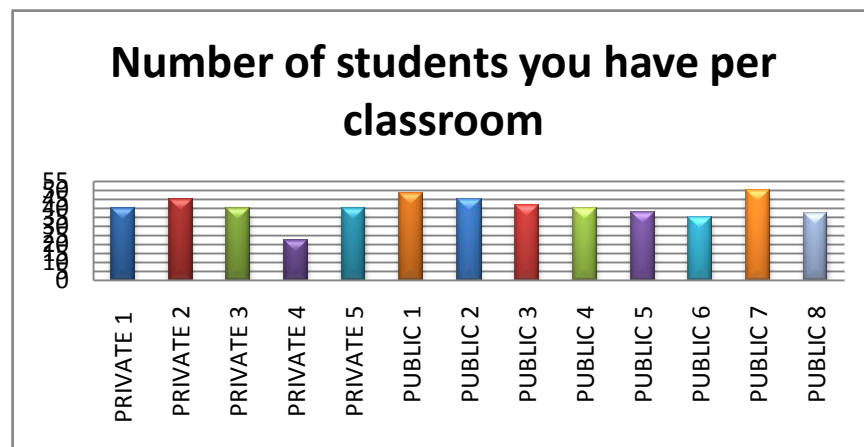
The graph shows there is not a constant of English hours for teaching, in fact, the training is irregular even in public schools where it is supposed there are clear policies about this matter.



In private schools the desire to have more English hours depends on internal rules and policies but in public schools, the amount of hours is a result of national considerations. That is why it is not feasible to devote more time for second language teaching in the public sector.

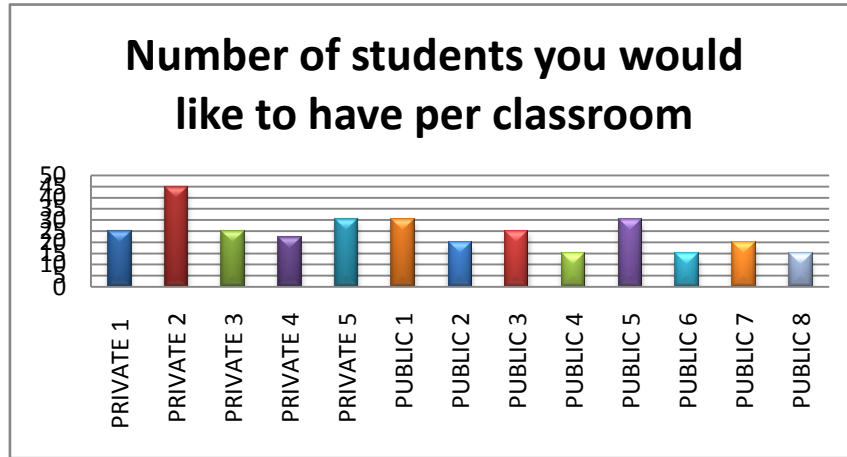


Most of public schools have many problems with classes because of lack of material and in some cases the tools they have are not updated, while in private schools there are agreements to obtain new material and resources in order to improve language teaching.

