Effects of the implementation of a Projects Based Learning methodology including cross curricular components in Secondary Level Students

Efectos de la implementación de una Metodología de Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos incluyendo componentes de integración curricular en Estudiantes de Nivel Secundario

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Abstract

This report shows how a research process was carried out to determine the perception of students from a private school in Sincelejo – Sucre about complementing their foreign language classes through a methodology based in projects execution. The inclusion of the methodology responds to the necessity of diversifying the regular and traditional classes that, despite the fact of being well directed and showing results, needed variations to make the language teaching process more effective. It was defined a cross sectional study to perform the process, due to the characteristics of the problem and the population. A sample of 28 students out of a total of 110 belonging to 8th, 9th and 10th grades of the school

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was selected to collect the data through a survey composed by ten agreement – disagreement (Likert scale) type questions. Results showed a positive impact of the application of the methodology and strategies in the students, inviting this way the school English team to continue implementing actions and methods pointing to work through projects.

Resumen

Este reporte muestra cómo un proceso de investigación fue llevado a cabo para determinar la percepción de los estudiantes de un colegio privado en Sincelejo – Sucre acerca de complementar sus clases de idioma extranjero a través de una metodología basada en la ejecución de proyectos. La inclusión de la metodología responde a la necesidad de diversificar las clases normales y tradicionales que, a pesar de ser bien orientadas y mostrar resultados, necesitaban variaciones para hacer del proceso de enseñanza del idioma más efectivo. Se definió un estudio de corte transversal para llevar a cabo el proceso, dadas las características del problema y la población. Se seleccionó una muestra de 28 de una población total de 110 estudiantes pertenecientes a los grados 8°, 9° y 10° del colegio para recolectar los datos a través de una encuesta con preguntas tipo Acuerdo – Desacuerdo (Escala Likert). Los resultados mostraron un impacto positivo de la aplicación de la metodología y las estrategias en los estudiantes, invitando de esta manera al equipo de inglés de la institución a continuar implementando acciones y métodos enfocados al trabajo en proyectos.

Introduction

One of the most common problems that English Language teachers face is related to the lack of interest their students have towards their classes. Many students feel they will not be able to understand and learn the language due to a lot of reasons as methodology, low language level of their teachers, a small number of hours per week, unattractive materials, teachers who are out of context and require more from their students without knowing how far they can go and many other reasons or factors.

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Many authors have conducted research processes looking for answers and solutions for this kind of situations and as a result of these initiatives, different methodologies and approaches have come out to the light being the language learning through projects one of the most successful ones due to the wide number of benefits it offers to both learners and teachers.

This work aims to discover the effects of applying a methodology of teaching the language through projects with the purpose to diversify the way English lessons are taught to secondary level students pointing to get students more interested in learning the language and as a consequence of this, in the positive sense, an improvement in their usage of the language, particularly their communicative skills.

Identifying a Research problem

The author of the present proposal has worked as an English teacher at all levels from preschool to Masters level in academic environments and through the teaching experience diverse problems have been faced and found. Recently, the author started to find out about a phenomenon that called his attention and it bases on how making English classes less cyclic and routinely and at the same time providing them a communicative component which has been absent for years in Colombian schools and national English curricula. It was possible to see that so lately, regardless of guidelines stated by the Ministry of Education (2004), programs and initiatives put into practice in the recent administrations, Language classes have become a text-based situation without many opportunities of leaving it, due to the necessity of covering the whole textbooks, demanding from the teachers to be attached to them.

There is no space for some other activities or even trying different strategies for teaching because today's textbooks even bring with them the way teachers should follow the courses, suggest class planning, time distribution and order of topics and structures according to the point of view of the author of the book. Apart of this, most of current textbooks follow a thematic line that is commonly out of the context and reality students live in their day by day. Textbooks talk about topics students do not know about, are not interested in or feel out of their

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reach, causing in many cases a decrease of the motivation they have to follow lessons and work during classes. Books propose projects or tasks that are not attractive to students because of their lack of context or just because they do not fit with their interests, their age, culture or skills. Lately with the inclusion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the world of teaching, many books are accompanied by a Learning Management System or a platform to support what is on the books, but the contents on those platforms are not as attractive as students like in comparison with the software and online contents they usually consume.

Apart of this situation, many teachers get absorbed by the system of the books and enter in a situation that obligate them to follow strictly the book, leading to a kind of monotonous cycle of conversation or reading to start a unit, comprehension, vocabulary, grammar table, grammar exercises, reading, comprehension, pronunciation, reading, review, test and starting over again the next unit, which commonly has exactly the same structure. It could be possible to see there was time to diversify the topics to center language teaching and at the same time, start including some other subjects and content into the lessons and the activities to be followed in order to motivate students learning the language in different ways.

Research question

After some class and peer observation stages at the school the author works as Chief of the English Department and analyzing the context, students' learning styles and preferences through informal interviews with them, the author wondered whether it could be possible to introduce to English teaching some components of general culture, cross curricular activities and Project Based Learning activities as suggested by Bas and Beyhan (2010), who highlights that classes aided by a Project Based methodology can be substantially improved offering remarkable results in both linguistic and motivational fields. This idea leaded to the next research question:

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How can the implementation of a Projects Based Learning be included cross curricular components affect the promotion and development of communicative skills in secondary level students?

Statement of the problem

The situation initially described, allowed to consider that there was a real issue to solve in the secondary level for English Language learners consisting on the absence of diversity in terms of strategies, methodologies and activities that can help students learning and practicing the language in a different way ahead from the traditional textbook following methodology, providing the students with a wider range of possibilities for learning the language and improving communicative skills. Consequently, the problem could be stated as follows: Lack of strategies that promote and develop English language learning and improvements of the communicative skills in secondary school students.

