

Beliefs of Teachers from other Subjects towards Teaching and Learning English in the
Elementary School at the “Institución Educativa Municipal San Juan Bosco”

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2016

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“las ideas y conclusiones aportadas en el trabajo son de responsabilidad exclusiva de su autor”

Artículo 1 del acuerdo No. 324 de octubre 11 1966 emanado del Honorable Consejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

Notas de aceptación

Firma del presidente del jurado

Firma del jurado

Firma del jurado

San Juan de Pasto mayo de 2017

Resumen

Este trabajo presenta de manera interpretativa las creencias de profesores de otras materias hacia el aprendizaje y enseñanza del Inglés en primaria. Hay variables tanto positivas como negativas por parte de los docentes que influyen en su aprendizaje. Por lo tanto, este trabajo pretende establecer estrategias que busquen mejorar su enseñanza dentro de las aulas. A partir del desarrollo de competencias y teorías del aprendizaje de diferentes autores. Además, una metodología de carácter cualitativa que busca a través de entrevista y observación entender las creencias y percepciones de los profesores y determinar estas creencias tanto en los demás profesores como en estudiantes dentro de la escuela primaria.

Abstract

This project presents in an interpretative way the beliefs of teachers from other subjects towards the learning and the teaching English in primary. There are both positive and negative variables by part of teachers that influence its learning. Therefore, this research paper proposes strategies that seek to improve their teaching in the classrooms. From the development of strategy competences and learning theories of different authors. In addition, a qualitative methodology that seeks through interview and observation to understand the beliefs and perceptions of teachers and determine these beliefs in both other teachers and students at the elementary school.

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Beliefs of Teachers from Other Subjects towards Teaching and Learning English to Students in the Elementary School at the “Institución Educativa Municipal San Juan Bosco”

This section of the research project gives a description of how teachers of other areas perceive the teaching and learning of the English language in an elementary school, as well as, the causes, consequences, and possible solutions. The problem will be analyzed after identifying the variables related to the attitudes that teachers of other areas have towards teaching and learning English in primary school. Furthermore, it refers to the methodology that will be used to carry out the study and finally the possible limitations.

Problem description

Social and cultural factors influence the act of teaching and learning English, and more specifically the Beliefs of teachers of other areas towards teaching and learning English in an elementary school.

Thus, this study will identify certain factors related to this concern: first, possible willingness teachers demonstrate to teaching English in the elementary school, which is essential in how it is taught and hence learnt. Besides, the willingness or rejection showed by teachers of other subjects to the English learning process, as well as attitudes students reflect towards English as a subject.

Social, economic, and cultural aspects come to play an important role in the school context. The possible rejection towards teaching English may be due to the fact that it comes from a different culture or that the language seems to be simply confusing and tedious for most of them. In that sense, also sensitive, cognitive and behavioral elements must be taken into account to approach to the English language learning process. Therefore, these reactions

will lead to develop a diagnosis upon the variables of the English learning process and how this affects motivation and beliefs by teachers of other subjects and students.

Research Question

What are the beliefs of teachers from other subjects towards learning English at the elementary School San Juan Bosco in the city of San Juan de Pasto?

Sub-questions

What are the teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning English?

What do teachers of other subjects think about teaching and learning English in primary school?

What are the differences between female and male teachers' beliefs towards the teaching and learning English in primary School?

What are the differences between new and experienced teachers' beliefs towards English in primary school?

General Objective

To understand the Beliefs of teachers from other subjects towards teaching and learning English at the primary school San Juan Bosco in the city of San Juan de Pasto.

Specific Objectives

To identify the opinions of teachers of other subjects towards teaching and learning English at the elementary school San Juan Bosco.

To recognize differences between male and female teacher's beliefs towards teaching and learning English in the primary School.

To establish differences between new and experienced teachers' beliefs towards English in primary school.

Problem Delimitation

Conceptual

Belief. “A belief is defined as a statement that is held to be true, that can affect language learning practices”. (Erlenawati as cited in Estupiñan, 2015).

