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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA**  
**AREA OF EDUCATION, ART AND**  
**COMMUNICATION**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE CAREER**

**THESIS**

**ANALYSIS OF THE METHODOLOGY USED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS TO GUIDE THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS WITH THE STUDENTS OF "ALEJANDRINO VELASCO" AND "JULIO ORDOÑEZ" PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF THE LOJA CITY. DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2008 – 2009.**

Thesis previous to obtain the  
Licentiate's Degree in Sciences of  
Education, English Language  
Specialization

**AUTHORESSES:**

Carmen Leopoldina Guamán  
Ana del Cisne Cuenca C.

**THESIS DIRECTOR:**

Dra. Marcia Criollo V. Mg. Sc.

**LOJA – ECUADOR**

**2009**

# **CERTIFICATION**

**Mg. Sc. Marcia Criollo Vargas**

**TEACHER OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LOJA, DIRECTOR  
OF THESIS**

## **C E R T I F I E S:**

To have directed and corrected this thesis, previous to obtain the Licentiate's degree with the title: **ANALYSIS OF THE METHODOLOGY USED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS TO GUIDE THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS WITH THE STUDENTS OF "ALEJANDRINO VELASCO" AND "JULIO ORDOÑEZ" PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF THE LOJA CITY. DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2008 – 2009.**, under the responsibility of the undergraduate Students: **Carmen Leopoldina Guamán and Ana del Cisne Cuenca**. Therefore, I authorize its presentation and defense.

**Loja, November 2009**

**Mg. Sc. Marcia Criollo Vargas**

**THESIS DIRECTOR**

# **AUTORSHIP**

The results of the research work and all the criteria, analysis, concepts presented here, are of their authoresses' absolute responsibility. This thesis can be used as a resource.

Carmen Leopoldina Guamán

Ana del Cisne Cuenca C.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We want to give our sincere thanks first, to the National University of Loja, because it gave us the opportunity to study and to obtain the degree as: English Language Teachers, next to Mg. Sc. Dra. Marcia Criollo Vargas, who has given us all her support as our thesis Director to finish this research work.

## **THE AUTHORESSES**

# DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this work firstly to God, next to my children, who with their sacrifice have given me their support to finish one of my wished goals.

CARMEN

With much love, I dedicate this work to my parents, who have given me their unconditional support to finish this thesis work.

ANITA

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## **SUMMARY**

The present work of the investigation titled: **Analysis of the Methodology used by the English Teachers to guide the Teaching-Learning Process with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and “Julio Ordoñez” Public Elementary Schools of the Loja city. During the School Year 2008 – 2009;** has been made with the purpose of finding out which methodology the teachers use in the English teaching learning process.

Mainly we have made use of the scientific method as a general one which has helped to find the truth about the researched object and to process the information as particular methodology. We have also used the descriptive, analytical-synthetic and the explicative methods. It is important to point out that the group picked up the information through the instrument of a survey that was applied to the teachers as well to the students.

Among the main results of the investigation we found that the teachers use traditional methodology during most of the classes because they translate, teach in the mother tongue and use grammar structures to teach the children and they do not apply specific techniques that let them develop the four basic linguistic skills of the English language in the students. For this reason the students' knowledge of the language is regular and deficient due to the teachers methodology is not being valid and it is limiting the students' English Language learning.

Consequently we have found that the researched institutions have serious trouble with the methodology that the teachers use in the English class, so that the authorities must carry out a course training for the teachers in the application of suitable methodologies and in this way be able to improve the students' English Language learning.

# INTRODUCTION

The English Teaching Learning process has been facing many trouble because most of the time the studying of this Language has not been mandatory in the elementary school. So that most of the schools have hired particular teachers to facilitate their children the learning of the English Language, considering that its study is an essential aspect in the nowadays competitive global world.

For that reason with the desire to contribute to solve in part the mentioned problematic we selected for the thesis of Licentiate in Sciences of Education English Language Specialization, the topic: **“Analysis of the Methodology used by the English Teachers to guide the Teaching-Learning Process with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and “Julio Ordoñez” Public Elementary Schools of the Loja city. During the School Year 2008 – 2009**, as an alternative that offers us a reflexion about the methods that the teachers are using to teach the English Language in two important public schools.

The theoretical scientist substance of the present investigation has been made by means of a careful consultation of the existent bibliographical

sources and in studies of quality that guarantees the truth of the scientific and operational conceptions of the topic and problematic categories.

The main problem of this work has been to know how the methodology used by the English teachers affects the English teaching learning process; and, as specific ones we have: what kind of methodology do the teachers use to develop the teaching learning process of the English language and how the teaching techniques used by the teachers are related to the development of the English Language skills of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?

The major objectives of the present work have been to identify the kind of methodology that is used by the teachers to develop the teaching – learning process of the English Language and to determine the teaching techniques used by the teachers and their relation with the development of the English Language skills of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

In coherence with the objectives we stated as general hypothesis that the methodology used by the English teachers affects the teaching learning

process with the students of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

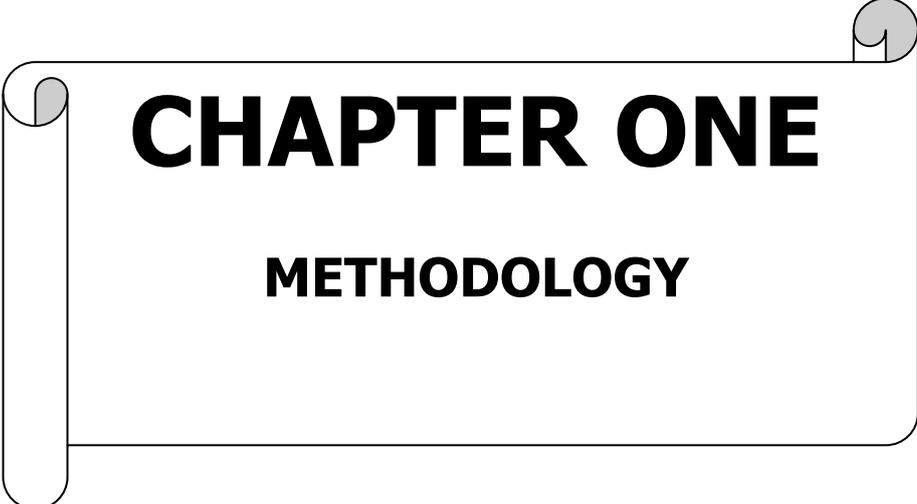
To reach the proposed objectives and the correspondent and hypothesis, has been required the classification and sequence of three chapters that include the final report of the investigative work:

In the chapter **ONE**, Methodology, we have included the methods, techniques, procedures and instruments which have been used in the investigation process, with the predominance of the scientific method due to be one of the most efficient to discovery the truth by means of the research.

In the chapter **TWO**, we have the exhibition and discussion of the obtained results through the instrument that was the survey; we exhibit first the teachers' survey and then the students' one. This chapter also has the hypothesis demonstration through descriptive and analytical process.

The results also have been presented using the descriptive statistics as a tool, expressed in tables expressed in frequencies and simple percentages, illustrating with descriptive graphs and the correspondent interpretation.

In the chapter **THREE**, we present the conclusions which we have reached after we have obtained the field results, and have analysed them in relation to the hypothesis that we wanted to prove about the methodology used by the teachers and its relation with the English language learning. Finally, in this chapter we include the recommendations that we can give based on the critical analysis about the results presented in each question of the survey and based on the conclusions that we reached. We hope that these can contribute to improve the methodology of the English teachers with students of the public elementary schools.



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

# **1. METHODOLOGY**

## **1.1. DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH**

The group considered the present research work as a descriptive one, because the researchers did not have the opportunity to manipulate the variables. The group just described the results using the descriptive statistics representing them in tables and graphs that let us the interpretation of the field data.

## **1.2. METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

### **1.2.1. METHODS**

The main method that we used in this project research was the **scientific one** because it let us carry out a systematic, and ordered process to do a logical explanation of the relations that were established in the researched object and consequently we could derivate alternatives of solution to the found problem. As particular methods we used the descriptive, the analytical-synthetic and the explicative ones.

The **descriptive method** was used to describe the obtained results in the field research and it was also used to determine the methodology that the teachers of the English Language are applying into the Teaching

Learning Process and it let us observe the main techniques that they use in the development of the before mentioned process.

The **analytic-synthetic method** was used to analyze the obtained results through the research instruments; it was also used to make the interpretation of the data and to establish the conclusions based on the results of major tendency. It also helped us to find the methodology that the teachers use in the two researched public elementary schools.

The **explicative method** served to explain the relation that exist between the variables established in the researched object, to give our point of view according to the obtained results and to explain the theoretical referents about the teaching methods and techniques that the teachers use into the teaching-learning process of the English language.

It is important to mention that the descriptive statistics were used as a tool which facilitated the representation of the data in tables and graphs that let us the comprehension of the information.

### **1.2.2. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

To get the empiric information in the field work about the researched object we used the following techniques and instruments.

The **survey** to the teachers who teach the English language in the two mentioned elementary schools in order to know what kind of methods and techniques they apply in their daily practice and what the development of the main skills listening, speaking, reading and writing are, with the students of the researched schools.

It was applied to the students of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education to obtain information about the methods and techniques that their teachers use in the English classes and to establish the learning reached by them in the English language. It was applied through a questionnaire that was elaborated with closed questions about the indicators that guided our research work. To apply the survey we explained the purpose of the project and the intention of it. Especially with the students it was necessary to direct the development of the survey because some of students did not understand the questions, so that we assure the reliability of the data.

### **1.3. PROCEDURES**

To make the present research work we developed the following procedures:

To process the information we classified the information by variables and by hypothesis and then we processed it, following these steps:

- The tabulation of the data making use of the descriptive statistics for every closed question, keeping in mind their indicators that facilitated their interpretation. The tabulation of all the applied instruments let us a contrast of the information and the analysis of one indicator since different points of view.
- The organization of the empiric information was made according to the specific hypothesis that guided the classification of the questions by hypothesis.
- The Graphic representation of the empiric information in tables and graphs that let us visualize the data easily, and the tendency of the indicators in each variable.
- The analysis and interpretation of the empiric information stating the results in percentages and in the analysis of the data was necessary to check again the principles of the main categories developed in the theoretical frame.

- The formulation of conclusions was done with worthwhile judgments that were derived from the analysis and interpretation of the data and they were based on the specific objectives which have guided the research process.
- The verification of the hypothesis was done through the empiric method with a description of the indicators with major tendency and contrasting them with the information of the theoretical frame of the project.
- The elaboration of the final report was necessary to integrate all the components of the research process, intending the logic integration among them; this process required a new revision of the theme, objectives, hypothesis and theoretical frame so we got a good relation among them.
- To elaborate the report we took into account the guidelines given in the National University of Loja regulation about the Graduation process.

#### 1.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population that gave us the empiric information was constituted by all the English teachers that teach in the two researched schools. They are four; two belong to "Jose Alejandrino Velasco", and two to "Prof. Julio Ordoñez Espinoza" schools.

It is important to mention that we took the whole teachers' population because it is small.

Regarding to the students we took a sample of the ones who are in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of Basic Education of every researched school, because we considered that they were able to give real information so that we got a more reliable research work.

We show the population in the following chart:

Schools	6 <sup>th</sup> Year				7 <sup>th</sup> Year				TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	
"Alejandrino Velasco" School	16	29			24	22			<b>91</b>
"Julio Ordoñez" School	33	32	33	29	33	35	35		<b>230</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>321</b>

From this population we got the sample through the following formula:

Schools	6 <sup>th</sup> Year	7 <sup>th</sup> Year	TOTAL
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$$n = \frac{PQ \times N}{(N-1) \frac{E^2}{K^2} - 0,25}$$

PQ = First quartile (0,25)

N= Population

N = Sample

K = Constant of proportionality (2)

E = Error of sample (10%, 0,1)

$$n = \frac{0,25 \times 321}{(0,1)^2 \frac{320}{(2)^2} - 0,25}$$

$$n = \frac{80,25}{2,95}$$

$$n = \frac{80,25}{4}$$

$$n = \frac{80,25}{0,74}$$

$$n = \mathbf{108}$$

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	
"Alejandrino Velasco" School	8	8			8	7		31
"Julio Ordoñez" School	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	77
<b>TOTAL</b>								108

Moreover we applied the surveys to 108 students of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of Basic Education.

To do the sample distribution we applied the below formula and the result must be multiplied by every course total.

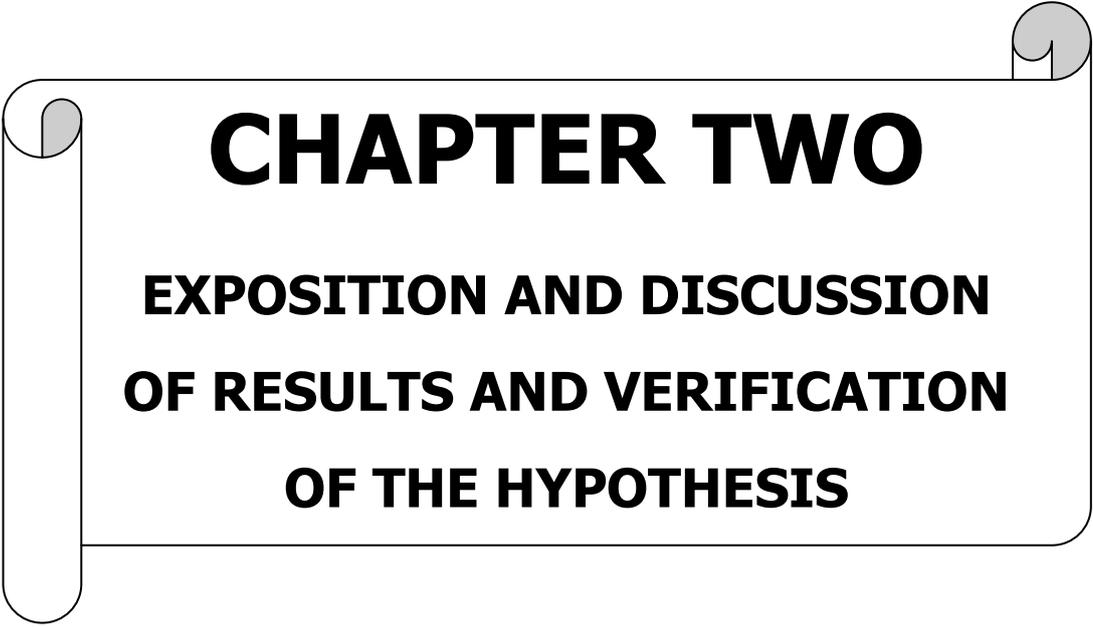
$$n = \frac{n}{N}$$

$$n = \frac{108}{321}$$

$$n = 0,336$$

$$n = 0,336 \times 91$$

$$n = 31$$



# **CHAPTER TWO**

**EXPOSITION AND DISCUSSION  
OF RESULTS AND VERIFICATION  
OF THE HYPOTHESIS**

## 2. EXPOSITION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND HYPOTHESIS VERIFICATION

### 2.1. TEACHER'S SURVEY

#### 1. What aspects do you use to teach English?

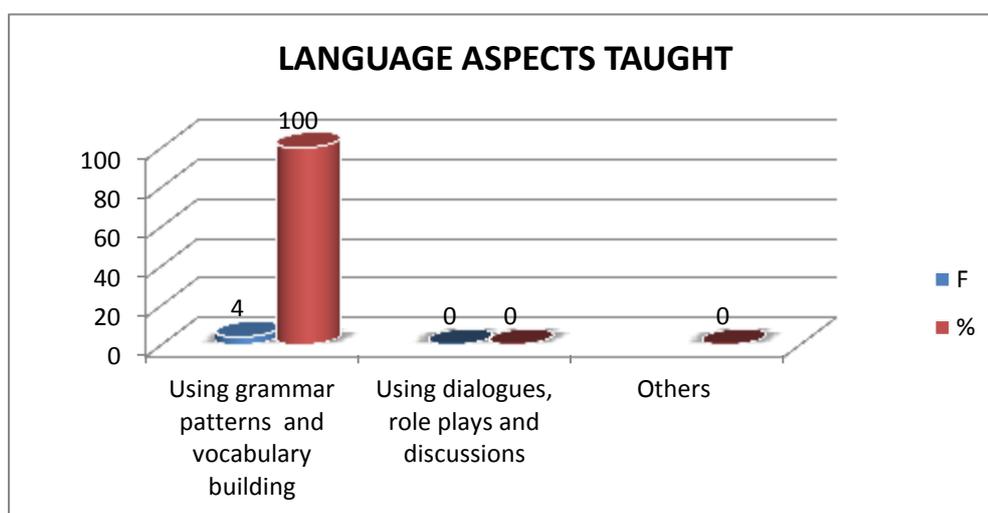
##### a. Statistics Table No. 1

LANGUAGE ASPECTS TAUGHT	F	%
Using grammar patterns and vocabulary building	4	100
Using dialogues, role plays and discussions	0	0
Others	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

##### b. Graphic Representation



### **c. Interpretation**

As the results show us, 100% of the teachers answered that they use grammar patterns and vocabulary building to teach the English language.

The traditional methodology is evidenced in the use of patterns to teach the grammar, drills to teach vocabulary and reading as a base of the translation. It develops the students` minds "mentally" through foreign language learning, and to build in them the kinds of grammar, reading, and vocabulary and translation skills necessary to pass any one of a variety of mandatory written tests required at high school or tertiary level so that we can say that this methodology is characteristic in the researched schools.

## **2. Which of the following methods do you use to teach English?**

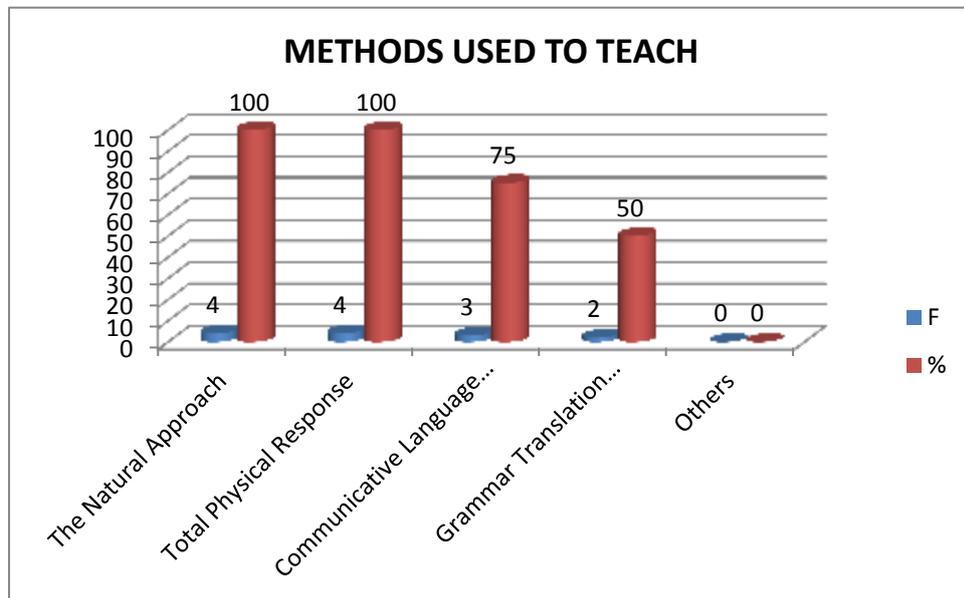
### **a. Statistics Table No. 2**

<b>METHODS USED TO TEACH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
The Natural Approach	4	100
Total Physical Response	4	100
Communicative Language Teaching	3	75

Grammar Translation Method	2	50
Others	0	0

**Source:** Teachers' survey  
**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

100% of the surveyed teachers said that they worked with the natural approach and total physical response, 75% of them pointed the communicative language teaching and 25% indicated that they used the grammar translation method.

Even when most of the teachers manifested that they work with communicative methodology, we know that if they use the patterns, drills and memorization in the teaching learning process they are working with traditional methodology.

### 3. Do you teach grammatical structures to teach English?

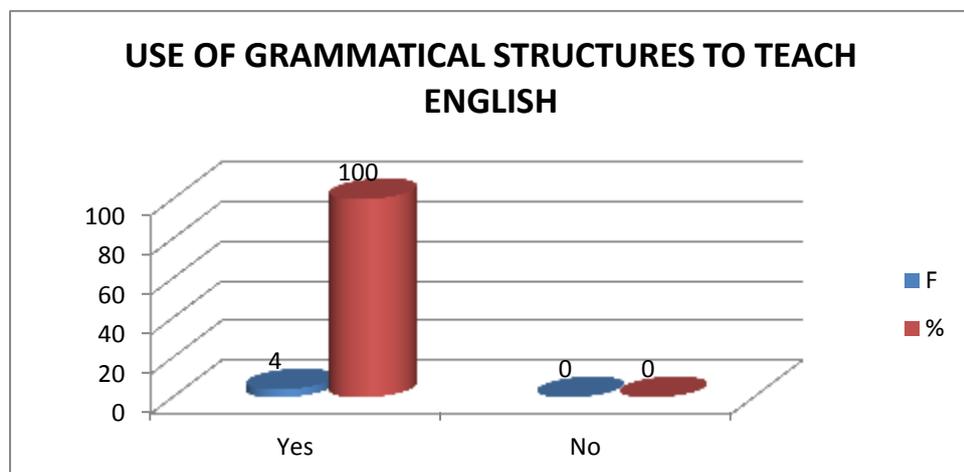
#### a. Statistics Table No. 3

<b>USE OF GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES TO TEACH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

#### b. Graphic Representation



### c. Interpretation

100% of the surveyed teachers answered that they teach grammatical structures into the English teaching learning process.

The main characteristics of the traditional grammar translation method is that long elaborated explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given and the grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words. Therefore if the teachers teach grammatical structures we can say that they are using the traditional methodology.

