Universidad Andrés Bello

An Examination of the Suitability of an English Language Syllabus Intended for

Dentistry Students.

Universidad Andrés Bello

Tesina para optar al grado de Magíster en Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost I offer my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Mauricio Véliz, who has supported me throughout my thesis with his patience and knowledge whilst encouraging me to work on my own and requesting the best of me. I attribute the level of my Masters degree to his support and effort and without him this thesis would not have been completed or even written. One simply could not wish for a better or friendlier supervisor.

Second, I would like to thank my family: my dear husband Rodrigo and my son Felipe. Without their support, faith and understanding I would have not been able to attend to classes nor finish this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank Instituto Chileno Norteamericano de Concepción and Universidad del Desarrollo for their support in the development of this research.

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Abstract

This study aims at determining the suitability of an English language syllabus for Dentistry students. To this end, a mixed methods approach was applied with more emphasis in quantitative methods. The findings suggest that the syllabus is not suitable in terms of the time programmed for this course, which does not seem sufficient for students to find oral practice and grammar and listening assessment easy enough. They also seem to need more time than the 40 hours stated in the syllabus to show their skills in the A2 and B1 levels of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which suggests a minimum of 180 guided teaching hours to reach level A2. The implications of this study will lead to the improvement of the syllabus at the Instituto Chileno Norteamericano de Cultura de Concepción, Chile, for providing a better service to higher education institutions such as Universidad del Desarrollo.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The effective use of English has become a requirement for many kinds of professionals due to its predominance as the lingua franca (ELF) in areas of knowledge such as medicine, business, science, research, education and politics, among others. English became a lingua franca since non-English speaking countries were first colonized from the late sixteenth century (Kachru, 1985). In 1992, Kachru describes the spread of English around the world in terms of three circles. The inner circle represents where English resides as a first language; the outer circle which represents where English is used as a second language and; the expanding circle, where English is a foreign language. Crystal (2012) made a prediction in his text *English as a Global Language*, in which he argued English would continue to spread in the outer circle to the point that they will challenge the inner circle's ownership of the language.

English has become a dominant language in many countries in the world, where it is used for different purposes such as communicating in business, education, science, arts and public relations among other fields. Although English is used as a *lingua franca* (LF) or second language (ESL), some countries use English as a foreign language (EFL), with the purpose of becoming a more active member of the international community and increase their level of proficiency in the English language in the future. Chile is part of the expanding circle, where English is taught, in general, as a foreign language.

In Chile, 99% of the population speaks Spanish as their first language. Other L1s are more evident in other regions of Chile, notably Mapudungun, the native Mapuche language in the south of the country, and German in the Los Lagos region due to 19th

century immigration patterns (Wolfram Alpha Curated Data, 2009; Kormos & Kiddle,

2011). According to the 2012 national census, 9.5% of the Chilean population can hold a

conversation in English (INE 2012), which is not enough to consider English as a lingua

franca locally, but a foreign language being currently introduced due to its use in specific

fields such as business and science and culture through different means such as movies, the

Internet and music in an indirect way.

Notwithstanding the foreign nature of the English language in Chile, the ever-

growing demand for professionals with a good command of English has meant that

universities have begun preparing future professionals with a view to effective command of

English. The globalization of higher education requires the availability of a curriculum that

responds to a higher type of training and one that provides graduates with the skills that

enable them to successfully work not only in the local or national job market but also in

international markets.

In order to successfully train 21st Century professionals, capable of holding a forth

in the *lingua franca*, higher education institutions (HEIs for short) have addressed this issue

slightly differently. Some, for instance, have included English language competence as a

key feature of the exit competencies contained in the so-called professional profile ; others

have simply set an exit language level and offer a series of language courses depending on

the distance between the student s current level and the desired exit level, for students to

take. Whichever the modality, achieving desired levels of English language competence,

HEIs have engaged in diverse curriculum reforms.

According to Johnson (1967), the curriculum is a set of learning

outcomes [which] prescribes (or at least anticipates) the results of instruction (p. 130).

Chile s educational climate currently leans heavily towards a technical-rationalist view of

curriculum (Dussel, 2006) and is being encouraged to continue doing so (OECD, 2009).

There is a variety of definitions in relation to the term curriculum.   The indecisive nature

of the term is owing to divided perceptions of stakeholders, e.g. students, educators,

researchers, administrators, evaluators, each with their own agenda of emphasis in

educational discourse. The concept of curriculum is rather complex due to the several

interpretations and definitions available. For this study, it is necessary to clarify the

conceptualization of the term curriculum, which can be considered as the process of

planning, implementation, evaluation, and studies undertaken by administrators, teachers,

researchers, and evaluators (Shao, 2012). Curriculum is what is successfully conveyed to

differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials

and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skill, taste, and propensity to act and react,

which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by

representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students who are

known to the decision makers (Schwab, 1983). Therefore, and for the context of study,

English as a foreign language curriculum is a set of objectives, content and plans (syllabus),

teaching methods, documents and assessment and experiences (activities, environment,

hidden curriculum and culture) that aim to help students develop proficiency in English as a

foreign language according to the goals stated in the Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages (Verhelst, Van Avermaet, Takala, Figueras & North, 2009)

     In Chile, the Ministry of Education has adopted a decidedly technical-behaviorist

approach to the English language curriculum, conceiving of education as a process through

which students are prepared to be contributors to a globalized society (McKernan, 2008).

The English Opens Doors Program of the Ministry of Education explicitly states that it is a program devoted to strengthening the capacity and skills of teachers so that they transfer those skills to their students and create a value chain that leads to a country where human capital is the main asset we can have for the future (OECD, 2008, p. 1). For the context of tertiary education, the Ministry of Education gives institutions the freedom to build their own curriculum in accordance to the CEFR.

Universidad del Desarrollo (UDD), has taken a great interest into building a solid curriculum for the teaching of English as a cross-curricular subject. It has placed great emphasis on the international program which students can access having a proficient B2 level of competence in the English language. UDD defined internationalization not only as a competitive advantage, but also as a distinctive feature in its students. Their project intends to train students on campuses where internationalization can be felt as an everyday experience, be it at UDD or abroad, thanks to the student exchange program they offer, the command of a second language being indispensable for them. They intend to include internationalization as an issue in their curricula and keep students motivated and conscious of the process. The university has addressed this concern by offering thematic short term programs, which are developed in different countries and courses taught in English. Fostering internationalization has meant offering programs such as Exchange schemes and Dual Degree Programs, which have proven a success thus far (UDD, 2015). As far as English language instruction, UDD has outsourced the service to ICHNC, the institution where the researcher works as a language instructor.

The old paradigm of traditional education, where the role of the teacher is that of a source of information and knowledge, and the student, whose role is that of a receiver, is

not compatible with the new educational model which is demanded to be used by the North

American Institute of Culture of Concepción and Universidad del Desarrollo, in the

implementation of the cross-curricular EFL program at UDD

During my work at the North American Institute and UDD, I realized the current

trend in English language education (ESP in particular) at binational institutes, such as the

North American (ICHNC from the Spanish acronym), and British Institute and at

universities is mainly based, at least on paper, on the Communicative Approach. Its goal is

the teaching of *communicative competence,* which means basically knowing how to use

language for a range of different purposes and functions, knowing how to vary our use of

language according to the setting and the participants, knowing how to produce and

understand different types of texts, and knowing how to maintain communication despite

having limitations in one s language knowledge (Richards, 2001).

1.1 Rationale for the study

The curriculum offered by the ICHNC for UDD is framed in the CEFR to prepare

students for international certification through the Test of English as a Foreign Language

(TOEFL) administered by the Educational Testing Service of USA (ETS). The expected

exit level for the class studied in this work is mainly B1, which is focused on developing

the following language skills: understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar

matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.; deal with most situations likely

to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken and produce simple

connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest, and describe

experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and

explanations for opinions and plans (CEFR). The preliminary process of observation

carried out on the target learners showed that most students had a considerably higher level of English proficiency and that the contents presented were much easier than they expected. Also, it was noted that there was no English for Specific Purposes content officially stated in the syllabus. ESP, as we know, is the specific design of courses to meet specific learners needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 2010) (Dentistry vocabulary in this case, for instance). Although, there is freedom of choice for extra content for the teacher within the time frame of the course of instruction, it is important to discover if a more specific syllabus would be more suitable for this context.

1.2 Significance of the study

This study s aim is to examine the syllabus designed and implemented by the Chilean North American Institute of Concepción (ICHNC) at Universidad del Desarrollo (UDD) in Concepción, Chile, and determine the degree of suitability according to the needs of a particular group of students in a particular level of proficiency, in order to be able to suggest further research to complete the existing syllabus to better serve the needs of students and to discover if perhaps this syllabus is the most suitable for this group, according to students perceptions and results. In other words, the objectives this study proposes are (i) to establish the demanding nature of the language contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the students; (ii) to establish the degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR for the level studied and the students' actual performances and (iii) to suggest a set of topics relevant to the students' needs and topical interests. Thus, the research questions that derive from the previous objectives are the following:

1. What is the demanding nature of the language contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the students under consideration?

2. What is the degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR for the level studied and the students' actual performances?

3. Which are the topics that seem more relevant that would better suit the students' needs?

1.3 Organization of the study

The first chapter of this work is an introduction to the research which describes its rationale, significance and the research questions and organization. Chapter 2 describes the contextual framework and an international and a national perspective of the learning of English in tertiary education and English language learning in the context of this study. Chapter 3 presents the literature review, which defines curriculum, its ideologies and curriculum development; syllabus design in language learning with the main types of syllabi; competences in the four language skills and finally English language teaching curricula and standards in tertiary education in expanding circle settings and curriculum in tertiary education in the national context. Chapter 4 presents the methodological framework: research paradigm and methodology, sampling procedure and sample, research procedure, data analysis procedure and research objectives and questions. Chapter 5 presents the results, including participants biographical data and results for research questions 1, 2 and 3 with their corresponding discussions. Conclusions and final remarks, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research are stated as the final chapter.

Chapter 2: The Context

2.0 Contextual Framework

In this chapter a brief survey of experiences dealing with English language teaching and learning at tertiary level is presented. They provide an international perspective on the subject that will later be complemented with the case of Chile. Also, a comparison is made between English for Specific Purposes and English for General Purposes as it relates to the two institutions under consideration.

2.1 English Language Learning at Tertiary Education Level: an International Perspective.

According to Hasman (2000), over 1.4 billion people live in countries where English has official status. Over 70% of the world s scientists read English; over 85% of the world s mail is written in English and 90% of information in the world s electronic retrieval system is stored in English. Hasman (ibid.) suggested that by 2010, speakers of English as a second or foreign language (SL/FL) would exceed the number of native speakers, which has already become a reality. Therefore, English has become a key factor in the development of nations globally. A fairly more recent IATEFL publication suggests that communication in English between non-native speakers now represents 80% of global English use (Finster, in Pulverness, 2004). For these reasons among others, tertiary education institutions all around the globe have established English as a means of instruction or have English taught as a second or foreign language.

The first example of the importance of English in tertiary education is Vietnam, where English has been gaining greater ground as a foreign language. Although English is mandatory in primary schools in Vietnam, people begin learning at different ages in

different parts of the country. All students have to learn it, but unless they receive extra

tuition   or are exceptionally talented   few can speak it fluently (The Economist, 2011). A

study from the National University of Vietnam by Tuyet in 2013 uncovered many key

aspects in the higher education context. For the last few decades and with their Higher

Education Reform Agenda (HERA), the Vietnamese government aims to formulate a

strategy on international integration, raise the cooperation capacity and competitiveness of

Vietnamese tertiary education (Hoang Van Van, 2008). Their aim is to organize teaching

and learning in foreign languages, especially English for the immediate future (p. 7).

University students are expected to be able to understand and communicate well in English

and in order to achieve these aims different approaches, theories and methods have been

used. Communicative language teaching and computer assisted language learning are two

of them, which have been used to increase the effectiveness of teaching and empower

students cooperative and autonomous learning process (Le Thao & Le Quynh, 2012;

Nguyen Van Long, 2010). Some of the problems they have encountered are: too large class

size (Hoang Van Van, 2008), lack of authentic context for language study (To Thi Thu

Huong, 2010), traditional form-focus instruction rather than interactive teaching

approaches, hierarchy relationship between teachers and students (Tran Thi Tuyet, 2013a)

and low English language levels of the majority students when entering university (Nguyen

Thanh Van, 2007). Computer based activities have helped solving the problem of large

classes and motivation (McCarthy, 2004). As globalization has turned the whole world into

a global village, it is easy for Vietnamese students to get access to the English speaking

world through internet or Cable TV, and also through direct contact with English native

speakers who are more and more integrating to the Vietnamese society. Nevertheless, the

findings in regards to teaching and learning views from the students were very negative.