Objectives

- To determine the impact of diversifying English Teaching to secondary school students through the inclusion of Project Based Learning and Cross Curricular strategies.

Specific Objectives

- To revise the literature about projects based learning and curricular integration to contextualize the research process.
- To analyze the methods being used to apply both projects and curricular integration in Languages Teaching.
- To design and apply a data collecting instrument to measure the level of acceptance projects methodologies have in students of Secondary Level at Bosques de León School in Sincelejo – Sucre, Colombia.
- To analyze the collected information searching to prove if including diverse strategies and methodologies can lead to an improvement of secondary students´ usage of the English Language.

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- To evaluate through the data analysis if there is a difference of student´s attitude towards English language classes when applying methodologies different from traditional methods.

- To determine how successful can result the fact of teaching through projects in terms of students' motivation to learn the language.

Justification

It is so important to start doing research around promoting diverse ways of teaching the language because studies have shown that most of English teachers are becoming similar to old styled math teachers: They teach every topic the same way they taught it years ago and they plan to teach it the same way in the future, or even they teach the same way they were taught, which might make the situation worse because new trends in teaching the language are ignored as well as approaches that have appeared recently showing good results. As it seems to be a generalized program at many Colombian schools, it is probable to think that in a close future there will be the necessity of changing the point of view of University Languages Teaching programs, schools' curricular committees, policy makers and as obvious, teachers.

Analyzing the most recent government programs as the Basic Learning Rights (BLRs) (2016) and the Curricular Guidelines (2016), it is possible to see that they are just an extension of books because once more they "suggest" how the language should be taught, but they do not take into account the way teachers ought to carry out an analysis of the class they have, the context, students' needs and learning styles, institutional curriculum and other factors in order to choose the strategies, approaches and methods that best fit the institutional reality.

Scanning some of the literature related to research processes about Projects Based Learning applied to English Language Learners, it was found that Turkish researchers in EFL (English as a foreign Language) from Selcuk University, Bas and Beyhan (2010), conducted a research to establish how students were affected by exposing them to only traditional or project based learning methods as well as how their attitude towards English lessons varied from one approach to other. The results showed that there was an important difference in the attitudinal field.

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The students that were taught only by traditional methods showed a radical reduction of their interest to learn the language, while the ones who received PBL based lessons increased their willingness, motivation and predisposition towards language lessons.

Additionally, it was also found out that PBL activities stimulated students' multiple intelligences more effectively leading those subjects to be more successful in their language learning processes, which also affected their self-esteem in a positive way. Psaltou-Joycey (2014) also remarks that accompanying projects with a curricular integration approach helps to diversify, strengthen and make more meaningful the activity of languages learning. Furthermore, the European Union Report on the implementation of Learning through content approaches (2001), emphasizes that the effectiveness of using projects and contents techniques in terms of performance of students' usage of the language is very high.

This last offers the possibility of thinking that implementing language programs based on this approach can affect positively the learning processes of the students. This is a good reason to start researching about the way of implementing strategies including this approach to evaluate the outcomes and results with the purpose of helping the decision making process at the time of institutionalizing methodologies that can produce meaningful learning processes.

Theoretical Framework

Project-based learning (PBL) is a methodology that promotes learning through projects. Projects give students the opportunity to work in tasks over certain periods of time and finish them by means of a presentation of a final product.

Thomas (2000) indicates that some features found about PBL include "... authentic content, authentic assessment, teacher facilitation but not direction, explicit educational goals, cooperative learning, reflection, and incorporation of adult skills". (p. 1)

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To understand a little bit how this method works it is important to think about the criteria a project should fit to be considered as a **PBL** activity:

- Centrality. Projects that really teach and become meaningful to students are commonly worked out of the curriculum.

- Driving question. Projects start from an inquiry, a doubt an unanswered question.

- Constructive investigations. Processes are built from scratch and keep building concepts and producing knowledge.

- Autonomy. Students have a feeling of freedom and work in a more relaxed way. They decide whether to walk, run or jog.

- Realism. Projects involve students in their day by day life and allow them living situations that are not possible to experiment in other methodologies. To complement this concept, it is necessary remember Gordon (as quoted in Thomas, 2000) when he speaks about the "... distinctions between academic challenges, scenario challenges, and real-life challenges" (p. 4); besides PBL considers the real-life situations, for example when it is focused on authentic problems, questions, and solutions could be implemented.

Lipova (2008) in her thesis work, reminded the teaching community that there are various definitions of project work, starting with the one expressed by Legutke and Thomas (1993), cited by Lipova (2008) that defined working by projects as:

"A theme and task-centered mode allows for a wide scope of self-determined action for both the individual and the small group of learners within a general framework of a plan which defines goals and procedures. Project learning realizes a dynamic balance between a process and a product orientation. It is experiential and holistic because it bridges dualism between body and mind, theory and practice." (p. 14)

Being direct, and going straight to a punctual definition, one of the first academic and theoretician of the PBL methodology who worked and developed

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his concept during the first half of the 20th century, W. H. Kilpatrick (2005), cited by Lipova (2008) defines project work as "hearty purposeful act".

Lipova (2008) in her work also mentions the theory exposed by researcher Michael Knoll from University of Bayeruth in 2005, who was working in this project in the European continent. From Knoll's findings, the project working methods and approaches history is divided into five stages:

- 1590-1765: The beginnings of project work at architectural schools in Europe.

