

Institutional plan, Course design and Lesson plans.

*INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, COURSE DESIGN, AND LESSON PLANNING AND THE
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL OF THE STUDENTS OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS
IN SAN JUAN DE PASTO*

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Abstract

This qualitative research study was focused on the design and the renewal of institutional plans, course designs, and lesson plans in public high schools in Pasto and their influence on English learning and teaching processes. The instruments we used to carry out this proposal were an interview to five teachers who belonged to different public institutions and samples of the institutional plan, the course design, and the lesson plans. The results show that planning is an essential part in this process. However, considering the lack of documents that corroborate the planning carried out by the teachers, it was necessary to highlight that planning should be implemented as a fundamental instrument that can benefit the English learning process in Pasto.

Resumen

Esta investigación cualitativa estuvo enfocada en el diseño y renovación de la planeación institucional, diseño de cursos y los planes de clase en colegios oficiales de San Juan de Pasto y su influencia en los procesos de enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés. Los instrumentos que se utilizaron para esta investigación fueron una entrevista a cinco profesores de diferentes instituciones educativas y las muestras del plan institucional, el diseño de curso y los planes de clase. Los resultados indican que la planeación es parte esencial en este proceso. Sin embargo, considerando la falta de documentos que corroboren la planeación llevada a cabo por los profesores fue necesario señalar que la planeación debería ser implementada como un instrumento fundamental que beneficie la enseñanza del inglés en los colegios públicos en Pasto.

CHAPTER 1: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This chapter presents a problem that is lived in public high schools in Pasto in relation to teaching and learning English as a foreign language. That problem has a description, an analysis, an evaluation, and some delimitations about the research study. The limitations, purpose, and significance of this study are also stated.

The Problem

Problem Description

In this section, we describe some of the factors that might affect the English learning and teaching process both internally and externally. One of them is related to institutional planning, the design of courses, lesson planning, and the way in which teachers use them.

The purpose of our research study is to analyze our topic **“the development of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto”** in relation to the macro-problem that is **“the problematic situations that involve the English learning teaching process in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto”**.

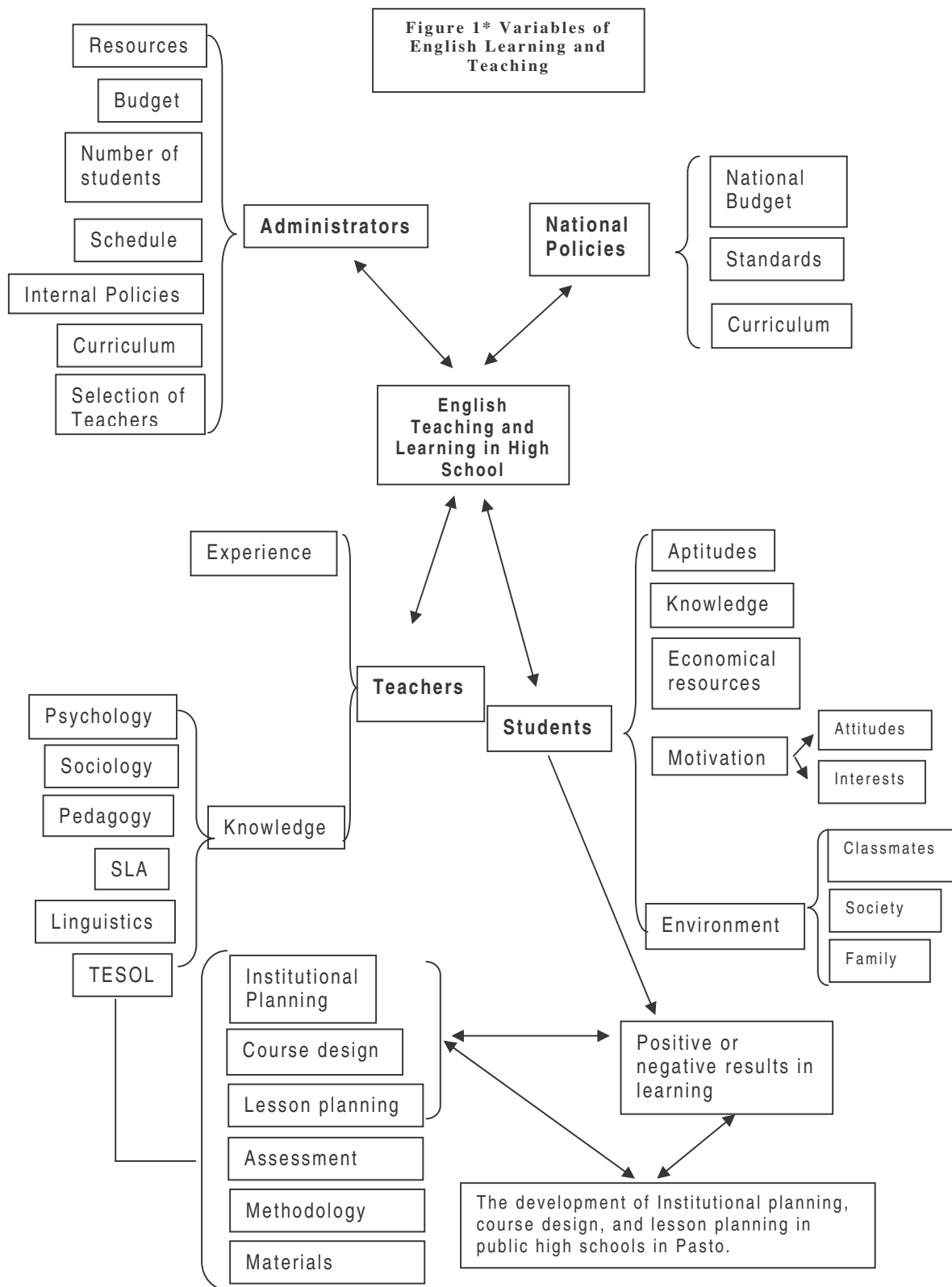
According to Bastidas (2002) the second language learning and teaching process is affected by different variables such as the learner, the teacher, the goals of learning and teaching, the subject matter, the methodology, and the community. Because of this foreign language learning has become a difficulty in many regional public high schools. Out of these variables, we have selected the institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning in order to see if they

are related to the level of English that students get at the end of the high school. We believe that if teachers do not do these activities in a systematic way, the student's learning process might be affected.

Analysis of the Problem

We will provide a brief explanation about the variables considering our research problem, the way they are related and how they influence on the process.

Although the institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning are beneficial factors, they are affected by some aspects that will directly and indirectly influence on the results. In other words, the failure or success of this process does not depend only on the application of them. We are going to study some variables related to institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning. In this way, we have identified the independent variable that is **“the level of development of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning in public high school in San Juan de Pasto”**. This variable might have an influence on the dependent one that is **“the level of academic results in English learning in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto”**. As we mentioned before, this English learning and teaching process is affected by different variables showed in Figure 1. *



The basic problem is related to English teaching and learning process in public high schools in Pasto. This is sometimes inefficient for students because most of them are able to communicate in the L2. According to Strevens (1987) the probable failure of this process has to do with the following aspects such as:

1. National Policies

Government decisions such as the limited budget cause a deficient effect on high schools because local administrators are not able to provide enough materials and resources for English teaching. On the other hand, the government is too ambitious when setting objectives which are difficult to achieve in these conditions like the national curriculum. This is supported by Bastidas (2002) who argues that the will of the Ministry of Education in Colombia is that English must be studied in high schools, but there are no clear policies related to the stability of this language.

2. Administrators

Each institution has internal administrators but the problem is that possibly they do not consider English as an important subject in the school curriculum. For this reason, the number of students in classrooms is not appropriate for foreign language teaching; the schedule is really limited with two or three hours per week and materials are insufficient because this subject (English) is almost never in the institution budget. In this way, there are not appropriate classrooms with tape recorders, television sets, cassettes, compact discs, DVD's, and so on.

According to Strevens (1977) the underdeveloped countries with little money and lots of social problems do not allow the administrators to finance educational instruments.

Finally, some administrators are in some cases unconscious because they choose teachers who are not pedagogically prepared, without professional experience and without L2 training.

3. Students

This is perhaps one of the most difficult aspects to deal with. Students need to develop appropriate skills for English learning. However, the teacher should know that the previous English knowledge of students in public schools is not that good because their social environment does not help too much. In other words, social trends, family, classmates, and the society in general can contribute to the motivation of students in a positive or negative way. Motivation is related to positive and negative attitudes and personal interests. Besides, you should also consider that the low economical level of students and the limited didactic resources do not contribute, either.

Finally, a majority of learners do not recognize the importance of English learning because they do not have a real motive to do it.

According to Strevens (1977) each learner has a potentiality for language learning that is a capacity to learn a second language, and there are also personal variables that show that every learner is different from their classmates because of their own experiences, abilities, defects, and the personal environment.

4. Teachers

They need to have enough proficiency of the target language and knowledge about other disciplines such as Psychology, Sociology, SLA, Linguistics, Pedagogy, and TESOL. The latter is important because it includes how to design plans, courses and lesson plans, considering the needs of learners and society. For Bastidas (2002) teachers are elements of the learning and teaching process which involve some variables such as teachers' characteristics, training and preparation, personality, instructional procedures, age, and so on. According to Strevens (1977) the quality and nature of the teaching is related to the effectiveness or failure of language learning and teaching. Furthermore, the teacher needs to choose an appropriate approach to develop in every course.

Finally, teachers must adapt and adopt different techniques that can be useful in their teaching. Therefore, they also have to innovate and update their knowledge or the way to apply it.

5. Institutional planning, syllabus design, and lesson planning.

Teachers and administrators should have some documents in which the items to be taught are listed. These documents are institutional planning, syllabus design, and lesson planning. They provide a background about the appropriate use of materials, assessment, methodology and techniques, and the logical, methodological, and chronological organization of every class.

In addition, these documents are created for a set of defined learners, for a period of time, with a determined sequence, with the objectives to be achieved, and the particular teaching techniques for every item.

Problem Evaluation

It is really important to highlight our research problem that is **“how the development of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning relates to the learning of English in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto”** because this will contribute to understand the English learning process of the public high schools of our region. We think that institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning are some of the multiple factors that might affect the learning and teaching process here in Pasto. In addition, this problem is a researchable topic because it analyzes how teachers create and develop or not institutional planning, their designs of the courses, and their lesson plans. To do this, we interviewed teachers and we have asked for the documents in order to corroborate if they actually exist.

On the other hand, institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning which describe all the activities, the time, the objectives, the methodology, and the content of the general planning, of each level, and of each class can be seen in the documents the institutions have in their files. We also have the necessary materials like recorders, the institutional plans, course design, and the lesson plans documents in order to conduct the study. Therefore, our proposal is a researchable project because it can be developed with the assistance of teachers and administrators. Finally, the researchers have the required time, money, and disposition to conclude this proposal.

Research Question

What is the influence of the development of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning on the teaching and learning process in five different public high schools in San Juan de Pasto, according to the opinions of teachers?

Purpose and Objectives

The following objectives describe the research problem, the goal, and the specific objectives support the main or general objective.

Purpose of the Study

To analyze the possible influence of the design and development of institutional planning, course designs, and lesson planning in the academic results of students in different public high schools in San Juan de Pasto, according to the points of view of the teachers.

Specific Objectives

1. To identify the bases that teachers use to do the institutional planning and the design of courses.
2. To identify how teachers do their lesson plans.
3. To identify the criteria and the frequency with which teachers renew their institutional plan, their course design, and their lesson plans.

Significance of the Study

According to our experience, English learning does not have the importance that it should have in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto. It is relevant to clarify that the English learning and teaching process in public high schools has not been very successful because its results have never been the

best. Through the results of ICFES it is possible to see that the English learning and teaching process has not been very successful. We consider that these outcomes have lots of roots that have already been studied, but the students of the universities of our region have almost never studied the field of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning. For this reason, we chose this topic because we think that these aspects can be related to the successful development of English learning and teaching, and they have not been studied in many of the public high schools in Pasto. Maybe the results of the ICFES exam and the academic English level of students can be affected by the inappropriate use of these processes. For this reason, we researched this topic in order to contribute to the understanding of this process in our city, and in this way, teachers, students, administrators, and the whole English teaching and learning community in Pasto might probably be benefited.

Besides, through this research study, teachers might become aware of the fact that institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning can be useful tools to organize their courses and to look for different ways to achieve them, so that English learning might be a successful process for their students.

For teachers, this study might be important because through institutional planning, course design, and lesson plans they have the chance to follow a sequence in the teaching process and they will avoid repetition in contents, gaps in knowledge, and demotivation of the students. In this way, the English learning and teaching process will have a sequence and the students would probably motivate and learn English more efficiently.

Delimitations and Limitations

In this section, we delimitate the problem in order to specify our research study and we show the main restrictions that limited our proposal.

Delimitations

Conceptual delimitation

It is important to clarify some terms that are used in this research in order to avoid confusions about the meaning of essential words.

Institutional planning

According to UNESCO (1984) planning is an ongoing process that involves updating of data, evaluation of the results, policies, and preparation for the following plan. That is why, planning should have a logical and chronological organization. It should consider the current realities of the education, the population, and the society in order to know the needs of education. The plan has some objectives. For this reason, the results and the reached objectives are shown to the population at the end of the academic year.

Course design or syllabus design

According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996) course design considers societal needs, assessment, curriculum, objectives, and materials preparation. Syllabus design is much more general than lesson planning but more specific than institutional planning.

Dubin & Olshtain (1996) also argue that it is really important to have clear definitions about curriculum and syllabus because both are different but

they have a close relationship. Furthermore, syllabi can be used as a combination in an eclectic form for the purposes of the course.

Course design sets general and specific objectives which are going to be involved in the whole program. This means that course design needs different written documents such as guides, plans, or outlines in order to carry out this task.

Lesson planning

According to Jensen quoted in Celce-Murcia (2001) a lesson plan is a tool that helps teachers to know what they are going to teach and what they have already taught. This plan should be coherent, flexible, and varied. Moreover, the teacher has to consider the knowledge of the students, the objectives of the lesson, activities, materials, time constraints, the skills to be developed, the components, and the way to connect the previews with the future lesson.

Curriculum

According to Nunan (1988, p. 10) “curriculum attempts to specify what should happen in the classroom, to describe what actually does happen, and to attempt to reconcile the differences between what should be and what actually is.”

Foreign language learning

According to Lightbown & Spada (1999) it is the learning of a language in a place and a context where the language is not used by most of the population.

Population delimitation

A limited number of teachers from different public high schools in Pasto compose the population that takes part in this research study. The teachers (men and women) are middle-aged and elderly people and they have different socio-economical levels. The public high schools were chosen at random according to their site in Pasto.

