UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

ENGLISH TEACHING

TESIS PARA OPTAR EL GRADO DE LICENCIATURA EN LA CARRERA DE ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

COMPILATION OF EFFICIENT TEACHING STRATEGIES TO DETERMINE THE FULFILLMENT OF MEP ENGLISH PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR ELEVENTH GRADE AT LICEO LUIS DOBLES SEGREDA I PERIOD 2019

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June, 2019

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my work to all the special people in my life that supported me and made

me stronger when I felt I could no more. This is not only my achievement, but theirs as well.

Without them this would not be possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and most important, I would like to thank God who is the wise giver and who never

forsakes me. Also, to my supportive family and friends who stood by me throughout the process

motivating me and making me feel their love.

EPIGRAPH

History begins only at the point where things go wrong; history is born only with trouble, with

perplexity, with regret.

Waterland

DECLARACIÓN JURADA

Declaración Jurada

Yo **Grethel Peña Gómez**, cédula de identidad número **8 0122 0358** en condición de egresada de la carrera de **Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés** de la Universidad Hispanoamericana, y advertido de las penas con las que la ley castiga el falso testimonio y el perjurio, declaro bajo la fe del juramento que dejo rendido en este acto, que mi trabajo de graduación, para optar por el título de **Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés** titulado **"Compilation of Efficient Teaching Strategies to Determine the Fulfillment of MEP English Program Objectives for Eleventh Grade at liceo Luis Dobles Segreda I Period"** es una obra original y para su realización he respetado todo lo preceptuado por las Leyes Penales, así como la Ley de Derechos de Autor y Derecho Conexos, número 6683 del 14 de octubre de 1982 y sus reformas, publicada en la Gaceta número 226 del 25 de noviembre de 1982; especialmente el numeral 70 de dicha ley en el que se establece: "Es permitido citar a un autor, transcribiendo los pasajes pertinentes siempre que éstos no sean tantos y seguidos, que puedan considerarse como una producción simulada y sustancial, que redunde en perjuicio del autor de la obra original". Asimismo, que conozco y acepto que la Universidad se reserva el derecho de protocolizar este documento ante Notario Público. Firmo, en fe de lo anterior, en la ciudad de Tibás **el 22 de mayo de 2019.**

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Estimado señor:

El estudiante Grethel Peña Gómez, cédula de identidad número 8-0122-0358, me ha presentado, para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado *COMPILATION OF EFFICIENT TEACHING STRATEGIES TO DETERMINE THE FULFILLMENT OF MEP ENGLISH PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR ELEVENTH GRADE AT LICEO LUIS DOBLES SEGREDA I PERIOD*, el cual ha elaborado para optar por el grado académico de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés.

En mi calidad de tutor, he verificado que se han hecho las correcciones indicadas durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación, antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos, conclusiones y recomendaciones.

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Sharon Solano Mena
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Estimado señor

El estudiante Grethel Peña Gómez, cédula de identidad 8-0122-0358 me ha presentado para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado "COMPILATION OF EFFICIENT TEACHING STRATEGIES TO DETERMINE THE FULFILLMENT OF MEP ENGLISH PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR ELEVENTH GRADE AT LICEO LUIS DOBLES SEGREDA I PERIOD ", el cual ha elaborado para obtener su grado de Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés.

He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre éstos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

Por consiguiente, este trabajo cuenta con mi aval para ser presentado en la defensa pública.

Atte.

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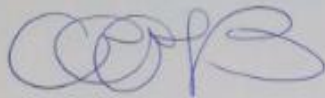
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De usted, cordialmente,

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to address an important matter regarding effective teaching strategies applied by teachers in class in order to fulfill MEP objectives for eleventh grade, specifically at Luis Dobles Segreda high school.

This research will be relevant when English teachers apply these effective strategies in their classrooms with the aim of helping students to achieve academic success and a proficient English level at the end of their high school years for them to be able to build a better future in the competitive bilingual job market.

It can contribute to improve the language proficiency of students and motivate them as much as possible not only in the academic field, but also in their life goals. Thus, it is a priority to make potential and existing teachers of English aware of the importance of applying effective teaching strategies in class.

Key Words

Effective strategies, English program, skills, holistic, academic success.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este documento es abordar un asunto importante en relación con las estrategias efectivas de enseñanza aplicadas, en clase, por los profesores de inglés para cumplir con los objetivos del MEP en undécimo grado, específicamente en el liceo Luis Dobles Segreda.

La investigación será relevante una vez que los docentes de inglés apliquen las estrategias efectivas en sus aulas con el objetivo de ayudar a los estudiantes a lograr el éxito académico y un nivel de inglés competente al final de sus años de secundaria para que puedan construir un mejor futuro en el competitivo mercado laboral bilingüe.

Además, puede contribuir a mejorar la competencia lingüística de los estudiantes y motivarlos tanto como sea posible no sólo en el ámbito académico, sino también en sus objetivos de vida. Por lo tanto, es una prioritario hacer que los docentes potenciales y existentes de inglés sean conscientes de la importancia de aplicar estrategias de enseñanza efectivas en clase.

Palabras Clave

Estrategias efectivas, programa de inglés, habilidades, integral, éxito académico

CHAPTER I

RESEARCH PROBLEM

RESEARCH STATEMENT

Students in Costa Rica spend around five or six years of their educational lives in high school, coursing different subjects established by the public ministry of education (MEP), being English one of these subjects as well. However, the English level that students have acquired by the end of this period has not demonstrated to be efficient regarding the development of English learning, thus causing students not to have the necessary skills to use language proficiently. Therefore, if students do not have the possibility to register in a public university after they graduate from high school, they will find it difficult to get inserted in the current demanding bilingual job market like the one in Costa Rica; nowadays, a high percentage of the job opportunities require for applicants to have an efficient mastery of the English language.

One relevant concern relies on determining the level of achievement of the goals set by MEP's program for foreign language learning that not only teachers, but also students have since an efficient coverage of these objectives will represent a competent mastery of the four English integrated skills. Thus, students will be able to speak, listen, write and read adeptly preparing them for a demanding world of job market opportunities. This research will be beneficial for future colleagues since it will be a source of strategies on how to implement favorable techniques that ensure the fulfillment of the English MEP program objectives for eleventh graders, at the same time that students improve their academic performance in this subject to get not only more personal, but also professional opportunities.

Conventional English teaching methodologies have been considered as a trigger factor in education and students with a defective academic performance in this area are proof that it is time for a revolution in the way English teaching is being carried out. For this has been a constant

problem in public academic institutions, it is important to question the cause of the issue and the suitable solutions proposed within in this case of study. Teachers are the key in an educational context as they play the facilitator's role in the classroom; consequently, it is imperative to identify the positive teaching practices that may favor the accomplishment of the promising objectives set by the Ministry of education in their program for the high school senior students.

For many decades, and currently, Bachelor *(Bachillerato)* tests have been the main tool used by MEP to test the domain that students have acquired during 5 or even 6 years of secondary education; however, analyzing this test demands also considering different factors that may, or may not, determine if at the end of an academical process students are prepared to apply the English language in an efficient way. According to statistics provided by MEP, 2018, 82% of high school students were enrolled to perform at the 2018 Bachelor *(Bachillerato)* national testing, consequently all of them approved the process and graduated last December. Furthermore, referring specifically to English, in recent years a high percentage of students (above 90%) has been able to approve the English test (2018, p.9.). The main concern with these statistics relies on the perspective from where they are analyzed; questions are aroused such as, do these positive numbers demonstrate that students concluded their academic studies with a full mastery of the English language? , and did the English teachers apply efficient strategies when preparing students to take this exam, or did they follow the strategies proposed in MEP's old and newest program?; however, at first glance, the positive results of these percentages mean that MEP's objectives were fulfilled and those students who graduated last year ended up with the requested competences in regards to English level. It is clear that it would be a hard task to interview all of them to make sure not only that they efficiently acquired the language competences, but also if their teacher applied the correct teaching strategies during the process.

When reviewing the format that the English national test follows, it is almost impossible not to question if students are really being instructed in the different skills that will help them to obtain certain level of mastery of the language because the only requested skill to approve the test is reading comprehension. Zhang declares that there is an explanation for those who are able to understand written information in a different language, but when they have to produce orally (speaking) or try to understand when the language is being spoken (listening) they are not able to do it with the same ability they have when reading as they can guess the "main idea from the whole context and words are already provided to them which does not happen when speaking because the learners have to come up with the necessary words to build an idea and transmit a coherent message" (Zhank, 2013; p.835). This may be one of the reasons why a large number of students approved successfully the national English test, and this does not mean they have acquired all the skills to produce in the target language by speaking, listening or writing. According to the statement of the current minister of education, Edgar Mora, to Semanario Universitario Magazine, there was a lack in the way students' knowledge has been measure with *Bachillerato* tests and he acknowledged that the main weakness is that students had to rely on memory to pass those exams rather than the ability they have or do not have to apply the knowledge (Mora, 2019, p.16) The latter intends to cooperate to construct a cohesive knowledge in students and to be able to keep record of their final outcome at the end of their academic life in high school.

The current evaluation methodology used in the national tests had a well-intended purpose that unfortunately was not oriented towards the real learning outcome of students, but relied on memory of knowledge to be applied in a test and students were not internalizing the different topics to ensure they acquired the desired abilities. Seas states that the intended purpose of evaluation was "to verify the fulfilment of the objectives or competences, to determine how effective the

didactic strategies and materials applied are and finally to follow up and provide feedback for students' improvement" (Mora, 2017, p.147). This is the reason why MEP authorities decided that it was the right time to modify the way students are being assessed and they are in the process of replacing *Bachillerato* tests by implementing FARO (*Fortalecimiento de Aprendizajes para la Renovación de Oportunidades*). There is not much information about this new modality as it is a pilot project, which as MEP pointed out in their official notification will be implemented for the first time this year in primary school to fifth graders and only to tenth grade high school students. Thus, eleventh graders will have to do the regular national tests in 2019; this will be the last time that students take *Bachillerato* exams. In regard to the English subject, a language proficiency test will be applied as of 2020 to tenth and eleventh graders. The ladder will take into consideration the different skills of the language and it will not be to decide whether a student approves or fails the subject, but to determine the English level that students have acquired along high school academic years; it is clear since this new process is being introduced by MEP, English teachers must not only receive an adequate training regarding the process itself, but also must continue applying the strategies set by current MEP's program since this will be the tool that prepares students when taking part of new FARO testing.

Background

English teaching became relevant in Costa Rica at the end of the XIX and at the beginning of the XX century as the main economic activity was coffee and English and American investors controlled a 50 percent of the crops that Costa Rica exported. Therefore, implementing English as a second language was perceived as a need that had to be addressed diligently due to economic interests and for the development of the country. Consequently, English teaching became official in 1901 according to the records found in *Archivo Nacional* (Marín, 2012).