- 1765-1880: The project as a regular teaching method and its transplantation to America.

- 1880-1915: Work on projects in manual training and in general public schools.

- 1915-1965: Redefinition of the project method and its transplantation back to Europe.

- 1965-today: Rediscovery of the project idea and the third wave of its international dissemination.

According to Larmer, Mergendoller and Boss (2015), the first of these stages started around 1577 in an architectural academy in Rome that was started by the time of Pope Gregory XIII. The teaching focus was mainly based on the fact that teachers gave their particular assignments to be fulfilled in predefined stages and to be delivered in established deadlines. They also had a jury to follow and grade the projects. These actions were an imitation of those architectural competitions carried out that time, which were called "progetti". They gave students the opportunity of applying theoretical knowledge in the practical world.

The following stage appears at the end of the 18th century, where. Projects started being an important part of the engineering education. By this moment, projects methods moved from Europe to America, specifically, the United States.

Students were asked to design their own inventions and machines and build them according to their own design. During the second half of the 19th century

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there was a group of theoreticians who dedicated their time to establish connections between projects methodology and human behavior and values nurturing. This way, after promoting the strategy at diverse educational contexts, Prof. Robinson of Mechanical Engineering at the Illinois Industrial University at Urbana, was one of the first who said emphatically and stated that using project methods allowed developing practical and professional skills as well as improving citizenship values because they were able to know-how to recognize men's equality and dignity in their work.

In 1910 Rufus W. Stimson put into practice a method that became so popular in the United States called "home project plan". In this plan, students at school received all the theoretical knowledge about a specific topic as making a wood box for toys storage or a wheeled trailer to transport toys and their projects were to build them at home. The methodology became very popular across America giving Stimson´s ideas a very important place in the spreading of project work, which by that time was meant as a means of progressive education.

The top of the cake for this approach came in the early 20th century, when American philosophers in education as John Dewey compiled their philosophy in a document called "Democracy and Education", In this document it was possible to find Dewey's point of view in his document *My pedagogical creed*. Dewey (1897) made a special emphasis on the role of experience and problem solving, by expressing that "the school must represent present life – life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in his home, in the neighborhood or on the playground" (p. 3).

Besides, William Heard Kilpatrick developed Dewey´s ideas in his essay "The Project Method" in 1918. The contribution of this pair of academics is seen as the milestone of what we know now as Project Based Learning.

Literature Revision

Between the years 2009 and 2010, a couple of Turkish researchers in EFL from Selcuk University, Gökhan Baş and Ömer Beyhan (2010), conducted a research called *Effects of multiple intelligences supported project-based learning*

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on students' achievement levels and attitudes towards English lesson to establish how students were affected by exposing them to only traditional or project based learning methods as well as how their attitude towards English lessons varied from one method to the other. The results showed that there was a substantial difference in the attitudinal field. The students that were taught only by traditional methods showed a radical reduction of their interest to learn the language, while the ones who received PBL based lessons increased their willingness, motivation and predisposition towards language lessons.

As an additional and valuable information that this research process conducted by this pair of academics, it was also found out that PBL activities stimulated students' multiple intelligences more effectively leading those subjects to be more successful in their language learning processes, which also affected their self-esteem in a positive way. At the end, the Baş and Beyhan (2010) research presents 3 key aspects that provide an excellent background at the time of deciding whether it could be a good decision to use this methodology to teach the language.

Baş and Beyhan (2010) based all their theoretical approach in the concepts of PBL taken from times of Dewey and William Heard Kilpatrick in the early 20th Century and later perfected and developed by Blumenfeld, Erdem, Demirhan, Ozdemir and Meyer. Most of these modern researchers say that despite the fact that more than 100 years passed after the original concept, PBL is still in developmental stage. However, the results of using this approach are undeniably positive. The main aims of this Baş and Beyhan (2010) project were:

- Showing the difference of student´s attitude towards language classes between traditional and PBL methods.

- Demonstrating the possibility of stimulating multiple intelligences while working through PBL methods.

- Show how successful can PBL approach be in terms of students' motivation to learn the language.

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To relate **PBL** with some other approaches that complement its application, it could be important to cite the *European Union Report on the implementation of CLIL in the Union to improve languages learning* which is a document compiled and authored by **David Marsh** in 2002, after completing around 10 years of experimentation with **CLIL** techniques and methods in pre-primary, primary, general secondary, secondary vocational and further education.

The document reports how relevant is the implementation of **CLIL** for the fulfillment of real advances and results in foreign language learning processes. Furthermore, it analyzes how quality of foreign language teaching can be improved through **CLIL**. The document also highlights how **CLIL** allowed an increase of the number of successful foreign language learners. Finally, the document provides examples of innovation and good practices by using **CLIL**, proposes alternatives for its extensive implementation and further development with the goal of empowering Foreign Languages teaching at the European Union, fact that in our days can be considered as done.

The main aims this work offers are:

- Showing the importance of applying **CLIL** methods in early educational stages to obtain remarkable results in the teaching - learning processes.

- Highlight the effectiveness of using **CLIL** techniques in terms of performance of students' usage of the language.

- Demonstrate that the extensive implementation of **CLIL** teaching approaches can lead to a global trend that, together with the use of some other successful techniques and approaches make languages learning something possible to fulfill.

