UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

"A Descriptive Study about the functionality of the program of Distance Education focused in the subject of English for senior students in this program, in the public schools: Complejo Educativo "Pedro F. Cantor", Centro Escolar Républica de Haiti, Instituto de Educación a Distancia "Laura Vicuña" and Centro Educativo Católico "Maria Mazzarello" located in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla."

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To God:

Thank You for being my perfect Father. Thank You for your everlasting love and unconditional. forgiveness.

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CRISTINA ISABEL ZÚÑIGA MARTINEZ

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INTRODUCTION

The public education is a modality that has allowed people to have access to different kinds of education. The two most important systems of education in El Salvador are: Educación Presencial and Educación a Distancia which have helped to a wide and flexible teaching way, in the case of second language (English) this is based in the communication among people through time and space.

The present research**, "A Descriptive Study about the functionality of the program of Distance Education focused in the subject of English for senior students in this program, in the public schools: Complejo Educativo "Pedro F. Cantor", Centro Escolar Républica de Haiti, Instituto de Educación a Distancia "Laura Vicuña" and Centro Educativo Católico "Maria Mazzarello" located in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla.",** was basically developed with the purpose to give information about the function of this education system and also describe how the teachers and students work in this modality, in this way both situations can be a reference for improving possible shortcomings in the teaching- learning process.

In this text a series of aspects are shown, they helped to have a better conceptualization about the principal aspects that the modality contained, which helped to give a better idea how it was working and if it fulfilled the necessities to the students who were taking part in this educative alternative (Distance Education).

The research was divided according to the information gathered through instruments of the research such as: Class Observations, Interviews, and Surveys. At the same time, the group used curricular bases and particular tendencies of Distance Education in order to show the most important information about this modality.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

- To describe the modality of Distance Education in the English classroom of the senior students in some publics schools of Sonsonate and Santa Tecla.

Specific Objectives:

- To highlight the most relevant aspects (human, academic, technological resources, etc.) that the modality offers to the students in the schools taken as the base of the research.
- To show the reason for and importance of the Distance Education, to direct the sense and value of this modality from tutorial labor.
- To find out if the students are pleased with the kind of English they are studying in Distance Education in these schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Perhaps the most striking difference between a traditional class and a Distance Education course is in the area of communication and interaction. In the Distance Education environment, instructors do not have the benefit of seeing students' nonverbal cues to gauge how well they are teaching. In a Distance Education environment, instructional designers have to help instructors to get involved in the educational process.

One method to encourage interaction is to develop strategies for student reinforcement and feedback. For example, in a video class, use several minutes at the beginning of class to review material from the previous week, and use other stuffs as reinforcement tools. For a Distance Education class, instructors may include materials that reinforce content they've gone over. And based on these things it is obligatory to mention and establish the follow statement.

Are the methodologies, techniques, teaching strategies inside the classroom the most appropriate tools used by teachers for students to receive meaningful English learning during the school year in Distance Education?

HYPOTHESIS

"In Distance Education senior students' learning is achieved easily in classroom when there exist effective teaching – learning strategies, appropriate didactical material, and appropriate teacher-students interaction."

JUSTIFICATION

Distance Education, structured learning in which the student and instructor are separated by time and place, it is currently the fastest growing form of domestic and international education. What was once considered a special form of education using nontraditional delivery systems is now becoming an important concept in mainstream education.

Due to the rapid development of technology, courses using a variety of media are being delivered to students in various locations in an effort to serve the educational needs of growing populations. For example in the last 10 years, student's population has increased substantially in some places in El Salvador. In many cases, developments in technology allow Distance Education programs to provide specialized courses to students in remote geographic areas with increasing interactivity between student and teacher. As for instance, in South America specifically Chile, and Argentina offer different kind of programs (they are in higher education) for the people who do not have the possibilities for studying regularly.

Although the ways in which Distance Education is implemented differ markedly from country to country, most distance learning programs rely on technologies which are either already in place or are being considered for their cost-effectiveness. Such programs are particularly beneficial for many people who are not financially, physically or geographically able to obtain traditional education.

Technology is a major contributor to the dramatic transformation of distance learning. Radio and television have been used effectively for more than forty years; satellites and the Internet are transforming the world into a borderless educational arena, benefiting both previously underserved people and education entrepreneurs. Although many developing countries still have limited access to these new technologies, major new investments in telecommunications and information systems are going to improve their access dramatically.

The research was made to analyze the teaching methodologies in Distance Education in order to provide necessary information that allows the group to discover if the

methodologies used for teaching English adjusted themselves to the objectives that the method pretended to reach. Besides as a way of widening the research the group determined the teacher-students interactions in this modality in order to discover if the teaching- learning process of English subject was functional for a real learning.

Because usually people think that teaching a second language is the same that teaching a regular subject, it is necessary to consider that the latter needs to apply different methodologies such as: classroom interaction, grammar translation, and communicative issues, etc. these methodologies help not only the teachers but also the students to have a kind of different class.

The vision of the education provides a challenge of information that involves the actors of this process: principals, teachers (tutors), students, and schools which in fact are the soul of the process. The idea was to discover how useful and attractive the learning activities this modality is. For example Distance Education has standard contents for the whole national system.

The group made the research to find out if the educational systems, in public schools, permitted the students to develop and conceptualize the learning of a second language (in this case English) and in this way, to discover if the methodologies and the teacher- student interactions were useful for a real understanding of the process.

<h1 style="text-align: center">THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</h1>

Education encompasses teaching and learning specific skills, and also something less tangible but more profound: the imparting of knowledge, positive judgment, and well-developed wisdom. Education has as one of its fundamental aspects imparting culture from generation to generation. Education means 'to draw out' facilitating realization of self-potential of the people. It is an application of pedagogy, a body of theoretical, and applied research relating to teaching-learning process and draws on many disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, computer science, linguistics, sociology (often more profound than they realize) though family teaching may function very informally.

Schooling simply occurs when society, a group, a class or an individual designs a curriculum to educate people, usually from children, teenagers, and young adults. Sometimes education systems can be used to promote doctrines or ideals as well as knowledge.

