

ASSESSING STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD

CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY IN LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA¹

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This paper intends to reveal students' and teachers' attitudes to the use of new technologies in the English language classroom in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The main tools used for the analysis have been two questionnaires, one administered to students and a second one given to teachers. In both cases, we have used a representative sample of the general population to be analysed. The findings show that the use of new technologies is very widespread in the English classes. Both teacher and student participants offer a positive attitude towards the use of these aids as a good way to teach and learn, whilst enjoying what they are doing. In both cases, there is a preference for the use of the computer and the DVD.

Key Words: Attitudes, English, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Integration, Classroom, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

El presente artículo pretende descubrir las actitudes de profesores y estudiantes en relación con el uso de las nuevas tecnologías en las clases de inglés de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Las principales herramientas que hemos usado para este estudio han sido dos cuestionarios, uno de ellos proporcionado a los estudiantes, y el otro a los profesores. En ambos casos, hemos usado una muestra representativa de la población general sujeta al estudio. Los resultados demuestran que el uso de las nuevas tecnologías está generalizado en las clases de inglés. Tanto el profesor como el estudiante muestran actitudes positivas hacia el uso de estos apoyos para el aprendizaje y la enseñanza, a la vez que disfrutan de ellos. En ambos casos, se prefiere el uso del ordenador al del DVD.

¹ I would like to thank Deanne Wiseman for her tips while writing this paper.

Palabras clave: Actitudes, inglés, integración de la tecnología de la información y la comunicación, aula, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of this paper has been object of different studies and approaches in the last decades, as the use of new technologies in the classroom has become a crucial tool for the development of any school subject. A number of research articles have examined the impact of ICT on different aspects such as teachers' and students' motivation (Mumtaz 2000; Knezeck and Christensen 2002; Demetriadis *et al.* 2003); others have shed light on gender differences (students and teachers) as regards the use of new technologies in the classroom (Bryson and De Castell 1996; Zhang and Espinoza 1997; Broos 2005; Huyer and Sikoska 2003); other studies have analysed the employment of ICT from a pedagogical perspective (McCornick and Scrimshaw 2001; Kennewell and Morgan 2003; Galanouli *et al.* 2004; John and Sutherland 2005). However, in this piece of research we will focus on the attitudes and preferences of students and teachers towards the use of new technologies in the English language classroom. Albirini (2006) has also studied the teachers' attitudes toward information and communication technologies in the context of Syria. However, not many pieces of research have considered the students' and teachers' attitudes and viewpoints toward the use of ICT in the classroom.

In this study, we will first provide a contextual framework of the role that English and new technologies are playing nowadays in the setting of our research: the Spanish education system.

In Spain, English has become part of each Spaniard's daily life, and the first foreign language studied. The situation has changed a lot over the past 50 years, Rodríguez González (2002:134), quoting Lorenzo, explains that:

In the 1950s, English was taught as an optional first foreign language in secondary schools to no more than 5 per cent of the students, whereas those who studied French exceeded 90 per cent. Today the situation is reversed: English has rapidly pushed French into a modest second place.

Palacios Martínez (1994:22) and Reichelt (2008:3) state that there seems to be a strong determination by Spanish authorities to improve levels of proficiency. This author (Reichelt 2008:6-8) considers the importance of English at the different levels of the Spanish education system, with English-language learning being started at a very young age, "even earlier than required by law; some pre-schools begin instruction in English as early as age three." During secondary

education (until age 16), “virtually all students in Spain study English...typically students at this level receive 120-180 minutes per week of English instruction.”² At University level, English is important in many subject areas, including engineering, computer science, chemistry, history, medicine and nursery studies, telecommunications, architecture, physical education and so on, not to mention University degrees such as English philology or the “queen of foreign philologies” as Rodríguez González (2002:134) calls it, or the studies in translation and interpretation, where English is one of the most important subjects.

Finally, there are also *Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas*³ (State Schools of Languages) where English, as well as other foreign languages, is basically taught to adult students, and English is the most demanded foreign language. We have offered an overview of the situation of English in Spain.

From the new technologies point of view, present-day students have been born, and have grown up surrounded by audiovisual aids such as televisions, DVDs, radios, MP3s, computers and all the possibilities that they imply; the Internet, chat rooms, e-mail, blogs, and in a few years, we will work with students who are more than familiar with the use of digital whiteboards too.

The use of the ICT offers many advantages for its use in the English classroom, and different authors (García Martín 2000:57; Domínguez and Fernández 2006:24) list some of them:

- The students have countless possibilities to access to information and to knowledge in general terms, as above mentioned.
- In distance or on-line education, the physical presence of the student is not required, which is very useful for students who work, since time and place are flexible principles.
- The teaching methodologies can be personalised and adapted to the different learning rhythms of the students.
- It is easy to look up words in dictionaries and encyclopaedias on-line.
- These tools can combine with and complement the traditional methods in the classroom with the teacher.

² In the case of the Canary Islands, secondary education students receive 220 minutes per week of English instruction.