Similarly, Psaltou-Joycey (2014) released a compendium called *Cross-Curricular Approaches to Language Education* that gathered a number of research projects on how cross curricular activities can enhance the learning processes of a Foreign Language gives a lot of experiences on the topic, from the diverse approaches to teach English by using cross curricular techniques, passing by the intercultural approach, so mentioned by these days with occasion of the trending topic of the intercultural communicative competence, talking about the

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use of CLIL for certain groups of students and an obvious immersion in the world of the ICTs, that are ruling today's world. It is an interesting document that talks about reengineering in the interior of institutions at the time of designing Language curriculum, the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches to take advantage of collaborative knowledge production and management and emphasizes in the necessity of making decisions from the policy makers and designers with the purpose of offering innovative language teaching programs.

As main goals of this study we have:

- Making education authorities aware of the importance of using approaches like this in order to diversify, strengthen and make more meaningful languages learning.

- Prove that it is a good idea to use curricular integration to learn both the language and complement other areas knowledge.

- Encourage teachers, school directors, policy makers and many other actors that are on the educator's side, to innovate, to create, to experiment with the purpose of improving their day by day activity reflexing it on students' performance.

Another concept that has been recently used in order to put into practice projects based learning methods is the concept of Cross Curricular activities. Catapano (Nd) emphasizes on the fact that teaching the language by following some parts of the curriculum of other subjects can boost the learning process of the students providing them with a different motivation to learn the language through other subjects included in their study plan.

Among the methods that can be considered to put into practice Cross Curricular approach, Catapano (Nd) highlights these three:

Do-it-yourself Integration: In this method the language teacher brings elements from other areas into the English plan. Math problem situations, physics explanations or historical facts can be studied during English classes allowing students to learn both the language and the topic of the desired subject.

Team-Teach-It Integration: In this case, the language teacher looks for the cooperation of another teacher, who will teach exactly the same theme, issue or

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topic the English teacher is teaching, no matter it is in their mother tongue, but obviously preferably in English language. This way, the discovery of America, just to provide an example, can be taught in both Spanish and English at the same time, giving to students the possibility of learning the topic in a better way and reinforcing their English language skills.

Multidiscipline Integration: It is possible to gather certain number of teachers that can share the way certain topic is taught according to the relationship it has with each subject. Through this method, the man on the moon can become a topic to study for at least 4 teachers: Social studies, physics, math and English.

Materials and Methods

Type of study

Given the characteristics of the problem and bearing in mind that it is necessary to establish the points of view of the participants regarding some specific features with the purpose of comparing and determining the percentage of students that do or do not do a specific situation which is contemplated in the questionnaire they will answer, it is possible to establish that this is a Cross sectional study.

By means of this type of study, it will be possible to determine whether the students of the institution under study feel more or less comfortable working by projects and at the same time to know if their level of interest towards the class of English and learning the language increases or decreases when they work in projects.

These variables can be measured once and determine their levels at the current moment and can be applied in some time to establish a comparison after an intervention, application of methodology or implementation of a strategy.

Although most cross-sectional processes are conducted in health sciences and social studies, this type of study has been applied successfully in ELT and EFL research projects, especially those related to communicative skills performance. For this case, as from the universe or population a group of students was selected randomly, the level of performance with the language can

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vary, which is one of the features this type of study show in Languages research projects.

Population

Bosques de León School in Sincelejo - Sucre is one of the most important private schools of the region. It has been functioning for more than 50 years. Founded as an elementary school, in 2013 the school changed its original name (Centro Educativo Liceo Panamericanito) for Institution Educativa Bosques de León with the purpose of giving the school a name that could fit the inclusion of Secondary Level and opening full Preschool level. Bosques de León currently has 485 students and offers Preschool, Primary, Secondary and 10th grade. 2019 will be the year when the school will have its first eleventh grade promotion.

The population selected for this study is composed by 110 students from 8th to 10th Grade at Bosques de León School in Sincelejo. Their ages vary between 12 and 15 years old and their English Language Level is between A2.1 and B1.2 levels according to the CEFR.

These students were subjected to a change in their English Curriculum in terms of complementary activities. The English Language Teachers team decided to complement English lessons with some projects with contents of different areas of knowledge aimed to provide them with an additional space of interaction with the language, so after some time of applying this methodology, it is important to test how well it is going and to measure the attitude students have towards studying the language after the intervention of projects.

From these 110 students, 28 of them were randomly selected. The sample was distributed as follows: 8 students from eighth grade, 10 students from ninth grade and 10 students from tenth grade.

The reason of this distribution is that ninth and tenth grade students have been working in projects for more time than eighth grade students, therefore their exposure to the methodology and strategy has not been as deep as ninth and tenth grade student's exposure.

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Students were invited to answer a survey which is oriented to determine if students' interest towards English classes increased, decreased or remained as it was before implementing projects strategy. It is necessary to mention that English level of students and the methodology to teach it were well oriented and worked well before implementing the strategy of working with projects. The idea of including some other activities was with the purpose of giving teachers and students the opportunity of working in a different way without getting a part of the methodology, just complementing what was being done in a right way with the intention of continuing the improvement.

Instruments

As a measurement device for the study, the researcher designed a survey composed by 10 statements with 5 levels of agreement or disagreement with a Likert scale structure as authors like Brown (2010) published to be used in diverse data collecting instruments. These levels are displayed as follows:

1 = Totally Disagree

2 = Partially Disagree

3 = Not Agree or Disagree

4 = Partially Agree

5 = Totally Agree

In the survey, students can find questions related to their interest doing projects, their advance in the language by doing them, their intentions of learning about different topics through English projects, their interest or lack of interest in learning English, the balance between the regular work in classes and the work in projects, the effects of combining regular classes with projects, the difficulty level of projects in English, among others.

