



**UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO**

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**División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades**

**My ELT experience at a private School: A Competence perspective**

**MONOGRAFÍA**  
**en la modalidad de experiencia laboral**

**Para obtener el grado de:**

**Licenciada en Lengua Inglesa**

**Presenta**

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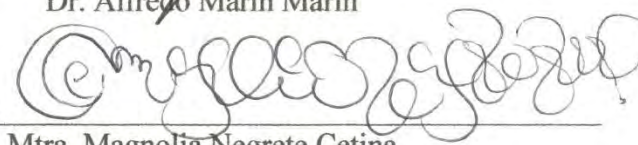
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## **1. Introduction**

I had always thought that being a teacher was an easy and common profession. Through the years I have realized that teaching a language involves more than being in front of a group of students. Being a teacher requires patience, willingness and, the most important, commitment with the students that at the end, will reflect the results of our teaching, the results of our everyday work. According to Jerald (as cited in Siew and Chee, 2018) the professional development opportunities and pedagogical support for us as teachers are crucial in our daily preparation. Therefore, all we can get for ourselves as teachers it is always in favor of our students as well.

Teaching has been part of my life for more than 13 years and every day is a learning experience, where the differences among age and social environment play an important role in the way we teach. For the last 13 years I have had the opportunity to work at “Instituto Colegio Latino”, teaching English to Jr- High school students mostly. It is amazing all the knowledge we can get from them. During all these years I have seen how generations have made a change in the way I teach and how I had to evolve in my methodologies and strategies every year. Even when the topics and the objectives are the same, there is a complete change about the way the classes are developed and the response of students to it. This has made me realize deeply how important are my students needs and their learning styles. As a teacher, I need to be aware that “styles is not matter of intelligence; it is simply a set of strengths and weaknesses that each person brings to the learning process” (Haggart, 2004, p. 43).

I remember, when I used to be a student at Jr- High school and I was learning the second language, the way I was taught was completely different from the way I, now as a teacher do. Back

then, memorization was part of the learning, through conversations, repetition and others routinely activities we used to have, basically following the traditional teaching methods, i.e. drills and repetitions (Celce-Murcia, 1999; Brown, 2006). Nowadays the learning of the target language needs to have that impact on students in which they feel comfortable with and in which they get that need to adopt the language without feeling forced to learn or make them do activities that do not cover their expectations at all. Students need activities in which they feel confident to use it in and out of the classroom. There are many important factors I consider are needed to be taken into account in order to fulfill my everyday teaching and that will make me succeed with my students (Gkonou & Miller, 2017). Some of them like motivation you can give to your students, willingness to overcome with everyday situations, empathy and so many others that are involved and required in a class (Méndez-López, 2015, p. 166). Those days where having a classroom with students of the same age and level have to be considered equal in the way they learn is practically over. Those times in which the same lessons and the same methodologies are applied for everyone are outdated. Research have proved that in a classroom the way of learning varies in every student and that the way of learning, influences how much a student can get from the lesson. As Gardner (1983, para. 11) cites in his Theory of Multiple Intelligences:

*“It has several implications for teachers in terms of classroom instruction. All seven intelligences are needed to productively function in society. Teachers, therefore, should think in all intelligences as equally important. This is in great contrast to traditional education systems which typically place a strong emphasis on the development and use of verbal and mathematical intelligences. Thus, the Theory implies that educators should recognize and teach to a broader range of talents and skills”.*

As Allen and Scheve states, “current educational reforms involve changing the classroom from a teacher- centered to student- centered environment. We are finally beginning to change the way that we teach to encompass these different learning styles” (Allen, Scheve & Nieter, 2011, p.10).

Students can be more active in language classrooms when teachers are aware of the impact of learning styles and design their lessons accordingly. Not only the teacher will improve the quality of his or her own teaching, but also help the learners to develop their less dominant preferred learning styles by implementing a range of activities involving all type of learners. According to Gardner (2009, p. 2) “educators should not follow one specific theory or educational innovation when designing instructions but instead employ customized goals and values appropriate to their teaching and student’s needs”.

Since I have taught different levels of English through my years as an EFL teacher, I have gotten a wide variety of experiences both at academic and personal levels. This has helped me realized that it is extremely important to bear in mind the different academic needs, learning skills and abilities that each of my students possesses. Such knowledge always helps me in my planning, and to create the needed environment that fosters the learning of each one of my students. Knowing the learning abilities of my students has a great influence on the different activities, dynamics, class work and assignments I implement in the classroom.

Teaching students from a private school requires more than the hundred percent that we give every day, because there are many factors that can be for and against for the acquiring of the language. Most of them are students who have the opportunity to take English as an extra activity in the afternoon. This implies that many of them have a previous knowledge and therefore are in

advantage as opposed to other students. In this way I have to find a balance and strategies with the ones who has and domain the language to the ones who have a deeper knowledge of the language in contrast with the ones who are in the process of getting it. This is how strategies and activities become into determiners in students' acquisition of English.

As a student of the English Language Major, I was taught and trained the needed techniques, strategies and methodology to teach any level of English and to make students learn the target language (English). However, we face another reality when we are in front of those students with diverse interests and different ways of thinking, the way in which we act and the way in which we want to get their attention is how students determine if they want to follow us or just being another person in the classroom. During these years I have learnt we are like role models for them.

The following descriptive work is based on the different ways I have provided instruction of the English language throughout these 11 years at the Jr. High-school level, to be more specific in the third grade. I must say that I really appreciate the fact I have been teaching this level because it has made me had a variety of activities with those students who tend to manage the language in a more structural way.

It is amazing how students can relate the target language with their mother tongue making the process less complicated for them because they have already linguistic system to rely on that allows them to compare and relate terms to identify and grasp the new ones. My students have developed activities where they have actually used and applied what they have learnt from the target language. They have been able to use it in a communicative form in real life situations like the writing of a



concerning letter to the governor about environmental situations. In there they were able to express themselves with vocabulary related to the theme and being capable to argue their opinions.

I have witnessed how they go from simple word identification, to complete and coherent sentences to phrase full and logic ideas. This is what I want to talk about in this work; about the wonderful process of seeing my students discovering and constructing their own knowledge. And how through this process not only them, but myself as well have learnt and evolve in my teaching and learning processes accordingly

### **1.1 General Objective**

The main objective in this monographic study is to describe my teaching experience. As educators we are in a constantly evolution therefore, I will mention how my classes have been developing and how I have been changing in my strategies. Additionally, I will talk about the controversial approach by competencies and the challenges this has brought in my everyday teaching. This includes the factors I have faced with my students, lesson plans, classes and everything that surrounds my professional career as a result of the approach implementation.