They were concerned about the passiveness of the process with no students participation,

and also about how teachers often say that students need to be good at English, but they do

not seem to teach them to discover how they can achieve this. They learn English only

during the first and second year; if they really want to improve their English, they have to

spend money and take some courses outside the university (Tuyet, 2013).

In Hungary, most of the population is monolingual: according to the 2000 census,

92.3% of the Hungarian population claimed to be ethnic Hungarian and the proportion with

Hungarian as their mother tongue was even higher, 98.2% (Central Statistical Office, 2004)

A study in tertiary education conducted in Budapest, which is the largest city in the

country, where one fifth of the total Hungarian population resides, showed that students

need to hold an intermediate and an elementary level language certificate (in English) in

order to be able to graduate from any major. Most students in the study sample were

preparing for one of the accredited intermediate level proficiency exams (B2 level on the

CEFR scale) therefore; their primary motivation was to pass the exam in order to get a

degree. Also, there is the fact that this country is located in Europe and there is a higher

possibility for students to continue studies or work in a country where English is used as an

L1 or L2 or as a lingua franca in commerce among other fields. This is different from the

Vietnamese reality, where English is just starting to be used in the fields mentioned,

according to what was described earlier.

Oman was never a British colony and   had no foundations for English   there

were no English-medium schools in Oman   there was no British inspired education ,

AlBusaidi (1995, p.90). However, from 1970 English was considered an officially taught

foreign language in its institutions. After 1970 and since the discovery of oil in the Gulf

States, Oman developed powerful trade links with various non-English speaking countries

in the globe such as Turkey, Sweden, Germany, Cyprus, France, Italy, Greece, Belgium,

Austria, Portugal, and Russia. English has thus been used as a lingua franca when

communicating with these and other non-English speaking countries. In addition to this,

English is the only tool or means of communication between Omanis and

foreigners/expatriates from all over the world who are working there. Increasingly there

seems to be a need for a single language to enable people with different linguistic

backgrounds to interact in a variety of settings, especially with the revolution of

information technologies. In Oman, as all over the world, English has evolved as that

language and is being taught and learned with increasing intensity (Hu, 2002, p.93).

English has now become the fundamental medium for Omanization a government

scheme for replacing the expatriate skilled labor force with Omani citizens gradually. In the

last few years, English language competence has therefore become a pre-requisite for

undergraduate education and recruitment. Many graduates fail to get jobs particularly in the

private sector if they do not have a good command of written and spoken English (Census

2003). According to a study conducted by Al-Jadidi for the Australian University of

Melbourne, English is the medium of instruction for academic purposes (EAP) in all the

science majors in public institutions in Oman at the Institutes of Health Sciences and at

Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) to equip the students with the necessary skills to produce

assignments and research papers in English. English is also taught for general and specific

purposes (ESP) in institutes such as again the Institute of Health Sciences, Higher Colleges

of Technology, the College of Banking and Financial Studies, the College of Law, the

Colleges of Education, Sultan Qaboos University and the Royal Air Force of Oman

Academy. At present there are 13 private colleges and three private universities which

teach English at tertiary level. English is taught in general, specific and academic streams.

The medium of instruction in these institutions is exclusively English for the science-based

subjects. However, in order to obtain the Ministry of Higher Education s accreditation,

these local institutions are required to either affiliate, or sign a memorandum of cooperation

with a university in an English-speaking country. In contrast with the cases of Vietnam and

Hungary, the Omani policy is to make English proficiency compulsory due to the factors

related to the use of English and the international business relations of this country to bring

improvement to its economy.

In Europe, according to data provided by the European Commission in 2002,

English is the most widely foreign language studied by Europeans followed, by first

French, German and third Spanish. In Spain, English is offered as a compulsory or optional

course in some degrees such as Education (for those who will become primary school

teachers in the future), Economics, Law, Engineering, Physics, Chemistry, and Pharmacy.

ESP, that is, English for Specific Purposes, has developed quite a lot in the last few years

but there is still a lot to be done because students' interests and needs are not always taken

into account (Palacios, 2002). According to a study by Palacios at the Instituto Cervantes in

Spain, the situation is not different in other countries in Europe. Master degrees and PhDs

programs demand their final publications to be written in the native language of the country

and also in English.

2.2 English language learning at tertiary education level: a National Perspective.

2.2.1 English for Specific Purposes vs General English or English as a Foreign Language in Chile.

The national reality in tertiary education is presented here as described by the British Council report, published in May 2015. English for Specific Purposes or ESP, as mentioned in Chapter 1, consists in syllabuses tailored specifically according to the need of the group of students who demand to become proficient in the English language at different contexts such as business, science, industry, etc (Jenkins, 2006). English as a Foreign Language offered as General English is what is more commonly found as being taught at companies and tertiary education institutions due to its practicality in the implementation by the entities in charge of the programs, who hire teachers by the hour and supply them a complete package of teaching resources already prepared, tested, validated and sold by trademark editorials such as Pearson, Oxford and Cambridge University Press among others (ICHNC 2015). Teachers must follow the syllabus provided and are also expected to be creative with extra material, within the duration established for the courses. The amount of creativity expected varies from institution to institution. For instance (and from personal experience), Tronwell does not provide room for innovation or improvisation on the part of the teacher, who must focus only on the syllabus provided by the institution. While access to private English lessons is limited to largely upper- and middle-income households, demand is high and is expected to increase, reflecting low English language proficiency overall. For this reason companies generally provide high-quality professional English training for senior executives but do not offer as much support for middle managers and non-managerial staff due to the high cost. In some companies, employees taking private

language courses may be subsidized, for example, on a 50-50 basis, Online learning may

present a more affordable option. However, some industry and human resources specialists

report that online learning is better suited to mature professionals as young people lack the

discipline for self-study (British Council 2015). At university level, General English is

offered to students of different careers, the same institution being the one in charge of

providing professionals to teach these courses, as is the case of the University of

Concepción, where the Languages Faculty is the one in charge of providing teachers and a

syllabus to teach English to students of other programs. English for them can be mandatory

or optional according to the institutional policy. Other universities prefer to use the services

of a binational institute, if they do not count on a Languages Faculty of their own, which is

the case of Universidad del Desarrollo. This university uses the services of the North

American Institute of Culture to provide a syllabus and teachers for its students training in

English as a foreign language.

2.3 English language learning in the context of this study.

      There are numerous private English language providers in Chile. Among the most

popular are Instituto Chileno Norteamericano, Instituto Chileno-Británico, Tronwell, Wall

Street English, Berlitz, eClass and The Language Co as well as International Center,

Education First and BridgeEnglish. These providers have campuses in Santiago as well as

Concepción and other cities and offer face-to-face lessons, online courses or a combination

of both. There is no course standardization among private language schools, but many teach

in line with the CEFR and books and materials correlate with these standards. (British

Council, 2015)

2.3.1 A binational institute description: The Chilean - North American

Institute of Culture of Concepción, Chile.

The Chilean-North American Institute of Culture, located in Caupolicán 315, Concepción, is a private corporation founded in November 1942. Since then, it has been promoting Chilean and American cultures with English language teaching within innovative methodologies through various cultural programs. It has served the needs of more than 100,000 middle class students in Concepción and surroundings: children who need to reinforce their English learning process at private or semi-private schools, teenagers who need practice or improving their marks at school and adults who take English lessons as a personal goal, for travel purposes or to acquire a better position at work, along with companies that need professional English training in the region. The ICHNC is an autonomous cultural entity, nonprofit, whose main objective is spreading Chilean and American cultural values, purpose that is fulfilled through English language teaching, organizing cultural programs and maintaining a library with material from both languages. The ICHNC development has consistently been supported by the Embassy of the United States, with which it has strengthened efforts to disseminate artistic, scientific, technological, commercial, educational knowledge and all those events that allow for better mutual experiences sharing.

The Instituto de Capacitación Chileno Norteamericano de Cultura de Concepción SA is recognized by SENCE and offers both individuals, institutions, public and private organizations, training in English Language according to international quality standards and the technical prestige and experience that characterizes this Binational Center (certified in 2006 by NCH 2728 Quality and ISO 9001: 2000.) Its mission is to provide quality

individual and corporate training service, innovative and customized; and its vision is to be

the best alternative for training and development of people and organizations, be

proactively and socially responsible and responsive to the needs of people. ICHNC defines

quality as the degree of compliance with user expectations in relation to the information

received, the excellence of English programs and processes of teaching and learning, as

well communications infrastructure and climate. To accomplish this process, the Institute is

based on the following principles: Attitude and commitment to quality, teamwork and

committed participation of staff in achieving corporate goals, effective internal and external

communication, human resource development and continuous improvement of processes

and programs. The Institute assumes a commitment to social responsibility based on skills

development aimed at creating added value, personal attention focused on user needs,

responsible leadership and proactive attitude, policy of strong commitment to the

educational function of the State, ongoing commitment to technological innovation and its

academic and administrative programs and continued commitment to the improvement of

teaching and support staff. Teachers are encouraged to get international certifications via

international examinations that can be taken at ICHNC.

Finally, the services offered by the institute are translations, certified translations,

test ETAAPP, TOEFL Exam Administration, TOEFL Exam Preparation, library,

management review TOEIC, TOEIC exam preparation, Art Exhibition Hall, Corporate

Training OTEC and Special programs tailored for Executives needs.

The curriculum at the Institute is framed in the Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages (Verhelst, Van Avermaet, Takala, Figueras, & North, 2009) due

to the fact that students are expected to sit for TOEIC and TOEFL examinations at this

Institute. The method of instruction is based on the communicative and task based

approach. Learners are asked to develop reading and listening tasks each one followed by a

speaking and a writing activity. Teachers must focus more on students speaking

production and do not support old fashioned academic grammar based approaches,

therefore speaking activities are to take most of the time of the lesson. The Institute

promotes a process oriented syllabus where the learner is focused on production and

practice during the time of the lesson and does not pay attention to the evaluation process.

What is important for the learner is the constant assessment and feedback given by the

teacher to be able to communicate simple ideas effectively (ICHNC 2015).

2.3.2 A Local Private University Context: Universidad del Desarrollo in Concepción.

The idea of founding a university in the city of Concepcion came in late 1989. In

those days, a group of professionals composed by Ernesto Silva Bafalluy, Joaquin Lavin,

among other Chilean politicians and economists with extensive experience in the public and

private sectors, decided to create the UDD.

In 1990 UDD opened its doors with 100 students enrolled in the Business

Administration Major in Concepción, with Ernesto Silva Bafalluy as RectorIn 1991 three

new majors were offered: architecture, law and journalism. In 1993 the first UDD campus

opened in a building built in Ainavillo street in Concepción. In 1997 and 1998 the Master

in Business Law and the Psychology major began in Concepción. In 1999 the UDD started

academic activities in Santiago with a total of 1,500 students in the careers of Law,

Business Administration, Psychology, Architecture, Journalism and Civil Engineering. In

2001, several exchange agreements with universities from different countries were signed, which leaded to the creation of the International Relations Department. In 2003, the first health area major was offered in Concepción: Dentistry. The MBA is accredited by AMBA (Association of MBA), English body that guarantees the quality of these programs worldwide. In 2010 the UDD signs a strategic partnership with the Stanford Technology Venture Program (STVP), the most important innovation center at the University of Stanford. International relations of the University with prestigious English speaking educational entities make English compulsory within the UDD curriculum (UDD 2015)

2.3.3   English as a foreign language at UDD: A General English Program.

The Chilean North American Institute of Culture is one of the external collaborators who have accompanied UDD since its foundation, offering its staff of teachers and the General English program for adults modified for university students in their first three years of instruction. The program followed is based mainly on the Communicative Approach, following the syllabus suggested in the Four Corners set of textbooks by Richards. The specific group analyzed in this study must fulfill objectives from level A-2 to B-2 from the CEFR which are to understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (basic information about self and family, shopping, local geography, employment, etc.); to contact situations of simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on topics that are familiar or usual and to describe in simple terms aspects of his past and environment as well as their immediate needs related topics.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by presenting the definitions of curriculum, its foundations and ideologies, together with its development over time. Then, it moves onto a discussion of the models of curriculum and syllabus design in language learning, which includes a brief analysis of the specific type of curriculum and syllabus used in the context of study. A brief explanation of the relevance of the CEFR for this study is included in this chapter when competencies and curricula standards in tertiary education are addressed. Then, there is a description of the knowledge base of English language curricula in tertiary education, its content knowledge in expanding circle settings and a model of curriculum in the national context is mentioned.

