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**Systematization of pedagogical experiences in the EFL
teaching program**

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Aprobación del director del trabajo de integración curricular

Loja, 16 de enero del 2023

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Dedication

This work is affectionately dedicated to my parents Mario Rosero and Corina Alvarez, who have been my nonstop source of inspiration and hard work. They have always encouraged me to do my best in every single step I take. Without their love and support this work would not have been possible.

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Abstract

The main goal of the systematization of pedagogical experiences in the EFL teaching program is that, through class observations and practices, enhance one teaching practices, as in my case, in-service teachers are already working in the education area, and the need of constant training is essential.

Having the opportunity to observe primary and secondary classes has helped me to see the reality of English classes, in which I could acquire new methods and strategies. As a result, this led me to apply all these new skills in not only face-to-face but also online classes.

In addition, COVID-19 breakout has completely changed the education system and unleashed a wave of modernization all around the world. After all, the use of ICT and online teaching are here to stay for good.

As a way of conclusion, having observed EFL classes at different levels made me realize the importance of the planning, linguistic aspects, clear and achievable objectives, and learning strategies applied in order to make the best of a class and provide learners a prime English environment that only teachers can create.

Keywords: EFL, In-Service Teaching, Systematization.

Resumen

La sistematización de experiencias pedagógicas en el programa de enseñanza de inglés tiene como objetivo principal que, a través de la observación y práctica de clases, se potencie una práctica docente de las personas que ya están trabajando en el área de educación, y la necesidad de una constante formación es fundamental.

Tener la oportunidad de observar clases de primaria y secundaria me ha ayudado a ver la realidad de las clases de inglés, adquiriendo nuevos métodos y estrategias. Como resultado, me llevó a aplicar estas nuevas habilidades en clases presenciales y en línea. Además, el brote de COVID-19 ha cambiado por completo el sistema educativo y desató una ola de modernización. Consecuentemente, el uso de las TICs y la enseñanza en línea llegaron para quedarse.

Como conclusión, haber observado las clases de Inglés en diferentes niveles me hizo darme cuenta de la importancia de la planificación, los aspectos lingüísticos, los objetivos y las estrategias de aprendizaje aplicadas para aprovechar al máximo una clase y proporcionar a los alumnos un entorno de Inglés privilegiado, que sólo los profesores pueden crear.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza en servicio, Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, Sistematización

Introduction

The systematization of pedagogical experiences in the EFL teaching program is a great opportunity to analytically reflect and interpret all the experiences acquired during the practicum courses, in which I had the opportunity to both observe and teach EFL classes. In addition, the expertise I have acquired by working not only with beginners but also with high-intermediate levels gave me a deeper understanding of the teacher's role based on the national curriculum and also the ones who are part of the IB program. Therefore, UTPL practicum classes are fundamental for acquiring new methods, strategies, and techniques to apply both inside and outside the classroom, as teachers encounter different situations to deal with students daily in this non-ending teaching-learning process. Furthermore, when observing EFL classes teachers may learn from others' mistakes, as not all the teachers are perfect and it is recommended to share approaches to learning and strategic processes and their application based on current trends.

On the other hand, getting to know what happens inside the classroom firsthand is a vital process in which a combination of objective and subjective dimensions provides a better understanding of the role of EFL teachers (Jara, 2009). Moreover, the systematization process concedes in-service teachers to continuously evaluate project activities, accomplish knowledge to improve its implementation and impact, and preserve the experience (Selener et al., 1996). In the same way, it is a process of reflection and critical interpretation of the practice and from the practice (Expósito & González, 2017).

In this sense, some previous researches have been considered to reinforce the understanding of the topic: Kini and Podolsky's article (2018) pretends to determine the teachers' experience in front of its impact in their profession. Another study was also included as it is Berger et al. (2018) who establish how teaching-practice training can enhance the teaching-learning process for the goals' achievement. Additionally, Irvine (2019) targets to propose how effective the academic process may be based on teachers' experience.

Apart from the mentioned authors, there were also other studies that contributed to the analysis of systematization process effectiveness. Shank and Santiago (2022) state how teachers' approach to students may lead their preparation and classroom management to be improved, and at the same time, how they can get some benefit when working with more experienced peers. Myroslava et al. (2022) as well intend to establish how important the technological resources are and how they can positively contribute to the learning process. Finally, Mera Rodríguez's work (2019) establishes the importance of systematization in the classroom in order to recollect educational experiences and propose new strategies to link knowledge and meaningful real-life situations.

The present work aims to deeply reflect on teaching practices as well as provide general definitions of specific terms regarding EFL education. As a result, chapter 1 contains a literature review about key topics. Chapter 2 comprises the information of the methodology, and chapter 3 consists of the analysis of some aspects related to this systematization. At the end, some conclusions and recommendations are presented.

The importance of this investigation lies in the relevant information it contains about new teaching methodologies based on both online and in-person teaching which are vital in the current educational field, and in the analysis of their impact on students engaged in these processes.

To fulfill this systematization of pedagogical experiences, classroom observations in elementary and high school took place in a bilingual school, in which not only the staff but also the students collaborated actively. Consequently, chapter three includes a special focus on planning, objectives, linguistic aspects, methodology, time management, and assessment that led to solid conclusions and recommendations that may contribute to better teaching practice in a current society in which public schools' English teachers need constant training.

To sum up, this investigation may be a great source of information not only for the university but also for society itself since it contains valuable information about how classroom observations boost teaching expertise.

Chapter One

Literature review

What is teaching?

The subject of teaching is somewhat complicated to explain, since many definitions are used in the literary system. There are so many contributions from authors specialized in the subject of teaching that it is not possible to define the subject of education in a logical way for the entire group of readers worldwide. An attempt is made to couple these parameters in a cognitive-psychological way, maintaining the logic of teaching from its beginnings to the time it has been evolving in this aspect as it is today. Substantial changes due to the new times (industrial age, technological age, others) have impacted the lives of teachers, who have adapted their lives to the current digital age. It could thus be indicated that, in order to achieve an assertive process, where students at their educational levels manage to learn, it would be necessary to see teachers from a psychological perspective based on the social aspects that each of them maintains in their daily lives (Gonzalez et al., 2018).

Psychosocial aspects have defined the lives of people in their teaching process on a recurring basis, both from birth and the initial school process; it has allowed the human being to be formed by their parents under the aforementioned parameters. For example, a child learns from the environment, when he did not understand his mother's guidance and suffered a fall that led to a medium injury, at home he put into play the father's guidance on the tasks to be done at school; then his teaching life was reflected in a lower grade by the teacher, a situation that led to an emotion of the student for that breach of the parameters experienced in adolescence, university and his adult life as a student and later as a professional (Albrect, 2021).

Therefore, the life of the teacher is to become psychologically involved in the life of the students, where they had lived part of their school process, now it is up to them to innovate in order to achieve results in the classroom through oral language training, reading and writing, didactic parameters that allow the application of cognitive strategies

applied in the classroom used by students. And it is there where learning takes its course towards academic orientation in both their mother tongue and the one introduced.

According to Barrachina (2018), the beginning of constructivist-cognitive development in the classroom starts from reading and decoding.

In this sense, the reading and writing processes might be understood as a complex cognitive action that involves the decoding of verbal graphic symbols in their sound correspondence to build their meaning or reading comprehension. In such a way, teaching is a vital part at that moment, where the student will experience their first grammatical aspects as well as expression (Ministerio de Educación, 2016). Having this in mind, it can be identified that the student learns through the teacher's instructions, and this generates an alternative of knowledge transfer that involves what happens in the classroom and the students' experiences outside of it.

Considering the different ways in which students absorb new information, the teacher must adapt to the different processes that each student experiences in which many of them maintain fast learning aspects and others do not; but in the end, due to the techniques and methods applied by the teacher, pupils will succeed or fail in the attempt to acquire the new knowledge in different study areas (Reimers & Chung, 2018).

The problem that teachers have in teaching a second language is the involvement of parents in the process of helping their children; if this fails, the teacher is left alone in the attempt to improve each didactic strategy in favor of each group of students under the direction of the teacher. As well as the exposure of complex goals, increasing cognitive complexity in the acquisition of knowledge, where cognitive damage maintains a dimensionality of social parameters that prevent the individual from developing outside of a second language.

What is learning?

The important processes in the acquisition of new knowledge lead the human being to behave based on his previous experiences, managing to adapt to the real environment and its social aspects where he develops. Consequently, Vélaz de Medrano et al. (2021)

have defined learning as the permanent relative change in behavior, whose main result is practice. This idea is also considered by Chiva-Bartoll and Gil-Gómez (2018) who established that learning is the process by which living beings acquire or modify their abilities, skills, knowledge or behavior as a result of direct experience, where study, observation, reasoning and training bring to experience and adaptation of living beings in general.

From this perspective, the process is linked to teaching in global aspects, where the didactic learning proposals aimed at the student are generated to improve the situation of teachers, trying to apply methodologies that lead to clarifying their contextual and comprehensive approaches, and where all these factors that facilitate teachers' work are integrated resulting in a process in which learning is enriched by both teachers and students.

This point is important because it describes the conflicts that the teacher reflects in his professional day to day, leaving unresolved issues in his current reality, which generates problems in addition to the ones present during the teaching process, where the main learning factor does not address the current reality of each teacher (Pastorino & Doyle-Portillo, 2021). The learning process, based on the comprehensive framework where the quality of education is derived from professional development, may have these favorable parameters which are however only guidelines that, in many cases, due to the operating policies of an academic entity allow the sustainable development of their teaching process. In this sense, they are forced to reduce their abilities by conjecturing irrelevant actions on the part of the students.

The questioning of the teaching-learning process leads to the knowledge society being only a support to alleviate the emotional falls that institutional policies present in the intellectual development of teachers in favor of their students. Hence, McDonals (2019) considers that the knowledge society in the learning of various subjects will help students in their lives to understand their importance, but what happens when the learning of a second

language is affected by the personal development of the teacher due to the misunderstanding of the students.

The second language learning process currently maintains an accelerated timing of knowledge which has allowed mistakes to be made while teaching, and the efforts of the teacher's daily work are framed or limited according to educational reforms, whereas Ecuador intends to work with fewer hours on the English language subject in the classroom (Lynch, 2017).

Modern Methodologies, Strategies, Techniques, Materials (current trends)

Within the framework of the strategies and techniques used by the teacher in the field of teaching, the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) has now become a type of tool that does not cover educational needs that the teacher provides to the student. This leads to the action of using and applying strategic processes, considering that the previous education, in addition to modern education, is slowing down the progress of the student's development, harming the psychosocial aspect of the teacher, where the modern student needs improvements for tomorrow's education (Harvey & Goudvis, 2017).

The strategies of a correct teaching methodology, under its techniques and materials in the national territory, could be framed in the current evolutionary modernity, where teachers must know how to apply the ICT resource to educational methodologies, through an explanatory format using links, videos, infographics, etc. As stated by Sprenger (2020) these resources could be useful and easily applied in methodologies like Flipped Classroom, Project-Based Learning (PBL), Cooperative Learning, Gamification, Problem-Based Learning, Design Thinking (DT), Thinking-Based Learning and Competency-Based Learning. In this point two important questions about the study may be considered. The first one refers to whether Ecuadorian teachers have knowledge about the methodologies mentioned in the present study; and, the second question is related to the way in which these educational methodologies could be applied inside the classroom.