In this monographic study, I will present a variety of own experiences to those who are interested in EFL teaching at Jr. High school, and which practices need to be conducted in the model based on competencies. In the same line of thought, strategies and techniques will be described and analyzed through my teaching experience along the different levels I have had the opportunity of teaching. Furthermore, how those strategies have been changing along the time I have been teaching in the classroom particularly at Jr. High school level.

## 1.2 Rationale

In the following monographic study, I will describe the approach of my teaching by competencies that has been applied in basic educational levels since the implementation of the 2011 National Basic Program, to be specific at Jr. High school level. Concepts and terms about this approach will be mentioned; specifically; the one I have been familiarized with during my teaching experience and how I have evolved as a teacher. In other words, in this way of teaching, students are expected to be aware of their own knowledge and are encourage to look at a solution for every real situation they face in and out school.

The process of adaptation towards this approach by competencies has brought a lot of changes in the way the language is taught. The advantages are enormous for students to clear their minds about their goals and achievements. For instance, it is sought that students are prepared to overcome situations in real life and to be successful in any area they want, for adulthood, personal issues, or when facing personal setbacks.

I will mention important points about the approach by competencies in order to provide readers an overview of its development and application, as well as exemplify how this approach works. It will consist of:

- The main five general competences for life.
- How to link the general competences in every day classes.
- What advantages teachers can have with this innovative approach based on competences.

This monographic study will be divided into four sections:

Section one will contain the main contextual framework which will provide a detailed description of the 'Colegio Latino School', its vision and mission, goals and methodology applied throughout the years. Section two will include the theoretical framework, plus a brief description of the approach by competences applied to the basic level education in the area of English Language Teaching in Cycle 4. Section three, will include a description of my experiences as an EFL teacher and the changes I have made throughout these years with the implementation of this approach and the adaptations I still do and apply in the developing of my classes. Section four will mention my conclusions as well as my suggestions for those who are about to become immersed in the profession and its inclusions in the way of teaching based on competences.

## **2 Contextual Framework**

Having had the chance of growing up professionally in one single institution for a long time, has provided me a lot of advantages since I can be a closer participant in the development of diverse areas and educational interest. Being at different school levels within the institution, has helped me to notice that at every level I must apply a wide range of different strategies and methodologies. Therefore, as a committed teacher, I must keep updating my knowledge in the current pedagogical strategies; this means I can put all of them into practice in my daily teaching in order to overcome with the diversity of cognitive levels, skills and abilities students bring in the classroom.

### **2.1 Colegio Latino Background**

Colegio Latino is a school where, as I mentioned before, I have had the opportunity to grow professionally for the last 13 years up to now (See Figure 1). I am proud to say this school has enriched me with different experiences along the diverse levels the school offers. Kindergarden section was the first area where I started working. I have gone from one level to another enhancing my experience all the way to Jr- High school. This has given to me an ample vision of what is required for each level.



Figure 1. Colegio Latino Infrastructure (Main Entrance)

Colegio Latino is a twenty-eight years old school. It is located in the city of Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico. It was built as a project where parents could feel confident and encouraged to leave their children in there. Teacher Mercedes Perez Loeza is the owner and General Principal of the educational institution. Her vision has made this project grow up throughout all these years. It has been a challenge due to the continuous opening of similar institutions which are continuously at the forefront educational field. It has not been easy, every year is a new beginning for projects and students needs but I consider is a strong school which will continue offering educational quality all over the years.

It is an innovative educational institution recognized among the local society because of its high quality educational content it offers throughout Kindergarden, Elementary school level, Jr. High-school and High school. The different physical resources, infrastructure, human talent, pedagogical and innovative model are oriented and commitment into the real formation of competent citizens based on their knowledge, social and individual development, environmental issues and values.

The ultimate goal of Colegio Latino is to fulfill the needs and expectations of users among quality  
<sup>1</sup>(Colegio Latino. 2014, p.15).

I have experienced the slowly but precise evolution of the educational institution during these 13 years. It started with the three levels of kindergarden (called Sesame) which were the basis for the process of the introduction of the six levels of primary. After it, it was necessary the construction of the next three levels of Jr. High school and more recently the three semesters of High school. Because of Colegio Latino is a fifteen-year project, starting in Kindergarden up to High school, we prepare our students to achieve their basic level education having the competencies for life. As it can be seen in Figure 2, the Latino School community is represented in the following graphic.

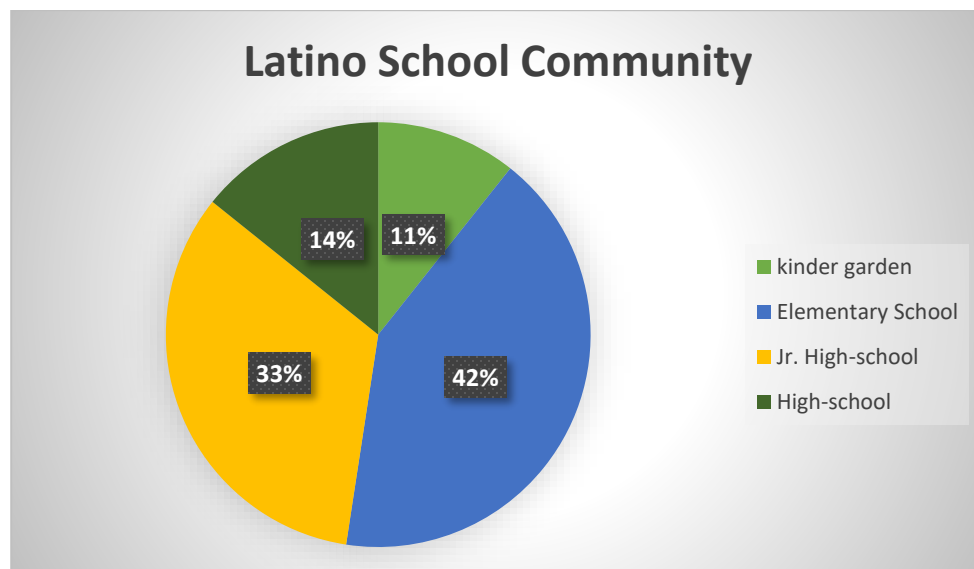


Figure 2. Distribution of the Colegio Latino Community by levels

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<sup>1</sup> My own translation

The distribution of the school community is divided into 42 kinder garden students, 164 students in the six elementary levels, 131 in Jr- High school and 56 in High school. The infrastructure of this educational institution, counts with the most suitable rooms to fulfill the student's educational needs in every area for the best development. It has one multi- use room, one counseling department, four courts, one science laboratory and one computer center room. All of these resources are designed to keep students with the most current innovative skills. It is a school with a range of activities which its objective is to lead and promote activities that reinforce the wellbeing of children and youth throughout the most comprehensible way and outstanding curriculum. Activities are always guided to achieve a closer relationship between parents, students and teachers, it seeks by all means, harmony supporting education.

