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**Exploring Learners and Teachers' Beliefs towards English Teaching and Learning
in the Local Context.**

BY

Edin Enrique Lemos M.

Licenciado, Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó Diego Luis Córdoba, 1988
Graduate Specialist, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, 1999

Maria Isabel Marín L.

Licenciada, Universidad de Antioquia, 1991
Graduate Specialist, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, 2008

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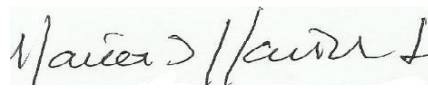
Master's Thesis Committee
Full Name, M.A./Ph.D., Chair
Full Name, M.A./Ph.D.
Full Name, M.A./Ph.D.

AFFIDAVIT

We, Edin Enrique Lemos M and Maria Isabel Marin L, hereby declare that this master's thesis has not been previously presented as a degree requirement, either in the same style or with variations, in this or any other university (Article 92 Advanced Education Student Code, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana)



EDIN ENRIQUE LEMOS M
C.C. N° 11793287



MARIA ISABEL MARIN L.
C.C. N° 43508397

To God for being my strength, to my wife, my daughter and my father, who have always been by my side in difficult and successful times. To my classmate and friend, María Isabel for trusting me and being an excellent partner in the development of our thesis.

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Abstract

There is a contradiction between learners and teachers' perceptions of what happens in the classroom; the reason is that teachers and learners do not see classroom events in the same way. This paper aimed at raising awareness about students and teachers' beliefs about English learning and teaching in a public university. The main objectives were, first, to identify the beliefs teachers and learners hold towards English teaching and learning and second to explore how these beliefs influence the learning outcomes of classes, and to identify if teachers' intention and students' perception produce gaps in the teaching and learning process. The mismatches between teachers and students' beliefs point to the need for English teachers to discover their students' perspectives and explore how those beliefs influence the learning outcomes of classes.

Key words: beliefs- intentions- perceptions- gaps- teachers- learner

Chapter One

Learning English

Introduction

In the local context, the teachers-researchers have observed that students from different academic programs and from a vast array of disciplines are increasingly showing a need to develop their basic oral and reading skills in at least one foreign language in order to be more competent in the so-called global village. This seems to be a trend in this globalized world, the importance of English is becoming more and more pertinent, as it is no longer confined to international affairs, but as a compulsory subject in educational arenas, and for this case, for students of higher learning institutions. Many studies have highlighted the increasing motivation to learn English today. For instance, Ehrlich (as cited in Alsamaani, 2014, p.434), estimated that “more than 300 million people are speaking English as their native language and more than 400 million are speaking it as a second or foreign language.” Altan (2012), also gave weight to the motivation people have to learn English as a way to propel their career, professional, and economical advance as states that:

The importance of English as a worldwide language has been increasing rapidly and more people are aware of the fact that at least some knowledge of English is necessary to get ahead in life since it brings high social status to the individual, as well as extending job opportunities (p.17).

Additionally, de Mejia (2005) explained the needs and reasons people have to undertake the learning of English as an ultimate goal:

Due to the recent economic opening up of the country in response to globalizing and internationalizing tendencies, career advancement is dependent to a large degree on

English language proficiency, and bilingual education is seen as the key to foreign language development (p. 60).

In contemporary Colombia, English is very often used as the language of books, technology, international trade, social network sites, as well as lingua franca for international events hosted by private and public institutions.

Some initial evidence collected through informal conversations with a group of students, has also suggested that students are aware that learning English is a tool that provides access to knowledge and effective communication and addresses academic, social, work-related and cultural situations. Bilingual education in Colombia is already a reality in some elite institutions, yet for the mainstream schools, the bilingual programs mandated by the plans of the Ministry of Education needs to be geared towards the specific needs of our country, specifically for public institutions.

For the former, the teaching of English seems to be done at the expense of our own cultural and linguistic richness, in other words, bilingual schools have overlooked the importance of including our own culture and language at the same level of relevance as the target language. De Mejia (2005), suggested that with “[...] appropriate orientation students would be able to develop their Colombian identity and at the same time get a good understanding and a level of tolerance towards other cultures” (p.60).

For the latter, as suggested by Zapata (2011), and Gonzalez (2012), lots of obstacles have acted as barriers for an appropriate development of a Colombian English program; in the case of this context, English teaching and learning has not been an effective process, due to different problems and needs. In the same vein, the British council (2015), stated that “[...]

Colombia lacks a suitable learning environment in its public and private schools to effectively and equitably promote English language acquisition” (p.58), besides the fact that “the

effectiveness of English teaching in public education is limited by a lack of teacher training, resources and funding, large class sizes and unenforced standards”(p.20).

Effective teaching in this context is usually measured in terms of impact on student outcomes, according to results on evaluations. In other words, if teaching practices were more effective, they would ultimately lead to satisfactory examination results, which is not considered to be successful so far, since it has been acknowledged by the Colombian Ministry of Education; that only one percent of high school students have reached the desired competence in English (Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2014). Additionally, Valencia (2005), suggests that many students feel that success in English language learning is only achieved outside the realm of the public school, and this condition is not met either by the majority of students who cannot travel to English speaking countries.

Furthermore, English teaching has been influenced by different laws and diverse views about the most efficient ways to teach English that have affected the consolidation of an official, permanent program designed to answer the needs of our context. Additionally, Gonzalez (2012) stated, “(...) Teacher quality is often related to the quality of general education and students’ achievements.” Furthermore, she points out that policies that relate to teacher education are shaped by what politicians decide to do (p.286). Zapata (2011), has also claimed that foreign interventions have a negative impact on our context; additionally, she suggests that English teaching in Colombia has been influenced more by political and economic relationships with the United States than by an intention of educating people who can understand the world through different languages.

From conversations, observations and the researchers’ personal experience, the teacher-researchers have realized that there are several potential threats for a successful teaching and learning process to take place. One of the obstacles appears to be the course content that has to be

covered by English teachers, in most cases, teachers have their hands tied, since they have to comply with pre-designed programs, and they have very little room to make changes or adjustments. This situation seems to give teachers very few choices to reflect on their work, or to make the necessary changes according to what they perceive as solutions to improve the teaching and learning practices. The situation is very complex because at times teachers fail to match their intentions with the real outcomes in the classrooms. Intentions refer to a plan in someone's mind to do something (Macmillan English Dictionary, 2002). Besides, the term intention or belief denotes to various definitions such as teachers' idea, thought, and knowledge that are shown in their activity and methods in the classroom (Basturknen, et al., 2004). In this study, teachers' intentions refer to what teachers plan or want to do when they teach an English class.

Lortie (1975), suggested that teachers use to contextualize their practices, based on their own experiences as language learners, generating beliefs and personal values; therefore, going around the same endless circles, without gaining new insights or including new practices. Additionally, he brought up the term apprenticeship of observation to "describe the phenomenon in which most of teachers teach very similarly to their own teachers; many of the beliefs teachers hold about teaching originate from personal experiences as students." Lortie also suggested that "Some beliefs may derive from other personal experiences such as family traditions and values, social encounters, community participation, popular culture, teacher preparation, observing teachers, professional development, and scholarly literature" (p.65). Moreover, according to Pajares (1992), teachers' beliefs influence and play a fundamental role in their knowledge acquisition and interpretation, task selection, and course content interpretation. That is to say, when teachers' decisions and practices are carried out, in the moment of choosing materials, topics and activities to develop during a class, the influence of those beliefs or conceptions can be observed.

When teachers venture in the teaching profession, they as teachers bring their own beliefs and these beliefs would inevitably have an impact in the classroom events. As Horwitz (1985), remarked, “Beliefs are central constructs in every discipline which deals with human behavior” (p.334). The other essential component of the classroom equation is the learners, and then, studying learners’ beliefs is vital to have a clear understanding of their learning expectations. As previously noted, the belief of the learners should become a key element in developing foreign language proficiency because, as described by Pajares (1992), “Identification of beliefs could help learners understand themselves and others as well as to adapt to the world around them. English language education should be appropriate to the context in which is going to be used” (p.317). People from different contexts seem to have fixed beliefs on how a language should be taught and learned, also, Horwitz’s (1985) suggested that “Learners enter the language class with many preconceived ideas about language learning, some of which may be unrealistic”(p.336). Thus, she recommends a systematic assessment of such beliefs to increase learning and satisfaction. The classroom; therefore, should become a site of constant reflection where teachers should be willing to explore and change their beliefs and practices in order to promote students learning.

Statement of the problem

Despite the fact that teachers are dedicated to providing a safe learning environment and to promoting adequate strategies for their English language learners, it is common to observe some gaps between students’ perceptions and their actual performance in their English classes. These gaps can be evidenced when students express their preconceived perceptions about learning a language, as well as their expectations and how classes should be carried out.

Some studies support the above. For instance, Altan (2006), described that “students hold a range of beliefs with varying degrees of validity; in some cases, the term myth might be a more accurate characterization.” Furthermore, Horwitz’s (1985), suggested that:

Language students have probably been exposed to many common and sometimes contradictory notions about language learning, people everywhere usually have common and fixed beliefs about how languages are learned (p.336).

Every day, there is an article in a magazine, or an advertisement on the radio, TV and INTERNET talking about new methods for learning languages with very little or no effort and in a very short time. Additionally,(as cited in Alsamaani, 2014,p.32) Rad and Dörnyei found that learners’ beliefs and viewpoints influence not only the way that they attempt to learn English but also the method that will be used by them. Additionally, to make these issues more complex, it is necessary to consider the differences between the conditions for learning English, among people who are learning directly in an institute in the United States, or in an English speaking country compared with those students learning in our schools and universities. For instance, Cardenas (2006), questioned the adequacy of the country's conditions for bilingualism since there are few classroom hours dedicated to the teaching of English, there is a shortage of materials and qualified teachers, classes are numerous and, in general, there are few opportunities to use authentic English communication.

Consequently, the teacher-researchers believe that the identification of these perceptual mismatches are conducive towards finding alternatives for the classroom as they can help raise awareness and finally bridge the gap between students’ perceptions and their performance in their English classes. Kumaravadivelu (2003), Nunan (1995), Tragant (1997), Bernart (2005), and Block (1994), identified and explained some of the instances where some mismatches occur

within a class. Those mismatches are taken into consideration in the exploratory study the researchers have completed.

This study proposes to explore some options to narrow down the afore mentioned gap by suggesting activities that would make students and teachers alike more aware of the situation and eventually to make a contribution from locally constructed knowledge in order to resolve the issues that affect the outcomes of instruction. The researchers do keep in mind that a small-scale research project like this has some limitations, however, they also believe that regardless of the “common topic” they have chosen, their findings mean an important contribution to understanding an issue that has not received enough attention, at least in the place where the study has been conducted.

Background

This research project can be better understood in the light of our educational laws, as Usma (2009), reported:

The Ministry of Education had issued a new set of standards for schools, defined standardized tests for students and teachers, established attainment targets for 2010 and 2019, and made the National Bilingual Program a multi sector agenda aligned with productivity needs (p.23).

“Bilingual Colombia”, is an educational language policy that promotes the mastery of English among the population. The main conditions required for this policy to be effective are the need for the country to be integrated internationally in an increasing globalized world, train students and professionals to be competitive in the labor market, and facilitate the population access to worldwide knowledge and culture. However, the panorama is rather complex, as many other, both positive and negative factors overlap. Gonzalez (2012), stated “certain discourses

within the policy ignore the work of local teachers and teacher educators, because some politicians and educational authorities believe that academic communities that use English as a native language have the power to improve our educational system”(p.288). The goal of this project is to support the professionalization of teachers; therefore, the government issued English national standards, mass training of English teachers, the harmonization or standardization of curricula and international tests, and the intervention on language teaching preparation programs. The institution in charge of these trainings is the British Council; additionally, their consultants have obtained important decision-making positions based on international agreements celebrated between the Colombian government and the United Kingdom.

In the year 2004, the Colombian government introduced some educational programs to improve the English level of Colombian citizens, such as: the National Bilingual Program – Colombia (2004 to 2019); later, the same government called it; Programa de Fortalecimiento de Competencias en Lengua Extranjera (Strengthening Foreign Languages Competences Program) and more recently, National English Program (MEN, 2005-2019). To support its policies that aimed at the potential improvement of communicative competences in English as a foreign language in all educational sectors, the Ministry of National Education adopted the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR); that describes foreign language proficiency at six levels: A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2. The government expects students to reach those levels of proficiency by 2019, but as stated by Gonzalez (2007):

There is no one single model that fits our reality regarding the diversity of settings, achievement of standards, resources, teacher preparation, student motivation, and curricula. English teaching in Colombia has been influenced more by political and

economic relationships with the United States than by an intention of educating people who can understand the world through different languages (p.312).

For example, in regards to the English teaching field in Colombia, the National Government also regulated the evaluation of competences in 2009, understood as expertise in specific situations that requires creative, flexible and responsible application of knowledge, skills and attitudes, by the Decree 2715 (July 21st, 2009). The Bilingual program Policy (MEN, 2005 - 2019) of the National Ministry of Education, implemented the assessment of knowledge, use and proficiency of English Teachers too, under the coordination of ICFES; and it is also supported by Plan Decenal de Educación (Ten-year Education Plan) 2006 – 2016.

The Ministry of Education (2014-2018) started to develop a project called **Heart for Change** (Colombia Volunteer Program), which is implemented along with some international English native speakers coming from all over the world to support the English Teaching in Colombia. However, they are not professionals in language teaching; they have a good command of the language, but in most of the cases are not certified to teach the language, which is not very helpful if we are to increase the quality of education, because, they only receive a short training, and a guidebook and through those, they are expected to help the teaching of English within a context they do not know much about. Even though, English has the status of a foreign language and it is a mandatory subject in the curriculum of K-11, Gonzalez (2012), claims that “its implementation reveals a huge gap in the time devoted to instruction, access to resources, and qualified teacher force” (p.287). And this makes the learning and teaching process a difficult practice

Purpose of the study

In the present study, the researchers wanted to find out what kind of beliefs teachers and students in a public institution have, and how these beliefs might affect the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, relationships between the teachers' beliefs about language learning and their choices for teaching are examined.

Objectives

General:

To identify the beliefs teachers and learners hold towards English teaching and learning.

Specific:

- To explore how these beliefs influence the learning outcomes of classes.
- To identify if teachers' intention and students' perception produce gaps in the teaching and learning process.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do teachers and learners' beliefs affect the class outcomes?
2. To what extent do teachers' intention and students' perception produce gaps in the teaching and learning process of second languages?

Significance of the study

This study was based on the effects of teachers and students' beliefs on the instructional practices in our context, and the teacher-researchers hope that this study will result in a better understanding of the relationship between the beliefs language learners hold and their behavior in the English learning process. Such an understanding might assist teachers in adopting a more sensitive approach to the organization of their classes.

Description of the problem

Barkhuizen (1998), claimed:

Every day, ESL teachers make many decisions in their classrooms about language teaching/learning processes. These include decisions about which activities their learners might possibly enjoy, which are most effective, and which would provide learners with skills that they could use for academic and communicative purpose (p.85).

He also argues that learners are rarely taken into account in this decision- making process.

Moreover, language educators have long recognized that learners bring to the language classroom a complex web of attitudes, experiences, expectations, beliefs, and learning strategies (Benson, 2001; Nyikos & Oxford, 1993; Oxford, 1992). That is to say, that not only teachers, but also students bring beliefs with them into the classroom and could create a gap between the learner and the teacher perceptions of classroom events. Unfortunately, teachers and students do not grasp what happens in the classroom in the same way, leading to potential mismatches between learners' interpretation and teachers' intention that in turn would affect the final desired outcomes. Some of the difficulties students may bear for understanding the objectives and activities in the classroom might produce potential mismatches between their interpretation and their teacher's intention. When the teachers' intention matches the learners' interpretation of a given task, learning could be successfully promoted.

As a response to this problem, this study explored some options to narrow the aforementioned gap, first, by identifying the beliefs teachers and learners hold towards English teaching and learning, second, by observing and analyzing possible sources of mismatches between teachers' intention and learners' interpretation, and third, by describing to what degree these mismatches affect learners final outcomes.

Delimitation of the project

This research project was carried out with college students belonging to different technological and engineering programs at a public institution, located in Medellin city. All students are registered in compulsory classes of English required in their educational program and needed as a requirement for graduation. To make things more complex, groups have mixed levels of skills in this language, and there is not a placement test to assess their level of proficiency before they start their classes. The courses are developed in 32 hours within a four months term, and with a two hours session per week. The course assessment is done via tests designed and administered by the institution and it is socialized to students the first day of classes, these assessments comprise reception, production and interaction activities. The groups range from 40 to 45 students from the different academic programs the institution offers. Many of the students who take these classes work full time and can be registered in an average of five or six other courses. The main objective of these courses is to provide learners with opportunities to develop the communicative competence at a basic level.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

In this chapter, the teacher-researchers discuss concepts and definitions of beliefs about language learning and teaching, relations between learners' beliefs about language learning, including their definitions, characteristics, and development, and other influencing factors to language learning such as: mismatches and gaps. Also, relationships between teacher and learners' beliefs, relationships between teacher's beliefs about language learning and classroom practices.

Teachers' beliefs and perceptions of teaching as well as learning perform a paramount role in their classroom practices and in their professional growth. To this respect, Gabillon (2012b), indicated that "teachers acquire their beliefs about teaching through their life experiences in society, prior schooling, professional education, and teaching experience". Similarly, Borg (2003), stated that teachers' prior experiences as learners, the education they receive as well as their practices inform their pedagogical beliefs and influence their teaching experience throughout their careers. Additionally, Gabillon (2012b), suggested that "Teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching, whether explicit or implicit, thus affect everything teachers do in their classrooms" (p.190). In other words, teachers' beliefs are inevitably related to classroom practices and inform their decisions, since they have been accumulated and constructed through life and life experiences. Moreover, Harste and Burke (1977) proposed:

Teachers make decisions about classroom instruction in light of theoretical beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. But, even though teachers' beliefs influence their goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, their roles, their students, and the schools they work in, sometimes, there is a mismatch between what teachers believe and what they actually do in their classes (p.35).