In this way, the study is generated under a direct method: the method developed by Maximilian Berlitz and Gouin Françoise in the nineteenth century, represented the first

takeoff and improvement in the method of direct translation between meanings or objects from the mother tongue to the learner and its adaptation to English (Conrad & Openo, 2018).

First, the natural approach used in the imitation of everything possible in the way that the student acquires his way of speaking his mother tongue and the same according to the linguistic rules of the foreign language as not essential for the learning process, therefore, this method places little emphasis on formal rules and grammar, as students acquire knowledge of the language intuitively and through experience.

Then, the Audio-Lingual Method emerged during World War II, as Americans increasingly needed to acquire knowledge of foreign languages to communicate with enemy allies. Based on linguistic and psychological theory, this method theorizes that language acquisition occurs through habit and repetition, with speech as its focus, the method emphasizing oral exercises and imitation of sentences, as well as in pronunciation (as cited in Hollins, 2021).

On the other hand, the cognitive approach has been developed to meet the academic needs of English language learners in the Engage-Study-Activate Method (ESA) or bilingual programs. It incorporates English language development, subject matter, and explicit instruction of learning strategies. With its main focus on subject content, this method teaches and develops academic skills in English if needed.

In contrast but equally important, the mentioned author Hollins (2021) affirms that the total physical response is a method that uses commands and action execution to rapidly integrate new linguistic material through kinesthetic learning. The author states that this technique recognizes that understanding English precedes the student's ability to communicate orally in the language.

Besides all the mentioned before, suggestopedia uses natural and enriching media and sensory inputs, such as colors, images, and especially music, with an emphasis on active participation. George Lozanov, the founder of this technique, believed that the mind could absorb more knowledge in a relaxed state. Lozanov and his followers began

presenting linguistic material to students while playing soft music, believing that students became 'suggestable' and more open to learning (Bakhromova & Ergashev, 2022).

Techniques used in teaching the English language

One very useful and requested technique in the inter-learning process of a foreign language is the dialogue. Dialogues are initially very simple and controlled, but as the student acquires significant knowledge, he is able to establish more fluid and spontaneous dialogues based on his communicative needs. About it, Sato and Loewen (2022) mentioned how relevant it is to establish collaboration among peers as a key in the educational process.

Dramatization is another very popular activity within the oral language. It develops when actions are represented, usually in the form of dialogue. In fact, any situation can be dramatized, for instance an aspect of national folklore, a historical episode, a literary work, among others, allowing students to identify topics of interest.

Additionally, the interpretive technique can also be mentioned since it consists of the commented reading of texts related to the subject of study. It facilitates learning precisely what a text intends to communicate and that lies often hidden between the lines because of the difficulty when interpreting (I Assiri & Siddiqui, 2020). This practice, apparently easy and comfortable to apply, might result difficult to carry out, especially in a foreign language class, since it can lead to monotony and, consequently, to the disinterest of the students, for which it requires liveliness and plenty of knowledge from the teacher. Reviews, interrogations, and didactic material should not be forgotten when applying the exegetical technique.

There are some other techniques that are worthy to be considered in the present study. For instance, dictation consists of the teacher speaking slowly while the students take notes of what he says. In a foreign language class, this activity represents a great challenge, since listening skills need to be applied to understand what the other person is speaking, and writing skills are also applied. They must be complemented with reading that allows interpreting the message of what is being dictated.

Written exercises might also have great value in the mutual learning process of the English language since they help in learning how to write without spelling mistakes and practicing different grammatical structures in each lesson, developing good spelling, and assimilating new vocabulary with little conscious effort.

Songs in English are very useful to learn new words and expressions, to improve the ability to speak and listen, as well as in the motivational part of the student. For this reason, it is recommended to work during the development of the classes on methodological strategies that require this resource.

Modern pedagogy increasingly recognizes the importance of playful techniques, educational games help create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and reinforce grammatical and lexical structures, and games reflect the character and interest of the students. Vaughn (2020) recommends that when choosing a game, it is essential to consider whether they are linguistically relevant or not. In addition, it must have a goal and a purpose, providing all students' participation. Moreover, it should not only be fun but also easy to execute.

Besides this, Bailey (2018) defined teamwork as a group of people working together for a common goal, sharing perceptions, agreeing on tasks and procedures, cooperating with each other, and accepting a compromise, in such a way that they can learn from each other. In this sense, teamwork may represent a very useful technique in the second language learning process since students benefit from their classmates' help.

In this sense, it is important to state that a didactic or teaching resource is any material that has been developed with the intention of facilitating educational roles. This means that the teacher uses it to support, complement, accompany, or evaluate the academic process that he directs or guides. Consequently, the teacher's role is to design different strategies (e.g. specific educational interventions, and activities). Besides, it is crucial to also develop strategies (series of activities) that include motivating, meaningful, collaborative, globalizing, and application activities. Their goal should be to promote the intended learning and contribute to the personal and social development of students.

As a result, teachers must guide students towards autonomous learning and promote the use of the knowledge acquired, which will increase their motivation when discovering its applicability. Additionally, it is equally important to design learning environments that consider the use (contextualized and integrated into the curriculum) of the media and the new computer and telematics tools (ICT), taking advantage of their informative, communicative and motivating value. This will set up learning opportunities for the students. Furthermore, it is necessary to take advantage of the multiple resources and educational contributions that its different codes and languages can provide and to consider the possibility of offering students various activities that can lead to the achievement of the objectives (facilitate the treatment of diversity through various alternatives and itineraries).

Communicative competence

Communicative competence is defined as the type of capacities that people maintain development in an adequate and effective way, where they express their discourse under social aspects. In short, as Byram stated (2020) the same language pattern is what people living in the same society have in common. Yet, in the case of a foreign language, the sets of grammatical rules and the levels of linguistic, lexical, phonetic, and semantic description must be respected, in addition to the importance of the rules of use of the language, which are related to the historical, social, and cultural contexts.

In this way, Canale (2014) defined the existence of four types of communicative competences. The first one, known as Grammatical competence, which groups the lexical, syntactic and semantic skills that the student acquires from a foreign language. The second one is Sociolinguistic competence. This refers to the context and the adequacy of communication in front of interlocutors in different environments. The author also mentions the Discursive competence that is understood as the ability to develop a correct and coherent message to achieve communication. Finally, the Strategic competence has been also stated. It refers to the ability to compensate for errors in communication through verbal

and non-verbal resources. It comes into play when there are deficiencies in any of the above competencies (as cited in Fantini, 2020).

Pragmatically, the development of communication skills should lead the human being to maintain his ability to convince and persuade people through language and textual competence, the same one that allows manifesting itself through the understanding and production of textual developments (Cazden, 2017). In this case, it has been evidenced that both productive and receptive skills are equally important to succeed when acquiring a new language.

In the field of communication skills in a second language teachers must establish and apply common social aspects of daily life in the classroom (Orjuela Roa & Huertas, 2018). Among these are the following: The foreign language must be the vehicle of communication in class so that the student learns to use that second language in real situations. Besides that, vocabulary learning must be promoted as word richness in another language and it is an important step when communicating. Furthermore, linguistic immersion should also be included so that the student interrelates and learns not only the language but also the culture of the country of origin (Bailey, 2018). And finally, the execution of school exchanges with the country whose language is being learned so that students have direct contact with the culture and people of their age with whom to practice the acquired knowledge (Jones, 2021).

Use of ICT in the classroom

Nowadays, the information society (IS) is characterized by the widespread use of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in all human activities and by a strong trend of being applied to the economic and cultural world. With this in mind, Schrum and Sumerfield (2018) affirms that these require all human beings to new personal, social and professional skills to be able to face the continuous changes imposed in all areas of life and the vertiginous scientific advances and the new globalized society. Consequently, as also mentioned by Kangas et al. (2017) the creation of a game-based learning environment

is essential in this technological era and is essential for enhancing the teaching-learning process.

About this topic, another author, Moore (2017) argues that the current life situation, in terms of learning, leads to visualizing a new culture that implies renewed ways of seeing and understanding the world. According to him, this fact offers new interpersonal communication systems of universal scope, which provides means to travel quickly to any place and technical instruments to carry out our work, and that presents not only new values but also new norms of behavior.

Chappuis et al. (2019) complements what was stated before by defining the strong impact these changes will have on the educational field. He considers that in this new culture that is developing in the changing world of the information society, rather than just 'teaching' (explain-examine) knowledge that will probably have limited validity, educators must help all students in their charge to 'learn how to learn' to promote their cognitive and personal development through activities that take into account their individual characteristics (student-centered) and that require them to actively process information (not reception-passive memorization). In addition, teachers need to apply inclusive practice because of the diverse needs of students (Cate, 2018).

Teacher's Role

Webb (2009) considers that teachers play an essential role within the classroom since one of the main principles for their tasks is to promote students' participation by encouraging them to provide justifications for their work and by creating opportunities for generating critical thinking. Wilson (1962) also establishes that the "teaching role demands the cultivation of sustained relationships with particular children, and this necessarily means a continued commitment to a particular situation" (p. 29). In this sense, it can be inferred that a teacher represents an important aspect of the educational process especially when dealing with different learning styles.

Besides this, the teacher's role is also based on understanding students' socio-cultural contexts, and trying to attend to and accept all their individual needs. To determine

this, the mentioned author establishes some questions that must be stated to comprehend their necessities. For instance, it needs to be determined the students' motivation and maturity level, the type of cultural attitudes learners have towards language, and whether there are external constraints that place limits on learner direction.

Finally, it is crucial for teachers to develop some skills that would become essential factors to be effective in their teaching practices. Moreno Rubio (2009) defines that professionalism, understanding, and kindness ought to be combined so a warm classroom environment where students can feel confident and comfortable is provided. These skills allow the generation of conscious and genuine approaches and interactions among teachers and students and of course appreciation of diversity within the classroom.

Teacher's Role in Virtual Learning During Pandemic

The role of teachers in the classroom had to change in many ways, especially the common technique of writing on a blackboard. They had to adapt quickly, the closure of traditional schools being a wound for the entire society, where the health emergency generated a recurring change in the continuing education model, and mandatory confinement brought problems for many homes, which did not have the technological resources and prior knowledge of how to act against the emerging process using the current technology (Oropeza, 2021).

The important detail is that the pandemic hit the educational system so hard that the teachers themselves did not maintain experiences in the type of education that it maintained, establishing demands greater than their own limits, in order to achieve the teaching-learning process that the student deserves, the strategies maintained daily analysis and new structures that allowed the development of education at a regular level. From tools such as television to the use of desktop and laptop computers, as well as the use and commitment to adapt technological cell phones led to social chaos. French (2021) describes that this process, in addition to being stressful, led to the practice of using virtual media, managing to define its results in a society concerned about their families.

To complement this idea, Price (2022) considers that the teacher went from being the subject of teaching to a technology sale model, being an obligation of the environment for not being able to attend to the physical environment, forcing himself to acquire debts and quickly training himself to assist the students and in that way getting their students' attention, all this in an uncontrolled environment such as a virtual classroom.

Moreover, Minasian and Kidder (2020) formulates the importance of contractual participation in the use of platforms in many institutions, but in the public sphere, the entanglement of the use of instant messaging systems and the use of temporary videoconferences, the emotional loss due to mandatory confinement and low morale in front of accustomed parents to the physical work environment, besides the fact of being obliged to becoming educational tutors, working from home at a single point harmed the emotional stability of every teacher in the adaptation process.

