

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH WORK ON THE MAIN BARRIERS
SPANISH SPEAKERS FACE WHEN LEARNING TO SPEAK
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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SANTA ANA, FEBRUARY 2nd, 2005

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GOD BLESS ALL YOUR WAYS!

Byron Johalmo Ortiz and Cristian Geovanni Padilla

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TO GOD ALMIGHTY:

For His love, mercy, guidance, strength, and help to reach every single goal along my life. *You will always be my Lord*

**TO MY MOTHER *MARGARITA*;
MY AUNT *PATY*; AND MY
GRANDMOTHER *NOHEMY*:**

For their love and support. Thank you for teaching me the value of life and encouraging me to continue looking forward to the future. *You are wonderful!*

TO THE REST OF MY FAMILY:

For their help, care, and support. You represent a very important part in my life. *God bless you!*

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ANA CRISTINA PADILLA**

For her unconditional support, patience, and love. God bless her.

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Whose sacrifice, support, patience, and love helped me overcome every barrier in my life

**TO MY TWO BROTHERS:
RENÉ ADALID PADILLA
HUGO ENRIQUE PADILLA**

For being there whenever I needed their help

**TO MY GRANDMOTHER:
MARÍA MAGDALENA SOLIS**

For standing by my side unconditionally. God bring light into her life.

**TO MY GRANDMOTHER:
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For teaching me the value of life

TO THE REST OF MY RELATIVES:

For showing me to be optimistic in anything I do

TO MY FRIEND BYRON ORTIZ:

For his friendship, and for sharing this
experience with me

TO THE REST OF MY FRIENDS:

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when I wanted to give up

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INTRODUCTION

This document is an undergraduate work based on the *Main Barriers Spanish Speakers Face when Learning to Speak English as a Foreign Language* which was carried out at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus with the Intermediate English I students of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza during the second semester, 2004.

In this work, learning about the main factors that affect learners to acquire a language, English in this case, is considered a very important issue since the effects such factors may cause, may also determine the failure or success of a learner. Therefore, the authors present the data related to such factors in an objective way so that these data can be reliable and could serve others for any purpose they consider convenient.

This document includes 3 chapters. The first two chapters are divided into sub-contents. Chapter number one, which is called Research Design, presents the description of the problem as well as its objectives. Then the justification for carrying out the investigation and the scope of the work, in which the factors to be the focus of attention are described, are presented. Next, the reader will find the theoretical framework where the theory related to the problem itself is exposed. Besides, in the research methodology the authors describe all the steps taken for the development of the research as well as the strategy for analyzing and giving credibility to data. Chapter number two —Analysis and Interpretation of Data— includes all the information obtained through the questionnaire administered to the Intermediate I English teachers, the questionnaire and non-structured interview administered to the Intermediate I English students, and the class observation carried out by the researchers themselves. Moreover, the conclusions and recommendations

drawn by the researchers are given. Chapter three includes the appendixes of the investigation.

It is worth mentioning that this work is not the solution to the problem being investigated; however, it is doubtless that it could help improve the teaching-learning process if the information included in this research is taken into account.



CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH

DESIGN

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, learning to speak English is considered to be one of the most important steps people can take to improve their lives since people who speak English have the advantage of interacting in the modern changing world in different areas such as science, technology, entertainment, business, and so on. Therefore, it is considered that learning English is rewarding though some people consider that it is not an easy task. This is a common conception they have about the learning of English. Some people even think it is impossible for them to learn the language, mostly if they begin to have contact with it when they are grown-ups. They are right, to a certain extent, since the younger people are the better and the easier they may learn the language. As Mary Finocchiaro (1973) stated, “the difference between children and adults (that is, persons beyond the age of puberty) lies primarily in the contrast between the child’s spontaneous, peripheral attention to language forms and adult’s overt, focal awareness and attention to those forms”.

Yet, adults might not be less successful than children when learning English as a foreign language since adults have the advantage of having a superior intellect to deal with the aspects of a language. So, the word “*impossible*” sounds too negative to be applied to the learning of a foreign language; instead, it can be said that learning a foreign language may be a challenging experience, but not impossible.

It may be considered challenging because language learners have a previous language background, Spanish in this case, so it is difficult for them to get accustomed to other habits when learning a language, such as learning new words and learning how to use these words in real context, spending time reading English books, thinking about how the language works, and building new vocabulary or sentences in mind about the things around as they walk on streets, and so on. Unfortunately, when the students learning a second

language are in the process of changing their previous language habits, some factors that may affect such process emerge which might also increase the challenge of learning a new language.

In fact, through a questionnaire administered to the beginner English students of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza at the University of El Salvador Western Multidisciplinary Campus (See appendix 1), it was realized that the factors that most affect the students learning English as a foreign language are the following: *1) the native language, 2) anxiety, 3) motivation, and 4) environment.*

These factors will be the matter of study in this research. Therefore, they will be developed more in detail later.

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- ✧ To identify the main barriers affecting the Intermediate I English students learning English at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in the year 2004.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- ✧ To determine to what extent these barriers are blocking the learning of English of the Intermediate I English students at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in the year 2004.
- ✧ To provide possible ways to diminish the blocking effect of each barrier on the Intermediate I English students at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in the year 2004.

JUSTIFICATION

Researches are carried out for different purposes: to analyze a certain phenomenon, to identify any problem in a specific population, to create new programs in different areas, and so on. But all of them share one characteristic; they all are aimed at trying to benefit a certain population. This research is not the exception since it will be conducted to fulfill such a characteristic.

It is known that the students studying English as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus have been facing problems with the learning of the language in the past four years. The problem has been affecting these students in such a way that around half of the students registered in Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés have failed English at basic level. Though the rest of the students succeeded in their grades, many of these students did not obtain promising grades; that is, they had grades between six and seven (Grade records of the Basic English students of the Language Department of the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, Term I, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003). So, it is evident that something has been affecting the students' learning.

To make sure that, in fact, something has been affecting these students, a questionnaire was administered to the beginner English students taking English as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. As a result, it was found that some factors such as the native language, anxiety, motivation, and the environment have been causing a negative effect. So this study will be conducted to try to determine the extent to which such barriers affect the students' learning. Likewise, possible ways to diminish such barriers will be provided.

This research will also serve as an academic tool for the English teachers to learn about what barriers and how these barriers affect the students taking English as their major at the

University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. In this way, these teachers could help their students overcome such barriers. Therefore, the students may be benefited provided that the teachers put into practice suitable activities to help students diminish their problems with English. Finally, this research may serve other researchers as a basis for deeper studies on this field in the future.

For all the reasons stated above it is considered that it is worth carrying out this research.

SCOPE OF THE WORK

Many are the factors that come across in the learning of a foreign language. Such factors, as H. Douglas Brown (1994) points out, range from affective up to linguistic factors. In fact, these factors will determine the success or failure of the learners depending on the extent to which they occur in the process of learning. In the questionnaire administered to the students taking English, at a basic level, as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, it was confirmed that some factors are, indeed, affecting their learning of the language.

First, it was found out that the native language is one of the main factors these students have problems with since they said they do not have enough competence in the target language. Therefore, they need to use the native language to interact in the English class. In addition to this, the students use Spanish in the English class because they have an established language background; consequently, they tend to speak in Spanish every time they want to use the foreign language. As stated by H. Douglas Brown (1994). “the majority of a learner’s errors in producing the second language, especially at the beginning levels stand from the learner’s assumption that the target language operates like the native language”.

Second, the majority of the students who answered the questionnaire expressed that anxiety is another factor that blocks their learning. They related anxiety to the lack of English vocabulary they have. In other words, the less vocabulary they know in the target language, the more anxious they feel in their performance. Besides, these students attributed their level of anxiety to the mockery of their classmates.

Third, some students considered that their learning highly depends on their level of motivation. They expressed that they do not feel motivated because they do not spend enough time doing activities to improve their English. It was noticeable that they have a goal but they do not want to go through the way which will lead them to reach such goal. As H. Douglas Brown (1994) said “Motivation is the extent to which you make choices about *a) goals to pursuit*, and *b) the effort you will devote to that pursuit*”. So the more effort a learner makes, the more rapidly he or she can learn the foreign language.

Finally, the students said that the environment in which they are learning English as a foreign language plays a blocking effect both in and out of the classroom because they do not like to practice, and they do not have enough opportunities to use the target language to interact in the external world. So, most of the time they listen to and practice English only in the classroom, and sometimes there are some students reluctant to speak English even in the classroom, not taking advantage of the class time.

The factors mentioned above will be the focus of attention in this research. Such research is intended to be carried out at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in the current year. The population to be studied will be the English students taking Intensive Intermediate English I at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in the current year.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The learning of a foreign or second language is related not only to the methodology, strategies, and techniques teachers use in a teaching-learning process, but also to some factors that prevent, to a certain extent, students' learning. This phenomenon is not the exception in the beginner students taking English as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. As shown in the grade records of Intensive Basic English students in the years 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, of the English Department, many of the students failed Intensive Basic English. Still, the grades of those who succeeded were not so promising. It could be assumed that this situation was due to the barriers they might have encountered during their learning process. But why do students face so many problems when learning a foreign language, English in this case?