Through the years its motto “**Human Scale Education**” has been a commitment an inspiration to create a foundation called Sinnik-kob which in Mayan language means “hardworking ants”. This foundation emerges 4 years ago oriented to those students who belong to Colegio Latino and from other schools based on different needs. According to the standards of the educational system Colegio Latino is at the top of an educational high levels of human values. As mentioned previously, there is a group composed by Colegio Latino's students who develops and conducts altruistic activities. This students' movement is in charge of collecting school bags and school supplies to give to those children in need in surrounding areas of Chetumal as well as the visits our students do to others schools to make students aware of health problems (See Figure 3).



Figure 3. Activity of the Foundation “Mochilas Felices”

Colegio Latino is oriented towards educational matters, however it focuses on humanistic aspects as well. As the motto says, it looks for students with a high attitude to help and serve others in different situations like economical, educational or social matters. As a result, we want students achieve and consolidate the main competencies for life to act responsibly with themselves and society.

Sinnik-kob foundation was also born because of the necessity teachers had, including myself, into everyday classes, to offer students different ways of learning. This foundation which I am part of, has helped me in the understanding of how strategies can be applied and being adapted for those students who present and requires a different speed of learning, and at the end, students will be able to get the knowledge and be a competent citizen in a constantly changing society.



As a teacher, I have always looked for opportunities to keep myself updated with the new trends and strategies to incorporate into my teaching; like taking training courses to be more prepared about humanistic and educational topics which help me in my daily pedagogical practice. The foundation goes hand to hand with the model of education through competencies because we consider they need to have the real tools to face life-long learning.

## **2.2 Mission and Vision**

Even though the institution has different levels they are under the motto of “Human Scale Education”, which its integral mission is to contribute throughout flexible, innovative and precise educational system, from the individual as well as academic development to each one of the students. This will allow them to explore all the inner potential among the basis of learning to learn, learning to create and learning how to share knowledge, so they can be able to continue with their own preparation and they can develop professionally and sociably with success in a future.

It goes along human vision based on the main principles human beings have, in which they can be able to participate actively in different situations in their lives, to create and be integrated in learning social opportunities as a matter of a change in society, unique sense of criticism to support alternatives arguments and a human vision to face nowadays challenges <sup>2</sup> (Colegio Latino, 2014).

As a result of aiming to form students who can express themselves, and can develop critical thinking, have cooperative learning and be formed as a model citizen, we foster and reinforce these attitudes and behavior with the approach by competencies. This approach was practically new when

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<sup>2</sup> My own translation

I started in 2006 my experience at Jr. High school level. At that time, I did not know much about this way of teaching and its implementation. I could notice most of my co-workers disagreed and were a little against accepting the new approach. The resilience to this approach was due the fact, teachers had to change the way they conducted their classes. We needed to take into account that Jr. High school teachers' activities were promoted in the same way for all students. The traditional and conventional teachers used to teach in an isolated way where their subject was threatened individually without integrated curriculum. As a consequence, classes turned out to be given and developed in a conventional way. This means, it did not matter what kind of students they had, the words "different learning styles and needs" were not included or applied in their teaching lesson plans. Evaluations, assignments, participations and learning activities were developed in a traditional pedagogical in which students were evaluated in the same line. In 2011 it was the year of transition in my teaching experience from Elementary level to Jr. High school, the same time in which the New Educational Reform took place. In that year I was more involved in the Jr. High school level. At the same time, it was the transition between the 2006 Educational Plan to 2011 Plan. This transition made me face important challenges in my way of teaching. First of all, those flat classes needed to be considered over. The way of teaching and its objectives needed to be performed differently. It was the year of team work, solving problems related to real situations that students need to face every day. It was the adaptation of projects which could be related to other subjects that at the end look for the same objective; called cross curricular subject. This was a new word for every teacher in the country. Also, this approach demanded the adjustment of classes for those students who had difficulty in the process of learning, new terms like "integration", "competencies", "adaptation", "projects" and many others were considered within this new approach, it was the moment of changing perspectives and also becoming more flexible teachers.

At first, I did not understand why teachers were so against those changes but as time went by I realized why. A systematic process was required in the corresponding lesson planning, which demanded collaborative work. This means the same line in objectives, even when they were different subjects. The word isolation needed to be disappeared. There were a lot of barriers for this process but with the passing of time and as a collaborative group of teachers we could develop projects in which different subjects could be included as one.

As an English teacher I had to be committed with that new approach. The purpose of the English subject is that students become actively involved in the social practices of the language. They had to be able to satisfy the basic needs of communication and interaction in the different social contexts. English belongs to communication and language in the curricular standard. This news terminologies and concepts allowed teachers to articulate the object of study with other subjects; in this case Spanish language, which also was immerse in the communicative field. This curricular standard changed in the way we teach a foreign language. The benefits of this were going to be corroborated in the way teachers integrate it in their foreign language practicum. This transition has allowed oral methods appliances to change in order to contradict the classic teaching among the practice.

### **3 Theoretical framework**

Being immersed in the educational fields requires a broad knowledge of different terms, concepts, theories, strategies. Thus this monographic study is focused in the description of the teaching of a second language. In order to do so, I consider essential to define what language is, and how both its teaching and learning are applied in this approach based on competencies. As stated in the National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English. Secretaría de Educación (2011), language is defined as:

*“a communicative, cognitive, and reflective activity through which we express, exchange, and defend our ideas; we establish and keep interpersonal relations and gain access to information; we participate in knowledge building, organize our thoughts, and reflect on our own discursive and intellectual creation. Language shows a variety of forms that depend on the communicative purposes, the interlocutors, the type of text or oral interaction, and on the medium by which the exchange is carried out”*  
(p. 111).

In other words, the teaching of a language will provide to our students the strategies to cope with the communicative aspects in which they eventually will need to interact within the different environmental and social practices on natural and spontaneous communication.

#### **3.1 Approach or methodology**

The implementation of a new type of approach based on competencies in the learning of English aims to deal with all kinds of concepts and changes. First of all, it is important to make a distinction

between the word ‘approach’ and the word ‘methodology’. Method is a teaching system with prescribed practices, and approach is a language teaching philosophy, loosely described, that can be applied in a variety of ways in the classroom (House et al., 2011).