Learning. “Learning involves the transformation of information in the environment into knowledge that is stored in the mind. Learning occurs when new knowledge is acquired or existing knowledge is modified by experience”. (Gates, 1999:153)

Teaching. It refers to the action of a real life teacher imparting learning to students (Patanathabutr as cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013).

Justification

The teachers of other areas have different perceptions and beliefs towards teaching and learning English. There is not enough information in Colombia and in the region about this enquiry; for this reason, this study will identify the opinion of teachers from different areas of the curriculum and their belief- towards learning and teaching English. Thus; this problem is related to social and cultural factors that influence the teaching and learning English in the primary school.

First, a possible willingness and motivation of other teachers to teaching English in primary school is crucial in how it is perceived and learnt. Besides, willingness or rejection

showed by most teachers from other subjects to the learning and teaching English, likely, will be reflected in the beliefs of the students for the subject. Thus, they would seek for the implementation of an adequate methodology which gives very positive aspects towards teaching English.

Most articles corroborate that English is implemented at all stages of school development, from primary school, high school, and university, making clear there is support or legislation from the government to learn and to teach English.

Second, it will find a possible bad attitude of other teachers in the area of English, these can be reflected in the motivation or disposition, an impairment of learning, because in many cases teachers from other areas ask to pay more attention to their classes by subtracting emphasis on English as a subject of the curriculum. Perhaps, the teachers have insufficient knowledge of English and teaching methodology.

Third, many state schools lack qualified teachers in English language, and one teacher ends up teaching all grades, despite the fact that the teachers themselves lack skills and knowledge of this particular subject. Such a situation has a strong impact on student learning process in any educational system since teaching refers to the action of a real life teacher imparting learning to students (Patanathabutr as cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013).

This way, factors such as social, economic or cultural come to play a role in the school context. The possible rejection of the English teaching in primary school may be, because it comes from a different culture or simply students find it confusing or overwhelming. Some factors such as affective, emotional, behavioral or cognitive are important by approaching to English language as rich in history and culture. Therefore, teachers are also encouraged to improve their language skills since they are the pillars of the

education system in the country. As a consequence, this study aims to investigate beliefs of teachers from other areas towards teaching and learning English in primary school.

Limitations

Certain number of constraints can be taken into consideration related to this research.

Some ethical issues generated in this research may be related to the true position of teachers, whether it is precise or by formalisms they hide their true opinion related to the research topic and their reactions.

It is possible that teachers feel a degree of fear at the moment of being questioned about their work; thus, they could respond according to their convenience instead of reality.

Theoretical Framework

Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

Vygotsky states that social intercourse drives to a personal growth, due to the contact people have with other we are capable of doing much more things than what we do by ourselves. We are able to develop our cognition. He believes that human intelligence relies on social interaction. The development is done in two steps, first in the interaction with others and second when we integrate that knowledge into our individual mental structure.

He defines the “zone of proximal development (ZPD)” which is the stage between what a person can do by himself and he cannot do alone, in that stage the person is cognitively prepared to learn but requires social help to fully develop.

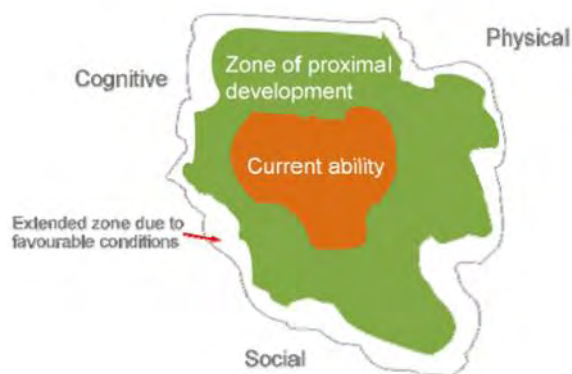


Figure 1. Zone of Proximal Development proposed by Vygotsky

English as a Second Language

At present, due to the evolutionary process of different means of social and cultural development, involved in this context of globalization, learning a second language has become a fundamental need to achieve the levels of competitiveness demanded by current society, as English is probably the third largest language group in the world worldwide.