Many have been the studies carried out in order to understand how people learn a foreign language and why they face certain barriers in the learning process. So far, researchers have looked closely at certain key factors such as; *the students' native language, their level of anxiety, their motivation toward the language itself, and the environment in which they learn the language.*

One of the linguists that has carried out important studies on this field is H. Douglas Brown (1994). He points out that the students' success in learning a foreign language will be highly depending on the students' native language. He says that although the students' native language somehow aids the students in producing the new language, the interfering effect is the most salient. Indeed, who could say that a beginner English student saying "*I have twenty years old*" is not a facilitating effect coming from the native language? This fact can be seen as a positive attempt for a student to survive in the target language. On the other hand, if this same student keeps on saying the same statement at higher levels, this can be taken as an

interfering effect. As Alex Mejía, a teacher of English at the Western Catholic University said, “*Some of my Intermediate I level English students are still making mistakes such as double negative statements (I do not have nothing to tell you.) and the omission of the “s” when using the third person singular (She study English at the university; She have eighteen years old.)*”. B. Taylor and Ervin Trip, cited in Patricia A. Richard Amato (1998) give credibility to Douglas Brown’s ideas by saying that learners will heavily depend on their native language system for communicating in their foreign language at the very beginning of language learning. They attribute this to what they call *overgeneralization* which is the learner’s false idea that the target language works as their native language.

Another important study that has provided insights on the factors that are present in the students’ learning of a foreign language is the one carried out by Patricia A. Richard, Amato (1998). In her study, she considers that affective factors such as students’ motivation, level of anxiety, and personality are the key factors in the process of learning a foreign language. In fact, motivation can be seen as a factor that leads the students to learn the target language according to their purpose. As Gardner and Lambert (1972) pointed out, a student might want to learn the English language to interact successfully in the target language context (*Integrative Motivation*) while another might just want to learn the target language only for certain purposes such as traveling or working (*Instrumental Motivation*). In fact, in the questionnaire administered to the beginner English students at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, it was found that all these students share the same objective, which is to become a professional in the English language area, but their actions do not reflect the necessary motivation for reaching such a purpose. They themselves expressed they do not dedicate enough time and effort in order to progress in their learning.

Regarding anxiety, research has shown that two of the key factors that relate to success in learning a language are: *a) self-confidence* and *b) low anxiety*. Those students whose self-confidence is high and the level of anxiety is low are more likely to learn the language faster and easier since they are not exposed to suffer the effects of anxiety. These students do not care about their mistakes and about what others might say or do against them. As pointed out by (Carol, 1963; Chastain, 19975; Gardner, Smythe, Clement, & Glisman, 1976) cited in Patricia A. Richard Amato (1998) a lowered anxiety level will lead learners to succeed in the learning of the target language. As for this, the students expressed in the questionnaire that their level of anxiety conditions their learning and that sometimes the English teachers contribute to increase their level of anxiety since their attitude toward the students' mistakes create a negative atmosphere in the classroom. Consequently, this affects their self-esteem negatively. Therefore, when they are asked to do something in front of the class, they start to feel anxious about the real possibility of making a complete fool of themselves, which also makes them feel concerned about what others might be thinking of them while performing certain activities.

Last, but not least, the quality of the learning environment, which includes everything from the place a class is taught to the whole range of interactions between class participants is another aspect to take into account in the teaching-learning process. (A study of Adult Learners, Ana Turula, Forum English Teaching, April 2002, Vol 40, number 2, pag 28, 33.). Indeed, all teachers of English should be conscious that the teaching of a language does not only relate to the methods, techniques, and activities, but also relates to the way they apply and develop them in order to create a suitable environment for the students to succeed. Unfortunately, as some beginner English students taking English as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus, pointed out, some teachers

do not create an appropriate environment since they show an authoritative figure instead of encouraging students to take steps in a safe and secure environment. Moreover, students said that classes were not as interesting as they expected them to be. They based this opinion on the lack of attractive material and activities used by teachers. Besides, students were concerned not only with the inner environment but also with the outer one by saying that the outside world does not provide enough opportunities to interact in the target language. Also, many admitted that they do not take advantage of the opportunities they encounter outside the classroom to practice. So here it can be noticed that students' motivation is one of the aspects that should be strengthened.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following research is aimed at determining the occurrence of a problem, how frequently it takes place, who is being affected by the problem, and where and when it occurs. Besides, it is directed to answer why a certain phenomenon is taking place and the effects it brings; thus, this research is descriptive and explanatory. (Métodos para Hacer una Investigación. Eladio Zacarías Ortez, 2000).

The universe to be studied will be all the Intermediate English I students taking English as their major at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus. However, the sample to be taken out of this universe will be only 10 students, who will be chosen at random, five from each of the two groups taking the subject.

Concerning the instruments to be used in order to collect the information, which will serve to verify the research questions, they are mentioned as follows: *a) a class observation guide sheet directed to the teachers and one to the students (See Appendixes 3 and 4); b) a*

questionnaire directed to the students and one to the teachers (See Appendixes 5 and 6); and c) a non-structured interview directed to students (See Appendix 7).

First of all, it will be necessary to talk to the head of the English Language Department in order to ask for permission to administer the instruments. Then a letter directed to the Intermediate I English teachers will be written and presented to them in order to get their permission to administer the instruments in their classrooms (See appendix 2). To carry out the class observation, the researchers will go into the classrooms to observe the Intermediate I English teachers as well as their students in a real context for about three months. During this time, the students and the teachers will be asked to complete a questionnaire. Students will also be interviewed by the researchers in order to obtain further information. On the one hand, the teachers will be given the questionnaire at the beginning of the development of the project, and they will be asked to give it back after some time so that classes are not interrupted. On the other hand, the students to be observed will be asked to meet three times with the researchers in order to fill out the questionnaire, to have a non-structured interview and to confirm all the information.

Since this research is a qualitative one, the analysis and interpretation of the data will be done through matrices. For this it will be necessary to gather, analyze, categorize and codify all the information obtained during the whole development of the project.

STRATEGY FOR ANALYZING DATA

For the analysis of the data it will be necessary to collect all the information gathered through the questionnaires, interview, and class observations. Then all the information will be analyzed separately. Then all the information will be compared. A matrix will be built for each instrument used to gather the data. The information included in each matrix will

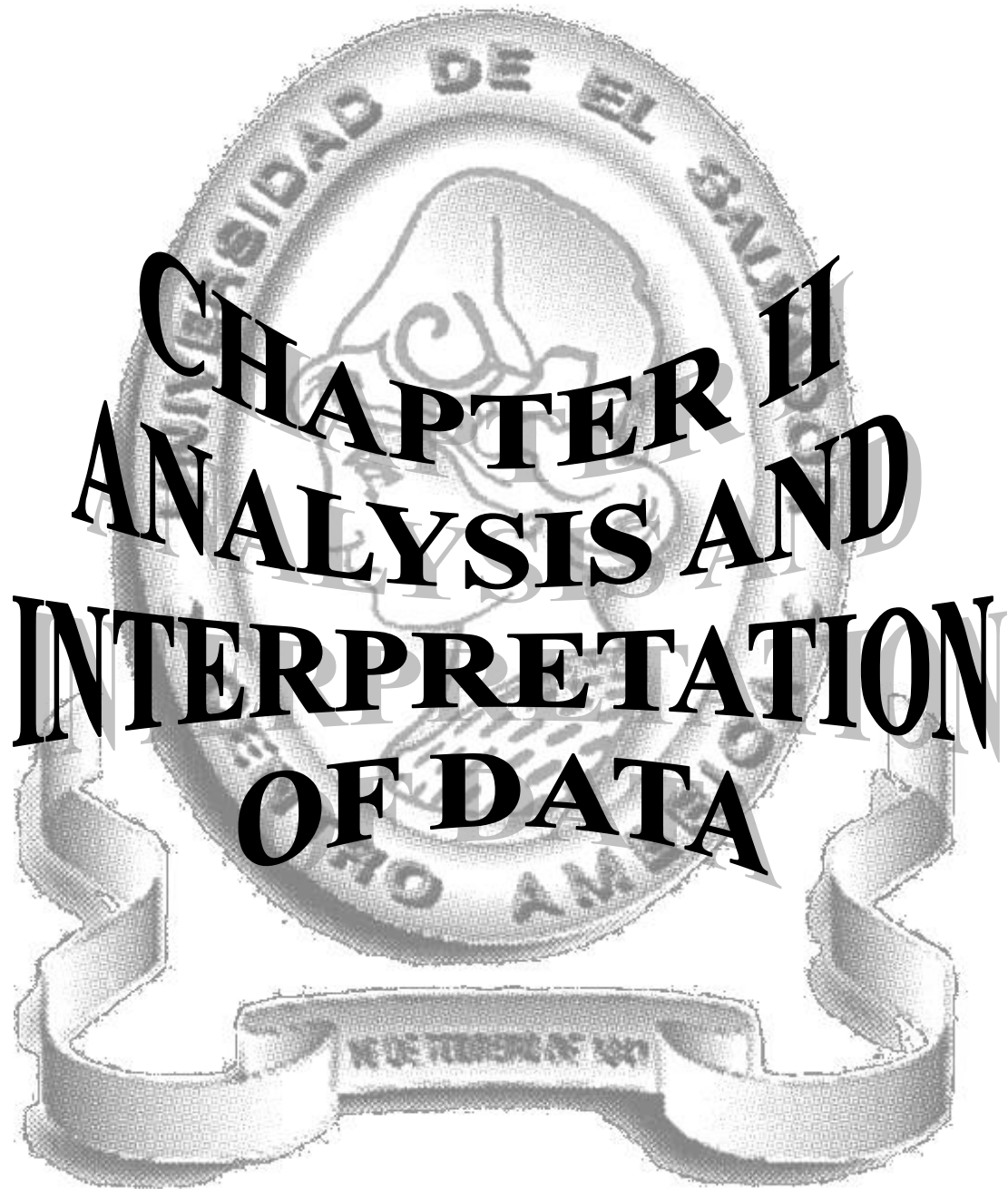
reflect the exact words given by teachers and students as well as the notes taken by the researchers during class observations.