3.2 Curriculum

3.2.1 Defining curriculum.

Cicero (1, BC) associated the term curriculum with *curriculum vitae* which means the course of one s life. He also associated it with curricula mentis that metaphorically refers to the (educational) course of the mind. It was not until the nineteenth century that the term began to be commonly used in the educational field. More modern definitions include the element of movement or action in a more explicit way. As defined by Nunan (1988), curriculum comprises the principles and procedures for the planning, implementation, evaluation and management of an educational program. A program is a list of the topics or chapters of the course. It usually includes readings and other bibliographical references. Barrow and Milburn (1990) and Pratt (1994) stated that the word curriculum is derived from the Latin verb *currere*, to run. Currere became a

diminutive noun and meant a racing chariot or race track . A large number of researchers or educators (e.g. Beauchamp, 1977; Wood & Davis, 1978; Barrow & Milburn, 1990; Longstreet & Shane, 1993; Goodson, 1994; Marsh, 1997) have reflected on issues related to the definition of curriculum. An example is the one given by Longstreet and Shane (1993) that includes the factor of participating by making decisions: Curriculum is a historical accident it has not been deliberately developed to accomplish a clear set of purposes. Rather, it has evolved as a response to the increasing complexity of educational decision making. Goodson (1994) describes curriculum as a multifaceted concept, constructed, negotiated and renegotiated at a variety of levels and in a variety of arenas . This view reflects the complex and interactive nature of curriculum.

The "Method of *Currere*" is an approach to education based on post-modern philosophy and psychoanalytical technique, first described in a 1975 paper by Pinar. According to Pinar (2004), curriculum is a multifaceted process, involving not only official policy, prescribed textbooks, standardized examinations, but as well the complicated conversation of the participants. Curriculum is considered as its infinitive: *currere*. The present study focuses on the conception of curriculum as a constant conversation and reflection on the aspects of the program of study, which can (or should) be modified according to the context s needs by the decision makers and teachers. "The method of currere reconceptualized curriculum from course objectives to complicated conversation with oneself (as a private intellectual), an ongoing project of self-understanding in which one becomes mobilized for engaged pedagogical action as a private-and-public intellectual with others in the social reconstruction of the public sphere" (Pinar 2004).

3.2.2 Curriculum ideologies.

McKernan's educational theory emphasizes the teacher as researcher and schools as agencies of cultural reconstruction using action research to improve school practices (McKernan, 2008). His curriculum theory rejects the use of educational objectives determined in advance of instruction in favor of a "procedural model" of design that elicits the intrinsic values of the educational experience as the aim of the educational encounter, and not a pre-specified outcome. He is an advocate for action research, the idea that research should be conducted by the practitioner who experiences a problem, with a view to improving the quality of action in the problematic situation through reconstructed actions. His theory holds that there is no division of labor between teachers and researchers and that school practices will only be improved by teachers researching their own practices. McKernan (2008) identified six major curriculum ideologies or conceptions:

1. Intellectual-rationalist (Greek/Roman/medieval);

2. Theo-religious (Christian-Scholastic, Islamic, Jewish);

3. Social-romantic (student-centered);

4. Technical-behavioral (science-efficiency);

5. Personal-caring (Existentialist-self-growth and self-realizing);

6. Critical-political (equality-meliorist)

Scholar academic ideologists believe that acquiring an understanding of academic knowledge involves learning the content, conceptual framework, and ways of thinking (Schiro, 2013). Schiro also identified four primal ideologies: (1) the scholar academic ideology, (2) the social efficiency ideology, (3) the learner centered ideology, and (4) the social reconstruction ideology. Educators who subscribe to the scholar academic ideology

use three main teaching methods. The three teaching methods include: didactic discourse, supervised practice, and Socratic discussions. In the social efficiency ideology, the student s learning is not the main focus. Instead, the focus is on helping students develop the skills necessary to become productive members of society. The social efficiency ideology places less emphasis on the individual needs of the student and more emphasis on the capability of the student to fulfill society s need for skilled workers. The learner centered ideology s main focus is on the learner. The student s needs and interests are central to his/her learning and must be incorporated in the learning experience. Central to the social reconstruction ideology is the idea that the existing society is imperfect. In other words, the society in which we reside is broken. Social reconstructionists believe that education should not be used merely as a vehicle for fixing the flaws within our society, but should instead be used to transform the existing society into a new society that is just, moral, satisfying, and empowering for everyone. Social reconstructionists argue that the function of schools is not to continue reproducing the existing society. Instead schools should go beyond reflecting the wishes of the existing society by teaching students to become critical, and analytical thinkers, and to be aware of the injustices existing in our current society. The four main educational ideologies are fluid in nature and educators may change their ideologies over time. According to Schiro (2013), educators alter their educational ideologies due to changes in their personal and/or professional lives. Most educators change their ideologies at least once every four years.

The present work is based on the learners centered teaching ideology. This study is aimed to support the idea that students needs and interests are of vital importance for the development and implementation of a successful syllabus, which was not much perceived

in preliminary observations. The existing syllabus is originally conceived with the student

as the center of the teaching and learning process (Richards, 2003) but in reality what is of

main importance are students grades and not whether or not they are able to communicate

efficiently in English.

3.2.3 Curriculum development.

Curriculum design is a new term which substitutes both *program* and *syllabus* as old

limited references to *contents* and *bibliography*. Within Richards and Rodgers outline

(1986), the *design* includes objectives, linguistic content, activities, learner roles, teacher

roles, and the role of instructional materials. According to Stern (1983), the practice level

of a general model for second language teaching includes *methodology* -objectives,

content, procedures, materials and evaluation of outcome and *organization*; thus, the term

m*ethodology* includes *design* and *procedures*.

Saylor and Alexander (1974) viewed curriculum development as consisting of four

steps. According to them, curriculum is "a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities

to achieve broad educational goals and related specific objectives for an identifiable

population served by a single school center".

Curriculum planners begin by specifying the major educational goals and specific

objectives they wish to accomplish. Each major goal represents a curriculum domain and

they advocate four major goals or domains: personal development, human relations,

continued learning skills and specialization. The goals, objectives and domains are selected

after careful consideration of several external variables such as findings from educational

research, accreditation standards, views of community groups and others. Once the goals,

objectives and domains have been established, planners move into the process of designing the curriculum. Here decision is made on the appropriate learning opportunities for each domain and how and when these opportunities will be provided. Will the curriculum be designed along the lines of academic disciplines, or according to student needs and interests or along themes? These are some of the questions that need to be answered at this stage of the development process. After the designs have been created the next step is implementation of the designs by teachers. Based on the design of the curriculum plan teachers would specify instructional objectives and then select relevant teaching methods and strategies to achieve the desired learning outcomes among students in the classroom. Finally, curriculum planners and teachers engage in evaluation. It was proposed that evaluation should be comprehensive using a variety of evaluation techniques. Evaluation should involve the total educational program of the school and the curriculum plan, the effectiveness of instruction and the achievement of students. Through the evaluation process, curriculum planner and developers can determine whether or not the goals of the school and the objectives of instruction have been met.

In this section, the reasons and rationale for the main different curriculum models are presented. One of the best known curriculum models, based on students differences is The Tyler Model, introduced in 1949 by Tyler in his classic book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, in which he asked four questions: What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Another approach to curriculum development was proposed by Taba in her book *Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice,* published in 1962. She argued that there was a definite order in creating a curriculum. She believed that teachers, who teach the curriculum, should participate in developing it which led to the model being called the grass-roots approach. She noted seven major steps to her grass-roots model in which teachers would provide a major input. She was of the opinion that the Tyler model was more of an administrative model. According to the Taba Model, first we need a diagnosis of need: The teacher who is also the curriculum designer starts the process by identifying the needs of students for whom the curriculum is planned. For example, the majority of students are unable to think critically. Formulation of objectives: After the teacher has identified needs that require attention, he or she specifies objectives to be accomplished. Then comes the selection of content: The objectives selected or created suggest the subject matter or content of the curriculum. Not only should objectives and content match, but also the validity and significance of the content chosen needs to be determined. i.e. the relevancy and significance of content. After this, the organization of content: A teacher cannot just select content, but must organize it in some type of sequence, taking into consideration the maturity of learners, their academic achievement, and their interests. It continues with the selection of learning experiences: Content must be presented to students and students must be engaged with the content. At this point, the teacher selects instructional methods that will involve the students with the content. Next is the organization of learning activities: Just as content must be sequenced and organized, so must the learning activities. Often, the sequence of the learning activities is determined by the content. But the teacher needs to keep in mind the particular students whom he or she

will be teaching. For the evaluation and means of evaluation the curriculum planner must determine just what objectives have been accomplished. Evaluation procedures need to be designed to evaluate learning outcomes.

The subject/teacher centered design is when the subject centered curriculum is based on subject. All knowledge is transferred to student through the subjects. The subject matter taught should reflect basic areas that are essentials and agreed upon content for learner attainment. The objectives are to transfer cultural heritage, to represent knowledge and to impart information. The drawbacks of the subject centered curriculum are that it ignores interest of students; there is no process of insight or thinking, there is plenty of rote learning, it neglects social problems and demands and it is a type of passive learning.

In the present study, the design of the curriculum is mainly student-based. Student-centered learning, also known as learner-centered education, broadly encompasses methods of teaching that shift the focus of instruction from the teacher to the student. In original usage, student-centered learning aims to develop learner autonomy and independence (Jones, 2007). In learner centered curriculum there is a link between courses and students psychology. It is created according to the interest and tendency of students. It facilitates the mind of students because it fulfills their psychological and mental requirements.

Student-centered learning environments have been shown to be effective in higher education (Wright, 2011). They have been defined specifically within higher education as both a mindset and a culture within a given educational institution and as a learning approach broadly related to, and supported by, constructivist theories of learning. They are characterized by innovative methods of teaching which aim to promote learning in

communication with teachers and other learners and which take students seriously as active

participants in their own learning and foster transferable skills such as problem-solving,

critical thinking, and reflective thinking (Attard et al, 2014). The revised European

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, commonly known as ESG which have

been adopted at the European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference held in

Yerevan (Armenia) the 14th and 15th of May 2015 (ESG Official Website, 2015) include

the following passage on student-centered learning: "Institutions should ensure that

programs are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating

the learning process and ensure that the assessment of students reflects this approach."

Another model relevant to this study is the Activity Based Curriculum due to its

characteristics, which coincide with the teaching style implemented in the classroom.

Active Learning is, in short, anything that students do in a classroom other than merely

passively listening to an instructor's lecture. This includes everything from listening

practices which help the students to absorb what they hear, to short writing exercises in

which students react to lecture material, to complex group exercises in which students

apply course material to "real life" situations and/or to new problems. According to Tanner

and Tanner (Schiro, 2012), "Activity curriculum is an attempt to treat learning as an active

process. Activity curriculum discards the boundaries and the curriculum was centered

largely on areas of child interest. The objective of curriculum was child growth through

experience". According to Bean, 2001, "The major premise of activity movements was that

learner ought to be active rather than passive participants in learning". Activities should

have a definite beginning and ending, a clear purpose or objective, contain complete and

understandable directions and a feedback mechanism and finally, include a description of

the technology or tool being used in the exercise. You said this was relevant to your study, but you never told us why.

Other models are integrated curriculum, which is a learning theory describing a movement toward integrated lessons helping students makes connections across curriculum. Core curriculum is the program which is made mandatory by the institution and is not an independent type of curriculum. It refers to the area of study, courses or subjects that students must understand in order to be recognized as educated in the area and the learner has no option but to study the prescribed course or subjects.   Hidden curriculum is a side effect of the educational process "lessons which are learned but not openly intended" (Martin, 1983) such as the transmission of norms, values, and beliefs conveyed in the classroom and the social environment (Giroux & Purpel, 1983). The collateral curriculum is designed intentionally to afford students the opportunity to learn empowering concepts, principles, and ideas peripheral or outside the subject being taught. Though the teacher intends learning outcomes for the collateral curriculum, the knowledge is not specified in the instructional objectives nor is it assessed. In this sense, the collateral curriculum is a planned hidden curriculum. The spiral curriculum is the one that proposes continuous revisions during the process: "A curriculum as it develops should revisit its basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them" (Bruner, 1960)

Finally, and more relevant to the context presented in this study together with the student-centered and activity-based curricula, there is that which is not taught in institutions: the null curriculum. Eisner (1994) suggests that what curriculum designers and/or teachers choose to leave out of the curriculum (null curriculum) sends a covert

message about what is to be valued. "Curriculum design has become more an issue of deciding what you won't teach as well as what you will teach. You cannot do it all. As a designer, you must choose the essential" (Jacobs, 1997) This cite is appropriate for the present context of study, in which the teachers are required to work at the same pace and also choose what they will leave out of the curriculum in order to use time efficiently in one semester. The problem consists in the fact that the textbook and material chosen were designed to be taught as a whole to be really effective in developing students competencies.

