

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



**A STUDY ON THE APPLICATION OF THE STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING  
APPROACH IN THE METHODOLOGICAL AXIS COURSES OF THE ENGLISH  
TEACHING MAJOR OFFERED BY THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING SEMESTERS I AND II IN  
THE YEAR 2018**

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## **Abstract.**

This descriptive research emerged from an academic change promoted by the authorities of the University of El Salvador pleading for the use of the Student Centered Learning Approach, in that sense the present study attempted to reach a better understanding if that approach is being applied or not. This research was also motivated by the information provided in the educational model which looks to improve its education. This study was placed in the School of Arts and Sciences at the Foreign Language Department specially in the Methodological Axis Courses from the English Teaching Major, during semesters I and II through the year 2018. The instruments to collect data involved observations, interviews and surveys. In addition, the results suggested that even though this approach is not entirely applied, there are many attributes of the Student Centered Learning Approach that are being applied by the professors to help the students acquire the knowledge in the Methodological Axis Courses at the Foreign Language Department. Besides, this research pretends to be a contribution to the process that the Curricular Committee of the Foreign Languages Department is carrying out in the attempt to change the current curricula design.

## **Abbreviations.**

-ETM: English Teaching Major.

-FLD: Foreign Language Department.

-MAC: Methodological Axis Courses (also known as Methodological Area).

-SCL: Student Centered Learning.

-SCLA: Student Centered Learning Approach.



## **I. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1. Delimitation of the problem.**

The demands of the new society have pushed educational institutions to look for improvement in the teaching-learning process. This has promoted the development and promotion of innovating teaching approaches such as the Student Centered Learning Approach. “Student-Centered Learning, as the term suggests, is a way of learning or teaching that puts the learner at the center...” (European students’ union, 2010). Students have to be given great importance during the learning process in any educational institution, but with more emphasis in universities as “higher education institutions play a central role in providing lifelong learning...” The European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2015).

At this respect, the University of El Salvador is trying to improve and adequate its way of teaching to academic and professional needs currently required by the society in particular and by a globalized world in general. As a result, in the administration of engineer Mario Roberto Nieto Lovo (Academic Rector) and professor Ana María Glower de Alvarado (Academic Vicerector) from 2011-2015, great efforts were made to implement a pedagogical model that systematized the teaching-learning process in all the careers that the University administers. This process mostly conducted by professor Ana Maria Glower led to the presentation of the current educational model, which looks to innovate the teaching-learning process in the majors offered by its different schools and with the purpose of promoting the professional development of the students. Somehow, the majors oriented to teaching or related with education should be more concerned with the application of this model. Mainly because UNESCO (2014) states that “teachers, and national policies that shape the teaching profession, are critical for the provision of a good quality education, as teachers are the key facilitators of learning.” By reading the current educational model of the University of El Salvador, we can infer that the university in a way is going in the right direction since it contains the institutional polices that call for the qualification of the

professors, who will be in charge of changing the future generations of professors formed at the university.

The University of El Salvador has many majors through its schools, which deal with the professional formation of professors. However, this research will be carried out specifically at the Foreign Language Department of the university, where the English Teaching Major is intended to prepare students professionally to apply their knowledge in the education area. The current study plan of this major is made up of thirty six academic courses, but the study will be focused on analyzing the seven courses that are responsible of empowering the students with the knowledge required by the teaching profession. These constitute a group of courses, which is recognized as the Methodological Axis Courses of the major. Thus, the research team considers of great importance to analyze the learning process that takes place in those courses in order to determine how close or far it is from the application of the SCLA principles or characteristics.

## **2. Statement of the problem.**

A study on the application of the Student Centered Learning Approach in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major offered by the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during semester I and II in the year 2018.

### **3. Objectives.**

#### **General:**

- To give a description about the importance of the Student Centered Learning Approach in the professional development of the students and professors.
- To provide an analysis of the methodological approach applied in the courses that belong to the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major offered by the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

#### **Specific:**

- To provide a description of the methodological approach applied by the professors in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major.
- To identify the role that professors and students have in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major during the teaching – learning process.
- To determine the main features of the Student Centered Learning Approach applied in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major to promote the professional development of the students.

#### **4. Research questions.**

##### **General question.**

How are the Student Centered Learning Approach principles being applied in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major offered by the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador?

##### **Subsidiary questions.**

- How much do professors at the Foreign Language Department know about the Student Centered Learning Approach?
- What are the features that predominate in the methodological approach applied by the professors in the Methodological Axis Courses?
- In general, what do the professors do to promote knowledge and to help the students to grow professionally in the Methodological Axis Courses?

## 5. Justification.

According to the QS World University Rankings in 2018, the University of El Salvador is one of the most recognized institutions in Central America and also it is known as the best university in the country by their education programs into the different majors this institution can offer to its students. It is important to take into account that this institution has its own educational model to accomplish its objectives with the three essential functions of the university which are teaching, research and social service (*Modelo Educativo y Políticas y Lineamientos Curriculares de la Universidad de El Salvador - Gestión 2011 – 2015*). However, the actual recognition and model do not mean that the institution covers all the needs when it comes to education specially in the teaching majors.

The main motivation to carry out this research has been stimulated by the model previously mentioned, which states that there is awareness among the authorities and professors about the need to improve the quality of teaching. However, there are limitations from the institution and the professors themselves to qualify. Besides, the same educational model establishes the policies to provide a modern education which seeks to develop the competences that the new generations need by putting the students at the centre of the teaching-learning process. However, there are majors such as the ones related with education in the Science and Arts School, and Natural Sciences School that have at least an eighteen years-study plan without being updated. To go beyond and with the purpose of being more specific, the Foreign Language Department is where the English Teaching Major takes place inside the University of El Salvador. This major has a study plan that dates from 1999 (*Catálogo Académico Pre-Grados - Universidad de El Salvador, 2011*). This is in a way overwhelming since the *Ley General de Educacion* establishes that an appropriate period of time for a study plan validity (curriculum) should be no more than five years but unfortunately some study plans have almost twenty years without being changed.

At the respect we must highlight that the study plan design is very important to provide the academic tools and to develop the professional competencies, otherwise students can face

issues in their professional career, specially the students from majors related with education and teaching since they might use the same outdated contents and methods in their classes and commit the same mistake in case their study plan design is not updated.

The reasons previously stated arise the necessity of understanding the relationship between what the educational model of the university looks for and what is actually going on within the teaching-learning process. Added to this is the researchers own experience in the ETM. They consider there are some aspects that should be improved in the major in mention, mainly because the major establishes the teaching of the foreign language by using a communicative approach taking into account aspects that help the teaching-learning process not only for professors but also for students, which is not put into practice in some courses.

The ETM has a study plan that is made up of thirty six courses within a five years-period of time but the concern of the researchers is related with teaching-learning process that takes place in some of them due to the major has the objective of making students to become English professors. The major has a core in its study plan that is known as the Methodological Axis Courses which include the courses that work together to make possible the major's purpose from the beginning until the end of the ETM. There are seven courses that belong to this Methodological Axis which are: General Didactic, Psycopedagogy, TEFL I, TEFL II, TEFL III, Practice Teaching I and Practice Teaching II. The courses from the Methodological Axis in the ETM are critical for students' professional career in the future. Therefore, a survey related with the current situation into the Methodological Axis and its function was addressed to students to have an idea on how much they are aware about not only the purpose of the MAC of the major but also the importance of the teaching approach applied in the classes. The results from the survey showed that even though there was a big amount of students who said that most of these features were enough to make them feel confident to become professors, there was another meaningful amount of students who thought there are some features that need to be changed or modified to get a better experience at the moment of being taught. The previous results can not be ignored because it is clear that not all the students from this major feel

satisfied with the actual teaching approach in some of the MAC for the English Teaching Major.

Therefore, the present research is considered of great importance because it will provide valuable information related with the methodological approach applied by the professors at FLD. Furthermore, as this new trend on the teaching-learning process is supposed to be used in the campus, the study pretends not only to identify its efficiency in the development of students' teaching skills but also to provide authorities, professors and students with an overview of the effectiveness in the learning process that takes place in the development of the courses that belong to the Methodological Axis. Besides, the research looks to identify elements from the Student Centered Learning Approach that could help, if necessary, to improve the methodological approach applied by professors to have a better experience in the teaching-learning process at the FLD.

## **II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **6. History.**

#### **6.1. Antecedents of Student Centered Learning.**

According to European Students Union (2010) Student Centered Learning does not have one universally-agreed definition, despite being a term often used by a number of higher education policy-makers. However, there is, a principle which has been agreed by all proponents and researchers of the SCL approach. This is that SCL is based on the philosophy that the student is at the heart of the learning process. “O’Sullivan (2004) says the concept of SCL can be credited to Hayward in as early as 1905 and, later, to Dewey’s work.” ( Erasmus+, 2016).

It can be inferred that Dewey himself was proponent of Student Centered Learning. According to Dewey the student is the core around which the education process is organized. Dewey argued that students should be engaged in meaningful activity, invested in what they are learning, participate in classroom democracy, and that curricula should be relevant to their lives (Education Evolving, 2018).

Discussion of Student Centered Learning initially focused on changes to the pedagogical methods used and in making learning and educational processes more flexible, in order for students to participate as much as possible. While “the concept of Student Centered Learning in its most recent form is relatively new, the idea of looking at the way in which teaching is conducted and how learning processes work has spanned over almost two centuries” (European Students’Union, 2010).

Sabine Hoidn (2018) states “in an increasingly globalized world high-quality education is pivotal in order to better prepare students to actively and successfully participate in today’s dynamic societies.” In the last few years, Student Centered Learning has gained political recognition in the Bologna Process as a concept with the potential to improve both quality and equity in (higher) education. (Student Centered Learning is both, a mind-set and culture within a given education institution and a constructivist approach to learning and instruction.” (Sabine Hoidn, 2018).



In its many forms and incarnations, SCL or facets of it, also occur in the work of Piaget and Vygotsky but any real paradigm shift towards SCL in its current form occurs in the latter decades of the 20th century.

## **6.2. Contemporary Student Centered Learning.**

While there is a large body of theoretical and anecdotal literature, there is no agreed-upon definition for the overall concept of Student Centered Learning. Some theorists provide a broad definition like “students have a choice in their learning,” while others provide specific principles. Relatedly, there are several education organizations across the country—including the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Education Reimagined, Hewlett Foundation, Next Generation Learning Challenges, Center for Collaborative Education, New Schools Venture Fund, and others—that have identified their own principles or definitions of Student Centered Learning they contend are necessary so all students can be successful in college, career, and life.

The implementation of the student centered paradigm is directly linked to systemic changes at all levels of the study content: recommended, written, taught, checked, supportive and hidden. The change at written study content level is identified by the reformulation of the study programs based on the logics of the study outcomes; at the teaching level it is described by active study methods, including a greater emphasis on independent studies. At the evaluation level of the study content – the assessment is based on the achievement level of the study outcomes; the supportive level guarantees the creation of an environment in higher education institutions needed for the achievement of the intended study outcomes. (Erasmus+ Project, 2016).

According to Erasmus+ Project, Student Centered Learning is being introduced in different professional fields, different geographical areas and practiced also in big classes. It also shows that teachers and students are acquainted with Student Centered Learning to a certain degree but that they are in need of more guidance, knowledge and understanding regarding its application and practice.

Nowadays, Education Evolving (2018) states that even though there is no agreed upon definition or singular program for realizing Student Centered Learning, the unifying theme is that in Student Centered Learning the model shifts from being adult-centered and

standardized to student-centric and individualized. Specifically, the learning is personalized to the students' unique needs, interests, and aspirations, and designed with their ideas and voices at the table.

### **6.3. Antecedent of the problematic situation under study: The University of El Salvador and the education based on learning.**

In order to establish the antecedents of this research there were consulted some research papers that have been carried out with the purpose of providing inputs for the improvement or qualification of the education of the University of El Salvador. Somehow, these documents describe the process of the last years, during which the university has tried to innovate the teaching-learning process to face a changing world where learning is key. And if education is to respond effectively to challenges posed by the rapid and constant changes which characterize the 21st century and its development, learning will have to take place throughout life. (UNESCO, 2014).

Due to international trends in education and the internal demands of the society of the last years, the University of El Salvador has made some attempts in order to qualify the education it provides. One of the most important has been the proposal and implementation of an integral and humanist educational model which was led by the vice academic rector during the 2011-2015 administration.

The following are some aspects highlighted by the model which promotes an integral formation based on the paradigms of learning.

#### *1. Modelo educativo y política y lineamientos curriculares de la Universidad de El Salvador (gestión 2011-2015).*

It emphasizes: The teaching-learning experience cannot be understood as a one-sided phenomenon in which one teaches and other learns limited by the material and cultural condition where the experience takes place. Therefore, the University of El Salvador can not articulate an educational model based on a single paradigm; in fact, its own character of public institution and its values and purposes demand the adoption of pedagogic paradigms that seek for the emancipation of the person and his or her integral development.

The new educational model states that it is necessary to move toward an active learning which develops the student's capacities in the current globalized and technological society. But this demands to change the role that teacher and student play in the education process as well. Therefore, it is paramount for a higher education professor to develop and apply methodologies and strategies that help the pupil to get a meaningful learning. As a result, the professor that is required by this educational model can not continue to work with the traditional pedagogy, instead of that, the teacher must promote the student's ideas and guide them through the teaching-learning process. Regarding the students, the model expresses that nobody learns for other. It is every person who will have the experience of taking for him or herself the knowledge in order to make the learning take place. In a nutshell, the student will have to turn himself or herself into a person who has developed autonomy and independence of thinking.

2. *Diagnóstico Institucional 2016, Secretaria de Planificación. Ciudad universitaria, mayo de 2017.*

In spite of the implementation of the new educational model, the institutional diagnosis carried out by the *Secretaria de Planificacion* of the university in the year 2017 arises the necessity of studying to what extent the model is being applied in classrooms. Regarding the model, the *Diagnóstico Institucional* expresses that the current educational model presents ideas of an educational model based on the integral development of the student, but it is a model approved for a specific administration only but not as an institutional model that has the approval of the university population. What is needed is to organize the many elements of the true educational model which are disperse within its organic law in order to get a coherent proposal that works as an instrument of pedagogic and curricular negotiation.

#### **6.4. The Foreign Language Department and its relation with an educational model based on learning.**

Even though there have not been carried out any researches that have a direct connection with the present study, there are important research papers that are somehow related with the topic since they reveal or provide important elements of the education provided in the

English Teaching Major of the FLD. Some of those documents give positive elements of the teaching learning process, which is worthy of being taken into consideration since the team wants to determine the effectiveness of the teaching that is intended to develop the students professionally in the teaching area.

The following research works are related with the ETM and provide an overview of the level of success that students get in the labor area. This success is determined in a way by the methodological approach applied by the teachers at the FLD.

1. *“Pertinencia de las asignaturas del programa de estudios vigente en relación al mercado laboral del graduado de la carrera Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés Opción Enseñanza del año 2009 al año 2013 del Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros, Facultad de Ciencias y Humanidades de la Universidad de El Salvador”*. By José Misael Aguilar Flores, Maryory Esmeralda Miranda de Gómez y Roxana Vanessa Mena 2016.

In this study the researcher got the conclusion that:

- The majority of the graduates start their labor life in the teaching area, and mostly in private institutions; there are other areas such as call centers, airlines among others where they are employed too. Therefore, it can be inferred that most of the graduates agreed on being more prepared to work in the teaching area.
- The results showed that more than a half of the graduates consider not being a hundred percent prepared to enter the current labor market due to some academic deficits in diverse areas. Added to this is the fact that enterprises and institutions want to hire experienced people, which makes it difficult for someone who just graduated to get a job. In spite of the obstacles the graduates consider they have performed better in the teaching areas.
- Even though the results show that some courses have played a fundamental role in their academic and professional growing, there are some courses of the current study plan that should be omitted from the study plan and incorporate others that help the students to adapt in a better way to the labor world, which is more demanding nowadays. If that can not be done; at least the methodology used to

teach the current courses should be improved so that the approaching of the different contents can be embraced.

Proceso de rediseño curricular de la carrera “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza” que ofrece el Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros de la Universidad de El Salvador by Curricular Committee from the Foreign Language Department, 2017.

Some aspects highlighted by Curricular Committee from the FLD are:

- Employers demand not only the use of technology applicable to the corresponding labor area but labor experience too. Not being those competences provided by the study plan of the major, the graduates are forced to complete their professional profile through extracurricular formation to get the level required by the employers.
- The institutions that hire professional of the English language know what they need in order to provide good education, so at the moment of hiring an English teacher, they look for very specific personal and professional competences. Among the required competences are the importance of having an advanced level of English, knowledge about pedagogic-didactic method, and being able to teach at different levels and ages. And the professional should be able to adapt himself or herself to the methodology that each institution applies and the professional of the English language must be creative, dynamic, innovator and with capacity of leadership.
- In regard with the profile of the graduates, the Curricular Committee from FLD states that in spite of the negative conception of teachers related with the fact that students do not develop specific competences that are required in different jobs, the situation is positive with linguistic competences where the gotten level is satisfying and according to researchers close to a sixty percent of the students get a job (mostly in call centers) before finishing the major.
- In relation with the academic development, the Curricular Committee points out: The growing population of the students, makes it difficult for them to develop the linguistic competences that are required in every level of the major. In addition, there are teachers who do not want to improve the teaching methodology and continue to work by applying a traditional methodology.

## **7. Theory.**

### **7.1. What is a Student Centered Learning Approach?**

“Student Centered Learning is a system of instruction that places the student in its heart. It is teaching that facilitates active participation and independent inquiry, and seeks to instill among students the joy of learning inside and outside the classroom.” (Rodolfo P. Ang and Celeste T. Gonzalez, 2001, p. 3). In student-centered classrooms, students are directly involved and invested in the discovery of their own knowledge. Through collaboration and cooperation with others, students engage in experiential learning that is authentic, holistic, and challenging. Students are empowered to use prior knowledge to construct new learning. Through the development of the metacognitive process, students reflect on their thinking. Curriculum and assessment are centered on meaningful performances in real-world contexts. As a partner in learning, teachers intentionally create organized and cohesive experiences to assist students to make connections to key concepts. (Rodolfo P. Ang and Celeste T. Gonzalez, 2001, p. 3).

### **7.2. Features that characterize Student Centered Learning.**

Student Centered Learning aims to develop learner autonomy and independence by putting responsibility for the learning path in the hands of students. Student-centered instruction focuses on skills and practices that enable lifelong learning and independent problem-solving. The Student Centered Learning approach is based on the hypothesis that students who are given the freedom to explore areas based on their personal interests, and who are accompanied in their striving for solutions by a supportive, understanding facilitator not only achieve higher academic results but also experience an increase in personal values, such as flexibility, self-confidence and social skills.

Student Centered Learning (SCL) puts students' interests first, acknowledging student voice as central to the learning experience. In a student-centered classroom, students choose what they will learn, how they will learn, and how they will assess their own learning. This is in contrast to traditional education, also called "Teacher-centered learning", which situates the teacher as the primarily "active" role while students take a more "passive", receptive role. In a Teacher-centered classroom, teachers choose what the students will learn, how the

students will learn, and how the students will be assessed on their learning. In contrast, Student Centered Learning requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning and with their own pace of learning. Student Centered Learning means inverting the traditional Teacher-centered understanding of the learning process and putting students at the center of the learning process. In the Teacher-centered classroom, teachers are the primary source for knowledge. On the other hand, in Student-centered classrooms, active learning is strongly encouraged while "traditional education ignores or suppresses learner responsibility." (Marinko and Daniels, 2016, p. 45).

The Student Centered Learning approach is diametrically opposed, in its ethos, to the philosophy underlying the conventional method of learning. By its very nature, SCL allows students to shape their own learning paths and places upon them the responsibility to actively participate in making their educational process a meaningful one. By definition, the Student Centered Learning experience is not a passive one, as it is based on the premise that 'student passivity does not support or enhance... learning' and that it is precisely 'active learning' which helps students to learn independently. Within SCL, students are given options in shaping their courses and in choosing particular units within their study programme. Some proponents of SCL assert that rather than devoting so much effort to teaching students what to think, SCL is based on the idea of teach them how to think.

Furthermore, within SCL there is an intrinsic motivation for learning, with the emphasis being on cooperation, rather than competition, between students. As part of this approach students are given the opportunity to compare their ideas with their peers and their teachers, whilst contributing to develop their curricula in a meaningful manner. In this context, the student is encouraged to ask questions and be inquisitive and the academic is seen as a facilitator and guide, rather than as the main source of knowledge. This approach therefore changes the role of the teacher, from being entrusted with the "transmission of knowledge to supporting and guiding self-regulated student learning." In a SCL environment, learning is no longer confined to lecture theatres and there is more focus on peer-review and continuous self-assessment, together with a broader perspective and openness towards lifelong learning.

The Student Centered Learning must support the complicated set of processes that make up personalized, student-owned, collaborative, anytime, anywhere learning and competency-

based education takes place. This requires a different set of “functional attributes” mapped to the different components of a Student Centered Learning model. It requires breaking down what class environment might be reached when teaching under the SCL. A gap in the necessary requirements for Student Centered Learning. The following attributes intends to help fill that gap.

### **7.3. Critical attributes of the student-centered classroom.**

According to Iowa Core (2008), the most important attributes are:

- ✓ Construction of learning.
- ✓ Metacognition.
- ✓ Educator/student partnership in learning.
- ✓ Collaborative learning.
- ✓ Meaningful assessment in real-world contexts.

*Construction of learning:* Armed with the knowledge of students’ previous understanding of concepts, student centered teachers create situations that allow students to make connections to new ideas. These connections can then be developed into entirely new concepts that continue to grow throughout a student’s experiences. A deep understanding occurs when new information offered through higher order thinking activities prompts the learner to rethink and reshape prior ideas. A classroom teacher must be prepared to offer a variety of learning opportunities to meet the needs of all students as each of us constructs our own meaning about issues, problems and topics.

*Metacognition:* it is thinking about your thinking. In order for students to be metacognitive they must know how and know the need to think about their thinking. In a student-centered classroom, teachers facilitate opportunities for students to be metacognitive. Teachers in learner-centered schools understand learning to be a self-regulated, ongoing process of making sense of the world through concrete experience, collaborative discourse, and reflection. Teachers can assist students to acquire a set of strategies, define goals, and monitor their progress. Providing opportunities for students to reflect on what and how they learn creates an environment where students take responsibility for their learning and



become more of a partner with their teacher in engaging in meaningful learning experiences.

*Educator/student partnership in learning:* The classroom teacher must possess a deep understanding of the developmental characteristics of their students as well as how students learn to be an effective partner in the learning process. A student-centered teacher will design learning experiences that explicitly link essential concepts and skills to students' current understanding and natural curiosity about the topic in order to scaffold additional or deeper understandings. Students are engaged in decision making in the classroom and have the opportunity to more fully explore topics. Professionals are most effective as teachers when they help their students discover the power of their own minds to work in their own ways to achieve success. —Few students develop a sense of academic, self-efficacy by becoming mired in what they can not do.

*Collaborative learning:* Teachers who rely exclusively on lecture are missing an important brain-based principle: people are social and the brain grows in a social environment. New meaning comes through social interaction, so the connection between students is important. Cooperative learning and collaboration should be encouraged. The student-centered teacher recognizes this principle of learning and actively infuses collaborative opportunities into each lesson. Collaboration provides students opportunities to learn from their peers and to gain skills that will be beneficial throughout their lives.

*Meaningful assessment in real-world contexts:* When students are engaged in activities that result in authentic and challenging applications, they are more highly motivated to learn. A combination of real-world assessment and the attributes of assessment for learning provide student-centered classroom teachers with the challenge of moving away from paper and pencil exams. As teachers begin—and continue—to search for ways to provide meaningful assessment for their students, their instructional activities will begin to fold into and overlap with intended assessment. Students and teachers alike will begin to monitor their teaching and learning and to make necessary adjustments to their actions. A true learning culture will result.

Creating a student-centered classroom is not considered an easy task. One of the most complex factors in a student-centered classroom is that of maintaining balance. Each of the five above mentioned attributes is quite an involved concept and may call for extensive learning and practice on the part of the teacher. A true student-centered classroom offers a balance of each of these attributes. A balance of these attributes will empower students to take control of their learning and create classroom teachers who are true facilitators of learning.

#### **7.4. Role of a teacher in a Student Centered Learning class.**

A Student Centered Learning environment is one where, as teachers, they recognize their role as facilitators of learning and not just repositories of knowledge. Teacher accept that they are not the sole authority on any subject matter. This teaching approach moves away from conveying information towards facilitating students' personal discovery through discussion, consultation, and mentoring. Teachers discourage students from relying on us to give them the "correct" answers all the time; they encourage them instead to come up with answers of their own. Teachers avoid simply trying to cover course content. Instead, they allow their students to uncover their subject matter at their own pace, according to their own aptitude, while providing tools to help them keep pace with the class or raise them to a desired standard. (Rodolfo P. Ang and Celeste T. Gonzalez, 2001, p. 5).