STRATEGY FOR THE CREDIBILITY OF DATA

Each of the two researchers will observe a group of five students taking Intensive Intermediate English I at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus in order to check the teaching-learning process in class. This observation will be done from Monday to Friday for approximately 3 months. The first week of this 3-month period will be devoted to get acquainted with the students. At the beginning of the class observation, teachers will be asked to fill out a questionnaire while students will do it two weeks before the researchers finish observing classes. The students will be also interviewed in order to get further information. Then, the two researchers will meet the students to confirm the information given by them.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is the native language the main barrier hindering the students' success in learning English as a foreign language?
2. Is the teachers' role increasing the students' level of anxiety in their performance?
3. Does the outside world provide the students the chance to interact in the target language?
4. Does the teachers' methodology used in class provide a non-threatening atmosphere?
5. Does the teachers' methodology used in class contain attractive material and dynamic activities in order to raise the students' motivation?



**CHAPTER II
ANALYSIS AND
INTERPRETATION
OF DATA**

DATA OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO THE ENGLISH TEACHERS

TEACHER 1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher 1 was asked if she considered Spanish to be the main barrier for students to learn English; she answered that she did not think so; instead, she commented that she considered the main barrier affecting students' learning was that they did not have good studying habits. Then, she mentioned that another factor affecting students' learning was the environment where the teaching process was taking place since it was a non-English speaking country. Then she described her role in the class, and she expressed that she was a teacher who tried to make her students learn and understand the topic she was teaching. She was also questioned about how she corrected her students when making mistakes; she answered that she almost always made her students repeat the correct form. After, the teacher described her students' role in the class and expressed that they were passive learners who, sometimes, seemed to be in the class just to pass the time. Concerning the students' attitude toward learning English, the teacher commented that they were not responsible and that they did not seem to be interested in their studies. Then, the teacher was questioned about how she showed her interest toward students' learning, and she answered that she prepared her classes with a variety of activities and that she studied the material she was going to teach beforehand and tried to make the topic easy. She also expressed that in order to motivate her students she played games, music, developed any warm-up, and told jokes from time to time. Regarding the creation of a non-threatening environment in class, she responded that although it was hard when students made mistakes, she tried not to embarrass them and that she also talked to them to encourage them to study. Then, she mentioned some extra material she used in class like charts, songs, photocopies, balloons,

or anything she could take to the class. Related to her way of promoting her students to participate equally in class, she answered that she made everybody participate. Finally, the teacher expressed that she tried to encourage her students to practice English outside the classroom by telling them that practicing was the only way they could improve English, but she also commented students did not care about it.

TEACHER 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher 2 expressed that she did not consider Spanish to be the main barrier for students to learn English. Instead she commented that all depended on how much Spanish teachers permitted students to use in class for considering Spanish one of the main barriers. Then, she mentioned other factors affecting students' learning of English such as, family problems, a poor English background from high school, which made students not to be prepared to face the academic pressure they were required at the university, and she also expressed that this new generation of students was not interested in studying but in other issues like computers, fashion, and so on. Next, she was asked to describe her role in the class, but she did not give any answer since she stated that the researchers had already observed this aspect during the class observation. Also, she was questioned about how she corrected her students and to describe her students' role in class, but she did not give any answer, either, for she argued the researchers had already observed those aspects during the class observation, too. In regards to students' attitude toward the learning of English, the teacher commented that students did not care about getting bad grades, and that they did not like to participate in class specially when they were asked to perform oral activities. Concerning her interest toward students' learning, she expressed she tried to focus on the effort the students made and not on their results so that students felt free despite of their mistakes. She also said she

taught students extra classes. As for her way of motivating the students, she did not give any answer. In relation to her way of creating a non-threatening environment in class, she responded she usually introduced her class with a game so that students felt confident, relaxed, and prepared for the coming activities. After, she described the extra material she used in class and she mentioned the following: charts, flashcards, pictures, comic strips, songs, videos, and cassettes. In regards to her way of promoting students' participation equally, she did not give any answer. Finally, she commented that in order to encourage her students to practice the English language outside the classroom, she assigned the students a lot of homework.

TEACHER 3 QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher 3 expressed that she did consider Spanish to be the main barrier for students to learn English because their learning process was taking place in a Spanish-speaking environment, so students were exposed to hear and speak Spanish most of the time. As a result they did not practice English as much as they needed. Then she commented that other factors that were affecting students' learning were their lack of aptitudes for learning foreign languages, high-absentism rate, failing to do homework assignments, teachers did not motivate students enough, and students entered the university not being prepared to face such a responsibility. The teacher also described her role in the class, and she expressed that she was a facilitator who presented and modeled the activities in class. After, she commented that she corrected her students' mistakes at the moment of making the mistake or when she considered appropriate, i.e., at the end of an activity or at the end of the class, without mentioning whose mistake it was so that students did not feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. Next, the teacher was asked to describe her students' role in

class; she answered that they interacted with their classmates and participated by performing individual, pair-work, or group-work activities in and out of the classroom. She also described her students' attitude toward the learning of English, saying that some students were interested for different reasons such as becoming a professional, singing songs, traveling abroad, and so on; she also expressed that students did not feel motivated with just drilling in class and that some students felt disappointed when they realized English was not as easy as they thought it was as a career. Regarding the teachers' interest toward students' learning, she responded that she was aware of her students' needs, she corrected students' mistakes appropriately, she assigned them enough homework, she talked to them when they missed classes, and she prepared herself well enough for every class. Then, she commented that to motivate her students, she tried to make every class a moment of joy through a variety of activities. She also expressed that to create a non-threatening environment she treated students with respect and tried to make them feel confident in the classroom. Regarding the extra material she used in class, she commented she used tapes, a tape recorder, charts, photocopies, and the text book. As for her way of promoting students' participation in class, she answered that she did it by having the students work in groups, in pairs, or individually. Finally the teacher expressed she encouraged her students to practice English outside the classroom by telling them to practice whenever possible since the class time was not enough for them to learn efficiently.

TEACHER 4 QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher 4 expressed she did not consider Spanish to be the main barrier for students to learn English because there were many ways to practice the language though they were learning it in a non-English speaking country. Then, she also added that students were not

conscious enough of their role in the process, and that they did not have good habits to study. When describing her role in the class, she mentioned she was a facilitator who provided the activities and gave directions. Also she commented that she corrected her students by encouraging peer correction. After, she was questioned what her students' role in class was, and she answered that they were learners who participated and performed the activities related to the topics being studied. Then, she described her students attitude toward the learning of English, saying that many students were not motivated and showed no interest in the class since they did not do any effort to avoid speaking Spanish in class. Regarding her interest toward students' learning, she expressed she encouraged them to do homework assignments and tried to talk to them about the importance of their career. In relation to the way she motivated her students, she commented that she tried to smile and to explore students' interests, she called them by their name, and she tried to carry out funny activities to make them feel relaxed. As for the creation of a non-threatening environment in class, she responded that she showed a friendly attitude all the time. Then she described the extra material she used in class; she mentioned that she used photocopies, lyrics, a tape recorder, and CD's. Then she was questioned how she promoted students' participation equally, and she answered that she did it through drills in the oral and written form. Finally the teacher expressed that in order to encourage students to practice English outdoors, she tried to speak English with students everywhere and suggested them to make groups in order to practice.

The following matrix represents the information gathered from the questionnaire administered to the English teachers in charge of the Intermediate I English students.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS	TOPICS AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE	CATEGORY	CODE
DATE 21-09-2004			
QUESTION 1	Teachers 1, 2, and 4 said that Spanish was not the main barrier. Only teacher 3 disagreed.	Spanish as the main barrier to learn English	<i>SAMABLE</i>
QUESTION 2	Lack of students' responsibility, motivation, and teachers' lack of motivation toward students.	Other factors affecting students' learning	<i>OFASLE</i>
QUESTION 3	They were just facilitators.	Teachers' role in the class	<i>TERIC</i>
QUESTION 4	They expressed they corrected students appropriately.	Teachers' way of correcting	<i>TECO</i>
QUESTION 5	Teachers described students' role as active.	Students' role in class	<i>SRIC</i>
QUESTION 6	Teachers pointed out most students were not interested.	Students' attitude toward learning English	<i>SATLE</i>
QUESTION 7	Teachers focused on students' needs and encouraged them to study.	Teachers' interest toward students' learning	<i>TITSL</i>
QUESTION 8	Teachers commented they used a variety of activities.	Teachers' motivation toward students	<i>TEMTS</i>
QUESTION 9	Teachers said they made students feel mistakes are normal.	Creation of a non-threatening environment	<i>CONE</i>
QUESTION 10	Teachers used flashcards, charts, photocopies, videos, lyrics, etc.	Extra material used in class	<i>EMUC</i>
QUESTION 11	Teachers tried to involve all students through different activities.	Promotion of students' participation equally	<i>POSPE</i>
QUESTION 12	Teachers encouraged students	Encouragement of students' speaking	<i>ESSEO</i>

	by telling them to practice and by assigning homework.	English outdoors	
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DATA OF QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO THE STUDENTS TAKEN AS THE SAMPLE

STUDENT A's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student A expressed that Spanish affected his learning of English because he had to translate first when speaking English and spoke English using Spanish grammatical structures. He commented that English teacher 2 corrected him strictly and she was very interested in pointing out every mistake, so that students did not make them anymore. He also said teacher 1 tried to correct quickly and seriously. Next, he was asked how he noticed teachers' interest in students' learning; he answered that he could observe that when the teachers assigned a lot of homework, corrected every mistake, and told him and his classmates how to improve their writing and speaking skills. Also, he expressed teachers did not use any attractive material; "they only use the board, charts containing dialogues and grammar information", he replied. After, he was questioned if teachers used activities that promoted his participation, and he answered that teachers sometimes developed games and dynamics. In relation to his motivation in class, he responded that he felt motivated only sometimes because some topics developed in class were very difficult, so he felt disappointed when he did not understand any question in English. As for his relationship with the teachers, he expressed that he only interacted with them in class, but he added that if he needed some help, teachers would help him. He also commented that teachers tried to make students interact with one another to create a good environment for learning, but he also

added that it did not occur so often because most of the time classes were merely teachers' questions and students' answers. He was questioned what he did to practice English outside the classroom, and he answered that he did not practice speaking English with anybody outside; he just listened to music and watched TV in English. Then he commented that he did nothing to improve his speaking skill and vocabulary. Finally, he expressed that his role in the classroom was not so active since he participated only when he was asked by teachers.