As the researchers said before, teachers' beliefs exist on numerous levels and serve as structures to understand the world, they are like guiding principles teachers hold and are used as clues to interact in a classroom. They are a part of teachers' identities. Stodolsky and Grossman (1995), argued that "teachers' beliefs about academic content, particularly with regard to status, stability, sequence, and scope, shape their practice" (p.242). Davis (2006), describes the ways reflection on beliefs can go when teachers have to participate in reform. Additionally, he states that "teachers who are willing to explore their beliefs, and how their beliefs relate to practice, can benefit from the beliefs they hold to promote students' intellectual growth, autonomy and reciprocity, and equity in their classrooms"(p.290). To sum this up, Gabillon (2012), claimed "Teacher beliefs are considered to be personal and social/cultural; implicit and explicit; practical and theoretical; dynamic and resistant; complex and systematic entities involving many facets" (p.192).

Beliefs about language learning have become a focal point, as important as materials, and techniques used on second language teaching and learning, because as Stevick (1980)stated, "what goes inside learners, which includes learners' beliefs, seems to have a strong impact on learners' learning process. People possess some preconceived ideas about various issues and these beliefs can influence their understanding and assimilation of new information" (p.4). Puchta (1999), claimed that beliefs are "guiding principles" of people's behaviors. He suggested that beliefs are "generalizations about cause and effect, and they influence our inner representation of the world around us" (p.68). Likewise, Borg (2001) defined that "a belief is a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, it is evaluative and accepted as true by the individual" (p.375).

Breen (as cited in Bernat, 2005, p.1), suggested, "In the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring with them to the

learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and ultimate success”. Additionally, in the context of second language acquisition, beliefs are defined by Kuntz (1997), as notions about language learning that students have acquired. Likewise, Kalajia & Barcelos (2003), claim that some people perceive beliefs as preconceived notions or metacognitive knowledge, while others see beliefs as not only a cognitive concept but also social and cultural constructs derived from one’s experiences and problems. Victori and Lockhart (1995) define them as “general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing learning and about the nature of language learning” (p.224). While Banya and Cheng (1997) define beliefs as individual’s opinions about language learning. Also, Ehrlich (2008) describes them as “opinions and viewpoints which attend in every discipline of human behavior to say that something is true or right and vice versa”(p.422).

Having this in mind, it can be inferred that second and foreign language learners do not come to class without ideas about the nature and process of learning and these attitudes toward learning, and the perceptions and beliefs that determine them, may have a profound influence on learning behavior (Bernat 2005). Additionally, Horwitz (1987) stated, learners have some presumptions about what language learning is and how a second language should be learned. Besides, she described the use of her Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory instrument (BALLI) that revealed that learners had clear ideas about which learning and communication strategies facilitate or inhibit learning.

These beliefs are considered to have influential impacts on learner’s approaches and behaviors in the learning process (Horwitz, 1987; White, 1999). Some researchers have suggested that a few beliefs are beneficial to learners while others argue that some beliefs can lead to negative effects on language learning. That is to say, that beliefs about language learning are

ideas that learners hold and think are true about language learning, which sometimes may differ from the information learners may have received. Likewise, Sakui and Gaies (1998) propose three characteristics of beliefs about language and foreign language learning: 1) beliefs are subjective understandings; 2) beliefs are relatively stable and, 3) beliefs are idiosyncratic. In addition, they state that these beliefs are unique to individuals.

Horwitz (1987) and Holec (1987) argued that insights about learners' beliefs on language learning can help teachers prepare their learners to be receptive to new ideas and information by deconditioning learners' prejudices or mistaken beliefs that may cause resistance to some instructional approaches or activities. Additionally, Horwitz (1987) claimed that "learners may lose confidence in the instructional approach and their ultimate achievement can be limited when there is a mismatch between learners' preconceived ideas about learning and teachers' teaching approaches and/or instructional activities"(p.119).

Research has shown that the perceptions of teachers and their learners do not always match (Block, 1994; Kumaravadivelu, 1991), additionally Kumaravadivelu (1991), claims that:

Both teachers and learners bring with them their own perceptions of what constitutes language teaching and learning, thus learners get to interpret what happens in the classroom from their own perspective in order to make it workable for them, leading to mismatches or misunderstanding of assigned tasks (p.107).

Therefore, teachers need to try to bridge any gap between their own and their students' expectations. In addition, teachers must be aware of their students' perceptions regarding what helps them progress and somehow to incorporate these perceptions into their teaching.

Accordingly, based on all concepts described in this literature review, it can be deduced that, even though some beliefs are result of empirical research, inference, anecdotal evidence, or generalized assumptions, beliefs not only guide action, but they are

also affected by action (Richardson,1996); beliefs are difficult to change if they are formed at an early age in life (Pajares,1992); they are socially constructed and culturally transmitted (Bernat,2005); beliefs have to be inferred from statements, intentions and actions (Pajares,1992).Hence, beliefs are unavoidably connected to learning since the very beginning of our experiences as learners and can easily lead to mismatches in our teaching practices so, it should be the teacher`s responsibility to try to find ways to reduce them or at least to have them in mind in the moment of preparing a lesson.

Evidence shows that these beliefs play a decisive role in language learners' success, failure and experiences (Cotteral, 1999). Pintrich and De Groot (1990) point out, for example, that learners who perceive their studies as important or interesting show higher degrees of perseverance in their work. Additionally, Rifkin (2000), claims that learners' beliefs (including their preferences) about the learning process are "of critical importance to the success or failure of any student's efforts to master a foreign language" (p. 394). For example, Bernat (2007), claimed that students tend to hold a higher preference for learning grammar, translation, vocabulary and pronunciation exercises, and often hold unrealistic expectations about the length of time it takes to learn a foreign language.

Previous Studies

Beliefs about foreign language learning have drawn extensive research in the past two decades. Horwitz (1988) was the first researcher who tried to determine the beliefs of learners about foreign language learning. She looked at the beliefs of American undergraduate students studying commonly taught languages and developed a 34-item scale called Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). She found that learner beliefs changed very

little over the whole semester, they do not automatically change when learners are merely exposed to new methods, and she also noticed that learner beliefs were deeply rooted.

In the French context, Nathalie & Renaud's study (2006) surveyed 1,305 university students enrolled in English and other foreign-language classes across five instructional levels in four major public universities. They explored the factors that promote or hinder multilingualism. The results suggest that the reasons first-year students typically have for studying a foreign language have more to do with internal factors (e.g., personal attitude) than with external factors (e.g., social value).

Wenden (1987) interviewed 25 adults studying advanced level ESL classes at Columbia University, and asked them about the social settings in which they used English and the learning strategies they used. She found that these language learners often used learning strategies consistent with their beliefs about language learning. Fourteen of these students reported specific beliefs about the best way to learn a language. She classified these learners' reported beliefs into three major categories: those that valued using the language naturally, those that valued formal learning about grammar and vocabulary, and those that valued the role of personal factors such as emotions, aptitude, and self-concept.

Park (as cited in Truitt 1995), found in a survey that he applied to 478 high school students, that 72 percent of them studied English in order to enter a good university or get a good job, while nine percent had no particular reason for studying English. He also found that 75 percent of the students believed that learning English means learning to translate and to understand English grammar.

Additionally, McCargar (cited in Truitt 1995), found several differences between the expectations of teacher and student role held by the teachers and those held by students from eight different countries. One difference was that whereas the American teachers tended to

disagree with the statement that "language teachers should correct every student error", the Korean students (in fact all student groups except the Japanese) strongly agreed with this statement. However, the Korean students agreed with the teachers that "language teachers should work with small groups of students during class."

In the Colombian context, Avella & Camargo (2010) two teacher-researchers, explored students' beliefs about English learning in two public institutions at the high school and university level and how these beliefs affected the view they have about English learning in the classroom activities as well as their learning process. They found out that students wanted to master a second language in order to be more competitive, but they think it is difficult to use the language because they are afraid of looking ridiculous. They also concluded that learners' previous experiences with the language play an important role in their motivation, and thus, in their performance in the target language.

Theoretical Framework

The relationship between what happens in a classroom; how different teachers and students see classroom activities, events, practices and objectives, and how complex is the nature of learner's beliefs, affects the outcomes of a course and generates a gap between what students and teachers think and expect. These differences in perceptions deserve detailed attention for optimizing learning environments.

To date, some authors like Kumaravadivelu (1991; 2003), Nunan (1986, 1995), Tragant (1997), Bernart (2005), and Block (1994), explain some of the instances where some mismatches occur.

Nunan (1986), identified clear mismatches between learners' and teachers' opinions about which activities were important in the learning process. Further, Nunan (1995), explores the

mismatch between the pedagogical intentions and plans of the educational institutions, curriculum, teachers, and textbooks, and the outcomes achieved through the competences and knowledge that learners gain from instructional encounters. In some cases, L2 learners tend to follow their own learning agendas rather than those of their teachers and teachers on the other hand, implement their pedagogical schemes without being aware of their students' expectations. In general, such discrepancies are postulated to be the result of differences linked to cultural concerns, prior experiences, perceptions of language teaching and learning, expectations of L2 teaching and learning, and learning style preferences between teachers' and learners.

Additionally, Nunan (1995), analyzes ways of closing the gap in relation to experiential content, learning process, and language content, in order to bring teachers and learners, as well as teaching and learning closer together. Likewise, Tragant (1997), points out three types of mismatches, which are simplified performances, adapted performances and overworking behaviors, and relates them with a number of aspects of the activity and with the instructor's teaching style.

Besides, other authors like Bernat (2005), analyze the nature of learner's beliefs implying that "the identification of these beliefs and the reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching in general, can inform future syllabus design and teacher practice in a course" (p.1). Likewise, she suggests that these beliefs are created and shaped by many internal and external factors.

Other scholars like Barkhuizen (1998), argue that "it is important for teachers to discover their learners' feelings and beliefs about their language learning experiences and consequently to review and possibly change their teaching processes" (p.45).

The teacher researchers consider that the recognition of our own beliefs can help teachers fully understand what happens in their classrooms and eventually, would enable them to adapt their methodologies to reduce these mismatches and draw the best from classes.

Kumaravadivelu (1991), found that “there was a gap between teacher intentions and learner interpretations on language learning tasks because learners naturally interpret, what is taught in their own terms—thus inevitably there are gaps”(p.98). Block (1994; 1996) also found, that teachers and students adopted different methodologies to perceive the purposes or objectives of a given task.

Kumaravadivelu (2003), identifies ten potential sources of perceptual mismatches that ELT teachers should be aware of: cognitive, communicative, linguistic, pedagogic, strategic, cultural, evaluative, procedural, instructional, and attitudinal mismatches.

1. *Cognitive mismatch*: This source refers to the incapability of the learner to understand or recognize a particular item in a foreign language. In fact, it “refers to the general, cognitive knowledge of the world that adult language learners bring with them to the classroom. It pertains to mental processes such as remembering, perceiving, recognizing, and inferencing” (p. 81).

2. *Communicative mismatch*: This mismatch is likely to happen when the learners are able to understand but are not confident to talk. They are unable to express their ideas or give an appropriate answer in class. This source “refers to the communicative skills necessary for the learners to exchange messages or express personal views. Because the learners have only a limited command of the target language, they struggle to convey their message” (p. 82). For instance, learners might be unable to communicate their ideas clearly, because they do not have a good communicative ability, hence, they could be

likely to use different strategies to be understood or eventually they could make use of their native language, in order to get their idea understood.

3. *Linguistic mismatch*: It refers to a situation in which the learner is able to understand but not having enough knowledge of the language. “This source refers to the linguistic repertoire— syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge of the target language—that is minimally required to do a task, and to talk about it” (p. 83). Teachers may not expect that a very familiar linguistic item might turn out to be problem for the learner, but this is very common.

4. *Pedagogic mismatch*: This mismatch refers to a situation in which the learners are not clear about the main purpose of a lesson in the class. Therefore, they might be confused about what is going on in the classroom. It “refers to the teacher and learner perceptions of stated or unstated short- or long-term instructional objective(s) of language learning tasks” (p. 83). The perception of the learners’ in terms of the purpose of the lesson may not match each other’s or that of the teacher, even though teachers may consider the purpose of the activities was clearly explained.

5. *Strategic mismatch*: This mismatch refers to a situation in which the learners are not clear about the overall approach they need to take in order to do a better work on an intended subject. It “refers to learning strategies: operations, steps, plans, and routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information, that is, what learners do to learn and to regulate learning” (p. 84). The mismatch might happen between the strategies the teacher expect the learners to use and the ones they actually use. The learners might prefer to use the simplest possible strategy of elimination and solve the problem within a few minutes and without much negotiation, especially if they are young students. When strategic mismatches occur, they do not necessarily

involve all the students in the classroom. While some students perform an activity differently from the teacher's expectations, other students would do the activity as intended by the teacher.

6. *Cultural mismatch*: This mismatch is likely to occur when the learner does not have enough cultural knowledge about a particular subject in a foreign language. “This source refers to the prior knowledge of the cultural norms of the target language community minimally required for the learners to understand and solve a problem-oriented task” (p. 85). Students come from different cultural backgrounds, so teachers are called to make students aware of the cultural variations that correspond to every language.

7. *Evaluative mismatch*: This mismatch points to the attempt made by learners to find out whether what they already studied about something is right. “This source refers to articulated or unarticulated types of self-evaluation measures used by learners to monitor their ongoing progress in their language-learning activities” (p. 86). What learners try to learn can influence and differ from the knowledge acquired in previous classes and teachers might be unaware of this self-evaluation, which may consequently lead to mismatches between the teacher and the learner.

8. *Procedural mismatch*: This mismatch refers to a situation in which learners are not clear about specific steps they need to follow, in order to complete a particular task or obtain a specific result in a class. The teacher may not usually be conscious of the path chosen by the learner to achieve a goal. “This source refers to stated or unstated paths chosen by the learners to do a task. The procedural source pertains to locally specified, currently identified, bottom-up tactics that seek an immediate resolution to a specific problem whereas the strategic source, discussed earlier, pertains to any broad-based, higher level, top-down strategy that seeks an overall solution in a general language

learning situation” (p. 87). A learner, for instance, might try to do a detailed, bottom-up explanation of how to go about solving a problem. This procedural thinking on the part of the learner might not be what the teacher expects to hear, although it might be correct.

9. *Instructional mismatch*: This mismatch occurs when the learners are unable to understand the directions given by the teacher about a particular task or piece of work in the class. Hence, teacher’s directions are not clear to the students. “This mismatch refers to instructional guidance given by the teacher or indicated by the textbook writer to help learners carry out the task successfully” (p. 88). Even straightforward instructional guidance can produce unintended effects. In some cases, as Tragant (1997) clarifies, when teachers ask learners to work on language activities in groups or on their own, they are often concerned with giving explicit instructions. This concern comes from the fact that it is impossible for teachers to be present when students actually perform the assigned activity. Thus, at times, the process that students follow may not match the teacher's expectations.

10. *Attitudinal mismatch*: It refers to a situation in which the learner is not happy or satisfied with the way the teacher did or discussed something in the class. “This mismatch refers to participants’ attitudes toward the nature of L2 learning and teaching, the nature of classroom culture, and teacher-learner role relationships. Adult learners, by virtue of their prior experience, have fairly well-established attitudes toward classroom management, and these preconceived notions can easily contribute to the mismatch between teacher intention and learner interpretation” (p. 88). In addition, there can be various types of attitudinal mismatches arising from preconceived notions about factors such as participant expectations, classroom management, learning strategies and cultural stereotypes.

Furthermore, he states that even though these mismatches are unavoidable, they can be identifiable and manageable and, eventually, they become learning opportunities.

Later, Kumaravadivelu (2006), stated that there are ten macrostrategies, which teachers can use to generate microstrategies or classroom procedures to make these macro strategies work. The macrostrategies are maximizing learning opportunities; facilitating negotiated interaction; minimizing perceptual mismatches; activating intuitive heuristics; fostering language awareness; contextualizing linguistic input; integrating language skills; promoting learner autonomy; ensuring social relevance; and raising cultural consciousness.

In minimizing perceptual mismatches, Kumaravadivelu (2006), explains that, any L2 class, however well-planned and well-executed, will result in some kind of mismatch between teacher's intention and learner interpretation and that it is therefore essential to sensitize ourselves to the potential mismatches that may occur between teacher intention and learner interpretation.

Chapter Three

Exploring Students and Teachers' Beliefs

Method

This research about students and teachers' beliefs is a qualitative, exploratory study with a descriptive approach, as Woods (2006), stated, "The qualitative researcher seeks to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on particular issues" (p.3). In addition, Marshall and Rossman (1999), stated that: "The central goal of a qualitative approach is to document the world from the point of view of the people studied and to know how people define their situations". Also, they explained that an adoption of a qualitative paradigm can allow the researcher to not only describe happenings and behaviours, but also to explore why such phenomena occur (p.92). According to those definitions, this study is a qualitative one as it aims to identify the beliefs that a group of students and teachers have related to learning English and the relationship between these beliefs about language learning and teaching approaches. Additionally, this is an exploratory study because it was conducted in order to determine the nature of the problem, so this research is not intended to provide conclusive evidence, but it can help the teacher-researchers to have a better understanding of the problem. Saunders et al. (2007), warn that "when conducting exploratory research, the researcher ought to be willing to change his/her direction as a result of revelation of new data and new insights" (p.134).

The present study used three instruments to collect information: First, a survey on beliefs about language teaching and practices, for teachers and students; second, a class observation rubric and third, and a two- question interview for both teachers and students. The sample for the study was comprised of five teachers and twenty-five students, five students per teacher. These

students were randomly selected to answer a survey and five of the twenty-five were selected to be interviewed, which was recorded and later transcribed.