³ *Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas* or State Schools of Languages offer the possibility of studying a variety of languages (Spanish, English, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Chinese). These schools depend on the school board of the government of the Canary Islands, and, once the students have successfully finished their studies, they achieve an official diploma.

- This diversity of techniques and methods that contribute to enriching and making the teaching/learning process attractive.

However, “everything that glitters is not gold,” because the use of these ‘new’ methodologies can also have some drawbacks or difficulties when working with the students. As stated earlier, these learners are very familiar with these new techniques, but, in most cases, the young generations associate them with leisure and free-time activities. When the students regard a computer as a way to spend his/her spare time, through Internet exploring or chatting with friends, it can be hard to make them understand that the computer is also a tool to work and learn a foreign language with. Another difficulty is the fact that sometimes, you, as a teacher have planned your lesson in the computer laboratory, and unluckily, the system fails, and there is no Internet connection when your lesson plan requires the use of Internet. However, there are always alternative possibilities, such as the use of a CD-Rom, which you can always take with you in case the Internet connection does not work properly.

Even though, we have offered “both sides of the same coin,” a brief analysis of some of the advantages and disadvantages of the use of new technologies in the English language classroom, it is important to bear in mind that these tools provide endless possibilities and advantages for teachers and students. The use of them in the foreign language classroom becomes more and more vital. The traditional methodologies seem not to be attractive enough for present-day students, who need to be continuously motivated.

In that sense, a combination between an active or interactive methodology and the use of audiovisual aids can be perfect for the teaching/learning process of this subject. The students enjoy interacting with other partners, since they play an active role and they do not feel embarrassed about making mistakes in public. Another aspect to take into account is the great variety of materials created to be used with audiovisual aids in the English language classroom.

The use of all these kinds of ICT is being extended to most state primary and secondary schools in the Canary Islands, as well as the creation of virtual platforms to work within different subjects at both Universities in the Canary Islands (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and La Laguna).

In this piece of research, we will focus on the Spanish context of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. It is the city with the highest population in the Canary Islands. It has the ninth position in the range of the most populated cities of all of Spain (http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Palmas_de_Gran_Canaria). It is located in the north east of the island of Gran Canaria, and it is the capital city of this island, being 100.55 Km² in size and having 377.056 inhabitants (www.INE.es/2006).

2. OBJECTIVES

This paper has a twofold purpose or, in other words, we attempt to analyse the students' and teachers' attitudes and points of view as regards the use of audiovisual aids in present-day education in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The analysis will be carried out by enquiring into the following issues:

- The degree of frequency of use of these resources in the English language classroom.
- The familiarity that the teachers have with the different technological equipments.
- How the teachers feel when using the different audiovisual aids in their lessons.
- Which resources are preferred by the students and by the teachers.
- How the teachers assess their training in the use of new technologies.
- Whether the teachers find these technological resources useful, as well as whether they think that students really learn with them.
- We will also show the opinions, ideas and suggestions of the students to improve the English classes.

3. METHODOLOGY

The main tools used for this double research have been two different questionnaires (see appendix).

Firstly, a survey was administered to students of fourth grade of compulsory secondary education in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The reason why we decided to focus this research on this level of education was because of the age of the students. They are around fifteen or sixteen years old, and we think this is a good age to ask the participants for the questions under research. They are in their adolescence or teenaged years, and they are quite aware of the methods and tools used in their English lessons.

Secondly, another questionnaire was provided to the teachers of primary and secondary compulsory education in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

In this case, we decided to cover teachers of English at both levels of compulsory education, because we think it is interesting to have a sample of the teachers working at the levels in which there is the biggest number of students of the whole education system.

3.1. SAMPLE

The autonomous community of the Canary Islands has acquired competencies to administer and control all matters related to education, and it is executed through the school board of the government of the Canary Islands. Therefore, in order to know what would be a representative sample, we applied for this information to the office of statistics of the school board of this community. They provided reliable data about the total number of students registered in state compulsory secondary education in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria during the academic course 2007/2008.

The total number of students was the following: 913 female students and 928 male students.

FEMALE STUDENTS	MALE STUDENTS
913	928

Table 1. Number of students at 4^o grade of compulsory secondary education

According to Labov's theory (1966:17) in order to get a representative sample, the percentage of 0.025% of the population we want to analyse is enough. In this research, we decided to increase the percentage to 2% of the total number of students registered at compulsory secondary education in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Thus, the number of student participants for this research was 19 girls and 19 boys.

SAMPLE OF FEMALE STUDENTS	SAMPLE OF MALE STUDENTS
19	19

Table 2. Sample of female and male students

Secondary education during the academic year 2008/2009, the office of statistics of the school board of the community of the Canary Islands also provided the applied data. There were 157 teachers of English at primary education, and 168 teachers of English at compulsory secondary education.