#### 4. Do you translate while you are teaching the class?

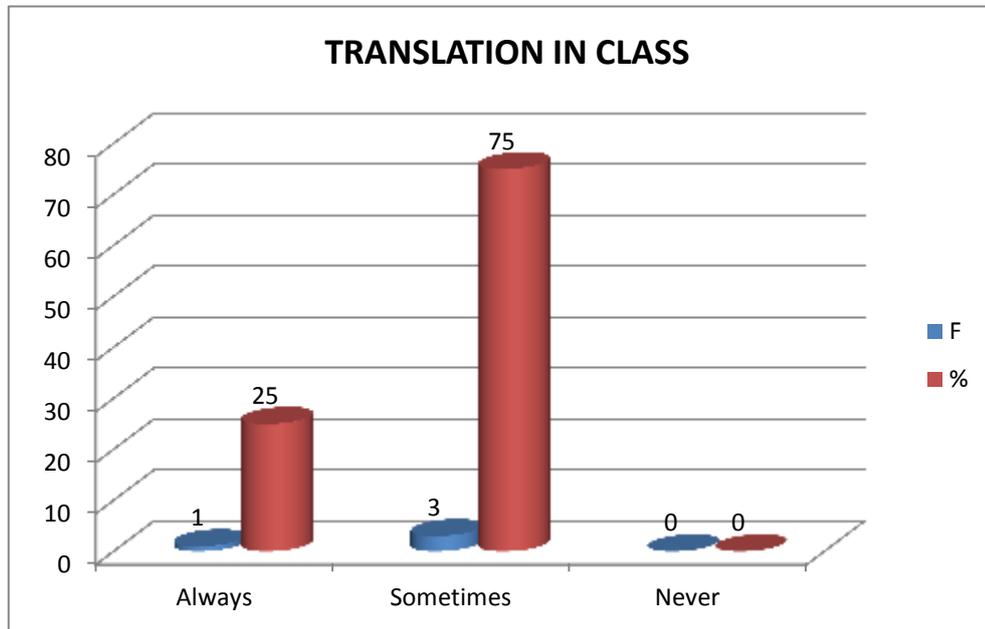
##### a. Statistics Table No. 4

<b>TRANSLATION IN CLASS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Always	1	25
Sometimes	3	75
Never	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

## b. Graphic Representation



## c. Interpretation

As we can see 75% of the teachers said that they sometimes translate while they are teaching, 25% of them answered that they always translated because according to their opinion translation with children is necessary.

In traditional methodology classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language. So that the students are not used to listen to the English language during the class neither they have the chance to use the language communicatively.

## 5. What percentage of language do you use in class?

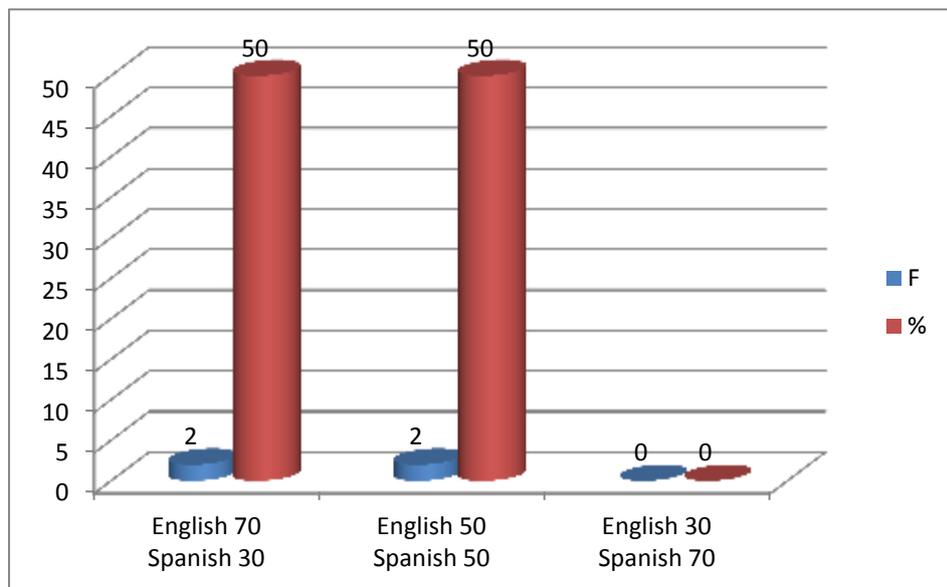
### a. Statistics Table No. 5

<b>PERCENTAGE OF LANGUAGE USED IN CLASS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
English 70 Spanish 30	2	50
English 50 Spanish 50	2	50
English 30 Spanish 70	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

### b. Graphic Representation



**c. Interpretation**

50% of the teachers said that they use seventy percent of English and thirty percent of Spanish; and the other 50% manifested that they used fifty percent of English and 50% of Spanish.

Translating target language to native language is always used during the class and this language learning experience is uninspiring, rather boring, or even left the learners with a sense of frustration when they traveled to countries where the language was used only to find they couldn't understand what people were saying and struggled mightily to express themselves at the most basic level. For this reason we can say that using translation in the class is not effective especially with children because they are able to understand anything using other teaching techniques without translation.

**6. How often do you practice the listening and speaking skills with your students?**

**a. Statistics Table No. 6**

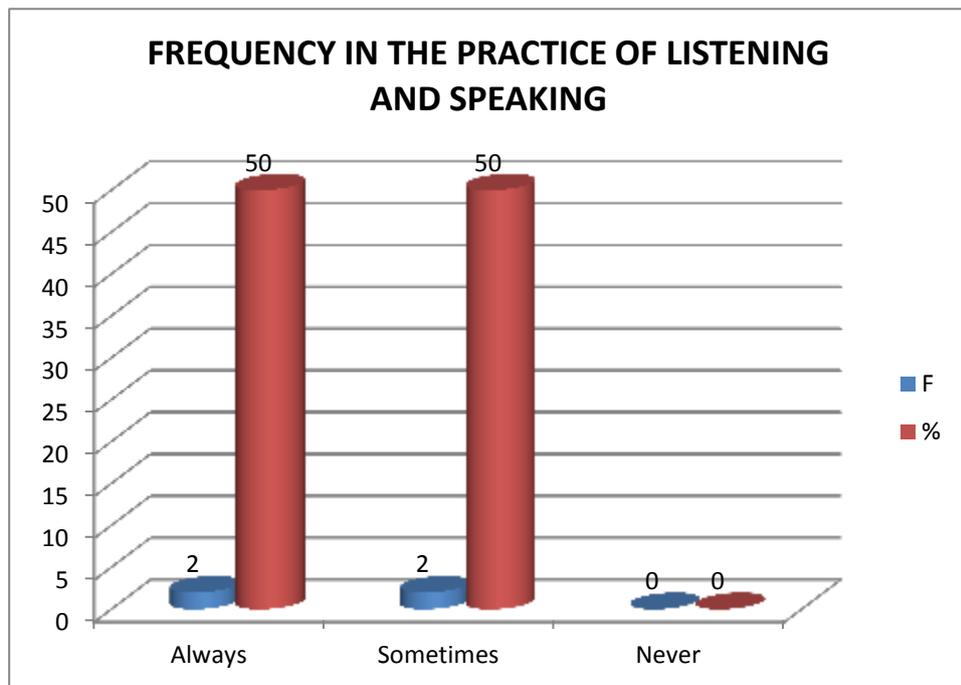
<b>FREQUENCY IN THE PRACTICE OF LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
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Always	2	50
Sometimes	2	50
Never	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

50% of the teachers said that they always practiced listening and speaking skills and 50% of them indicated that they sometimes practiced these skills with their students, because according to their

opinion they do not count with audio material to practice these skills.

If the teachers do not work with dialogues, role plays or discussions that means that they are not developing the speaking skills and if they do not count with audio material neither they would be able to develop the listening skill. Learning a foreign language implies listening to real and authentic language. However, in the researched schools the teachers do not offer the students the opportunity to listen different accents of the English language.

## 7. How often do you practice the reading and writing skills?

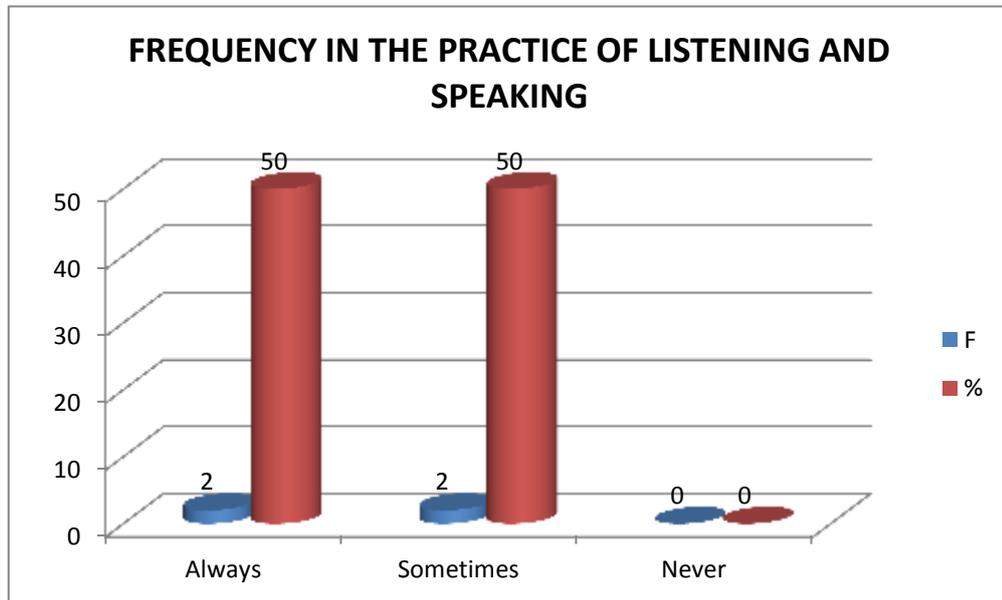
### a. Statistics Table No. 7

<b>FREQUENCY IN THE PRACTICE OF READING AND WRITING SKILLS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Always	2	50
Sometimes	2	50
Never	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

50% of the teachers said that they always practiced the listening and speaking skills with their students and the other 50% of them told us that they just sometimes practiced these skills.

The development of the listening and speaking skills involves a hard process where the students have the opportunity of listening to different accents of the real language, so they can distinguish and understand whenever they listen to English and they must be able to answer managing a high level of language. This aspect goes right to the heart of communication itself, stressing the dual roles

of "receiver" and "sender" in any communicative situation in which the interaction creates the "negotiation between interlocutors" which in turn produces meaning (semantics).

**8. Which of the following techniques do you use to teach the English class?**

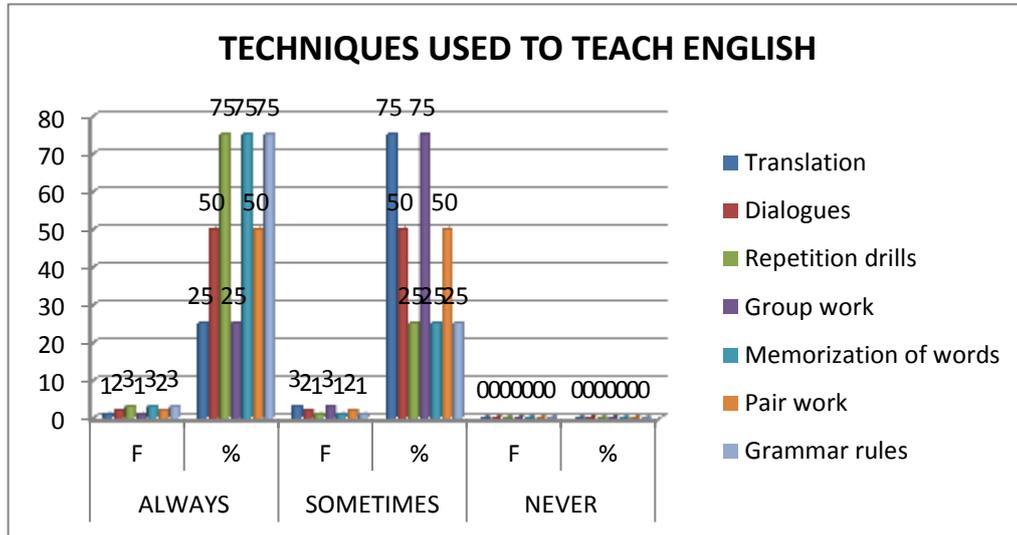
**a. Statistics Table No. 8**

TECHNIQUES USED TO TEACH ENGLISH	ALWAYS		SOMETIMES		NEVER	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Translation	1	25	3	75	0	0
Dialogues	2	50	2	50	0	0
Repetition drills	3	75	1	25	0	0
Group work	1	25	3	75	0	0
Memorization of words	3	75	1	25	0	0
Pair work	2	50	2	50	0	0
Grammar rules	3	75	1	25	0	0

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

## b. Graphic Representation



## c. Interpretation

The results show that 75% of the surveyed teachers always apply repetition drills, memorization of words and grammar rules while the same percentage of the teachers said that they sometimes used the techniques of dialogues and pair work. 50% of the teachers answered that they always used dialogues and pair work but the other 50% manifested that these techniques are used just sometimes. 25% of them pointed out that they always applied translation and group work and 25% of them indicated that they sometimes worked with repetition drills, memorization of word and grammar rules.

The common or typical techniques closely associated with the Grammar Translation Method are repetition drills and memorization of lists of isolated words. Long elaborated explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given and the grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words. Therefore if these are the techniques most used by the teachers in the researched institutions we can say that they are using traditional methodology to teach the English language.

## 9. How do you consider the learning of the English Language of your students?

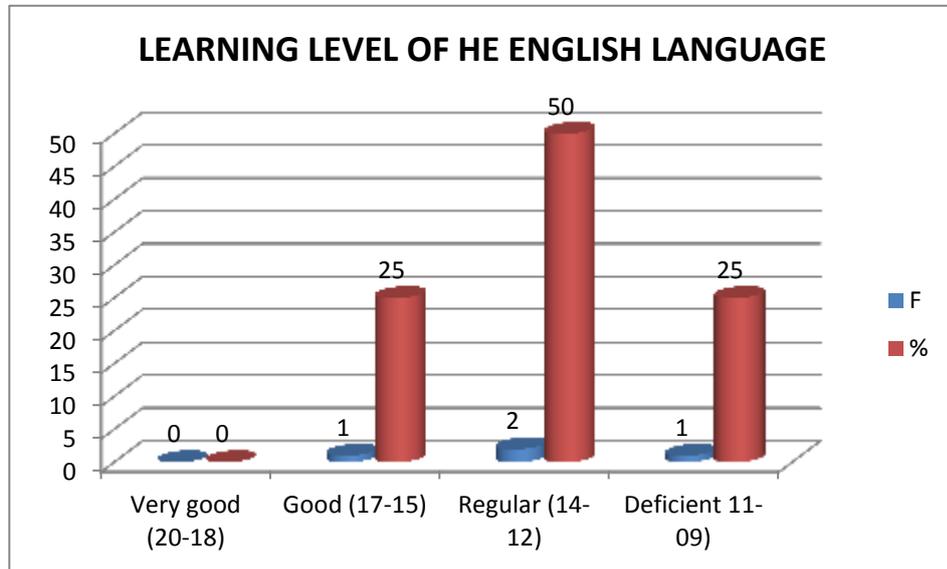
### a. Statistics Table No. 9

<b>LEARNING LEVEL OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Very good (20-18)	0	0
Good (17-15)	1	25
Regular (14-12)	2	50
Deficient (11-09)	1	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

## b. Graphic Representation



## c. Interpretation

50% of the teachers positioned their students in a regular level of knowledge of the English language, 25% of them said that these students are good in the language management and the other 25% of them placed their students as regular in the English language management.

The level of knowledge of the English language in most of the students is regular and the unique explanation is that, the methodology that the teachers apply is not effective. Many people, who have learned foreign languages in ancient times, remember that this method is not appropriate because it uses the translation of books which is not recommendable. Nowadays there are new methodologies and theories that can be practiced by the teachers if

they want to learn enable the students to speak the English Language.

## 10. What's the development of the skills of the English Language of yours students?

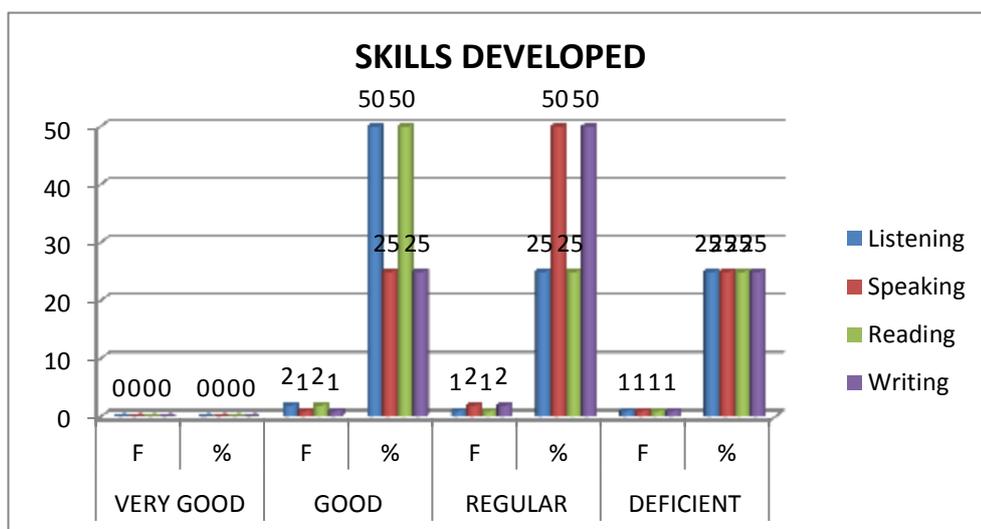
### a. Statistics Table No. 10

SKILLS DEVELOPED	VERY GOOD		GOOD		REGULAR		DEFICIENT		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Listening	0	0	2	50	1	25	1	25	4
Speaking	0	0	1	25	2	50	1	25	4
Reading	0	0	2	50	1	25	1	25	4
Writing	0	0	1	25	2	50	1	25	0

**Source:** Teachers' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

### b. Graphic Representation



**c. Interpretation**

The graph show that 50% of the teachers said that their students are good at listening and reading the English language and 25% of them also answered that the students are good at listening and reading skills. By other side 50% of the teachers considered that the students are regular at speaking and writing and 25% of them said that the students are regular at listening and reading. And the last 25% of the teachers manifested the students are deficient at the four skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

## 2.2. STUDENTS' SURVEY

### 1. What aspects does your teacher use to teach English?

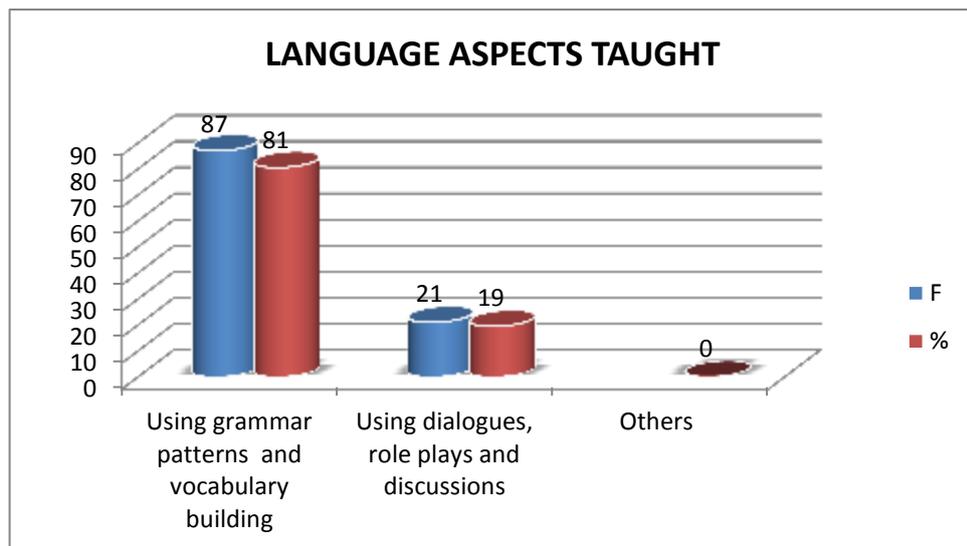
#### a. Statistics Table No. 1

LANGUAGE ASPECTS TAUGHT	F	%
Using grammar patterns and vocabulary building	87	81
Using dialogues, role plays and discussions	21	19
Others	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

#### b. Graphic Representation



### **c. Interpretation**

According to the results 81% of the students answered that the teachers use grammar patterns and vocabulary building as the most taught aspect of the English language while 19% of them told us that their teachers used dialogues, role plays and discussions.

We can analyze that the teachers really do use the traditional methodology in the teaching because the main characteristic of it is the teaching of grammar patterns, rules and their exceptions, then applying them to new examples and drills. Meanwhile the communicative methodology emphasizes the use of the language in real situations so that the students can develop the four basic linguistic skills.

