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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**



**“ESSAY”**

**MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING THE PRACTICE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OUT OF CLASSROOMS AMONG THE STUDENTS OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: TEACHING OPTION, OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR.**

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**UNDERGRADUATE WORK PRESENTED TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: TEACHING OPTION**

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## SPECIAL DEDICATION

To **God**, the Father almighty for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

To **Jesus Christ**, our Lord.

To **Virgin Mary**, the Holy Mother of God.

To my beloved parents for their encouragement and support.

To my sisters and my brother.

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## **Main factors affecting the practice of the English language out of classrooms among the students of the Bachelor of Arts in English language: Teaching Option, of the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.**

In every learning process, practice is an important factor to succeed, especially when referring to language learning. Specialists in teaching the English language agree with the old saying “practice makes perfect”, emphasizing on the importance of the development of the speaking skill among others. However, this does not seem to be taken into account by the students of the Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) in English program of the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, who in spite of being majoring in teaching the English language do not practice it out of classrooms due to they are influenced by cultural and personality factors, as well as by the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department.

The Larouse Dictionary defines practice as “repeated performance to gain skill”, this means that in order to learn a language, learners must perform some activities which lead them to use the target language and master it. When learners are in situations (or create the situations by themselves), in which they have to

express concrete ideas to defend their opinions with argumentations, they “push” themselves to select the precise words and organize them in the right way and convey a specific message. Experts on teaching languages think that this effort enables learners to be a step forward in the learning process, because the practice of the target language makes them realize about words, expressions, and grammar structures that have not been mastered yet.

The B. A. in English program offered by the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador is a five-year program addressed to train students to become teachers of English for higher education. During this training, the students are exposed to five intensive courses of the English language (Basic Intensive English, Intermediate Intensive English I, Intermediate Intensive English II, Advanced Intensive English I, and Advanced Intensive English II) in which they develop the four macro-skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and sub-skills such as: vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc. The development of these skills and sub-skills is carried out through some activities provided for active communicative interaction among students. However, these opportunities are only provided as classroom activities in which not all the students take advantage of them.

Some of the teachers who work in the basic skills area often complain about the little participation of the students in classroom activities, especially when oral practice is required. Most of the students of the B. A. in English seem not to be aware that in order to be considered proficient in oral production, they need to be able to use the language in a variety of contexts with considerable flexibility and creativity, as well as to communicate with reasonable degree of precision and coherence, things that can be only achieved through practice. However, the fact that the students of the B. A. in English do not practice the English language out of classrooms, is not only brought about by not taking into account the advantages of practice, but also by rooted cultural factors, personality factors, and the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.

Cultural patterns are defined as the set of norms that rule the behavior of people in a community, which are learned by its members during the socialization process. Cultural patterns perform an important function on people’s daily life, since they indicate how to adjust the behavior in every circumstance, as well as to understand other people’s behavior.

Some Salvadoran cultural patterns interfere in the learning process. Rooted cultural patterns such as mockery and criticism make learners feel embarrassed when they are criticized or laughed at by their peer group or by other people, inhibiting them to practice the target language. But nowadays, Salvadoran culture is being transformed by the adoption of some foreign customs and habits, mainly from the United States, which contribute to shorten social distance. Nowadays, students are exposed to a variety of customs and traditions (Halloween celebration, fashion, music, etc), that help them to learn some vocabulary and expressions used in the target language, and contribute in this way to the learning process of the English language. Besides, most teachers of English use music, films, and TV programs created in the English language as supplementary materials in their classes. By adopting some foreign cultural patterns, Salvadorans also get close to the language that is spoken in that foreign culture.

The use of English words within Salvadoran Spanish is another factor that facilitates the learning of the language. There are many English words in the lexicon of most Salvadorans which are used in daily conversations with friends and relatives, such as: jeans, shorts, cool, closet, lunch, game, picnic, okay, thank you, etc. Everybody understands the meaning of these words that are mostly used by children and youngsters. This fact makes easier for students the learning of vocabulary in the English language. However, there are some cultural patterns that make students not to practice the English language out of classrooms.

Mockery is one of the most rooted cultural patterns among children, youngsters and even adults who make fun of almost everything. Most students make fun of their classmates when they make mistakes either in pronunciation or in the use of grammar structures; then, students feel embarrassed and decide not to speak English with their classmates.

Another rooted cultural pattern among most Salvadorans is criticism. Most Salvadorans tend to criticize everything they do not like. It is common that students who practice the English language out of classrooms are called “alienated” or “boastful” by other people.

Conformity attitudes also make students not to practice their English out of classrooms. Most students tend to feel satisfied with the things they do during classes in order to learn the language. Nowadays, students believe that at the end of the career they will be proficient in the language just by taking all the subjects of the

curriculum, and they do not worry about practicing the language to get proficiency in oral production at any stage of the learning process.

Procrastination is a very rooted cultural pattern among Salvadorans, since most people tend to waste time, make decisions and do everything at the last moment. It is common among students that having enough time to be prepared for an oral exam (or any exam), some of them begin to study just one day before of it. It is like a “lack of foresight” on the students which makes them put off what they have to do at the right moment.

Inherited behavior is another rooted cultural pattern that not only affects the students but also the teachers of the Foreign Languages Department. Students and teachers tend to adopt certain kind of behaviors which are transmitted from generation to generation, such as: the lack of practice of the English language out of classrooms by the students, and the loss of requiring the use of English to the students when they are at the teachers’ offices.

Besides all these aspects, there are some personality factors that affect the learning process. Personality factors refer to the development of affective stages or feelings, the emotional side of human behavior that contributes in some way to the success or to the failure of language learning. One of these personality factors is self-esteem, which is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds toward himself. Learners with high self-esteem like risk-taking and they are more willing to participate in the learning process, since they believe themselves to be capable and successful.

Self-confidence and risk-taking are personality factors closely connected to self-esteem. Self-confidence refers to the belief or trust in one’s own capabilities. The lack of self-confidence makes students not to participate in activities in which they have to use what they have learned, due to they do not trust in their own capabilities to accomplish the tasks.

Risk-taking is an important characteristic of successful learning of a second language. Impulsivity is described as a style which could have positive effects on language success. A high willingness to take risks makes students not to be afraid of being wrong or being laughed at by their classmates.

A very important personality factor that helps to develop the abilities to learn a language is motivation, which gives students the initial impulse and the strength to continue in the learning process. Motivation is some kind of internal drive which



pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something. "In discussions of motivation an accepted distinction is made between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, that is motivation which comes from outside and from inside. Extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel. Intrinsic motivation, by contrast, comes from within the individual. Thus a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to make themselves feel better" (Harmer, J., 2001, p. 51). Learning a foreign language clearly requires motivation, which is closely connected to the achievement of goals; and the participation of students in activities out of classrooms in which the English language is needed depends on how motivated they are in learning the language. Motivation is a term often used to explain the success or the failure of learners in the learning process.

Similarly to self-confidence and risk-taking, inhibition is a personality factor that is closely connected to self-esteem. It refers to the process of building defenses to protect the ego. Students with weaker self-esteem maintain walls of inhibition to protect what is self-perceived to be weak or fragile ego, or a lack of self-confidence in a situation or task. These defenses can prevent students from communicating in a foreign language.

Extroversion and introversion are personality factors that are very important in the learning process of a foreign language. Extrovert students are thought to be more willing to interact in the target language, while introvert students are quiet and tend to stay away of any activity in which they have to use the target language; but, they learn using different strategies from the ones used by extrovert ones.

But the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador also influences the practice of the English language out of classrooms. It is understood by socialization, those psychosocial processes in which the individual is developed as a person and as a member of a society. In this case, the socialization process refers to the circumstances that surround the students at the Foreign Languages Department that influence them in the practice of the English language.

Nowadays, Salvadoran society is influenced by some foreign social and political systems, mainly from the United States, which have contributed to change people's attitudes. It is evident that Salvadoran society is being influenced by the United States due to some factors such as: the migration of Salvadorans to the US,

American companies working in El Salvador (fast food restaurants, shops, etc), fashion, music, TV programs, movies, etc. All these factors contribute to the spreading of the English language among Salvadorans, as well as cultural patterns of the target language.

One of the goals of the current Salvadoran government is the implementation of English as a second language in the country; therefore, it is supposed that Salvadoran society will be more exposed to some elements that make people learn the language. But, even though all these factors may contribute to increasing people's interest in using the English language, this does not happen to some of the students of the Languages Department, since the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department has made the students be reluctant to use the target language for communication out of classrooms.