The teacher observation rubric was related to four domains: 1) performance and planning; 2) classroom management and organization; 3) presentation and delivery of instruction; and 4) monitoring, assessment and follow up.

The questionnaire for the students was created in Spanish by the teacher-researchers, as they considered that the students would understand the items more easily and this would prevent any misunderstandings. The questionnaire was designed based on a five points scale adapted from the Likert style, which measures respondents' interest according to their level of agreement or disagreement.

Before starting the process of completing the questionnaire (see Appendix A), the participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. They were then asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix G). The questionnaires were completed and returned to the teachers- researchers as soon as they were finished. The students from the sample of the population belonged to different semesters of their academic program, and their ages ranged from 18 to 25. In terms of gender, 18 of the students were males and 7 were females. Regarding the teacher participants, there were two women and three men, whose ages ranged from 35 to 57. The survey had two versions; one in Spanish and one in English.

Data Collection

To collect the data in this research the following instruments were implemented:

First, the researchers handed out the survey during class time; this was preceded by a brief explanation of the purpose and the nature of the study. If there were any difficulties in understanding any item, the teacher-researchers clarified these doubts. Also, a similar process

was carried out with 5 teachers where both, the purpose and nature of the study were explained. The time allotted for the participants to answer the questionnaire was no longer than 15 minutes.

Part of the data collection process was complemented by observations; as the teacher-researchers' role during these classes was as non-participant observers, they did not participate in any class activities or have any interaction with the teachers before the observations regarding the activities or materials that were going to be used in the class. The teacher-researchers observed students and teachers' practices in the classroom, for example, their participation, their performance and their interest in developing activities in class and at the same time, they filled in the observation rubric template, they had already prepared for this purpose.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics, as defined, by Laerd Statistics Guide (2013):

Descriptive statistics is the term given to the analysis of data that helps describe, show or summarize data in a meaningful way such that, for example, patterns might emerge from the data. Descriptive statistics therefore enables us to present the data in a more meaningful way, which allows simpler interpretation of the data (p.1).

The results were then reported in three ways: number of participants, the percentages, and a bar graph. This exercise was conducted to summarize and quantify the teachers and learners' beliefs concerning language learning item by item.

Additionally, an interview was administered to the five teachers and to the five randomly selected students. The interviews for students were either in Spanish or in English; and the teachers' interviews were in English. All interviews were recorded and transcribed as the ones in Spanish were translated into English.

As Rubin and Rubin (1995) stated, there are some systems for the analysis of qualitative data. These systems involve: “coding techniques for finding and marking the underlying ideas in the data; grouping similar kinds of information together in categories; and relating different ideas and themes to one another”(p.241).

Based on these systems, after the transcription, the collected data were categorized in terms of “emergent” themes or descriptors defined by some researchers like Saldaña (2009), as codes. The purpose of the analysis was to study the teachers’ teaching approaches, the underlying beliefs about language learning, and the relationships between their beliefs and teaching approaches.

In the final analysis of the qualitative study phase, the teacher-researchers used all three sources of data collected from the teachers and students. The survey and interview data were used to discuss the reported beliefs about language learning of both teachers and students. The emerging themes from the observation data were used to highlight the teaching performance and underlying beliefs about language learning. The reported beliefs in the surveys and interviews and the underlying beliefs that emerged from the observation data were compared in order to revalidate the data from the three sources. Then, relationships between beliefs and teaching performances were analyzed.

Chapter Four

Analyzing and Discussing the Results

As explained in chapter III, the purpose of this study was to identify the beliefs teachers and learners hold towards teaching and learning; and the relationship between these beliefs about language learning and teaching approaches in English learning. The data from the surveys (appendix A) and interviews (appendix D) were analyzed to build an understanding of the participants' beliefs about language learning and their teaching approaches. First, the teachers-researchers started with the transcription of interviews and then they began to identify codes and categories, as proposed by Saldaña (2009) "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data"(p.3).

Once the teachers researchers identified the emergent themes used frequently, as well as the ideas coming from how the interviewees expressed themselves, and from the information collected, the researchers organized these ideas into the following codes or categories: self-regulation, practice, autonomy, awareness, environment, motivation, skills and contact with the language. These findings show that students and teachers hold many beliefs about language teaching and learning, so the researchers decided to concentrate on the most commonly reported core beliefs that matched both teachers and students: self-regulation, practice, autonomy and motivation.

Based on the information collected, the researchers found not only that teachers and students kept a variety of beliefs about language learning, but also that there were some relationships between students and teachers' beliefs. For instance, both teachers and students agree on the fact that *self-regulation* over learning, is one of the most fundamental characteristics needed when learning a language. According to Pintrich (2000), self-regulated learning is "an

active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment”(p.453). The researchers have noticed that when students have clear goals on what they want to achieve and when they develop strategies to keep in track, and are persistent, it is easier for both teachers and students to compensate shortcomings and move ahead. The key for instructors would be to learn how to foster and train these skills in all students.

When referring to self-regulation student J. affirmed that:

I consider that the main or the most fundamental in the learning of the person to know the English language has to have a lot of discipline, to be very constant and practice this language anywhere and whenever, and in the timely moment.

In this sense, that self-regulated learners get to be more effective and are eager to fulfill objectives.

Results also indicated that for teachers and students, *practice* is a significant category in language classes, as stated by Rosenshine (2009), “the best way to become an expert is through practice—thousands of hours of practice. The more the practice, the better the performance” (p.24). Linguistic knowledge is introduced in a class through different sets of activities that emphasize the reception, production and interaction competences. In the interviews, these findings are consistently supported by some teachers who mentioned that learners needed to practice in order to be good at English, for instance, teacher L argued: “I think they (the students) learn more easily when they practice a lot and when they have self-confidence and discipline.” Additionally, one of the students stated that “for me, the most important way to practice English would be not only to practice it in class, but also to practice it daily.”

Motivation is another category that emerged from the data, it has always been discussed as one of the main factors accounted for success in second language learning and in this case, it was no exception. Gardner (1985), refers to motivation as “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p.10). Through the teacher-researchers’ teaching experience, they have dealt with different types of students in the classrooms and they have noticed that those learners bring to class different kinds of motivations that affect their performance in class, depending on their interests and needs. Furthermore, teacher M. noted “I think they [students] learn more easily if we [teachers] motivate them to learn English as a culture, as a need in their life , because to be a bilingual person is very important in this society at this moment.” In addition, student N. expressed that “motivation and self-motivation is fundamental before learning English.” As mentioned earlier, once more motivation becomes a key element that leads to success or failure in any learning process.

Another factor that was found through the data that influences beliefs about language learning is *autonomy*; it has been long discussed as an element that can lead to success in language learning. As Brown (2007), “successful language learners tend to take charge of their own attainment, proactively seeking means for acquisition” (p. 25). Accordingly, Holec (1987) claimed that good learners are those who “know how to learn and can manage their own learning” (p.147). For instance, teacher R. asserted that:

You need to have autonomous work. With two or four classes, is not enough, definitely.

You need to work extra hours outside the classroom, you need to go to the net, you need a book, you need to do exercises and another one that I consider the most fundamental...wanting to learn English.

For the researchers, autonomous learners are the ones who are constantly looking for different options of self-learning, are able to regulate their own process, because they know what their needs are, and can decide when and how to take action.

Finally, some the most traditional beliefs about learning a language, also appeared from students' answers, being: the importance of learning grammar and vocabulary, taking a formal language course after finishing their academic programs, travelling to an English speaking country. This indicates that although learners are aware of an evident need to speak a second language as future professionals; they believe that learning English in a different place, afterwards, would be better, since they have to focus on many other subjects as well. Learners do not feel the instruction they receive at the institution is good enough, either because the instructional practices of their teachers differ from the ones they were used to have at school, or because the demands of their teachers are challenging and also, because they recognize they do not devote enough time to practice. Horwitz (1987) affirmed "students who believe that language learning is a matter of learning vocabulary and grammar will likely invest the majority of their time memorizing vocabulary lists and grammar rules at the expense of other language learning practices"(p.123). Additionally, Bernat (2007), assured that "students tend to hold a higher preference for learning grammar, translation, vocabulary and pronunciation exercises, and often hold unrealistic expectations about the length of time it takes to learn a foreign language" (p. 176). This may lead to poor practices, and to have a negative relationship with the process of learning.

Teachers start their instructional practices guided by specific teaching methods that facilitate interaction in the classroom and with an initial theory of language teaching and learning that is based on both their personal experiences as language learners, and as teachers. Afterward, teachers begin selecting what they think works better according to specific classroom situations,

and implement actions based on the beliefs and values they have developed through time and experience. In this case, beliefs and values around the teaching of English. In that order of ideas, the classroom becomes a kind of laboratory where teachers can relate teaching theory to teaching practice, Kumaravadivelu (2003) believes that “[...]they need to systematically observe their teaching, interpret their classroom events, evaluate their outcomes, identify problems, find solutions, and try them out to see once again what works and what does not”(p.2). This idea from Kumaravadivelu is central in this study, since the researchers need to keep in mind that in every classroom there would be different opinions and interpretations, coming from teachers, or from students related to classroom events, and on how these events should be approached. In addition, this can be observed in the institution where the teachers-researchers work, therefore, the researchers wanted to find answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do teachers and learners’ beliefs affect the class outcomes?
2. To what extent do teachers’ intention and students’ perception produce gaps in the teaching and learning process of second languages?

If teachers want to narrow down the gap between teachers’ intention and students’ perception, teachers might understand that there might be incongruences or mismatches between teachers’ beliefs and practices, because this understanding can lead them to reflect on what they do in class and explore ways to narrow down those gaps.

As mentioned previously, three instruments were used to collect information: First, a survey on beliefs about language teaching applied to both teachers and students. Second, a class observation rubric and third, an interview for both teachers and students. Table one (appendix I) reports the results obtained from responses of students.

After the data-gathering process, the next step was to synthesize and analyze the results. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to determine students' opinions about teachers' performance (See Table 1.1-Figure 1). Regarding the results, the researchers consider students believe that teachers have an advanced communicative competence in the target language, key issue in any second language teaching and learning context, because competent, skilled teachers are essential for efficient educational systems and for enhancing the quality of learning. To this respect, Markley (2004), states "a good teacher and actions to be taken on his part in the classroom play a vital role in provoking effective and efficient learning on the part of the students"(p.3). Additionally, some other researchers, as Sanders (2015), Ferguson (1991), and Ferguson and Ladd (1996), suggest that the academic background competence of teachers not only matter in student achievement but also are major variables in improving student learning and achievement. Furthermore, they demonstrated that placing students in classrooms with high-quality teachers does matter, and also reported that student achievement was related with the quality of the teachers who taught them, so that, students who were placed with less competent teachers suffered what they called a "residual effect" as a result of an ineffective classroom experience.

As stated by those researchers, teachers' quality is important and even more when teachers are the main source of input in a class. That confirms once again, that teachers need to be very well prepared, and have a good mastery of the language, in order to be a good role model which students can imitate and learn from; besides, the role of the teacher as a person can also affect learning; for instance having a positive attitude, an open mind, good availability and being helpful, are some of the characteristics mentioned by students when referring to effective teachers.

In the next domain *encouraging students to ask questions and give answers*, the figure 56% might imply some incongruence in the respondents' answers. Apparently, teachers do not get to encourage them enough to take an active part in the activities, which can be due to the fact that groups at the institution where the study was conducted are large, and as Persaud (1999) pointed out, "it has been found that classes with less than 40 students have higher levels of engagement than groups with more than 40 students" (p.90). Likewise, Brown (2001) states that:

Ideally, language classes would have no more than a dozen people or so. They should be large enough to provide diversity and student interaction and small enough to give students plenty of opportunity to participate and to get individual attention (p.196).

He also assures that large classes present some problems such as different levels of proficiency and ability among students, individual teacher attention is minimized, student opportunities to speak diminish, and teacher feedback gets limited. All the problems mentioned before, have been noted by the teacher-researchers at the institution where this study was carried out. From the teacher- researchers practice, they have observed that some students tend to "hide" behind their partners to avoid participation and more proficient students are eager to participate or to tell their partners what they have to say, which leads to cheating and lack of engagement from less proficient students, and eventually can contribute to drop outs.

On table 2.1, Figure 2, the teachers' questionnaire table 2 (appendix J), the *performance and planning* domain displayed a certain level of difficulty, due to the fact that teachers did not self-assess with a 100% *to having a full command of the language*. This finding indicates that teachers do not recognize on their performance some of the attributes a good teacher may have, in an investigation that examined the characteristics of good language teachers, Brosh (1996) found that the desirable characteristics of an effective language teacher should be:

Having knowledge and command of the target language; being able to organize, explain, and clarify, as well as to arouse and sustain interest and motivation among students; being fair to students by showing neither favoritism nor prejudice; and being available to students (p.28).

In this case, teachers seem to be too critical with their practices. Even though, in the results from the *Class Observation Rubric*, the *performance and planning* domain (Appendix Q) got very high scores, and from the observations, the researchers consider that teachers have an excellent command of the language, they gave clear instructions and they encouraged students to participate in class. It is possible that teachers are not be completely satisfied with how they perform in class, due to the fact they are not native speakers and they might think they can do better. All of them are trained, experienced teachers that hold a master's degree or a specialization on second languages. To this respect, Kamhi-Stein & Mahboob (2005), stated that "perceived language proficiency is an important issue for NNES teachers and has an impact on their professional self-esteem and confidence" (p.224). Additionally, Chacón (2005), found that "teachers' perceived efficacy was positively correlated with self-reported English proficiency" (p.257). In other words, language proficiency constitutes the foundation of the professional confidence of non-native English teachers.

Even though, in Colombia there is a tendency to announce learning English with native speakers as the best and only way to learn English, it cannot be assumed that native speakers can teach English effectively. Language teaching goes beyond speaking the language, they may be able to speak the language, but as stated by Darling-Hammond (2005), "(...) knowledge about teaching subject matter, teaching diverse learners, issues of assessment, and classroom management" (p.11) are important characteristics teachers should have, without training in classroom management and lesson planning, among other aspects, native speakers cannot be

effective instructors. In addition, Llorca (2005), suggests that bilingual and bicultural non-native teachers can greatly contribute to the language teaching profession because some of the advantages of non-native teachers are their higher level of language awareness. It can be inferred too, that teachers are thinking they can do a better job, and they might be looking for better ways to improve their practice as expressed by the *National Board for Professional Teaching Standard*(1998), “they might be striving to strengthen their teaching by critically examining their practice, and looking for ways to expand their repertoire, deepen their knowledge, sharpen their judgment and adapt their teaching to new findings, ideas and theories.” This, in any case, can turn out to be very beneficial for learners and teachers as well, since it is all about improvement and quality.

Competent teachers in general may share some characteristics, and there are certain traits that differ among them depending on the subject matter they teach. Some researchers like Hammadou & Bernhar (1987), believe that “it is the nature of the subject matter that makes language teachers different from teachers of other fields” (p.302). According to Lile (2002), “a student will find it difficult to perform in a stressful environment” (p.). He also mentions that lessons must be very simple, yet fun and interesting, changing from a writing exercise, to a speaking, listening, back to writing, and so on.

For instance, in English lessons, teachers are more likely to adapt diverse kind of activities in the same class period to address each one of the competences that need to be developed, for example: games, videos, songs, worksheets, puzzles, short stories, story writing, etc. At the institution, this is no exception, students in this context comment that the environment of English classes is more entertaining and less stressful than other subjects. Borg’s study (2006), suggests that “language teachers are seen to be distinctive in terms of the nature of the subject, the content of teaching, the teaching methodology, teacher–learner relationships” (p.3).

Taking into account that teachers' beliefs are important for improving and understanding educational processes and practices, and that according to research, beliefs guide practices that help teachers to cope with every day challenges, it does not make sense why teachers do not self-assess with a 100% to these aspects.

All teachers should be “reflective practitioners” of what they do and implement in class, taking more responsibility for shaping their practice, in this regard, Zeichner and Liston (as cited in Kumaravadivelu 2003,p.11) concluded that:

If a teacher never questions the goals and the values that guide his or her work, the context in which he or she teaches, or never examines his or her assumptions, then it is our belief that this individual is not engaged in reflective teaching.

Accordingly, teachers should echo their beliefs to avoid discrepancies and confusing messages. Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom with a critical eye, thinking about why you do it, and considering if it works or not, it should be a constant process of self-observation and self-evaluation. At the institution, the curriculum sets the goals of learning and suggests the teaching methods and content, but teachers are free to teach their classes according to what they think suits their groups better, based on their experience and beliefs, and also, taking into account the specific needs of every particular group of students. Teachers have to follow the curriculum and develop the competences and content stated on it, and include changes when necessary. In addition, they have to set the classroom rules and pace to promote learning and need to be responsible for developing the competences regarding each level.

As it can be seen from figure 4, table2.2 (appendix L), teachers gave more weight to items related to the same domain *Classroom Management and organization*, a figure of 100% was given to all indicators, which suggests teachers feel and think that students are treated fairly and even though their percentages differed, students think the same too. Additionally, the

researchers believe it is important here to highlight the fact that students are seen as active participants of the learning process, and their learning needs are taken into account, making both teachers and students assume their role as players on the same team. A research carried out by Darling-Hammond (2000), indicates that academic achievement and student behavior are influenced by the quality of teacher and student relationship. The more the teacher connects or communicates with his or her students, the more likely they will be able to help students learn easier and accomplish tasks quickly.

Brown (2001), defines classroom management as different variables that affect a classroom, for example sitting arrangements, teaching style and classroom energy. Additionally, Emmer and Stough (2001), stated that classroom management consists of “actions taken by the teacher to establish order, engage students, or elicit their cooperation”(p.103). Efficient classroom management leads to minimizing behaviours that interfere learning and, at the same time maximizes the behaviours that enhance learning. Classroom management cannot be easily separated from all the other decisions that teachers make, that is to say that, satisfactory teaching and positive classroom management are in some extent inseparable.