Motivation and its roles in language teaching

Motivation is an abstract element that is directly related to the process of learning the English language, as highlighted by numerous studies on the subject. This concept is usually associated with elements such as enthusiasm, dedication, or perseverance to achieve a specific goal (as cited in Horwitz, 2020). To fully understand motivation, it is important to mention that even though it is an intrinsic process, it depends on many internal and external factors that may be present inside or outside the classroom.

Three important aspects of motivation must be distinguished: First, wanting to activate a person. Second, wanting to do it in a certain direction. And third, looking for the persistence of the action. Everything may seem logical, forgetting that they are three different things. If the student shows up in class and does anything but study, he has been activated and motivated but definitely not in the desired direction. This direction is very clear for teachers: the student may have other concepts about the subject than the teacher. Above all, when it comes to adult learners, it is advisable to introduce them to a program and the exact content, as detailed as possible, of the subject to be taught at the beginning (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019).

In this sense, the role played by the teacher is fundamental since one of the main objectives is to promote a positive learning climate in the classroom, as well as the use of motivational strategies to be able to establish meaningful communication with students. However, it is not an easy task to involve and motivate all students in the field of the mother tongue and much more so in the foreign language, since this also depends on other factors that cannot be controlled by teachers. Thus, Wright (2019) mentions the two types of students who could be easily distinguished: those who show a positive attitude towards learning a foreign language, and, who, consequently, have more options to experience effective learning; and, others, with a less predisposed attitude, who experience slower and less productive learning. Hence, it is necessary to apply those methodologies that enhance and encourage the motivation of all students.

Teaching experience (skill acquired)

Referring to teaching experiences, Vialet (2021) distinguishes that they have managed to develop main strategies for the research teacher which are located in the orientation for the use of shared resources. Of course, this is pretty convenient today where not only books and notebooks give results, but also the combination of the use of social networks, the degree of friendship implied by networks and instant messaging systems, the social interactions among students and teachers, and different environments where English is heard such as electronic games and music, that mostly maintain the English language as the main communication access.

In this way, the teaching experience constantly places the application practices under the cooperative structural system with Find Someone Who..., Jigsaw, Quiz-Quiz, Trade, or Round Table are some strategies that the research teacher has been able to apply in the classroom, both physical and adaptive, obtaining positive results from the students (Mitchell, 2018). Finally, the creation of digital posters or the use of applications such as Plickers, Cake, Duolingo, Edpuzzle, or Canva have given teachers the experience to verify real results in the English language learning process.

Links Between Experience and Teaching

It has been claimed that teachers' years of teaching experience correlate with teacher effectiveness. Findings indicate that the relationship between total years of experience and teacher effectiveness, as measured by student achievement, is complex, nuanced, and nonlinear. According to this fact, Irvine (2019) states that the bottom line is that decisions based on assumptions that the relationship between experience and effectiveness is direct and linear are simplistic and lead to less-than-optimal policy.

Valle Arias et al. (2019) considers that teaching experience is “positively linked with levels of self-reported creativity, classroom management, and pedagogical skills and negatively linked with predictability” (p. 137). This affirmation may be interpreted that the more experienced a teacher is, the more creative and motivating his class would be, leading their students to get engaged to the activities proposed in the classroom and maybe providing more spaces for effective and meaningful interaction.

Nevertheless, Ibrohim et al. (2022) reported that after a survey carried on with a group of educators, it was noticeable that the Technological Pedagogical Content was better perceived by ‘new’ teachers. So, even though the experience is an essential factor when teaching, it is also important to have constant training in technological resources so their knowledge keeps updated and they can be aware of new educational tendencies.

Undeniably, the educational results obtained by a teacher are not necessarily linked to their previous experience (Brackett et al., 2010; García-Roset al., 2015; as cited in Olson et al., 2019, p. 138). Of course, outcomes will depend on various factors just as motivation which can be acquired from inside aspects and outside situations that occur in the classroom with students or in any educational environment.

Related Studies

Kini and Podolsky (2018) aims to determine whether teachers, on average, improve their effectiveness as they gain experience in the teaching profession, this article summarizes the findings of each of them in the teaching process. This study was carried out by using data from third to fifth-grade students and their teachers in North Carolina over

an 11-year period and found that teachers whose peer teachers had more experience tended to have better student outcomes. Research indicates that teachers whose colleagues have more experience are more effective than those whose colleagues have less experience. This suggests that more experienced teachers provide important additional benefits to their school community beyond increased learning for the students they teach. The study also found that novice teachers benefit more from having more experienced colleagues. In addition, the study found that the quality of a teacher's peers the year before, and even two years before, affected the performance of their current students.

Berger et al. (2018) intends to manage teacher training according to the strategies proposed in the classroom in order to achieve results in the teaching-learning process. Their comprehension guidelines state that using data from a survey of 154 vocational teachers involved in teacher education, this study examined associations between classroom management practices, teaching experience, and teachers' beliefs (general pedagogical beliefs, beliefs about student motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs). The results highlighted associations between the different types of beliefs and between teachers' beliefs and practices. Teaching experience was positively related to self-efficacy and beliefs in constructivism but had no impact on practices. It is concluded that this study gave the expected results, where its relevant practices established parameters seen and hidden, allowing focus on the hidden to define the expected results achieved at the end of the process.

Irvine (2019) claims that teachers' years of teaching experience correlate with their effectiveness. The alleged experience-effectiveness relationship was used to support the political decisions of the Government of Ontario, Canada, its general objective was to establish correlative actions in the teaching-learning process to the framework of efficiency and teaching quality, being related to the hiring practices of teachers. This study critically examined the sources cited in the policy brief and reviewed other research on teacher effectiveness. Results indicate that the relationship between total years of experience and

teacher effectiveness, as measured by student achievement, is complex, nuanced, and nonlinear. The bottom line is that decisions based on assumptions that the relationship between experience and effectiveness is direct and linear are simplistic and lead to less-than-optimal policy

Shank and Santiago (2022) aims to describe how lack of confidence and feelings of disqualification can affect a teacher's preparation and classroom management and how he can be benefitted from suggestions coming from more experienced teachers. This work is a case study that contains a qualitative description that was based on different interviews applied with eight novice teachers from the California Bay Area. Its intention is to get a collection of data in order to be able to analyze and describe classroom management needs. These research findings concluded in identifying a lack of teaching practical approaches, little preparation for managing behavioral issues, and a need for management training. Teachers engaged in the research reported they felt indecision with some aspects of classroom management practices and they requested their more experienced teaching partners to provide clear suggestions and further support in their practices.

Myroslava et al. (2022) intends to propose how learning a foreign language can get benefitted from the use of social networks. The research establishes the importance social networks have and they can be determined as a resource with high pedagogical potential and value. The results obtained in this work showed a critical and profound analysis as well as a detailed assessment of social networks and the possibility that they are used in the learning-teaching foreign language process, and of course the significance they would have in the classroom considering current students' reality.

Mera Rodríguez (2019) analyzes the importance of systematization in the classroom in order to recollect educational experiences and propose new strategies to link knowledge and meaningful real-life situations. The research is based on an analysis and reflection of significant different experiences and how they can lead to improvement and enrichment of the classroom processes by observing students' and teachers' goals and needs. This is done considering the several contexts and realities that may arise in different

institutions and taking into account their contributions to redefining pedagogical practices and educational processes.

Chapter two

Method

Settings and participants

To carry out this work, a catholic school located in the south of Guayaquil was selected for the observation and the practices. This school has implemented the program 'Bachillerato International' which empowers students to take ownership of their learning process and prepares them to respond to current global challenges with an open mind. Besides, it is a bilingual school in which they have Reading and Science as subjects in elementary school; and, Language, English B, Academic Writing, and History in high school. As a result, the exit profile of the students is B2 according to the Common European Framework of References.

Procedure

Elaborating on the literature review and looking for information related to the teaching process, which needed to be selected carefully in order to state appropriate studies that could be included in this work, was not only demanding but also led to critical thinking and self-reflection. Therefore, the collected information is relevant to the understanding of the topic, which includes different learning activities that were evident in the observation process. Consequently, the classes included some of the techniques and methodologies that have been analyzed in the present research.

As part of the planning, there were some aspects such as learning activities, methodology, and objectives that were considered to analyze the processes applied in the classroom and their effectiveness. For this reason, the classes' observations were coordinated with the different teachers based on their schedules, and with the permission of the authorities of the school.

To start with, I planned to observe ten classes in which five of which were with primary students and the five remaining took place in high school. For this purpose, a meeting was organized to inform the English staff of the process in which they would have been involved. As part of the process, some tools as a checklist and observation sheets

were used to analyze each of the classes. By the end of the classes, some pictures were also taken as evidence of the process.

In the second stage, I designed five plans for primary classes, which were previously revised by the coordinator. The objectives of these classes were set based on the students' level and the material they used. The activities were related to the topic and both formative and summative assessments were applied to measure students' approach to learning.

Both the observation and the main-teaching process took place in the school itself, in which not only teachers but also students collaborated actively in the process. Besides, teaching experiences and strategies were shared as a way of enhancing the teaching-learning process through feedback sessions with the coordinators and teachers of different levels. However, some teaching practices were done through zoom sessions because of the COVID-19 breakout.

Chapter Three

Discussion, Analysis, and Interpretation of the Teaching Experience

Having the opportunity to develop my practicum in a bilingual school gave me a memorable opportunity to learn new techniques from observing EFL teachers in their daily classes with big groups of students. Consequently, my teaching expertise improved a lot as I learnt from my coworkers' experiences engaging with different levels and subjects such as Science, History, and Reading taught in English.

Practicum subjects connected me with the real world of teaching in primary school, since I currently work with teenagers and adults and some of the techniques and strategies are totally different. Therefore, after studying so many subjects related to teaching at UTPL, I could finally realize how different methodologies and techniques are used by EFL teachers to engage students of different ages and keep them working all the time. Additionally, I had the opportunity to witness how teachers work with special needs students, who may be approached completely differently and have special planning. As a result, I learned so many new techniques which I currently apply in my classes not only with teenagers but also with adults. Therefore, it is just a matter of adapting and selecting the proper techniques so they can be applicable in my classes.

As a way of conclusion, practicum levels enhanced my teaching expertise through class observations and main teaching that has given me firsthand experiences on how to work with special needs students, which is something I still struggle with as it is really hard for me to cope with this kind of student.

Observation: Description and reflection of the experience in Basic Education.**Planning****Class 1.**

This class was focused on the simple past with regular verbs. The activities planned were accurately prepared for the level of the students (5th grade) since the teacher designed a warm-up activity to review the story covered in the previous class. It is essential to state that there was an activity in the plan in which the teacher prepared and printed a worksheet for each student so they could work in class. The teacher wrote the objectives of the class on the left side of the board and explained each of them. These objectives were desirable and realistic, even though some students were not familiar with the different ending pronunciations of -ed in regular verbs in the past.

Class 2.

The planning was carefully prepared for this level (6th grade) as the flow of the class was perfectly stated in the objectives presented (to apply adverbs of frequency through an interview). It was very clear to identify the ESA methodology (Engage, Study, and Activate). Even though the last activity planned, in which students interviewed their classmates, was messy, the teacher did his best to monitor and made sure each student filled in the chart with proper information about their classmates. I strongly consider that the outcome of the planned activity could have been different considering that students did not apply the adverbs of frequency in statements. Therefore, after completing the chart, students should have written sentences using adverbs of frequency based on the information of the interview.

Class 3.