Even though the Languages Department has organized two special events related to teaching languages (the first and second congress for foreign languages professionals) and the first Arts and Culture Festival in National and Foreign Languages, there are some factors within the Department that contribute to hinder the practice of English. Some of these factors are: a) it is unusual the practice of the English language among the teachers; b) not all the teachers speak English to their students during tutoring sessions; and c) notes and announcements from the Department to the students and teachers are not written in English.

The socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department may also be affected by the political ideologies of some students in the University of El Salvador. There are some students in the university who are against the United States policies toward El Salvador and other countries. This ideological and political distance makes some students not to practice the English language in the university because they do not want to be considered as being in favor of the United States policies.

One or more of these factors may influence the non-practice of the English language out of classrooms. But these factors not only hinder the practice of the language, but also reduce opportunities for the best development and improvement of oral production in using English for communication. According to C. Muñoz (2002), when learners of a foreign language practice it, they realize about their progress in the language; but, most important, is that the practice makes them be aware of their deficiencies; and, this may make them do something to solve those deficiencies (p.50).

Practice also helps learners to develop fluency and accuracy. Speaking English fluently is to express a wide range of ideas without unnecessary pauses or breakdowns in communication; and, speaking English accurately is to use an acceptable standard of pronunciation and grammar when communicating (Richards & Sandy, 1998). In short, fluency refers to the ability to express oneself smoothly and easily; and, accuracy refers to the acceptability, quality and precision of the message conveyed. By developing fluency and accuracy, learners also develop their abilities to be considered proficient in the language.

But, what does it mean to be proficient in a language? Omaggio (1993), points out that proficiency refers to “a somewhat idealized level of competence and performance, attainable by experts through extensive instruction” (p.2). Competence refers to one’s implicit or explicit knowledge of the system of the language; and, performance refers to one’s actual production and comprehension of language use. In short, competence is what one knows, and performance is what one does. “Only performance is observable, and it is only through it that competence can be developed, maintained, and evaluated” (Savignon, 1983, cited in Omaggio, 1993, p.5).

How can competence in a language be evaluated? The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) developed some guidelines that define and measure language ability in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines have come to be a widely recognized proficiency standard in language teaching circles (Brown, 1994). The ACTFL scale owns four great proficiency levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior. The whole scale is divided into nine levels: Novice-Low, Novice-Mid, Novice-High; Intermediate-Low, Intermediate-Mid, Intermediate-High; Advanced, Advanced Plus; and Superior.

The Novice level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally with learned material. The Intermediate level is characterized by the speaker’s ability to create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements, though primarily in a reactive mode; initiate, minimally sustain, and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks; ask and answer questions. The Advanced level, is characterized by the speaker’s ability to converse in a clearly participatory fashion; initiate, sustain, and bring to closure a wide variety of communicative tasks, including those that require an increased ability to convey meaning with diverse language strategies due to a complication or an unforeseen turn of events; satisfy the

requirements of school and work situations; and narrate and describe with paragraph-length connected discourse. The Superior level is characterized by the speaker's ability to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics; and, support opinions and hypothesize using native-like discourse strategies. (Taken from the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines presented by D. H. Brown, 1994, pp. 102-103).

As one goes up the scale, progressively more language skill is needed to attain the next level. The five intensive courses of the English language, which the students of the B. A. in English program are exposed to during their training (Basic Intensive English, Intermediate Intensive English I, Intermediate Intensive English II, Advanced Intensive English I, and Advanced Intensive English II), develop students' abilities in the language, starting from the Novice level up to the Intermediate level. According to the course syllabus of these intensive courses, every course provides language practice and activities that enable the students to reach a higher level of English proficiency in the four language macro-skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In accordance to book 3 of the New Interchange textbook series, which was used to teach the Advanced English courses of the program a year ago, students are taken from the Intermediate level up to the Intermediate-High level. Therefore, it is supposed that the students at the end of the Advanced Intensive English course will have reached an Intermediate-High level of proficiency in the English language. The new textbook series Skyline does not provide this information, but it can be assumed that the students achieve the same level (Intermediate-High) at the end of the Advanced Intensive English II course. In theory students would reach an advanced level but in reality most of them get to an intermediate one. But if the students achieve proficiency levels in language macro-skills and sub-skills, through the intensive English courses, why do not they practice the English language out of classrooms? What factors influence the students in such a way that hinder the practice of the target language out of classrooms? Is it that the students think that in order to become a teacher of English it is enough the practice done in the classroom? Or is it that the students think that they have already achieved a high level in oral production that they do not need to practice a lot? But, before tackling these questions, it is necessary to go back in time and establish if the students used to practice the target language out of classrooms in the past.

According to some teachers of the Languages Department, who also studied there, and some former students, not all the students used to practice English out of classrooms in the late 80's and in the early 90's. They also said that at that time, the fact that some students practiced the target language out of classrooms depended on the teachers who "obliged" them to speak English anywhere.

*"I remember that we practiced the English language in one subject in which we were forced to a lot. The teacher said to us: "if I see you at the cafeteria, I want to see you speaking English..."*

(Grace Gómez, personal communication, Sept. 3, 2004)

*"In the late 80's, the practice of English was an obligation, because we were not allowed to speak Spanish... and they (the teachers), clearly told us that anywhere we were, our obligation as learners of English, was to practice it..."*

(Patricia Arteaga, personal communication, Sept. 26, 2004)

Another factor that contributed to the practice of English out of classrooms in the past was the fact that there were some native English speakers, working as teachers at the Foreign Languages Department.

*"...When I began to study at the University in 1984, there were some Americans working for the Department; then, that was a tool for us, because we needed to speak English to communicate with them... for example: Gaio (Tiberio), Patrick (Hughes), and Jim (Macera)..."*

(Patricia Arteaga, personal communication, Sept. 26, 2004)

However, not all the foreign teachers were easy to approach in order to have a conversation and practice the target language. According to René Hernández (personal communication, Sept. 3, 2004), the only one with whom they always talked to in English was Gaio Tiberio. And, according to Ricardo Garay (personal

communication, Sept. 6, 2004), he only used to talk to Jim Macera, who used to make the first move and talk to the students.

Not only the foreign teachers made the students practice the target language, but also the native ones, including some of the teachers who still are part of the teaching staff of the Languages Department.

*"I began to study at the University in 1991, and Mr. Baltés was one of teachers that I had, and he told the students at the beginning of the course that we should practice the language with other students and teachers...The same told us Norma (de Castro) and Sarita (Méndez)..."*

(Cesia Benavides, personal communication, August 27, 2004)

*"There was a teacher, a certain Danilo (Orellana), who motivated us a lot to start practicing the language; and, at the end we had made up a drama group..."*

(Ricardo Garay, personal communication, Sept. 6, 2004)

Some other teachers who were mentioned by the former students, as part of the teaching staff that made them practice the target language out of classrooms are: Ramón Turish, Tita de Arévalo, Emma Lazo, Pedro A. Salazar, and Ana María Glower. Even though not all the students used to practice English out of classrooms, for some of the former students, the practice was more evident at that time due to, in some cases, they did it as an obligation or as a requirement; but, some others did it because they were motivated to do so.

Nowadays, the practice of English by the students is mostly done as classroom activities. In order to find out how frequently the students of the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador used the target language in their conversations, they were observed in and outside the classrooms. Through the observations done in the classrooms, it was verified that the students spoke English only when the teacher requested it, as well as that not all the students participated in class.

*“The students who have lived in the United States, or who have worked as teachers are the ones who participate the most in class; the others don’t want to speak English, even if the teacher assigns a grade for participation in class...”*

(Lilian Olivares, personal communication, July 19, 2004)

In class activities, most of the students spoke English only when the teacher was observing them or nearby; once the teacher moved to other part of the classroom, they began speaking Spanish. This behavior was observed in many students of different levels. It is obvious that those students do not take advantage of class activities in which doubts can be clarified and mistakes can be corrected.

It was supposed that out of the classrooms the situation would be different; however, few students were observed practicing English. In the halls, the stairs, as in the surroundings of the Languages/Philosophy building, most of the students only used the target language to say the name of songs and sing part of them; to say the name of films; the topic of a class or activity; but mostly to say bad expressions. The few ones, who were observed practicing their English, were in groups performing activities such as: doing some homework, singing songs, or just talking. In one of the groups, the students were working on a Didactics report; they were talking about the things they would write in the report. In another group, there were two students playing guitars and singing some English songs; there were about eight students around them, who were also singing the songs. Some of these students were rehearsing an artistic act that would be presented during the Cultural Festival of foreign languages, which was promoted by the Foreign Languages Department.