Based on the researchers’ experience as teachers, the class observations and the previously stated information, the researchers may establish that a good atmosphere for a classroom environment, for instance, respect, connection and self-confidence provide a better communication between the student and the teacher and can improve desired products.

Table 1.3 Figure 5 (appendix M) *presentation and delivery of instruction*, shows different levels of agreement, students have different opinions on various indicators, this result reveals students do not have the same level of satisfaction in some aspects that are vital to the correct development of a lesson. For instance, the fact that they do not consider that teachers explain clearly or that the teacher does not adjust the rhythm of the class to students’ level when

explaining a topic, points out that teachers and students do not see class events and explanations in the same way. It could be inferred that there is a pedagogic mismatch here, based on what the teachers-researches read on Kumaravadivelu (2003), this mismatch refers to a situation in which the learners are not clear about the main purpose of a lesson in the class. Therefore, they might be confused about what is going on in the classroom. This mismatch “refers to the teacher and learner perceptions of stated or unstated short- or long-term instructional objective(s) of language learning tasks” (p.83).

When planning a lesson, teachers consider the special characteristics the material should have, the background of their students, and the conditions under which the teaching and learning are to take place, but, despite of this careful planning, sometimes students do not remain engaged in class, and this excellent designed lesson in the eyes of a teacher does not have the impact it was supposed to have; likewise, a very simple lesson can turn out to be excellent, in terms of outcomes. What happens in a classroom during a lesson cannot be easily predicted, because there are many other aspects besides the lesson plan, like: the particular characteristics of every group, of the teacher, the context, the level, the students’ motivation, the beliefs, etc.

As reported by teachers, referring to *presentation and delivery of instruction* domain, Table 2.3 figure 6, sharing the objectives with students and explaining material got the highest score (80%), while stimulating interest in material got a 60%. In spite of the fact that teachers claimed they shared the objectives of the class with students, less than 50% of respondents agree with that, this demonstrates that there is a mismatch in this domain, which can lead to a pedagogic mismatch, as mentioned before. Referring to effective approaches to communicate objectives, Marzano (2011), states that even though sharing objectives with students has a positive effect, sometimes the approach used to share them may have a negative or no effect at all. He suggests that: “The teacher should help students understand what the objective requires of

them and why it is important.” And that “the lesson should end with a return to the objective.” Additionally, he states that: “Instructional objectives must be specific enough for students to understand exactly what the teacher expects of them” (p.86-87).

From the above, the teacher-researchers can conclude that the perception of the teachers in terms of the purpose of the lesson, the presentation and the delivery of instruction does not match with what students think and leads to a lack of success of the instructional practices. Therefore, there will always be a gap between teachers’ intention and students’ interpretation, even when teachers are convinced all aspects are clear, thus, students will not achieve the target of the activities. About this, Marzano (2011), also suggests that “By avoiding common pitfalls and implementing effective approaches, teachers can more clearly communicate their instructional objectives and promote greater student understanding” (p.87). That is to say, that teachers need to identify and communicate clear learning objectives for the activities they propose, so that students get a picture of the desired learning outcomes.

Results from table 1.4, figure 7 (Appendix O) *Assessment and Evaluation* (Evaluación y Seguimiento), showed that there were significant differences among students’ opinions; since, traditionally in this context, assessment has been a domain that generates controversy and distress, due to the role assessment has, for example in categorizing people, or in determining success or failure and in the influence it has on teaching and learning. Assessment, according to Brindley (2001) is defined as “the variety of ways of collecting information on a learner’s language ability or achievement” (p.137).

Respondents had different degrees of agreement with the sentences given. This finding shows how problematic it is for students and teachers to reach a common ground when referring to assessment.

One of the most challenging tasks for language instructors, is finding effective ways to judge what, and how much their students are actually learning ,in order to improve student outcomes; and in the institution, it becomes specially challenging, taking into account that in this place, there are large classes and assessing large numbers of students in time-efficient ways may not always be easy, and the results sometimes may not be the expected ones. Teachers should use different kinds of progress checks, to make sure they are creating and delivering lessons that lead students toward mastery, and to ultimately reach their learning goals.

Having in mind that larger classes mean a more diverse and complex groups of students, assessment activities should ideally target this diversity. Since at the institution, a 40% of the final grade of the courses comes from follow up activities that every teacher is free to implement, these activities must relate to reception, production and interaction competences. Sometimes, students feel at disadvantage with other groups, because of the activities their teacher decides to carry out to fulfill this percentage, and that might be more complex than the ones implemented by other teachers at the institution.

Table 2.4 figure 8 (appendix P),shows that teachers rated with a four (*Frequently exceeds expectations*), to *directing and stimulating discussion and allowing students to evaluate and reflect about their learning (100%)*. From this outcome, the researchers notice, once again, that teachers and students do not perceive class events in the same way. During the observations, the teachers-researchers could notice that teachers use a variety of effective means to check understanding and give a general feedback on students' work. For example, teachers ask a question first, repeat it, and then select students to answer it, call on different students regardless of whether they have their hands raised, formulate questions starting from very simple to more complex ones; additionally, circulate around the classroom to monitor students' readiness for the task and to help students who may need an extra explanation.

Based on the results described above, the present study revealed that participants held, to varied degrees, an array of opinions about the *instructional practices* that are carried out in a classroom. This study found evidence that many times the perceptions teachers at the institution have about their classes, are not shared to the same degree by students, especially when referring to *classroom management and organization*, in which teachers considered they are doing their best, while students differed greatly with these statements. Additionally, the *monitoring, assessment and follow up* category, showed some levels of disagreement not only among students, but also between teachers and students' opinions.

To better explain this finding, Kumaravadivelu (2003), states that “mismatches are unavoidable”, he believes that even highly structured and well-planned lessons will result in perceptual mismatches of one kind or another. In fact, he also states that “it would be surprising if perceptual mismatches do not occur at all” (p.90). The teacher-researchers were able to observe some pedagogical, communicative, linguistic, instructional and attitudinal mismatches, which are going to be explained below.

For example, during the class observation of one of the teachers, who is going to be called teacher 1, some communicative mismatches were observed, considering students have not developed the necessary communicative skills to exchange messages or express personal views, therefore, from what the researchers saw, it was difficult for them to express what they wanted to say. Teacher 3 presented his students a video segment, after the video students had to describe what had happened in the segment. One of the students was asked to start the description and then another had to continue the narrative where the previous student finished. At some point, some students had some problems to continue the story, either because they were short in vocabulary, or because they were not able to understand what their partners had just said.

Teacher: Juan start!

Juan: A woman was standing on a dark street waiting for a taxi, she stopped a taxi....

Teacher: Ana continue...describe the taxi driver.

Ana: The taxi driver was ugly and barbado...Como se dice barbado?

Teacher: he had a beard.

Ana: He had a beard and spoke...

Teacher: Alex

Alex: Teacher, I didn't understand what Ana said... repeat please.

This example represents what can happen in a class situation in which oral interaction is required without previous preparation of vocabulary and structures and which can lead to a communicative mismatch.

Additionally, some syntactic, semantic, and linguistic mismatches were common too, since learners are just starting their learning process and need to expand their knowledge of the target language to do the tasks. Teacher 1 explained the use of the second conditional. First, he gave a grammatical explanation, followed by an example:

This conditional is also called unreal conditional, because it is used for unreal impossible or improbable situations. This conditional provides an imaginary result for a given situation. For example, If I were 25, I would have better results at the gym... This is not possible because I am 45.

Then, he asked students to pair and write two examples of the second conditional as specified by him before. He gave them five minutes to prepare the examples and then, socialize them.

Student 1: If I were a student, I would come to class.

Teacher: aren't you a student?

Student 1: Yes.

Teacher: Then, it is not unreal conditional.

Through the results presented on the graphs displayed in figures 5 and 6, some pedagogic mismatches also appeared. As stated on chapter III, Kumaravadivelu (2003) affirms, “This source refers to the teacher and learner perceptions of stated or unstated short or long-term instructional objectives of language learning tasks” (p.83). In the results depicted on the graphs students did not show the same degree of satisfaction as teachers when talking about explaining and clarifying objectives. As the researchers mentioned previously, teachers should help students understand what the instructional objectives are, and what is expected from students in terms of outcomes.

This mismatch can definitely affect the outcomes of the class, as students and teachers are not focusing on the same goal, maybe, because students did not pay attention to the objectives or because the teacher was not clear enough, or for both reasons. When both parts are not following the same path, it is very difficult to get the desired objectives of instruction, therefore, it is like beginning constructing from a weak foundation, which can lead to poor performances and to consuming time trying to clarify again, what it is supposed to do. It is common to listen to students asking repeatedly, what they have to do; this slows down the order of the class and distracts other students.

Related to instructional mismatches and attitudinal mismatches that refer to the guidelines given by the teacher to carry out a task, to the nature of classroom culture; that is defined by Altun (2006), as “classroom discipline, routines (rules), level of interaction, communication and collaboration between students and teachers, as well as the teacher learner-role relationships respectively”(p.4). The researchers noticed that even though, teachers are positive, they have absolute control of their classroom environment, procedures and space, pupils disagree and express that these practices could be better. Although, everything can be certainly improved, the point is that teachers are not aware of how different students perceive what they do and why they

do it like that. Listening to what students think would be an interesting way to refresh teaching practices.

Another aspect that started to appear during this research process was the concept of generational gap, because, even with very young teachers, there will always be a generational gap between teachers and students and this condition may generate new, tougher mismatches. The concept of generational gap is useful, because if teachers can understand the context where they work, in and out the classroom or the influences in which people from a particular generation grew up, they could understand how those values translate into everyday life and also, how to engage this generation in the English classroom.

To complement the description of this context, the teacher-researchers need to say that since these students ages range from 16 to 27, most of them were born in the so called digital era and from an early age, not only their entertainment, but also most of the information they receive is linked to computers, internet, video games and cell phones. Text messaging is part of their daily routines, as well as the use of social networks. They can reach information easily with just a click, everything is online, including all sorts of educational programs. They communicate with each other in many ways, and many times this communication is not vis-a-vis.

The challenge for educators and educational institutions is to maximize the learning opportunities for today's learners, combining all tools mentioned before, understand how technologies work and how they are changing the basic interactions between teachers and learners. Also, taking into account that sometimes students might feel more comfortable using new technology, teachers need to understand that INTERNET is changing how people learn in a variety of ways and that there are new literacies that are becoming important as well.

Nowadays, memorizing is less relevant with the variety of sources available on the web, but students do need to learn how to find information, recognize what data they need, and

evaluate what they have found. From the researchers experience as teachers at the institution where this research was carried out, the teachers-researchers have noticed that most of these students do not make a big effort to understand or consciously read the information they collect from the internet. They just copy and paste without analyzing, classifying and discarding the parts of the information that are not relevant for their homework and they do not even grasp the full meaning of the text. When they are asked to judge the accuracy, or to give extra information from what they encountered in online reading, they just become confused and overwhelmed and are unable to give a satisfactory answer. This practice leads to less analytical scholars and future professionals, who will not be able to plan, organize and make good choices.

Chapter Five

Reflecting and Concluding

As stated in chapter one, by means of the present study, the teachers- researchers wanted to identify the beliefs teachers and learners hold towards teaching and learning, and to explore how those beliefs influence the learning outcomes of a class, and also, if they lead to possible mismatches. This study has identified important language-learning related beliefs of teachers and students in that institution in Medellin. Also, it investigated teachers and students' beliefs on different items, including instructional practices, and it not only showed that teachers and students had a variety of beliefs about language learning, but also demonstrated that there are some beliefs that both parties shared, for example: the beliefs about autonomy, motivation, practice and self-regulation. It also revealed that there were significant differences between what teachers and students believe about the instructional practices (*classroom management, performance and planning, presentation and delivery of instruction, monitoring, assessment and follow up*).

This study confirms that there are perceptual mismatches between teaching objectives and learning outcomes, and between the instruction that satisfies teachers and instruction that is meaningful to students, but as Kumaravadivelu's research concludes, these mismatches cannot be avoided, since both teachers and students contribute to the promotion of learning in the class process. The challenge here is to find ways to work with these mismatches to benefit learners' outcomes.

Concerning teachers and learners' beliefs, the researchers observed that teachers and learners have some common beliefs about the way English should be learnt, these beliefs

interfere in a positive or negative way the results, the approach and the decisions they take in relation to language learning.

Furthermore, this study also corroborates that teachers' instructional or pedagogical practices do have an impact on students' engagement in classroom activities. Wright (1991), believed "it is necessary for teachers to instruct less in class and for learners to take some leadership and management decisions on the conduct of activities" (p.5). That is to say, that, when teachers are aware of how learners approach language learning, what they feel about their language learning experiences, and how they use the language, teachers will be able to promote expected learning outcomes in the classroom. It would be important to encourage students to express their perceptions and make questions about why the class goes in a certain direction. This process would allow learners to realize why they are taking part of certain activities, how these activities can help them learn English, and what use they can make of them outside the classroom.

As Nunan (1988), states, when teachers get to be aware of their students' perceptions, they could plan and implement alternative activities in their classes. Having in mind the characteristics of this context, the researchers understand that it is difficult that teachers and learners could negotiate together what needs to be done in class, but, as mentioned previously, the researchers observed that teachers and learners share some common beliefs about the ways English should be learnt, hence, this common ground could be used to get learners more involved in their English classes and could, therefore, lead to more positive attitudes towards them.

Taking into account the results, the present study displayed that participants held different opinions about the *instructional practices* that are carried out in a classroom; many times the perceptions that teachers at the institution hold, about their classes are not shared to the same degree by students, especially, when referring to *classroom management and organization*, in

which teachers felt completely satisfied with these aspects, while students differed greatly with these statements. With regard to *monitoring, assessment and follow up*, the researchers observed some levels of disagreement among students, as well as among teachers and students' opinions.

The difficulties that learners may face in understanding the objectives and activities carried out in the classroom, such as: cultural aspects, language proficiency, lack of confidence, previous learning experiences and the need for clarification in their native language, can lead to potential mismatches between their interpretation and their teacher's intention. Mismatches are based, at least partly, on learners' interpretations of what happens in class. Moreover, teachers' instructional practices are constantly criticized by students, since they usually have a different opinion on the way instruction must be given; perhaps, because they expect teachers to act in the same way they are used to be taught, or because they have a particular perception of how classes must be executed.

The findings confirm, once again, that students embark on the project of language learning with preconceived ideas. Most of the times, language teachers are not aware of, or ignore these beliefs and assume their students are open to their particular teaching methodologies and are willing to participate in all activities they plan, for example, some teachers manifested that they use the Communicative Approach and bring activities connected to this specific approach. In addition, some others claimed to be eclectic, that is to say, they select what they think is better from different sources like books, INTERNET, magazines, and are not necessarily tied to a specific method. Based on this scenario, since each teacher is autonomous on his practices, recognition of learners' beliefs about language learning can also raise teachers' understanding of how students approach the tasks presented in a language class and, ultimately, can help teachers foster more effective ways to better class outcomes. This study proves that teachers and students obviously think differently, but ideally paying closer attention to this

evidence would facilitate the selection of activities that can match both parties' opinions, getting nearer to learners' beliefs and helping teachers develop a lesson designed to confront the students' needs.

The results from the questionnaires the researchers conducted suggest, to some extent, that learners are not completely satisfied with the English instruction they have received so far or with the progress they have made, which indicates that their English lessons are not actually complying with their language learning needs. Some students claim they like having extra opportunities to participate in free conversations, or that they prefer a more communicatively oriented approach. On the other hand, there are those learners who prefer having more emphasis on grammar, considering the fact they were taught this way at school. The perception students have on the progress they are making in learning English sometimes does not match their learning expectations for different reasons, this may eventually have a negative effect on classroom instruction and on learning outcomes; the researchers think that teachers should take into account learners' diversities; this could be done by means of consultation and negotiation.

Consultation and negotiation can be achieved by conducting a student's needs analysis that is defined by Richards (cited in Kayl 2008), as "a process of collecting and analyzing information about learners in order to set goals and contents of a language curriculum based on the needs of those learners". This analysis usually seeks to find out what students already know, what they need to know, and what their preferences are; in other words, this analysis is related to language skills required and known, prior experiences with the language, and common problems like students' abilities, learning styles and personality traits. The information collected from this analysis can guide the teaching that takes place in the classroom and can be used to define program objectives, it could also become the foundation for developing lesson plans, materials, tests, homework and activities. Some researchers (as cited in Kayl 2008), indicate that it is

necessary to know about learners' needs such as their objectives, language attitudes, expectations from the course and learning habits in order to design an efficient curriculum (Brindley, 1984; Kaur, 2007; Nunan, 1988; Nunan, 1990;Xenodohidis 2002). Basically, from the researchers' point of view, a student's needs analysis is a useful tool that can help teachers and institutions to clarify the goals of their language programs by taking into account students' opinions and their specific needs.

Furthermore, at the Institution there are no textbooks to follow, therefore, as mentioned in Chapter Four, the curriculum sets the objectives of learning and suggests the teaching methods and content. The role of teachers is to be facilitators of learning, providing students with the information and tools they need to master a subject; consequently, teachers have to follow the curriculum and provide, create, or select materials according to the topics, functions and objectives depicted in the curriculum. As Allwright (1990) argues, "materials should teach students to learn, they should be resource books for ideas and activities for instruction/learning, and they should give teachers rationales for what they do" (p.10). From this point of view, teachers should adapt, supplement, and create activities based on those materials, while also monitoring the progress and needs of the students. The goal of using materials within any English program is to help learners build language proficiency to communicate effectively, appropriately, fluently, and accurately, considering texts and activities at exactly the right level for particular learners, to ensure appropriate challenge and levels of success.

