

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

***“FACTORS RELATED TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN STUDENTS IN THE  
10<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER IN THE MAJOR OF MODERN LANGUAGES IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR: TEACHERS, RESOURCES,  
ADMINISTRATION AND STUDENTS.”***

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UNDERGRADUATE WORK PRESENTED TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF  
LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS, ESPECIALIDAD FRANCES E  
INGLES.

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MAIN CAMPUS, MONDAY, MAY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

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## *I. Introduction*

Nowadays, learning a foreign language has become an elemental key to be successful as a professional in a society. Therefore the Foreign Languages department in the University of El Salvador has created the major of Modern Languages, specialized in English and French, to cover the demands society brings. This major was implemented in the year 2002 and now it has become one of the most attractive for students. The amount of students increased and the Foreign Languages Department had to face the problem of not counting with enough human and technological resources, as well infrastructure, which has led to various constraints. This brought difficulties to the learners to obtain academic success.

Academic success can be defined as the achievement by individuals of objectives related to various types of knowledge and skills. These objectives are socially established based on the age, prior learning and capacity of individuals with regard to education, socialization and qualification. Studies conducted on academic achievement notably focus on student progress and individual, institutional and organizational factors of achievement, along with social relationship interactions that determine, facilitate or hinder academic achievement (CRIRES 2005). But in this research appeared some aspects that were taken into consideration since according to the students they interfered with their academic achievement.

The most relevant aspects were divided in four factors: Teachers, Administration, Resources and Students. These were found in the SICEVAES<sup>1</sup> (Sistema Centroamericano de Evaluación y Acreditación de la Educación Superior). These factors were not only reinforced with the bibliographic, but also with the information survey results obtained from the students of the tenth semester of Foreign Languages Major. Given the fact that this research is merely bibliographical, only the survey was carried out. All this information will be presented in the following essay.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a guiding tool created by the Technical Evaluation Committee from the Central American System of Assessment and Accreditation in Higher Education, to achieve a consensus on the guidance and the standards which SICEVAES utilizes for the improvement of academic programs of higher education in Central America .

## *II. Objectives*

### **General**

- To identify how the factors : Teachers, Administration, Resources and Students interfere in the students academic success when learning a foreign language, as it is in the case of the students in the 10<sup>th</sup> semester in the major of Modern Languages in the University of El Salvador.

### **Specifics**

- To determine how the factor “teachers” relate to the students to obtain academic success in learning a foreign language.
- To analyze how the factor “resources” influence students’ academic success in learning a foreign language.
- To identify how the factor “Administration” affects students’ academic success in learning a foreign language.
- To explore how the factor “Students” interrelates with the learners’ academic success in learning a foreign language.

### *III. Justification*

The purpose of this research is to determine how the factors : Teachers, Administration, Resources and Students interfere in the students academic success when learning a foreign language, as it is in the case of the students in the 10<sup>th</sup> semester in the major of Modern Languages in the University of El Salvador.

As well, It is important to emphasize that the aim of this research is not to criticize, but to demonstrate which aspects need to be improved since they are affecting the students' academic success in the department of Foreign Languages.

The research is addressed to the students who may be experiencing this situation, to teachers who play an important role in the academic success of the students. And finally to the Administration area which is the one that manages the coordination of the academic services and resources.

Finally, this could motivate the stakeholders involved to take actions in order to promote effective and efficient learning for the future generations. As such, the Modern Languages Major will show higher levels of academic achievement.

***IV. The factors related to the students academic success of students in the 10<sup>th</sup> semester in the major of Modern Languages in the University of El Salvador : teachers, resources, administration and resources.***

Nowadays, learning a foreign language has become an elemental key to be successful as a professional in a society. Society changes everyday due to globalization which comes with technology, transnational enterprises, and tourism. The Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador has created the major of Modern Languages, specialized in English and French, to cope with the demands society brings. This major was implemented in the year 2002 as an innovating option for the students to learn two languages at the same time. The following years the Department experienced not only a great acceptance but also a big challenge since the Department was not prepared for the large number of students who applied for the different majors that were offered. This situation brought difficulties to the students during their learning process, therefore, it affected them to have an academic success as it is in the case of the students in the tenth semester in the major of Modern Languages at the University of El Salvador.

The purpose to develop this study on the population before mentioned is to investigate how the factors: administration, teachers, students, and resources affect the achievement of learning a foreign language, which, in this case is French. The participants are the students in the last semester of the major of Modern Languages in the University of El Salvador. They were given a survey to explore their opinion based on their own experience. This survey was divided in the four factors mentioned above which are based on the quality standards established from the SICEVAES<sup>2</sup> ( Sistema Centroamericano de Evaluación y Acreditación de la Educación Superior). These factors : *administration, teachers, students, and resources*, are the main components of this analysis, how they affect or interfere in the university students to get academic

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<sup>2</sup> It is a guiding tool created by the Technical Evaluation Committee from the Central American System of Assessment and Accreditation in Higher Education, to achieve a consensus on the guidance and the standards which SICEVAES utilizes for the improvement of academic programs of higher education in Central America .

success in the foreign language learning, which in this case is French. This survey had the only purpose to strengthen the bibliographical research so as to present evidence from the students' opinion rather than anecdotic data coming from us as both students and researchers.

It is important to define the term of academic success. It refers to the achievement by individuals of objectives related to various types of knowledge and skills. These objectives are socially established based on the age, prior learning and capacity of individuals with regard to education, socialization and qualification. Studies conducted on academic achievement notably focus on student progress and individual, institutional and organizational factors of achievement, along with social relationship interactions that determine, facilitate or hinder academic achievement (CRIRES 2005, November 18). Academic success is when students feel that education (as a system/institution) has given them the opportunities to increase the depth and breadth of their knowledge and skills, and allows them to focus on their dispositions around what they define as successful (CRIRES 2005, November 18). But there are factors that influence to this academic achievement; these factors will be mentioned one by one in this essay.