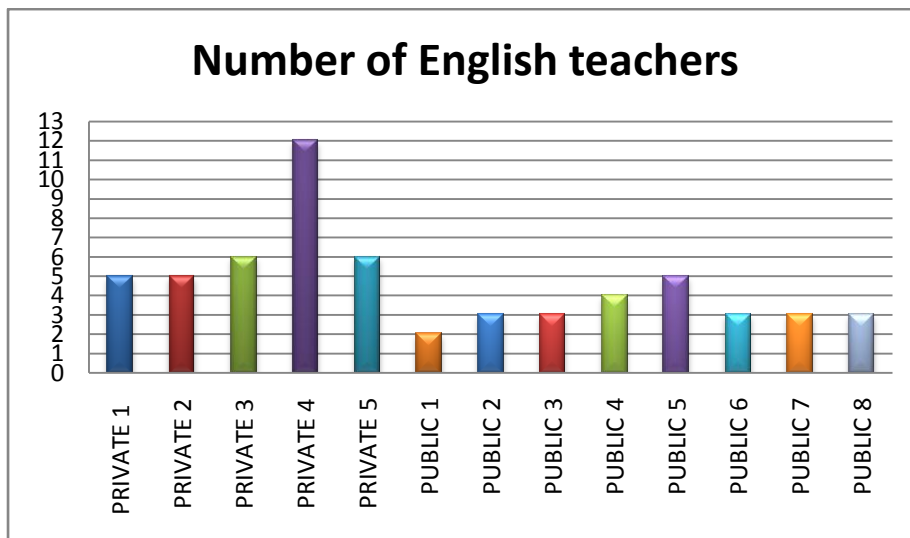


Although in some private schools and because of economical benefits, teachers deny the idea to change the number of students; in the public sector, the necessity to reduce the

number of students is evident and teachers frequently complain about the large classes they have.

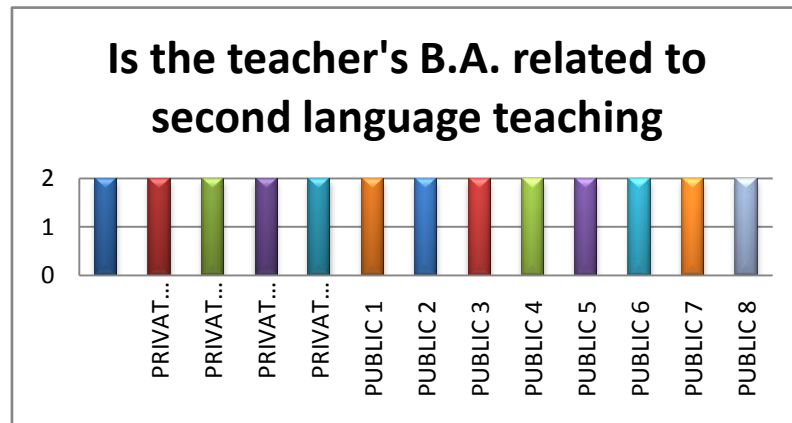


Most of private and public schools show that the number of students is over forty. It implies discipline problems and classes cannot be developed, as they should be. Teachers spend more time correcting students' behavior rather than on the class.



One of the biggest differences between private and public schools is the number of teachers. Unlikely private

schools, in the public sector teachers have to afford and deal with subjects different to those they were studying for. And it is the lack of English teachers a problem that public schools find more difficult to solve.



As the researchers thought at the beginning of the study, teachers' training and preparation is appropriate to guarantee a successful educational program. It is evident that in the public and private sector there are professional people working as second language teachers so it is necessary to revise the conditions and the environmental situations around second language teaching before applying any new program.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study was satisfactory and the objectives set at the beginning of the research were reached and it was demonstrated that the problems surrounding second language teaching affect the practical use of a new educational program.

There is a huge gap between private and public schools and there is a great difference in language policies in both these sectors.

This type of research demonstrates that the National Program of Bilingualism needs to be revised and analyzed with the purpose of having an actual view of Colombian learning conditions.

Teachers from private and public schools affirmed to be aware of the foundations of the National Program of Bilingualism; however, they also stated that there are some other factors affecting language teaching.

It is believed that the National Program of Bilingualism could have successful results only if the Colombian weaknesses and limitations in terms of second language teaching are considered and solved.

Future teachers from the University of Nariño affirmed to be conscious of Bilingual methodologies and they showed to have an appropriate level of English proficiency.

Teachers, policy makers and administrators must be part of any program that pretends to improve language teaching and it is compulsory to define what the appropriate methodologies for our context are.

A successful bilingual program cannot be applied in Colombia unless the educational conditions change and policy makers are convinced that it is more necessary to invest in research programs and materials rather than on superficial immersion programs.

It is necessary to define which type of Bilingualism will be achieved by citizens before applying strategies and pointless programs.

It is important to maintain communication among private and public institutions in order to share new information about educational issues.

