



**UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO**

**División de Estudios Internacionales y  
Humanidades**

**Motivation, Multi-aged students class,  
Curriculum, Authentic material: Some facing  
problems in Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language**

**TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO**  
Para obtener el grado de  
*Licenciada en Lengua inglesa*

**PRESENTA**

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Chetumal, Quintana Roo 2003



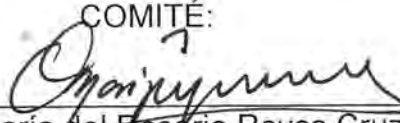
# UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

Trabajo monográfico elaborado bajo la supervisión de del comité de asesoría y aprobada como requisito parcial para obtener el grado de:

LICENCIADA EN LENGUA INGLESA

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Chetumal, Quintana Roo; 4 de Diciembre de 2003

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## Introduction

The importance to learn English in this world makes people take English courses and the proliferation of those courses make the existence of English teachers. I studied the English major first, because I like it and second, because of its importance in life. I graduated in 2000 and since that time I started working in two schools: the Irlanda Academy of English and the University of Quintana Roo. It was during my class sessions when I perceived some learning problems among students.

During the time I have been working as an English teacher I have had the opportunity to see different kinds of experiences. Some of these experiences have been grateful and they let me grow and improve my teaching. Others were problematic and difficult to overcome. I think that sharing all these experiences through this paper will be helpful for people who want to enroll in this job or just want to know the experiences that others teachers have. Those learning problems I consider essential to be discussed in this monograph were the following: the students' lack of motivation, students' age in a class, the missing of a curriculum to follow by the Irlanda School and finally the each time less use of authentic material by Irlanda's teachers.

The first part of this paper contains the students' lack of motivation topic. Since the beginning of my teaching in the University of Quintana Roo most students who have been attending English courses at the CEI (Centro de Enseñanza de Idiomas) were not strongly motivated, as few students really were because they like English. Not all students are motivated by the same reason. Most of them were encouraged to learn by an instrumental motivation. Unfortunately, this classification that some authors do of motivation is not an effective reason for students to learn English, as if they were really motivated by the pleasure to do it.

The second part that was considered in this paper was students' age in a class. This point was really a big trouble, because it made my teaching difficult.

To teach a multi-aged class was not easy even more if the students were children. Then, it emerged the necessity to study Piaget's theory of cognitive development. This theory stated that every child has a variety of methods to learn and he/she does it at different stages.

In part three the problem studied has to do with the school. The problem was the missing of a curriculum. According to what I saw when I was teaching, most teachers, included me, do not follow a curriculum because the Irlanda school did not have one. Teachers taught what they believed it was good for students.

Finally, the fourth problem revised was the each time less use of authentic material by teachers from the Irlanda Academy. I am convinced that the use of authentic material such as: songs, games, brochures, and films make students to be motivated during class.

This monograph is not intended to popularize or promote particular theories of motivation and curriculum, nor it is an attempt to present new definitions of Piaget's theory of cognitive development or to give modern uses of authentic material. It is rather designed to describe how my teaching experiences were developed, and how these teaching experiences will be analyzed according to the theories written in the literature review. This writing is an invitation to know the way how my teaching has been developed and improved through my experience.

I hope that the analysis of the experiences and the examples that will be presented in this paper will be used by English language students and why not by beginning professors as a guide to see what future problems they could have.

I do not pretend either that this paper represents a scholarly advancement of fundamental issues of motivation, curriculum, authentic material and the different ages of students in a class. If this paper serves its purpose, it should leave you with a desire to move beyond the theoretical points.

## **Chapter I**

### **Contextual Framework**

The two places where I have worked are the Centro de Enseñanza de Idiomas (CEI) and the Irlanda Academy of English. In the first place mentioned before, I am still working. I find important to mention that since the University was created the CEI was called Programa Universitario de Idiomas (PUI) but its name was changed in November 2002, so that is how I will call it from now on.

The two places, The CEI and the Irlanda Academy of English, are very different places; in size, kinds of students, in the equipment and the academic areas they have, in the teacher's academic background. Following I will describe both places in more detail.

#### **CEI (SAC)**

The Centro de Enseñanza de Idiomas (CEI) forms part of the University of Quintana Roo (thereafter UQROO). The UQRoo is located in the capital city of the State of Quintana Roo.

According to the Ley Organica of the UQRoo, The University is a public university because from an anual budget for all universities the state gives 50% percent and the other 50% percent is given by the federal government.

The UQRoo offers 9 majors: Law, Anthropology, Commercial Systems, Economics and Finances; International Affairs, Natural Resources; English Language and two Engineerings: Environmental and Energy System. It is available Post graduate studies too. There are also two technical carriers: Tourism and Computer system.

The CEI is the department in charge of giving language courses to internal and external students. Internal students are people studying a major in this Institution (UQROO). External ones are all those who are not registered as major students (the community of the state or from other places) and who want to learn one of the languages that the CEI offers.

The CEI gives the possibility to learn languages through the development of the four linguistic skills (Listening, Speaking, Writing, and Reading) and the sub skills (Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Grammar).

The CEI is managed by the academic staff that belongs and works in this specific area. It is formed by 9 full-time teachers and 15 part-time teachers.

All teachers who work at the CEI have to have at least the bachelor degree in the language they are teaching.

### **Services**

The CEI provides the following services to internal and external ones:

- Language Courses
- Self Access Center (SAC)
- Language individual tutors.

### **Languages Courses**

The Language courses are: English, Italian, French, Maya, and Spanish as a foreign language. These courses are taught at different levels from beginners to advanced levels. They are divided in eight levels: Introductory, Elemental, Basic, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate; Post –Intermediate, Advanced 1 and 2.

There are also preparation courses for taking international or institutional tests; therefore, students can have an official diploma. For English the CEI offers: K.E.T, P.E.T, F.C.E, CAE and T.O.E.F.L. courses. For French the tests taken are D.E.L.F and D.A.L.F, and for Italian La Certificazione de la Lingua Italiana per Stranieri.

### **Materials used in class**

At schools usually a book is used during classes and the UQRoo is not the exception. The introductory, elemental, basic, pre-intermediate, and intermediate levels use the series Interchange for International communication (the students' book, the workbook and cassettes.)

Post-intermediate courses use the book fourth dimension and the advanced one use the book Headway. For the British preparation courses the books according to

the level are used. KET uses the book Look Ahead 1, PET uses Focus on Pet Preliminary English Test, and FCE uses the First Certificate Avenues. TOEFL uses the book TOEFL.

These courses are available in three periods; fall, spring, and summer and they last eighty hours. There are also varieties of Schedules. There are classes from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

### **Self Access Center (SAC) and Language Individual Tutors**

The SAC is a center with many physical areas and equipped to learn a foreign language without the direct help of a teacher. In this center teachers and assessors encourage students' autonomy through independent learning. The teachers or tutors help students find out about the SAC and its services and show them how to use specific resources or equipment. Students who are not able to attend regular classes are allowed to take the courses with the help of a tutor. Students and tutors must work together. Tutors teach, advice, supervise and lead students learning process, when they go to the SAC.