3.3 Syllabus design in language learning.

A syllabus, similar to *program*, contains what is to be taught with a clear reference to selection and grading of *content*. A syllabus is an expression of opinion on the nature of language and learning; it acts as a guide for both teacher and learner by providing some goals to be attained. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define syllabus as follows: At its simplest level a syllabus can be described as a statement of what is to be learnt. It reflects language and linguistic performance. This definition is traditionalist: it focuses on the outcome and not on the process. However, a syllabus has also been defined as a "summary of the content to which learners will be exposed" (Yalden, 1987). It is an approximation and not as an instrument of accurate prediction of outcomes. A language teaching syllabus integrates subject matter and linguistic matter. Curriculum is broader compared with syllabus. Curriculum deals with the arrangements of all the activities and additional aspects made by the institution for the complete academic year to direct teachers and learners. A syllabus is limited to particular content of a particular class.

Syllabus design deals with the decision of what needs to be taught and in what order. For this reason, the theory of language underlying the language teaching method will play a major role in determining what syllabus should be adopted. Six different types of syllabi are presented below based on the works of Wilkins, (1976); Richards & Rodgers (1986); Prabhu,(1987); Yalden,(1987) and Nunan (1988).

3.3.1 Product-Oriented Syllabus in language learning.

This kind of syllabi emphasizes the product of language learning and is oriented to obtain approval from an authority. There are three types of product-oriented syllabi:

(i) The Structural Syllabus

The structural or grammatical syllabus is the most historically used. It bases the selection and grading of the content on the complexity and simplicity of grammatical items. Learners are expected to master each structural step and add it to their grammar collection. Here, the focus is on the product or outcomes. One of the many disadvantages is that recent research suggests there is a disagreement between the grammar of the spoken and of the written language; raising complications for the grading of content in grammar based syllabuses.

(ii) The Situational Syllabus

The situational syllabus links structural theory to situations the learner is able to grasp the meaning in relevant context. One advantage of the situational syllabus is that motivation will be heightened since it is "learner- rather than subject-centered" (Wilkins, 1976). However, a situational syllabus will be limited for students whose needs and

interests were not taken into account by whoever designed the situations in the syllabus.

This thought led Wilkins to describe notional and communicative categories which had a

significant impact on syllabus design. This is one of the elements of slight discomfort that

was perceived when performing a needs detection activity within the group of students in

the context of the present study, which is included in one of the research questions to verify

whether or not the syllabus is suitable for this group.

(iii) The Notional/Functional Syllabus

In order to establish objectives of a Notional/Functional *syllabus*, communication

need is the most important aspect when starting a course. Consequently, needs analysis has

an association with notional/functional syllabuses. White (1988) claims that "language

functions do not usually occur in isolation" and there are also difficulties of selecting and

grading function and form.

3.3.2 Process-Oriented Syllabuses in language learning.

(i)Procedural/Task-Based Syllabus

This syllabus is arranged in form of tasks such as information- and opinion-gap

activities. It is hoped that the learner perceives the language subconsciously whilst

consciously concentrating on solving the meaning behind the tasks. A task-based syllabus

assumes that speaking a language is a skill perfected through practice and interaction, and

uses tasks and activities to encourage learners to use the language communicatively in

order to achieve a purpose. Tasks must be relevant to the real world language needs of the

student. That is, the underlying learning theory of task based and communicative language

teaching seems to suggest that activities in which language is employed to complete

meaningful tasks, enhances learning. The syllabus in the context of study includes all these elements. But whether or not the tasks in the syllabus are suitable for the group analyzed is presented in the following chapters.

(ii)Learner-Led Syllabus

The notion of basing a syllabus on how learners learn language was proposed by Breen and Candlin (1984). Here the emphasis lies on the learner, who it is hoped will be involved in the implementation of the syllabus design. By being fully aware of the course they are studying, it is believed that their interest and motivation will increase, coupled with the positive effect of nurturing the skills required to learn.

(iii)The Proportional Syllabus

The proportional syllabus basically attempts to develop an "overall competence . It consists of a number of elements within the main theme playing a linking role through the units. This theme is designated by the learners. It is expected initially that form will be of central value, but later, the focus will turn towards interactional components. The syllabus is designed to be dynamic, not static, with sufficient opportunity for feedback and flexibility.

3.3.3 Situational, functional, task based, process-oriented syllabus: Competences-based syllabus.

The competency-based education (CBE) movement was born in the United States in the 1970s and advocates defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and behaviors students should possess at the end of a

course of study   (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).. This approach means that there is a strong

focus on defining what learners   can do   with the language at each stage of the course,

providing benchmarks to measure students progress. These outcomes are the building

blocks of the students communication skills mapped to the CEFR. The focus on practical

learning outcomes is reflected on an outcomes-based approach to assessment. Students and

teachers can measure success after every lesson to find out if they can use what they have

learned. Additional practice is required within the context. Students are required to

complete handouts corresponding to the activity book in their free time to review lexical

and structural contents.

The contents in this context of study are organized to develop students

communicative competence in English. Each unit of the 12 units in total (levels A and B)

includes these four strands separated in four lessons (A-B-C-D): accuracy, functional

language, skills and fluency. The accuracy strand (A-C) draws on vocabulary and grammar

and the ability to use grammatically well-formed sentences in communication. The

functional language strand (B) focuses on functional speaking skills or the ability to use

core functional language in speech (ex. Agreeing and disagreeing, apologizing, accepting

and declining invitations). The skills strand involves using language across the different

modalities of speaking, listening, reading and writing, with more emphasis on speaking.

There are several opportunities for students to speak within the textbook with a main

speaking activity at the end of each lesson, although in the reality of the context, not every

student is supervised thoroughly in their speaking practice due to the large amount of

students in the class. There are two formal listening activities within each unit, but students

have the opportunity to listen to recorded sections several times throughout the unit.

Reading and writing are the main focus of lesson D. The fluency strand is present as each

unit develops, changing the focus from accuracy to fluency. At the end of lesson D there is

a specific section to practice fluency. All of these components are meant to be used as a

whole. Nevertheless, the elements which are proper from the context do not allow

completing all the sections in the units, due mainly to time constraints.

3.4   Competencies in the four language skills.

The action-oriented approach describes most of the model of the CEFR. In

summary, language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by

persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both

general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the

competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under

various constraints to engage in language activities involving language processes to

produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activating those

strategies which seem most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. The

monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of

their competences.

Language learners ability is described as competences in the four primary language

skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These competencies are classified as

linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Linguistic competencies include lexical,

grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic knowledge.

Sociolinguistic competencies include linguistic markers of social relations, politeness

conventions, expressions of folk wisdom, register differences, and awareness of dialect and

accent. Pragmatic competencies include discourse and functional skills. The knowledge,

skills and behaviors of these three competency areas is demonstrated by the learner at the

moment of completing language tasks. The framework provides descriptions of learner

achievement in the form of can-do statements for each of the competencies previously

seen. A description of the levels in the CEFR is included in Appendix E. The level in this

context of study is A-2 to B-1 (elementary level). It is most relevant to have clarity on this

at two crucial moments of the teaching and learning process: at the moment of planning the

course for having a clear teaching starting point based on students needs and interests, as it

was done for the current study; and the second moment is related to the importance of

knowing the students proficiency level for determining whether or not the previously

proposed syllabus is suitable or not for this course. The levels of proficiency were

determined with a diagnostic test. Further assessment and direct observation confirmed the

diagnostic test results, which placed students in the elementary level.

3.5   English language teaching curricula and standards in tertiary education.

In this section, a knowledge base for the teaching of English in tertiary education is

given through the presentation of two sources which support the EFL teaching and learning

process in tertiary education with theory. Then, a description of English in tertiary

education in expanding circle settings is presented. Finally, there is a section devoted to

English in tertiary education in Chile.

3.5.1 The knowledge base and content of English as Foreign Language curricula and evaluation in Tertiary Education in expanding circle settings.

When teaching English as a foreign language to university students as a cross curricular program, what is clear is that the general English subject is not students main interest and the subjects related directly to their major are the ones that have more protagonism in their university life. As the study of English in this context is directed to university students, it can be said that these students are part of adult education type of programs. Decision makers in these types of programs have freedom to build a curriculum that best suits the needs of its students. To discover what is best, they must take some steps back and look at the big picture : *higher education is becoming globalised alongside the economy, and English is proving to be a key ingredient   partly because universities in the English-speaking world dominate the global league tables, and partly because English is proving popular as a means of internationalizing both the student community and teaching staff* (Graddol, 2006). This section is mainly informed by Graddol s Education Next , developed for the British Council.

To understand the reality of the use of English in the context of study, it has to be defined to which category the analyzed group of students in the present work belongs. Expanding circle settings is part of a classification to define World Englishes created by Kachru (1985) which refers to EFL speakers from countries with no UK colonial past with over a billion users and are dependent of the linguistic norm. Chile is part of this category (But what about the amount of people in Chile who use English as their second language? How can they be classified?). Outer circle settings is a term used to refer to ESL users with a UK colonial past with over half a billion users and which are developing

the norm. Inner circle settings addresses native English speaking countries (England and former colonies), with less than half a billion users, and which are providers of the linguistic norm. The problem is that speakers from the expanding and outer circle are progressively moving to the center, so we cannot separate speakers per country. A better way to separate them is according to their context, background, and needs. Higher education, globally, has centered on serving students needs. Global institutions in non-English-speaking countries are using English medium courses to attract international students and teachers (Graddol, 2006). Malaysia and China are sending fewer students overseas and preparing their own students providing the formation they require. So it can be stated that universities are struggling to educate their students in English building their own curriculum without depending on the cultural constraints of the inner circle settings. Chile and the present context of study are mainly classified in the outer circle. But institutions and people who are more proficient in the English language belong to the expanding circle.

EFL insists in showing the importance of learning the culture and society of native speakers fostering the emulation of native speakers language and behavior (British or American pronunciation emulation, for instance). The EFL learner as a foreigner or non-native speaker has to fight to be linguistically and culturally accepted by the target community but the language is always going to be someone else s mother tongue making him a linguistic tourist but with no residence rights always submitted to the almighty standards of the native speaker. Cook (1999) used the term multicompetent instead of non-native speaker, which is far more respectful and with a rather positive and optimistic

connotation towards the multiple skills of the students of English who are speakers of other languages.

EFL was mostly linked to secondary school curriculum, where language was a timetabled subject with focus on achieving grammatical accuracy and native speaker-like pronunciation presenting students as failure before they even had the opportunity to advance in the learning process. It was also linked to be sign of wealth and elite. It is important to embrace identity as EFL learners (Golombek & Rehn Jordan, 2005) because they will never be perfect. EFL has been technologised, and enhanced with communicative methods, nevertheless, learners have had little success. Some countries that require English exams as a condition of promotion or graduation, report learners have felt stressed and resented, and not helped to develop their proficiency levels.

EFL began taking new directions, with initiatives such as the European language portfolio that records a learner s experience and achievement in non-traditional ways. Also, the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) provides a uniform approach to attainment levels across all languages, using can do statements and not the aspects of failure. According to the Pearson s Teacher s guide to the CEFR, it is like a staircase with each step not at the same distance from the next (A1 to A2 to B1 to B2, etc.). The guide says learning a language is like climbing a mountain: the ascent gets harder the higher you climb. This means it will take longer to get to B2 from B1 than it does to get to A2 from A1. This is because the learner progresses with the language; he or she needs to acquire a larger range of language knowledge and competencies. Also, when going beyond B1 level, most learners reach a linguistic plateau, and acquisition slows. No two learners develop their language skills in the same way or at the same pace; therefore it is difficult to

define the exact amount of time needed to reach each level. The Association of Language

Testers of Europe (ALTE), whose members have aligned their language examinations with

the CEF, provides guidance on the number of guided teaching hours needed to fulfill the

aims of each CEF level: to reach level A1 it is required to study 90 to 100 hours and A2 is

obtained with 180 to 200 hours of study. B1 with 350 to 400. Guided teaching hours are the

hours the learner is in a formal learning context. The number of hours needed for different

learners varies greatly, they depend on factors such as age and motivation, background,

amount of prior study, extent of exposure to the language outside the classroom and amount

of time spent in individual study. Learners from some countries and cultures or others may

take longer or less time to acquire a new language according to their specific contexts.