At the beginning of the XX century, English teaching did not show any significant advance in Costa Rica; however, in the middle of the same century it started to develop slowly, but consistently. "During the first decades of the century, the English teaching movement advanced with no relevant change. The methodology that was applied at that moment was conventional and the majority of the English teachers were foreigners. Besides, some teachers from Costa Rica had the opportunity to travel and acquire English knowledge to come back and teach in the country as well. Even though most teachers were native speakers, the lessons were taught in Spanish and focused mainly in the writing and reading skills". (Marín, 2012, p.7-8)

"There was a lack of English teachers at that moment which fostered the creation of an interchange program in which American teachers would come to Costa Rica to teach English and Costa Rican teachers would go to the United States to get immersed in the culture and language at the same time they got trained to provide quality of language education once they came back to the country. Costa Rica received a lot of donations such as books, movies, booklets in English, which made evident the United States' interest in the development of English language in the country". (Marín, 2012, p.7)

As of 1944, English teaching became mandatory; thus, the educational system had to start implementing it in primary school; the latter motivated by an agreement between the United States and Costa Rica in an effort to prepare the new generations language wise. *During this decade the Centro Cultural Costarricense-Norteamericano was born with the purpose of filling some existing educational gaps in the country* (Marín, 2012, p.7). In 1958, the English programs and methodologies were established and after that a lot of educational reforms and changes took place, including the last changes implemented in the program by 2016, in order to improve the English teaching process (Marín, 2012, p.7-8).

Currently and according to the Ministry of Education of Costa Rica, there are specific holistic goals that students should be able to achieve at the end of their high school academic life. Including linguistic objectives and also those which will help them to be valuable citizens in the current society who eventually will be able to generate positive changes in their surroundings. In general, in the program "Educating for a New Citizenship" it has been mentioned diverse achievements that students will develop throughout their high school period such as using the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities in out-school contexts, being able to express their own opinion towards matters of social and current interests, practicing peaceful resolutions in conflicts, getting involved in social and economic development and environmental sustainability of the country and taking action in taking care of the country's resources, developing global world awareness and implementing the use of technology as tool for communication, innovation and social service (MEP, 2016, p.15).

It is noticeable that the purpose goes beyond the linguistic target (being this the main concern at the beginning), but it also addresses other skills that students may need once they finish their academic life and that will impact in the society as well. Besides those general aims proposed in the program for students from the different levels, there are specific objectives for each of them. In the case of eleventh grade students there are expectations about their target described in the program as follow:

"Learn to know have a level-appropriate language (words, phrases, formulaic expressions) and topical knowledge related to domains, scenarios and themes. Learn to do use level-appropriate linguistic and topical resources in order to listen, read, speak and write in response to level and age-appropriate tasks, integrating language and topical knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) within domains, scenarios and themes. Learn to be and live in

community use personal and social dispositions (e.g., engagement, attitudes, cooperation, turn taking, empathy, and other universal values) when interacting and producing in the target language and taking time to search for words using oral and body language for transferable learning beyond the classroom setting (enduring understanding)". (MEP, 2016, p.294)

One more time, the program sets a holistic teaching style in which the linguistic area should be as important as the other aspects such as culture, respect, affectivity and among others. At this point, it is relevant that teachers find the proper methodology to integrate all these important aspects and achieve to guide students to have academic and social success.

Furthermore, it is important to take into consideration existing researches from different contexts. There are international studies that also consider the importance of effective teaching strategies when it comes to the acquisition of a second language. In 2018, a research about language learning strategy was carried out in the Sichuan university of Arts and Science in China. The author was interested in finding out which were the factors that cause students acquired different levels and perform differently while acquiring the language even when they were exposed to the same learning environment as it is the same class, the same teacher, materials, methodology used (Su, 2018, p.522). The author proposed that one variation could be related directly to the students as he stated that "different learners have the possibility of using different strategies successfully or unsuccessful because there are factors of variety behind it which influence learning language strategy use" (Su, 2018, p.524). Some learners perceive language learning in a negative way while others view it with positive eyes, and this could be a fact that determines success or failure in the teaching-learning process. The author concludes that "success in acquiring the language may be in the different strategies applied by the teacher, if they are innovative and not

repetitive, in the environment created in class during the process. Besides aspects like culture, the setting in which the class is developed, and the selection of the necessary teaching styles may impact positively English teaching-learning process. Su suggested strategies such as interviews, diaries, questionnaires and thinking activities to be implemented in class". (Su, 2018; p.526)

Second language acquisition has become a focus of attention in the past and it seems to gain relevance with the pass of time as there are many aspects to be studied and discussed about the subject matter. Another Chinese research was carried out in 2017 regarding the investigation of the English grammar learning strategy for high school students. One of the author's concern is that *high school students' English grammar may be deficient, and this is worrying at the same time as English language acquisition is considered as highly important in defines student's future* (Zhou, 2017, p.2). The author mentions that "grammar is one of the three elements that make up the language system, and it is also a difficult point in the English teaching" (Zhou, 2017, p.2). Consequently, teachers should implement strategies to ease the learning process regarding grammar content. It seems that both authors agree in the sense of implementing effective tactics in class to help students to acquire the language with proficiency in the different skills. Different studies carried out demonstrated that learning grammar strategy was not strong, the sample used for this study was of 179 students, male and female from three classes that have few or no variation in their English level. Students were going to be interview for a total amount of time of 5 minutes each for the researcher to test their perception of grammar (Zhou, 2017, p.2) As a result of the interviews the author found out that "high school students generally find English grammar difficult, dislike grammar learning, and do not know how to use effective learning strategies, either" (Zhou, 2017, p.5) Therefore, teachers should keep seeking for the proper strategies to help students acquire this language skill successfully.

There were also relevant investigations carried out by domestic researchers regarding the aspects that may influence the success in English teaching that are worthy to analyze. In the research, Valverde main aim is to identify what the aspects that obstruct the English teaching process; "this with the purpose of analyzing them and find the factor that contribute to the language acquisition to be able to propose important techniques that will help English teachers to guide learners in their academic success". (Valverde, 2016, p.18)

The most relevant findings of this research were that students need that the teacher be aware of their English level and helps to grow taking that level as a starting point. Besides, time for practicing the language is very limited which makes it difficult for students to internalize what is taught in class, the topics studied in class are far away from the students' interest and this make cause a lack of motivation for students to participate, classes were not well prepared with selected, appealing activities. *The most used material in class is the book which according to students it is not appropriate for their level* (Valverde, 2016, p.143) among other findings that work for teachers to correct those lacking aspects and try to create a more positive learning environment for students to achieve a desired proficiency of the language.

Thus, it is pertinent to analyze the efficient teaching practices proposed in the program as well as the ones that are not included within it but are still applied in the classrooms to determine their effectiveness.

Problematization

Based on the new MEP program's content , the guidelines set sound ideal and benefitting for students; however, there are determinant aspects that may affect indirectly the teaching-learning process; when referring to students, for instance, there are different areas of opportunity such as lack of motivation and family support, economic difficulties, emotional aspects proper from adolescent age, etcetera. On the other hand, when it comes to teachers there are elements that make evident a reality such as lack of motivation caused by factors such as unfair salary rage or payment delays, lack of constant training, non-paid over work, large classes, and lack of didactic material due to a low budget provided for public institutions, and teacher's hiring process among others.

When referring to this last aspect, it is evident that the hiring process is quite complex; according to the Ministry of education, one weakness of the recruitment area for teachers corresponds to the complex processes they have to go through to be hired and one deficiency is that teachers still get a job position based on the amount of academic titles and not necessarily according to the abilities and skills they need to provide quality of education and achieve the language objectives proposed in the English program. The Ministry of education acknowledges that there has been partial advance in regards to their recruitment process; nonetheless, they are still seeking for a more reasonable process to select their workforce and assign permanent positions in the different institutions instead of only temporary ones which is a fact that demotivate the new hires and that may affect the work quality in the classrooms. *Deficient payment methodology and delays in the pay day are also part of the weaknesses that demotivate teachers highlighted in the chapter VII of MEP report regarding human resources.* (*Memoria Institucional*, 2006-2014; p. 404)

In this research, the aspects previously mentioned are subject of analysis in order to determine if they interrupt not only the fulfillment of MEP's program for eleventh graders, but also the implementation of efficient strategies during the process, thus refraining them from getting the desired English competences to use language in context to communicate effectively with other English speakers for specific purposes.

Justification

The purpose of this research is to address the most significant teaching strategies that are being carried out by teachers of public institutions, specifically for eleventh grade in Luis Dobles Segreda High School in order to determine not only if they are fulfilling the objectives proposed by the public Ministry of education of Costa Rica, but also the implications of not applying at all, or in a proper way, such strategies. The latter with the aim of collecting beneficial teaching techniques as tools that will help eleventh graders to be competent in the use of the English language in the bilingual society and to have better opportunities in the demanding job market.

Thus, it is a priority to make potential and existing English teachers aware of the objectives established by MEP in order for them to implement those strategies to achieve the final goal set in the program. Providing tools for teachers to encourage students to continue learning outside the class, implementing motivational strategies, reinforcing the goal that students are able to acquire a good English level at the end of their high school stage, showing students real importance of learning a language proficiently and how beneficial it can be in the near future are some of the solutions that will be part of the research

The institution Luis Dobles Segreda was selected due to the variety of the population that yearly enrolls into this high school because of the convenience of its location; students from different places from San Jose such as La Carpio, Leon XIII, Alajuelita, Pavas, Hatillo, Barrio

Cuba, Cristo Rey, among others attend to this institution. All of these places share in common that they are underdeveloped communities that face high levels of poverty, risk factors like drugs and delinquency, so education does not seem to be the priority for young people that live in these neighborhoods. Public education has a relevant role in these communities as it may be the only educational experience that these students may have, as poverty is one common factor, they need to receive quality education in all the different subjects, especially in the subject in study. English language has become a need and a tool at the same time that will help the young population to fight against poverty and provide students with a more promising future for them and their families. The interviewed teachers were selected because of their experience as eleventh grade teachers; their expertise in this area certainly contributes by providing first-hand information about the different strategies applied to teach English. The intentions of these interviews rely on identifying if the strategies established by MEP are not only being implemented, but also if they are considered useful by teachers.

Research question

Are the teaching practices proposed in MEP's program being implemented by teachers to favor the fulfillment of the objectives set for eleventh grade students, and if so, what are some of them?

The level of English proficiency that students develop at the end of their high school academic life has become an important concern as the demanding society that they have to face after graduating is requesting at least intermediate or advance levels in order for them to be given better job opportunities. Therefore, if students are not reaching the desired level, then that fact uncovers the obvious question about which teaching practices are being used in the EFL (English as a foreign language) classrooms by teachers and what happens during their teaching-learning process that is not producing the expected results.

In recent times, the Costa Rican Ministry of Education has implemented changes in the English program in which the English class is intended to be perceived as a holistic one; taking into consideration the student as a whole and assigning the facilitator's role to the teacher. The objectives of the English program are promising, and by implementing those changes the students will be the main benefitted ones; teachers play a key role during the learning process, thus, it is essential to analyze the different practices suggested by MEP as well as the empirical and traditional ones that are still used to teach English to high school students, especially to eleventh graders.

Scope and limitations

Scope

This research will be relevant as it intends to uncover the efficient strategies that are implemented in the teaching-learning process, and that may help students to reach a desired English level at the end of their high school academic life. One of the goals to be achieved through this research is to provide existing and potential English teachers with a compilation of efficient teaching practices that need to be applied, especially for eleventh graders as this population will face life challenges that imply the use of English language proficiently.

Limitations

A lot has been discussed about the importance of applying efficient teaching practices in an English class to motivate students to learn and level up their language skills, but teachers also need to be encouraged at work to be able to transmit their knowledge and positive attitudes to their students, and precisely this is one important limitation to take into consideration in this research.