In this section, I layout the basic concepts, terminology and theories that give support and that are needed to lead develop my discussion; and which sustain my professional practice on which I build my experience. The following terms and theories mentioned in here, are strongly recognized and applied within the National Educational System Program, which guides our institution and therefore the specific program where I take part. This program seeks to contribute in the development of Mexico through the reinforcement of the educational system in the context of an everyday changing and evolving globalized world. Following these philosophies and theories when conducting my teaching process has shaped the way I manage the new approach based on competences, as a result I have been looking for the same objectives pointed in the theories, the achievement of degree profile and learning objectives my students need to have at the end of the cycle four pointed in the National English Program. It is important to mention that this section does not aim to cover educational theories in depth; I will only focus on covering the major concepts on which my teaching practice is based.

### ***3.2 Definition of Competence***

In 2011, the transition from one educational model to another started. To be more specific; during that year, the teaching was performed through the implementation of a new approach based on competencies in the Basic levels of education, a whole new system that was set to change completely the teaching methodology and the educational scope in Mexico.

Colegio Latino had to undergo this change (as every school in Mexico) now taking as the bases of its educational system this new approach. The school goes together with the project of the new model which is to have students with a high sense of personal values, family sensitive and professional development. In this sense, to involve students in a constant and active participation in the construction of a more just and democratic society where they can be more active participants. It implies that we as teachers have to provide students with the skills to become competent. In other words, as discussed previously, today students not only gain knowledge by attending classes, but they acquire abilities in all possible aspects of life: how to manage information, how to interact within society, how to handle different situations and problems, how to manage a lifelong learning, and to coexist and aim for a wellbeing 'status-quo'.

The implementation of this model in education has caused the emergence of new concepts and terms, among which the most important is *competence*. First of all, we need to understand what a competence is. According to Perrenoud (2008) cited by Berta Stiefel (2008, p.19), a competency is the capacity to use different kinds of knowledge to deal with different real-life situations. Taking into account the concept from the *Annual Plan of Education* (2006, p. 29), it is defined as “*the ability to solve different situations and implies the ability to know what to do (abilities), what to know (knowledge) as well as the implications of those actions (values and attitudes)*”.

Various authors agree in the use of the term. I would like to make a reference to Tobón (2006, p.5) who defines competencies as “*complex processes of performance with qualifications in a determined context, with responsibility*”

It is clear that we have to prepare our students to thrive in society. Thus, our school, strictly follows the CTE (Consejo Técnico Escolar), which is a monthly meeting that teachers and principals jointly conduct in order to analyze the functional or non-functional strategies and activities applied with students. The ultimate goal of the CTE meetings, is the creation of new projects where students can apply the competencies through collaborative and challenging learning activities.

### **3.3 Competence approach: Characteristics**

As we can infer from concepts, “a competency” has to do more with real life; than we think; it has to do with how to deal with situations that are faced every day. Acquiring competences through formal education goes far beyond the simple gaining of knowledge. The Mexican National Educational Workers Union and Mexican Federal Government realized that students needed to know how to use all that knowledge and managed the whole information they acquire at school, how to make all that meaningful. This realization is what triggered a reformation in the national education system. They established commitments to conduct this reformation oriented to the development of competences and abilities (Annual Plan of Education, 2011)

As stated on the *Annual Plan of Education 2006*, students need to have the ability to solve different situations (National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English. Secretaría de Educación, p.10-11); these situations alluded here, are situations of real life. Education is then, the means to provide students with these abilities to make that gained new knowledge and information useful for real life. So now the view has completely changed: it is not

a matter of just knowing, but a matter of performing accurately in life through the application of abilities acquired in school. As Rodriguez (2014) points out, the more literate, skillful and sensitive the citizens are the better lifestyle they will have.

### **3.3.1 Five General Education Competences**

It is essential to delineate and specify the concept of competences applied to the Mexican Educational System. As they are stated in the National Educational Plan (2011), there are five general competences created to achieve a real meaning for education:

- Competences for permanent learning: for its development it requires: Reading skills, to integrate them into the culture of the writing skill, communicate in more than one language, digital knowledge and learn to learn.
- Competences for the use of information: for its development it requires: to identify what it needs to be learnt; learn how to search for; to identify, to evaluate, to select, to organize and to systematize information; to adopt the information in a critical way, to use and share information with ethical sense.
- Competences for dealing with situations. For its development it requires: to face the risks, the uncertainties, to implement and end up procedures in a reasonable way, manage the time, encourage changes and face them, to make decisions and take the consequences of them; handle failing, frustration and disillusion; to act effectively in the design and development of life projects.



- Competences for interaction: For its development it requires: being emphatic, to relate warmly with others and nature; being assertive; have a collaborative work; take agreements and negotiate with others; flourish with other members; recognize and value the social, cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Competences for life in society. For its development it requires: decide and act with critical judgment among values, social and cultural principles; to conduct in favor of democracy, freedom, peace, respect for legality and human rights; to participate taking into account social consequences in the use of technology; opposed against discrimination and racism, and consciousness of cultural, country and world belonging. (Programa de Estudio Educación Básica, 2011, pp. 38-39 ).<sup>3</sup>

These general competences make up the core of the new educational system based on competences and Colegio Latino is following their application. They are the general guidelines suitable to the elaboration of school syllabuses with a strong emphasis on the development of abilities. As a consequence, for Colegio Latino, this has meant the total reformulation of school syllabuses in all levels in basic education.

This development of abilities, meaning; competencies at school, is related to real life situations. This is quite new, innovative and challenging, because it directly links the subjects that students deal with at school and their application in real situations. That is, students contextualize what they have learned in their lives in different contexts such as familiar, cultural, environmental issues that they face every day in and out the classroom.

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<sup>3</sup> My own translation

### **3.3.2 Components**

To implement better, the five general competences in the educational system, all areas of knowledge taught at schools needed to be restructured. Thus, all subjects were grouped into four educational fields which contents were being expected to provide students meaningful outcomes in each one of the stages of the education system. That is to say, students were going to get the learning processes according to their age and level, setting them specific purposes in the expected learning outcomes in each subject through a continuous and sequenced way. The four education fields became the following in the National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English (2011):

- Language and communication
- Mathematical thinking
- Exploration and understanding of the natural and social environment.
- Personal development and coexistence (English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English, 2011, p. 95).

### **3.4 Competence Approach and Second Language learning in Junior High school**

In a globalized world the mixture of cultures and languages has become something common among nowadays societies. This is why English, as the Lingua Franca of these times, has been taken as the Second Foreign Language to be taught in Mexico. It's function is focused in the communicative challenges that this globalized world demands and in where students should be able to face situations in real life. English has been classified into the "Language and Communication" block, thus is looking for the consolidation of the communicative skill. In particular, these

standards provide a basis for exploring the role of language and other ways of communication in the cultural and social life of young people. As they progress and advance through the education system and their knowledge of the world (National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English. 2011, p 104). Such a classification is meaningful, as the purpose of learning a language at middle school is that students can obtain the necessary linguistic skills to partake in certain written and oral social practices here in Mexico, and eventually in other countries, with native speakers or speakers of English as a second language.