I. History

Generally Distance Education programs were developed by private and state institutions, in the communities. The main impact of Distance Education consists of the constant evolution of itself, trying to give an answer to the fast changes of the society: economical demands, political, cultural, and technological for benefiting people.

Historical evolution of Distance Education.

It is believed that Distance Education was born as a form of education by mail. Many people affirm they were instructive letters, in the Sumerian civilization in order to interchange information between doctor and priests. Other people consider the origin from different letters: Eratosthenes and Archimedes, letter from Horace, Augustus, and Seneca with his epistles to Lucilo, among others. The truth is that the original Distance Education lies down on these historical facts: As a systematical informal modality by mail.

For instance in El Salvador Distance Education began by mail thorough the Hemphill Scholl and its variety of lesson without teaching personnel: English, Electricity, and Nursing, among others. Also through the years it had been done other specific relevant actions which could be mentioned for example: teacher training by mails in the decade of fifties. It was developed by the didactical unities in order to prepare teachers searching for a promotion in the teaching level.

Although there has been no central theoretical framework to guide research in Distance Education, there have been a number of important studies which have examined the interactions of new ways of learning, course design, and instruction. For these reasons, it is appropriate to examine these different roles in this context.

For example in El Salvador, Televisión Educativa was created in 1964 in order to improve the quality of the instruction, the development teaching personnel, and also to enlarge the coverage of the educational services, in which that decade were incipient and inadequate, which undermined the possibilities to have a better development of the educative system, and were those situations which impelled the establishment of new ways of educative development. As a result of those new ways of educative development, El Programa de Perfeccionamiento de Maestros en Servicio (PPMS) was promoted in 1981 by La Dirección General de Tecnología Educativa.

The issues previously mentioned were followed for two other important events: The establishment of the system of Distance Education that was created in 1983 to help people in their wish to have Educación a Distancia studies in the different educative levels; as well as, El Programa de Educación Básica a Distancia "PREBAD" which was created in 1986, in order to give educational coverage to people set aside from the educative system, and to help people who drop out from the formal educative system.

Some promoters of the Distance Education:

Promoters of Distance Education have constantly claimed that a good reason to establish Distance Education infrastructure and build "distance teaching" capacity is to take knowledge and training to the marginalized, isolated, underprivileged and the unreachable.

Through the years have existed people who have worked so hard to create a better field for Distance Education, and they have contributed not only with their knowledge, but also with their sacrifice to place this way of education into the most necessary ones in country's history.

Because Distance Education is perceived as an increasingly effective method of instruction, educational researchers have examined the purposes and situations for which distance education is best suited. Frequently asked questions cluster in five areas:

- Is technology-assisted, distant teaching as effective as traditional face-to-face teaching?
- What factors determine the most effective mix of technology in a given distant teaching situation?
- What are the characteristics of effective distant students and teachers?
- How important is teacher-student and student-student interaction in the distance education process and in what form(s) can this interaction most effectively take place?
- What cost factors should be considered when planning or implementing distance education programs and how are those costs offset by benefits to the learner?

Much of the research done to date has centered on the use of new technologies for teaching and distance education's effectiveness as a teaching medium. A predominance of those researches has used survey questionnaires with closed-ended questions with the range of options determined by the researcher. This empirical research is useful for studying drop-out rates, learning about student preferences, and attempting to compare the variety of

technology used. Hommberg (1988) acknowledges that the focus of most distance education institutions is on the technology but suggests that the research is shifting to "the more human side" of the system as the programs age.

In the case of our country, there have been a lot of institution which have worked to developed, enhance and launch different researches to let know the people what Distance Education is working and covering in El Salvador. Institutions like: Universidad Tecnológica, Mined, Universidad de El Salvador have spent lots of time working with people in Different areas such as: math, science, literature, etc.

But not only here in El Salvador have been people who have made a big effort in order to promove Distance Education as a Educational system, around the world were a group of people who tried to create a real field to the system already mention to make people understand that existed a way to get access to education, these are some of those promoters, mostly in Europe, who wrote, worked to developed Distance Education.

Borge Hommberg: Distance Education was created in order to give continuity to the people unable to take classes through the formal educative system. Its origin overcomes from the century XVII, in Boston and Sweden in 1833.

Isaac Pitman: started to teach stenography by mail, in England, in 1840.

Jaime Sarramona: overcomes Distance Education from Charles Fossalt and Gusstave Langeus Chied, in 1856.

Without a strong base in research and theory, Distance Education has struggled for recognition by the traditional academic community. It has been described by some (Garrison, 1990; Hayes, 1990) as no more than a combination of ideas and practices taken from traditional classroom settings and imposed on learners who just happen to be separated physically from an instructor. As Distance Education struggles to identify appropriate theoretical frameworks, implementation issues also become important. These

issues involve the learner, the instructor, and the technology. Because the nature of Distance Education as learner-centred instruction, distance educators must move ahead to investigate how the learner, the instructor, and the technology collaborate to generate knowledge.

Due to the rapid development of technology, courses using a variety of media are being delivered to students in various locations in an effort to serve the educational needs of growing populations. For example in the last 10 years, student's population in Distance Education has increased substantially not only here in El Salvador but also in Central America. In many cases, developments in technology allow Distance Education programs to provide specialized courses to students in remote geographic areas with increasing interactivity between student and teacher. As for instance, in South America specifically Chile, and Argentina, they offer different kind of programs (they are in higher education) for the people who do not have the possibilities for studying regularly. Radio and television have been used effectively for more than forty years; satellites and the Internet are transforming the world into a borderless educational source, benefiting both previously underserved people and education entrepreneurs.

II. Definition of Distance Education.

To Jaime Sarramona (1989) "It is an educational modality that permits the educational act through several methods, techniques, strategies and sources in a situation in which the students and teachers are physically apart, and they meet occasionally, according to the distance, type of knowledge that is imparted, technology that is used, and others."

In Distance Education there are a few personal meetings, which means the students in the educational process are placed far from the educational tutor; this is the main characteristic of this kind of education.