Geographical delimitation

This research study was developed in public high schools located on different parts of San Juan de Pasto, in the department of Nariño, at the south of Colombia. The physical conditions of the high schools are varied, but most of them are located in popular neighborhoods that belong to a middle and low status. They are exposed to the noise produced by many cars, buses, and motorcycles that move back and forth around these neighborhoods. Students are also exposed to the noise produced by other students due to the structures of the classrooms.

Limitations

This research was carried out with five teachers of different public high schools in Pasto. We intended to develop our study in seven high schools but in two of them teachers were disposed to answer the interview. Besides, the disposition of the interviewed teachers could influence on the result of this study. In some cases, teachers did not have enough time or they were not available to answer the interviews.

As a conclusion, we can state that this chapter tried to summarize the diverse aspects that were involved in our research study. Moreover, this chapter

included the objectives of our proposal and the limitations that had when doing the research study.

On the other hand, in the next chapter, we will provide some theories and information about the English and learning and teaching process and the literature related to institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning.

CHAPTER2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an explanation about theories of second language learning and teaching and the aspects that have an influence on English teaching and learning including institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning in order to contextualize the study.

Theories of Second Language Learning

The following theories have been used to describe the different ways a second language is learned. These theories are organized in chronological order.

Behaviorist Theory

As an introduction, Behaviorism understands learning (verbal or non-verbal) as practice, reinforcement, and habit formation. The Behaviorist theory states that the speakers provide linguistic input to the learner in the environment, so they have a positive reinforcement because of their correct repetition and imitation. Then, they make associations between words and events. In this way, associations are stronger and repeated. As a result of this process, reinforcement comes from correct imitation and corrective feedback on errors.

According to Lado (1964, quoted by Lightbown & Spada 1993) the acquisition of a group of habits refers to language development. To learn a second language, it is supposed that an L2 learner associates first and second language habits. However, first language habits sometimes interfere in learning and new habits must be learned.

Behaviorism says that the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) refers to the difficulty or ease that students learn an L2 depending on the differences and

similarities between two languages. Some errors are most of the time not included in the CAH. One of the traditional views about CAH is the bi-directional error, which means, that a Spanish speaker learning French and vice-versa would probably have the same errors in learning.

We think that this theory of learning has certain aspects that help to understand how someone learns a language. For example, reinforcement and habits can contribute to an easier way of learning. Nevertheless, learners do not really pay attention to the similarities but to the differences between the two languages, and this can produce interferences.

Krashen's Theory

Stephen Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998) proposed five central hypotheses in order to explain how a second language is learned.

The acquisition- learning hypothesis

This hypothesis states that people have two ways of learning a second language. It can be through learning or acquiring. The first one has to do with a conscious process that occurs when someone learns about the language itself. It means the formal knowledge of it. In this way, learners will be able to recognize and talk about the structures of the language. It is important to consider that an adult cannot achieve the level of a native speaker.

In contrast, acquisition means a subconscious process in which each person is not usually aware of the fact of acquiring a language. So this process is natural and people have the opportunity to develop linguistic abilities. In other words, to acquire a language is to use it for real communication.

Monitor hypothesis

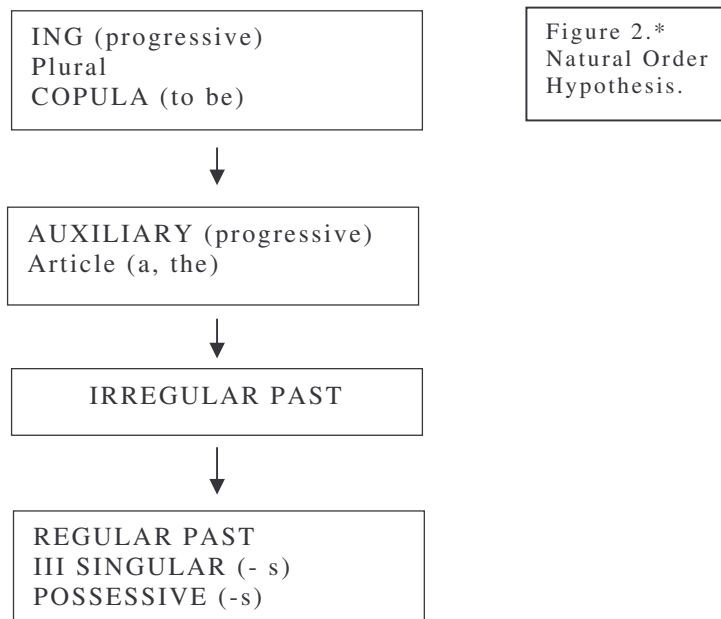
According to Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998) the term monitor is used as an editor of the learned system. This hypothesis explains that learning is a limited function in adults. The editor makes changes to the utterances of someone only by considering the ones generated by the acquired system. This could probably happen before speaking or writing, but if it happens after the production it is called self-repair. Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998 p. 31) also states that:

A very important point about monitor hypothesis is that it does not say that acquisition is unavailable for self-correction. We often self-correct, or edit, using acquisition, in both first and in second languages. What the monitor hypothesis claims is that conscious learning has only this function that is not used to initiate production in second language.

Finally, the monitor needs: (a) time (all learners need to have enough time to know and to use rules effectively; (b) focus on form (it is also necessary to think about correctness.); and (c) know the rule (even though learners have a good exposure to the L2, they will never know all the rules.)

Natural order hypothesis

Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998) stated that L2 speakers learn the target language in predictable ordered sequences. This hypothesis does not mean that all people acquire in the same order grammatical or linguistic structures. In general, some structures can be acquired early and some others can be acquired later. For this reason, figure 2* shows many empirical research studies in which it is described the way how grammatical morphemes are acquired.



Taken from Candlin (1998)

Finally, Brown (1974, quoted by Candlin, 1998) claimed that the order of the acquisition in L1 is different from the same process in L2 but there are clear similarities.

The input hypothesis

According to Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998) the only way to learn a target language is by means of comprehensible input. This hypothesis says that the abilities such as reading and listening are really important in the language program but the fluency of speaking and writing in L2 will come with time. So that acquires get to the next stage in the acquisition process, when they comprehend language input including grammatical or linguistic structures that belong to the next stage. This can be represented in a formal way by $i + 1$ that refers to the forms or structures that go beyond the level of learners. That is to say, i means the level of competence of the acquirer and $i + 1$ means the following stage to i along some natural order.

The affective filter hypothesis

According to Krashen (1982, quoted by Candlin 1998) this hypothesis refers to an imaginary barrier that shows how affective factors are related to the L2 acquisition process. Attitudinal variables in this hypothesis are related to success in SLA but not in language learning. When the learner is stressed, without motivation or self-conscious, the affective filter goes up, and the learning process becomes more difficult. Nevertheless, the filter will go down when the learner is relaxed and motivated. So the speaker is more open to the input, so that the input goes deeper in knowledge. As a conclusion, motivated people will look for more input contributing to a lower filter but comprehensible input is not the unique factor necessary in classrooms to promote a lower filter.

We consider that Krashen's theory is one of the most complete theories in SLA field. Besides, we agree with the Input hypothesis because it shows the way how teachers have to demand students to improve by themselves in the L2. However, we disagree with Krashen when he claims that only comprehensible input is necessary for learning a second language; so we would say that learners also need some other factors such as: motivation in the L2, a socio-cultural background, and materials to learn the target language.

Innatism

Noam Chomsky (1959, quoted by Lightbown & Spada 1993) proposed the innatist theory as a response to the inadequacy of the behaviorist theory. Chomsky (1959) states that all children are biologically programmed to learn their L1 and they have the ability to discover the rules of their mother language. This ability is known as LAD (language acquisition device). It is an imaginary

black box that is in the brain and that prevents many grammatical mistakes when children are learning a language. This device is activated when children listen to different samples of a language. When the LAD is activated, children have the ability to discover the structure of language to be learned by relating the innate knowledge to the new structure. Sometimes Chomsky uses the term LAD but referring to UG (universal grammar) that is a set of principles that are common to all languages and that allow children to acquire a language from the environment.

Chomsky (1959) says that there is a critical period for language acquisition and that UG will not be available to the learners who have already passed the critical period. When learners of L2 begin to learn after the end of the critical period, there is still a logical problem of L2 acquisition; it means that the learning will depend on the input they are exposed to.

Others have proposed an innatist theory similar to the theory proposed by Chomsky called creative construction hypothesis in which learners are supposed to construct internal representations of the language being learned. These internal representations can also be considered as mental pictures that will be developed in predictable stages.

We consider that for learning a foreign language, it is not fundamental the innate knowledge you have but the practice on L2.

Recent Psychological Theories.

We will provide some new psychological theories about Second Language Learning.

Information processing

According to McLaughlin (1987, quoted by Lightbown & Spada 1999) some cognitive psychologists propose that information processing model in SLA is seen as the building up of knowledge through speaking and understanding. At the beginning, learners pay attention to the most important aspects of a message due to the limited capacity of the human brain. Experience and practice will make knowledge of learners becomes automatic and they are not aware that they are developing and using this elements of the language. Although, this knowledge may have its origin from intentional learning. In this case, practice is seen as a process which involves effort on the part of the learner and not as something mechanical. Schmidt (1990, quoted by Lightbown. & Spada 1999) argues that knowledge comes from noticing consciously and they disagree with the difference between learning and acquisition proposed by Krashen. Some psychologists suggest that there are some changes in the knowledge, which are due to restructuring. It is a new phenomenon investigated by cognitive psychologists. This explains the interaction between the knowledge we already have and the new knowledge without extensive practice. Somehow, it will fit into an existing system Lightbown & Spada (1993)

According to Lightbown & Spada (1999) restructuring also considers the observation of things that we already know and use in an automatic way, but sometimes they cannot be explained with the construction of automaticity through practice. They are based on the relationship between new and previous knowledge. The new knowledge is transformed or restructured in order to be fit into an existing system.

We consider that sometimes the phenomenon called restructuring is not always effective because according to Bastidas (2002) a positive transfer is possible when there are similarities between the two languages, but it is a problem when some aspects of the languages are different. This is known as Error analysis.

Connectionism

Connectionism differs from Innatism because they do not see the importance of the existence neurological module designed for language acquisition. They also consider that the role of the environment is more important than the innate knowledge in the learner because innate knowledge is just an ability to learn and not a specific linguistic structure. For connectionists, the main source of linguistic knowledge is the input. Connectionists state that the more you listen to language characteristics, the stronger you develop neurological connections between these elements. Connectionism also states that learners build up their knowledge through exposure to thousand of instances of the linguistic features that they learn. For connectionists, a learning mechanism is very similar to a computer program that not only generalizes and learns what it hears, but it also overgeneralizes errors. These studies are not focused on the acquisition of grammatical morphemes and vocabulary. However, for innatists, those are aspects acquired through memorization.

Finally, the way in which cumulative learning becomes knowledge of complicated syntactic structures is a non-answer question yet.

We consider that the connectionist position is important because learners have to be exposed as much as possible to the L2 environment. Nonetheless, it is also necessary to have a feedback in order to correct possible errors that interfere in communication.

The interactionist position

According to Long (1983, quoted by Lightbown & Spada 1999) SLA takes place through conversational interaction. This theory has a lot to do with the first language theory that provides a relevant importance to child-directed speech.

Long (1983) states that the comprehensible input of Krashen is necessary for language acquisition, however learners also need an opportunity to interact with other speakers in order to demonstrate what they already know. Nonetheless, Long (1983) emphasizes on how input becomes comprehensible.

Long also infers that modified interaction must be necessary for language acquisition. He proposed: (a) Interactional modification makes input comprehensible; (b) comprehensible input promotes acquisition; and (c) interactional codification promotes acquisition.

Linguistic simplification includes modified interaction, elaboration, gestures, additional contextual cues, and slower speech rate. In this way, conversational arrangements can help to the learner to comprehend so interaction aids to understand the linguistic simplification.

The Vigotskian socio-cultural theory also includes the importance of interaction in SLA. Vigotsky (quoted by Machado, 1999) states that cognitive development includes language development, which is a product of social

interaction among people. In order to expand Vygotskian theory, Lantolf (1994) and others proposed that L2 learners acquire a higher level of linguistic knowledge when they interact with more knowledgeable speakers.

We think that this interactionist theory is an important theory because it relates the comprehensible input with interaction, so students can show what they have already learnt.

Theories of Teaching a Second Language

The process of learning and teaching a language is a complex process that involves different variables. If the teacher wants to teach a foreign language, it is necessary to know most of the variables that affect the way in which someone succeeds or fails second language learning process. From 1940 to 1960 language teaching was related to the application of linguistics and psychology, but between 1960 and 1970 a number of scholars concluded that **applied linguistics** was a mediating discipline that would smooth the language sciences in this field of language teaching. Too many schemes or models were proposed in order to deal with this theory and to establish a conceptual framework.

In this item, we have chosen the most related theories to teaching a second language in order to provide a theoretical background for L2 teachers. However, we have chosen the model of Stevens because it is based on different models like a combination of them and it is much more associated with language teaching rather than linguistic ideas. In this way, this model is considered as a general one that serves as a conceptual framework for theory development, to provide categories and criteria for interpretation and evaluation of existing

theories, to give or provide enough directions, and to research essential conceptualizations for planning and practice.

According to Strevens (1977) this general model for second language teaching has its own characteristics: (a) comprehensiveness, (b) principle of interaction, (c) multifactor view, and (d) multidisciplinary approach.

In language teaching it is necessary to operate with four important concepts:

1. Language: teachers need to work with a theory of language and requires language as a concept based on linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and the study of particular languages.
2. Learning: learners need the nature of language learning based on psychology, educational psychology and psycholinguistics.
3. Teaching: language teaching requires the view of language teacher and language teaching based on the study of education.
4. Context: it is an important concept that helps language teaching occurs. In this way, language learning and teaching need a context. However, context is based on: (a) the language context, (b) the educational setting, and (c) the language teaching background.

This model neither prescribes language teaching objectives nor gives specific patterns to follow in advanced, but it helps teachers to arrive at certain criteria that will probably define areas of knowledge and ignorance and it will also guide practice more effectively. This model consists of twelve items or elements:

1. Policy and aims are recognized by the community that provides the importance and value to the language depending on economical, social, and political aspects.
2. Administration and organization are elements that carry out the first element. According to Strevens (1977) administration and organization are elements that consist in the financial and administrative provision for language teaching.
3. Relevant professional disciplines refer to language teaching and learning process that can be helped by other disciplines that have their own purposes. Education, psychology, linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics are disciplines that contribute to language teaching. According to Campbell (quoted by Brown 1987) applied linguistics would serve as a mediator between Linguistics (theoretician) and Pedagogy (practitioner). However, if this theory will be applied in an L2 field, he suggested an expanded version with the same structure but with three more sciences; Sociology, Psychology, and Anthropology. Nonetheless, Ingram (quoted by Brown 1987) detailed the Campbell's model with the same list of disciplines and considered feedback from practice.