The selection of class materials and activities that teachers design is influenced by beliefs about motivation, beliefs about the importance of developing English competences of reception, production and interaction; and also, the beliefs regarding the importance of practicing. Based on these beliefs, and taking into account the importance of English for these students; motivation, self-regulation, practice and autonomy were reported as influential factors in English learning for

both teachers as well as students. This common belief between teachers and students could facilitate both parties to reach a mutual understanding of the process and increase cooperation, despite the fact that some students learn more quickly and easily than others, this cooperation among them could generate a more selfless environment in class, encouraging each other to do their homework, and learning to work together. This simple fact can build confidence and empower many students at the same time.

Teachers enhance their students' motivation towards English learning by making lessons more appealing through different types of activities, building supportive environments, and reinforcing students positively. In addition, teachers can foster students' interest and motivate them as they implement diverse types of exercises to have students practice and take responsibility for their learning inside and outside the classroom. For example, the researchers observed that teachers assigned homework related to the class topic; also, they made a short review of the previous classes and provided feedback.

Researchers like Hussin, Maarof, and D'Cruz (2001) mention that "what occurs in the language classrooms must be extended beyond the walls of the classroom so that a link is created between what is learned in the classrooms with what occurs outside of the classrooms"(p.3). Therefore, students' motivation for learning a language greatly increases when they see connections between what they learn in the classroom, and how they predict they will use the language in real life or outside the classroom. As the researchers have observed, the students' attention span evidently increases when classroom activities are relevant to their interests, including their preferences of music, video games, TV series, and manuals related to their studies.

Additionally, from the interviews and class observations, the teachers-researchers can suggest there is a close relation between teachers' educational beliefs and their planning,

instructional decisions, and classroom practices. The researchers also observed that the teachers' instructional or pedagogical strategies have an impact on students' engagement in classroom activities, and therefore, can lead to higher or lower engagement of students in class. As Harste and Burke (1977), stated

Teachers make decisions about classroom instruction in light of theoretical beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. Teachers' beliefs influence their goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, their roles, their students, and the schools they work in (p.36).

Some of the teachers commented that oftentimes it is hard to separate what they truly believe in from what they are requested to do. A few teachers presented grammar by explaining the forms and rules, and then students were asked to use these forms and rules to complete specific communication tasks. Other instructors present students with possible scenarios by giving them situations in which they may have some reason for using the language. For example, buying things, asking and giving directions, going shopping, booking hotel rooms, reading signs and informational materials as well as introducing themselves, spelling names, etc. Through these scenarios, learners get to understand that meaning is an integral part of language learning.

Given the importance of developing the receptive competence in language learning and teaching, the teachers-researchers observed that teachers presented some listening activities that were based on real-life situations, and spoke in English, in order to familiarize students with this language. Moreover, as oral production is also a crucial part of the language learning process, instructors helped students develop this competence by providing different types of classroom practice. This practice prepares them for real-life communication situations. Considering that groups at the institution are large, and class size has an effect on students' engagement in

classroom interaction, it was noticed that teachers used small groups and pair work as an alternative to promote students speaking practice and to make them feel more comfortable while increasing their speaking competence.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this study has helped the researchers to get a better understanding of what happens in a classroom, and also, to learn some of the reasons why teachers develop their classes in a certain way; the findings cannot be generalized to represent all kinds of mismatches that occur at the institution and what their cause is, due to the fact that, the most obvious limitation in this research was the sample size. Further research should look for identifying the causes of the mismatches in order to help both the learners and the teachers understand that there is an underlying reason for the difficulties the learners may have encountered in the comprehension of classroom instruction.

Despite the fact that exploring the link that beliefs have with students' outcomes was not an aim of this study, it would have been very stimulating to explore it, as well as the different types of intervention techniques that could be employed for minimizing the discrepancies between teachers' intention and learners' interpretation. Another aspect that caught the teachers-researchers' attention and that is directly related to mismatches, is the fact that it is necessary to face and recognize that every group of students is different, because they bring their own life situations, customs and as expected, their own beliefs. For this reason, students cannot be addressed in the same way, and every generation is more challenging than the previous one, therefore, teaching practices should not remain the same.

Learners and teachers' beliefs regarding language learning and teaching demand more exploration, because research, as Ferreira (2003) claimed: "has mainly described beliefs without

trying to understand why students have certain beliefs and what role they play in students' learning experiences" (p.7). In this sense, some researchers suggest the need for further studies on how beliefs differ across learners, and on why they adopt a particular learning approach.

Pedagogical Implications

Certain pedagogical implications can be inferred from this study. Firstly, identification of learners' beliefs and reflection on their possible effect on language learning may lead to increased awareness and even adjustment of their expectations, commitment, success in and satisfaction with their language classes (Hortwitz, 1988). Secondly, the identification of these learners' beliefs might provide guidelines to teachers at this institution on how to adapt their teaching approaches to try to avoid mismatches between classroom practices and learners' beliefs and to make more informed choices about teaching (Bernat, 2005). Finally, an analysis regarding students' needs could help educators better understand learners' beliefs about English learning, students' preferences, what competences have been developed and what others still need to be explored, prior experiences, and common problems they face. The result of needs analysis is a realistic list of language, ideas or skill items, as a result of considering the present proficiency, future needs and wants of the learners (Nation & Macalister, 2010). This list can be taken into consideration when designing a language-learning syllabus, so that any material taught in the English classes will match with the beliefs and other gender, social, personal, cultural, cognitive and affective factors students bring to class.

Some of the theories presented at this study suggest a possible relation between beliefs about language learning and instructional practices and as claimed by Alarcon et al (2015), "teachers are finally professionals who can better describe and interpret the conditions in which the teaching and learning processes take place at schools"(p.183). Based on this concept, and

given that that “Beliefs guide teachers’ behavior and inform teachers’ practice by serving as a kind of interpretative framework through which they made sense of what they do in their classrooms”(Alarcòn, 2015), educators at the institution should try to enhance their understanding of their own beliefs about language learning, these beliefs are essential for the sake of promoting more appropriate instructional practices, the selection of class activities and materials, as well as, to ensure that teaching approaches match the goals or the curriculum of the institution where they work.

Conclusion

Research on beliefs of teachers and learners is important because there are theoretical and empirical reasons suggesting they affect the teaching and learning practices. The present study allowed the teachers-researchers to get not only an idea of what teachers and students think, know, and believe, regarding what they do in the classroom, and of the learning process in general; but also it allowed the researchers to consider that, since beliefs identification encourages teachers to self-reflect on their own views and classroom practices, and to contrast their views with those of other teachers, they should become reflective practitioners of what they do in class, constantly updating and taking into account the specific needs each group has. Likewise, there are many aspects about beliefs that influence class behaviours and classroom practices, ranging from very simple beliefs to more complex processes, which can involve and influence the students’ interpretation of a task. In addition to these beliefs, learners’ previous experiences with the language as stated by Avella & Camargo (2010), play an important role on students’ motivation, and thus, in their performance in the target language.

In spite of the fact that teachers usually tend to use specific teaching practices that would be related to their teaching experience, their beliefs, or to their experience as learners; it is not

easy to predict the outcomes a class based on those principles, is going to yield. Even experienced teachers, who have already developed methodologies for teaching that work well for students, cannot avoid mismatches, because they are always likely to happen in any teaching-learning situation.

Teachers and students would benefit from discussing potential mismatches, as the challenge would be then to look for ways to minimize those without sacrificing the desired outcomes of instruction. To make significant changes to their practice, teachers need multiple opportunities to learn new information, understand its implications for practice and be willing to use them, observe and reflect on the results.

For example, teachers with more experience may be less likely to feel discouraged when they discover that mismatches occur, because through experience they have created ways to cope for when something does not go as planned (Emmer et al, 2001, Borg, 2003). That is to say, with experience, teachers learn to automatize the routines associated with managing the class, and can thus focus more attention on issues of content (Borg, 2003). Moreover, Richards (as cited in Borg 2003), also found that experienced teachers engaged in more improvisational teaching than inexperienced teachers. He argues that:

This suggests that as teachers develop their teaching skills, they are able to draw less on preactive decision-making (the type of planning that occurs prior to teaching) and make greater use of interactive decision-making as a source of their improvisational performance (p. 92).

Most of them would be able to anticipate the difficulties that students are likely to encounter, and employ a number of routines they have in stock, to immediately use them in response to students' behavior. On the other hand, as stated by Tsui (2003), novice teachers often have difficulties anticipating problems in the classroom, and the complications that students

might have with the curriculum, as they are usually reluctant to depart from their plans in response to students' performance. In the end, it is also true that less experienced teachers are willing to adopt new ways to avoid mismatches through teaching strategies they have recently developed from their professional training. The goal here must be for teachers, to find a meeting point between experience and willingness to try new things for the benefit of students.

Professional teaching development should focus not only on improving teachers' knowledge of the subject matter that they are teaching or at changing teachers' beliefs and instructional practices, but also it should enhance their understanding of students' thinking about that subject matter, in order to close down the gaps within the learning process. At the same time, it is remarkably important to identify the beliefs learners hold, to help them understand themselves and others as well as adapt to the world around them (Pajares, 1992). Besides, as proposed by Bernat & Gvozdenko (2005), "Identification of these beliefs and reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching in general, as well as in more specific areas such as the learners' expectations and strategies used, can inform future syllabus design and teacher practice in the course"(p.). For these reasons, teachers as well as students should work together towards making the changes that are necessary to improve the educational experience for both parts.

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Appendix A

Beliefs about Teaching Survey

(Adapted from A Guidebook for University of Michigan Graduate Student Instructors, 6th ed.)

Directions: Throughout your teaching experience, you have been constantly encouraged to think about your beliefs about teaching. As you respond to this Teacher Beliefs Survey, Mark with an X on the number under each statement to indicate your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers.

- 5 - Consistently exceeds expectations
- 4 - Frequently exceeds expectations
- 3 - Meets expectations
- 2 - Sometimes meets expectations
- 1 - Rarely meets expectations

Appendix B

Teacher Observation Rubric

1. Performance and Planning	5	4	3	2	1
A. Demonstrates knowledge of content and pedagogy					
B. Demonstrates knowledge of students					
C. Designs a complete plan of instruction					
D. Uses instructional materials					

2. Classroom Management and Organization	5	4	3	2	1
A. Creates an environment of respect					
B. Establishes a culture for learning					
C. Manages classroom procedures					
D. Organizes physical space					
E. Circulates around the classroom					

3. Presentation and Delivery of Instruction	5	4	3	2	1
A. Communicates with student					
B. Presents new topics to the class (lecture-style presentation)					
C. Explicitly states learning goals					
D. Develops action plan					

4. Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up	5	4	3	2	1
A. Uses a variety of effective methods to check for understanding					
B. Provides general feedback on student work					

C. Takes into account students' needs					
D. Uses effective questioning and discussion techniques					

Appendix C

Students' Survey (Encuesta a los estudiantes)

Estimado Estudiante:

Por favor, use este cuestionario de manera constructiva para proporcionar información a su instructor acerca de su enseñanza. Tómese un momento y piense en sus comentarios y sea lo más específico posible para que su instructor pueda determinar los pasos a seguir para hacer de su enseñanza una actividad más efectiva para usted. Sus respuestas a este cuestionario deben ser devueltas a su docente.

Gracias por tu ayuda.

Docente: _____

Evalúe su profesor utilizando la siguiente escala:

5 - Siempre supera las expectativas

4 - Frecuentemente supera las expectativas

3 - Cumple con las expectativas

2 - A veces cumple las expectativas

1 - Rara vez cumple las expectativas

1. Desempeño	5	4	3	2	1
A. Efectivamente alienta a los estudiantes a formular preguntas y dar respuestas					
B. Tiene buen dominio de su asignatura					
C. Da instrucciones claras					
D. Facilita mi aprendizaje					

2. Gestión y Organización de la clase	5	4	3	2	1
A. Demuestra interés en los estudiantes					
B. Fomenta el trabajo en parejas y grupos					
C. Trata los estudiantes con respeto					
D. Es tolerante con las diferentes opiniones expresadas en la clase					

3. Presentación y Entrega de Instrucción	5	4	3	2	1
A. Ajusta el ritmo de la clase a nivel de comprensión de los estudiantes					

B. Estimula en los estudiantes interés en el material					
C. Explica con claridad el tema de la clase					
D. Socializa claramente los objetivos de la clase					
E. Indica puntos importantes para recordar					

4. Evaluación y Seguimiento	5	4	3	2	1
A. Estimula la discusión efectivamente					
B. Está disponible por fuera del salón de clases					
C Me permite evaluar y reflexionar acerca de mi aprendizaje.					
D. Monitorea mi aprendizaje por medio de preguntas.					

Appendix D

Interview Questions for Teachers and Students

Teachers' Interview

1. What do you believe it is fundamental in the process of teaching English?
2. How do you think students learn more easily?

Students' Interview

1. Que consideras fundamental en el proceso de aprendizaje del idioma inglés?
2. Como crees que se debe enseñar el Inglés?

Appendix E

Transcriptions of Interviews for Teachers

Interview: Teacher 1

Researcher - Good morning teacher.

Teacher - Good morning

R- Okay, please would you like to answer me these questions?

From your learning point of view, how have your experiences influenced as students, as teacher, and as user of English language?

T- so, I would say that, when you really know that you need to speak English, so, you look the way or you ask, excuse me, um, as student you want to know a lot of English yah, and sometimes you face the situation you need to speak English, in that moment you know that you need to learn; in that part you know that you have to look for more information, to look at the Internet to search for more ah grammar, more videos, more learning ways that help you to develop your skills, your English Skills, so, sometimes when you are student you need to look for the thing you really like to learn yah, eh I may say that, eh, when you really want to know, you don't need a teacher all the time teaching you how to say things, you can look the information, you can do

exercises, you can train yourself, and then, you can ask the teacher how to do the things, and when you are a teacher, usually try to thinking that way, because student students most of the time, they want to know a lot of things, but they don't know how to ask the teacher, teacher please help teach me how to say this, how to, how can, how can I solve this exercise, If I am in this real situation, If I am in the metro station, in the train station, how can I help some people to, I don't know, to give an a direction or something, and most of the time when you are preparing a class, you have to teach in that situation, how to explain the students to solve a situation.

R- Okay, ah experiences have influenced you as a user of English language? As a user of English? What can you say?

T- yah, I say that you really need to face real situation and the experiences say that if you have problems or when you face an excuse me, how to say that, as a user of English when you face problem, when you face a real situation, you need, you know that you really need to increase your English skills; yah, and some students in these, on these institutions they don't know that they really need the English, until they face real English situation, for example, they don't have idea, or they don't want to learn English, then, they go to a travel may be to another country and they face a real situation, they miss the opportunity to know a person, to know I don't know, a lot of people, or to buy something, and if they don't want, they don't know how to do it, they face a problem and they note I really need, I really need to speak English, for example sometimes they are looking for a job and when they face the situation, they don't know English, they need the English.

R- Thank you and the other question would be: How do you think the students can learn more easily?

T- I think as a user of English I think that students can learn easily when they read or write or they listen to the things they really like, for example they like sports, they can look for all information for example if I like soccer I can read Spanish in English, I must watch English channels talking about sports, if I like for example about fitness, I can look Videos of fitness in English, yeah, or if I like I don't know animation, comics I can look for the comics in English, for example is musical students they have a lot of skills in English why because they want to learn a lot of the music they like so they listen to the videos they look for the music and they look for the lyrics of the songs and they really learn easily then other students so the problem is for example don't like music in English, they only listen to reggaeton and they can never have contact of the English language in that way, so if they see a little of videos or listen to music in English they will increase their English level, so I said hey teacher how can I improve my English level , do the things you like try to do in English , listen to the things you love in English, if you had seen a Spanish movie six times in Spanish see it in English once, twice.

R- In the first point of the first question, I didn't understand how your experience have influenced you as a teacher!

T- Any time you teach a class you are always evolved, the first class is not the same as the third, or the tenth or the twenty classes all the classes are different, every time you are given a class you are evolving your way to teach. For example in the class you have seen today the first time I took that class was not today and the next time I am going to teach this class is going to be better than today, you usually try to evolve.

R- Yes, that is true, practice make masters

T- Yes, for teachers and for students

R-thank you very much.

T-thank you.

Interview: Teacher 2

R- Good afternoon, we are with the teacher 2.

R- Teacher thank you very much for this interview. Okay

T- Okay

R- Teacher what do you believe is the fundamental in the process of teaching English?

T- I think the most important thing is the interest, if you can be developed interest in your students, they can achieve whatever they want, if they like they do

R- Thank you, the second question

R- How do you think the students can learn more easily?

T- I think they learn more easily when they practice a lot and when the have self-confidence and discipline

R- Thank you so much, its very kind of you

Interview: Teacher 3

R- Good afternoon teacher 3, thank you very much to share your ideas with me.

I would like you answer me some questions number one could be: what do you believe is the fundamental in the process of teaching English?

T- I think that the most fundamental thing in the process of teaching English is based on the nature of students, it depends most of the times of the culture and the environment , it is not the same to teach to students of private schools or universities then teaching to students of private school.

R- The second question is: how do you think students learn more easily?

T- I think they learn more easily if we motivate them to learn English as a culture as a need in their life, because to be a bilingual person is very important in this society at this moment

R- Thank you very much, excellent.

Interview: Teacher 4

R- Teacher thank you very much for this interview.

R- Teacher what do you believe is the fundamental in the process of teaching English?

T - Fundamental in the process to learn English. First of all, you need to be organized. I mean, you need to have a process; you need to follow some procedures, steps. You have to organize your learning process.

First if you want to learn a second language you weather attend some courses, if you are self-taught, you have to establish a schedule.

Second, you have to be aware that there must be a self, I mean, you need to have autonomous work with two or four classes are not enough definitely. You need to work extra hours outside the classroom, you need to go to the net, you need a book, you need to do exercises and ----- other one that I consider the most fundamental...wanting to learn English. You need to be passionate about it. You need to be in contact with the language, you need to love music, movies, to be updated, as we say in Spanish you have to be “gomoso”.That’s it.