STATE PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHERS	STATE COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION TEACHERS
157	168

Table 3. Teachers of English during 2008/09 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

In the case of the teachers, we also found Labov's theory insufficient, and we decided to increase the percentage to 10%. Thus, the number of teacher participants for this research was the following: 16 teachers of state primary education, and 17 of compulsory secondary education in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

SAMPLE OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT PRIMARY EDUCATION	SAMPLE OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION
16	17

Table 4. Sample of teachers of English at state primary and compulsory secondary education

3.2. METHOD

The questionnaires of the students were given to a group of learners of fourth grade of compulsory secondary school in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. They were composed of a series of questions related to the use by teachers and preferences of students for the different audiovisual aids that are currently used in their English lessons. The surveys were administered to students of different secondary schools from December 2007 to January 2008.

The only personal information we asked for was the participants' sex, since we wanted to check whether there were differences related to the preference of one particular type of ICT between boys and girls.

The questionnaires of the teachers were administered to participants of different primary and secondary schools during the months of October, November and December of 2008.

In both cases, the researcher was always present during the filling-out process in order to resolve any doubt or question. The only personal information asked for, in this case, was the teaching level; primary or secondary compulsory education. Both questionnaires were provided in Spanish and they were completely anonymous so as to make the participants feel free to answer with honesty. In fact, at the beginning of the questionnaire we included the sentence

“In this questionnaire there are not CORRECT OR INCORRECT QUESTIONS. It is completely anonymous. Please, answer with honesty” (see appendix).

4. RESULTS

First, we will analyse the data taken from the students’ questionnaires, and after that, we will look at the teachers’ answers.

4.1. THE STUDENTS’ POINT OF VIEW

The first question in the students’ questionnaire was whether the English teachers use any kind of audiovisual aid in their lessons, and the figures show that the highest percentage is for the teachers (84.2) who use these aids, whereas the lowest score is for the ones who do not (17.5). Therefore, we can assert that most of the teachers of English in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria use some kind of technological equipment.

Question number two asked about the different kinds of new technologies used in the English classes, and the students’ replies state that the most common audiovisual aids used are as follows:

- The most widely-used form of ICT is the *DVD*, since it is used by a high percentage of teachers (55.2), according to students, whereas 44.7 of the participants say the opposite.
- The second most widely-used audiovisual aid asked about was the *video*, and only 39.4 of the students say that it is used in their lessons, while a percentage of 52.6 of them state that the video is *never* used. Therefore, in the case of the video there is a higher score of students who think that this method is not used in their lessons, and it could be because this is an audiovisual aid that is fast becoming old-fashioned, and new materials are currently released in DVD format rather than video.
- The third aid was the *television*, and, in this case, the results are unequivocal. Most of the students (71) declare that this resource is *never* used in their lessons, whereas a lower percentage of the teenagers (28.9) state that the television is used *sometimes*. At this point, we need to clarify that the television is a resource that usually complements the use of the video or the DVD, because it is not frequently used in the

classroom as a resource in itself. We guess that the students interpreted that it referred to the use of the television as a unique resource in activities such as watching TV English films or serials.

- The next audiovisual aid was the *radio or CD player*, and a high score of the participants (68.4) state that this resource is used in their classes, while only a third of them (31.5) say the opposite. In this case, there is an obvious majority of students who report that the radio is a frequently used tool. In fact, most of the materials for English teaching offer CDs to practise pronunciation, and it is true that in most of the education centres, there are radios and CD players available to be used by the teachers.
- The last resource asked about was the *computer*, and around a third (39.4) of the teenagers say that they use computers in their English lessons, whereas a percentage of 60.5 state that they do not. Domínguez and Fernández (2006:23) state that “the use of computers is very motivating for students since it is traditionally associated with leisure situations.”

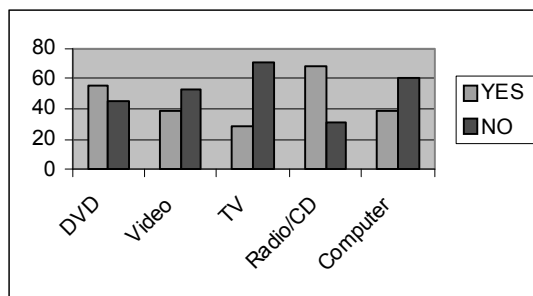


Figure 1. Use of technological resources in the English class, according to students

However, we need to point out that a great number of students, as we can observe in our results, do not use computers in their lessons, and this can be explained by taking into account different facts: first, in most state schools in the Canary Islands, there are not enough computers available at all times for all the students. There are usually a couple of computer laboratories that you need to reserve in advance to use once or twice a week. And, a second fact is that not all the teachers are trained to teach their grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing or listening lessons using computers. When the teachers are asked for this matter, some of them feel a little apprehensive because they have not done it before. It is important to highlight that courses on computing are offered to teachers by the education authorities on a regular basis, so that they have the

opportunity to acquire the necessary skills. We will deal with this topic in depth in the second part of the research, when we ask the teachers for these questions.

The next question asked students about their preferences as regards the use of one or another audiovisual aid in their classes. In this case, we analysed the answers taking into account whether there were differences between boys and girls.