## **2. Which of the following methods does your teacher use to teach English?**

### **a. Statistics Table No. 2**

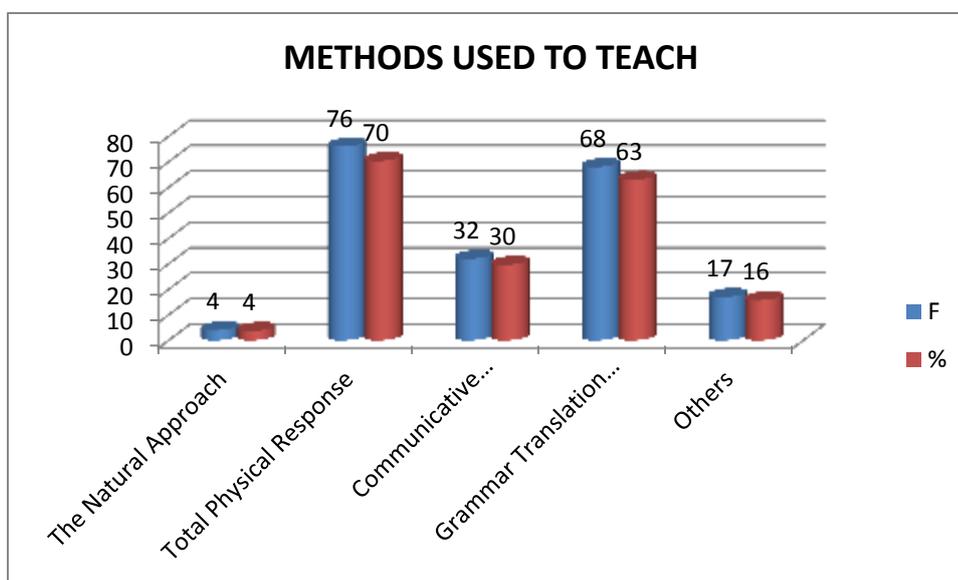
<b>METHODS USED TO TEACH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
The Natural Approach	4	4
Total Physical Response	76	70
Communicative Language Teaching	32	30

Grammar Translation Method	68	63
Others	17	16

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

## b. Graphic Representation



## c. Interpretation

70% of the students answered that their teachers used the total physical response method, 63% replied that the teachers applied the grammar translation method, 30% of them said the teachers used the communicative method and 16% indicated that the teachers used other methods in the teaching learning process of the English language.

Latin has been studied for centuries, with the prime objectives of learning how to read classical Latin texts, understanding the fundamentals of grammar and translation, and gaining insights into some important foreign influences Latin has had on the development of other European languages. The method used to teach it overwhelmingly bore those objectives in mind, and came to be known (appropriately!) as the ***Classical Method***. It is now more commonly known in Foreign Language Teaching circles as the **Grammar Translation Method**.

**3. Does your teacher teach grammatical structures to teach English?**

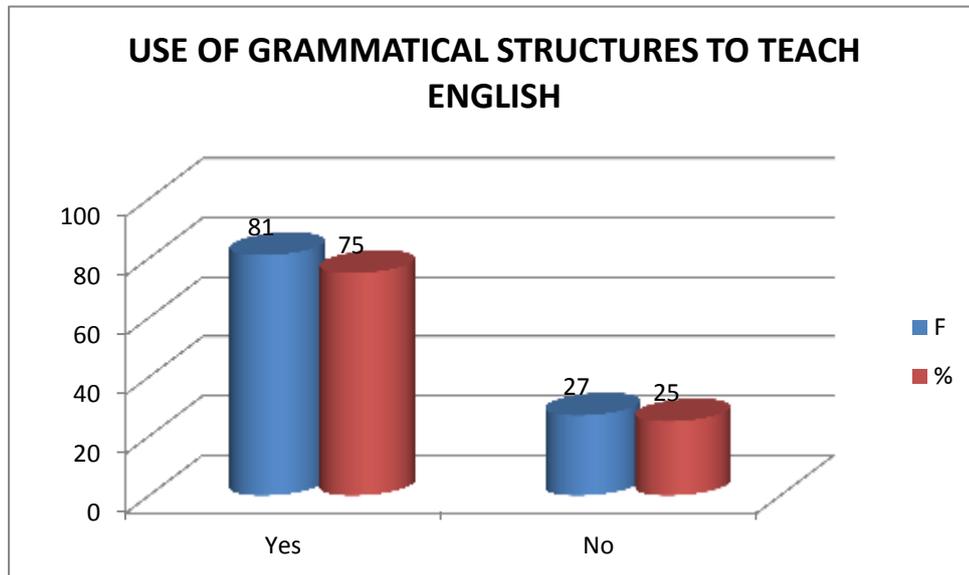
**a. Statistics Table No. 3**

<b>USE OF GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES TO TEACH</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	81	75
No	27	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

75% of the students indicated that the teachers used grammatical structures to teach the English language and 25% of them answered that the teachers do not use grammar rules in the teaching learning process of the English language.

In a traditional way of teaching the English language the grammar rules and structures are essential because according to this theory they give the students the key to make fixed sentences using patterns and drills, but such assertion is probably because most teachers and students are even unaware that the method has a name and can be compared alongside other methods.

#### 4. Does your teacher translate while he/she is teaching?

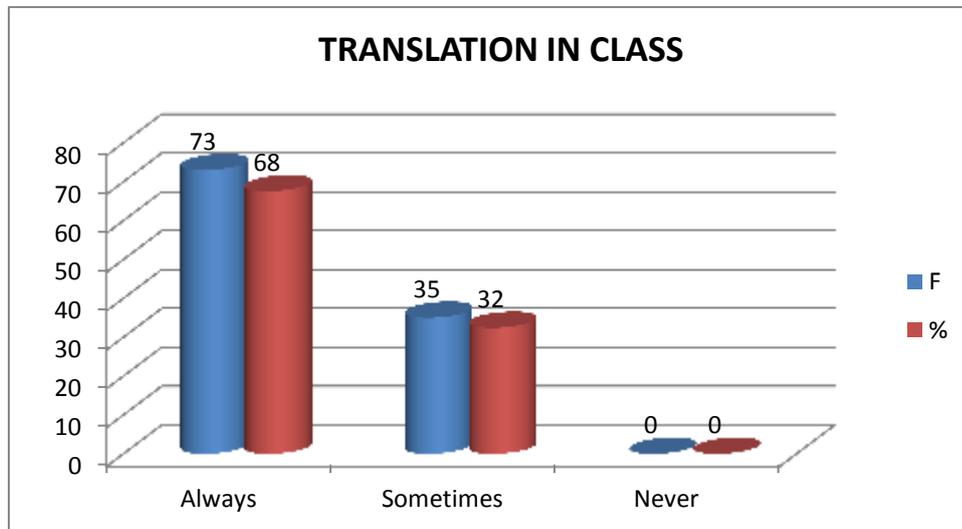
##### a. Statistics Table No. 4

TRANSLATION IN CLASS	F	%
Always	73	68
Sometimes	35	32
Never	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

##### b. Graphic Representation



##### c. Interpretation

According to the results 68% of the students answered that their teachers always use translation in class and the other 32% on the students told us that the teachers sometimes translated in class.

Some teachers who use the traditional methodology might tell you that it is the most effective way to prepare students for "global communication" by beginning with the key skills of reading and grammar. Others may even go so far as to admit that they think it is the "least stressful" for students, because almost all the teaching occurs in L1 and students are rarely called upon to speak the language in any communicative fashion. Therefore we assure that the methodology that the teachers use has characteristics of traditional.

**5. What percentage of language does your teacher use in class?**

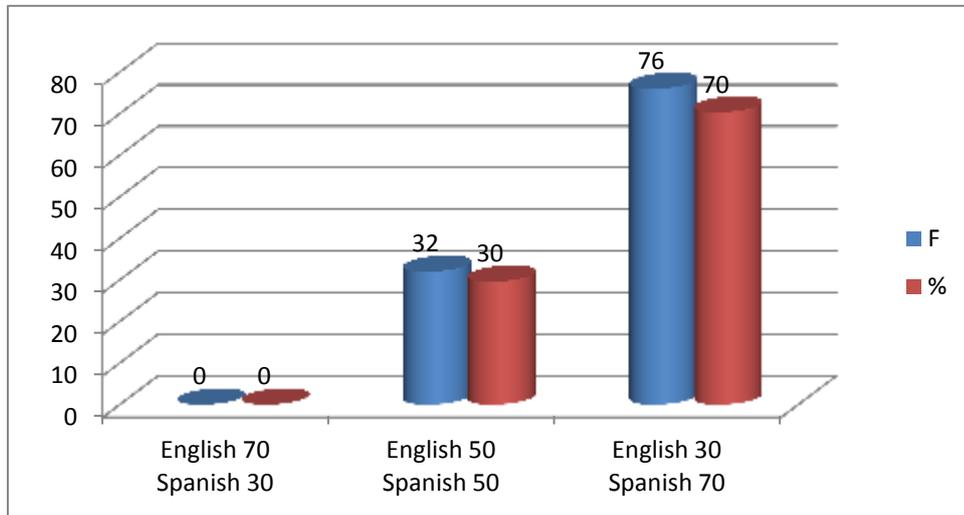
**a. Statistics Table No. 5**

<b>PERCENTAGE OF LANGUAGE USED IN CLASS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
English 70 Spanish 30	0	0
English 50 Spanish 50	32	30
English 30 Spanish 70	76	70
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

## b. Graphic Representation



## c. Interpretation

70% of the surveyed students said that the teachers use thirty percent of English and seventy per cent of Spanish and 50% of them answered that the teachers use fifty per cent of English and 50% of Spanish.

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979:3), the key features of the Grammar Translation Method are that classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language and much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words for that reason the learning of the English language with this method is so hard and if the teachers of the researched schools work with the grammar translation method, it is impossible that the students learn through it.

6. How often does your teacher practice the listening and speaking skills with the students?

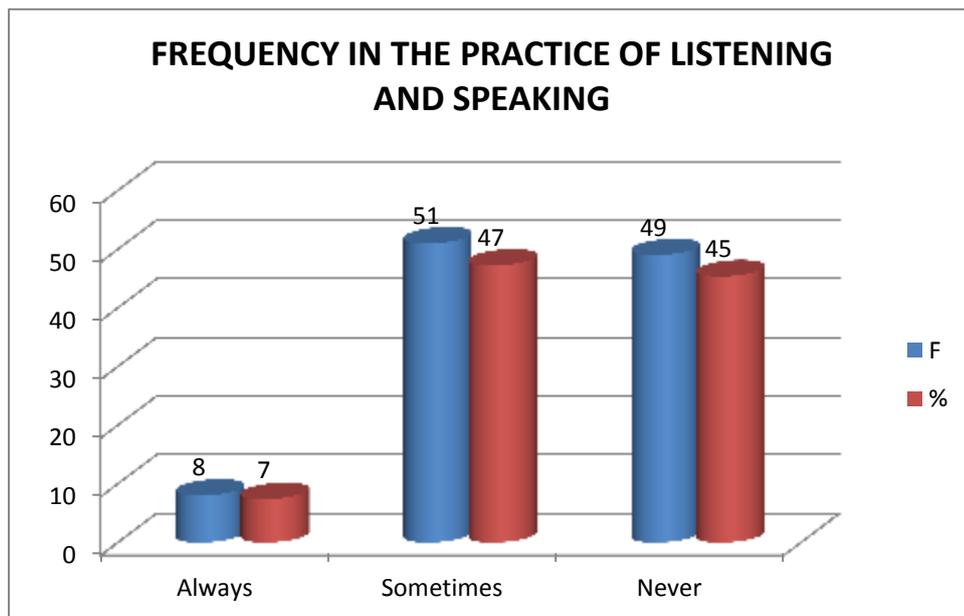
a. Statistics Table No. 6

<b>FREQUENCY IN THE PRACTICE OF LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Always	8	7
Sometimes	51	47
Never	49	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

b. Graphic Representation



**c. Interpretation**

The graph representation shows that 47% of the students indicated that they sometimes practiced the listening and speaking skills and 45% answered that they never worked on these skills.

The grammar translation method states that listening to and speaking skills must be developed through listening to their own voices on the tape in a relaxed and reflective environment and the students work in small groups to create new sentences using the transcript, afterwards sharing them with the rest of the class. However through this methodology the students do not have the opportunity to be exposed to real and authentic language where they can recognize other accents of the English language and this is impossible if teachers do not count with audio material to work in elementary schools.

**7. How often do you practice the reading and writing skills?**

**a. Statistics Table No. 7**

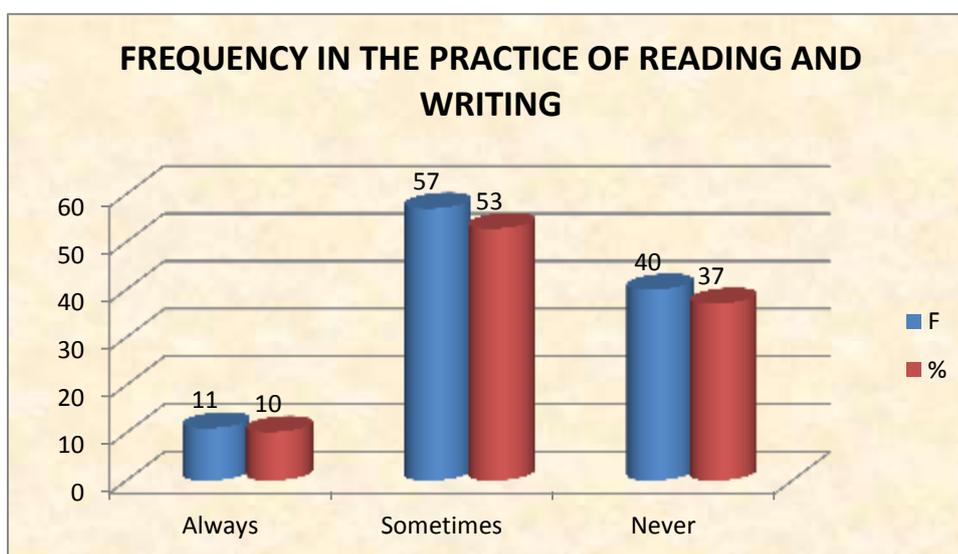
<b>FREQUENCY IN THE PRACTICE OF READING AND WRITING SKILLS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Always	11	10

Sometimes	57	53
Never	40	37
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

### b. Graphic Representation



### c. Interpretation

According to the results 53% of the students told us that they sometimes practiced the reading and writing skills, 37% of them answered that they never worked with these skills and only 10% of them said that these skills are always practiced in class.

It is obvious that the teachers do not work by skills even when their teaching is based on the grammar translation method. It is evident

that the most relevant characteristic of their methodology is the grammar and not the reading because the before mentioned method states the learning of the English language through the reading of difficult classical texts at early reading comprehension questions for example, finding information in a passage, making inferences and relating to personal experience.

**8. Which of the following techniques does your teacher use to teach the English class?**

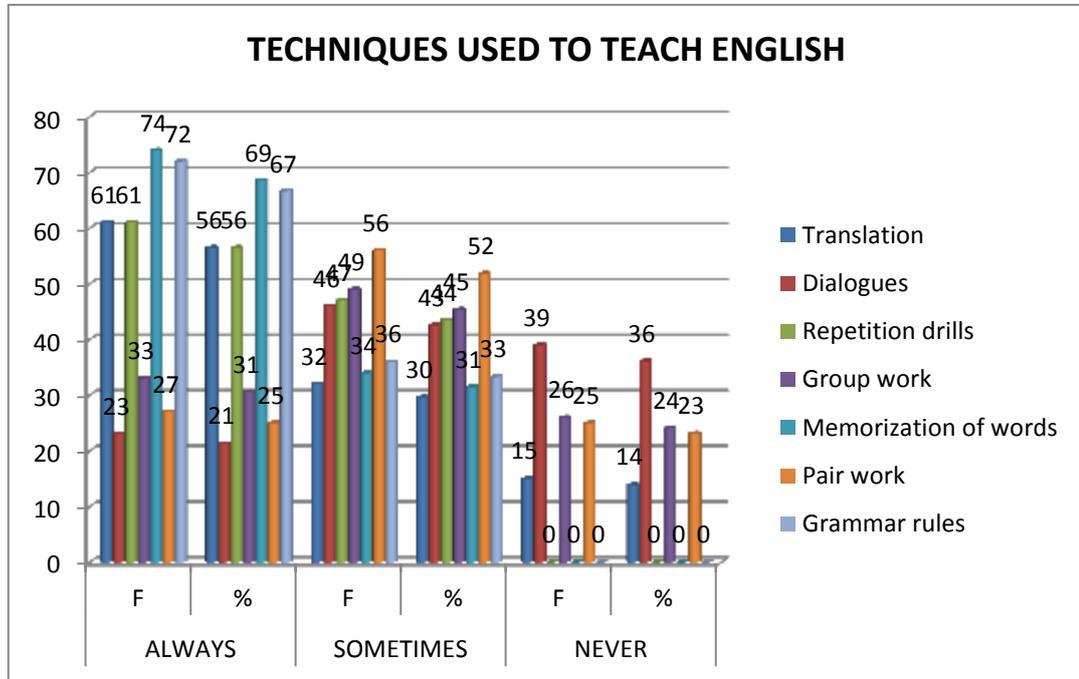
**a. Statistics Table No. 8**

TECHNIQUES USED TO TEACH ENGLISH	ALWAYS		SOMETIMES		NEVER		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Translation	61	56	32	30	15	14	108
Dialogues	23	21	46	43	39	36	108
Repetition drills	61	56	47	44	0	0	108
Group work	33	31	49	45	26	24	108
Memorization of words	74	69	34	31	0	0	108
Pair work	27	25	56	52	25	23	108
Grammar rules	72	67	36	33	0	0	108

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

According to the results 56% of the students answered that their teachers always use the translation as a teaching technique, 30% of them told us this technique is sometimes applied by the teachers and 14% of the surveyed students said that translation is never used by their teachers.

21% of the students told us that dialogues are always used by the teachers, 43% stated that they are sometimes used and 36% said that dialogues are never used.

56% of the students indicated that the repetition drills are always used by the teachers and 44% of them manifested that this technique is just sometimes used.

With regards to group work, 31% of the students said that this technique is always used by the teachers, 45% of them assumed that the technique is sometimes used and 24% of them indicated that it is never used in class.

69% of the surveyed students answered that the teachers always used the memorization of words to teach vocabulary and 31% of them said that his techniques is only sometimes used and similar percentages we obtained in the application of the grammar rules in the teaching of the English language.

Finally 25% of the students said that the teachers always apply the pair work technique, 52% instead answered that it is sometimes applied and 23% of them told us that it is never used by the teachers in the English class.

As we can see, the techniques most used by the teachers in the researched schools are: translation, repetition drills, memorization

of words and grammar rules, which are typical of the grammar translation method because it requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers. They do not need knowledge of diverse techniques to teach the language because the process of learning is common and repetitive every day. However we can say that it is not recommended to teach children because it does not consider the different learning styles of the students neither their necessities of learning.

**9. How do you consider your learning level in the English Language?**

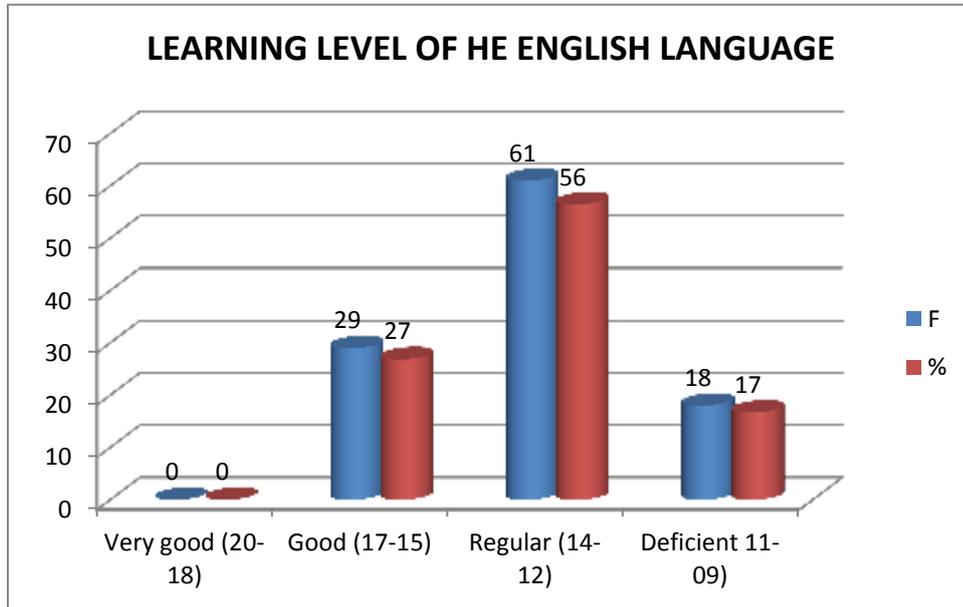
**a. Statistics Table No. 9**

<b>LEARNING LEVEL OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Very good (20-18)	0	0
Good (17-15)	29	27
Regular (14-12)	61	56
Deficient 11-09)	18	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

**b. Graphic Representation**



**c. Interpretation**

The percentages evidence that 56% of students placed themselves in a regular level of knowledge of the English language, 27% of them positionated in a good level and 17% of them told us that they are deficient in the English language because they just have got few hour of English weekly.

It is important to remark the low level of knowledge that the students get at school, could be given by many reasons, maybe they do not get enough class periods but we think that the methodology used by the teachers is an important factor that we should keep in mind if we want to change these results.

## 10. What's the development of your skills of the English Language?

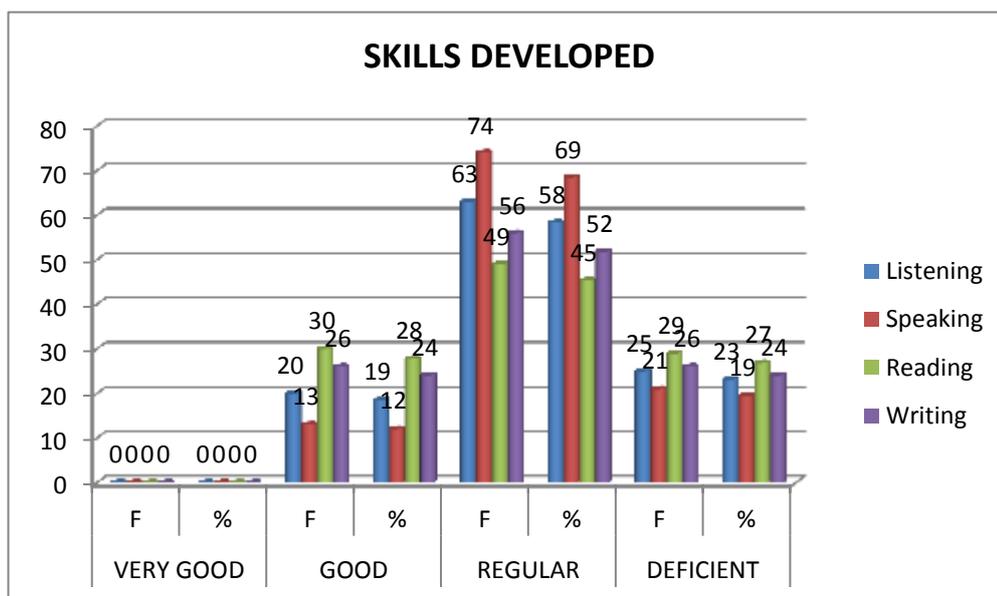
### a. Statistics Table No. 10

SKILLS DEVELOPED	VERY GOOD		GOOD		REGULAR		DEFICIENT		TOTAL
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Listening	0	0	20	19	63	58	25	23	108
Speaking	0	0	13	12	74	69	21	19	108
Reading	0	0	30	28	49	45	29	27	108
Writing	0	0	26	24	56	52	26	24	108

**Source:** Students' survey

**Elaboration:** Research team

### b. Graphic Representation



**c. Interpretation**

The data show that 43% of the students qualified themselves as regular in the listening skill, 23% of them told us that they are deficient in listening and only 19% answered that they are good in it.