Teacher's role in Student Centered Learning does not occur by happenstance. It is a deliberate, planned activity where the teacher plays an enormous role influencing it. Below are written some of the roles that any teacher might cover while teaching under the SCL.

- a. The teacher tries to create and sustain an appropriate, warm and focused working environment.
- b. Teacher may take an active role in organizing how time, space, materials etc. are used.
- c. The teacher can provide positive support and encouragement to students to take active role.
- d. Teacher elicits answers, formulates questions, give partial examples, encourage hypothesis, etc. that lead the students to work out answers for themselves.

- e. Teacher can explain, lecture, and answer questions etc. on areas of the learning content.
- f. Teacher can propose, suggest or select what work is to be done in class and the text and materials to be used.
- g. The teacher might monitor what is happening in the class.
- h. The teacher can give objective information that may help the learning process. For example correcting bad, negative, or insufficient answers/information given by students.
- i. The teacher can, as part of regular timed lesson, provide a sense of form, regularity and concreteness to an otherwise more formless learning process.
- j. The teacher can suggest or help select what to study and how to organize the programme of learning and the shape of individual lessons.
- k. The teacher's presence has to be felt throughout the whole class. This can be done by the teacher moving from one end to the other, especially to places of inactivity.

#### **7.5. Role of a student in a Student Centered Learning class.**

In a Student Centered Learning environment, students accept that their teachers are primarily facilitators of learning and not simply walking encyclopedias, dispensing the information that they need. Students take greater responsibility for their own learning and do not rely exclusively on the teacher to provide direction. They find schoolwork valuable, and are therefore motivated to do well. They recognize the importance of every learning activity in which they engage. They do not have to be told what to do and when to do it. They are encouraged to be truth-seekers and meaning-makers.

When students are empowered in a Student Centered Learning environment. They share credit for their increased learning. They realize that they are capable of making decisions for themselves — they know when to accept or reject ideas. But, they also share in the blame if they do not meet desired learning outcomes. They realize that along with freedom and choice come responsibility and accountability to themselves and to others.

The role of student is institutionalized, that is, it is part of every formal education experience and carries with it a set of obligations and privileges students learn through the

process of socialization: learning the appropriate behaviors. Students take on individualized roles as learners.

### **7.6. Classroom environment under the Student Centered Learning.**

In a Student Centered Learning environment, students are encouraged to learn independently, with the appropriate guidance from the teacher as it becomes necessary. Teachers adopt teaching methodologies that provide their students with opportunities to do independent work, either alone or in a group. The desire to learn much more than what the teacher presents in class drives the students to read, to do research, and to discuss on their own.

Collaboration is a prime feature of a Student Centered Learning environment. Students share information, help each other out and provide support for each other's learning. While students are driven to learn independently, they also enjoy working with classmates because they actually see for themselves that many heads are better than one.

### **7.7. Classroom management.**

*Large classes:* the ideal size for a student-centered language class is probably 12 (The number 12 can be divided into 6 pairs, or 4 groups of 3, or 3 groups of 4, or 2 groups of 6 – and 12 students can easily hear one another in a whole-class activity.) But, of course, teachers can not choose the number of students in their classes. Most classes are larger; many classes are far larger. Is there a maximum size beyond which student-centered learning is inappropriate? (Leo Jones, 2007, p. 4).

Actually, the larger the class, the more necessary it is to have a Student centered class. The only way to give all the students time to speak is by having them work together. The difference between a large class and a smaller class is the amount of time teachers have to monitor the groups. Let's say, thirty students they can usually get around to all the groups in a lesson, and spend a few moments listening to each group and making notes. With a very large class this is not feasible, so teachers should keep track of which groups they did not listen to in one lesson, so that in the next lesson they can give them their attention.

In a crowded classroom, teachers may not even be able to reach some students as they circulate. They may need to rearrange the students and where they sit. It is also important

for students to sit close together so that they can talk softly and still hear one another. A lot of students talking loudly make a lot of noise. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Keep track of which groups you listen to so no one gets left out.
- b. Rearrange groups to be near enough for you to overhear as you walk around.
- c. Seat students close together so they can talk softly and still hear one another.

*Very small classes:* How should students in a very small class work together? Should teachers take part in discussions as an equal partner? In a small class, students tend to be more teacher-dependent, waiting for praise or encouragement while they talk. It is hard to monitor a conversation and participate in an activity at the same time. It may be better to sit outside the group while students work together, and not be part of the group. Nodding encouragement, showing interest, and answering questions are fine, but constant intervention is not likely to encourage students to behave autonomously. Teachers need to judge when it is helpful to add a comment or contribution, or when it is spoon-feeding. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Avoid becoming part of the groups-small classes tend to be overly teacher-dependent.
- b. Encourage students and answer their questions as you move from group to group.

*Mixed-ability classes:* In many ways, every class is a mixed-ability class. Even students who have studied together all the time will have varied mastery of the language or remember different things. Some will be better at different skills: reading, writing, listening, or speaking. They bring their own personalities, strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles to the class.

Teachers do not want their better students to be held up by the weaker ones, or the weaker ones to feel intimidated by the better ones. Teachers may need to arrange pairs and groups differently for different kinds of activities, sometimes putting weaker and stronger students in different groups, sometimes mixing weaker and stronger students (in the hope the stronger ones will encourage and help the weaker ones), and sometimes giving students different tasks according to their strengths and weaknesses. There are no hard and fast rules about what to do – teachers make their decisions based on their knowledge of each class

and the individuals within it. This can be hard to do in a very large class, particularly if it meets only once a week. Teachers may have to just hope for the best when arranging groups. Mistakes are sure to happen. Weaker students may not be able to cope, and stronger students may get bored. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Vary the way you pair your students – sometimes put weaker and stronger students together; sometimes group students with others of the same ability.

*Different ages:* Younger, immature students may find working together a chance to misbehave when not supervised. Older students may fear losing face by making mistakes and lack the confidence to express themselves in less than perfect English. They may also have preconceptions about the “right way to learn.”

Students may need training in the methods used in a student-centered classroom. If teachers are going to ask them to work together, they need to explain why this is desirable and how they can benefit from this – and why the alternative teacher-focused lesson is not as effective. Teachers can not assume that students will share their beliefs and try to impose those beliefs on them. Some younger students may need stricter handling. Students who are unused to autonomy may need to be introduced to new methods gradually. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Explain to students the benefits of group work and why the teacher-focused alternative is not as effective.
- b. Introduce methods gradually for more experienced students who are unused to autonomy.

*Monolingual classes:* In a multilingual English class, where all students do not share a common native language, students are unlikely to speak in their native language – provided that pairs or groups are arranged in such a way that each group is multilingual. (But teachers may need to separate inconsiderate same-language students who do not speak English together). In a monolingual class, students may be more tempted to speak in their common native language rather than in English when working together in pairs or groups. Teachers need to persuade students that they will benefit from speaking English in their English class, which may be their only chance to speak English. They may also need to

persuade them that, yes, they really do have enough knowledge to be able to carry on a conversation in English. Teachers need to make sure that the tasks are within their capabilities, and to give them adequate preparation.

Despite their efforts, some groups may disregard their persuasion and speak English only when teachers are nearby, reverting to their native language when unsupervised. It is tempting to ignore such groups and think that they do not know what is good for them or that they do not deserve their attention. But it may be that it is just one member of the group who is leading the others, who would like to speak in English but are less assertive. It is important that all the groups speak English, not just the more motivated ones. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Remind students that the class may be their only opportunity to speak English.
- b. Make sure students have adequate preparation for each task.
- c. Make sure all groups speak English.

Pairs or groups or whole class? When should students work together in pairs? When should they be in groups or work together as a whole class? How many students should there be in a small group? Do pairs always have to be two students working together?

In a pair, the atmosphere tends to be more protective and private than in a group. Students often feel less inhibited in a pair, and they can talk about more personal feelings or experiences than they would even in a small group. Pairs seem to be more conducive to cooperation and collaboration, while groups tend to be more conducive to (friendly) disagreement and discussion. A lively discussion often depends on an exchange of different ideas and a certain amount of conflict – if everyone agrees with everyone, there may not be much of a discussion.

Talkative students who are full of ideas may work better in groups of three. Less talkative students may do better in groups of four or five, but it may be difficult for students in a larger group to get close enough to one another to converse comfortably. Usually the maximum comfortable size for a group is five, and the ideal size is three.

The size of groups directly influences the amount of possible “talking time” each student has: In a pair, each student can talk for about half the time; in a group of three, for about a third of the time; in a group of four, for about a quarter of the time, and so on. But in a larger group, there may be more ideas flowing, more different opinions, and a livelier

discussion – though in a larger group some students will participate less because they are less confident, or have less to say.

In a pair, of course, there will usually be two students, except when an odd number of students are divided into pairs and there will have to be at least one group of three. But there are situations where “pairs of three” are preferable to pairs of two. If a particular class contains students who are reticent or lacking in confidence, a pair of three can often stimulate a better exchange of ideas than two students would on their own. Another option is to have two students doing the talking while a third listens and takes notes for feedback later – usually when students are working together, the only feedback they get is from teachers, picked up from our monitoring.

Sometimes, to build confidence, teachers may want to start students off in even numbers of pairs and combine the pairs into groups later. Students prepare and rehearse their ideas in pairs, then share them in a group.

Besides the times when teacher-led activities are taking place (preparation, follow-up, Q&A, etc.), there may be times when the whole class may want to be involved together. This may be after a group discussion where each group can report on their discussion, mentioning the most interesting or amusing points that were made. In a large class this could go on and on, so teachers would only ask a few groups to report! Or it could simply be the continuation of a discussion as whole class for a few minutes, but self-assured students are more likely to contribute when the whole class is listening. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Put talkative students in groups of three and less talkative students in groups of four or five.
- b. Stimulate a better exchange of ideas by putting shy students in groups of three rather than in pairs.
- c. Sometimes have two students talk while a third listens and takes notes, then have the third provide feedback at the end of the conversation.

*Seating:* they could quickly and comfortably change position to face each other for pair work, turn around the other way to form a different pair, and turn around to face the teacher whenever necessary, or move into a full circle for a whole-class discussion. But, of course,



in reality most classrooms have furniture that is not easily moveable; sometimes students have to sit in rows in a lecture room, with seats facing the front. Real classrooms are often crowded.

But even if teachers can not move the furniture, the students can move! For pair work, students sitting side-by-side can move their upper bodies to face each other. Sometimes a person in the row behind may be more accessible than the person beside: The one in front can turn around, sitting backward to face the one behind. With groups of three sitting in row, the middle student can move back slightly, so that the ones on the left and right can see each other. Groups of four may be less comfortable because two of them will have to move back, but groups of four could consist of two students from the row in front and two from the row behind – then they can all see one another.

It is also important that all the pairs or groups are accessible to them as teachers go around the class while they are working together. They need to be able to monitor all the pairs and groups. If the rows are very long, the students in the middle may be too far from the aisles for us to get near them. Students in the middle need the teacher’s attention, too. The only way around this is to rearrange the class regularly so that those students usually in the middle of a row can sometimes be on the aisle. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Rearrange your students regularly if your class is composed of long rows, making sure that those in the middle sometimes sit on the outside.
- b. Think creatively about seating arrangements to ensure students can speak comfortably.

*Different personalities:* Every student is an individual, and some people are more outgoing than others, more dominant than others, and more opinionated or more imaginative than others. A class full of lively, outgoing, opinionated, and imaginative students would be a joy to deal with, but the reality is usually different. Sometimes one student dominates a group, doing most of the talking, while the others just sit and listen to him or her, getting bored or feeling frustrated because they can not get a word in edgewise, or because the dominant student keeps interrupting them. In other cases, one student in a group may not join in with the others and is happy to be a “passenger” and let the others lead the group and do all the talking.

*Rearranging groups regularly can help here:* Weaker and shyer students should not always be with the same partners. People get stuck in their habits, and it is hard to change them when you are always with the same people. New experiences with different partners can help such students to develop more confidence. It will not happen suddenly, however. If there are several groups, each dominated by one student, it may be worth removing the dominant ones from each group and putting them together – and let them try to dominate each other. This leaves the less assertive students to talk with one another uninterrupted. On the other hand, these dominant students, whose English may be better or who are simply more confident, can be great assets. Sometimes (but certainly not always) they can be “team leaders.” Teachers can ask them to make sure everyone in their group gets an equal chance to speak, to chair the discussions and be responsible for reporting back to the whole class afterward. They have to be careful that this does not undermine the other group members or make them feel inadequate. Different students should be team leaders at different times.

Some students may have no strong opinions, may not want to express disagreement, or may lack the confidence to lose face by talking in less than perfect English. They may not want to talk much. In a pair, it may be harder for one of them to keep quiet, but if both students feel like this, neither will have much to say. Students need to be taught techniques to bring out others and encourage them to say more or expand on their ideas – for example, with follow-up questions such as *Why do you think that? Can you give me an example?* Or encouraging phrases such as *tell me some more. Go on. That is interesting.* In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Pair weak or shy students with a variety of partners to help them develop confidence.
- b. Make dominant students “team leaders,” but make sure to switch team leaders so other students do not feel left out.
- c. Teach your students techniques to bring out others and encourage them to say more or expand on their ideas, specifically with follow-up questions.

*Best friends and relative strangers:* Clearly, groups that get along well and work well together are going to be more congenial and effective than groups that dislike or mistrust each other. But if students select the groups themselves, less popular or proficient students may be excluded from every group. “I do not want to work with someone I do not like. Or with someone who is weaker than me. Or with someone who is much better than me. Or someone I do not know. I want to work with my friend all the time.” Most students prefer to work with friends or with people they get along well with, which is understandable. They may resent being paired with people they do not know, or with those who have weaker English skills. Teachers may need to manage this carefully and tactfully.

Once students have become accustomed to working together, they can select their own partners. If students always sit in the same places in every lesson, those pairs and groups may always be the same and no time will be wasted deciding who is going to work with whom – unless some students are absent. But those regular pairs and groups might get bored with one another and need perking up with new ideas. The class needs to be reseated on a regular basis so that students are not always talking with the same partners.

When best friends are always together, they may know each other so well that they have nothing much to say to each other. In a discussion they may know each other’s views or agree on most things. When talking about experiences (*Talk about a great meal you remember, or What is your favorite movie?*) they already know all about the other’s experiences, perhaps even shared them. Students who know each other less well are more likely to have differences of opinion, which they may have to justify, and experiences that the other partners do not already know about. They have more to share because they do not already know much about each other.

Teachers should encourage students to be tolerant and inclusive of everyone in the class, to cooperate with everyone, and not to exclude people with different tastes or abilities. A stranger is just a friend waiting to happen. Moreover, when they go out into the real world, students will not be speaking to their friends in English. They will be speaking to people from other countries who begin as strangers, but might become colleagues or even friends. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Reseat the class on a regular basis so that students do not always have the same partners.

- b. Encourage students to be tolerant and inclusive of everyone in class.

*Noisy classes:* A classroom full of students all talking at once can make a lot of noise. It is wonderful that they are all talking in English, teachers say to themselves. But all this noise may disturb other classes in adjacent rooms, and may even be unpleasant for our own students. The best way to encourage students to talk softly is to make sure they are sitting really close together — and facing each other. It is hard to talk loudly when you are close to someone and when you can see their reactions. Most people feel uncomfortable if their interlocutor starts talking loudly, and their reaction is to move away or to ask them to talk more quietly. With a very large class, it may be necessary for students to sit unusually close when they are working together, and teachers need to explain why this is necessary. Different cultures feel more or less comfortable at different distances, so it may not be easy for everyone to do this. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Seat students close together to encourage them to talk softly.

*Timing:* How long will an activity take? Should teachers allow each activity to go on until students run out of steam? But different groups will run out of steam at different times. Some groups will finish quickly, while others will take longer and feel frustrated if they are interrupted before they have finished. If the time is open-ended, most students will try to finish quickly (for fear of running out of time) and will not have a long, satisfying conversation.

It is better for students to be given a time limit, so that they can pace themselves and deal with questions in more depth. Knowing how long they have, students will feel they can say more and share their ideas and opinions in a more relaxed way. A time limit encourages students to take their time, and in doing so, have a stimulating exchange of views as they explore a topic in depth and share ideas.

Judging exactly how long this time limit should be depending on how much time is available and how talkative a particular class is. When teachers say you have three minutes for this, they must be reasonably accurate. A digital clock or the timer on a cell phone are good for keeping time, or even a kitchen timer that beeps when the time is up. It is helpful to warn students when their time is nearly up, so that they can finish up their activity

satisfactorily. Teachers need to be flexible, of course. If students are not enjoying a particular activity or do not have much to say, they may decide to stop them early. If they are enjoying it and have plenty to say, they will offer them more time. Generally, it is better to err on the side of longer time rather than shorter time because this will encourage students to say more. Having a longer time limit also gives students a few moments to reflect in silence and prepare themselves before they begin their conversations. Some groups will finish early and wonder what to do. In a discussion, they can go back to an earlier question and deal with it again. In a role play they can switch roles and try it again. Or they can prepare questions to ask the teacher afterward. In that sense the teacher should care of:

- a. Give students a time limit so they can pace themselves and deal with questions in depth.
- b. Use a timer and give students a warning when time is almost up.
- c. Be flexible – if students are enjoying an activity, let them prolong it. If an activity is not going well, it is fine to cut it short.

### **7.8. Benefits of using the Student Centered Learning.**

SCL if implemented properly, offers benefits to all, including the institution, students and staff involved, higher education staff unions, students' unions and society as a whole. Given the current context of higher education across the globe—the financial situation, massification of higher education and a high work load for teaching staff— there are many benefits to be reaped by implementing the SCL approach. (ESU, 2010, p. 7).

*Benefits for students:* The benefits of SCL for the students involved are many and varied. Coming into an academic community possibly for the first time can shape the way students think for the rest of their lives. SCL provides skills for life, creates independent learners and responds to the changing and differing needs of individual students. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:

*Making Students an Integral Part of the Academic Community:* Students are said to be part of the academic community, but in practice this can be difficult to achieve due to varied

practices of rigid teaching structures. Via SCL, students can become part of that community much earlier, given that the teacher acts as a facilitator, rather than an instructor. In encouraging students to think for themselves, analytical skills and critical thinking are gained earlier on. In this context, research-led teaching becomes all the more possible. Teachers are able to discuss their research and hear the views of students on the matter. Increased cooperation and a feeling of having one's views valued can further increase the interaction and engagement of students. This can lead to participation in the development of research and also to help develop a given course, due to the sense of ownership that students feel. Lastly, it may also encourage more students to enter the academic community as members. Teachers must not forget that students are the teachers of the future.

*An Increased Motivation to Learn:* SCL can encourage deeper learning. Knowledge retention differs depending on the way in which material is learned, but all types of active learning show a higher retention rate than traditional forms of learning. The student is also often more motivated to learn through SCL, because the tasks set require original thought and increase interest in the subject matter. Students retain more of the information they learn where there is an aspect of active learning and active participation.

*Independence and Responsibility in Learning:* Within SCL, students must engage with the course material and are in control of their learning. This makes the student more independent and adaptable to life after higher education. The independence of students enables them to learn more effectively and to gain other skills such as teamwork, effective written and verbal communication, prioritization of tasks and critical analysis. In turn, students can develop transferable skills and would be able to work more effectively in their careers and lives in general.

*Due Consideration for Student Needs:* Massification of higher education has had the effect of diversifying the student body. Inevitably students have differing needs that are wider than ever before. SCL can enable students to study in a flexible manner, through the use of part-time study, distance learning and e-learning. The SCL approach demonstrates that learning is not limited to a given time or place in the way that traditional learning has been.

Different learning needs of students can also be met because students can engage with materials in different ways. For example, some students engage more with audiovisual materials whereas others prefer reading. Furthermore, by experiencing a range of teaching methods students are further challenged academically.

*Benefits for teacher:* While the benefits of SCL for students seem obvious, some may question whether this is also the case for teaching staff. Indeed, teachers can benefit from SCL as much as the students in their classes. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:

*A More Interesting Role for the Teacher:* SCL, as stated above, puts the onus on the student to learn. The teacher is there to facilitate and enable this. Whilst this might be seen by some as negative, it is a good opportunity to academically challenge students, in order to enhance their learning.

*Solutions to Tackling Massification and Diversity:* In a reality of massification in higher education and a more diversified student body, it is likely that SCL will have to be used in many cases because of the increased demands of quality from students, the increased costs of higher education associated with this and the diversity of the student body, meaning student needs are varied.

*Positive Impact on Working Conditions:* Given that SCL provides the opportunity for learning to take place in different ways, the work of a teacher can be more interesting and the negative aspects of the working conditions normally associated with teaching can be alleviated by SCL.

*Continuous Self-Improvement:* SCL can enable teachers to review and develop their courses and teaching methods so as to improve both the content of their courses and their method of delivery as teachers. The confidence gained from implementing the SCL approach is also measurable in that teachers obtain relevant and constructive feedback from more highly-engaged students.

*Increased Learner Motivation and Engagement:* Increased engagement by students and a higher level of student participation makes the job of teaching more interesting. The ability to bring new research into tutorials or classes becomes a reality in SCL. This sounding board of ideas can contribute to the research of the teacher and introduces students to research and the academic community at an early stage in their learning process.

*Professional Development for Academia:* SCL can offer a much higher level of professional development with regards to the development of knowledge, skills and competences relevant both for personal development and career advancement. It also enhances teachers' flexibility in designing ways of running a course or a programme component and in applying new ways of teaching or research.

*The wider benefits of SCL:* Collectively both teaching staff and students have an interest in, and benefit from, SCL. This produces cross-over and benefits for their representative organizations. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:

-Quality Enhancement: Any increase in the quality of both working conditions and the student academic experience is to be welcomed by both teachers' and students' unions.

-The Status of the Teaching Profession: Given the trend in institutions to focus on research, the status of the teaching profession can only be improved with the adoption of the SCL approach. SCL takes into account innovation and allows teachers to develop their courses in the way they wish, whilst allowing students the flexibility to develop in their own ways.

-Increased Representation in Governance Structures: Given that SCL in and of itself requires a higher level of cooperation between all institutional levels, it pre-supposes that the hierarchy within higher education institutions is rather flat. SCL therefore favors a more collaborative approach within institutions, allowing for more representation of both students and staff within the relevant governance structures.

SCL also produces benefits both to institutions in which the learning approach is being applied as well as to society, which is a key beneficiary of graduates who are innovative, critical and reflective thinkers and who are able to drive development forward in their given society. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:



- **Better Retention Rates in Higher Education:** Where institutions employ the SCL approach, there tends to be a lower number of students who choose not to complete their studies. This may be due to the flexibility within such courses and may also be due to the fact that, via SCL, students engage with their studies more than within traditional methods of instruction. Indeed, students feel more valued when learning within a SCL environment because their learning needs are paramount. In a climate of massification, formalization and anonymisation of higher education, this can only be welcomed.
- **Attracting Students:** Where students' learning needs are carefully considered, teaching will be seen as being of higher quality. Meeting student expectations and managing them is of paramount importance. Furthermore, many aspects of SCL can be implemented without costly measures and can make institutions which apply this approach much more attractive to potential students, also attracting more mobility into the region in which the institution is found, thus benefitting also the development of society.
- **An Ongoing Improvement Process:** The ability of institutions to evaluate their courses and the student academic experience as a whole mean that they produce better graduates. The main benefit to society as a whole is that such graduates are more analytical and better citizens as a result of them having to think for themselves throughout their higher education studies.
- **Fostering a Lifelong Learning Culture:** Students who have experienced SCL are likely to learn more lessons by themselves and are likely to be more practical and logical, with an ability to tackle all sorts of problems as and when they arise, turning this into a learning experience. SCL can give graduates skills for lifelong learning, making them more effective in their place of work and enabling them to contribute extensively to the society in which they live.

## **8. Expertise.**

There are researches that have been carried out around the application of Student Centered Learning approach to foster and innovate in the teaching-learning process. The following fragments of research are displayed with the purpose of providing a wider view of what the application of Student Centered Learning looks like.

### **8.1.**

In the Mamonaheng Amelia Matsau's (2007) research, which was a qualitative study, the main purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of the existing learner-centred strategies currently used in language classrooms, and to identify other learner-centred methods that might be used in the future. The study also seeks to learn more about the skills and benefits that teachers and learners associate with the learner-centred approach in the teaching of English and Sesotho languages in Lesotho secondary schools. The main findings, based on learners' and teachers' questionnaires, observations and focus group discussions were:

Learners preferred to learn English because of their belief that it was essential for smooth relations and understanding among different language speakers in a wide range of situations. However, most learners applied previous experiences while learning languages in order to gain new knowledge. All teachers also believed that previous experience was vital in the learning process. Besides, when teachers were asked to define the learner-centred approach, they also included the benefits of using this approach. For them the first benefit noted was the importance of learners being the main focus and having the learner-centred approach directed to them. Moreover, the majority of learners expressed that learner-centred methods required them to take responsibility of their own learning and therefore become self-motivated.