On the other hand, Splosky (quoted by Brown 1987) thinks that linguistics and psychology by themselves are not sufficient for language teaching.

For this reason, he proposed a third version that has three main sources: (a) language description, (b) theory of language learning, and (c) theory of language use. This model is based on psychology, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and general linguistics. These four disciplines deal with

language education and this one constitutes what Spolsky calls educational linguistics.

4. Choice of language learning (LL) and language teaching (LT) types: L2 and L1 language teaching are seen as single processes that are influenced by different factors, such as: (a) pupil age, (b) stage of proficiency reached, (c) educational aims, (d) learner involvement, (e) language of instruction status, and (f) target language status. These factors are explained below:

a. Pupil age: the language learning and teaching type (abbreviated LL/LT) is broadly determined by the characteristics of children, teenagers, and adults. All of them are different. That is why, their abilities, attitudes, goals, aptitudes, expectations, and behaviors are not similar. They have good and bad characteristics that are part of their age and that influence on LL/LT success or failure.

b. Stage of proficiency reached: teachers will have to choose the appropriate type of teaching for their students taking into account the knowledge that learners have. So, they are divided into beginners, intermediate, and advanced learners. The role of teachers and students will be different depending on the proficiency of students. Then, the LL will be centered on the teacher, on teachers and students, and on students.

c. Educational aims: the planning of the course will vary depending on the goals of students. For some of them, the language is a part of their education as math or biology; for others, it has a specific and special purpose, or maybe they will want to acquire it and command it.

d. Learner involvement: the learning and teaching process is also affected by the attitudes of students. So, the LL type will be different if the student is volunteer or non-volunteer to learn the language. These last aspects are also considered by authors such as Brown (1987) who states that it is important to take into account what are the previous knowledge of learners, their origin, their families, their socio-economic levels, their personalities, and so on.

e. Language of instruction status: the LL and LT type is influenced by the way in which L2 is used as the mother language to learn other subjects that are in the curriculum or when the target language has been already learned and it is used to learn a third language.

f. Target language status: it can be foreign or second language. For Strevens (1977) the final aspect that influences LL/LT type is the role of the language as a second or foreign one. The LT type will be depending on the status of the language.

5. Teaching training: In many countries LL is broadly influenced by the qualities of the teachers. As there are different students, there are also different kinds of teachers and courses for training teachers. In order to train an ideal teacher, the course must contain aspects that enhance personal, technical, and professional characteristics. For this reason, these courses must be composed by skills, information, and theory in which teachers learn about the language activities, techniques, and methods for teaching it. The syllabus that they follow influences on LL and LT. besides, due to administrative and economical restrictions, many teachers cannot have this preparation. English teachers have

to provide not only the language, but also the cultural background taking into account that English is the universal language. It is also important that the teachers know some terms in order to have a better understanding of their pedagogical field. They are: (a) language, (b) learning, and (c) teaching.

a. Language: according to the Wehmeier (1994 p. 356) “language is the system of sounds and writing that human beings use to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings.”

b. Learning: according to Kimble and Garnezy (quoted by Brown 1987, p.133) “learning is a relatively permanent change in a behavioral tendency and is the result of reinforced practice.” It means that learning is a daily process that is always changing in order to renew the previous knowledge through practice.

c. Teaching: this is not an isolated term because it depends on learning. Teaching guides and helps students to learn. Learning takes place depending on the methodology of teachers, philosophy of education, teaching styles, approach, and classroom techniques.

6. Approach: here Strevens (1977) understands approach as a compound group of notions. For him, teachers must follow an approach or mix different approaches so that language can be taught.

7. Pedagogy, methodology, instruction, and teaching: These terms are different but all of them are related to the ways in which teachers present the material to the learners. Through these elements, teachers can realize about the progress of students and make some changes in L2 learning. Teachers are guides because they interact with their students and they use different teaching techniques in order to promote learning.

It is important to underline the role of teachers in this process because they must change traditional teaching by a process in which students grow as a person and as a member of a society. Teachers must also have qualities such as knowledge of the L2, imagination, creativity, intelligence, and experience. In addition, teachers must have clear ideas about course purposes and how they will be attained and evaluated. Teachers as a sample of authority can also influence on students and they can also affect them in academic and personal aspects.

Furthermore, the teachers need to know the content that is going to be taught, the target language and the differences between L1 and L2. Other points that teachers need to take into account are related to the process of how language learning takes place in learners, why they want to learn a target language, their needs, the teaching and learning strategies, and the age of each learner in order to establish goals and objectives.

8. Syllabus design: it is a relevant element that influence on LL/LT process. The syllabus is a public document that lists the items that will be taught in a course and how they will be achieved. There are different types of syllabi that can be focused on grammar, vocabulary, concepts, notions, communication, etc.

9. Materials construction: It is also necessary that teachers choose very carefully the materials. They must be different and sufficient to develop the course. For Strevens (1977), teaching materials should have these characteristics: (a) they should be realistic. It means accessible and useful for learners and teachers; (b) relevant for learners; (c) they should encourage the

progress of students; and (d) they should be compatible with the approach and the attitude that teachers follow.

10. Constraints on LL/LT achievement: Some countries value a language and factors that surround it. These factors can become constraints that have an influence on the success or failure of teaching language process. Strevens (1977) lists these constraints: (a) total quantity of instruction, (b) intensity of instruction, (c) various impediments to teaching, and (d) the quality of the teacher. These constraints are explained below:

a. Total quantity of instruction: language learning as a process requires a minimum time to be achieved. It is too difficult to establish a number of hours because students are different and they need different quantities of hours. Furthermore, it can or cannot have a relationship between number of hours with language improvement.

b. Intensity of instruction: to achieve the success in LL/LT process, it is necessary that the intensity of classes is moderated. Classes should not employ few or lots of hours because they influence this process.

c. Various impediments to teaching: learning is diminished by physical or psychological aspects such as the anxiety or fatigue of learners, lack of attention, noise, a large number of students in a reduced space, etc.

d. The quality of the teacher: teachers must keep on training in order to improve as professional people. Some aspects that determine the quality of teachers are their personality, knowledge about the language, and abilities to teach.

11. The learner: the learners have the potentiality for language learning. As human beings, they are capable of learning a mother or foreign language. Although there will be some variations depending on learners. Moreover, they have personal variables. They are different and their lives, environments, thoughts, and experiences are too.

Bastidas (2002) proposes some factors that also affect learners. One of them refers to motivation that can be integrative or instrumental. The first one has to do with the interest of learners in the community and culture that involves the second language. Instrumental motivation refers to the specific goals of the students. They use the language to achieve other purposes. Bastidas also shows the communicative need for a foreign language as an aspect that affects learners. He explains that lots of students feel demotivated because they think the L2 is neither important nor useful for them.

Another factor is the socio-economical level of the students. Due to this problem, learners cannot use materials for the learning process and then their classes might become boring.

On the other hand, transfer can or cannot be a problem in language learning and teaching process. When there are similarities between the L1 and the L2, the learning can be easier, but when there are differences between the two languages, interference can be a difficulty.

12. Evaluation: finally, this element tries to assess the evolution of this process in order to change aspects that can produce its failure. Although evaluation is

used for social, administrative, and the needs of teachers, sometimes it is used with purposes that are against LL/LT process.

Institutional Planning, Course Design, and Lesson Planning.

In this section we will clarify some concepts related to the topic of our proposal, giving the most important characteristics of them.

Institutional Planning

According to UNESCO (1984) planning is a continuous process that involves updating of the data, an ongoing evaluation of the results, policies, and preparation for the following plan. It means that the first plan is the base for the second one and so on. For this reason, planning should have a logical and chronological organization.

According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996) the institutional planning includes a wide description of the general objectives, an educational- cultural philosophy which is related to the subjects and a theoretical orientation to language learning process. In addition, the institutional planning is, in most of the cases, contemplative to the national and political trends. Besides, according to Moreno (2004) this tool should also have some objectives that may consider the capacities of the students, the integral formation of the learners, and a social, economical, and cultural context of the institutions. Moreover, evaluation is also essential because it enables teachers to determine the goals that someone needs to achieve and to establish the objectives with a sequence for all grades.

For UNESCO (1984) in institutional planning, it is important to consider the current realities of the education, the population, and the society in order to know the needs of the education and it is also relevant to predict the future of education. With these bases, the objectives to reach will be chosen. Then, the solutions to the current educational problems should be proposed. When the plan is approved, it is given the government's support and the budget. Next, the plan and its activities are applied in order to achieve the proposed objectives, and at the end, it is shown to the population the results and what objectives were reached with this plan.

When the plan is implemented, many problems arise and they have different sources. The problems are derived from the plan itself (very ambitious objectives, the budget is not enough, its proposals are not related to the socio-cultural characteristics of the population, etc.) or from external factors (the limited participation of the population, the government does not support the plan, etc.)

On the other hand, Markee (2002) estimates that innovation in institutional planning is risky and difficult. For instance, Adams and Chen (1981, quoted by Markee, 2002) note that approximately 75% of all innovations fail. Thus, people and organizations involved in managing change have engaged in a progressing search for more efficient ways of implementing and maintaining innovations. It is also essential to understand the importance of continuous innovation as part of professional and organizational development, particularly when circumstances in the wider environment are continuously changing.

Finally, Markee (2002) considers that negotiation between teachers and students should be included in institutional planning. In this way, it allows teachers to know some problems of learners in their academic performance and to find some possible solutions by negotiating with them.

Course Design

Currently, course design is a fundamental aspect that needs to be considered in English teaching. Designing a course is a task in which teachers must consider different aspects that will be adapted depending on the audience and the time. Furthermore, Dubin & Olshtain (1996) propose that the political and national context should be considered at the initial stage of course design because political considerations have to do with the general perception about language learning.

According to Ur (2006) course design, commonly known as syllabus, is a document that consists of a list. It specifies the things that will be taught in the course (s). Its components can be either content items (words, structures, topics), or process ones (tasks, methods.) The order of the items is generally from easier or essential components to more difficult and less important ones. This order can be detailed and rigid, or general and flexible.

The most important participants in planning should be the teachers who will direct the course and students who will take part in it. The teachers must also collect information informally from their learners. Besides, they should constantly monitor students for changing their needs and preferences. (Nunan 1996).

Although, teachers should be autonomous, they are not completely free of doing whatever they want. They should keep in mind that autonomy has some features that they need to consider like reflection and observation of the context and the learners. Robertson (2001) also estimates that the autonomy of teachers does not mean freedom at all. Autonomy is developed through observation, reflection, thoughtful consideration, understanding, experience, and evaluation of alternatives.

Moreover, Dubin & Olshtain (1996) state that when teachers design a plan there should be an idealized team in which all of them know their duties related to syllabus. Therefore, a team must have different people in charged of the following responsibilities: the organization of the work, the control of the quality, the budget, the importance of the role of the teachers, the needs of the learners, and the role of the administrators and the Ministry of Education within the objectives of the planning.

Dubin & Olshtain (1996) also argue that the designers of the courses need to know about three expanded areas before designing the courses. They are: language content, process, and product. Teachers need to involve the interests of students and exciting tasks while they use the L2.

On the other hand, syllabus is a public document available for scrutiny not only by the teachers, but also by the consumers, by representatives of the relevant authorities, by other interested members of the public. It means that the composers of the syllabus are answerable to their target audience for the quality of their document.

According to Taba (1977, quoted by Dubin and Olshtain, 1986) it is important that the course designer takes into account: (a) diagnosis of needs, (b) formulation of objectives, (c) selection of content, (d) organization of content, (e) selection of learning experiences, (f) organization of learning experiences, and (g) determination of what to evaluate.

Course design follows some stages, one of them is known as the fact-finding stage. According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996), for this stage it is important to consider aspects such as the language setting, the patterns of language use in society, the group and individual attitudes, and the political and national context.

1. The language setting: according to Gumperz (1968 quoted by Dubin & Olshtain 1996p, 6) “the language settings refers to the totality of communication roles in any speech community.” Considering this aspect, course designers need to know the importance of the language in specific settings. It is relevant to say that English is a language of wider communication (LWC) that means that many people use it for specific needs such as the understanding of scientific and technical documents.

The economical, political, national and societal support that has the language affects the environment in which the learner is involved. In this way, depending on the importance of the language in a determined setting, the course design will be developed in different ways and the effects on the language learning and teaching process will be also different.

2. Patterns of language use in society: English is an LWC that has different roles. In education, when English is not the L1, it is fundamental to take into

account two aspects if English is used as a means to teach other subjects and the effectiveness of the materials and the existing curriculum.

The first aspect considers if the language is a native, official, or second language. So, the way in which English will be used will depend on the importance of the language in the specific setting. Besides, in order to know the real role of English, it is relevant to evaluate the proficiency in the L2 of teachers, the materials and textbooks that are used to teach other subjects, and if the teaching and learning resources are available for learners.

When the role of the LWC is known the effectiveness of the existing program and materials must be established. If it is designed a new program, it is because there are some gaps between the needs of learners and the results of the previous program.

3. Group and individual attitudes toward language: it is necessary to take into consideration group and individual attitudes towards language in an L1 or L2 environment. Therefore, attitudes can be evaluated through people who speak the target language with its culture or through the learning acquisition process.

Moreover, course designers need to design special courses taking into account individual and group needs and feelings, considering always learning as the main objective.

4. The political and national context: political, national, and economical factors can be seen as similar concepts but it is important to know that they are different and that they need specific analysis. Hence, the designing of a course must always be done taking into account the political and national priorities in which the community has an important role inside the design.

After the fact-finding stage, course designers must think about realistic goals that allow the good development of a course. In this way, it is important to consider the setting that can be an EFL or ESL setting.

According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996) in an EFL setting, the course designer will make decisions about goals by considering the type of school, societal, and personal needs. In this way, the courses will be different and will not have similar purposes. It is also important to establish some intermediate objectives in order to specify the outcomes at each stage.

Additionally, Dubin & Olshtain (1996) claim that the designing of an EFL course needs to prepare students to communicate with the rest of the world and to enrich the culture of students and their personal growth. They suggest that the objective of any EFL course design must be focused on the ability of every student to have an effective conversation with a native speaker on topics of interest.

According to Ur (1998) there are diverse types of syllabi. They are:

Grammatical Syllabus: consists in a list of grammatical structures.