English is spoken as a native language by seventy out of the one hundred thirty two (132) countries around the world and has around 1.5 billion native and non-native speakers. (Forero, 2007, p.19)

The Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) established the Law 115 of 1994, which indicates that “the acquisition of elements of conversation and reading at least one foreign language” is one of the main objectives of the Law of Education for primary cycles. In the same law, article 23, the Law claims English as the target foreign language. (Law 115 of 1994,art. 21-23)

When the teaching-learning process starts, the student learns to value the identity, culture and in the same way begins to open his knowledge in relation to other cultures and new ways of conceiving the world , linking meanings , concept. The child begins to be aware

of what he learns abilities, aptitudes and attitudes that make learning exercise materialize.

(Forero, et al, 2007, p 20)

Likewise, the development and learning of a second language promotes in the students a greater linguistic awareness, resulting in a monitoring process, also it emphasizes the social consciousness that is reflected in the language. (MEN, 2006, p.8)

For the understanding of a second language, it is required that teachers delve into the characteristics of language development in children starting in the way the acquired their mother tongue, that is to say, how they first related symbols, and so how they related to others according to their world view. With this, English teachers are able to identify processes and features that can help the learning of a new language.

Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation.

Gardner states the attitude concept in three components, namely the affective component (feelings about the attitude object); the behavioral component (predisposition to act towards the attitude object in a certain way); and the cognitive component (beliefs about the attitude object).

a). The affective or emotional aspect of attitude can help learners to express whether they like or dislike the objects or surrounding situations and the inner feelings and emotions of foreign language learners influence their perspectives and their attitudes toward the target language (Zainolas cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013, p. 52). This is because learning a foreign language is an emotional process in which the teacher and his students engage in emotional activities in a classroom setting (Feng& Chenas cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013, p. 52).

Emotional expressions can be identified through facial movements such as smiling or scowling or reactions through crying or laughing.

b). the behavioral aspect of attitude deals with people's reaction and behavior toward situations they encounter. Their reaction can be expressed either favorably or unfavorably.

According to Kara cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013, p. 52), positive attitudes lead to the exhibition of positive behaviors toward courses of study in that learners will absorb the acquired knowledge and put themselves into it and strive to learn more. These students will be more eager to solve problems and apply information and skills useful for daily life than those who have neutral or negative attitudes. Thus, the behavioral aspect might view any positive act toward a person or object as positive attitude. In contrast, it views any negative acts as negative attitude.

c). the cognitive aspect of attitude is the beliefs of the language learners regarding their acquired knowledge and their comprehension and understanding toward the process of language acquisition. According to Zainol cited in Kitjaroonchai, 2013, p. 52) this aspect of attitude can be classified into four steps; namely, connecting the previous knowledge with the new one, creating new knowledge, checking new knowledge and applying the new knowledge in different situations.

From a different angle, Van Els et al. (cited in Al-Tamimi&Shuib, 2009, p. 33), suggests that 'it does not really matter whether all or only one of the three components are measured; the relationship between the components is so close that sufficient information on an attitude can be obtained by measuring only one component, no matter which.'

Teachers' Beliefs.

Learners' beliefs about language learning could also result from their teachers' beliefs; nevertheless, researchers have not found an ample consistency of that relationship.

On one hand, some studies (Elbaum, Beg &Dood ,as cited in Estupiñan, 2015, p. 33) show that the instructional methods, the curricular content, the tasks, the assessment procedures and the feedback used by the teachers and the perceptions that they have could have repercussions on the learners' beliefs about language and how they learn, for instance, Fang (Barcelosas cited in Estupiñan, 2015, p. 33) asserts that learners who have similar beliefs to their teachers could have a better possibility to attain success in a second or foreign language learning. Kern (Barcelos, 2000as cited in Estupiñan, 2015, p. 33) further discusses that the students' beliefs could derive from the teachers' actions rather than from the teachers' discourse.