### **3.4.1 The competence approach and the four pillars of Education**

English Language has gained importance through time for the educational system, that is why since 2009 there was a completely restructuring of the program to include and implement the teaching of it into basic levels of education, since Kindergarden up to Jr High School. Every time there is an educational movement, student's needs must be considered, the infrastructure and the sociocultural factors. Educational matters are not only about the enrichment of knowledge but working on the real use of it in a demanding society. Therefore, it is taught based on the four pillars of education as the other subjects are taught as well. For instance, it means it has to be taught in order students can take the advantages, benefits and opportunities that education provides. It is important to mention the responsibilities that it implies for lifelong knowledge and the way it is applied in own life and society. Being under the basis of the four pillars of learning means to deal with the learning to know, the learning to do, the learning to be and learning to live together.

The four pillars of learning are fundamental principles for reshaping education. This means, nowadays it is clear that getting knowledge became not only the most important in education but also how individuals use it in a way they can move together forward to the continuous change of challenges and situations in everyday life. These pillars taken from UNESCO (2017) are as follows:

**Learning to know:** to provide the cognitive tools required to better comprehend the world and its complexities, and to provide an appropriate and adequate foundation for future learning.

**Learning to do:** to provide the skills that would enable individuals to effectively participate in the global economy and society.

**Learning to be:** to provide self-analytical and social skills to enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential psycho-socially, affectively as well as physically, for an all-round 'complete person.

**Learning to live together:** to expose individuals to the values implicit within human rights, democratic principles, intercultural understanding and respect and peace at all levels of society and human relationships to enable individuals and societies to live in peace and harmony.

It is clear that these four pillar of education have the purpose to create and develop citizens capable to succeed in their individual commitments, therefore in society where they can contribute in a social structure interaction.

### **3.4.2 Components of a curriculum design for Second Language learning in Jr High School.**

#### **3.4.2.1 Educational field. Language and communication**

The acquisition of a new educational model, as I pointed before, brings new concepts and terms. For this reason, I cannot leave behind two words that go hand to hand with education by competences, and that is curricular standard. It is defined as the descriptors of achievement, and they indicate what students are expected to know and to be able to do at the end of the school year. They synthesize the achievements which are organized in the primary and secondary programs into subject-grade-unit, and at kinder-garden level they are organized into educational field aspects (National Educational Plan, 2011, p.39).

Their design is organized by cycles and not by school grades, which guarantees continuity and articulation in the different grades and levels in Basic Education. Thus the program for Cycle one, comprises 3<sup>o</sup> grade of Kinder garden, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades of elementary school; Cycle 2 includes 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades of Elementary school; Cycle 3 includes 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades while Cycle 4 includes 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades of Jr Highschool.

#### **3.4.3. Cycle 4: Twelve educational achievements**

This further expansion in the curricula is due to the fact that Mexico is a multicultural and multilingual nation. During the last decades there has been a continuous and permanent outburst of contact with language and foreign cultures; that is why, it is essential that the educational system includes the basic and necessary knowledge to cope with the new reality in Mexican society.

At the end of Cycle 4 students must have completed specific abilities and competences which help them to overcome situations. According to the National English Program in basic Education Second language: English (2011) these are the twelve points to be considered:

- 1 To get the main idea and specific details from a variety of texts (oral and written, taking into account the previous knowledge they have about their environment).
- 2 To understand and use information from different sources.
- 3 To produce brief texts in which they apply personal, creative, social and academic skills.
- 4 To adapt the language into unexpected communicative necessities.
- 5 To recognize and respect their own culture and cultures from other parts of the world where the language is spoken.
- 6 To express their own interests.
- 7 To be able to use the proper register for specific communicative situations (for instance, formal, informal).
- 8 To identify the parts of speech in a sentence or text.
- 9 To edit their own written texts or their classmates'.
- 10 To know how to use grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately.
- 11 To take part in formal communicative situations.
- 12 To keep the conversations going, when the communication is broken, and to use strategic sources to reestablish communication (National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English, p. 103 c).

All these specific competences are key in the development of this work. They are both determined by the general competences and define the contents of the subject syllabus. We must

recall that these specific competences are the result of the completion of the programs that is why it is extremely important that the contents of the course are intimately related to the expected specific competences.

The curricular standards are based on international standards and, along with the achievements, they are a good reference for national and international evaluations. These are used to measure the progress of the students throughout the whole basic education level, assuming the complexity and gradual acquisition of what is to be learned by students.

For then, the achievements are the factors that indicate students' knowledge, expertise and know-how-to-be. What is more, they concretize the teaching process, because the teacher can be more aware of the students' achievements. The achievements also make up a set of references for planning and evaluations in the classroom. They set the level of the knowledge, abilities, attitudes and values that the students must get in order to advance to more complex levels, so they acquire and develop more competences.

It is also important to remark that these competences represent three defining components of the curricula content of the subject (English as a foreign language), whose purpose is to preserve the formal aspects and functions of the language within social life. These components can be found in the National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English. (2011, pp. 113-115), and they are classified as:

- a) "Doing" with the language. It refers to the use of language itself in specific interactive situations. This can also be depicted as actions necessary to the

accomplishment of the specific competencies. When these actions are carried out in the teaching process, the teacher plans his/her lessons to guarantee that students will learn by doing; that is, through the practicing of what is being taught: learn to listen by listening, to write by writing.

b) “Knowing” about the language. This covers linguistic aspects of the content of the curricular programs, and they all are aimed at improving students’ performance and their acquisition of the specific competencies. These linguistic aspects are the improving and learning of grammar, the expanding of the vocabulary, and the use of correct punctuation and spelling. The improving of all these linguistic aspects have a direct impact on the students’ skills for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

c) “Being” through the language. This component makes a strong emphasis on the role of intercultural education in general and to language diversity in particular. “Being through the language” means to take advantage of any opportunity at hand for the students to share what they know of and the experiences they have with the English language. These opportunities could be used to socialize.

The implementation and development of these three different components of the language whose main purpose is to preserve the formal aspects and functions of the language within social life and to be settle in a permanent way.



### **3.4.3.1 Academic Achievement**

At the end of Cycle 4 students can give prove of their acquired skills and abilities in the four skills in English as a foreign language. They can be evaluated by demonstrating use of the different levels of learning taking as a reference the higher forms of thinking in education. This can be done based on Bloom's Taxonomy which describes the six levels of the learning process, the ones that need to be followed one by one without skipping any of them as each level cannot be reach successfully without working on the previous one. This is moving forward from the simple to the complex. The learning objectives change according to the different levels. These are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Bloom's taxonomy relates the cognitive process with the affective one. Mentioning this, Bloom quoted M. Rokeach that every cognitive behavior has an affective counterpart. There is no mental process which cannot be associated with feelings or that among the articulation (verbal or artistic) does not present any feelings in others (Birkenbihl, 2008).