STUDENT B's QUESTIONNAIRE

In regards to the influence of Spanish on his learning, student B expressed that Spanish affected him a lot since he took other subjects that were taught in Spanish which did not allow him and his classmates to practice English. Also he commented that teacher 1 was patient when correcting him, but that teacher 2 was rough sometimes. Then, he was questioned how he noticed his teachers' interest in his learning, and he answered that both teachers brought games, and charts to class. Besides, he said teachers taught him and his classmates extra classes. In relation to the attractive material teachers used in class, student B responded that both teachers just used some charts with grammatical information. Then, he commented that teachers promoted students' participation by developing games, and individual questions that involved everyone even though some students were afraid of speaking. Also he expressed he did not feel motivated enough because teachers were monotonous in their classes. In regards to teachers' way of motivating students, he answered that teachers tried to motivate them by telling them what was going wrong with them. He was also asked what his relationship with teachers was, and he responded that he did not have confidence with them and that he just looked for them to ask for his grades and homework

assignments. He commented, however, that teacher 2 was more willing to help in any way. Then he commented that teachers did not create a suitable environment for learning because they were almost never dynamic in class. As for his way of practicing English outside the classroom, student B answered that he tried to speak with his classmates and to learn new words every day, listened to music, and watched TV in English. Also he restated that he did the same activities he mentioned above in order to improve his speaking skill and vocabulary. Finally, when describing his role in the classroom, he stated that he was an active student since he liked to participate whenever he had the chance.

STUDENT C's QUESTIONNAIRE

Regarding the influence of Spanish on his learning, student C answered that he considered Spanish to be a barrier for him to learn English because he did not practice English as much as he needed. In relation to the teachers' correction, he commented that teachers corrected him appropriately. He also added that he noticed teachers' interest in his learning when they scolded him and his classmates and assigned them a lot of homework when getting bad results in the exams. In re regards to the attractive material teachers used in class, student C expressed that neither of the two teachers used attractive material in class, but that they tried to make their classes a little dynamic. Then he was asked if teachers used activities that promoted students' participation equally, and he answered that both teachers developed activities such as oral and written exercises that involved students' participation. After, he expressed that he felt motivated in class because he liked English a lot, and because sometimes classes were a little dynamic. As for the way teachers motivated him and his classmates, he answered that teachers motivated them through activities they developed in class. He was also questioned about his relationship with teachers, and he replied that he got

along better with teacher 2 because this teacher showed more interest when he asked questions or had doubts. He also added that teachers tried to create a nice environment in class because they were friendly with him and his classmates. In relation to his way of practicing English outside the classroom, student C commented that he tried to practice with his classmates after class and watched English programs. He also said that he read books and learnt new words from the dictionary to improve his vocabulary and speaking skill. He added that he considered himself to be an active student since he liked to participate in every activity developed in class.

STUDENT D's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student D expressed that Spanish affected her learning in such a way that she translated word by word whenever she spoke English. Then she commented that teacher 1 made her feel uncomfortable when correcting her mistakes while teacher 2 was more polite. Related to teachers' interest on students' learning, student C replied that teacher 1 seemed to be interested in just teaching while teacher 2 tried to make her class more attractive. She also mentioned that teachers almost never used extra material in class. Then, she was asked if teachers used activities that promoted students' participation equally in class, and she answered that teachers promoted their participation through individual and group-work activities. As for her motivation, student C replied that she did not feel motivated with teacher 1 because whenever she had classes with this teacher she was worried about how this teacher would make her feel in class. On the other hand, she did feel motivated with teacher 2 since she was very patient to explain anything. Then student C expressed that only teacher 2 motivated her because she was sometimes dynamic in class. She also said that her relationship with teacher 2 was more friendly than with teacher 1. In relation to the way

teachers created a good environment in class, student C expressed that when having classes with teacher 1, she did not want to attend class, but when having class with teacher 2, she was there since this teacher was more friendly. Then she was questioned what she did in order to practice English outside the classroom, and she answered that she practiced with her family members. She added she practiced in the web, and she watched TV. Concerning to her way of improving her speaking skill and vocabulary, she replied that she read books and she tried to speak with her classmates. Finally, student C expressed she was an active student since she always volunteered to participate.

STUDENT E's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student E stated that Spanish interfered in her learning since she had to translate before speaking sometimes and she also lacked English vocabulary. Then she commented that teachers corrected her appropriately even though teacher 1 was more serious when doing it. Regarding teachers' interest in students' learning, student E answered that both teachers somehow showed interest by bringing some charts with dialogues to the class, by assigning homework, and by getting annoyed when students got low grades. Student E was also asked if teachers used attractive material, and she replied that they almost never brought extra material to the class, but he also expressed that teachers promoted students participation by drilling and gaming. In regards to her motivation in class, student E responded that she felt motivated only sometimes since classes often turned boring. In relation to the way teachers motivated her and her classmates, she expressed that teachers sometimes played games and told jokes. After, student E was questioned about her relationship with teachers; she responded that she did not feel confident with teacher 1. Then she expressed that teachers tried to be friendly in order to create a good environment for

learning. In regards to her way of practicing English outside the classroom, student E responded that she watched TV, read the English text book and the notebook, spoke English with friends , and spoke alone. Next, she commented that to improve her speaking skill and vocabulary she just tried to practice English with her classmates and learnt new words by heart. Finally, she described her role in class as a passive student because she felt bored sometimes and did not like to participate even when being asked to do it.

STUDENT F's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student F commented that Spanish did not affect him so much. Only when he did not know some words, he needed to use his translator. Then he was asked about teachers' correction, and he answered that teachers tried to do it appropriately though sometimes teachers made his feel uncomfortable. As for teachers' interest in his learning, student F answered that teachers' interest was noticeable since they assigned homework and also made students repeat until they pronounced and said things right. Regarding the extra material used by teachers,

he expressed that they only used charts containing dialogues, and handouts in class. Then he was questioned if teachers used activities that promoted students' participation equally in class; he responded that teachers only asked to repeat and act out short and long dialogues. He also commented that he felt motivated in class since he liked English a lot, so he was always paying attention to the teachers. In relation to what teachers did to motivate students, student F responded that teachers almost never motivated them because teachers seemed unfriendly almost all the time. Regarding his relationship with teachers, student F replied he just interacted with them in class and that teachers did not give him so much confidence. Then he was questioned what he was doing in order to practice English outside

the classroom, and he responded that he practiced only with his classmates after class. He also added that to improve his speaking skill and vocabulary he just tried to learn new words by heart. Finally when describing his role in class, he expressed that he tried to be active since he often liked to participate in every activity developed in class.

STUDENT G's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student G expressed that Spanish influenced on his learning in such a way that he almost always used Spanish grammatical structures to speak English and he also lacked English vocabulary. Then he was asked about his teachers' way of correcting, and he answered that teacher 3 did it appropriately, but that teacher number 4 was very rough sometimes. Then, he commented that he noticed his teachers' interest in students' learning when teachers told them not to miss class, corrected their mistakes, and asked them to do their homework assignments. Concerning the extra material teachers used in class, student G responded that neither of the teachers used extra or attractive material, only the tape recorder and the textbook. In relation to the activities teachers' used to promote students' participation in class, he answered that teacher 4 used more activities than teacher 3. Regarding his motivation in class, he expressed that he often felt motivated in class since he liked English a lot. Related to this, he commented that teachers almost never motivated him and his classmates since teachers only told them to study hard because learning English was difficult. Next, student G was questioned about his relationship with teachers; he replied that he did not have so much confidence with them, and that he only interacted with them in class. In relation to what teachers did to promote students' participation equally in class, student G answered that they tried to do it through group-work and individual activities. Then student G expressed that to practice English outside the classroom, he just spoke English with his classmates. He also commented that he listened to music and watched English programs

in order to improve his speaking skill and vocabulary. Finally, he described his role in class, saying that he was not so passive since he tried to volunteer in every activity developed in class.

STUDENT H's QUESTIONNAIRE

Student H expressed that Spanish affected her because she did not have enough opportunities to practice English outside the classroom, and in the university her classmates did not practice either, so she had problems when speaking English since she lacked English vocabulary and she also had to translate most of the time. Then she commented that teachers' way of correcting her mistakes was different; she said that teacher 3 was very kind but that teacher 4 made her feel uncomfortable sometimes. In regards to her teachers' interest toward students' learning, she responded that teachers tried to encourage them not to miss classes and to improve their grades. Next, she was asked if teachers used attractive material and activities that promoted students' participation equally in class, and she answered that teacher 3 just did some funny activities when students seemed to be bored, but she almost never used extra material to teach; as for teacher 4, she just said this teacher used charts containing dialogues sometimes, and she promoted students' participation by drilling. In relation to her motivation in class, student H commented that she didn't feel motivated sometimes because her personal problems made her not to be concentrated in class, and also classes were not dynamic which made her feel bored. Regarding teachers' way of motivating her and her classmates, she expressed that only teacher 3 made her feel motivated sometimes since she was kind of funny from time to time. Then she was questioned about her relationship with teachers, and she answered that she just greeted them and interacted with them in class since she did not feel confident to make questions or ask about her

doubts. Then, she commented that teachers almost never created a good environment in class since they did not use a variety of activities. Related to what she did to practice English outdoors and improve her speaking skill and vocabulary, student H responded that she spoke English with some American neighbors, listened to music in English, watched TV programs in English, and tried to learn new words by heart each day. She also described her role in class; she commented that she was a passive student since she did not like to speak, for she felt nervous to speak in front of the class. This student added at the end of the questionnaire that in the exams teachers included very complex topics such as politics which made her and her classmates feel kind of frustrated.