On the other hand, language educators have indicated that students attend to the language classroom with "a complex web of attitudes, experiences, expectations, beliefs, and learning strategies" (Benson, Nyikos&Oxford,Oxford, as cited in Bernat&Gvozdenko, 2005) concluding that learners' beliefs could not correspond with the teachers expectations or the mismatch between teachers' and students' beliefs as researchers call.

Due that the learners have their own perceptions about the process of learning and classroom roles; a mismatch between teachers and students beliefs could take place in language learning (Barcelosas cited in Estupiñan, 2015, p. 34) for instance, the studies of Kern (Barcelos, as cited in Estupiñan, 2015, p. 34) reveal that the learners tend to believe that form is more important than function, the key in speaking is an excellent accent, they also view that the learning of a foreign or second language deals with translation. In contrast, teachers tend to disagree with these ideas and apply methods that differ from the students' beliefs, leading to a mismatch between teachers and students beliefs afore mentioned.

The two opposite sides shown in the studies about the relationship between teachers and students beliefs become evident that “foreign or second language teachers and students share some common beliefs about language learning but they also differ in some beliefs”.

Vibulphol (2004:39)

English Teachers Qualifications

Methodological competence. To define language-learning acquisitions is necessary to take into account the collective and individual students’ needs, to adjust the objectives to a stronger focus on communicative competence and so to contribute to the social development with moral values.

This issue has within itself the professional competence that refers to the teacher's ability to teach their classes, to produce their own materials and to properly use aid for the students benefit. Equally, it implies that the teacher should be informed about the different methods, approaches, theories of pedagogy and psychological basis that the current education of foreign languages gives to manage well the group. (Páez, 2001, p.4)

Communicative competence. According to MEN the communicative competence is the ability to handle specific contexts using the knowledge they have acquire. This competence is composed in the same way by three competences. A language competence, which is the well management and knowledge of the language. A pragmatic competence which is the ability to use this language skills to form and express complete and meaningful ideas; and a socio-linguistic competence, which refers to the knowledge of the culture and society like habits or difference around this language (MEN, 2006, p.11).

Features of foreign language teaching. The characteristics a teacher is expected to have for being effective in his/her profession involves a great number of competences like:

“flexibility, adaptation, sensitivity, ability to respond to problems found in both professional classroom and emotional, empathetic, goal, to be able to observe what is happening in the instructional, genuine and sincere context, no dominant management, no authoritarian.”

(Martinez, 2011, p.109).

According to this, the teaching profession becomes such a complex task that it seems to be difficult to reach all these; nevertheless all the features required are learnt through the experience and contact with the educational environment. Meanwhile, some elements a teacher, specifically a foreign language teacher must never leave aside are:

The management they have in the language, teachers must have a reasonable mastery of it in all the communicative skills (spoken, written, listened, read) in order to teach it. Know how to teach a foreign language.

The previous preparations of the classes keeping in mind the simplicity, clarity and plan of the class. Even if it is necessary to have a class plan, teachers cannot leave aside the ability of improvisation trying to adjust activities in the moment not to lose students` motivation (Martinez, 2011, p.121).

Understanding motivates students, so creating a pleasant, entertaining and dynamic boosts the active learning in the classroom. English Teachers should aim to make learning the language an enjoyable experience. (Martinez, 2011, p.121)

Teachers Training

This model about training and teaching strategies for Language Teachers designed by Freeman (1989) states that the teaching practice comprises four elements: the first is one is to know what, to whom and where something is taught. The second element is the skills that allow curriculum development and instruction. A third aspect is the attitude of the teacher,

which is extremely important to this research as the project seeks the way English teaching is conceived. Finally, the fourth element which is closely linked to the previous one intended to recognize important aspects or facts of the learning process that motivates decision making.