Moore's (1990) concept of "transactional distance" encompasses the distance which, he says, exists in all educational relationships. This distance is determined by the amount of dialog which occurs between the learner and the instructor, and the amount of structure

which exists in the design of the course. Greater transactional distance occurs when an educational program has more structure and less student-teacher dialogue, as might be found in some traditional distance education courses. Education offers a continuum of transactions from less distant, where there is greater interaction and less structure, to more distant where there may be less interaction and more structure. This continuum blurs the distinctions between conventional and distance programs because of the variety of transactions between teachers and learners in both settings. Thus distance is not determined by geography but by the relationship between dialog and structure.

Finally, the social context in which distance learning takes place is emerging as a significant area of research. Theorists are examining how the social environment affects motivation, attitudes, teaching, and learning.

Because people usually think that teaching a second language is the same as teaching a regular subject, it is necessary to consider that the latter needs the implementation of different methodologies such as: classroom interaction, grammar translation, and communicative issues, etc. These methodologies help both teachers and students to have a better class.

Many educators ask if distant students learn as much as students receiving traditional face-to-face instruction. Research comparing distance education to traditional face-to-face instruction indicates that teaching and studying in a distance program can be as effective as teaching and studying in traditional instruction. When the methods and technologies used are appropriate to the instructional tasks, there is student-to-student interaction, and teacher-to- student feedback.

The vision of education provides a challenge of information that involves the actors of this process: principals, teachers (tutors), students, and schools which are indeed the soul of the process.

III. Objectives of Distance Education:

Distance Education like any other educational processes has its objectives in order to:

1. Open the access to educational opportunities
2. Motivate and develop attitudes toward the improvement of knowledge of the adult population.
3. Facilitate strategies of permanent education for young and adult students.
4. Expand the action coverage.
5. Develop the individual learning in order that people get away from the geographical social, labour, and family areas.
6. Contribute to educational innovation.
7. Facilitate the innovation of teaching methods, where students are authors of their own learning.

IV. Characteristics of Distance Education:

1. Distance Education is an answer to the permanent education needs and rights.
2. It is an accurate answer to people's demands in order to overcome the existing barrier between school and normal life, between theory and practice; not to isolate the students from their environment, but to let them apply immediately their previous knowledge.
3. It permits a flexible knowledge in time and duration, rhythm, and intensity of study according to students' characteristics and curricular contents.
4. Self-evaluation permits feedback that allows the quality of the system and the establishment of a bi-directional dynamic between the system and the students.
5. Distance Education demands logistical support, availability of the tutors, and self-disciplined students to ensure the learning success.

The previous characteristics allow people to take part of this modality to be responsible, organized, and capable in the new functions assigned as: planning their studies and

activities, and taking advantage of their time. Distance Education in El Salvador is divided in two modalities: Secondary School and Higher Education. Every modality has its own organization fields according to the way the schools have to work with the students.

Secondary Education

Secondary education consists of the second years of formal education. It is characterized by transition from the typically required, comprehensive primary education for minors to the optional "post-secondary" or "higher" education for adults. Depending on the system, schools for this period or a part of it may be called secondary or high schools, middle schools or vocational schools. The exact border line between primary and secondary education varies from country to country and even within them, but it is generally around the seventh to the eleventh year of schooling. The purpose of secondary education can be to give common knowledge, to prepare for either higher education or to train directly for a profession.

Higher Education

Higher education, third stage or post secondary education, often known as academia, is the non-compulsory educational level following the completion of a school providing a secondary education, such as a high school or secondary school. This education is normally taken to include undergraduate and postgraduate education, as well as vocational education and training. Higher education generally awards certificates or diplomas.

Higher education includes teaching, research, and social services activities of universities, and within the realm of teaching, it includes both the undergraduate level (sometimes referred to as higher education) and the graduate (or postgraduate) level (sometimes referred to as graduate school). Higher education in some countries generally involves work towards a degree-level or foundation degree qualification.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Profile of teachers in Distance Education:

The performance of an English tutor in Distance Education as any other profession is attached to some circumstances and requirements. The success in the student's learning will depend of the next prerequisites:

Willingness: It is important the tutors have established a wish to share their knowledge with the students and also to enjoy their class preparation, development and of course the important aspect of the evaluation.

Knowledge: No one will teach what no one understands. Teachers have to demonstrate the confidence in managing the contents during the development of the class.

How to teach: Tutors need to be experts to transfer their knowledge properly to students. The tutor has to be smart in the way of using different kinds of teaching techniques to the objectives to reach in class and to know how adults' English learning is acquired easily. Finally, tutor in Distance Education should express clearly the instructions that students have to follow in order to do their quizzes, exams or homeworks.

Universe

According to MINED the program of Distance Education is offered in all El Salvador (see appendix 1), but this research was focused on two specific places of El Salvador: Sonsonate and Santa Tecla. An important reason why the researchers decided to take these places for the research was that the group members could get information easily because they live in those places; besides, the advisor recommended the researchers to take different cities (not specifically San Salvador) for the research. This suggestion was based upon the fact that most of the time many of the researches just focus on the capital and other places

are not taken into account. In the case of this research, Santa Tecla and Sonsonate represent a different point of view about this system (Distance Education).

This year in Sonsonate, there were 22 schools in which 478 students were registered in their last year in the program of Distance Education (243 men and 235 women), meanwhile in Santa Tecla there were 16 schools in which 464 students were registered in their last year in the program (179 men and 285 women), but for the research just an amount of this general number was taken.

Sample

For making the diagnostic study and obtaining information, the group worked with 94 students, which was the population of the research. These students were in the last year of their studies. The group took a specific quantity of students in the schools Complejo Educativo "Pedro F. Cantor", Centro Escolar Républica de Haiti, Instituto de Educación a Distancia "Laura Vicuña" and Centro Educativo Católico "Maria Mazzarello", that are located in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla. Because of their high amount of students registered, it is important to mention that these two cities are the ones that in that moment had more institutions that offer these education system in El Salvador (besides San Salvador). For that reason, the group researched about the function of Distance Education, and it was done through the following research techniques:

Research Techniques

Observation

The observation instrument was designed according to the objectives that had been established at the beginning of the research. The purpose of the class observation was to discover the real environment in which a class is carried out. This instrument included how the teacher develops and organizes his/her class. In there, there are some aspects to pay attention to, like the introduction he/she did at the beginning of the class, how he/she

developed the class, taking into account rhythm, gestures, eye contact, and the attitude of the teacher to make the class evaluation.