With regards to the speaking skill, 69% of the students indicated that they are regular in this skill, 19% said that they are deficient and 12% pointed that they are good at speaking.

By the other hand 45% of the students also said that they are regular at reading, 28% indicated that they are good at reading and 27% manifested that they are deficient on it.

Finally 52% of the students answered that they are regular at writing, 24% stated that they are good and 24% also indicated that they are deficient in this skill.

According to the results most of the students at the researched schools are regular and deficient in the four basic skills of the English language. It is the reason why the group thinks that the teachers do not consider specialized techniques to develop the four

English language skills which are: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

## **2.3. CONTRASTING AND VERIFICATION OF THE HYPOTHESIS**

### **2.3.1. HYPOTHESIS ONE**

To contrast and verify the hypothesis that our group have stated in the project; we used the obtained results from the logic analysis of the information gathered as from the teachers as the students of the researched schools; this information have let us prove if the hypotheses are positive or negative and after this, we have been able to establish the respective conclusions and suggest the best recommendations to improve the methodology to teach English and consequently improve the Teaching Learning process.

#### **a) Statement**

The methodology used by the English teachers has characteristics of the traditional didactic what limits the learning of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary Schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

#### **b) Demonstration**

The first hypothesis has two variables the methodology used by the English teachers which is the independent one and the second variable

that is the learning of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city, which is the dependent one.

This hypothesis has been proved through the following questions:

In the question number **ONE**, 81% of the students' and 100% of the teachers' answered that the teachers' methodology includes the use of grammar patterns and vocabulary building, which are characteristics of the traditional didactic.

In the question number **TWO**, where we asked about the methods most used to teach the English classes, even when 100 of the teachers said that they used the natural approach and the total physical response, 63% of the students indicated that the teachers also use the grammar translation method in their classes.

In the question number **THREE**, to see if the teachers used grammatical structures to teach English, where 100% of the teachers and 75% of the students answered that the teachers do use grammatical structures to teach English which means that they teach using the grammar translation method.

The question number **FOUR**, was done to prove if the teachers translated while they are teaching the English language and 75% of the teachers said that they just sometimes translated whereas 68% of the students answered that their teachers always translated while they are teaching. These results confirm our hypothesis that the methodology used by the teachers has characteristics of the traditional didactic.

In the question number **FIVE**, where we asked about the percentage of the Spanish and English that the teachers speak during the class 50% of the teachers said that they speak seventy per cent of English and 30% of Spanish but on the other hand 70% of the students answered that the teachers speak thirty percent of English and seventy percent of Spanish during a class, which verifies our hypothesis that the teachers use traditional methodology to teach the English language in the researched schools.

### **c) Decision**

The research group based on the obtained results and after the demonstration with the respective questions, accepts the first hypothesis because we have proved that the methodology used by the English teachers has characteristics of the traditional didactic, which limits the

learning of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

### **2.3.2. HYPOTHESIS TWO**

#### **a) Statement**

The techniques used by the teachers are not in relation with the development of the English Language skills in the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

#### **b) Demonstration**

As we can see in the second hypothesis we also have two variables the first one, the techniques used by the teachers, which is the independent variable and the second one that is the development of the English Language skills of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city, which is the dependent one.

So to prove this hypothesis we have the following questions:

The question number **SIX**, that refers to the practice of the listening and speaking skills 50% of the teachers answered that they always practice

these skills. However, 47% of the students told us that the teachers just sometimes practiced the listening and speaking skills.

In the question number **SEVEN**, was also about the frequency in the practice of the reading and writing skills and 50% of the teachers answered that they always practiced these skills but 53% of the students said the opposite. That the teachers just sometimes practiced these skills.

In the question number **EIGHT**, we asked about the techniques that the teachers use in their classes where the major percentages of teachers and students placed the use of translation, repetition drills, memorization of words and grammar rules, which are related to the traditional methodology.

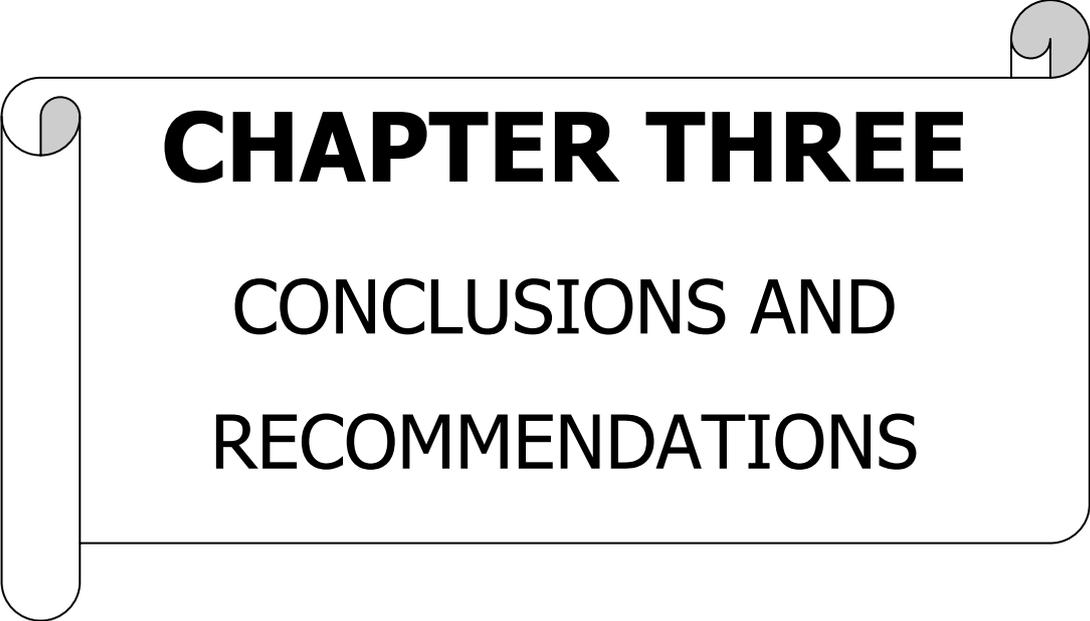
In the question number **NINE**, we asked about the learning level of the English language with the students and 50% of the teachers and 56% of the students placed their level of English in regular so that, we can say that the methodology used by the teachers is traditional and it is not giving good results.

The question number **TEN**, to see if the teachers have developed the four basic skills of the English language and the major percentages 69% and

58% of the students placed themselves in a regular level in all the skills which means that the techniques that the teachers apply are not in relation to the development of the English language skills.

### **c) Decision**

With the results in the field work that the group have been able to get through the survey applied to the teachers as well as to the students, the group accept the second hypothesis of this research work which says that the techniques used by the teachers are not in relation with the development of the English Language skills of the students at "Alejandrino Velasco" and Julio Ordoñez" public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.



# **CHAPTER THREE**

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

After we have finished our research work about the methodology that the teachers use to guide the English teaching learning process with the students of "Alejandrino Velasco" and "Julio Ordoñez" public elementary Schools of the Loja city. During the School Year 2008 – 2009., we have been able to get to the following conclusions:

#### **3.1. CONCLUSIONS**

- ✓ Most of the teachers of the researched schools use the traditional grammar because they apply grammar patterns and build up vocabulary through memorization, which are aspects of the grammar translation method.
  
- ✓ The translation is predominant in the methodology that the teachers of the researched schools use during the English teaching learning process, which is a characteristic of traditional methodology.
  
- ✓ Most of the class is taught in the mother tongue, which is not advisable because the students are not exposed to the target language and it is categorized as traditional methodology that does not give good results.

- ✓ The techniques that the teachers use are repetition drills, memorization of words and grammar patterns to teach the English language and they are related to the grammar translation method which is considered as a traditional methodology.
  
- ✓ The techniques that the teachers apply to teach the English language are not in relation to the development of the four basic skills that are: listening, speaking, reading and writing because they are traditional.
  
- ✓ The level of the English learning and the development of the English language skills of the students in the researched schools is placed in regular which evidence that the methodology that the teachers are using is traditional.

### **3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ✓ That the teachers should emphasize other aspects of the English language such as: dialogues, role plays, discussions and so on, which point out to the learning of the language communicatively.

- ✓ That the teachers must eliminate the translation of their methodology because this methodology does not give good results and interferes in the learning of the English language.
  
- ✓ That the teachers must take their classes totally in the English language because it helps the children with acquisition and exposure to the target language consequently in learning it.
  
- ✓ That the teachers must change the techniques that they use by ones which are communicative and give the students the opportunity of talking and managing the target language.
  
- ✓ That the authorities look for training for the teacher of the English language because they must use techniques that are related to the development of the English language skills.
  
- ✓ That the teachers must change their methodology and techniques in order to improve the English learning and to reach a good level in the development of the four basic skills of the same one.

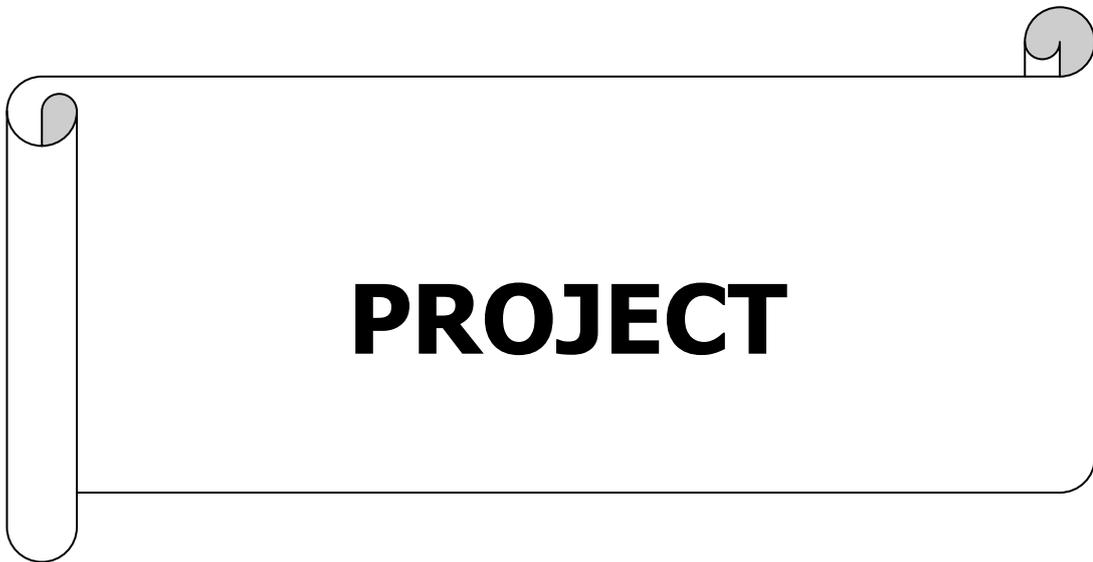
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## 6. ANNEXES



## **1. THEME.**

**ANALYSIS OF THE METHODOLOGY USED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS TO GUIDE THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS WITH THE STUDENTS OF “ALEJANDRINO VELASCO” AND “JULIO ORDOÑEZ” PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF THE LOJA CITY. DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2008 – 2009.**

# **1. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

## **2.1. BACKGROUND**

The present research work will be carried out in two public elementary schools of the Loja city which are: Alejandrino Velasco and Julio Ordoñez Espinoza. These have been chosen because we think that they are strategically located so that the information that we will get is so important.

The main objective of the present research work is to determine the methodology that the teachers use to develop the teaching – learning process of the English Language in the two before mentioned Public Elementary Schools of the Loja city.

There are 46 public elementary schools in Loja city, which are distributed in four parishes: in the “Sagrario” Parish there are eleven schools, in “San Sebastián” Parish there are twelve, in Sucre Parish there are fourteen, and in The Valle Parish there are nine Public Elementary Schools.

First, we have the “José Alejandrino Velasco” Mixed Elementary School, which is a public one located in the Northwest of our city, It is in Manuel Carrion Pinzano neighborhood, Sucre Parish. The student’s population in the present school year is 307 children distributed in two parallels for each basic year from first to seventh year of basic education .It has 15 full time teachers and 4 part time ones. It has two teachers who take two hours of English Language per week in each class of basic education.

Next, we have the “Julio Ordoñez Espinoza” Mixed Elementary School, before called “Jose Angel Palacios N°1 Male School,” which is a public one situated in the North centre of Loja, in “Juan de Salinas” neighborhood which belongs to the “Sagrario” Parish. Its student’s population in the current school year is 682

children, distributed in three parallels for each basic's year from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education. It has 30 full time teachers and 5 part time ones. It has two teachers, who take two hours of English Language per week in each class of basic education.

Finally it is important to mention that all the institutions object of this research have hired English teachers, who are monthly paid according to a voluntary allowance given by the family parents who have children in those schools.

## **2.2. *CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RESEARCH OBJECT***

The English Language is becoming the first language of the world so that it is very important that all people speak it whatever their profession be. It has become the language of communication, business and of technology around the world.

Even when we know the importance of leaning English, the study of it is not mandatory in public elementary schools. However every school tries to include it into the curricular program as an optional subject that can be taught according to the economical sources that every school can pay to hire an English teacher.

This is the problematic in the teaching of the English language in elementary public school education, which is in crisis due to different factors, but according to our previous observation, we realized that children who study in public elementary school do not get even a basic knowledge of this important language, that is essential to continue the studies in the high school.

Inside this problematic the English teaching learning process also is included, because most elementary schools do not have even the English subject included in their curriculum. Most of the time the family's parents hire an English teacher in order to teach their children one or two hours per week which is not enough for the students who face a lot of trouble when they go into the high school.

The teachers use a traditional methodology to teach the English language, which is based on grammar patterns and using the native language to teach. Consequently, they do not get good results in the learning of the students because most of the students face trouble when they access to the high schools.

It is well known that children learn best using didactic material and using communicative methodology which emphasizes the learning of the grammar in context because children are not aware of the real use of it, but they learn it deductively without any deep explanation. However most of the teachers in elementary school just teach starting with an explanation of grammar patterns which is so difficult for the students to understand.

There is no doubt that, it is not the more recommendable way to teach a foreign language and that is the reason why most of the students do not get any basic knowledge of the language in six years school.

It is known that the teachers do not have a clear knowledge about methods to teach English nor the techniques that belong to every method. Most of them are applying traditional methods and techniques and this is affecting the student's learning of the English Language; because the students in public elementary schools do not reach a basic level of knowledge in the target language.

Moreover the little schedule charge assigned in each elementary school also is influencing the student's learning of the English language, because most of the school just have one or two hours per week, which is taken from the optional hours and they are not enough for the teachers to reach a good level of knowledge with the students.

To learn a foreign language it is necessary to study it at least one hour every day, this will let the teacher to have continuity in the process, and to teach some elementary contents that let the students to access the high school without trouble. However if the elementary school do not have the English Language as a mandatory subject, it is not possible to improve the students' learning level, even when the teachers develop a good methodology.

To reach the basic linguist skills in a language requires a whole process that must include the use of a good methodology to teach kids. But most of elementary schools just hire undergraduates or students to teach the children, so that the

schools do not count with qualified staff that assures a good learning with their students.

Based on all the before mentioned problems the group has considered convenient to state the following problem of research:

### **2.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM**

How the methodology used by the English Teachers affects the Teaching Learning process with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?

### **2.4 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **a) TEMPORAL**

The present research work will be done during the school period 2008-2009.

#### **b) SPATIAL**

The project will be carried out in two public - elementary schools of the Loja City. These are:

1. “José Alejandrino Velasco Mixed School”.
2. “Julio Ordoñez Espinosa Prof. Mixed School”.

#### **c) OBSERVATION UNITS**

1. School Directors

2. English teachers

3. Students of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education of the two schools

**d) SUBPROBLEMS**

- What kind of methodology do the teachers use to develop the teaching –learning process of the English Language with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?
  
- How the teaching techniques used by the teachers are related to the development of the English Language skills of the students with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?

## **2. JUSTIFICATION**

The present research project is justified if we consider that there are problems in the public education especially in the methodology applied by the teachers to develop the English teaching – learning process. This is a trouble that needs to be researched in order to establish what kind of the methodologies are using the teachers and which are the results that they have obtained with their students.

It is important since the social point of view to do a research because it is necessary to attend the trouble that are affecting the teaching learning process especially in the methodology that the teachers are applying in order to establish the causes that are limiting the learning of the English language by the students of the main elementary schools of our city. In this way we will be able to provide some alternatives that let these schools to improve the students' learning.

The knowledge in teaching methods and techniques is the basic tool that assures the students' learning especially in the public schools where there is the necessity of improving the children' leaning of the English language, because they do not get even a basic level of it in the sixth years that they receive it during the school time.

It is important to start a research about the factors that are limiting the students learning of the English language in the elementary schools of the Loja city, because most of the learning depends of the methodology and the specific techniques that work with children and if we take into account the majority of the teachers in public elementary schools are temporally hired; we think that they do not have enough knowledge about the best techniques to teach children, so that they do not get good learning with their students.

The project is viable to carry out because it is an unpublished theme, that has not been researched before and it is possible to take it as a unique one. Moreover the group counts with the necessary resources to carry out it in the determined time. It also is justified because it is a previous requirement to obtain the Licentiate's degree in Science of Education English Language Specialization and we as undergraduates of the English Language Career are interested in obtain our degree.

## **4. OBJECTIVES**

### ***4.1 General***

- To know the methodology used by the English Teachers to guide the teaching-learning process with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?

### ***4.2. Specifics***

- To identify the kind of methodology that is used by the teachers to develop the teaching –learning process of the English Language with the students of the main public elementary schools of Loja city. School period 2008-2009.
- To determine the teaching techniques used by the teachers and its relation with the development of the English Language skills with the students of “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

### 3. THEORETICAL FRAME

#### CHAPTER I

##### *5.1. OVERVIEW OF LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY*

“The word "methodology" is itself often misinterpreted or ill-understood. It is usually given lip-service as an explanation for the way a given teacher goes about his/her teaching, a sort of umbrella-term to describe **the** job of teaching another language. Most often, methodology is understood to mean *methods* in a general sense, and in some cases it is even equated to specific teaching *techniques*. It does (or should) in fact mean and involve much more than that. I've found that Brown's (1994:51) definitions (reflecting current usage at the time and drawn from earlier attempts to break down and classify elements to do with methodology) are the most useful:

##### **Methodology**

The study of pedagogical practices in general (including theoretical underpinnings and related research). Whatever considerations are involved in "how to teach" are methodological.

##### **Approach**

Theoretical positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings.

### **Method**

A generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Methods tend to be primarily concerned with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials. They are almost always thought of as being broadly applicable to a variety of audiences in a variety of contexts.

### **Curriculum/Syllabus**

Designs for carrying out a particular language program. Features include a primary concern with the specification of linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials to meet the needs of a designated group of learners in a defined context.

### **Technique**

Any of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or devices used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives”<sup>1</sup>.

#### **5.1.1. BROWN'S PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING**

Careful consideration of almost any field of inquiry or practice generally begins with (or inevitably returns to) general sets of guiding principles.

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• <sup>1</sup> BROWN H. Douglas Teaching by Principles, An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. Second Edition 2001.

In terms of principles for English language learning, I was (and remain) very strongly influenced by the principles set out by **H. Douglas Brown** (see below for reference).

According to Brown, language learning principles are generally sorted into three sub-groupings: **Cognitive** Principles, **Affective** Principles and **Linguistic** Principles. Principles are seen as theory derived from research, to which teachers need to try and match classroom practices.

Here are some brief summaries of the principles that fall into each of Brown's groupings:

#### **5.1.1.1. COGNITIVE PRINCIPLES**

- **Automaticity**: Subconscious processing of language with peripheral attention to language forms;
- **Meaningful Learning**: This can be contrasted to Rote Learning, and is thought to lead to better long term retention;
- **Anticipation of Rewards**: Learners are driven to act by the Introduction to the Grammar Translation Method.

Latin and Ancient Greek are known as "dead" languages, based on the fact that people no longer speak them for the purpose of interactive communication. Yet they are still acknowledged as important languages to learn (especially Latin) for the purpose of gaining access to classical literature, and up until fairly recently, for the

kinds of grammar training that led to the mental dexterity considered so important in any higher education study stream.

Latin has been studied for centuries, with the prime objectives of learning how to read classical Latin texts, understanding the fundamentals of grammar and translation, and gaining insights into some important foreign influences Latin has had on the development of other European languages. The method used to teach it overwhelmingly bore those objectives in mind, and came to be known (appropriately!) as the *Classical Method*. It is now more commonly known in Foreign Language Teaching circles as the **Grammar Translation Method**.

It is hard to decide which is more surprising - the fact that this method has survived right up until today (alongside a host of more modern and more "enlightened" methods), or the fact that what was essentially a method developed for the study of "dead" languages involving little or no spoken communication or listening comprehension is still used for the study of languages that are very much alive and require competence not only in terms of reading, writing and structure, but also speaking, listening and interactive communication. How has such an archaic method, "remembered with distaste by thousands of school learners" (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:4) persevered?