Based on the previous, and as English teachers, if we want to generate a meaningful learning process with positive impact for our learners and train them for real life situations, we need to make students go through a process in which not only factual knowledge is provided but a strong feeling of sense and consciousness in the use of language within the communicative scheme. Ignoring Bloom's taxonomy is like ignoring procedures of learning; since it means going from easy to complex, if we as teachers ignore that, is like if we were ignoring the learning content complexity and the chosen and developed strategies. We cannot ask our students to perform in a level they have not gone through.

According to Coll, Pozoy & Valls (1992) as teachers it is important to plan the contents in terms of knowledge or cultural shapes, which assimilation and adoption from students be considered essential for development and socialization.

#### **3.4.4 Educational Model 2016. The fourteen Pedagogical Principles.**

The school is the center of educational factors. Such ‘actors’ are different actors around that have to do with the success and development of a good society. In order to achieve the transformation, it is necessary the change of different factors such as curricular standards and how they are applied, as well as the transformation of teachers’ professional development who are the main actors. This means, the teacher training should take place since the very beginning and in consequence teachers should be deeply involved in educational matters (Modelo Educativo. Secretaría de Educación, 2016).

To have an effective learning environment is necessary the articulation of different aspects and actors such as teachers, students, parents, principals, educational supervisors, society and infrastructure. According to their closely participation is how achievements are going to be reached along the educational process. Clearly, teachers are an important key in the reinforcement of students’-learning process. Responsibility therefore, lies primarily on us as teachers since we are in front of a formative process for our students.

Based on the Modelo Educativo. Secretaría de Educación (2016) teachers should have into consideration the following pedagogical principles in order to offer a meaningful learning and cognitive process:

- 1 To focus on the learning process.
- 2 To take into account the rationale students have.
- 3 To design educational activities in favor of situated learning.
- 4 To recognize the social nature of knowledge.
- 5 To give great importance to intrinsic self-motivation.
- 6 To encourage the culture of learning.
- 7 To go hand in hand with the learning process.
- 8 To recognize the existence and value of informal learning.
- 9 To promote the interdisciplinary relationship.
- 10 To understand evaluation as a process related to planning.
- 11 To overcome discipline's vision in order to fulfill the rules.
- 12 To model the learning.
- 13 To be aware of student's interests.
- 14 To rediscover the value and redefine teachers' function.

Taking into account these fourteen pedagogical principles we, as teachers, can redefine our role in the classroom and we can provide our students better and meaningful strategies to cope with surrounded situations they face in and out the classroom.

## **4 Teaching Experience Report**

If someone had ever asked me to define the concept of “teaching” in one single word, I would choose definitely the word “opportunities”. For me this word involves a lot of things. Opportunities to work, to travel, to socialize, to learn from other cultures and much more. Those are the things that I, as a teacher, have tried to give to my students during all these 13 years. Throughout the years I have noticed and identified the diversity of factors each level requires according to students age and necessities. It is clear for me that they represent a wide range of learning and teaching experiences. What I teach and how I do it has become the pillar of my everyday career. I really believe each level has the beauty and challenges you need to overcome at the moment you step into a classroom.

### **4.1 Kindergarden level**

When I started my teaching experience, I started it with children. They were students from three to six years old. I was in charge of the three groups. Needless to say I was not able to be a static teacher as the groups were formed with an average number of fifteen to twenty-five students. Someone said it was an easy job to stand in front of children, but this is something that needs to be rethought. They are the best audience since they show their feelings to their teacher spontaneously during classes. They do not hesitate to express they feel bored or even worst that the class is not interesting for them. For this reason, the preparing of material was basically focused on images related to the lesson.

The elaborated material had to be done with basic material like paper, crayons, foamy, colors following the realia principles so students could work on a specific set of vocabulary (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Animal's farm material

Most of the time at the end of the lesson students had to do a 'hand- crafty' \_ in which they would use this type of materials to decorate the product. I provided my students with material like straws, paper, seeds, sequin and cardboard. At that time, I tried to use recycled material like boxes, plastics and covers in order to make parents spend the least possible money. The text books and printable paper were the main tools to develop the vocabulary skills. Apart from written material there were songs (CD's) which I used to use all the time. I became a professional singer since I had to create the lyrics with the target vocabulary, so students could sing and learn the proper vocabulary.

### **4.1.1 Lesson Planning**

At the time I was teaching at kinder garden, classes were not as structured as they are now. As I mentioned previously, I used to base my classes in contents from the textbook. There was no program to follow as it was not immersed in the curricula. The main objective for these classes was that students could get the main vocabulary and be able to identify the purpose of each lesson. Repetition was the basic technique at preparing a class. A monthly list of phrases and vocabulary had to be covered in classes.

Every day I had to start with a welcoming song in order to have students actively initiate and they can be able to recognize the beginning of the English class. Once I got students' attention I started showing my images for introducing or reviewing the vocabulary required from the lesson. I made them repeat the word at the same time I showed the image. After the image recognition, I jumped over guided questions to make them produce the language with a short answer or just a nod of the head. Through the use of images, I took advantage to teach students colors, sizes and numbers. Shortly after the reviewing I used to use the textbooks. The activities from the textbook required coloring, matching, tracing and circling. None of these activities were done without my instruction and guidance. Students were oriented at all times to follow and wait for instructions. At the end of the planned activities, the class had to close with a good-bye song, so students could identify the class was over.

This procedure was similar in the three levels of kinder garden considering the current lesson, group and age. I realized the first two grades were mainly recognition of the language and the third grade could start with the production of the English language.

#### 4.1.2 Problems encountered

I remember the first time I introduced myself to my students, I told them I was their teacher. I tried to make them understand the term so I said “maestra-teacher”. I used a literal translation. The result was that every time they referred to me, they did as a “maestra-teacher”. It took me a while until they could get rid of that term. I understood repetition followed by imitation in an activity was basic to accomplish the target vocabulary. This guided me to understand better what I had been thought about the Total Physical Response method (TPR) developed in the 60’s by James Asher.

Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 277) state that TPR *“is a teaching method that goes outside mainstream applied linguistic for its theoretical basis. It is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language thorough physical (motor) activity”*.

As a teacher I started having with my students the language-body conversation which made me pointed or acted what I was trying my students get from the class. From a very simple word to actions like pull a chair or ask them to go to the board, I realized I was a mirror for them and everything said or done I was going to be followed by my little students.