The first factor that will be discussed is Administration. This entire organization applies mechanisms for the coordination of different areas which compose the Faculty of Sciences and Arts. The Academic Department has as functions the planning and coordination of the different administrative and academic services from its respective Regional Faculty or University Center. (Art 9, Reglamento de Universidad de El Salvador; 2004). As well to submit the students' files to the Computer Center in order to keep a statistical record (for enrolled, graduates, undergraduates students) (Art 10, Reglamento de Universidad de El Salvador)

However, according to the survey administered to the students, the Academic Department does not help that much on speeding up the academic processes, which is part of its main roles, as it was mentioned before. Requesting a form, documents or any other type of paperwork takes at least two weeks to obtain a response. By then, of course, they would always have a good excuse for that. Luckily, something that has

changed for good is that now students can make their registrations online. But, in the past, not counting with this resource had made it very difficult and frustrating when students had to face the inconvenience of having to wait more, making the academic Department be inefficient. This is shown on the results, in which a 46 % of the students believe in this statement, while 27% partially agree and 27% partially disagree (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, "Factors related to the student's academic success" survey, 2009). As Crozier described, "... the slowness, the ponderousness, the routine, the complication of procedures and the maladapted responses of the bureaucratic organization to the needs which they should satisfy" (Crozier, 1964)

Another role described from the SICEVAES, a quality standard which needs to be considered as significant is Job Profile Catalogue (SICEVAES-CSUCA, 2003). This is the publication of the professional and job profile that the students will get at the end of their major. Most of the objectives that the students who answered this survey do not have a clear knowledge about the job profile that the major offers, with a result of 60% totally agreeing with this, 20% partially disagreeing, while 20% partially disagree with this statement. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, "Factors related to the student's academic success" survey, 2009). Contrary to most of the universities, like "Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador", in the major's catalogue it is found the major's profile and the characteristics that a student will acquire at the end of the major. (Universidad Tecnológica, 2009). This is an urgent plan of action the University of El Salvador should take.

In addition to the aspects mentioned above, there is a lack of information about the major's regulations as well as the Foreign Language Department regulations. It is true that this information can be given when a student enters the university and together with the internet, on the website "[www.academica.ues.edu.sv](http://www.academica.ues.edu.sv)", But, there is little interest from the part of the administration to provide and verify that students are knowledgeable on the regulations. As a result 58% students totally agree in considering that there is no clear knowledge about the major's regulations as well as the Foreign Language Department rules, 21% partially agree with this and 21% partially disagree. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, "Factors related to the student's academic success" survey,



2009) The Tecnologica University has a course called "Seminario taller de competencias", in which students receive information about their installations, education system, about the regulations, rights and benefits of the students. It lasts one month and they make sure pupils know everything of the university before they start their studies.( <http://www.utec.edu.sv/>). This example could be taken into account to inform University of El Salvador Students about University`s academic and administrative processes at the beginning of their careers.

Therefore, there are some other issues caused by the Department Administration like students losing classes, especially for two reasons. First, the schedules of the teachers`s meetings, since some of these were at the same time of their courses. Their priority would be in this case to attend these meetings, and have the students study and review the classes by themselves. Then they would be trying to catch up with the classes missed on the next class hour, limiting the students learning process. This is supported with the data obtained from the survey, 73% students agreed in considering that the class hours were affected by teachers meetings, while the rest of the student which is a 21% disagreed with this(Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, "Factors related to the student`s academic success" survey, 2009)

Second, the constant closures of the university, which are a result of different causes such as: political interventions, students and employees` demands, affect the student`s academic performance in classes throughout their academic years. According to the survey`s results, the pupils mentioned that these closures made them lose sequence in their courses. The results show that 53% students believed in that statement, 27% partially agreed with this, and 20% partially disagreed (Martinez, Trejo, Velasquez, "Factors related to the student`s academic success" survey, 2009). As an example among many, it can be mentioned the closure on April 15, 2007, which lasted around 2 months (Diario Latino 13 de abril del 2007). It brought inconveniences to the students who had no place to receive classes and had no other alternative than to be assigned study guides which only made them lose the motivation they had for their learning. Since not all students are used to the self study method, which is needed to complete the assignments, may be difficult for some students who come from certain

educational backgrounds and had been led to believe that it is only teachers job to provide learning. (Harmer, 2001)

The Department Administration instead of discouraging the students should look for ways to provide assistance and motivation. In order for this to happen it will be necessary to take into account what other universities do for improving this aspect. As an example in the San Mateo college exists a Counselling Support Center, which provides staff and resources that assist students to understand educational and career options, as well to guide the new comers when deciding in taking the major that most attracts them. (<http://collegeofsanmateo.edu/>) To recognize whether they have or do not have the attitude and aptitude to have success in that discipline. As it was described on the responses the students gave in the survey. (Martinez, Trejo, Velasquez “Factors related to the student’s academic success” survey, 2009). Opposite to what the foreign-language curriculum believes that "language is for all" and "anyone can learn a foreign language". The help of the aptitude tests can be just one step for the future in the counseling department in the university if it is taken into account what was the work of Carroll and Pimsleur (1963) for developing foreign-language aptitude tests, who have provided extensive evidence that there is a special factor or an aptitude for learning a foreign language (Pimsleur, 1963). It is vital to recognize it and motivated it to get high good academic results.