The SAC provides students with guidance and advice so they can do their own individualized program of study in the language they are learning.

Students work independently according to their possibilities, schedule and rhythm but if they need help they can ask for it to the tutor or assessor in charge.

### **Sac's Equipment, resources and areas**

The SAC is equipped with cassette recorders, headphones, televisions, videos and fifteen computers with internet access.

There are also EFL/ESP dictionaries, grammar books, anthologies, vocabulary exercises, novels; of mystery, fiction and terror; and magazines in the five languages taught in the SAC.



In the SAC students also have the opportunity to practice on: University course material used in the English major such as: students' book, past test papers (KET, PET, and FCE)

The material in the SAC is varied. Teachers can suggest updated material, books, magazines, etc to be bought. Books for teachers' improvement in teaching are also available.

When students come to the SAC they find different studying areas to be used in order to learn a language. For instance; the speaking area, the listening area, the reading area; the computer area, the video area and the grammar area.

The speaking section is also called speaker's corner. In this area there is a teacher who guides students to practice their oral skills. Teachers make conversational circles where students are integrated. For this specific area there are different schedules according to the level and what students want to reinforce.

The listening section is equipped with eight tape recorders with headphones, cassettes and books in the language students are learning.

The reading section has several kinds of books, magazines, novels and comfortable sofas and armchairs to be read.

The computer area has fifteen computers, with speakers and headphones, connected to internet. There are CD-ROMs programs to practice grammar and reading.

The video area has 15 televisions, VCRs with headphones and some movies without sub-titles. There are also movies about the books given in the courses.

The grammar area is available with tables and chairs for working groups, there are also individual desks. This area is used by students to check grammar books, dictionaries, writing books, vocabulary books of the five languages being taught. All the mentioned about the CEI shows that it has all the equipment and the infrastructure necessary to satisfy students who want to attend one of the language courses taught at the CEI.

**IRLANDA ACADEMY OF ENGLISH**

The Irlanda Academy of English is an urban private school located in the capital city of the state of Quintana Roo. The Irlanda Academy of English is a school that imparts English classes for children and teenagers from the state or other towns near the capital city.

This school teaches English to children from six to 12 years old and to teenagers from thirteen to fifteen years old.

The English classes given are the following: beginners one, two and three; intermediates one, two and three and advanced one and two. The English courses provide all the skills needed to learn a language: Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading, and sub skills such as: vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

### **The Staff**

The staff is formed mostly by women teachers, a director and an academic secretary.

Regarding teachers who work in the Irlanda Academy of English, some of them have the bachelor degree in English but it is not an essential requirement to teach in this school. Some native speakers of English without a formal preparation can also teach.

### **Materials used in class**

Beginners one, two and 3 use the series Step in Stones (students' book and activity book) and the series Flash for practicing grammar. Intermediate students use the series Fountain (students' book and activity book) and the book Focus on PET and Advanced students the books First Certificate Gold course book and the First Certificate Gold exam maximiser.

This school also prepares students to sit Cambridge tests. Children are prepared to take the three Cambridge tests (Starters, Movers and Flyers) according to their levels. Teenagers are prepared to take the tests: KET, PET, and FCE.

## **Equipment and resources**

The Irlanda Academy of English is equipped with 10 cassette recorders, 10 televisions and 10 VCRs. There are some bilingual dictionaries, grammar books, novels, stories and some old films of all kinds.

The classrooms are set with boards, tables and chairs. All material needed by teachers is provided by the school (chalks markers, notebooks, assistance books, etc).

The classes are on weekdays in the afternoons from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The classes are divided as follow: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Students use the Stepping Stones (activity and students' book) and Tuesday and Thursday they use the book Flash.

## **Method**

Both places The Irlanda Academy of English and the CEI (SAC) state to use the teaching method Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT). CLT is widely accepted as being the best form of teaching that is why most English schools use it. Even when CLT is best considered as an approach rather than a method it is used by more schools. This approach focuses on students own lives and experiences. CLT encourages interaction among students and the use of the language in ways that are meaningful for them.

Both places the CEI and the Irlanda Academy of English divide their classes according to students' levels. Both places have almost the same levels such as; beginners or intro, basic, intermediates and advanced levels.

The two schools manage good equipment. Related to extra material used in classes the Irlanda Academy is poorer than the CEI. The CEI has a variety of books to be used by students to practice reading, writing pronunciation, grammar, etc. There is enough material to be used in class. Irlanda Academy, on the contrary, does not have enough; most teachers have to design/buy or create their own material.

As regard to the method used in both places emphasizes on students learning through the interaction in the target language, it does not mean that all teachers working in these places follow it.

As a conclusion I can say that both places have the same goal, teaching a foreign language such as English through the Communicative Language Teaching method. Both schools have the possibility to give students the Cambridge exams to certificate their knowledge in English. However, the CEI has better and qualified teachers who also have degrees in the language taught. The CEI is also better equipped and has more material in teaching English than the Irlanda Academy. As it has been shown with the description of both places where I worked what I intend to do is to give readers an idea about a clear background which my teaching took place.

Having concluded this part what follows now is the theoretical review in which it is included the approaches and techniques to support my comments and opinions about my teaching experience.

## Chapter II

### Literature Review

Learning a Second Language is difficult because during the process of learning students find many problems that make their learning stops. One of these problems is motivation. However, not only students find difficulties also teachers. The problems that will be presented in this paper involve students and teachers and they are: the different kinds of motivations that students have, the influence of age in children, a curriculum to be followed by schools and the use of authentic material.

The learning problems mentioned previously have been reviewed by a big number of scholars. Then, the most important concepts that support the problems will be reviewed. So the problem that goes now is motivation.

#### **Motivation**

While being at the UQROO, I have taught different levels and students. Each student has a reason to study English. Some of them come to school because their parents send them, others students come because they have a necessity to obtain their degree, others because they like English, and so on.

In the world of motivation there are general theories such as: the theory of achievement's motivation, the theory of personal value ; the theory of the attribution, the theory of social cognition, the theory of goals, the theory of association, the cognoscitive theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory and the psychoanalytic theory.

According to Dale H. Schunk (1997) motivation is all the process to provoke and maintain the behavior due to specific goals. He states that motivation is not seen directly, it is seen in the way people behave; for instance the way people talk, the tasks they choose to do, the time and the practice they take to achieve the objectives.

Schunk (1997) asserts five theories for motivation that have been explained by other people. These theories are ; a) the theory of achievement's motivation by

Murray, b)the theory of personal value by Atkinson; c)the theory of the attribution by Weiner, d)the theory of social cognition by Bandura, and e)the theory of goals by Ames, Blumenfeld, & Weiner.

Schunk stated that intrinsic motivation is the desire to do an activity because of the interest you have to do it. Schunk compares intrinsic motivation with extrinsic motivation. He assured that extrinsic motivation is the means to get specific aims.