Regarding the use of different learner-centred strategies, the researcher made three conclusions. Firstly, in order to implement the learner-centred policy well, teachers have to be cooperative, not only as language teachers, but with all the teachers in a school, in the region, in the district and in the whole country. By doing so, they will undertake team teaching, assist each other as need arises and build relations among themselves as teachers

## **8.2.**

Stephanie McKean (2014) carried out a study which was intended to examine the effects of implementing student-centred learning (SCL) in a college at-risk mathematical classroom, and how this teaching strategy affected students' self-efficacy. A triangulation of methods and data was used to examine these effects in two cohorts of students at a large urban college's Academic Upgrading program.

The evidence from the study suggests implementing SCL in classrooms for at-risk students is beneficial. The major findings were as followed: (1) both students and teachers experience some level of resistance when SCL is initially implemented; (2) increased levels of self-efficacy lead to better mathematical performance; (3) SCL did not appear to raise achievement; (4) SCL activities improved students' confidence levels.

Moving forward, the researcher concluded that the teachers agreed that they would want a more balanced approach to their teaching. Integrating more of the student-centred learning activities with some of the traditional methods in order to get students thinking critically about the math they are learning, but also preparing them for inevitable assessments and college entrance exams.

## **8.3.**

Bernal Mendoza (2016). This qualitative research emerged from an academic internship that attempted to describe eventual variations in ninth graders' attitudes and perceptions towards the English class following the implementation of a Learner-Centered Curriculum (LCC) in relation with the principled approach. This study was placed in a private school in Bogotá with students from fourteen to sixteen years old. The instruments to collect data involved surveys and journals, which were applied during three months (August – November, 2015). The results suggested that Learner-Centered Curriculum allowed positive variations in perceptions and attitudes of students. In addition, LCC facilitated teachers and students to take new roles such as designers, communicators, and active participants in the teaching–learning process. As a conclusion, it is said that the Learner Centered-Curriculum allowed variations in perceptions and attitudes when was implemented in ninth graders. This model of education integrated with the principled approach highlighted students' positive perceptions in language learning, and favorable

attitudes towards the class. Then, the variations observed were satisfactory as initially anticipated (planned) when the internship project proposal was formulated. Therefore, one could argue that the learning process had a positive impact due to LCC.

## **9. Assumptions.**

- Student Centered Learning Approach is being partly applied in the English Teaching Major from the Foreign Language Department because not all the elements that encompass SCLA are being applied in the teaching learning process.
- The methodology applied at the Foreign Language Department is not entirely based on the Student Centered Learning Approach due to some limitations such as time, equipment and the will to change from a traditional teaching approach to a SCLA.
- The traditional educative methods still predominate in the development of classes in the English Teaching Major.
- The syllabus methodology from the English Teaching Major at the Foreign Language Department is based on the Student Centered Learning Approach even though it is not entirely applied.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

#### **10. Research approach.**

The purpose of the researchers was to gather information to understand and describe the characteristics of the teaching-learning process in the MAC of the English Teaching Major. Therefore this research was conducted under the qualitative approach, “Qualitative research is characterised by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis” (Michael Quinn Patton and Michael Cochran, 2002).

#### **11. Type of study.**

The descriptive studies seek to specify the properties, characteristics and the meaningful profiles of people, groups, communities or any other phenomenon under analysis (Dr. Manuel E. Cortés Cortés & Dra. Miriam Iglesias León, 2004). The researchers adopted this type of study since the main objective of the research was oriented to identify specific elements of the Student Centered Learning Approach which would help to identify and describe the features or elements that characterized the teaching-learning process during the semester I and II of 2018.

#### **12. Research design.**

The research team developed a Non-experimental descriptive research. It is a research that lacks the manipulation of an independent variable, random assignment of participants to conditions or orders of conditions, or both (C.R. Kotari, 2004). The research team first developed a documental study in order to gather as much information as possible related with the SCLA, which required a deep analysis of books, journals, articles, and other different documents containing information related with the approach under study. In addition, a field study was carried out to obtain direct information from the teaching-learning process that took place in the courses that belong to the MAC of the English Teaching Major during the semester I and II of 2018.

### **13. Population of the research.**

#### **13.1. Population.**

The population for this research was made up by professors of the English Teaching Major at the Foreign Language Department and students who were able to start their research work in 2018 since they had already finished not only the Methodological Axis Courses but also the other courses that made up the study plan.

#### **13.2. Sampling frame.**

The population at this stage were the professors in charge of the Methodological Axis Courses (seven courses: every course was made up by more than one group) of the English Teaching Major and the students who registered their research project in the semester I - 2018.

#### **13.3. Sample.**

The sample was encompassed by six professors from the MAC (one professor from every course, both Practice Teaching courses were taught by the same professor) and forty students who were surveyed about their experience related to the teaching-learning process in the MAC of the major. All of the participants of the sample were chosen through purposive sampling technique (intentional).

## 14. Techniques and instruments.

Due to the fact that the research was carried out under the qualitative approach, the researchers made use of techniques that are appropriate for gathering qualitative data. The techniques and instruments used are the following:

### 14.1. Techniques.

- a) **Interview:** Depth interviews or in-depth interviews are according to the definition from the economic glossary Gabler (2013), a form of non-standard or semi-structured oral interview with a relatively large freedom of the interviewer in terms of content and design, which increase the willingness to provide information and the spontaneity of the respondents should be higher. The research team applied that type of interview for gathering information from the six professors who were teaching in the courses of the Methodological Axis. The questions of the interview were oriented specifically to seek data related with the methodological approach that they apply to develop the courses. The data would provide an overview of the teaching learning-process from the professors' perspective.
  
- b) **Observation:** Under the observation method, the information is sought by way of investigator's own direct observation without asking from the respondent. But when the observer observes as a detached emissary without any attempt on his part to experience through participation what others feel, the observation of this type is often termed as non-participant observation (C.R. Kotari, 2004). Since the purpose of the researcher was to analyze the phenomenon as it occurred naturally, the type of observation adopted was the non-participant. The observations were carried out in the classes performed by the professors of the sample to identify in a direct way the characteristics of the teaching-learning environment that took place in the MAC. The data gathered through the observations was intended to broaden the information provided by the interviewed professors.



## **14.2.Instruments.**

- a) Checklist:** Checklists structure a person's observation or evaluation of a performance or artifact. They can be simple lists of criteria that can be marked as present or absent, or can provide space for observer comments. These tools can provide consistency over time or between observers. Checklists can be used for evaluating databases, the use of library space, or for structuring peer observations of instruction sessions. The team carried out an observation technique in order to analyze the methodology applied by the professors of FLD to identify if the elements of the Student Centered Learning Approach are applied or not in the MAC.
  
- b) Survey:** A survey is a method of collecting data in a consistent way. Survey research is useful for documenting existing community conditions, characteristics of a population, and community opinion (University of California, 1983). The team wanted to measure the satisfaction in people who have gotten the last term at the FLD. The team carried out a non-randomly survey among forty individuals.

## 15. Timetable.

<b>Timetable of the activities to be carried out during the research process in the year 2018</b>											
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Months</b>										
	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1 Registration of the research process											
2 Definition of the research problem(delimitation)											
3 Literature review and design of the research profile											
4 Presentation of the research profile											
5 Design of the instrument to gather information											
6 Piloting of the instruments											
7 Gathering of the data through observations											
8 Interpretation of the data											
9 Final report											

## **IV. PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS**

### **16. Observations.**

The observations were performed by the research team through the use of a checklist to identify the characteristics of the teaching-learning process that took place in the Methodological Axis Courses to determine the teaching strategies applied by the professors.

The aspects mentioned below, were identified as the most recurrent actions that took place in the teaching sessions. The features are arranged from the most frequent to the less frequent in the following areas.

#### **Teaching and learning methods:**

- Group-work activities are used in the learning process.
- Developing the students' teaching skills was one of the aims of the teaching process.
- Activities-based learning were mainly applied in this process.
- Peer-assessment and peer-learning were applied by professors.
- Extra-curricular activities were used as part of the teaching-learning process.

#### **Student assessment methods:**

- Feedback was usually provided after activities.
- Presentations were used to assess students with regard to topics studied previously.
- Simulations of real life situations were used in the assessment of students.
- Peer and self-assessment were promoted by professors during classes.

#### **Learning environment:**

- Technological sources were used within the learning process.
- A professional growth of the teaching skills of students was promoted by the professors.

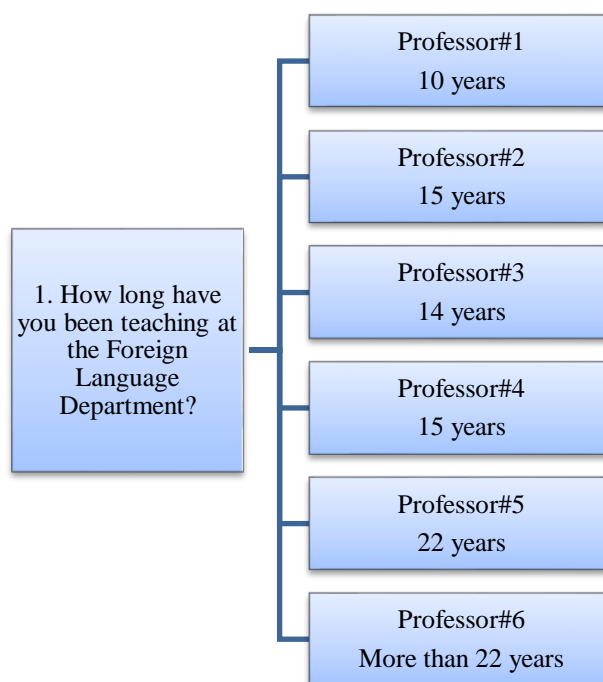
- Professors varied the activities in order to enhance students' learning experience.
- Professors encouraged the students to take an active role in the classroom.
- Students had access to appropriate materials oriented to reach different learning styles.

(PowerPoint presentations, videos, readings.)

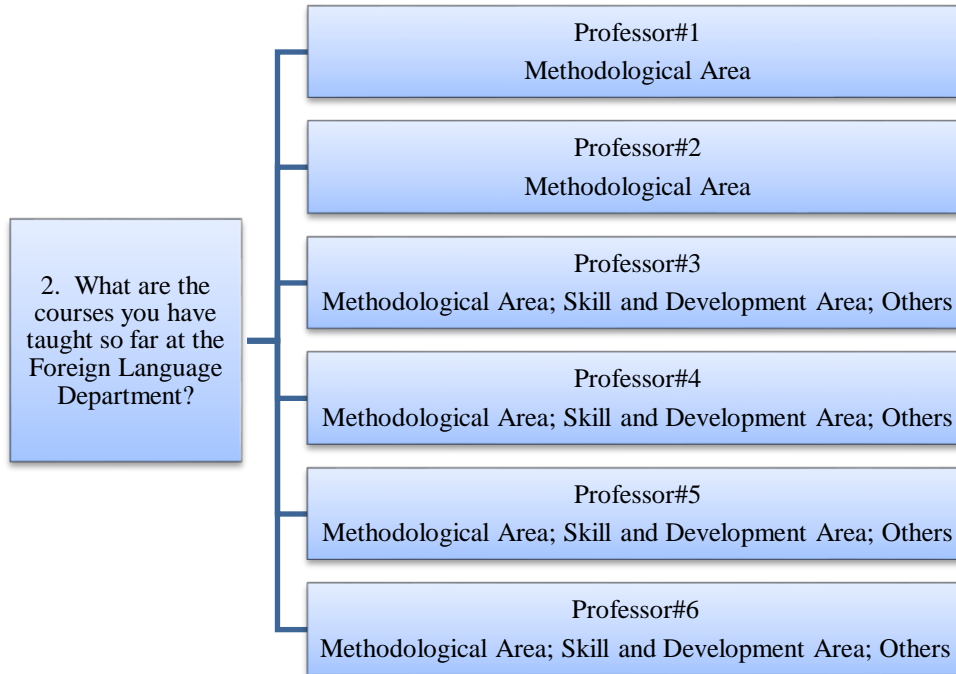
## 17. Interviews.

The interviews were administered to professors from whom the researchers looked to obtain data related to the teaching-learning process in the Methodological Axis Courses from the professors' perspective.

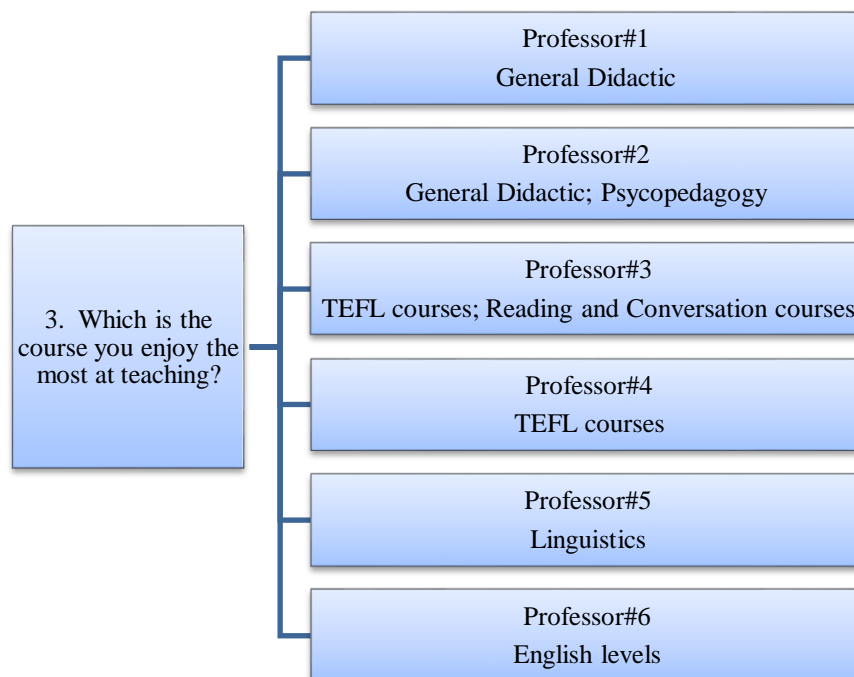
The following schemes have to do with the information provided by six professors from the MAC in the English Teaching Major. The professors' answers were set in codes, which represent the core of the data collected through the six interviews carried out.



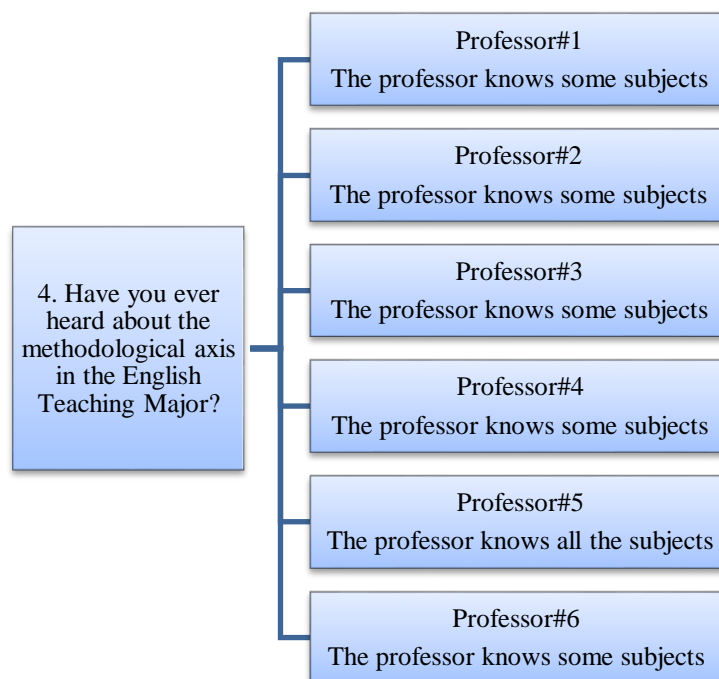
According to the previous diagram, the six professors that were interviewed have worked for periods of time that range between 10 or more than 22 years. It can be interpreted that the Methodological Axis Courses are mainly taught by professors with a large teaching experience.



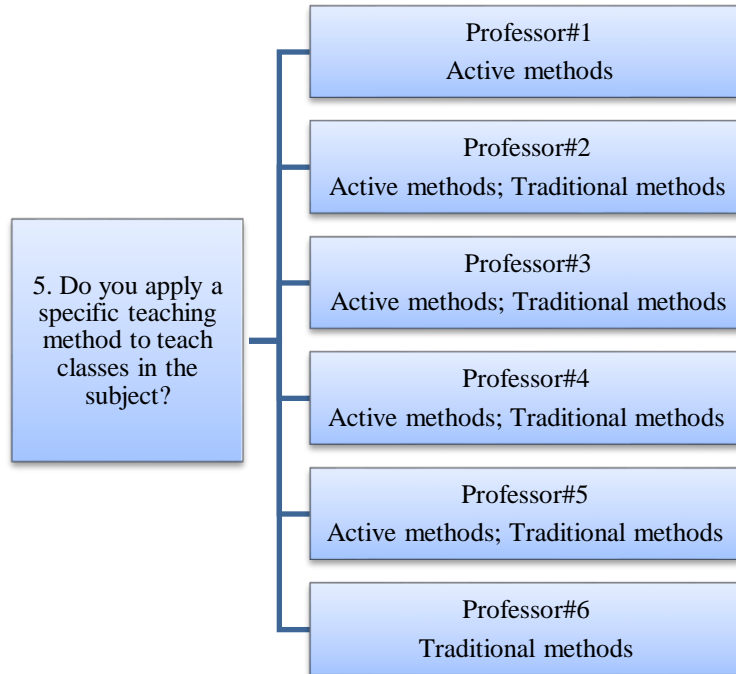
When the professors were asked about the courses they had worked with, the answers revealed that professors #1 and #2 had worked with courses from the methodological area only, and the rest of the professors had worked with courses from the Methodological Area, Skill and Development Area and others areas that complement the ETM.



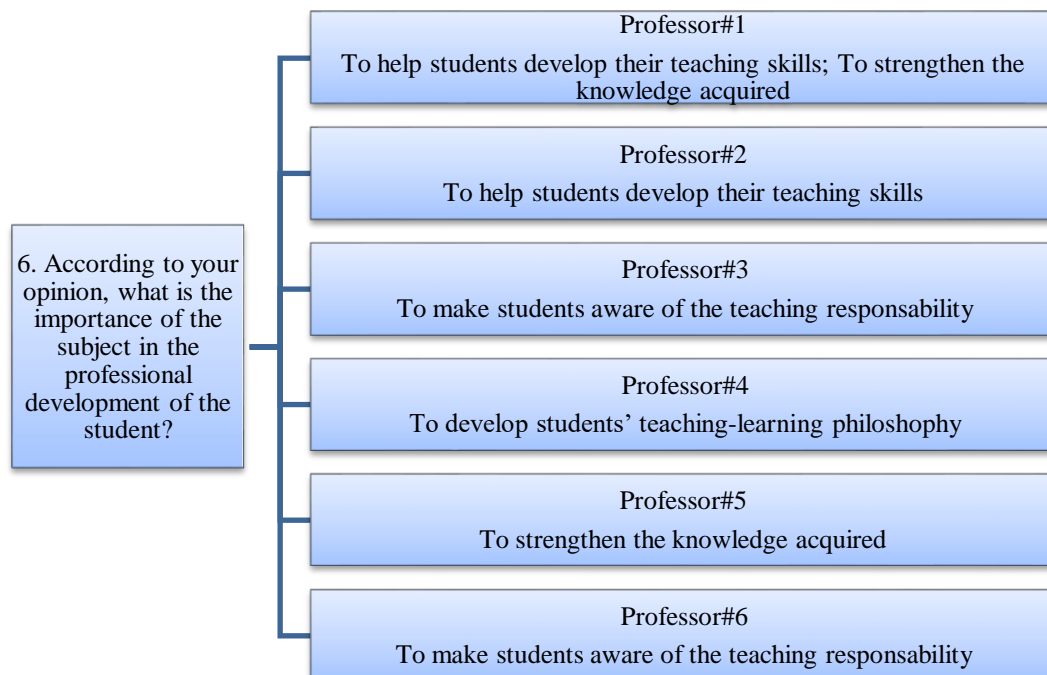
When asked about the favorite course at teaching, the answers were: professors #1 and #2 said General Didactic; professor #3 said TEFL courses and Reading Conversation's; professor #4 said TEFL courses; professor #5 said Linguistics; and professor #6 said English levels.



The answers for the question “Have you ever heard about the Methodological Axis in the English Teaching Major?” revealed that: only one of the professors knew all the courses whereas the rest of them knew just some of the courses.

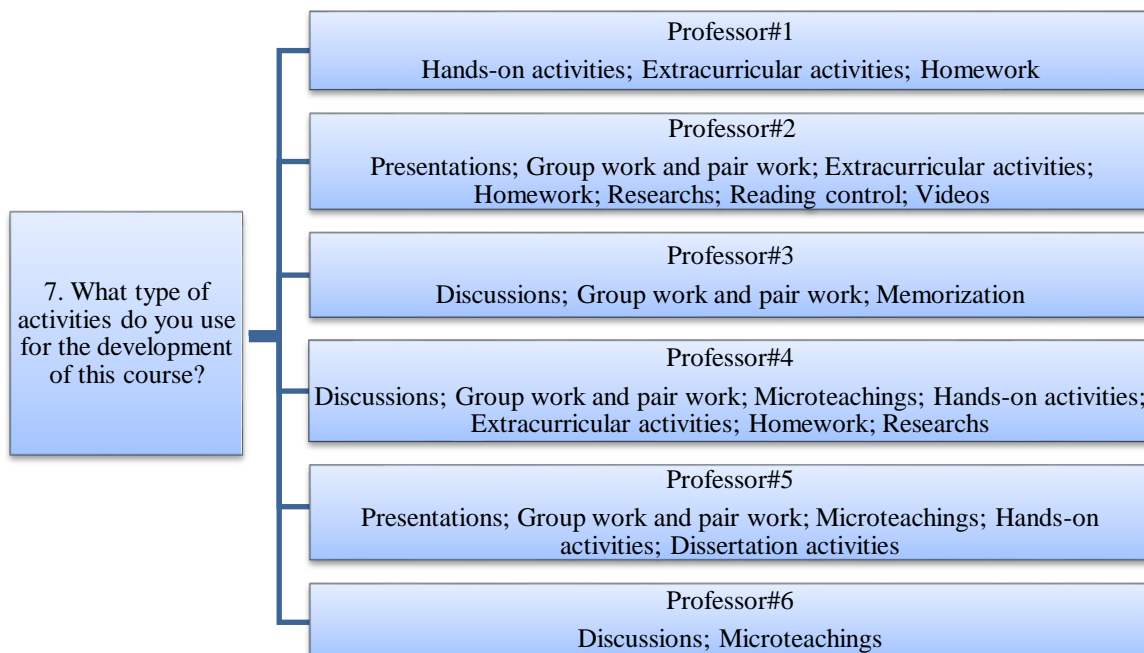


When the team wanted to identify if professors used a specific method to teach classes in the MAC, it was found that professor #1 uses active methods, professors #2, #3, #4 and #5 use active methods and traditional methods and professor #6 uses only traditional methods.

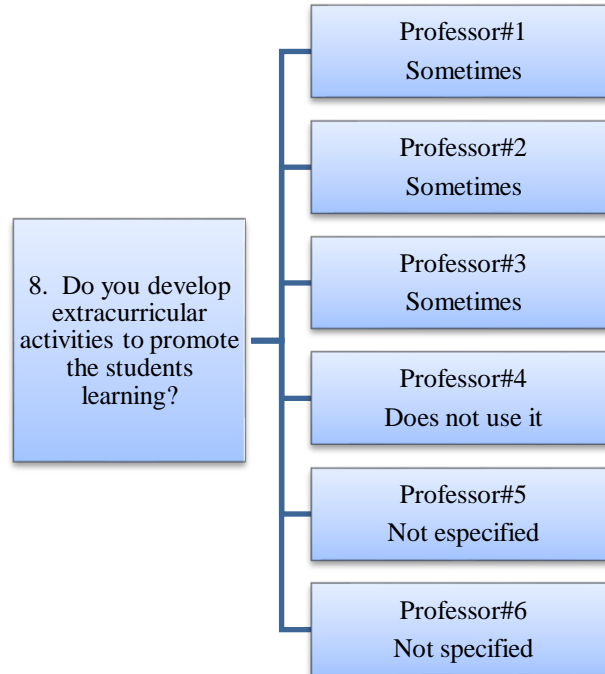




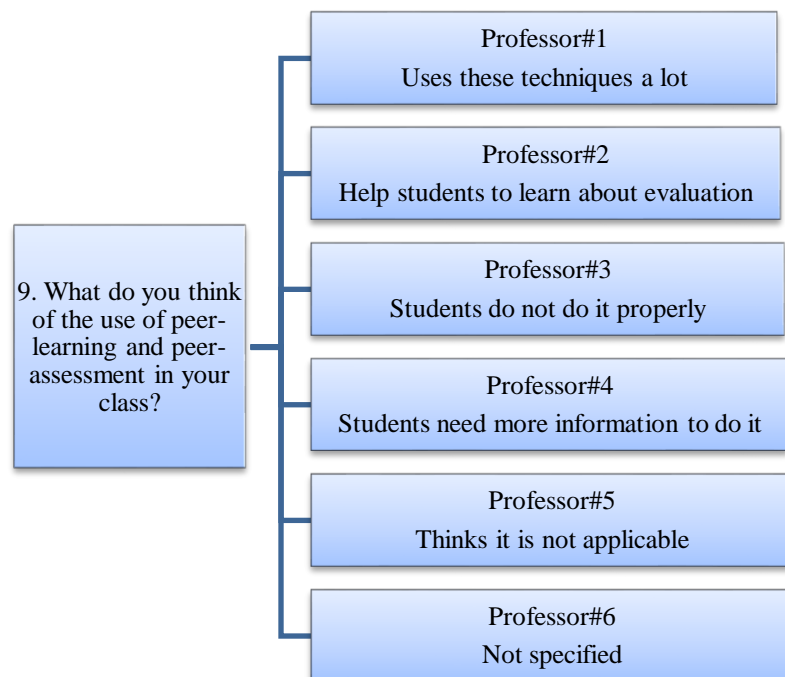
The professors' opinion regarding the importance of the course they were teaching in, showed different perspectives such as the following: professor #1 expressed that it is important to help students develop their teaching skills and to strengthen the knowledge acquired; professor #2 said that it is important to help students develop their teaching skills; professor #3 conveyed that it is important to make students aware of the teaching responsibility; professor #4 expressed that it is important to develop students' teaching-learning philosophy; professor #5 said that it is important to strengthen the knowledge acquired; and professor #6 pointed out that it is important to make students aware of the teaching responsibility.