Lexical Syllabus: consists in a list of lexical items or vocabulary lists.

Grammatical-lexical Syllabus: the combination of the grammatical and lexical syllabus. It has a list of vocabulary and a list of grammar rules.

Situational Syllabus: consists in real-life contexts.

Topic-based Syllabus: this syllabus is very similar to the situational but this one takes real situations in real contexts.

Notional Syllabus: refers to concepts that language can express such as time, weather, color, morning, child.

Functional-notional Syllabus: this syllabus combines the notions that you can express and the function you can do with language.

Mixed or multi-strand Syllabus: consists in the combination of all or most of the syllabi. It means that it is designed with grammar, vocabulary, notion, context and function.

Procedural Syllabus: specifies the learning tasks to be done more than specifying the language or its meaning.

Process Syllabus: is not a pre-set syllabus because the content is negotiated with students at the beginning of the course.

Lesson Planning

According to Jensen (quoted by Celce-Murcia, 2001) a lesson plan is a tool that helps teachers to know what they are going to teach, in what order, how they will take each component of the planning, what they are going to do next, and what they did in previous classes. Furthermore, Spratt (2005) states that teachers can identify and select the appropriate goals by looking back at earlier lesson plans and thinking of things that worked well and things that should be improved.

According to Jensen (quoted by Celce-Murcia, 2001) planning a lesson can be a very simple mental checklist or long detailed description in a page format. Besides, the author says that a lesson plan is a really important tool

serving as guide, as a resource, and as a historical document which reflects the amount of students, materials, activities, goals, and the philosophy of teaching.

According to Spratt, Polverness, & Williams (2005) the components of a lesson plan must be the description of the course, the objectives (main, subsidiary, and personal), the time frame, the procedures, homework, the teaching aids, interaction pattern, anticipated language problems, possible solutions, and evaluation. Furthermore, a lesson plan must be varied, flexible, and coherent.

According to Ur (2006) for learners, it is difficult to concentrate and they get bored and irritable when a lesson is completely covered by one type of activity. Therefore, a varied lesson is more interesting and pleasant for teachers and learners. Hence, the lessons should vary depending on the materials, the practice activities, or the tests. A lesson, which is entirely carried out through just one kind of activity, does not let students concentrate. In addition, it caters for a wider range of learning styles and strategies. It provides regular refreshing changes in the type of mental and physical activity demanded.

Ur (2006) also says that students are fresher and more energetic at the beginning of the lessons and they get progressively demotivated. That is why, it is important to put the harder tasks earlier.

Finally, Ur (2006) argues that there are some criteria to evaluate the lesson effectiveness. These criteria are: if students were active and attentive the whole class, they were motivated, they learned the material, the lesson went according to the plan, the language was used communicatively, and so on.

In chapter two, we have considered the theories about second language learning and teaching, institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning. The next chapter will include the methodology that we are going to use and the techniques to develop our proposal.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter provides some information about the design and techniques that were used with the purpose of having reliable and accurate results about this research study. Besides, we provide the research units, data collection, and the techniques of analysis.

Research Design

We used a qualitative research. This tries to identify the meanings that people attribute to the daily phenomenon in order to understand society. The qualitative research is focused on the process rather than the product and it has practical purposes such as understanding and interpretation. In Wikipedia (May, 14th, 2007) the qualitative research is defined as one of the two major approaches to research methodology in social sciences. It involves an in depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern it. Qualitative research also investigates the why and how of decision making. Moreover, it categorizes data into patterns as the primary basis for organizing and reporting results. Also, it describes the experiences, actions, and attitudes of human beings through social interaction.

Finally, we chose a descriptive research in order to identify the characteristics of a population, situation, or interesting area, and to collect the teachers' opinions about the possible incidence of planning in learning English in public high schools. The main techniques to reach this goal were interviews and planning documents.

Population, Sample and Setting.

In this section, we provide some information about the population that was involved in our research, the physical environment in which our research study took place and the sample.

Five teachers from five different public high schools were involved in this research. We chose this quantity of teachers so that they give their opinions about institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning.

The teachers (men and women) were professional people between twenty five and fifty years old, they had different socio-economical levels and most of them had training in English teaching. It was almost thirty percent male and seventy percent female. It is important to clarify that we chose these population because teachers are the most appropriate participants in our research study, since they create, develop, and apply the institutional plans, syllabus design, and lesson plans. Moreover, teachers can provide the suitable documents related to our research study. In this way, we analyzed how these pedagogical tools could influence on the academic results at the end of the studies in public high schools.

On the other hand, every high school is located in different cardinal points in San Juan de Pasto, in the department of Nariño, Colombia. The location of each high school is not comfortable enough but they have the necessary elements to attend classes. The high schools have the capacity to receive among 1500 to 4000 students approximately. However, the learning process is affected by the noise produced by students of the same class, of other

groups, and by the traffic because they are located in different neighborhoods in San Juan de Pasto.

The sample was chosen at random. That is to say, the sample, which we were working with, represented the eighth part of the total population of our research study.

Data Collection

In this section, we explain the variables and factors that affect our research study, the techniques, and the materials used to collect the data and the development of this research process.

Variables or Topics

In our research project, we have identified the independent variable that is “the level of development of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning in classroom”. These factors might have an influence on the dependent variable that is “the results in English learning in five different public high schools in San Juan de Pasto”, as measured by the ICFES exams. In order to establish a relationship between the two variables, we consider “the number of factors that obstruct the follow-up of institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning” such as time and students’ lack of knowledge.

Data Collection, Techniques, or Instruments

In order to collect the data, we applied two techniques so that the information can be reliable.

We used an interview that contained sixteen questions. The interview was answered by five teachers of five different public high schools. The types of questions that we used were open and semi-open questions. It means that

teachers could give their opinions for open questions and for semi-open questions they could reply by one or two alternatives.

The objectives of the interview were to know the process that teachers follow to design the institutional plan, the course design, and the lesson plans. To develop this proposal, we also used some documents to corroborate the information given by the teachers.

Pilot Study

The objective of the pilot study was to avoid errors and uncertain results that did not contribute at all to our study. The people that we chose to develop the pilot study were different from the people that were involved in our research.

In order to have valid results of the interview, we developed a pilot study in which we could perceive the possible problems that teachers could have because of unclear questions. In this way, teachers might provide accurate information about institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning.

Through this study, we also measured the time, so that the interview was not very long because it could interfere with the validity of the results.

Procedure

For developing our research study, we looked for the number of public high schools in San Juan de Pasto and the places in which they are located. Then, we classified them depending on the cardinal points of the city. Finally, we chose five public high schools at random.

In every high school, we asked for permission to carry out our study through a formal letter. Later on, one English teacher for each high school was

selected. Then, we asked to the teachers if they had an institutional plan, if they created a syllabus, and if they followed their lessons plans.

The next step was to apply the interviews. We gave very clear instructions and we asked the teachers to be sincere in their answers. Afterwards, the teachers answered the interviews and then we corroborated their answers through the documents we could collect.

After analyzing all the results that we got from the public high schools, we wrote the conclusions about what we had already analyzed. Finally, we presented our final results to all people who were involved in our research in order to show how important was their cooperation and as a way of gratitude.

Data Analysis

According to Bastidas (2002) the data analysis has some steps to be developed: (a) data organization; (b) identification of the preliminary ideas; (c) generation of categories, topics, or patterns; (d) identification of emergent hypotheses; (e) data interpretation; and (f) written report of results.

We applied the previews steps in our research study. Once we got the data from the interview and the documents, we organized them in different categories and sub-categories. The information was ordered in a chronological way considering the date the data was collected. We analyzed the information, discussed it, and compared the collected data with some authors' ideas.

Ethical Issues

Our research tried to include all the necessary ethical aspects so that the participants were not affected by study. That is why, we asked for permissions in the high schools that participated in the study. In the permissions, administrators and teachers were included. We encouraged people to participate in a voluntary way. We also cared for not damaging the teachers, administrators, or the prestige of every high school. For this reason, we protected the names of the teachers. Finally, we provided a summary and the conclusions to all the involved population, as a way of gratitude.

In this chapter, we included all the information related to the methodology that we used in order to have accurate results about our proposal. In the following chapter, we will include the results and the analysis about the information that we gathered.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we report and analyze all the results that were gotten through the use of interviews. At the beginning, a pilot study was used to validate the data collection instrument. Afterwards, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Later, the answers were grouped and categorized according to the replies of every teacher in order to have a more accurate interpretation of the data.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

For this research study, we have categorized the answers of the teachers regarding four main aspects that have to do with the specific objectives proposed in chapter one. These categories are related to institutional planning, course design, lesson planning, and their relationship to the English teaching and learning process.

Institutional Planning

This category refers to how, when, and the criteria teachers use to design and modify the institutional plans in public high schools. Besides, this category intends to show the importance and the influence of this instrument in the English learning and teaching process. This category has three sub-categories which are institutional planning, institutional planning renewal, and institutional planning and achievement.

Institutional planning

This sub-category is related to the process and the time in which teachers of some public high schools in Pasto undertake the institutional planning. For this sub-category, we asked this question: ¿Cómo se desarrolla la planeación institucional en este colegio? And the answers are transcribed as follows:

Teacher 1 (T1): De los grados 6to a 9no, nos basamos en un texto llamado “Interchage”. De ahí 10 y 11 no exigen textos, el grupo de programadores tiene que organizar los diferentes módulos para entregar a los estudiantes y con base en estos módulos se desarrolla la programación en décimo y once. Existe también grupo de programadores pero se la hace teniendo en cuenta el texto.

Teacher 2 (T2): Por lo general a nivel institucional nos reunimos primero todos y hablamos sobre lo que se va realizar en el próximo año. A nivel del área nos reunimos el departamento al principio del año una semana antes y luego semanalmente. Hacemos la planeación es para toda la institución o sea desde preescolar hasta 11 para tener continuidad sobre todo para que no se corten los programas; uno sabe donde queda la compañera... seguimos nosotros y así no adelantarse.

Teacher 3 (T3): Nosotros somos 5 profesores y sorteamos la carga académica y los cursos a los cuales les vamos a dictar. Hacemos cinco distribuciones académicas y hacemos papelitos y sorteamos. Y lo que a uno le toco le tocó. Luego, miramos la planeación del año anterior y

vemos que temas se estudiaron y que temas no. Vemos que inconvenientes hubo. Si de pronto se le dejó mucho tiempo a un tema o si necesita más.

Teacher 4 (T4): Si, la planeación se relaciona con la formulación de estándares. Estos están diagnosticados por periodos en cuatro periodos en el año escolar. Y cada periodo con cada uno de los estándares esta relacionado con el desarrollo de actividades y la forma de cómo se evalúa cada uno de estos logros.

Teacher 5 (T5): Bueno eso se hace anualmente, a principios de año, después de haber hecho la evaluación institucional. Se detectan unas fallas entonces se hacen por comités y después hacemos la planeación de la institución tanto del bachillerato, de la primaria y de la jornada de la tarde. Trabajamos la mitad de los profesores, allí miramos cuales son las falencias, tratamos de buscar los correctivos. La planeación al principio se hace de forma general, luego por departamentos. Primero nos reunimos los comités de cada área. Al finalizar el año se mira la cobertura del programa, hasta donde avanzó, porque uno planea una cierta cantidad de temas por así llamarlos. Pero uno no sabe con que inconvenientes se va a encontrar en la mitad del año, y como cada estudiante es diferente, cada uno es diferente, entonces al finalizar el año se mira hasta donde usted avanzó en los temas, entonces el próximo año se los vuelve a mirar, y se lo hace por comités.

According to these answers, the institutional planning in public high schools is carried out before starting the academic year. This plan is partially renewed every year regarding the mistakes and the goals that were not achieved

in order to correct them. The goals that were not reached are implemented in the following year. Another relevant aspect is that institutional planning is prepared at first by all the teachers of the high school, in most of the cases, and later on they get in specific groups depending on their subjects.

Some teachers change a few things on their institutional plan in order to avoid monotony in teaching. Furthermore, they get together at the beginning of the year to review the last institutional plan and to look for the mistakes they had to correct.

Considering the answers of the teachers, we think that they are limited to compare the results and the objectives that were not achieved in previous years, but they do not really consider the institutional plan as a general instrument in which they can formulate diverse decisions in order to improve the English level of their students. For example, teachers need to think about educational and cultural objectives with the goals of the L2. It appears that teachers just look for a text as a general plan. We do not think this is wrong but we suggest that teachers should also consider language, educative, and cultural objectives in their institutional plans. This also allows them to have a sequence in the teaching and learning process as T2 said.

On the other hand, it would be important for teachers to know that an institutional plan should have some elements that characterize it. According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996) the institutional planning includes a wide description of the general objectives, an educational- cultural philosophy which is related to the subjects and a theoretical orientation to language and language learning

process. In addition, the institutional planning is, in most of the cases, contemplative to the national and political trends.

Institutional planning renewal

This sub-category attempts to show how much the institutional planning lasts and how it is renewed in some public high schools in Pasto. The gathered information was obtained through the question: ¿La planeación institucional se modifica año tras año o se mantiene durante un tiempo?. The teachers answered:

T1: “Nosotros elaboramos programación cada año porque como somos diferentes programadores y nos corresponde a cada uno diferentes horarios. El horario también tiene que ver con los programadores. Si ustedes analizan lo que dije anteriormente; el año me puede tocar o no un grado sexto”.

T2: “Uno tiene que estar actualizado, hay temas que hay que modificarlos pero por lo general se mantiene. Pero si una cosa se cambia para que no se vuelva monótono”.

T3: “Cada año se hacen ajustes a la planeación. Solo cuando se decide cambiar el texto, en este caso se cambia totalmente la programación”.

T4: “Pues... si se modifica, pero algo muy mínimo”.

T5: “Cada año se hacen ajustes, solamente lo que es necesario”.

Regarding the answers of the teachers, we can see that the institutional planning, in most of the cases, has several adjustments every year. Nonetheless, in some high schools there is a total modification only if teachers change their textbook as T3 stated or when there is a change of the courses assigned to the teachers as T1 said.

We consider that teachers are making good decisions when they change their planning according to the mistakes they had in previous years. However, Markee (2002, pp 6-7) says:

We must remember that all innovation is risky and fraught with difficulty. For instance, Adams and Chen (1981) estimate that approximately 75% of all innovations fail to survive in the long term. Thus, it is not surprising that individuals and organizations involved in managing change have engaged in a continuing search for more effective ways of implementing and maintaining innovations... As Ron White notes “it is *crucial* to understand” the importance of continuous innovation as part of professional and organizational development, particularly as circumstances in the wider environment are constantly changing.