It is worth looking at the objectives, features and typical techniques commonly associated with the Grammar Translation Method, in order to both understand how it works and why it has shown such tenacity as an acceptable (even recommended

or respected) language teaching philosophy in many countries and institutions around the world.

## **5.1.2. TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

### **5.1.2.1. THE GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD**

#### **– Objectives**

“Most teachers who employ the Grammar Translation Method to teach English would probably tell you that (for their students at least) the most fundamental reason for learning the language is to give learners access to English literature, develop their minds "mentally" through foreign language learning, and to build in them the kinds of grammar, reading, vocabulary and translation skills necessary to pass any one of a variety of mandatory written tests required at high school or tertiary level.

Some teachers who use the method might also tell you that it is the most effective way to prepare students for "global communication" by beginning with the key skills of reading and grammar. Others may even go so far as to admit that they think it is the "least stressful" for students, because almost all the teaching occurs in L1 and students are rarely called upon to speak the language in any communicative fashion.

More conservative teachers from more conservative countries are even likely to be put out by anyone merely questioning the method, and a typical response could be "because that's the way it's always been done - it's the way I learned and look, now

I'm a professor". The point being, the method is institutionalized and considered fundamental. Such teachers are probably even unaware that the method has a name and can be compared alongside other methods”<sup>2</sup>.

### **- Key Features**

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979:3), the key features of the Grammar Translation Method are as follows:

- (1) Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
- (2) Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
- (3) Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
- (4) Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
- (5) Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
- (6) Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
- (7) Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
- (8) Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

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<sup>2</sup> Larsen-Freeman, Dianne. 1986. *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## - Typical Techniques

Diane Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (2000:19-21) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Grammar Translation Method. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) **Translation of a Literary Passage** (Translating target language to native language)
- (2) **Reading Comprehension Questions** (Finding information in a passage, making inferences and relating to personal experience)
- (3) **Antonyms/Synonyms** (Finding antonyms and synonyms for words or sets of words)
- (4) **Cognates** (Learning spelling/sound patterns that correspond between L1 and the target language)
- (5) **Deductive Application of Rule** (Understanding grammar rules and their exceptions, then applying them to new examples)
- (6) **Fill-in-the-blanks** (Filling in gaps in sentences with new words or items of a particular grammar type)
- (7) **Memorization** (Memorizing vocabulary lists, grammatical rules and grammatical paradigms)

(8) **Use Words in Sentences** (Students create sentences to illustrate they know the meaning and use of new words)

(9) **Composition** (Students write about a topic using the target language)

### **-Comments**

Many people who have undertaken foreign language learning at high schools or universities even in the past 10 years or so may remember many of the teaching techniques listed above for the Grammar Translation Method. They may also recall that the language learning experience was uninspiring, rather boring, or even left them with a sense of frustration when they traveled to countries where the language was used only to find they couldn't understand what people were saying and struggled mightily to express themselves at the most basic level.

Very few modern language teaching experts would be quick to say that this is an effective language teaching method, and fewer would dare to try and assert that it results in any kind of communicative competence. As Richards and Rodgers (1986:5) state, "It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory."

And yet the Grammar Translation Method is still common in many countries - even popular. Brown attempts to explain why the method is still employed by pointing out:

"It requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers. Tests of grammar rules

and of translations are easy to construct and can be objectively scored. Many standardized tests of foreign languages still do not attempt to tap into communicative abilities, so students have little motivation to go beyond grammar analogies, translations, and rote exercises." (2001:19)

#### **5.1.2.2. THE DIRECT METHOD**

"Towards the end of the late 1800s, a revolution in language teaching philosophy took place that is seen by many as the dawn of modern foreign language teaching. Teachers, frustrated by the limits of the Grammar Translation Method in terms of its inability to create communicative competence in students, began to experiment with new ways of teaching language. Basically, teachers began attempting to teach foreign languages in a way that was more similar to first language acquisition. It incorporated techniques designed to address all the areas that the Grammar Translation did not - namely oral communication, more spontaneous use of the language, and developing the ability to think in the target language. Perhaps in an almost reflexive action, the method also moved as far away as possible from various techniques typical of the Grammar Translation Method - for instance using L1 as the language of instruction, memorizing grammatical rules and lots of translation between L1 and the target language.

The appearance of the "Direct Method" thus coincided with a new school of thinking that dictated that all foreign language teaching should occur in the target language only, with no translation and an emphasis on linking *meaning* to the language being learned. The method became very popular during the first quarter

of the 20th century, especially in private language schools in Europe where highly motivated students could study new languages and not need to travel far in order to try them out and apply them communicatively. One of the most famous advocates of the Direct Method was the German Charles Berlitz, whose schools and Berlitz Method are now world-renowned”<sup>3</sup>.

Still, the Direct Method was not without its problems. As Brown (1994:56) points out, "(it) did not take well in public education where the constraints of budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background made such a method difficult to use." By the late 1920s, the method was starting to go into decline and there was even a return to the Grammar Translation Method, which guaranteed more in the way of scholastic language learning orientated around reading and grammar skills. But the Direct Method continues to enjoy a popular following in private language school circles, and it was one of the foundations upon which the well-known "Audiolingual Method" expanded from starting half way through the 20th century.

### **5.1.2.3. THE AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD**

The next revolution in terms of language teaching methodology coincided with World War II, when America became aware that it needed people to learn foreign languages very quickly as part of its overall military operations. The "Army Method" was suddenly developed to build communicative competence in translators through very intensive language courses focusing on aural/oral skills. This in

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<sup>3</sup> Richards, Jack & Rodgers, Theodore. 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

combination with some new ideas about language learning coming from the disciplines of descriptive linguistics and behavioral psychology went on to become what is known as the Audiolingual Method (ALM).

### **Objectives**

Just as with the Direct Method that preceded it, the overall goal of the Audiolingual Method was to create *communicative* competence in learners. However, it was thought that the most effective way to do this was for students to "overlearn" the language being studied through extensive repetition and a variety of elaborate drills. The idea was to project the linguistic patterns of the language (based on the studies of structural linguists) into the minds of the learners in a way that made responses automatic and "habitual". To this end it was held that the language "habits" of the first language would constantly interfere, and the only way to overcome the problem was to facilitate the learning of a new set of "habits" appropriate linguistically to the language being studied.

### **-Key Features**

Here is a summary of the key features of the Audiolingual Method, taken from Brown (1994:57) and adapted from Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979).

- (1) New material is presented in dialog form.
- (2) There is dependence on mimicry, memorization of set phrases, and overlearning.

- (3) Structures are sequenced by means of contrastive analysis and taught one at a time.
- (4) Structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills.
- (5) There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than deductive explanation.
- (6) Vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context.
- (7) There is much use of tapes, language labs, and visual aids.
- (8) Great importance is attached to pronunciation.
- (9) Very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted.
- (10) Successful responses are immediately reinforced.
- (11) There is great effort to get students to produce error-free utterances.
- (12) There is a tendency to manipulate language and disregard content.

#### **-Typical Techniques**

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:45-47) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Audiolingual Method. The listing here is in summary form only.

(1) Dialog Memorization

*(Students memorize an opening dialog using mimicry and applied role-playing)*

(2) Backward Build-up (Expansion Drill)

*(Teacher breaks a line into several parts, students repeat each part starting at the end of the sentence and "expanding" backwards through the sentence, adding each part in sequence)*

(3) Repitition Drill

*(Students repeat teacher's model as quickly and accurately as possible)*

(4) Chain Drill

*(Students ask and answer each other one-by-one in a circular chain around the classroom )*

(5) Single Slot Substitution Drill

*(Teacher states a line from the dialog, then uses a word or a phrase as a "cue" that students, when repeating the line, must substitute into the sentence in the correct place)*

(6) Multiple-slot Substitution Drill

*(Same as the Single Slot drill, except that there are multiple cues to be substituted into the line)*

(7) Transformation Drill

*(Teacher provides a sentence that must be turned into something else, for example a question to be turned into a statement, an active sentence to be turned into a negative statement, etc)*

(8) Question-and-answer Drill

*(Students should answer or ask questions very quickly)*

(9) Use of Minimal Pairs

*(Using contrastive analysis, teacher selects a pair of words that sound identical except for a single sound that typically poses difficulty for the learners - students are to pronounce and differentiate the two words)*

(10) Complete the Dialog

*(Selected words are erased from a line in the dialog - students must find and insert)*

#### (11) Grammar Games

*(Various games designed to practice a grammar point in context, using lots of repetition)*

#### - **Comments**

Just as with the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method represents a major step in language teaching methodology that was still aimed squarely at communicative competence. A teacher that can use the method well will generally be able to create what appear to be very "productive" students. The extensive and elaborate drills designed to facilitate overlearning and good "language habit forming" were an innovative addition to the techniques used to practice language, and many of them are featured as essential parts of "communicative" methods that followed the Audiolingual Method.

The method's original appearance under the name "The Army Method" is apt, and from it one ought not to be surprised that the method is all about highly controlled practice involving extensive repetition aimed at "habit forming". If you can imagine a squad of new military recruits doing marching drills in the exercise yard, listening to the terse commands and repeating the movements in various combinations until they become second nature and do not need to be "thought about", then you have yourself an effective picture of how the Audiolingual Method essentially works and creates the desired result. The experts representing descriptive linguistics at that time can be seen as disseminating the patterns required

to perform the various marching drills piece by piece, and the behavioral psychologists dictated the various ways for the drills to be repeated in order to create an effective habit-forming process.

The (however slightly simplified) picture presented above ought to also indicate to the modern, enlightened and eclectic language teacher the obvious ways in which the Audiolingual Method falls far short of the overall goal of creating sustainable long-term communicative competence in language learners. The linguistic principles upon which the theory was based emphasized surface forms of language and not the "deep structure". Cognitive principles aimed at explaining how learners learn and develop independent concepts were to change considerably in the period following the Audiolingual Method.

Still, there are reasons why the method is still popular, and perhaps even appropriate in certain educational contexts. In countries where one of the prime objectives of learning English is to take and achieve successful results in a variety of tests, and where many learners are not intrinsically motivated to learn English but do so because they feel they have to, the method is not without merits. The term "practice makes perfect" was coined at a time when the concept of practice was synonymous with repetition, and if English is seen as just "another subject to be learned", then the philosophy of repeating the required patterns until you get them right without needing to think about them does have a lot of supporters.

In my personal opinion, however, one of the key responsibilities of the modern day teacher of any discipline is to actively create and build intrinsic motivation in their learners, to empower them with the ability and confidence to "learn how to learn", to develop a sense of responsibility for their own development, and to regard peers as possible sources of learning as well. They should also be encouraged to experiment with and formulate their own ongoing set of language rules, and to deduct through active independent application where and how the rules need to be adapted. The idea that errors are a natural and even necessary part of the learning process needs to be encouraged and supported. The Audiolingual Method does nothing to address those issues, and as a whole is little more than a very effective way of running highly teacher-orientated classrooms designed to produce language users whose proficiency stems from some kind of "auto pilot" mentality.

There are ways in which the practice involved in the Audiolingual Method can be applied to approaches that have a bigger picture in mind. Audiolingual-based drills can be adapted and used in combination with effective error correction techniques to create an approach that is sensitive to affective factors, and can be followed up with techniques designed to create more independent experimentation and application. I do not in any way recommend it as a holistic approach to language teaching, but there are certainly aspects and techniques from the method that are effective if used properly and in combination with an appropriate range of other activities.

This new method incorporated many of the features typical of the earlier Direct Method, but the disciplines mentioned above added the concepts of teaching linguistic patterns in combination with something generally referred to as "habit-forming". This method was one of the first to have its roots "firmly grounded in linguistic and psychological theory" (Brown 1994:57), which apparently added to its credibility and probably had some influence in the popularity it enjoyed over a long period of time. It also had a major influence on the language teaching methods that were to follow and can still be seen in major or minor manifestations of language teaching methodology even to this day.

Another factor that accounted for the method's popularity was the quick success it achieved in leading learners towards communicative competence. Through extensive mimicry, memorization and over-learning of language patterns and forms, students and teachers were often able to see immediate results. This was both its strength and its failure in the long run, as critics began to point out that the method did not deliver in terms of producing *long-term* communicative ability.

The study of linguistics itself was to change, and the area of second language learning became a discipline in its own right. Cognitive psychologists developed new views on learning in general, arguing that mimicry and rote learning could not account for the fact that language learning involved affective and interpersonal factors, that learners were able to produce language forms and patterns that they had never heard before. The idea that thinking processes themselves led to the

discovery of independent language rule formation (rather than "habit formation"), and a belief that affective factors influenced their application, paved the way toward the new methods that were to follow the Audiolingual Method.

#### **5.1.2.4. COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING**

"In the early seventies, Charles Curran developed a new education model he called "Counseling-Learning". This was essentially an example of an innovative model that primarily considered affective factors as paramount in the learning process. Drawing on Carl Rogers' view that learners were to be considered not as a *class*, but as a *group*, Curran's philosophy dictated that students were to be thought of as "clients" - their needs being addressed by a "counselor" in the form of the teacher. Brown (1994:59), in commenting on this approach also notes that "In order for any learning to take place ... what is first needed is for the members to interact in an interpersonal relationship in which students and teacher join together to facilitate learning in a context of valuing and prizing each individual in the group." Curran was best known for his extensive studies on adult learning, and some of the issues he tried to address were the threatening nature of a new learning situation to many adult learners and the anxiety created when students feared making "fools" of themselves. Curran believed that the counseling-learning model would help lower the instinctive defenses adult learners throw up, that the anxiety caused by the educational context could be decreased through the support of an interactive community of fellow learners. Another important goal was for the teacher to be perceived as an empathetic helping agent in the learning process, not a threat.

The Counseling-Learning educational model was also applied to language learning, and in this form it became known as Community Language Learning. Based on most of the principles above, Community Language Learning seeks to encourage teachers to see their students as "whole" persons, where their feelings, intellect, interpersonal relationships, protective reactions, and desire to learn are addressed and balanced. Students typically sit in a circle, with the teacher (as counselor) outside the ring. They use their first language to develop an interpersonal relationship based on trust with the other students. When a student wants to say something, they first say it in their native language, which the teacher then translates back to them using the target language. The student then attempts to repeat the English used by the teacher, and then a student can respond using the same process. This technique is used over a considerable period of time, until students are able to apply words in the new language without translation, gradually moving from a situation of dependence on the teacher-counselor to a state of independence"<sup>4</sup>.

### **-Objectives**

The Community Language Learning method does not just attempt to teach students how to use another language communicatively, it also tries to encourage the students to take increasingly more responsibility for their own learning, and to "learn about their learning", so to speak. Learning in a non-defensive manner is considered to be very important, with teacher and student regarding each other as a

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<sup>4</sup> Richards, Jack & Rodgers, Theodore. 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

"whole person" where intellect and ability are not separated from feelings. The initial struggles with learning the new language are addressed by creating an environment of mutual support, trust and understanding between both learner-clients and the teacher-counselor.

- **Key Features**

The Community Language Learning method involves some of the following features:

- (1) Students are to be considered as "learner-clients" and the teacher as a "teacher-counselor".
- (2) A relationship of mutual trust and support is considered essential to the learning process.
- (3) Students are permitted to use their native language, and are provided with translations from the teacher which they then attempt to apply.
- (4) Grammar and vocabulary are taught inductively.
- (5) "Chunks" of target language produced by the students are recorded and later listened to - they are also transcribed with native language equivalents to become texts the students work with.
- (6) Students apply the target language independently and without translation when they feel inclined/ confident enough to do so.
- (7) Students are encouraged to express not only how they feel about the language, but how they feel about the learning process, to which the teacher expresses empathy and understanding.

(8) A variety of activities can be included (for example, focusing on a particular grammar or pronunciation point, or creating new sentences based on the recordings/transcripts).

### **-Typical Techniques**

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:45-47) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with Community Language Learning. The listing here is in summary form only.

(1) Tape Recording Student Conversation

*(Students choose what they want to say, and their target language production is recorded for later listening/dissemination)*

(2) Transcription

*(Teacher produces a transcription of the tape-recorded conversation with translations in the mother language - this is then used for follow up activities or analysis)*

(3) Reflection on Experience

*(Teacher takes time during or after various activities to allow students to express how they feel about the language and the learning experience, and the teacher indicates empathy/understanding)*

(4) Reflective Listening

*(Students listen to their own voices on the tape in a relaxed and reflective environment)*

(5) Human Computer

*(Teacher is a "human computer" for the students to control - the teacher stating anything in the target language the student wants to practice, giving them the opportunity to self correct)*

(6) Small Group Tasks

*(Students work in small groups to create new sentences using the transcript, afterwards sharing them with the rest of the class)*

- **Comments**

Community Language Learning is an innovative approach that Brown (1994:58) lists as one of the "'Designer' Methods of the Spirited Seventies". It is certainly unique in that it is one of the first methods to be developed that really focused on the feelings of the students and tried to address affective factors in learning (particularly for adult learners). It was also the first method to combine the field of language learning with the dynamics and principles of counseling.

Important and beneficial as that may be, it could be said that the method goes too far in the direction of affective factors at the expense of other considerations. It has been criticized for being *too* non-directive, and it certainly is not a method which could be recommended for students who are learning English as part of a standard, compulsory education curriculum. The method assumes that students intrinsically *want* to learn the new language, and that is not always the case. In a class where only half (or less) of the students actually want to be there, the principles of the group support/ dynamic are very likely to fall down.

The method has other limitations. The teacher must be fluent in both the target language *and* the students' mother language. It cannot be used for large or very large classrooms, and would be quite limited in terms of how it could be applied to classes of young learners, who tend to instinctively expect a certain amount of active direction from the teacher.

Still, the basic affective principle is a good one, and various Community Language Learning techniques can be used very effectively in combination with other methods. The tape recording and transcription elements are very useful, and any method which stresses the feelings and independent development of the learners themselves is one worth looking at and trying out in a variety of ways.

#### **5.1.2.5. THE SILENT WAY**

In addition to affective theories relative to language learning, another challenge to the Audiolingual Method was under way already in the sixties in the form of the *Cognitive Code* and an educational trend known as "Discovery Learning." These concepts most directly challenged the idea that language learning was all about mimicry and good habit-formation. An emphasis on human cognition in language learning addressed issues such as learners being more responsible for their own learning - formulating independent hypotheses about the rules of the target language and testing those hypotheses by applying them and realizing errors.

## **Objectives**

Teachers using the Silent Way want their students to become highly independent and experimental learners. Making errors is a natural part of the process and a key learning device, as it is a sign that students are testing out their hypotheses and arriving at various conclusions about the language through a trial and error style approach. The teacher tries to facilitate activities whereby the students discover for themselves the conceptual rules governing the language, rather than imitating or memorizing them - Brown (1994:63) expresses this as being a process whereby "students construct conceptual hierarchies of their *own* which are a product of the time they have invested."

In addition to the idea that students become more autonomous learners and "develop their own inner criteria for correctness" (Larsen Freeman, 1986:62), another key objective was to encourage students to work as a group - to try and solve problems in the target language together.

Based on these principles and using the techniques described below, it was hoped that students would eventually be able to actively use the language for self-expression, relating their thoughts, feelings and perceptions.

## **-Key Features**

Richards and Rodgers (1986:99) describe the key theories underlying the Silent Way:

- (1) Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned.
- (2) Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical objects.
- (3) Learning is facilitated by problem-solving involving the material to be learned.

Cuisinere rods (small rods of varying color and length) are typically used in this method to introduce vocabulary and syntax, along with colorful wall charts. Instruction in this method typically starts with sounds, the basic building blocks in any language. The teacher usually provides single words or short phrases to stimulate the students into refining their knowledge of the language with as little correction/feedback from the teacher as possible.

### **-Typical Techniques**

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:66-68) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Silent Way. The listing here is in summary form only.

- (1) Sound-Color Chart -

*(The teacher refers students to a color-coded wall chart depicting individual sounds in the target language - students use this to point out and build words with correct pronunciation)*

- (2) Teacher's Silence

*(Teacher is generally silent, only giving help when it is absolutely necessary)*

- (3) Peer Correction

*(Students encouraged to help each other in a cooperative and not competitive spirit)*

(4) Rods

*(Rods are used to trigger meaning, and to introduce or actively practice language. They can symbolize whatever words are being taught and be manipulated directly or abstractly to create sentences)*

(5) Self-correction Gestures

*(Teacher uses hands to indicate that something is incorrect or needs changing - eg. using fingers as words then touching the finger/word that is in need of correction)*

(6) Word Chart

*(Words are depicted on charts, the sounds in each word corresponding in color to the Sound-Color Chart described above - students use this to build sentences)*

(7) Fidel Chart - click [here](#) to see an example

*(A chart that is color-coded according to the sound-color chart but includes the various English spellings so that they can be directly related to actual sounds)*

(8) Structured Feedback

*(Students are invited to make observations about the day's lesson and what they have learned)*

### **-Comments**

Like almost all methods, this one has had its fair share of criticism. The method encourages the teacher to assume a distance that prevents him/her from providing direct guidance when at times such guidance would be helpful. It is criticized as being too focused on building structure, and misses out on cultural input through the language, and the silence of the teacher can prevent students from hearing many active models of correct usage that they may find useful. In trying to create a less teacher-orientated classroom, many say that the Silent Way goes too far to the opposite extreme.

Other problems are a little more practical in nature. Getting together the "classic SW" prerequisite materials can take a lot of time and money - there is the sound-color chart, 12 word charts each containing around 500 words, and 8 Fidel Charts for the English language alone. And don't forget the actual cuisiniere rods as well! In order to maximize the learning potential of students using the Silent Way, teachers would have to be prepared to invest quite heavily in materials.

