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# MOTIVATING STUDENTS THROUGH CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION

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Piura, 28 de Enero de 2009

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

Maestría en Ciencias de la Educación



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MOTIVATING STUDENTS THROUGH CONTENT-BASED  
INSTRUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF PIURA



FACULTY OF SCIENCES OF EDUCATION

MASTER IN EDUCATION MENTION IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS  
A SECOND LANGUAGE

2009

## APPROVAL

The thesis titled **MOTIVATING STUDENTS THROUGH CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION** presented by Rocío Miño Vásquez in accordance with the requirements of being awarded the Degree of Master in Education with Mention in **Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language**, was approved by the thesis director Majid Safadaran Mosazadeh-Kohan and defended on ..... before a Jury with the following members:

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to thank my parents for all the support and example I have received from them during all these years.

I also want to thank my husband for inspiring me all these years; my brother and sister for being always there to help me and encourage me to be a good teacher and person.

I have to thank all the teachers, students and parents that helped me to obtain information to do this investigation.

I dedicate this research to all the teachers that want to plan amusing and motivating language lessons.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers always try to find any kind of strategy that can lead them to make their students responsible for their own knowledge and motivated to keep learning in spite of all the obstacles they would find in their way.

Motivation is the key to do any activity, without this element it is hard to complete anything and succeed in it. It is important to find a motivation or anything that makes us keep doing something with the same enthusiasm we started until finishing it.

Content-based learning is a methodology to learn a foreign language by studying a specific subject in that language. This methodology has some important advantages, for example students use authentic material to learn and their learning is not reduced to the sentence level. It is also a methodology that provides students with a second language environment to practice and communicate through this language.

Content-based learning can be applied to any subject but the present investigation tries to show that Science, Handicraft, and Social Studies are the subjects more suitable to teach another language.

The following investigation aims to demonstrate that content-based learning is a methodology that can increase the level of motivation children have to study another language and that it can use amusing activities to achieve this goal.

It is important to expose students to the target language, therefore a Science class in which they learn about the topics they like in a language different from their mother's tongue and which they have to use it to communicate their opinions and previous knowledge. It is a very good way to study a language without having to travel abroad.

This research starts by finding the subjects that students and their parents find interesting and amusing and getting information about the reasons for this preferences. It continues by interviewing teachers about their methodologies to teach to find the guidelines that make some lessons be more motivating than others. The learning environment and the materials used in each subject are also analyzed as well as the way students react during each lesson. The research also includes some evaluations done to the students, object of the investigation, to evaluate their acquisition of a specific knowledge in a second language.

The appendix includes all the tests, observation guides and questionnaires applied to obtain information about motivation and content-based learning.

Unfortunately there are not much information about content-based instruction in the only university specialized in Linguistics and second language learning in Quito, therefore this investigation started from zero.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INVESTIGATION OUTLINE**

### **1.1 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM.**

The problem of this thesis is: How can a teacher motivate his or her pupils to study a second language through content based learning?

### **1.2 HYPOTHESIS**

#### **1.2.1 GENERAL HYPOTHESIS**

Teachers can motivate students to learn a second language through the study of a subject in that target language.

#### **1.2.2 SPECIFIC HYPOTHESIS**

Subjects taught in the target language help students learn grammar, vocabulary and acquire specific information through specialized and not modified didactic materials.

### **1.3 DELIMITATION OF THE OBJECTIVES**

The following investigation aims to obtain the following objectives.

### 1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate that teachers can motivate students to learn a second language through the study of a specific subject in that language by doing an action research and reviewing written sources on the topic.
- To know how to motivate students in order to improve their achievement by interviewing them and other important factors in the teaching-learning process.

### 1.3.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the different subjects students have to learn in order to see which ones are more motivating to students.
- To observe the lessons students have to attend to find out strategies and clues that can help teachers to improve their work.
- To observe the setting where the learning process takes place to make it more attractive for students to learn.
- To improve the methods used to teach and also to create a program to change the negative view students have about English.

## 1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

At the beginning of the year students were required to answer a questionnaire about the subjects they liked and disliked. Most of them wrote that English was one of the subjects they do not like and Science, even if it is taught in English, was one of their favorite ones.

During the five years, I have been teaching English I always felt that my students are not as motivated to study English as they are to study other subjects, therefore I chose to do this research project in order to find out what teachers have to do to motivate learners to study English and succeed.

During a Science class I realized that students were using adjectives successfully to describe animals while the English teacher said that most of the kids did not understand how to use them in a simple conversation. The same happened in teacher meetings where English teachers said that it is really hard to make students use the language orally, while the

Science and Handicraft teachers said that most of their students like to talk and use a lot of new vocabulary after hearing it for the first time. Taking this into account I decided to investigate why students feel more motivated to study a subject in English than to take English lessons, and why they learn more taking these content based learning lessons.

### 1.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

One of the limitations of the investigation was that there were not many thesis or investigations on the content based learning field, in fact in the only Linguistics faculty of the city there were no researches done about this topic, therefore I needed to start investigating from zero.

Another limitation of the research was that the group investigated was made up of children and they tend to relate the teacher with the subject they are studying and sometimes they change the opinions as they change their mood. Anyway after observing and interviewing them all the time I think I count with reliable data.

One of the limitations of the time chosen was that at that time students were already tired considering that during those months they are in the third term of the year and some of them only think about vacation.

### 1.6. ANTECEDENTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

When I started doing the research I wanted to find strategies to motivate my students to study a second language. During that time I was teaching Science and I realized that almost all of my students liked the subject and they seemed to find it attractive, a situation different to what they felt about the English language lessons.

One of the problems I had to face was that there were no researches in the library of Pontificia Universidad Católica de Quito, which is the only Linguistic Faculty in the city, related to the topic of my investigation. I also talked to the Dean P.H.D. Fernando Miño-Garcés who told me that no students have investigated anything related to “Content Based Learning”. All of this motivated me to do this thesis.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 DEFINITIONS OF CONTENT- BASED INSTRUCTION**

According to Krahne Content-based instruction “is the teaching of content or information in the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught”. (Krahne, 1987: 65)

This method is nowadays being used in many schools where students learn a second or additional language while they acquire specific knowledge of other subjects. The subjects that are actually used to teach English are Social Studies, Science, Art, Geography, Biology, Math, History, Culture and Geo-economics.

This method focuses on communication, “the language that is being taught could be used to present subject matter, and the students would learn the language as a by-product of learning about real world - content” (Widdowson, 1978 : 16)

While students acquire a real knowledge about the world through the different subjects they learn they are also developing the four skills, speaking, reading, writing and listening. Students also learn using real

material where the language is not reduced to the basic unit or to sentence level. The information is presented in the same way as in their mother tongue. Most of the books students use to learn these subjects are designed for native speakers and this factor helps students to learn more and not only a specific vocabulary and grammar structure.

This method motivates students because they receive relevant information in another language and this constitutes a goal in itself, students learn two things at the same time and they do not question the importance of learning them.

Not all the subjects are suitable to be used for content-based instruction purposes they depend on the students' needs and interests.

## 2.2 FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE STUDY OF A SECOND LANGUAGE

There are many factors that affect the success in the study of a language. These factors are the attitude of the students toward the target language, the learning context, the age of the learners, the idea they have about the target culture and people, etc. This research is going to be centered in the first factor which is the students' attitude toward the second language.

Motivation is the force that pushes us to make all the efforts necessary in order to achieve a certain result. This force helps us to start an activity, keep working and finish it. Without the decision of doing something the activity carried out can fail and not have the success needed.

During all the years I have been teaching children I have realized that when they like to do something, when they feel capable of doing it, when they feel the support of the teacher and friends, when the learning environment is attractive, students make more efforts and as a result they get better results.

It is very disappointing as a teacher to arrive to the class and hear these phrases "Ah, qué pena tenemos inglés" "¿Cuánto falta para que se acabe la hora?" These phrases clearly indicate that students go to the class with a negative attitude toward the English subject.



As many studies have shown, attitude and motivation are of paramount importance for the teaching and learning process. I have analyzed a study done by two students of the Catholic University in Ecuador. The title of the study is “Appropriate motivational and English Proficiency programs”. I found the study similar to the research I wanted to carry out because its aim is to find information in order to motivate students to study English and create an English program based on that information. I also wanted to know how to motivate my students to learn English through the study of another subject.

This research will take into account extrinsic and intrinsic motivation: Extrinsic motivation is the external force that makes a person take a decision or do an action. It comes from out of the person, for example some students do their homework and use strategies to learn the language and practice it at home because they are worried their parents might punish them if they do not get good grades.

This external motivation lasts until the external force interferes in the person’s life and actions. Therefore students are going to study English while they live under their parents’ rules. Other students take English lessons because that subject is included in the curriculum they have in order to graduate from university or high school, therefore as soon as they graduate they abandon their lessons. The objective of this research is to motivate students in a way that they will take English lessons because they want to, that is to transform the external motivation into an intrinsic one.

Another extrinsic motivation can be the reward the student can get if he or she obtains good grades. Some of my students receive a present if their grades are good, the presents can be toys, books or anything they like.

Another extrinsic motivation comes from the other students of the classroom. Some students are motivated by the acceptance they can get from their peers if they learn how to do something or if they get good grades.

Intrinsic motivation is the one that makes the student learn because the subject is interesting and rewarding by itself, therefore he or she does any effort in order to get information and learn more facts about it. The person that is intrinsically motivated does not need anyone to reward his or her job, he or she has the desire to study and learn and nothing can affect that feeling.

Motivation can also be divided into integrative and instrumental. The integrative motivation is the one that teachers desire their students have, because it involves the desire to study a language because it is beautiful, interesting, amusing, and because the people who speak it are very attractive as well as their culture. So students do not need other reasons to learn a language but the attraction that it exercises over them.

When students have an integrative motivation they can develop learning strategies that will lead to success. Most of the time children do not realize the importance of the study of a second language and they are not really attracted by other culture, because they tend to look and find models of the things that are really close to them.

Adolescents and teenagers are more conscious of the advantages of learning a language, they are more attracted to other culture, because they try to find a way to distinguish themselves from the rest of the people, they can also be more responsible toward the study of another language and they keep going no matter the efforts they have to do to achieve a goal.

Another kind of motivation is the instrumental one, this motivation refers to the desire to study a language because it is useful, because it will help the people who study it to graduate from university or to get a good job. Sometimes the interest students have to study a language is to understand movies, songs and electronic games, to pass to the next year or other practical reasons. This kind of motivation is not going to exist forever because as soon as the student finishes the high school or the university or as soon as he or she gets a good job he or she is going to leave the study of the language there.

According to the study done by Catalina Bossano and María Fernanda Alarcón “a nice classroom stimulates feelings of pleasure, comfort, enjoyment and the desire to continue the activity”.<sup>1</sup>

Students have different classrooms for the subjects they have to attend: an English classroom, a Science one, a Math classroom, a Social Studies one, etc. Before observing each class I established some guidelines that included de decoration, illumination, tables and chairs disposition, materials used, etc.

The teacher must also help students feel comfortable in the class, she has to help them discover that they are capable of achieving any goal they choose, and learn any new thing they want. I think that any subject is appropriate to learn values.