Planning a class should not be a straitjacket, instead, sometimes it is required to be flexible as a lot of things may come up along the way. Hence improvisation might be the key and a wise teacher does his/her best to provide not planned activities. With this in mind, the plan for this class was not what I saw, yet the teacher came up with activities that demanded a lot from the students and managed the class very well. Not only the plan was

not adequate but also the objectives of the class were not reached as in the end only one of them was accomplished. Nevertheless, the activities and the material were splendid for the level of the students even when there were many situations by which the class was interrupted.

Class 4.

Planning is essential for preparing the best activities according to the level of the students. This time the plan was perfectly detailed and each activity planned was carried out during the class. The objectives of the class were completely reachable, even though some students were not familiar with some words and did not seem to understand one of them because it was the first time in the school year that they were going to fill in a Venn diagram. The content was wonderfully prepared, and the teacher was so confident with the topic that I could notice that the students were engaged in the class.

Class 5.

The content of this lesson was fascinating for the students since they discovered something they had never seen before. Besides, the way the teacher introduced the class was so authentic since she presented the short film *The Longest Daycare* from *The Simpsons*, which is something students were familiar with. Therefore, the activities stated in the plan were accurately prepared for the kids. On the other hand, the objectives of the class were presented and written on the board, even though some students did not care about them at all. The teacher totally proved confidence when presenting the topic and the ESA methodology was perfectly evident in the planning since at the end of the class students were required to answer some reading comprehension activities based on the text.

Reflection

Planning is essential when teaching. Based on it, it can make a class flow using the methodology we have decided for our students. In addition, it is mandatory to know the group's strengths and weaknesses, especially if they are kids, in order to prepare activities that they would enjoy, and because through careful planning, the learning process would

be more organized (Emiliasari, 2019). As a result, students can really get connected to the class and make the best out of it.

Furthermore, as observed during the classes, having an outline of the activities helps teachers to create a proper assessment at the end of a lesson. Some of the benefits identified from planning are that it allows stating reachable, desirable, and realistic objectives. In addition, planning is not a straitjacket since it can be modified depending on the needs identified during the class, so it gives the freedom of being flexible and it provides many opportunities for improvisation. It also gives teachers enough confidence and preparedness as the resources to be used are selected in advance according to the student's level. On the other hand, based on my experience, I could observe that in some cases the tasks proposed were not related to the objective of the class, or they were too demanding considering the students' performance. In this case, it might be helpful to share previous plans from former classes in order to get more ideas about what activities may be applied to our groups. In addition, having the plans revised by a coordinator or vice-principal is also necessary in order to have accurate feedback and make changes if necessary.

Due to the technological era we are currently living in, it is fundamental to use ICTs in class in order to make it interactive for our students since they were born with the technology at hand. Therefore, the use of gadgets in class should be mandatory and we need to find online activities when preparing our planning. As a consequence, we might encounter engaged students who do not find learning boring.

In conclusion, planning should be mandatory even if it is a class that has been previously taught before because there is always something that can be done better as there are new online techniques that can be applied in class to make it more interactive. As a result, students can use technology wisely and have meaningful learning classes.

Linguistic aspects

Class 1.

Having students be involved in an English environment is essential for them to learn and get familiar with everyday expressions. As a consequence, there was a poster with classroom rules and everyday expressions that students used in a class all the time. They even knew that every single time they wanted to participate in class they needed to raise their hands and share their ideas in the target language. The teacher used English all the time and encouraged students to do so. Additionally, not only was his tone of voice perfect for the class (even the students at the back could listen to him loud and clear) but also the expressions and vocabulary he used were suitable for the students to clearly understand his commands.

Class 2:

Students were surrounded by English posters, so they were in a perfect environment in which they had 3 different subjects (with 3 different teachers) in the target language. Not only did the teacher use the language but also encouraged students to do so. It was remarkable when a student approached the teacher to ask for permission to go to the restroom and she used Spanish, then immediately the teacher pointed out the question on a poster to make the student read aloud in order to let her go.

On the other hand, there were some vocabulary words students were not familiar with, but the teacher used realia to explain them and made sure students use them in a sentence. Consequently, students learned how to use the new vocabulary words to write questions using how often.

Class 3.

The expressions and the vocabulary used in class were sublime because the teacher used a variety of resources to introduce a new reading and present the new vocabulary. Students were not familiar with many words, yet the teacher found pictures on the web in order to explain them. In the end, the students could apply the new vocabulary and use it in a short role-play in which they were asked to also include their own

information. It is important to state that the teacher used Spanish to give some commands when some students were not paying attention.

Class 4.

The tone of voice the teacher had was magnificent since all the students were paying attention to her. She raised her tone of voice when some students at the back of the class were having an argument because of some school supplies, so they immediately stopped and kept on working. She used English the whole time, even to manage the situation in which a pencil was lost and, in the end, it was found on the teacher's desk. Students also used English most of the time and were completely connected to the class since it was a topic they found interesting so they started talking about their dogs in Spanish among them, yet they did their best to share their ideas with the teacher in English.

Class 5.

The use of English during the whole class is evident since the teacher made use of it even for little things such as asking students to share school supplies among them. I strongly believe that watching the teacher use body language in the class helped students understand some commands they were not familiar with, however, the teacher made sure they all totally understood what they were asked.

Furthermore, the teacher encouraged students to use expressions like '*done*' instead of '*finish*' when they had completed an activity. This made students have a more extensive vocabulary. The teacher even corrected a student when asking for permission to go to the restroom, since she said bathroom instead and explained the difference between them.

Reflection

Applying easy commands and using realia to enhance students' learning is vital in EFL primary courses so children could make experimental and cognitive connections between real-life objects and words (Barrera, 2019). Consequently, English teachers should consider some main linguistic aspects when teaching.

First of all, as noticed in the classes observed, having teachers use L2 not only inside but also outside the classroom allows creating an environment in which learners feel motivated to use the target language. Furthermore, I could notice that the teachers tend to encourage students to learn everyday expressions that can be applied on a daily basis. In addition, it is important for primary teachers to use appropriate vocabulary and expressions as we are role models for our students, and they learn every little thing we do or say.

As a way of conclusion, teachers should use very basic commands, vocabulary, and expressions with young learners and increase their difficulty in the different grades. Therefore, repetition makes students get familiar with the new vocabulary so they can apply it in daily situations.

Learning management

Class 1.

Dealing with unexpected situations is part of a teacher's daily basis. Therefore, a teacher should be ready to face any issue in class. Fortunately, there were no issues with this class since all the students worked peacefully. The teacher made sure all of them did their best by walking around the classroom and monitoring them all the time. He even made sure a slow student worked fast as he asked him to sit next to another student who pushed him to copy the class and present the worksheet. Nevertheless, I could not see proper feedback at the end of the class, for instance some students wrote *danceed* instead of *danced* as they understood that it is needed to put ed to all the regular verbs in the past tense.

Class 2.

Although the teacher did his best to manage the class in a proper way, there was a student who took a nap during the class. It was palpable that this student did not apply the activity of the interview with questions with how often to her classmate since the teacher did not realize that she was not working. Besides, she did not copy the class and I found out that she has very bad grades not only in Reading but also in Science (which are two of the English subjects).

On the other hand, the rest of the students worked well. It was clear that the interview activity let students walk freely around the class in order to apply it to their peers. It is also important to state that there were two straight-A students who applied for the interview but did not take notes. Surprisingly, at the end of the class, they could tell the teacher information about how often their peers played soccer, watched TV series, and went to the mall. It was evident that they were auditory learners, and the teacher was aware of this situation.

Class 3.

Based on what I saw, there were many situations that the teacher had to deal with during the class. First, there was a sick student who needed to be taken to the medical department. Then, the tutor interrupted the class a couple of times because of some announcements. As a result, the students were not completely engaged in the class since they were talking about a birthday party they would be having at the end of the class. After all, the teacher managed the situation very well and did her best to make students complete the vocabulary worksheet. However, there was no appropriate feedback as the teacher just collected the worksheets to check them later, so I noticed some students did not write a word in the correct form.

Class 4.

An English environment was totally evident in the class. The teacher perfectly managed every single situation in the class and even helped some students find a pencil that got lost. Besides, in the different moments of the class, she made sure to include activities for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. On the other hand, she made sure all the students participated (even the low-performing ones). Finally, with the Venn diagram, she evaluated students' understanding of the reading when they were asked to fill it in while working in pairs. She monitored them by walking around the classroom and made sure they were all working properly as it was the first time they used this kind of graphic organizer.

Class 5.

It was evident that the teacher provided accurate feedback throughout the whole class since she corrected them when necessary. She asked them to repeat what they have said incorrectly so they would not make the same mistake again. She kept the students connected to the class since they found it very interesting. On the other hand, she asked a student to move to the front of the class so she could keep an eye on her. I was told that this student had a dyslexia problem, that is why she kept her close to her. Finally, not all the students participated since some of them were very shy and could not find the words to express their ideas in English. So, the teacher asked them to state them using Spanish and translate them to have them repeated after her.

Reflection

Exposing learners to an English environment is fundamental for engaging them. In addition, a wise teacher should know how to deal with unexpected situations and make everyone participate in the class. In the first place, it is fundamental to know students' learning styles. Even though this might be hard to achieve, it is important to have good communication with not only the teachers from different subjects but also with the English staff to find the best strategies to apply in the class.

On top of that, as witnessed during the lessons, dealing with unexpected situations is part of a teacher's job and it is necessary to keep in mind students' needs and safety. Furthermore, teachers should be good listeners and empathetic before making a final decision when facing problems and disagreements within the classroom. In addition, it is important to apply summative and formative assessments all the time to evaluate learning processes. Finally, another aspect I consider important is to provide accurate feedback to have a meaningful approach to new knowledge.

In conclusion, constructive feedback is essential for students regarding their advances in the learning process (Torres, 2019). Additionally, it is important to respond to students' needs and create a good environment in which they can feel motivated to learn.

Methodology

Class 1.

The techniques used in class were planned based on the students' level. To start with, the teacher reviewed the story by using the vocabulary of the unit and displayed some pictures to have students brainstorm ideas to predict what would happen next in the story. He used a PPP with some pictures and a Venn diagram which they had been completing in the previous class. Then, he presented the grammar topic that was simple past with regular verbs through a video and some slides in which students could practice orally. After that, he handed out a worksheet and students had the spelling rules of regular verbs displayed so they solved the activity by checking the rules.

Class 2.

The timing and the planned activities were perfect for the level of the class. The class flowed smoothly, and the teacher carefully made sure all the instructions were clear by providing examples for the interview activity. Additionally, the teacher applied an oral evaluation using a Bamboozle game to make students fill in the blanks with some statements using the adverbs of frequency, so they were entirely engaged with the activity while working in groups and the winners would have an extra point in-class participation. As a result, students were engaged in the class as they had the game in groups and the winners won an extra point in-class participation.

Class 3.

The teacher came up with activities that were not planned, yet the flow of the class was good, and the activities were perfectly accurate for the level of the students. She used a combination of online resources and realia to explain the new vocabulary and I strongly consider the activities meaningful. At the end of the class, the role play was essential for students to apply the new vocabulary words and the teacher made sure students pronounced the words perfectly. On the other hand, the timing was not the best since the teacher let students solve the vocabulary worksheet in more than 20 minutes, even though

it was totally understandable as there were many situations that happened during the class. However, in the end, she managed the class very well.

Class 4.