Considering what Markee claimed in the last paragraph, we could say that teachers in public high schools in Pasto do not have to change the complete institutional plan every year. It is only necessary to do a few adjustments in order to improve and vary this plan. On the contrary, if teachers renew the entire plan, they would run the risk of wasting the time and the sequence on the topics.

Institutional planning and achievement

This sub-category intends to identify the possible influence of institutional planning in the learning process at the end of every academic year and at the end of high school. We gathered the information through the question ¿Usted considera que la planeación institucional puede incidir en los resultados

que obtienen los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de inglés al final de cada grado y al final del bachillerato? And the teachers gave the following answers:

T1: Lógicamente que la organización que nosotros los docentes le damos a una determinada área como lo es el inglés, pues... los estudiantes al final del curso produzcan; den muestra de que han adquirido conocimientos y que estos conocimientos de alguna manera directa o indirectamente incidan en su comportamiento personal y les sirva para la vida futura.

T2: Como ya lo dije anteriormente, todo es definitivo y depende de una buena planeación. Si usted tiene una buena organización los resultados van a ser los mejores.

T3: Pues cuando se hace una planeación a conciencia, que eso depende de la ética de cada quien y si la gente esta trabajando muy duro se hace una planeación viendo y empalmado cada profesor con el anterior en que temas se puede avanzar y que se tiene que reforzar. Entonces, no todo es responsabilidad del profesor. La planeación juega un papel muy importante porque de lo que se planea se ven los resultados. Nosotros si acostumbramos a hacer esos correctivos, a planear, a empalmar en que temas quedó el anterior profesor para poder continuar y ver que dificultades hubo para afianzarlas.

T4: Claro que si, por qué imagínese, esto generaría un caos, llegaríamos a una improvisación. Si uno planea le permite a uno saber de donde parte y donde va a terminar. Y al final permite evaluar para hacer correctivos de aquellos errores y falencias que se tuvo.

T5: Yo creo que influyen de una manera muy significativa porque la planeación es precisamente por eso, porque se trata de concertar que es lo que el estudiante necesita y que es lo que se debe hacer para conseguir en ellos lo requerido. Entonces la planeación debe ser el momento en el que se decida como se va a hacer que los estudiantes lleguen al final de cada año y al final del bachillerato. Y por eso es definitivo lo que se plantee en estas reuniones. Es lo que influye prácticamente porque si no se hace una buena planeación no se va a desarrollar un buen curso y si no se desarrolla un buen curso no van a haber buenos resultados.

According to the opinions of the teachers, we can say that they consider that institutional planning is a very important and relevant instrument for the outcomes of the students. Teachers think that the better the institutional plan is, the better the results will be at the end of every grade and at the end of the high school.

Some teachers, like T1, think that a good organization will influence not only in the good outcomes of the students, but it will also influence their behavior and personal life. Another important aspect to stick out is that some teachers keep in mind the needs of students regarding the contents and the methodology in order to achieve good results.

According to Markee (2002) planning should involve negotiation between teachers and learners. In this way, it allows teachers to know some problems of students in their academic performance and to find some possible solutions by negotiating with students.

According to Moreno (2004) the institutional plans should have some objectives that may consider the capacities of the students, the integral formation of the learners (intellectual, affective, social, and corporal aspects), and a social, economical, and cultural context of the institutions. Moreover, evaluation is also significant because it enables teachers to determine the goals that someone needs to achieve and to establish the objectives with a sequence for all grades. Finally, the author suggests that institutional plans need to have an external and internal evaluation. External evaluation allows teachers to check if their teaching process is accepted in the society and internal evaluation tries to reveal if all the objectives of the institutional plan were achieved by students

Course Design

This second category is based on the way teachers design and modify their courses of English. This section intends to collect information about how teachers design their courses, their criteria, and how decisions are made.

We have considered four sub-categories. They are designing the courses, course design responsibility, course design criteria, and course design decisions.

Designing the courses.

In this sub-category, the process to design English courses was analyzed. Besides, this sub-category intends to know how English courses are designed and if there is a general program for the courses in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto.

Therefore, we asked the following questions: ¿Cómo se hace la planeación de los cursos de inglés? ¿Hay un programa general para todos los cursos de Inglés del bachillerato? Teachers answered:

T1: Dependiendo de los niveles. Para el grado sexto hay un tipo de programación acorde con las exigencias y necesidades que el Ministerio de Educación tiene. Hoy en día que hay los estándares, están también en el mercado. Hasta el décimo y once se supone que se tiene en cuenta lo de los estándares. Por un lado se basa en el texto llamado “New Interchange”. Ustedes saben que estos textos no tienen dosificado y organizado de cero a... comienza directamente con las temáticas. A pesar de que seguimos el texto también perdemos la secuencia que el texto tiene.

T2: Nosotros nos reunimos en departamentos y miramos la programación de años anteriores, luego nosotros nos damos cuenta si hay algunas falencias, si hay algunos temas incompletos, nosotros los vamos complementando y lo hacemos desde el grado cero hasta el grado 11. para que no se repitan los temas.

T3: Como lo dije anteriormente nosotros vemos siempre la planeación del año pasado y hacemos algunos ajustes. Sin embargo, tenemos una planeación desde el grado 6to al grado 11. Como nosotros seguimos un libro llamado “Get Together”, entonces la planeación es en base a ese libro.

T4: Hay una continuidad, por supuesto. Iniciamos con ciertos estándares para sexto. Es más, el último estándar que se suele revisar al final del 4to periodo, se lo reinicia en el siguiente grado. Hay una concatenación de estándares en todos los grados.

T5: Ahí en el comité se dice el objetivo nuestro que es que los estudiantes puedan comprender textos escritos antes que la producción oral. Entonces, al mirar, por ejemplo decimos nosotros que hasta el grado noveno se debe haber cubierto todo lo que es cuestión gramatical, para en el grado diez y once hacer énfasis en los temas que están flojos y más que todo dedicarse a la comprensión de textos y preparación de pruebas ICFES, eso es lo básico.

According to the answers of the teachers, we can conclude that in every high school there is one plan from 6th to 11th grade. It is relevant to clarify that in some high schools, teachers get together in order to organize a detailed plan for the current academic year. Furthermore, most of the teachers plan this document based on the textbooks, the requirements of the Ministry of Education especially the standards, and on the adjustments to previous plans.

Teachers also take into consideration the topics that were taught the previous year and the range of difficulty that students had with those topics. Regarding teachers answers, public high schools have specific course designs for each grade which probably means that there is a sequence in the contents or topics that are taught to the students.

Besides, we can say that some teachers take into account the policies given by the Ministry of Education to design their courses as T1 said.

According to Dubin & Olshtain (1996) the political and national context should be considered at the initial stage of course design because political considerations have to do with the general perception about language learning.

Regarding the answer of T5, grammar and the preparation for the ICFES exam (reading comprehension) are the basic aspects considered before designing a course. We think that learning grammar and developing reading skill are necessary aspects in English learning, but it is also relevant to develop the other skills and components of the language in order to communicate. This has been corroborated by Dubin & Olshtain (1996) who say that the designing of an EFL course needs to prepare students to communicate with the rest of the world.

Another relevant aspect is that some teachers plan their courses based on the textbook that does not belong to the culture of the students. However, we consider that to design a course teachers need to consider the culture and the environment of the students that generally are not considered in the textbooks. This is also claimed by Dubin & Olshtain (1996) who state that the designing of a course has to do with the enrichment of the culture of students and their personal growth. They suggest that the objective of any EFL course design must be focused on the ability of every student to have an effective conversation with a native speaker on topics of interest at the end of the high school.

Course design responsibility

We analyzed the organization teachers have in order to design their own courses. The question we used was: ¿Cómo se distribuyen los profesores para diseñar los cursos? The answers were:

T1: Para cada nivel hay un grupo de programadores conformado por tres o cuatro docentes. Los de mayoría de intensidad horaria en el nivel son los programadores de ese nivel. Por ejemplo, si yo tengo unos cuatros sextos voy a hacer uno de los programadores y así sucesivamente para grado

siete. Dependiendo de la intensidad horaria del profesor. Solo tengo un grado de décimo por eso a mi me entregan conferencias los programadores de grado 10.

T2: Todos lo hacemos a nivel general y después para ver los recursos y las actividades.

T3: Por cada grado hay uno o dos profesores de Inglés. Yo estoy en grado 11 y para la planeación de este grado nos basamos en el grado 10 teniendo. Si se quedaron temas toca verlos en once y ajustar la planeación de 11. Se programa al tiempo.

T4: En cada grado hay más de dos profesores de inglés. Aunque varia dependiendo de la carga académica. Nos reunimos todos los profesores y planeamos entre todos cuales serian los estándares básicos para cada grado. Y luego nos repartimos nuestra carga.

T5: Cada semana tenemos una reunión de profesores donde se charla para saber donde se va y que cosas se deben modificar en la planeación que tenemos. Es una reunión semanal cada viernes.

After analyzing these answers, we could say that there are two forms used by teachers to distribute themselves to plan the course of English. The first way is when teachers divide themselves into small groups, depending on the number of hours that they are given for each grade in order to plan the topics they are going to teach through the academic year. The second one is at the beginning of the academic year when all teachers get together and plan every level. Nevertheless, the meetings that teachers have in every high school are completely different because of different factors.

Regarding teachers' answers, we can say that teachers meet to see the previous faults of the plans in order to improve the following ones. We could point out that T1 talks about teachers who are in charged of doing the planning just if they have more hours in every grade. T5 states that they get together every Friday. This could mean that teachers in that school are discussing and analyzing every weekend about their experiences and results of the plans they are following. Additionally, it is a very good choice to get together not only at the beginning of the academic year, but also during the year in order to check the English learning and teaching process and to identify the aspects that need to be changed.

We also consider that working in groups is a better alternative than working alone because teachers have the opportunity to share their opinions and experiences in order to avoid possible mistakes and to help themselves in the designing of the courses.

Dubin & Olshtain (1996) state that when you design a plan there should be an idealized team in which all teachers know their duties related to the designing of courses. Therefore, a team must have different people in charged of the following duties: the organization of the work, the control of the quality, the budget, the importance of the role of the teachers, the needs of the learners, and the role of the administrators and the Ministry of Education within the objectives of the planning.

Course design criteria

This sub-category is related to the criteria that teachers consider to design their courses. To get this information, this question was used: ¿En qué se basa para diseñar sus programas de inglés?. Teachers gave the following opinions:

T1: Somos tres programadores. Miramos el texto y los ajustes necesarios para sacar la programación. Por ejemplo, si somos los tres programadores del grado sexto, nosotros nos reunimos y organizamos la programación de este grado haciéndola conocer a los demás profesores de grado sexto.

T2: Primero uno debe ver las pautas que el ministerio le dice miramos los lineamientos curriculares, tenemos en cuenta, inclusive las necesidades de los estudiantes. En cuanto al texto solo utilizamos con los grados 6, 7 y 8 con un libro llamado “New Interchange”. Ya para los grados 9, 10 y 11 no. Estos cursos utilizan copias. Si ahora aparecieron los estándares pero que serán aplicados el próximo año.

T3: Nosotros nos basamos en el texto, teniendo en cuenta las competencias, los medios de desarrollo y también que salieron los estándares con base en ellos pero eso ya para el próximo año.

T4: Últimamente ya estamos tratando de llevar a cabo lo que establece el ministerio porque antes como no teníamos estándares, estos han salido últimamente, entonces hemos tratado de acomodarnos a ellos. Nos hemos ido plegando a esos estándares. Pero antes lo que mirábamos en... de acuerdo a nuestra experiencia, a los libros que vienen formuladas ciertas temáticas o estándares y a eso nos regíamos. Pero sinceramente no había algo establecido. Aquí tenemos un texto que ya tiene sus años, que es

“English Here and English There”. En mi caso sinceramente es muy poco lo que lo utilizo. Utilizo bastantes talleres, fotocopias, el aula de bilingüismo con el programa “English Discoveries.”

T5: Hemos tratado de adaptar, por ejemplo en el grado sexto más que todo se mira lo que es vocabulario cotidiano y el verbo TO BE, todo con base en este verbo desarrollamos por ejemplo los objetos de clase, ordenes, alimentos y las prendas de vestir. En séptimo, presente simple, presente progresivo, el pasado y los tiempos fundamentales obviamente incluyendo las preposiciones, los adjetivos, los adverbios, todo eso. Nuestro objetivo es que hasta 9no conozcan la gramática.

Regarding these answers we can conclude that most of the teachers are based on the textbooks from 6th to 9th grade and on selected material for 10th and 11th level. In some other cases, they also work taking into consideration the standards proposed by the Ministry of Education and some isolated grammar points. However, in some high schools, these standards will be applied the next year.

Considering the answers given by T2 and T4, we could state that it is a good idea to use different materials from the textbook because it could avoid monotony in the English teaching and learning process and at the same time in the use of the textbook.

Although, T2 says that the needs of students are considered, most teachers do not consider the real interests and needs of the students because they are not involved when teachers meet to carry out the course design. In addition,

teachers just take into account the materials such as the textbook, so the designing of every course is carried out without regarding the teachers' and students' needs and environment.

Dubin & Olshtain (1996) argue that the designers of the courses need to know about three expanded areas before designing the courses. They are: language content, process, and product. Teachers need to involve the interests of students and exciting tasks while they use the L2. In other words, topics, materials, or the textbook must be chosen just by taking into account the interests and background knowledge of the students. Besides, semantico-grammatical characteristics and communicative features will be chosen to study each topic.

On the other hand, Krahnke (1987) states that there are ten different steps to design a course. The most relevant steps are: to consider what outcomes are desired for the students, to rank the type of syllabus, to evaluate the resources and the materials, to decide the type of syllabus according to the available material, and to choose between two prevailing types of syllabi and one or two as secondary.

Finally, T5 claimed that the objective from 6th to 9th grade is that learners know the basic English grammar. Nevertheless, comparing one of the syllabus that we got, we realized that it does not include objectives to be reached. Objectives are one of the most important parts in a syllabus. This is noted by Ur (1998) who lists the components of a course design which are contents, objectives, schedule, methodology, and materials.

Course design decisions

In this sub-category, we identify the people in charge of making the decisions to design, revise, or change the courses. The question was: ¿Quién toma las decisiones para la renovación del diseño de los cursos de inglés? The teachers said:

T1: “Somos nosotros los que tenemos que ver con el desarrollo de la asignatura”.

T2: “No, los profesores somos autónomos para cambiar y tomar nuestras propias decisiones”.

T3: “Los profesores”.

T4: “Somos nosotros los profesores”.