There are aspects that can trigger lack of encouragement in teachers as if they selected their profession or if they wanted to have another occupation, if they are blamed most of the time for the low results, or received few or no incentives at all according to their abilities may determine their level of motivation or a complete lack of it. There should be motivation in the different institutions where teachers' work is appreciated, and they are rewarded for fulfilling and exceeding the school expectations to persuade them to perform better their significant job. As reported by Alam (2011):

> Teachers are the backbone of the educational institutes and future of our nation lies in their hands. In order to improve the quality of education, there is a dire need to spend on the teacher training, which in return may provide quality education. (Alam, 2011, p.304)

Therefore, it can be clearly stated that maintaining teachers motivated leads to the enhancement of students' motivation as well.

Another gap found through this research is school authorities' lack of involvement and interaction with the student population. Principals, administrative workers, the evaluation committee and other entities that work at the high school try to provide quality of education to the learners, but rarely interact with students, so learners do not perceive them as a support during their academic process. Therefore, there is not a relationship between authorities and students and that fact moves the latter away from school environments to the point of looking for the solution of their problems outside and dropping out of school.

The third gap focusses on the lack of time availability for classes in the high school. First, the number of English lessons that students receive per week is not enough according to the interviewed teachers' opinion. Students receive only five lessons and sometimes there are different

activities in the high school that take time from the class which implies for the teacher to change the lesson plan and consequently getting delayed with the topics and the chronogram. For instance, it was not possible to carry observations during the third trimester of last year as most of the teachers were supporting the national strike. Besides, during testing season, students only attend to the high school to do the corresponding exam and then they leave the institution since there are not enough classrooms to receive lessons, nor to finish with the testing process for those groups with pending exams.

Another significant limitation in this research might also be the teachers' transparency during the observation period ; it could be possible that at the moment of these observations the class is carried out in an outstanding manner and the teacher may apply efficient practices that are not commonly used in a regular basis and this may cause a discrepancy when reporting the collected data.

Finally, a limitation that should not be left aside is the lack of support teachers may have to learn new strategies to teach English and produce positive results. Teachers play a key role in the English teaching-learning process; part of this role relies on accomplishing plenty of tasks in order to have an efficient performance in class. It should be taken into consideration that the work done by teachers does not end in the institution; teachers have to continue with out of the class duties such as preparing lesson plans, making curricular adaptations in case they have a student with special needs, creating materials to be used in class, researching about the topics to be taught, preparing parents' meeting, doing paper work for the institution, among other assignments. Even though dealing with those tasks may be time consuming, teachers have learned to carry them out for the benefit of their students. When analyzing everything they have to do, a question arises: are teachers receiving proper training to be able to perform all those assignments? The answer may be

that they lack that support. There is an undeniable worrying fact when it comes to the training that teachers receive in regard to the effective strategies that they can apply to help students to fulfill the proposed language goals. As it was mentioned in the background, English teaching was implemented as part of a strategy to prepare the Costa Rican population to contribute with the economy of the country. Thus, teachers should be in constant training to learn innovative, effective and appealing strategies to fulfill with the English program objectives and help students to acquire at least an average English level.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To analyze the implementation of different teaching practices proposed by the public Ministry of education (MEP) in the English program for eleventh grade.

Specific Objectives

- To describe the relationship between the objectives and teaching practices set by the public ministry of education.

- To identify the current teaching practices applied by English teachers in the teaching-learning process at Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda.

- To propose methodological strategies to strengthen the use of beneficial teaching practices for the advantage of students.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

It is a challenge for English teachers to get all their students engaged in the learning process in class; students may have different reasons for participating actively and responding positively to the teacher's strategies applied in the classroom. For some students, the learning process may become easier; for others, it could seem more difficult to be acquired due to different factors such as learning disabilities or distracting agents (cellphones, make up, music, noise, etc.), but one important aspect is motivation; not only from students, but also teachers' encouragement. Motivation may be compared to an engine that makes people to have the desire of genuinely making their best effort in trying to carry out their plans, activities, projects or goals successfully and feeling satisfied with the results. According to Soureshjani and Riahipour, motivation "refers to the deliberate investment, effort and willingness to achieve a purpose". On the contrary, they state that "a demotivated person is one who lacks deliberate effort, willingness and investment for achieving a specific purpose (here language learning purpose)" (2012, p.327).

In their article, the authors show the reality that happens in many English classes; there are a number of deficiencies in most English courses that restrain students from feeling motivated to acquire the different skills and put them into practice confidently. The authors mention specific aspects that foster demotivation, for instance, lack of contextualized classes, few or no contact with native speakers at all and lack of self-motivation are some aspects that many institutions share in common (2). It is true that all of those factors are relevant and significant, and if students had access to practice with native speakers or to be immersed in contextualized lessons, they would feel the desire to learn in and out of class and to produce the language and use it with proficiency in their daily speech. However, those factors do not have to be an excuse for not having a good academic performance and achieving success because there are also efficient practices that can be

implemented by teachers who have the necessary competences to teach significant lessons and produce positive results in students regarding English language. Besides, this may help them to feel motivated to try to achieve academic accomplishment.

Fen and Kiat highlight that "motivation has been widely accepted as one of the key factors that influence success in second/foreign language (L2) learning. It is known as a stimulant for achieving a specific target" (Fen and Kiat, 2015; p.98). They also refer to the two types of motivation which are the intrinsic and extrinsic ones; it is relevant that teachers know the definition of them to be able to incorporate them in class to obtain positive results throughout the language acquisition process. The authors explain that *intrinsic motivation comes from the inside of the person while extrinsic comes from the outside of each individual.* (Fen and Kiat, 2015; p.98)

Determining the type of stimulus students prefer must be taken in consideration by teachers since, once it has been identified, it could be implemented in the teaching-learning process. In the case of intrinsic motivation students should be aware of the implications of acquiring a second language and all the advantages and benefits that they may get from it. They should know that what they are learning can be used outside the academic context for different and appealing purposes. For instance, if they like music, they can broaden their preferences by adding English songs to their list, if they play video games, they can understand the instructions better, if they have English speaking friends they can communicate effectively with them by applying the knowledge acquired in class, and among other motivations.

Regarding extrinsic motivation, and according to the authors previously mentioned, it does not have to be expensive rewards, it could be related to the grades they obtain in the tests and a congratulation from the teacher, the type of materials used, appealing activities or games carried

out in class, the use of technological resources (music, videos projected, and their cellphones), etc. Motivation should not be taken lightly, and it is significant that teachers be aware that *the learners who are not motivated are more likely to fail in achieving their goals than those learners who are motivated*. (Fen and Kiat, 2015, p.98) Teachers should also look for their own factors of motivation as well on the contrary, they will not be able to encourage students genuinely.

Once teachers get motivated, they will be able to apply the different efficient teaching strategies to try to motivate students to get engaged with their learning process as well. There are multiple benefits of applying the efficient teaching strategies. Regarding making the class centered in students instead of the teacher doing all the talking, this helps students to become more independent learners. "The teacher should play only the facilitator role to give students the opportunity to develop the thinking ability and construct their own knowledge and this will help them when they are outside the class to keep on researching and learning". (Gershon, 2014, p.4)

Another strategy addressed in this research is about the importance of providing clear instructions. It was mentioned before "the time as a limitation and if teachers put into practice the simple strategy as being clear and concise while communicating the students what they are expected to do, then they will be saving valuable time that could be invested in any other stage of the class". (Sowell, 2017, p.11) Furthermore, another strategy recommended in the new English program is to foster teamwork in class. One of the principles that the new program states is that teachers should be educating to create a new citizenship who is able to have good relationships and live in community without social issues. On the one hand, if teachers incentivize only individual work, they are not giving students the opportunity to develop positive social skills. On the other hand, "students who learn how to work as a team will be more likely to develop a sense

of responsibility and unity in the class which may imply more students performing the tasks proposed by the teacher and experiencing a deeper learning acquisition". (Sowell, 2017, p.15)

Throughout this research the strategy of implementing the use of idiomatic expressions and useful phrases will be address. "Students need to be exposed to contexts from the reality of the language and culture and teaching idioms and common phrases from English speaking countries is a great way to start". (Hossein, 2010, p.73) Additionally, efficient strategies such as lesson planning, integrating the four skills, monitoring students while performing the tasks assigned and implementing peer assessment in class will be analyzed and discussed in this research.

Historical context

This research will be carried out at Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda currently leaded by the principal Javier Arce (recently assigned this role at the institution). It is located in Sabana, San José next to the Costa Rican Art Museum and it is a public high school which has a population of approximately 1800 students. At the institution, they have a mission that states they contribute to the education of students by using creativity and innovation and at the same time they focus on three philosophies which are: humanism, rationalism, and constructivism. It is expected that this institution will shortly become into a leader institution with the most prestige and confidence in the area. Furthermore, the vision of Luis Dobles Segreda high school they are an institution leader in all different educational processes and their objective is to be recognized for its efficiency, effectiveness, positive communication and good relationships with the students and their parents. Its management is characterized as a transparent teaching center, oriented to serve the community in their projects. Besides their main aim is be the mentor of people who are able to accept challenges, critiques, objectives and for those who build their own knowledge. (Departamento de innovación educativa, Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda)

The institution receives students from different backgrounds; for instance, there are students from La Carpio, León XIII, Pavas, Hatillo, Barrio México, Alajuelita and other places of the capital city. These students have access to different services at school such as receiving economic support from IMAS, FONABE, scholarships to eat for free, library services, and laboratory and among others. When it comes to the infrastructure of the building, it was concluded that it is appropriate in most of the aspects like number of classrooms, size of classrooms, etcetera. It can be considered that the school authorities worry about the high school and what can be done to improve the quality of the education provided to students. There are four academic English teachers and six conversational English teachers and there are five groups of eleventh grade.

Theoretical-conceptual context

Philosophical foundations on the MEP program

The reform done on the new program proposed by the public Ministry of education had a clear aim which is to provide a holistic education for every student enrolled in the system. There are three main philosophical foundations that nurtured this reform: rationalism, humanism and constructivism.

Rationalism

According to the MEP English program rationalism "promotes the development of complex, challenging, creative and critical thinking skills, in order to face the multidimensional perspective of problems with the support of cooperative learning and pedagogical scaffolding". (MEP, 2016, p.16) This is a different and challenging proposal for teachers and students as in the past learners were not taught to think and rationalize, but to rely on their memory to reflect their "knowledge" in an exam and probably forget about it after the evaluation. The rational foundation

encourages teachers to enrich their teaching practices to include more class activities that will make students to think critically, not to be afraid of having a position about topics of current relevance, be problem solvers and learn how to work cooperatively in a society (Educating for a new citizenship, English program 2016, p.17).

Humanism

The philosophical foundation based on humanism "searches for the full realization of the human being, as a person, endowed with dignity and values for the common will" (2016, p.16). It is relevant that this is being taken into consideration within the academic context as it is noticeable in today's communities the urgency of raising and educating the new generations with positive values and good customs to build an ideal place for each individual. There are high schools located in at risk places and it may be considered that part of the population does not receive formation based on good values and customs resulting in a gap in the society which these reforms intend to fill in the classrooms with the collaboration of teachers.