The following factor to discuss is "teachers". It is known that teachers play an important role in students having an academic success when learning a foreign language. It is considered that a good teacher is one who cares more about students learning than they do about their own teaching, Harmer (2001). This statement is opposed to the survey responses obtained from the students, who affirmed with a 67% that in their context the lack of interest from teachers towards the teaching-learning process affected them as students since it discourage them. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009).

The teacher’s attitude is another aspect that might affect the students’ motivation to be successful. Teachers need to set up a personal example with their own behavior, create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, make the language classes interesting,

promote learner autonomy, familiarize learners with the target language culture. These are all some suggestions adapted from "Ten commandments for motivating language learners: results of an empirical study" by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998). One of the main tasks for teachers is to create interest and involvement in the subject even when students are not initially interested in it. It is due to teachers` attitude to class participation, their conscientiousness, their humor and their seriousness that they may influence their students. ( Harmer, 2001)

In addition, it is important to acknowledge that the good relationship between teacher – student is fundamental for obtaining good academic results. (Mortimore, 1999) As teachers, the effective teaching is largely determined by the extent of our relationship skills with students (Barry, 1999) Students believe that their best learning behaviours occur when their teachers are ‘committed to helping them, take time to know them personally (Jones, 2004: 80) According to Jones (2004), a significant body of research shows that academic achievement and students’ behaviours are greatly influenced by the quality of the teacher-student relationship. Affirming this it can be observed that the majority of the students agreed with this statements by a 53% who totally agreed, 33% partially agreed and just a 7% partially disagreed and 7% totally disagreed.

Similarly, the teachers should create an environment in which the students can feel confident with the educators Harmer, Jeremy (2001). In this respect, students agreed positively in their majority according to the survey results, that the teachers accessibility and flexibility helped them to have a better academic performance in the classroom. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009). Being accessible and flexible means being approachable for students doubts, concerns, suggestions, and critics. If the students are not confident, they will find the classes boring, they will not participate in classes, feeling discriminated and fearful to express their doubts, they will fail their grades, and finally they most likely give up in attending to classes. The ability to control and inspire a class is one of the fundamental skills of teaching. Teachers find it much easier if their

students believe that they are genuinely interested in them and available for them. (Brown , 1992).

To get back with the point of teachers behavior, responsibility is another component . Responsibility in this case is referred to teachers preparing and following lesson plans, punctuality, like when grading tests and letting the students know their evaluations results, being on time for classes. In the major this is not completely accomplished as the students responses reflect, 53% of them say there is a lack of responsibility from teachers and this has affected them in their educational process. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009). As example it can be mentioned that some teachers did not return the tests results until the end of the semester, so students were unable to know in which areas they needed to improve. Comparing with some private universities as the Universidad Don Bosco and Universidad Jose Simeon Cañas. These universities from the beginning of the year have established the work plan for each semester and they follow the dates settled up with punctuality. (<http://www.udb.edu.sv/PortalWeb/Default.aspx>, [http://www.uca.edu.sv/documentos/Plan\\_estrategico\\_UCA\\_2009\\_2013.pdf](http://www.uca.edu.sv/documentos/Plan_estrategico_UCA_2009_2013.pdf)).

The next factor is resources, to begin with this aspect it is important to know the definition of “resources”. Resources are any instruments that help us to achieve any goal (Merriam-Webster Dictionary ). According to the authors George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh and Elizabeth J. Whitt (2005) in their book: Assessing conditions for student success, the conditions matter, the existence of resources and equipment make the teaching-learning process easier in any area. Also they say that a curriculum cannot operate without a resource that is why the amount and the type of resources available are important, but specially important is the way they are allocated and used. (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh,Whitt . 2005).

On the other hand , at the University of El Salvador in this case at Foreign Languages Department, based on the results obtained from the survey passed out to the

student of the 10<sup>th</sup> semester, from the Modern Languages major, students stated that the lack of technological equipment (computers, overhead projectors, video and audio material) affects their learning process, (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success” survey, 2009). E.g. When a student has a presentation most of the time, it is required to have an overhead projector in order to present a topic in particular, but there is only one projector for the entire Department, making impossible the usage of these tool since there is a huge number of students in comparison with the what the department counts with.

Similarly, the Department of Foreign Languages lacks both specialized laboratories and videos, which are very useful for the purpose of practicing the language that can be either English or French. Affirming this fact, Christy Harell (2007) states that virtual laboratories should be implemented in classrooms, since they were created to allow students to experience real life situations in classrooms or laboratories environment; these experiences are created and used as training purpose. However, the reality in the Foreign Languages Department is that there are videos available but they are outdated, and not only the videos, as well the devices for their transmission. These should be considered as a vital tool since there is not too much access and relation with native speakers, which does not let the pupils know the native accent from the language they are learning. Christy Harell (2007)

Likewise, the authors George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuch and Elizabeth J. Whitt (March 2006) in the book “Students success in college, conditions that matter” present that computers are closely related with the learning process. Computer can offer a kind of interaction –with a program- and the process of learning is individualised, according to the abilities of the student. E.g. The Universidad Technologica de El Salvador, has created a laboratory big enough for students that are learning English, students are allowed to make practices. It consists for example in reading a paragraph and the program in the computer make the corrections if it is necessary. (<http://www.utec.edu.sv/>).

In the same way, since computers imply an active learning process, they improve the assimilation of contents and create an autonomous learning, students learn to learn by themselves. Also, the combination of the visual, sound and movement provides a very attractive presentation. These are the most popular resources since they provide a closer approach to reality through the ear and eye and keep the students active, the existing computer and software equipment make the teaching-learning process easier when they are adequate with the methodologies of the major. As mentioned before, doing practices or watching video tapes that contain real experiences between others. Video presents the culture behind language, particularly if learners have had little or no contact with English speaking countries. The students can see, as well as hear, what is being said since the recording is much closer to "real life". The visual element is attractive and gives a natural context for practicing listening skills.(Mendoza, 2004).