3.5.2 National English curriculum in Tertiary Education.

Governments seem to be bewitched by standardization of language teaching. In

Colombia, policy makers hold the misleading belief that, by creating standards for language

teaching (only English) based on imported models, proposing the same goals to be attained

for all citizens, and following equally foreign methodological prescriptions, Colombians are

given clear instructions in terms of what they have to do and achieve in language learning,

regardless of the dissimilar conditions and opportunities (see: Cely, 2007: MEN, 2005).

Conversely, the establishment of those imposed regulations leads to exclusion and inequity

(Gonzalez, 2009), grounded in utopian intentions (Sánchez & Obando, 2008), which can

likely be possible only in urban middle class private schools (Ordonez, 2004 as cited by

Gonzalez, 2009). This seems to be quite familiar to the Chilean schools context. But in

higher education, what is leading the way in educating university students in general

English, is the inner initiative from the Languages Faculties (ex. Universidad de

Concepción, Andrés Bello, Católica de la Santísima Concepción) which provide professionals to teach students within a cross curricular framework. Other private universities, such as Universidad del Desarrollo (UDD), prefer to hire the services of binational institutions to implement their own curriculum in their majors programs. This is the case of the North American Institute of culture of Concepción, which provides the syllabus for all the majors at UDD as it was stated in the previous chapter, but with a course of one semester of 40 hours. In 80 hours, students are expected to advance from the CEFR level they are in (A1) to the next level, which is below the learning hours suggested by the CEFR (90 minimum). It must be pointed out that the context characteristics foster the fast acquisition of the skills expected for this course.

The national strategy 2014-2013 developed by ex-president Sebastián Piñera s government has the main objective of strengthen the proficiencies of the Chilean population in the English language, in order to accelerate the integration of Chile into a global world and therefore improve ourcompetitiveness (Estrategia Nacinal de Inglés 2014-2030). Although it gives tremendous importance to the implementation of effective strategies to promote the teaching and learning of EFL, it does not mention General English in Tertiary Education contexts. It does mention English for specific purposes programs. It states that there are no international standardization measures that allow comparing the English proficiency level of Chilean professionals, but they do count with the International Report of the TOEIC test results in 2012, which locates Chile in place number 30 among 45 countries. It is stated that these results are surely biased and lower due to the fact that these professionals sat only for the listening and reading tests, leaving speaking and writing aside

(Corfo Scholarships, 2012). But the Strategy remarks the importance of being proficient in

English in the professional world to become part of a globalized world.

Chapter 4: Methodological Framework

4.0 Introduction

The purposes of a research study determine its methodology and design (Cohen and Manion 2007). For this reason, this chapter describes the methodological procedures used to subsequently answer the research questions presented in the first chapters. In the following section, the research paradigm and research methodology are described. The third section describes the research methods used in this research. After that, a description and specifications of the instruments implemented are presented. Section 4 describes the sampling procedure and sample of the study. Later, the procedure used in the study and the data analysis procedure are explained.

4.1 Research Paradigm and Research Methodology

A paradigm is a belief system (or theory) that guides the way we do things, or more formally it establishes a set of practices. This can range from thought patterns to action. According to Guba (1990), paradigms can be characterised first through their ontology, which is the interpretation of reality, from a realistic, critical realistic or relativist point of view; secondly, their epistemology, refers to the perceived relationship with the knowledge being uncovered, internal or external to the researcher, affecting objectivity; and methodology, which is how one gathers knowledge and how the research is conducted. It is a strategic approach, rather than techniques and data analysis (Wainright, 1997). These characteristics create a holistic view of how we view knowledge: how we see ourselves in relation to this knowledge and the methodological strategies we use to discover it. Disciplines tend to be governed by particular paradigms, such as positivism (e.g. experimental testing), post positivism (i.e. a view that we need context and that context free

experimental design is insufficient), critical theory (e.g. ideas in relation to an ideology - knowledge is not value free and bias should be articulated) and constructivism (i.e. each individual constructs his/her own reality so there are multiple interpretations. This is sometimes referred to as interpretivism).

The present study takes a rather positivist point of view, which uses a quantitative analysis, although it includes a qualitative analysis of one of the three research questions. Keeping objectivity was vital, having in mind that the reality analysed was the researcher s own context.

4.2 Research methodology.

The three most common research methodologies are the quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies. Quantitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data which is then analysed primarily in numerical data which is then analysed primary by statistical methods (survey analysed by statistical software). Qualitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analysed primarily by non-statistical methods (interviews with transcribed recordings for analysis). .

Due to the nature of the research questions, the chosen and most appropriate method to analyse the data for this research is quantitative. A survey-based research study provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2003). The instrument designed to gather the required information was a survey. Survey studies aim at describing the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group (Dörnyei, 2007). The main data collection method in surveys is the use of questionnaires and the result from them are

mainly quantitative. It is preferred because questionnaires are easy to build, versatile and

fast to gather great amounts of data in short time. The procedure used was a self-

administered pencil-and-paper questionnaire, which is defined as any written instruments

that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react

either by writing out their answers or selecting among existing answers (Brown, 2001). In

the first part of the survey, there were factual and behavioural questions, aimed to find out

background and context data such as age, gender and whether or not the person had been to

a native English speaking country or formally studied English at other institutions apart

from university.   The central and final parts were focused on gathering the students

opinions regarding suitability of the syllabus for their level of study. The questionnaire was

organized in a chart with statements on a four point Likert scale. The actual instruments are

included in Appendix B. It was designed according to Dörnyei s recommendations: two

pages long; it took less than 8 minutes to complete and an explanation and confidentiality

clause was included to ensure anonymity. It was also clarified that there were no right or

wrong answers and since participation was voluntary, they could withdraw at any time.

Additionally, the survey was developed in the students mother tongue, Spanish, in order to

avoid bias that language misunderstanding may have produced. The survey was first

subjected to a process of validation: it was evaluated by two experts in the field of

linguistics and it was pilot tested with another class that was using the same syllabus. After

the completion of the survey, the student who helped with the piloting process and the

experts gave their opinion through a rubric, which is included in Appendix B. Their

opinions were considered for further improvements before the official and final date of the

survey. Dörnyei s recommendations were followed: Aim for short and simple items, use

simple and natural language, avoid ambiguous or loaded words and sentences, avoid

negative constructions, avoid double-barrelled questions and avoid items that are likely to

be answered the same way by everybody or are repeated and positively and negatively

worded items were included. Formatting and main parts were built according to Dörnyei s

concerns about the title, introduction, specific instructions, items clarity, additional

information and the final thank you note to finish the survey. Ethical concerns present in

Dörnyei s work were also taken into consideration. The corresponding rubric for the

evaluation of the survey is also included in Appendix B. There is also a section of syllabus

topics proposed which had to be assigned a number according to the participant s opinion

to classify their importance 1 being the less suitable for the program and 10 the most

suitable. According to Dörnyei, numerical ratings can easily be turned into semantic

differential scales for a clear analysis. Ranking items is a common mental activity which

means participants are familiarized with putting in order a list according to their

preferences. Figures 1 and 2 show a detail of what has been described above:

SECCIÓN II:

Instrucciones: Marque con una equis (X) la casilla que mejor describa su opinión acerca de la afirmación correspondiente.

DIMENSIÓN 1: Nivel de exigencia de los contenidos.

	Preguntas	a) Totalmente en desacuerdo.	b) En desacuerdo.	c) De acuerdo.	d) Totalmente de acuerdo.
1	Me resulta fácil leer y entender los extractos de textos escritos en inglés en la clase.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Los extractos de textos escritos en inglés de la clase son largos y complicados para mí.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Escucho las grabaciones en la clase y puedo entenderlas bien.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Figure 1. Four points Likert s scale survey.

SECCIÓN III:

Instrucciones: Lea los temas propuestos para un curso de inglés que usted tomaría y asigne un número a cada uno de ellos de acuerdo a su relevancia según su opinión, siendo 1 el menos relevante y 10 el más relevante.

____ Moda y estilos.
____ Deportes y actividades de tiempo libre.
____ Viajes y vacaciones.
____ Ciencia y tecnología.
____ Música y arte en general.
____ Salud y hábitos saludables.
____ Ciudades y cultura del mundo.
____ Cine y televisión.
____ Sueños y aspiraciones.
____ Otro (especificar: _____)

Figure 2. Rank order items.

4.3 Sampling procedure and sample.

According to Dörnyei (2003), sample is   the group of people whom researchers actually examine   (p. 70). Cohen and Manion (2007) distinguish two kinds of samples: Probability and non-probability. In the former sample, every member of the population can participate in the study whereas in the latter, non-probabilistic sample, only some members of the population are chosen to participate in the study. Non-Probability sampling was used in this research, because not all the members of the population had equal chance to participate answering the survey. They answered the survey freely with no obligation. Nine students were absent on the day of the survey and didn t participate in it. Participants are 26 students of Dentistry at Universidad del Desarrollo, in Concepción, Chile, who are enrolled in the General English course (Inglés 1, sección 1) offered by the North American Institute at the University. Nineteen of the students ages are between 18 and 19. Six of them are between 20 and 21 and one is 24 years old. Seven of them are males and 19 are females. None of them have lived in an English speaking country and three have studied English or are currently studying English apart from University. Three of them have travelled to an

English speaking country and ten of them have learnt English on their own.

4.4 Procedure

As it has been previously described, in order to answer the research questions

proposed for this study, one procedure was developed and taken by the participants in the

form of a survey. The other procedure consisted in the collection of data concerning

students academic results. For the former, participants were given from 5 to 10 minutes to

answer the survey, during the class period, with authorisation previously given by the

UDD s Dentistry Academic Department and the North American Institute s Academic

Director. Participants finished the survey in less than 8 minutes. The first part consisted in

short paragraphs that explained the purpose of the survey and information about objectives

and research. It guaranteed anonymity. The second section was a page with the purpose of

collecting personal and background data (not the name of the participant). The third section

was the actual questionnaire in the form of a four point Likert scale. Participants did not

have any question in regards to the clarity of instructions or items. The fourth part

consisted in ranking syllabus topics according to suitability for the English program

according to students views. This section also included a section for an extra suggestion. It

could be noticed that the previous expert validation and piloting process were key to

present a clear and precise instrument that gathered all the information required to answer

the research questions. The latter procedure, the collection of academic results, was

performed after the second oral performance test, of a total of three oral tests during a

semester of 42 hours and after the second written evaluation of a total of two, which

assessed reading, listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. This is consistent with the

fact that the syllabus is mainly communicative and aims to develop oral skills. A copy of

the surveys and the corresponding authorization from the Institute and University to

perform the procedure and piloting are included in Appendix A. Appendix B includes the

survey and expert validation instrument. The oral and written tests are included in

Appendix C with the corresponding specifications table and rubric. CEFR general charts

for levels A2 and B1 are included in Appendix D.

4.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Below there is an explanation of how the analysis of the data obtained was

performed. The present study is mainly of quantitative nature; therefore the analysis of data

is quantitative in two research questions. One of the research questions is analyzed

qualitatively due to its nature.

4.6 Research Objectives and Questions.

The objectives for this research are the following:

1. To determine the students perceived degree of difficulty of the language

   contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the

   students under consideration.

   This objective is achieved through the analysis of the corresponding survey.

2. To establish the degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR

   for the level studied and the students' actual performances.

   This second objective is accomplished through the analysis of assessment

   instruments in comparison with the CEFR.

3. To uncover students preferred topics that seem more relevant that would better

   suit the students' needs.

This final objective is obtained through the analysis of another section in the survey, which portraits students preferences towards existent and suggested topics.

Therefore the research questions are the following:

1. What is the demanding nature of the language contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the students under consideration?

2. What is the degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR for the level studied and the students' actual performances?

3. Which are the topics that seem more relevant that would better suit the students' needs?

Chapter 5: Results

5.0 Introduction.

We must be reminded that the data generated through a survey was analyzed quantitatively. The results were obtained from the application of this survey and the analysis of students academic results. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) propose various forms to present quantitative data. The one used in this study follows a structure where the results are presented per each research question. Thus, the following sub sections are headed first by the biographical data and then by the research questions posed at the outset of this study. Following the actual presentation of the results of this study is the discussion. Such discussions per research question do not only examine the results per se, but also relate them to the relevant literature and speculate as to the possible causes or reasons that might explain what is present in each sub section. The software used for the analysis was Excel 2013 and Infostat.