The Emotional Intelligence is a new concept developed by Daniel Goleman, which is based in the control of negative emotions and in developing motivation and a positive attitude toward life. As teachers, we have experience with students that are completely sure that are not capable of learning English and that cannot even understand the language, this kind of negative ideas can lead to low self esteem. Teachers have the power to help students change their attitude toward themselves and toward the language.

Many authors state that students with high self esteem are the ones that succeed at the school, or get better results. I think that happens because they are not so interested in their image or in how they are seen by their friends, so they have more time to practice and ask the teachers if they do not understand anything. Students with a low esteem are constantly worried about how to avoid their peers to mock at them, so they do not ask their teachers for help, they do not participate in class, and finally

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<sup>1</sup> Alarcón, María Fernanda y Bossano Catalina (2002) *Appropriate motivational and English proficiency programs applied in a school help to improve students' achievement*, Licentiate Thesis not published, Quito: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Quito.

they think that they are not capable of learning the language which is worst.

When teachers face this kind of problems they have to convince their students that everybody makes mistakes, that it is important to try in order to learn, and that all the efforts made are going to lead them to succeed. If we as teachers encourage students and tell them that they are capable of doing and learning anything they want, we are probably going to increase the students' self esteem.

There is nothing that affection cannot get. Students need to feel that there is someone close to them that will help anytime and that is always going to encourage and make them feel secure. Sometimes even a phrase like "I am sure you can do it better" makes the student keep working and succeed.

I have a seven years old student who has a neurological problem that does not let him pay attention or focus in what he is learning. After knowing his learning problem I tried to personalize the class and help him individually with additional explanations and being always near him. After one month I found out that he was really improving, his attitude toward the language is better now and he feels he can do all the things his friends can even if he has to make more effort than the rest. Anyway his positive attitude helps him improve and achieve any goal he has decided to.

Modern teachers are not the ones that talk during all the class time. Nowadays lessons are interactive, students discover the things they are interested in by sharing previous knowledge and by researching, instead of listening to the long and boring lectures of teachers.

Science is a subject that allows students to share the previous knowledge about animals and plants that all of them have, therefore they feel more motivated to speak English and use the language in a less formal way. When students have a previous knowledge about the topic treated they are more comfortable, and they feel that they are going to be accepted by their friends because they have something interesting to say too.

When students do things they like and when they know how to do them, they enjoy learning and feel smart and talented. Sometimes students like to talk about movies or documentaries they have seen about animals, plants or the body systems, so they feel more secure to share their knowledge with their friends.

The participation of students is very valuable because it makes the class more interesting and less boring, and it also helps students to practice the language by producing it.

In my opinion it is important to know how to use the second language in a written way, but it is more important to speak it, because most of the time we communicate in an oral way, therefore teachers have to encourage students to speak English in the class and get used to avoid the use of their mother tongue.

Sometimes students get discouraged because they are not allowed to speak Spanish, but after some efforts they realize that to speak the target language is not so hard.

The learning environment is very important because it has to help students to feel comfortable and confident enough to make suggestions for the improvement of the class and ask if they have any doubt. The environment is mostly a teacher's responsibility, because she/he has the power to encourage students or to discourage them to learn.

According to Toumi a negative treatment received by a child from an adult can easily block the development of abilities. That is why students come to class with negative attitudes toward the language. A simple thing as yelling a child because he or she can not answer a question, or do an exercise has a terrible effect on the future learning of the language.

Things like receiving a bad grade, or being yelled can make a student hate a subject because most of the time they provoke a problem of low self esteem or rejection toward anything that has to do with the cause of the problem.

Negative treatments from adults can also cause insecurity and frustration in children (Thoumi : 2000). How is a child going to feel confident to participate and ask questions if he or she is sure that the teacher is going to yell or get mad at him for no reason? Children are very sensible and it takes more time for them to forget and try again.

Students are motivated or non by the meaning that a certain thing, subject or topic has for them (Tapia: 1996). Students are probably unmotivated because the study of a language is not important for them, they probably find it so hard that do not find any important reason to make an effort.

Sometimes students start the study of a language very motivated but as it gets harder or as the teacher does not make it funny, the objectives students had at the beginning change as well as their attitude toward learning.

Learning does not have a value in itself, it has a value according to its practical use. If the study of a language can help me get a promotion or a better job, or if I can have access to a foreign university, or even if it helps me understand my favorite music, electronic games or T.V. series, I will probably be motivated to study and learn. Unfortunately this kind of motivation does not last forever, and we as teachers do not always count with this important factor.

Students do not like to do things for obligation, because it does not allow them to enjoy activities. Children hate the word “homework” even if they do not know what the activity they have to do at home is. Everything they do and that is graded tends to become an obligation and it is not always going to be enjoyed.

Sometimes teachers tend to valorize grades over the progress students achieve in each stage of the learning process, therefore they memorize things to get a good grade instead of making an effort to study things forever. Studying things by heart is easier than making use of learning strategies, paying attention to teachers and research in order to learn.

As teachers we can realize that students do not understand what we are explaining when their body expression or the way they are sit shows us

that they are bored. Other way to see if students are bored is to realize that they are not longer participating or asking questions related to the subject. Body expression can tell almost anything about the way the student feels. We have to be aware that when the student is tired and has lost interest, it will be really hard to attract his or her attention and make him or her learn something, and that will be the right time to change the activity and use something funnier and interesting for them.

When the class is hard to understand, sometimes we tend to ask the students to do something that can overpass their real possibilities this can create a feeling of disappointment and frustration in them. This negative attitude as well as being the cause of a future low self-esteem will make the student hate the subject, affecting his or her learning motivation.

The level of difficulty of the learning tasks affects motivation too. Very easy tasks can make students lose interest in the subject because it does not represent a challenge for them. Very difficult tasks can affect motivation too because they make the students feel incapable of doing them. Teachers have to design tasks that increase their difficulty gradually. At the beginning students have to feel that they can do their drills, the others exercises planned have to capture the attention and interest of students as well as they have to be more difficult than the precedent ones.

Projects are a very good tool to increase the students' motivation, because they can decide the theme of the project, they can research to find information and they have to do the whole process with the guide of the teacher. They are not obligated to do what the teacher asks but they are free to use any strategy they want to get the results needed.

Motivation helps the students to keep working until they succeed, if we do not count with this important factor it does not matter what methodology, materials or strategies we use to teach, students are not going to make any progress in their learning. Students need to dedicate time to learn, if they are not motivated they are going to use that time to do other things that are more valuable for them.

The use of contests to motivate students even if sometimes helps to make them pay attention and focus on the teachers' explanations they can create a feeling of disappointment in the losers. Anyway, students react in different ways and sometimes the ones that have lost the contest can practice and make an effort to do better next time, so the strategy turns out to be effective at the end.

Teachers have to take into account the gender of the majority of their students in order to plan the lessons. Boys tend to be more competitive and less cooperative than girls. Boys like to do different things in the class, and change the activity every 15 minutes. They also like to do more active and interactive things rather than listening and reading tasks. Girls on the contrary like to read and write more than other kind of activities.

The age of the students have to be taken into account too, because if we ask students to do something that they are not able to do, they can get frustrated and very disappointed and that can lead to an unmotivated class.

Young children like to learn things by playing, they like to draw, to sing songs and to move all the time. Secondary students do not like to sing songs that are not chosen by them, they prefer to write, read and do listening and oral activities.

### 2.3. HOW MUST A LESSON BE PLANNED?

Some authors suggest that lessons should start with a warm up activity. Warm up activities are planned to help students focus on the lesson they are going to learn. It can start with an amusing activity.

“Teachers have to motivate the students' curiosity at the beginning of the class” (Tapia: 1996). Science is an interesting subject that can be planned based on amazing facts that can call the students' attention and make them feel interested about the new things they learn. For example at the beginning of a lesson dedicated to plants, teachers can talk about the plants that trap animals to get nutrients from them, that is an



interesting fact that can make students focus on the teacher's explanations.

Teachers must introduce a lesson using questions that make students feel curious about it (Cartula: 1996). Students will find the answers to the questions while the teacher explains the lesson or after a research done by them.

Students are interested in something when they are capable of understanding. Things are easy to understand when the new information can be easily connected with the previous knowledge.

As teachers we can start the class by asking questions to make learners talk about the things they know related with the subject of study. The contents must also be presented using pictures and images whenever it is possible, because it will facilitate assimilation. It is easier to present information about the digestive system or about the body using images rather than teaching any abstract information for example a grammar rule. That is why it can be easier and more interesting to teach a subject in English rather than teaching English as a subject.

Additionally, there are more cards, pictures, videos, etc to learn a subject as Science than to teach Grammar, speaking, writing, and reading.

The contents to be studied must be relevant (Tapia: 1996). Students are not going to be motivated to study something that is not important, or things that have no use for them. We tend to easily forget the things we do not use, and we always remember the things we are constantly making use of. For example we do not forget what we learned in our computer systems class because we use the computer almost every day, but we probably forgot some things we learned in our Math class because we have a calculator at hand.

Teachers must also relate the things they are teaching to the future activities of the students, so they can be motivated to study. Most of the students have a clear idea of what they are going to study at the university, as teachers we can relate the contents of a lesson with their interests in order to make them pay attention.

Teachers may also provide activities that give the student the opportunity to choose among many options. When students can choose the activity to learn they feel that they are an important part of the learning process. When we have the possibility to choose, we feel more motivated to do something because we can act according to our preferences. Students like to take their own decisions because they feel free to do what they like. The activities to choose can be readings about interesting facts, role plays, handicraft tasks, model buildings using recycled materials. One of the tasks students had to do that gave great results and motivated them to learn was to create a dinosaur using any material. Some of the students brought dinosaurs made of clay, others made them of paper and glue, others draw pictures, others used sticks to make bones, etc. They enjoyed the activity and learned more about the Triceratops and the Tyrannosaurus rex.

Teachers have to encourage students to take their own decisions and be independent. When students do not depend on the teacher to learn they can acquire knowledge by themselves and using their own strategies.

Teachers can also design tests and tasks in a way that give students some correct options to answer questions about a lesson, so they do not get discouraged if they do not know the exact word that goes in the blank. “Fill in the blank” exercises make the students learn concepts by heart instead of thinking about the lesson and drawing their own conclusions.

Nowadays the method used for learning does not include memorization but reasoning and experiment. Students are not asked to repeat the same things that the teacher exposed in the class but to use their own words to explain a fact, and research using any method to come up with new information.

Some books contain activities that consist on asking students to solve problems in order to learn. Some years ago students had to study concepts by heart. Nowadays, some of the tasks students are asked to do include “think about it” exercises, in which students have to answer questions after reasoning.

Science and English grammar books contain many texts and exercises that help students learn new words and expressions. If this kind of drills are interesting and not too long they motivate students to read and develop more skills. A reading exercise can be followed by a debate which obligates students to practice the language by talking which is not boring for them.

Some text books include sections that develop other skills. Students are asked to write songs or poems about any topic, or they are asked to perform role plays using the characters studied in the lesson just learned. Students do not like to follow routines everyday so this kind of activities is really enjoyed by them.