On the other hand Klausmeir (1997) reviewed some theories of motivation; such as the theory of association, the cognoscitive theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and the psychoanalytic theory. He did not give an exact meaning for motivation as others significant researchers who talk about this theme do.

a) The theory of association.

Thorndike (1898) made his first experiments with animals (cats) and he argued that learning is done on a model "attempt and error". He explained motivation in this kind of learning through the "effect's law". For instance he assured that answers caused by encouraging situations and followed by satisfaction, become stronger than the ones that receive stimuli and they were followed by displeasure.

Hull (1943) also followed this theory (stimulus-answer) and he defined the "effect's law" in a more scientific way. He also replaced the word satisfaction by the reduction of necessity and he introduced the concept of drive. Hull affirmed there is a necessity when there is a condition (of surviving) of the person or species. And the action that belongs to the organism (person, species) is a prerequisite of the person or species surviving. A necessity always precedes an action of an organism; so it is frequently said that the action encourages or drives the associate activity.

Another researcher who gave his point of view of this theory was Skinner. He disagreed with Hull's explanation of behavior by drives, and other variables. Although he differed about these words he accepted the concept of reinforcement therefore, Skinner's main concepts are: lack and reinforcement (1968).

He described this hypothesis in the way. The organism is related to the degree of lack meanwhile the answers given to reduce the lack get stronger with reinforcement.

Consequently, Klausmeir (1997) assumed that all these theories about association states that human motivation is similar to any inferior animal.

#### b) The cognitive theory.

Herein the cognitive scholars pay more attention to the brain's central intermediaries as; goals, expectations, curiosity, intention and plans. All these central intermediaries are directed to start and direct people' activities to achieve any state people chose or want.

Klausmeier (1997) agreed with the existence of powerful and physiological needs that activate and direct people's behavior. In the cognitive theory there is a necessary point to cite; the motivation to obtain an achievement or to give more about what a student/person knows.

An achievement is defined by Atkinson (1965), as something you have learned and this tendency when it is referred to a task or an activity functions with three variables. These are: the motivation to obtain success or achievement, the probability to success, the success's incentive value.

- 1) The motivation to obtain success has a central objective avoid the failure.
- 2) The probability to success is to do a subjective examination to know if the person is good or bad in a subject.
- 3) The success's incentive value is always bigger to difficult activities than to easier ones. (Klausmeir, 1997)

#### c) Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory

In accordance with Maslow (1970) motivation is of great magnitude in the studies of personality. He also accepted that any human behavior was motivated because of the satisfaction of biological necessities.

He stated a kind of growing motivation that means necessity to make what a person really is, and other necessities. Maslow put these necessities in categories (esthetic necessities, necessities of knowledge, necessities of self stem,

necessities of love and ownership, necessities of safety and physiological necessities). It is necessary to satisfy them one by one, for example; the physiological necessities need to be satisfied before the necessities of self esteem, and these last ones before the necessities of love and ownership.

Klausmeir argued that Maslow's theory is similar to the cognitive theory. Accordingly the human explanations assure that human beings are completely different from other animals because of the rational thinking and free will.

#### d) Psychoanalytic theory

Klausmeir (1997) acknowledged that the psychoanalytic theory emphasizes in the first childhood experiences to determine the main personality during life.

This theory also points out other personalities as the development of ego, the ability of people to face real situations about life. According to Klausmeir this theory is complex to explain because it manages instincts of crazy behaviors. I agree with him about the complexity of it that's why I just mention the concept that he mentioned.

From these general theories that have been used in learning English as Second Language have arisen the classifications of the types of motivation., for example instrumental, integrative, resultative, extrinsic, etc.

Due to students have different kinds of motivation Rod Ellis (1997) stated that motivation involves the attitudes and affective states that influence the degrees of efforts that learners make to learn a second language.

He manages different kinds of motivation; a) instrumental, b) integrative, c) resultative, and d) intrinsic.

#### a) Instrumental motivation

Ellis (1997) affirmed that learners make efforts to learn a second language for many functional reasons, to pass an examination, to have a better job, or to get a place at the college. He assures that in some learning contexts this motivation seems to be the principal force determining success in second language learning. This instrumental motivation that Ellis mentioned is also defined by Schunk (1997) but with a different name. Schunk takes instrumental motivation as extrinsic motivation but the points he explained are similar to Ellis'.



#### b) Integrative motivation

Learners prefer to learn a second language because they are attracted to the people and culture of the language they want to learn or because they may be influenced by the desire to manipulate and to pass the people of the target language.

#### c) Resultative motivation

Motivation is the result of learning. Learners who have good experiences and success in learning may become more or, in some contexts, less motivated to learn.

#### d) Intrinsic motivation

Ellis also mentions intrinsic motivation that Schunk (1997) defined as the desire to do an activity. Ellis stated that intrinsic motivation involves students' curiosity and can flow as a result of learners' interests and the extent to which they feel personally involved in learning activities. Both definitions Ellis' and Schunks' are similar.

In contrast to Ellis, Lightbown & Spada (1999) stated that they do not know which is first if it is motivation that gives students successful learning or vice versa successful learning gives motivation.

They also mentioned two of the kinds of motivation that Ellis manages integrative and instrumental motivation.

They add that integrative motivation is people personal achievements and because these people want to know about the culture of the language they are learning.

They agree with Ellis and define Instrumental motivation as people immediate or practical objectives, for example to get a better job or as a requirement to get their title.

Motivation is important to students learning any language. Most students from the University of Quintana Roo have a strong reason to learn English; they study English because it is a requirement to obtain their degree. Due to this problem and from what I have seen while teaching English I agree with Ellis' definition of motivation and instrumental motivation. Ellis affirms that motivation

includes what attitudes students have and in what states students are to learn a language and he sees instrumental motivation as learners' efforts to learn a language for many reasons; to have better grades, to pass an examination, to obtain their schools' diplomas, and so on.

### **Multi-aged students class**

As I said in the introduction of this theoretical framework I had some teaching problems in the schools where I have worked, one of these problems was teaching children of different ages. The difficulty here is not the age but the difference in ages in a same class. To this specific problem I will call it multi-aged class variety. For instance I had children from 7 to 11 years old in the same class. So that is why it is important to refer to Piaget's Theory of cognitive development.

*" Piaget's general hypothesis is simply that cognitive development is a coherent process of successive qualitative changes of cognitive structures, each structure and its concomitant change derived logically and inevitably from preceding one."*(Wadsworth, 1979, 27)

Piaget's cognitive development is divided into four stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational.

The sensorimotor stage is defined by Robinson (1997) as a period which babies and young children explore their world by using their senses and their motor skills.

The preoperational stage also defined by the same author as a specific period which children understand by thinking and using symbols to represent objects mentally. This period of psychology development in children starts after the sensorimotor stage from two years to seven years. "Operation" is used in terms of understanding actions or thinking in a logical or planned way.