The students had a blast when the teacher presented a puppet in order to read the dialogue with a different tone of voice. She even asked some of them to reread the dialogue while changing their voice and having the puppet in their hands. As a consequence, all of the students wanted to participate, and I could say that they all deeply understood the reading and the outcome of the story. Even though the teacher only used a recorder to have students listen to and read the story, there was no need for any other gadget since the puppet caught all their attention. Furthermore, the teacher asked students to fill in the graphic organizer with different colors to classify the differences and similarities between the characters.

Class 5.

The strategies used by the teacher were completely accurate and prepared for the level of the students. Even though there were some scientific terms in the reading, the teacher managed the class well, and used the internet to show some pictures about it. The video which was presented at the beginning of the class was the best way to catch the students' attention. Therefore, they were totally motivated to learn about the life cycle of a butterfly. Moreover, they were very excited when at the end of the class they had to work in groups and, using clay, state what they have learned in class. This project took 30 minutes and not all the students could present it to the whole class, yet they totally understood it and had fun while learning.

Reflection

Teaching nowadays has completely changed because of technology, which some teachers still struggle with. As a result, there is no way to slow down the progress of the students' development which modern learners need improvement for tomorrow's education (Harvey & Goudvis, 2017).

A weakness identified during the lesson is that the online material presented had not been uploaded to a platform so students would have access to it all the time, especially when doing homework, as they might need to check again some grammar structures. Therefore, all the staff must be trained to use technological devices in education to train not only students but also parents on the use of platforms such as Canvas, Moodle, or Google classroom.

As a result, the use of technology in the classroom has become a fundamental aid tool in the teaching and learning process (Halim & Hashim, 2019). Consequently, it is essential for school boards to invest money in technology, as old fashion education trends may vanish and nowadays learners are being born in the era of technology.

To sum up, having updated teachers with current education trends is necessary to enhance students' learning process, as in the future they will even have jobs in which technology is used for almost everything. Subsequently, there is still a long way ahead because technology is here to stay for good.

Observation: Description and reflection of the experience in Bachillerato**Planning:****Class 1.**

'Natural disasters' is a topic that we are all familiar with, so the objective of this class was to provide 4 tips on how to be safe during different natural disasters, for this reason, they were completely achievable. The ESA method was evident in this class, since the first activity was to present the big question: *Would you know what to do if a hurricane or other natural disaster threatens your town?* Then, a vocabulary worksheet for students to write the definition, synonym, an example and draw a picture was planned. In the end, students were separated in groups so they could provide 4 tips on how to be safe in a tornado, tsunami, and earthquake.

Class 2.

The activities planned in this class were highly focused on listening and reading. Since the topic was about natural disasters, the first activity planned was to solve a listening activity about items in emergency kits. Then, a reading was planned in order to solve some reading comprehension activities and summarize the text in a graphic organizer. The learning activities proposed for this class were effectively connected to the objectives since by the end of the lesson, students were supposed to be able to state what items are necessary to have in an emergency kit backpack and to scan a text to fill in a graphic organizer.

Class 3.

Lying can be easy for some people. Therefore, the objective stated in the plan of this class was to state what facial expressions people may have when lying, which is quite challenging to notice. First, students brainstormed ideas about the question: Can you always tell how someone is feeling from their facial expressions? By having this big question, students might predict what the topic of the class would be about. Then, a listening activity was applied and, in the end, the teacher had planned a reading activity in

which students read the article 'The truth about lying' and solved some reading comprehension activities.

Class 4.

Teaching advanced grammar topics may be challenging for both the teacher and the students. Therefore, the teacher planned to explain the grammar topic with a variety of resources. The objective of this class was to have students apply causatives by writing a role play in pairs of six lines each student about loyalty. For this reason, a video was included so students could have a better understanding of the grammar topic. Furthermore, an ice-breaker activity was planned at the beginning of the class in which students had to tell two truths and one lie so their classmates could identify which statement was not true. As a result, the previous class was efficiently connected to this new class.

Class 5.

Exposing students to topics they are not familiar with can make them not participate in class actively. Therefore, the objectives of this class were not achievable not only because of the lack of vocabulary but also because students had no idea of what the topic was about. It was stated as the main objective of the class to have students write a cause-effect essay about identity theft, but that did not happen. To start with, the teacher planned to play the trailer of the movie '*Catch me if you can*'. Then, the next activity was to brainstorm ideas about fraud, and in the end, students were supposed to write their essays about fraud. For this reason, the objective of this class was maybe the one for the whole unit, therefore it was not achievable for one single class.

Reflection

Preparing activities in advance enhances the teaching-learning process. In addition, knowing the strengths and weaknesses of our group is also important when selecting the level of difficulty of the activities that would be included in the plan.

In this sense, during the class, it became evident the need of exposing learners to a variety of activities such as reading, listening, vocabulary and grammar, and in the end, make them apply everything they have learned in the unit to work on challenging activities

such as creating role plays, writing essays, or preparing presentations. Therefore, as it was showed in the classes observed, producing the language is the last activity at the end of a lesson or unit, in which students may have speaking sessions, which integrates listening and comprehending concurrently and it relies on communicative competence (Ali Mahmood, 2015).

Linguistic aspects:

Class 1.

Teaching new vocabulary words through pictures, realia, videos, and real-life experiences is the best way to avoid the use of mother tongue in the class. For this reason, it was evident that the teacher made use of all of these techniques to explain each of the new words of the vocabulary in which there were some new words students were not familiar with, yet the teacher never used Spanish to do so. His vocabulary and grammar structures were easy to understand, therefore all the students clearly understood the whole class.

Class 2.

Exposing students to different accents enhances their listening skill. As a consequence, since the teacher speaks American English, they also have listening activities in British English. The teacher used English all the time and explained some different words such as apartment and flat, which mean the same thing. He made sure all the students understood the class as he asked some of them to use the new words in sentences related to natural disasters and emergency kits. The teacher managed to avoid the use of the mother tongue to explain some vocabulary students were not familiar with.

Class 3.

The use of different methods to present new vocabulary words enhances students' participation. Consequently, the teacher made the use of mimes and gestures to explain new vocabulary words. As a result, the use of English was evident throughout all the class. The teacher also made the use of the proverb '*The early verb catches the worm*' to explain the meaning of the word yawn, yet students were not familiar with it but he managed to

exemplify it and, in the end, students were able to understand and even apply them in real life situations. Furthermore, none of the students used Spanish when learning the new vocabulary words, as they made the use of mimes and gestures instead.

Class 4.

Getting students to understand advanced grammar which is not similar to our language is complicated and teachers need to find the best way to do it. In this class it was evident that students found it very hard to understand the use of causatives and the teacher made the use of Spanish to make them understand in which situations they are used. Nevertheless, once students figured out the use of the new grammar topic, they were able to apply it, and the mother tongue was no longer used in the class.

Class 5.

Even though the grammar structures and the expressions used by the teacher were easy to understand, students found it very hard to get familiar with the new vocabulary as there were many words they had never seen before. For this reason, this class was very challenging to the students and they were kind of lost. The teacher spoke in English all the time, and some students translated some new words into Spanish so they could all understand them. After all, it was not the teacher who spoke in Spanish when explaining the class, and having students translate the words that were difficult to understand was acceptable and used as a last resort.

Reflection

Getting students involved in new advanced grammar structures and vocabulary is challenging not only for them but also for teachers since it is crucial to find the best strategies to help students truly understand a new topic. Therefore, the use of varied techniques and resources during the different lessons was vital for creating a good learning environment. Furthermore, as Wharton (2007) stated, since most teachers are non-native, the use of the mother tongue should be limited as only used as a last resource as students need to be exposed to the target language the whole time.

As a conclusion, it was evident that creating a good learning environment in which students feel encouraged promoted more active participation during class. Therefore, when having students who struggled with the subject, it is essential to keep in mind that the teacher's duty is to find the best strategies to help them.

Learning management

Class 1.

It was noticeable that there was a good English environment in which students were motivated to learn the target language as almost most of them participated actively in the class. The teacher responded positively to students' doubts and managed unexpected situations perfectly, as some students were late to class and there was another group of students who were required to leave the class because of a dancing rehearsal. The teacher knew his students' strengths and weaknesses and knew how to organize the desks so they could work collaboratively. In addition, he managed to have all the students participate in class, even the ones who arrived late to the class.

Class 2.

Keeping all the students' attention during the whole class is challenging. However, the teacher managed to do so and students responded effectively. Students were constantly asking questions as they found the topic of the class really interesting. In addition, the teacher provided accurate feedback when necessary and the students learned from other classmates' mistakes. The teacher asked students to restate what they had to do in each activity presented in class so they were all working properly. Additionally, the teacher totally managed the flow of the class since it was interrupted a couple of times when the vice principal and then the inspector got in the class to remind students of some information about upcoming events.

Class 3.

All the students found the class interesting and entertaining. They all had fun when making the use of mimics and gestures to learn the new vocabulary. Besides, the teacher made sure all the students understood some expressions from the text providing realistic

situations they are familiar with within our society. On the contrary, there was no immediate assessment of the vocabulary as the teacher sent students homework in which they had to write a sentence for each new word, so it was clear that not all the students had meaningful learning.

Class 4.

Dealing with advanced grammar topics made students have a negative reaction at the beginning of the class. As a result, the teacher had to provide some examples in Spanish so students could understand the use of causatives. Besides, not all the students participated in the class since some of them were working on another subject and the teacher did not care about it. Even though there were no unexpected situations and they had fun with the starting activity, the students were kind of irritated because the grammar topic was very difficult and they were about to have the summative, so they complained a lot.

Class 5.

In this class, it was clear that the students had no idea of what the topic was about. Besides, the vocabulary was very demanding and students did not feel ready to write an essay about fraud. First, none of them had watched the movie *Catch me if you can*. Then, even though students provided some possible solutions to avoid being victims of fraud, they were still not completely familiar with the topic, yet the teacher asked them to write an essay about it. Consequently, the students worked very little and wrote essays with inaccurate information.

Reflection

It is evident that dealing with unexpected situations is part of a teacher's job when working in schools, yet it is necessary to make the best of our time in class and keep students working as much as possible. In addition, teachers need to assess students constantly to evaluate the targeted learning objectives to boost both students' achievement and motivation (Ratminingsih et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in order to reinforce the recently acquired knowledge, teachers conducted feedback sessions to enhance students' skills and correct common errors. All this considering that both self and peer feedback may represent very useful tools when having reflective and critical-thinker teenagers from different levels within the same class.

Methodology

Class 1.

Due to the lack of technological resources in the school, the teacher handed out vocabulary worksheets in order to present the new topic. First, a big question was presented. However, there was no use of at least some visual aids or a video to do so. However, the students are already used to working this way and did not complain about it. On the contrary, they participated enthusiastically and did their best to share what they went through in the 2016 earthquake. In the end, they worked in pairs and provided 4 tips to be safe in different natural disasters.

Class 2.

In this class, it was palpable that the technology was well used. First, an online listening activity was presented and students worked properly. Second, the teacher projected the text so they could all read the story together. In addition, there were some words that students looked up in the Cambridge dictionary. Finally, the teacher found on the web an example of the graphic organizer they were about to complete. In brief, not only were the activities and strategies applied by the teacher trendy, but also the timing was also perfect.

Class 3.

The use of ICTs was barely evident in this class. As a result, the computer in the classroom was only used for playing the track of the text and looking up some words in the dictionary. However, the flow of the class was fine and the students had a blast when making the use of mimics and gestures. The content was challenging for the students, but it is part of the program to expose students to global topics in which they have to be risk-

takers. Additionally, the activities enhance students to have meaningful learning. On the contrary, the teacher assigned too much time for the reading comprehension activities.