T5: “Cada profesor en el comité comenta de nuestros estudiantes y entonces ahí tomamos las decisiones para hacer las reformas necesarias”.

Taking into consideration the answers given by the teachers, we could say that they are autonomous to make the decisions about the development, the revision, and the renewal of their syllabi.

Autonomy is important in planning because teachers are the people who know the conditions which they are exposed to. In this way, we could say that English teachers in public high schools in Pasto are making correct decisions when they renew and design their courses autonomously because they are the designers who have to establish relationships between the objectives and the learners.

According to Nunan (1996) the most important participants in planning should be the teachers who will direct the course and students who will take part in it. The teachers must also collect information informally from their learners.

Besides, they should constantly monitor students for changing their needs and preferences. Finally, teachers should be autonomous in this process.

Nevertheless, they should also consider the national policies, the administrators, the society, and so on. This is corroborated by Brown (1996) who states that there is a danger in curriculum planning that only focuses on the needs of learners, without considering some other people who are involved in the teaching and learning process. They are teachers, administrators, employers, institutions, societies, and even the nations that have influences on language learning.

It is necessary to stress that autonomy does not mean to be completely free of doing whatever teachers want. They should keep in mind that autonomy has some features that they need to consider like reflection and observation of the context and the learners. This is also claimed by Robertson (2001) who says that the autonomy of teachers does not mean freedom from all constraints, but teachers can be autonomous only as individuals and self-actualized learners. Autonomy is developed through observation, reflection, thoughtful consideration, understanding, experience, and evaluation of alternatives.

Relevance of Planning

In this category, teachers gave their opinions about the importance of planning in language teaching. To gather the information, we asked ¿Qué tan importante es la planeación general y particular de los cursos de inglés para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de esta lengua?. The answers of teachers were:

T1: La programación general por cuanto el maestro debe seguir un derrotero para desarrollar en el transcurso del tiempo. La programación

particular está sujeta de una manera indirecta con la programación general. Esta programación es fundamental para poder sacar adelante cualquier meta que nos propongamos conseguir. Difícilmente las metas de una materia pueden cristalizarse si no hay un orden, si no hay una programación. También, pienso que la programación es un elemento que favorece los ideales e intereses de los estudiantes. Además, la programación general de cada uno de los niveles tienen una razón fundamental porque es mirar con antelación los posibles problemas y dificultades que puedan existir en el contexto para clarificarlas y llevar ante los estudiantes un contenido programático con más claridad.

T2: La planeación es fundamental es decisiva para que los resultados sean los mejores. No se puede trabajar sin organización. Cuando nosotros planeamos todas las actividades que vamos a realizar van a marchar de la mejor manera o sea mientras uno planea y tenga organizado lo que va a hacer los resultados serán los mejores. Usted no puede llegar a improvisar, menos cuando se va a trabajar, cuando se va a iniciar un curso y mucho menos cuando se va a iniciar un año... Pero que la planeación incida en los resultados de los estudiantes no creo, porque como cuando uno trabaja planeando las cosas tiene que salir mejor. Resulta que el inglés apenas ahora está dando los primeros pasos a nivel de primaria y de preescolar y los profesores nos hemos dado cuenta que los profesores de inglés de preescolar no son licenciados en idiomas. O sea hay profesores de otras asignaturas que dictan el inglés. Y esto reincide en el aprendizaje de los muchachos. Otra cosa que afecta el aprendizaje son los recursos.

Afortunadamente nosotros tenemos el laboratorio. Y sobre todo que tenemos 3 horas semanales que no alcanza para dictar inglés y los cursos son de más de 45 estudiantes cada uno.

T3: La planeación general y particular es súper importante porque por esto aquí en este colegio hay muchas dificultades en el aprendizaje del Inglés. Por eso podría decir que el 85% de los estudiantes tienen baja motivación. Sabemos que si no se planea no salen buenos resultados, con una buena planeación, lógico con un tiempo suficiente, un principal enemigo que tenemos porque la planeación siempre se la hace con la premura del tiempo. No hay un espacio suficiente para poder ver cuando prácticamente se están presentando las dificultades aunque se está tratando en el área de inglés de reunirnos al finalizar cada periodo. En estas reuniones buscamos que es lo que está pasando y que podemos mejorar. Porque de un tiempo para acá vemos que estamos progresando porque ya no estamos en el último puesto en los resultados del ICFES. Eso sí, se asciende a pasos lentos porque la situación en un colegio oficial en donde la cantidad de estudiantes es difícil, de 42 a 40 como mínimo, y sobre todo la clase de estudiantes que nos llegan. Hay estudiantes con estratos uno y dos. Por eso, ellos no se ven rodeados por una cultura de progreso, ni una visión futurista y por eso casi las expresiones de ellos son ¿Para qué me sirve el inglés?.

T4: No pues que tal sin ello. Por una parte, la planeación no es una camisa de doble fuerza. Obviamente que uno tiene que regirse con esta temática. Gracias a esto uno va avanzando en el aprendizaje de inglés

como lengua extranjera en una forma ordenada, organizada, coherente y digo que no es camisa de doble fuerza porque uno ve a través de la experiencia y del recorrido que hay veces en la que uno puede ampliar, porque mira vacíos o mira que hay bastante eficiencia. Y uno dice esto está muy bien adquirido por los estudiantes entonces lo amplía, le da la oportunidad de enriquecerlo más. Pero si creo que en parte la planeación si incide. Es importante la planeación porque pueden haber otros estilos, pero esto de la planeación es un estudio que uno hace de acuerdo a la experiencia de cómo se van concatenando cada uno de los estándares. Y lo uno es consecuencia de lo otro. Luego de que no mejora en una habilidad o en otra de que estemos escasos en mejorar en ciertas habilidades depende de muchas situaciones. También es importante porque con la planeación se busca señalar los objetivos, las metas al lograr dentro de un proceso de enseñanza. En este caso por periodos y en todo el año. Con ellos se esta marcando el norte y por ende se marca los procesos que se tienen que desarrollar. También implica los objetivos y metas y al final la evaluación.

T5: Todo tiene que ir alrededor de la política de la institución. Nosotros hemos organizado esta programación para que vaya de lo mas simple a lo mas complicado y que haya coherencia y se relacione mucho con la vida cotidiana de ellos, por ejemplo cuando se enseña preposiciones se enseña todo lo relacionado con el contexto de ellos y donde se desarrolla y por eso hay incidencia en ellos, en el proyecto de vida.

La planeación general y particular me parece importante porque hace que uno se enfatice en que es lo que se va a enseñar y que es lo que los estudiantes necesitan para determinado año, que es lo que necesitan saber entonces de acuerdo a eso se toma la decisión. Así que la planeación,... lo importante es ver que es lo que los estudiantes van a necesitar en cada curso específico, como se va a llevar a cabo eso, cuales son los medios y cuales son las actividades que se van a realizar con los estudiantes.

According to the opinions of the teachers, planning is important because it helps them to have a sequence of the contents to teach in a coherent and organized way. So, using these tools, language teaching and learning has a sequence from 6th to 11th grade. Furthermore, planning helps teachers to know which goals they have to achieve, at the end of a period of time or at the end of every year, and which activities and process they are going to use.

For teachers, planning is also relevant due to the fact that particular planning (lesson plans and syllabus) should be connected to the institutional plan that should include the policies of each public high school.

When teachers use a plan, they can see the progress of students in English learning. They also avoid improvisation and repetition of topics, activities, or materials in order to get better results. However, T2 thinks that planning does not influence the low results of the students. Finally, some teachers say that these documents should be organized from simple structures to complex ones.

We agree with the teachers who state that institutional plans and syllabi are important documents that help students and teachers to achieve their goals

and to make sure that they are achieved in a coherent sequence. This can be corroborated by Celce-Murcia (2001) who states that a method tends to be used with a syllabus, which is an inventory of the goals the students should master; this inventory is sometimes presented in a recommended sequence in order to design courses and teaching materials.

On the other hand, it is correct when teachers claim that planning should be flexible because during the English learning and teaching process, there could be some problems that interfere in the good development of these plans or because the topics are very difficult. This is also estimated by Krahnke (1987) who notes that a syllabus can be flexible. It also allows some modifications on the part of the teachers and students and the ability of teachers and their resourcefulness should interact with the type of syllabus.

It is important to highlight that T1 says that course design should be connected to the institutional plan. This is also claimed by Dubin & Olshtain (1996) who estimate that a general plan can contain a diverse number of syllabi considering different audiences, particular needs, and intermediate objectives.

On the other hand, teachers say that learning is affected not only by planning, but also by a lot of factors such as the number of hours and students, the lack of materials, the knowledge of teachers, the low motivation and interest of the students, and so on. We agree with this statement but we do not agree with T2 who states that planning does not have an influence on the results of English learning. We think that a syllabus or an institutional plan influence the good or bad results of the students depending on the correct or wrong use of these documents. This is also claimed by Strevens (1997) who lists twelve

essential and necessary elements in language teaching and learning. Among these elements we find syllabus design and curriculum.

Finally, according to T3, at the beginning of every academic year, they do not have enough time to look for all the circumstances that did not let the good development of the institutional plan and the course design. Thus, we could say that this is probably one of the factors that influences the results of students because these instruments need time to be corrected. In this way, it is necessary to recognize the mistakes of the previous documents before being carried out. This can be confirmed by Dubin & Olshtain (1996) who propose to survey the existing program to expand and improve it by examining the existing conditions.

Lesson Planning

This category focuses on how teachers plan every class and the criteria they consider in this process. This category is divided into two sub-categories which are: criteria for lesson planning and lesson planning process.

Criteria for lesson planning

In this sub-category, it is considered the different aspects that teachers take into account in order to do their lesson plans. To gather the necessary information for this subcategory, we have asked: ¿Cómo hace Usted la planeación de cada clase?. Teachers answered:

T1: Cada clase la planeo teniendo en cuenta el nivel de cada grupo de estudiantes. Nosotros avanzamos a medida que el tiempo transcurre. Y cuando hay que incrementar a una unidad que la vemos que está como vacía o floja, nosotros cada uno de los docentes le hacemos reajustes a la programación. Los reajustes que se hacen durante el año escolar son

tenidos en cuenta para la programación del siguiente año. Porque programar es mirar recursos que inciden en el aprovechamiento del bajo rendimiento. Y esta puede ser una de las causas del bajo rendimiento.

T2: Yo preparo las clases diarias dependiendo los contenidos, ya ve que en unos grados uno puede adelantar más o a veces porque se interrumpen las clases. No puede uno trabajar de la misma manera con todos los grados. Puede ser que la temática la maneje, pero la metodología es diferente.

T3: La planeación de cada clase se cuadra dependiendo en el texto tratando siempre de ampliar la cantidad de ejercicios porque generalmente los ejercicios que vienen en el libro son pocos.

T4: Toca adaptarse al curso porque hay estudiantes como por ejemplo en mi curso no puedo avanzar tanto porque hay muchas cosas como directora de ese curso. No puedo porque tengo que estar pendiente de otras cosas con ellos, hay cursos que están como atrasados, débiles en ciertos conocimientos entonces tengo que tratar de lograr un objetivo mas o menos estable para poder avanzar. Entonces no puedo avanzar hasta que ellos no tengan un conocimiento confiable para avanzar. Entonces no todos los cursos se los programa con un mismo ritmo o con el mismo estilo. A unos a veces hay que agregarles otras cosas.

T5: Dependiendo de cada curso, de las características de cada curso, es decir uno presenta la planeación general pero ya una vez enfrentado al diario, uno desarrolla de acuerdo a su manera.

According to the answers of the teachers, they plan classes taking into account the knowledge of the students, the topics to be taught, the activities that

will be used, the textbook, and time schedule. Even though they have two or three courses that belong to the same level, they plan every class according to the knowledge of each group. Moreover, the interviewed teachers take into consideration aspects that let the lesson plans be varied and flexible. That is why, they think about the use of different and additional activities that are implemented depending on time and English knowledge of learners.

It is also important to clarify that when we asked teachers for a copy of their lesson plans, they said that these documents are done just in an abstract way. That is why, they do not have a written document to show.

Regarding teachers answers, we can point out that teachers are right when they look for additional and diverse activities to include variety in their lesson plans and the chosen activities depend on the content they will teach and the kind of students they have. This is supported by Ur (2006) who says that the lessons should vary in topic, time, methodology, and materials. Nevertheless, lesson plans are essentially concerned with the participation of learners and teachers.

It is relevant to underline the answers of T1, T2, and T4 because they plan their classes considering the range of difficulty or ease of each topic. Besides, one of these teachers stated that this can be one of the reasons for the low results in language learning.

It is really important that teachers change the tasks and the materials in every class because they are some of the bases for a good and successful lesson plan. This can be corroborated by Ur (2006) who states that the topics and the tasks are the basis of a language lesson. For this reason, they vary depending on

the materials, the practice activities, or the tests. In a lesson, which is entirely carried out through just one kind of activity, does not let students concentrate. That is why, variation of components is a good principle, but it is not enough. For this reason, teachers should consider some principles of selection and organization of components in order to construct a smooth and coherent program.

It is necessary to highlight that teachers assess the progress and comprehension of the students through different activities including tests. This is one of the most important tasks of the teachers in order to plan their lessons. This is corroborated by Nunan (1996) who claims that in planning, data should be collected through formal or informal techniques. They include standardised interviews, proficiency tests, classroom observation, and self-rating scales to be used by students in evaluating learning activities.

According to Jensen (quoted in Celce-Murcia 2001), lesson plans are maps that help teachers to remember what they did in previous classes and to know what they want to do next in order to achieve the proposed goals. According to what teachers said, they prepare a different lesson plan for every class. However, when we asked for a sample of the lesson plan, teachers did not give us the documents. In this way, we could say that they do not have a written document, although they have a lot of courses that belong to the same level. Thus, we could say that it is difficult to remember the topics, the materials, and the activities that were used in each class. We could also state that teachers can repeat or avoid the topics and the activities that students need in order to learn a language. According to our experience, we have observed that many activities

are repeated and monotonous, and some important topics are omitted causing gaps in English knowledge. That is why, we say that this situation can be one of the aspects that influences the results that students have at the end of the high school.

To have a written lesson plan is relevant because this document helps teachers to remember what they have already taught. Spratt (2005) states that teachers can identify and select the appropriate goals by looking back at earlier lesson plans and thinking of things that worked well and things that should be improved.