Other students were observed having a conversation with a native English speaker. There was an American boy visiting the Foreign Languages Department during the last two semesters, and some students talked to him; but they were only about seven or eight (mostly girls). There were still others who practiced English with their classmates, but they were only four. Two of these students began a conversation in English, but soon began speaking Spanish. The other two had a conversation in English, but it lasted less than two minutes, due to one of them had to

attend another class. The rest of the students were never observed speaking English, excepting to say bad expressions.

At the teachers' offices, the situation was not so different. It was observed that very few students used the English language to communicate with their teachers. Some of the students only greeted their teachers in English, but the rest of the conversation was in Spanish. However, there were about three students who spoke English to their teachers. Through the observations, it was verified that most of the students do not use the English language as they should, taking into account that they belong to a foreign languages department of a university; that they are majoring in language teaching; and, that they should be a model to their future students.

But, the answer to the question why the students do not practice the English language out of classrooms could only be found out by asking them. Therefore, a survey was passed to students of different levels of the B. A. in English program, excepting the 2004 new admission students. The survey was passed to 140 students, but only 108 of them returned it (24 students of second year, 39 of third year, 20 of fourth year, 17 of fifth year, and 8 undergraduate students); therefore, the sample of the research was of 108 students. The survey was intended to get some information related to the students' learning process, and identify the most important factors that influence them in the non-practice of English out of classrooms.

One of the questions in the survey was about why the students were studying the B. A. in English language, that is to say, what had motivated them to study this career. It was included seventeen different options from which the students had to select the one or the ones that fit their answer. Each student checked more than one option -about six or seven of them-; therefore, it could not be established percentages that add up a 100%. However, the percentages of the options that were mostly checked are "I want to work for an international organization" (57%); "I want to be a teacher of English for higher education" (46%); I want to be an interpreter (33%); and, "I want to be a teacher of English for high school" (33%).

In the three options mostly checked by the students as their reasons to be studying the B. A. in English, the mastery of the English language for communication is a must. Therefore, they need to have a high level in oral proficiency if they want to succeed. When they were asked about how well they considered they spoke English, only 7% of them said "very well"; 56% considered that they spoke English "well"; while 25% said that they spoke English in an "average" way. This means that most of



the students, in a certain way, feel satisfied about how well they speak the language; therefore, they do not worry enough about improving their speaking skill.

Nevertheless, according to the students, they perform some activities in order to improve their speaking skill. The students were asked about what they do to improve their speaking skill, and it was included some activities as options. The students checked more than one option, and the most selected ones were: reading books, magazines, or newspapers written in English (69%); getting lyrics and singing English songs (58%); and, practicing English with their classmates (55%). Even though more than 50% of the surveyed students said that they practiced English with their classmates, this was not shown by the observations carried out in different places, near the Languages Department, since very few students were observed practicing the target language. About the places, in the University, in which they had practiced their English, most of them (43%) pointed out the teachers' offices as the place where they had practiced English the most, while only 30% of the students said that had "sometimes" practiced the language in the surroundings of the Languages/Philosophy building. This means that the teachers, at their offices, as in the classrooms, are a strong influence for the students in order to practice the English language; something that should be taken into account by the teachers in order to always speak English to their students, in and out of classrooms.

The students were also asked about the factors that encouraged them to practice the target language. They were presented different options again, from which they checked more than one of them. The ones that they pointed out as the most important factors are: that they wanted to be fluent speaking the language (70%); that their teachers talked to them in English (60%); and, that they wanted to learn more vocabulary (58%). Even though, most of the students accepted that there are some factors that encourage them to practice English, this has not been shown by their performance, since very few students have been observed practicing the target language; and, if they want to be fluent, for example, they need to do a lot of oral practice.

But the students have pointed out that there are some deficiencies that are affecting them in English oral production. These deficiencies are poor vocabulary, problems in the use of some grammar structures, lack of fluency, and mispronunciation of some words. In addition, there are some factors that, according to the students, discourage them to practice English out of classrooms, which can be

classified as cultural factors, personality factors, and the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department.

Cultural factors are thought to be of great influence on people, due to culture is defined as a way of life, as the context in which people exist, think, feel, and relate to others. According to Brown (1994), culture might be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools, which characterize a given group of people in a given period of time. Salvadoran anthropologist Carlos Lara (1998) states that culture refers to the symbolic creations anonymously done by nations as part of their daily life, such as: mythology, religious and civil rituals, oral traditions, and the system of values and social norms that orientates the social life in the economic and political activities, domestic life, etc. From these definitions, it can be understood that people's behavior, in some way, is influenced by certain cultural patterns.

J. H. Velásquez (1996) defines cultural patterns as a set of norms that rule individual and group behavior in part of social relationships. Cultural patterns are ways of behavior that are socially shared and learned during the socialization process; therefore, they are very difficult to be modified. Even though some local and international events have contributed to change some cultural patterns -the last civil war, peace agreements, the migration of many Salvadorans to the United States, the globalization process, etc.-, there are some patterns that still remain. Some of these patterns were mentioned by the students as factors that discouraged them to practice the English language out of classrooms.

According to most of the students, they did not practice their English because their classmates did not speak English out of classrooms. One reason for this, is the fact that all the students are accustomed to using Spanish everywhere, due to it is Salvadorans' native language, and it is easier for them to communicate with it.

Another reason is that the students avoid being criticized. Some students do not speak English out of classrooms because they do not want to be called "alienated" or that people think that they are "boastful" and that they only speak English to impress someone else.

*"...They don't want to be considered as a kind of show off. Some people think that if you are speaking English is because you are trying to impress others... or other people may think that you are an "alienated" person..."*

(Mathew Alvarado, personal communication, July 21, 2004)

Another reason to avoid the practice of English is that most students do not want to be victims of mockery. Some students tend to make fun of their peers when they make mistakes using the target language. Mockery is one of the most rooted cultural patterns on most Salvadorans, especially on children and youngsters.

*“One cultural aspect in El Salvador is that people here are very ‘mocky’, in all levels; then, to avoid mockery people say: ‘I better don’t speak...’ ”*

(Jorge Lemus, personal communication, June 30, 2004)

In the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, most of the students are younger than 24 years old; and, because of their age, some of them still behave as if they were teenagers (even though some of them are studying the last two years of the major). Most of the time, these students tend to laugh at their classmates’ mistakes making them feel uncomfortable speaking English. According to the students, some factors that discourage them to practice the target language out of classrooms are: problems in the use of some grammar structures (36%); fear to mispronounce some words (31%); lack of vocabulary (30%); and, lack of fluency (30%). All these deficiencies make the students be afraid of not only being victims of mockery, but also of showing their weaknesses. None of the students likes to show his or her deficiencies in the use of the language.

But there is still another cultural pattern affecting the students, conformity. Some students said that it was enough the practice done in the classrooms, therefore, it was not necessary to practice the target language out of classrooms in order to be proficient in it. Fortunately, these students only represent 6% of the sample; but conformity is considered a harmful cultural pattern that does not let people achieve further goals.

*“Something that opposes to the learning of English ... is the fact that we are not willing to make extra efforts... if we do not see immediate benefits...”*

(Carlos Lara, personal communication, June 24, 2004)

However, the students may also be influenced by some sub-cultural characteristics that Trow (cited by C. W. Backman & P. F. Secord, 1971, p. 88) describes when he analyzes the behavioral conditions of different universities. According to Trow, there are four sub-cultures among students: scholar, professional, academic, and non-conformist. The scholar sub-culture is described as a world of football, clubs, dates, and fun within the campus. Under this sub-culture, students identify themselves with the university as a social object, but they show relatively indifferent to the academic demands. There are many students in the Languages Department that fit in this kind of sub-culture, who can be observed in the surroundings of the Languages/Philosophy building (e.g. some students spend hours playing cards instead of doing academic matters), and some others who spend lots of time playing soccer and basket-ball too.

In the professional sub-culture, students do not identify themselves with the University as a social object, but as a part of the working market. In this case, it is important to get an academic degree in order to get a good job. From all the surveyed students, only 7% admitted to be studying the career in order to learn English and at the same time get a university degree.

In the academic sub-culture students are identified with the intellectual interest of the teaching staff. The symbols of this sub-culture are the library and the laboratory. In the case of the Foreign Languages Department, few students take advantage of the laboratory to improve their communicative skills by listening to exercises by themselves.

Finally, the non-conformist sub-culture is similar to the academic sub-culture, in the sense that students emphasize the importance of ideas, but show themselves relatively indifferent to the intellectual interest of the teaching staff, and more sensitive to the intellectual extracurricular tendencies. Under this sub-culture, could be some of the students who are part of students' unions, due to most of them are more engaged with the unions than with their studies.

According to Trow, all these sub-cultures can be found, in different levels and combinations, in most universities. But, cultural patterns affect not only the students, but also the teachers. Some teachers also do not speak English out of classrooms because they feel more comfortable speaking Spanish.