Nevertheless, the Modern Language Department has created a computer room for those students who have no computer access to make their homework at home. but this computer room is too small for the number of students that this Department handles every semester, as it is shown in the survey results, which reveal that the 53 % of the students totally agree that classroom including the computer room are not adequate for the number of students, however, 47 % affirm that doesn't affect their learning process, (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, "Factors related to the student's academic success"survey,2009). As mentioned before, doing practices or watching video tapes that contain real experiences between others.

According to George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H Schuh, Elizabeth Whitt (2005) in "Students success in college, conditions that matter" affirms that the physical setting and structure of the campus has to be adapted effectively for the teaching learning process. However according to the students' opinion, it can be revealed that that most of the learners agreed that the equipment (desks, lounges, auditoriums, classrooms) are not appropriate for the large groups of students, the result says that the 79% totally agree that classrooms are not adequate for the large number of students, desks are not enough for the big demand like lounges as well.

Now the last factor that will be mentioned is students since they are the main element in this study. There are many reasons why students have problems to get success in their university results. It was found that studying a major that a learner did not choose or do not like because he does not have abilities in that area affects their learning performance. This is what 80% students who answered the survey agreed about this statement. (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success” survey, 2009). Choosing a major is a crucial decision on the student’s life and it is something that has to be decided before starting university. But there are some undecided students who don’t know what to do with their lives after high school so they enter to the university just to obey their parents, without having any aptitude or attraction towards the major that they finally picked.

This brings consequences such as waste of time, waste of money and frustration since they failed on their courses because they do not care about their studies. In order to avoid this type of problems foreign universities perform aptitude tests as a selection tool for the people who apply for their education system, Neil Stringer (2008). As an example one can mention the SAT Reasoning Test <sup>3</sup> (College Board, Educational Testing Service, 1990) which is a standardized test for college admissions in the United States. This type of test has shown a satisfactory validity, and therefore is used in a very general way. Recently it has started to be used in Mexican Institutes as Tecnológico de Monterrey, (<http://www.itesm.edu/wps/>) Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (<http://www.alterinfos.org/>).

On the other hand, Mexican and Latin American universities use informal academic achievement tests, as in El Salvador. Mostly, they try to assess knowledge that in theory, the candidate should have learned in high school (Backhoff, 1992). But nothing related to their aptitudes or abilities as in the case of the University of El Salvador.

Another aspect linked to students is the relationship between study skills and

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<sup>3</sup> Scholastic Aptitude Test and Scholastic Assessment Test. The College Board claims the test can assess a student's readiness for college. The test was first introduced in 1901, and its name and scoring have changed several times.

learning outcomes (Nola Purdie, John Hattie-1999), it means that there is a strong relation between the students habits to get students academic success. It is increasingly becoming clear that there is not a best set of study skills. Nist, Simpson, and Hogrebe (1985) criticized some of the studies that have compared study methods on the grounds that they were not conducted in naturalistic settings in which students were free to select and employ the strategies they preferred. Often the experimental conditions were such that students were taught a particular method or methods and then placed in a situation in which they were instructed to use what they had been taught. Their achievement was then compared with that of students who had been instructed in a different method, or who had received no training at all. Regarding this aspect most of the students believed that their study habits in the higher education were fundamental for obtaining achievements. The results showed a 46% of the students who totally agreed about this and a 43% partially agreed while only a 7% totally disagreed said(Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009).As an example one can mention The University at Buffalo<sup>4</sup>, where they offer counseling services, helping students to have better study habits and to decrease test anxiety.

Additional to what was indicated above, findings showed that another element to be considered affecting the pupils is the over crowdedness. This diminishes the quantity and quality of teaching and learning with serious implications for attainment of educational goals (Pedder, 2006). As it was found on the survey that 12 out of 15 students totally agree that the overpopulation in classrooms interfered in their class participation and thus their learning process, 2% partially agreed with this, and 1% totally disagrees(Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009). This has been already described by different authors. Antonelli (2004) says that larger classrooms present teachers with classroom management problems. As well would affect since it creates greater chance for wide variations in student abilities. While depriving teachers of the opportunity to work on an individual basis with students who need the extra attention and time, teachers feel constrained by time and often turn to briefer and more summative forms of feedback for students (Pedder, 2006).

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<sup>4</sup> UB, University at Buffalo, the state university of New York.



By contrast small class populations allow teachers to “take the time to probe incomplete, incorrect or correct responses, providing adequate wait time during which pupils can consider how they might respond to teachers’ questions” (Pedder, 2006, pg. 227). Smaller classes also allow teachers to spend more time assessing individual work. Added to this reality Simmons (2005) in his study of writing courses demonstrates that small classrooms afforded teachers the opportunity to spend more time evaluating students writing, providing more informative and constructive feedback. As well as an advantage reduced groups allowed teachers to spend more time with ‘troubled pupils’ giving them the attention they needed reducing the likelihood that there would be behavioural issues in the classroom. (Finn, et al., 2005, pg. 338)

As well, it is valuable to mention how the lack of economical resources could interfere the studying process in the learners. This is one of the reasons of college dropout, but this is not taken into consideration by the education authorities of El Salvador, MINED that ignore the current level of college dropout. The last study carried out was in 2005, which showed that dropouts in higher education was 12.56%, corresponding to 16 thousand 405 students of a total 580 thousand of 130 nationwide. The latest figure, according to the MINED, decreased by 9.88% in 2006 amounting to 12 thousand 987 students from a total of 131 thousand 449. ( La Prensa Grafica, april,2008). Related to this aspect in the survey administered for this argumentative essay, the pupils said that the lack of economical resources paralyzes their studying process. As a result, the study shows that 60% of the students agreed that the lack of economical resources affected them in their studying process, (Martinez, Trejo. Velasquez, “Factors related to the student’s academic success”survey,2009).