A lot can be taken from the method, however, if adapted and combined with elements from other methods. Viewing language learning as an "exploratory" process for students, of hypothesis building and trying out, is a very valuable teaching principle. Having tried various SW-style techniques with Young Learners, I would have to say that they are amazingly effective, and students appear to enjoy the learning process much more when they have such an active role in it. You can see various "Discovery Learning" principles in a lot of the materials I have

created for this site, especially [Sentence Building](#), [Sentence Navigation](#) and [Conversation Creation Cards](#). However, I usually like to combine the cognitive elements with a lot of contextual language input, initial models, and peripheral language pointers/stimulators. "Finding out for oneself" is a very important part of my overall teaching philosophy, but not the be-all and end-all.

Some of Cattegno's basic theories were that "teaching should be subordinated to learning" and "the teacher works with the student; the student works on the language". The most prominent characteristic of the method was that the teacher typically stayed "silent" most of the time, as part of his/her role as facilitator and stimulator, and thus the method's popular name. Language learning is usually seen as a problem solving activity to be engaged in by the students both independently and as a group, and the teacher needs to stay out of the way in the process as much as possible.

The Silent Way is also well-known for its common use of small colored rods of varying length (cuisinere rods) and color-coded word charts depicting pronunciation values, vocabulary and grammatical paradigms. It is a unique method and the first of its kind to really concentrate on cognitive principles in language learning.

When students create their own sets of meaningful language rules and concepts and then test them out, they are clearly learning through a discovery/exploratory method that is very different from rote-learning. This appears to have much more in common with the way people learn their native language from a very early age, and

can account for the way children come out with new language forms and combinations which they have never heard before. The underlying principles here are that learners become increasingly autonomous in, active with and responsible for the learning process in which they are engaged.

Caleb Gattegno founded *The Silent Way* as a method for language learning in the early 70s, sharing many of the same essential principles as the cognitive code and making good use of the theories underlying discovery learning.

#### **5.1.2.6. SUGGESTOPEDIA**

"In the late 70s, a Bulgarian psychologist by the name of Georgi Lozanov introduced the contention that students naturally set up psychological barriers to learning - based on fears that they will be unable to perform and are limited in terms of their ability to learn. Lozanov believed that learners may have been using only 5 to 10 percent of their mental capacity, and that the brain could process and retain much more material if given optimal conditions for learning. Based on psychological research on extrasensory perception, Lozanov began to develop a language learning method that focused on "desuggestion" of the limitations learners think they have, and providing the sort of relaxed state of mind that would facilitate the retention of material to its maximum potential. This method became known as Suggestopedia (but also - rather confusingly - Desuggestopedia) - the name reflecting the application of the power of "(de)suggestion" to the field of pedagogy.

One of the most unique characteristics of the method was the use of soft Baroque music during the learning process. Baroque music has a specific rhythm and a pattern of 60 beats per minute, and Lozanov believed it created a level of relaxed concentration that facilitated the intake and retention of huge quantities of material. This increase in learning potential was put down to the increase in alpha brain waves and decrease in blood pressure and heart rate that resulted from listening to Baroque music. Another aspect that differed from other methods to date was the use of soft comfortable chairs and dim lighting in the classroom (other factors believed to create a more relaxed state of mind).

Other characteristics of Suggestopedia were the giving over of complete control and authority to the teacher (who at times can appear to be some kind of instructional hypnotist using this method!) and the encouragement of learners to act as "childishly" as possible, often even assuming names and characters in the target language. All of these principles in combination were seen to make the students "suggestible" (or their fears of language learning "desuggestible"), and therefore able to utilize their maximum mental potential to take in and retain new material"<sup>5</sup>.

#### **5.1.2.7. TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE**

Already in the late 1800s, a French teacher of Latin by the name of Francois Gouin was hard at work devising a method of language teaching that capitalized on the way children naturally learn their first language, through the transformation of

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<sup>5</sup> Richards, Jack & Rodgers, Theodore. 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press. P 101.

perceptions into conceptions and then the expression of those conceptions using language. His approach became known as the *Series Method*, involving direct conceptual teaching of language using series of inter-connected sentences that are simple and easy to perceive, because the language being used can be directly related to whatever the speaker is doing at the immediate time of utterance (ie, one's actions and language match each other). His thinking was well ahead of his time, and the Series Method became swamped in the enthusiasm surrounding the other new approach at the time in the form of the Direct Method.

### **-Objectives**

One of the primary objectives underlying Asher's TPR methodology was that learning needed to become more enjoyable and less stressful. Asher thought that a natural way to accomplish this was to recreate the natural way children learn their native language, most notably through facilitating an appropriate "listening" and "comprehension" period, and encourage learners to respond using right-brain motor skills rather than left-brain language "processing".

### **-Key Features**

Here are some of the key features of the Total Physical Response method:

- (1) The teacher directs and students "act" in response - "The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors" (Asher, 1977:43).
- (2) Listening and physical response skills are emphasized over oral production.
- (3) The imperative mood is the most common language function employed, even well into advanced levels. Interrogatives are also heavily used.

(4) Whenever possible, humor is injected into the lessons to make them more enjoyable for learners.

(5) Students are not required to speak until they feel naturally ready or confident enough to do so.

(6) Grammar and vocabulary are emphasized over other language areas. Spoken language is emphasized over written language.

### **-Typical Techniques**

Larsen-Freeman, in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (1986:118-120) provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with TPR. The listing here is in summary form only.

(1) Using Commands to Direct Behavior

*(The use of commands requiring physical actions from the students in response is the major teaching technique)*

(2) Role Reversal

*(Students direct the teacher and fellow learners)*

(3) Action Sequence

*(Teacher gives interconnected directions which create a sequence of actions [also called an "operation"] - as students progress in proficiency, more and more commands are added to the action sequence. Most everyday activities can be broken down into a sequence of actions)*

### **-Comments**

TPR has become a worldwide business (see [www.tpr-world.com](http://www.tpr-world.com)), so it makes sense to try and determine which of the principles involved are business/marketing-orientated and which are strictly pedagogic. TPR.com would have you believe that you can use TPR as the be-all and end-all for language teaching, right up into very advanced levels.

I personally feel that the original theories underlying the method, orientated around creating an effective and stress-free listening period in combination with physical responses (the same way we all began learning our own native language as babies) are the safest ones to stick to. I therefore view it as an almost pre-requisite technique for teaching young students or older students at beginning levels, but a method that needs to be supplemented with other approaches as students progress in proficiency. In the same way, it is an excellent method for young/beginning teachers to learn, as TPR lessons tend to be a lot of fun and the techniques involved are relatively simple. As with any other method or technique style, overdoing it will eventually create boredom and a feeling of repetition, which is enjoyable for neither students nor teachers.

I have enjoyed using varieties of TPR for a long time, and if there is a weakness to be found it would have to be the difficulty involved in employing TPR for the purpose of teaching abstract language. Not all the things we do are "physical" and not all of our thinking is orientated around the visible physical universe. To some extent you can be innovative and even develop "physical" manifestations of abstract

and/or mentally-based verbs and nouns, but it loosens the connection and thus weakens it. I personally try to limit TPR activities to the directly obvious, visible and physically "doable". I believe this makes it a great method for young learners before they develop enough cognitively to start considering more abstract concepts.

I have also experimented with a technique that I felt grew naturally out of the TPR sphere, which I called at the time "Total Conceptual Response." Through this technique, students were encouraged to draw pictures or symbols for words and/or phrases and units of meaning that are personal to them - a manifestation on paper representing their own perception of various concepts. They share these with fellow students to (1) see how effectively the representation transfers to other people, (2) to get fresh ideas on how to portray the language "visually", and (3) build up a personal language "picture dictionary" that portrays language conceptually rather than translating it. It tends to involve humor in the same way TPR does, but involves the students more personally and more creatively. The way one student conceptualizes "ambition" or "success" is usually different from other students, and it can be an entertaining process to see what drawings and symbols emerge. I liked the "Total Conceptual Response" technique because it had elements of learner autonomy and problem-solving, and actively moved students away from the habit of making direct translations back into their native language.

Some 80 years later, in the 1960s, James Asher began experimenting with a method he called Total Physical Response, and its basic premise had a lot in common with Gouin's. The method was to become well known in the 70s, and it drew on several

other insights in addition to the "trace theory" that memory is stimulated and increased when it is closely associated with motor activity. The method owes a lot to some basic principles of language acquisition in young learners, most notably that the process involves a substantial amount of listening and comprehension in combination with various physical responses (smiling, reaching, grabbing, looking, etc) - well before learners begin to use the language orally. It also focused on the ideas that learning should be as fun and stress-free as possible, and that it should be dynamic through the use of accompanying physical activity. Asher (1977) also had a lot to say about right-brained learning (the part of the brain that deals with motor activity), believing it should precede the language processing element covered by the left-brain.

TPR is now a household name among teachers of foreign languages. It is widely acclaimed as a highly effective method at beginning levels, and almost a standard requirement in the instruction of young learners. It is also admired as a method due to its inherent simplicity, making it accessible to a wide range of teachers and learning environments.

#### **5.1.2.8. THE NATURAL APPROACH**

"Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell developed the Natural Approach in the early eighties (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), based on Krashen's theories about second language acquisition. The approach shared a lot in common with Asher's Total Physical Response method in terms of advocating the need for a silent phase,

waiting for spoken production to "emerge" of its own accord, and emphasizing the need to make learners as relaxed as possible during the learning process. Some important underlying principles are that there should be a lot of language "acquisition" as opposed to language "processing", and there needs to be a considerable amount of *comprehensible input* from the teacher. Meaning is considered as the essence of language and vocabulary (not grammar) is the heart of language.

As part of the Natural Approach, students listen to the teacher using the target language communicatively from the very beginning. It has certain similarities with the much earlier Direct Method, with the important exception that students are allowed to use their native language alongside the target language as part of the language learning process. In early stages, students are not corrected during oral production, as the teacher is focusing on meaning rather than form (unless the error is so drastic that it actually hinders meaning).

Communicative activities prevail throughout a language course employing the Natural Approach, focusing on a wide range of activities including games, roleplays, dialogs, group work and discussions. There are three generic stages identified in the approach: (1) Preproduction - developing listening skills; (2) Early Production - students struggle with the language and make many errors which are corrected based on content and not structure; (3) Extending Production - promoting fluency through a variety of more challenging activities.

Krashen's theories and the Natural approach have received plenty of criticism, particularly orientated around the recommendation of a silent period that is terminated when students feel ready to emerge into oral production, and the idea of comprehensible input. Critics point out that students will "emerge" at different times (or perhaps not at all!) and it is hard to determine which forms of language input will be "comprehensible" to the students. These factors can create a classroom that is essentially very difficult to manage unless the teacher is highly skilled. Still, this was the first attempt at creating an expansive and overall "approach" rather than a specific "method", and the Natural Approach led naturally into the generally accepted norm for effective language teaching: **Communicative Language Teaching**"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Krashen, Stephen D., & Terrell, Tracy D. 1983. *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. Pergamon Press.

## CHAPTER II

### 5.2.1. COMMUNICATIVE METHODOLOGY

#### 5.2.1.1. THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

"All the methods described so far are symbolic of the progress foreign language teaching ideology underwent in the last century. These were methods that came and went, influenced or gave birth to new methods - in a cycle that could only be described as competition between rival methods or even passing fads in the methodological theory underlying foreign language teaching. Finally, by the mid-eighties or so, the industry was maturing in its growth and moving towards the concept of a broad "approach" to language teaching that encompassed various methods, motivations for learning English, types of teachers and the needs of individual classrooms and students themselves. It would be fair to say that if there is any one umbrella approach to language teaching that has become the accepted "norm" in this field, it would have to be the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. This is also known as CLT"<sup>7</sup>.

#### **-Basic Features of CLT**

David Nunan (1991:279) lists five basic characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching:

(1) An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.

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<sup>7</sup> BROWN Douglas H. Teaching by Principles an Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. P 25.

- (2) The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- (3) The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- (4) An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- (5) An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

### **CLT Features at Length**

Finnochiaro and Brumfit (1983:91-93) compiled this list of CLT features way back in 1983 as a means of comparing it to the Audiolingual Method. Below each feature in blue italics is the feature of ALM to which it was being compared.

- (1) CLT: Meaning is paramount.

*ALM: Attends to structure and form more than meaning.*

- (2) CLT: Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized.

*ALM: Demands more memorization of structure-based dialogs.*

- (3) CLT: Contextualization is a basic premise.

*ALM: Language items are not necessarily contextualized.*

- (4) CLT: Language learning is learning to communicate.

*ALM: Language Learning is learning structures, sounds or words.*

(5) CLT: Effective communication is sought.

*ALM: Mastery or "overlearning" is sought.*

(6) CLT: Drilling may occur, but peripherally.

*ALM: Drilling is a central technique.*

(7) CLT: Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.

*ALM: Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.*

(8) CLT: Any device which helps the learners is accepted - varying according to their age, interest, etc.

*ALM: Grammatical explanation is avoided.*

(9) CLT: Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning.

*ALM: Communicative activities only come after a long process of rigid drills and exercises.*

(10) CLT: Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible.

*ALM: The use of the students' native language is forbidden.*

(11) CLT: Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it.

*ALM: Translation is forbidden at early levels.*

(12) CLT: Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired.

*ALM: Reading and writing are deferred until speech is mastered.*

(13) CLT: The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate.

*ALM: The target linguistic system will be learned through the overt teaching of the patterns of the system.*

(14) CLT: Communicative competence is the desired goal.

*ALM: Linguistic competence is the desired goal.*

(15) CLT: Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methods.

*ALM: Varieties of language are recognized but not emphasized.*

(16) CLT: Sequencing is determined by any consideration of content function, or meaning which maintains interest.

*ALM: The sequence of units is determined solely on principles of linguistic complexity.*

(17) CLT: Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language.

*ALM: The teacher controls the learners and prevents them from doing anything that conflicts with the theory.*

(18) CLT: Language is created by the individual often through trial and error.

*ALM: "Language is habit" so error must be prevented at all costs.*

(19) CLT: Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context.

*ALM: Accuracy, in terms of formal correctness, is a primary goal.*

(20) CLT: Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings.

*ALM: Students are expected to interact with the language system, embodied in machines or controlled materials.*

(21) CLT: The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use.

*ALM: The teacher is expected to specify the language that students are to use.*

(22) CLT: Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language.

*ALM: Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in the structure of the language.*

### **Caveats**

Brown (1994:78-80) warns that there are certain caveats in the field of language teaching when it comes to discussing CLT and one's support of the approach, saying that that support or belief needs to be "qualified". He warns against:

(1) Giving "lip service" to the principles of CLT (because "no one these days would admit to a disbelief in principles of CLT; they would be marked as a

heretic") without actually grounding one's teaching techniques in those principles, or making sure one indeed understands and practices according to the characteristics that make CLT what it is.

(2) Overdoing certain CLT features, for example engaging in real-life authentic language to the exclusion of helpful devices such as controlled practice, or vice versa. Moderation is needed in combination with common sense and a balanced approach.

(3) The numerous interpretations of what CLT actually "is". CLT is often a catchall term, and does not reflect the fact that not everyone agrees on its interpretation or application.

Teachers need to be aware that there are many possible versions, and it is intended as an "umbrella" term covering a variety of methods.

The Communicative approach does a lot to expand on the goal of creating communicative competence compared to earlier methods that professed the same objective. Teaching students how to *use* the language is considered to be at least as important as learning the language itself. Brown (1994:77) aptly describes the "march" towards CLT:

"Beyond grammatical discourse elements in communication, we are probing the nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language. We are exploring

pedagogical means for 'real-life' communication in the classroom. We are trying to get our learners to develop linguistic fluency, not just the accuracy that has so consumed our historical journey. We are equipping our students with tools for generating unrehearsed language performance 'out there' when they leave the womb of our classrooms. We are concerned with how to facilitate lifelong language learning among our students, not just with the immediate classroom task. We are looking at learners as partners in a cooperative venture. And our classroom practices seek to draw on whatever intrinsically sparks learners to reach their fullest potential."

CLT is a generic approach, and can seem non-specific at times in terms of how to actually go about using practices in the classroom in any sort of systematic way. There are many interpretations of what CLT actually means and involves. See Types of Learning and The PPP Approach to see how CLT can be applied in a variety of 'more specific' methods.

#### **5.2.1.2. TYPES OF LEARNING ASSOCIATED WITH THE CLT APPROACH**

##### **Interactive Learning:**

This concept goes right to the heart of communication itself, stressing the dual roles of "receiver" and "sender" in any communicative situation. Interaction creates the "negotiation between interlocutors" which in turn produces meaning (semantics). The concept of interactive learning necessarily entails that there will be a lot of pair

and group work in the classroom, as well as genuine language input from the "real world" for meaningful communication.

**Learner-centered Learning:**

This kind of instruction involves the giving over of some "power" in the language learning process to the learners themselves. It also strives to allow for personal creativity and input from the students, as well as taking into account their learning needs and objectives.

**Cooperative Learning:**

This concept stresses the "team" like nature of the classroom and emphasizes *cooperation* as opposed to *competition*. Students share information and help, and achieve their learning goals as a group.

**Content-based Learning:**

This kind of learning joins language learning to content/subject matter and engages them both concurrently. Language is seen as a tool or medium for acquiring knowledge about other things, instantly proving its usefulness. An important factor in this kind of learning is that the content itself determines what language items need to be mastered, not the other way around. When students study math or science using English as the medium, they are more intrinsically motivated to learn more of the language.

### **Task-based Learning:**

This concept equates the idea of a "learning task" to a language learning technique in itself. This could be a problem solving activity or a project, but the task has a clear objective, appropriate content, a working/application procedure, and a set range of outcomes.

### **The PPP Approach to Communicative Language Teaching**

"PPP" (or the "3Ps") stands for *Presentation*, *Practice* and *Production* - a common approach to communicative language teaching that works through the progression of three sequential stages.

**Presentation** represents the introduction to a lesson, and necessarily requires the creation of a realistic (or realistic-feeling) "situation" requiring the target language to be learned. This can be achieved through using pictures, dialogs, imagination or actual "classroom situations". The teacher checks to see that the students understand the nature of the situation, then builds the "concept" underlying the language to be learned using small chunks of language that the students already know. Having understood the concept, students are then given the language "model" and engage in choral drills to learn statement, answer and question forms for the target language. This is a very teacher-orientated stage where error correction is important.

**Practice** usually begins with what is termed "mechanical practice" - open and closed pairwork. Students gradually move into more "communicative practice"

involving procedures like information gap activities, dialog creation and controlled roleplays. Practice is seen as the frequency device to create familiarity and confidence with the new language, and a measuring stick for accuracy. The teacher still directs and corrects at this stage, but the classroom is beginning to become more learner-centered.

**Production** is seen as the culmination of the language learning process, whereby the learners have started to become independent *users* of the language rather than *students* of the language. The teacher's role here is to somehow facilitate a realistic situation or activity where the students instinctively feel the need to actively apply the language they have been practicing. The teacher does not correct or become involved unless students directly appeal to him/her to do so.

The PPP approach is relatively straight forward, and structured enough to be easily understood by both students and new or emerging teachers. It is a good place to start in terms of applying good communicative language teaching in the classroom. It has also been criticized considerably for the very characteristic that makes it the easiest method for 'beginner' teachers, that is, that it is far too teacher-orientated and over controlled. A nice alternative to 'PPP' is Harmer's 'ESA' (Engage/Study/Activate).

## CHAPTER III

### 5.3. *TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS*

The teaching learning process of the English Language has been an educative fact that always has woken up the interest of the teachers and students.

The difficulties and lack of assimilation of the knowledge for the students are intensified when is tried the learning of grammatical rules, it is when the students get a complex in front of a quantity of grammatical rules that confuse them and they have mistake in exercises or in the tests that they judge very easy.

In front of the difficulties that the students manifest, especially of Fourth year of Basic Education, many teachers have speculated with methods, methodologies, techniques, forms and teaching learning procedure hitting the efficient solution that facilitate the learning of the students and the teaching of the teachers.

To teach by means of processes and values means to use the potentialities that students have inside their somatic, affective and psychic development give them cognitive abilities that must be taken advantage by means of the coordinated work of teachers and students, in function of the knowledge that they need.

In front to the necessity of using the processes and values as didactic auxiliaries for English teaching learning, is because the proposed present has been structured that will serve of a lot to those people interested in finding a meaningful pedagogic change so that all the students learn English and all are promoted.

### **5.3.1. EXPLANATION OF THE INTEGRAL LEARNING BY PROCESSES**

It is a very efficient teaching learning system impelled in the Educative Reform of Colombia, in which the personality of the students is privileged in function of the learning of different ways like different characters.

It has taken into account that the integral education can impel by means of all the learned contents if it adapts to the personal and collective vivential reality of the students that are the actors of their formation.

The teaching by processes has taken into account the human quality of the beginner in his/her affective and psychomotor, cognitive stadiums, in such a way that each lesson is a conjunction of actions directed to the universal personality of the student to transform it every day benefit of the necessary values with the purpose to reach their happiness.

“The learning by processes and values, constitutes a new and singular step in the pedagogic dialectical, in such a way that is necessary to investigate its result and to apply it, if we want to make of each student an author of his/her own formation”.<sup>8</sup>

### **5.3.2. THEORIES OF LEARNING**

**Why considers learning theories?**

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<sup>8</sup> DIAZ, Gladys, didactic guides for learning English grammar by processes and values school year 2001-2002

This short of paper has summarized a range of learning theories that can be applied in educational contexts. Teaching and learning activities can be designed and implement to take principles of learning into account. Also, it is interesting to think about individual differences among learners and to work towards including activities that they variety and interest for all the learners in educational programs.

There are many different theories of how people learn. What follows is a variety of them, and it is useful to consider their application to how your students learn and also how you teach in educational programs. It is interesting to think about your own particular way of learning and to recognize that everyone does not learn the way you do.

Burns (1995, p99) ‘conceives of learning as a relatively permanent change in behavior with behavior including both observable activity and internal processes such as thinking, attitudes and emotions.’ It is clear that Burns includes motivation in this definition of learning. Burns considers that learning might not manifest itself in observable behavior until some time after the educational program has taken place.

- Sensory stimulation theory
- Reinforce theory
- Cognitive-Gestalt approaches
- Holistic learning theory
- Facilitation theory
- Experiential learning

- Action learning
- Adult learning (Andragogy)
- Etc.