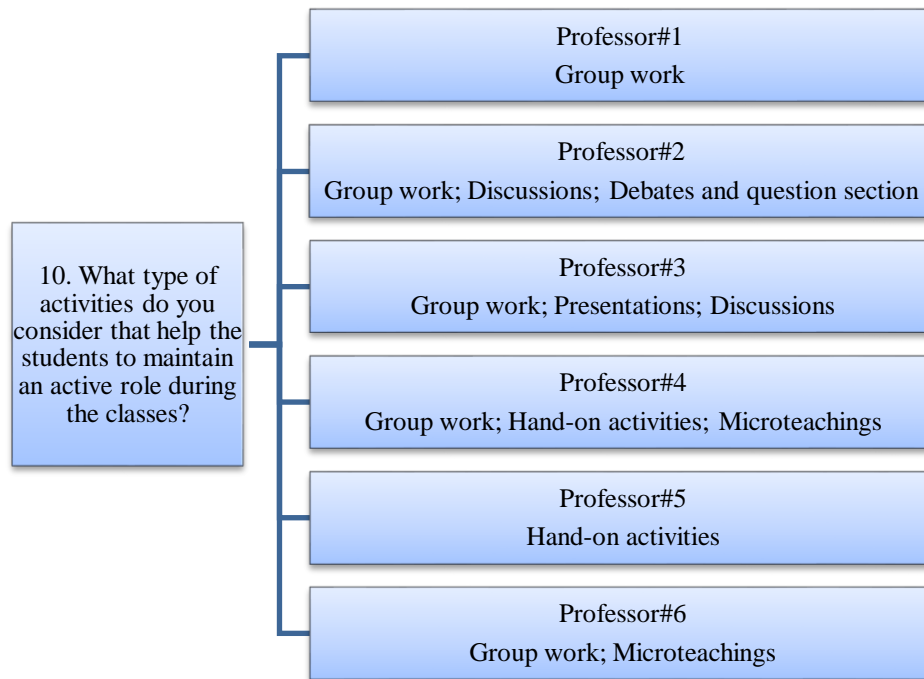
The activities used by professors for the development of the courses related to the Methodological Axis were: presentations, discussions, group work and pair work, memorization, microteachings, hands-on activities, dissertation activities, extracurricular activities, homework, researches, reading control and videos.



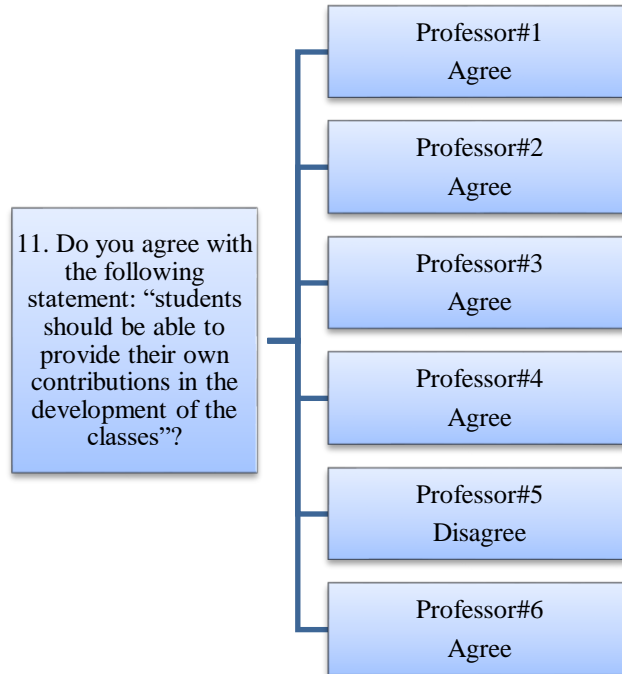
When asked about the development of extra-curricular activities, half of the professors expressed they used extra-curricular activities sometimes, professor #4 did not use those activities and professors #5 and #6 were not clear if they used it or not.



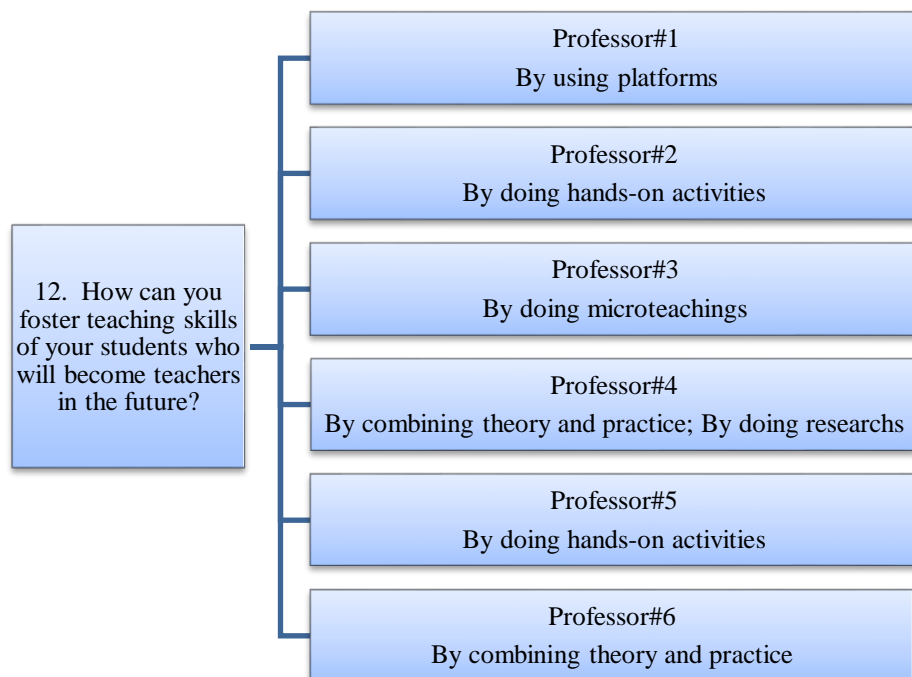
When asked about the use of peer-learning and peer-assessment, professor #1 used those techniques, professor #2 said it helps to learn about evaluation, professor #3 said that students did not use it properly, professor #4 expressed that students need more information to do it, professor #5 thought that it was not applicable and professor #6 did not specify.



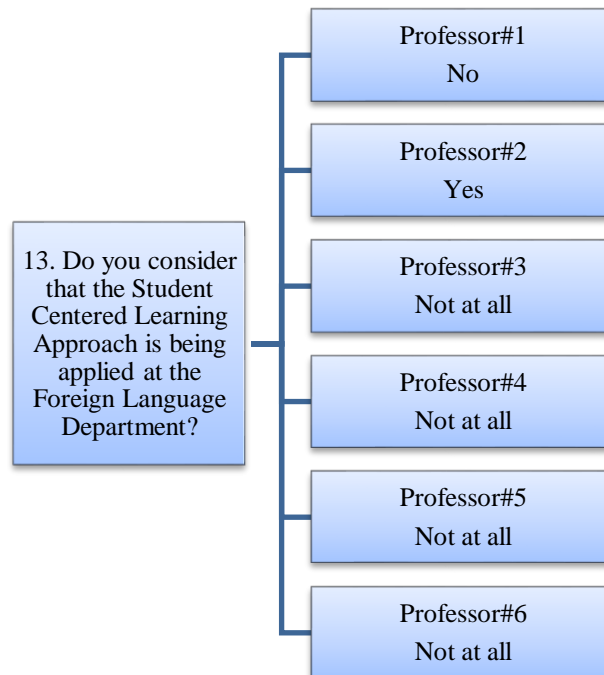
Regarding the activities that help the students to keep an active role during classes, the professors stated the following activities: group work, presentations, discussions, hand-on activities, microteachings, debates and question section, from which the most used was group work.



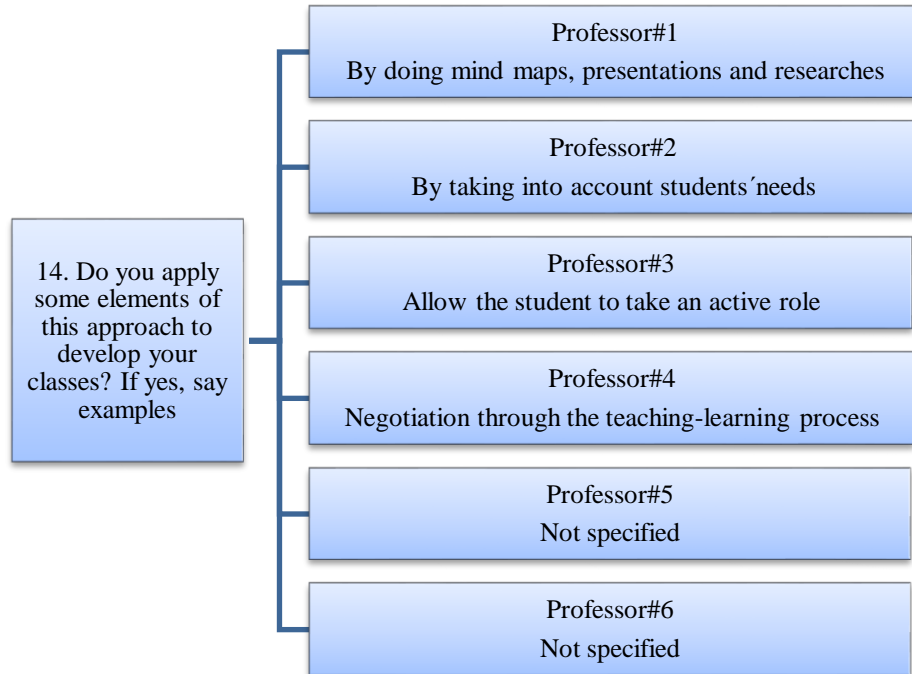
According to the data collected by the researchers, five professors from the sample agreed with the statement “Students should be able to provide their own contributions in the development of the classes”, and only one professor did not agree with the statement.



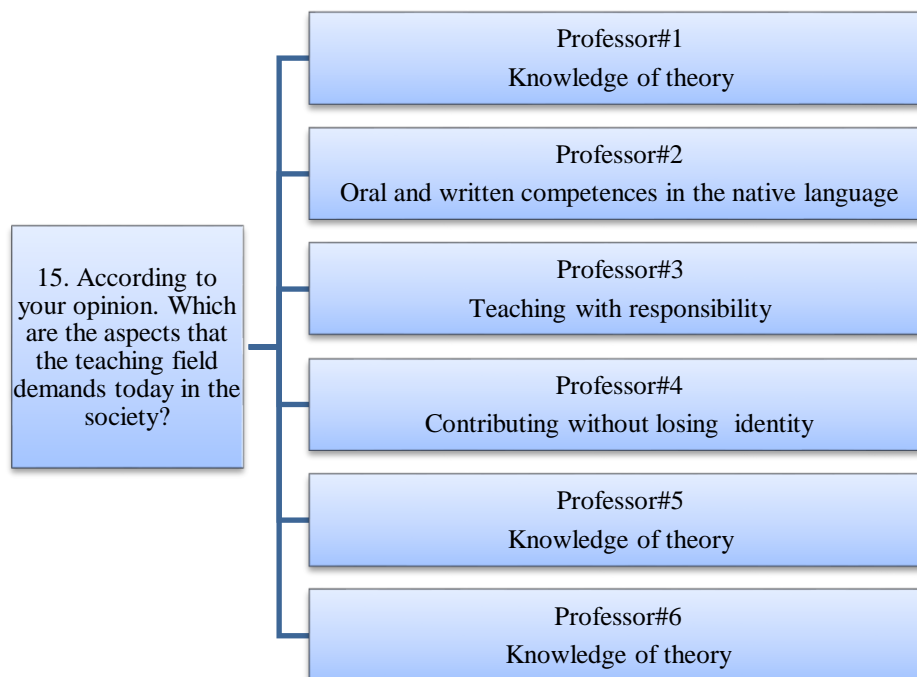
Regarding the question “How can you foster teaching skills of your students who will become teachers in the future?” professor #1 said by using platforms, professor #2 said by doing hands on activities, professor #3 by doing microteaching, professor #4 by doing research and combining theory with practice, professor #5 by doing hands-on activities and professor #6 by combining theory and practice.



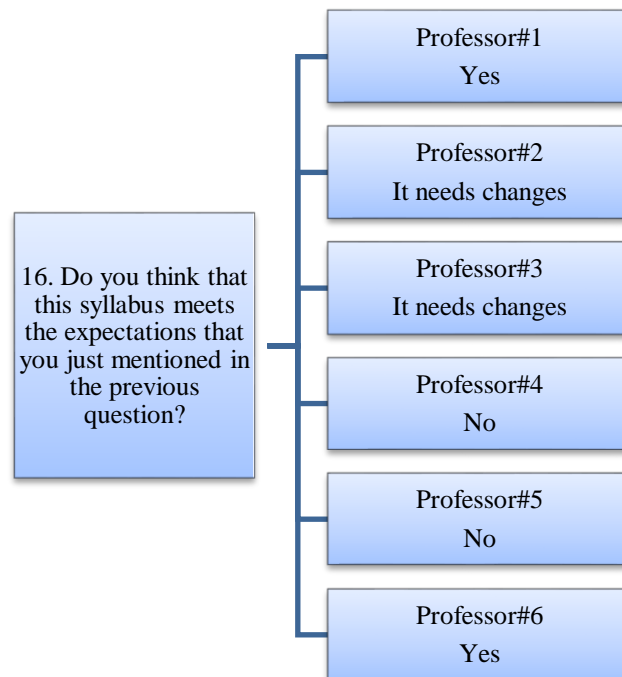
When asked about their opinions related to the application of Student Centered Learning Approach at the Foreign Learning Department, professor #1 said that SCL was not applied, professor #2 pointed out that it was applied in the courses of the Methodological Axis whereas the rest of the professors expressed that SLC is not applied at all.



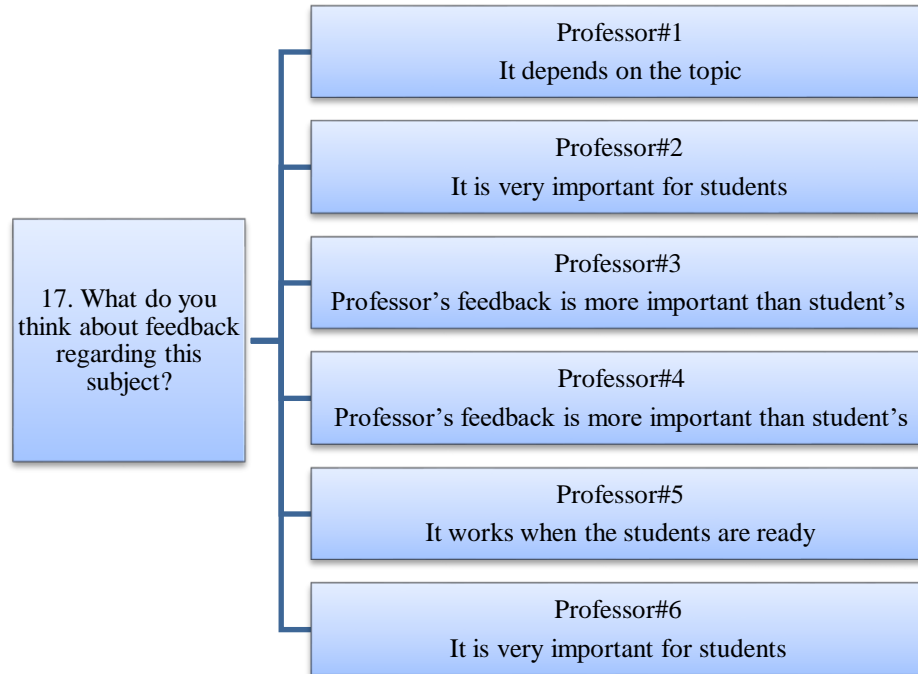
Regarding the application of some elements of SCLA to develop the classes in the MAC, the answers from the professors were: professor #1 by doing mind maps, presentations and researches; professor #2 by taking into account students' needs, professor #3 by allowing the students to take an active role, professor #4 by negotiation through the teaching-learning process and the professors #5 and #6 did not specify their answers.



When asked about their opinion related to the aspects that the teaching field demands today in the society, half of the professors said that it was the knowledge of theory, but professor #2 stated that it was the oral and written competences in the native language, professor #3 considered that it was teaching with responsibility and professor #4 stated that it was contributing without losing identity.



The professors' opinion regarding the syllabus of the MAC and their efficiency with respect to the requisites that the teaching area demanded were: professors #1 and #6 said that the syllabus they worked with was ok, the professors #4 and #5 expressed that the syllabus did not meet the demands, and professors #2 and #3 stated that the syllabus needed changes.

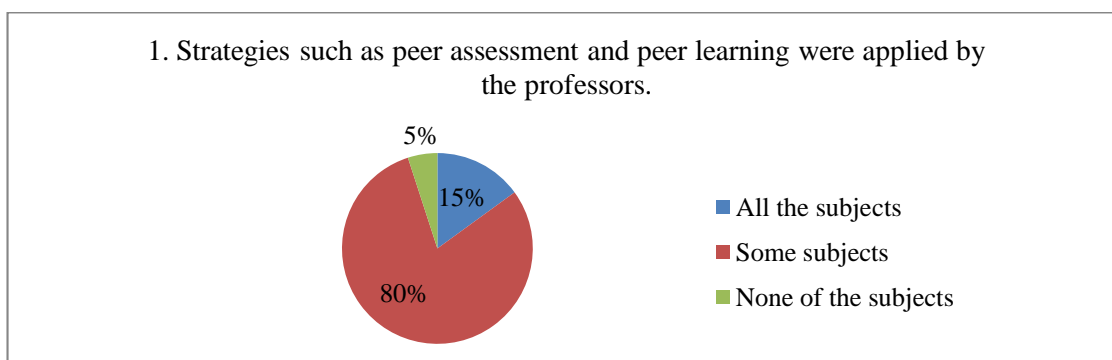


The opinion of the professors related to the importance of providing feedback in the development of the courses were the following: professor #1 believed that the importance of feedback depended on the topic, professors #2 and #6 said that feedback was very important for students, professors #3 and #4 expressed that professor's feedback was more important than student's feedback, and professor #5 stated that feedback worked when students were ready.

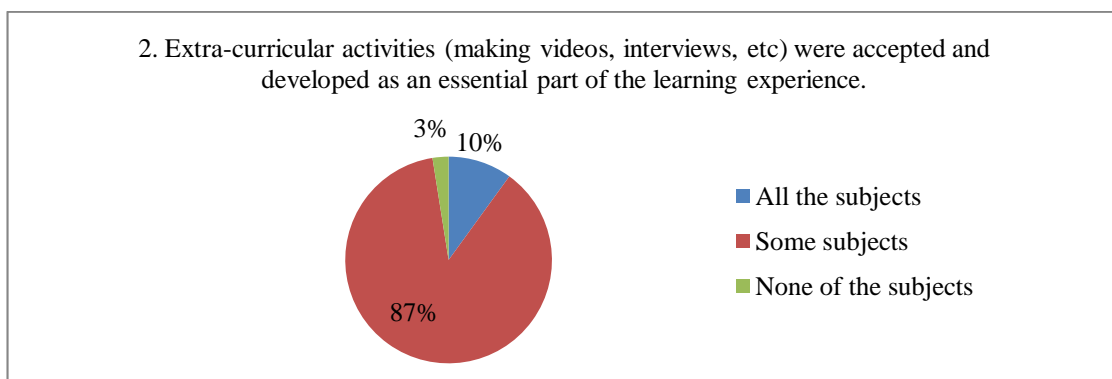


## 18. Surveys.

A survey was administered to forty students who enrolled their research work in the semester I - 2018 since they had already finished all the courses from the English Teaching Major, which enabled them to provide a broader perspective of the main features that characterize the methodological approach applied by the professors from the students' opinion.

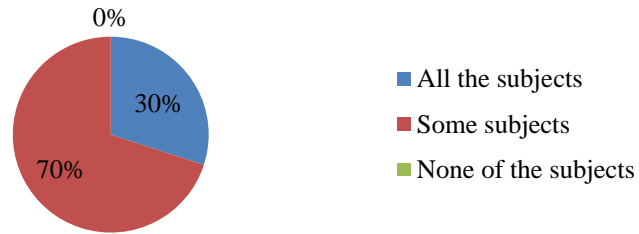


From the selected sample of forty students 80% agreed that strategies such as peer-assessment and peer-learning were applied on some of the courses, 15% said that those strategies were applied in all of the seven courses from the Methodological Axis and there was also a 5% that said that those strategies were not used at all.



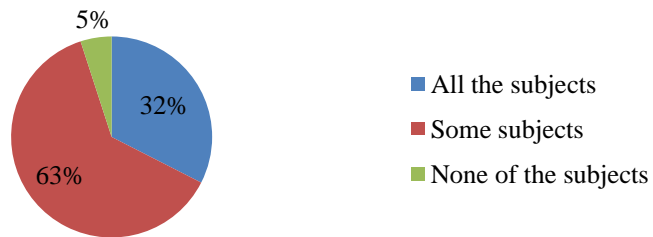
The result showed that 87% from the sample considered that extra-curricular activities were done in some courses of the Methodological Axis only, while a 10% said that they did those kinds of activities in all of the courses and only a 3% said that extra-curricular activities were not applied at all.

3. The development of your teaching skills was one of the objectives of the learning process.



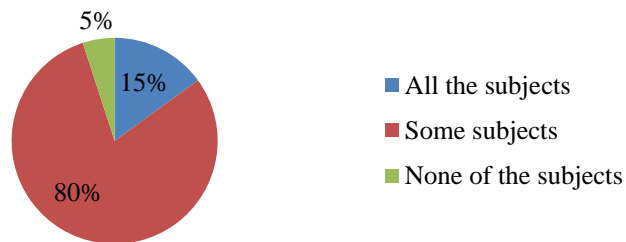
From the sample of forty students, 70% expressed that their teaching skills were encouraged but not through the seven courses that belong to the Methodological Axis while a 30% said that their teaching skills were encouraged in all of the seven courses.

4. Professors provided feedback and suggestions after activities developed inside or outside the class.

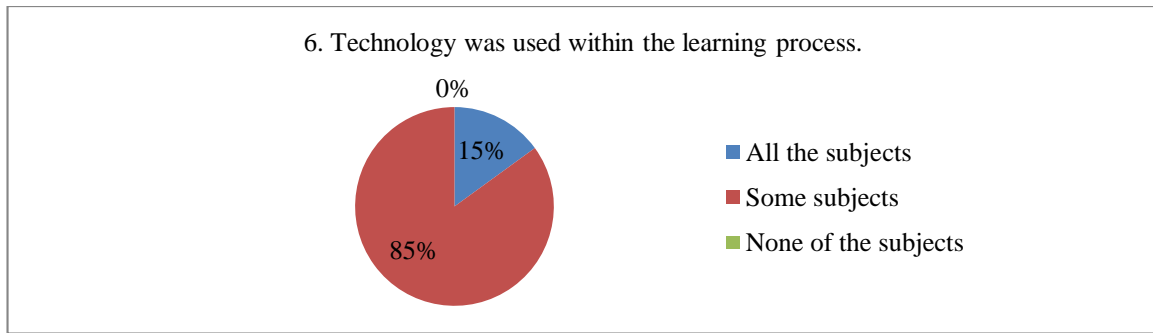


From forty students surveyed, 62% expressed that they received feedback and suggestions after doing activities in some of the courses while a 32% said that they did receive feedback in all of the courses and there was a 5% who said that feedback was not applied at all.