In conclusion, by means of this bibliographic essay on the factors: Administration, Resources, Teachers and Students, as well as the survey administered to the students of the 10<sup>th</sup> semester of the Modern Languages Major with the only purpose to create non-existing information on the so-called factors , it was observed that the

reality of the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador is totally different.

How different the Department is? To start with, the factor Administration, should have a better organization at the moment of assigning the schedules for the meetings that the teachers need to assist in order this not to affect students classes. Another issue that needs to be worked out is when the University experiences closures. Under this situation, the Department Administration needs to try to establish a better communication with the students to avoid inconveniences.

It also is necessary to promote appropriate mechanisms at the moment of selecting students in the major. Like for example: The aptitude test which at the end is expected to help with the overpopulation in the classes, since the Department will only have students who have the aptitudes for the major.

As a result it will benefit teachers because they will count with students who have interests in the career and aptitudes for it. Probably the classes would have an appropriate number of students and could motivate teachers to be more approachable which was reflected as an important need according to the results obtained from the survey carried out. It also could be suggested to promote teacher evaluations to see what aspects are working appropriately and which ones need to be improved.

Apart from that, the Department should request to the “Consejo Superior Universitario” to invest in the learning resources such as didactic materials, infrastructure, equipment, laboratories, as well on their continuous updates and maintenance.

With the situation in the Department of Foreign Languages, which does not count with the appropriate technological resources because they may not have enough funds, the Department Administration could implement activities in order to get their own sources to get the money that it is required. Like Fremerey (2008), who suggests that if there are no funds, it is necessary to try to offer services in order to collect additional incomes for the Department.

Furthermore, based on the actions implemented by other universities for their education systems as mentioned before, the Foreign Language Department should use them as a guide to follow, due to the success they have experienced. This is what has

led them to obtain Quality Accreditation in the higher education of El Salvador by the CDA (Comision de Acreditacion de la Calidad de la Educacion Superior, Republica de El Salvador, 2009).

Looking forward, all this will not only help the new generations to come but also to improve the quality standards from the major which at the end will provide academic success and the university will offer qualified professionals.

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## *V. Methodology*

To collect the necessary information of this bibliographical research, it was necessary to gather different articles from several authors. These were obtained from books, magazines, newspapers and internet websites. In addition, a survey was created, which was addressed to the students in the 10th semester of the major in Modern Languages at the University of El Salvador. The reason of creating the survey is because it was necessary to collect information from students who would provide their own experience during the entire major, since they were about to complete it. Therefore they would give us the most accurate information in order to develop this research.

It is important to emphasize that this is a bibliographic research merely. The primary source used in the research was the survey, since there is no bibliographic information about the essay's topic. For this it was necessary to create that information by using this survey. In addition, several books, magazines, journals articles and links were used as secondary sources to develop the arguments for the essay.

The research idea was originated from situations that had affected us throughout the major. We had experienced all these issues mentioned on the essay, but since it was not possible to base the essay in our own opinion, it was needed to carry out a survey in order to get the information from other students who have experienced the same situation as we did. The statistics collected justified the topic of our choice along with the bibliography gathered throughout the study .

The research followed a guide of six steps to have success in the literature review. First of all in order to search for the topic of this research the professors provided a list of themes in order to select one of them. As a group we selected in the beginning, the topic "What are the factors related to academic success in the University students". We had an interest in focusing in the major of Modern Languages. We came up with the interest of searching for the reasons why the students of this major fail some

subjects and decide to drop off their studies. It was necessary to design a survey addressed to the students of the 10<sup>TH</sup> semester of Modern Languages to collect data to give us a better idea to narrow the topic down. As well it was relevant the help of books, magazines to support the idea we have to choose our topic.

After we selected the topic we looked for specific information in literature applying the reading techniques, choosing only the articles that will support our thesis. We organized the information we gathered from the survey and literature found on books and magazines and evaluate what we knew about the topic and what we have found to support it. We built a case with logical evidence to support our claim which came from the survey results and the bibliography found. It was necessary to assemble all the data collected and to synthesize the information, creating bibliographic cards and analyzing the evidence that we have to support the topic of our research. Following the analysis we came with the interpretation of the current understanding of the topic. It was found that students attitude towards the major at the beginning of their studies was positive; however, given the nature of the factors that interfered in their learning made them change their attitude. Finally once we have analyzed, interpreted the data collected and created arguments, we assemble all these steps to process of writing.

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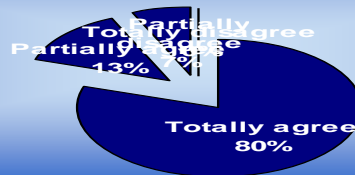
## STUDENTS

A.1 The good relationship between teacher – student is fundamental for obtaining good academic results.



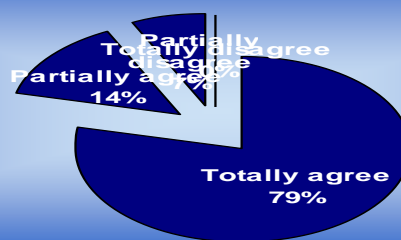
53 %TOTALLY AGREE      33 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.2 Studying in a major that you did not choose because you do not like or because you do not have abilities in that area affects your performance and the possibility to grow up as a professional.