The concrete operational stage is defined as the intellectual development in Piaget's theory of cognitive development in people. It is also marked by the mastery of the principal of conservation.

The formal operational stage is the last stage in the intellectual development in Piaget's theory. It is the time when people reach their intellectual level as adults.

According to Piaget sensorimotor stage is between 0 to 12 years old. The characteristics of this stage are: Symbolic thought, Children can solve many physical problems, they can also communicate through the use of language, and they have the ability to represent reality (Owens, 1996).

The preoperational stage i.e. from 2 to 7 years old is to be explained. In this stage children have further development of symbolic function (language, physical problems solving, categorization). Children's thoughts are characterized by centration, irreversibility and egocentricity (Owens, 1996).

Concrete operational. This stage is comprised from 7 to 11 years old. Herein thinking is featured by conservation, decentration, and reversibility, the existence of logical thought relative to concrete or physical operations and categorization into hierarchical and seriation categories. (Owens, 1996)

Formal Operational. This stage (11 and more years) is characterized by capability of abstract thought, complex reasoning, flexibility, and mental hypothesis testing. (Owens, 1996)

Multi-aged group was another teaching problem I identified among children from 7 to 11 years in a same class. Regarding this it is essential to give details about the last two stages; concrete operational and formal operational that Piaget shows us in his theory of cognitive developmental, mentioned before.

a) Concrete Operational.

At this stage children have the capacity to engage in mental representations and they can also think in a logical way about their surroundings.

Children's thoughts become logical and trespass the limitation of the preoperational stage (Kutter, 2001). An illustration of this is the following example I had with some of my students: a seven year child takes him/her more time and different methods to understand grammatical explanations that a twelve year-old child.

b) Formal Operational.

As Owens (1996) mentioned at this stage children can think and do mental hypothesis. The same way Kutter (2001) agrees with him and she also stated that

during this stage the cognitive development obtains its peak, an example of this is; children are capable of using and manipulating their symbolic representation in an abstract thought. Children can also reason in scientific and deductive styles.

All in all, the four stages are meaningful to know how children act and behave during them. The two last stages (concrete operational and formal operational\_ include seven-year old children) that I have clarified previously are decisive to be analyzed because of my students' age. In each stage children behave in a variety of ways and they learn through different methods techniques, time and degree of difficulty because of their age.

As it has been expressed first children's age was a problem but there are other problems necessary to be literated in this job such as the use of curriculum or syllabus and authentic material.

## **Curriculum**

The existence of a curriculum is necessary and important to be followed by schools. Taking this into consideration, I found out that the Irlanda Academy of English did not manage a whole curriculum for the subjects taught and even though a curriculum for one subject. Due to this problem, curriculum's definitions and kinds of curricula will be explained and compared.

According to the "Encyclopedia of Educational Research" (1992, 1447) "Curriculum is all the set of the different courses and experiences of study that are taught in a school, college or university."

To talk about curriculum means to return to general kinds of curriculae such as the ones that Ludgren and Stenhouse approached until reaching the specific curriculum used for learning a Second Language.

According to Lundgren (1991) a curriculum is a selection of contents and objectives for the social reproduction that means a selection of what kinds of knowledge and what skills are going to be taught by education. He also claimed that it is an organization of knowledge and abilities, and an instruction of relative methods in how contents selected are going to be taught, for example; the

sequence and the control. He managed 4 different types of curriculae and he called them codes. These curriculae have been changing because of the time and the politic, economic and social problems. The first curriculum that emerged was the classical curricular code, then the realistic curricular code, after that the moral curricular code and finally the rational curricular code. These four codes have a big influence in the curriculae used nowadays in schools.

The classical curricular code offers just few disciplines (mathematics, grammar, etc.) but it has a profound understanding and an extensive knowledge of culture.

The realistic curricular code introduced the sciences and modern languages. In this curriculum the knowledge is oriented due to the disciplines.

The moral curricular code presented some mandatory laws about education; the most essential in this kind of curriculum was the nation and the religion. This curriculum also had a specific point to form citizen people who defend their state and to be responsible in duties that concern the state or the nation.

The rational curriculum code took the individual as the most important element; and knowledge is seen as a set of organized and active experiences. Lundgren also acknowledges that this rational code is built in the real knowledge people have to have for social life not over the subjects that exist in school.

The invisible curricular code shows how the curriculum in this stage is controlled by education without showing the interests that the state has over it. That's why is called invisible code. The curricular theory becomes a control object in the state's interest.

On the contrary Stenhouse (1981) stated that a curriculum is a purpose to describe the work observed in the classroom. This curriculum needs contents, methods and mainly its application in an institution of an educational system.

Stenhouse (1981, 29) assures "*Curriculum is an attempt to communicate important principles and characteristics of an educational purpose, so in a way to be open to the critics and to be done effectively in practice.*"

Having mentioned the general ideas of curriculae it is necessary to emphasize the more specific approaches for Second Language Acquisition because they are related with experiences I had.

Some concepts of curricula that belong to Second Language Acquisition are vital to be mentioned to support this job. A clear case of this is the one that Widdowson mentions.

In accordance with Widdowson (1990), curriculum is a teaching program or list of pedagogical issues applied to a specific subject and for particular learners. Thus, curriculum has both the selection and the arranging of the contents to be taught.

Widdowson managed two kinds of curricula: the notional/functional curriculum and the structural curriculum.

- a) The notional/functional curriculum found out that "the subject language" will be taught as units of "communicative performance for accumulation." (1999,131) That means that all words, concepts and actions learned in class are put in use when the language knowledge is practiced or used. The notional/functional curriculum emphasizes on the objectives or purposes and not in the procedures or process of language learning.
- b) The structural curriculum stated that the subject will be taught as units of "linguistic competence for investment." (1999,132) For instance a structural curriculum is a mean to achieve language performance through the four abilities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in a language. Then this curriculum is directed to a communicative aim and it is intended to be used.

Reading other curriculum designers I believe in the importance to present Nunan's point of view about curriculum. Nunan (1989) indicated that curriculum has many diverse meanings, and it is used in a variety of ways. For him curriculum is more used for planning, implementing, evaluating and managing an educational programme.

He adds that a curricular designer first decides on the goal and objectives of instructions. Once these have been satisfactorily done, then the curriculum content is designed, after that the learning experiences are decided and, finally the means for evaluating learner and the curriculum are established.

In summary there are many vital definitions to curriculum but the one that I agree with is the one that Nunan's states because he clarified that curriculum is for preparing, implementing, assessing and organizing an educational program, what is missing in the Irlanda Academy of English.

### **The use of authentic material**

While teaching children at the Irlanda Academy of English I remarked on the simplicity of the material we used. The school just provides teachers with textbooks that are used during the whole year of classes.

Teachers need to create, design their own material and they also have to look for their authentic material. That is why in this part I will mention the importance to use creative and innovative authentic material.

Authentic material should be used during classes because it helps students to be in contact with the language taught. Moreover, it gives benefits to students. One of these benefits is that using authentic material makes students to be encouraged with the language.