There are many interesting and amusing exercises for example puzzles and crosswords that can include Science vocabulary. Students have to solve a crossword by relating a Science concept with its word.

To finish the lesson a wrap up activity can be a conversation about the unit studied, which can include questions. Sometimes students need this kind of activities that help them assimilate new concepts and practice.

Giving students a sticker after having a good answer or after doing something correctly is not a good and long lasting way of rewarding them, because they are going to make an effort in order to get a present and not because they know that they are learning something important.

#### 2.4. CHARACTERISTICS TEACHERS MUST HAVE TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

“We cannot give what we do not have”. Teachers must like their job in order to make students love the subject they are learning. Teachers must be motivated to motivate students to learn.

Teachers are one of the most important factors in the classroom, even if we think that they have to be only facilitators. Many people started to hate a subject because they felt rejection for the teacher that taught it.

Teachers and students must be friends, they have to have a close relationship, because it is hard to be among strangers and people we do not like. Teachers must be respected because they are authorities, and not because students are scared of them.

There is nothing that love cannot get, sometimes yelling is not the best strategy to get the student's attention, but keeping them interested in the explanations.

Teachers must also be creative to plan and design exercises and tasks that can be amusing, to motivate and make students pay attention. The material used to teach must also attract the attention of students, as well as the way teachers explain concepts.

A creative teacher decorates the classroom in a way that can attract the interest and attention of students. We can use posters, pictures and other kind of things that make the class more beautiful.

I think that students like to have as many classrooms as subjects they study. Each classroom must be decorated according to the lesson that is being studied this helps students to change of environment and to prepare themselves for the next class.

Teachers must also choose the topics and themes that can be more interesting for students, so they will feel more motivated to study. If students think that a subject is interesting they are going to pay attention and learn it in a better way.

Patience is an important characteristic that teachers must have. They have to be patient to answer any kind of question, to explain the same thing twice and using different elements, to deal with all kinds of students trying always to help them, to talk to parents even if they are not interested in their children's studies, and the list can go on.

It is important to show the students that the teacher is prepared and can solve any doubt. At the same time teachers have to be really close to students so they feel confident enough to ask any question and ask for help when needed.

Teachers have to encourage students to make an effort and do whatever they can to succeed. Sometimes we find students that conform themselves with failing every time and do not do anything to get better results, so the teacher may convince the student that he or she is perfectly capable to achieve any goal he/she has.

A teacher is a person that knows the subject but also the person that knows how to express the contents to be taught and be understood. Anybody can speak English, but not everybody knows how to teach it.

In some schools native teachers are hired because they know the language and they have an excellent pronunciation but academic directors have to look for people who know Pedagogy and know how to deal with students otherwise they are not going to learn anything and are going to get discouraged.

A good teacher must also know something about psychology or even count with the aid of a psychologist to know how to treat hyperactive students or the ones that have neurological problems which do not let them concentrate like the other children do.

A teacher must know what the limit of each student is, so he/she is not going to ask the student to do something that he or she is not capable.

Nobody likes to be in a place that has too many prohibitions. Students hate to listen “do not do this or that”, some authors suggest changing the wording of orders, it is better to say “please sit down” than “do not stand up”.

Teachers have to be intuitive because they have to adapt the method of teaching to each student. Some students need more attention than others.

It is also important for teachers to set the principles and objectives they are going to follow and achieve because that can give them the vision of what they want to obtain. Having the goals in mind facilitate the teacher to follow a path and do not waste time in things that are not really important.

Teachers have to plan the tasks, assignments and homework, because students always realize if the teacher is just wasting their time because she/he did not plan the lesson.

To have additional activities to do if the ones planned are done before the time is over or if the students are bored and we need other kind of things to capture their attention is important.

Attention is defined by Tapia as “a selective concentration about something that interests us”. The attention students pay depends on the interest they have. The information received is better processed if the student pays attention, if he/she finds it useful, and if the student thinks he/she is going to succeed (Tapia: 1996).

Teachers have to understand the students’ emotions and they have to support them emotionally when they feel disappointed or sad. Teachers have to help students to feel happy, accepted and loved. Sometimes students love a subject because they like their teacher.

It is important to congratulate students when they do something really good. Sometimes we tend to exaggerate in the congratulations so that practice loses the real purpose and students think that everything they do deserves an excellent grade or a congratulation note for parents.

Even if it takes a lot of time and work, it is important to correct every paper students do and write little commentaries that will help them improve next time. Sometimes students have the feeling that teachers ask them to do an assignment but they do not even read it, so they start to present papers that are not well done or they copy the papers of their friends. The teacher’s notes will motivate students to do a better job.

Adults are always an example for children and this certainly is a great responsibility for teachers because students tend to imitate them. Sometimes parents ask teachers to tell something to their students about any problem they have at home because they know that students do what teachers say. I remember that one of my students told their parents that the science teacher said children have to go to bed at 8 o’clock so she

made her parents change the dinner time in order to do what the teacher said.

The way a teacher behaves and his or her personality affects the way the student perceives the class, for example I remember a teacher that hated to cook so when the students had an activity related with cooking they started to complain even if before they loved to do it.

It is necessary to have meetings with the students' parents in order to know what they think about the class and receive their suggestions. I remember a student that always talked about cells and other science things and made their parents buy a microscope because they saw their son's interest in Science.

## 2.5 CULTURAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE STUDY OF A SECOND LANGUAGE

Gardner and Lambert believed that people study a second language because they are attracted by a certain culture or because they want to belong to that linguistic group. I think that one of the motivations for people to study a language is that they want to identify themselves with a cultural group.

Most of the private prestigious schools in Quito are characterized by their English courses. This kind of schools provides the students with many classes in their second language. These schools also have contests among them which require the use of the second language, for example the "Spelling bee" contest, or the "English poetry contest".

One of the things that students like the most is that knowing English helps them to fit into a popular and high status group. Some of the words teenagers use come from English, therefore to participate and be part of one of these groups students have to speak this language.

Teenagers watch American series on T.V. and listen to English songs. They also like to wear American clothes and they imitate the behaviors and attitudes of the teenagers in North America. Teachers can take advantage of this situation to motivate pupils to study a second language.

We can use more texts and materials taken from magazines or we can use T.V. series students like to do listening comprehension exercises.

Teachers can transform that integrative motivation into an intrinsic one which is going to last more and have good results. Students with an intrinsic motivation tend to use learning strategies at home that help them improve their knowledge as well as to practice the language.

## 2.6. CONTENT-BASED LEARNING AND EVALUATION

Most of the students feel a lot of pressure when being evaluated, they do not like to sit and answer questions that are boring and that will have important consequences like to pass or fail the level.

Some authors say that students are asked to answer what the teachers want and using their words, that is what leads to study things by heart.

All the students are different so they need different kinds of evaluation, some express themselves better in a written way, others like oral exercises, and others like to communicate themselves through art and music. The important thing here is to know if students learned or not, it does not matter the way they use to express what they have learned.

Science is a subject that allows teachers to evaluate in a global way. Teachers can talk with students about vertebrates and evaluate skills such as speaking and reading. Teachers can also design projects using experiments and observation activities where students have to record results in a written way, so students are being tested in an interesting way.

Evaluating students only during a week has negative consequences because students think that they only have to dedicate their time to study during that specific time. They also get very worried and they feel stressed because during that time they are supposed to pay attention and update all their homework and notes. Evaluation has to be a day to day practice because there are many ways to see if students are working and not only tests.



Projects are a good way to evaluate students because they are allowed to choose the subject of their investigation, look for data, design their presentations, and they are free to work in the way they want, teachers become only a guide but the real work is done by the students.

Projects contain information that as were obtained by students, will be hard to forget and that is going to motivate them.

A project is also a kind of exercise that keeps students active and doing things by themselves instead of being passive and listening to all the information that the teacher provides. Projects help students to be independent and responsible for their learning.

Projects allow students to change the place of study. Students can work at the library or outside the class changing the routine and feeling more comfortable. The place where students have their classes also affects their attitude toward the subject.

## 2.7. PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION IN A MOTIVATING CLASSROOM

The classroom is the place where students are going to spend the most of the time at school therefore it has to be designed following important principles.

The tables and chairs have to be distributed for group work, it is important to let students communicate between each other, however it is important to set the parameter of “Speak English only” so even a little opportunity to talk is going to serve to practice the language.

There must be space between each group so the teacher can walk along listening and observing what the students are doing.

It is evident that the classroom has to have the necessary light so students can work without forcing their eyes. The classroom has to have thick walls and doors so the noise from outside does not disturb the lesson. There must be windows so the air can circulate inside the classroom.

Tables and chairs have to be really comfortable, but not too comfortable to let students sleep.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE INVESTIGATION**

#### **3.1. INVESTIGATION TYPE**

This research has been conducted following the parameters of a qualitative investigation, specifically it is an action investigation because its objective is to improve the teaching of a second language and making it a motivational activity.

Most of the information was gathered from interviews, questionnaires, and observation of the lessons taught and the places where they were developed.

#### **3.2. DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION**

At the beginning of the research, the English, Social Studies, Handicraft, Math, and Science classes were observed, therefore the furniture distribution as well as the classroom environment were analyzed. After that, tests, homework and class work of all the subjects the students learn were analyzed. Later students, parents and teachers were asked to fill in questionnaires and to answer questions during personal interviews.

Finally the data was analyzed in order to obtain guidelines to motivate students to learn English.

The research started on November 2004 but it lasted until June 2005 because it was necessary to collect more data to support the hypothesis as well as more instruments to be designed.

### 3.3. POPULATION AND STUDY SAMPLE.

The investigation had been carried out with 14 students who are in sixth grade of a private school in Ecuador. They are elementary school students, and they are from 10 to 11 years old, 5 are girls and 9 are boys. As they live in Quito they speak Spanish at home and they receive some classes as Social Studies, Math, Language and Physical Education in that language.

Colegio Metropolitano is a private school located in an exclusive area of Quito, therefore most of the students have a high socio economic status. These students have about 12 English hours per week distributed into English, Science and Handicraft.

I chose these informants because they have more experience than younger ones in taking English courses. I also like to work with children and I think that this research project will help me improve my teaching and give me a lot of ideas about how to make lessons more interesting and how to motivate students to continue learning.

The teachers, parents and the headmaster of the English department were interviewed in order to get additional information.

### 3.4. VARIABLES

#### DEPENDENT VARIABLES

To motivate students to learn a second language.

To learn grammar, vocabulary and acquire specific information through the second language.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES:

ACTIVE VARIABLE: The study of a subject in the target language.

ACTIVE VARIABLE: Subjects taught in the target language.

### 3.5. TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS FOR GATHERING DATA

The data was analyzed in a qualitative way because most of it relates to the attitudes and behaviors toward the study of English, and they are almost impossible to be tabulated in a quantitative way.

The background investigation followed the guidelines provided by the questionnaires students, teachers and parents had to answer, and it included topics as the characteristics teachers must have, how a lesson has to be planned, and also how to improve the way evaluation is carried out, etc.