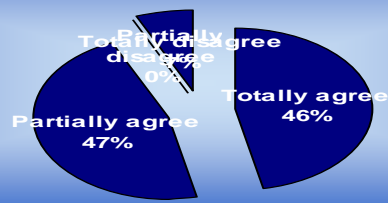
80%TOTALLY AGREE      13 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
2 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      8%TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.3 Classrooms are not enabled for a big number of students.



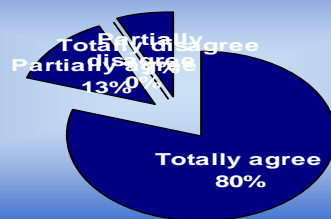
79 %TOTALLY AGREE      14 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.4 The good and bad reading habits of the students in the higher education are fundamental for obtaining achievements.



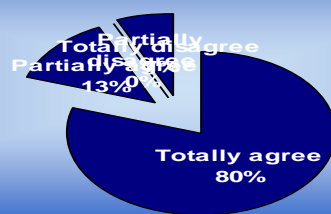
46%TOTALLY AGREE      47 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.5 The overpopulation in classrooms interferes in the students' participation.



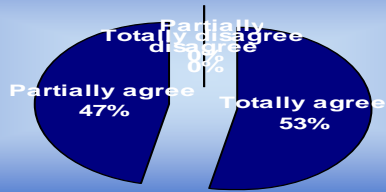
80%TOTALLY AGREE      13 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.5 The overpopulation in classrooms interferes in the students' participation.



80%TOTALLY AGREE      13 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.6 The lack of technological equipment (computers, projectors, video and audio material) affects my learning process.



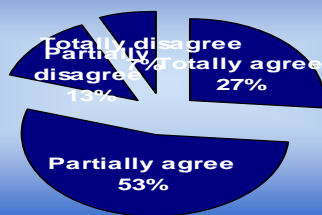
53%TOTALLY AGREE      47 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.7 The lack of economical resources paralyzes my studying process.



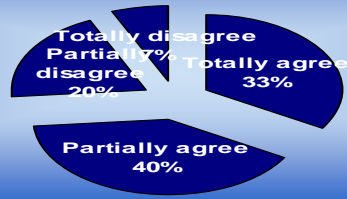
37%TOTALLY AGREE      38 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 18%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.8 The study habits of the students are affected because of the liberal lifestyle they may follow.



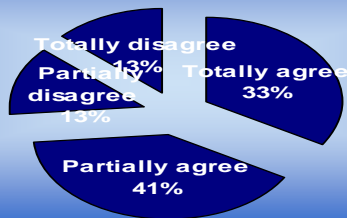
27%TOTALLY AGREE      53 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 13 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

A.9 The lack of family support could be negative for students' development in his/her major.



33%TOTALLY AGREE      40%PARTIALLY AGREE  
 13%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE

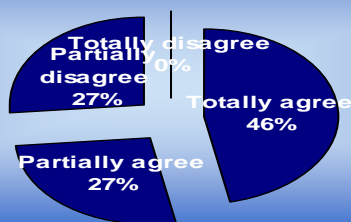
A.10 The lack of interest in professional growth leads into a poor development in both academic and working areas.



33%TOTALLY AGREE      41 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 13%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      13 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

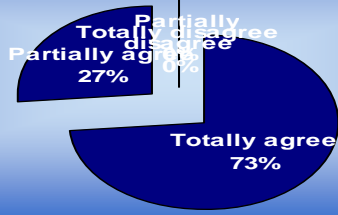
ADMINISTRATION

B.12 Inefficiency from the administration department members of the major.



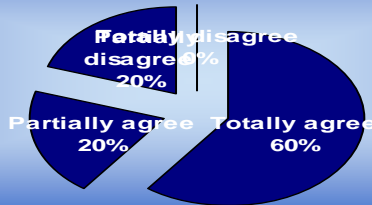
46%TOTALLY AGREE      27 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 27 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

B.13 Absence of a counseling department in the Foreign Language Department.



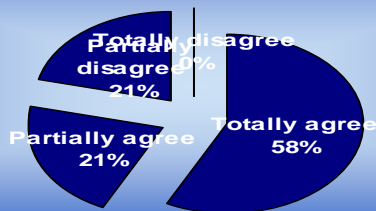
73%TOTALLY AGREE      27 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
0 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

B.14 No clear knowledge of the job profile that the major offers the students.



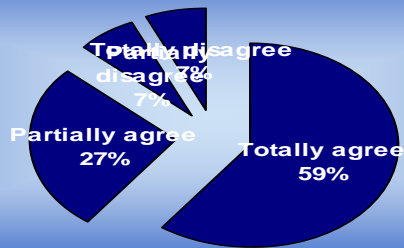
60%TOTALLY AGREE      20 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
20 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

B.15 No clear knowledge about the major's regulations as well as the Foreign Language Department rules.



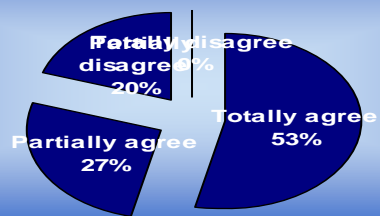
58%TOTALLY AGREE      21 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
21%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

B.16 No control or maintenance of the administration equipment.



68% TOTALLY AGREE      27% PARTIALLY AGREE  
7 % PARTIALLY DISAGREE    7 % TOTALLY DISAGREE

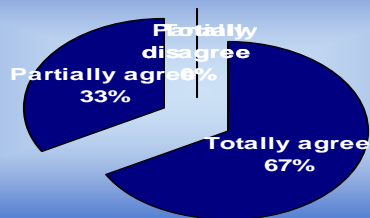
B.17 The constant closures of the university (because of different reasons) have affected my academic performance in the class.