What is authentic material?

Gebhard (1996) said that authentic material includes anything that is part of communication, such as films, songs, news, photographs; magazines, pictures, cartoon, realia, etc.

He put this authentic material in a list:

- a) Authentic Listening material L; films, commercials, news, movies, radio news, etc.
- b) Authentic Visual material, photograph, paintings, sketches, drawings by children, calendar, pictures, news, popular magazines, stamps; etc.
- c) Authentic printed material, newspapers, ads, science, math and history books, etc.
- d) Realia: dolls, puppets, currency, scissors, balloons, walkie- talkies and all what teachers can take to the classroom and show them to students.

To show the importance of material Edge (1993) stated that material exists because they need to support learning and teaching, therefore they should be better designed to suit the people and the method involved.

Edge also affirmed that teachers' purpose is to teach students and to use materials in the process, not to teach materials.

He affirmed that teachers must be able to produce materials and the role of a teacher producing material "is to bridge the gap between the classroom and the world outside."(Edge, 1993, 47). For instance, when teaching how to give directions, teachers can use the book but if students need more practice the teacher can localize a map of the city or can draw a map of the city in order to make students practice the topic more.

Another point that Edge asserted is the use of authentic material. For him authentic material means examples of language that were not produced for language learning purposes, but that can be used for it. To exemplify authentic material he suggested the use of articles taken from magazines or newspapers.

Furthermore he gave two reasons why this material is important. One of these two reasons is the language. He said that authentic material "represents the actual goal of language learning, including the difficulties that learning materials avoid" (Edge, 1993, 47)

The other reason is motivation. He said that students are motivated if they work with authentic and funny material.

He advised teachers to use the framework they find about any material, game, etc., and apply it with other material and topic of their own.

In regard to authentic material Widdowson (1990) asserted that language presented to students should be simplified in some aspects. To students is better if authentic material is simplified so they have quickly and easily the acquisition of the language is being taught.

Gebhard (1996) agreed with Edge and Widdowson (1990) about the meaning of authentic material but he added some points of using authentic material.

Gebhard (1996) gave some disadvantages and advantages of using authentic material. One of these disadvantages is the difficulty to find or locate authentic



material. The second important disadvantage is how to make authentic material understandable to the students. The third disadvantage is that students could not accept authentic material as being a valuable learning source.

Although the existence of these disadvantages authentic material will be continued in use, because authentic material reinforce the direct relation students have with the language classroom and the outside world.

Gower and et al. (1995) stated that the use of authentic material is important in teaching a language; they also said that a piece of authentic material can be used at different levels. In this case teachers would fit this material in a variety of exercises. For instance, lower levels could look for words seen previously in a simple article and higher levels could practice reading comprehension.

Gower, Phillip and Walters (1995) also affirmed that students find more interesting and stimulating the use of authentic material and they also added that authentic material could help students to be independent learners.

Teachers should try to find or fit authentic material to be used in class even when it is difficult to do it because of the disadvantages that have been specified earlier.

Therefore, most scholars such as Gebhard, Edge, and Widdowson agreed in what authentic material is. Authentic material is anything that a native speaker of the language taught could hear or read. For example; theatre programs, poems, brochures, menus, and the list could continue on.

Having considered all points (motivation, multi-aged students class, curriculum and the use of authentic material) I may conclude that all of them are valuable to support this paper.

Motivation in teaching is really necessary and it has been studied by many scholars, who have given their point of view about it. Motivation has also been a cause of discussion among them. Most of these scholars agree with Ellis' definition of motivation. Ellis affirmed that motivation involves attitudes and students' states to learn a language.

Lightbown, Spada and Schunk classify motivation in different types and they call these types with diverse names. Some call them instrumental, integrative, resultative, intrinsic, and so on. Although these researchers differ with the names they give to each type of motivation and they write their own names they agree with the content in most of them.

Regards the multi-aged students class Piaget said that children cognitive development is different from child to child. He bequeathed us this theory of children cognitive development that affirms that children change their cognitive structure in a process.

Related to curriculum I searched many points that explain why a curriculum is vital in schools. Curriculum is relevant because it is used to communicate principles and characteristics of education to be criticized and to say if a subject is making improvements in students' learning. If this subject is working then it stays in the teaching program and in the school. During the history curriculum has been having changes and names such as the classical curriculum; the realistic curriculum, the moral curriculum, the rational curriculum, the notional/functional curriculum and the structural curriculum.

Finally, the use of authentic material is all what teachers can use during their teaching, examples of this are the following, songs, games, films, menus, pictures, etc. The usage of authentic material is important because we make our class more interesting and funnier to our students. Detailed examples will be presented in the following memory report.

## **Chapter III**

### **Memory report**

Considering that the main objective of this paper is to describe my teaching experience and taking into consideration the characteristics of the places where I have worked, and the literature review of the problems I faced what follows is the writing of this experience.

This memory report will cover the following points:

- a) The description of the activities done in each school
- b) The analysis of the problems found, as well as the solutions and techniques used to solve those problems
- c) The description of the achievements as professor
- d) The testing of my teaching development

#### **a) The description of the activities done in each school**

##### **CEI**

When I was working at UQRoo I was in charge of doing many activities related to teaching such as: teaching classes, tutoring, and making exams for those classes.

##### **Giving classes**

Before I started my lesson I needed to prepare for it. It took some steps to make a lesson. First, the main objective should be specified and the students' level of competence needed to be considered and according to this it was decided what kinds of exercises would be used. Second, the students' age was also considered in the preparation of the class, because it is not possible to give adults and children an exercise with the same degree of difficulty, or viceversa. Time was also

important to be taken into account because most of the lessons at the CEI were two-hour classes so I needed to divide this time in the activities done in the book and the extra activities given to students. To reinforce the topics seen in the lessons extramaterial is necessary to be looked up in books and magazines.

## **Tutoring**

Most teachers at the CEI were required to tutor students. Tutoring means to help the students individually or in groups with doubts or questions they have about any topic while they are studying. I used to have a student who came every week to ask grammatical points he did not understand by himself, for example the difference between the verb *to be* and the verb *to have* related to the age.

The CEI managed two different ways of tutoring. One is when students come and ask what they had not understood during classes. The other one is when a number of students who attended the SAC (Self Access Center) and from different levels from intro to advanced levels were assigned to a teacher (tutor). As I have said previously these people studied by themselves and came at the CEI to ask their doubts and sit exams corresponding to the course they have been studying.

Tutoring different students was not too complicated because teachers only needed to be in contact with the teacher in charge of the level and ask for the exams if he/she was not teaching that English level class. But if the teacher was giving the level so he/she was responsible of making the exams with the teacher in charge of this class level.

The first kind of tutoring was helpful for students if they took it or if they attended to this tutoring.