Those little but concise actions made me realized at that time, the importance of being an example and a model for my students, also it made me got conscious about the responsibilities I had with them at the moment I stepped in the classroom.

### **4.1.3 Teaching Techniques**

By the time I got immerse in the activities in this level, I realized that mimic became part of my everyday teaching. A simple nod of the head, repetition and recognition were my closest friends to develop a class. I learned that every time that I asked for something, first I needed to model the instruction; for example, to stand up, to sit down, to pull a chair and other instructions. I realized that I had to go step by step with them. This means when students were given a piece of paper in which they were asked to color on it, I had to first model the activity, without giving their material since those were a distractor for my students. They must be patient enough to be asked for taking one specific color and direct them coloring the aspect I required to be done in the activity. That had a huge impact on the learning outcomes as they reviewed colors and they got clear instructions from the activities they would do. I discovered that if I did not do it in that sequence, my students started taking the colors as they wanted and started coloring guideless and without any objective for the activity. Working with kids for one and a half years gave me an overview about how to increase the clarity at the moment I gave an instruction and the guidance students needed so they could learn another language.

### **4.2 Elementary School Level**

In my teaching experience I had the opportunity to be transferred to primary school among its different grades. When I was teaching the first grades of primary, I kept noticing that the activities and strategies were not so different at all. I faced similarities with the students because they were still children, so the strategies I used in kinder garden were easily applied among the new pupils at the fist levels of elementary school.



The students from the first three grades of primary ranged from six to nine years old. Each classroom used to have around twenty-two to twenty-five pupils. Classes developed in a good way due to the fact that I could give personalized attention to most of them since there were not big groups. The same happened with the other three levels of primary. The students' ages were from ten to twelve years. Classes at this level made me change the perspective of what type of teacher I wanted to become more like a facilitator in the process. In these words, I expected my students started thinking of solutions to those in and out classroom-learning situations they may encounter with.

#### **4.2.1 Lesson Planning**

There are words in the teachers' world that should be the first things to be considered before entering a classroom, these are lesson planning. Most of the time as a teacher I write down what is expected to be covered in a class. I dare to use the word expected because most of the time the planned activities are not developed as the way they were conceive for. The class progress had to do with students' needs and attitudes they had among what was prepared. Classes used to start with the reviewing of vocabulary followed with an oral or written exercise. Once the students got the vocabulary, textbooks were used to lead students to the target grammar structure. Immediately after students got the desired structure, I focused on the practice of exercises where students could apply what they had learnt. At the end of the class there was always a review from the exercise and peer-evaluation was conducted. Students identified it was the end of the class because I asked them to close their books and review what they had learnt from the lesson.

#### 4.2.2 Problems encountered

Another factor that as a teacher I have noticed in this level is the fact that English is not in the curricula. Unfortunately, there are still some parents who do not give enough importance to the learning of another language and instead of helping and supporting the teacher, they consciously or unconsciously transmit their children the influence of not being interested about the subject. This means, a constant challenge to engage students in the language learning process. Most of them like the language, certainly, there are others who are not interested at all. Unfortunately, they are completely aware that this subject does not affect their final grade. I noticed this situation in the higher grades of this level. As a result, I tried to make the class as enjoyable as possible with different activities in which the social practice of the language was the main purpose. This means to create social environment situations in the classroom where students could implement the practice of the language since it is the only place they can practice the language. For this reason, the social practice of the language is divided in familiar and community environment, literary and ludic environment, and academic and educational environment. This social practice of the language follows what the National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English (2011), *“Incorporating English as a compulsory second language into the national curriculum implies – according to one of the objectives of the Common European Framework of Reference: learning, teaching, assessment– stressing the relationship between the languages so that both can benefit from the exchange:[...] the plurilingual approach emphasizes the fact that as an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands [...] he or she does not keep these*

*languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competency to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact.”* (National English Program in Basic Education Second Language: English, 2011, p. 117)

I became aware that they are still kids and they like playing so I always took that as an advantage to encourage them to do the activities by using an educational game such as playing scrabble with their own created alphabet, hangman, elephant tail or games related to review vocabulary as well. These games were after a well-done activity or well-behavior, so my students felt motivated to follow the activities properly so they could receive the prize of playing but always conducted in educational matter.

#### **4.2.3 Teaching Techniques**

I noticed a change in my way of teaching when I was signed up with the higher levels of primary (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades). Students were more aware of grammatical aspects. For example, if I wanted to teach comparatives or superlatives, I could easily mention what an adjective was because they already had the rationale behind required to make a comparison between the two languages, that is, students had started developing their metalinguistic awareness and I could deal with more abstract grammatical concepts and categories. I could say that while working with these levels, teaching became easier for me. I managed to start the class with vocabulary, followed by a text and focused on the structure I wanted children to learn and develop upon. I always asked them to underline in the text what we were focusing on and considered to be the main topic from the lesson. I accompanied students to understand the use of each structure by giving examples and applied

them into real situations according to their age. Those examples were taken from the reading texts or listening exercises, where I took advantage from the mentioned structured while these were conducted, it was followed by writing the grammar on the board and at the end I would make my students identify the structures given. They were faster writers, so I could complement the class with an extra written exercise in the notebook to emphasize the target topic.

I understood that homework was important but at the same time I needed to be careful with the amount of it. I noticed that if I left the homework to reinforce the topic at home, the next day I had problems with the students that did not do the activity but also with the students who did it but containing a lot of mistakes on it. That started making me go backwards with my class objective. Providing feedback became quiet challenging and discouraging; the time allotted to correct each one of my students or to try to make them understand the mistake took me a lot of time in my class. For that reason, I decided to include those extra reinforcement activities during the class, so all students did the activities with my supervision and I could implement the peer-evaluation and applied the cooperative learning principles.

#### **4.3 Jr High school level**

Working with these two first basic levels gave me an overview of the differences in attitudes, likes, moods and willingness students have every day in the classroom. This guided me to start thinking about the level I have been in charged for many years and has brought me a lot of experiences and changes in my way of teaching. I am talking about Jr. High-school. I have been able to be in this level for almost 13 years and every day is a teaching learning process not only for students but for me as a professional in the field of education. Everything I was told about this level

certainly did not prepare me with regards its challenges and what is needed to succeed while trying to teach at it.