R- Thank you, the second question

R- How do you think the students can learn more easily?

T. We are not an English speaking country.... So if you want to learn English you have to be aware that if you go out, if you leave your home, you are not going to be...facing...and English world. I mean, you won’t go to a café and ask for a cup of coffee, you are going to see a sales person who is going to say “en que le puedo servir. So you need to be conscious that this is not an English speaking country, ok. So what do you need to do? You need to learn by yourself, you need to be in contact with thee language as much as you can...

English cannot be taught, so that is why you should be passionate about it I don’t teach English, I share English

Interview: Teacher 5

R- Teacher what do you believe is the fundamental in the process of teaching English?

T. For me, the most important, in the process of teaching English, is to take into account students' needs and motivation for learning a second language. This is because most of the teachers teach but they do not care if students learn.

R- How do you think the students can learn more easily?

T. They learn more easily if we, as teachers, create an environment where they must use English to satisfy their basic needs.

Appendix F

Transcriptions of Interviews for Students

Interview: Student A

Researcher. Good evening, we are with the student A. Thank you for accepting this interview.

Student. Good evening.

R. I would like you answer these following questions: First, What do you consider is fundamental in the English learning process?

S. The foundation would be to practice English all the time, to constantly listen to English.

R. Thank you very much. The second question is: How do you think English should be taught?

S. I think by listening to the English teacher speaking English all the time, and the teacher shouldn't be demanding a very high level especially when he might hear Spanish being spoken.

R. Thank you very much.

Interview: Student B

R. Good evening, Student B, thank you for accepting this interview.

S. Good evening teacher.

R. The first question that I would like you answer me is: ¿What do you consider as the foundation in the English learning process?

S. For me, the most important way to practice English would be not only to practice it in class, but also practice it daily because when you do not study for it for some days, one usually encounters difficulties like in pronunciation.

R. Then what is the foundation from your point of view?

S. Practice and listening.

R. The second question is: How do you think English should be taught?

S. I guess it should be taught in a dynamic way by setting dialogues in order to interact more with classmates and by that mean, improve the pronunciation.

R. Thank you very much.

Interview: Student C

R. Good evening, we are with the student C, thank you for accepting this interview. And the first question that I want to ask is what do you consider as the foundation in the English learning process?

S. Good evening, I consider the foundation is in the willingness that one puts in it because you can have a very good teacher, but you don't want to learn it or don't take it as a passion, you wouldn't learn it.

R. Ok thank you very much. The second question is how do you think English should be taught?

S. In my opinion, this actually depends on the teachers, because a teacher should not only be a teacher, but also should have a passion for what he does.

R. Ok thank you very much.

Interview: Student D

R. Good evening, Student D, Thank you for accepting this interview.

The first question, I would like you answer me is: What do you consider is fundamental in the English learning process?

S. I think that fundamental to be able to learn English, before thinking in some good bases, a good development and a good performance in the learning. It is to want, attitude before anything, I speak from my personal point of view, since my personal experience; the bases that I have received in English, I am Speaking of the ITM, high school, have not been the best, but I have had I the desire, motivation of practicing and learn by myself and I believe that I have been able to speak, so the motivation and the self-motivation is the fundamental, before learning English.

R. Okay, Thank you very much. The second question is: How do you think English should be taught?

S. eh, the methodology that is used here in Colombia many times and is already changing is that the teachers talk you in Spanish and ask you in English. The first is to teach people to change the switch, turn the switch and try from the beginning to mentalize and to think of English. That is the fundamental. So, when someone arrives to the classroom talking in English and only English is talking, talking, live and breathe in English, people tend at least to loosen up a bit this mental rigidity that they have about the language.

R. Okay, Thank you very much,

S. with pleasure

Interview: Student E

R. Good evening, Thanks Student E, for accepting this interview.

The idea is that you can answer these two questions in English or Spanish the way you want.

Okay in English or in Spanish?

S. In Spanish.

R. What do you consider is fundamental in the English learning process? (Translation of the researcher)

S. I consider that the main or the most fundamental in the learning of the person to know the English language has to have a lot of discipline, to be very constant and practice this language anywhere and whenever.

I think that the discipline is really important for a good process of learning, organize the times and being so responsible with the things. Talking about external agents as environment, in what is all the process should be always the best.

R. Okay, the second question says: How do you think English should be taught?

S. Okay, to teach English, it is necessary to take in to account some topics important,

First: to relate images with special moments in the real life, also with a lot of dialogue, and something very important is the listening, that is the most difficult in the moment for all the people.

R. Okay, thank you, for these short words.

S. Thanks to you.

R. Okay.

Interview: Student F.

R. Good evening, thanks Student E, for accepting this interview.

The idea is that you can answer these two questions in English or Spanish the way you want.

Okay in English or in Spanish?

S. In Spanish.

R. Que consideras fundamental en el proceso del aprendizaje del Inglés?

S. Yo considero que, lo más importante es trabajar con diccionarios, las estructuras de las oraciones, cuales auxiliares debo usar, en que momento. Lo fundamental es hacer muchos ejercicios, enfocados en la estructura, aprender verbos; la metodología seria aprender diez por clase y que los evalúen, como se conjugan, cuales son los verbos más utilizados. Y también considero que un vocabulario es fundamental, vocabulario acerca de diferentes cosas.

R. Bien, la segunda pregunta es: cómo piensa ud. que se debería enseñar el Inglés?

S. El Inglés debería ser enseñado a través de métodos dinámicos, incluyendo todas las competencias, como la escucha, la escritura, el habla, y la lectura. Obviamente el inglés debe ser enseñado por una persona que tenga un buen conocimiento del mismo.

Appendix G

Informed Consent Letters

**UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA BOLIVARIANA
SISTEMA DE FORMACIÓN AVANZADA
ESCUELA DE EDUCACIÓN Y PEDAGOGÍA**

MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

Estimado Docente,
Cordial saludo.

Nosotros, **Edin Enrique Lemos M. y María Isabel Marín Lopera**, somos estudiantes de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de nuestro trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, hemos propuesto la investigación “**ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE GAP IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF ONE INSTITUTION IN MEDELLIN**”, cuyo objetivo es examinar el impacto que las creencias y percepciones sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje que traen los docentes al aula de clase, pueden tener un papel de suma importancia en sus prácticas y en su crecimiento profesional.

Como parte de la investigación se hará la recolección de datos, que consiste en la aplicación de varias encuestas (docentes, estudiantes) y en la observación de clase que nos servirán como referencia. Esta investigación también incluirá la declaración de enseñanza de los docentes y una rúbrica de observación de clases.

Esperamos que los resultados de este estudio nos ayuden a dar luces sobre las creencias generales que tienen los docentes acerca de la forma de enseñar inglés y cómo estas creencias influyen o no en sus prácticas. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación se emplearán en principio para la escritura del trabajo de grado (tesis). Sin embargo, los datos que se recojan en el trabajo de

campo servirán para futuras ponencias y publicaciones académicas. En todos los casos, se hará uso de pseudónimos, a no ser que usted autorice lo contrario.

Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que nosotros, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, podamos contactarlo a usted para desarrollar el trabajo de campo que será soporte para el proceso investigativo.

Usted está en completa libertad de participar, sin ninguna forma de coerción para su colaboración y sin ninguna posibilidad de represalias en su institución educativa o en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana en caso de no aceptar. Usted tiene derecho a ver el producto final y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradecemos su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual nos ayudará en nuestra formación como investigadores. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente al Dr. José Orlando Gómez s, jose.gomez@upb.edu.co

Atentamente,

Edin Enrique Lemos M
María Isabel Marín L.
Candidatos a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con mi participación en esta investigación.

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Fecha

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo en aparecer en materiales de audio para el propósito de esta investigación.

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Fecha

**UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA BOLIVARIANA
SISTEMA DE FORMACIÓN AVANZADA
ESCUELA DE EDUCACIÓN Y PEDAGOGÍA**

MAESTRÍA EN PROCESOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y ENSEÑANZA DE SEGUNDAS LENGUAS

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPACIÓN EN INVESTIGACIÓN PARA TESIS DE MAESTRÍA

Señor Juan Carlos Sánchez Giraldo
Jefe de oficina centro de idiomas,
ITM

Estimado jefe:

Cordial saludo,

Nosotros, **Edin Enrique Lemos M y María Isabel Marín Lopera**, somos estudiantes de la Maestría en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Uno de los requerimientos para aspirar al título de magíster es el desarrollo de un proyecto de investigación como parte de nuestro trabajo de grado (tesis). Para dicho trabajo, hemos propuesto la investigación “**ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE GAP IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF ONE INSTITUTION IN MEDELLIN**”, cuyo objetivo es examinar el impacto que las creencias y percepciones sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje que traen los docentes al aula de clase, pueden tener un papel de suma importancia en sus prácticas y en su crecimiento profesional.

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Esta carta, entonces, tiene por objeto solicitar su autorización para que nosotros, en el marco de este proyecto de investigación, podamos llevar a cabo nuestro trabajo de campo para desarrollar nuestra investigación. A los docentes y estudiantes que vayan a apoyar esta tarea se les entregará una forma de consentimiento similar.

Los docentes y estudiantes que participen en esta tarea lo harán en completa libertad y se espera que no haya ninguna coerción para su colaboración. Ellos estarán en completa libertad de no participar, sin que ello pueda constituir motivo de represalias en la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Ellos estarán en derecho de ver el producto final y, de no estar de acuerdo con algo en el mismo, se harán los cambios del caso.

De antemano agradecemos su colaboración en el desarrollo de esta investigación, la cual nos ayudará en nuestra formación como investigadores. En caso de cualquier inquietud con respecto a este proyecto de investigación, puede contactar directamente al Dr. José Orlando Gómez S, jose.gomez@upb.edu.co

Atentamente,

Edin Enrique Lemos M
María Isabel Marín L.
Candidatos a Magíster en Procesos de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza de Segundas Lenguas
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Sede Central Medellín

He leído la información en esta carta y estoy de acuerdo con la participación de los estudiantes y/o docentes de esta institución en esta investigación.

Nombre, Cargo y Firma

Fecha

Appendix H

Author's Biography

Edin Enrique Lemos M.

He is currently working as an English teacher at public Institution Federico Ozanam. Nowadays, he is a candidate for MA in Learning and Teaching Processes in Second Languages from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB), in Medellín, Colombia (2016). He also holds a BA Specialization in Teaching English of the same University (UPB) 1999; a BA in Computación para la Docencia at Universidad Antonio Nariño (UAN) 2000; a BA in Docencia Investigativa Universitaria at Universidad Luis Amigó (FUNLAM) 2006. He belongs to the program of Bilingualism Heart for Change of the Ministerio de Educación Nacional. He has been an English teacher at a public institution, Tecnológico de Antioquia, and Universidad Luis Amigó among others. Teacher Lemos also has a bachelor's degree in Languages at Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó (UTCH) Diego Luis Córdoba.

María Isabel Marin Lopera.

She is currently working in public university in the city of Medellín, Colombia. She has been working as an English teacher there for the last twelve years. Additionally, she works as an associate professor at the Language Center of Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. She holds a Teaching Degree in Foreign Languages from Universidad de Antioquia (1991) and she is a graduate specialist in English Teaching from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (2008). She is also a candidate for the MA in Learning and Teaching Processes in Second Languages from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (2016).

Tables

Table 1.1

<i>Students' Survey</i>						
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL
1. Performance	1	2	3	4	5	
Efectivamente alienta a los estudiantes a formular preguntas y dar respuestas	0	0	5	6	14	25
Tiene buen dominio de su asignatura	0	0	0	6	19	25
Da instrucciones claras	0	3	4	7	11	25
Facilita mi aprendizaje	0	1	5	7	12	25

***Valoraciones: 5 - Siempre supera las expectativas; 4 - Frecuentemente supera las expectativas; 3 - Cumple con las expectativas; 2 - A veces cumple las expectativas; 1 - Rara vez cumple las expectativas**

Table 2.1

<i>Beliefs about Teaching Survey</i>						
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL
2. Performance and Planning	1	2	3	4	5	
I encourage my students to ask questions and give answers	0	0	0	2	3	5
I have a full command of the language	0	0	1	3	1	5
I give clear instructions	0	0	0	3	2	5
I facilitate my students learning	0	0	0	3	2	5

Table 1.2

<i>Students' Survey</i>							
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL	
3. Classroom Management and Organization	1	2	3	4	5		
Demuestra interés en los estudiantes	0	0	1	7	17	25	
Fomenta el trabajo en parejas y grupos	0	0	1	6	18	25	
Trata los estudiantes con respeto	0	0	0	5	20	25	
Es tolerante con las diferentes opiniones expresadas en la clase	0	0	4	3	18	25	

Table 2.2

<i>Beliefs about Teaching Survey</i>							
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL	
2. Classroom Management and organization	1	2	3	4	5		
I am interested in my students learning	0	0	0	0	5	5	
I encourage pair and group work	0	0	0	0	5	5	
I treat my students respectfully	0	0	0	0	5	5	
I am tolerant with all opinions expressed in class	0	0	0	0	5	5	

Table 1.3

<i>Students' Survey</i>							
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL	
1. Presentation and Delivery of Instruction	1	2	3	4	5		
Ajusta el ritmo de la clase a nivel de comprensión de los estudiantes	0	1	1	9	14	25	
Estimula en los estudiantes interés en el material	0	1	2	7	15	25	
Explica con claridad del tema de la clase	0	1	1	10	13	25	
Socializa claramente los objetivos de la clase	0	0	2	11	12	25	
Indica puntos importantes para recordar	0	0	1	8	16	25	

Table 2.3

<i>Beliefs about Teaching Survey</i>						
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL
3. Presentation and Delivery of Instruction	1	2	3	4	5	
I adjust pace of class to the students' level of understanding	0	0	0	2	3	5
I stimulate interest in material	0	0	0	2	3	5
I explain material clearly	0	0	0	4	1	5
I share with my students the objectives of the class	0	0	0	1	4	5
I Indicate important points to remember	0	0	0	3	2	5

Table 1.4

<i>Students' Survey</i>						
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL
3. Assessment, and Follow-Up	1	2	3	4	5	
Estimula la discusión efectivamente	0	0	4	12	9	25
Está disponible por fuera del salón de clases	1	1	5	10	8	25
Me permite evaluar y reflexionar acerca de mi aprendizaje.	0	0	2	13	10	25
Monitorea mi aprendizaje por medio de preguntas	0	0	3	8	14	25

Table 2.4

<i>Beliefs about Teaching Survey</i>						
	VALORACIONES					TOTAL
Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up	1	2	3	4	5	
I effectively direct and stimulate discussion	0	0	0	5	0	5
I am always available outside the class	0	1	3	0	1	5
I allow my students to evaluate and reflect about their learning.	0	0	0	5	0	5
I monitor my students learning by asking questions	0	0	1	1	3	5