The second kind of tutoring I believe it did not work for teachers because in this kind of tutoring ten students were given to a tutor to help them with problems they had when they were studying by themselves. I think it did not work because sometimes, there were students that enrolled on a course to study by their own but never came during the semester or they came when the school term had almost finished. They came to ask to sit the three partial exams corresponding to

the course book they had been studying. As teachers if students came at the end of a school term to ask for the exams we cannot refuse to put them. These students who came late almost always failed the exams because they were not well prepared and because of the time that is why they probably failed the course when they took these partial exams. Most of these students probably think that by just sitting the exams they would pass.

### **Making Exams**

During the period I am talking about, teachers worked in groups to prepare the exams for each course.

The sections of an exam were divided among the number of professors teaching the level.

I liked this way of working because as a group we said our points of view to be discussed and if the idea was correct it was accepted by the whole group and if it was incorrect the result was supported with theoretical principles or facts. Also, as a group we learnt from our companions and we strengthened our weaknesses when we compared our ideas. Sometimes we passed hours discussing a point until we reached a solution. I think the greatest difficulty I had with my companions was when one the group wanted to impose his/her ideas to the group but as a group we knew how to solve this problem.

### **Irlanda Academy of English**

Here, the activity I was asked to do was teaching classes from seven to eleven-year old children. As I have previously mentioned teaching a class is not easy. It is needed to do more than just teaching. Teachers need to perform many roles such as being clowns, psychologists, singers, actors, et cetera. Why all this is necessary when teaching? It is necessary at any level and at the Irlanda was more helpful to have different roles because of students' age. For example, if I wanted to explain a topic to my students it was not enough just explaining it was essential to

sing, to act, or to take other different roles to demonstrate what I meant. Truly, in a class it is important that we, as teachers, use a variety of roles during our class to make it entertaining, funny, and interesting without losing the main goal of the class: students' learning. I think that by teaching children these kinds of personalities are more done than when the students are adults or teenagers. But it is also possible to use these personalities with those kinds of students we only need to adapt the activities and the roles done for each age.

## **b) The description and analysis of the problems and their solutions**

### **Motivation**

While teaching many problems came out, one of these problems was students' motivation at UQRoo.

Students have different goals to study English. As it has been mentioned some of them were motivated because they wanted to get their degree, others because they liked it, and others, were not motivated. They were sent to learn English by their parents because they think that learning English is a future tool for life.

According to what I have read about this topic I deduce that some of my students had those reasons to attend class. And for those reasons the kind of instrumental motivation in second language Acquisition that most of my learners had will be explained. In accordance with Ellis (1997) and Lightbown & Spada (1999) this kind of motivation that students had is focused on specific goals, for example getting a degree. This instrumental motivation was also explained by Schunk (1997) but using a different name. So, in those researchers' opinion this motivation forces students to learn, but even so it is not a strong reason to do it.

As I have noticed according to my students' attitudes, what those researchers stated happened in my group because an approximate average of 90 percent of my students had this kind of motivation and the other probably 10 percent was divided between the ones encouraged by the pleasure to learn and the ones sent by their parents.

Most of the time the ones who were motivated because they liked English were external students and they also almost always finished the course by the same reason: intrinsic motivation.

Probably 90 percent of the students were internal ones then they had to finish the course to get the degree they were supposed to finish. These students were characterized by their absence in class and by dropping out the courses.

Due to the absences they did not learn and that is why they failed the course and if they dropped out they did not succeed in passing the course, too. This information has shown me that students were not motivated. I confirmed that students were not motivated because they were forced to learn the language even when they had other priorities. I knew that because I asked them why they did not come to class and most of them answered that they had more relevant things to do for their major. Some students of this group, that by chance came to class and saw how funny, interesting, and encouraging that class was, continued attending classes.

For those problems that arose out when students had instrumental motivation I had the necessity to research and implement some activities to reduce students' absences and the dropping out from the course. Consequently, forthcoming activities were tried, because it has been observed that those types of activities could maintain students' interest in the class.

The variety of activities, tasks and material that were applied helped students to be encouraged. So when I teach I always try to vary the activities in each lesson. For example, when I was teaching "present progressive" and vocabulary of clothes, it was funny and rewarding to do a game in which this structure and vocabulary were put in practice. A clear case of this was the game "Fashion show" where the teacher chooses the most extrovert students to pass in front and model as if they were professional models; meanwhile another student is describing the clothes they are wearing.

The result of this activity was checked at the end of the class when I put them a small oral quiz about the present progressive. The majority of the students got surprised because of the quiz but finally they did well.

At the very beginning of the next lesson I did a review of that theme seen the previously day, and asked students not to check their notes, in this way I could notice who knew or did not know and who needed reinforcement or feedback about the topic.

Other point that works in my class to motivate students was the use of co-operative goals. In accordance with what I have read during my learning process I noticed that when I arranged students to work together in order to solve or complete a task most students felt more confident than when they worked individually, I think even the weakest ones felt more confident.

Clearly, all these activities used do not work with all the students, but they helped some of my students who missed classes to be encouraged and the ones who were motivated to get fun and to continue attending with the personal motivation they had.

### **Multi-aged students**

One of the problems I had at the Irlanda Academy is the variety of children's age in the same class. This was a problem because in a beginner level I had children from seven to eleven years old. This made my teaching difficult because when I was explaining a topic that was easy for the oldest ones the same topic was difficult for the youngest ones. This problem made me spent too much time when doing an activity.

That is why in this memory report Piaget's contribution is remarked because he explained that children from seven to eleven years old have logical thoughts but these thoughts are managed according to the specific age.



Seven-year old children have different ways of thinking than eleven-year old children. Their thoughts become gradually deductive and scientific. They also have complex thoughts.

What I did to make a working group was to find or fit activities where all ages were involved and could work together. For instance, if I asked them to work in groups, these groups were set half and half: If it was a group of four they worked in this way two young learners and two old learners

Another strategy I used to do with children was to ask the oldest ones that had finished their activities to help the youngest ones to finish their work, they should not tell them the answers but explain what they needed to do. This made the oldest learners feel helpful and did not get bored.

Other point that is necessary to be mentioned as a solution of this problem is to choose a leader in each group. If learners are working in groups is better to name an old student as a leader, because if the smallest ones do not know what to do, the leader can help them to understand or do any activity easily. I used this solution and it works very well.

Also when the activities or extra materials were designed I tried to find the ones that were good for my students' ages. I could not prepare, for example, an exam putting cartoon pictures because my oldest students found them silly. The best is to make an exam appropriate for both parts.

All these solutions I have mentioned previously worked with my specific group of beginners and they will probably work with groups whose students have the same age and the same problem.

## **Curriculum**

Curriculum was another problem I had while I was at the Irlanda. As it has been mentioned in the literature review there was not a whole curriculum of the subjects taught to be followed. The school did not have the whole curriculum even

though the curriculum for each subject. Thus, teachers just gave classes with the book and without preparing them.

As Nunan stated curriculum is used for planning, assessing and managing an educational programme. Not having a curriculum was difficult because teachers did not have the general goals of the whole course even the specific ones. They also did not have the contents of the course and let alone they have the way of evaluation.