5.1   Students biographical data.

According to the following graph, 27 % of the students were male and 73% were female.
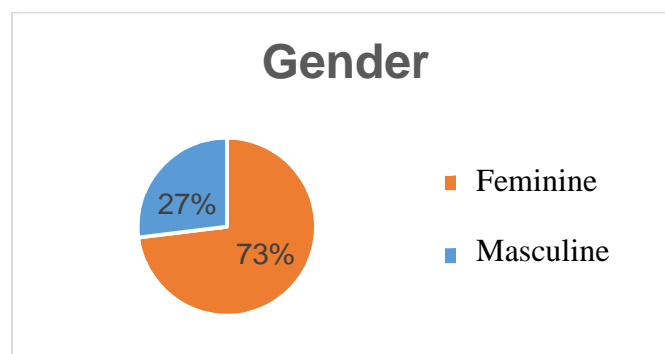
Graph 1: Students gender.

In Graph 2 we can observe that no male have travelled to an English speaking country, while 16% (3) of the women in the group have. No student has ever lived in an English speaking country.
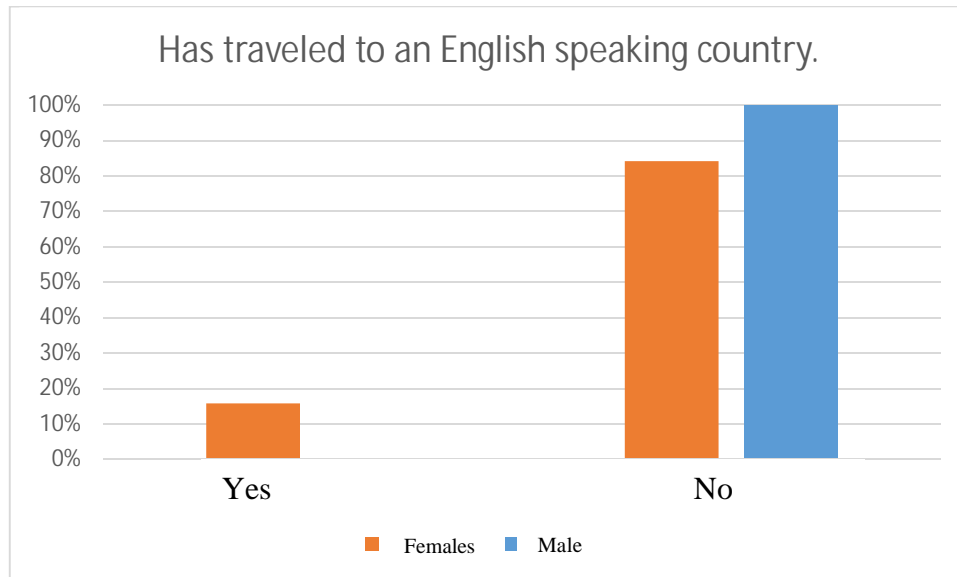
Graph 2: Has traveled to an English speaking country   according to gender

In the following graph, we see that most of the students have not studied English at another institution apart from university.
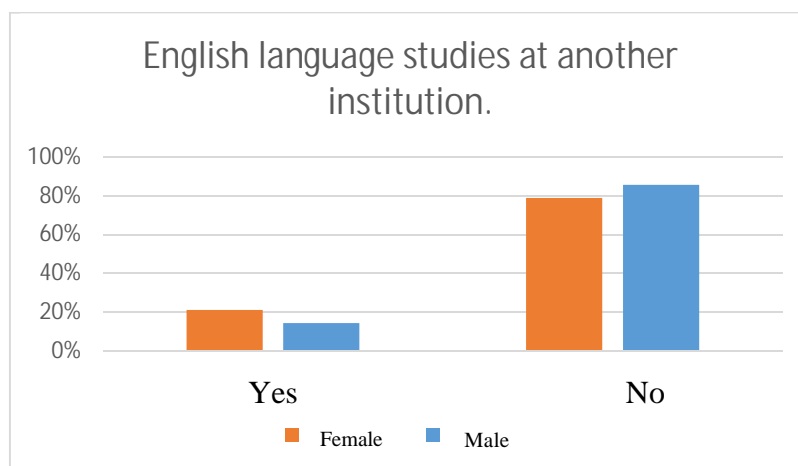
Graph 3: English studies at another institution apart from University   according to gender.

In the following graph we see that most of the students are aged 18-19.
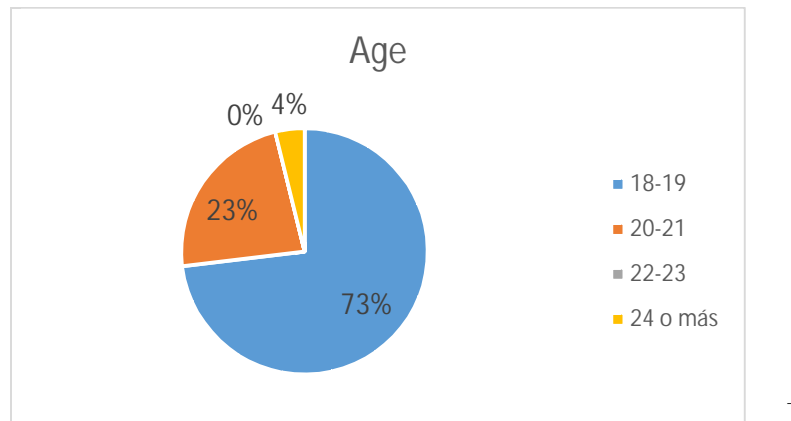
Graph 4: Students ages.

In the next graph it can be seen from the latter Graph, that most of the students did

not learn English on their own.
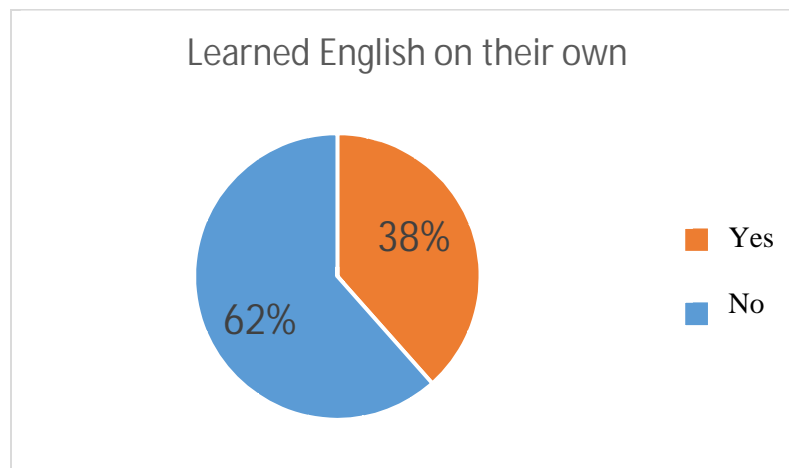
Graph 5: Learned English on their own.

5.2 RQ1: Perceived degree of difficulty of the language contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the students under consideration.

5.2.1   Perceived degree of the demanding nature of contents.

In this section, the results have been segregated for ease of understanding, in terms of language skills. In other words, the results indicating the students perceived degree of ease or difficulty are presented per skill. In order to better understand the results presented, first, the degree of ease is shown per language skill and then the degree of perceived difficulty per language skill is presented later. Each table presents numerical values going from 1 to 4, where 1 stands for totally disagree with the statement and 4 totally agree with the statement. For example, in the following section, items tapping into reading have been grouped together to be analyzed in percentage points as far as degree of ease is concerned.

5.2.1.1 Degree of ease of contents

As pointed out earlier, the students perceived level of ease is presented. Table 1 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as reading ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 1, the item analyzed is reading and understanding extracts of texts in class. It can be inferred from Table 1 that the majority of the students agree that reading and understanding extracts of texts in class is easy to them.

Table 1: Perceived degree of ease of reading content

I find it easy to read and understand extracts		
Reading	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	9	35%
3 (agree)	15	58%
4 (totally agree)	2	8%
TOTAL	26	

Table 2 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as listening ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In table 8, the item analyzed is listening and understanding recordings in class. According to Table 2, most of the students agree on the fact that they listen to the recordings in class and are able to understand them.

Table 2: Perceived degree of ease of listening content

I find it easy to listen and understand recordings in class.		
Listening	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	3	12%
2 (disagree)	9	35%
3 (agree)	13	50%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	26	

Table 3 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as speaking ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 3, the item analyzed is speaking English in class. Table 3 shows most of the students disagree that it is easy for them to speak in English during classes.

Table 3: Perceived of ease of speaking content.

I find it easy to speak English during classes.		
Speaking	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	5	19%
2 (disagree)	17	65%
3 (agree)	4	15%
4 (totally agree)	0	0%
TOTAL	26	

Table 4 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as writing ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 4, the item analyzed is writing paragraphs in English with structure and almost no mistakes in class. From Table 4 it can be inferred that most of the students disagree that it is easy for them to write paragraphs with structure and almost with no mistakes.

Table 4: Perceived degree of ease of writing content.

I find it easy to write paragraphs with structure with almost no mistakes.		
Writing	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	5	19%
2 (disagree)	15	58%
3 (agree)	5	19%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	26	

Table 5 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as grammar structures understanding is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 5, the item analyzed

is to understand quickly the use of grammar structures in class. Table 5 shows most of the students agree they quickly understand the use of grammar structures studied in classes.

Table 5: Perceived degree of ease of use of grammar structures.

I find it easy to understand grammar structures		
Grammar Structures	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	8	31%
3 (agree)	14	54%
4 (totally agree)	3	12%
TOTAL	26	

Table 6 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as grammar structures use is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 6, the item analyzed is to understand quickly when grammar structures mistakes are corrected in class. According to Table 6 it can be inferred that the majority of the students agree they understand quickly when their grammar structures mistakes are corrected in classes.

Table 6: Perceived degree of ease to understand grammar correction.

I find it easy to understand grammar correction in class		
Grammar use	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	3	12%
3 (agree)	20	77%
4 (totally agree)	3	12%
TOTAL	26	

Table 7 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as vocabulary use is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then

the percentage is presented. In Table 7, the item analyzed is the use of vocabulary after studying it in class. Table 7 shows most of the students agree they use the vocabulary learned in classes after studying it.

Table 7: Perceived degree of ease to use vocabulary.

Degree of ease		
Vocabulary	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	6	23%
3 (agree)	14	54%
4 (totally agree)	5	19%
TOTAL	26	

To conclude, a general graph is presented next with a summary of the results. According to Graph 5 we can observe that for students it is less easy to speak in English during classes and to write paragraphs with almost no mistakes. On the other hand, it is easier for them to understand grammar content when it is explained to them during classes. According to these results, we can conclude grammar explanations seem to suffice during classes. This is not the case for speaking activities. Therefore, results suggest the syllabus must make a stronger emphasis on speaking activities, making them clearer, more frequent and practical, due to the fact that speaking is the key objective to achieve not only for the Institute and the University, but for students as well.

In order to understand to graph below, the Y axis stands for the perceived degree of ease of the different skills and language contents: 1 and 2 can be interpreted as students disagreeing with finding a given skills easy (i.e. they are perceived as rather difficult),

while 3 and 4 can be interpreted as students agreeing with finding a given skill easy (i.e. they are perceived as relatively easy).
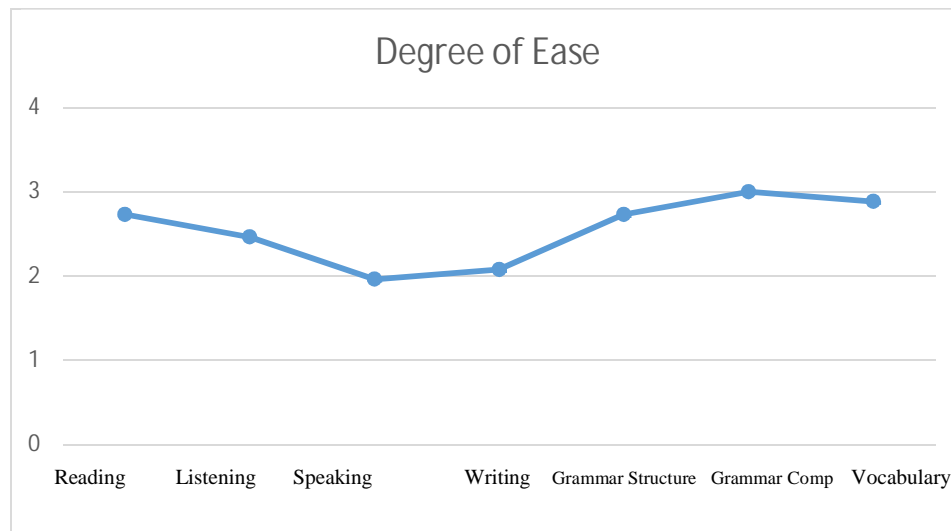
Graph 6: Ease to learn the contents.