Objectives of the observation

- To explore and specify previous aspects of the structured and systematic observations.
- To collect data to interpret findings.
- To describe facts.

Field research needed to distinguish two main kinds of observation: active and non-active observation [in the former, the researchers participate]. This was the model the group followed in order to collect information from people who were involved in this work. The researchers participated actively in the life of the groups.

The instruments the group used for the research were:

- Interviews
- Surveys
- Observation

Survey:

The survey is an inquiry in which questionnaires are employed to know the public opinion. In this process, it is important to collect oral and written testimonies of people. The group ran a survey to the teachers (see appendix 4) and students (see appendix 3) in order to know academic aspects about the teachers and know from the students their general and socio-economic aspects, and the interests that they had in the English language as a subject.

Interview:

This technique included ten questions (see appendix 2) about the development of the syllabus for senior students taking English addressed to the different principals that are part of each school. Also, the research was focused on the teachers by asking questions that

refer to the English teacher background. It also had seven questions about the learning of the students.

Objectives of the Interview:

1. To get data from the principals about the program they are offering to the students (Distance Education).
2. To describe positive and negative factors students have in the learning process.

DATA ANALYSIS

QUESTION 1

¿Cree que aprende suficiente Inglés en el sistema de enseñanza de Educación a Distancia?

The results of the graph charts reflect that 61.7% of the people who study English in Distance Education in the schools researched in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla showed satisfaction about their education system, and 38.3% were not pleased with the system.

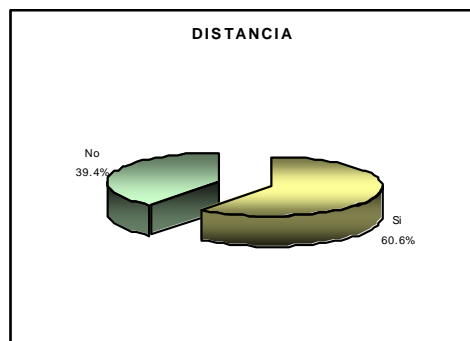| Question 1		
Resp.	**f**	**Porc.**
Si	58	61.7%
No	36	38.3%

GRAPH 1
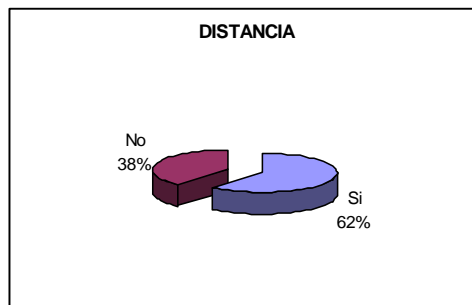
QUESTION 2

¿Le capacitan para conversar lo más elemental los conocimientos de Inglés que ha recibido hasta la fecha en su institución educativa, en caso necesario?

The results of the poll reflected that 60.6% of the people who were studying English in Distance Education in the schools before mentioned in this research considered they have learned the necessary tools for keeping a conversation; on the other hand, the other 39.4% were in disagreement with it.

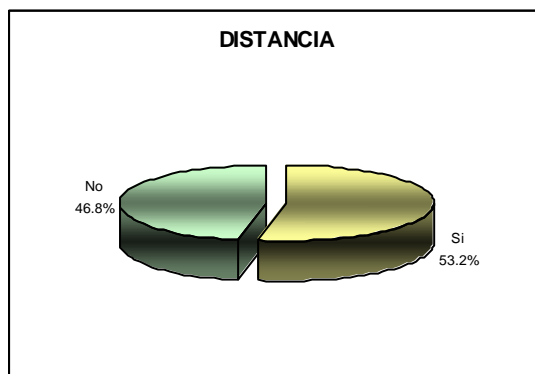| Question 2		
Resp.	f	Porc.
Si	58	60.6%
No	36	39.4%

GRAPH 2

QUESTION 3

El libro de texto o unidad de aprendizaje de estudio como metodología, ¿Contribuye a asimilar los conocimientos del idioma?

53.2% of the students researched in the schools before mentioned considered that the textbook or material they were using in their courses helped them so much to understand the language. The rest of the students did not agree that their textbook helps their learning.

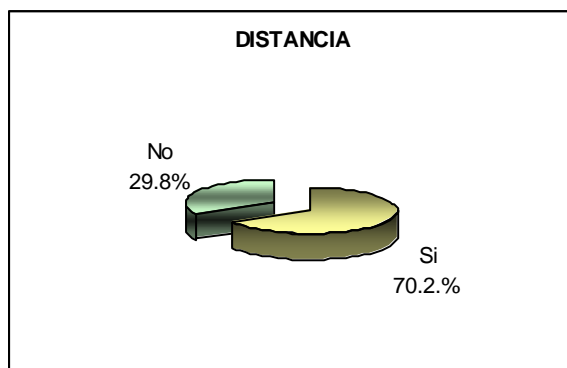| Question 3		
Resp.	**f**	**Porc.**
Si	50	53.2%
No	44	46.8%

GRAPH 3

QUESTION 4

¿Contribuye la metodología utilizada en el sistema de enseñanza para aprender Inglés?

The results showed that people of Distance Education in the schools researched in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla were in agreement with the methodology that the teachers were applying inside the classroom; more than 70% of students considered the methodology was very useful; meanwhile less than 30% considered that teachers must change their methodology.

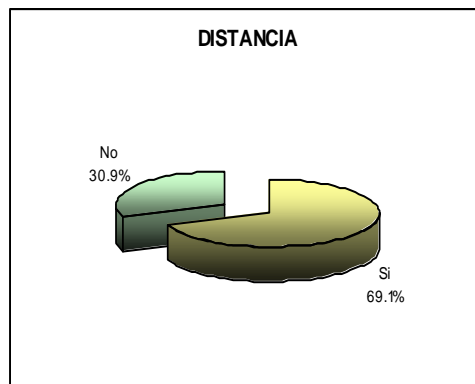| Question 4		
Resp.	**f**	**Porc.**
Si	66	70.2%
No	32	29.8%

GRAPH 4

¿Considera difíciles los exámenes trimestrales o parciales de Inglés?