*“Teachers feel comfortable using Spanish, and maybe, we don’t want to challenge ourselves with the language...”*

(Rhina Franco, personal communication, July 19, 2004)

The teachers, who have studied or lived in the United States, also show this pattern of using Spanish for comfort.

*“Nobody speaks English, even when a number of teachers have studied abroad, especially in the United States; or some like me, who have lived there. We try to follow the others, and the others say “Spanish”, so we say ‘OK Spanish’...”*

(Fidel Navidad, personal communication, July 16, 2004)

Likewise the students, it is possible that also the teachers do not speak English out of classrooms due to they may not want to be victims of mockery or criticism. These factors may cause that the teachers do not use the English language when they talk among them.

*“...It happens the same among the teachers, there are some teachers who master the English language more than others... I have heard, in the context of the Department that some of them criticize or make fun of someone who mispronounced a word...”*

(Jorge Lemus, personal communication, June 30, 2004)

However, the fact that the teachers do not speak English out of classrooms, either for comfort or for avoiding mockery or criticism, is a pattern that was adopted many years ago. According to some former students of the Languages Department, the use of the English language within the Department began to diminish once the foreign teachers went away. The use of the Spanish language by the teachers of the Languages Department among themselves is a cultural pattern that has been inherited, and it continues being inherited to new generations of teachers. This factor affects the students due to they do not have a model to follow, and teachers are supposed to be a model for their students. In addition, there are some teachers who not only use the Spanish language with their students out of classrooms, but also inside the classrooms. These teachers contribute to hinder the practice of English out of classrooms among the students, since even inside the classrooms the English language is not a requirement for them.

*“...Even in high levels of the career, in subjects in which the English language is the means for instruction, many teachers teach their classes in Spanish. I have been in Seminar classes, and others, and the teacher speaks Spanish... but they want the reports in English...”*

(Ricardo Garay, personal communication, Sept. 6, 2004)

However, there are other factors that make the students not to practice English out of classrooms, personality factors. These factors are related to the emotional side of human behavior (the affective domain). “The development of affective states or feelings involves a variety of personality factors, feelings both about ourselves and about others with whom we come into contact (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 100).

The personality factors that mostly affect the students are self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, extroversion/introversion, and motivation. According to the 108 surveyed students, most of these factors arise from some deficiencies in the use of the English language and how the students feel when they speak it, such as:

problems in the use of some grammar structures (36%); they feel nervous when they have to speak English (35%); fear to mispronounce some words (31%); poor vocabulary (30%); and, lack of fluency (30%).

The fact that the percentages of the students who admitted having these problems are low might be due to a very rooted cultural pattern: nobody likes to show his/her weaknesses. Most people tend to feel embarrassed when they are in situations in which some weaknesses may be shown; therefore, they try to hide them.

*“The students may lie, especially the ones who feel embarrassed; they will not openly say it...”*

(Sara Bernal, personal communication, June 16, 2004)

According to Sara Bernal, most of the students do not speak English out of classrooms due to they do not feel confident to do so. These students may have problems in pronunciation, and do not want the others to make fun of them, or to be criticized. Therefore, the students try to avoid any possible circumstances, in which the English language is required, showing with this their low self-esteem.

“Self-esteem is probable the most pervasive aspect of any human behavior. It could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive activity can be carried out without some degree of self esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself, and belief in your own capabilities for that activity” (Brown, 1994, p. 101).

It is thought that a high self-esteem would make the students practice more the target language; but it seems that in the case of the students of the Languages Department, it works in the opposite way. On the one hand, 69% of the surveyed students said that they felt confident in their ability to succeed in learning English; while 19% said that they felt quite uncertain about their ability to succeed in learning English. On the other hand, 60% of them said that they would not mind if people laugh at them when they speak English. This means that most of the students believe themselves to be capable, successful, and worthy. However, they do not show this by their low rate of practice of the English language out of classrooms.

*“When you have a proficiency level in what you do, you show it, and you feel comfortable with that; but here, many people don’t feel comfortable with the level they have. They think that if they speak English, they will show their low proficiency...”*

(Ricardo Garay, personal communication, Sept. 6, 2004)

By having low self-esteem, many students build sets of defenses, or walls of inhibition to protect what is self-perceived to be weak or fragile ego, or a lack of self-confidence in their own capabilities in the use of the target language. “These defenses do not facilitate learning; rather they inhibit learning...” (Brown, 1994, p. 104).

Another factor that is connected to self-esteem is risk-taking. A person with high self-esteem would not care about the possible consequences of being laughed at or being criticized when some mistakes in the use of the target language are made. According to the students, 53% of them said that they liked to try out new words and structures that they were not complete sure of; while 39% said that they liked to use only the language that they were certain was correct. This means that most of the students would be willing to make guesses and take the risk of being wrong. But in practice, this is not what the students show with their performance in and out of classrooms. If most of the students do not like to speak English in and out of classrooms, much less they would be willing to take risks, and use vocabulary and structures that they are not sure of.

Another personality factor that may affect the practice of English is extroversion/introversion. According to Brown (1994), “extroversion is the extent to which a person has a deep-seated need to receive ego enhancement, self-esteem, and a sense of wholeness from other people; while introversion is the extent to which a person derives a sense of fulfillment apart from a reflection of this self from other people”. Extrovert students are thought to be more willing to interact with others using the target language, while introverts, tend to keep apart from any interaction in which the target language is required. For some teachers of the Languages Department, the lack of practice of English out of classrooms may be due to most of the students are introverts.



*“...Extrovert students practice English in the classroom or out of it, but what we usually have are introvert students, mostly female. Even in the classroom we have trouble trying to get them to practice English...”*

(Fidel Navidad, personal communication, July 16, 2004)

According to the survey that was passed to the students, in which an extroversion/introversion test was included (which was taken from several tests presented by Brown (1994) to test formal personality and cognitive styles), 50% of the students are considered to be quite introverted; 24% moderately introverted; 21% moderately extroverted; and only 2% of them are considered quite extroverted. This explains, in part, why most of the students avoid speaking English with their classmates out of classrooms.

But there is still another personality factor that may foster or hinder the practice of English out of classrooms, motivation. Motivation is an inner drive or stimulus that moves one to a particular action. According to C. Muñoz (2002), there are two sources of motivation when learning a language: internal and external. Internal motivation comes from inside the individuals; while external motivation comes from one's environment; that is to say, the desire to do something is stimulated by external elements.

According to the students, 88% of them said that they wanted to learn English because of what they could personally gain from it. This means that, if they did not lie, they are motivated to learn the language; therefore, they have internal motivation. But, what about external motivation? Some students said that they did not speak English out of classrooms because the use of the target language within the Languages Department was not necessary. Therefore, the students do not have any external motivation from the Languages Department to be interested in using the target language for extra-curricular activities, and not only for class activities.

*“I would blame the Languages Department, for how it is organized, and how the authorities have handled the idea of a linguistic environment, which has not been created within the Department...”*

(Jorge Lemus, personal communication, June 30, 2004)

According to Jorge Lemus, the Languages Department should establish policies in order to promote an “English Only” environment. It is stated that the more motivated someone is, the more persistent someone will be in doing something. Therefore, if the Languages Department promoted the use of the target language, the students would feel motivated to speak it. But, that is not an easy task, due to most teachers and most students are so accustomed to speaking only Spanish at the Languages Department; therefore, some policies have to be established for everybody.

*“...It has to be something like a policy of the Languages Department, with its personnel in order to speak only English; then, spread that policy to the students...”*

(Dora E. Portillo, personal communication, Sept. 13, 2004)

According to some teachers, one way to motivate the students to improve their speaking skill is to make them have an exam after certain period of time, in order to make them be aware of their proficiency level. One similar idea was stated by Blandón, Castellanos, and Luna (1983): “after having completed the four English courses, students will be required to take the Proficiency Test, that will be offered by the Foreign Languages Department at the beginning of each term. A minimal grade of 80% will be obligatory for entering the fifth term. Students who do not fulfill this requirement will have to enroll for a midterm English course. This course will be of three hours daily and will cover speaking, reading, and writing. The minimal grade for passing this course will be 80%. Students who do not pass this midterm course will have to repeat Advanced English...”(p. 195). An idea like this would be of great help for students due to through this, the students would be more responsible for their own learning process.