Class 4.

The exercises and the activities planned for this class were totally considered for the group. The first activity was meaningful for learners to get connected to the topic. However, since the grammar topic was very demanding, the students found it hard to understand the topic. For this reason, the teacher played a video from YouTube with the same explanation of the use of causatives and then found an online exercise about it on the web. On the other hand, the teacher assigned just 3 minutes for students to solve the grammar exercise, but it was not enough since some students could not finish the activity and the teacher did not monitor them.

Class 5.

Writing an essay is an activity that students find it hard to do as many of them do not have the necessary vocabulary and grammar structures to do it. In addition, the learners were not familiar with the topic even when the teacher played the trailer of the movie *Catch me if you can* and explained the story of Frank Abagnale. The use of technological resources was only used to play the video. Moreover, the activities that were planned were not meaningful and the students were not familiar with it. Even though students had plenty of time to write a cause-effect essay, most of the students did not work well for the reasons previously mentioned.

Reflection

Observing teachers' work at different levels gave me a different insight into the real role of teachers. It is crucial for all teachers to be aware that they are role models for their students, hence they are expected to be morally upright and discipline students to be respectful and responsible in completing their assignments (Lumpkin, 2008).

I learned that exposing students to teachers who only speak the target language inside and outside the class and encouraging them to do so is the best way to create an

English environment. Therefore, when presenting new vocabulary, it is necessary for teachers to avoid the use of the mother tongue to make students understand it.

On the other hand, planning may be challenging since it is essential for teachers to find the best activities for students. Consequently, teachers must be aware not only of their students' level but also of the topics they are familiar with.

To conclude, teachers should always have a positive attitude and keep in mind that the teaching-learning process is endless. In the end, as Will Durant stated: Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance.

Closure reflection

Observing different teachers' work in both primary and high school classes provided a wide perception of the teaching-learning process into which teachers are immersed. Consequently, being part of different teaching methods and strategies enhances inexperienced teachers' methodology and prepares them for real-life classes in which students are more advanced in technology every single day.

Likewise, getting to experience first-hand how the different strategies studied during the university years are applied in real-life classes is necessary to know in advance what to expect in the upcoming years when having the opportunity to be in charge of a class. Besides, it is evident that students need constant monitoring and motivation to learn the targeted language.

To sum up, observation sessions are a key factor for teachers to acquire new teaching strategies. Yet the teacher's role is to not only prepare a class and have students work on assignments, but also to positively influence students and always keep in mind that teachers are also role models, mentors, and even external parents.

Main teaching: Description and reflection of the experience in Basic Education

Planning

Class 1.

Teaching young learners can be quite a challenge. For this reason, it is necessary to plan activities which students can really enjoy. The objective of this class is for students to create a dialogue in pairs about organizing a birthday party. As a way to engage students, a video was the first activity so students can come up with vocabulary related to parties. For this reason, the content of this lesson was accurate for young learners and the rest of the activities were carefully prepared for students to have fun while learning online. In addition, the teacher completely demonstrated a total understanding of the topic.

Class 2.

Planning fun activities for young learners is essential to keep their attention. Consequently, the main objective of this class was to write 4 information questions individually with going about places at school. The content for this lesson is a topic that students are completely familiar with since they all know all the places in their school. All the activities planned for this lesson were accurate for students to have meaningful learning. In addition, since it was an online class, most of the students had plenty of activities to work on individually.

Class 3.

The main objective of this class was to write five sentences individually describing food they like by applying the new vocabulary, which was about adjectives to describe snacks and other foods. The topic of the class was perfectly presented since students were demonstrated pictures of typical Ecuadorian food. This topic was absolutely uncomplicated for students to understand since as a way of introduction, they were asked to state what their favorite dish was and what ingredients were in it.

Class 4.

Planning activities that young learners are confident with is vitally important for them to be engaged throughout the class. For this reason, the objective of this class was to

create a dialogue in pairs about sports using will and the vocabulary of the unit. Not only was the content of the lesson entirely based on the students' level, but also the objective was fully achievable and realistic. The activities were unconditionally organized as in the end, the assessment activity was the creation of the dialogue, after covering the vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening activities.

Class 5.

The topic of this lesson was *Chores*. The objective for this class was to write a short paragraph individually about how they help at home. For this reason, the activities planned for this class were carefully prepared and assessment was perceivable throughout the lesson. Furthermore, the content was entirely easy for students as chores are part of their daily routine. In addition, each of the activities was organized based on the ESA method in which the last activity was the writing part as a way of assessment. In the end, the 4 skills were skillfully planned for this class.

Reflection

Planning is a vital part of the teaching process, even for experienced teachers, since it is the key to preparing a class based on the students' needs and with updated material that technological learners may be keen on. For this reason, I consider it is necessary to prepare ahead different classroom activities and assignments to reach the objectives of the class (Al-Seghayer, 2017).

In addition, I noticed that when working with subjects and topics already taught on previous terms, it could be useful to reuse resources and activities, as it might become a great opportunity to analyze whether the material presented was accurate, hence in the best scenario, it could be applied again.

To sum up, teachers need to have the ability to design effective lesson plans to ensure students' learning, keeping in mind the technological era we are currently facing and the kind of learners we have now.

Linguistic aspects

Class 1.

Getting students used to listening to English all the time is crucial for creating a good bilingual learning environment. For this reason, not only English was used throughout the class, but also for interacting with other teachers that interrupted it, having students feel motivated to use the target language not only with the English teachers but also with all the staff. The commands and the grammar and vocabulary used were easy for students to understand and feel comfortable with. Besides, the use of gestures was extremely important for the young learners to feel like having fun while learning.

Class 2.

Having online teaching sessions with young learners may be quite a challenge as we cannot monitor them. Nevertheless, creating a good environment and using English all the time enhances students' motivation to do so when interacting not only with the teacher but also with their peers. Consequently, there were quite a few instructions students were not familiar with, so they were asked to translate them into their mother tongue to have a full understanding of the assignment they were required to do at the end of the class as a way of assessment.

Class 3.

Exposing students to advanced vocabulary little by little is indispensable in the teaching-learning process, as young learners need to expand their vocabulary in order to have a better understanding of intermediate content that they may encounter in international examinations such as the KET exam. As a consequence, students were taught some slang words to sound more native when describing food. As a result, some students seemed to not fully understand some terms, but they were given more real-life examples in daily life situations to apply them correctly. In the end, students were able to apply the new vocabulary when working on their writing.

Class 4.

Teaching content that students find uncomplicated to understand makes the class flow with no major problems. With this in mind, as the topic of this class was to talk about sports, some students were engaged and participated actively as they all play different sports. The grammar structures and the vocabulary were a walk in the park for students to understand. The mother tongue was only used to remind some students to upload some activities on the platform as the end of the term was about to come, and some students usually forget to do so.

Class 5.

Covering topics with activities students do on a daily basis enhances the learning process as they just find the relation with their experiences. Therefore, the use of the target language was evident not only by the teacher but also by the students who stated the chores they have to do to help at home. Consequently, the use of the mother tongue was not necessary, even when some students were required to repeat the instructions of the assignments, they were required to do in the different activities planned for this class.

Reflection

English teaching to children is quite a challenge since young learners find it hard to concentrate. Consequently, the use of different strategies is crucial when dealing with them, therefore the Total Physical Response (TPR) is effective when integrating physical activity and language learning, which contributes not only to the linguistic area but also to the physical development and movement (Nodirovna & Temirovna, 2022).

On the other hand, I found important to create a friendly English environment to enhance students' learning, as they felt exposed to the target language both inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, motivation plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process as it directly influences learners, keeping in mind that teachers are seen as role models.

To sum up, the Total Physical Response, a friendly English environment, and motivation are the key to encouraging and enhancing students' learning process of the target language.

Learning management

Class 1.

The environment the students were in was totally appropriate for the learning process, since there were many posters around the class that encouraged students to speak the target language. The learning styles of the students were also considered as there were many activities with different skills. Besides, students' doubts were responded to effectively and constant feedback was given when necessary. On the contrary, students' participation needed to be improved as there were some students who did not participate at all in the class.

Class 2.

Dealing with unexpected situations within a class is completely normal, especially when having young learners. As a result, they were handled with care and the flow of the class was not entirely interrupted by it. In this class, there were not many activities for kinesthetic learners and some of them found the class a little boring, keeping in mind that it is hard to monitor students in online sessions. Even though students' participation was enhanced, only some students could complete the final assignment. Consequently, there was no proper feedback given. On the other hand, the learning environment was fine.

Class 3.

Making fast and wise decisions when dealing with unexpected situations in class proves teachers' expertise. For this reason, there were a couple of issues that were handled with total care. On the other hand, precise feedback was given when monitoring shy students' work. Furthermore, technology was properly used to look up words in an online dictionary to solve students' lack of vocabulary. Additionally, students' learning styles were taken care of as they were given a variety of assignments based on their different skills.

Class 4.

It was evident in this class that many situations were not handled with care. First, there was a group of students who were late. Second, there was another group that was doing homework for another subject. As a result, not all the students were engaged in this class, hence it was not the best. Feedback was not given because there was no time to check students' work and only the high-achiever students participated actively in this class. To sum up, many issues did not let the class flow properly.

Class 5.

A good learning environment was evident in this class and class management was great when dealing with some students who had a misunderstanding about some markers. The unexpected situation was solved in the target language to motivate students to do so. As a result, English was used throughout the class. Moreover, proper feedback was provided when checking students' writing activities. Furthermore, students' participation was enhanced and there were a lot of planned activities that demanded students' talking time. For this reason, an ongoing assessment was noticeable.

Reflection

Establishing an appropriate learning environment where students may feel confident when dealing with different situations is essential to motivate and engage them in the learning processes. In this sense, they must be built considering not only students' different learning styles but also their individual needs and approaches to knowledge.

Besides this, I found myself trying to use and apply different techniques to assess students' classroom performance so that looking to avoid the misconception of assessment as a punishment. In fact, assessment is not only about applying a test and scoring it; on the contrary, it is also intended to give both teachers and students a precise view of the achievement of the class objectives (Torres, 2019).

In this sense, constructive feedback is extremely necessary for students to reflect on how they are doing and improve when necessary. Even though it was not always evident during the observed classes, learners must be given an effective assessment and

feedback, so they are able to identify not only their strengths when learning but also their weak aspects during the knowledge acquisition process.

Methodology

Class 1.

Applying what students have learnt in lessons creating something on their own makes learning meaningful. For this reason, the dialogue about a birthday party using the new vocabulary and the grammar topic studied in class was perfect. Furthermore, using realia and connecting the topic to previous knowledge is a great strategy to engage students in the learning process and to make them participate actively. In addition, technology was well used when presenting a video and an interactive vocabulary game so that students could work in pairs and compete against other groups, assessing vocabulary and enhancing their participation.

Class 2.

Even though timing for each activity was properly set, students could not be totally monitored as it was an online session. The planned activities were totally accurate for the level of the students and the use of online worksheets was fun for them. Furthermore, students competed against each other in an online game about the grammar topic of the lesson. For this reason, they reviewed the grammar notes in order to select the correct answer. To sum up, all the activities were efficiently selected for online sessions, yet there was no way to make sure all the students were working properly.

Class 3.

For this class, each of the assignments was given proper time for students to work on their own under the teacher's supervision. As a result, even though there was an activity that was not very clear for students to understand since they found quantifiers for countable and uncountable nouns very hard to understand. For this reason, some slides and a video were used to explain the grammar topic. Consequently, in order to have meaningful learning, the assessment activity was to write a short paragraph about their favorite dish

and its ingredients. In the end, the use of technological resources and timing was good for this class.