### **5.3.2.1 Sensory Stimulation Theory**

Traditional sensory stimulation theory has as its basic premise that effective learning occurs when the senses are stimulated (Lair, 1985). Lair quotes research that found that the vast majority of knowledge held by adults (75%) and the other senses – touch, smell and taste account for 12% of what we know. By stimulating the senses, especially the visual sense, learning can be enhanced. However, this theory says that if multi- senses are stimulated, greater learning takes place. Stimulation through the senses is achieved through a greater variety of colors, volume levels, strong statements, facts presented visually, use of a variety of techniques and media.

### **5.3.2.2 Reinforcement Theory**

This theory was developed by the behaviorist school of psychology, notably by B.F. Skinner earlier this century (Lair 1985, Burns 1995). Skinner believed that behavior is a function of its consequences. The learner will repeat the desired behavior if positive reinforcement (a pleasant consequence) follows the behavior.

Positive reinforcement, or ‘rewards’ can include verbal reinforcement such as ‘That’s great’ or ‘You’re certainly on the right track’ through to more tangible rewards such as a certificate at the end of the course or promotion to a higher level in an organization.

Negative reinforcement also strengthens a behavior and refers to a situation when a negative condition is stopped or avoided as a behavior because a negative condition is introduced or experienced as a consequence of the behavior and teaches the individual not to repeat the behavior which was negatively reinforced. A set of conditions is created which are designed to eliminate behavior (Burns, 1995, p. 108). Laird considers. However, Burns says that punishment is widely used in everyday life although it only works for a short time and often only when the punishing agency is present.

Burns notes that much Competency Based Training is based on this theory, and although it is useful in learning repetitive tasks like multiplication tables and those work skills that require a great deal of practice, higher order learning is not involved. There is criticism of this approach that it is rigid and mechanical.

### **5.3.2.3. Cognitive – Gestalt Approaches**

The emphasis here is on the importance of experience, meaning, problem-solving and the development of insights (Burns 1995, p. 112). Burns notes that this theory has developed the concept that individuals have different needs and concerns at different times, and that they have subjective interpretations in different contexts.

### **5.3.2.4 Holistic Learning Theory**

The basic premise of this theory is that the ‘individual personality consists of many elements...specifically...the intellect, emotions, the body impulse (or desire),

intuition and imagination (Laird, 1985, p. 121) that all require activation if learning is to be more effective.

### **5.3.2.5 Facilitation Theory (the humanist approach)**

Carl Rogers and others have developed the theory of facilitative learning. The basic premise of this theory is that learning will occur by the educator acting as a facilitator, that is by establishing an atmosphere in which learners feel comfortable to consider new ideas and are not threatened by external factors (Laird 1985.)

#### **Other characteristic of this theory include:**

- A belief that human beings have a natural eagerness to learn,
- There is some resistance to, and unpleasant consequences of, giving up what is currently held to be true,
- The most significant learning involves changing one's concept of oneself.

#### **Facilitative teachers are:**

- Less protective of their constructs and beliefs than other teachers,
- More able to listen to learners, especially to their feelings,
- Inclined to pay as much attention to their relationship with learners as to the content of the course,
- Apt to accept feedback, both positive and negative and to use it as constructive insight into themselves and their behavior.

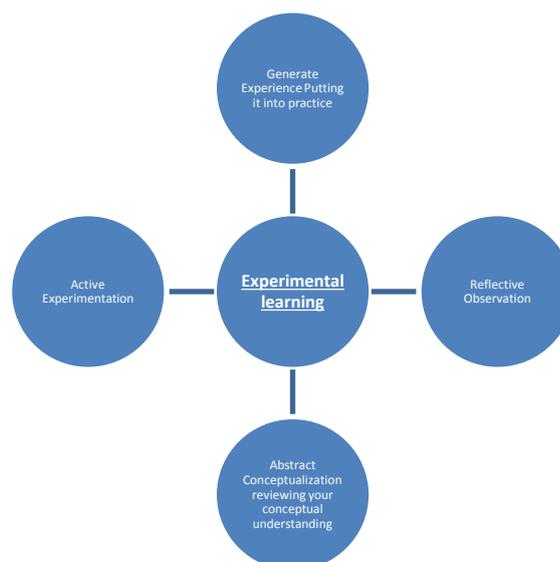
#### **Learners:**

- Are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning,

- Provide much of the input for the learning which occurs through their insights and experiences,
- Are encouraged to consider that the most valuable evaluation is self-evaluation and that learning needs to focus on factors that contribute to solving significant problems or achieving significant result.

### 5.3.2.6 Experimental Learning

Kolb proposed a four-stage learning process with a model that is often referred to in describing experimental learning (McGill & Beaty 1995). The process can begin at any of the stages and is continuous; there is no limit to the number of cycles you can make in a learning situation. This theory asserts that without reflection we would simply continue to repeat our mistakes. The experimental learning cycle:



### **5.3.2.7 (Brooks 1995, p.66)**

Kolb's research found that people learn in four ways with the likelihood of developing one mode of learning more than another. As shown in the 'experimental learning cycle' model above, learning is:

- Through concrete experience
- Through observation and reflection
- Through abstract conceptualization
- Through active experimentation

### **5.3.2.8 Differences in learning styles**

As already discussed, the idea that people learn in different ways has been explored over the last few decades by educational researchers. Kolb, one of the most influential of these, found that individuals begin with their preferred style in the experimental learning cycle (see above).

Honey and Mumford (1986 cited in McGill & Beaty 1995 p. 177) building on Kolb's work, identified four learning styles:

- Activist (enjoys the experience itself),
- Reflector (spends a great deal of time and effort reflecting)
- Theorist (good at making connections and abstracting ideas from experience)
- Pragmatist (enjoys the planning stage)

There are strengths and weaknesses in each of these styles. Honey and Mumford argue that learning is enhanced when we think about our learning style so that we

can build on strengths and work towards minimizing weaknesses to improve the quality of learning.

### **5.3.2.9 Action learning**

Action learning is the approach that links the world of learning with the world of action through a reflective process within small cooperative learning groups known as ‘action learning sets’ (McGill & Beaty 1995). The ‘sets’ meet regularly to work on individual members’ real-life issues with the aim of learning with and from each other. The ‘father’ of Action Learning, Reg Revans, has said that there can be no learning without action and no (sober and deliberate) action without learning.

Revans argued that learning can be shown by the following equation, where L is learning; P is programmed knowledge (eg. traditional instruction) and Q is questioning insight.

$$L = P + Q$$

Revans, along with many others who have used, researched and taught about this approach, argued that Action Learning is ideal for finding solutions to problems that do not have a ‘right’ answer because the necessary questioning insight can be facilitated by people learning with and from each other in action learning ‘sets’.

### **5.3.3.0. Adult Learning (Andragogy)**

Malcolm Knowles (1978, 1990) is the theorist who brought the concept of adult learning to the fore. He has argued that adulthood has arrived when people behave

in adult ways and believe themselves to be adults. Then they should be treated as adults. He taught that adult learning was special in a number of ways. For example:

- Adult learners bring a great deal of experience to the learning environment. Educators can use this as a resource.
- Adults expect to have a high degree of influence on what they are to be educated for, and how they are to be educated.
- The active participation of learners should be encouraged in designing and implementing educational programs.
- Adults need to be able to see applications for new learning.
- Adult learners expect to have a high degree of influence on how learning will be evaluated.
- Adults expect their responses to be acted upon when asked for feedback on the progress of the program.

Here is a quote from Burns (1995, p. 233)

“By adulthood people are self-directing. This is the concept that lies at the heart of andragogy ... andragogy is therefore student- centered, experience-based, problem-oriented and collaborative very much in the spirit of the humanist approach to learning and education ... the whole educational activity turns on the student.

Adulthood as a social construction

Pogson and Tennant (1995) provide a perspective of adulthood as a social construction. They say that the concept of a life's course varies for different individuals and different cultures; therefore trainers and adult educators should be wary of definitive views of adults and their behavior.

Burns would probably support this view as he discusses the notion that ‘definitions of the adult are not clear’ and says ‘the same is true of adult education’. He discusses the ‘petrol tank’ view of school education: ‘fill the tank full at the only garage before the freeway, then away we go on life’s journey’ (1995, p. 227). He goes on to discuss that problems can arise when people have not had their tank filled completely at school and he extends the metaphor to suggest that there should be service stations along ‘the length of the highway of life’.

The question could be asked-when is maturity complete? Is there no further development after a certain stage in life?

Some authors think that while children at approximately the same age are at approximately the same stage of development, the same cannot be said of adults. Adults would vary in levels of knowledge and also in their life experiences. There could be said to be tremendous variation in adult experience.

An adult’s emotional response can affect learning

Some adults can approach formal settings with anxiety and feelings of high or low self-efficacy. Their approach to new learning contexts can be influenced by how they appraise or evaluate the new experience.

For example: given two adults in a classroom where an exercise is about to begin, one individual may interpret the exercise in such a way that leads to a feeling of ‘excitement’, while the other person interprets the exercise in such a way that leads to the feeling of ‘embarrassment’. It is self evident that the way the individual interprets the situation and the subsequent emotion that arises, will affect the kind of action the individual is to take. (Burns, 1995, p. 16)

Burns considers that such appraisals; couple with labels such as ‘fear’ or ‘anxiety’ can led some learners to emotionally disengage from the source of discomfort that is the learning experience. However, when couple with labels such as ‘excitement’ or ‘challenge’ the learner is led to take actions that focus on the task<sup>9</sup>.

### **5.3.3.1. CONSTRUCTIVISM**

#### **Definition**

Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in. Each of us generates our own “rules” and “mental models,” which we use to make sense of our process of adjusting our mental models to accommodate new experiences.

#### **Discussion**

There are several guiding principles of constructivism:

1. Learning is a search for meaning. Therefore, learning must start with the issues around which students are actively trying to construct meaning.
2. Meaning requires understanding wholes as well as parts. And parts must be understood in the context of wholes. Therefore, the learning process focuses on primary concepts, not isolated facts.
3. In order to teach well, we must understand the mental models that students use to perceive the world and the assumptions they make to support those models.

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<sup>9</sup> [Http://www.brookes.ac.uk/serevices/ocsd/2\\_learnth/theories.html](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/serevices/ocsd/2_learnth/theories.html). Oxford center, oxford Brookes University, OX33. Email: ocsid@brookes.ac.uk

4. The purpose of learning is for an individual to construct his or her own meaning, not just memorize the “right” answer and regurgitate someone else’s meaning. Since education is inherently interdisciplinary, the only valuable way to measure learning is to make the assessment part of the learning process, ensuring it provides students with information on the quality of their learning.

### **How Constructivism Impacts Learning**

**Curriculum**—Constructivism calls for the elimination of a standardized curriculum. Instead, it promotes using curricula customized to the students’ prior knowledge. Also, it emphasizes hands-on problem solving.

**Instruction**—under the theory of constructivism, educators focus on making connections between facts and fostering new understanding in students. Instructors tailor their teaching strategies to students’ responses and encourage students to analyze, interpret, and predict information. Teachers also rely heavily on open-ended questions and promote extensive dialogue among students.

**Assessment**—Constructivism calls for the elimination of grades and standardized testing. Instead, assessment becomes part of the learning process so that students play a larger role in judging their own progress.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Jacqueline and martin brooks, the case for constructivist classrooms. Htt: / [www.funderstanding.com/constructivism.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/constructivism.cfm). Htt:[www.funderstanding.com/constructivism.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/constructivism.cfm)

### 5.3.3.2. BEHAVIORISM

#### Definition

Behaviorism is a theory of animal and human learning that only focuses on objectively observable behaviors and discounts mental activities. Behavior theorists define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior.

#### Discussion

Experiments by behaviorists identify conditioning as universal learning process. There are two different types of conditioning, each yielding a different behavioral pattern:

1. **Classic conditioning** occurs when a responds to a stimulus. The most popular example is Pavlov's observation that dogs salivate when they eat or even see food. Essentially, animals and people are biologically "wired" so that a certain stimulus will produce a specific response.
2. **Behavioral or operant conditioning** occurs when a response to a stimulus is reinforced. Basically, operant conditioning is a simple feedback system: If a reward or reinforcement follows the response to a stimulus, then the response becomes more probable in the future. For example, leading behaviorist B.F. Skinner used reinforcement techniques to teach pigeons to dance and bowl a ball in a mini-alley.

There have been many criticisms of behaviorism, including the following:

1. Behaviorism does not account for all kinds of learning, since it disregards the activities of the mind.

2. Behaviorism does not explain some learning—such as the recognition of new language patterns by young children—for which there is no reinforcement mechanism.
3. Research has shown that animals adapt their reinforced patterns to new information. For instance, a rat can shift its behavior to respond to changes in the layout of a maze it had previously mastered through reinforcements.

### **How Behaviorism Impact Learning**

This theory is relatively simple to understand because it relies only on observable behavior and describes several universal laws of behavior. Its positive and negative reinforcement techniques can be very effective—both in animals, and in treatments for human disorders such as autism and antisocial behavior. Behaviorism often is used by teachers, who reward or punish student behaviors.<sup>11</sup>

### **5.3.3.3.PIAGET**

#### **Definition**

Swiss biologist and psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) is renowned for constructing a highly influential model of child development and learning. Piaget's theory is based on the idea that the developing child builds cognitive structures—in other words, mental “maps,” schemes, or networked concepts for understanding and responding to physical experiences within his or her environment. Piaget further

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<sup>11</sup> D.C. Phillips&Jonas F.Soltis, perspectives on learning, chapter 3.

<http://www.funderstanding.com/behaviorism.cfm>

attested that a child's cognitive structure increases in sophistication with development, moving from a new innate reflexes such as crying and sucking to highly complex mental activities.

## **Discussion**

Piaget's theory identifies four developmental stages and the processes by which children progress through them.

The four stages are:

1. Sensory motor stage (birth – 2 years old)—The child, through physical interaction with his or her environment, builds asset of concepts about reality and how it works. This is the stage where a child does not know that physical objects remain in existence even when out of sight (object permanence).
2. Preoperational stage (ages 2-7) — The child is not yet able to conceptualize abstractly and needs concrete physical situations.
3. Concrete operations (ages 7 – 11) \_\_As physical experience accumulates; the child starts to conceptualize, creating logical structures that explain his or her physical experiences. Abstract problem solving is also possible at this stage. For example, arithmetic equations can be solved with numbers, not just with objects.
4. Formal operations (beginning at ages 11 – 5) – By this point, the child's cognitive structures are like those of an adult and include conceptual reasoning.

Piaget outlined several principles for building cognitive structures. During all development stages, the child experiences his or her environment using whatever mental maps he or she has constructed so far. If the experience is a repeated one, it fits easily –or is assimilated –into the child’s cognitive structure so that he or she maintains mental “equilibrium.” If the experience is different or new, the child loses equilibrium, and alters his or her cognitive structure to accommodate the new conditions. This way, the child erects more and more adequate cognitive structures.

### **How Piaget’s Theory Impacts Learning**

**Curriculum**—Educators must plan a developmentally appropriate curriculum that enhances their students’ logical and conceptual growth.

**Instruction**—Teachers must emphasize the critical role that experiences—or interactions with the surrounding environmental—play in student learning. For example, instructors have to take into account the role that fundamental concepts, such as the permanence of objects, play in establishing cognitive structures.<sup>12</sup>

### **5.3.3.4.NEUROSCIENCE**

#### **Definition**

Neuroscience is the study of the human nervous system, the brain, and the biological basis of consciousness, perception, memory, and learning.

#### **Discussion**

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.funderstanding.com/piaget.cfm>

The nervous system and the brain are the physical foundation of the human learning process. Neuroscience links our observations about cognitive behavior with the actual physical processes that support such behavior. This theory is still “young” and is undergoing rapid, controversial development.

Some of the key findings of neuroscience era:

1. *The brain has a triad structure.* Our brain actually contains three brains: the lower or reptilian brain that controls basic sensory motor functions; the mammalian or limbic brain that controls emotions, memory, and biorhythms; and the thinking brain that controls cognition, reasoning, language, and higher intelligence.
2. *The brain is not a computer.* The structure of the brain’s neuron connections is loose, flexible, “webbed,” overlapping, and redundant. It’s impossible for such a system to function like a linear or parallel-processing computer. Instead, the brain is better described as a self-organizing system.
3. *The brain changes with use, throughout our lifetime.* Mental concentration and effort alters the physical structure of the brain. Our nerve cells (neurons) are connected by branches called dendrites. There are about 10 billion neurons in the brain and about 1,000 trillion connections. The possible combination of connections is about ten to the one-millionth power. As we use the brain, we strengthen certain patterns of connection, making each connection easier to create next time. This is how memory develops.

## **How Neuroscience Impacts Education**

When educators take neuroscience into account, they organize a curriculum around real experiences and integrated, “whole” ideas. Plus, they focus on instruction that promotes complex thinking and the “growth” of the brain. Neuroscience proponents advocate continued learning and intellectual development throughout adulthood.<sup>13</sup>

### **5.3.3.5. BRAIN-BASED LEARNING**

#### **Definition**

This learning theory is based on the structure and function of the brain. As long as the brain is not prohibited from fulfilling its normal processes, learning will occur.

#### **Discussion**

People often say that everyone **can** learn. Yet the reality is that everyone **does** learn. Every person is born with a brain that functions as an immensely powerful processor. Traditional schooling, however, often inhibits learning by discouraging, ignoring, or punishing the brain’s natural learning processes.

The core principles of brain - based learning state that:

1. The brain is a parallel processor, meaning it can perform several activities at once, like tasting and smelling.
2. Learning engages the whole physiology.
3. The search for meaning is innate.
4. The search for meaning comes through patterning.
5. Emotions are critical to patterning.
6. The brain processes wholes and parts simultaneously.

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<sup>13</sup> RENATE AND GEOFFREY Caine, Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain. <http://WWW.Funderstanding.com/neuroscience.cfm>

7. Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception.
8. Learning involves both conscious and unconscious processes.
9. We have two types of memory: spatial and rote.
10. We understand best when facts are embedded in natural, spatial memory.
11. Learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by treat.
12. Each brain is unique.

The three instructional techniques associated with brain-based learning are:

1. **Orchestrated immersion**—Creating learning environments that fully immerse students in an educational experience.
2. **Relaxed alertness**—Trying to eliminate fear in learners, while maintaining a highly challenging environment.
3. **Active processing**—Allowing the learner to consolidate and internalize information by actively processing it.

### **How Brain-Based Learning Impacts Education**

*Curriculum*—Teachers must design learning around student interests and make learning contextual.

*Instruction*—Educators let students learn in teams and use peripheral learning. Teachers structure learning around real problems, encouraging students to also learn in settings outside the classroom and the school building.

*Assessment*—Since all students are learning, their assessment should allow them to understand their own learning styles and preferences. This way, students monitor and enhance their own learning process.

## **What Brain-Based Learning Suggests**

How the brain works has a significant impact on what kinds of learning activities are most effective. Educators need to help students have appropriate experiences and capitalize on those experiences. As Renate Caine illustrates on p. 113 of her book *Making Connections*, three interactive elements are essential to this process:

- Teachers must immerse learners in complex, interactive experiences that are both rich and real. One excellent example is immersing students in a foreign culture to teach them a second language. Educators must take advantage of the brain's ability to parallel process.
- Students must have a personally meaningful challenge. Such challenges stimulate a student's mind to the desired state of alertness.
- In order for a student to gain insight about a problem, there must be intensive analysis of the different ways to approach it, and about learning in general. This is what's known as the "active processing of experience."

A few other tenets of brain-based learning include:

- Feedback is best when it comes from reality rather than from an authority figure.
- People learn best when solving realistic problems.
- The big picture can't be separated from the details.
- Because every brain is different, educators should allow learners to customize their own environments.

- The best problem solvers are those that laugh!

Designers of educational tools must be artistic in their creation of brain-friendly environments. Instructors need to realize that the best way to learn is not through lecture, but by participation in realistic environments that let learners try new things safely.<sup>14</sup>

#### **5.3.3.6. LEARNING STYLES**

##### **Definition**

This approach to learning emphasizes the fact that individuals perceive and process information in very different ways. The learning styles theory implies that how much individuals learn has more to do with whether the educational experience is geared toward their particular style of learning than whether or not they are “smart.” In fact, educators should not ask, “Is the student smart? But rather “How is this student smart?”

##### **Discussion**

The concept of learning styles is rooted in the classification of psychological types. The learning styles theory is based on research demonstration that, as the result of heredity, upbringing, and current environmental demands, different individuals have a tendency to both perceive and process information differently. The different ways of doing so are generally classified as:

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<sup>14</sup> Renate and Geoffrey Caine, Leslie Hart, Human Brain, Human Learning. Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain, [http://www.funderstanding.com/brain\\_based\\_learning.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/brain_based_learning.cfm)

1. *Concrete and abstract perceivers*—Concrete perceivers absorb information through direct experience, by doing, acting, sensing, and feeling. Abstract perceivers, however, take in information through analysis, observation, and thinking.
2. *Active and reflective processors*—Active processors make sense of an experience by immediately using the new information. Reflective processors make sense of an experience by reflecting on and thinking about it.

Traditional schooling tends to favor abstract perceiving and reflective processing. Other kinds of learning aren't rewarded and reflected in curriculum, instruction, and assessment nearly as much.

### **How the Learning Styles Theory Impacts Education**

*Curriculum*—Educators must place emphasis on intuition, feeling, sensing, and imagination, in addition to the traditional skills of analysis, reason, and sequential problem solving.

*Instruction*—Teachers should design their instruction methods to connect with all four learning styles, using various combinations of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. Instructors can introduce a wide variety of experiential elements into the classroom, such as sound, music, visuals, movement, experience, and even talking.

*Assessment*—Teachers should employ a variety of assessment techniques, focusing on the development of “whole brain” capacity and each of the different learning styles.<sup>15</sup>

### **5.3.3.7. MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES**

#### **Definition**

This theory of human intelligence, developed by psychologist Howard Gardner, suggests there are at least seven ways that people have of perceiving and understanding the world. Gardner labels each of these ways a distinct “intelligence” –in other words, asset of skills allowing individuals to find and resolve genuine problems they face.