    In Distance Education, in the same schools 69.1% of students considered the evaluations very difficult, but the rest considered them were easy.

Question 5		
Resp.	f	Porc.
Si	65	69.1%
No	29	30.9%

GRAPH 5

QUESTION 6

¿Ayudan a su aprendizaje las evaluaciones mensuales o trimestrales?

The pie chart results reflect that 84.0% of the people who were studying in Distance Education in the schools researched of Sonsonate and Santa Tecla considered that the evaluations helped them to have a real notion about their level of English, and only 16.0% were not in agreement with that.

Question 6		
Resp.	**f**	**Porc.**
Si	79	84.0%
No	15	16.0%

GRAPH 6

DISTANCIA

No
16.0%

Si
84.0%
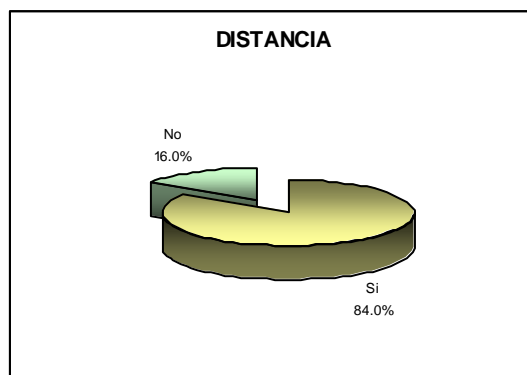
QUESTION 7

Marital Status

Single	23	24.3%
Married	28	29.8%
Cohabitation	43	45.9%

The graphs showed the marital status of the students in Distance Education in the schools researched in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla. 45.7 % of the polled people were living in cohabitation, 24.5% were married and 24.5% were single.

GRAPH 7

ESTADO CIVIL
(Distancia)

Soltero
24.5%

Acompañado
45.7%

Casado
29.8%
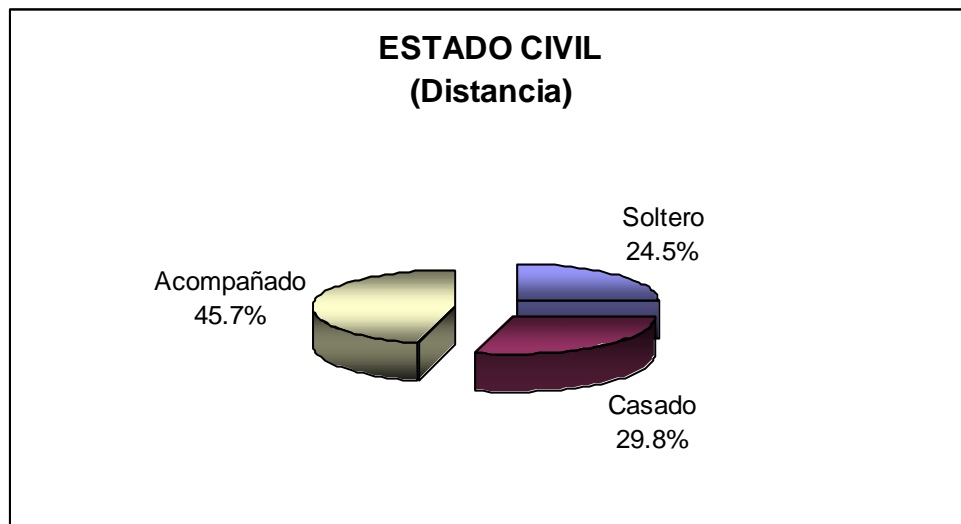
DATA INTERPRETATION

Distance Education is a good choice for people who do not have the time or the possibilities to take classes on weekdays. The research was focused on this system and on the teaching-learning process of English for senior students of Complejo Educativo "Pedro F. Cantor", Centro Escolar Républica de Haiti, Instituto de Educación a Distancia "Laura Vicuña" and Centro Educativo Católico "Maria Mazzarello located in Sonsonate and Santa Tecla.

In general, the teaching-learning process in Distance Education is difficult for many reasons. The system depends only on the intrinsic motivation of the students. They do not have the necessary resources for a good development of the language. In spite of those facts, most of them showed availability for learning. Another situation they faced is that they did not have enough time to practice with the teacher's help (in the case of the speaking skill); for that reason, the program is not focused on developing the speaking or the listening skill. It only works with reading and translation exercises.

Teachers (tutors) in Distance Education: At least these institutions work with pupils once a week, the class lasts 80 minutes where students (most of them adults) participate actively in order to feel themselves part of the educational experience; nevertheless, it is important for the tutor to consider students' characteristics, positive and negative, in order to create a good environment before teaching because it can help the teaching-learning process. Another important aspect to mention is that the classes are generally offered to students that most of the times do not have the textbook or class material; as a result, these people misunderstand certain topics, exercises and tutors' directions about the class.

According to the syllabus, the contents are for students in an intermediate level, but the results of the survey showed that more than half of the students felt the exams difficult. This could be because the books did not arrive on time; for that reason, students could not study at home; besides, it is mentioned that these people have other responsibilities (It was shown in the observation because many of them have to take their children to their classes).

Many of the students work during the week. This was a factor that was mentioned before. For that reason, the students arrive in classes a bit exhausted, something that affects their real learning during the session. Some of them did not have the attitude to make their learning meaningful. It is known that the performance of every tutor is different, however, in every situation, even when students were tired; it is a duty to keep some aspects in favor of the class success.

Most of the classrooms from the schools that were taken for this investigation did not have the necessary didactic materials to teach an English class appropriately since they did not have audio-visual aids, CD players or a TV set, which are so important and useful to present at least once in a while the contents of English class, and in that way make the classes more interactive and interesting.

For that reason, it is urgent to provide schools with these tools (television sets, videos, etc) in order to enhance the speaking and reading skills (the ones mentioned in this program) in the students because these are considered two of the most important areas of English.