5.2.1.2   *Degree of difficulty of contents*

In this subsection, the students perceived degrees of difficulty are presented, segregated per language skill. For example, Table 8 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as reading ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 8, the item analyzed is the length and perceived complication level of reading extracts in class. From Table 8 we can understand most of the students do not agree reading extracts from the class are long and complicated for them.

Table 8: Perceived degree of difficulty of reading content.

I find it difficult to understand reading extracts.		
Reading	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	20	77%
3 (agree)	4	15%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	25	

Table 9 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as listening ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 9, the item analyzed is understanding classes in English. Table 9 shows most of the students do not agree it is difficult for them to understand the classes in English.

Table 9: perceived degree of difficulty of understanding the class in English.

I find it difficult to understand classes in English.		
Listening	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	7	27%
2 (disagree)	14	54%
3 (agree)	4	15%
4 (totally agree)	0	0%
TOTAL	25	

Table 10 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as speaking ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 10, the item analyzed is the use of oral practice moments in class. From Table 10 we can infer that most of the students agree

they use oral practice instances during classes to improve their pronunciation because this

aspect is difficult for them.

Table 10: Perceived degree of difficulty of pronunciation.

I find it difficult to pronounce in English correctly.		
Speaking	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	5	19%
3 (agree)	14	54%
4 (totally agree)	7	27%
TOTAL	26	

To conclude, a graph with a summary of the results is presented next. From Graph 6

we can observe more clearly that, on average, students find it more difficult to use oral

practice instances during classes to improve their pronunciation because speaking is

difficult for them in general. Speaking is the key aspect in this syllabus at institutional and

learner s level. On the other hand, students find lest difficult to understand classes in

English. In order to understand the graph below, the Y axis stands for the perceived degree

of ease of the different skills and language contents: 1 and 2 can be interpreted as students

complete disagreement and disagreement with the items being difficult and 3 and 4

correspond to the agreement and total agreement of the items being difficult.
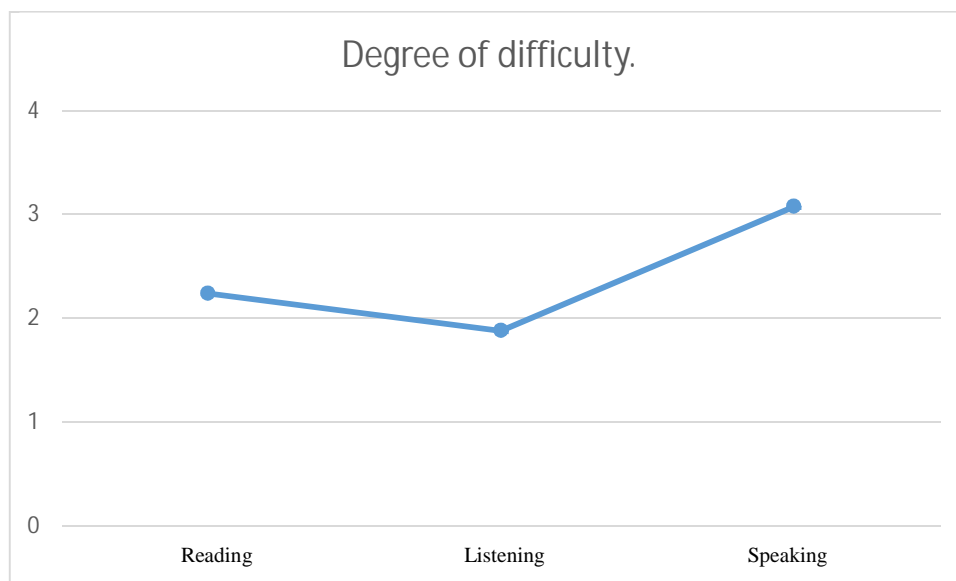
Graph 7: Difficulty to understand key content.

5.2.2   Discussion

It is important to remember that what is being analyzed in this work is suitability for

this specific context, and students perceptions is one of the elements to reach a valid

conclusion, because these students are focused on achieving their major s goal and English

learning is one of the components that should contribute to their future success. It also

needs to be mentioned that not enough research was found on this specific topic that could

be similar enough to be compared with this work, mostly due to time restraints. Although,

according to the studies of Martínez-Flor et al. (2006) and Aliaga García (2007), English

pronunciation is considered to be one of the most difficult skills to acquire and develop.

This is an example of students perceptions on one aspect of speaking. As has been stated

before, for students in this study it is less easy to speak in English during classes and to

write paragraphs with almost no mistakes. On the other hand, it is easier for them to

understand grammar content when it is explained to them during classes, therefore, we can

conclude grammar explanations suffice during classes and should not be disregarded. This is not the case for speaking activities, as results suggest the syllabus must make a stronger emphasis on speaking activities, making them clearer, more frequent and practical for students. Students find it more difficult to use oral practice instances during classes to improve their pronunciation because speaking is difficult for them in general. On the other hand, students find it less difficult to understand classes in English, which might be due to the teachers expertise.

As it has been mentioned before in this work, according to the Pearson s Teacher s guide to the CEFR and the Association of Language Testers of Europe (ALTE), to reach level A1 it is required to study 90 to 100 hours and A2 is obtained with 180 to 200 hours of study. The course under study has 42 hours, which may explain why students find speaking practice more difficult: they require more time to practice and achieve goals prescribed for this course during classes. Students in this course are, in general, young, ambitious and motivated, with an almost privileged socio economical background, which includes learning English up to level A1 complete (verified with diagnostic results), and have exposure to the language outside the classroom via internet and within their circle of friends. Most of them spend time in individual study to prepare for evaluations. These positive factors reduce the amount of hours necessary for reaching and passing A2 level for some, but with a more appropriate amount of oral practice time the implementation of this syllabus would probably be more suitable.

5.2.3   Perceived degree of the demanding nature of evaluations.

As the previous section hinted, here the results are separated first into degrees of ease, then difficulty degrees and the four skills plus grammar structures and use and vocabulary in order to uncover the perceived demanding nature of evaluation procedures.

5.2.3.1 Degree of ease

Table 11 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as reading ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 11, the item analyzed is the complexity of written extracts in evaluations. According to Table 11 we can infer that most of the students agree that written texts in exams are simple and enough to show their reading abilities in the English language.

Table 11: Perceived degree of ease of reading contents in assessment

I find it easy to read and understand extracts.		
Reading	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	6	23%
3 (agree)	17	65%
4 (totally agree)	2	8%
TOTAL	26	

Table 12 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as listening ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 12, the item analyzed is related to understanding audio extracts in exams. Table 12 shows most of the students do not agree recordings in exams are easy and short.

Table 12: Perceived degree of ease of listening extracts in assessment.

It is easy for me to listen and understand recordings.		
Listening	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	13	50%
3 (agree)	9	35%
4 (totally agree)	3	12%
TOTAL	26	

Table 13 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as speaking ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 13, the item analyzed is the ability of responding orally in evaluations. From Table 13 it can be inferred that most of the students agree they answer their classmates questions within the given time in oral evaluations.

Table 13: Perceived degree of ease of oral interaction in assessment.

It is easy for me to answer my partner s questions within the time given.		
Speaking	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	2	8%
2 (disagree)	4	15%
3 (agree)	15	58%
4 (totally agree)	5	19%
TOTAL	26	

Table 14 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as writing ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 14, the item analyzed is the ability to write short paragraphs in evaluations. Table 14 shows most of the students do not agree they finish the

written paragraphs they are asked to write in less time than the one assigned during the written evaluations.

Table 14: Perceived degree of ease of writing tasks in assessment.

| I find it easy to write paragraphs in less time than the one assigned for the task.		
Writing	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	15	58%
3 (agree)	9	35%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	26	

Table 15 presents the perceived degree of ease, as far as vocabulary use is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of ease and then the percentage is presented. In Table 15, the item analyzed is the use of vocabulary in evaluations. According to Table 15 we infer that the majority of the students agree that they use the vocabulary studied in class correctly in written and oral evaluations.

Table 15: Perceived degree of ease of use of vocabulary in evaluations.

It is easy for me to use the vocabulary studied in class.		
Vocabulary	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	12	46%
3 (agree)	14	54%
4 (totally agree)	0	0%
TOTAL	26	

All in all, we can notice that Graphs 7 and 8 are more stable than the previous graphs, ranging from I agree to I disagree . In the latter graph it can be noticed that, on

average, there is little difference between the students that find it easier to apply the vocabulary studied in class correctly during the evaluations and students that find it difficult to understand the written text extracts because they are not simple and enough to show their reading ability in the English language. Therefore, we can conclude the contents within the syllabus have the appropriate ease for these students with this particular background. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that speaking, which is the key ability to be developed in this syllabus, is not perceived as an easy aspect. In order to understand the graph below, the Y axis stands for the degree of ease in assessment: 1 and 2 can be interpreted as total disagreement and disagreement and 3 and 4 correspond to agreement and total agreement.
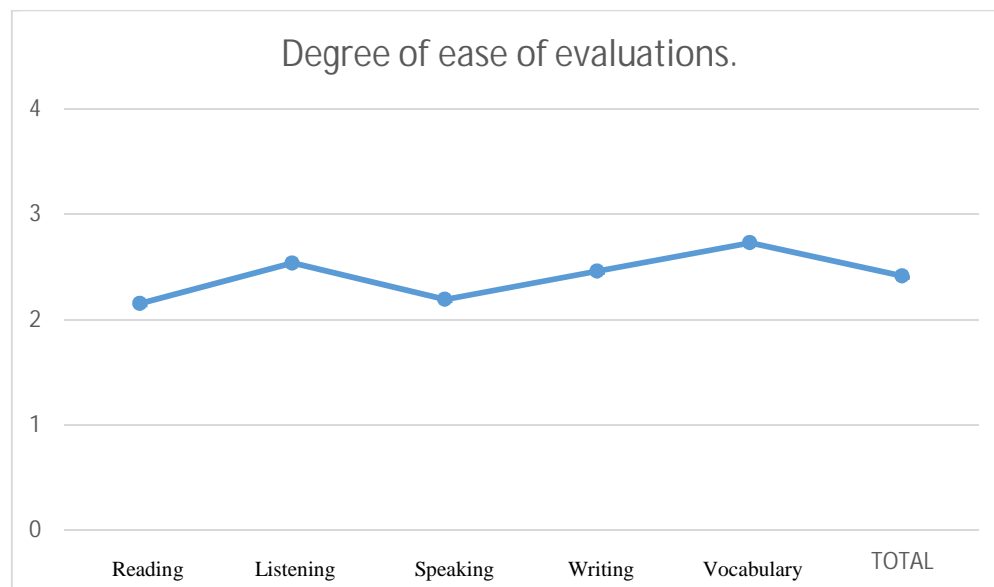
Graph 8: Degree of ease of evaluations.

5.2.3.2 Degree of difficulty of assessment

Table 16 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as reading ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 16, the item analyzed is the complexity of written extracts in evaluations. Table 16 shows most of the students do not agree written text extracts are difficult for them in written evaluations; in other words they find reading relatively easy.

Table 16: Perceived degree of difficulty of reading content in assessment.

I find text extracts difficult in evaluations		
Reading	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	21	81%
3 (agree)	3	12%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	26	

Table 17 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as listening ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 17, the item analyzed is the complexity of audio extracts in evaluations. From Table 17 it is inferred that most of the students do not agree they have little understanding of audio recordings in written exams. Put differently, students find it relatively easy to have listening in assessment procedures.

Table 17: Perceived degree of difficulty of listening extracts in assessment

I understand little of oral recordings in exams.		
Listening	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	2	8%
2 (disagree)	13	50%
3 (agree)	6	23%
4 (totally agree)	5	19%
TOTAL	26	

Table 18 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as speaking ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 18, the item analyzed is understanding and replying to instructions in oral evaluations. According to Table 18 we can infer that most of the students do not agree they have difficulty understanding instructions in oral evaluations.

Table 18: Perceived degree of difficulty of instructions (oral interaction) in assessment

I find it difficult to understand and follow instructions during speaking exams.		
Speaking	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	3	12%
2 (disagree)	15	58%
3 (agree)	8	31%
4 (totally agree)	0	0%
TOTAL	26	

Table 19 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as writing ability is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 19, the item analyzed is the ability of writing paragraphs in evaluations. On Table 19 we can see that most of the students

think writing paragraphs according to instructions given in written evaluations is easy for them.