Figures

Figures 1

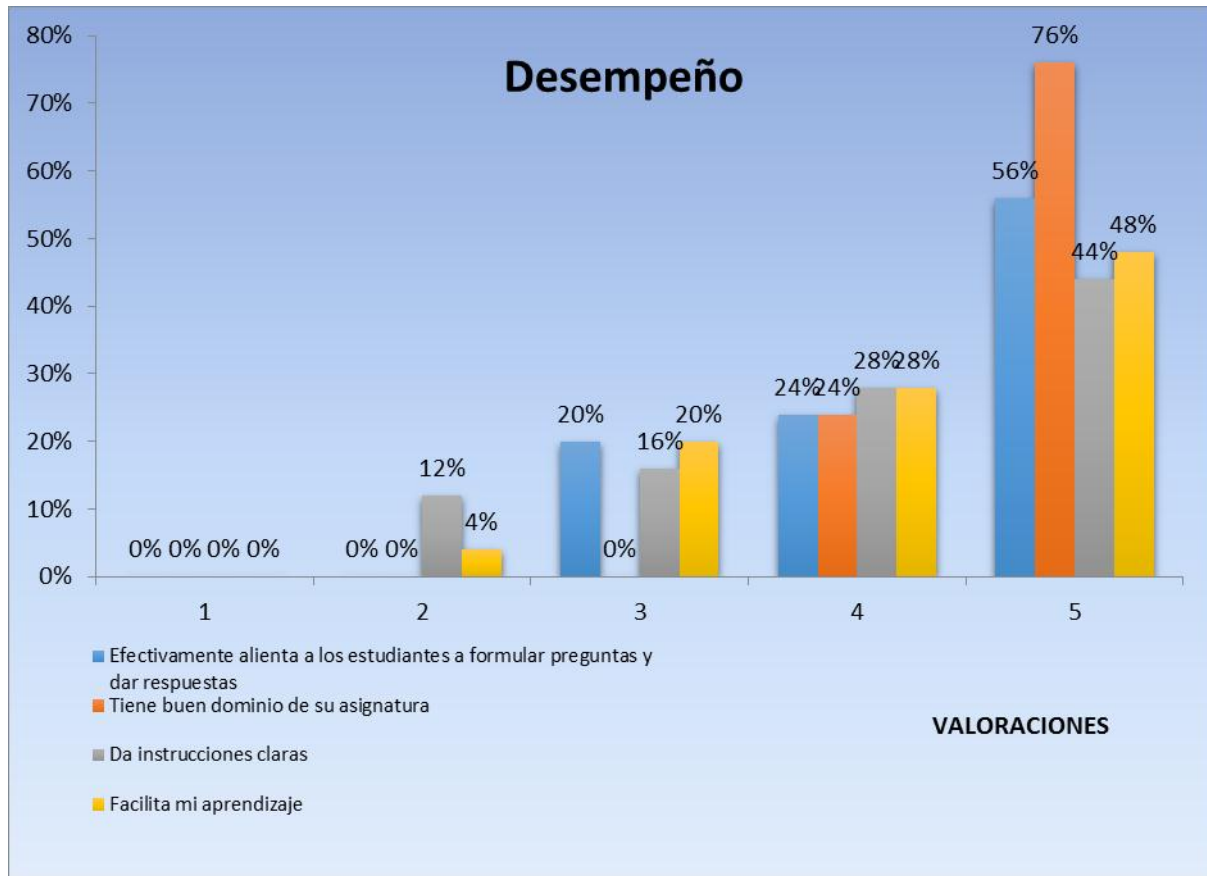


Figure 1. Performance according to Students

Figure 2

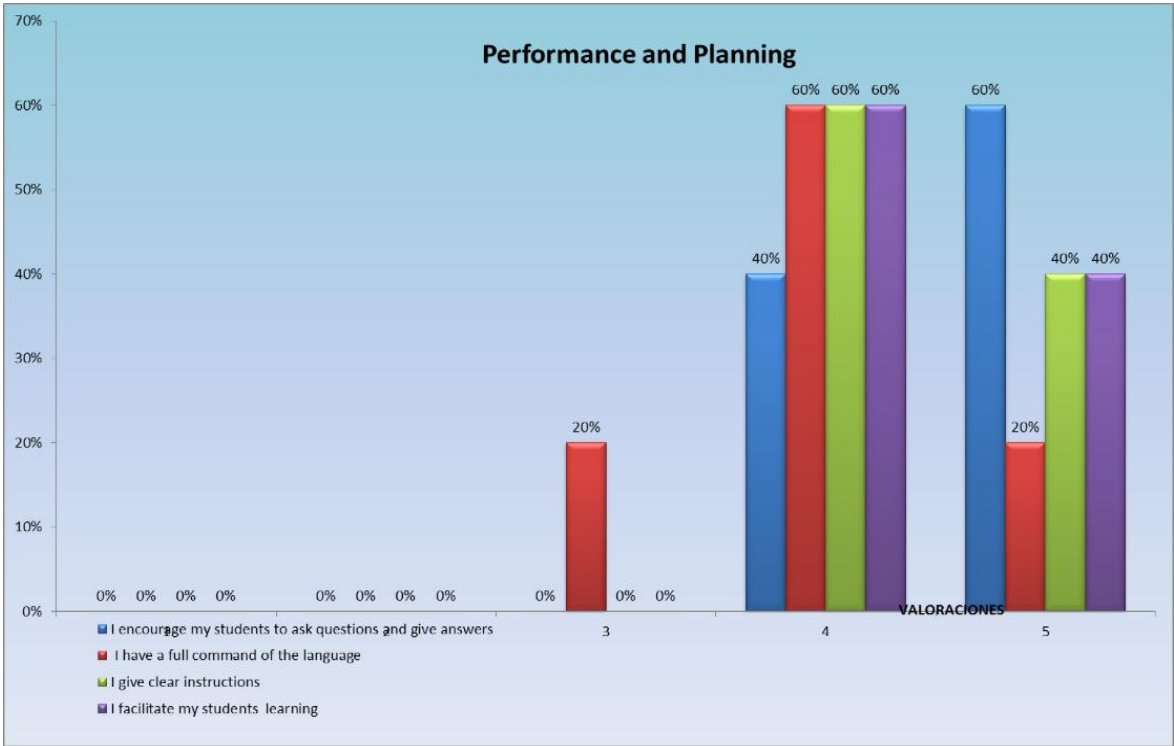


Figure 2. Teachers’ Performance and Planning

Figure 3

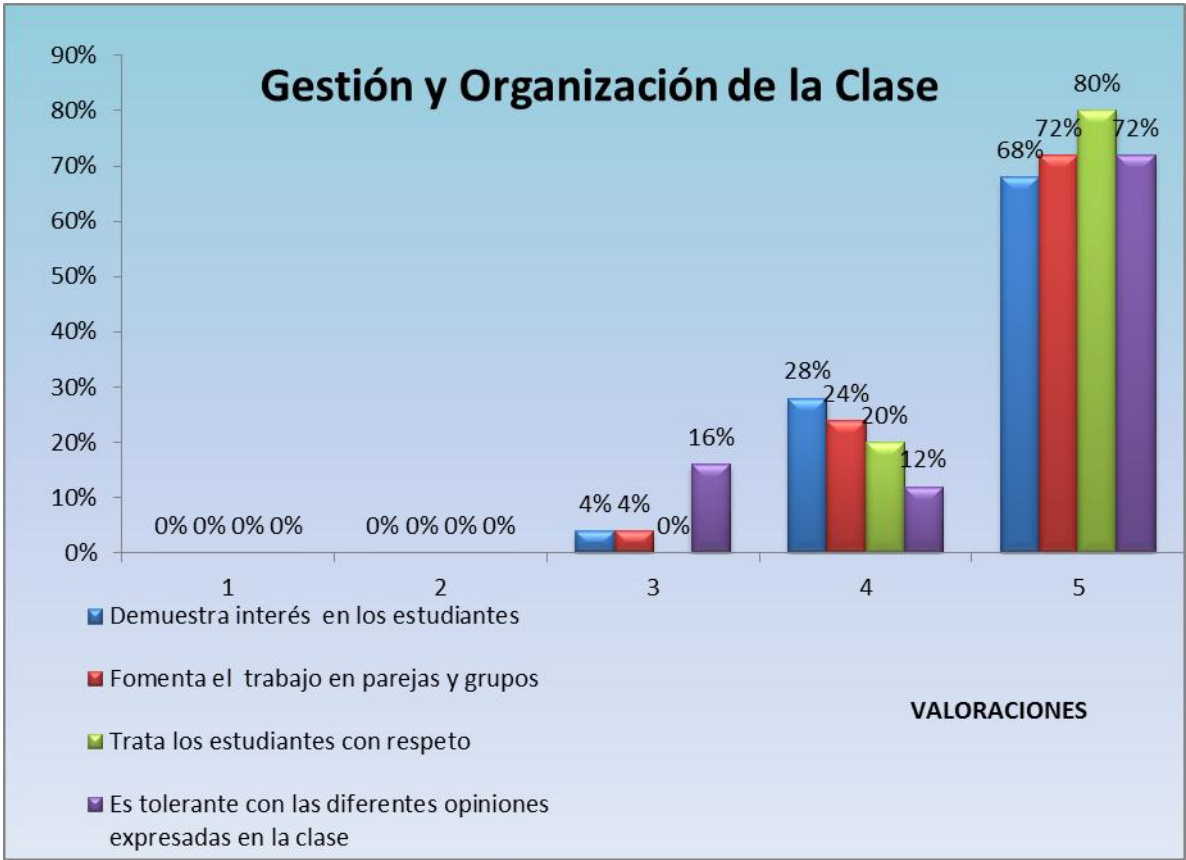


Figure 3. Classroom Management and organization according to Students

Figure 4

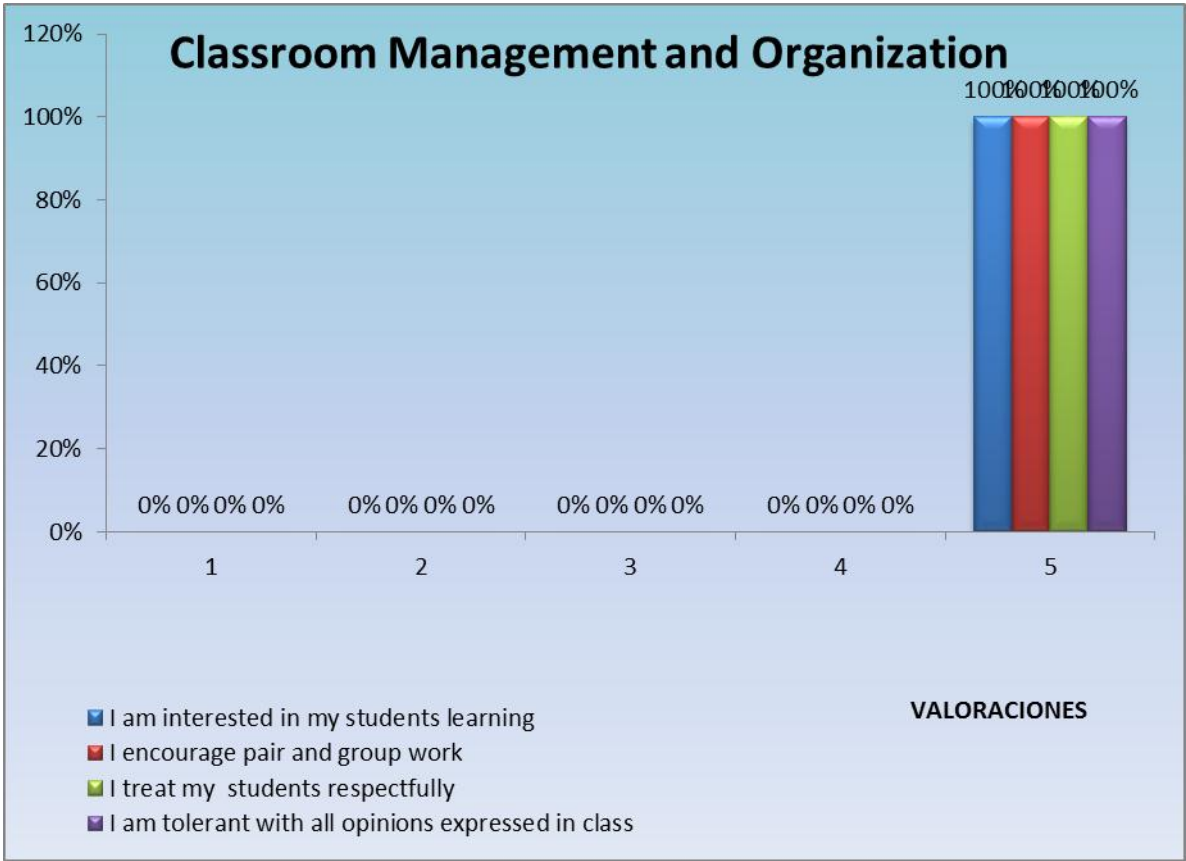


Figure 4. Teachers’ Classroom Management and organization

Figure 5

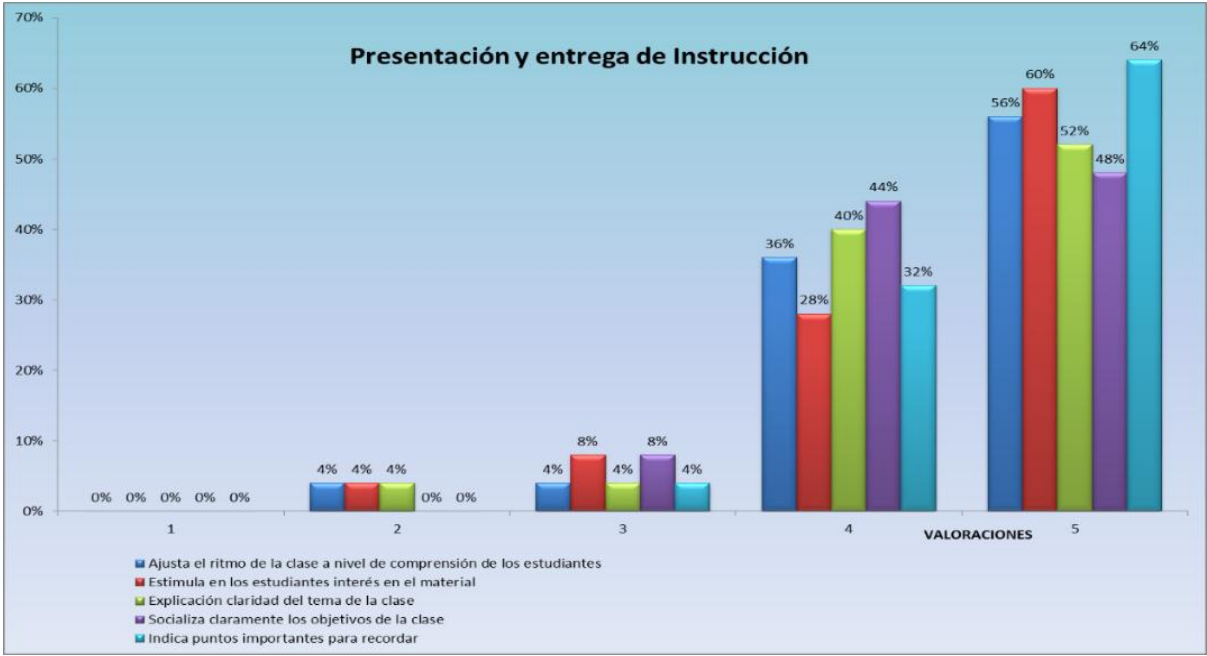


Figure 5. Presentation and Delivery of Instruction according to Students

Figure 6

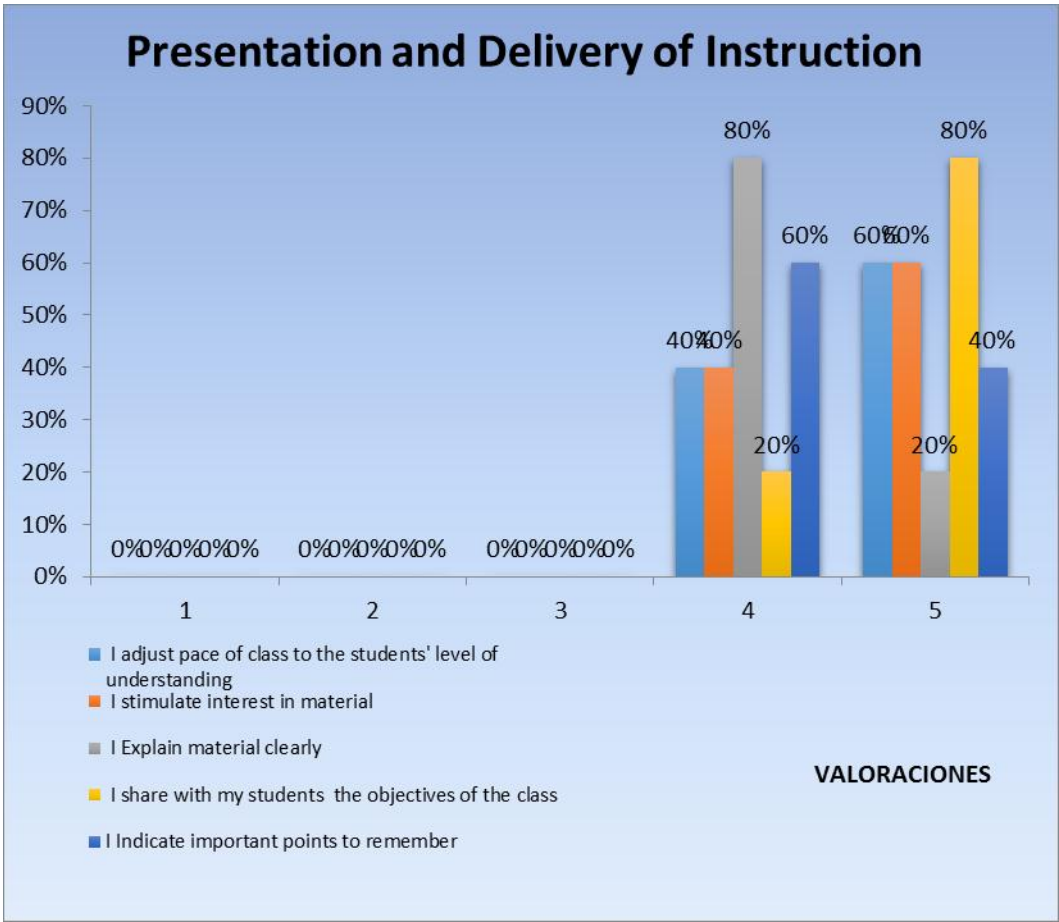


Figure 6. Teachers' Presentation and Delivery of Instruction