- The results show that the favourite resource for the students is the *computer*. The same percentage of boys and girls (42.1) state that they prefer to use the computer as their favourite resource to learn English.
- The second chosen resource is the *DVD* with the same percentage of boys and girls (36.8) stating that they prefer the use of the DVD in their classes over any other resource. In both cases, there are not gender differences, since exactly the same number of boys and girls give the same answer. It is also remarkable to say that a percentage of 15.7 of the girls choose both of them, *computer* and *DVD*, as their favourite technological tools in their classes.
- The least chosen resources are the *television* with a score of 10.5 of boys and no girls, followed by the *radio*, chosen by the same percentage of boys and girls, 5.2, and, finally, the *video* with 5.2 of boys and no girls who prefer it.

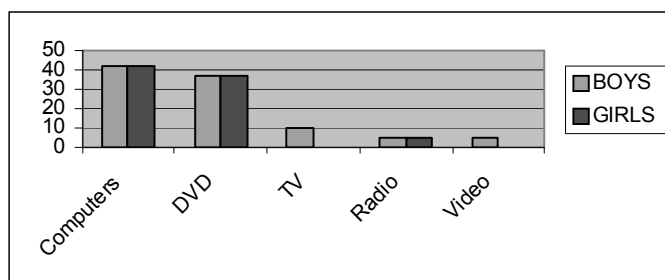


Figure 2. Favourite resources for boys and girls

Therefore, we can assert that there are no important gender differences between boys and girls in terms of preference for any one particular resource. Most of the students regard the computer and the DVD as their favourite tools, followed by other, much less popular, resources. From this, we can infer that both, boys and girls want interactive English lessons.

One last question was open for the students to offer suggestions about how to improve the English classes. Most of these suggestions consider the use of the technological resources on a regular basis. The students emphasise the

importance of using computers as a tool to learn vocabulary, practice grammar and carry out interactive activities.

Other ideas involve the use of games that make the teaching/learning process fun; the use of translations to improve their capacity to understand their readings; the practice of dictations to increase the students' listening skill; the use of more oral activities that force students to speak English, such as debates, role-plays, dialogues, and working with everyday language and expressions in English that let them communicate in usual situations such as listening to songs to practice pronunciation and increase vocabulary, watching films and serials, and working in small groups that make classes more dynamic. Some teenagers even support that they like their classes as they are now, but most of them basically insist on two ideas; first, the importance of the use of ICT to make the teaching/learning process more interactive and fun and to improve the development of the four different skills. The second idea focuses on the importance of practicing oral activities in the classroom that make the teacher and students speak English more frequently and allow them to have a greater exposure to the sounds and pronunciation of English.

The last question is about whether the students consider that they learn with the new technology, and most of them agree that the use of new technologies contribute extensively to increasing their mastery of English, especially the most practical skills; listening and speaking, that have traditionally received less time and attention in the English classroom in Spain.

On the other side, we can state another fact: the authorities in the Canary Islands are making a great effort in order to progressively provide enough technological equipment to state education centres. In fact, the quantity of resources currently available is much bigger than ten years ago. At present, in most primary and secondary schools, there are televisions, radio-cassettes or CD players, videos, and some DVDs. Computers are not enough for all the students in most cases, but in a couple of years, the number will hopefully increase.

With regard to the use of computers in the English class, the Internet is another huge field that allows endless possibilities to make our lessons more fun, practical and interactive. There is a number of web pages that provide activities to practise English, and there are even specific books that guide teachers on how to use these pages and how to make the most out of them (Dudeney 2007; Domínguez and Fernández 2006).

E-mail, chats, blogs, wikis and video-conference are other media that allow students not only to practice their reading and writing skills, but also exchange personal and socio-cultural information with other students.

It is also remarkable to talk about the kind of abbreviated language that is used with these electronic media. David Crystal (2007:8-9) analyses in depth the different linguistic features of these media: graphic, orthographic, morphological, syntactic, lexical, discourse, phonetic and phonological features.

4.2. THE TEACHERS' POINT OF VIEW

Both teachers and students see the value of new technology in the classroom and there seems to be great agreement as regards the importance and usefulness of using new technologies in the English language classroom.

The first question asked for the frequency of use of new technologies in the English language classroom, and the results show that *sometimes* is the most chosen answer from the following responses *never*, *sometimes*, *often*, *always*. A percentage of 62.5 of teachers of English at primary and 70.5 at secondary education *sometimes* use new technologies in their English lessons. We also need to point out that there is a great variety of materials to work each of the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), as well as grammar and vocabulary. Editors usually offer the teachers a pack with extra resources such as CD-ROMS, tests, worksheets, and so on, that complement the textbook used in the classroom. This is not taking into account the number of websites that allow the teacher to work on a specific topic. So, English teachers have lots of options when it comes to classroom resources.