STUDENT I's QUESTIONNAIRE

Concerning the influence of Spanish on her learning, student I answered that although she was conscious that she had to avoid speaking Spanish most of the time, she could not avoid using it sometimes outdoors when she did not know how to express her ideas in English because of her lack of English vocabulary. Then she was questioned how teachers corrected her when making mistakes, and she responded that they just helped her say and write words correctly and that sometimes teacher 4 did it in a way that made her and her classmates feel uncomfortable. Next, she commented that teachers almost never showed their interest in students' learning since their classes were bored sometimes. Regarding teachers' use of attractive material in class, student I commented that teachers only used photocopies and charts containing dialogues sometimes. Besides, student I expressed that teachers made her and her classmates work in pairs and groups through activities that were dynamic sometimes in order to promote their participation in class. Regarding her motivation in class, she commented that she just felt motivated sometimes since teachers used almost the same

activities in class. Next, she expressed that teachers awoke her motivation only when gaming or developing a new activity. In regards to her relationship with teachers, student I responded that teachers were eager to help students when they had doubts or any question, but that she was not so confident with them. Also, student I commented that because of teachers' lack of dynamism in class, she did not consider they created a suitable environment in class. In relation to what she did to practice English outdoors, she replied that she tried to speak English with her classmates and read from time to time. Then she added that to improve her speaking skill and vocabulary, she listened to music in English, watched TV programs in English, and tried to learn new words from the dictionary. Related to her role in class, she expressed that she was a passive learner since she did not like to interact with her classmates and teachers because of her lack of confidence with them.

STUDENT J's QUESTIONNAIRE

When she was asked about the influence of Spanish on her learning, student J responded that she considered Spanish affected her a lot because she translated most of the time and when she did not find the way to say something in English, she switched into Spanish. Then she commented that teachers' way of correcting students was appropriate although sometimes they seemed uncomfortable when students made mistakes. Next, she expressed that teachers' interest toward students' learning was noticeable when they assigned students a lot of homework and tried to make them participate as much as possible in class. As for the attractive material teachers used in class, student J replied that teachers only used charts containing conversations and photocopies. She also expressed that teachers promoted students' participation by making them work in pairs and in groups. In relation to her motivation, student J expressed that she did not feel motivated sometimes because she had

problems expressing her ideas in English which made her feel a little frustrated; she also commented that classes were sometimes very boring. Concerning teachers' way of motivating, she answered that she felt a little motivated when teachers played any game. In regards to her relationship with teachers, student J responded that she just interacted with them in class. Regarding what teachers did to create a good environment in class, student J commented that teachers showed a friendly attitude, and that teacher 3 tried to be dynamic sometimes. In regards to what she did to practice English outdoors, she expressed that she spoke English with her classmates, and that she translated paragraphs into English. Then she commented that to improve her speaking skill and vocabulary, she learned new words from books or from the dictionary, and that she practiced English with her classmates. Finally, she described her role in class; she expressed she was not very active because she participated most of the time only when she was asked to do it, and that she did not practice so often with her classmates and teachers at the university.

At the end of the questionnaire, student J pointed out that exams were very difficult since listening exams were too long, and the time students were given to listen to the audio was not enough, so they had problems to answer; she also expressed that questions of oral exams were related to complex topics; thus, she commented that she and her classmates felt frustrated sometimes.

The following matrix represents the information obtained from the questionnaire administered to the English students taken as the sample for this study.

<i>QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS</i>	<i>TOPIC AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>CODE</i>
<i>DATE 01-11-2004</i>			
<i>QUESTION 1</i>	They tended to think in Spanish before speaking	Spanish interference in	SILE

	English, translated and lacked English vocabulary. They also spoke Spanish inside and outside the classroom.	learning English	
QUESTION 2	Teachers made students feel so uncomfortable that they did not want to participate.	Teachers' way of correcting	TECO
QUESTION 3	Teachers were interested in their learning because they assigned homework and scolded them when they did not do them.	Teachers' interest toward students' learning	TITOSL
QUESTION 4	Teachers almost never used attractive material, only charts, photocopies, and a tape recorder.	Teachers' use of material	TUOM
QUESTION 5	Teachers tried to promote participation even though it was a little difficult because the class was large.	Teachers' use of activities	TUA
QUESTION 6	The majority felt a little motivated.	Students' motivation	SUM
QUESTION 7	Teachers awoke their motivation with oral and pair-work activities.	Teachers' way of motivating students	TEWOMS
QUESTION 8	Students did not have enough confidence with them.	Teacher-students relationship	TESR
QUESTION 9	Students' said they felt afraid with some teachers.	Teachers' creation of a good environment	TECGE
QUESTION 10	The majority expressed they watched TV, listened to music, and translated. Just a few said they practiced with friends.	Students' way of practicing outdoors	SPRACO
QUESTION 11	They commented they watched TV, listened to music, learnt new words from dictionaries, and spoke with friends.	Students' way of improving their vocabulary and English speaking skill	SUWIVESS
QUESTION 12	The majority expressed they participated only	Students' role in the class	STUROIC

	when being asked to.		
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DATA OF INTERVIEW ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS

STUDENTS A's INTERVIEW

Student A was asked if he felt comfortable or confident with teachers 1 and 2, and he answered he did not feel so well with these teachers since they did not give him enough confidence to speak. So they made him feel uncomfortable sometimes because of the way they corrected him. Then he was questioned how he noticed his teachers' interest toward his learning, and he responded that he was aware of this when teachers encouraged him to come to class when he did not attend class. Next, he said that teachers motivated students sometimes through funny activities which were rarely used. Student A was also asked why students were getting bad grades. "Well, to be honest, I do not study consciously and I'm not being responsible", he responded. Related to this, he commented he just studied the lessons and he also admitted this was not enough.

STUDENT B's INTERVIEW

When he was asked if he felt comfortable with teachers 1 and 2, he answered that he did not feel willing to participate in class, for teachers did not show a friendly attitude so often. Regarding teachers' interest toward students' learning, he answered that teachers tried to make him and his classmates conscious of the importance of their career and asked them to bring homework assignments and not to miss classes. Concerning the way teachers motivated him and his classmates, he commented that classes were not as attractive as he

expected them to be. Regarding bad grades in exams he responded: “I’m not the kind of student I am supposed to be because I do not study enough, and I guess the same is happening with my classmates.” So, he was questioned what he was doing to improve his grades and he answered that he did not study as much as he should. “I just study one day before the exam or the same day of the exam”, he replied.

STUDENT C's INTERVIEW

Concerning comfort with teachers 1 and 2, student C expressed that she did not feel comfortable with them. She added she felt bored sometimes since classes were not so dynamic. She also replied these teachers were not so friendly sometimes when correcting her and her classmates. Regarding teachers’ interest toward her learning and her classmates’, she answered that teachers were helping them with extra classes . “So I think that is part of their interest toward our learning”, she added. Then she talked about how teachers motivated her and her comments were not so positive. She expressed that although teachers tried to do a good job, classes lacked dynamism, so she and her classmates were not so active in class. Then when she was questioned why students were getting bad grades and what they were doing to improve them; she responded that they were getting bad or low grades since they did not study enough and that they did not do as much as they should to improve such grades.

STUDENT D's INTERVIEW

Related to how she felt with teachers 1 and 2, she answered that she did not feel comfortable, for teachers were not so friendly sometimes. She was also asked how she noticed her teachers’ interest toward her learning and her classmates’, and she replied that she

could notice this through extra classes teachers were teaching and also through dynamic activities teachers developed in class sometimes. Then she commented how teachers motivated her; she expressed that she did not feel motivated by teachers all the time because they used the same activities in class very often and almost never used attractive material. Regarding bad grades, she expressed that her studying habits were not appropriate; that was why such a situation was taking place. This student was also questioned what she and her classmates were doing to solve that situation and she replied that she was not taking so seriously her studies and that she was not doing so much to improve her grades. “And, in my opinion, the same is happening with my classmates, she replied.”

STUDENT E's INTERVIEW

In regards to how she felt with teachers 1 and 2, she answered she just felt comfortable with teacher 2, for this teacher made her feel her mistakes were natural in the learning process. Then she expressed that she noticed her teachers' interest toward students' learning in that they were on time to teach, they assigned homework assignments, they encouraged them not to miss class, they taught extra classes, but they lacked dynamism. Then she commented teachers did not motivate her and her classmates enough; she said that although she liked English very much, she sometimes felt really bored since classes were not as dynamic as she wished. After, she was questioned why students were getting bad grades and what she and her classmates were doing to improve such a situation, and she replied that exams were kind of difficult and that she and her classmates did not make the effort they needed to improve their grades.

The following matrix represents the information obtained from the administration of the interview to the Intermediate I English students, group number 1.