As this is a research done in class with the students, and that is going to have practical implications for the success of English teaching and learning, the methods used in order to obtain information were:

- Questionnaires designed to the director of the English department, parents, teachers and students.
- Interviews with students, parents, and teachers.
- Progress and achievement tests.
- Observation of the Science, Handicraft, Math, Social Studies and English classrooms.
- Observation of the Science, Language, Handicrafts, English, Social Studies and Math lessons.
- Homework and notebooks presentation.
- Extra activities such as role plays.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRACTICAL RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM CONTEXT**

#### **4.1. QUESTIONNAIRES RESULTS**

##### **4.1.1. STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS**

The students of sixth grade were asked by a person who was not their current teacher to answer a questionnaire about their curriculum preferences. At the beginning the teacher explained that the questionnaire was really important to improve the way lessons were taught. They were said that there was no need to write a name, but that they had to be sincere.

The questionnaire was written in Spanish because that is the students' first language so I considered it will be easier for them to express their ideas.

According to the students' answers the subjects they like the most are: Math, Handicrafts and Science. It has to be taken into account that two of these subjects are taught in English. Physical Education, Music and

Social Studies occupied the fourth, fifth and sixth place in the students' preferences. Finally, English and Language have the seventh and eighth places.

It is important to note that students placed English in one of the last positions of their preferences, while they ranked Science and Handicrafts, two subjects taught in English, in the first positions.

The second question asked students why they study English. Most of them answered that they study this subject because it is very useful. Some of them said that they study English because they like it. And a few of them said that they are obligated by the school to take that subject and that is why they study it.

The third question asked students if they would like to learn other subjects in English, half plus one said that they would not like to receive more subjects in their second language. Among their reasons they said that Spanish is easier and they also said that English is a difficult language.

Students said that they would like to receive subjects such as Social Studies, Physical Education, history, Biology, and American culture in English. These answers show that students are interested in the culture of one of the countries that speak English as a first language.

The next question asked students if they prefer to speak English correctly or to write it correctly, most of them answered that they prefer the first option. It seems clear that students would like more to communicate in their second language in an oral way. In other words, they prefer to speak rather than write.

The sixth question asked students if they preferred to study English or a subject in English, and most of them preferred to receive a subject in English.

The next question asked students to choose which subject in English they liked the most. The majority of them chose Science. The reasons they gave are:



- Science is an understandable subject.
- It is very important and nice.
- It is interesting and makes people use difficult words.
- One of the students wants to be a doctor this reason shows that the student has an instrumental motivation.
- The teacher is nice and good and she has patience to treat students.

Question number 8 asked students their opinion about the materials used in the lessons taught in English. Most of them think that the materials are difficult, some think that the materials are attractive and amusing and few of them think that they are boring, and ugly.

The next question was about the materials used in the Science class. Most of the students think that the materials used are amusing and just a few of them think that they are boring and difficult.

Question number ten asked students about the subject in English that they feel more motivated to study. 8 students, which are the majority, chose Science, their reasons were:

- I like plants and Science.
- I want to be a doctor and this subject will help me reach my goal.
- I like to learn new things.
- I know more things about Science than English.
- In the Science class I can speak English more than in the English class itself.

Students were asked to propose ideas to improve the English class. They answered:

- Teachers should be more demanding.
- Lessons should be more entertaining and less boring.
- There must be more group work.
- Students want to be heard.
- Students do not want to spend the whole hour reading and writing.

- Students want to do more projects.
- They want to learn by playing.
- Lessons should be more creative.
- They want teachers to explain slowly.
- Teachers should be more patient.

The next question asked students to answer if they would like to receive more hours of English. All of them answered in a negative way. It seems that they misunderstood the question because their reasons relate the question specifically to the subject of English and not to a subject in that language.

The reasons they gave were the following:

- I would not like to receive more hours of English because the teacher is not patient.
- I have English two hours a day.
- I do not like English.
- The class is a little bit boring.
- To receive more English hours would drive me crazy.

Question thirteen asked students about what they liked the most of the English class. They answered:

- Everything (1 student).
- The language (two students).
- To travel (2 students)
- The English accent. (2 students).
- The book (1 student)
- Nothing (2 students).
- To read (1 student).
- The subject of handicraft (1 student).
- To speak the language (1 student).

The following question asked students what they do not like of English and they answered:

- To study (1 student).
- The teacher (4 students).

- Everything (2 students).
- To write in English (2 students)
- The book (1 student).
- Nothing (1 student).
- It is a new language.

The answers show that students confuse the language with the English subject.

The next question asked students if they would like to have other activities related to English during the afternoon. Only four answered yes, the rest answered no. It seems that they thought that the question asked them if they would like to receive English lessons during the afternoon.

Students answered that the activities related to English they do are to speak English with their relatives and to have lessons.

#### 4.1.2. CONCLUSIONS OF THE CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRES.

After tabulating the questionnaires done by the students I could come up with the following conclusions:

Students placed two subjects taught in English on the first three places of the ranking, this fact shows that it can be really advisable to teach English through a specific subject. It seems that teaching another subject in this language can be very profitable because students have the option of studying interesting things while they learn a new language.

Most of the students agree that it is very important to learn English because it is very useful to know another language. Even if studying English is an instrumental motivation which will allow the students to succeed in future life, this can help them do an effort in order to learn it.

Four students answered that they study English because that class is obligatory at their school. This is not a valuable motivation because it is going to last only during the school years. Students have to find another kind of motivation if they really want to speak this language correctly.

It is important to remark that five students study English because they like this subject. It is very recommendable to have this kind of motivation because it will help the students to overcome any problem in order to learn the language.

Most of the students do not want to take other lessons in English, it seems that they did not understand the question and they thought that the question asked them if they would like to have more English hours per day, therefore they answered in negative way. The results show that the English class is not popular among students.

Most of the students asked, answered that they would prefer to speak English rather than write in this language. They think that it is more important to communicate in an oral rather than in a written way. Science and Handicrafts are subjects that do not ask students to write in a perfect way, these are subjects that help students practice listening comprehension, reading and speaking and obviously to acquire specific knowledge.

Students like the Science class because they feel apathy for the teacher and this factor seems to affect their preferences about the subject. Other important thing is that students like to learn new vocabulary and practice it in oral activities. They seem to incorporate new vocabulary very easily.

They like to learn interesting things and Science is a subject that can attract their attention easily because it is about animals and plants.

According to the students the materials which are books and photocopies are difficult. It can be very recommendable to check if the textbooks are adequate to the students' level, because if they are too difficult students can get discouraged to study the language.

Most of the students think that the materials used in the science class are amusing. The book used for this class has many puzzles, questionnaires, experiments and other activities that keep students interested and discovering facts by themselves. The workbook does not have an

attractive design and it does not have colors, but the book the teacher uses to show to the class has many photos and graphic sources to learn. This last resource, the colorful book is not used by the students because it is really expensive, so the school principals decided that to spend that quantity of money on a book was excessive.

Most of the students would like the English classes to be more interesting and they really would like to play in order to learn.

According to the questionnaire most of the students feel more motivated in the Science class, because they have the opportunity to do oral activities and learn new vocabulary. Even if learning words and speaking activities are crucial in an English class, students spend more time doing this kind of activities during the science class.

Students gave many suggestions to improve the English and Science lessons. They propose to have more group and oral activities. They would also like to have creative lessons and to learn by playing.

Even if they feel motivated in the Science and Handicraft lessons they do not want to have more English hours a day, because they think that they are going to receive that class instead of another subject in that language.

Students are motivated to study English because they would like to travel in the future and they know that the language is very necessary. A few students do not like the language, sometimes that is a teachers' fault because it is important to present the language in an attractive way and encourage students to learn it. Sometimes students think that the language is difficult so teachers are the ones that have to convince them that they are capable to learn it.

Even if the students do not seem to do any extracurricular activity related to English, it is important to encourage them to read books, watch films and listen to music in that language, so they will be interested in learning.

#### 4.1.3. RESULTS OF THE PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

According to the parents the students of sixth grade prefer Math, Science and Handicraft. It is important to note that Science and Handicraft are subjects taught in English.

Most of the parents answered that their children obtain better results and felt more motivated in Science and Math. Even if these subjects are known to be hard and are the ones where students have to do homework and study, it seems that they enjoy learning them and they get good grades.

The subjects that parents think their children dislike and get bad grades in are Language and English. English is a subject that does not seem to be popular among students but they like to receive lessons in that language.

Parents think that their children should receive other subjects in English, because for them it is necessary to learn that language. They also think that Science is a subject that is helping their children to use the language and practice. Parents agree that their children must communicate through that language. They also suggested that children should learn English through a different method for example the one used in other classes.

Some of the subjects that could be taught in English are Computer Systems, Math, Geography, History, and Language.

The suggestions parents gave to improve the learning of English are:

- The school should be provided with more didactic materials.
- To have more activities in English.
- To use more updated resources for learning.
- To change the methodology.

Most of the parents think that the English level of their children is good.

## 4.2. INTERVIEWS

### 4.2.1. INTERVIEW TO THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR.

The director of the English Department of Colegio Metropolitano is Verónica Stacey. She coordinates all the programs, methods, and materials used in any English classroom from kinder garden to senior year. She is also charged of hiring English teachers.

#### 1. What is the objective of the school by teaching lessons in English?

The objective of the school is to prepare students for a globalized world where English is an important tool for communication.

#### 2. Which are the subjects taught in English at the School?

These subjects are Economics, Sociology, Literature, Current Events, Biology, Handicraft, Science, History and Social Studies.

#### 3. What is the percentage of the subjects taught in English to the students of sixth grade?

It is almost the 50% of the entire curriculum.

#### 4. Will this percentage increase as the students pass to the next course?

Yes, the students will receive more subjects in English as they grow and pass to the next grade.

#### 5. Do you think that the elementary school students are motivated to study a second language?

Yes, they are very motivated to learn English.

6. What are the activities done by the school in order to motivate the students to learn a second language?

Students receive many interesting subjects in English. They also have the opportunity to participate in contests done at the school or outside it.

7. Is it easy to find materials to teach English?

Yes, it is easy to find didactic materials and courses to train teachers.

8. What would you suggest the teachers in order to make their lessons interesting and amusing?

I would suggest them to update their lessons, to continue studying, and to look for interesting and modern materials.

9. What are the factors that affect the students' success when they learn another language?

The factors that affect the success of the second language learning are: the teachers, the materials used and the English environment that the school has for the children.

10. What would you recommend to the students' parents that notice their kids are not motivated to study a second language?

Most of the students that are not motivated to learn a second language are the ones that have just entered the school so they have a basic level. I recommend the parents to register their children in the English academy so their level is going to improve and they are going to feel more comfortable during the English lessons.

#### 4.2.2. TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS

Some sixth grade teachers were interviewed to see what their vision about the teaching of a second language was and to know how they motivate and manage their students.



#### 4.2.3. RESULTS OF THE TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS

After interviewing the teachers of sixth grade I could get many good ideas about how to know if the students are motivated and what kind of activities students want to do in order to learn.

Most of the teachers said that their students are motivated to learn English, but not all of them think that Science and English are ranked on the first places of the students preferences.