Constructivism

The Philosophical Foundation constructivism points out that "the learner constructs and reconstructs understanding and learnings based on prior knowledge from his/her life and in exchange with others" (2016, p.16). Besides, according to a study published by the University of Sydney, an important fact to understand is that teachers' role in this foundation is to motivate students to be in constant assessment of each activity they do in class and it helps them to understand better its purpose. Students have to question themselves and think about strategies they can use to build their own knowledge along their academic life. A characteristic of learners who receive classes under a constructivist paradigm is that they become independent learners, and this

provides them with tools that can be used throughout their lives to keep learning even outside the class environment.

Different Learning Styles

It is well known that every person is different from each other; students have different personalities, customs, likes, dislikes and in the academic field they also may have different learning styles. The latter has already been clearly identified based on the different traits and people's profile for the convenience of teachers and students. According to Ahmad, a learning style refers to *the way that the learner prefers to use to acquire, process and internalize information*. (Ahmad, 2014, p.9) The author mentions that the main styles that students may have are: concrete experience, which is associated with feelings, reflective observation related to watch, abstract conceptualization which has to do with thinking and active experimentation that is associated with doing. They are commonly known as *visual, auditory, kinesthetic and read/write learning styles*. (Ahmad, 2014, p.10)

The visual learning style as its name self-explains occurs when a person learns through the use of visual aids showed during the learning process. The person is able to storage images in his brain and in this way acquire the knowledge desired. There are different recommendations for visual learners to succeed in class; for instance, use visuals when teaching lessons, such as pictures, charts, diagrams, maps, and outlines, physically demonstrate tasks, use visual aids such as flashcards and blocks, show the visual patterns in language to teach spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, organize information using color codes, make eye contact while talking to the student whenever possible, and among others.

The auditory learners acquire information by hearing and speaking; they "often talk more than the average person, they are very social, enjoy hearing stories and jokes, understand concepts

by talking about them, and may excel in music or the performing arts". (Ahmad, 2014, p.10)
Furthermore, it can be suggested that strategies such as playing word games and use rhymes to
practice language, having the students reading aloud, even when alone, and follow the text with
their finger, allowing them to explain concepts verbally and give oral reports, memorizing
information by repeating it aloud, providing a personal voice recorder for the learner to record
notes or questions and using beats, rhythms, and songs to reinforce educational information. In the
case of kinesthetic learners, who learn by performing, by being in constant movement around the
class and using the different objects. "They like to explore the outdoors, are often very coordinated.
They prefer trying new skills for themselves rather than being given directions or shown a
demonstration". (Ahmad, 2014, p.10)

For kinesthetic learners there are also recommendations: give breaks frequently, let the
child try something first before the teacher gives detailed instructions, provide plenty of hands-on
learning tools, such as crayons, blocks, puzzles, maps, modeling clay among other materials.
Finally, the last one is the read/write learning style; this type of learners learn best by having
written information it is highlighted in the article that "they absorb information by reading books
and handouts, taking lots of notes (sometimes word-for-word), and making lists. They prefer
lectures, diagrams, pictures, charts, and scientific concepts to be explained using written language.
They are often fast readers and skillful writers". (Ahmad, 2014, p.11)

For read/write learners the following techniques are provided to be applied for their benefit:
"encourage the them to write plenty of notes, rewrite them in her own words, and study from them,
provide thorough, well-organized written material, and write key points in full sentences on the
board during lectures, assign plenty of writing exercises, set up a quiet study area with as few
distractions as possible, etcetera". (Ahmad, 2014, p.11) The author insists in highlighting the

important that teachers know the different existing learning styles and the strategies that can be used according to them. Additionally, because in reality in any institution there is a variety of types of students with different learning styles the article it is suggested that teachers should use "a variety of teaching to give all students the best chance to succeed". (Understanding the Learning Styles and its Influence on Teaching/Learning Process, 2014, p.9-13)

Social and Emotional Learning

Specialists on education and/or psychology such as Gardner, Piaget and Vygotsky have looked for and studied the "best" way to teach and approach students' learning process for decades. Some of these experts presented theories based on different intelligences, ways of thinking, behaving, communicating, environmental settings, and so forth. Most of these theories became part of the educational curricula, some to improve it and some that did not work effectively. One of the theories presented by the Chaiklin which is when people develop the inspiration to do something through interaction with other people, Also, the author develops the Vygotsky's theory that what motivates people to acquire certain abilities is to be able to communicate with others and according to him this process occurs through steps. This theory promotes the idea that *motivation may even transform how people learn and how they develop different skills while learning.* (Chaiklin, 2012, p.892) As people learn differently, at different time in their lives and in different circumstances, many learning approaches have been created, developed and tested to determine whether they work or not. These theories lead to the importance of education and how educational institutions "are expected to play an important role in promoting the development of children and adolescents by preparing them for their future roles in society" (Marcin et. all, 2012, p.892) as students spend most of the time in school, high school, college or any learning institution.

Teaching Strategies Proposed by MEP

The Public Ministry of Education proposes a variety of practices to be implemented in the English class in their new program. It is important to highlight the fact that teachers play the role of facilitators and they are responsible for encouraging students to be independent learners to contribute actively to build their own knowledge. Teachers are expected to make sure students understand clearly the instructions to complete a task. Some teachers provide complicated instructions that students are not able to understand, and this causes a different result in the task proposed and the objective of the activity is lost due to lack of clear explanations. Furthermore, teachers need to ensure that learners "know how to use strategy through teacher scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration and individual practice". (Educating for a new citizenship, English program, 2016, p.38) This is a significant teaching practice because through this, students learn to work as a team and as an individual meaning that they are capable enough to continue learning even outside the class. Another practice to be implemented in class is to provide "useful words, phrases, idioms" that students may need while performing the task; this implies that teachers should not limit to teach only what is requested, but they have to go beyond and teach what is pertinent for students to broaden their vocabulary and knowledge and within this strategy it is suggested that teachers emphasize pronunciation of those words, phrases or idioms for learners to be able to apply them in and outside the academic context. Teachers are expected to make sure they are involving the integration of the different skills: listening-speaking or reading-writing in the different activities with the aim of providing a holistic lesson. Besides, monitoring students to make sure they complete the tasks is part of the efficient practices proposed in the program. For instance, if students are working in groups to present a topic to the class, the teacher has to check that students are rehearsing the presentation, that all of them are revising and participating in the written report. It is not enough to assign an activity and give instructions about it to the students

which is an action that some teachers usually do. Instead of doing this, they have to accompany and encourage students to do their best to accomplish the objective of the class.

In addition, one of the most important practices for any educator is to get prepared with plenty of time; planning the lesson is essential as students can notice when it was not prepared, and they may lose interest in participating. Students also need to be given time for preparation and clarification when they have to perform a task and this needs to be taken into consideration when planning the lesson. The task-based approach used in the elaboration of the program states that students should be taught to be independent learners; therefore, they need to learn how to assess themselves and their peers. Thus, teachers need to provide them with the necessary tools such as rubrics and checklists for learners to develop the habit and be self-critical in their learning process. Teachers set the example to follow when they assess learners, provide feedback, bring back words and phrases to internalize knowledge and deliver additional practice to students who need to reinforce certain topics.

The last teaching practice proposed by MEP is related to the encouragement of learners to develop and present mini projects at the end of each unit (Educating for a new citizenship, English program, 2016, p.39) This is also a mean to fulfil the purpose that students learn to know, to do and to live in community as they have to go through a research process, socialize with their peers to get into agreement and execute their plan.

The Importance of the Use of Materials in Class

In the article **Effective Use of Teaching and Learning Resources,** Busljeta states that "the purpose of using different resources or materials in class is to assist the teacher to present and

transmit the educational content and help students to achieve educational objectives, at the same time they acquire knowledge and develop a variety of skills and values". (Busljeta, 2015, p.56)

Warm up Activities

According to Akther, warm up activities are commonly used as a "way to bring variation in class activity and to make the students curious, focus their attention and provide them purpose and motivation". (Akther, 2014, p.8) The author highlights the relevant fact that teachers may not consider warm up activities as a useful resource to awaken students' interest and to make the class more appealing for them. Perhaps, this could be due to lack of information about the benefits of applying them in class. Akther states that some of the benefits of warm up activities are that they "provide motivation to students to participate in class activities, activate the students' background knowledge, help the teachers introduce a new topic in interesting way or help get the students' attention". (Akther, 2014, p.8)

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

RESEARCH TYPE

Applied purpose

This research is intended to be applied as its main aim is to contribute to collect efficient teaching strategies to improve teachers' competences in order to achieve students with better English level at the eleventh grade. According to Barrantes, the applied *research has the purpose of solving existing problems to transform the conditions of a concerning fact* (Barrantes, 2014, p.64). Meaning that the collected information will be useful to provide recommendations to solve specific issues to be studied and analyzed through this research.

Transverse temporal dimension

The dimension of time in this research is transverse temporal for it is carried out in the first months of class on eleventh graders as it is at this time that is relevant for teachers to make more evident their competence level due to the fact they have to prepare students, not only to pass the national English test, but also to prepare them for the upcoming professional life once they graduate from high school. Barrantes points out that this *transverse temporal dimension studies aspects related to the development of the individual and the topics in a given time.* (Barrantes, 2014, p.25)

Micro Framework of the research

Sampieri mentions that *the micro space of a research refers to a part, element, or subtopic in which the researcher bases his study or research.* (Sampieri, 2014, p.26) This research is developed at a micro level due to the fact it is carried out in a specific high school of the metropolitan area in Mata Redonda, Liceo Dobles Segreda. The purpose is to analyze the obtained

data from eleventh graders from the same public institution which has approximately six groups in that level.

Nature of the research

This research is based on a qualitative approach, which according to Hernandez, is aimed to *emphasize the deep analysis of the data, more than expressing the final results in numbers.* (Hernandez, 2014, p.28) Therefore, the main objective of this study is to determine which efficient practices are being applied by teachers in EFL classrooms from the ones proposed in the English program for eleventh grade and also the efficient practices applied by teacher in an empiric manner.

Exploratory, descriptive and explanatory nature

The matter of efficient teaching practices enlightens by the new English program presented by the Ministry of education still has a lot of aspects to be explored and studied as it was released in recent years and there are still schools that are not using it yet; for this reason, the researcher applies an exploratory nature throughout the investigation. Additionally, as it is an innovative topic, it is essential to describe and explain the different aspects that this subject matter involves in order for other teachers to understand clearly the concept and to be able to implement the recommendations that are towards the end of the research.

SUBJECTS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Participants

The informants are not be selected under a certain selection method, but are chosen at random, only considering their level (eleventh graders), position in the institution (teachers of the institution).

Data Analysis

Through this research project regarding efficient teaching techniques proposed by the public Ministry of education and with the aim of finding out if the objectives proposed in the reformed English program are being fulfilled, some areas of opportunity have been identified in regard to the implementation of the proposals. Furthermore, opinions from experienced English teachers about important aspects related to English teaching techniques used in class that should improve have been collected in order to provide possible solutions for this matter.

Summary of the methodology

To start with the analysis of the data collected during the research on efficient teaching techniques proposed by the Ministry of Education, an interview was performed to an English teacher with more than ten years of experience in the teaching field and one additional interview was performed to an English teacher from a private institution. The latter with the intention of collecting first-hand information from the professionals who are daily involved in the educational process. This can provide useful and real evidence that will give a strong base to this research for potential and existing English teachers. The latter with the purpose of taking it as a reference and motivation to be always self-monitoring, improving their teaching quality and encouraging their students to take advantage of what is taught in class and foster a culture in which students recognize the significant need for them to continue building their knowledge even outside of the classroom because their academic success and the level to be acquired at the end of the academic high school life depends on themselves as well. Furthermore, classroom observations were carried out with the purpose of collecting information from the reality in the class itself and to be able to compare it with the teachers' perspective to determine if there are any discrepancies.