*“...Israel Oliva passed a placement test to the students who were going to take the Advanced Intensive English II course. The surprise was that from about 62 students, only about 22 of them were ready to take the course...”*

(Ricardo Garay, personal communication, Sept. 6, 2004)

It is evident that, even though some students have passed an English course, this does not mean that they are really proficient enough to go up the next level, since most students pass the course with the required minimal grade (6.0). Therefore, some students do not achieve the proficiency levels stated in the course syllabi, and this explains, in part, why some students are afraid of making mistakes when they speak English. The fact that some students do not reach a determined proficiency level of the English language after finishing any of the English courses, is due to some of the students do not take an active part in their own learning process. They also complain when they have a teacher that makes them work hard. The teachers are also responsible for this situation due to they have not motivated the students enough to continue working on their learning process. Another thing that may have influenced in this situation is the fact that nowadays the students have less classes per week than the ones they used to have some years ago.

Even though there are some teachers who make their students take the TOEFL test during their learning process, this test is not administered at the end of the career in order to check students' progress. Besides, the proficiency level in the speaking skill is not evaluated anymore once the students have finished the Advanced Intensive English II course, since the Basic skills area is designed for the learning of English and the differentiated area is designed for content-based teaching. But, for the students who do not reach a satisfactory proficiency level in the use of the target language at the end of the Basic skills area, the improvement of it will be difficult because of the lack of motivation and evaluation, since it is evident that some of the students do not worry about their learning process unless they are required to do so. The lack of evaluation of the students' proficiency levels in the speaking skill after finishing the five intensive courses of the English language may be due to it is considered that oral testing is problematic because of the lack of time, large classes, and heavy teaching loads. According to Omaggio (1993), "many classroom teachers feel that the oral exams are among the most difficult types of exams to create, schedule, administer, and grade, especially when they have large classes or many classes in the course of a day. For these reasons, some classroom teachers consider oral tests impractical and do not attempt to test oral skills in any regular or consistent fashion. Yet, it is clear that one of the priorities in the language teaching profession in recent years has been the development of oral proficiency" (pp. 454-455).

The lack of external motivation from the Languages Department to the students affects the students' socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department. Martín Baró (1996) defines socialization as the processes in which the individual is historically developed as a person and as a member of a society. According to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (cited by Martín Baró, 1996, p. 118), socialization processes are divided into two groups: primary socialization and secondary socialization. In the primary socialization, an individual becomes a member of a specific social group, such as: the family, the school, the group of friends, etc. Through these groups, the individual shapes his personal and social identity by acquiring personal values, thoughts, and ways of behavior. Through the secondary socialization, the individual is incorporated to institutional "worlds" such as: a university, a social club, a political party, a union, etc. It is through this secondary socialization that the students are being affected, since they spend most of their time at the university, especially at the Foreign Languages Department, which has not created a proper linguistic environment in order to help the students in their socialization process.

As it was stated before, the students also pointed out that other factor that discouraged them to practice the target language out of classrooms was because English is not necessary to be used in the Languages Department. It is supposed that a languages department should promote the use of the target language or languages that are taught in it. In the case of the Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, regarding to the English language, it seems as if the target language were a requirement only for class activities.

There is not an institutional policy in the Languages Department in order to promote the use of the English language out of classrooms: teachers speak Spanish among themselves, and to their students. Even the notes and announcements to teachers and students are all written in Spanish. The Languages Department has not created the conditions that there should be, in order to make students, and teachers, communicate in the target language. How is it possible that the use of the English language is a requirement for everybody in most English academies, and it is not in the Languages Department of the University of El Salvador? In some English academies and institutions, it is considered as a fault if the teachers speak Spanish to their students, in and out of the classrooms. Then, why something like this could not be done in the Languages Department?

*“...The Department should promote the use of the English language out of classrooms... if you go to Centro Cultural Salvadoreño, even though that is an academy, they don't major professionals in teaching the language, from the times I have been there, one of the things that calls my attention is that... if you go to the library, everything is in English. The secretaries speak English, in the reception desk, too. Everything is done in English, and it is not to mock or underestimate the students, but to help them and create the environment...”*

(Jorge Lemus, personal communication, June 30, 2004)

According to the students, if some policies were implemented in the Languages Department, they would help them to improve their speaking skill and practice the target language. Six policies were presented to the students to find out the ones that they agreed with. Most of the students agreed with the six policies, and result was: if there were a special library for the students of the Languages Department in which the English language were required (94%); if the English language were used by the teachers in their conversations with the students out of classrooms (94%); if the students were notified about all the available materials in stock in the laboratory (90%); if the percentage of the total grade assigned to the speaking skill in the English classes were increased (90%); if the English language were used by the teachers at their offices (89%); and, if notes and announcements to teachers and students made by the Languages Department were in English (86%).

Even though not all of these policies can be implemented by the Languages Department, at least in the near future, there are some of them that are necessary to take into account in order to change those factors that hinder the practice and use of the English language by teachers and students, and help the students in their socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department.

Nevertheless, some teachers of the Languages Department, by their own motivation, started some projects in which the students have the opportunity to improve their speaking skill by practicing the language. These projects are two conversation clubs, which were created to help the students in the learning process of the English language.

One of these conversation clubs is the one that is promoted by Rhina Franco. This conversation club has been working for more than two semesters. At the beginning, there were three the teachers who were in charge of the club: Rhina Franco, Norma de Castro, and María Teresa de Coronado; but, because of their work, Norma and María Teresa could not continue working with it. Nowadays, only Rhina Franco is in charge of the club, in which different topics are discussed every Friday.

Unfortunately, most of the students of the B. A. in English career do not take advantage of this opportunity, since this club is mostly attended by students of the Teaching Training career. According to the surveyed students, only 6% of them said that had attended the club, while 92% said that had never attended it. From this last group, 71% of them said that they did not attend the club because they did not have time; a poor excuse since the Languages Department has not programmed any classes for Fridays since 2001, after the earthquakes. (Not having classes on Fridays at the Languages Department anymore means, for the former students who were interviewed, a decrease in the academic level that the Department offers to the students). However, the 6% who someday attended it, said that the club was a good idea and that it was interesting.

The other conversation club –“Chatting Pub” as it is called-, is promoted by Francisco Rodríguez and Alexander Landaverde. This is a new club that began working in August. It takes place on Wednesdays, and it is divided into two groups. One of the groups is in the morning and it is attended by Francisco Rodríguez; the other one is in the afternoon and it is attended by Alexander Landaverde. According to these two teachers, the objective of this club is to increase students’ speaking skill and promote the use of the language.

Similarly to the club that is promoted by Rhina Franco, few students attended this other club. According to the surveyed students, only 9% of them said that had participated in this club; they also said that it was a good idea and it was interesting. Some others, 87% said that had never attended it. From these students, 71% said that had not attended it because they did not have time, while 13% said that they have never heard anything about it.

It is evident that the students do not take advantage of any opportunity to practice the language and increase their proficiency in oral production; otherwise, these two conversation clubs would remain crowded every time they take place.

But there is another factor that, according to some teachers may cause the poor use of the English language within the Languages Department. In accordance to Fidel Navidad and Ricardo Garay, most teachers are not acquainted with the curriculum of the B. A. in English program, as well as with its objectives; therefore, most of the teachers do not know the linguistic level in the English language that an undergraduate student must have.

*“There is a curriculum, but we don’t know it, much less its objectives...”*

(Fidel Navidad, personal communication, July 16, 2004)

Even though the proficiency levels in the English language to be reached through the learning process are stated in the curriculum, it is evident that this information has not been shared with all the teachers, who are the ones that make those objectives achievable. Teachers should be required to be acquainted with the curriculum of the major once they begin to work for the Department and when it is modified.

*“The students don’t really know the level that they must have as professionals; then, that does not serve as a source of motivation for them...”*

(Ricardo Garay, personal communication, Sept. 6, 2004)

If some of the teachers of the Department do not know this information, much less the students know it. Through the syllabus of each of the English courses, the students know that at the end of each course they will have reached certain level; but do they really reach those levels? According to the syllabus of the Advanced Intensive English II course, at the end of it, the students will have reached an Advanced proficiency level; but, according to book 3 of the “New Interchange” series, which was used to teach that course a year ago, the students are taken from an Intermediate level up to a High-Intermediate level. Consequently, the students are not really aware of their proficiency level at the end of those courses, much less of the required level that they must have as professionals in teaching the English language,

as it is stated in the curriculum. This was evident when the students were asked about the proficiency level in oral production of the English language that they considered they would reach at the end of the career. Different proficiency levels were mentioned by the students: 30% of them said that it would be the Advanced Plus level; 27 % of them said that it would be the Advanced level; 17 % of them said that it would be the Superior level; another 17 % said that it would be the Intermediate-High level; 6 % said that it would be the Intermediate-Mid level; while 3 % of the students did not answer the question. This means that it is unknown for the students the proficiency level that they must have reached at the end of the major, since not even the 40 % of the students agreed in one of the proficiency levels that they mentioned.