Teachers think that students like to do creative and practical activities that let them learn by doing things.

Students are more motivated when they want to do more activities, when they are concentrated, when they look happy and cooperate with the teacher and with their friends. If they are concentrated and do a good work teachers think that students are motivated to learn the subjects they teach.

Most of the teachers take into account the ideas their students gave while planning the lessons.

Teachers encourage their students to participate in class by giving them stickers, or by talking to them. Teachers also plan interesting lessons, make contests with students and play with them.

According to their teachers, students like to act role plays, to have an active participation in activities like games, to do reading activities, to participate in contests, and to paint.

Teachers dedicate an average of 65% of the hour to do speaking activities and most of them are based on a certain topic.

#### 4.3. FORMAL EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

As the physical environment is an important factor that determines the motivation to study, I designed a questionnaire about the different classrooms students have to assist in order to receive their lessons. The questionnaire is located in the appendixes.

After observing the classrooms I obtained the following results:

All of the classrooms are well illuminated.

The classrooms do not have a CD player, a T.V. or a tape recorder. All of the classrooms have learning posters and bookshelves where the books and notebooks are perfectly organized. They have two boards, comfortable tables and chairs, and enough materials to write.

The students count with the necessary books and notebooks to learn, sometimes they leave them in the classroom and other times they take them home to study or do homework.

The classrooms are cleaned up every day after the lessons.

Only the English classroom has a semi circle organization of tables and chairs, the rest of the classrooms have the chairs and tables organized in groups.

The classrooms have windows toward the gardens and courts but they are located on the second floor. Only the Handicraft classroom has windows toward the stairs where students can be distracted by the people that go upstairs and downstairs. Even if the teachers have the windows opened during all the day students are not distracted by the noise coming from outside.

The walls are light gray which is not a really motivating or happy color but the posters that teachers stick against the walls make the classrooms look more attractive.

At noon the temperature of the Science class tends to increase but it is perfect to learn if the windows and door are open. It is important to note that the school is located in a valley.

Students have some of their work hung on the walls of their Handicraft, Science and Language classroom, it is important to note that they feel more motivated to do an effort and a better job when they know their work is going to be presented and hung on the wall.

#### 4.4. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' NOTEBOOKS AND BOOKS

Notebook and book analysis included the revision of the handwriting, pictures, charts and the information written on them.

After reviewing the students' notebooks and books I discovered that most of them have a good presentation, except for the language notebook which does not have pictures and is written using the same ink color. I could discover that students do not feel motivated to study that subject and they show their disapproval in the way they use their materials.

The English and Science notebooks have many explanatory pictures where students exemplified the new words. They seem to enjoy this kind of exercises because only two students drew ugly pictures and wrote with a terrible handwriting.

Most of the students use different colors of pens to write, so the notebooks have a lot of colors.

Students tend to have a lot of spelling mistakes, but on the Science and English notebooks this kind of errors tend to increase. It can be because English is not their native language and they do not know how to write the words.

The Science books have a good and understandable handwriting but they do not have colored pictures so students had painted some of the drawings by themselves. It is important to note that students were not asked to color the pictures but they did it probably because they were

interested in improving the books' presentation and that fact certainly shows that they are motivated to learn.

I also observed the way they have their books, some of them have colorful coverings but some of the boys had destroyed the covers and they had drawn pictures and painted them, that is another way to show that they are motivated because they decorated their books and notebooks so they can look better. Only two students had destroyed the coverings and never replaced them, those books look really old and damaged.

#### 4.5 TESTS ANALYSIS

It is hard to analyze the tests because they do not really reflect the students' motivation. One of the elements that reflect the students' motivation is the grades because they can tell if students are improving or not.

The grades show that some students improved their performance during the second term in comparison to the grades they obtained after the first three months of school. This can show many important things:

- Students got used to the teacher, her method to teach and her way to evaluate.
- Students learned more things which helped them to improve their grades.
- Students made an effort to improve their grades.
- Teachers have known their students for three months and know how to evaluate them.
- Students are more motivated to study now than at the beginning of the year.

It is important to say that in the school tests represent 20% of the total grade, the other 80% represents the grades students get at the end of each month. The grade students get each month is the average of class participation, homework, oral and written lessons and special assignments therefore I think that it is better to observe the way students behave in the classroom, their homework and the way they do their tests in order to know if they are motivated to study.

#### 4.5.1 TYPES OF TESTS

The types of tests implemented were Progress and Achievement ones. Progress tests are the ones used to check the students' understanding of a certain topic or lesson and to decide if the methods used to teach were correct or if there is a need to change them.

Two progress tests were designed based on two different topics. The first one was about rocks and minerals, a topic that not all the students liked. The other progress test was about the planets and the space, which was one of the topics that kids like the most.

Both progress tests evaluate performance, because they are designed to test the use of the language. They can also be classified as integrative assessments because students are not asked to illustrate the use of a certain grammar rule but they have to use the language to answer open questions and they have to demonstrate if they understand a reading and do a practical exercise with the information obtained from it.

The tests also evaluate one receptive skill, in this case reading, and one productive skill which is writing. Students had to read the questions and answer them using their own words and applying information they received during the science lessons.

Progress tests are valuable because they can be used to obtain information about the method of teaching and the materials used.

As the first progressive test was based on rocks it is important to describe the lessons that students received about this topic. As all the students know something about rocks and minerals, they were asked to talk about all the previous information they have about them. Then the teacher used picture cards and drawings to explain the differences among Igneous, Metamorphic and Sedimentary rocks. Then, students were asked to describe each kind of rock, and finally they had to use their workbook as well as reference sources to do some oral and written activities.

The materials used during the lessons were rocks, pictures, the workbook and dictionaries. Students were also asked to bring different rocks to be classified.

Even if the topic was not really interesting for students, they seemed to understand the differences and properties of rocks therefore I decided to evaluate the students' progress using a test.

It is important to note that Science and Handicraft teachers are not asked to grade the use of language but the content of the tests. For this time I decided to pay more attention to the students' language performance in order to compare it with the results obtained from the English tests.

The second progress test used was based on the planetary system and all about the space. The space is a topic that all of the students liked, even the ones that had a lot of trouble with the language loved this chapter, this test is also included in the appendixes. Only two of the thirteen students got a grade under 17, both of them admitted not to have studied and they failed the questions related with scientific names and facts.

At the beginning of July, the end of the academic year, students were asked to answer an achievement test that contained all the information studied during the third term.

The achievement test included in the appendixes is a wide scale test that evaluates three skills and specific knowledge about science. It evaluates language performance because students are asked to use the language to show what they have learned during the last three months. It is also an indirect testing and an integrative assessment because it does not ask the students to clarify or exemplify any grammar rule.

The test evaluates both a receptive skill –reading- and a productive skill –writing-. When they do not understand a question they have to ask the teacher and most of the times they find out the correct answer when they hear the question from the teacher, so they are also practicing listening.

This achievement test is going to be used to plan future courses as well as to know what teachers have to explain next year. Students required 40

minutes to answer all the questions correctly, and the teacher needed less than an hour to correct all the students' tests. It was really easy to correct all the tests and the teacher did not require the help of other person.

The achievement test includes a text where students have to use some of the vocabulary they learned in order to complete the phrases. This kind of exercise is very good to evaluate reading comprehension and the use of new words. Students have to express what they know using their own words to answer most of the questions, and this free way to answer is good to test performance. There is also a match exercise where students have to relate concepts and definitions, so they have to show that they understood some of the concepts related to science, this is also a good way to evaluate reading comprehension. The students do not have to stick to a grammar rule they can answer open questions using any kind of expression that helps them do it.

A week before the test, the Science teacher did many reviews to have students ready. Students had to study almost ten pages, so they were not overcharged with material to go through. When students realize that they dominate the topic they feel more motivated and get better results.

Only three students got grades under 17 in the achievement test, two of them did a great effort and one of them did not study for the test, so he was so disappointed that he did not even try to answer all the questions, leaving some of them in blank.

It is important to say that most of the students were very happy and said that the test was really easy, some of them said that they did not have to study a lot because they remembered the concepts from the previous lessons, so all the practice and exercises really worth it.

The students did an achievement test in the English class that is also included in the appendixes, the teacher said that they did a good job, at least most of them have gotten great grades.

#### 4.5.2. RESULTS OF THE TESTS

The students did the progress test about rocks during the third week of May. The test was graded over 11 and only 3 students received a bad grade. It is important to note that these four students do not have the same language level as the rest of the class.

Most of the students failed on the questions about things that they were supposed to memorize, but the questions where they had to summarize a text or to write the main idea of a paragraph, or even to draw what they had understood were successfully answered.

Only one of the students answered the questions using expressions or textual ideas taken from the Science book, which shows that they are acquiring the knowledge and using the target language to express it.

It is important to note that this test was based on rocks, which are considered one of the most boring topics by all the students, and the one that they found hard to understand.

The second progress test was based on the solar system, this topic seems to be very interesting and most of the students had a lot of previous knowledge about it.

#### 4.6. OTHER WAYS OF EVALUATION USED

Besides written tests, there were used some other mechanisms of evaluation. Teachers are supposed to evaluate the oral performance of their students. Grading the oral performance can become a subjective activity and teachers are not always aware of what they have to evaluate, therefore I used some ideas from the holistic scales of Carroll, B. J. and I included the scales used in the appendices.

The following holistic scales were used to classify students during the English, Science and Handicraft lessons because these are the classes where students use the target language.



After observing students and evaluating them, students were located as follows:

Eight students were classified in the first category, because they can understand questions and directions and they answer all the questions clearly. They read fluently and understand the information read.

No students were included in the second category, where students understand what they hear but make some mistakes both grammatical and phonetic when talking. In this category they read fluently and understand most of what they read.

Only one student was placed in the third category because he asks for repetition and clarification when being talked. He also makes many mistakes while talking but can be understood. He has to read several times the same text before getting the main idea or understanding what the text is about.

Two students entered in the fourth group because they do not understand the language at normal speed. They do not participate in the conversation. They do not speak fluently and make a lot of mistakes. They use L1 vocabulary and need to read a text slowly and to check the dictionary to understand.

Two students were placed in the fifth category because they have a lot of difficulty to understand conversation. The students mix up the first with the target language. They cannot read a text without a dictionary and have to read many times the same text before getting the main idea. Those students are the ones that required extra lessons to understand their English classes and were the least motivated in the lessons that used that language.

#### 4.7. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

In order to do the classroom observation I had to apply the observation guide designed using the Flanders' Interaction Analysis categories (FIAC) and the Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) as a reference.

It is important to note that students and teachers are not natural when they are observed so some of the observations were done through the window of the classroom or behind the door in order to obtain precise information.

The observations were carried out in the Science, Handicraft, Math, English and Social Studies classrooms, because they are the subjects where students feel the most and least motivated as in the case of Social studies.

Another class observation was done during the month of June, it included Science, English, Math, Social Studies, and Handicrafts lessons. Even if students knew that there was a camera they were more natural that time.