The perfect environment for having an English class requires some of the means mentioned above. Besides, the group noticed that the teachers not always looked for or performed the appropriate activities in class to make them easy to understand, and for that reason, the pupils did not feel eager and motivated to attend the English class. And probably they feel studying in the system of Distance Education is easy because most of these students have extra responsibilities (Some of them are married, others live in cohabitation, and still others work and study at the same time). It means for most of them this is the change for having a better life. And this is a real proof in order to know what the real importance of Distance Education is.

Distance Education has long had trouble with testing. The delivery of testing materials is fairly straightforward, which makes sure it is available to the students so that they can read it in their leisure time. The problem arises when the student is required to complete

assignments and evaluate It is appropriate that teachers apply different kinds of evaluation criteria to fulfill students' expectations about the course, as well as to change and pass different quizzes to give the student the chance to get familiar with different contexts. In that way, they feel the exams neither complicated nor easy. In short, there must be a variety of evaluations.

Probably, it is not so easy to establish the accuracy, and effectiveness of Distance Education classes (specifically English); but it is important to mention how significant this program is because it allows so many people to be in contact with a different context, encourage them to get involved to a new language, and put in practice certain things they have previously learn during their process (3 years).

CONCLUSIONS

- The program of Distance Education is helpful for people who want to have access to the educational system in spite of their limitations (job, family matters, economical situation, etc). Students with scheduling or distance problems can benefit, as can employees, because distance education can be more flexible in terms of time.

- In the case of English, the program of Distance Education is taught to help the students to get a notion about the new language. It means that it is not taught to create a bilingual student.

- In Distance Education the tutor does not assume knowledge he or she lets the student to take the control of their own learning, just provides the necessary tools to have an idea about the task.

- Even though, it is mentioned in the program of Distance Education student had to be in contact with technology equipment such as CD players, DVD videos, Internet, etc. They never used it in the teaching- learning process.

- Most of the students who were surveyed during the research felt pleased with the kind of English they were studying because with the knowledge that they get in the program can have a basic notion about the language and for most of them this is enough. Also, it could help them to continue studying in another place if they want.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is suggested that the way for teaching English in Distance Education could be focused in a more modern way taking into account students' interests and necessities; it is true that students liked the way of education they received but it could be better and in that way reach the objectives of the programs.

- It is recommended to the Ministerio de Educación to provide the necessary tools (television sets, videos, etc) to the schools in order to enhance the speaking skill in the students because this is one of the most important areas of English but in this educative modality is not so applied or developed.

- It is suggested to the Ministerio de Educación to provide the didactic materials, in this case textbooks, to the schools, teachers, and students which are involved in the teaching-learning process of a new language in the public institutions researched.

- It is appropriated that teachers apply different kind of evaluation's criteria, to fulfill students' expectations about the course, as well as, to change and pass different quizzes to give the student the chance to get familiar with different contexts and that way they do not feel the exams neither complicated nor easy.

- It is recommended to keep, Distance Education program, due to that it reach the purposes established, in spite of their limitations, capacities and because it is focused to different kind of people in their general and socio-economic aspects.

TIMETABLE

Period of time / Activities	2007 March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November
1 Meeting with the teacher			x						
2.To check literature related to the topic				x x x					
3.Draft of researching plan presentation					x				
4.Instrument researching design					x x x x				
5.Meeting with the assessor				x	x	x	x	x	x

Period of time / Activities	2008 January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
6.Handed perfil		x							
7.Meeting with the assessor		x	x	x	x	x			
8.observation class			x						
8.First report presentation				x	x				
9.To apply questionnaires to public school teachers/ principals				x x x					
10.Analysis of collected date of teachers/ principal				x x x					
11.Analysis of collected date of students						x x x x			
12.Final report presentation								x	

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<center>**GLOSSARY**</center>

For making easy the comprehension of this research, the researchers present the following vocabulary:

Academic English: Academic language refers to the ability to read, write, and engage in substantive conversations about math, science, history, and other school subjects.

Bilingual Education: An educational program in which two languages are used to provide content matter instruction. Bilingual education programs vary in their length of time, and in the amount each language is used.

Class observation: The dictionary defines observation as the act of noticing or perceiving, or as an instance of viewing or noting a fact or occurrence of some scientific or other special purpose

Comprehension Strategies: Techniques to teach reading comprehension, including summarization, prediction, and inferring word meanings from context.

Content Area: Content areas are academic subjects like math, science, English/language arts, reading, and social sciences. Language proficiency may affect these areas, but is not included as a content area. Assessments of language proficiency differ from those of language arts.

Development: Determination of the best techniques for applying a new device or process to production of goods or services.

Direct Instruction: An instructional approach to academic subjects that emphasizes the use of carefully sequenced steps that include demonstration, modelling, guided practice, and independent application.

ESL: English as a second language (ESL) is an educational approach in which English language learners are instructed in the use of the English language. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content) and is usually taught during specific school periods.

Distance Education: These are courses that are taught to students who are separated by time and/or space from the instructor. Modes of delivery for these classes include: telecourses, online courses, videotaped courses, correspondence courses, or live-interactive courses.

Educational provider: A college, university, high school, non-profit agency, corporation or other entity which originates a course or program of study.

Internet: A worldwide network of computer networks. It is an interconnection of large and small networks around the globe. The Internet began in 1962 as a computer network for the U.S. military and over time has grown into a global communication tool of many thousands of computer networks that share a common addressing scheme.

Face to face instruction: Being in the presence of another; facing, in order to talk about specific information or information which is concerning to both

Fluency: The ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression and comprehension. Because fluent readers do not have to concentrate on decoding words, they can focus their attention on what the text means.

Formal Assessment: The process of gathering information using standardized, published tests or instruments in conjunction with specific administration and interpretation procedures, and used to make general instructional decisions.

Informal Assessment: The process of collecting information to make specific instructional decisions, using procedures largely designed by teachers and based on the current instructional situation.

Interview: A meeting in which a person is asked about personal views, activities, etc., as by a newspaper reporter or a pollster

Language: A system of objects or symbols, such as sounds or character sequences, that can be combined in various ways following a set of rules, especially to communicate thoughts, feelings, or instructions.