To sum up, a well-prepared teacher requires training and development, what linking it to the items above, can be called experience. Teachers' development is permanent and has no time condition, because the teacher is the one who determines when the process stops, looking for all the educational options based on reflection to build and transform.

Linguistic Attitudes

Attitudes are the language response we emit towards social intercourse and refer to language management in certain contexts (Fernandez, 1998, p.179) so they show that the use of language not only provides linguistic characteristics peculiar of every person, but also transmit social connotations and feelings.

Linguistic attitudes are hence linked to psychosocial attitudes, which says that apart from the personal characteristic, a person also count on social characteristics, this is to say, it depends on the context where the individual develops that he/she is going to express him/herself. According to Baker (1992), the term attitude is the "hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior "(p.10) although not having any verbal affective reactions.

Motivation

Motivation in teaching English as a Second Language according to Gardner is the individual ability and attitude and the willingness of meeting objectives, linking the desire to learn and teach knowing that self-commitment is necessary.

Although motivation is essential for any learning process, to strengthen the Communicative competence is necessary to also have a background and from it continue building knowledge, otherwise, motivation will low down and the process will be affected.

The background required is grammar and sociolinguistics and strategy competence, which are the necessary basis to acquire to boost motivation in learning another language.

Grammar knowledge implies to use the language correctly while socio-linguistics refers to the interpretation of the speech according to the context and finally the strategy competence, which is the ability to overcome communicative difficulties by the lack of knowledge. (Canale, 1983, p.7)

The Teacher -student Interaction

According to Rubio & Garcia (2012), the communicative approach to teaching and learning of second languages, has madestudents take an active role and has turned the teacher into a guide, coordinator and collaborator in the Learningprocess. Thus, teachers in matter of motivational environments play an essential role in the learning experience (Harmer, 1998).

As a result, the teacher must provide the appropriate learning environment when teaching the language. In addition, they must bring healthy, relaxed and comfortable conditions, providing support to students in order to develop communicative competence by encouraging positive attitudes towards second language (Rubio& Garcia, 2012, p.3).

Taking the information above, this research project will take Freeman´s model as a theoretical reference as it proposes reflective strategies towards teaching a language, just as, it meets and uses prior knowledge and background for it.

Methodology

This chapter refers to the description of how researchers will obtain the data for the research, the population, context and the sample that will be used for collecting and analyzing the information. This process will be done in order to understand the attitudes of teacher of other subjects towards teaching English and the Social factors which are going to determine these attitudes both in teachers and students.

Design

In this section, researchers will introduce the paradigm of the research, the type of research and the research technique.

Research method. In the research project, researchers will work based on the characteristics of qualitative research. “Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. That is to say, it aims to help us to understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about: · Why people behave the way they do · How opinions and attitudes are formed · How people are affected by the events that go on around them · How and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have” (Hancock B., Windridge K., and Ockleford E, 2007, p. 7)

Research Type

This research will be interpretive in which it is qualitative. It involves collections of qualitative information, “the methods used by interpretive researchers differ greatly from positivist research. While positivist researchers start their research with a Hypothesis, interpretivists use more open-ended research questions. Also, the main focus is on the qualitative data, from which the researcher will interpret meanings. Moreover, interpretive

studies are often idiographic, using small numbers of participants. This is because the purpose is not to generalize, but to explore the meanings which participants place on the social situations under investigations". (Sureepong, 2010, p. 2)

Research Techniques and Instruments

This study will use research techniques such as interviews and observations, which have as objective, to describe the beliefs of teachers from other subjects, since the interpretative research implies the interpretation and observation of a character without any influence over him/her.

Interview. The qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the people's life. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. (Kvale, 1996)

A qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level, though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level. (Kvale, 1996)

Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses. (McNamara, 1999)

Researchers chose this technique, due to the fact that it is necessary to know the information directly from the teachers of other subjects about their opinions concerning the teaching and learning of English in primary school.