<i>STUDENTS' INTERVIEW GROUP 1</i>	<i>TOPIC AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE INTERVIEW</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>CODE</i>
<i>DATE</i> <i>04-11-2004</i>			
QUESTION 1	Students A, B, C, and D said they did not feel well with teachers 1 and 2.	Comfort with teachers 1 and 2	COMT
QUESTION 2	The five students expressed teachers 1 and 2 were interested in their learning.	Teachers' interest in students' learning	TEISLE
QUESTION 3	The five students admitted they did not study consciously.	Reasons for getting low grades	REFGELG
QUESTION 4	The five students said teachers 1 and 2 did not motivate them enough.	Teachers' way of motivating students	TEWOMS
QUESTION 5	The five students stated they were doing few things to improve their English grades.	Means for improving English grades	MEFIEG

STUDENT F's INTERVIEW

Student F was asked if he felt comfortable with teachers 3 and 4; he answered that he did only with teacher 3 because she was friendly. Regarding his English teachers' interest in his learning, he responded that teacher 3 showed interest because she encouraged him to attend classes, to do homework assignments, to study hard, and so forth, but teacher number 4 did not care if he did not study. Also he expressed how teachers 3 and 4

motivated him, and he stated that both teachers only told them that learning English was difficult, and that they had to improve. In relation to low grades, he said that he did not study as hard as he should. Finally he was asked about what he was doing in order to improve his English grades, and he added that he tried to speak English with his classmates whenever he had time, and he also expressed he did homework assignments.

STUDENT G's INTERVIEW

Student G was asked if he felt comfortable with teachers 3 and 4, and he answered that teacher 3 showed a friendly attitude toward him, so he felt free to speak in class, but not with teacher 4 since this teacher did not correct him in a friendly manner. Then he commented that both teachers were interested in all students' learning since both assigned a lot of homework. Regarding how teachers motivated him to learn English, he expressed any of them almost never motivated him because he believed they were almost always in a bad mood. Also he was questioned why the majority of the class was getting low grades, and he expressed most of them did not have a high level of responsibility. He also added that to improve his English grades, he listened to the audio program of the text book, spoke English with his classmates, and tried to do all his homework assignments.

STUDENT H's INTERVIEW

In relation to comfort student H expressed he felt comfortable with teacher 3 because this teacher was giving him all the time a sense of achievement and encouraging him to speak while teacher 4 was serious in her classes and did not give him enough confidence to express his ideas thoroughly. Then he expressed both teachers were interested in students learning since they assigned a lot of homework in order to see how much he was learning. Regarding

how teachers 3 and 4 motivated him to learn, he answered both teachers motivated him through individual, pair-work, and group-work activities, but their classes sometimes turned boring and the classroom heat increased that boredom. He also commented that the majority of his classmates were getting low grades since they missed classes and that they believed studying English was easy, but as time passed by, they realized they had to do a bigger effort in order to get good grades. In relation to what he was doing in order to improve his English grades, he responded that he tried to speak with American people in order to improve his speaking skill and read his English book in order to gain more vocabulary.

STUDENT I's INTERVIEW

Student I was questioned if she felt comfortable with teachers 3 and 4, and she answered she never did since she was always nervous when speaking English in class. Also, she expressed that both teachers were interested in students' learning since they made her aware of her mistakes, and told her how she could overcome them. Besides, she commented that only teacher 3 motivated her because she spoke English fluently. Concerning bad grades, she responded that exams were very difficult, for her level of English was not broad. In regards to what she was doing in order to improve her English grades, she expressed she did all the exercises assigned by teachers, and she tried to speak English with her classmates.

STUDENT J's INTERVIEW

She was questioned if she felt comfortable with teachers 3 and 4, and she expressed she did not feel so much comfortable with both teachers, not because of them, but because she was always unsure when answering. Related to teachers' interest in her learning, she answered that teachers tried to do their job, which was to teach in order for all the students to

improve their abilities, “but sometimes classes are boring, and in this condition, learning is slow”, she replied”. Then she commented she felt motivated when teacher number 3 told her about her years in the university, and about how difficult finishing her career was. In relation to low grades, she admitted she was not studying so much, and she also expressed that teachers should have helped them more before exams, since exams were pretty difficult for them. In regards to what she was doing to improve her English grades, she expressed she tried to practice pronunciation, did her homework, practiced doing written exercises, and practiced orally with her classmates.

The following matrix represents the information obtained from the administration of the interview directed to the Intermediate I English students, second group.

<i>STUDENTS’ INTERVIEW GROUP 2</i>	<i>TOPIC AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE INTERVIEW</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>CODE</i>
<i>DATE 04-11-2004</i>			
QUESTION 1	Students F, G, and H expressed they did not feel comfortable with teacher 4, but they did with teacher 3 whereas students I and J commented they felt uncomfortable not because of the teachers but because of their nervousness when speaking.	Comfort with teachers 1 and 2	COMT
QUESTION 2	Student F expressed only teacher 3 was interested in students’ learning. Students G, H, I, and J expressed that both teachers were	Teachers’ interest in students’ learning	TEISLE

	interested.		
QUESTION 3	Students F, G, and H expressed that their level of responsibility was low while students I and J expressed exams were difficult.	Reasons for getting low grades	REFGELG
QUESTION 4	Students F and G said teachers almost never motivated them while student H said both did. Students I and J expressed that only teacher 3 motivated them.	Teachers' way of motivating students	TEWOMS
QUESTION 5	All the students expressed they practiced with their classmates, did homework assignments, practiced pronunciation, spoke with American people, and read English books.	Means for improving English grades	MEFIEG

RESULTS OF THE OBSERVATION TO STUDENTS

Regarding the use of Spanish in class, it was observed that students spoke Spanish in all the classes almost all the class time as when teachers were doing certain activities in the class. Students also asked questions in Spanish to their teachers and talked in Spanish to their classmates. Just a few spoke English sometimes in class, but when talking to these guys, they said they had been born in the States. Still, there were some others that had not been born in the States, but tried to use English as much as they could since they said they were motivated

to learn. It is worth pointing out that teachers did not do any major effort to try to diminish students' use of Spanish in class. Besides, it was noticed that many students had problems understanding English because of their lack of English vocabulary and also when studying new structures. As mentioned before, students' lack of vocabulary prevented them from understanding and talking about certain topics in class. During the interview it was found out that some students they did not do so much to improve their vocabulary, "we do not read, write, or look up words in the dictionary, just when necessary", some of them commented. In relation to how they felt when speaking English, just a few students expressed they felt comfortable. They did not care about mistakes but the rest was very nervous when speaking in front of the class and even when speaking from their seats. The researchers think the attitude of the English teachers had a lot to do in this case, as some students expressed in the questionnaire, they did not even want to enter the class because of the way teachers corrected them. Related to students' participation, at the beginning of the observation it was observed that the same people participated. Also the teacher only focused on the same guys. The rest only spoke when being asked, that is to say, students did not show a high level of interest to volunteer in order to participate. This situation did not change during the second half of the observation. In regards to students' attitude toward their classmates, some students made their classmates feel embarrassed or ashamed sometimes when they laughed at them when performing any activity in front of the class. Also there were those students who did not care about this situation and laughed together when their classmate tried to make them feel bad. In relation to students' attitude toward the class, it was noticed that the majority of students came to class. However, there were some students that came to the university but did not enter the class; they said they felt bored at some stages in class because of teachers' lack of dynamism so they felt like not being in class. As for students' attitude toward the teacher,

they showed they liked their teachers or that they had no problems with them, but as explained previously, at certain moments of the class students showed a negative attitude toward their teachers when they were not dynamic or friendly. Concerning students' motivation, it was noticeable that students had a very low motivation since some of them did not come to class often, did not volunteer to participate in class, spoke Spanish most of the time, so they did not show any major improvement in their speaking skill. Finally, students' lack of responsibility was shown since many of them missed classes, did not bring homework, came late to class, and left the class before finishing.

The following matrix represents the information obtained from the class observation of the Intermediate I English students.

<i>OBSERVATION TO STUDENTS</i>	<i>TOPIC AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE OBSERVATION</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>CODE</i>
<i>DATE</i> <i>16-08 / 29-10 2004</i>			
ASPECT 1	The majority of the students spoke Spanish most of the class time.	Use of Spanish in class	USIC
ASPECT 2	Many students had problems when dealing with new topics.	Students' problems in understanding English	SPIN
ASPECT 3	Most of them lacked English vocabulary.	Students' lack of English vocabulary	VOLA
ASPECT 4	The majority felt uncomfortable.	Students' comfort to interact	COMS
ASPECT 5	The same people participated almost in every class.	Students' participation	SPA
ASPECT 6	Everybody laughed at each other.	Students' attitude toward each other	SATE
ASPECT 7	They felt bored most of the class time.	Students' attitude toward the class	SATOC
ASPECT 8	Students showed a negative attitude in certain stages of the class .	Students' attitude toward the teacher	SATOT

ASPECT 9	Few people were motivated.	Students' motivation	STUMO
ASPECT 10	The majority showed lack of responsibility.	Students' responsibility	STURES