Some teachers prepared a kind of big lesson instead of a curriculum to follow during the whole year but this lesson did not include the general and specific goals and the way of evaluating that according to Nunan a curriculum needs to have. For example they counted how many days they were going to give classes and divided these days in the pages of the two books they use. Other teachers just checked the book fifteen minutes before they start their classes and others worked just with the book without checking it previously and without using extramaterial.

During the two years I worked there I tried to plan a kind of curriculum for my personal usage trying to use Nunan's definition (1989). In the first days before the classes started I made a curriculum. I designed my specific objectives, I tried to describe the course, I divided the contents of the books, I also found extramaterial to reinforce the topics seen in the books and I tried to set a way to evaluate the knowledge the students get during the classes. As Nunan's indicated, a curriculum needs to have most of the points mentioned before.

Something that children liked in this curriculum is that I chose a day in each month to watch a film in the target language taught (English) and according to the film I gave them some exercises to be done in class. I did not specify the film's name when I was making the curriculum until two days before I was going to play it. An example of this kind of curriculum for the month of august is the following:

Month	August 20 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup>
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Group: beginners	
Book : Flash	
Goal: At the end of the first month students will be able to know two kinds of nouns (common and proper), plurals, pronouns, capital letters & periods, and the verb to Be according to their level.	
August 20 <sup>th</sup>	Nouns(pages 1-5)+ extramaterial
August 21 <sup>st</sup>	Common and proper nouns (pages 6- 10)
August 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Plurals (pages11- 13)
August 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Plurals (pages13-15)
August 24 <sup>th</sup>	Some irregular plurals (pages15-19)+ game "Bingo plurals"
August 25 <sup>th</sup>	Pronouns (pages20- 24) +extramaterial)
August 26 <sup>th</sup>	Capital letters & periods (pages25- 30)
August 27 <sup>th</sup>	Capital letters (pages31-34) + song+ extramaterial
August 28 <sup>th</sup>	Verb to Be (pages35- 40) +extramaterial
August 29 <sup>th</sup>	Film
August 30 <sup>th</sup>	Review
August31 <sup>st</sup>	Monthly exam

\*Note. The school decided to use the book flash twice a week but I divided the two hour class between the two books being used. I used an hour the Flash and an hour the Stepping Stones because I wanted my students used the two books the same day in order they did not lose the continuity of both books. So when they finished the grammar book (Flash) they continued with the other one, the reading book.

As I followed Nunan's curriculum the evaluation is important to check students' advances. Therefore in this specific course the evaluation is decided by the teacher. There was not a specific one followed by all teachers. So I designed my own way of evaluation. Due to the monthly report card managed skills and subskills I decided to evaluate in the same way.

For all my students either beginners or intermediates I applied the same way of evaluation: one monthly exam and some weekly quizzes. For example for the monthly exam I graded the four skills: listening, speaking, writing, reading and the subskills: grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Students may fail a month in a skill or subskill but this did not mean that they would fail the whole year because when the year is finished I added the grades they got in each month per skill or subskill and I divided them into the months the course took and I obtained a final grade. Therefore, at the end of the term the students had eight final grades. For instance a sample report card is shown in the following chart.

Skills or Subskills	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Juan	Feb	March	Apr	May	Jun
Listening	80	70									
Speaking											
Writing											
Reading											
Grammar											
Vocabulary											
Pronunciatio n											

Personally I think this curriculum was useful because I did not get lost with my teaching and when I was lost I checked it and went back to what I needed to do.

### **The use of authentic material**

The use of authentic material is essential to reinforce an English language class. Most authors agree with the use and meaning of authentic material.

According to them authentic material is anything that was designed with the purpose of being used by native speakers and that can be used to practice English as a Foreign Language. Songs, films, articles, newspapers, et cetera are examples of this authentic material.

The use of authentic material at the Irlanda Academy was poor because there was not authentic material available to be used in class. Even when most of the teachers wanted to use it, it was sometimes difficult to find or buy this authentic material.

A clear case was the songs because although the teacher could look for these songs in the internet most of times he/she did not have the tape or Cds to be listened. Personally, many times I played songs that I had at home but according to my students' age (seven to eleven) they disliked the songs.

Other times I had the necessity to buy Cds or cassettes of updating songs to motivate students and to practice the listening skill.

Regarding the films, the Irlanda had a collection of films subtitled in English. The problem in this case was not the lack of films but the old age of these films and the students' age. When I was just starting teaching at this school I remembered that once I took a "Barney film " to my students and most of them said that it was a boring film, that barney was stupid and silly.

Since this time I tried to select the films I put them. I also rented the newcomer films in DVDs because with this I had a benefit. An advantage because the Irlanda had a DVD system to reproduce the films and as this system has the option to select the language and the subtitles you want to see the film, that was excellent. Something I used to do is divide the exercises I did with the film in three parts: before, while and after watching the film.

I remembered that I brought them a film called "Flubber", with that film I prepared many activities to be done by my students. As I have said before I set three kinds of activities. Before watching the film I explained them the meaning of the word Flubber and I also brought them some plasticine (clay) to form some models that Flubber took during the film.

While watching the film I asked the students to pay attention carefully about the things that happened in the film because I gave them an exercise about the film.

Example:

1. What color is Flubber?  
a) Red            b) black            c) green
2. How many times has Flubber's inventor tried to get marry?  
a) One            2) three            c) six
3. Where does the inventor work?  
a) In a school            b) in a hospital            c) in a store

Finally after watching the film and as the students were children and liked to draw, I asked them, to draw their favorite part of the film.

Another thing I did in those times and I do now to solve the problem of authentic material is the use of photographs and pictures taken from magazines. I remembered that I asked my students to bring old magazines they had at home to be cut out in order to use them in class. I could notice that when I used pictures to describe or teach vocabulary I felt my students were encouraged to speak even the shyest ones . I think they got involved in the laugh that other students had when they were participating.

Other point to be mentioned in the use of authentic material is the use of printed cartoons, I probed that teaching children with cartoons encouraged them to know the meaning of the words and to learn the vocabulary shown in the cartoons and they were also challenged to learn English because of the desire to understand the stories in those cartoons. I kept in mind that in one of the units of the book "Stepping Stones" there was a part which had some short printed cartoons. Therefore, when we finished seeing this part I brought them some cartoons I had. The activity I did with the cartoons was; I arranged the students in groups of three or four and I gave each group a cartoon. I gave them some minutes to read it and to practice it. When they had finished practicing they

performed the cartoon to the whole class. At the end of the activity everybody was happy but students got disappointed when I told them that next class they were going to have a small exam about the cartoon's vocabulary. After taken the exam the students' results were excellent because most of them remembered the vocabulary seen in the cartoons.

Undoubtedly, students who are sufficiently challenged because of the use of authentic material are more motivated to learn.