As it was said before, the answers to the surveys should show the level of agreement or disagreement students have about the statements. The following form is a sample of the applied survey:

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Table 1: Example of Survey
INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA BOSQUES DE LEÓN
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT
Survey about Strategies to work in English classes using Projects
Eighth – Ninth and Tenth Grade Students

Dear student: Thanks for participating in this survey. Please indicate how identified do you feel with the statements having in mind that there is a numeric scale where:

1 = Totally Disagree 2 = Partially Disagree 3 = Not Agree or Disagree 4 = Partially Agree 5 = Totally Agree

	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
1	I feel more comfortable working only with books, audios and CDs in my English Class.					
2	I find projects more interesting than regular activities in my English Class.					
3	I think I learn English more easily when I have to do projects.					
4	When I learn about a specific topic in English, I feel my general knowledge increases.					
5	Making projects is easy for me.					
6	I like to present my projects in front of my class.					
7	I feel that the combination of grammar, exercises and projects is good for my English Learning Process.					
8	Knowing about contents of science, society, geography, technology, sports, history and others in English is interesting.					
9	Making projects is challenging for me.					
10	I feel more interested in learning English when I can complement my regular classes with projects.					

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Survey application

The survey was applied in little groups of 6 -7 students.

The questions were read in both English and Spanish Language to guarantee students understood the sense of each one.

Surveys were anonymous. Students did not have to write their names on them.

Analyzing and Interpreting Data

Table 2: Frequencies of answers

Questions Key of answers: **1** = Totally Disagree **2** = Partially Disagree **3** = Not Agree or Disagree **4** = Partially Agree **5** = Totally Agree	Frequency of each answer				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I feel comfortable working only with books, audios and CDs in my English Class.	7	5	9	5	2
I find projects more interesting than regular activities in my English Class.	2	1	1	7	17
I think I learn English more easily when I have to do projects.	1	0	4	8	15
When I learn about a specific topic in English, I feel my general knowledge increases.	0	1	1	12	14
Making projects is easy for me.	0	3	6	8	11
I like to present my projects in front of my class.	2	1	6	7	12
I feel that the combination of grammar, exercises and projects is good for my English Learning Process.	1	0	1	5	21
Knowing about contents of science, society, geography, technology, sports, history and others in English is interesting.	1	1	3	10	13
Making projects is challenging for me.	1	1	3	6	17
I feel more interested in learning English when I can complement my regular classes with projects.	1	0	1	10	16

Source: Answers from the students of the sample population.

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Data Analysis per question

From the data in the table it was possible to carry the next analysis question by question:

1. **I feel comfortable working only with books, audios and CDs in my English Class.**

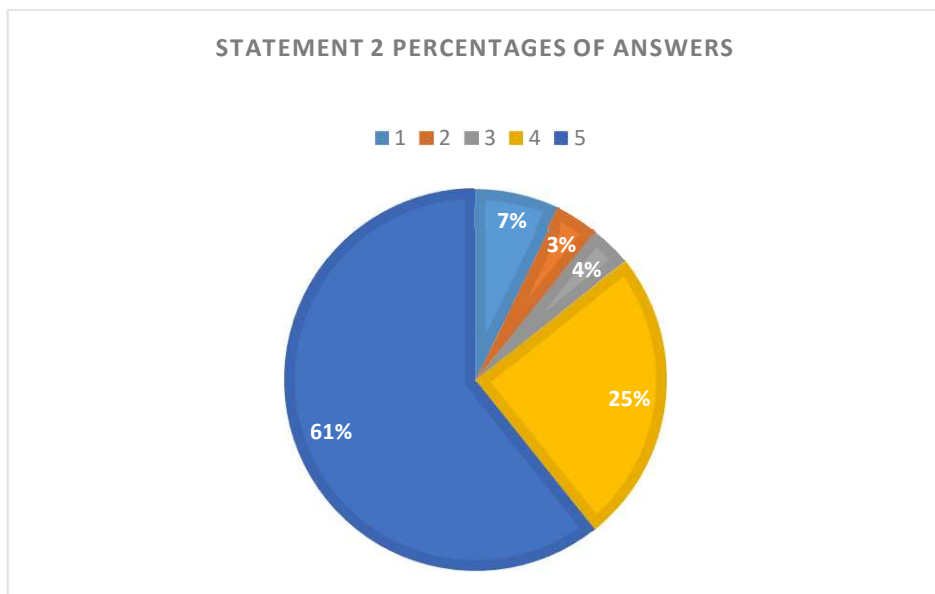   A considerable number of students like to work with traditional methods.

    Figure 1: Percentage distribution statement 1

    STATEMENT 1 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

    ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

    7%
    25%
    18%
    18%
    32%
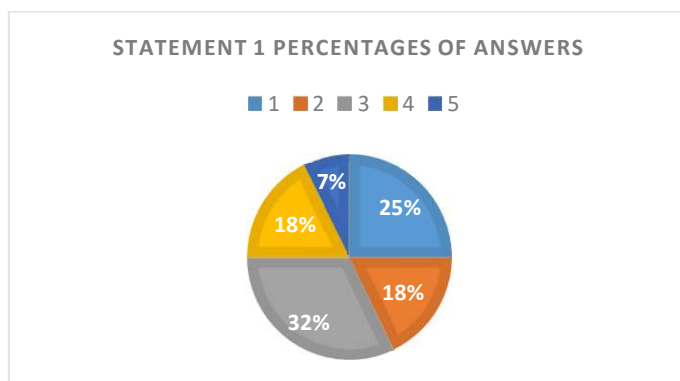
2. **I find projects more interesting than regular activities in my English Class.**