Lesson planning process

In this sub-category, we intend to know how the teachers carry out their lesson plans. For this sub-category we asked the question ¿Cuál es el proceso que lleva a cabo para la planeación de cada clase?. Teachers answered:

T1: Tengo en este momento grado 7, 9 y 11. Para cada uno de los niveles yo planeo cada clase con antelación. Unas veces semanalmente y a parte de eso la víspera de la clase uno tiene que mirar los aspectos que se van a enseñar, los contenidos que vio la clase anterior para poder cimentar las fallas de la clase anterior. Nosotros a nivel particular cada uno planea su clase con temática, logros a obtener, criterios de evaluación y evaluación.

T2: Tengo los once y siempre preparo clase con anterioridad, miro los temas y sobre todo yo le dedico mucho tiempo a la comprensión de lectura. Yo no manejo un libro, yo solamente trabajo la mayoría de las veces con fotocopias. Entonces yo les traigo fotocopias y trabajo sobre todo en comprensión lectora. Porque yo se que esto es lo que más van a

necesitar para el ICFES. La lectura es fundamental, por eso miro el tema y busco lecturas que les interesen a ellos y manejamos algunas estructuras o algunos conceptos del tema que se está viendo. Estos son refuerzos para el ICFES y sobre todo porque la lectura, la comprensión, la interpretación es fundamental para que ellos vayan bien preparados a la universidad.

T3: Tengo los grados séptimos y planeo clase para cada curso, la planeación la hago a diario y ésta va de acuerdo a la planeación general. Si la mayoría de los estudiantes están bien se puede avanzar en los procesos, de lo contrario hay estancamientos ya que uno debe ir con la mayoría y no con uno o dos estudiantes que están adelantados.

Generalmente a ellos se los pone de monitores.

La clase siempre la planeo la noche anterior y miro el texto, las posibles preguntas de los estudiantes como también los materiales que se utilizan dependiendo de la disciplina de cada curso porque cualquier actividad dinámica la toman a la recocha y así no se puede seguir trabajando.

También reviso el vocabulario, el tema que se va a enseñar y se trabaja con diferentes actividades dependiendo el grado. También les dejo trabajo para adelantar la siguiente clase sin importar sus errores sino su responsabilidad y el aprendizaje así sean de una palabrita. No se si esto está bien o mal pero siento que a los estudiantes les gusta. Incluso, hemos tenido buenos resultados porque ahora miro que inglés ocupó el primer puesto en las pruebas saber que se hacen en la institución, entonces uno se da cuenta que a muchos les gusta.

T4: Yo trabajo semanalmente o cada vez que amerite un estándar. Entonces voy a mirar que estándar dicto esta semana y planeo cuanto puede durar. Una o dos semanas. Entonces cada estándar lo preparo semanalmente. El proceso es consultar el contenido, su gramática y su práctica. Por lo general lo hago en un documento escrito pero no siempre. Siempre al iniciar la clase, les digo a mis estudiantes cual será el objetivo central de cada clase.

T5: Cuando tengo una clase con mis estudiantes, el día anterior en una hoja o en un cuaderno escribo algunas cosas que me van a servir para el desarrollo como ejemplos o palabras claves. Claro que en ocasiones no lo hago y simplemente trabajo con el libro o hacemos algo diferente, pero en la mayoría de las veces si lo hago y saco lo que más me va a servir cuando mi memoria no me ayude y para el momento de la clase me apoyo con la hoja con oraciones, vocabulario, alguna actividad, algún juego.

According to the answers of the teachers, we could say that some teachers do not improvise because some of them plan their classes weekly, some others every day or some other a day before the class. It is important to mention that when teachers plan their classes they take into consideration the contents, the vocabulary, the activities, the evaluation, some games, and possible questions from the students.

We think that teachers are doing well with their classes if they are preparing all the contents and topics that will be taught during a class. This means for us, that teachers are not improvising when they teach. It is important

to indicate that T3 prepares classes daily which facilitates the teaching process because the teacher is prepared to know almost everything about the class.

According to Spratt & Williams (2005) teachers should select the appropriate aims for their classes. Aims are what students have to learn at the end of the class. There are main aims, subsidiary aims, and personal aims. The main aims express the most important goals that teachers want to achieve in the lesson. Subsidiary aims describe the needed language skills of students in order to achieve the main aim. Finally, personal aims have to do with the objectives of the teachers and what they want to improve in a lesson.

According to Jensen (quoted by Celce-Murcia 2001) planning a lesson can be a very simple mental checklist or long detailed description in a page format. Besides, the author says that a lesson plan is a really important tool serving as guide, as a resource, and as a historical document which reflects the amount of students, materials, activities, goals, and the philosophy of teaching. Jensen also states that planning let teachers to have an order in their teaching process, to know what they did in previous classes, and what to do in following ones. However, for Jensen most of teachers plan their classes the night before the class. But this has good results just if they have a good syllabus. In addition, the author affirms that planning a lesson is easier with the experience, but it does not mean that you do not know the principles of a lesson plan which are flexibility, coherence, and variety.

Criteria to Change the Institutional Plan and the Course Design

This category looks for the opinions of teachers about the diverse aspects that are considered by teachers in order to change the institutional plan and the

syllabus. The question that we asked teachers was: ¿Qué criterios Usted utiliza para renovar la planeación y el diseño de sus programas de inglés?. Teachers said:

T1: Para renovar la programación hay que mirar sobre todo los intereses particulares de los educandos. De grado 6 a 9 es un inglés comunicativo general. En 10 y 11 se desarrolla una programación acorde con los énfasis de los estudiantes, teniendo en cuenta el tipo de bachillerato que vayan a seguir. No es el mismo inglés para académico, que para el industrial o tecnológico.

T2: Cambiamos la planeación teniendo en cuenta las necesidades que se tiene. Se enfatiza en lecturas y se ve también, la comprensión gramatical, la cohesión y coherencia.

T3: Para cambiarla lo que le decía, si los temas no se alcanzaron a ver o si necesitan mayor tiempo. Por ejemplo, el presente simple que casi siempre se lo calcula para un periodo, siempre necesita más.

T4: Para renovar se tiene en cuenta los logros. Se dice que no ha sido posible rebasar esto en tal periodo porque fue muy amplio o porque no se logró el objetivo con los estudiantes, fue muy difícil para ellos, fue necesario implementar otro estándar, la necesidad de mirar otro aspecto. Entonces se le quita se le pone.

T5: En primer lugar que haya coherencia, comenzamos por lo mas fácil para ir motivando al estudiante.

These answers let us conclude that all the decisions about the renewal of the institutional plan and the course design only depend on teachers. It is

important that teachers renew and create these documents. Nonetheless, other people can help and take part in this task. For Markee (2002) teachers have the main role in language teaching innovations; nevertheless, the officials of Ministry of Education, personnel working for donor agencies, school superintendents, and principals can also take part in these innovations. In addition, students and their parents can also participate in the change of any proposal.

The last statement tells us that people who are involved in language learning and teaching process can decide about the institutional planning and the course design. Nonetheless, in Pasto, students do not take part in this process although they are key players in English learning and teaching.

In addition, the criteria that are commonly used to change or renew the plans and the syllabi depend on the particular interests and needs of the students.

Teachers also consider the general objectives and needs of the whole class. For example, when there are different types of baccalaureate or when all the learners need to develop any language skill or component.

On the other hand, teachers think about the time that they have to teach a topic and the difficulty of each one. As a result of this aspect, teachers modify the institutional plan and the course design in order to emphasize those topics that were difficult in previous years.

In the renewal or change of the institutional plan and the syllabus, it is necessary to organize the topics considering the range of difficulty or ease of each one. T5 said that the topics are classified from the easiest to the most difficult. However, Ur (2006) says that students are fresher and more energetic

at the beginning of the lessons and they get progressively demotivated. That is why, it is important to put the harder tasks earlier.

English Achievement

This category refers to the English level that the students get at the end of the high school. To collect this information, we used the following questions ¿Qué piensa usted del nivel de conocimiento de inglés que adquieren los estudiantes al término del bachillerato? and ¿Qué nivel adquieren los bachilleres de esta institución? (principiantes, intermedios o avanzados.) Teachers gave the next opinions:

T1: El nivel que adquieren los estudiantes, yo pienso que no solo de este colegio sino que de todos los establecimientos educativos públicos del orden nacional, es un inglés de grado elemental, para principiantes. A pesar que hay contenidos grandes que podrían llevar a un estudiante que se dedique a aprenderlos tendría un conocimiento intermedio.

Desafortunadamente, la falta de interés que los estudiantes muestran por el aprendizaje de la segunda lengua es bastante bajo.

T2: El nivel de conocimiento es prácticamente bajo, priman otros intereses. Además, nosotros manejamos solo tres horas a la semana y es relativamente corto el tiempo. Aquí en este colegio se maneja un número grande de estudiantes. Por ejemplo, son 50 o 53 estudiantes por cada curso. Difícilmente uno puede dedicarse a cada uno de ellos entonces por eso el inglés es bajo. Es un inglés de principiantes porque los conocimientos que ellos adquieren aquí son muy básicos. A ellos les falta

mucho y la cantidad de asignaturas que ellos tienen. Entonces el tiempo que ellos le dedican al inglés es poco y muy corto.

T3: Para tener un nivel avanzado, en primer lugar hay que tener una intensidad horaria. En los cursos inferiores tenemos una mínima intensidad de 3 horas. Hay unos onces y decimos que tienen solo dos horas semanales y las horas son de 55 minutos., a veces estas coinciden con programas o actividades que entorpecen el proceso. Por eso hemos solicitado el incremento en la intensidad horaria. Uno puede ver los resultados en academias donde hay un promedio de 10 estudiantes, en donde la educación es casi personalizada. Entonces por eso es que tal vez los resultados son pocos. Uno es por la cantidad de estudiantes y el otro problema es la carencia de materiales didácticos y eso que ahora por lo menos tenemos 3 grabadoras para 38 cursos donde laboramos 5 docentes con una intensidad horaria de 24 horas semanales. Además, si los estudiantes tuvieran una conceptualización de la importancia que tiene el inglés en el medio social, le pondrían interés. Hay estudiantes que le ponen interés a la materia porque tienen posibilidades de seguir estudiando y de tener un buen futuro Entonces tener un buen nivel es un poquito difícil y mucho menos tener un nivel avanzado, por eso los estudiantes alcanzan un nivel de principiantes.

T4: Sinceramente estamos en un nivel de principiantes. La mayoría adquieren un nivel básico. Serían muy poquitos los que adquieren un nivel intermedio, son muy escasos. Hay personas que se les nota esas ganas de mejorar pero ya son casos aislados. Hacen el esfuerzo por

mejorar, pero la mayoría piensan que el inglés no les va a servir para su vida. Son muy pocas las personas que tienen sueños y aspiraciones.

T5: En esta institución pienso que tienen el nivel de principiantes al terminar el bachillerato.

According to all the interviewed teachers, students get a beginner English level at the end of the high school. They just have the basic knowledge. However, there are a few students who have an intermediate or advance level. Teachers consider that this level is not good. In addition, they state that students are not interested in learning English and they do not spend enough time to learn this language.

In order to corroborate the perceptions of the teachers, we also asked about the results of the ICFES. To gather this information, we use the following question ¿Cuál es el último promedio de inglés en el ICFES? Teachers answered:

T1 “El promedio de resultado de los conocimientos de inglés de los estudiantes de grado once frente a las pruebas de estado fue medio bajo”.

T2 “El último promedio ICFES de inglés fue de 48.8. Considero que no es muy bueno. Ocupamos el sexto puesto a nivel de las materias evaluadas”.

T3 “El promedio de inglés de este año es de 44 y la asignatura ocupó el sexto lugar a nivel de la institución. También se que hemos subido en la escala una unidad en comparación al anterior año. Esto es importante para nosotros porque siempre hemos estado en los últimos puestos”.

T4 “Le voy a hacer un recuento. En el 2005 el promedio de la jornada de la mañana de inglés fue de 41.57. En el 2006, 42.16 y en el 2007 fue 47.22. Ha

mejorado muy levemente. Hay algunos estudiantes que sacaron buenos promedios, pero los malos estudiantes nos dañan el promedio. Hay unos que sacan 30 o 35”.

T5 “El último promedio en el ICFES fue de 51 en el área de inglés”.

Regarding the answers of the teachers, the scores of English in the ICFES exam are between 44 and 51. In this way, we can corroborate that the English level of the students is not very good.

Furthermore, teachers believe that this situation is a result of the lack of future objectives or because the learners are not responsible and interested in English learning. In addition, they spend much more time in other subjects rather than in English and this is not necessary to achieve the goals of the students.

Taking into consideration the results of the ICFES and the perceptions of the teachers, it is also relevant to consider the factors that influence on this situation. We agree with the interviewed teachers when they say that there are several aspects that contribute to the low results.

For teachers, the most common factor is students' lack of interest towards English. We agree with them; however, we consider that motivation not only depends on the students, but also on the teachers.

We think that it is difficult for teachers to motivate students when they feel that they do not need the language either to communicate or to achieve their goals. This is corroborated by Lightbown & Spada (1999) when they say that learners perceive the value of the L2 when they need to speak the language in social situations or to fulfill professional ambitions.

On the other hand, we think that motivation can be promoted by teachers when they use adequate activities and materials in their classes and in this way, they contribute to the learning and teaching process. This is stated by Lightbown & Spada (1999) when they propose that teachers must implement varied activities, tasks, and materials and use co-operative rather than competitive goals to motivate students into the lessons.

We also agree with the interviewed teachers when they state that students' interests and preferences influence learning. Moreover, T2 says that learners spend much more time in other subjects that are more important for them.

Most of the factors mentioned by the teachers have to do with the learner. We come to the same conclusion that learners are important and influential parts in learning. Nonetheless, we also consider that all the students differ from their classmates. So, they need to be observed by teachers and to think about several strategies that can contribute to this process. This is corroborated by Stevens (1977) who claims that learning has a complex and multiple nature. That is why, teaching should also be diverse and should change with the nature of learners' aims.

Finally, comparing the teachers' answers and the results of the ICFES 2007, we could say that the level of students at the end of the high school is low and in some cases, learners get an intermediate level.

Achievement Influential Factors

This category intends to show some possible aspects that may influence the English learning process in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto. To gather the information we asked ¿Qué factores considera Usted que inciden en el

bajo nivel de conocimientos de inglés adquiridos por los bachilleres en general?.

Teachers answered:

T1: Hay multiplicidad de factores. Uno, el factor social es preponderante. Los problemas que tienen los estudiantes a nivel familiar, a nivel doméstico. Estudiantes que no conocen a sus padres y que viven con el tío, con la abuela, lo cual va a marcar de alguna manera que los estudiantes vuelquen sus aspiraciones por otro tipo de actitudes y no por las del estudio. El factor económico también es otra limitante. Las necesidades básicas no satisfechas por los estudiantes también son un motivo que ellos no aprovechen el tiempo libre dediquen y piensen en como adquirir dinero para poderse sostener.