Class 4.

The strategies used in this class were not completely accurate since many students were doing other activities and not paying full attention to the teacher. As a result, the timing for some activities was more than enough as the class was interrupted a couple of times and there were some situations that had to be taken care of. On the contrary, the material, the use of technology, and the activities planned for this class were totally carefully prepared for the level of the students. In the end, the assessment activity was proper to provide meaningful learning, yet only some students received instant feedback.

Class 5.

Not only technology was perfectly used throughout this class, but also the strategies and the activities were entirely accurate for the level of the students. Consequently, the class was based on modern methodologies, encouraging cooperative learning. Furthermore, the use of online games made students compete against each other, enhancing learners' active participation and using technology as a way of assessment. As a result, both meaningful learning and correct timing were noticeable in this class.

Reflection

Designing plans with meaningful learning activities should be the priority for all teachers. Furthermore, the integration of Web 2.0 into classrooms has positively changed teaching for good since most learners are digital natives (Gupta, 2019).

Consequently, even though there are still some drawbacks to the use of smartphones in class since some students do not use them wisely for academic purposes, it cannot be denied that it is a powerful tool that enhances the teaching-learning process since it provides access to helpful educational resources and technological tools so teachers should encourage learners to use it properly.

Main Teaching: Description and reflection of the experience in bachillerato

Objectives

Class 1.

The topic of the class was environmental issues. The objectives were to list environmental issues in our community and to provide a possible solution for each of them. These were totally achievable since it was a very demanding class, and the students had a very good level. The material, which is from an international program, is strictly connected to the objectives. The methodological strategies were also stated in the objectives, and the content was strictly challenging for the students. The activities presented for this class were not only accurate but also meaningful since they challenged students to come up with solutions to current environmental issues through a group work activity.

Class 2.

Of all the skills that are planned, I strongly consider speaking the most important. Since the objectives of a class should be measurable, the objective was to develop an argument to describe a picture related to the environmental issues in our society. The objectives were rigorously connected to the content and the level of the students. However, I consider the activities quite challenging for the students. On the other hand, students should be risk-takers and reflective, which are two of the attributes of IB students. The methodological strategies proposed for this class were highly effective in achieving its goal.

Class 3.

Having the 4 skills balanced in a class is essential when planning a class. Therefore, there were four different objectives planned for this class. All of them were strongly connected to the main content of the lesson, which was geographic mobility. Even though it was challenging to achieve them all, the teacher did his best and the students really collaborated in the class participating actively. At the end of the class, students were able to have a group conversation about reasons why people move, read a text and solve a reading comprehension exercise, work on a listening activity, and write 4 negative questions individually about reasons for geographic mobility. Consequently, all the

methodological strategies were greatly prepared for this class, and all the goals were accurately achieved.

Class 4.

Content-based books integrate the different skills needed by EFL learners. For this reason, the content and the methodology strategies covered in this class were deeply measurable and combined the 4 skills. Since most of the students have a high level because they are part of an IB program and it is a bilingual school, usually the objectives are easily achievable, keeping in mind that they are also always realistic. By the end of the lesson, students were able to apply those clauses by writing a short paragraph about how different cultures have influenced our society. The activities planned for the class were greatly chosen as students were required to write about their international influences, as it is also an attribute of the IB profile to be open-minded.

Class 5.

Applying all the content learned by writing an essay is a very good way to end a unit. Consequently, the objective for this class was to apply the vocabulary and grammar from the unit, and cohesive devices by writing a 300-word opinion essay about tourism in Antarctica. The methodological strategies applied in the activities were meaningful since a review of cohesive devices was planned as the first activity of the class so students review and use them effectively in their writings. Therefore, the content was strongly connected to the methodological strategies used in the class and they were highly measured and achievable.

Reflection

During the class, I noticed that having clear and measurable objectives is indispensable for letting students know what the lesson will be about and what they are expected to achieve at the end of it. Therefore, it is necessary to present them at the beginning of each class.

Even though there are different approaches, based on my own experience I strongly consider most plans to follow a standard lesson format, which includes a warm-up activity,

presentation of the topic, controlled practice, free practice, and feedback (Nodirovan & Temirovna, 2022).

Furthermore, it is fundamental to have skills connected to the evaluation criteria and the skills and performance descriptor since they should all be related in order to state specific objectives. In addition, it is also important to correlate all the skills through different activities based on a specific topic.

As a way of conclusion, stating specific objectives is essential for the teaching-learning process in order to have clear ideas about what to achieve so students can see what they are expected to do at the end of a class.

Methodology - Learning activities

Class 1.

A wide variety of strategies were used in this class about environmental issues to achieve the objectives that were planned. Consequently, there was an interactive video, a prediction about the lesson by using a picture, speaking group work, and a reading comprehension activity. The content was strictly connected to prior knowledge because the students were all familiar with the environmental challenges we currently face in our society. Therefore, even though some of the activities were quite demanding, the teacher presented a video about environmental problems and some online vocabulary flashcards. As a result, when having the group work the students could apply the ideas from the video and the vocabulary to list the 5 biggest local environmental problems and provide a possible solution. It was a 24-student class, so they were divided in 6 groups, assigning a task for each member of the group so they can all participate.

The objectives and the activities were highly connected. Besides, the teacher planned the class based on current language teaching trends as he used an interactive video with some comprehension questions and Quizlet, which is used for presenting vocabulary, to introduce new words about environmental problems. As a result, students had the chance to play an online game about vocabulary and they used their cell phones for it. I could notice that the students and the teacher used the technology wisely for

academic purposes. In addition, even though the information presented in the book was global, the teacher managed to connect it to the environmental issues we currently face in our community, and students could reflect on our situation and provide a possible solution.

Class 2.

Through the observation of a visual stimulus, students were required to prepare a 2-minute presentation. The strategies were effective to provide ideas and vocabulary students could use in their speech. Therefore, the teacher first reviewed some vocabulary and causes and possible solutions to local environmental challenges. Students were given 25 minutes to prepare their presentation so they could talk about it in front of the class. From my point of view, most of the students had a B1 level so they were able to fully describe the picture and present a convincing argument. Whereas some students presented a weak and short argument which was not enough to convince the examiner (the teacher in this case).

In addition, preparing students to face an international exam to get the FCE certificate is tough, yet students were working little by little for it and they had these speaking sessions in which they had the opportunity to present an argument based on a visual stimulus. The teacher first presented a video about a similar activity so students could be aware of what they had to do. Furthermore, they could use their cell phones to record themselves so they could check their pace and pronunciation, so the use of technological devices in class was effectively carried out. Besides, the material, which was a picture of two half-naked boys walking over trash on the bank of a river near a poor housing area, was quite challenging and demanded a lot from students.

Class 3.

Even though students were teenagers, and the content was about geographic mobility, students could perfectly participate actively in the class by sharing their relatives' experiences about reasons why people move. Therefore, the speaking activity was ideal for having students learn from each other's experiences to get a general idea about the topic of the lesson. Subsequently, when writing 4 negative questions about reasons why

Ecuadorians usually move to the USA, students were already aware of it and could integrate the grammar and the main topic of the class. Besides, since they were working in pairs, there was peer correction so they could help each other.

On the other hand, planning a class is demanding as we need to keep in mind what kind of activities our students can do. Besides, the objectives of the class are based on it and are strongly connected. The material for this class was quite unfamiliar at the beginning for some students since they could not come up with reasons why people move away from a country. However, a menti presentation was used for this class since it was in the computer lab, so students participated actively by brainstorming some ideas about geographic mobility little by little and checking some information on the web. Furthermore, the teacher used slides to present the grammar topic and at the end of the class, students used Padlet to write 4 negative questions about the topic of the unit, hence the technology was productively used.

Class 4.

All 4 skills required for EFL learners to enhance their level were evident in this class. The first strategy was to predict the lesson based on a picture, then a vocabulary and reading comprehension activity was presented so students could get familiar with the main idea of the lesson. After that, some questions about cultural values were presented to have students discuss them in groups of 4 through a speaking activity. Then, the grammar presented was easy for the students because it was something they had always used, but now they are studying it deeply. Finally, the difficult part of the lesson was the one in which they had to apply what they had learned in the lesson and connected to our society by writing a short paragraph about how different cultures had influenced our society. As a result, listening, speaking, reading, writing and use of English were entirely combined into one class and even though the activities were tough, students worked properly.

Using the internet for academic purposes should be part of our teaching. Consequently, the use of technology in this class was precisely applied. They all worked together in looking up the vocabulary words in the dictionary and created a shared google

doc to state the information. On the other hand, the speaking activity was carried out in groups, so it encouraged collaborative learning and provided shy students the opportunity to share their ideas since most of them do not like to participate actively but when working with their peers it was a whole different story. In addition, they used the web wisely when researching information about how other cultures have influenced ours and USA culture. In the end, they wrote a paragraph in Padlet about it using that-clauses, which was the grammar topic covered in this lesson.

Class 5.

Writing an essay can be a difficult task for students, especially when there is no translator around. However, the teacher let them use a dictionary. They were required to write an opinion essay about tourism in Antarctica. This writing assignment was carefully connected to the unit, so they were already familiar with the topic and had an extensive vocabulary about it. Furthermore, they solved some exercises about the structures of opinion essays, and they reviewed the use of cohesive devices. Additionally, they were required to prepare an outline which is highly effective for organizing the ideas to include in their writings. Even though it was a large group (27 students) and there were some low-performing students, the teacher managed to monitor and guide each of them in the process of writing, and in the end, they all turned in the paper.

Likewise, the activities prepared for this class were accurately applicable based on its objectives. Therefore, all the strategies planned were highly effective for the pace of the class, following the ESA method. As a consequence, the combination of the method with the technology was effectively carried out and the students used the technology wisely.

Reflection

The methods and strategies applied by teachers in the classroom clearly state one's teaching style. Therefore, teachers should have constant training on trendy teaching strategies and the use of ICTs in the classroom.

Learning styles play an important factor when teaching. A learning style is the person's ability to understand a lesson. As a result, learners interpret information in

different ways (Rozi et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important to get to know our students' strengths and weaknesses in order to prepare plans based on them.

Due to the fact that I had a lot more than 20 students in a classroom I worked, I needed to find a way to monitor them all and find the best strategies to keep them working the whole time. Based on what I could see in these classes, students really collaborated and did their best. Additionally, they had a very good level since it was a bilingual school and they were part of the IB program, which facilitated the teachers' work.

To conclude, preparing classes including the use of ICTs encourages students to participate actively and use technology wisely in the learning process. Therefore, it is extremely important to be currently updated with teaching strategies and bear in mind that one can also learn from students since they are handier with technology.

Assessment

Class 1.

The assessment applied in this class was evident not only at the beginning but also at the end of the class. First, when watching an interactive video, students were responding to some questions along it. Then, when presenting vocabulary using Quizlet, students could all play an online game using their cellphones. Finally, when having the group work activity, students could apply the vocabulary previously learned to present possible solutions to local environmental issues. Therefore, in the end, they activated their previous knowledge with the new vocabulary and came up with solutions to real-life problems which our society is currently facing. As a way of conclusion, the assessment was present throughout the class by having an online activity and a group work.

Class 2.