It is necessary to improve teachers' conditions, in this way, they will feel comfortable when teaching and it makes other people be interested in second language teaching.

It is not possible to think that only two or three hours a week are enough for English classes, language teaching, as the other subjects, requires time and effort.

Recommendations

The government should invest more resources in public areas to make language conditions as similar as possible to those in the private sector.

The government needs to make sure that the program and the resources are present everywhere in Colombia.

Educational meetings and presentations must be carried out in different parts of Colombia and all those people involved in language teaching need to be part of them.

Immersion programs and all that is done to obtain a bilingual country should have serious foundations and it has to be based on experience not on improvisation.

People need to be aware of the necessity and importance of speaking another language and English should be learned because of self-motivation not by imposition.

Colombian culture and tradition must be respected and ethnic groups and their mother tongue cannot be limited to communication in a foreign language.

It is not possible to affirm that Colombia is a bilingual country because of big cities such as Bogota,

Medellin or Cali. It is necessary to guarantee the same conditions everywhere and to make sure that small cities and towns have the same conditions and resources than the main Colombian cities.

Government should include more English hours in public schools in order to guarantee a successful training.

In public schools, English classes should be divided to facilitate students' concentration and it would be easier for teachers to manage discipline problems.

Appropriate environments, where students practice what they learned, must be provided; so, students' motivation increases and they would show interest in English classes.

Communicative classes should be introduced since elementary school to guarantee a continuous process of language proficiency.

Based on Colombian conditions, the government should create their own standards concerning second language teaching. Therefore, it would be easier for teachers, administrators and government offices to develop adequate programs.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY # 1

1. In a few words provide a definition for BILINGUALISM.

2. In your opinion who should be involved in the process of achieving BILINGUALISM in Colombia?

3. Do you agree with sending teachers to San Andres to expose them to Standard English?

4. Make a list of things or issues that must be provided in order to apply BILINGUALISM in Pasto.

5. What could be some advantages and disadvantages of applying BILINGUALISM in Colombia (especially in Pasto)?

6. Rate from 5 (excellent) to 1 (deficient) the current conditions presented in Pasto that could help to apply BILINGUALISM.

- Teachers' training. ___
- Materials. ___
- Seminars and conferences concerned to BILINGUALISM.

- Appropriate time and schedule for English classes.

- Enough exposure to the L2. ___

- Students' motivation for learning a Second Language. _____
- Opportunities for students to practice the L2 outside the classroom. _____

7. Check () the characteristics you are identified with:

1. I can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. _____
 - I can express myself spontaneously. _____
 - I can summarize information from different spoken and written sources. _____
2. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic or professional purposes. _____
 - I can produce clear-well structured texts on complex subjects. _____
 - I show controlled use of patterns, connectors and cohesive devices. _____
3. I can understand main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics. _____
 - I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity. _____
 - I can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar topics. _____
4. I can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. _____
 - I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions or plans. _____
 - I can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance. _____
5. I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information. _____
 - I can understand and use familiar everyday expressions. _____
6. I can introduce myself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details. _____
 - I can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly. _____

SURVEY # 2

INSTITUTION: _____

TYPE OF SCHOOL: _____

1. NUMBER OF ENGLISH HOURS YOU HAVE A WEEK: _____

2. NUMBER OF ENGLISH HOURS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE: _____

3. MATERIALS

	YES	NO
BOOKS		
LABORATORY		
TAPES, CD' s		
COMPUTERS		
MAGAZINES		
TV SET		
VCR - DVD		

4. NUMBER OF STUDENTS YOU HAVE PER CLASSROOM: _____

5. NUMBER OF STUDENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE PER CLASSROOM: _____

6. NUMBER OF ENGLISH TEACHERS: _____

7. IS THE TEACHER'S B.A. RELATED TO TEACHING ENGLISH?

TEACHERS	YES	NO
TEACHER 1		
TEACHER 2		
TEACHER 3		
TEACHER 4		
TEACHER 5		

OBSERVATIONS