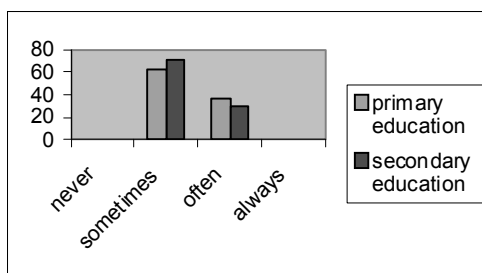


Figure 3. Degree of use of new technologies by primary and secondary education English teachers.

Question number two is concerned with the degree of familiarity that teachers have with the most frequent new technologies used at school – *computer* and *CD-ROMS*, *digital whiteboard*, *DVD*, *the Internet*, *radio* and *CD*. The highest score was for the *radio* and *CDs* with 100 per cent of teachers at both levels using them. These resources are available at all schools, and very often every teacher has his/her own machine to use at any time. The second

most chosen resource was the *computer* and *CD-ROMS*, 93.7 of primary and 100 per cent of secondary teachers are familiar with them. *The Internet* was third with 93.7 of primary and 88.2 of secondary teachers using it. The reason that the Internet is number three in the list may be because of the shortage of computer laboratories in all primary and secondary schools. If a teacher wants to use the computer laboratory, he/she has to reserve it in advance, and if they are lucky he/she will be able to use it once a week. The following figures, four and five, show the percentages in more detail.

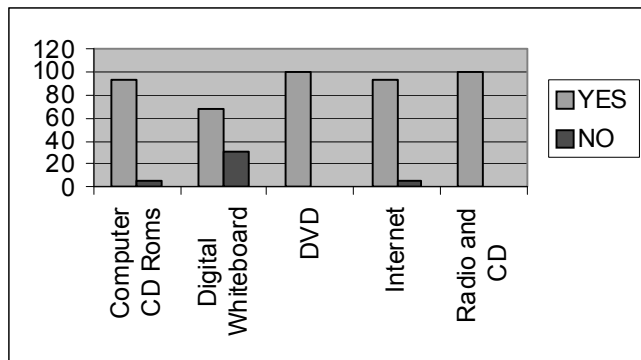


Figure 4. Familiarity of primary teachers with the new technologies

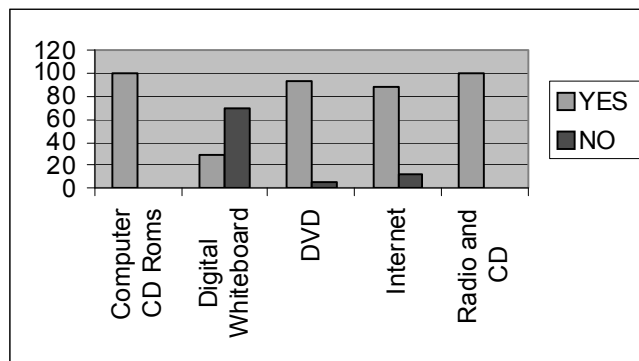


Figure 5. Familiarity of secondary teachers with the new technologies

Question number three tried to find out the degree of knowledge of websites and audiovisual aids for use in the English language classroom, and the results show that 87.5 of primary and 94.1 of secondary education teachers know of interesting websites to use in their lessons.

Question number four was more concerned with the way the teachers feel when they use new technologies in their English lessons. In this case, we asked

about the use of the *DVD* or *VHS* system in an English class. A variety of answers was offered ranging from *self-confident*, *calm*, *nervous* to *not confident*. The results reveal that the highest score of primary (56.2) and of secondary teachers (52.9) is for the teachers who feel *confident*. The second most chosen was *calm*, with 37.5 of primary and 47 of secondary teachers.

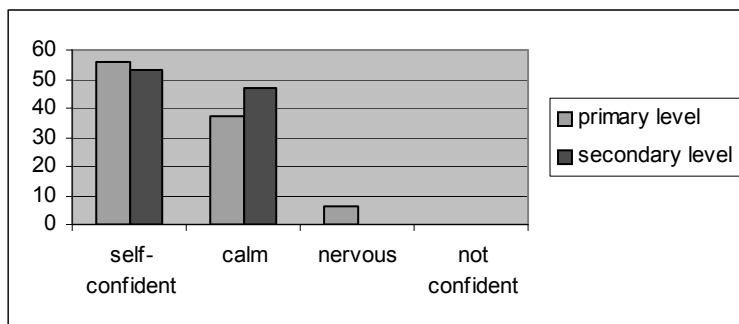


Figure 6. Teachers' feelings when they use DVD or VHS with their students

The next question asked for the feelings of the teachers when they teach their English lesson in the computer laboratory. Here, we offered the same range of possible answers as in the previous question, but, in this case, the results changed a little because the percentages are not so high. The highest score was again for the feeling of *confident*, with 31.2 of primary and 41.1 of secondary education teachers.