T2: Principalmente la falta de motivación. Pero también somos culpables los profesores porque no sabemos como motivar a los estudiantes y como ya dije, la cantidad de alumnos que se maneja en cada curso. La falta de horas es otro factor. Hace tres años teníamos 4 horas semanales en el grado décimo. Y eso nos ayudaba muchísimo. También la escasez de recursos didácticos, por ejemplo nosotros tenemos el laboratorio bilingüe, pero en el año este trabaja solo 2 o 3 meses porque por lo general permanece dañado. Además solo tenemos una grabadora para los 36 cursos que hay. Entonces esto también incide en el aprendizaje. Siempre se ha luchado por conseguir unas gramáticas, aquí no hay gramáticas, aquí no se consigue diccionarios suficientes para que los estudiantes trabajen. Entonces esto también incide en el bajo rendimiento de los estudiantes. Y como ya dije, la falta de motivación es fundamental porque ellos tienen

que amar la materia, tienen que querer a la materia para que ellos puedan dedicarle más tiempo.

T3: En primer lugar, en varias instituciones poco o nada se ve inglés desde el preescolar en comparación con los colegios privados que empiezan desde el jardín, pero aquí la gran mayoría llegan a sexto grado sin ningún conocimiento, entonces ésta es una desventaja que tenemos. Empezando desde allí, tenemos que partir de cero porque son muy pocos los que tienen algún conocimiento, quizá equivocado o correcto, pero son muy pocos. Otro factor que incide son los recursos. Acá en esta población siempre nos dicen que no tienen plata, ni siquiera para comprarse un diccionario. El texto guía lo tienen muy pocos y otros pocos utilizan fotocopias. Creo que con un buen material se reflejarían mejores resultados. Otra cosa que influye es el clima. Cuando hace mucho calor los estudiantes se sofocan y no quieren aprender. Por otra parte, cuando la hora de inglés es la última de la jornada, los estudiantes están fatigados y cansados para aprender en la clase.

T4: Hay muchos factores. Uno de ellos es que dentro del proyecto de vida de mis estudiantes no cuenta el inglés para su futuro. También pienso que tiene mucho que ver las bases que ellos tienen desde la primaria. Muchos estudiantes no han tenido ni una ilustración de inglés en la primaria y por eso cuando llegan a sexto de bachillerato, llegan con cero de conocimientos de inglés.

T5: Yo creo que está directamente relacionado con la preparación del profesor al inicio del año y la preparación de cada clase. La preparación

de cada clase es definitiva para conseguir buenos resultados. Si el profesor no se prepara tampoco va a desarrollar un buen curso.

Regarding the opinions of the teachers, we could say that they think that some possible factors affecting the learning process are the lack of materials and resources, the economical problems of students, the big number of students in just one class, the few hours for English classes in the high schools, the preparation of the teachers, and the demotivation of students.

We can point out that teachers are aware of the situation of their students and of their high schools. It is difficult to expect for good outcomes if students do not have the disposition to learn a new language and if they do not really see the importance of English for their future life. Besides, some institutions do not have enough and available resources to guarantee a better education. T2 said that they just have one tape recorder for 36 courses.

Another important aspect has to do with weather conditions. T3 states that sometimes it is difficult to receive a class with a hot temperature because it does not allow students to pay attention to the explanation of the teachers. In addition, when the English class is at the end of the journey, students are really tired to attend classes, therefore they will not really learn.

Finally, for T5, another aspect influencing the learning process is perhaps the previous preparation of the teachers. This means that teachers do not have to improvise. Otherwise, students will have bad results.

According to Littlewood (1984, quoted by Bastidas 2002 p, 141) motivation is “the force which determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he perseveres.” Besides,

according to Gardner & Lambert (1972, quoted by Bastidas, 2002) there are two different types of motivation in learners. They are integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation means that the apprentice wants to learn the L2 with an authentic interest of communicating with L2 speakers and to know more about their culture. On the other hand, instrumental motivation means that the apprentice only wants to learn the second language with the purpose of accomplishing some requirements for their job or for their degrees.

Bastidas (2002) also states that the socio-economic level of students in public high schools is a big problem that teachers have to face with. Bastidas says that some of the possible problems, that students may have, are that they will not be able to buy the textbooks or a dictionary. In other words, they are not able to have the resources they need to learn the L2. Therefore, teachers and the goals of their classes are going to be difficult to achieve. Furthermore, Bastidas states that good and favorable conditions in the classroom enable students to get pleasing results. Bastidas also estimates that it is really difficult for teachers to achieve any goal related to communicative English level if the classrooms are not with enough ventilation and lighting, if classrooms are overcrowded with more than 40 students each, if tables, desks, and boards are in bad shape, if extreme heat or cold conditions are inside the classroom, and if emotional environment of students towards the L2 is not the appropriate. Regarding teachers preparation, Bastidas (2002) notes that teachers need a previous training. The author considers an initial and further training. Initial training is related to the theory, methodology, and practice when teaching a

foreign language. Further training has to do with the training teachers can get when they work or being withdrawn of teaching in order to bring new ideas and share experiences.

Finally, according to Bastidas (2002) materials are very important tools that help with the success of the goals of the English teaching and learning process. Additionally, he affirms that one of the major problems for teachers when teaching English in public high schools is that students or the institutions do not have instructional materials. That is why, students feel demotivated and classes become boring.

In summary, most of the interviewed teachers consider that some of the possible factors that influence the teaching and learning process in public high schools in Pasto are the lack of materials and resources, the students' economical problems, the number of students in just one class, the schedule for English classes, teachers' training, and students' demotivation. However, just T5 states that planning is fundamental so that the students get good outcomes. This teacher also estimates that if teachers and their lessons are not prepared, the aims of the course will not be achieved. Besides, it is important to highlight that we asked all teachers to give us a sample of the institutional plan, the syllabus, and their lesson plans. Unfortunately, just two high schools gave us the syllabus and one high school provided us its institutional, and any teacher presented their lesson plans.

We could say that teachers do not prepare their classes using a written document that later could be a guide in English learning and teaching process. Additionally, we think that if teachers do not have available the institutional

plan or the syllabus, it is really difficult to connect the specific planning to the general one. T1 said that "... la programación particular esta sujeta de una manera indirecta con la programación general. Esta programación es fundamental para poder sacar adelante cualquier meta que nos propongamos conseguir. Difícilmente las metas de una materia pueden cristalizarse sino hay un orden, sino hay una programación..." However, teachers did not provide us the documents that could corroborate the design of the institutional plan, the syllabus, and the lesson plans. So, it is difficult to believe that teachers design these documents if they do not have them.

On the other hand, in personal communication with Sister Edith Torres (May, 18th, 2007), an administrator of a private school in Pasto, stated that the high school where she works is looking for "proceso de gestión de calidad e implementación de los estándares de calidad de la norma 9001 versión 2000". For this reason, the institutional plan, the course design, the lesson plans, and the students' notes must be related among them. She said that this implies more efforts and more hours of work for teachers and administrators, but in this way, this guarantees quality and very good outcomes in students at the end of the high school.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

In the language learning and teaching process, there are many factors that contribute to the high or low results like demotivation of students, lack of materials, planning, methodology, the schedule of English, number of hours, teachers' training, and so on. Among these aspects, we selected institutional planning, course design, and lesson planning to be studied. Hence, this research study has focused on the design and renewal of these instruments in different public high schools in San Juan de Pasto and their possible influence on the teaching and learning of English.

Considering the objectives proposed in chapter one, we can say that institutional plans are renewed and created at the beginning of every academic year. However, teachers only change those topics that were problematic in the previous year. Also, these pedagogical tools are completely changed when there is a change of the textbook. Finally, institutional planning and course design are done autonomously by teachers.

In public high schools in Pasto, there is a sequence in the contents that are taught from 6th to 11th grade based on the institutional plans. However, planning is mainly based on the textbook. Only some teachers say they consider the policies proposed by the Ministry of Education and the institutional and learners' resources.

In relation to courses, they are designed in order to avoid monotony and to emphasize all those topics that need to be reinforced. When designing

courses, teachers consider the range of difficulty of the topics. In addition, the syllabus is a task of the teachers. That is why, they get together in small groups to design the courses.

Referring to lesson planning, teachers in public high schools in Pasto do their lesson plans every week, or the day before the class. Moreover, they design a lesson plan for each class. They consider the differences and needs of every course although they belong to the same level. The interviewed teachers also think about the knowledge of the students, the possible difficulty or ease of every content, and the activities and materials to be used, when they plan their lessons. Nevertheless, teachers do not have a written document to corroborate what they say. They state that experience let them to organize and plan their ideas and classes in their minds.

If teachers do not have a written lesson plan, we could state that there could be a problem in the teaching and learning process because teachers can forget some activities and topics that need to be taught which may provoke gaps in knowledge. Furthermore, we could say that the activities and the materials will be used repetitively and this situation might cause monotony and demotivation on learners. Besides, we could say that we also asked for samples of institutional plans and syllabi but some teachers and some administrators did not present these documents.

Additionally, most of the teachers think good outcomes of students at the end of every grade and at the end of high school depend on planning. Nonetheless, it is difficult to reach the goals when there are no documents that

show planning and even more if the documents do not have purposes or objectives.

Finally, bad results depend on the demotivation of students, the lack of materials, and the limited number of hours of English. However, there was just one teacher who said that planning is essential for achieving very good results in students.

Recommendations

After having analyzed and confronted the collected data and the ideas proposed by different specialized authors in the TESOL field, we could give the following recommendations in order to help in the improvement of the English learning and teaching process in public high schools in San Juan de Pasto.

The first recommendation is related to the institutional planning. We suggest that English teachers should consider cultural objectives when they are doing this tool. Besides, they should take into account that a total change of the institutional plan is very risky. Consequently, they need to do a very careful and detailed study to renew this process.

The second recommendation has to do with course design. Teachers should emphasize not only grammar, vocabulary, or the ICFES exams, but also communication. If it is possible, teachers should design a different syllabus for every course due to the several differences between one class from another. Moreover, teachers should also take into account the essential parts of a syllabus.

Regarding the answers of the interviewed teachers about institutional planning and course design, we advise administrators to give teachers more time

to create the institutional plan and the syllabus in order to recognize the previous mistakes in order to correct them.

Another recommendation is related to lesson planning. We think that teachers should have a written document in order to establish the objectives of every class, the activities, the content, and the evaluation. In this way, teachers can follow a sequence in their teaching process during the academic year. If it is necessary, teachers will use this document to remember the activities and topics that have previously taught in order to know what aspects are going to be explained and to avoid repetition and gaps in knowledge.

It would be advisable for administrators to ask the institutional plan, the course design, and the lesson plans in order to corroborate at the end of the academic year what objectives teachers and students achieved.

Finally, we advice to keep on researching about the diverse factors that have an influence on the English teaching and learning process in public high schools in Pasto including the field of planning. For example, it would be important to conduct similar studies in other public institutions in order to see if the results are similar or different.

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APPENDIX

Formal format to ask for permission.

Pasto, _____de 2007

Señor(a):

Rector(a).
Institución Educativa Municipal
San Juan de Pasto

Cordial saludo

Con nuestro cordial saludo a nombre de la Universidad de Nariño nos permitimos informarle que los Profesores y Estudiantes del Departamento de Lingüística e Idiomas hemos venido promoviendo y realizando una serie de trabajos de investigación sobre la Problemática de la Enseñanza y el Aprendizaje del Inglés en la Educación Básica y Secundaria que viven los colegios de la ciudad de Pasto desde el año 2001, bajo la coordinación del Doctor JESÚS ALIRIO BASTIDAS ARTEAGA.

Desde el semestre pasado hemos venido diseñando algunos proyectos de investigación con el fin de lograr un mayor entendimiento de algunos de los factores que pueden incidir en el aprendizaje del inglés por parte de los estudiantes de Básica Secundaria, mediante la realización de observaciones de clase, entrevistas a los profesores y estudiantes y/o aplicación de cuestionarios. Con este propósito le solicitamos su valiosa colaboración para el logro de los objetivos que se han propuesto los estudiantes MARIO ANDRÉS GUERRERO CORAL y DIANA LORENA YAMÁ MERA, quienes han planteado el proyecto titulado “INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, COURSE DESIGN, AND LESSON PLANNING IN THE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL OF THE STUDENTS OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN SAN JUAN DE PASTO”, el cual se llevará a cabo en el curso del presente semestre.

Le agradecemos su colaboración, la cual constituye un magnífico aporte para la formación profesional de nuestros estudiantes de los Programas de Idiomas, que actualmente se ofrecen en el Departamento de Lingüística e Idiomas.

Atentamente,

GABRIEL VICENTE OBANDO G.
Director

JESÚS ALIRIO BASTIDAS A.
Coordinador
Proyectos de Investigación

Teachers' interview

Fecha:

Hora:

Institución:

1. ¿Podría informarnos sobre el proceso de planeación institucional que se lleva a cabo en este colegio?
2. ¿Para la planeación hay reuniones por departamentos o en general?
3. ¿Cómo se hace la planeación de los cursos de inglés? ¿Hay un programa general para todos los cursos de ingles del bachillerato? (Pedir copia del programa)
4. ¿Cómo se distribuyen los profesores para realizar la planeación? ¿Los profesores que dictan ingles en el mismo nivel hacen planeación juntos?
5. ¿Cómo planea usted sus cursos? (Pedir copia del syllabus.)
6. ¿En que se basa para realizar sus programas de ingles? ¿Se basa en el ministerio, en el texto, en la programación institucional o en el criterio personal?
7. ¿La planeación se modifica año tras año o se mantiene durante un tiempo?
8. ¿Qué criterios usted utiliza para renovar la planeación y el diseño de sus programas de curso?
9. ¿Quién toman las decisiones para la renovación de los diseños de los programas de cada curso?
10. ¿Qué tan importante es la planeación general y particular de los cursos de inglés para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de esta lengua?

11. ¿Usted considera que la planeación institucional y de los cursos puede incidir en los resultados que obtienen los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de inglés al final de cada grado y al final del bachillerato?

12. ¿Qué piensa usted del nivel de conocimiento de inglés que adquieren los estudiantes al término del bachillerato? ¿Qué nivel adquieren los bachilleres de esta institución? (principiantes, intermedios o avanzados.)

13. ¿Cuál es el último promedio de inglés en el ICFES?

14. ¿Qué factores considera usted que inciden en el bajo nivel de conocimientos de inglés adquiridos por los bachilleres en general?

15. ¿Cómo hace la planeación de cada clase?

16. Describa el proceso que lleva a cabo para la planeación de una clase.

Gracias por su colaboración.