It was thought that the students' socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department would be also affected by the ideological and political distance still existing among some students of the University of El Salvador. C. Lara (personal communication, June 24, 2004) considers that a political ideology against the United States affects some students, especially to the ones who come from the middle class. Nevertheless, this opinion was not supported by many people who consider that the political ideology against the United States has changed, because they consider that the current political ideology is not so radical or extreme as it used to be in the 80's decade.

*“During the years of the last civil war, the students who used to speak English were pointed out as “pro-Yankees” or “imperialists”; then, the fact of practicing English out of classrooms could cause someone serious troubles, even someone’s life could be in danger...”*

(René Hernández, personal communication, Sept. 3, 2004)

According to Jorge Lemus (personal communication, June 30, 2004), the political environment in the University of El Salvador has evolved, and it is not so general as it used to be before; therefore, this is not a factor that hinders the practice of the English language out of classrooms anymore. The students confirmed this situation when they were asked about the factors that discouraged them the most to practicing English out of classrooms. Only 5 % of them pointed out that they did not speak English out of classrooms because they did not want to be criticized by the students who are against the United States policies. Even though it still exists an



ideological and political distance in some students of the University of El Salvador, this is not a factor that affect the students' socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department anymore.

All these factors (cultural factors, personality factors, and the socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department) presented above, are the most important ones that the students pointed out to be affecting them in the practice of the English language out of classrooms. It is evident that certain cultural patterns have made the students be reluctant to the practice of the English language out of classrooms. Cultural patterns such as mockery, criticisms, conformity attitudes, and procrastination, have made most of the students prefer to speak Spanish for comfort and for not showing their weaknesses in the use of the target language. Likewise the students, some teachers have also adopted certain behavior which has been inherited from generation to generation (e. g. the poor use of the English language in their conversations out of classrooms). Similarly to cultural patterns, some personality factors also affect the students' learning process. A low self-esteem makes the students feel insecure about their proficiency in the use of the target language; therefore, the students avoid situations in which they have to speak English due to their fear to what the others may think about their possible mistakes. Furthermore, the Foreign Languages Department has not fostered the use of the English language out of classrooms; consequently, the students have not received any external motivation. This lack of external motivation also affects the students' socialization process at the Foreign Languages Department. The Foreign Languages Department has not created the conditions to make the students, and teachers, communicate in the target language out of classrooms. The students consider that the English language is not necessary to be used at the Languages Department because almost everything what is done out of classrooms, even by the authorities of the Department and the teachers, is done in Spanish.

If the Languages Department wants to achieve what it is stated as the Department's vision ("Be the academic unit that nationally lead in the teaching-learning field of foreign languages"); then, it has to make some changes. One of these changes is that the Languages Department, teachers, and students must be aware of the linguistic level that an undergraduate student must have achieved. Another change to be done is the establishment of institutional policies in order to

create the environment at the Languages Department, in which the students use the English language because of a necessity and not only for practicing it.

It will be a challenge for the Languages Department the creation of the linguistic environment to improve and increase students' performance in the English Language. But this is something that has to be done, especially after having found out that, according to a study carried out by the Languages Department itself, from 431 students who were surveyed, 81 % said that they would like the Department create another B. A. in English language program addressed to major the students in learning the English language for communication and discourse analysis. (Taken from the study in which the authorities of the Languages Department wanted to know the students' opinions about the possibility to change the curriculum of the current B. A. in English program, in order to make the students get the teaching credentials provided by the Ministry of Education).

It is by the creation of a proper linguistic environment at the Languages Department, or by the implementation of some evaluation system of the speaking skill at different levels of the major, after finishing the intensive English courses, that the effects of the cultural and personality factors mentioned throughout this essay may be diminished. It is necessary to make the students take an active part in their learning process, in order to achieve the objectives of the curriculum of the B. A. in English language program and make them be competitive and proficient in the use of the English language.

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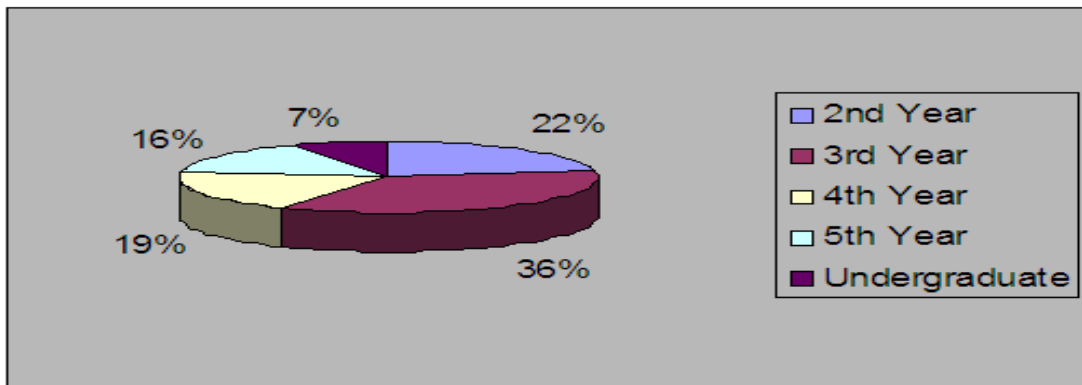
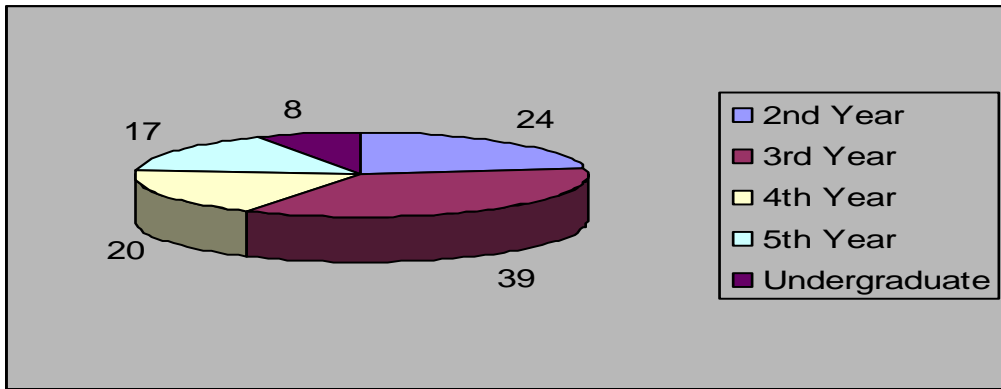
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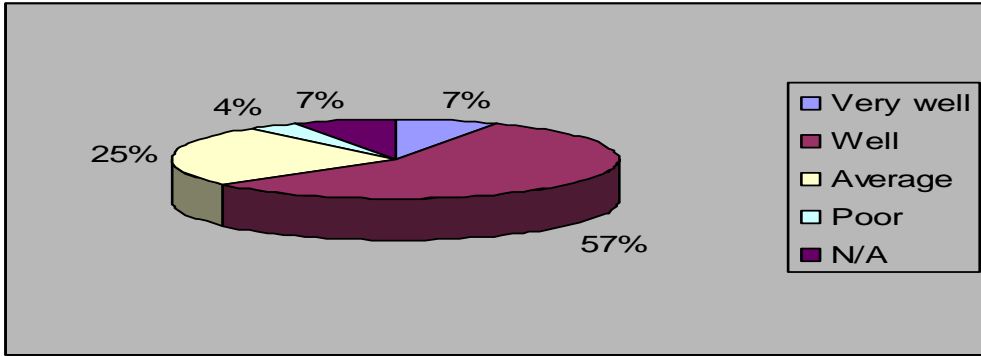
# ANNEXES

## SURVEYED STUDENTS

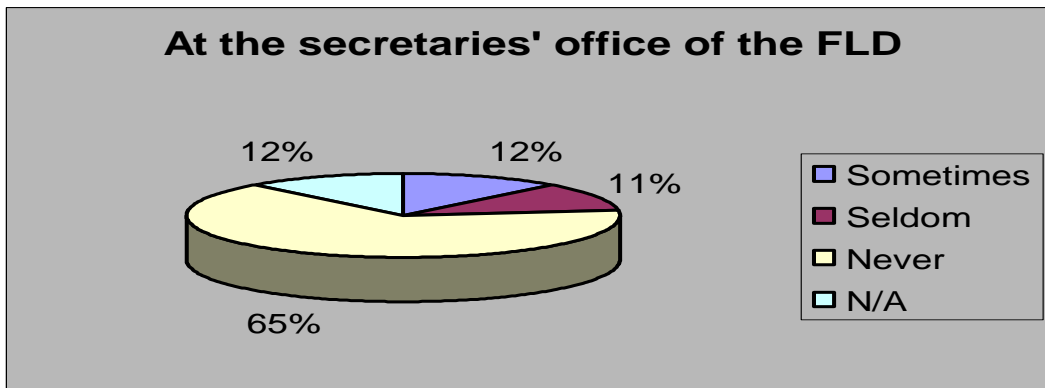
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Second year	9	15	<b>24</b>
Third year	11	28	<b>39</b>
Fourth year	7	13	<b>20</b>
Fifth year	10	7	<b>17</b>
Undergraduate	2	6	<b>8</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>108</b>