RESULTS OF THE OBSERVATION TO TEACHERS

First of all, regarding classroom setting, it is worth mentioning that although the classrooms were not as appropriate as desired and the class was a large one, teachers did not do any effort to make the classroom look different in order to provide students a better environment in class. Related to teachers' use of Spanish, there is not much to say since teachers knew very well their responsibility to speak English all the time; however, teachers sometimes spoke Spanish to the students out of the classroom before or after the class. Besides, though it was not possible to control every single student, it was noticed that teachers did not do enough to prevent students from speaking Spanish in class. They just told students not to do it which was not the best solution to the problem since it continued happening. In relation to teachers' way of correcting students' mistakes it could be observed that students made mistakes very often and teachers corrected them at once, but with the exception of one teacher, their way of correcting was not the best sometimes which made students feel uncomfortable and embarrassed. Concerning teachers' interest toward students' learning, it was observed that teachers tried to make students understand and use the language appropriately. Also they started and finished the class on time and helped the students whenever possible. Still there was a negative point to mention, i.e., teachers' comments to the students by the end of the semester: "Only half of you is going to pass." "Do not even come to the make up test." "I do not care if you do not practice, I already know English." Besides, teachers sometimes did not prepare interesting activities

for the class. Regarding teachers' attitude toward the students, it was not negative, but sometimes it was not appropriate as when they said to the students the words in quotation mentioned above. Concerning teachers' frequency use of attractive material and dynamic activities, it was noticed that teachers did not make use of them most of the time. Teacher 1 only brought some material the first day of the week during the first month of the observation; the rest of teachers mostly worked with the lesson plans, the book, photocopies, charts with dialogues, tapes, tape recorder, and slips of paper. As for teachers' creation of a participative class, the aspect mentioned above had some negative effect in this point since students sometimes were not eager to participate because classes turned boring at certain stages. Also sometimes it was hard for teachers to involve all the students because the class was a large one. Yet, teachers sometimes focused only on people who had few problems in speaking, neglecting those who really needed more practice. Besides, at the beginning of the class observation, teachers' speaking in class was approximately 70%, for students depended on teachers, but as time passed by, teachers' speaking decreased to 40%. Finally, concerning teachers' creation of a suitable environment in class, it was observed that although the classroom did not permit to reach this objective in a 100%, as mentioned previously. However, teachers tried to create a good environment by developing some activities to pursue such objective. Yet, teachers' attitude was not correct sometimes; likewise, students' attitude was incorrect when disrespecting each other and shouting in class without having any correction from teachers.

The following matrix represents the information obtained from the class observation of the Intermediate I English teachers.

<i>OBSERVATION TO TEACHERS</i>	<i>TOPIC AND WORDS TAKEN FROM THE OBSERVATION</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>CODE</i>
<i>DATE</i> <i>16-08 / 29-10 2004</i>			
ASPECT 1	Teachers did almost nothing to provide a good classroom setting.	Classroom setting	CLASS
ASPECT 2	Spanish was hardly used.	Teachers' use of Spanish in class	TUSIC
ASPECT 3	No effort was done in order to stop students from speaking Spanish.	Teachers' allowance to use Spanish in class	TAUSIC
ASPECT 4	Teachers 1, 2, and 4 seemed unfriendly when correcting students	Teachers' way of correcting	TEWOC
ASPECT 5	Teachers showed they were interested in students' learning.	Teachers' interest toward students' learning	TITOSL
ASPECT 6	With the exception of teacher 3, they did not have a good attitude.	Teachers' attitude toward students	TATOS
ASPECT 7	Attractive material was hardly used.	Use of attractive material and dynamic activities	UAMADA
ASPECT 8	Teachers tried to have a participative class though it was difficult.	Teachers' creation of a participative class	TECOPAC
ASPECT 9	At the beginning teachers spoke approximately 70% but it decreased to 40% by the end.	Teachers' speaking in class	TESIC
ASPECT 10	Teachers tried to have a good learning environment, but it was not enough.	Teachers' creation of a suitable environment	TECOSE

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The following analysis is based on all the information gathered through all the instruments used: a questionnaire and a non-structured interview administered to the English students who took Intensive Intermediate English I at the university of El Salvador, Western

Multidisciplinary Campus last year, a questionnaire administered to the English teachers in charge of these English students, an observation guide for the students, and an observation guide for the English teachers.

All the information will be analyzed in terms of categories; that is, influence of Spanish, students' motivation, teachers' role in the classroom, learning environment, and so forth.

To begin, the influence of Spanish on students learning was a point teachers 1, 2, and 4, in the questionnaire, considered was not the main factor affecting the English students' learning process. They commented there were other factors such as, students' lack of preparation, students' lack of responsibility, and students' lack of motivation which were affecting more. However, students as well as teacher 3 agreed that Spanish was indeed the main barrier affecting the learning process. During the class observation, the researchers could verify that although Spanish was present on students' learning, it was students' lack of responsibility and lack of motivation what was affecting them the most, since students seemed not to be interested in their learning, and they did not care about their studies. That is why they did not do homework assignments, missed classes, and so forth. In fact, the students interviewed confirmed their lack of responsibility and their lack of motivation when they said their studying habits were not good, and that they did not make so much effort to improve their English. It is worth mentioning that students pointed out that teachers also contributed to their lack of motivation since they lacked dynamism in their classes as teacher 3 answered in the questionnaire "*teachers do not motivate students enough*". In addition, students expressed that teachers' attitude was not appropriate sometimes when correcting them which made them feel uncomfortable and not motivated.

Concerning students' motivation, teachers expressed that they tried to motivate the students by means of a variety of activities such as games, music, jokes, and

videos. However, students expressed that teachers only motivated them sometimes since such activities mentioned above were rarely used, and there were lack of attractive material most of the time, so classes turned boring. Related to these aspects, during the class observation, researchers could witness that along the three months of observation, teachers did not use all the extra material they mentioned above. Besides, activities were monotonous, and teachers' way of correcting students' mistakes was not appropriate sometimes, which somehow made students have a negative attitude toward the teacher and the class itself.

CONCLUSIONS

After having gathered and analyzed all the information obtained through all the instruments applied to the students and teachers taken as the sample for this study, the two researchers drew the following conclusions:

- 1.* The first factor affecting the students who took Intensive Intermediate English I in the second semester in 2004 at the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus is students' lack of motivation as it was realized during teachers' responses, class observation, and students' responses in the questionnaire.
- 2.* As the majority of students expressed, the second factor affecting the students was their lack of responsibility which was observed during class observation. The majority of students came late to class, did not attend class, and did not do homework assignments.
- 3.* Another factor affecting students' learning of English was the lack of dynamism teachers showed in the development of their classes.

4. Since the English teachers in charge of the students seemed to be annoyed when correcting students' mistakes, as students stated in the interview, teachers' attitude toward students' mistakes was another factor affecting the students' learning of English.

5. Although some of the teachers did show interest in students' learning, there were some that did not seem to be interested since their attitude towards students was not so appropriate. So, the researchers concluded that teachers' interest on students' learning was another factor blocking students learning of English.

6. Another factor that affected students' learning was that English teachers did not prepare enough attractive material in order to motivate their students.

7. Taking into account that the economical resources of the University of El Salvador, Western Multidisciplinary Campus did not permit to have appropriate classrooms for the learning of a language, it was not expected to have an excellent environment in the classroom for the learning of English. However, teachers did not show so much interest to improve the learning atmosphere in the classroom.

8. Considering that El Salvador is a country where English is not widely spoken, the researchers concluded that the environment outside the classroom does not provide many opportunities for students to speak English . Therefore, students do not practice as they should.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results obtained through the analysis and interpretation of data, the researchers recommend that:

1. Since it was noticed that sometimes teachers did not correct students appropriately, teachers should try to be more careful and patient when correcting students so that students do not feel uncomfortable or embarrassed when being corrected.
2. Because of the lack of responsibility students showed by not doing homework assignments, which students expressed were hard to do sometimes because they had to write a lot, teachers should assign different kinds of homework assignments such as interviewing English speakers (native if possible), recording TV commercials and talking about them, videotaping different places or events in their cities and preparing a mini presentation, and recording their own conversations in order to practice pronunciation.
3. Teachers tried to make a good job in class and showed they were interested in students' learning by teaching them extra classes and trying to make them conscious of the importance of attending classes and submitting homework assignments, still it was noticed that teachers did not prepare enough attractive material to teach and that they did not develop dynamic activities so often, so teachers should take more time preparing better their classes in order to make them more attractive.
4. As it was learnt that students had problems with their English vocabulary and pronunciation, students should be assigned more homework assignments related to the reading skill. Teachers should assign students to read short stories, articles, magazines, newspapers in English if possible, and others, so that students improve their English vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and competence.
5. In order for students to develop the habit of writing in English from the very beginning, teachers should assign students to keep a journal from Intensive Basic English.
6. English students should be more conscious that the learning of a second language, English in this case, requires a change in their studying habits, so they should get accustomed

to reading and writing everyday in the target language, to learning new words each day and practicing them in context, and speaking in the target language as much as possible.

7. Teachers should create different group-work and pair-work in the classroom taking into account that some students have more learning aptitudes so that they can help one another.

8. Taking into account that students are not in contact directly with the English language, students should create their own groups to study and practice the language every day.

9. Although the English department does not provide all the necessary resources, i.e., charts, pictures, flashcards, and others, teachers could negotiate with students about the cleaning and decoration of the classroom during the time class. Teachers should work along with the students preparing attractive material about the topics being studied. They could also paint the classroom and clean it from time to time or when necessary in order to improve the learning atmosphere in class.

10. Although teachers have a great deal of experience teaching English, they should be conscious that one never stops learning, so they should attend more seminars or workshops about English teaching so that they learn more and new strategies and techniques to put them into practice in their classes.

11. In order to have a better control of what is going on with teachers' job in their classes and students, teachers' classes should be supervised more often in different ways such as unannounced class observation and videotaping.

12. Though it was noticeable that English teachers developed their role in a very good way, as facilitators and teachers (as they stated in the questionnaire administered to them), it was observed that teacher-students relationship was not very close, so teachers should try to be more a friend, a counselor, and even a parent.