Description of the subjects

One English teacher of Luis Dobles Segreda high school was interviewed; she has 22 years of experience working as an English teacher and she allowed her class to be observed during several lessons. A second English teacher was interviewed; she teaches English to different levels including eleventh graders. However, she does not work in a public institution but in a private one. She has 6 years of experience working in the same institution as an English teacher as well. This informant was selected with the purpose of getting to know if MEP program and lesson plans are applied in that private institution and to determine what strategies they use and if the results produced by students are positive and what may be the difference between a public and private institution as the strategies should be similar due to the language objective is the same.

Main findings Interviews

Regarding the first question of the interview about teachers' awareness of the strategies proposed by MEP for English teaching, both teachers had a general idea; however, they were not able to mention or list the strategies that have been proposed by MEP in the new English program. One of the teachers mentioned that lesson plans should be based on the aim of developing the four skills in class which may be related to the strategy of implementing a holistic teaching methodology for the students to obtain proficiency not only in reading comprehension, but also in speaking, listening and writing as well. This was the only strategy that one of the teachers could remember.

This demonstrates that the teachers were not be fully conscious of what is expected from them to teach students. They may be applying other techniques that they learned during their years of experience, but this does not necessarily mean that those practices are effective or have a well

sustained objective that can contribute for students to acquire the desired English level once they graduate from high school.

After collecting information about their knowledge on the different strategies proposed by MEP, teachers were asked about the ones they use in their class and which ones they would like to use, but for some reason outside their control they are not able to implement. Despite teachers did not know exactly what the strategies proposed by MEP were, it was interesting to notice that the ones they are using in class are not far from what they are supposed to be applying. For instance, one of the teachers mentioned the introduction of new vocabulary which can be associated with the strategy of implementing new words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, etc. Furthermore, they mention "the use of different appealing games or activities to foster team work in the class and one more time this could be matched to the recommended strategy of teaching through modeling, students learn in a significant way through the interaction with others at the same time their sense of responsibility and unity is developed". (Sowell, 2017, p.7)

In regard to what the limitations that refrain teachers from applying the teaching strategies in class, the teachers made an emphasis on how they think MEP objectives are difficult to be fulfilled for different factors. Some of the limitations they mentioned are: time as the number one and most relevant limitation, they consider there is not enough time to put into practice all the activities they would like to carry out with their students in class. Teachers claimed that the lessons assigned for the English subject are not enough. Another limitation mentioned by the teachers is that supporting materials for the class are not enough and that they are not always available when they need to use them. For instance, in a class where teachers want to play some videos or an interesting documentary, but they are unable to do it because they do not have the video beam. One of the teachers mentioned an interesting limitation regarding the level of students, she stated

that some students do not even understand topics from such as the verb to be that they were supposed to master it by eighth grade. Therefore, teachers have to invest more time explaining or reviewing topics from other grades instead of their corresponding subject.

The teachers were asked if they considered that MEP objectives were realistic in the Costa Rican context and they agreed that MEP objectives are not realistic. They mentioned the fact that according to the program students are supposed to have certain mastery of the language by the end of their academic live in high school. However, the way in which English has been taught and the purpose of English subject in high school has not allowed the fulfillment of the objectives proposed in the program. Students have been prepared for the "*Bachillerato*" test which only includes the implementation of the reading skill. Thus, students are not proficient in any of the other skills. One of the interviewees pointed out that students do not know how to create basic sentences. Besides, students do not have a good English level according to her opinion and this could be due to the limitations previously mentioned. The teacher considered that if students do not have the resources, they need such as a laboratory with computers, speakers, video beam to practice listening and speaking then it will be more difficult to acquire proficiency in those skills as well. Therefore, the objectives are not being fulfilled as desired.

The teachers had to answer a question in regard to the importance of the English language nowadays and if they are informing students about the variety of advantages of acquiring the language proficiently. According to their answer, they understand clearly how relevant it is the acquisition of a second language nowadays. They mentioned advantages such as better job opportunities available, competitive salaries, the opportunity to travel abroad and being able to communicate with English native speakers, and the possibility of applying for scholarships to study abroad. They stated that they try to motivate students and take the time to talk about the

opportunities that speaking a second language brings to their lives. Nevertheless, both teachers agreed that sometimes students do not seem to understand the importance of acquiring a second language and they do not show interest in the class either.

As to the strategies used to encourage students to keep learning outside the class, teachers try to motivate students to take advantage of leisure activities such as watching series, movies, videos, listening to music, playing video games, among others. They recommend students to use English in every activity to improve their skills in the second language.

Another question of the interview referred to the aspects that may demotivate them and they mentioned that sometimes they feel frustrated with the excess of work they have to do. Teaching is not like other jobs that people only work their shift and then go home and relax. The interviewees expressed how overwhelming it is to deal after-class work such as preparing the next lesson, material, resources, checking exams or students' assignments at home, working on all the aspects of activities like the English festival in which they have to decorate and organize everything related to the activity.

Regarding *Bachillerato* test, the teachers agreed that it does not measure students' knowledge in general, but only the reading skill and they disagree to this evaluation way. One important aspect highlighted by one of the interviewed teachers is the fact that students who learn in a different way and that are good in any other skill do not have the opportunity to develop their learning style and *Bachillerato* test only frustrate students and at the same time teachers get frustrated as wee because they would like to implement strategies including the different skills, but they have to prepare students for the national exam which is only for reading comprehension which tiring and not as beneficial as a holistic teaching style may be.

With reference to the last question, that was intended to collect information about the training that teachers are receiving to be able to assist students to do FARO test successfully, the teachers mentioned they had not received proper training and they had been given few information about FARO; it is even stated that that not even the authorities of the high school handle the information about the FARO process.

As a conclusion, teachers are not fully aware of the efficient teaching strategies proposed by MEP in the new program. Besides, they perceive more limitations (being time the main one) that refrain them from teaching in a way that the MEP objectives can be fulfilled. They need more support from the authorities of the high school and from MEP to provide the necessary tools to provide education of quality for students. Teachers feel overwhelmed with the additional tasks they have to perform at home of after class. Therefore, there are several aspects to be discussed and improved for the well-being of the future of the students.

Main findings classroom observations

The instrument used to carry out the observations included a variety of aspects to be observed. The following findings are based on the information collected in class and being the instrument a guide for the observer. The main aim of the observations is to determine if the objectives and the teaching strategies proposed by MEP are being taken into consideration when teaching the class.

The objective of the instrument is to collect information related to the class to be observed and the techniques used during the English teaching process to be able to analyze the data as a contribution to this qualitative research of effective teaching strategies for eleventh grade. The

latter with the purpose of proposing strategies that contribute to existing and potential English teachers to help students to achieve their academic language goal at the end of their high school years.

The first aspect to be observed is related to the class structure. The intention is to identify if basic stages of the class were present during the lessons observed. In the different lessons, it was not observed any warm-up activities. The observed lessons started by reviewing the topic studied in the previous class; the teacher asked questions and most of the time students did not answer, which may be because they did not remember the information or did not want to participate in class. It was noticeable that the methodology to review the previous class was not successful in the observed lessons as the purposed was not fulfilled as desired.

With reference to the introduction of the topic, it was observed that a new topic was going to be explained and during the time observed, there was only one new topic introduced this because the testing period was about to start and they had to review and do practices related to the topics that were going to be evaluated in the exam. The topic introduced was about values and morals; as it was previously mentioned, the Ministry of Education pointed out in their new program the fact that students' formation needs to be holistic including skills and knowledge that will encourage them to be part of a new citizenship with good values for the common well in the society. The teacher introduced the topic by using the copies of the book and students had to match a list of values with the pictures below. The teacher went over the meaning of each value and reviewed with the students the pictures to guide them to provide answers about what values matched best with each scenario. Students reacted positively as they started sharing their opinions about the values represented in each picture.

In relation to the explanation of the new topic, the teacher explained it in English, most of students did not seem to understand the teacher's oral explanation; however, when she used mimics and repeated herself a little bit slower, then students seemed to have a better sense of understanding. One aspect noted during the observation is that not all of them were paying attention. There were several students who were doing something else during the explanation. Some were using their cellphone to check their social media, others to listen to music or take pictures of themselves (selfies). There were a couple of students who were laying on their desk trying to sleep, and they missed the explanation and there were several students who seemed to be interested in the teacher's explanation as they were paying attention, taking notes and asking questions. After that, students were assigned to do a reading comprehension. They were given twenty-five minutes to read and answer the questions. In the meantime, the teacher was checking the homework that was a resume created by the students. Regarding the assessment of the activity, students were not monitored while they were doing the practice. If they had any questions the teacher approached to assist them, but again apart of the class was not working on the reading. Once the time was up, the teacher checked with students their answers and started to call their name to put a stamp on their copies as part of the class work. The ones who did not do the task consciously, copied the answers from their classmates and still got the stamp. There was not any wrap up activity, the class ended as soon as they finished stamping the copies.

Another aspect included in the observation instrument was about the materials used in class. As it was mentioned in the theoretical framework the use of different resources is essential to assist the teachers in their aim to present the class in a clear and appealing manner. During the lessons observed, the only material used in class was the set of copies from the book *On your mark.* Students did not show much interest in the copies they were using as it is not an appealing way to

present information. It would have been interesting to see students' reaction and level of participation and interest if the topic would have been presented with the support of different resources like pictures, music, videos, a game, and among other didactic materials. There was a radio and a laptop in the class and a couple of posters on the walls. During the lessons observed none of those resources were used. The teacher allowed students to use their cell phone to look for the meaning of unknown words and some of them took advantage to keep on using their cellphone for different purposes, but not class related.

Besides observing if different resources were used during the teaching process in the lessons observed, it was necessary for this research paper to determine which activities the teacher implemented in class; for the main aim of the research is to identify if the strategies proposed by MEP are being used while teaching English to conclude if the objectives proposed in the new program are being fulfilled in eleventh graders. There were not activities such as games, songs, stories telling, board games, educational videos, among others used during the time the class was observed. This could contribute to the lack of interest students reflect in the class, that they prefer to be doing anything else, but participating in class.

In relation to the teaching strategies observed in class, it could be perceived that it was not only a teacher-based class, but it was also centered in the students. The teacher tried to make students to provide their opinion and participate. She asked questions for the class to think, analyze and give answers, the teacher asked one student to read the reading comprehension out loud and corrected pronunciation mistakes, among other efforts to make the class interactive. The teacher provided oral explanation about the topic, but she was not the only one talking, she asked students for examples and ideas. Despite of the teacher's effort, most of the students did not participate actively; once again, this could be due to the lack of appealing materials or innovative activities

that make students to feel involved in the class. There was not an explicit grammar explanation and the only assessment activity that was performed in class it was the teacher checking the practice and asking all of the students for the answers to the questions of the reading comprehension.

When analyzing the classroom management, it was noticeable how difficult it was for the teacher to handle the large class of 30 students. Although she has plenty of experience working with large classes and handling a lot of different situations, she could not control the whole class. There were students that did not want to cooperate and try to acquire as much knowledge as possible.

In regard to the classroom itself, there were some aspects observed that could be fixed. There were only two posters on the wall with short phrases in English, no supporting materials or educational posters on the walls.