Language Proficiency: To be proficient in a second language means to effectively communicate or understand thoughts or ideas through the language's grammatical system and its vocabulary, using its sounds or written symbols. Language proficiency is composed of oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) components as well as academic and non-academic language (Hargett, 1998).

Learning Teaching Process: Is the interaction among certain people whose main idea is to provide and receive necessary skills for carrying on a specific task.

Methodology: The science of method, or orderly arrangement; specif., the branch of logic concerned with the application of the principles of reasoning to scientific and philosophical inquiry

MINED: Ministerio de Educación.

Principal: Is applied to the thing or person having precedence over all others by reason of size, position, importance, etc.

Program: A brief usually printed outline of the order to be followed, of the features to be presented.

Questionnaire: A written or printed form used in gathering information on some subject or subjects, consisting of a set of questions to be submitted to one or more persons

Research: "Research" is used to describe a number of similar and often overlapping activities involving a search for information.

Survey: To do a statistical study of a sample population by asking questions about age, income, opinions, buying preferences, and other aspects of people's lives

Syllabus: An outline or a summary of the main points of a text, lecture, or course of study.

Senior student: Relating to the last year of high school or college

School: Is an institution designed to allow and encourage students (or "pupils") to learn, under the supervision of teachers.

Skills: Is the learnt capacity or talent to carry out pre-determined results often with the minimum outlay of time energy or both

Teacher: One who helps students or pupils, often in a school, as well as in a family, religious or community setting. A teacher is an acknowledged guide or helper in processes of learning.

Technology: a manner of accomplishing a task especially using technical processes, methods, or knowledge <new technologies for information storage>

Text Comprehension The reason for reading: understanding what is read by reading actively (making sense from text) and with purpose (for learning, understanding, or enjoyment).

Vocabulary: Vocabulary refers to the words a reader knows. Listening vocabulary refers to the words a person knows when hearing them in oral speech. Speaking vocabulary refers to the words we use when we speak. Reading vocabulary refers to the words a person knows when seeing them in print. Writing vocabulary refers to the words we use in writing.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN
DIRECCIÓN NACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN
EDUCACIÓN DE ADULTOS
CUADRO ESTADISTICO DEL PROGRAMA DE EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA, MARZO DEL 2,008

Nº	MUNICIPIO	PREBAD 7º H	7º M	TOTAL	8º H	8º M	TOTAL	9º H	9º M	TOTAL	TOTAL H	TOTAL M	TOTAL NIVEL	INED 1º H	1º M	TOTAL	2º H	2º M	TOTAL	3º H	3º M	TOTAL	TOTAL H	TOTAL M	TOTAL NIVEL	TOTAL GRAL.
1	AHUACHAPAN	17	14	31	15	16	31	21	33	54	53	63	116	129	74	203	92	47	139	80	43	123	301	164	465	581
2	SANTA ANA	113	142	255	123	145	268	108	151	259	344	438	782	545	557	1.102	389	394	783	191	275	466	1.125	1.226	2.351	3.133
3	SONSONATE	66	72	138	81	75	156	88	84	172	235	231	466	364	348	712	290	227	517	223	223	446	877	798	1.675	2.141
4	LA LIBERTAD	84	128	212	70	162	232	71	176	247	225	466	691	413	578	991	235	368	603	179	285	464	827	1.231	2.058	2.749
5	SAN SALVADOR	59	108	167	57	125	182	56	150	206	172	383	555	510	734	1.244	347	576	923	228	462	690	1.085	1.772	2.857	3.412
6	CHALATENANGO	28	54	82	27	53	80	22	56	78	77	163	240	123	197	320	59	145	204	42	110	152	224	452	676	916
7	CUSCATLAN	65	19	84	58	30	88	51	17	68	174	66	240	168	196	364	122	130	252	84	87	171	374	413	787	1.027
8	LA PAZ	82	97	179	107	94	201	101	104	205	290	295	585	431	402	833	305	268	573	210	203	413	946	873	1.819	2.404
9	CABAÑAS	51	38	89	38	28	66	31	34	65	120	100	220	95	113	208	44	101	145	56	63	119	195	277	472	692
10	SAN VICENTE	49	30	79	37	41	78	41	53	94	127	124	251	121	121	242	89	87	176	48	73	121	258	281	539	790
11	USULUTÁN	3	8	11	3	7	10	8	19	27	14	34	48	177	172	349	134	103	237	113	86	199	424	361	785	833
12	SAN MIGUEL	38	51	89	21	62	83	31	60	91	90	173	263	203	286	489	143	202	345	61	144	205	407	632	1.039	1.302
13	MORAZÁN	34	50	84	30	50	80	43	57	100	107	157	264	142	187	329	97	84	181	59	68	127	298	339	637	901
14	LA UNIÓN	17	8	25	12	15	27	7	19	26	36	42	78	74	108	182	47	79	126	49	55	104	170	242	412	490
	T O T A L	706	819	1.525	679	903	1.582	679	1.013	1.692	2.064	2.735	4.799	3.495	4.073	7.568	2.393	2.811	5.204	1.623	2.177	3.800	7.511	9.061	16.572	21.371

- ¿Cree usted que el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés en los estudiantes responde al tipo de bachillerato que ellos estudien?

- ¿Cree usted importante la enseñanza del idioma Inglés, en los estudiantes de bachillerato?

- ¿Considera usted que el maestro que enseña la materia de idioma Inglés utiliza métodos y técnicas apropiadas para que el estudiante se comunique en este idioma?

- ¿Qué opina usted de los objetivos generales del programa de bachillerato de la signatura de Inglés?

- ¿Considera usted que los contenidos presentados en los programas de estudio se adecuan a las necesidades de aprendizaje de los estudiantes?

- ¿Cree usted que se logran dichos objetivos del programa?

- A su criterio, ¿Qué factores influyen negativamente en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de una segunda lengua en este caso Inglés?

- ¿Cuáles son los aspectos positivos dentro del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés?

- ¿Considera que el estudiante puede aprender Inglés por medio de la educación a distancia?

- ¿Considera que el Inglés se aprendería mejor con un maestro presencial?