63% TOTALLY AGREE      27 % PARTIALLY AGREE  
20 % PARTIALLY DISAGREE    0 % TOTALLY DISAGREE

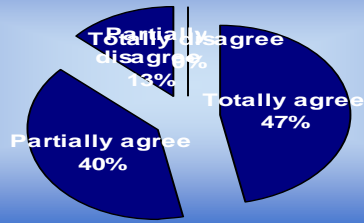
### TEACHERS

C.19 Does the lack of interest from the teachers towards the "teaching – learning process" affected you as a student.



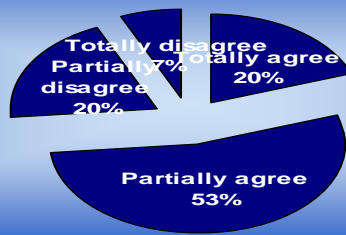
67% TOTALLY AGREE      33 % PARTIALLY AGREE  
0% PARTIALLY DISAGREE    0 % TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.20 The little use of technological equipment in a higher educational level determines the professionalism of teachers.



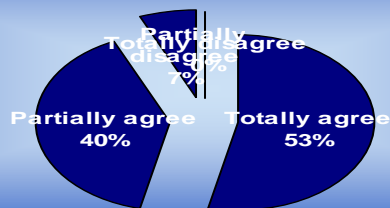
47%TOTALLY AGREE      40%PARTIALLY AGREE  
 13 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.21 The class hours are affected by teachers meetings.



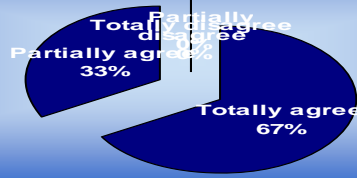
20%TOTALLY AGREE      53 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 20 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.22 The lack of responsibility from the teachers affects the educational process



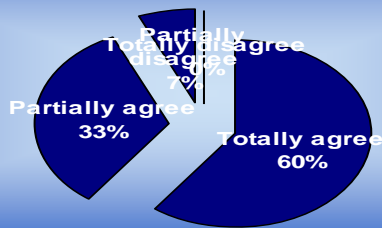
53%TOTALLY AGREE      40 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 7%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.23 The teacher professional development is an essential tool in preparing competent professionals.



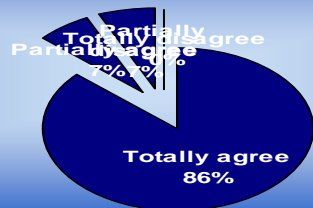
67%TOTALLY AGREE      33%PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.24 Did Teachers motivate you to become more interested in your classes?



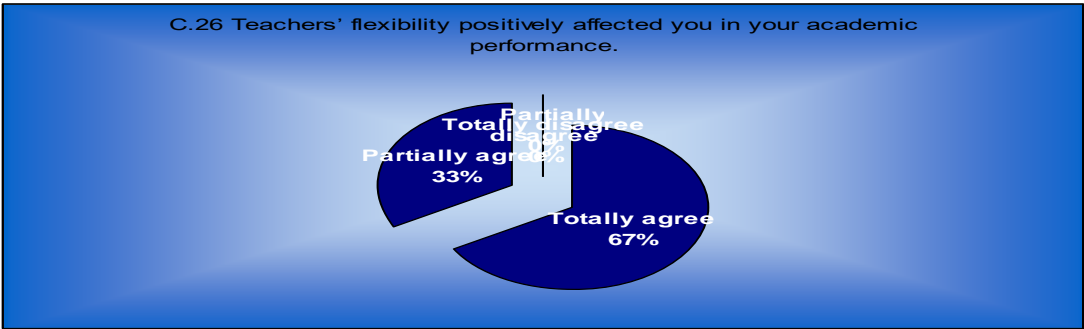
80%TOTALLY AGREE      33 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

C.25 The teachers' accessibility helped you have a better performance in the classroom.