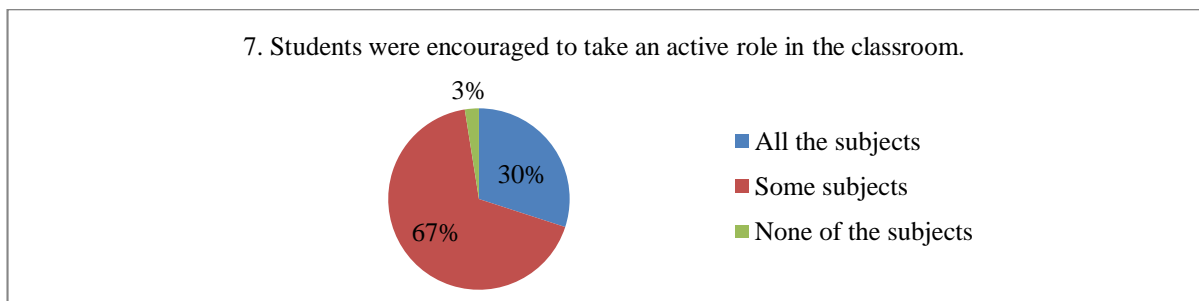
5. Students had access to appropriate materials oriented to reach the different students' learning styles (visual, logical, verbal, etc).



From the selected sample, 80% said that they had access to appropriate materials in some of the courses, a 15% of the students said that they did have access to appropriate materials in the seven courses from the Methodological Axis and there was a 5% who said that they did not have appropriate materials at all.

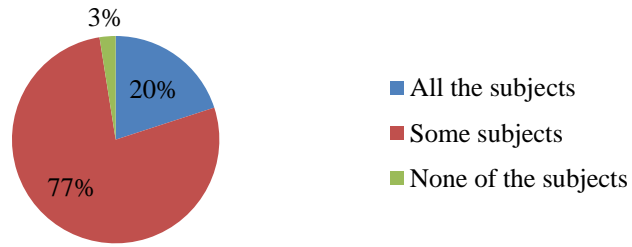


The result from the survey showed that 85% of the students agreed that technology was used only in some of the courses of the MAC and a 15% of the students said that technology was used through the seven courses.



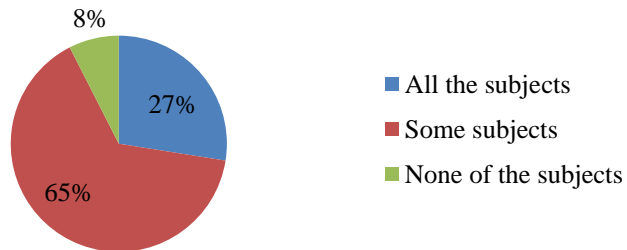
The result showed that 67% of the students were encouraged to take an active role in some of the courses from the Methodological Axis, a 30% said that they were encouraged to take an active role during the class in all of the courses while there was a 3% that said it was not promoted an active role by the professors at all.

8. Professors promoted and accepted students' own contribution during the teaching-learning process.



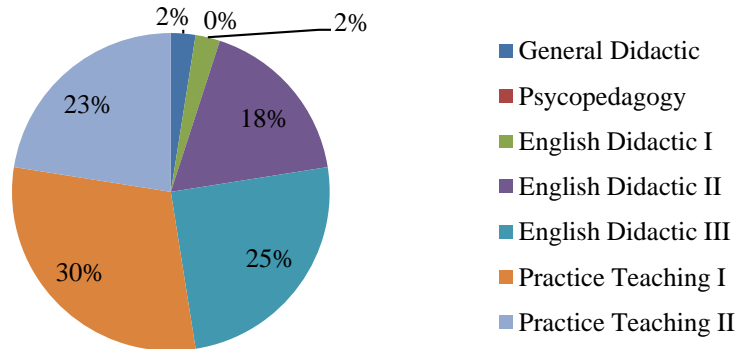
According to the result, a 77% of the students from the sample said that professors promoted and accepted students contributions during the learning process in some of the courses, a 20% said that their contribution were accepted and promoted in all of the courses while there was a 3% who said their contributions were neither promoted nor accepted.

9. Being a Guide or a Facilitator were the most common roles the professors performed.



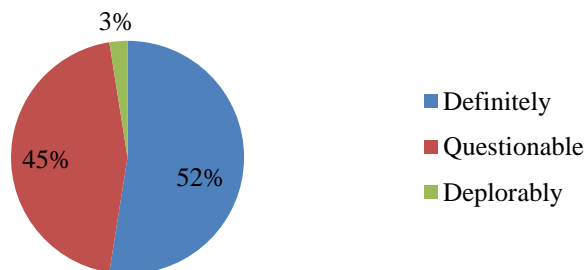
From the sample, 65% of the students said that professors took the role of a guide or a facilitator in some of the courses, 27% said that the professors took the previous roles in all of the courses from the MAC while a 8% said that professors were neither a guide nor a facilitator in none of the courses studied.

10. Which one of the courses of the Methodological Axis do you consider that mostly matches with the features (extra-curricular activities, feedback, appropriate material, students' active role, etc.) mentioned in the previous questions.



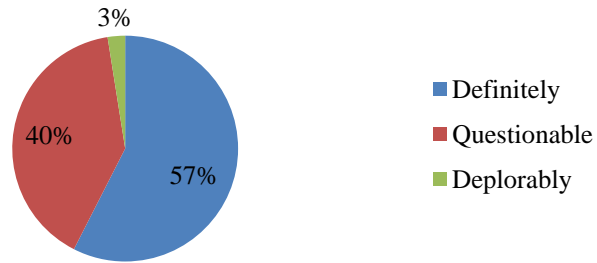
From the sample of forty students there was a 30% who said that “Practice Teaching I” was the course that encompassed most of the features of SCL, there was 25% who said that “English Didactic III”, 23% of the students chose “Practice Teaching II” as the course that recalled all the features denoted in the question, 18% chose “English Didactic II”, 2% selected “English Didactic I” and there was a 2% that chose “General Didactic”.

11. Did the knowledge you acquired in the Methodological Axis Courses make you feel confident at the moment of performing a real class?



The results showed that 52% of the students agreed that the knowledge that they acquired in the MAC made them feel confident at the moment of performing a real class while 45% were not confident with the knowledge acquired and there was a 3% who said that the teaching-learning process was deplorably.

12. After taking the Methodological Axis Courses, have you already defined your teaching style to become a professor?



From the sample of forty students, there was a 57% who said that after taking the MAC they had already defined their teaching style while a 40% expressed they were not sure at all what their teaching style would be and there was only a 3% who said that had no idea of which style to follow.

## V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The three instruments for the present research had different content of questions and statements which were oriented to professors and students but these instruments pointed out to the same topic under study taking into account the opinions and ideas from different perspectives in order to achieve an acceptable level of validity for the present research. Since the researchers made use of these instruments to gather the information on behalf of the validity of the results, a methodological triangulation was used to carry out the analysis. “Methodological or method triangulation is the triangulation of the findings from the various data collection methods,” *Journal of College Science Teaching* (2006). This technique has been employed to describe and compare the most valuable data gathered through interviews, survey and observations specifically. For that reason, the following sections have to do with the characteristics of the Methodological Axis Courses from the English Teaching Major.

To start with, the researchers made a comparison of the data regarding the features of the teaching and learning methods that characterize the teaching-learning process in the group of courses under study.

- Concerning peer-learning and peer-assessment the interviewed professor expressed that peer-learning was commonly used in their classes but when it came to peer-assessment some professors stated that they had tried but it was tricky since students took into account friendship at the moment of assessing their classmates. These results in a way matched with the information of the survey which revealed that 88% of students expressed that peer-learning and peer-assessment were used just in some courses of the Methodological Axis. Besides, the data from the observations showed that peer-learning was applied in every course, but peer-assessment was not observed at all.
  
- According to the information from the interviews, all the professors made use of extra-curricular activities as part of the teaching-learning process, but an 88% of the participants in the survey stated that those activities were used just in some courses

but not in all of them, which matched with the information of the observations where the researchers identified that this kind of activities were used just in a couple of courses.

- Regarding the objective of developing teaching skills, the interviews showed that professors made use of hands-on activities, platforms, microteachings and combination of theory with practice. However, the data from the survey revealed that 70% of the participants felt that the activities oriented to the development of teaching skills were not part of all the courses but some of them, while in the observations the researchers found out that most of the teaching activities performed in the class were oriented to develop the students teaching skills.
  
- Regarding the development of the courses in general, professors expressed they made use of a diversity of strategies, which ranged from student centered such as negotiation and discussion to those strategies of a traditional education such as memorization and homework. Regarding those strategies, the survey did not reveal significant data but in the observations the researchers observed that the use of activities-based learning and professors lecturing took place in the development of the courses. Having described the previous features, the team realized that the professors did not make use of a single method for developing the courses. Depending on the topics or situations in the classroom, the professors made use of active methods (Which are part of the Student Centered Learning Approach) or traditional methods which are more professor centered.
  
- In the case of the student assessment, the interviews and surveys were oriented to gather data related to feedback, which is a fundamental feature in the teaching-learning process of a student centered education. The interviews revealed that even though the majority of the participants assigned a great importance to feedback, there was a couple of professors who said that the efficacy of feedback depended on the topic or the student mindset. That data matched in a way with the results from the survey where a 62% of students pointed out that they received feedback not in



all the courses of the Methodological Axis, but in some of them. At this respect the research team not only observed that professors provided feedback after activities but also observed that professors made use of presentations and simulations of real life situations for assessing the student's progress as well. Moreover, the researchers observed that professors used traditional summative exams to complement the student assessment. After showing and contrasting the previous features, the researchers conclude that professors not only use feedback and other elements of the SCLA but also some features of traditional education to assess the student's learning.

- Moreover, the techniques and instruments used in the gathering of data were also oriented to look for any features of the SCLA that could be applied within the teaching-learning process in the courses under study. The results regarding these features were as follow: from the information of the interviews, researchers highlighted that most of the professors expressed they allowed the students to take an active role during de classes while the survey revealed a little discrepancy since a 67% of the participants expressed that they were allowed to do so in some of the courses and not in all of them. However, the data from the observations showed something remarkable which is the fact that in some cases it was observed that professors encouraged students to take an active role but the students seemed a little insecure.
  
- Regarding the classroom ambience, the interviews showed that professors varied the teaching strategies and techniques throughout the teaching-learning process with the purpose of reaching the different learning styles and in the survey it was found out that the majority (80%) of participants felt that professors varied the teaching strategies to reach the different learning styles but in some of the courses only. However, in the observations the researchers realized that professors varied the teaching strategies and classroom activities making use of technological sources as well.

- Another feature worthy of being highlighted was that according to the interviews professors expressed they not only accepted the student's contribution but also took into account the students' needs. At this respect a 77% of the participants from the survey stated that their contributions were accepted just in some of the courses and the observations revealed that as a result of taking into account the students' needs, the professors varied the activities in order to enhance the professional growth of the students. Moreover, the interviews showed that negotiation was also part of the teaching-learning process in the Methodological Axis. Negotiation on part of the professors can be compared with the role of guide or facilitator which is a remarkable feature in SCLA. In the survey a 65% of the students considered that the role of guide was adopted by professors in some courses only.

To conclude, the researchers consider that even though not all the professors have a clear definition of the SCLA, there are many features of this approach that are being applied by the professors to help the students acquire the knowledge in the MAC at the Foreign Languages Department.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of the present study was to provide an analysis of the methodological approach applied in the courses that belong to the Methodological Axis of the English Teaching Major offered by the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. Therefore, based on the results the research team concluded that:

- Even though the attributes of the teaching-learning process within the Methodological Axis are not entirely Student Centered, most of the principles found are encompassed in the following attributes: construction of learning, collaborative learning, educator-student partnership and meaningful assessment in the real world-context. The attributes mentioned above are critical in a Student Centered Learning Class.
- The findings of the present research revealed that the professors in charge of the MAC do know the importance of putting the student at the center of the teaching-learning process; however, the majority of the professors agree that the SCLA is not applicable due to the culture of our country.
- In general, the attributes from the SCLA that predominate in the MAC are: group work activities, the use of feedback, the use of technological sources, homework assignment and reading control. Moreover, there are also other features which are less frequent yet very important since they are part of the development of some courses; these attributes are: professors take into account student's needs at the moment of teaching, negotiation through the teaching-learning process, the use of peer-learning and peer-assessment and the development of extra-curricular activities. Apart from those attributes that clearly denote the use of the SCLA there were also found features from the traditional approaches for instance; memorizations, reading controls, homework assignments and written exams.

- The educational model of the university, which calls for a student centered education within its schools and majors, is being partially implemented by the professors of the MAC. However, the difficulties to put the new model into practice do not depend completely on the professors or authorities from the FLD since they themselves acknowledge that for having a Student Centered Learning, the students should be taught under that approach since the very beginning of their teaching-learning process.
- The elements from the Student Centered Learning that are being applied “though not in all the subjects” help the students to define their teaching style and make them confident at the moment of teaching, which is positive since the research carried out in 2017: *Proceso de Rediseño Curricular de la Carrera “Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza” que ofrece el Departamento de Idiomas Extranjeros de la Universidad de El Salvador* by Curricular Committee from the Foreign Language Department states that teaching is one of the main labor areas where the graduates are employed the most.
- The feature of *students take an active role* in the teaching-learning process does not depend on professors only since there are cases in which professors encourage the students to participate actively during the classes but they do not take into account the professors’ encouragement.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evidence regarding the importance of applying a Student Centered Learning Approach in the teaching-learning process and the results of the present research, which deal with the characteristics of the current methodological approach in ETM, lead the research team to state the following recommendations:

- Since the results of the present study showed that there were elements of the SCLA that were applied by the professors, but the results also showed that those elements were not applied in all the courses. Therefore, the syllabi of the courses that make up the Methodological Axis should incorporate as much elements of the SCLA as possible in their methodology for the professors to have student centered guidelines.
- The outcomes of this research showed that the SCLA should be implemented since the very beginning of the major including the thirty six subjects during the learning process for all students.
- The professors should promote and enhance the practice of negotiation in the teaching-learning process since this is a fundamental element in the SCLA.
- At the moment of planning, professors should be more focused on the student's needs (objective needs) which can be reached through listening and negotiating with the students through the teaching-learning process and not taking into account what professors believe regarding the student's needs (subjective needs.)
- Students from the ETM should be taught under the SCLA with greater emphasis on the courses that belong to the Methodological Axis and give the students the opportunity to put into practice the principles of the SCLA in real classes.

- The authorities from the FLD should promote trainings under the SCLA, so that all the professors that teach in the ETM can implement it in their classes in order to increase the benefits of this approach in the formation of the future English professors.

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## **ANNEXES**

## IX. ANNEXES

### A) Checklist template for observations.



UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOLS OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



Objective: To gather information related with the teaching-learning process in the Methodological Axis Courses of the English Teaching Major through observations.

<b>Regarding the teaching and learning methods</b>		Yes	No
1	Does the professor use peer assessment and peer learning?		
2	Does the professor use activities-based learning?		
3	Is group-work used in the learning process?		
4	Are extra-curricular activities used as part of the teaching-learning process?		
5	Is the development of teaching skills by students one of the objectives of the learning process?		
<b>Regarding student assessment methods</b>			
1	Are peer and self-assessment promoted by the professor during the classes?		
2	Are presentations used in the assessment of students?		
3	Are simulations of real life situations used in the assessment of students?		
4	Does the professor provide feedback after activities?		
<b>Regarding the learning environment</b>			
1	Do students have access to appropriate materials oriented to reach different learning styles?		
2	Are technological sources used within the learning process?		
3	Does the professor vary the activities in order to enhance students' learning experience?		
4	Does the professor contribute to promote a professional growth of the teaching skills of students?		
5	Does the professor encourage the students to take an active role in the classroom?		

## B) Surveys template.

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT



**Objective:** To gather information regarding the teaching-learning process in the English Teaching Major from students' own experience and perspective.

**Instruction:** Read the statements and questions, and according to your own experience, choose just one answer taking into account the following subjects: Psychopedagogy, General Didactic, English Didactic I, II and III, Practice Teaching I and II. (7 courses)

1. Strategies such as peer assessment and peer learning were applied by the professors.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

2. Extra-curricular activities (making videos, interviews, etc) were accepted and developed as an essential part of the learning experience.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

3. The development of your teaching skills was one of the objectives of the learning process.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

4. Professors provided feedback and suggestions after activities developed in or outside the class.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

5. Students had access to appropriate materials oriented to reach the different students' learning styles (visual, logical, verbal, etc).

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

6. Technology was used within the learning process.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

7. Students were encouraged to take an active role in the classroom.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

8. Professors promoted and accepted students' own contribution during the teaching-learning process.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

9. Being a Guide or a Facilitator were the most common roles the professors performed.

- All the subjects
- Some subjects
- None of the subjects

10. Which one of the subjects of the Methodological Axis do you consider that mostly matches with the features (extra-curricular activities, feedback, appropriate material, students' active role, etc) mentioned in the previous questions.

- General Didactic
- Psychopedagogy
- English Didactic I
- English Didactic II
- English Didactic III
- Practice Teaching I
- Practice Teaching II

11. Did the knowledge you acquired in the Methodological Axis Courses make you feel confident at the moment of performing a real class?

- Definitely
- Questionable
- Deplorably

12. After taking the Methodological Axis Courses, have you already defined your teaching style to become a professor?

- Definitely
- Questionable
- Deplorably

### C) Interviews template.

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

**Objective:** To get a deeper understanding about the methodology that professors apply in the Methodological Axis Courses through the semesters I and II of the year 2018.

1. How long have you been teaching at the Foreign Language Department?
2. What are the subjects you have taught so far at the Foreign Language Department?
3. Which is the subject you enjoy the most at teaching?
4. Have you ever heard about the Methodological Axis Courses in the English Teaching Major? If yes, what can you tell us about it?
5. Do you apply a specific teaching method to teach classes in the subject?
6. According to your opinion, what is the importance of the subject in professional development of the student?
7. What type of activities do you use for the development of the subject?
8. Do you develop extracurricular activities to promote the students learning?
9. Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment in your class? If yes, what is the objective of doing this?
10. What type of activities do you consider that help the students to maintain an active role during the classes?
11. What do you think of the following statement: “students should be able to provide their own contributions in the development of the classes”?
12. How can you foster teaching skills of your students who will become teachers in the future?
13. Do you consider that the Student Centered Learning Approach is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?



14. How about you? Do you apply some elements of this approach to develop your classes? If yes, could you mention some examples?

15. According to your opinion. Which are the aspects that the teaching field demands today in the society?

16. Do you think that this syllabus meets the expectations that you just mentioned in the previous question?

17. What do you think about feedback?



## **D) Transcriptions of the interviews.**

### **I. Professor #1**

1. Interviewer: How long have you been teaching at the foreign language department?

Professor #1: It has been ten years since I am teaching at the FLD. I started with General Didactic and then I got involved in the field of Psychopedagogy.

2. Interviewer: What are the subjects you have taught so far at the foreign language department?

Professor #1: General Didactic, Psychopedagogy, and when I was teaching for the Profesorado I taught the Educative Evaluation.

3. Interviewer: Which is the subject you enjoy the most at teaching?

Professor #1: Both of them. Yes, actually it is both of them. Maybe a little bit more, because I am a Professor in Science Education, General Didactic is the one I enjoy the most.

4. Interviewer: Do you know, what are the subjects that are related with the methodological axis of the English Teaching Major?

Professor #1: The elemental ones, because after them the majority is taught in English and since I am teaching in Spanish, I would say that the ones that are taught in Spanish are the most important. I know that after General Didactic students are taking others three subjects related with "Didactic" but they are in English. And I also believe they take Linguistic and at the end, students do the research project.

5. Interviewer: Do you apply a specific teaching method to teach classes in the subject of General Didactic?

Professor #1: -Ahh... A method? Yes, for example it has been used the Interactive Method and Constructivism. There is also a Participative Methodology, which is the same as the Active Methodology or Constructivism. So there are many methodologies that we use to promote the learning for our students. We definitely use different types of methods.

6. Interviewer: According to your opinion what is the importance of the General Didactic subject in the professional development of the students?

Professor #1: It is very important, actually in that subject you are taught with the basic knowledge that you need to be a professor, then, you learn about the Didactic skills. Through this subject we know why the knowledge of Didactic skills is important. Also in this subject we learn the elements that we are going to use in our labor as professors. We check about themes, guidelines, ehh... and many different strategies and procedures. The General Didactic has to do with the methodology that involves the building of a person as a professor.

7. Interviewer: What type of activities do you use for the development of General Didactic?

Professor #1: Activities that are practical for students, professors always talk about theoretical and practice field. We start by teaching students the theory and then we embark them into the practice for example; extra-curricular activities like going to an educational institution to do a teaching practice. In this activity, they create all the lesson plans and their materials. Firstly, we teach them how to make all of those material and procedures, actually there is a specific period of time in which they are learning how to do it. Remember that they are beginners so they are not very proficient on those types of abilities. The process starts with teaching them how to create all the materials and planning and then we go for the process of implementing all the materials and planning that they have created,

as the education labor should be at classrooms. So we do out-classroom and extra-curricular activities. After the first stage of the subject in which they learn how to create all the materials and planning, they go to an educational institution where they are evaluated by their tutors. Finally they give me the reports and they have their grades.

8. Interviewer: Do you develop extra-curricular activities to promote the students learning?

Professor #1: Yes, sometimes I use them, -ahh, there have been years in which I have not sent them to educational institutions instead they have elaborated their materials and planning with their classmates. Let's pretend that they choose a second grade to teach and the others classmates act as if they were from a second grade. So the group that is presenting, they have to teach as if they were really teaching to a second grade, they have to adequate themselves to the level they are teaching, so everything has to fit on a second grade environment. Let's name for example the Physical classes area. So they take the students to the park or to the stadium –and also, talking about this kind of extra-curricular activities, we assign them to do some labs, we also work with an on-line platform and furthermore we assign them activities outside the institution and university so as you see we work a lot on extra-curricular activities.

9. Interviewer: Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment in your class?

Professor #1: We use those techniques a lot, for example in outside activities. What do we evaluate with those techniques? Well, what they have done inside and outside the classroom and their processes outside the university, you already know what the extra-curricular activities are. Students evaluate their peers; in all their jobs that they present. Their obligation is to do the auto-evaluation and the hetero-evaluation in all their tasks. So in the auto-evaluation, you know it, we evaluate ourselves, how we have worked during the realization of the task. In the hetero-evaluation they evaluate their performance by themselves as a group. We give a great deal of importance to the results coming from the auto-evaluation and hetero-evaluation when they present their final job in front of their

peers. So, there are three evaluations: the auto-evaluation, hetero-evaluation and professor's evaluation.

10. Interviewer: What type of activities do you consider that help the students to maintain an active role during the class?

Professor #1: I use a great deal of group activities, but remember that doing a group activity does not mean making a mess and doing whatever they want, since students are young and immature they believe that group activities are equal to mess around, but it is not like that. We use a lot of group activities, for instance I use one activity in which I ask my students to create songs, poems and acrostic text. So I assign a specific topic to each group and they do what they have been assigned to and they love those activities, it was interesting to write a song according to what it was covered in the topic. They worked in groups and it was really good even though they are adults, they liked the activity and the most important, they learnt.

11. Interviewer: What do you think of the following statement, "students should be able to provide their own contribution in the development of the classes"

Professor #1: Important, it is very important, however, sometimes some professors, talking in quotes, do not take into account the students contributions. I believe it is necessary to take it into account, for example: I am teaching the class and suddenly, I tell them "so, help me to read that slide". Then I ask him or her "what did you understand from the reading?" because, sometimes they just do a mechanical reading. It is not the same as when I say to them "read it and explain to me what you understood". Sometimes they are wrong. We tell them they are wrong and explain the meaning of what they are reading. But of course, I like to take into account the students' opinions. Sometimes they do not give their opinions because of shame. However, it is important to listen to them, at least on part, I do it. Though, I will tell you that I do not ask to all of them because they are too many, but yes, I take it into account. It is important because remember that they are not in traditional education but in a different one. Nowadays, we are in what is called the inclusive

education, which is another way of teaching. So, yes it is important to take into account the students' contributions and they learn as well.

12. Interviewer: How can you foster teaching skills in your students who will become teachers in the future?

Professor #1: How do I teach them? Well. Since the very beginning I teach them actively. I mean in an active and dynamic way. Why? Because it is supposed that they are going to be teachers for kids and adults too. First, they should have patience and the ability to teach. We as professors have to help them to acquire the knowledge. How are they going to do it? We have to teach them in a comprehensible way for the students to understand, because that is what we want. If a teacher does not apply any process to teach... We give students so many dynamic and constructive inputs for a better learning. I think the interactive platforms help the teachers and students a lot, right? It is a more interactive process now that we have electronic equipment, such as computers and smartphones, etc.

13. Interviewer: Do you consider that Student Centered Learning approach is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #1: Student Centered Learning approach? Mm. Not much. No very much. I believe that here at the university we continue with a traditional education. In General Didactic, we are working on that. In fact, we cannot change it at all. We are in-between traditional education and modern education. You know what the traditional education and the modern education are, so I think we are in the middle. We cannot say that we are working under the traditional or modern one, because in the former one the professor has the reason and the students observe only and in the latter one professor is only a tutor. So, no... In a few words, the traditional education has a great influence in our School.