## 1. TEACHER TALK

### a) Praises or encourages the students.

The Science and English teachers are the ones that encourage their students the most when they go to the board or are doing any activity. They use phrases as: "I know you can do it", "It is easy for you", "You did a great job", "Excellent", "Great answer or interesting question", "You will do better next time", etc.

The Social studies teacher gets mad when students do not answer correctly, so they are afraid most of the time to raise their hands or take a chance and try to participate.

The Handicraft and Math teachers never encourage their students they just tell them what to do.

### b) Accepts or uses ideas and suggestions of students.

The Science and Handicraft teachers take suggestions from the students when they look for examples or the ways to do experiments or art work.

The English teacher is always asking questions, so is constantly using the students' ideas to teach.

The Math teacher uses the students' suggestions to solve problems and she asks many questions to help students think about possible ways to do an exercise.

c) Asks questions.

All of the teachers ask questions, but the Math, English and Science teachers ask questions where students have to think and not only say things by heart. Students love the questions of the Math teacher because they are related with real life and they have to come up with ideas in order to solve problems.

Most of the English teacher's questions ask students to use new vocabulary or complete a story they have read, so they love to do this exercise.

All of the teachers ask comprehension questions to see if the lessons were understood.

d) Answers questions.

All the teachers take time to answer questions, they say that they will answer them at the end of the class but they do it as soon as a student asks.

e) How much time does the teacher dedicate to lecture the students?

The Handicraft teacher only lectures her students 5% of the class time. The Science teacher uses 20% of the time to lecture her students. The Math teacher uses 70% of the time to do it. Only the Social studies teacher uses 80% of the time to explain the lesson, so students looked bored almost all the time.

The Science teacher has many activities to do with her students, she lectures her students when the activity they are doing requires an explanation but they are always doing something so they do not get bored, and the same happens with the English, Math and Handicraft teachers.

f) Does the teacher criticize the students or make them feel bad if they make mistakes?

The Science, Math and English teachers talk with the students that are not behaving in a good way privately at the end of the class, while the Social studies teacher criticizes them in public when they make a mistake, this last observation was noted from outside the classroom because when the camera was on there were no critics toward students.

g) Does the teacher plan interesting and funny activities?

During the Math class students had to do some exercises that at the beginning were not funny until they became easy to students so they got more motivated.

The handicraft teacher does not use a text book so she plans interesting lessons where students have to work in projects all the time, the other teachers have text books to work with, so this factor makes the planning really hard, because they have less time to plan interesting lessons and they have a fixed plan to follow.

h) Does the teacher correct immediately every single mistake students do?

All of the teachers correct the mistakes at the moment they are made, but the Math, Science, Handicraft and English teachers are really charming with the students so they do not feel mad or sad when corrected.

The English and Science teachers rephrase what the students say to correct their mistakes, for example one of the students said: "Mars and Venus is part of the inner planets" and the teacher said "Yes, Mars and Venus are inner planets".

The English teachers also complete all the students' sentences to make them understandable.

i) Does the teacher give directions before every activity?

All the teachers explain the activity before they start to do it with the students. The Science, Math, Handicraft and English teachers go around

the class to help the students that did not understand directions easily, so the lessons for them are more personalized.

j) Does the teacher criticize the students' behavior and mistakes aloud?

Only the social studies teacher criticizes her students aloud, and they seem to be scared when they make a mistake.

k) Does the teacher attract the attention of the students during most of the time?

Students seem to be more concentrated when they are doing the exercises by themselves than when they are listening to an explanation that is taking a lot of the time.

The same three students seem to be distracted during all the lessons but handicraft. They do not participate they just copy all the information from the board and wait for the rest of the class to answer questions for them.

They seem to be more concentrated in the Handicraft and Math classes than in the others. During the social studies class they tend to be concentrated otherwise the teacher seems to get mad.

## 2. STUDENT TALK

a) Do students feel free to ask and answer questions?

In most of the classes they feel free to ask any question, and the teachers seem really open to answer them.

b) Do students feel anxious or insecure about taking part in the lesson?

Three of the students who have problems to speak English are clearly a little bit insecure when they are asked or when they have to talk in public, the rest seem to enjoy the oral activities.

Most of the students remain silent during all the Social Studies lessons because the teacher seems to be very serious and angry when she listens any sound.

c) Are the students noisy or quiet?

In the Science, Handicraft and English class they seem noisy when there is a contest or an activity where they are required to do group work. Students are quieter during the explanations or evaluations.

In the social studies class students are really quiet during all the time.

d) Do students look boring?

During the explanations if they take more than five minutes students look really boring, so they start to play with their materials or to look at the windows and pictures they have on the walls or in their books.

e) Do students have to do activities that appear on the book?

In the Science, English and Social studies classes they have to do a lot of the activities that are on their text books.

The Math teacher does not have to use a book so students solve the problems she brings in separate pieces of papers.

g) Are all of the students active during the class?

The students are very active during the Handicraft lessons. During the English and Science classes they have many activities that require their active participation but they remain passive during the explanations and oral evaluations.

The social studies class requires them to be passive almost all the time, but the time they have to draw maps.

During most of the Math class students were passive because they were listening to the teacher's explanations, but during the exercise time

students were more active. Students were copying things from the board almost all the time they did not seem bored but not amused either.

h) Do students interact with the teacher?

They interact with the Science, English, Math, and Handicraft teachers most of the time. In all these classes they have to raise their hands if they want to speak, but most of the time they forget to do that because they seem to enjoy the lessons so they are more spontaneous.

The English and Science teachers do open questions all the time that motivate students to feel free to speak.

After observing the lessons I found out other interesting information. Students took turns to talk in each class, but in the Science class it was hard for them to wait until the teacher gives them the opportunity to speak. It seems that the students were really motivated to answer questions and did not want to wait until their turns come. It was also hard for them to express in English all the things that they had to say, so they tended to ask "how can I say .....in English?" all the time. It was a really good way to motivate students to use the second language.

It is important to mention that the classrooms where students learn English are the ones that have more decorations and papers on the walls, the other classrooms had a little bit of posters and were less attractive.

Obviously students are not as fluent in English as they are in their native language, and sometimes they speak Spanish when the teacher is not present or paying attention, for example during the Handicraft class students talked in Spanish when the teacher was helping other group, and one of them asked questions to the teacher using that language.

Most of the teachers were all the time close to the students to answer questions and that helps make them take part in the lesson and to discover what their mistakes are.

As part of the class observation it was necessary to videotape the projects exposition that took place the 26<sup>th</sup> May. Parents were invited to that

exposition therefore the school was decorated and the students were very happy to present their projects.

Students chose the theme of their presentations. They made a lot of research about each topic and built models with different kinds of materials. They were very happy while presenting their projects to their parents and got dressed according to each presentation. They did not talk by heart and it was clear that they were really interested in their theme and well prepared to any question. All of these factors motivated them to study hard and continue learning.

The students that are not good at speaking in public felt free and less anxious than in normal circumstances, they were also happy to cooperate, talk and work in groups and in front of people.

#### 4.8. ACTIVITIES DONE TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS.

##### ROLE PLAY

During the month of May and after seeing some of the results of the research, some activities were planned in order to motivate students, because at the end of the year students are tired and less motivated than at the beginning. Therefore I wrote a role play based on the story of the “Shoemaker and the elves” that was carried out by students that had a lot of trouble with the science class during all the year. This role play is included in the appendixes and has some modifications to the original tale because during that time students were learning about occupations and were really exited about that topic.

To select students I made a list of the learners that English teachers said were the ones that were not a good choice, then I checked the reports about what their parents said about the subjects they had a lot of trouble with, finally I talked to them and they seemed really exited with the idea of being part of the tale. I distributed invitations to the parents of the students selected and to the other parents. I designed the stenography and placed chairs around the place where the role play was going to take place.



Almost sixty parents came to the presentation even if their children were not part of it. Although we practiced during four weeks some of the students made mistakes, they were understandably nervous. Some of them designed their own costumes which was more motivating.

After the role play was presented the twelve students that participated were happier during the lessons and it seemed that their self-esteem increased because most of them have never had the chance to be part of any presentation and they were the ones that always had to do backstage works while their friends were applauded.

Besides the role play I designed some activities that included handicraft works related to science, for example students built models of the solar system using recycled materials, they also made posters of the galaxies using their own ideas and they brought curious things to explain the states of the matter.

At the end of each unit there was a contest about what they learned and they obtained extra points which was a good way to motivate them.

#### 4.9. CLASSROOM INTERACTION

According to what students said about their lessons, it seems that they really enjoy group work or doing any kind of activity in pairs, therefore a tiny questionnaire was designed to see if teachers use different kinds of activities involving interactions between students to teach.

Teachers were asked to write a tiny report about the frequency and the kinds of activities they did with students. At the end of the week they confronted their report with the students' ideas and answered some of the questions of the guide designed.

The results were the following:

Students do not do group work during the English and Math classes, both teachers prefer individual work. The Handicraft, Social Studies and Science students do group work almost all the weeks.

The group of learners studied seems to be very competitive but at the same time they like to cooperate with each other.

All the teachers do more individual work than group work because that is a good way to evaluate the students' performance. Individual work also keeps students quieter than group work and for some of them is a good way to make them participate.

The Social studies teacher has debates every week. The Handicraft teacher does this activity once a month and the Science teacher at end of each unit.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **5.1 CONCLUSIONS**

After working with the students, observing their classrooms and lessons, talking to parents, and teachers I found out many interesting conclusions that will lead to improve my teaching as well as the other English teachers of the school.

Motivation to learn is the most important factor that leads to the success in learning a second language. Even if students do not have a great ability to speak a second language or a place to practice it every day, they will always make an effort if they are motivated to do it.

Learning another language through a specific subject can be very good and profitable because students have the option to study interesting things while they learn a new language and the subject they are studying in English will motivate them to learn that language.

Content based learning helps students to learn a language developing all its skills and not only the study of its grammar. Besides that, students learn to communicate in that language without being asked to use

specific expressions and constructions. Finally, they can apply all the skills they use in other subjects.

The study of specific subjects in a second language can help teachers and students to do interesting group work and oral activities, as well as it helps students to use previous knowledge and it generates curiosity that will motivate students to learn.

Learning has to have a purpose. With young students the purpose of learning is not really clear so teachers have to help them discover the objective of everything they have to study.

Students always remember and learn better when they are doing the things and not only listening to the teacher's explanations. That is why I will recommend teachers to limit their lecture time to 5% or 10% of the total amount of class time.

Students enjoy the lesson if they play an active part in it. Students like to play in order to learn, they like to do amusing activities too, and content based learning provides teachers with interesting and motivating activities.

Teachers have to be creative and plan interesting lessons instead of having fixed textbook activities that have no relation with real life and that are not going to be useful to students.

Teacher attitudes toward the students, as well as the physical environment where students learn have an important relation to the motivation students demonstrate toward the subject.

It is important to take into account the suggestions students give because they are the most important part of the learning process so they are the ones that know what they need and want to learn.

## 5.2. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The most important limitation of the study was the time available to do the research and the way the answers received were not always the same as the information obtained after real observation.