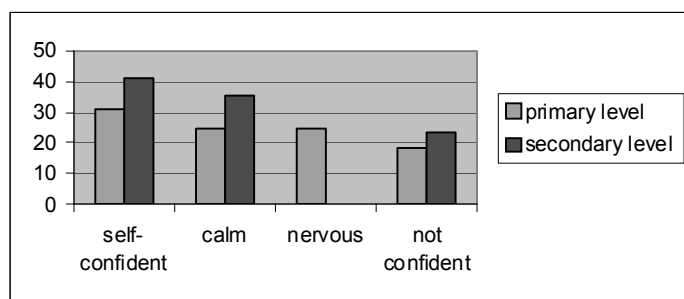


Figure 7. Teachers' feelings when they go with students to the computer laboratory

Question number six asked for the kind of board that the teachers choose, *regular* or *digital*, to work in their English classes. In this case, we noticed some differences between the two education levels, since in primary education, the highest score (56.2) was for the teachers who prefer a *digital* board, whereas in secondary education, the first position (52.9) was for the *regular* board. At this point, we need to clarify that in most state schools in Las Palmas de Gran

Canaria, there are not digital boards in all the classrooms. The amount is increasing every year, but there are not enough yet. Most of the teachers of secondary education who did not choose the digital board stated that this was their reason for their choice.

Question number seven was concerned with the training that the teachers have received for the use of the new technologies. A variety of responses was offered for the teachers to choose from ranging from *excellent* to *terrible*. The results confirmed that around half of the participants (50% of primary and 58.8 of secondary teachers) regard their training in new technologies as *acceptable*. The second highest score (31.2 of primary and 23.5 of secondary teachers) was for those teachers who consider they have received a *good* training in using new technologies.

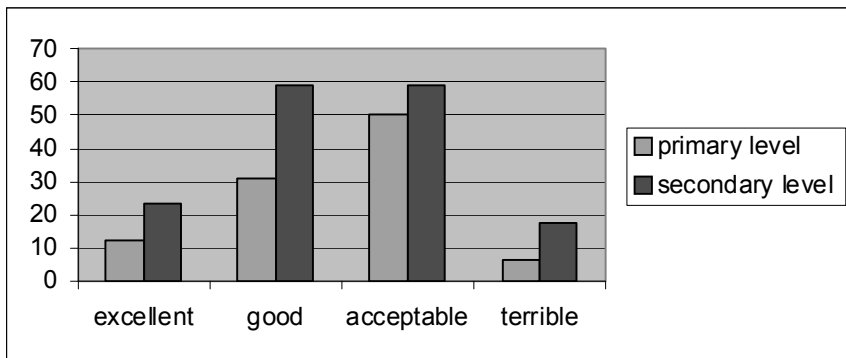


Figure 8. Assessment of teachers' training in the use of new technologies

Question number eight enquired for the degree of mastery of new technologies in the English language classroom by the participants. Again, the same variety of possible answers as in the previous question was provided for the teachers to choose only one. The results reveal clearly that the highest percentage of primary (62.5) and secondary (64.7) teachers assess their mastery in new technologies in the English language classroom as *acceptable*. The second highest score is, one more time, *good*, for 18.7 of primary and for 17.6 of secondary teachers choosing this option.

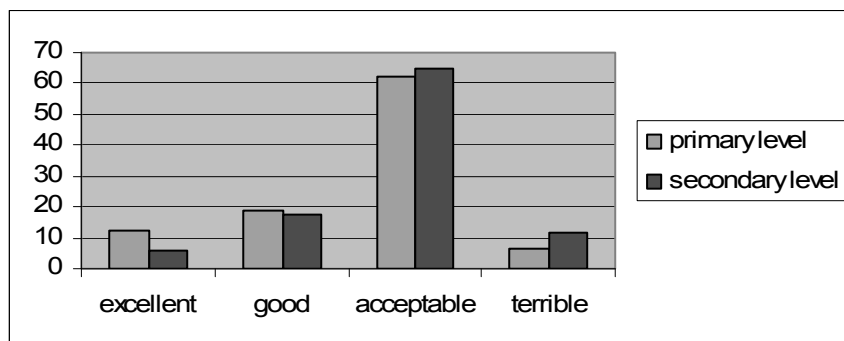


Figure 9. Mastery in the use of new technologies by primary and secondary teachers

These last two questions imply that the teachers have received a good or acceptable training in the use of new technologies in their lessons, in addition to having achieved an acceptable or good mastery of them. In that sense, it is important to highlight two aspects: on the one hand, we should be aware of the interest and motivation of teachers to learn and assume the use of new technological tools in their English classes.

On the other hand and as stated earlier, the concerted effort by the authorities in the Canary Islands. It is important to insist on the fact that courses and seminars are constantly being offered to teachers through the centres for teachers' training, as well as specific courses for the use of these technologies by teachers of foreign language classes. Furthermore, the school board of the Canary Islands has also provided primary and secondary schools with English programmes to be used with computers such as *Hot Potatoes*, *Tense Buster* or *Malted*, which are useful tools that can be combined with the use of other resources such as CD-ROMS offered by textbook editors, interesting websites, and so on.