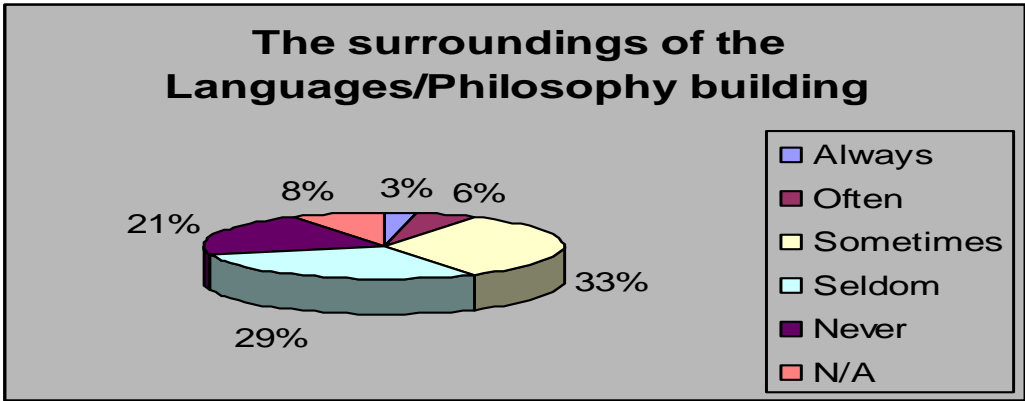
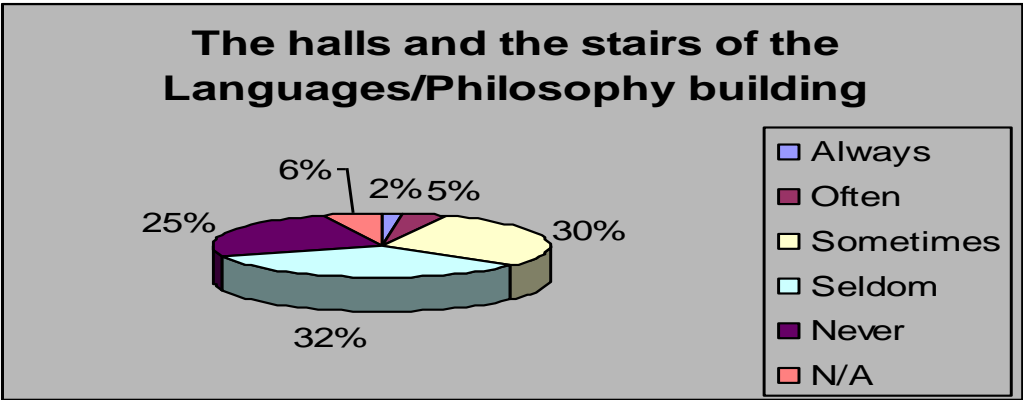
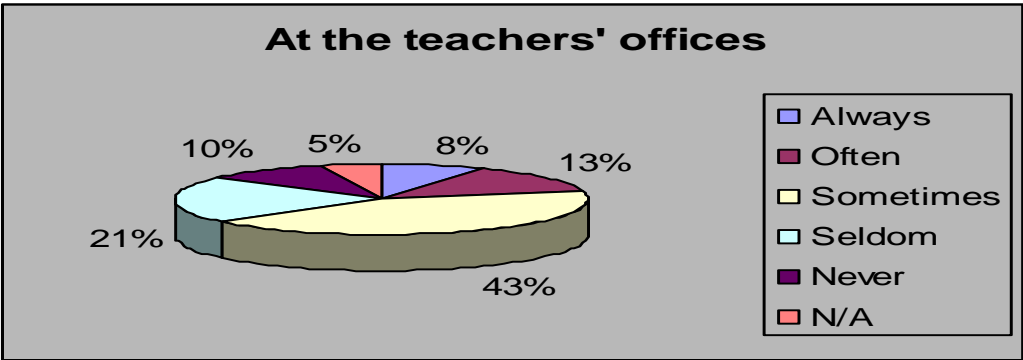
HOW WELL DO YOU CONSIDER YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?



WHERE DO YOU PRACTICE ENGLISH AND HOW OFTEN THIS HAPPENS?

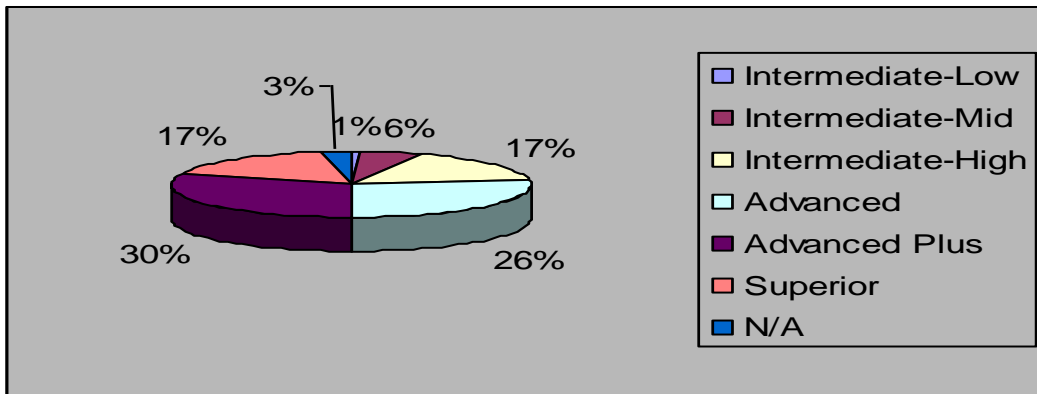


WHERE DO YOU PRACTICE ENGLISH AND HOW OFTEN THIS HAPPENS?

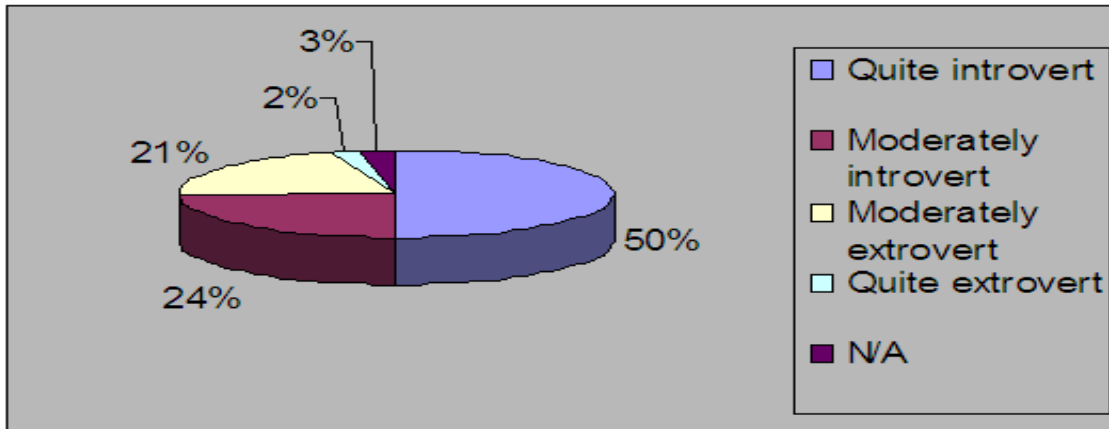


WHAT PROFICIENCY LEVEL DO YOU THINK YOU WILL HAVE REACHED AT THE END OF THE CAREER?





### EXTROVERSION/INTROVERSION TEST





10. Check what English textbook series you have used (or you are using) in your English classes.

	New Interchange	Skyline
Basic English		
Intermediate English I		
Intermediate English II		
Advanced English I		
Advanced English II		

11. What deficiencies do you consider are affecting you in English oral production?

- ǎ Poor vocabulary
- ǎ Mispronunciation of some words
- ǎ Problems in the use of some grammar structures.
- ǎ Lack of fluency
- ǎ None
- ǎ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. What proficiency level in oral production of the English language do you consider you will have reached at the end of the career?