Population

The population that will be used in this study corresponds to teachers of other subjects, both men and women, who are in charge of the grades first to fifth in the elementary school San Juan Bosco.

Setting

The research project will be carried out in the Public Elementary School San Juan Bosco, located in the city of San Juan de Pasto, capital of the department of Nariño, south west Colombia.

Sample

Fifteen teachers of different subjects who are in charge of the primary education will be the sample, and will be interviewed.

Procedure

Before starting the process in the school, researchers will ask for the required permissions. After, an interview will be applied to 15 teachers from different grades and subjects from the School San Juan Bosco, the questions in the interview must reflect the beliefs taken by teachers of different subjects, as well define the socio-cultural and socio-economic situations of the teachers polled. The data collected will be organized and classified, so to be easily analyzed.

Then before leaving, we will be thankful for every one of the teachers for their time and kindness and the permission to perform this procedure.

Ethical issues

The author's rights are something not only very important when collecting information but it can have legal implications for this reason it is best to avoid falling into this class of problems, asking the respective permits. If data collection is prevented by some kind of formalism, with letters to teachers and principals. Reliability, the results will be anonymous, to prevent any injury or hurt any susceptibility at the end of our intervention the thanks and we will commit to writing some kind of report to the school to clarify the assistance there.

This research as you could see is a qualitative, interpretive, and use research techniques to be applied on teachers from other areas in San Juan Bosco elementary school. This data will actually be approached to help us find a solution to the problem on the beliefs of teachers from other areas to teaching English.

Administrative Aspects

El estudio se ha diseñado para un tiempo de 7 a 8 meses a partir de su aprobación. Las actividades planeadas son las siguientes:

| Actividades | Tiempo | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Mes 1 | Mes 2 | Mes 3 | Mes 4 | Mes 5 | Mes 6 | Mes 7 | Mes 8 |
| • Revisión del proyecto según observaciones de los jurados evaluadores. | *** | *** | | | | | | |
| • Visita a las IEM para dar información y solicitar los permisos | | *** | | | | | | |
| • Aplicación de la entrevista en la IEM utilizando las técnicas y herramientas de recolección designadas para el estudio. | | | *** | *** | | | | |
| • Análisis cualitativo de la información recogida a través de las técnicas de recolección de datos. | | | | | *** | *** | | |
| • Escritura del reporte final del | | | | | | | *** | *** |


| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----|
| proyecto. | | | | | | | | | |
| • Entrega final del proyecto | | | | | | | | | *** |

Budget

| ENTRY | COST |
|--|----------------------|
| Photocopies for surveys and questionnaires | 20.000.00 |
| Tape recorders | 180.000.00 |
| Transport | 30.000.00 |
| SUM | \$ 230.000.00 |

Data Collection Technique

Encuestas (dirigida a los profesores)

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  | Universidad de Nariño Facultad de Ciencias Humanas. Licenciatura en Inglés -Francés | Cuestionario para medir las actitudes de profesores de otras materias hacia el aprendizaje y enseñanza del inglés. |
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“Beliefs of Teachers from other Subjects towards Teaching and Learning English in the Elementary School “Institución Educativa Municipal San Juan Bosco””

Technique: Interview

Objetivo: Obtener información que permita establecer las creencias de profesores de otras materias hacia el aprendizaje y enseñanza del inglés.

Instrucciones: Con el fin de desarrollar esta entrevista, a los profesores se les hará unas preguntas acerca de sus creencias, sensaciones y opiniones con respecto a la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés en primaria.

Preguntas

- ¿Está de acuerdo en que se enseñe inglés en primaria? (por qué)

- ¿Cómo cree que se benefician los estudiantes al aprender el inglés en primaria?
- ¿Cómo cree usted que se debe impartir el inglés en primaria?
- ¿Cómo cree usted que el inglés contribuye a ampliar el conocimiento del niño?
- ¿Cuáles cree usted son las ventajas de aprender otro idioma?
- ¿Ha tenido la experiencia de enseñar inglés en primaria, por qué?

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