Another limitation I had to face was the idea that some of the parents and two of the students kept seeing English as a difficult subject to learn. Some parents and teachers have the idea that their children were not able to learn such a hard subject if they even have problems to express themselves in their native language.

Even if the research had been based on the study of another language using a specific subject most of the time the investigation followed the line of the motivation to learn any subject.

It would be useful to do an investigation about the way a curriculum has to be planned in order to include the interests of the students as well as the real practicability of the things they learn.

Another important research can follow the line of how to design a study guide for students with learning difficulties or how to apply the theory of multiple intelligences into the teaching a second language program.



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## APPENDIX 1

### TEST DE MOTIVACIÓN HACIA EL ESTUDIO DE UNA LENGUA EXTRANJERA

El propósito del siguiente cuestionario es obtener información sobre el grado de motivación que presentan los alumnos de sexto año hacia el estudio del inglés como lengua extranjera.

La información obtenida ayudará a los profesores de esta área a mejorar el método empleado para la enseñanza de la segunda lengua y motivar a los alumnos para conseguir mejores resultados en el aprendizaje.

1. Ordena las siguientes materias del 1 al 8 de acuerdo a tus preferencias, siendo 1 la que más te gusta y 8 la que menos te gusta.

|                          |              |                   |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| _____ Estudios Sociales  | _____ Inglés | _____ Matemáticas |
| _____ Ciencias Naturales | _____ Arte   | _____ Lenguaje    |
| _____ Educación Física   | _____ Música |                   |

2. ¿Cuáles son las razones por las que estudias inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_ Porque es una materia obligatoria impuesta por el colegio.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Porque es una materia muy útil.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Porque me gusta.

Otra escribe tus razones personales \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Te gustaría estudiar otras materias en inglés?

Sí No  
¿Cuáles?

\_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Si la respuesta anterior fue sí, contesta ¿cuál materia te gustaría estudiar en inglés?

---

5. Te interesa más:

Hablar en inglés correctamente \_\_\_\_\_

Escribir correctamente en inglés \_\_\_\_\_

6. ¿Qué preferirías estudiar: la materia de inglés o una materia como ciencias en inglés?

---

7. ¿Entre las materias que tienes en otro idioma cuál prefieres y por qué?

---

8. ¿El material que se utiliza en las clases que tienes en inglés es?

|                               |                 |               |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| _____ entretenido             | _____ aburrido  | _____ difícil |
| _____ fácil                   | _____ atractivo | _____ feo     |
| _____ otro (especifica) _____ |                 |               |

9. ¿El material didáctico que se utiliza en la clase de ciencias es?

|                               |                 |               |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| _____ Entretenido             | _____ aburrido  | _____ difícil |
| _____ Fácil                   | _____ atractivo | _____ feo     |
| _____ Otro (especifica) _____ |                 |               |

10. ¿Cuál es la materia en inglés en la que te sientes más motivado?

\_\_\_\_\_ ¿por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

11. ¿Qué propondrías para que las clases en inglés (ciencias, arte e inglés) sean más entretenidas e interesantes?

---

12. ¿Te gustaría tener más horas de inglés en la escuela?

Sí \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

13. ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta del inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_

14. ¿Qué es lo que menos te gusta del inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_

15. ¿Realizas actividades relacionadas con el inglés fuera del horario de clases?

Sí \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

¿Cuáles son? \_\_\_\_\_

Muchas gracias por tu colaboración.

## APPENDIX 2

### TEST DE MOTIVACIÓN HACIA EL ESTUDIO DE UNA LENGUA EXTRANJERA

El propósito del siguiente cuestionario es obtener información sobre el grado de motivación que presentan los alumnos de sexto año hacia el estudio del inglés como lengua extranjera.

La información obtenida ayudará a los profesores de esta área a mejorar el método empleado para la enseñanza de la segunda lengua y motivar a los alumnos para conseguir mejores resultados en el aprendizaje.

1. ¿Cuáles considera usted que son las materias preferidas por su hijo?  
(Ordénelas de acuerdo a las preferencias del niño/a)

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

2. Tomando en cuenta la historia estudiantil de su hijo, ¿cuáles son las materias en que ha tenido mejores calificaciones y con las que se ha sentido más motivado?

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

3. ¿Cuáles son las materias en las que su hijo ha tenido dificultad y con las que se ha sentido menos motivado?

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

4. ¿Está de acuerdo con la enseñanza de inglés mediante una materia específica como ciencias naturales?

Sí \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Cree usted que deben impartirse otras materias en inglés?

Sí \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ ¿cuáles?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Usted ha escogido un colegio bilingüe para su hijo porque el inglés es un idioma:

\_\_\_\_\_ necesario \_\_\_\_\_ lindo \_\_\_\_\_ difícil  
\_\_\_\_\_ otra razón (especifique)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. ¿Cuáles serían sus sugerencias para mejorar la enseñanza de inglés en el colegio?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. ¿Considera que el nivel de inglés de su hijo (a) es:

bueno \_\_\_\_\_ mediano \_\_\_\_\_ malo \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Muchas gracias por su colaboración.

### APPENDIX 3

#### ENTREVISTA A LA DIRECTORA DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE INGLÉS DEL COLEGIO METROPOLITANO

El propósito del siguiente cuestionario es obtener información sobre el grado de motivación que presentan los alumnos de sexto año hacia el estudio del inglés como lengua extranjera.

La información obtenida ayudará a los profesores de esta área a mejorar el método empleado para la enseñanza de la segunda lengua y motivar a los alumnos para conseguir mejores resultados en el aprendizaje.

1. ¿Cuál es el objetivo del colegio al impartir materias en otro idioma?
2. ¿Cuáles son las materias impartidas en inglés en el Colegio Metropolitano?
3. ¿Qué porcentaje representan las materias impartidas en otro idioma del total del currículum en sexto año?
4. ¿Ese porcentaje tenderá a aumentar conforme pasen los años?
5. ¿Considera que los estudiantes de primaria se encuentran motivados a estudiar una segunda lengua?
6. ¿Cuáles son las actividades realizadas y tendientes a motivar a los estudiantes para que aprendan una lengua extranjera en el colegio?
7. ¿Es fácil conseguir materiales didácticos en inglés para impartir clases?
8. ¿Qué sugeriría a las profesoras a las que dirige para que las clases sean más entretenidas e interesantes?



9. ¿Cuáles son los factores que influyen en el éxito de los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua?
10. ¿Qué recomendaría a los padres de familia que notan que sus hijos se encuentran desmotivados en las clases de inglés?

## APPENDIX 4

### ENCUESTA A PROFESORES DE SEXTO AÑO

El propósito del siguiente cuestionario es obtener información sobre el grado de motivación que presentan los alumnos de sexto año hacia el estudio del inglés como lengua extranjera.

La información obtenida ayudará a los profesores de esta área a mejorar el método empleado para la enseñanza de la segunda lengua y motivar a los alumnos para conseguir mejores resultados en el aprendizaje.

1. ¿Considera usted que sus alumnos se encuentran motivados para estudiar inglés?
2. ¿Cuáles cree usted que son las materias preferidas por sus alumnos?  
¿Por qué?
3. ¿Cuáles son las actividades que más les gusta realizar a sus alumnos?
4. ¿Cuáles son los indicadores que le muestran que sus alumnos están motivados o no?
5. ¿Qué hace cuando sus alumnos le hacen preguntas sobre cuestiones no relacionadas con el tema de clase?
6. ¿Toma en cuenta las sugerencias y los intereses de los alumnos al momento de planificar las clases?
7. ¿Cómo anima a sus alumnos a participar en clase?
8. ¿Cuál es la actividad que prefiere realizar con sus alumnos?
9. ¿Cuánto tiempo dedica a actividades orales en clase?

10. ¿Las actividades orales que realiza con los alumnos son libres o siguen un temario en especial?

## APPENDIX 5

### CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

OBJECTIVE: One of the variables related with motivation is the environment where the students learn.

1. Is the class well illuminated?
2. Are there the necessary materials to teach a lesson?

|                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Tape recorder or CD player _____ | Board _____                         |
| Learning posters _____           | Comfortable chairs and tables _____ |
| A bookshelf or a place to keep   | Materials to write.                 |
| paper and books in order _____   | Picture cards _____                 |
| Others _____                     |                                     |

3. Do the students have the necessary books and notebooks to learn?
4. Is the classroom clean?
5. How are the chairs and tables organized?  
In rows \_\_\_\_\_ In groups \_\_\_\_\_ In a circle or semicircle \_\_\_\_\_
6. Noises from outside the classroom interfere with the activities done inside?
7. Do the colors of the walls motivate students to learn?
8. Can students be distracted by other people from outside the classroom?
9. Is the temperature of the class good to study?

APPENDIX 6  
COLEGIO METROPOLITANO  
SCIENCE TEST

This is a progress test designed to check if the students have understood the lesson about rocks. It was implemented before the motivation program started.

NAME:

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1. Write three different properties of minerals, and give examples of each one.
  
2. Write how igneous rocks form.
  
3. How is a sedimentary rock formed?
  
4. Complete the following sentences.
  - a) Heat and pressure change sedimentary rock to \_\_\_\_\_ rock.
  - b) Igneous rock is eroded and deposited at the bottom of the river, eventually forming \_\_\_\_\_ rock.
  - c) Completely melted rock erupts from a volcano and hardens to form \_\_\_\_\_ rock.
5. Read the selection below and write the main idea.

FROSTY BREAK – UPS

Weathering breaks the rocks on Earth's surface into smaller pieces. One of the processes that breaks up rocks is called *frost wedging*. Frost wedging is a mechanical process, meaning that it involves a physical, not a chemical, change. Rainwater seeps into the cracks in rocks and expands when it freezes, putting pressure on the joints in the rocks. In extreme climates, where there is a repeated cycle of freezing, this expansion puts extreme pressure on the rock joints, which eventually give way and split apart<sup>2</sup>.

Main idea \_\_\_\_\_

6. Draw a picture of the weathering process described in the text above.

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<sup>2</sup>Slavick M, Jones, R.: *Science*, U.S.A: Harcourt.  
p. 172.

APPENDIX 7  
COLEGIO METROPOLITANO  
SCIENCE TEST

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ 6TH GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

This is a progress test designed to check if the students have understood the lesson about the space. It was implemented after the motivation program started. (3 points)

II. Read the selection. Then complete the chart by comparing and contrasting asteroids and comets.

Although they may seem similar, asteroids and comets are very different. Asteroids are small rocky objects that can be as big as small planets or as small as basketballs. Most of our solar system's asteroids are found between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter in place called the Asteroid Belt. Some scientists believe that billions of years ago a large planet tried to form between Mars and Jupiter but has prevented from doing so by Jupiter's gravitational forces. The asteroids in the Asteroid Belt are thought to be pieces of that failed planet. Some asteroids even have other asteroids that orbit them like miniature moons.