Appendix 3

Encuesta para estudiantes de último año de bachillerato a distancia, para obtener información sobre la asignatura de Inglés.

Estimado(a) alumno(a)

Con el deseo de colaborar en tu proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, se ha elaborado esta encuesta que contiene una serie de preguntas, las cuales se te piden las contestes con sinceridad, para obtener información concreta de tu modalidad de enseñanza que incide en tu rendimiento instruccional.

Su colaboración decidida en este sentido se agradecerá de antemano.

Instrucciones:

Marca con una X los apartados correspondientes a las preguntas. Cuando tengas que completar la información que se pide, escríbela en el espacio asignado.

Aspectos Generales:

1. Edad: _____

2. Sexo: _____

3. Nombre de la Institución: _____

Aspectos Socio-Económicos:

4. Estado Civil

- Soltero   _____
- Casado   _____
- Acompañado   _____
- Otros   _____

5. Ocupación u Oficio _____

Interés de los Alumnos sobre la Asignatura del Inglés

6. ¿Ha recibido cursos de Inglés en Academias particulares?

SI _____   NO _____

7. ¿Ha estudiado Inglés por iniciativa propia?

SI _____   NO _____

8. ¿Está conforme con el sistema de enseñanza en el cual estudia la asignatura de Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

9. ¿Cree que aprende suficiente Inglés con el sistema de enseñanza?

SI _____   NO _____

10. ¿Dispone de tiempo para estudiar sus clases de Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

11. ¿Considera que el interés del alumno es importante para aprender Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

12. ¿Tiene el habito de auto-responsabilidad para estudiar Inglés fuera del aula?

SI _____   NO _____

Dominio del idioma Inglés por parte del maestro autor de la unidad de aprendizaje en el sistema de Educación a Distancia.

13. ¿Considera que su maestro encargado de la asignatura de Inglés, domina el idioma?

SI _____   NO _____

Habilidades y destrezas del estudiante para aprender Inglés

14. Los conocimientos de Ingles que ha recibido hasta la fecha en su institución educativa ¿Le capacitan para conversar lo más elemental, en caso necesario?

SI _____   NO _____

15. El libro de texto o unidad de aprendizaje de estudio, como metodología, ¿Contribuye a asimilar mejor los conocimientos del idioma?

SI _____   NO _____

16. ¿Contribuye la metodología utilizada en el sistema de enseñanza para aprender Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

17. ¿Tiene participación activa en su clase de Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

18. ¿Desarrolla ejercicios para afianzar el contenido del Inglés enseñado?

SI _____   NO _____

19. ¿Alcanza el objetivo que se propone el maestro en la clase de Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

Evaluación de la asignatura de Inglés

20. ¿Considera difíciles los exámenes trimestrales o parciales?

SI _____   NO _____

21. ¿Considera justo el porcentaje asignado a los exámenes trimestrales o parciales de Inglés?

SI _____   NO _____

22. ¿Existe claridad en las preguntas de las evaluaciones?

SI _____   NO _____

23. ¿Ayudan a su aprendizaje las evaluaciones mensuales o trimestrales?

SI _____   NO _____

<u>Appendix 4</u>
Encuesta para maestros que imparten la asignatura de Inglés en Instituciones Educativas Oficiales y Particulares, en el nivel de Bachillerato, en los departamentos de Sonsonate y Santa Tecla.

ASPECTO ACADEMICO DEL MAESTRO

1. ¿En que institución se graduó como especialista en idioma Inglés?

- Escuela Normal Superior de El Salvador _____
- Universidad de El Salvador _____
- Universidades Privadas de El Salvador _____
- En el extranjero _____
- Otros _____

    Especifique: _____

2. ¿Qué grado académico posee?

- Profesor en Idioma Inglés _____
- Licenciado en Idioma Inglés _____
- Otros _____

    Especifique: _____

3. ¿Cuántos años tiene de impartir la asignatura de Inglés?

6. Menos de 1 año _____
7. De 1 a 5 años _____
8. De 6 a 10 años _____
9. De 11 a 15 años _____
10. 16 años o mas _____

4. ¿De qué recursos didáctico se vale mas para desarrollar su clase de Inglés?

- Pizarra y yeso _____
- Cárteles _____
- Láminas _____
- Material impreso _____
- Asesoría _____
- Otros _____

    Especifique: _____

5. ¿Las exposiciones que usted hace para enseñar el idioma Inglés, son dadas en castellano, a través de ciertas formas propias de la enseñanza?

8. Clase expositiva
9. Clase dialogada
10. Lectura oral
11. Otros Especifique: _____

6. ¿Que tipo de refuerzo da a sus alumnos para el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés?

Asesoría _____
Cuestionario _____
Consulta _____
Entrevista _____
Otros _____

Especifique: _____

Generalidades sobre el aprendizaje de los estudiantes

7. De su número matricular inicial, ¿Cuánto alumnos asisten regularmente a clases?

De 5 a 10   _____
De 11 a 20   _____
De 21 a 30   _____
De 31 a más   _____

8. De su número de matricula ¿Cuántos alumnos aprueban la materia de Inglés en el examen mensual?

De 1 a 5   _____
De 6 a 10   _____
De 11 a 15   _____
De 16 a más   _____

9. ¿Qué clase de material impreso utilizan los estudiantes para el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés?

Libro de Texto   _____
Libro de trabajo   _____
Guía de trabajo   _____
Otros   _____

Especifique:_____

10. ¿Qué porcentaje de su matricula desarrolla la habilidad de entender el idioma Inglés?

20%   _____
40%   _____
60%   _____
80%   _____
100%   _____

11. ¿Qué porcentaje de su matricula desarrolla la habilidad de hablar el idioma Inglés?

20%   _____
40%   _____
60%   _____
80%   _____
100%   _____

12. ¿Qué porcentaje de su matricula desarrolla la habilidad de leer el idioma Inglés?

20%   _____
40%   _____
60%   _____
80%   _____
100%   _____

13. ¿Qué porcentaje de su matricula desarrolla la habilidad de escribir el idioma Inglés?

20%   ——————————
40%   ——————————
60%   ——————————
80%   ——————————
100%   ——————————