One disadvantage for the teacher is that the group was large; there were 30 students in the classroom and 5 who did not attend to class. This makes it difficult for the teacher to handle the class as desired; she even had to scold them to make them stop talking and start paying attention. Time also plays a significant role; copies were not made until all the students were in the class and the teacher could know how many copies she would need for the class. She needed to make 3 copies per student and the fact that they had to go and make the copies at the moment of the class, distracted students and made them waste around 15-20 minutes of their class time.

Another factor that may have distracted students, it was the temperature of the class, it was a hot day, the classroom was full with people and there was only one fan and this specific class was

scheduled 12:20 to 2:00 pm, so it may be possible that students were already tired and lacked willingness to participate or pay attention in class.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVES

General

To analyze the implementation of different teaching practices proposed by the public ministry of

education (MEP) in the English program for eleventh grade.

Specific

- To describe the relationship between the objectives and teaching practices proposed by

  the public ministry of education.

- To identify the current teaching practices applied by English teachers in the teaching-

  learning process.

Conclusions

Regarding the general and specific objective stated above about what the different

strategies proposed by MEP implemented in the class are, it can be concluded that there were some

of the efficient strategies that were applied in the observed lessons. The first strategy mentioned

in the theoretical framework stated that the teacher has to play the role of facilitator. The objective

of this strategy was directly focused on students, and it relied on strengthening the process of

becoming independent learners and build their own knowledge. The teacher motivated students to

participate and to think more instead of waiting for the correct answer that she was going to provide

which can be consider as taking the role of the facilitator.

The second strategy is that the instructions should be provided with clarity to avoid that

the objective of the activity may be lost by the lack of understanding. The teacher took the time

to explain and give clear instructions and if students were in doubt, she repeated herself and made

mimics or used examples to clarify and make sure students know what they were expected to do. However, students seem distracted with different factors such as their cellphones, the background noise, and the hot weather. They, except a few students, did not show enough interest in the class, understanding any instructions or performing the proposed practice.

A third strategy set in MEP's program was that the teacher should use modeling and scaffolding as a way of incentivizing students to learn through the example. They were supposed to learn how to work as teams to apply the different values mentioned in the program about learning how-to live-in community and get along with other people. Additionally, they were expected to perform individual practice to become more independent and responsible. Teamwork was not observed during the time of observation; thus, it can be concluded that this strategy was not applied effectively. Most of the time students were required to do individual work which was not effective either as they were not being monitored. Most of them did not work in the practice or activity.

The fourth strategy proposed by MEP in the English program addresses an important aspect that is the implementation of useful phrases, idiomatic expressions and important words that students may need to perform the tasks proposed by the teacher in every class. This strategy encourages teachers to go beyond and to help students to broaden their vocabulary. Along with this, the next strategy high lights the relevance of teachers to emphasize the pronunciation of the new vocabulary acquired. These strategies were partially applied; the teacher did not provide new vocabulary but clarified the meaning of the unknown words for students. Besides, she corrected students to pronounce words correctly, especially when they were reading out loud. If this strategy should be implemented in every single class, students would have a broad vocabulary and perhaps they could dare to use the language orally with confidence in class.

The following strategy analyzed refers to the integration of the four skills in every class in order to expose students to language in a holistic approach. However, it was not applied as expected because there were not listening activities, few oral participations, despite of the teacher effort to make them speak, few writing activities (re-write answers literally from the reading comprehension) and the skill that was used the more was reading. This does not represent a challenge for students and made the class dreary and boring. Thus, the objective related to this strategy was not accomplished in the observed class.

MEP program also contemplates constant monitoring of the class as a strategy to make sure students are being guided by the teacher to accomplish the objectives of each topic. In the observed lessons, the guidance and monitoring were partially done. Most of the times, the teacher was doing another work-related task, and, in the meantime, students completed a practice or an activity to take advantage of time. For instance, she had to check previous assignments to make sure they had the correct information for the upcoming test and as teachers pointed out in the interview the given time for the lessons is not enough to do every task they need to perform.

Another strategy suggested for English teaching for eleventh grade is that the class needs to be prepared ahead of time. Teachers need to work consciously on their lesson plans, not only to present them as a requirement, but also to guide themselves throughout the class time. In the observed lessons, they did not seem to be planned carefully as there were not appealing activities, all the lessons were similar regarding materials used (copies), activities performed (reading comprehension), a couple of questions and a practice in the copies. It could be perceived that the teacher did not used the lesson plan, especially in the class in which the copies were not ready to start the class and that took around 15 to 20 minutes out of 80 minutes of the total class duration. During that time students did not do anything class related.

Finally, regarding the strategy suggested for eleventh graders that teachers should make them familiarized with peer assess, this with the aim of teaching them to become independent learners. If students know what aspects have to be evaluate from each other, then they raise their awareness on the performance that is expected from them. This strategy was not applied in class; thus, it can be stated that the objective behind it has not been fulfilled.

Recommendations

As stated in one specific objective there are some recommendations to be proposed regarding methodological strategies to strengthen the use of beneficial teaching practices for the advantage of students.

- Teachers need to be aware of the role they are assigned to play: the facilitator. They should find different ways to encourage students to be more active in class and to make them the center of it, the doers instead of only observers.

- Instructions should be given in simple words for students to understand them at first. If possible, instructions should be written down on the board for students to have them handy and still ask students if they are understanding what they are expected to do.

- Teachers need to come up with more group or pair appealing activities. This will help students to feel more committed to work in class and complete the assignment at the same time they are learning to build healthy relationships with their classmates.

- Teachers should provide words, idiomatic expressions, two-word verbs, useful phrases in every single class. It could be two or three new words written on the board or in a poster that students can see at any time.

- Teachers should make students aware of the phonology of words and eventually they will learn their correct pronunciation and have a better idea of how different words are pronounced correctly due to their phonology knowledge.

- Activities should be planned based on developing the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). In this way students will receive a holistic learning experience and not only in one specific skill.

- Teachers should monitor students to make sure they are working in the assigned task. Students should be aware of the importance of class work in the acquisition of English as a second language, so they feel more committed to work even when the teacher is not able to walk around.

- Teachers should work on realistic, appealing lesson plans, not only to present them as a requirement, but to follow them during class and make students to have the feeling that the class was designed especially for them and time is invested wisely every lesson.

- Teachers should implement peer assessment in class and foster the positive assessment among students by teaching them the use of rubrics and scales to evaluate their classmates work.

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ANNEXES

Authorization Letter for the Observations

UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA
Seriedad y Prestigio

San José, 09 de abril del 2019

Señor
Javier Arce
Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda

Estimado Señor

Me permito saludarle y a la vez desearle éxitos en el desarrollo de sus funciones profesionales. La Universidad Hispanoamericana, con la finalidad de preparar a nuestros estudiantes de una manera adecuada, tanto desde la forma teórica como práctica, solicitamos su colaboración, para que se le permita a nuestra estudiante **PEÑA GOMEZ GRÉTHEL PATRICIA**, con número de cédula 8-0122-0358, realizar unas observaciones de clase, de la carrera de LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS.

La estudiante se compromete a cumplir con las indicaciones reglamentarias que le obligan como estudiantes universitarios y otras que se le den a conocer y sean propias de la institución que visitan.

Atentamente.

Jéssica Juárez Solís
Departamento de Registro.
Universidad Hispanoamericana

UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

English Class Observation Instrument

Objective: To collect information as possible related to the class to be observed and the techniques used during the English teaching process to be able to analyze the data as a contribution to the qualitative research on effective teaching strategies for eleventh grade.

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Institution: _____

Observer: _____

Topic: _____

Chart 3. Class Structure

Class Structure	What was done?	It was observed	It was not observed	Did not apply	Observations
Warm up Activity					
Review of last class					
Introduction of the topic					
Clear explanation					
Activity or practice					
Assessment					
Wrap-up					

Chart 4. Materials

Materials	How were they used?	It was observed	It was not observed	Did not apply	Observations
Copies					
Book					
TV/ Videos					
Audio/ music					
Pictures					
Games					
Other					

Chart 5. Activities

Activities	Purpose	It was observed	It was not observed	Did not apply	Observations
Games					
Songs					

Stories/ tales					
Board games					
Other					

Chart 6. Teaching Strategies/Methodology

Teaching Strategies/ Methodology				
Teacher based				
Student based				
Oral explanation				
Grammar explanation				
Pronunciation included				
Assessment				
Class management				

Chart 7. Classroom

Classroom					
Support material on the walls					
Number of students (Desks)					
Organization					
Light					
Temperature					
Distracting Elements					
Board					

Chart 8. Use of Language

Use of Language					
Is the class carried out in English?					
Do students use English?					
Does the teacher corrects and provide feedback					
Other					

Interview questions

Universidad Hispanoamericana

Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés

Facultad de Educación

Student: Grethel Peña

Tutora: Sharon Solano

　　　　Research: Efficient Teaching Strategies Set to Determine the Fulfillment of Mep English

Program Objectives for Eleventh Grade at Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda I Period

You have been selected to participate in this interview in order to know the experience from

English teachers' perspective regarding the efficient teaching strategies that may determine the

fulfillment of MEP English Program objectives for eleventh grade. The data you provide will be

treated confidentially as it will be used for research purposes only.

Interview 1

1. Do you know what are the strategies proposed by MEP for English teaching? Which ones?

> The lesson plans are based on the developing the four skills (listening, speaking, reading
>
> and writing during the class through different exercises such as dialogues, expositions
>
> (oral presentations), watching videos, short documentaries in order to answer WH
>
> questions and giving details about what they watched before, after that the students will
>
> be able to understand short sentences, paragraphs to answer information in a written way.
>
> Those are some of the strategies that MEP proposed.

2. What strategies would you like to implement in class? What which strategies do you implement in class?

> For example, when Im going to introduce a new topic and new vocabulary, I usually use different pieces of paper, I paste the piece of paper on the whiteboard and I ask them what does this word mean for you or in Spanish? I use warm up activities like crosswords, word search, different games like hot potato, Simon says etc. It will depend on the topic I'm teaching, for example with jobs and occupations I could use pictures and they can guess what occupation is that. Also I write unscramble words and they identify the occupations and they can be working in groups. These are some of the strategies I implement because sometimes they don't remember the meaning of words or how to say those words. That's why I use those strategies before introducing the topic.

3. Are there any limitations refraining teachers from applying different teaching strategies in class?

> In my personal opinion MEP has a lot of objectives to be accomplished in the class, but teachers don't have enough time to put into practice all the different activities we want to do with our students. Sometimes we want to watch videos or a documentary, but in many institutions they don't have video beam to project them. MEP wants to cover a lot of things, but in real life it is too complicated because we don't have enough lessons, we don't have equipment, also many students don't know English very well, they don't understand even the verb to be and MEP wants that eleventh graders can speak English fluently, but in real life this is not real because they don't know how to speak very well, how to write sentences, they don't know basic vocabulary and for that reason I think MEP has a lot of objectives but in the real situation these objective are very hard to be

implemented in class. Many times we have extra-curricular activities, we don't have enough lesson, the necessary equipment to use in class, many students lack of interest in learning English and basically for many reasons I think MEP objectives are not realistic.