Question number nine asked the teachers whether the use of new technologies is useful for learning foreign languages. This was an open question that allowed any kind of answer, but most participants in primary (93.7) and secondary (88.2) education replied affirmatively. It shows that there is a latent awareness of teachers of the usefulness of these resources in the English language classroom at this time. The only other response given was that *sometimes* the use of new technologies can be useful, with a very low percentage at primary (6.1) and at secondary (11.7) participants. No teacher gave a negative response to this question.

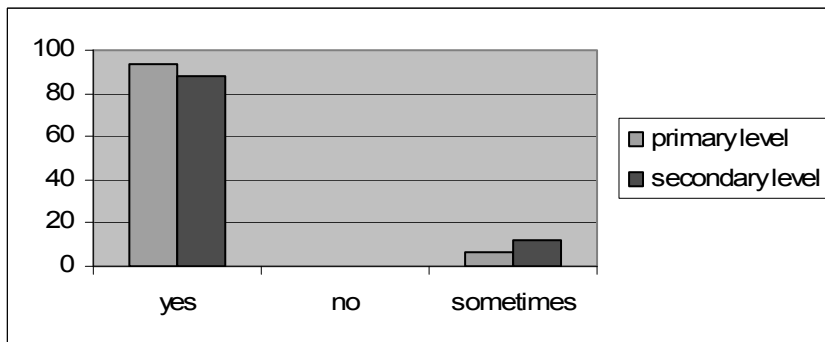


Figure 10. Usefulness of the use of new technologies in the English lessons

The goal of question number ten was to find out whether teachers think that students like using new technologies in their English classes. The results are categorical, because all the participants (100%) at primary and secondary education stated that students enjoy learning with the use of new technologies.

The next question combined, to a certain extent, the previous one in the sense that it asked participants if they really think that students learn with the use of these technologies. Again, the answers of the teachers were quite unequivocal, at both education levels; (93.7) at primary and (88.2) at secondary education are completely sure that students learn with the application of these methods. A few teachers, (6.2) at primary and (11.7) at secondary, believe that students learn with the use of these tools only *sometimes*.

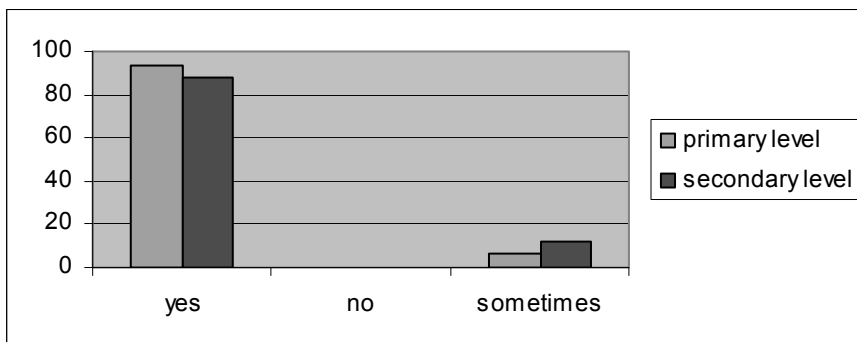


Figure 11. Do teachers think that students really learn with the use of technologies?

Question number twelve has the aim of enquiring which are the most frequently used audiovisual aids in the English language classroom. A variety of possible answers is offered to the teachers with the purpose of choosing one

or two. The different possibilities are: *television, video, DVD, digital whiteboard, computer (the Internet, CD-ROM, blog, e-mail, webquests)*.

The results show that most of the teachers at both levels (primary and secondary) use several different resources, but the most chosen ones are the following: *DVD, computer, CD-ROMS and the Internet*.

The last question attempts to reveal what is the teachers' favourite resource, and the same possible answers as in the previous question are offered this time to teachers. The results show that the most chosen resources are *DVDs, computers* to be used with *CD-ROMS* or *the Internet*, and also *digital whiteboards*.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This paper offers an important and novel angle, since it analyses the attitudes and viewpoints of the main agents involved in education; the students and the teachers. It reveals very useful information in terms of the use of the new technology in the English language classroom in the context of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, which possibly would not differ much from the results that we could obtain in any other area of Spain. As a consequence, our capacity to know what the students and the teachers think about these issues can help to improve the quality of the English language teaching/learning process.

After the analysis of the data, this paper provides some conclusions:

First, according to both, the students and the teachers, most of the teachers of English in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria *sometimes* use technological resources in their classes. However, it seems expectable to think that this use will increase more and more, as long as there is a wider availability of them at the education centres, and as long as teachers become more familiar and more confident with the use of these aids.

Focusing on the degree of familiarity of the teachers with the technological resources, they state that they are very familiar with the most common forms of ICT, especially the *DVD, radio* and *CD*, as well as the *computer*, and they also assert that these tools are the most frequently used by them in their classes. However, according to the student participants, the most common resource is the *radio* or *CD player*. It is quite logical, since it is cheap, easy-to-use, and quite easily available at any school. Moreover, there is a huge number of materials to teach English using this method. The second one used by the teacher participants is the *DVD*, which is also quite accessible for students.

Computers seem not to be so much used by the teachers, and the reason can be, as explained before, the lack of equipment in primary and secondary schools.