    Most students find more interesting working with projects than regular activities in class.
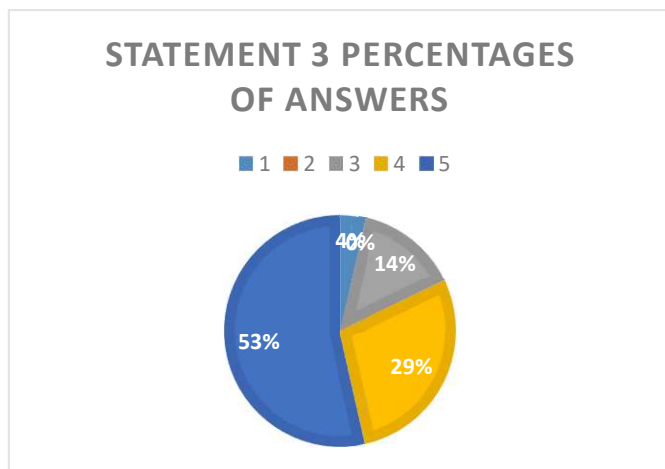
    Figure 2: Percentage distribution statement 2

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STATEMENT 2 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

■1 ■2 ■3 ■4 ■5

7%
3%
4%
25%
61%

3. I think I learn English more easily when I have to do projects.

Most students believe they learn English more easily by doing projects.

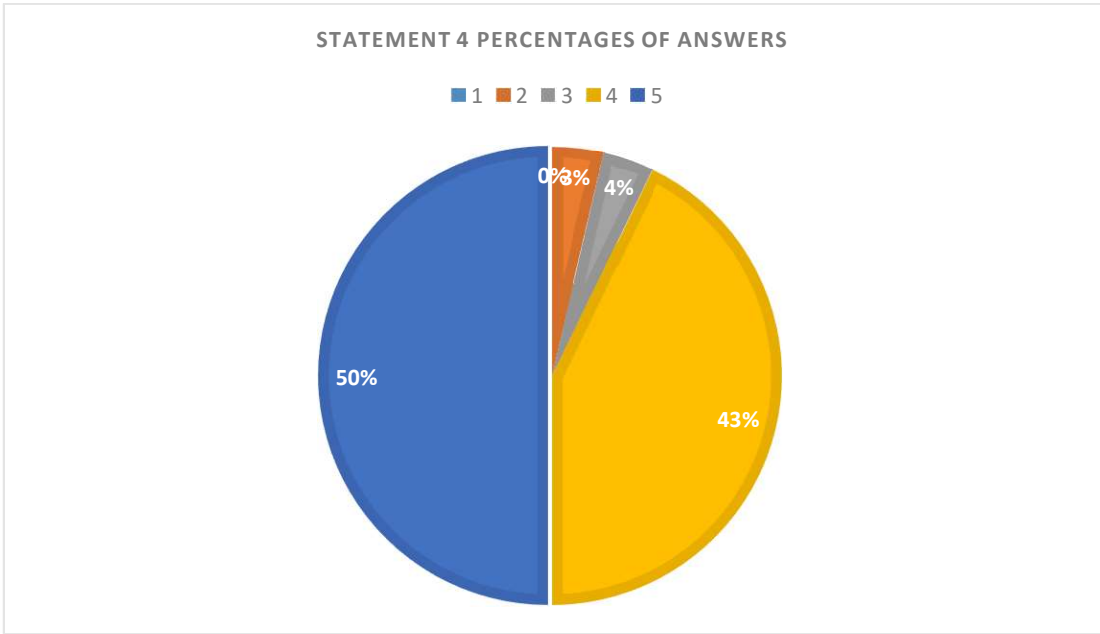Figure 3: Percentage distribution statement 3

STATEMENT 3 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

■1 ■2 ■3 ■4 ■5

4%0%
14%
53%
29%

4. When I learn about a specific topic in English, I feel my general knowledge increases.

Most students feel their general knowledge increases when doing projects about specific topics.
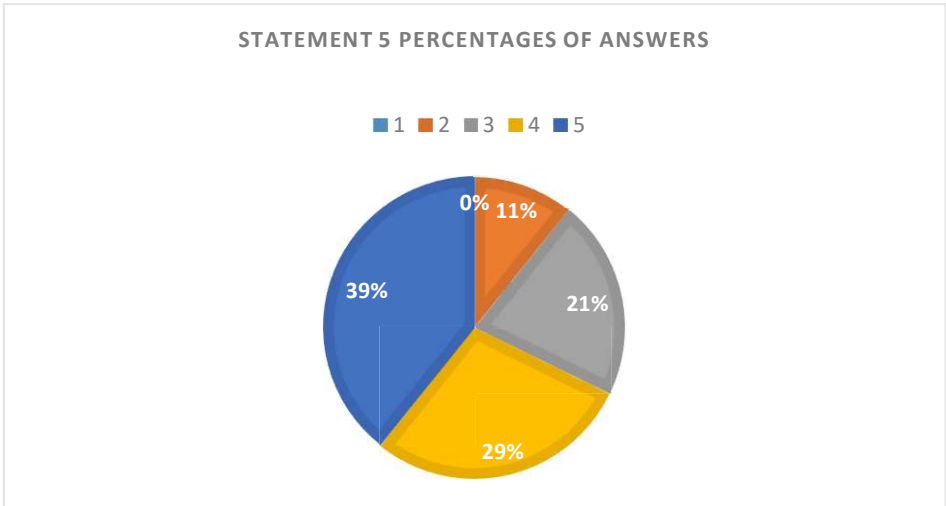
Figure 4: Percentage distribution statement 4

36

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STATEMENT 4 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

1 2 3 4 5

0% 3% 4%

50%

43%

5. Making projects is easy for me.

Most students think that making projects is easy. However, it is important to take into account that group of students that do not think so.