14. Interviewer: Do you apply any elements of the modern education in your classes?

Professor #1: Mm. Yes, I do it, for example in... if we are talking about the two types of education (traditional and modern). The modern education has many different elements. We are improving step by step. So I am trying to apply it. I try because I cannot omit a traditional education and that is why I told you that we are in the middle. We cannot apply a Student Centered Learning approach since we have to lead the students, right? Some of the students are self-learners because they look for the information on their own. But yes I try to be one... I try to I apply a little bit of the modern education. As an example, I believe that most of the professors use it. For example, assigning topics for students to investigate and to give their contributions, they have to make mind maps or presentations, which are used by many professors, right? It is not like the traditional education where the professor teaches his or her class and that is all and the students have to conform themselves with the information provided by the professor with judging if he or she is right or not.

15. Interviewer: Do you think that feedback is very important for this subject?

Professor #1: Well, it depends on the topic because there are topics which are easier for the students to understand, but sometimes asking questions means they did not understand the contents so we can have ten or fifteen minutes to clear those doubts. If students tell me they are not clear with the topic and need an extra explanation, I will do it even though this is not going to happen in every class. When students make a presentation, they get feedback and I also explain a little bit about what they have presented and if there is something the students did not do in a proper way, I tell them to work on that. I am very strict in this case, if we are failing or missing something, I talk to them about it for them to improve in their next presentations.

16. Interviewer: According to your opinion, which are the aspects that the teaching field demands nowadays in our society?

Professor #1: Demands? There are many aspects. For example the reading, you have to read a lot. Otherwise, there is no future for students because with the reading, people are learning many things and if they do not read, how will they learn? Students have to read

and know a lot, especially if they want to become professors because being a professor is not the fact that you get to the classroom and leave the class like nothing happened. To be a professor is a big responsibility, knowing laws, knowing what a syllabus is, because sometimes they are excited to start working and they do not even know what a syllabus is and when I ask them about it, they think it is a resume but this happens with students who are starting the major so they have to read and learn to understand. Some students read before coming to classes to make sure they have a general idea and feel the enthusiasm to become a professor. Students have to be self-learners so they will not only get the information from the professor in the class but also they will look for new sources to increase their knowledge such as libraries and internet.

17. Interviewer: Do you think that the syllabus from General Didactic meets the expectations that you just mentioned in the previous question?

Professor #1: Well, talking about syllabus, I think it has been modified so it is kind of new. We use this handbook to work a whole semester. I think that the syllabus covers an eighty percent of the needs because it includes the strategies, the methods, the assessment and the planning, so this syllabus is very essential. The remaining twenty percent is from the professors or even it can be more once they put into practice everything. In my opinion, the syllabus plus its changes is excellent. The handbook is from Argentina but it is not a big deal because in the process, students must know how things regarding the education in El Salvador are, so they will have material to know more about the teaching profession.



## **II. Professor #2**

1. Interviewer: How long have you been teaching at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #2: Ehh... since 2003 to 2018. It is around 15 years.

2. Interviewer: What are the subjects you have taught so far at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #2: Just at the foreign language department? There is General Didactic I and II. I have taught Psychopedagogy I and II because in the major “Profesorado del Idioma Inglés” we had two Psychopedagogy courses. Also I taught “Design and Application of the Curriculum,” other subject I have taught is “Education and Society” and there is other called “Professional Teaching Development” those are the subjects I have taught.

3. Interviewer: Which is the subject you enjoy the most at teaching?

Professor #2: Maybe all of them because all are interesting and they complement each other, though the one in which all of them converge... let’s say the sum of knowledge from those subjects is “Design and Application of the Curriculum,” which is a subject that by the way, they (authorities of the FLD) took off from the study plan. I know we are weak in that area. We are weak because “Design and Application of the Curriculum” is like when you say to the students of “Law School” that they are not going to study the “Code of Laws” anymore and they rubbed off that subject... you see there is a weakness in this new study plan.

4. Interviewer: Have you ever heard about the methodological axis in the English Teaching Major? If yes, what can you tell us about it?

Professor #2: Methodological axis? Ah... well the Didactics and the TEFL courses are the essential ones.

5. Interviewer: Do you apply a specific teaching method to teach classes in this subject?

Professor #2: No... I use a method... But it is not purely a method. The active methods are all the ones trying to develop an active role of students. Those are the methods in which students are developing all their skills with the guide of the professor. There are many methods that encourage an active role from students. For instance; the methods... let's say the traditional methods and the methods that are more radical. Naming for example: the constructivism which is a method that not only compiles active methods such as "Montesioriano" and "Decroly" methods, but also goes to the poles reaching "socio-critical methods" which come from another perspective like Vigotsky's and Pablo Fray's. So, as you can see, it goes from one pole to another... from a traditional education to one that is more critical.

6. Interviewer: According to your opinion, what is the importance of this subject in professional development of the student?

Professor #2: As a matter of fact, every major forming future professional workers in the area of teaching in any field, must have a great deal of knowledge regarding a person aptitude, because that would be his or her tool of work. As you see, Psychology, presents a big panorama of what the human psyche is, how the critical thinking of a person develops and how she or he learns. Psychopedagogy as a hybrid science is been composed by educative Psychology, Pedagogy and Didactic. So, those areas have to be joined to apply Psychopedagogy. That is why we call it an "application science," this science applies the psychological, pedagogical and didactic theories. It teaches how the tutor has to treat different ages of students according to their own learning and development characteristics. That is learning.

7. Interviewer: What type of activities do you use for the development of this subject?

Professor #2: Well, it is a great amount of activities, but we generally have the presentations of the professor to explain the topics. Mostly, when you know that they are students from the first year and they do not have previous knowledge about the topics because one of the weaknesses is that one. Our students start a major without having the basis. They study the applied science since the very first time. For instance, regarding Psychology and Pedagogy, they do not have the basis. Here we give it to them directly. Yes, it is difficult because they do not have previous knowledge; we have to make that introduction for them to learn.

First, what I use are presentations for conceptualization so that all the students have the same concepts for them to understand what we are talking about. It is not that I start talking and explaining as though they knew what I am talking about; so I give them a conceptual basis first. When we get that foundation, basic concepts, such as what is Psychopedagogy? What is Psychology? What are the areas of Psychology? What are the areas of...? So, they understand. When they get that knowledge, we start Psychopedagogy. At this point they understand what Psychopedagogy is, its areas and its importance for students to become a good professor too since the English Teaching Major is precisely for teaching. We also have other activities such as research. Students do bibliographic and field research.

The students do a research work, which I have been using for three years and it is very... I have observed that it is one of the activities where they learn the most, where they learn the most! I give them the theory of Jean Piaget who explains how the mental development of the person takes place. To understand and to see it in real life with kids is something very heart touching for them (students). As you see the groups... we are too big, so I distribute the students, I arrange work groups and we begin with the handouts that I have prepared to develop the topics that are assigned to them. For example, the groups receive topics such as the sensorimotor stage, the concrete operational, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational, they are four stages. So, there are two groups because I made eight groups this time. There are too much students. Two groups work with the first stage, the sensorimotor stage, others the preoperational, two groups the concrete operational and two groups the formal operational stage. I give them the characteristics they are going to work

with, they are not the same. The students go to observe some of them for not repeating because it is too much information. Students also need me to push them more. Remember that they are beginners, but they learn, they search and they have to investigate. I give them reading material because they have to read a lot, but they have to investigate what is meant by every characteristic.

I have two mandatory advisories for them to attend with a score of 15% each one. So, the students go through some questions that I ask them. Every member of the group has to answer and there I go with the evaluation. The evaluation is in the process. That helps them to develop others abilities such as study and work habits because remember that we come accustomed to other types of formation from high school. They (students) say “here at the university is difficult but we learn a lot”. They realize that we as professors do not continue to give them the pill, the water and they drink. They have to exert themselves and do research.

They choose a family, for example: the ones who went to observe three-months-babies. They had to get that family to give them permission. You know that it is difficult, but they have to face the problems of the reality. When the group get the baby, they carry the toys and everything they use, then one member of the group makes the interview and other records the video because that is the evidence since I cannot always go with them.

Then, taking into account the time that I have established, they prepare their video and they get prepared to present it to the whole group as well. So, that is double feeding because there is the individual, the group and the big group work, of course this is hard work. I consider that if we want them to learn Psychopedagogy, they have to work! They have to work! Because this subject is not learned by reading only, it is learned by seeing it. Look! They came amazed, amazed of realizing that what Piaget said is true. It takes place in kids. The students went to kindergarten, to that nursery school of the Ricaldone Institute. They went to kindergarten, they went to schools, to primary schools and they went to high schools because we studied it until that level, until high school. But, yes it was an experience... I consider that it is the most important activity. On the other hand, they have to take their exams. Here, they have to take them and do individual activities such as reading control where they do little bibliographic research too. I teach them how to do it because there is a problem. Now that we have the online libraries and the web, knowledge

is a legacy of the humankind, it belongs to everybody. The only thing we have to learn is how to get it. If I know how to arrive, I enter and take what I want. However, I must learn to identify what is worthy and what is not.

So, that is what I work with them, learning how to identify the material. It has not to be magazine material, let's say like... somebody wanted to upload it. This has to be proven by the authors. For example let's see the moral development, the psychosocial development of adolescence, the students have to investigate that all. Of course I give them supporting material.

Videos are something that I use a lot too. I use videos, for instance, in relation with the psychosocial development of the adolescence... I got an excellent video from OCEANO Inc. where psychologists and psychiatrists, specialists in adolescence explain how it should be understood the behavior of the adolescent and how to help him or her. Help them to overcome that transition. The adolescence is in a bridge! It is a weak bridge! So, how to help them to pass from kid to adult and that video amazed my students.

At the end we have a final work. Other times I have done other, but this time I made one which is about the gathering of information to make a book with the help of everybody in the group. Right now we are about to finish it because there are eight chapters. They have to work with the last units.

There is no time to be careless. We have to develop a strategy, a strategy to get the minimal knowledge. But, they already know where they can go to find it later on because when they work, they can face a classroom management problem and it is an everyday problem. How will you manage the group? How will you treat them? How will you get involved with them? And motivation is a key for that. How will you keep that motivation? The students learn it in the last units of the syllabus. The syllabus has six units, which is too much. So, what we have to do... in this case the professor in charge of this subject must be creative. He or she must think of how to get the students to study all the topics in a comfortable way and based on reality too.

Nowadays I won't tell them... go to the library. No, that would be absurd. They have to use what they have in their hands. They have their smartphones and computers so they must use them. Back then we did not even have typing machines; everything was handwritten and dusty libraries. It is good that nowadays they have all that (technology). I would have

wanted to have it, so students have to take advantage of that. And we do not say ahhh... the guys just do copy and paste. Why do not we teach them how to do it? That is the problem. We have to teach how it is done and how it is learned without nagging and embarrassing the students.

8. Interviewer: Do you develop extracurricular activities to promote the students learning?

Professor #2: Yes, the ones I told you before are extra-curricular, because it is not like we do those activities right there in the (classroom) for instance the activity I told you before, the one related to the book and children. Students have to go and step over the field. I used to plan more activities but due to the social and economic situations, we cannot do it them anymore. I was able to get transportation for those activities but nowadays the School does not have any transportation, so these are some limitations to facilitate the extracurricular activities.

9. Interviewer: Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment in your class? If yes, what is the objective of doing this?

Professor #2: Yes because we do co-assessment, hetero-assessment and self-assessment. Students evaluate for example what we did in regard Piaget's theory. In this case, the group presenting its findings is evaluated by everyone. I set the rules so group A is evaluated by group B. All the groups that are evaluating have a rubric previously studied so they know exactly what they have to take into account when grading their peers, because modern evaluations are not like the ones we have in the past, when professors used to try to make students fail because they thought that the few students that got their degrees were successful people, in modern times all of them have to be winners. As professors, we have to give the same opportunities to all students so, they have to learn how to evaluate and in that way students are learning two things; they are learning the material content that they have to cover during the course and learning how to evaluate. It is a big responsibility for the professors because they have to plan and organize everything.

10. Interviewer: What type of activities do you consider that help the students to maintain an active role during the classes?

Professor #2: It is the constant dialogue. Every class is communicative; all the classes do have to have dialogs such as discussions, debates or questions section. Because students are a little bit shy, it is difficult to make them talk in front of the class. Even though they are starting the major and they are insecure, they are learning. We always have to talk with them, the class instead of being a monologue, it must be a dialogue.

11. Interviewer: What do you think of the following statement: “students should be able to provide their own contributions in the development of the classes”?

Professor #2: Of course, actually that is what it is, students might give their contributions. Students have to search, observe, know, read and question, since they have to be inquires and analysts of everything. It is not just to come to class and repeat what somebody has said.

In this last term I had some really good students, there was one in particular. He always contributed to the class, sometimes I had to put a limit to him, asking him to wait for the participation of other students but at the end, he always participated, he was really good at learning.

12. Interviewer: How can you foster teaching skills of your students who will become teachers in the future?

Professor #2: How do I transmit my abilities? Well, by making them to practice. Because practicing the abilities with my students... before everything I like to have good interpersonal relationships with my students, teacher-student and student-student. I like to promote a respectful environment with smiles and laughs neither we are going to show a very authoritarian or serious attitude, because that attitude will not contribute for students to be spontaneous and they will not participate since they will fear to be embarrassed. In the

past, we were educated in a way in which at the end we did not even have the courage to ask questions to the teachers because tutors were in a pedestal.

13. Interviewer: Do you consider that the student-centered learning approach is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #2: I think it is applied. The Foreign Language Department is the one that has applied this approach. I would say that FLD is the department that mostly uses the Student Centered Learning approach in the School of Arts and Science, maybe is due to the fact that in the FLD are being seen others cultures through the learning of a new language so, that allows an integrated development and puts into practice new active and modern methods for students, I have seen that.

14. Interviewer: How about you? Do you apply some elements of this approach to develop your classes? If yes, could you mention some examples?

Professor #2: Of course I do because when I am planning, I do think on students' needs since the very beginning. One difficult thing to change among the teaching schemes is that professors think on themselves when planning classes. Professors say...what am I going to do for the class? What am I going to do? What am I going to bring for the class? Professors do not say... What do my students need? What materials would be better for students? Professors do not think like that. For example you can think of your own experience when you did your Practice Teaching I and II, did not you think of you own convenience when planning? Do not you think of your own? So, we need to change that and start thinking ... what am I going to teach? What do I want my students learn? Changing that way of thinking is not impossible, but we have to do an effort. I do apply elements of the Students Centered Learning, in Psychopedagogy I think is easier, more... the subject itself facilitates for students taking an active role, in all the subjects is possible but in Psychopedagogy you can apply them easier because we are talking of human beings. We are talking of the development of the person and how a person learns...what do students need in the classroom? You see, it is always a mandatory to talk about students.



15. Interviewer: According to your opinion. Which are the aspects that the teaching field demands today in the society?

Professor #2: In my opinion... well I think it is important that the School of Arts and Sciences... right now I am a member of the team which is proposing a new curriculum. We are changing the study plans of all the Schools taking into account what society demands but also what students need. It is true that society is demanding practical people and technicians to improve the economy but, remember that the University of El Salvador is forming professionals and a professional has to be integral, not only acquiring knowledge but also including values such as ethics and doing that requires other types of subjects... For instance, students should know about subjects related to the transverse axis like the knowledge of global warning, since our lives depend on it. Also, they should acquire an appropriate citizen behavior. We have to know laws, norms, rules... look at traffic, traffic law. Appropriate behaviors like patience and tolerance, wherever you go, you have to make rows and wait for your turn. We are overpopulated... you go and get some medicines at ISSS (social insurance) and you have to wait for an hour or an hour and a half so, if you do not learn to be patient how are you going to deal with that? Our country does not have the resources to take care of every single citizen. We have to understand the reality and we have to work on those points with our students. I was thinking... according to the subjects I will teach this coming semester and work with the problem method how we are going to solve a specific problem. In real life, we are going to face different issues... Another important point is the correct production of a task and its correct edition. We do not manage Spanish very well but we want to learn and teach other language. So students must speak Spanish accurately because when you are teaching an English class you use Spanish to make students understand. If students do not manage very well the English language they always use Spanish. We are not well prepared; we live in a country which does not speak Spanish but Salvadoran. All those things are very important since they are required at the moment of working.

16. Interviewer: Do you think that this syllabus meets the expectations that you just mentioned in the previous question?

Professor #2: Yes it does, the only thing is they took away Psychopedagogy II and now we cover only Psychopedagogy I, just the first one is in the study plan. Psychopedagogy teaches students how to manage the ages from zero to twelve years old and as a professor you are going to work with all ages so. If you see Psychopedagogy II is missing. It was the subject that taught how to manage young and elder students. That was a really good subject... I taught it many times. In that subject you learn all the characteristics that a young student “as you” possesses... all characteristics, emotions, and needs of younger students... It was a really good subject... what are the interests of a twenty-five years old student compared with a twelve years old student or a forty years old student? When teaching at different ages of students, there is a big difference from one to another student, not to even mention seventy-five or eighty-five years old student. How are you going to teach English to each of those students? You are not going to use the same methods; you are not going to use the same exercises because you will not reach their interests... I will not give them childish toys because they would get angry, and they might think “well, this professor who thinks am I? I am not a kid any more” especially with the elder students because with their experience they think that a young person will not be able to teach them. But it is not like that. That is a wrong way of thinking, of course a young professor can teach something valuable to an elder student. As a matter of fact, all students from the English Teaching Major will go and teach all ages, for example at the Social Insurance (ISSS) there is a program to teach English to elder students, I do not know if you have heard of that program, and the professors are from the University of El Salvador. I am talking of teaching English to seventy-five years old students, sometimes even older students and they are learning English. My sister is one of them, she is eighty-two years old and she is glad at learning English at this stage of her life, why? Because there is no age limit to learn so, this kind of programs are important because in these programs you can get a big panorama of how to deal with different ages when teaching. Honestly “I think that our current study plan meets the expectations that our society demands” even though there is the problem of limited time, because the content of the study plan is very extensive and the time assigned for each term is limited so it is almost impossible to give feedback. Another problem generated by the FLD itself is the quantity of students. We want to teach more students and give them the time required but it is impossible. They are not concerned about the desired

quantity of students in each class. For example, at the beginning of this term there were fifty four students and at the end I taught forty eight, and it was good because I could put them work in groups of eight

17. Interviewer: If you can change something from this study plan, would you change it?

Professor #2: As I said, the content of the study plan is ok, we should polish the methodology. The methodological approach has to be clarified; we have to make it better because it is too simple, definitely, we have to make it better. Let's put an example, we can give professors a list of specific activities that they could do in order to meet the expectations at the end of the term. We miss contents... it looks like a "Predetermined list" it should go...-ehh- a list of activities... in that way we would help more to the professor. We have had issues with this subject and it is ok that you are concerned about this problem. The problem is that this subject has been taught mostly by psychologists who give to the subject a psychological approach, leaving a psychopedagogical approach aside. Furthermore, some professors... maybe because they did not learn to be a psychopedagogue and a psychologist at the same time, they ended up teaching "General psychology" and not "Psychology for the education field" as it should be and sometimes that has nothing related with this subject and students ended up lacking knowledge. Psychopedagogy in other countries is a major -Psychopedagogy is a major.

18. Interviewer: Do you think that Psychopedagogy should be taught only by psychopedagogists?

Professor #2: Yes, it should be taught by psychopedagogists. I am a psychologist and a professor, I have gotten knowledge as an educator and as a psychologist which gives me a lot of facilities because I understand what Psychopedagogy is looking for, while someone who is only a psychologist cannot.

19. Interviewer: Do you provide feedback to your students?

Professor #2: Yes, I do. That is essential because we have to forget about the traditional way of teaching which aimed to reprove students. I told you at the beginning, in the traditional way of teaching, the best professor was the one who reprove more students, but it does not work like that. The less students the professor approved, the better he or she was. And nowadays it is the other way around. The UNESCO which is the international rector in education is pointing out that “professors must work in order to reach a personalized education so every student develops his/her skills”. Look, in my case this term I gave prizes, I called those awards “honorific prizes” and they were for the best students. These students were the ones who presented their research papers so, at the end I told them that I was going to mention the best students the ones who experimented a “jump of quality”... they started the process... look, they did not participate, they did not understand anything, they did not prepare materials, well it was... I paid attention to that behavior very well, as long as we were working, at the end they were the best students and I was so happy. There was an autistic child, I observed him since the very first day. He used to sit in a corner alone and refused everybody. When classmates were trying to get closer to him he got away from them and I observed that, I started to ask him questions in order to make him participate but he was just looking at me without answering any of my questions. I left that situation passed, but the day of the first test, that guy did not answer even a question. He was looking at the test, he was looking at me again and to his classmates and finally he told me “I am leaving the classroom because I can do nothing” and I said “ok, but you know, we are going to talk” and I asked him if he was available the next day and he answered “yes” so I told him “ok, you should look for me, you know where I am”, because they had come to educational advisories during the previous days, and I told him we were going to solve the test. I advised him to study and read everything we had covered. The guy was on time the next day and I told him we were going to do the test orally. “Is it ok for you?” I asked him “Do you feel comfortable?” I asked again and he agreed. I started to ask questions and all of them were answered perfectly. Why? Well because he is an autistic student, the matter is that his brain does not work the same as the others students and we have to give to that kind of students more opportunities and trust on them, because those students are very difficult to deal with. Look! After that day, he was answering in the class in a very good way, really good way because the autistic students are obsessive, they have

obsessive ideas. If he was going to read a specific author, you have no idea how he did that research. You should have seen his classmates, they were very impressed. So, as psychopedagogue, we have to realize about the behavior and situation of every single student. Any person gets isolated without any reason, at the beginning I thought he was a deaf person, but he was not, he was an autistic student and he told me that his parents had put him in training because he was autistic and in that case is the Psychopedagogy which is going to help him to develop his skills.

### **III. Professor #3**

1. Interviewer: I would like to know how long have you been teaching here at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #3: It has been fourteen years. In July I will be teaching for fourteen years. It was the first of July when I started to work in here.

2. Interviewer: and which are the subjects that you have taught at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #3: At the beginning I was teaching Reading and Conversation, all the courses of developing skills, also Composition which is the one that I am teaching now and Didactic which is my strength because I studied the master degree which is related with TEFL and how to become an English teacher and also teacher in any area. I studied a degree that has a formation for university studies so, that is for people studying the superior level.

3. Interviewer: And for all the subjects that you have been teaching here in our department, which the one that you enjoy the most when teaching?

Professor #3: Maybe this one Reading and Conversation but also it is writing because I like to help people... let's see...know how to start writing. I enjoy all the subjects I teach, I think I like them. I have the courses for teaching English because I see the advance that students have since the beginning and then I see how they have become speakers of the language at the end of the semester. Didactics is also another one that is TEFL and I enjoy teaching that one too.

4. Interviewer: Have you ever heard about the methodological axis courses that we have here in the English Teaching Major at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #3: We are based in the Communicative Approach and we have the Eclectic Approach which are related to all the methods that we know and are relevant because they are the “designer method” I do not know if you have heard of that concept? The “designer methods” are the ones in the antic teaching. They have those previous methods and they used them for teaching the army to teach Greek, Latin and those languages which are the ones taught before. And those designer methods are the ones that we use in a way but eclectically, that means that we take some techniques from each one and we make one. That is what we do here and we have the communicative approach. I do not know if your question is related to this.

Interviewer: It is like that, but also... which is or are the subjects that are the core of the English Teaching Major?

Professor #3: You are talking about the areas, because we have the skills development area, in which we teach English to our students and this is Basic English, Intermediate and Advanced, this is the area of development of skills. The other area is the specialty area in which we teach Syntax, Pronunciation, Advanced Grammar and Seminar. The ones with Practice Teaching I and II, in two semesters we cover them. The other is... I guess... What is the other area? Those three areas are the ones that are the major, I think.

5. Interviewer: Ok, I would like to know if you apply a specific method to teach Didactic I?

Professor #3: Ok, because we have free decision of doing whatever we want as teachers, but according to the objectives that we have too. Following the objectives at the end we have to give a product depending on the objectives we have for complying at the end of the semester and because we have a free decision of making whatever we want with the activities we have to develop with the students. I apply this one which is the Communicative Approach in the TEFL I and because students need to say what they understand about what they read because we send them to read. This is like the... what is the name of this approach? Kind of... this is a new one... The “Flipped approach”, I do not know if you have heard about this. The Flipped approach is when students go to the classroom to develop what they have studied at home...eh, you give them the information

to the students in the class for them to develop it at home. And when they go to the classroom, they start like developing what they have understood, what they have written, what they have said, what they have elaborated because sometimes they have to elaborate things for explaining them to their mates. That is what we do, to have students work outside the classroom and developing in the classroom things that they have understood about the topic we have developed. Also we have them like... eh, interact with one another for understanding the topic better. One part of the class is for them to express what they have understood and the other part of the class is for me, for getting the doubts I have, for explaining things that they have not understood or to say things that I know that are related with the topic. Using the metaphors also for having students to understand through others examples what they have not understood by reading because this is not so easy for students. I think to understand something that is very technically said. In a handout you have to bring examples in order to have students to understand the real examples and what happens in the classrooms for them to face the situations in any time in which they are going to teach.