Both the student and the teacher participants regard the *computer* as their favourite form of ICT, even though they are not able to use it as much as they would like in their classes. The second one chosen as favourite by the students is the *DVD*, which is also one of the favourite resources for the teachers. This last tool is widely available in the English language classes. The teachers also highlight the *digital board* as one of their favourite audiovisual aids, in spite of the fact that there are not enough at all schools yet. We can foresee that this resource will be very widespread in the English classes, since it allows countless possibilities within the classroom.

As regards the differences between male and female students, there seem not to be obvious differences between both sexes when choosing one or another audiovisual aid. Both boys and girls prefer the same resources: *computers* in the first place, and *DVD* in the second place.

A series of suggestions by students to improve their English lessons have already been mentioned before. They insist on the use of games to make classes more fun; translations to improve their reading skill; the practice of dictations to enhance their listening skill; the use of more oral activities such as debates, role-plays or dialogues to force students to speak English; working with everyday language and expressions in English. Nevertheless, many of them state the importance of ICT to make their classes more fun, more practical and more interactive.

In analysing the way the teachers feel when they use some of these methods, we found that most of them seem to feel quite confident, especially when they use *DVDs*, rather than *computers*. In the case of their training and mastery of the use of new technologies, most of the teachers regard it as acceptable. They are also very aware that the students learning English is enhanced through these resources, in addition to increasing their enjoyment. Most of the teachers find the audiovisual aids useful in their classes.

All in all, we may consider that students' and teachers' attitudes toward the use of ICT in the English language classroom are quite positive. There seems to be considerable motivation and interest in ICT as very useful strategies to make the English teaching/learning process more pleasant. The technological resources currently have, and will also have in the future, a vital role in the teaching/learning process of any subject. Finally, students' and teachers' positive attitude toward the employment of ICT implies a great step forward in its gradual integration in the classroom.

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7. APPENDIX

7.1. STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

En este cuestionario no hay preguntas CORRECTAS O INCORRECTAS. Es completamente anónima. Por favor, responde con sinceridad.

Poner un círculo a la correcta:

SEXO: **MUJER / HOMBRE**

Nivel:

1. ¿Se usan recursos audiovisuales en las clases de inglés? SI / NO
2. ¿Cuáles se usan?
 - DVD--- SI / NO
 - Vídeos--- SI / NO
 - Televisión--- SI / NO
 - Radio --- SI / NO
 - Ordenador --- SI / NO
 - Otros: Especifica---
3. ¿Cuál es el que más te gusta?

4. Ofrece sugerencias sobre cómo podrían mejorar las clases de inglés.
5. ¿Aprendes inglés con el uso de estas técnicas?

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR COLABORAR CON ESTA INVESTIGACIÓN.

7.2. TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

En este cuestionario no hay preguntas CORRECTAS O INCORRECTAS. Es completamente anónima. Por favor, responde con sinceridad.

Poner un círculo a la correcta:

ENSEÑO EN **PRIMARIA/SECUNDARIA**

1. Uso nuevas tecnologías en la clase de idiomas. Elige una.
Nunca
A veces
A menudo
Siempre
2. Estoy familiarizad@ con el uso de nuevas tecnologías. Elegir una
Ordenador y CD-Roms : SI/NO
Pizarra digital: SI/NO
DVD: SI/NO
Navegación por internet: SI/NO
Radio-cassette y CDs: SI/NO
3. Conozco páginas web y recursos audiovisuales para usar en la clase de lengua extranjera.
 SI/ NO
4. Cuando llevo al alumnado una película en VHS o DVD me suelo sentir. Elige una:
Seguro
Tranquilo
Nervioso
Inseguro
5. Cuando llevo al alumnado al aula Medusa, me siento. Elige una:
Seguro
Tranquilo
Nervioso
Inseguro
6. Si puedo elegir usar una pizarra normal o una digital: ¿cuál elijo?

7. Considero que la formación que tengo en nuevas tecnologías para usar en el aula es.

Elegir una:

Excelente

Buena

Aceptable

Pésima

8. Considero que mi dominio de las nuevas tecnologías para usar el aula de idiomas es.

Elegir una:

Excelente

Buena

Aceptable

Pésima

9. ¿Crees que el uso de las nuevas tecnologías es útil para enseñar lenguas extranjeras?

10. ¿Crees que al alumnado le gusta usar nuevas tecnologías en la clase de idiomas?

11. ¿Piensas que los alumnos realmente aprenden con el uso de estas tecnologías?

12. Elige qué recurso audiovisual usas más:

TV

Vídeo

DVD

Pizarra digital

Ordenador

- *Internet*
- *CD-Rom*
- *Blog*
- *E-mail*
- *Búsqueda web(webquests)*

13. ¿Qué recurso te gusta más?

TV

Vídeo

DVD

Pizarra digital

Ordenador

- *Internet*
- *CD-Rom*
- *Blog*
- *E-mail*
- *Búsqueda web (webquests)*

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR COLABORAR CON ESTA INVESTIGACIÓN.