### **4.3.1 Lesson Planning**

This is the level I have been working on during the most in my teaching career. I have learnt that a lesson plan success is students learning achievements. How a lesson plan is conducted has to do with the type of teacher you are. The lesson planning at this level is requested every two months called bimesters. In each lesson plan I have to be specific in my general objectives with a well-structured beginning, development and closure. Classes are always directed to start with a catching question where students can practice the oral skill, the question is related to the topic I expect to achieve. As soon as the topic is introduced I make my students read a text from their books which contains vocabulary from the target lesson. Because students are more aware of grammatical structures, through the analysis of the text, I guide them to discover the main grammar structure. For example, after the reading I ask my students to answer specific questions about the text. While they answer I copy some of the answers on the board, trying to write down the main structure. Once my students get the grammar, activities are developed with different instructional media and materials. Nowadays technology has made easier the way I conduct my classes. I can make them more appealing and interactive by using videos related to the topic, songs containing the target grammar, documentaries or movies that can help me increase my student's self-learning-motivation. By doing all these processes the closure of the lesson is evident with a written and oral project that involves the use of what they have learnt.

### **4.3.2 Problems encountered**

First of all, I need to say that dealing with adolescents is completely different from dealing with children. You as a teacher, have to be aware of extreme emotions. One day they can be happy or sad, excited or bored, depressed or joyful, sleepy and countless other moods. The intellectual and physical changes are on top of everything. I have learnt they are undergoing a process of self-identification. They do not consider themselves kids anymore nor young adults. The making of decisions and individualism starts taking them in a stage of desperation. The phrase “be responsible” fits in their everyday vocabulary. Teachers, parents and society are in charge of reminding them that phrase every day. Thus, when I knew, I was going to work with a group of adolescents I knew I had quite a challenge ahead of me. In my first two or three years of teaching experience at this level I thought being the friendly- teacher was a good way of getting to know them as they could feel comfortable to talk to me when they had a problem in or out the school. Hence, they could feel more comfortable in the classroom and they could feel free to express or to ask about anything they could not possibly understand. Unfortunately, having this role made me realized that my students started feeling extremely relax about the responsibilities they would have at classes. They started to procrastinate because they knew I, as “the teacher”, was going to accept the activity or the homework out of time. For me of course the most important was students getting the knowledge, and that could only be attained by means of being stricter with them; I was then when I clearly understood one-word discipline.

### 4.3.3 Teaching techniques

As a teacher I realized the word discipline was not in opposition to the words responsibility and enjoyment, so I started changing my attitude, I became a teacher who sets the rules from the beginning of the course; I made them see what I expected from them but at the same time considering what they expected from me and the course. I was very clear about the things that were allowed and not allowed to do or say in the classroom, the kind of behavior or attitudes allowed, and the most important is that I gave them the criteria for the activities and evaluations about to start in the new bimester. They have to be aware of this criterion so they can be alert of what they need to achieve to pass successfully the subject. With these points sets clear, students know what to face along the classes and their responsibilities. How much effort they put on will determine their passing mark.

I realized that my role had become that of the facilitator. In classes my ultimate goal was to make my students create innovative and active projects where they could prove themselves their skills with in the language. Naturally, discipline became the most important at the moment of being in front of my students. As I stated before it does not mean I could not laugh, make jokes or make my students feel comfortable in the class. Throughout the years I have become more disciplined and professional as an educator. The phrase “If there is no discipline, there is no organization”, is always present at the moment I step in the classroom. Being this way has helped me to have a good classroom management. For me it is clear that *“the time you take teaching the rules up front reduces the amount of time you may have to spend enforcing your students later on”* (Haggart, 2004. p. 43). By this means, since the moment I start my classes, my students know what kind of classroom environment is going to be required. For example, a welcoming smile, well distributed sitting

arrangement, clean and light spaces among students is the first point I take into account. I have learnt all these aspects make and help me to develop a healthier learning environment not only from my students but for me as a teacher.

My teaching perspective is oriented to create in my classroom a well-structured and balanced environment where my students feel confident and keen to learn new things. This well-structured learning environment is only given with the guideline I provide my students with since the very beginning. I have learnt how to conduct and apply what I expect from my students. For example, if any of my students did not do the homework, they know they have another chance to hand it in, but they are aware they will not receive the same grade to the ones who handed it in on time. After the second opportunity they know they have a third one which becomes a date with the principal and parents if they do not do it. Most of them do not need the third chance because they start being conscious about the importance of a good grade or better, of their own learning. I have to say that not all students are aware of it. During all these years I had to deal with the changing of strategies and methodologies. Once the word competencies, as I mentioned before, started sounding, it had an impact in the way I teach. Educational adaptation is now a usual word in our planning. We cannot let this word apart in the activities we develop. Students with different needs and different learning conditions need to feel that inclusion within the activities. When doing my lesson plan I have to considerate those strategies for those students who require varied activities or for those who have different pace learning.



## **5. Conclusions and Suggestions**

Educational matters can be a sensitive topic since we deal with human's emotions. Everyone involved in this area should be more than committed to the educational principles. Love for this profession should be the main tool for teachers in front of a classroom. We always have to take into account that every student is different, and that every one of them requires different learning pace, needs and learning styles. If we as teachers do not want to deal with this, I would dare to say it is not the right profession for you. Being patient and managing our emotions is an art since there is a vast array of situations in and out the classroom. We become the students' role models, this means, if we do not control ourselves how can we ask them for self-control, if we do not respect them, how we can ask for respect. We transform ourselves into mirrors for them and they become our reflection. It is clear that we need to have in mind that the values that we expect our students to consolidate must be presented to them in actual vivid example. Since they are still in a formative process the way we conduct while being in front of them perhaps will be the way they will conduct to us and society. Therefore, I take the liberty to address some suggestions for the ones who are about to be immersed in the educational field.

First, we have to take into consideration the level of our students. It is important to be related to the type of teaching techniques applied and developed for each one of these levels. This means, to be updated in the strategies and educational innovations that we as teachers face with educational reforms. Secondly, we need to plan our classes taking into account the diversity of student's needs and always be prepared for flexibility and spontaneity from what it is previously written on a lesson plan. Third, we have to be aware of the classroom management since the moment we step in it. Taking this into account, we can offer a well- structured teaching and learning environment for

students. Classes will be implemented in the way students recognize and have a class sequence that involve a clear beginning, development and closure. By this, they will be able to reach the objectives of the class. The way we behave in front of our students is the way they respond to us. To feel confident and prepared should lead us to the path of success in this profession nevertheless it is not a guarantee if we are not well-committed with this.

I have retrospectively reflected on my own teaching evolution through all these years and the most rewarding aspect of it has been the contributions I have made to my students. Being skillful in the designing of lesson plans, learning activities, teaching techniques and strategies to be applied in the classroom is crucial, this will determine what type of teachers we are; being also aware of the importance of becoming into prosumers instead of consumers, by this means we have to create our own learning environment always keeping in mind the school context, approach and students' needs aiming to nurture those young minds to achieve success in life.

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