Figure 5: Percentage distribution statement 5

STATEMENT 5 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

1 2 3 4 5

0% 11%

39%

21%

29%

6. I like to present my projects in front of my class.

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Most students like to present their projects in front of the class. On the other hand, almost a third part of them do not like to do so.
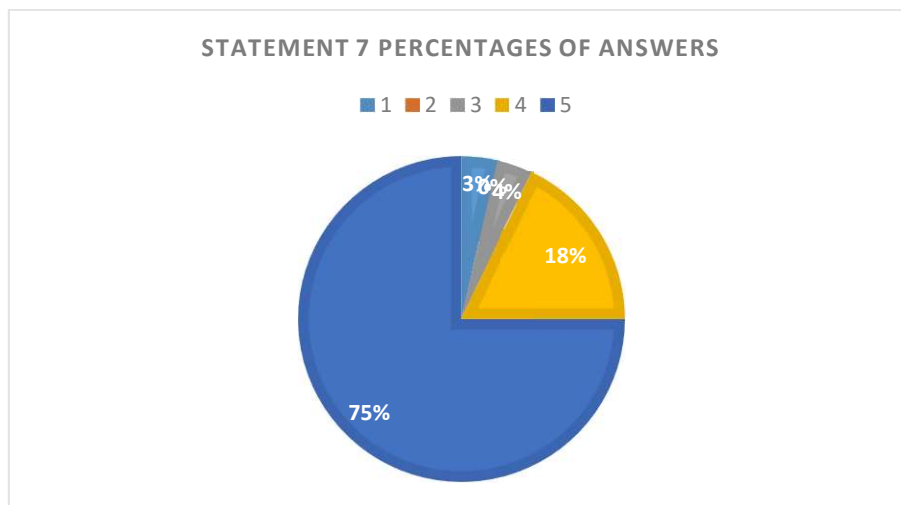
Figure 6: Percentage distribution statement 6
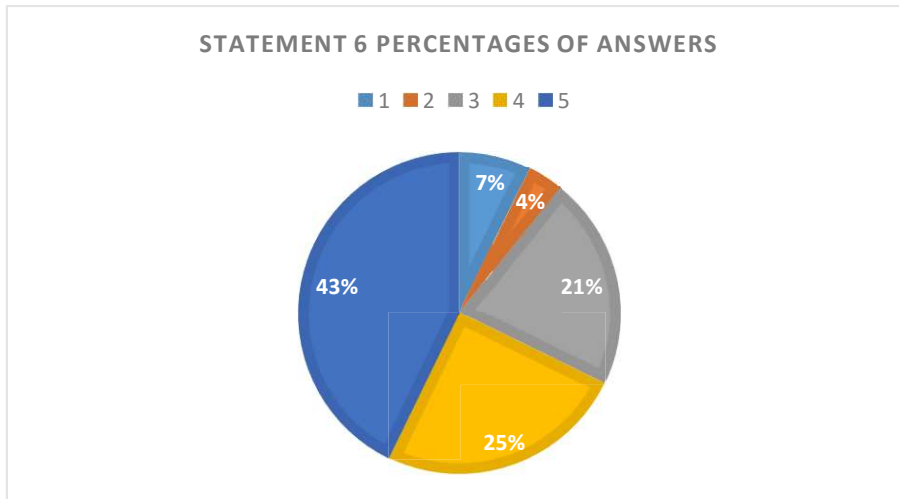
STATEMENT 6 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

■1 ■2 ■3 ■4 ■5

7%
4%
21%
43%
25%

7. **I feel that the combination of grammar, exercises and projects is good for my English Learning Process.**

Most students believe that combining regular lessons with projects is good for the Language Learning process.
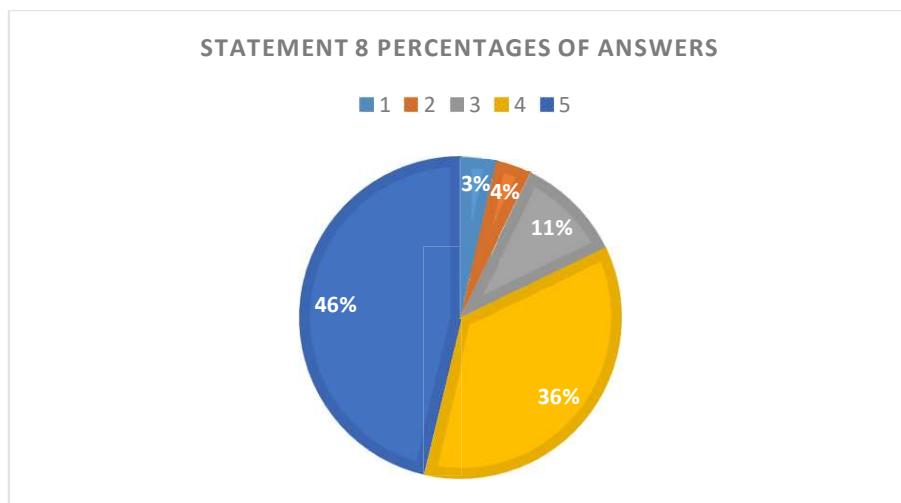
Figure 7: Percentage distribution statement 7

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STATEMENT 7 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

1 2 3 4 5

3% 0% 4%

18%

75%

8. Knowing about contents of science, society, geography, technology, sports, history and others in English is interesting.