- ǎ Novice.
- ǎ Intermediate-low.
- ǎ Intermediate-mid.
- ǎ Intermediate-high.
- ǎ Advanced.
- ǎ Advanced plus.
- ǎ Superior

13. What factors motivate you the most to continue learning English?

- ǎ Communicate with people
- ǎ Go to USA
- ǎ Learn about other cultures
- ǎ Be a good English teacher
- ǎ Understand lyrics and movies
- ǎ Understand cable TV programs
- ǎ Most jobs require the knowledge of English
- ǎ Be like the teachers of the Languages Department
- ǎ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Check the places where you speak English as a practice and how often this happens.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
At the secretaries' office of the Languages Department					
At teachers' offices					
At the cafeteria					
The halls and stairs of the Languages/philosophy building					
The surroundings of the Languages/philosophy building					
On the bus					
At home					

15. Who have you practiced the English language with?

- ǎ Classmates
- ǎ Teachers
- ǎ Relatives
- ǎ Friends
- ǎ Native speakers
- ǎ Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- ǎ I don't practice English

16. Check the factor(s) that encourage you the most to practice English out of classrooms?

- ǎ My classmates talk to me in English
- ǎ My teachers talk to me in English
- ǎ Nobody corrects my mistakes
- ǎ The existence of "Conversation Clubs"
- ǎ It is not enough the practice done in the classroom
- ǎ I want to learn more vocabulary
- ǎ I want to be fluent using the language
- ǎ The new textbook series (Skyline) increases my interest in practicing the language.
- ǎ I want to impress someone
- ǎ I want people notice that I can speak English
- ǎ Speaking English makes me feel as if I were another person
- ǎ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ǎ I don't practice English out of classrooms

17. Check the factor(s) that discourage you the most to practice English out of classrooms?

- ǎ I don't want to be criticized by some students who are against USA.
- ǎ I don't know too much vocabulary.
- ǎ I'm afraid of mispronouncing some words.
- ǎ I have problems in the use of some grammar structures.
- ǎ I don't like being corrected when I make mistakes.
- ǎ I feel nervous when I have to speak English.
- ǎ The new textbook series (Skyline) doesn't motivate me to practice the language.
- ǎ I don't want to be called "alienated".
- ǎ I don't want people think I'm boastful.
- ǎ My classmates make fun of me.
- ǎ My classmates don't speak English out of classrooms.
- ǎ The teachers don't speak English out of classrooms.
- ǎ It is not necessary the use of English within the Languages Department.
- ǎ It is enough the practice done in the classroom.

1 I can't speak English fluently.

1 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Check the frequency in which the following actions occur:

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
I speak English out of classrooms					
I speak English at the teachers' offices					
My teachers speak English at their offices					
My teachers talk to me in English out of classrooms					
I have observed teachers talking in English out of classrooms					
I have observed or read any information to teachers and students made by the Languages Department in English					

19. What do you do to improve your speaking skill in the English language?

1 Practicing English with classmates.

1 Reviewing English lessons.

1 Watching Cable TV.

1 Repeating words and expressions aloud.

1 Getting lyrics and singing English songs.

1 Practicing English with relatives and friends at home.

1 Conversing with native English speakers.

1 Going to the lab to practice English lessons (by myself).

1 Talking to teachers in English out of classrooms.

1 Listening to radio programs in English.

1 Reading books, magazines, or newspapers written in English.

1 Going to the movies without reading the translation.

1 Talking to myself in English.

1 Watching English TV courses.

1 Going to "Conversation Clubs".

1 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Check how the following factors would help you to improve your speaking skill?

	A lot	A little	Nothing
If notes and announcements to teachers and students made by the Languages Department were in English.			
If the English language were used by the teachers at their offices.			
If the English language were used by the teachers in their conversations with the students out of classrooms.			
If there were a special library for the students of the Languages Department in which the use of the English language were required.			
If the percentage of the total grade assigned to the speaking skill in the English classes were increased.			
If the students were notified about all the available materials in stock in the lab.			

21. Have you ever participated in the "Conversation Club" that is promoted by Licda. Rhina Franco?

1 Yes



How do you consider it?

1 It's a good idea.

1 I don't like it.

1 It doesn't work.

1 It's interesting.

1 It's boring.

1 I don't like the teacher in charge of it.

1 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 No



Why?

1 It is not of my interest.

1 I don't have time.

1 I don't like it.

1 I don't like anybody notice my deficiencies in the language.

1 I don't like the teacher in charge of it.

1 I don't like speaking English with others.

1 I don't know anybody there.

1 I don't like the topics that are chosen.

1 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Have you ever participated in the "Conversation Club" that is promoted by Lic. Francisco Rodriguez and Lic. Alexander Landaverde?

1 Yes



How do you consider it?

1 It's a good idea.

1 I don't like it.

1 It doesn't work.

1 It's interesting.

1 It's boring.

1 I don't like the teacher in charge of it.

1 No



Why?

1 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- ↑ It is not of my interest.
- ↑ I don't have time.
- ↑ I don't like it.
- ↑ I don't like anybody notice my deficiencies in the language.

- ↑ I don't like the teacher in charge of it.
- ↑ I don't like speaking English with others.
- ↑ I don't know anybody there.
- ↑ I don't like the topics that are chosen.
- ↑ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

23. Check how you feel identified with the following statements.

	A lot	A little	Nothing
• I enjoy doing the exercises assigned in the English class.			
• I would like to have been born in USA.			
• If I speak English very well, I will have more possibilities to find a good job.			
• I have always enjoyed English classes.			
• I can't stand Americans and I wouldn't like to be confused with one of them.			
• My interest in learning English arises when I get good grades or when the teacher congratulates me in class.			
• I've felt unmotivated after realizing how difficult is to learn English.			
• I am highly satisfied of being able to communicate in English in real life.			
• I admire the culture (literature, cinema, music) created in the English language.			
• My interest in the English language increases if I am given a reward when I get good results.			

24. Check the statements that best describe you.

- ↑ I review English lessons often.
- ↑ I try to talk like native English speakers.
- ↑ I start conversations in English.
- ↑ I read for pleasure in English.
- ↑ When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use Spanish.
- ↑ If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.
- ↑ I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
- ↑ I pay attention when someone is speaking English.
- ↑ I look for people I can talk to in English.
- ↑ I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
- ↑ I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
- ↑ I stop speaking English when the others begin to speak in Spanish.
- ↑ I feel unmotivated to speak English when I can't express an idea in that language.
- ↑ I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.
- ↑ I don't study for English oral exams.
- ↑ The new textbook series (Skyline) helped me more to learn about the English language.
- ↑ I learned more about the English language with the "New Interchange" textbook series.

25. Check one box in each item that best describe you.

A.	↑ I don't mind if people laugh at me when I speak English. ↑ I get embarrassed if people laugh at me when I speak English.
B.	↑ I like to try out new words and structures that I am not completely sure of. ↑ I like to use only language that I am certain is correct.
C.	↑ I feel confident in my ability to succeed in learning English. ↑ I feel quite uncertain about my ability to succeed in learning English.
D.	↑ I want to learn English because of what I can personally gain from it. ↑ I am learning English only because someone else is requiring it.
E.	↑ I am not overly conscious of myself when I speak English. ↑ I "monitor" myself very closely and consciously when I speak English.
F.	↑ When I make mistakes, I try to use them to learn something about the language. ↑ When I make a mistake, it annoys me because that's a symbol of how poor my performance is.
G.	↑ I find ways to continue learning the language outside of the classroom.

↑ I look to the teacher and the classroom activities for everything I need to be successful.
--

H. ↑ I really enjoy working with other people in groups.
--

↑ I would much rather work alone than with other people.
--

26. Circle either a or b, even if you have a hard time placing yourself into one or the other.

- I usually like
  - a) Mixing with people.
  - b) Working alone.
- I'm more inclined to be
  - a) Fairly reserved.
  - b) Pretty easy to approach.
- I'm happiest when I'm
  - a) Alone.
  - b) With other people.
- At a party, I
  - a) Interact with many, including strangers.
  - b) Interact with a few people I know.
- I can usually do something better by
  - a) Figuring it out on my own.
  - b) Talking with others about it.
- My usual pattern when I am with other people is
  - a) To be open and frank, and take risks.
  - b) To keep to myself and not be very open.
- When I make friends, usually
  - a) Someone else makes the first move.
  - b) I make the first move.
- I would rather
  - a) Be at home on my own.
  - b) Go to a boring party.
- In a group of people I usually
  - a) Wait to be approached.
  - b) Initiate conversation.
- When I'm alone I usually feel a sense of
  - a) Solitude and peacefulness.
  - b) Loneliness and uneasiness.
- In a classroom situation I prefer
  - a) Group work, interacting with others.
  - b) Individual work.
- When I try to put deep or complex thoughts into words, I usually
  - a) Have a quite hard time.
  - b) Do so fairly easily.