Comets are rocky and icy bodies that have been compared to dirty snowballs. Unlike asteroids, most of which are located between Mars and Jupiter, comets orbit the sun from well beyond the orbit Pluto. Usually the core of a comet is smaller than an asteroid. When a comet nears the sun, its icy core melts, forming clouds of dust, gas and ice. The sun's energy then turns these clouds into comet tails that can measure several millions kilometers in length<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>Slavick M, Jones, R. *Science*, U.S.A: Harcourt. Page 173

|           | Appearance | Size | Orbit |
|-----------|------------|------|-------|
| Asteroids |            |      |       |
| Comets    |            |      |       |

II. Choose the answer that best completes the statement. (3 points)

- Some \_\_\_\_\_ are almost the size of small planets.  
a) Comets                                      b) asteroids                                      c) hemispheres
- In our solar system there are nine \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) Asteroids                                      b) comets                                      c) planets.
- Balls of ice that often have clouds surrounding them are \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Comets                                      b) planets                                      c) asteroids

III. Read the following sentences and substitute the vocabulary terms in italics with other words or phrases. (2 points)

- As it travels around the sun, Earth *rotates*  
As it travels around the sun, Earth \_\_\_\_\_.
- Planets, asteroids, and comets *move around* the sun.  
Planets, asteroids and, comets \_\_\_\_\_ the sun.

IV. Answer the following questions. (2 points)

- How are galaxies classified? \_\_\_\_\_
- What shape do irregular galaxies have? \_\_\_\_\_

V. Mark the following statements with True or False. If the statement is false, write a correction next to it. (2 points)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Many galaxies rotate around a core. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A nebula has no light on its own. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ A light-year is a unit of time. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The Milky Way is an irregular galaxy. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. Draw a picture of the sun and label its parts. (4 points)



## NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ 6th GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

Crust mantle core plate magma  
volcano Fault earthquake

The \_\_\_\_\_ is the Earth's center and its hottest layer. It is divided in two parts. The outer section is molten rock. Great pressure keeps the inner section solid. The middle layer of Earth is called the \_\_\_\_\_. It is made of hot, soft rock called \_\_\_\_\_. This hot, soft rock sometimes reaches Earth's upper layer through openings called \_\_\_\_\_. The hot, soft rock is called lava when it flows on Earth's surface crash together or scrape against one another, the release of energy causes an \_\_\_\_\_. The places where pieces of Earth's crust move can bend or break. These breaks can become \_\_\_\_\_.

a) \_\_\_\_\_ Many galaxies rotate around a core. \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_ A nebula has no light of its own. \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_ A light-year is a unit of time. \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_ The Milky Way is an irregular galaxy. \_\_\_\_\_

III. Choose the answer that best completes the statement. (3 points).

1 Some \_\_\_\_\_ are almost the size of small planets.

a) comets                      b) asteroids                      c) hemispheres

2. In our solar system there are nine \_\_\_\_\_.

a) Asteroids                      b) comets                      c) planets

3. Balls of ice that often have clouds surrounding them are \_\_\_\_\_.

a) Comets                      b) planets                      c) asteroids

IV. Match the terms in column A with the definitions in column B. (3 points)

**Column A**

Atmosphere

Climate

Precipitation

Global warming

Humidity

**Column B**

The weight of air.

water or moisture in the air.

rain or snow

the average of all weather conditions through all seasons over a period of time.

an abnormally rapid rise in Earth's average temperature caused by

excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Air pressure

blanket of air surrounding Earth

V. Complete the following chart about the rocks. (3 points)

| TYPE OF ROCK     | HOW ROCKS FORM                                    |
|------------------|---|
|                  | From melted rock that hardens.                    |
| Sedimentary rock |   |
|                  | From rock that has under great heat and pressure. |
|                  |   |

VI. Draw and label the picture of the sun. (2 points)

VII. Organize the steps of the stars' life cycle.(3.5 points)

a) Main – sequence star    b) nebula    c) red giant

d) expanding star      e) planetary nebula    f) protostar    g) white dwarf

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. Write three examples of matter (1.5 points)

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX 9  
COLEGIO METROPOLITANO  
ENGLISH EXAM

This test is an achievement exam used to evaluate students at the end of the third term.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Choose the correct answer.

1. Does this pen belong to the reporter?

- a) Yes, that is her pen.
- b) Yes, that is she pen.

2. When can we see the stars?

- a) We can see them before the sun goes down.
- b) We can see them after the sun goes down.

3. How does the reporter get information?

- a) She ask questions and listen carefully to the answers.
- b) She asks questions and listens carefully to the answers.

4. Where should I sit?

- a) Please sit in the chair.
- b) Please sit on the chair.

5. What should I bring to class?

- a) Bringing your paper and pencil.
- b) Bring your paper and pencil.

6. Where did you go last summer with your parents?

- a) I went to Guatemala with them.
- b) I went to Guatemala with they.

7. Were did you get your plane tickets?

- a) A travel agent sold them to we.
- b) A travel agent sold them to us.

8. Will you visit again?

- a) We'll visit if we are invited.
- b) We'll visit or we are invited.

9. What do you want to do in Mexico?

- a) I want to buy ice cream.
- b) I want to buying ice cream.

10. What are two good things about traveling?

- a) I like meeting new people but seeing new places.
- b) I like meeting new people and seeing new places.

II. Read the story "Spider soup" page 84-87 from the student's reading book and answer the following questions.

1. Why doesn't the spider let Water into his house?

2. What can you tell about Spider's character on the first page of the story?

3. Why doesn't Salt stay with Spider?

4. Why does Spider want Pepper to stay?

5. How does Spider feel after Soup Pot leaves?
6. If Spider had been nice to Water at the beginning of the story, would Spider be unhappy now? Why?
7. What is the lesson of this story?

IV. Write a sentence with the following vocabulary words.

Balance, cattle, brave, success, danger, dunes, immigrated, efficient, good, goal.

V. Complete the following story map about “Spider Soup”.

TITLE:

Characters:

Setting:

Event

---

---

Event

---

---

Event

---

---

Event

---

---

Event

---

---

APPENDIX 10  
INFORMAL ORAL ASSESSMENT  
GLOBAL SCALES

The following scales will serve to evaluate and classify students using pre-designed parameters that will make the research more reliable and valid.

1. Understands questions and directions, answers all the questions clearly. Reads fluently and understands the information read.
2. Understands what he/she hears but make some mistakes both grammatical and phonetic when talking. Reads fluently and understands most of what he/she reads.
3. Asks for repetition and clarification when being talked. He/she makes many mistakes while talking but can be understood. He/she has to read several times the same text before getting the main idea or understanding what the text is about.
4. He/she does not understand the language at normal speed. The student does not participate in the conversation. He/she does not speak fluently and makes a lot of mistakes. Uses L1 vocabulary and needs to read a text slowly and to check a dictionary to understand.
5. He/she has a lot of difficult to understand conversation. The student mixes up the first with the target language. He/she cannot read a text without a dictionary and has to read many times the same text before getting the main idea.

- They were designed using information from the holistic scale of Carroll, B. J.



## APPENDIX 11

### CLASS OBSERVATION GUIDE

The following observation guide is based on the Flanders' Interaction Analysis categories (FIAC) and on the Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT). This guide was designed in order to have objective information about the development of the English, Handicraft, Science and Spanish lessons and how students react during each of these lessons.

#### 1. TEACHER TALK

- a) Praises or encourages the students.
- b) Accepts or uses ideas and suggestions of students.
- c) Asks questions.
- d) Answers questions.
- e) How much time does the teacher dedicate to lecture the students?
- f) Does the teacher criticize the students or make them feel bad if they make mistakes?
- g) Does the teacher plan interesting and funny activities?
- h) Does the teacher correct immediately every single mistake students do?
- i) Does the teacher give directions before every activity?

- j) Does the teacher criticize the students' behavior and mistakes aloud?
- k) Does the teacher attract the attention of the students during most of the time?

## 2. STUDENT TALK

- a) Do students feel free to ask and answer questions?
- b) Do students feel anxious or insecure about taking part in the lesson?
- c) Are the students noisy or quiet?
- d) Do students look boring?
- e) Do students have to do activities that appear on the book?
- g) Are all of the students active during the class?
- h) Do students interact with the teacher?

## APPENDIX 12

This is a role play written to be acted by students that were not motivated to study English. It was presented at the end of the term and many parents assisted to their children's performance.

### THE SHOEMAKER AND THE ELF

NARRATOR: Fred is a shoemaker that lives with his wife Kate. They have a little house near the city.  
Fred makes shoes for boys and girls.

FRED: I need leather to make the shoes but I just have this little piece.

KATE: That is terrible dear! and we have no money to buy another piece of leather.

FRED: I feel tired but I am going to cut the leather so tomorrow I can make a new pair of shoes.

KATE. Ok, honey but you have to sleep.

NARRATOR: In the morning, Fred went to make the shoes. He looked at his table. The shoes were made!

FRED: Who made the shoes?

KATE: I do not know, why don't we call Mr. Johnson, he is always asking questions and he probably knows who made the shoes.

FRED and KATE: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Good morning, what can I do for you?

FRED: Somebody made these shoes at night, and we do not know who made them!

MR. JOHNSON: I will find out. I am a detective and I am going to look for fingerprints on the shoes, let me see them.

FARY GODMOTHER: Hello, what is your problem?

MR JOHNSON: It was you, I am sure. You always help people.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: No, it was not me, I am a social worker, I help people but I do not know how to make shoes.

GEPETO: Hi, did you see my boy? Did you see Pinocchio?

KATE. No, we did not see him.

MR. JOHNSON: What did you do last night? Did you come to this house and make a pair of shoes?

GEPETO: No, I am a carpenter I do not know how to make shoes.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: Good morning. Do you know which way I should take to go to my grandmother's house?

KATE: Sorry Dear, I do not know.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: What is everybody doing here? Is there a party?

KATE: No sweetie, we are here to discover who made those shoes.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: it was not me, because I am a mail carrier I deliver mail to sick grandmothers.

POLICEMAN: Is something wrong?

KATE: No, thank you policeman we are just trying to know who made a pair of shoes.

POLICEMAN: I am a policeman I protect people and properties, so if there was not a robbery I have nothing to do here. Good bye.

FRED: What about the Sleeping Beauty she is always going to sleep in the morning. She could probably make the shoes at night.

SLEEPING BEAUTY: Good night, I have to sleep, because tomorrow I have to sell mattresses and pillows. I am the best seller of the world. And I do not know how to make shoes Fred.

TEACHER: Gepeto I finally found you. When are you going to give me the tables and chairs that I need for my students?

GEPETO: I will take good care of it as soon as I find Pinocchio.

TEACHER: Do not look at me like that Kate, I am a teacher I do not have the ability to make shoes.

MR. JOHNSON: Fred, let's hide and see who made the shoes.

EVERYBODY: Got you, you were the one who made the shoes.

ELF: I am a shoemaker I make shoes using leather, plastic and fabric. I made the shoes at night because in the morning I like to play.

## APPENDIX 13

### CLASSROOM INTERACTION GUIDE

The following guide will be used to evaluate the kind of interaction work done in the classroom and to see if the lessons are completely centered on the teacher. This guide will be used to interview students during a week and about subjects such as Science, Math, Language, English, and Handicrafts.

1. Do students do group work?
2. How often do students do group work?
3. Do students do individual work?
4. Do students collaborate with each other?
5. Do students participate in debates or any other full class interaction?