6. Interviewer: The next question is, according to your opinion, what is the importance of Didactic I for developing the professional development of the student?

Professor #3: Those are the subjects in which students are going to decide if they want to become English teacher or not. In fact, this is the first question I ask when I teach this subject. At the beginning, I ask them if they want to really become English teacher but, some of them say: “yes,” some of them are very eager and say: “yes of course” now some of them go there because you know... ah- maybe they say that they want to learn... I was one, when I came here and I studied “Profesorado” I wanted to learn English but I did not want to become an English teacher and I did it. But, once I started to see my teachers and having the experience of teaching outside here, I decided to be a teacher... Well let’s try it! You know once you started the third or fourth year you have to decide. Some students decide that they would become English teachers when they are in the Practice Teaching, because they see the contact with the people and you have to decide if you are going to teach kids, adolescents or adults because that is another decision too. Do you want to teach? And who do you want to teach? It is not the same.



7. Interviewer: What type of activities do you use for the development of this subject?

Professor #3: The techniques are group work, pair work, the flipping things... the flip is to change. You know, what students have to do in the classroom, they do it outside and what they have to do outside they have to do it in the classroom. This is the Flipping approach that is what they are supposed to do. And it works, presentations memorization of terms for them to explain that words, what they would do and what they would say or what they understand. –eh... these things, I think this is for them to interact also and for losing the fear of being in front of people, the fear of talking to people because it is not the same when you talk to five or six people in a group than talking in front of everybody, thirty people for example is not the same. And you have to know that it is one of the skills that you have to develop too if you want to become an English teacher, you have to learn that competence.

8. Interviewer: Do you develop extra-curricular activities to promote students' learning?

Professor #3: Sometimes I do, sometimes I do not, and that is depending on the activity and on the subject. And in the activities sometimes students have to become self-learners and this helps them very much. The extra-curricular activities help them to apply... I do not do it very much because of the time I have not been able to develop these things and be aware of what they are doing, I think I have done those activities, but in a way I do not do it.

9. Interviewer: Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment in Didactic I?

Professor #3: In the one I am teaching right now I have used peer-assessment.

Interviewer: Which is the objective of using these kinds of activities?

Professor #3: Students have to know that the teacher does not say everything, they can also... sometimes I think this is not so fair because students are very friendly to each other and sometimes they are going to help each other to have a good grade. You are not going to put a six to him because even though you say... well or maybe... well I try to make them

conscious of what they are doing. Sometimes they do it but sometimes since they are very close friends they are afraid of... you know, giving a bad grade to that person.

10. Interviewer: What type of activities do you consider that help students to maintain an active role during the class?

Professor #3: Group work, also –eh... interaction, with one question, you can hot one interesting question in relation to the topic they are studying, you just give students this question and they start talking. They start interacting and they are like ah- telling their own anecdote of what they have understood of the question that you give them etc, etc. And also presentations in which students take the main role of the participants because I am just observing what they are doing and their peers are the ones who are evaluating. In this presentation groups of people come and they maybe... Carlos is presenting something and you have to evaluate what you have heard from him because I am here just to observe and take the time or tell them “change” so the ones that are listening have their speech of what Carlos have explained so the listeners are the ones giving a grade to Carlos. And this is the power you give your students when they are evaluating the other students. This is the power you give students for being active participants of the class and not only the teacher to be in front.

11. Interviewer: What do you think of the following statement? “Students should be able to provide their own contribution to the development of the class.”

Professor #3: Yes, sure! That is what I have been telling you. Let’s see an anecdote, an experience, something that a student says in the class can help one person and we do not know who but in a way that student who learns something of what Carlos said is going to be beneficial for him or her in any time in their life. They will remember and they can provide something and that is going to enrich the learning of others students not only what the teacher says is what is going to have students learn but what your peers say in the class is what is going to help others students.

12. Interviewer: Another question, how can you foster teaching skills on your students who would become the future teachers?

Professor #3: It is difficult because we have the practice (teaching) at the end we have the micro teaching and that is very poor time because the micro teaching according to... has to be in real contexts. So, we should send students at the end of the TEFL courses we have to send them to real schools to have real students and to have real classes and this is very difficult because we cannot be sending students to any school now and because we are not going to control being in a school and another one, revising what students do and observing what they are doing, it is difficult but that is the real practice that they should have. But what I do is to encourage them to do at least microteachings in the classes and letting them know what they have been failing or to price their strengths when they have passed.

13. Interviewer: Do you consider that the “Student Centered Learning” is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #3: In a way it is. You are the ones who can say that better because you have seen your teachers and some of them maybe are at the center of their class in the whole semester but there are teachers that give students the opportunity to participate and to be the center of the class but, in a way I think that we try to give students freedom to be the center of the class.

14. Interviewer: What would you say that are the elements from this method that is being applied in our department or if all the features that compile this approach are being used in our department?

Professor #3: I know that we do it very much, let's say sixty percent from the ones I know but I know from other that they are just like trainers.

Students are the ones who take the active role, because you know, they are the ones who have their own personalities and they develop the topic according to their personality ask them to do because if you are shy, of course you are going to do something very rapidly

because all that you want to do is to finish. You do not want to start your presentation instead you want to finish your presentation because you do not want to stay in front of the class. But the ones that are very extroverted, you know they prepare many things, they are more eager to say something, to teach something but you know, there have been moments in which shy people are very surprising too, but I do not think I have to give them or seek characteristics in them to assign something.

15. Interviewer: According to your opinion, which are the aspects that the teaching field demands in today's society?

Professor #3: Eh... to be more aggressive in a way, aggressive for getting the confidence of students because now the students are getting ... let's say the fear of the teachers, they are the ones who intimidate teachers and students are the ones who take the most important role in the classes because they do not want to learn and being taught. They do not want to learn, they just want to be there and you know, they want teachers to obey what they say yes, that is what we have to do, be more aggressive in gaining the students confidence for letting them know that what they are going to learn is for the future not for passing a semester or passing with a good number. No, it is not that, what they are going to learn is for life and that is what teachers must learn and not to be a friend of students, but to be very close to them, to know why they behave in a class the way they behave, because as I said before I guess we do not have problematic students in the classroom. We have students with problems and that is a very big difference because we see that this problematic student is behaving that way because he has a problem, and what is the problem he has? I am going to search it, how? By talking, by being near the student and by being close to him or her.

16. Interviewer: Do you think that the syllabus from Didactic I meets the expectations that you just mentioned in the previous question?

Professor #3: We have been working in a "curricular change" you know about that and we have changed many things, -eh, some subjects do not cover of course we are not going to

teach everything. There are some empty spaces, some gaps that the curricula has, but of course we can do something in order to fill out those gaps. But if we cover these gaps we are going to open another hole because we are going to leave other emptiness in there. That is a problem in here that we cannot cover all the situations that we have because of the time, because of the moments in which we taught students.

There is always something that is needed and that is a point... -eh you give your students a topic, but in the way you discover others things that are also important to be covered but you cannot cover them very well because you have to focus in the main objectives that is what we need sometimes. Yes, of course we have some emptiness that in a way we try to have students to follow the objectives for becoming English teachers and the best test for knowing if the major of the University of El Salvador is working. It is the people we have in the different institutions, everybody in every institution knows the students from the University of El Salvador because they know they are very well prepared. The ones who do not do a very well job in there is because they did not want to become an English teacher or because they did not get much work in the major or because their attitude for teaching is not the adequate, which is the minority I think, but the majority of students who really get what they wanted to know and want to do in here, they do a really good job in the institutions they work for.

17. Interviewer: One more question, what do you think about feedback?

Professor #3: It is very necessary. That is what we do when... I do not know if I did it with you, when you finish the microteachings. I called you and you came here and I let you know what you did as a mistake or what errors you have or what areas or things you have improved. That is something that is beneficial.

Interviewer: Do you think that one kind of feedback is more important than the other or both are essentials?

Professor #3: I think students, because I said before that students sometimes do not say things to their friends because they do not want to hurt them and since I know that I tell them so, both of them are very important but the most significant is the one that teachers give. Because teachers know about technical things and students do not know, maybe they

say this because you did not know or they did not study, but I know why she or he did not do it, due to the technical things I know.

#### **IV. Professor #4**

1. Interviewer: How long have you been teaching at the foreign language department?

Professor #4: It has been around fifteen years already.

2. Interviewer: So, what are the subjects that you have taught so far at the foreign language department?

Professor #4: I have worked with the skills development area, which consists of the intensive courses and also Reading and Conversation, and the Didactic courses.

3. Interviewer: Which is the subject that you enjoy the most at teaching?

Professor #4: Didactics

4. Interviewer: Do you know which the subjects that belong to the methodological axis of the English Teaching Major are?

Professor #4: Not exactly all of them but I know that Didactic is one of the courses... well is one of them the most... if not the most important courses from the major, since we have two majors. Yeah one of the two majors that we have in our department is the teaching of English, right? So we cannot have that major without the Didactics courses.

5. Interviewer: Do you apply a specific teaching method to teach classes in English Didactic II?

Professor #4: Well most cases... ah, I like to do discussions, which is one of the strategies that the methodology consists of... and I can say that I apply a method of a well... a discovery. There is a big amount of discovery in research that students have to do, though it is not carried out in the way it should be done and this is because our own culture

background, right? Students expect that teachers bring everything to the class and they have this belief that everything that teacher says or brings to the class is enough and it is the only existing knowledge which in my opinion it is just a low percentage. Students have to discover for example their own learning philosophy, they have to create their own teaching learning theory and they have to do research in the topics that they consider relevant to them to the building up of their own philosophy and well I believe that... In a way we are not doing as much as we should be doing, and when I say we, it is students plus teachers. And I think that is being affected by the amount of students that we have so the methodology that is proposed in the syllabus which is mostly based on discussion in groups or as a whole class are not being carried out in the way they should be done because the large groups that we have. So in a way the methodology stated in the syllabus is not exactly what is being done in the classrooms.

6. Interviewer: What is the importance of English Didactic II in the professional development of students?

Professor #4: Well, it has a big relevance; this is where students learn to become teachers and to develop their own teaching-learning philosophy. I am going to resay what I just said. "It is not the way we want students to teach, it is the way they have to discover, they have to teach and the way they would like to teach," following the standards so, it is not like -oh I like to teach in this way and that is the way I am going to do that, so it is based on the standards and in the theoretical bases that already exist that the students have to create their own philosophy so, there are a very little try outs that students make in their future career. Very few opportunities are provided to our students in the major to practice teaching and to discover this learning theory -teaching-learning philosophy- so, we only have three Didactics, four with the one in Spanish, but the one in Spanish as far as I know is very holistic and so we have to put that aside and have to consider only as Didactic one, two and three. So we are short in the way that contexts, at least the amount of contexts that we would like to carry out in the class, to cover with our students, so Didactic courses are very essential.



7. Interviewer: What type of activities do you use for the development of this subject?

Professor #4: Well, as I mentioned before some of the activities based on the methods, is, ah... to have class discussion, we have group discussions, we have some tasks that are being developed outside the classroom, there have been some times that we included research components as part of our own creating philosophy in the teaching-learning environment but, again I go back to the issue of time constrains and large groups...Ah- having large groups in the Didactics courses so, and the lack of knowledge that we teachers have to develop research. So research should be an important component, especially in Didactic because that is how students, who want to be teachers, can discover the factors that are influencing the teaching-learning process and to develop this as their own and to see what can be improved and to see how this can be changed to improve the students learning outcome. So... ah- one component we want to improve this semester –this coming semester and we want to incorporate it as one of the activities to be applied and then, we have the micro teaching, which is one of the main activities used specially in Didactic II... ah- that is where students develop some try-outs, some practice in how to teach the macro skills and the steps they need to follow to teach. The development of these macro skills so, there is a combination of theory and practice.

8. Interviewer: Do you develop extra-curricular activities to promote students learning?

Professor #4: Well, ah... I do not know if this would be an extra-curricular activity but I do ask them to use the platform so we can have some follow up discussions based on what we have been doing in class. I do not know if this would be part also of extra-curricular activities but I also ask them to look for information, this is what I did at the beginning of the course that they consider relevant and a doubt that they have about the topics that we were discussing and what they were observing in their own learning, I mean, I ask them to put themselves as -learners- to identify an issue that they were having in their own English class how they thought that could be improved so, just to have them to reflect upon their own learning process so they can understand their future students. I know that there is a lot

of other activities that can be done as extra-curricular activities but, in a way I have a lot of concern about that, because it is mostly applied to field work, so my dream would be as an extra-curricular activity is that I could take my students from Didactic II to the real world. I have done only twice. The first time I did this, was with a group from the “Profesorado” and I only had fifteen students. They had the experience of having a real group as an extra-curricular activity and they were facing reality. I also wish that we could have an experimental school here in our school of sciences and I had proposed this many many times that instead of having the students pretending to be teachers with an artificial number of students, to have an experimental school and we would be doing also social work because we would be giving the opportunity to students that are at public schools who receive a very very deficient English class to come and learn in here and having our students from the Didactic courses practice teaching with them. So, again it is a dream hopefully it will come true.

9. Interviewer: Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment?

Professor #4: Yeah but not so much, I have done this in the two tasks that we carried out this semester. I did it and they would do peer-revision group, work-revision as well and obviously that would be part of the grade that they have to receive.

In a way, probably receiving peer-assessment from their peers is done at the time that we do the micro teaching sessions in which... Ah- the students that are teaching at that moment, who are developing the micro teaching are in front of their peers and they receive feedback from their peers, though it is not part of the evaluation system. In the past I did it. I chose in every micro teaching that we had, three or two students to evaluate the process but I came to conclude that they were not ready to evaluate the process yet, because they have to receive a lot of exposure to theory and they also have to have a lot of experience to assess that. They need more information to have the criteria to assign a grade but they can have the power to provide feedback to their peers and that would be more relevant receiving their feedback from their own classmates than from teachers, I believe.

10. Interviewer: Do you think that is it important to provide feedback?

Professor #4: Especially the teacher, but useful feedback from their peers? Yeah because in a way that is the teacher in charge of the course, in this case... me, right? I get a sense of how much the students have appropriated, have acknowledged the theory that we have been studying so, I am assessing the whole process based on the feedback that peers are giving to their classmates. I mean in this case peer-feedback, obviously there is a big responsibility upon the teacher to provide feedback to everyone but I come again to the same issue. In the past when I had fewer students in my class I had the opportunity to provide feedback to every single group when they talked, to every single student when I taught. It has been two or three semesters that I have not done it. So, only to the ones who wanted to receive feedback but in the past it was an obligation, you would not receive your grade if you do not come and receive feedback but I have too many students and that is affecting the process a lot, a lot.

11. Interviewer: What types of activities do you consider that help students to maintain an active role during the classes?

Professor #4: The kind of activities? When they are in charge, believe it or not, there is a misconception in having students a great responsibility upon their own learning process. Sometimes, and I am telling you this because I was a student as well and I have been a student and I continue being a student. I am taking a course in this moment. So, when we are students, we criticize the teacher to leave a lot of presentations and a lot of responsibilities upon the students. I think that it should be changed. That should be changed when... and I am going to give you a very precise example of one of the activities I did. I distributed some activities based on how to teach the micro skills in this case grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. And I assigned each small group one of the activities and I said "you have to develop the how to teach the pre, during and post." And they did an extraordinary work. They did a very good job. Now let's put it the other way around what if I had taken the responsibility to demonstrate, to do the demonstration myself, it would not been so relevant because they would see me as the teacher. I think and I hope, I could observe that many of those students documented those activities, they were taking notes on the activities and they did a very good job so this means that it is more relevant for them to

replicate what was done with their peers than what I did as a teacher why? Because I believe that in most cases students take what the teacher says as tedious, as something that it is being studied because it will be evaluated. In that case they did not receive any points to do those activities and they did a very a much good job, they did a much better job in those activities that were not evaluated even the job they did in the micro teaching so, they were taking responsibility upon their own learning but they did not acknowledge that so, I think that giving the students the opportunity to discover and to do things themselves obviously with the feedback, with necessary feedback from the teacher to clarify what has been done in the classroom from the students' part to clarify what they do ok yes... you do this, to summarize everything what is been done by the students so we can also provide some extra help and reinforce the learning that is taking place.

12. Interviewer: What do you think of the following statement “Students should be able to provide their own contribution in development of the class”?

Professor #4: It is perfect... I agree a hundred percent because of our own education in the system we have been trained since we went to kindergarten and the first grade that the only one who can contribute with the teaching-learning process is the teacher. That was what we have been told actually from the very moment that in the school we are asked to come and copy the class, it is like come and put this knowledge and make a copy in the students' brain so, what is the experience that students bring to the class? It is much richer than that. I think that students can contribute so much to the classroom but teachers have to acknowledge that and have to give some power to the students even to deal with how they would like to be evaluated. You know teacher have to give up some control of the class and students have to be responsible for taking those decisions and I remember we were discussing Didactic that there should be a negotiation continuing along the way of any specific course or school year where students contribute every single process even to the content, to the type of evaluations, to the type of activities they prefer etc, etc. so, we can have a student centered class.

13. Interviewer: How can you foster the teaching skills upon your students who would become teacher in the future?

Professor #4: The teaching skills? By having them to practice, having them experience but in a real context because if you notice, in a way it is an artificial, it is an artificial context they are not authentic students. By also, reading a lot and by doing research, teacher and students have to do research and as teachers we have to provide tools and have to facilitate the research process, in that way students would develop their teaching skills. So far, I think that in our country we see teachers as only facilitating or providing knowledge to the students that we are also... we have to take into consideration the role of us...the teacher being researchers. For example research can be seen as... ok the teacher identifies a specific problem or situation in the classroom, how am I going to cope with that as a teacher? We have to do some research to find out some techniques that I can apply to help our students. So how can I foster the future teacher to develop their teaching skills? That our students, in this case my students become aware of their role and that the role it is not only... it should not be seen as just providing knowledge to the students, students have to discover and create knowledge and when I say create knowledge it is by doing research, every time we do research and we have some findings like you would find, that is knowledge. You will be creating knowledge yes definitely so, as students we have to teach to become the agents of change they have to become the main agent in the classroom and to motivate students to be inquires to question everything they read, to question everything they observe and to see how they would do some changes in that.

14. Interviewer: Do you consider that the Student Centered Learning is being applied at the foreign language department?

Professor #4: mm... not really, we try, and I think it is because this cannot be done immediately and it does not depend exactly on the university level, this has to be implemented since the lower levels. I mean since the kindergarten, the whole system has to change because what happens if we try to implement this until students arrive at the university, that is shocking and students have a misunderstanding of Student Centered

Class, why? Because in the SCL, students are asked to ... also create the curricula, the syllabus and to create every element of what would take place in the classroom and what takes place in the classroom. So, are students ready to do that? No. Are teachers ready to give up power? Because it has to do with power... No. It is not that the teachers are going to lose authority, I mean the authority of the teachers should be stated from the very moment. I think that we are trying to do that in a way ... and the teacher centeredness is not ... as I said in my opinion, it has been taken as a different concept like for example giving the students all the responsibility and it is not that easy, it is a share of the responsibility in where students acknowledge and become aware of what they need to learn, what is what they already learnt? How they will? You know, reach whatever they want to learn so, it is very complex.

15. Interviewer: We are talking about Didactic II in this case, what do you think? Do you apply any element, any activity related with this approach in the class?

Professor #4: Yes I try with the students... I have given them in certain cases choices in how and in which they want to be evaluated and how they want to be evaluated, it is very difficult. That is tricky because sometimes students see this share of power as an opportunity to take advantage and to improve their grades. So, I try to make them to reflect upon the big responsibility that they have and I said look! Do you really think you deserve this? Nine for example. What does this nine represent for you? Why do you think this nine should be given to you? Why do you give this nine to you? - In many cases students just say "oh because I deserve it and that is it".

I think that, yes in a way because of the type of methodology that we implement... where we are not only providing knowledge, I mean we do not see education just as a copy of just what we have in our brain or the teacher knows to what we want our students to learn, in a way we include students and I think that many of us are taking into consideration the students' opinion and sometimes even in the evaluation process and how they would be evaluated. Some teachers I know, they include what students believe and think they should be evaluated so, in a way I think that it is been applied but not purely...

You see what I mean when we share this power. Students are not ready and because I observe that, not much percentage is given to those types of activities and you see how much responsibility you have, how you are going to use that responsibility based on your own benefit or based on what you really want to learn so, I have done some changes I have also... we have gone over the syllabus like twice this last semester and I said “Do you think we should make some changes in the activities?” there was once when they said yes, because there were a lot of things to do or it would be complex and we can make those changes, that is possible even with the deadline and I have moved that but even like that I wish I could make the syllabus with the students based on what they bring from Didactic I to take Didactic II and based on what they think they have weakness to reinforce those weaknesses.

And we will have to consider and construct the syllabus with the students, we could have the course syllabus that all of the teachers from Didactic have agreed in the development and we can have our own syllabus and when I say our own syllabus, it is the syllabus that is really implemented in classroom but that is also kind of tricky because what if that syllabus that we carried out in the classroom does not benefit one or two students. They would see their outcomes in risk. Students have to be really informed the way of SCL.

16. Interviewer: According to your opinion which are the aspects that the teaching field demands in today’s society?

Professor #4: I do not know if you are going to agree with me but nowadays, a person who knows English is believed to have immediate access to the work force of our society so, if I would ask... let’s say two semesters ago, semester two, two thousand seventeen, I asked my students when I was teaching intermediated I and I asked them “why are you learning English? And I would say that sixty percent or seventy percent of students replied “because I want to work in a call center” so, I am seeing that teaching English in society is seen as a tool to help others become part of the work force of our society. You can notice that there are so many English academies and not language academies “English academies” around San Salvador and all the departments and so many people are studying that, not because they need to continue studying or because they want to learn English and become teachers

and increase their knowledge and to have more opportunities for example if they are engineers they would have more opportunities to get a job because knowing English will... enhance their skills to become an engineer. I mean we are not seeing English as that. We are seeing English in society to start working really fast as a customer service or a technician supporter and so it is... I have heard some colleagues say that it is another type of “maquila” here. So what are we as teachers? So, what products bring English teachers to our society? I think that we are seeing as technician, as only teaching the language so we can have people go and work in a call center and we know that the role of a teacher it is not that it goes way beyond that.

Those are the elements that we are missing not in... probably we need to reinforce the curricula, of course we need to reinforce that. I want to project how English teachers are seeing in society. As someone who can teach English, so I can go and work really fast and I say no, no, no... sometimes I have even reflected. Some others days I have been thinking “ok I teach English... I teach English and that is what I know and how I am contributing to society... oh students that graduated from this major in many cases they start working in a call center and it is not that working in a call center is bad. I mean thanks God that they exist in our country because they give many opportunities to our students but teaching is way beyond that, I mean are you going to graduate from a teaching major to go and work in a call center? Probably immediately yes because we need to receive incomes, we need to survive, we want to eat and that is our reality that there should be something beyond that... there are few students who get to have other position in those call centers but if you ask... many of our students who are working or who have graduated from here and are working in call centers they say “No, I am working here because I have not found a job at teaching and that is really sad so that was like immediate need that students have to start working at a call center but that is not their main goal so, the way we are seen in society is that... but that is my humble opinion... it is that we are responsible to produce the work force or immediate work force of our society and I think that is really bad.

17. Interviewer: but talking about the people, let’s say the people who have clear that they want to become teachers, what aspects do you think they should take into account?



Professor #4: To be teachers? They really want to be teachers that they are not going to study this and I am going back to... I do not want to discuss... because they want to work really fast... well to have a clear idea of what they are getting into and that teaching is a big responsibility that we have teaching in general because when we teach English we are not only teaching the language. We are teaching them values, we are teaching to students to become you know an agent in society where they are going to contribute to society, to the empowerment of society, to the improvement of society and not to lose our identity as Salvadorian because you already know English comes from another culture, it is not part of our culture and sometimes we tend to lose our identity as Salvadorian just because we speak English sometimes we prefer even speak English than Spanish and we start to use these terms. I mean we use “Spanglish” and... How much is English influencing our society? So, to specifically answer your question. I think that English teachers should take...we should take our career more seriously and to see how much we impact society in a way that we will improve or reinforce the way society is being seen specifically in our country.

18. Interviewer: Do you think that the syllabus from Didactic II meets the expectations that you just mention from the previous question?

Professor #4: No, there is a lot that needs to be done, in every single semester I will teach... Well before we start teaching the semester we have a whole... I mean, there is a lot of discussion. Right now, I am discussing with others teachers that will be in charge of the Didactic I and we are thinking and what we need to share with our students based on what we believe that we have not asked to our students. So, you see it is hard because... why? maybe if we believe in this moment –ok they are going to take Didactic I so, they do not know what they need, I am making an assumption, they do not know what they need or maybe they do know, so maybe I should talk to their teacher who taught or was in charge of “Pedagogía” and “Didáctica General” to see what they have seen to have a continuing and we tried to do that once and we found that, that is a completely different world “Didáctica General” from “Didactic I” It is like... two different worlds and it should not be. The components of research need to be immediately incorporated or reinforced in Didactics.