Gebhard (1996) affirmed the existence of three disadvantages of using authentic material. The first one is the difficulty to find authentic material. I agree with him about this because even when in this part of the state we have a lot of tourism re there are not enough magazines, newspapers, films, cartoons, books etc, in English to be used. Since this material does not exist here, as a teacher I need to find or buy this material in other places.

The second disadvantage Gebhard stated is to make authentic material understandable to students. This disadvantage that Gebhard refers to was not a problem for me because I always tried to choose material according to my students' levels. For instance if they were beginners I needed to use material according to beginners.

The third disadvantage that Gebhard mentioned is that students might not accept authentic material as a valuable source of learning. This was not also a problem for me because since my students were children, they almost always accepted the authentic material I chose for them. That does not mean I imposed what I wanted to be done. I tried to use authentic material which students could learn and reinforced what they had seen previously during classes.

As has been mentioned most of the examples given in this part were absolutely workable with my specific groups at the Irlanda. Maybe the examples used could work with similar groups with the same characteristics that the groups I taught. Thus, teachers can make use of the examples shown in this paper's part.

### **c) Descriptions of my achievements as professor**

During my teaching experience in both schools I had bad and good experiences that made me a better person and I think a better teacher. During that time I had many important achievements. For instance, when I graduated and started working I considered that there were things that were difficult to me because of my inexperience in this field. One of these difficulties was the insecurity I felt in my first classes. I did not know how to start the class even when I had the lesson prepared. As time went by and I obtained some experience to control nervousness and students. I am now losing that fear. That does not mean I do not feel nervous the first day of any class, but I feel more self-confident now than three years ago.

Another thing I consider it was an achievement it is my behavior's flexibility with my students now. At the beginning of my teaching I used to be very strict with students because as I was novice in teaching I thought that to be strict made a good teacher, but finally I realized that communication and flexibility work better than strictness.

Other achievement I had and I think all professors have is the satisfaction I had to see my students learning and passing to other levels. The satisfaction to see my students learning was rewarding because with this I noticed that I gave my best in my lessons. For example when I taught I was always motivated and excited even when I had personal problems. When I entered my classes I forgot all the problems I could have and enjoyed my classes as if I were one of my students. That is why I think I encouraged my students to have the same motivation and excitement to join and work in a participating group.

Finally, a big achievement I consider is the pleasure I had to teach what I was taught. It is really highlighted because when I was teaching any topic some anecdotes or living experiences my professors told me came to my mind to exemplify the topic. I found these anecdotes and experiences helpful to my professional formation and when I told them to my students I did it with the hope they will be helpful and applicable as a tool to their life.

#### **d) The testing of my teaching development**



According to the activities I did in both places (CEI & Irlanda) I believe that my teaching development was divided in very good, good and fair. My teaching development was very good because I think that I could solve many problems I had and the solutions I gave for such problems made me notice that I applied all the knowledge I got during my learning process.

It was good because in my teaching I noticed how something I think could work with all students, sometimes may not work well, then I need to take quickly decisions and change or replace an activity or definitely stop doing it.

I think some parts of my teaching were fair because I believe I need to improve my way of teaching. Maybe I need to gain more experience in working with children or take some courses that show me how to work better with children. All these because during the time I worked with children I did my best but I do not know if it was good or bad.

To recapitulate it is essential to remark the points explained in this section. First it was described the activities done in each place and then the analysis of the problems faced such as: lack of motivation, multi-aged students, curriculum, and the use of authentic material. In the analysis of the problems examples, anecdotes and different techniques were written to make my teaching experience understandable.

Finally my achievements and testing as a professor were also described to show how good I was during the period I worked at those places. All the examples, experiences and problems mentioned gave me the opportunity to state some advice, suggestions and conclusions in the following part of this paper.

## Conclusions

In this paper I have described my experience teaching English as a Foreign Language at the CEI and the Irlanda

Based on this experience, I had analyzed four kinds of problems. Those problems were the lack of motivation, multi-aged students, the lack of a curriculum, and the use of authentic material.

Regarding the lack of motivation, it is significant to highlight the need to use a variety of material. Teachers must use communicative exercises such as; games, songs, and can also ask students to make short oral presentations about their major according to their level. After analyzing the problem it can be concluded that if students get their major involved in the tasks they were asked by their English teacher they feel comfortable and motivated to go to class and to learn the language.

In the case of a multi-aged students' class I learnt that teachers could work with different students' age, even when it is difficult because of the variety of ages, thus, if teachers find a way to get students involved and work as a group he/she can work with those kinds of group without difficulty. As a conclusion I can say that the use of co-operative activities such as: group work and pair work help all students share knowledge and feel comfortable when participating.

Regarding the use of a curriculum it can be seen that if a curriculum does not exist, it brings problems to the teacher, to the school and to the students, because if only one teacher makes a curriculum he/she does not have the general objectives that the whole group of teachers must have and follow if a curriculum exists.

If a curriculum exists teachers can save time preparing the objectives and thinking how they will evaluate because in the design of a curriculum, the evaluation, the objectives, the contents and the learning experiences are important characteristics that should be done before the classes start. So if teachers have a curriculum to

follow since the beginning of the lessons they do not need to have all the problems that a missing curriculum can bring before they plan their lesson.

Looking back to the problems I mentioned previously let me consider the following one: the use of authentic material. Having checked the advantages and disadvantages of using authentic material I think that it is essential to use it in class. Although in Chetumal it is difficult to find or to buy authentic material because there are not libraries or places that sell this material teachers sort out this problem buying their material in other places.

The use of authentic material is very connected with motivation. If teachers use a variety of materials such as: pictures, cartoons, news, songs, magazines, movies, etcetera, students get fun and feel motivated to attend a dynamic lesson.

Finally, in this paper not only problems were analyzed also a variety of familiar examples supported by data found in the literature review. All these experiences and examples were written to make readers interested in my teaching experience. Thus, to be successful in teaching a Foreign Language is not just what you were taught in classes, but also the experiences we get when we are teaching. As teachers we never stop learning, we are always updating ourselves and learning from our colleagues, from our school, from our students and from our mistakes.

## Suggestions

The suggestions come into existence from the problems I have previously mentioned and they are:

a) Teachers should try to make dynamic classes, using a variety of material without losing the main goal; students' learning.

b) Teachers should promote students' participation by making these students feel motivated to learn.

c) For multi-aged groups should be only accepted in a room twenty or twenty five children or it should be better to arrange students with the same age in a same class.

d) I also suggest to the degree of Lengua Inglesa to implement a subject about how to teach multi-aged students. In this major it is taught how to teach children in general but not to teach a multi-aged group.

e) To the Irlanda Academy of English I suggest to give its teachers training and actualization in how to elaborate and manage a curriculum.

f) I also suggest to the Irlanda's headmaster that in period before the classes start to ask teachers to make a curriculum for the course the teacher will give.

g) I advice teachers to prepare or find authentic material to be used during classes in order to make them entertaining.

h) Teachers should share the authentic material they have because it is for the same objective; teaching.

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