Having speaking sessions is essential for preparing students for international exams as they can learn from mistakes and enhance their oral productions little by little. Therefore, this internal assessment activity about current environmental issues demanded a lot from students as they prepared their speech and had to complete 2 minutes describing the picture. As a result, students really had a hard time, and they used the technology wisely

since they not only looked up words in the dictionary but also checked the pronunciation. Therefore, after 30 minutes of solo work, students did their speaking presentation in front of the class using a stopwatch so they could keep track of time.

Class 3.

By having a brainstorming activity, students could share some ideas about the reasons why people move. Then after reading a text, students individually solve some reading comprehension exercises. After that, students get into small groups to discuss some questions about the reasons why people move to the USA. Finally, after having the grammar presented and solving some exercises in their books, students write individually 4 negative questions about geographic mobility. As a result, the assessment was definitely evident during all the processes of the class, having different activities for all the skills but listening. Furthermore, the teacher monitored students' work all the time and provided accurate feedback whenever it was necessary.

Class 4.

Using technological devices is currently a must in teaching. As a result, the assessment was totally noticeable in this class by using different online techniques. Firstly, the teacher presented some slides and in the speaking activity, students discussed questions about cultural values and shared their ideas with the whole class, having proper feedback at the end of each of their participation. Then, students searched on the web for information about the influence of other cultures in the USA and Ecuador, so students wrote a short paragraph individually in Padlet about it using that-clauses. As a result, students were clearly assessed 2 different times in the class and received appropriate feedback.

Class 5.

Furthermore, an individual assessment was applied in this class since the main task was to write an opinion essay about ecotourism. This assignment was the final evaluation at the end of the unit since they had already covered vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening, grammar, and the use of English. Nevertheless, the teacher presented a review

about cohesive devices and students solved an exercise about it in Kahoot, so the assessment was also evident here. In addition, they used Google Classroom so the teacher could monitor each of them while writing their opinion essays in Google Docs and the plagiarism detector was activated in order to avoid cheating. Furthermore, Google Translate was blocked so students only could use a dictionary as an aid for their writing. In the end, because of time the teacher only revised some of the essays and provided adequate feedback.

Reflection

The learning activities presented in the classes included either formative or summative assessments in order to make sure students really understood the lesson; and of course, that they would be able to apply the knowledge acquired in different situations. As a result, I could collect information to prepare ahead planning based on the students' needs.

Current trends in teaching enhance the teaching-learning process in which ICT plays a fundamental role. As a result, Ecuadorian teachers should be aware of current methodologies such as Flipped Classroom, project-based learning (PBL), cooperative learning, gamification, problem-based learning, Design Thinking (DT), thinking-based learning, and competency-based learning (Sprenger, 2020).

Furthermore, relying on conventional testing is irrelevant neither for teachers nor students. Therefore, the use of technology for education should be applied also to assess as at the end of a term, teachers can recollect all the information on an e-Portfolio which includes assignments, essays, videos, and projects performed by the students (Asad, 2021).

In the final analysis, trendy methodologies and e-assessment should be applied in the new era of education in which also online teaching is now another way of the teaching-learning process, which became essential due to the COVID outbreak. As a result, teachers were forced to learn how to use technology in education. In the end, every cloud has a silver lining.

Time management

Class 1.

Time was efficiently set for each of all the activities planned for this class. In the video activity, they had 7 minutes as they also discussed some questions about current environmental issues and their consequences. Then, students had 5 minutes for going over the new vocabulary of the unit and then they all played the online game. After that, they had about 20 minutes for the group work activity, which was totally worth it since they were all working responsibly. Finally, they had around 20 minutes to present their ideas to the whole class. However, I did not see any pause in the activities because the students were working throughout the whole class.

Class 2.

Having students work at their own pace has some advantages and disadvantages. After explaining the speaking assignment and having watched a video about a real-life internal assessment, students had 25 minutes for preparing their presentation. Some of the straight-A students completed the task in 5 minutes, so they spent the rest of it distracting the other ones and checking out social media. Even though the teacher asked some of them to help the ones who struggle with the subject, they still had plenty of time to do whatever they pleased. Then, they spent 25 minutes on their presentations, but not all of the students could make it since it was a large class and 8 would present it the next day.

Class 3.

In this class, all of the activities were perfectly carried out in precise time. First, the engaging part of the class lasted 10 minutes as they brainstormed some ideas and students were not familiar with the topic at the beginning of the class. Then, the reading comprehension activity lasted 15 minutes. After that, the speaking activity took 15 more minutes, which was perfect since they all shared ideas about why Ecuadorians moved to the USA and they could all get a little bit more familiar with the topic. Additionally, the teacher explained the grammar (negative questions) in 12 minutes, as they were providing more examples for each of the rules, and then they spent 10 minutes solving the grammar

exercises and revising them. In the end, students were given 5 minutes to create their own negative questions about the topic.

Class 4.

All the activities were perfectly set for no more than 10 minutes. First, the introduction was presented in 10 minutes. Then, the vocabulary, which they all worked on collaboratively in a shared Google doc, was also set for 10 minutes. After that, the reading comprehension, which was a walk in the park for the students, lasted 10 minutes, as well as the speaking activity and the grammar. Finally, students had 10 minutes for looking up information about cultural influences on the web and writing a short paragraph using those clauses in Padlet. As a result, the students did not have any free time among each of the activities, but the timing for all the activities was accurately set. In addition, the class started and ended on time.

Class 5.

This class did not start on time because the students attended a special event. Yet the teacher did his best to cover all the activities planned for this class. As a way of introduction, they had a 5-minute review about the definition and examples of ecotourism. Then, they spent 10 minutes in an exercise about cohesive devices. Finally, they had 30 minutes for the writing assignment. Consequently, I strongly consider that timing for each of the activities was perfectly set even though the students were not on time in the classroom. However, some students did not turn in their writing on time, and they had to finish them at home since they had a break after this class. As a result, the teacher could not provide proper feedback to all of them.

Reflection

Giving enough time for students to work on activities enhanced their active participation as they had more time to reflect and provide accurate responses to specific assignments. Consequently, I learned that as a teacher I must provide precise timing based on the difficulty of the activities.

As a matter of fact, teachers must provide enough time for students to comprehend and, in the best scenario, to work collaboratively so they can help each other whenever they can. On the other hand, when having speaking sessions, timing is fundamental since they need to organize their ideas and state them in a 1-2-minute speech (depending on the task). As a consequence, students need time to practice in order improve.

Additionally, I strongly consider, based on my experience, that students need some time off at the beginning and at the end of the class so they can relax a little bit and be ready for the different subjects they have during the day. Also, having a warm-up activity as a starting point in the class may be helpful for students to stretch out their bodies.

And last but not least, based on time management, teachers should keep in mind that based on a study there are 4 profiles of students: efficient, high-effort, with difficulties, and low-effort (Valle Arias et al., 2019). Consequently, teachers should identify and classify these students so they group them according to their profiles.

A thoughtful analysis would conclude that providing essential time for each of the assignments prepared for the class enhances the teaching-learning process. The main idea is to keep students busy all the time. In the end, as Benjamin Franklin stated, 'Lost time is never found again'.

Closure reflection

Teaching English is not just about vocabulary and grammar structures, but it also involves exposing learners to a big world full of different cultures in which English is the primary language spoken; therefore, English teachers are essential within our society. As a result, having the opportunity to apply all the skills acquired during many years of studying is a unique experience.

On the other hand, I could notice that the role of a teacher is endless and it goes beyond teaching since it also involves mentoring, counseling, and even external parenting. For this reason, it is crucial to remember that teachers are role models and can be a source of inspiration.

To sum up, finding the passion and inspiration to be a teacher is something that not all people have. Teachers' efforts are evident in the distant future in which former students contribute to a better society. Therefore, learners' accomplishments are our rewards.

Conclusions

As it could be observed during the whole systematization process, planning based on trendy methodologies and techniques enhances English teachers' classes.

Consequently, it is necessary to plan, even if the teacher already knows the material by heart, since it represents a fundamental action considering there are many activities and resources online that can be applied in a class. From my own experience, I believe that a well-planned outline helps establishing and fulfilling a clear objective. All this, having always in mind the application of different strategies and the identification of students' individual needs.

Additionally, during the systematization, it was observed that it is necessary that teachers get constantly prepared in order to enhance all their skills, and hence teach more complex lessons in order to be able to improve not only their own use of the language but also their students'. In other words, permanent preparation becomes essential during the teaching practice.

As I have mentioned before, unexpected situations can come up at any moment during the class. Given this point, it was observed that more experienced teachers tend to handle them better. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain an open mind and be willing to receive feedback and companionship from wiser teachers so that be able to identify what to do in different situations we might be exposed to in order to respond to our student's needs more effectively. For this reason, having good communication with peers improves our classes as well as we may learn from the experience of other teachers.

Furthermore, it was also shown that the use of ICTs has become a compulsory resource in EFL classes. For this reason, constant training about methodologies and the use of new technologies and tools is important, so teachers are updated in these educational trends and are able to use them effectively within their classrooms.

Finally, even though developing communicative competence is hard to achieve, it was evident that teachers needed to provide a great variety of activities in which students were immersed in the language, and of course, encouraging students' active participation is

required. Moreover, I could notice that constant formative assessment is vital to verify students' knowledge acquisition and analyze the possibility of reinforcement activities if necessary to go over skills not acquired during the process. In addition, it was evident that it is also required to provide corrective and immediate feedback for students to learn from mistakes and do better on upcoming tasks, in that way the advancement of the curriculum can be properly observed.

Recommendations

Sharing both plans and experiences may improve classes as there are many strategies and techniques that teachers may find applicable to their groups. For this reason, a system in which teachers check each other's plans may be used to try to add more activities and enhance the teaching-learning process.

This project was part of my school policy and the outcome was what we expected in that all the high-school students approved the FCE exam within 2 years. Additionally, from now on preparing teachers for international exams to get a B2 certificate must be an indispensable requirement before getting a university degree if we really want to improve our students' level locally. It has been evident that usually public-school teachers from both primary and secondary levels struggle to get this certificate. For this reason, a training program should be implemented by the Ministry of Education to prepare these teachers and consequently also increase the level of our students and finally achieve the performance criteria in our curriculum.

When students are exposed to different EFL subjects and consequently have more hours of English classes weekly, they would definitely improve their level and be ready to take international exams to achieve the different levels based on the European Framework. Therefore, subjects such as Reading, Science, History, Literature, and Academic writing should be implemented in all the schools within the country. As a matter of fact, not only should our curriculum be revised but also there should be an increase in the hours of English in public schools. At the present time, it is mandatory to have 5 hours of English classes a week and it is not enough if we want our students to be bilingual. Therefore, based on my own experience, at least 16 hours are needed. Consequently, the local authorities must take action in this matter as soon as possible. However, English teachers are the ones who need to be trained first to carry out this massive change.

Providing immediate feedback allows students to automatically reflect and learn from mistakes. For this reason, teachers should revise quizzes and provide feedback all the

time. This should be a routine in which students can do over again an assignment if necessary to apply the recommendations given by teachers.

Training teachers on the use of ICTs is vital due to the current teaching trends since the internet is now part of Education and kids are being born in the era of technology. With this in mind, a massive teacher training program should take place to acquire new methodologies and strategies to enhance the teaching-learning process. Consequently, teachers should be open-minded and ready to face new challenges in this new era of online teaching.

Finally, exposing students to different current methodologies such as Flipped classrooms, Project-based learning, and cooperative learning can encourage them to acquire knowledge by having new trendy classes in which they learn on a different framework.

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