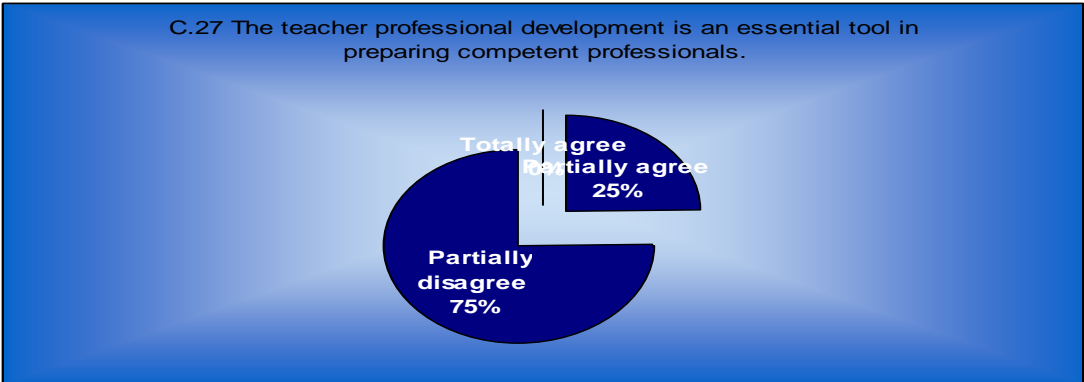


86%TOTALLY AGREE      7 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE

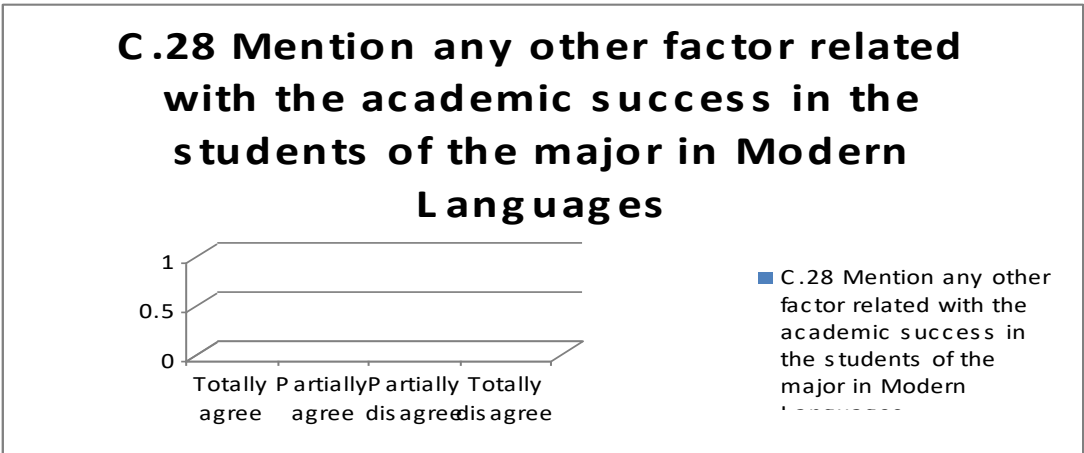




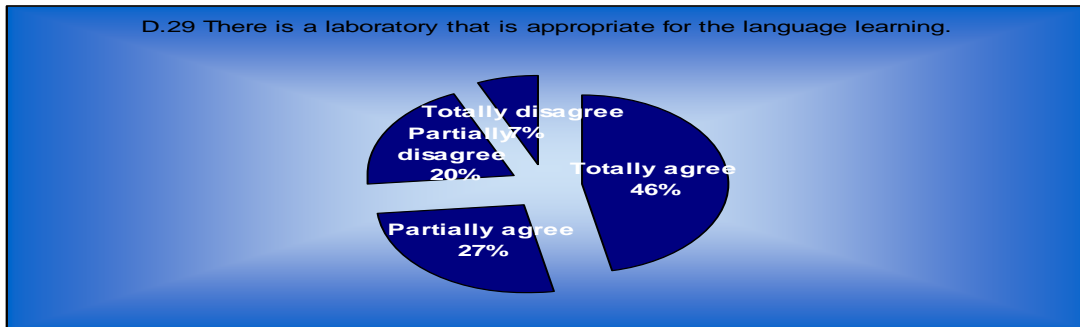
67%TOTALLY AGREE      33 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 0 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE    0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE



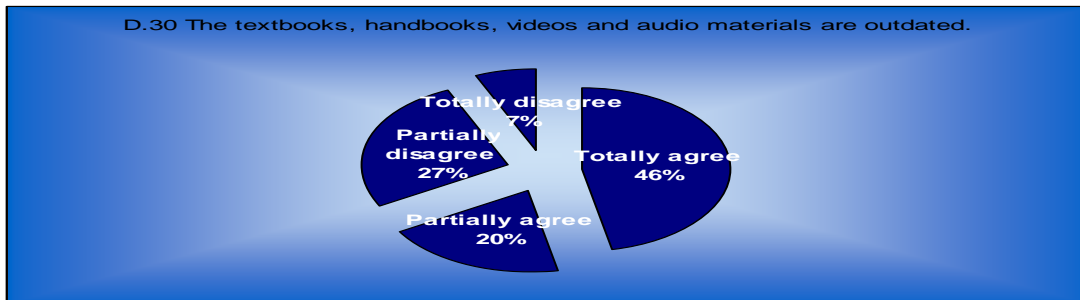
25%TOTALLY AGREE      0 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
 75%PARTIALLY DISAGREE    0 %TOTALLY DISAGREE



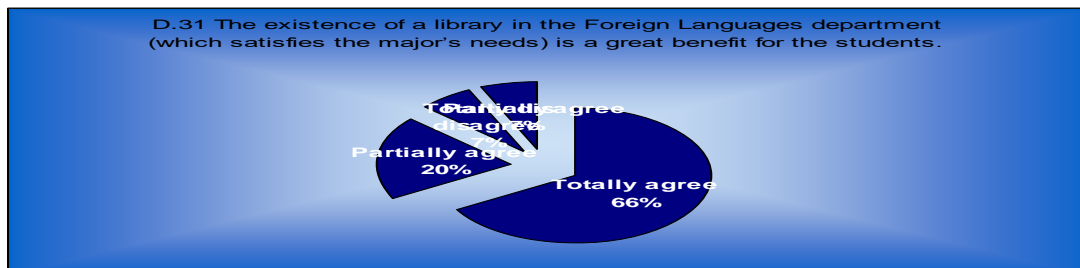
## RESOURCES



46%TOTALLY AGREE      27%PARTIALLY AGREE  
20%PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE

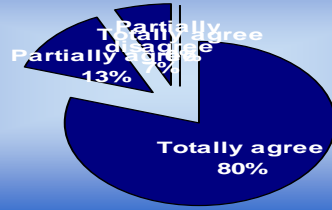


46%TOTALLY AGREE      20 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
27 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE



66%TOTALLY AGREE      20 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      7%TOTALLY DISAGREE

D.32 The equipment (desks, lounges, auditoriums) is not appropriate for the large groups of students.



80 %TOTALLY AGREE      13 %PARTIALLY AGREE  
7 %PARTIALLY DISAGREE      0%TOTALLY DISAGREE