Most students like to learn contents from diverse areas in English.
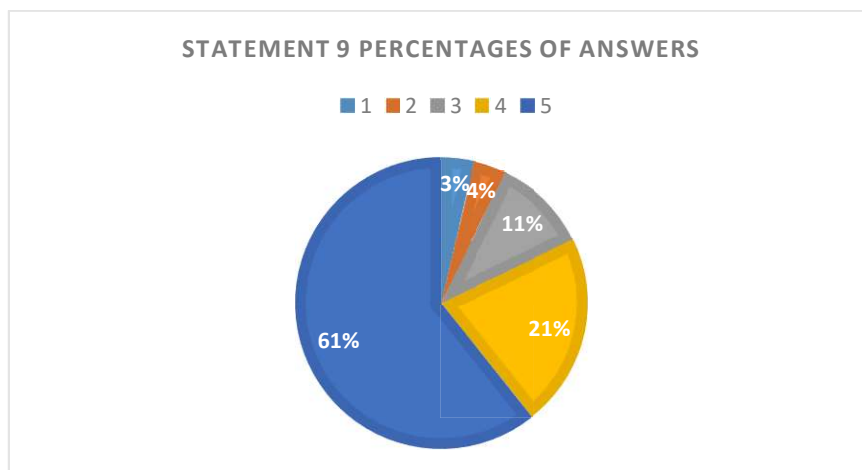
Figure 8: Percentage distribution statement 8

STATEMENT 8 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

1 2 3 4 5

3% 4%

11%

46%

36%

9. Making projects is challenging for me.

Most students like to be challenged by doing projects.

Figure 9: Percentage distribution statement 9

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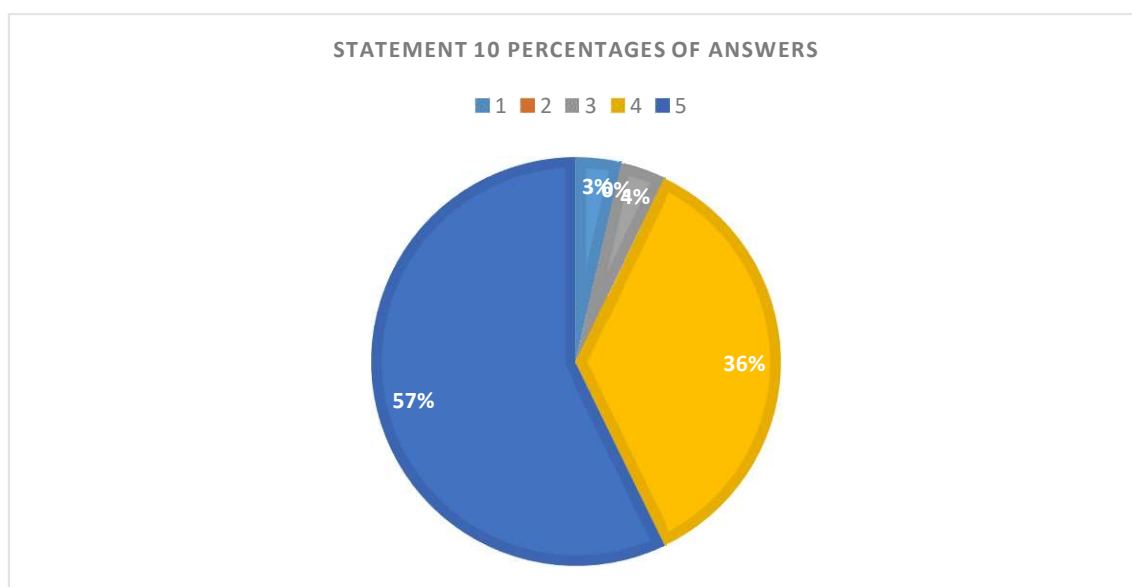
39

STATEMENT 9 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

10. I feel more interested in learning English when I can complement my regular classes with projects.

Most students feel more interested in learning the language when they have to do projects.

Figure 10: Percentage distribution statement 10

STATEMENT 10 PERCENTAGES OF ANSWERS

Conclusions and final comments

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The present research intended to get the perception of students about their interest of learning the language by implementing projects methodologies. From the data analysis, it is clear that students feel more comfortable working with projects since it is a different way to learn. Additionally, the results show that it is a good idea to keep traditional teaching of the language; this is meant to be as the way the school has been doing things, with the projects methodology as a complement.

Moreover, the perception of students is that they learn the language more easily when they do projects. They express feeling comfortable when doing them and data do not report that they experience difficulties during the process of doing projects.

The research was oriented to get the impressions of students based on their experience working with projects, methodology that accompanies regular lessons since 2017. The English Language team of teachers at the school needs to verify the way the methodology works with the purpose of providing institutional English curriculum with a wider space to develop projects, to learn contents and to practice curricular integration leading students to broaden their perspectives of usage of the language.

There are some points on the data to reflect about and they are related to those students that do not feel comfortable with the methodology, those that do not feel confident or do not think they can improve their language level by means of working in projects. This leads the researcher to think about the possibility of exploring some other strategies and methodologies. Differential levels in the same classroom tend to become one of the main difficulties to solve.

Finally, in general terms, the methodology appears to be accepted in a positive way. The results of the research show that most students like working in projects, want to continue doing so and would like them to be definitively included in school English programs. An indicator that could have shown that the methodology would not fit in the school had been the fact of having many students expressing they do not like to work in projects, do not feel comfortable presenting their works or face difficulties doing projects.

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