Probably theory that is more adaptable to our country needs to be included or EFL in this case we need to have a more Student Centered Class. We need to design activities that would allow students to have power in a classroom, to take their own decisions, to discover, to become inquires, to question, you know? To have the will and that needs to question, to discover, to find out, to... but I cannot find it. I mean, I know that is not impossible, it is hard because we have this... special community in our class... probably it does not have anything to do with your research but we are having a phenomenon in our community especially in the teaching major because we have so many students who come from another major for different reasons. One of the main reasons is that...well this was their first option but they were sent to another major but the second reason is that they were studying Engineering or Medicine but they did not meet the requirements so, they said –oh I am going to study English because it does not have any Math or I do not have to read a lot, so what we have in the classroom is this amount of students who are there just because there are other options but they do not want to complicate themselves and they do not see teaching as an easy thing to do while teaching is more complicating than studying Medicine... in my opinion, I mean we are not seeing that. We have not discovered that so until we find the way to have a community where teaching is seeing as this is “what I want to be” and which is one of your questions from the very beginning I mean, they really have... it is like people who are studying Medicine because they really want to be doctors or nurses. I do not know, or people who are studying at the Engineering School, it is because they want to be... I do not know; a civil engineer I mean they really... they know exactly that when they graduate, they will look for a job in that area, but in our major I mean, it is like you have this group of students who are there and they are not motivated, they say “I am here because you know, I want to learn English but I am traveling to the United States” and then I say: “Why are you not studying at an academy?” Do not take the space of someone who really wants to be a teacher and saying that to your students is risky because you should not be doing that, that is not ethical, it is not professional but sometimes I get frustrated, I get upset because they say... look I mean you either get to like teaching or you change the major because being a teacher is a big responsibility and you have done your teaching practice and you have discovered that. That is not just go and there

is a class I mean every single student has his or her story and you have to deal with so many things so, it is people who you are dealing with.

A lot needs to be improved from the syllabus but we need to have the conditions to improve and one of the conditions is to have a reasonable number of students in the classroom. If we do not have it there is not much what we can do yeah so, conditions need to be improved.

## V. Professor #5

1. Interviewer: How long have you been teaching at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #5: It has been twenty two years.

2. Interviewer: Which are the subjects that you have taught here at the FLD?

Professor #5: Many, from Grammar, Composition, Readings and Literature courses. All the basic levels of English, from Basic to Advanced. What else? The TEFL, Phonology, Morphology and Linguistic courses... I do not know, a lot of them.

3. Interviewer: Which is the subject that you enjoy the most at teaching?

Professor #5: Probably Linguistics, yeah I like that.

4. Interviewer: Have you ever heard about the Methodological Axis Courses?

Professor #5: Yes, we have Psychopedagogy, General Didactic, TEFL I, II and III, Teaching Practicum I and II. It should be enough, but if everything was connected. But as I said, right now at least on my account I can say that the only ones that are connected are TEFL I, II and III. Teaching Practicum I guess, I think and Psychopedagogy and General Didactic I do not know. They should be all connected, right?

For example let me give you a little history about that. When I started working with the TEFL, what I found out was that it was not connection with TEFL I, TEFL II, TEFL III, there was like, just like an arrangement, not even an arrangement. It was like a compilation of topics, but there was no connection. When I started working there, I made a proposal and the proposal was based on a TESOL program. So, what I did, I got a TESOL program from one of the universities of the United States and I adapted that TESOL program that they do in two years. I adapted it so one term of that program could be TEFL I, the other term could

be TEFL II, and the other term could be TEFL III, and mostly that is what we have. At least now, we can say that the TEFL program has a connection with the different contents that we teach in the first, second and in the third.

5. Interviewer: Do you apply a specific methodology to teach classes in TEFL III?

Professor #5: Basically what I do is more like a... The methodology, specifically I use hands-on training. It is too bad you did not go today because we were doing the syllabus, you remember we started with the syllabus. So, today we started with whatever they presented as a proposal for the syllabus, they had to teach a class. I like to do that, to connect the theory with hands-on, meaning, doing what you say that you proposed, and the rest of the class is a lot of lecturing. Another part I think is also, because we are doing presentations, we are doing micro-teachings. We started the micro-teachings today and there is another micro-teaching at the end, but that is mostly based on teaching children.

6. Interviewer: According to your opinion, which is the importance of the TEFL III in the professional development of the students?

Professor #5: I think that, as I said if there is some sort of connection between or among the three TEFL subjects now (the first, the second and the third) with still do not have a connection with Psychopedagogy and with General Didactic I, because they are teachers from another departments. So, I think sometimes they hire teachers here, but the problem is that they come and teach whatever they want. I think the department should say "I want you teach this, to have like the program, and do not teach whatever you want but I want you teach this" because in the TEFL I, what we experience is that we have students who do not know about a lot of theory, the classic theory, right? Classical theory. So, we have to like re-teach that in TEFL I, and if we do, what is the purpose to have Psychopedagogy? Or General Didactics because if they do not teach that there, then we have to re-teach it here. It would better if we have like five levels of TEFL and we should be in charge of teaching that, in English if possible because that is another problem. I think they assign those topics in Spanish because they begin, I think with Psypedagogy in the first semester and they (the

students) do not know English for that. Maybe that is the reason, but we do not know what the other teachers do in Psychopedagogy or General Didactics.

7. Interviewer: What kind of activities do you use to develop TEFL III?

Professor #5: Mostly a lot of hands-on, as I said, right? Jigsaw and micro-teachings. I assign topics for them to present, and the rest would be just presentations, kind of dissertations.

8. Interviewer: Do you develop extracurricular activities to promote the students learning?

Professor #5: Well, with the syllabus design yes, because what they have to do is to go to a department or school, not here and they have to go and ask the head of the department for the syllabus they use in English. So, they interview the head of the department, they interview the teacher who is in charge of that subject, right? And they have to interview some of the students. Probably that is one extracurricular activity.

9. Interviewer: What do you think about peer-learning and peer-assessment?

Professor #5: I think is good, but unfortunately the idiosyncrasy that we have here does not work. I tried to use it, but what I found out is that the students when you tell them to evaluate others, what they do is that they have like a common agreement. The common agreement is like “I will give a ten if you give a ten and then everything is ok” and then, how can you ask them to really honestly evaluate someone if they do that? It is very hard because what I am doing right now is I am recording the micro-teachings. When you record the micro-teachings, and that is what I plan to do when I finish with this, we are going to watch the videos and I am going to give them a check list for the things they are supposed to do. They have to analyze and give feedback to the classmates. The only thing that I cannot do is allow them to give them a grade for this, because I know if I do that, they will give each other a ten and then there is not purpose of doing that. But, when you do this,

when you have students to watch themselves and others watching you, you can tell what is done correctly and what is not done correctly. The only elements that I do not add is the grading part, I do not give them a chance to grade themselves or others because they always do the same. They give each other a ten. But if we had another type of culture where you are honest, unbiased and you can evaluate someone really honestly, then that would work. But in here, it is very difficult. I have tried it many times but most of the times it does not work.

10. Interviewer: What kind of activities do you think that help the students to maintain an active role during the class?

Professor #5: Mainly as I said hands-on activities. Let them do it because that is a preparation for Practice Teaching that they have to do the next semester. So, everything that we do is for them to be able or ready next semester.

11. Interviewer: What do you think about the following statement, “students should be able to give their own contribution in class”?

Professor #5: Well, according to what Mr. David Noonan says and Mr Woodson they say that a very important part of teaching is allowing students to give feedback specifically on what they want to be taught. That is called students unique needs. Unfortunately we only practice one part of the students’ needs which is the objective needs. That is what the teacher, the professional says the semester should be about. We very seldom or never like students participate on what is called the subjective needs because the subjective needs is when you ask students what is that they want to learn, what kind of activities. We do not do that part and it should be part of what we do, but we do not do it. We only practice the objective part of needs, students’ needs.

12. Interviewer: How can you foster teaching skills in the students who will become professionals in the future?

Professor #5: By doing the types of activities that I described, we do a lot of hands-on activities where they have to do it themselves and they see others do it and then we give feedback on that. Not to criticize in a way that would be a harmful criticism but rather in a way to notice what they did and what is done properly, we say “ok continue doing that, it can be an example of you” and what is not desirable, we say “No, that you should avoid it, you should do it differently.”

13. Interviewer: Do you consider that Student Center Learning Approach is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #5: No... I think that the Department at one point and I am talking about maybe like twenty, twenty five years ago had an approach, had a way of teaching which was more effective than the one that we have now, and the contradiction is the advances of technology increases, even though our knowledge and new methodology come, we are less effective in the classroom. So in the past, with less knowledge we were more effective and now with more knowledge we are less effective because we are producing a lot of students, I think... I do not know what the percentage is, but a lot of students who do not really manage the language. You see them finishing the five levels of English, the Literatures', the Reading and Conversations' and everything and still... they have a lot of problems with the language and I say “Why is that?” and the problem is that we have concentrated too much on teaching with the books and teaching the contents, but not teaching the competences, what is needed to speak the language and as long as we continue with the same focus on concentrating on the book or concentrating on the contents, we are not going to change that situation, we will continue to go for many for many years. So I think we need a restructuring, we need an overhaul of the methodology of how we teach English in the Department and believe me if we are not well here, imagine in other universities, right? So there is time for us now to do that work, to change it because I do not think we are doing what we are supposed to do, it is just like finishing books. A lot of us are just following the book, doing what the book says; but not really doing what we should be doing based on the theory. That is the contradiction, we know more theory now but we are more dependent on



the book and in the past we had less theory and we were less dependent on the books but the classes were a lot better.

Many still have same approach, Teacher Center. It is difficult, I think we have to include everybody because the problem is when we see the book as the main resource of the class, then the book becomes the center of the class, it is not the students, it is not even the teacher, right? It is the book who takes control of the class so as long as we are dependents on books, we are going to do that. I think, we can have books but the books should be a resource, but if you go and teach any class, most of us is doing exactly what the book says. There are few times we go straight, we go different to what the book says.

Maybe some elements of that approach are applied but the problem is that a lot of the theory that we have, when we analyze it in its pure form, we believe that everything that is in the books is doable but when we really teach and we are on the front line with students we find out that being a facilitator does not always work, actually it works at certain periods of the class because at other periods, you have to have the control of the class. We go through a very dominant product teaching and the teacher has established that because you can have a great plan for the class, you can have great materials, you can have the best of everything but if you loose control of your class, nothing else works. So the teacher has to know when to change the role and it is not only one role that we play in the class, the role that we play depends on the type of activity and the moment that the class is doing at a very specific time. The book would say “No! the teacher should only be the facilitator and he should...” but that is not possible, in here we do not have much problems of disrupting behavior cause most students are adults they already like have an idea of what they want to do and why they are here but if you go to schools, right? Highschool, junior high or elementary, try to be a facilitator there and then tell me about it if you can really be a facilitator, right? It is not possible, the book sometimes they say one thing but reality in the classroom is another and that is why I think we should be able to analyze, to adapt, to change, to take what is possible and other things that are not possible, I think we do not have to... like believing everything that in the book says because our experience, as well as theory is a very important part of our professional life because without that... believe me I am telling you this because my wife works at a public school, I have a lot of friends who work at public schools and they tell me about the problems, classes behavior specifically

disrupting behavior in the classroom and they can not be a facilitator all the time, they need to constantly change the roles depending on the situations, right?

14. Interviewer: Which are the aspects that the teaching field demands today in society?

Professor #5: I think to do this we need arms, more knowledge of the theory because the problem is that we teachers have taken the attitude or the stance were we say: the students do not understand the theory and because they do not understand the theory, we make the courses easier and I am talking about TEFL, right? Because I was listening to the teachers who are in charge of TEFL I, and they were saying “so what we do is because they (students) do not understand, we make it easier and we teach less theory” and I think that is a mistake, I think we have to find a way in which we make students understand the theory, not the pure, the high theory but at least the theory they need to understand what teaching is about, that is number one. And number two, we need to concentrate in combining or uniting the theory with the practice. Now you read about this, now do it! See how it works when I am doing here with my students, they prepare the syllabus and then I say “now that you have prepared that syllabus put it into action and show me how it woks”. Today we had an interesting class because one of the groups, they decided to take a... what was that?... Química y Farmacia’s I think, and I told them... because the original syllabus says that they will go to teach listening, reading, speaking... but when you look at the syllabus it was only like reading and I said “Are you going to do this or are you going to do that?” You cannot do everything because you do not have enough time and I ask them “Did you ask students how the teacher does the class?” and they say “Yeah most of the class is in Spanish” because it has to be, they do not speak English. Students over the... We only have... like in medicine right? We only have one more subject, one course.They do not speak English, the class is taught in Spanish because what you are teaching to your students there, is to read and understand English. But how can your students to answer and to speak English if they have not been trained to do that. So today’s class the other students, when this group started like teaching, right? They were like surprised at this group and I think one of the questions was. Why are they teaching in Spanish? Because that is the way it supposed to be done, right? That is the way they were supposed to do in the past when you

take “Inglés de servicio” when we serve to English or Philosophy, Journalism the classes were taught... right? And it was focused to teach our students to read but the class were conducted in Spanish and not in English.

15. Interviewer: Do you think that the syllabus meets the expectations that you just mentioned?

Professor #5: I think it is outdated. I think that at one point in history, probably it met the demands, but now that was more like eighteen-twenty years ago has not been changed, has not been modified. I think it is time to change it.

16. Interviewer: And what about the syllabus for TEFL III?

Professor #5: As I said, remember that TEFL III right now is based on a TESL program from a university in the United States so at least, right? I think that anybody who does well in TEFL I, II and III and they go to the United States and they take the exam. Because there when you finish this TESL program you have to take an exam like the “PAES” to get certified, if you pass the exam then you become a certified teacher of English. If you do not pass the exam it is like no, go and study some more. So, I think that if students here, they do well TEFL I, II and III, they could be able to pass a certification exam in the United States because the contents that we include here, I included in a TESL program so at least in that part and if teachers do not modify too much, I think we are ..... by now but this proposal that I made was about eight-nine years ago. So, even by now I think we should have changed it and see what is new. Right? And see what other universities are proposing for TESL programs. Because they are changing, they constantly change the demands, the needs so we should change it. I think it should be an overhaul, there should be a review. Right? At least as they losses every five years.

17. Interviewer: In your case, is there something that you would like to change in that subject?

Professor #5: Yeah, I would say like we should make a revision, make an overhaul with the focus on the contents that they are studying over there in the United States. It is too old the program that we are doing right now, it is too old. It is about nineteen years old so we should change it. But at least we have something that says... that is what they were doing, others at least ten years ago. Right? It is not like in the past that there was not connection, like the teachers taught whatever they wanted to teach, but right now there is at least an idea of this program.

18. Interviewer: What do you think about feedback?

Professor #5: feedback is important, but feedback only works as well as corrections, feedback only works when the students understand why you are given them feedback for. Because this is like a child and a child says “es que no cabio” why do you think he says that? Do you think that he says that because he knows and he does not want to use the correct form? He uses that form because he thinks, his brain thinks that is the correct form. Right? And you can correct the child, you can say “cabio no, cupo” and the child says “ok, no cupo” five minutes later –no cabio- the brain is not ready, not ready for correction. So the same here, feedback, we give someone feedback but if they understand what feedback is about yes it works, but if they do not understand is like... they do not get it. My students, did you see the group that I was with, before you came? I was asking them questions about the syllabus that they got and they still do not understand and we have been here like three weeks in the syllabus assign and still they do not get it. Maybe by showing them the videos with the checklist, they may understand, in that case maybe feedback works. But there has been a lot of work before that. Because the ideas sometimes that we have here is the students do something and immediately we give them feedback and we think that they get it, that they understand but in many times no. The brain has to be ready and when the brain is ready they understand. You are teaching right? Have you ever taught? What happens when you teach a class? Because this is what happened to me when I was either preparing the class or when I was teaching the class and there was something I did not understand and I taught I understood specially with the grammatical structures so when you are preparing the class or when you are teaching the class, it suddenly hits you ... “oh, now I understand”

you say “oh the explanation that the teacher gave you” you think you understand but when you prepare a class or when you teach a class then you understand and this is many years later. I remember when I have a “gringa” who came a couple of years ago and we were talking specifically about this “how can we make students understand... because we explain and... and she said “Well, think like this, whatever you explain, whatever you do is like a little seed that you plant, but you do not expect that the little seed to blast immediately, it is going to take some time and it depends on each student differently, maybe you realize about what I am telling you tomorrow or maybe you right now and maybe he is going to get this three weeks later. There is no definite time, for some students is soon and for some is later. And believe me when I was teaching and when I started teaching a lot of grammatical structures that I have been explained and I passed grammar with good grades, well one of them, the other one not so good with six I guess but the first one I think I passed with a nine. I taught a new grammar but when I was preparing the class I understood. So, the same with feedback. I think the best way for feedback to work is when the student is ready, when he has enough information, enough examples that he can notice, because that is the word that they use now in the theory, that he can notice by himself because I can explain it to you but if your brain is not ready. You can say “ahh yeah I get it, I get it” but when you notice something and this is like the discovery learning, right? What Mr. David Ausubel proposed, that when the student sees something and he understands, it is better for you to explain, because what was the idea that we had to teach grammar structures in the past -that you had to explain grammar- and the best you had explained the easier the students would understand “mentiras” it does not work like that. How do people really learn grammar? By listening, by reading books because there you see or you hear grammar in actions. And that is much better than learning the rules. But because we come from an idea, we come from an idiosyncrasy where we expect to be explained the rules, right? And some students get mad when you do not explain grammar “hey teacher why, why do not you explain grammar?” and you are showing them, it works like this, it works like that, but still where is the grammar? I need the grammar.

## VI. Professor #6

1. Interviewer: How long have you been teaching at the foreign language department?

Professor #6: For little more than twenty two years.

2. Interviewer: What are the subjects you have taught so far at the foreign language department?

Professor #6: Well, I have really taught like many subjects. From the language skill development area courses to Practice Teaching I and II for some years. TEFL courses I, II and III, Reading and Conversation, Advanced Grammar and others I don't remember. Ah... Once I taught French but it was somewhere else. Yeah it was basic French and it was just an emergency.

3. Interviewer: Which is the subject you enjoy the most at teaching?

Professor #6: I like teaching in the skill development area a lot. But in fact I selected ahh... just on my own will I selected one of these subjects for this term because I enjoy them.

4. Interviewer: Do you know, what are the subjects that are related with the methodological axis of the English Teaching Major?

Professor #6: I think we are talking about TEFL I, II and III, Practice Teachings and... maybe ahhh... I might probably have some others, but since I haven't taught them.

5. Interviewer: Do you apply a specific teaching method to teach classes in Practice Teaching I?

Professor #6: Ahh... yes, since the methodology we are working with students in two different areas; we work with theory and of course, the subject is maybe related to practice

so we usually assign the student... Well no usually, but always assign the student to work with a tutor and that tutor is really responsible of assisting the student in different methodological issues.

6. Interviewer: According to your opinion what is the importance of Practice Teaching I, in the professional development of the students?

Professor #6: I guess it is the moment of the truth where students probably realize if they are made for working in this area. Some of them get disappointed. And they ask themselves about what they are doing here at to this moment. And then there is pity, but I guess it is really important for the students to realize about what teaching is.

7. Interviewer: What type of activities do you use for the development of Practice Teaching I?

Professor #6: Well as I told you, we have like in-class-activities. We discuss, review or give some feedback on the theory, but it is only feedback because students have already taken TEFL I, II and III. So, they are supposed to know all the different theories. We do not stop to teach them about very, very specific methodological issues, just have a brush up and we review, right? And then we have some others activities in which students participate for example in some... Ahh... In class activities, they have some micro-teaching sessions in which we basically help students realize about some technical issues, alright? And then, the reality is when they come to their practice.

8. Interviewer: Do you think that feedback is very important for this subject?

Professor #6: Yeah, I think it is important for both teachers and students. For the students because they realize about some problems and they kind of solve the problems before they come to the classroom. Somehow they are warned about some problems that they might probably face when they come into and you give them the tools in order to make decisions, the correct decisions basically.

9. Interviewer: Do you develop extra-curricular activities to promote the students learning?

Professor #6: I guess we do through some assignments that we have. For example, we give them time to work on some videos, right? The last term they were assigned to work on a couple of videos. They were really interesting I think. Those are some extra-curricular activities. Then we ask the students to... or we make them conscious on the fact that they have to work on developing their skills for teaching even if they are not here. I sometimes ask them to get a job, right? At least teach a couple of hours because that is going to really be the school for them.

10. Interviewer: Do you use peer-learning and peer-assessment in your class?

Professor #6: Yes, probably when it comes to classroom management we do that, right? We ask the students to work in pairs or we give them cases in which they probably sometimes do this.

11. Interviewer: What type of activities do you consider that help the students to maintain an active role during the class?

Professor #6: They have to put into practice like for example classroom management strategies. That is something that they have to do and the kind of activities they have to perform during the class like put the students to work in pairs, groups, right? And, there are some others activities. We do have to put on this site the administrative issues that they have to work with too.

12. Interviewer: What do you think of the following statement, "Students should be able to provide their own contribution in the development of the classes"

Professor #6: That is something regards to students to do. In fact that is... if you take a look at the role of the students and teachers, there is a lot of that. They have to contribute; they



have to be actively involved in different activities. When they are not teaching, we ask them to get involved for example in monitoring group work. That is only an example, and there are others of course, other activities. And of course, I agree with the statement.

13. Interviewer: How can you foster teaching skills in your students who will become teachers in the future?

Professor #6: Definitely this... probably we have to think about theory and practice, right? And that is the idea of this subject, right? To put the students to work and experience. Because experimentation is really the way they are going to learn, and that is the way we foster students' learning in the area of teaching.

14. Interviewer: Do you consider that Student Centered Learning approach is being applied at the Foreign Language Department?

Professor #6: Now at the FLD? I think we are kind of changing the tendency, right? If we compare it to what we were doing many years ago, I remember when I was studying here it was probably Teacher Centered Class. Now, students have like a little more involvement in the decisions of the class. We usually involve students, we negotiate with the students as part of... let's say our everyday activities, right? I think that in general, we are not there, but we are probably heading to this.

15. Interviewer: Is the Student Centered Learning approach being applied in Practice Teaching I?

Professor #6: Mm... we probably try to work on this approach and we try to put into practice the different... I mean the... what is involved in the Student Center Learning, right? That is probably part of our job to give the example to the students, right? This is a model, so we try to work on that.

16. Interviewer: According to your opinion, which are the aspects that the teaching field demands nowadays in our society?

Professor #6: Demands? Probably there is something that I usually talk to, or talk about with my students, maybe it is competition, right? That is one of the demands. Students have to be like skillful, they have to show that they know what they are doing. That is part of the competition. It is only, probably content, to know about the content of the subject, but also to have like the methodological knowledge. To have like the competences, linguistic competences, right? It is part of the demands. Outside they're usually required. There are requirements and these three things that I have mentioned are probably part of the requirements that are demanded outside.

17. Interviewer: Do you think that the syllabus from teaching practice meets the expectations that you just mentioned in the previous question?

Professor #6: That is what I think but I am the teacher. So, I might be biased. Mm, but we have been working on... To tell you the truth, we have been working on the syllabus for years and we have modified the syllabus. It was... if you take a look at the syllabus that was used like probably ten years ago or fifteen years ago, it is totally different. Nowadays we have like a guideline, we have used a lot of time working on the guidelines... working on... like specific ideas in order to help students know what it is expected from them.

18. Interviewer: Is there anything you would like to change right now in the syllabus?

Professor #6: In the syllabus? As you know, ahhh... groups are really different, I mean not all groups... We cannot prepare like a recipe, as a doctor's recipe and that recipe is not going to work for everybody, right? We have previous experiences in Practice Teaching I, we get to know the students. And then we sometimes modify according to the kind of students that we have, yeah? It is surprising that sometimes the syllabus needs to be changed according to the audience that we have at the moment. Ahhh... basically that is what we do. We have the syllabus and then for example with the professor Grace we have a

meeting. We are going to have a meeting and we are going to check the syllabus again for this coming term. And if it is necessary to make some changes. If something did not work for Practice Teaching I, then generate those changes.

19. Interviewer: Is there any change in the methodology or the activities between Practice Teaching I and Practice Teaching II?

Professor #6: Basically we follow the same guidelines, because it is... Let's say in the second part, we basically follow the same guidelines but we usually change some of the activities. So you must expect some of the activities to be different. For example, for Practice Teaching I, we emphasize on the micro-teachings based on the skills, right? So you present some activities based on the different skills and I usually have to talk to Professor Grace as I told you before. We usually emphasize... Let's say the issue that we take into account from Practice Teaching I, is the focus on material design, ok? But as I told you we need to talk about that and see if we can implement the same activities of the last year. We talk about it and we evaluate probably about the validity, about the usefulness of the activities for the students, not for us, but for the students. We usually try to work on things that are going to be useful for the students in their practice or in their real life. In other words the real practice outside the campus.