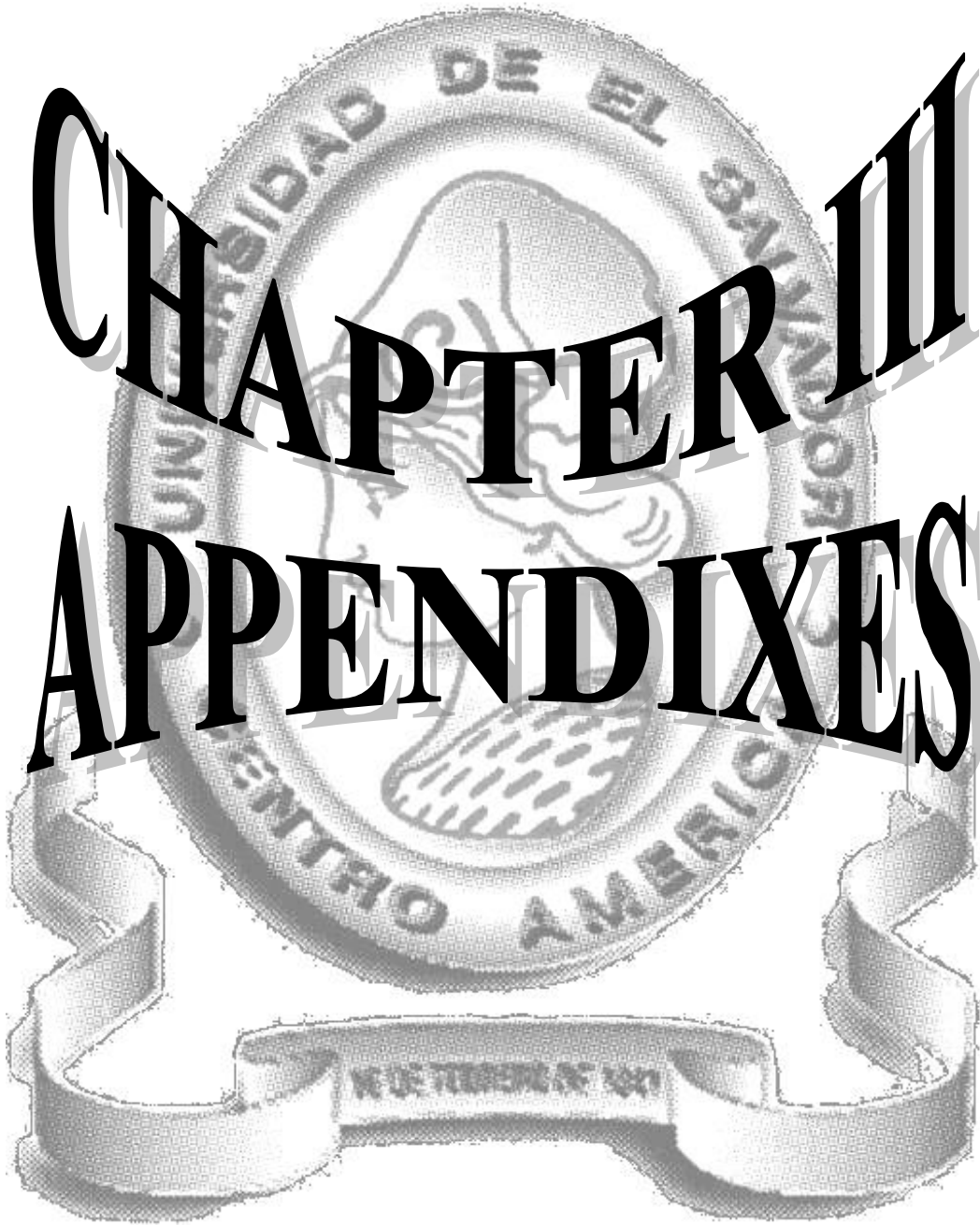
13. Since the teaching-learning process requires the participation of both teachers and students, students should express their teachers their likes and dislikes so that teachers prepare material and lessons that meet students' needs.

14. As the classroom is the place where students are more in contact with the language, they should try to interact more among them by practicing the target language.

15. Students should take advantage of every opportunity they encounter to practice the language whether inside or outside the classroom so that they can advance little by little in their learning.

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UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR
FACULTAD MULTIDISCIPLINARIA DE OCCIDENTE
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS

El presente cuestionario tiene como objetivo recopilar información sobre los problemas de aprendizaje que enfrentan los estudiantes de Inglés básico intensivo de la Facultad Multidisciplinaria de Occidente.

Instrucciones: Lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta y responda de manera objetiva.

EDAD _____ SEXO: M _____ F _____

1. ¿Por qué decidió estudiar inglés como carrera?

2. Antes de estudiar inglés en la universidad, ¿había realizado estudios de inglés?

SI _____ NO _____

3. Para usted el aprender inglés como idioma extranjero le parece:

FACIL _____ NO MUY FACIL _____ DIFICIL _____ MUY DIFICIL _____
¿Por qué?

4. ¿Considera que el medio en el cual usted aprende inglés contribuye de manera positiva o negativa en su aprendizaje? ¿Por qué?

5. Al participar en clase siente: TEMOR _____ PENA _____ INSEGURIDAD _____
¿Por qué?

6. ¿Usa el español en su clase de inglés? SI _____ NO _____
Si su respuesta es SI, explique por qué.

7. ¿Necesita traducir para entender lo que dice el docente en su clase de inglés?

SIEMPRE _____ ALGUNAS VECES _____ NUNCA _____

8. ¿Habla usted inglés fuera del salón de clase?

SIEMPRE _____ A VECES _____ RARAS VECES _____ NUNCA _____

9. ¿Qué hace usted para mejorar su inglés?

COMENTARIOS

Docente:
Inglés Básico Intensivo

Nosotros, Byron Johalmo Ortíz y Cristian Giovanni Padilla alumnos egresados de Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza actualmente realizando el trabajo de grado denominado “PRINCIPALES BARRERAS QUE ENFRENTAN LOS HABLANTES DEL ESPANOL DURANTE EL APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLES COMO IDIOMA EXTRANJERO”, le saludamos muy cordialmente deseándole éxitos en su vida laboral y personal.

El motivo de la presente es para solicitarle su permiso para administrar un cuestionario a los alumnos a su cargo. Esta actividad tiene como objetivo recopilar información la cual servirá para el desarrollo del trabajo antes mencionado.

Esperando su colaboración le agradecemos de antemano.

Atentamente

Byron Johalmo Ortíz

Cristian Geovanni Padilla

Lic. Juan Antonio Escalante
Docente Director

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

CLASS OBSERVATION GUIDE SHEET

Teacher's name: _____ Group: _____
Date: _____ Time:

OBJECTIVE: To identify the aspects that might be affecting the students' learning of English.

1. Classroom setting
2. Teacher's use of Spanish in class
3. Teacher's allowance to use Spanish in class
4. Teacher's way of correcting students
5. Teacher's interest toward student's learning
6. Teacher's attitude toward students
7. Teacher's frequent use of attractive material
8. Teacher's frequent use of dynamic activities
9. Teacher's creation of a participative class
10. Teacher's speaking in class
11. Teacher's creation of a suitable environment in class

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LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

CLASS OBSERVATION GUIDE SHEET

Group:_____

OBJECTIVE: To identify the aspects that might be affecting the students' learning of English.

1. Use of Spanish in class
2. Problems in understanding the language
3. Students' lack of vocabulary
4. Students' comfort to speak in class
5. Students' participation
6. Students' attitude toward their classmates
7. Students' attitude toward the class
8. Students' attitude toward the teacher
9. Students' motivation
10. Students' responsibility

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LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

GROUP: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERMEDIATE I ENGLISH STUDENTS

The present questionnaire is aimed at gathering information which will serve the undergraduate English students, Byron Ortiz and Cristian Padilla, to carry out their undergraduate work.

Directions: Read each question carefully and answer them objectively.

1. How does Spanish influence your learning of English?

2. How does your teacher correct you?

3. How do you notice your teacher's interest in your learning?

4. Does the teacher use attractive material in class?

5. Does the teacher use activities that promote your participation?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Never

Explain: _____

6. Do you feel motivated in class?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Never

Why?

7. How does the teacher awake your motivation?

8. What is your relation with the teacher like?

9. What does the teacher do to create a good environment for learning? How often?

10. What do you do to practice your English outside the classroom? How often?

11. What do you do to improve your speaking skill and vocabulary?

12. What is your role in the classroom?

Active

Average

Passive

Explain:

Comments :

....

THANK YOU!!!

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

GROUP: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERMEDIATE I ENGLISH TEACHERS

Dear teacher:

The present questionnaire is aimed at gathering information which will serve the undergraduate English students, Byron Ortiz and Cristian Padilla, to carry out their undergraduate work.

Directions: Read carefully and answer the following questions objectively.

1. Do you consider Spanish to be the main barrier for students to learn English?

YES

NO

Why?

2. What other factors do you consider affect students' learning?

Explain:

3. Describe your role in the class.

4. How do you correct your students?

5. Describe the students' role in the class.

6. Describe your students' attitude toward the learning of English.

7. How do you show your interest toward students' learning?

8. What do you do in order to motivate the students?

9. What do you do to create a non-threatening environment in class?

10. Describe the extra material you use in class.?

11. How do you promote the students' participation equally in class?

12. How do you encourage students to practice the English language outside the classroom?

Comments :

THANK YOU!

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

INTERVIEW FOR INTERMEDIATE I ENGLISH STUDENTS

OBJECTIVE: TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SOME ASPECTS THAT STUDENTS DID NOT CLARIFY WELL IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

1. DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR ENGLISH TEACHERS?
2. HOW CAN YOU NOTICE YOUR ENGLISH TEACHERS' INTEREST IN YOUR LEARNING?
3. HOW DO THE ENGLISH TEACHERS MOTIVATE YOU?
4. WHY DO YOU THINK MANY STUDENTS ARE GETTING LOW GRADES?
5. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH GRADES?