Figure 7

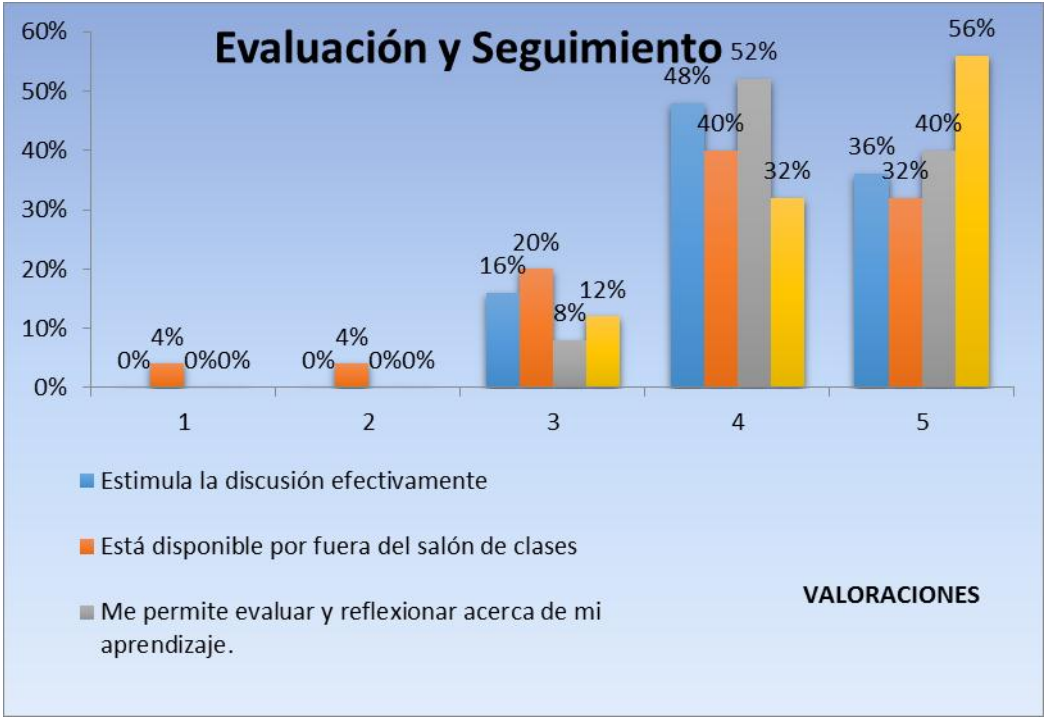


Figure 7. Assessment, and Follow-Up according to Students

Figure 8

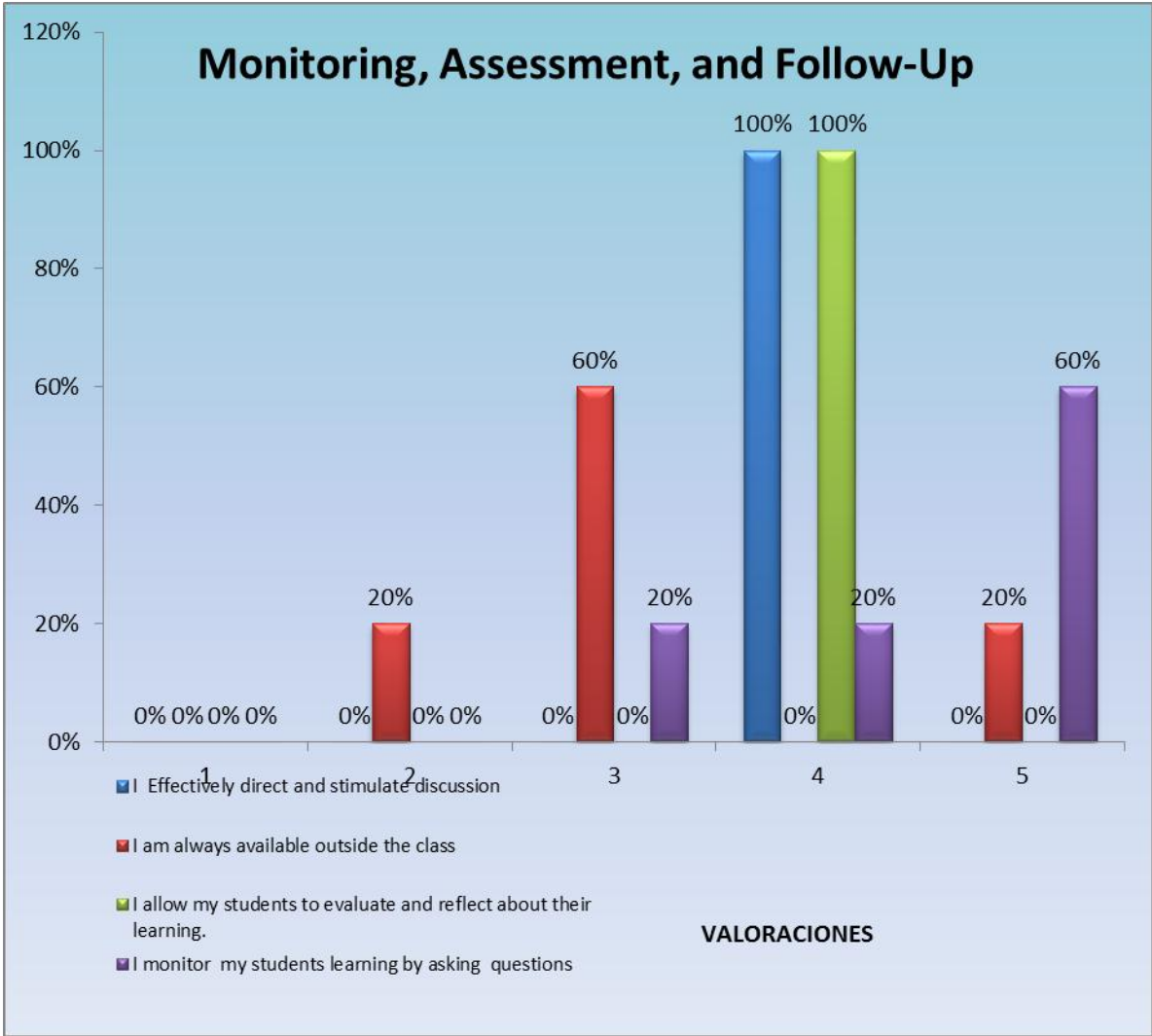


Figure 8. Teachers’ Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up

Figure 9

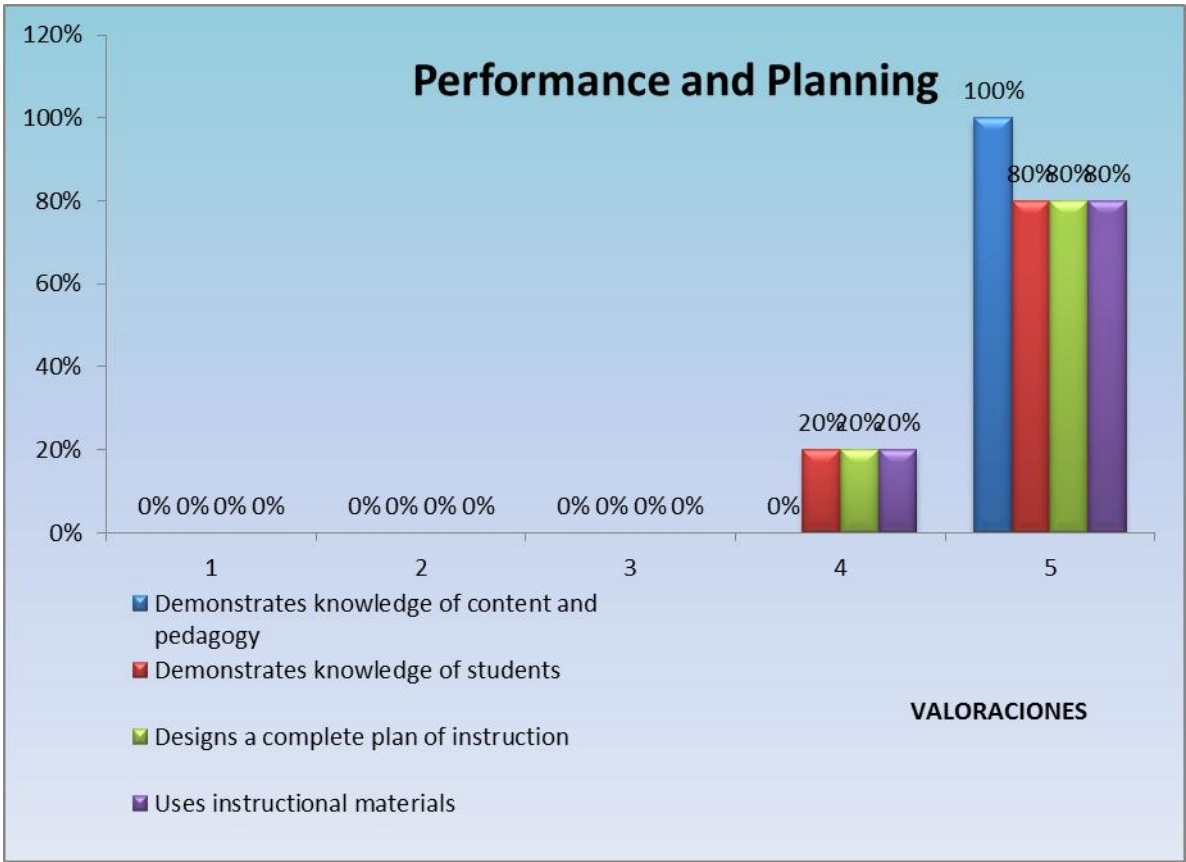


Figure 9. Performance and Planning

Figure 10

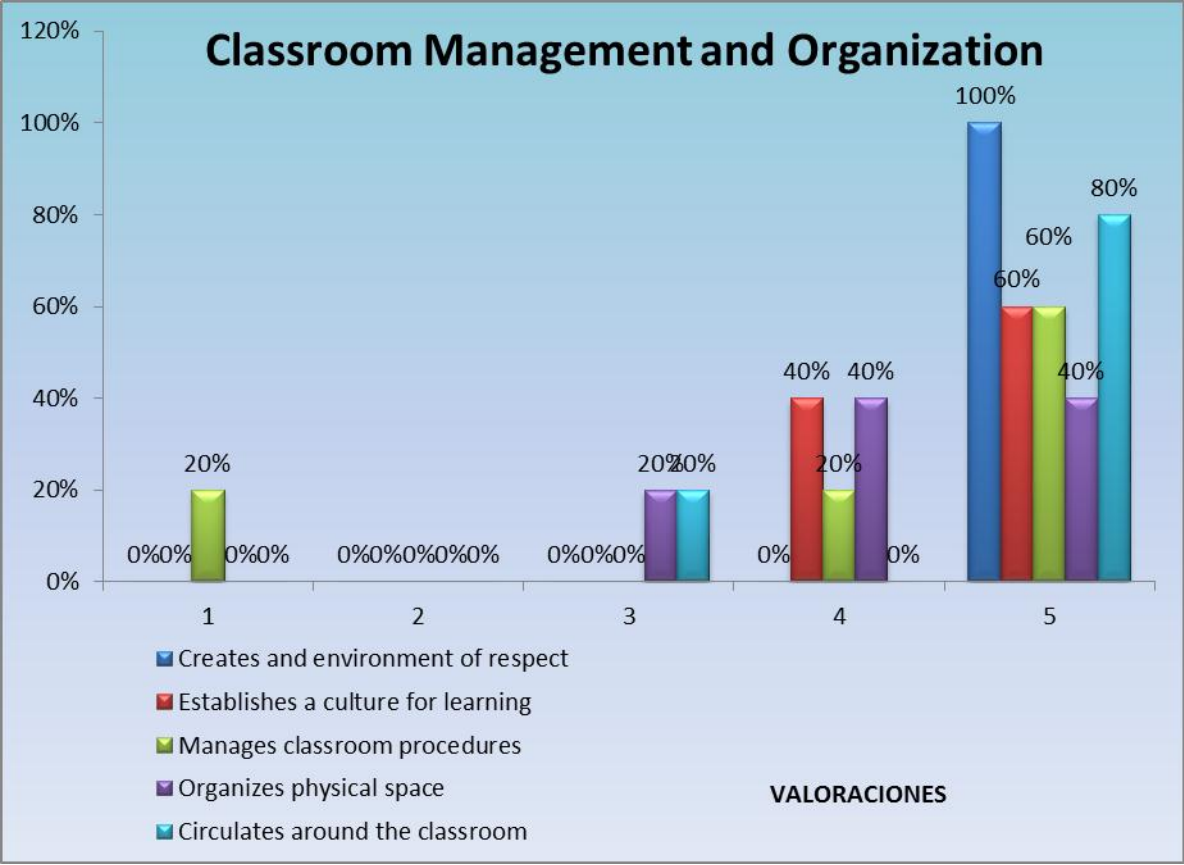


Figure 10. Classroom Management and Organization

Figure 11

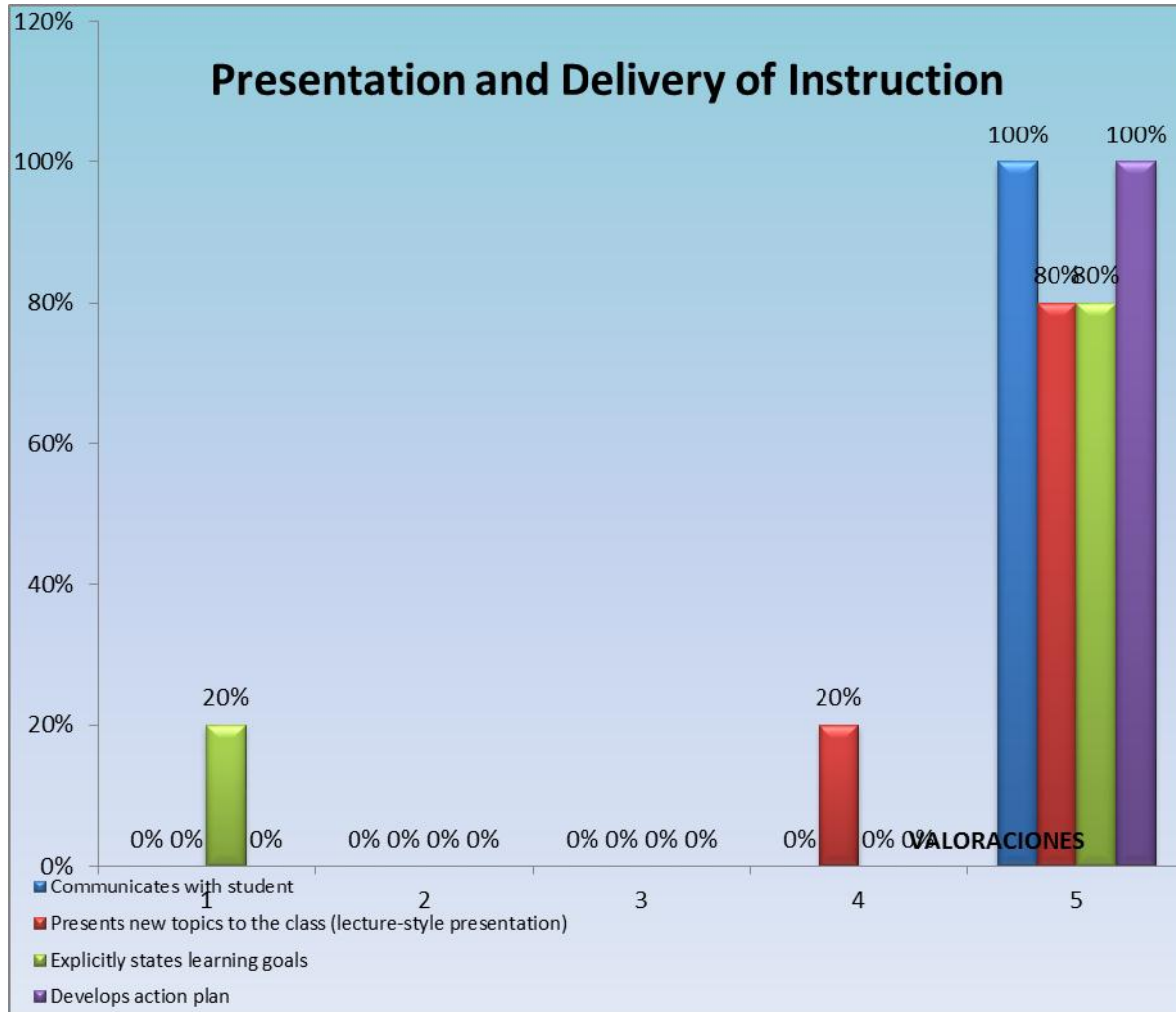


Figure 11. Presentation and Delivery of Instruction

Figure 12

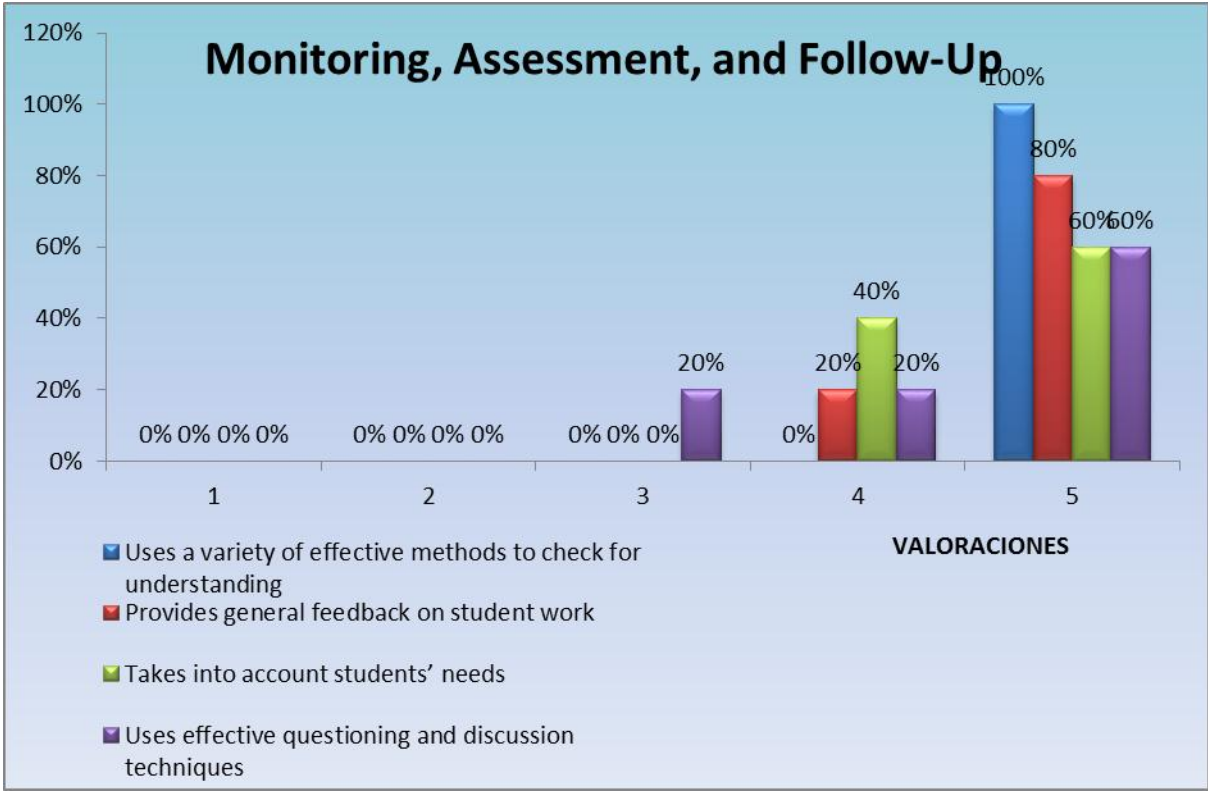


Figure 12. Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up