4. **Are MEP's objectives for eleventh grade are realistic for the Costa Rican context and scenario?**

It is something similar to what I said before. Eleventh graders in our country don't know how to create sentences in the different tenses, they don't have a good pronunciation, they don't understand the difference between verbs. I think that they don't have a good level, but there are different reason for this. There are many high schools in which teachers don't have the conditions to teach properly, starting from the classroom, lack of equipment like video beam, speakers, enough material to share with every student. For this reason I think that this can be the reason why teachers can't have a good performance. We need English labs for students to practice real listening, speaking, and the experience of students using the computers. Student also lack of motivation and they don't want to participate in the different activities we propose, like debates and presentations. It is complicated.

5. Do you think MEP objectives for eleventh grade are being fulfilled?

Already answered in the previous questions.

6. **Are students acquiring the desired level at the end of their academic high school life?**

Already answered previously.

7. How important is English knowledge nowadays? Are teachers making students aware of the multiple advantages of learning English with proficiency?

I think that many students know different benefits of studying English. For example, that they can get better job opportunities, good salaries, travel if they want to visit other countries, get scholarships to go to English speaking countries like Canada, United States, United Kingdom if they want to study different majors there, they can have real conversations with foreign people who come to Costa Rica, but I don't know why I have the feeling that students don't want to make the effort to learn, I think they don't like math or English, these subjects may be complicated for them. I do motivate them to learn English as they can have more opportunities, but English is a must.

8. **How do teachers encourage their students to keep on learning outside the class?**

Me personally, I encourage them to watch movies with subtitles, they love watching movies and series, in Netflix for example. If they like to listen to music I motivate them to listen to music in English and look for the lyrics, many students love to play video games on line and they have to communicate with people who speak English, sometimes they tell me about the videogames they are playing and I take advantage to encourage them to learn English outside the class because they are doing activities they love while practicing the different skills like listening, writing, reading.

9. Are there aspects that may demotivate teachers? If so, which ones have you or your colleagues experienced?

Many teachers are frustrated because most of the time they have to cover extracurricular activities. For example, sometimes teachers don't have enough time to prepare your

lesson plan because they must work in preparing extracurricular activities like the different holidays, look for information, preparing material to celebrate. Also we must, fill out different information each trimester, curricular adaptations. So sometimes there is no time for preparing a quality class because we spend too much time doing other stuff that are not part of the class. We even need to be with our students in their sport activities, so we feel frustrated because of lack of time, sometimes you prepare your class and students are called for a civic act to celebrate a holiday or to participate in different activities.

10. What do you think about *Bachillerato* test? Does this test limit teachers from teaching in a holistic way, including the four skills?

In my opinion *Bachillerato* test is excellent to evaluate reading only, but this test is not evaluating the other skills. I think that *Bachillerato* is a way to measure how the student is doing in reading skill, but it is not a good test to evaluate the other skills. Students are not being prepared in the other aspects of language, so they are not able to produce the language. There are students who are good in writing, speaking or listening, but they may not be good for reading, so this type of test is tiring and frustrating for them.

11. Is MEP training teachers properly for them to be able to prepare students for FARO test successfully?

MEP is not training teachers, they are implementing FARO tests, but they are not sure about how it works. They haven't provided enough information about it. They put all the responsibility in teachers to get students prepare for FARO tests on November, but they have not provided proper training. Besides, we don't have the necessary equipment to

prepare students for a test like FARO as this will cover conversational English, listening, writing and reading.

Interview 2

1. Do you know what are the strategies proposed by MEP for English teaching? Which ones?

To be honest, I know about different teaching strategies, but I'm not sure if they are the ones proposed by MEP in the program.

2. **What strategies would you like to implement in class?**

Every teacher is supposed to use communicative approach. I would like to implement more talking in my class, for students to be able to put into practice what I teach them with the other skills. I would also like to find a way for my students to be or to feel more immersed in the culture.

3. **What which strategies do you implement in class?**

I try to do my classes as communicative and holistic as possible, stretching the time between civic acts, meetings and paperwork. I prepare the class with anticipation to be able to take to the class all the necessary materials for students to participate in the activities I prepare for them. I keep on asking questions and make them talk at least a little bit, because students sometimes may be shy.

4. **Are there any limitations refraining teachers from applying different teaching strategies in class?**

> The need to be constantly stretching the time between civic acts, meetings with principal of the school, parents, working on paperwork, besides teaching and providing students with enough material to build knowledge and something to test out. I would say time is the main limitation.

5. Are MEP's objectives for eleventh grade are realistic for the Costa Rican context and scenario?

> They would be more realistic to achieve in a context where students would have had been prepared in English acquisition from the most basic levels all the way through. Unfortunately, it hasn't being the case in most schools around the country, especially public ones, where students are limited by poor administrative decisions.

6. **Do you think MEP objectives for eleventh grade are being fulfilled?**

> They might be fulfilled in some high schools, but not in most around the country. Students may have not perceived any change in the program since the final standardized test hasn't change in years. Many teachers keep on teaching the "old" way avoiding going out of their comfort zones where they would be forced to have students produce real content and not just reading comprehension. Besides, the programs do not consider the academic reality of certain places of the country in which students might not have the same possibilities.

7. Are students acquiring the desired level at the end of their academic high school life?

No. Students do not seem to internalize the knowledge that was supposed to be acquired since they started their academic life in primary school. I have to review topics of seventh or eighth grade because I feel they are lost most of the time. Most of them don't even handle the verb to be in eleventh grade and I think it could also be lack of willingness on their end as well as other factors.

8. **How important is English knowledge nowadays? Are teachers making students aware of the multiple advantages of learning English with proficiency?**

English, as learning any other language, has been fundamental in professional development and many students are aware of it. The thing is that many teachers are not "offering" to the students' real context, realia for them to "feel" the language as part of their reality and advantages for life. There are a lot of institutes providing students with different scenarios of the language that they should, but are not, shown in high school.

9. How do teachers encourage their students to keep on learning outside the class?

By using projects, by providing them with tangible experiences and realia. I have noticed that students internalize the topics when they are assigned projects to be presented in class and more likely when I assign them a topic of their interest. I also try to encourage them to watch movies and tv series in English, listen to music in English and try to be aware of how language is everywhere they go and how necessary it is for them to understand certain things better.

10. **Are there aspects that may demotivate teachers? If so, which ones have you or your colleagues experienced?**

> The massive loads of paperwork left for teachers to do while on teaching labor and the fact that teaching, as an occupation, has been losing respect because of the bad administrative decisions coming from the government representatives. Besides, the lack of training to teachers. We are required to do a lot of things in our profession, but we were never taught how to perform them. What we learned at university is very basic in comparison to all the tasks we need to be able to do. Another aspect that demotivates teachers is about time. Strikes, activities not related to the subject, so students spend the lesson time doing something else and then they get behind with the topics that need to be taught.

11. **What do you think about *Bachillerato* test? Does this test limit teachers from teaching in a holistic way, including the four skills?**

> National *Bachillerato* standardized test is just another way of telling students that learning is a hazardous and boring process that doesn't really care about what they have learned for life, but for a test. Sadly, many professionals have taken this test as the one and only reason for them to teach so they have been teaching "around" this test placing aside the combination of skills for students to produce accurately.

12. Is MEP training teachers properly for them to be able to prepare students for FARO test successfully?

> No, not even MEP's hierarch knows exactly what they want about Faro. As an English teacher I haven't receive any kind of material, workshop or any kind of "help" to know exactly how to prepare my students for the test. Surely, we have to teach holistically since that is what we have been expected to do for years, but now we have to face students' insecurities, nervousness, and even ours' too.

PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

When the research *Compilation of Efficient Teaching Strategies to Determine the Fulfillment of Mep English Program Objectives for Eleventh Grade at Liceo Luis Dobles Segreda I Period* was carried out, there were uncovered aspects that could be improved in order to benefit students and to help them to achieve the academic objectives proposed by MEP.

Furthermore, MEP recently stated that *Bachillerato* National Testing will not continue being the tool used to test the proficiency of students in different subjects, English language among them; MEP established a new modality of exams named "FARO", and it is expected that by applying these tests students will have to demonstrate proficiency in the foreign language, not only in the reading skill, but also in listening, speaking and writing abilities. Therefore, it is important that teachers research and put into practice effective strategies that will help students to acquire a proficient level in the English language. This proposal intends to give ideas to teachers who may be struggling due to the new modality. It will be a guide for teachers to do their own research on the type of activities that are more suitable depending on the strategies that they are going to apply. Teachers will need to deal with different limitations because "FARO" represent a bigger challenge than just preparing students for a test based on reading comprehension only. Some of the limitations that teachers may face could be lack of enough time to address all the topics, to perform all the activities and to apply the proposed strategies. Besides, lack of interest from students that prefer to do other non-related to class activities rather than participating actively in class. Teachers need to be conscious about the possibility that at this point students may not understand how significant academic success and all the knowledge they can acquire will be for their lives after they graduate. Thus, teachers need to guide them and

inform them about the different opportunities English as a second language may bring to their lives.

Objective of the proposal

The aim of this proposal is to provide a guide for teachers to obtain ideas on how to implement efficient strategies that are connected to the objectives of the MEP program for eleventh graders. Furthermore, through the implementation of these strategies, teachers will design their lessons more appealing and significant for students at the same time teachers motivate them to continue researching and learning even outside of the class.

Strategies of implementation

First, it is necessary to raise awareness in English teachers of how important it is to prepare efficiently students visualizing their future once they graduate from high school. Teachers need to have in mind how great the impact of a good teaching could be in the lives of their students.

The following are some activities that can be applied in class.

Chart 9. **Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade**

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials Teaching tools**
Classes should be more student-centered. The teacher playing the role of a facilitator. Students building their own	Independent learning style. This could be used in any class/ topic.	The following strategies were proposed by	This strategy could be used with any activity proposed by the teacher. Ex. Reading comprehension:	● A power point presentation or handout with clear instructions of the activity.

| knowledge playing an active role. | The example of the activity can be used to teach values and morals unit which is an important matter in the new MEP program. | Gershon (2014, p.5-7):
 ● Minimizing teacher talk to allow students to participate more.
 ● Praising students for trying their best.
 ● Telling students about the importance | ● Students will make groups of 4.
 ● One student will be the reader (this student has to read out loud for the group), another student will be the writer (this student will be in charge of taking notes), student #3 will be the time keeper (this student will make sure the task is completed on time) and the last student will be the speaker (this student | Ex. An outline or checklist of the task and the timing.
 ● Based on the activity:
 1. A copy of the Aesop's fable
 2. A big piece of paper for each group for the poster
 3. Color markers
 4. Recording or video of the fable
 5. A laptop, speakers and a video beam or a tape recorder to play the audio |

| | | of being independent. | has to present their work to the rest of the class).

● First students have to read the Aesop's fable (http://www.saberingles.com.ar /stories/aesop.html). Write the answers to the questions provided by the teacher. Then, they have to discuss in which situations of their lives they could apply the moral of the fable and write down three of them in a | |

| | | | poster to share with the class.