#### **Discussion**

Gardner defines “intelligence” as a group of abilities that:

- Is somewhat autonomous from other human capacities.
- Has a core set of information-processing operations
- Has a distinct history in the stages of development we each pass through
- Has plausible roots in evolutionary history

While Gardner suggests his list of intelligences may not be exhaustive, he identifies the following seven:

1. Verbal – Linguistic—The ability to use words and language

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<sup>15</sup> Bernice McCarthy, the 4-MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/left Mode Techniques. [http://www.funderstanding.com/learning\\_styles.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/learning_styles.cfm)

2. Logical – Mathematical—The capacity for inductive and deductive thinking and reasoning, as well as the use of numbers and the recognition of abstract patterns.
3. Visual – Spatial –The ability to visualize objects and spatial dimensions, and create internal images and pictures.
4. Body-Kinesthetic –The wisdom of the body and the ability to control physical motion.
5. Music – Rhythmic –The ability to recognize tonal patterns and sounds, as well as sensitivity to rhythms and beats.
6. Interpersonal –The capacity for person- to- person communications and relationships.
7. Intrapersonal –The spiritual, inner states of being, self-reflection, and awareness.

### **How Multiple Intelligences Impact Learning**

*Curriculum*—Traditional schooling heavily favors the verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. Gardner suggests a more balanced curriculum that incorporates the arts, self-awareness, communication, and physical education.

*Instruction*—Gardner advocates instructional methods that appeal to all the intelligences, including role playing, musical performance, cooperative learning, reflection, visualization, story telling, and so on.

*Assessment*—This theory calls for assessment methods that take into account the diversity of intelligences, as well as self-assessment tools that help students understand their intelligences.

### 5.3.3.8. RIGHT BRAIN vs. LEFT BRAIN

#### Definition

This theory of the structure and the functions of the mind suggest that the two different sides of the brain control two different “modes” of thinking. It also suggests that each of us prefers one mode over the other.

#### Discussion

Experimentation has shown that the two different sides, or hemispheres, of the brain are responsible for different manners of thinking. The following table illustrates the differences between left-brain and right-brain thinking:

<b>Left Brain</b>	<b>Right Brain</b>
Logical	Random
Sequential	Intuitive
Rational	Holistic
Analytical	Synthesizing
Objective	Subjective
Look at parts	Looks at wholes

Most individuals have a distinct preference for one of these styles of thinking. Some, however, are more whole-brain modes. In general, schools tend to favor left-brain modes of thinking, while downplaying the right-brain ones. Left-brain scholastic subjects focus on logical thinking, analysis, and accuracy. Right-brained subjects, on the other hand, focus on aesthetics, feeling, and creativity<sup>16</sup>.

#### How Right-Brain vs. Left-Brain Thinking Impacts Learning

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<sup>16</sup> Howard Gardner Frames of mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence. [http://www.funderstanding.com/multiple\\_intelligence.cfm](http://www.funderstanding.com/multiple_intelligence.cfm)

*Curriculums*—In order to be more “whole-brained” in their orientation, schools need to give equal weight to the arts, creativity, and the skills of imagination and synthesis.

*Instruction*—To foster a more whole-brained scholastic experience, teachers should use instruction techniques that connect with both sides of the brain. They can increase their classroom’s right-brain learning activities by incorporating more patterning, metaphors, analogies, role playing, visuals, and movement into their reading, calculation, and analytical activities.

*Assessment*—For a more accurate whole-brained evaluation of student learning, educators must develop new forms of assessment that honor right-brained talents and skills.

### **5.3.3.9. OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING**

#### **Definition**

Observational learning, also called social learning theory, occurs when an observer’s behavior changes after viewing the behavior of a model. An observer’s behavior can be affected by the positive or negative consequences—called vicarious reinforcement or vicarious punishment—of a model’s behavior.

#### **Discussion**

There are several guiding principles behind observational learning, or social learning theory:

1. The observer will imitate the model's behavior if the model possesses characteristic—things such as talent, intelligence, power, good looks, or popularity—that the observer finds attractive or desirable.
2. The observer will react to the way the model is treated and mimic the model's behavior. When the model's behavior is rewarded, the observer is more likely to reproduce the rewarded; the observer is more likely to reproduce the rewarded behavior. When the model is punished, an example of vicarious punishment, the observer is less likely to reproduce the same behavior.
3. A distinction exists between an observer's "acquiring" a behavior and "performing" a behavior. Through observation, the observer can acquire the behavior without performing it. The observer may then later, in situations where there is an incentive to do so, display the behavior.
4. Learning by observation involves four separate processes: attention, retention, production and motivation.
  - Attention: Observers cannot learn unless they pay attention to what's happening around them. This process is influenced by characteristics of the model, such as how much one likes or identifies with the model, and by characteristics of the observer, such as the observer's expectations or level of emotional arousal.
  - Retention: Observers must not only recognize the observed behavior but also remember it at some later time. This process depends on the observer's ability to code or structure the information in an easily

remembered form or to mentally or physically rehearse the model's actions.

- Production: Observers must be physically and/intellectually capable of producing the act. In many cases the observer possesses the necessary responses. But sometimes, reproducing the model's actions may involve skills the observer has not yet acquired. It is one thing to carefully watch a circus juggler, but it is quite another to go home and repeat those acts.
  - Motivation: In general, observers will perform the act only if they have some motivation or reason to do so. The presence of reinforcement or punishment, either to the model or directly to the observer, becomes most important in this process.
5. Attention and retention account for acquisition or learning of a model's behavior; production and motivation control the performance.
6. Human development reflects the complex interaction of the person, the person's behavior, and the environment. The relationship between these elements is called reciprocal determinism. A person's cognitive abilities, physical characteristics, personality, beliefs, attitudes, and so on influence both his and her behavior and environment. These influences are reciprocal, however. A person's behavior can affect his feelings about himself and his attitudes and beliefs about himself and his attitudes and beliefs about others. Likewise, much of what a person knows comes from environmental resources such as television, parents, and books. Environment also affects behavior: what a person observes can powerfully influence what he does. But a person's behavior also contributes to his environment.

### **How Observational Learning Impacts Learning:**

*Curriculum*—Students must get a chance to observe and model the behavior that leads to a positive reinforcement.

*Instruction*—Educators must encourage collaborative learning, since much of learning happens within important social and environmental contexts.

*Assessment*—A learned behavior often cannot be performed unless there is the right environment for it. Educators must provide the incentive and the supportive environment for the behavior to happen. Otherwise, assessment may not be accurate.<sup>17</sup>

#### **5.3.4.0. VYGOTSKY AND SOCIAL COGNITION**

##### **Definition**

The social cognition learning model asserts that culture is the prime determinant of individual development. Humans are the only species to have created cultural, and every human child's develops in the context of a culture. Therefore, a child's learning development is affected in ways large and small by the culture—including the culture of family environment—in which he or she is enmeshed.

##### **Discussion**

1. Culture makes two sorts of contributions to a child's intellectual development. First, through culture children acquire much of the content of their thinking, that is, their knowledge. Second, the surrounding culture provides a child with the processes or means of their thinking, what

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<sup>17</sup> Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Vygotskians call the tools of intellectual adaptation. In short, according to the social cognition learning model, culture teaches children both what to think and how to think.

2. Cognitive development results from a dialectical process whereby a child learns through problem-solving experiences shared with someone else, usually a parent or teacher but sometimes a sibling or peer.
3. Initially, the person interacting with child assumes most of the responsibility for guiding the problem solving, but gradually this responsibility transfers to the child
4. Language is a primary form of interaction through which adults transmit to the child the rich body of knowledge that exists in the culture.
5. As learning progresses, the child's own language comes to serve as her primary tool of intellectual adaptation. Eventually, children can use internal language to direct their own behavior.
6. Internalization refers to the process of learning—and thereby internalizing—a rich body of knowledge and tools of thought that first exist outside the child. This happens primarily through language.

7. A difference exists between what child can do on her own and what the child can do with help. Vygotskians call this difference the zone of proximal development.
8. Since much of what a child learns comes from the culture around her and much of the child's problem solving is mediated through an adult's help, it is wrong to focus on a child in isolation. Such focus does not reveal the processes by which children acquire new skills.
9. Interactions with surrounding culture and social agents, such as parents and more competent peers, contribute significantly to a child's intellectual development.

**How Vygotsky Impacts Learning:**

Curriculum—Since children learn much through interaction, curricula should be designed to emphasize interaction between learners and learning tasks.

Instructions—With appropriate adult help, children can often perform tasks that they are incapable of completing on their own. With this in mind, scaffolding—where the adult continually adjust the level of his or her help in response to the child's level of performance—is an effective form of teaching. Scaffolding not only produces immediate results, but also instills the skills necessary for independent problem solving in the future.

Assessment—Assessment methods must take into account the zone of proximal development. What children can do on their own selves level of actual development and what they can do with help is their level of potential development. Two children might have the same level of actual development, but given the appropriate help from an adult, one might be able to solve many more problems than the other. Assessment methods must target both the level of actual development and the level of potential development.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Vygotsky, L.S (1962).Thought and Language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Originally work published 1934 <http://www.funderstanding.com/vygotsky.cfm>)

## **6. HYPHOTHESIS**

### **6.1. GENERAL**

The methodology used by the English teachers affects the teaching learning process with the students of the main public elementary school of Loja city.

Period 2008-2009.

### **6.2. SPECIFICS**

- The methodology used by the English teachers has characteristics of the traditional didactic what limits the learning of the students at “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.
- The techniques used by the teachers are not in relation with the development of the English Language skills of the students at “Alejandrino Velasco” and Julio Ordoñez” public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.

## **7. METHODOLOGY**

The group considers the present research work as a descriptive work, because the researchers will not have the opportunity to manipulate the variables. The group will just describe the results using the descriptive statistics representing them in tables and graphs that will let the interpretation of the field data.

### ***7.2. METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS***

#### **7.2.1. METHODS**

The main method that will be used in this project research is the scientific because it will let carry out a systematic, and ordered process to do a logic explanation of the relations that are established in the researched object and consequently we can derivate alternatives of solution to the found problem. As particular methods we will use the descriptive, the analytical-synthetic and the explicative ones.

The **descriptive method** will be used to describe the obtained results in the field research and it also will be used to determine the methodology that the teachers of the English Language are applying into the Teaching Learning Process ant it will let observe the main techniques that they use in the development of the before mentioned process.

The **analytic-synthetic** method will be used to analyze the obtained results through the research instruments, to make the interpretation of the data and to establish the conclusions based on the results of major tendency. It also will help us to find the

methodology that the teachers use in the main public elementary schools of the Loja city.

The **explicative method** will serve to explain the relation that exist between the variables established in the researched object, to give our point of view according to the obtained results and to explain the theoretical referents about the teaching methods and techniques that the teachers use to into the teaching-learning process of the English language.

It's important to mention that the descriptive statistics will be used as a tool which will facilitate the representation of the data in tables and graphics that will let us the comprehension of the information.

### **7.2.2. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS**

To get the empiric information in the field work about the researched object we will use the following techniques and instruments.

The **survey** to the teachers who work teaching the English language in the two mentioned elementary schools in order to know what kind of methods and techniques they apply in their daily practice and what the development of the main skills listening, speaking, reading and writing in the students of the researched schools.

It will be applied to the students of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education to obtain information about the methods and techniques that their teachers use in the English

classes and to establish the learning reached by them in the English language. It will be applied through a questionnaire that will be elaborated with closed questions about the indicators that will guide our research work. To apply the survey we will explain the purpose of the project and the intention of the survey especially to the students we are going to direct the development of the actors so that we will assure the reliability of the data.

### ***7.3. PROCEDURES***

To make the present research work we will develop the following procedures:

To process the information we will classify the information by variables and by hypothesis and then we will process it following these steps:

- The tabulation of the data making use of the descriptive statistics for every closed question, keeping in mind their indicators that will facilitate their interpretation. The tabulation of all the applied instruments will let us a contrast of the information and the analysis of one indicator since different points of view.
- The organization of the empiric information will be made according to the specific hypothesis that will guide the classification of the questions by hypothesis.

- The Graphic representation of the empiric information in tables and graphs that will let us the visualization of the data easily, and the tendency of the indicators in each variable.
- The analysis and interpretation of the empiric information stating the results in percentages and in the analysis of the data will be necessary to check again the principles of the main categories developed in the theoretical frame.
- The formulation of conclusions will be done with worth judgments that will be derived from the analysis and interpretation of the data and they will be based on the specific objectives which have guided the research process.
- The verification of the hypothesis will be done through the empiric method with a description of the indicators with major tendency and contrasting them with the information of the theoretical frame of the project.
- To elaborate the final report it is necessary to integrate all the components of the research process, intending the logic integration among them; this will require a new revision of the theme, objectives, hypothesis and theoretical frame so we will get a good relation among them.

- To elaborate the report we will take into account the guidelines given in the National University of Loja regulation about the Graduation process.

#### **7.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

The population that will give us the empiric information is constituted by all the English teachers that teach in the two researched schools who are **four**. Two belongs to “Jose Alejandrino Velasco”, two from “Prof. Julio Ordoñez Espinoza” schools.

It is important to mention that we will take the whole teachers’ population because it is small.

Regard to the students we will take a sample of the ones who are in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education of every researched school, because we consider that they are able to give real information so that we will get a more reliable research work.

We show the population in the following chart:

**Chart No. 1**

Schools	6 <sup>th</sup> Year				7 <sup>th</sup> Year				TOT AL
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	
“Alejandrino Velasco” School	16	29			24	22			91
“Julio Ordoñez” School	33	32	33	29	33	35	35		230

<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>321</b>
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From this population we will get the sample through the following formula:

$$n = \frac{PQ \times N}{E^2 \left( \frac{N-1}{K^2} + 0,25 \right)}$$

PQ = First quartil (0,25)

N= Population

N = Sample

K = Constant of proporcionality (2)

E = Error of sample (10%, 0,1)

$$n = \frac{0,25 \times 321}{(0,1)^2 \left( \frac{320}{(2)^2} + 0,25 \right)}$$

$$n = \frac{80,25}{2,95}$$

$$\frac{\text{-----}}{4}$$

$$n = 80,25$$

$$\frac{\text{-----}}{0,74}$$

$$n = \mathbf{108}$$

Moreover we will apply the surveys to 108 students of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> years of basic education which we show in the following table:

Schools	6 <sup>th</sup> Year				7 <sup>th</sup> Year				TOTAL
	A	B	C		A	B	C	D	
"Alejandrino Velasco" School	8	8			8	7			31
"Julio Ordoñez" School	11	11	11		11	11	11		77
<b>TOTAL</b>									<b>108</b>

To do the sample distribution we will apply the below formula and the result must be multiplied by every course total.

$$n = \frac{n}{N} \qquad n = \frac{108}{321}$$

$$n = 0,336$$

$$n = 0,336 \times 91 \qquad n = 31$$

## **8. ORGANIZATION Y MANAGEMENT OF THE INVESTIGATION**

### **8.1. RESOURCES**

#### **8.1.1. HUMAN**

The resarch group is conformed by Carmen Leopoldina Guamán Ortiz y Ana del Cisne Cuenca Cuenca.

Teachers of "José Alejandrino Velasco" and "Profesor Julio Ordoñez Espinosa" schools.

#### **8.1.2. MATERIAL**

Office material, books, copies, computer, printer, paper, folders and paper clips

### **8.2. BUDGET**

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>VALUE</b>
Project elaboration	400
Thesis report	200
Copies and Reproduction	400
Unforeseen	200
	.....
	\$ 1.200

#### **8.3. FINANCING**

All the expenses from the present research work will be assumed by the group.

## 9. TIME TABLE

Time ACTIVITIE	Feb				Mar				Abr				May				Jun				Jul			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Presentation of the Project	x	x																						
Write the recommendations to the project				x	x																			
Checking and redesign of the research instruments						x																		
Application of the research instruments							x	x																
Processing of the research									x	x	x													
Drawing conclusions												x	x											
Elaboration of the report													x	x										
Private qualification of the thesis															x	x								
Write the recommendations																	x	x						
Public sustentation and Graduation																					x	x		

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## 12. ANNEXES

# National University of Loja

## Area of Education, Art and Communication

### English Language Career

#### Teacher's Survey.

##### 11. What aspects do you use to teach English?

- a) Using grammar patterns and vocabulary building ( )
- b) Using dialogues, role plays and discussions ( )
- c) Others ( )

Which ones : .....

##### 12. Which of the following methods do you use to teach English?

- a. The Natural Approach ( )
- b. Total Physical Response ( )
- c. Communicative Language Teaching ( )
- d. Grammar Translation Method ( )
- e. Others ( )

##### 13. Do you teach grammatical structures to teach English?

- a) Yes ( )    b) No ( )

Why?.....

##### 14. Do you translate while you are teaching the class?

- a) Always ( )
- b) Sometimes ( )
- c) Never ( )

Why?.....

##### 15. What percentage of language do you use in class?

- |               |               |       |
|---------------|---------------|-------|
| English (70%) | Spanish (30%) | ..... |
| English (50%) | Spanish (50%) | ..... |
| English (30%) | Spanish (70%) | ..... |

Why?.....

**16. How often do you practice the listening and speaking skills with your students?**

- a) Always ( )    b) sometimes ( )    c) Never ( )

Why?.....

**17. How often do you practice the reading and writing skills?**

- a) Always ( )    b) sometimes ( )    c) Never ( )

Why?.....

**18. Which of the following techniques do you use to teach the English class?**

<b>Techniques</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
a) Translation			
b) Dialogues			
c) Repetition drills			
d) Group work			
e) Memorization of words			
f) Pair work			
g) Grammar rules			

**19. How do you consider the learning of the English Language of your students?**

- a) Very good 20-18 ( )  
b) Good 17-15 ( )  
c) Regular 14-12 ( )  
d) Deficient 11-09 ( )

**20. What's the development of the skills of the English Language of yours students?**

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Regular</b>	<b>Deficient</b>
a) Listening				
b) Speaking				
c) Reading				
d) Writing				

**Thanks for your collaboration**

# National University of Loja

## Area of Education, Art and Communication

### English Language Career

#### Student's Survey.

**1. What aspects does your teacher use to teach English?**

- d) Using grammar patterns and vocabulary building ( )
- e) Using dialogues, role plays and discussions ( )
- f) Others ( )

Which ones : .....

**2. Which of the following methods does your teacher use to teach English?**

- a. The Natural Approach ( )
- b. Total Physical Response ( )
- c. Communicative Language Teaching ( )
- d. Grammar Translation Method ( )
- e. Others ( )

**3. Does your teacher teach grammatical structures to teach English?**

- a) Yes ( )
- b) No ( )

Why?.....

**4. Does your teacher translate while he/she is teaching the class?**

- d) Always ( )
- e) Sometimes ( )
- f) Never ( )

Why?.....

**5. What percentage of language does your teacher use in class?**

- |               |               |       |
|---------------|---------------|-------|
| English (70%) | Spanish (30%) | ..... |
| English (50%) | Spanish (50%) | ..... |
| English (30%) | Spanish (70%) | ..... |

Why?.....

6. **How often does your teacher practice the listening and speaking skills with the students?**

- b) Always ( )    b) sometimes ( )    c) Never ( )

Why?.....

7. **How often do you practice the reading and writing skills?**

- b) Always ( )    b) sometimes ( )    c) Never ( )

Why?.....

8. **Which of the following techniques does your teacher use to teach the English class?**

Techniques	Always	Sometimes	Never
a) Translation			
b) Dialogues			
c) Repetition drills			
c) Group work			
d) Memorization of words			
e) Pair work			
f) Grammar rules			

9. **How do you consider your learning level in the English Language?**

- a) Very good 20-18 ( )  
 b) Good 17-15 ( )  
 b) Regular 14-12 ( )  
 c) Deficient 11-09 ( )

10. **What's the development of your skills of the English Language?**

Skills	Very Good	Good	Regular	Deficient

a) Listening				
b) Speaking				
c) Reading				
d) Writing				

**Thanks for your collaboration**

## CONSISTENCY MATRIX

**THEME:** ANALYSIS OF THE METHODOLOGY USED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS TO GUIDE THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS WITH THE STDUENTS OF THE MAIN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF THE LOJA CITY. DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2008 – 2009.

PROBLEMS	OBJECTIVES	HYPOTHESIS	VARIABLES	INDICATORS
<p><b>GENERAL</b> How the methodology used by the English Teachers affects the Teaching Learning process with the students of the main public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?</p> <p><b>SPECIFICS</b> What kind of methodology do the teachers use to develop the teaching –learning process of the English Language with the students of the main public elementary schools of Loja city. School period 2008-2009</p>	<p><b>GENERAL</b> To know the methodology used by the English Teachers to guide the teaching-learning process with the students of the main public elementary school of Loja city. Period 2008-2009.</p> <p><b>SPECIFICS</b> To identify the kind of methodology that is used by the teachers to develop the teaching –learning process of the English Language with the students of the main public elementary schools of Loja city. School period 2008-2009.</p>	<p><b>GENERAL</b> The methodology used by the English teachers affects the teaching learning process with the students of the main public elementary school of Loja city. Period 2008-2009.</p> <p><b>SPECIFICS</b> The methodology used by the English teachers has characteristics of the traditional didactic what limits the learning of the students of the main public elementary schools of Loja city. School period 2008-2009</p>	<p>Traditional Methodology</p> <p>Learning</p>	

<p>How the teaching techniques used by the teachers are related to the development of the English Language skills of the students the in the main public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009?</p>	<p>To determine the teaching techniques used by the teachers and its relation with the development of the English Language skills of the students in the main public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.</p>	<p>The techniques used by the teachers are not in relation with the development of the English Language skills of the students in the main public elementary schools of the Loja city. Period 2008-2009.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Techniques</li> <li>• Development of the English Language skills</li> </ul>	
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