 *The teacher may play a video or recording of any of the Aesop's fables to make the class more remarkable and wrap-up the activity with a short reflection. | |

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
Instructions should be provided with clarity to avoid that the objective of the activity may be lost by the lack of understanding. According to Sowell (2017, p.10) "Instruction-giving has a direct effect on learning; a lesson or activity becomes chaotic and fails when	This should be implemented in every class for any topic or content.	The following are strategies proposed by Sowell, 2017: ● Giving the instructions in the second language since the beginning is ideal for students to get familiarized with them. However,	● Going over the list with students. ● Demonstrating, mimicking or explaining the actions of the unknown instructions. ● Giving commands for students to perform to test if they understood the meaning of the instructions. (Sowell, 2017, p.12)	● List of common instructions. Ex. 1. Take out a pen or pencil 2. Take out a piece of paper. 3. Write your name on the paper. 4. Open your books. 5. Turn to page _____. 6. Read page _____. 7. Close your books. 8. Put your books away. 9. Stand up.

students do not understand what they are supposed to do."		sometimes providing them using L1(mother tongue) can be helpful for the sake of "efficiency and clarity." (Sowell, 2017, p.11) ● Provide a list of the most used instructions since the beginning of the academic year,		10. Sit down. 11. Find a partner. 12. Put your desks face-to-face 13. Get into a group of _____ students. 14. Put your desks together. 15. Make a half-circle with the desks. 16. Look at the board. 17. Look at the teacher. 18. Look at the dialogue. 19. Repeat after me. 20. Raise your hand. 21. Put your hand down. 22. Pass your papers to the front

| | | so students use it as a reference.

 ● Avoid wordy or long sentences while giving instructions.

 ● Do not improvise instructions. Prepare them before the class starts.

 ● Choose the correct time to give instructions. | | List taken from:

     https://americanEnglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/etf_55_3_pg10-19.pdf

 (Sowell, 2017, p.11) |

		● Break down instructions when there are several steps. ● Check for understanding.		

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
The teacher should use modeling and scaffolding as a way of incentivizing students to learn through the example. They were supposed to learn how to work as teams to apply the different values mentioned in the program.	This strategy can also be put into practice in any of the topics or content of the class.	The following strategies were proposed by Sowell, 2017: • Try not to have students select their partners. This to avoid any uncomfortable moment for students who	• Groups can be formed by giving numbers to the students from 1 to the amount of people that the teacher wants the group to be. For instance, numbers 1 to 4 if the teacher wants groups of 4. Then, have all the number 1 get together, all the number 2 get together until all the groups are formed.	Depending on the activities: • For charades: Enough cards with the words to be used. (it could be used to practice vocabulary) • Story writing: a pen or pencil and blank sheet of paper for each student. They can use one from their notebooks. • Board-games: the mini posters with the board-game printed on it, dices, beans or

		have issues socializing. ● The teacher should make the groups randomly.	● The same can be done with names of fruits, animals, etc. (Sowell, 2017, p.15) ● Well known team-building activities to implement in class: 1. Charades: a game in which some of the players try to guess a word or phrase from the actions of another player who may not speak. (https://www.mer	other small pieces to use during the game. ● Debates and round tables: The copy of the topics to be discussed.

			riam-webster.com/dictionary/charade) 2. Story telling: In groups, students will create a story. Each of them is going to add a phrase until all of them participate. 3. Story writing: Each student will have a sheet of paper in which he/she is going to	

			start writing a story. When the teacher indicates, they have to pass their paper to the right and the next student has to continue his/her classmate's story. At the end they read their crazy stories. 4. Board-games: monopoly, bingo, puzzles, among others, adapted	

			by the teacher depending on the topic to be studied. 5. Role plays 6. Debates about interesting topics 7. Round tables	

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
The implementation of useful phrases, idiomatic expressions and important words. "Idioms cause difficulties for English as Second Language (ESL) learners because their meanings are unpredictable." (Mansoor, 2015, 9)	This strategy can be used for any topic. Vocabulary and pronunciation. Language and culture	The following strategies were proposed by Mansoor, 2015: ● Use the traditional method which encourages teaching idioms explicitly in context.	● Writing down the idiom on the board and have students guessing the meaning. ● Giving the idiom to the students and have them completing the meaning. Ex. **Idiom**: Hold your horses. **This means**_____ a moment.	● The white board. ● Markers ● Handouts with the idioms' information. ● Color papers ● A playlist of clean version of popular songs. ● Speakers, laptop, video beam.

		● Apply the conceptual metaphor method that is when the idioms are taught after obtaining some knowledge about them.	● The Hot Potato: The teacher makes a ball with several pieces of color paper; each paper will contain an idiom written down. Students will pass around the ball while the teacher plays some music. When the music stops, the student that had the hot potato at that moment, will have to read out loud the idiom and try to guess the meaning.	

			● The teacher can project a short story with a video beam, ask different students to help reading out loud. Ask students to write down any phrase that they think is an idiomatic expression. Then, they will go over them and guess their meaning through context.	

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
Relevance of teachers to emphasize the pronunciation of the new vocabulary acquired.	Any class when students make oral participatio n.	● Teach the different sounds of vowels and consonants and the possible combinations as well as the exceptions. This could be implemented in every class one	● Game the dice of pronunciation: The teacher will make two blank dice to write sounds on each of the sides of them. The class will be divided in two groups students from group A will throw the dice and students from group B have to give an or two examples of a word that contains	● A handout with the different phonemes and the places of articulation. ● Students can take a small mirror to observe themselves while they acquire the pronunciation of the new phoneme. ● Pictures or a poster of the position of lips, tongue and the jaw for students to use it

		phoneme at the time.	the sound. If the words are correct the group gets a point. The group that has more points win a small price.	as a reference when they need to.
		● Set a realistic goal: intelligible pronunciation. That others can be able to understand the words that students pronounce.		● The white board. ● Dice of paper ● Markers ● Hand-made red and yellow flashcards. ● Tape
			● Minimal pair game Chinese whispers. The class will be divided in two groups. Each group will send five players. Each team will be making a line. The last students in each line will read a word that has a minimal pair and whisper it to the next student until	
		● Students should be expose to the target language as much as possible. Thus,		

| | | teacher should use English in class and encourage them to listen to music, watch movies, series or videos in English as well and pay attention to the correct pronunciation of words.

● Teachers should research about | the first student in the line listen to the word and write it down or draw it on the board. Ex. Sheep-Ship /Seat- Sit / Chase- Chess

● Classifying words according to their pronunciation. Students will be divided in two groups. There are going to be red flashcards in one desk for group A and yellow flashcards in another one for group B. Each group will have 5 | |

| | | apps that students could use to practice pronunciation and encourage them to use them.
● Students should be taught to use the dictionaries that include the pronunciation of words. | minutes to classify all the words in their desk according to the pronunciation of the highlighted consonant or vowel. The board will be divided by sounds and students will paste each word where they think the correct pronunciation is.
Ex. **V**est- **B**est
L**ea**ve- L**i**ve
● Dictation: It could be for pair work, one student read the word and the | |

			other one writes it down and then they change roles. ● Spelling contests Note: some ideas were taken from https://www.fluentu.com /blog/educator-English/esl-pronunciation-activities/	

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
1. The class needs to be prepared ahead of time. 2. Constant monitoring of the class as a strategy to make sure students are being guided by the teacher to accomplish the objectives of each topic. 3. The Integration of the four skills in every class for students to be	This should be implemented in every single class.	● Teachers need to be aware that each student is different and that is why the lessons should be planned to use different methodologies that include the different skills and learning styles.	● Check the topics that will be studied in class. ● Look for interesting warm-up activities related to the topic. Make sure they are not time consuming. ● If you are going to use the video beam to project a ppt presentation of the topic. Reserve it ahead of time, make sure it is set up before the class start.	● The lesson plans ● The materials will depend on the class that was planned.

| exposed to the language through a holistic approach. | | ● Lessons should be appealing for students to be encouraged to participate actively.

● Each section of the lesson plan should be timed.

● Lessons plan should include basic stages such as warm-up activity, explanation of the topic, guided | ● If you are going to use any worksheets, handouts or copies of the book, make sure they are ready before the class starts.

● Write one objective per activity.

● Manage time wisely, use the lesson plan as a guide. Tell students how much time they have to perform each task.

● Monitor students to make sure they are working and not wasting time. | |

		practice, wrap-up activity. Note: This website contains useful information about lesson planning for ESL classes. https://www.theteflacademy.com /tefl-learning-centre/lesson-planning ● Teachers should monitor the class while they		

		are performing an activity or individual work to make sure they are understanding what the assign task or to clear any doubts.		

Plan of activities related to the effective strategies for English lessons for eleventh grade				
Strategy principle	**Content**	**Strategies Proposed**	**Activities**	**Materials** **Teaching tools**
Teachers should make students familiarized with peer assess, this	This can be implemented in any	The following strategies were proposed by Karami and Rezaei, 2015:	● Peer Quizzes: Students write their own questions about the topic explained	● Rubrics ● Checklists

with the aim of teaching them to become independent learners.	class, with any content. Teachers should be aware of the multiple benefits of peer assessment: ● Students develop a better sense of responsibility. ● Students learn from other students'	● Teachers should involve more students in peer-assessment by providing enough and clear training about how to assess and provide feedback to their classmates (p.8). ● "Provide students with sample self and/or peer assessment criteria." (p.8)	by the teacher and then ask the questions to the peer they are assessing. They are also expected to provide the correct answers once the classmate finishes the quiz. ● **Roll the Dice:** <u>Put a die at each desk</u>. At the end of class, each student rolls and briefly answers aloud a question based on the number rolled: ● I want to remember …	● Basic evaluation sheets. ● Dice

	success and mistakes. (Karami and Rezaei, 2015, p.8)	● "Introduce students to the concepts and elements of assessment against specified criteria in the first weeks of class." (p.8)	● Something I learned today ● One word to sum up what I learned ● Something I already knew ● I'm still confused about … Note: Ideas of activities taken from: https://www.wabisabilearning.com/blog/15-assessment-activities-fast-formative	

Benefits

- By the implementation of a variety of activities and effective strategies students may be motivated to participate in class as they will perceive that the lessons were planned specially for them.

- Students may understand the importance of English learning process and can be encouraged to keep on studying and being more exposed to the language even outside the class.

- Students will be acquiring knowledge regardless their learning style as different activities that include the four skills will be implemented.

- When assigning roles to the students and implementing peer assessment, students will feel compromised to work in class because they are part of a team that need to achieve a common goal.

- Students will be more familiarized when being exposed to a teaching style that includes the four skills and eventually, they will improve their proficiency in all of them.

- In the process of applying peer assessment, students will develop awareness of what is expected from them in the class.

- Students will feel guided during their learning process when the teacher monitors the class.

- Students will learn to work as a team, and this will foster a sense of responsibility and unity in the class.

- Students will broaden their vocabulary and cultural knowledge by the implementation of common and useful phrases, idioms, two-word verbs and sayings proper of English-speaking countries.

- The teacher will save time when providing clear instructions on the board, projected with the video beam or in a handout.

- The teacher will make use of time efficiently when planning the lessons ahead of time and students will notice that the class is more organized.

Limitations

- **Time:** Sometimes there are other activities carried out in the high school that are mandatory for all of the students to attend; this takes time from the class time and the lesson cannot be carried out as desired. Additionally, strikes, meetings and other activities that implies the teacher to be outside the class. Furthermore, when it is exams period, most of the time students only go to school to do the corresponding exam and then go home because the principal does not want them to interrupt the other students who will do exam later.

- **"*Adelantos de clase"*:** which is when a group did not have class with a teacher and they are allow to take a lesson which was scheduled for them later on in the day, with another group to go home earlier, so the teachers have to deal with two groups at the same time.

- **Number of lessons:** The number of lessons per week may not be enough to cover all the topics in the way teachers desire. As it was mentioned in the interviews, teachers think more English lessons per week are necessary.