Table 19: Perceived degree of difficulty of writing tasks in exams in assessment.

| I find it difficult to write paragraphs according to instructions		
Writing	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	0	0%
2 (disagree)	15	58%
3 (agree)	10	38%
4 (totally agree)	1	4%
TOTAL	26	

Table 20 presents the perceived degree of difficulty, as far as grammar use is concerned. Frequency stands for the number of students who chose a specific degree of difficulty and then the percentage is presented. In Table 20, the item analyzed is the use of grammar in evaluations. From Table 20 it is inferred that most of the students agree and totally agree they make mistakes using grammar structures in oral and written evaluations.

Table 20: Perceived degree of difficulty of grammar use in assesment.

I find it difficult not to make mistakes in oral and written evaluations.		
Grammar	Frequency	%
1 (totally disagree)	1	4%
2 (disagree)	10	38%
3 (agree)	10	38%
4 (totally agree)	5	19%
TOTAL	26	

In the next graph as a summary, it can be observed that, on average, there is little difference with students that find grammar structures difficult (they make mistakes) and students that find written extracts more difficult to understand when reading, Thus, it can be

concluded that students do not find the contents excessively difficult, which make them suitable within the syllabus. It must be noted that speaking activities, speaking being the key aspect of this syllabus for both of the institutions mentioned in this study and for the students, have been considered not difficult , whereas they were considered difficult during classes. This study suggests further observation of the degree of difficulty of oral evaluations and subsequent introduction of slightly more complex speaking oriented evaluation activities together with clearer grammar evaluation activities, which was considered as the most difficult aspect to develop in written and oral evaluations. In order to understand the graph below, the Y axis stands for the perceived degree of difficulty: 1 and 2 can be interpreted as students total disagreement and disagreement and 3 and 4 correspond to agreement and total agreement.
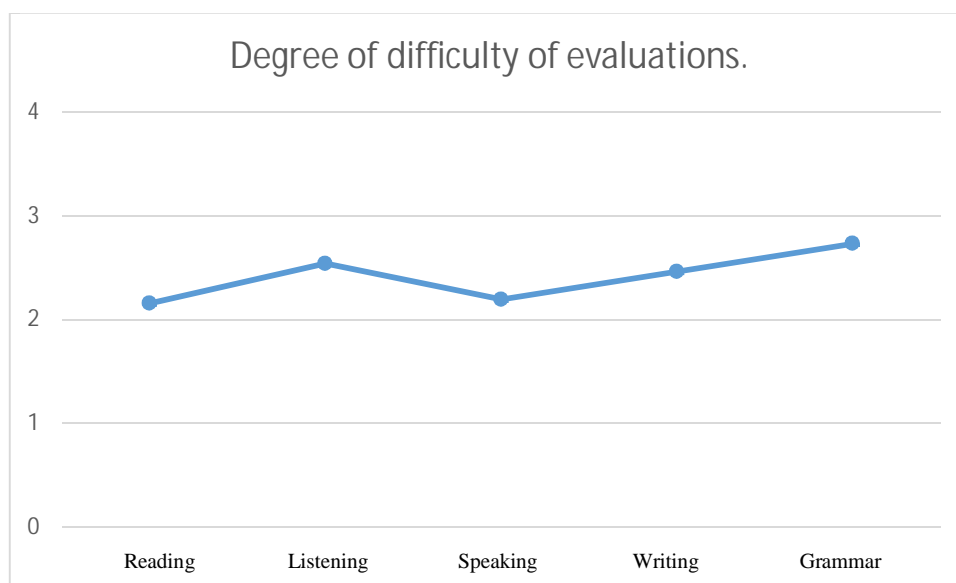
Graph 9: Degree of difficulty of oral and written evaluations.

5.2.4 Discussion

Grammar is defined as the rules that govern how a language s sentences are formed (Thornbury, 2000, p. 1). It is necessary for ELLs to master grammar in order to be competent in the four language skills because incorrect use or lack of understanding of grammar might hinder communication either in speaking, writing, listening, or reading (Savage, Bitterlin, & Price, 2010). Grammar is the most difficult aspect in evaluations for students in this study; therefore, it is suggested to further reflect on this issue when creating written tests. It would be advisable to expose students to proper previous practice to prepare them for written evaluations that contain grammar items. As has been stated before, there is little difference between the students that find it easier to apply the vocabulary studied in class correctly in assessments and students that find it difficult to understand the written text extracts in assessments. This means the contents within the syllabus have the appropriate ease for these students with this particular background. Speaking is not perceived as a really easy aspect either. Students do not find the speaking contents excessively difficult in evaluations, so this makes them suitable within the syllabus. Speaking activities have been considered not difficult in evaluations, meanwhile they were considered difficult during classes. This study suggests further observation of the degree of difficulty of oral evaluations and subsequent introduction of slightly more complex speaking oriented evaluation activities together with clearer grammar evaluation activities, which was considered as the most difficult aspect to develop in written and oral evaluations.

It can be pointed out again the duration of the course is too short for students to show they can do what is expected of them. According to the previously analyzed results,

grammar content in written assessment is the most difficult item for students. This means that if they had had more practice instances during the course, the grammar items would probably have been considered easier. The explanations of the teacher were considered sufficient, which leaves this factor aside. They also needed more time to practice listening before evaluations.

It could be suggested the written evaluations are not so suitable for this course, because the evaluations don t give clear and enough opportunities for students to demonstrate their grammar skills. Students should be given enough practice time during classes and enough opportunities to show their skills in tests. The oral assessment is more suitable according to students, although they haven t had enough oral practice moments, as it was stated in the content suitability discussion. Not enough oral practice makes students find it more difficult as well as oral assessment moments.

5.3 RQ2: Degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR for the level studied and the students' actual performances.

Below is the data gathered from three distinct sources in two tables, which allow the researcher to conduct a qualitative, comparative analysis between the language performance indicators contained in the CEFR, the official specified program overview of the course, and the data gathered from the students expected language performance according to the syllabus. As for the first, it must be noted that two different English language levels have been considered from the CEFR as the course taught makes use of a course book which incorporates A2 level performances for the beginning of the course and B1 level performances towards the end of the course. In Table 21, the first column shows the language performance indicators from level B1 of the CEFR (what students are expected to achieve), separated by language skill. The data showing students expected performance in the second column has been gathered from the official program overview, which acts as a type of curriculum created for the course. Appendix D contains the table for level A2.

Table 22 explains the data with further detail. The actual language performance data has been gathered from the specifications tables from two of the final tests that the students under consideration were to take, one written and one oral. The first column shows the CEFR levels of performance separated by skill. The second column contains the language performance (indicators) expected of the students for the oral production test. The same applies to the language performance (indicators) present in the third column derived from the analysis of written test 2. Table 22, thus, shows what was found in each of the data sources as for as language performance is concerned.

Table 21. Students expected performances at the end of the course within the syllabus compared with the CEFR levels of performance.

CEFR Level B1 Descriptor	Students expected performance according to syllabus (official program overview)
Listening Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can understand the main point of many radio or TV programs on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear. Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.	Listening Can understand sentences and everyday vocabulary related to areas of personal interest (very basic personal and family information, shopping, the city, employment, health). Can apply strategies and listening techniques to predict the topic and locate introductory formulas, keywords, or other indicators to recognize information of a general and specific nature in short and simple speeches.
Reading Can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency every day or job-related language. Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters. Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task. Can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.	Reading Can infer the meaning of written material supported by the context and / or knowledge of additional language background. Can report communicative intention and recognize the organization of information from different texts. Can use the knowledge learned to understand literal and inferentially the information content of texts.
Speaking Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g family, hobbies, work, travel and current events). Can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. Can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe reactions. Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events. Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used "routines" and patterns associated with more predictable situations. Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production. Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding. Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.	Speaking Can communicate functionally when carrying out simple and routine tasks requiring simple and direct exchange of information on topics that are familiar or common. Can communicate with simple statements effectively and spontaneously in simple routine tasks requiring simple and direct information about familiar topics and activities. Can use a custom or circumstantial speech adapted to the work, social or cultural environment.
Writing Can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions. Can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can summarize report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his field with some confidence.	Writing Can produce simple messages and written texts of increasing length and complexity. Can communicatively express feelings, preferences, agreements, etc. to describe situations of personal, professional, social or cultural interest. Can use the vocabulary and grammar structures relevant to the communicative situation presented.

Table 22. Students actual performances in oral and written tests compared with the CEFR levels of performance.

CEFR Level B1 Descriptor	Students actual language performance in ORAL TEST 2	Students actual language performance in WRITTEN TEST 2
Listening Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can understand the main point of many radio or TV programs on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear. Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated.		Listening Can listen and understand people s health problems and given suggestions. Can listen and complete a dialogue about shopping with the correct word which is missing.
Reading Can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency every day or job-related language. Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters. Can scan longer texts in order to locate desired information, and gather information from different parts of a text, or from different texts in order to fulfil a specific task. Can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects.	Speaking Content: Can provide a variety of types of content related to what has been studied (bargaining, comparing, recommend, fun in a foreign city and making plans for the weekend, ordering at a restaurant, reacting to good and bad news, making plans for the future) which are appropriate for the tasks, such as generalizations, details, examples and give various forms of evidence. Can develop ideas in a clear and coherent manner. Fluency: Flow of speech is fluent. Student can act as a facilitator helping the conversation flow and development. Pronunciation: Can produce sounds which are similar to those of a native speaker. Can show superlative intonation patterns and stress. Structure (Grammar accuracy when speaking): Can correctly use nearly all grammatical structures corresponding to the level. Vocabulary use: Can use most words/phrases from the level appropriately. Communicative ability: Can deliver naturally and with confidence and does not just convey the message but enhances it. Can make excellent use of volume, pace, etc. Can give an adequate level of detail.	Reading Can read and understand a timeline about a famous character s life and put a time sequence in order according to the text.
Speaking Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g family, hobbies, work, travel and current events). Can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. Can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe reactions. Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events. Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used "routines" and patterns associated with more predictable situations. Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production. Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding. Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.		Writing: Can write about a place where usually goes / or has gone shopping (market, store, supermarket, etc.), telling about the following: name of the place, location, days you can go there, what s a good time to visit and what can be bought there) and develop ideas in a clear and unified manner. Can respect conventional use of collocations and variety of structures. Can respect spelling, punctuation and paragraph formation conventions. Can use a native-like previously taught vocabulary. Grammar use Can identify the sentence which is grammatically correct in a familiar context. Can choose the correct structure to use in a sentence in a familiar context. Vocabulary use Can use the correct word according to the context.
Writing Can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions. Can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can summarize report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his field with some confidence. Grammar control Communicates with reasonable accuracy in familiar contexts; generally good control though with noticeable mother tongue influence. Errors occur, but it is clear what he/she is trying to express. Can use with reasonable accuracy a repertoire of frequently used "routines" and patterns associated with more predictable situations. Vocabulary control Can identify unfamiliar words from the context on topics related to his/her field and interests. Can extrapolate the meaning of occasional unknown words from the context and deduce sentence meaning when the topic discussed is familiar		

Table 21 shows a correct correspondence between level B1 of the CEFR and the program overview, yet it seems this last table shows that the course syllabus is too general and falls short of the necessary specifications of all the objectives of the course.

As can be seen in Table 22, the column presenting language performances following the CEFR is the one that evidences richness of information, most understandably. The level included is B1, because this level of performance is the one supposed to be successfully completed. As was observed in Table 22, most of the language performances for oral and written production coming from the oral and written tests seem to correspond to the A2 level approaching to B1, thus leaving out some of the performances suggested by the CEFR for reaching B1, even though the students are expected to finish the course with a B1 level. The written evaluation seems to focus on just a couple of the many can-do statements presented in the CEFR chart, which can suggest a lack of rigor when evaluating the corresponding abilities, which makes the instrument inefficient to measure results. Perhaps it would be a better idea to establish a more frequent and process type of written evaluation, in order to have a clear and better idea about students actual results. This is congruent with the findings of the survey which state grammar is the most difficult item as perceived by the students.

The oral evaluation seems to cover successfully the A2-B1 CEFR level. The oral evaluation within the syllabus is much more complete and prepared according to standards, which means the oral component is more suitably evaluated.

As an addition to all the data presented, Graph 9 shows the academic results of the oral and written evaluations, which behave in a similar manner, that is to say, both sets of

scores feature an increase in score from the first to the second evaluation procedure. All students have marks above 4, which is the pass grade. Therefore, it can be concluded that students meet the requirements of the syllabus to pass the course, which is merely administrative data, but can also give a hint on students progress within the course. For further analysis on students academic results, the following graph and chart are presented.
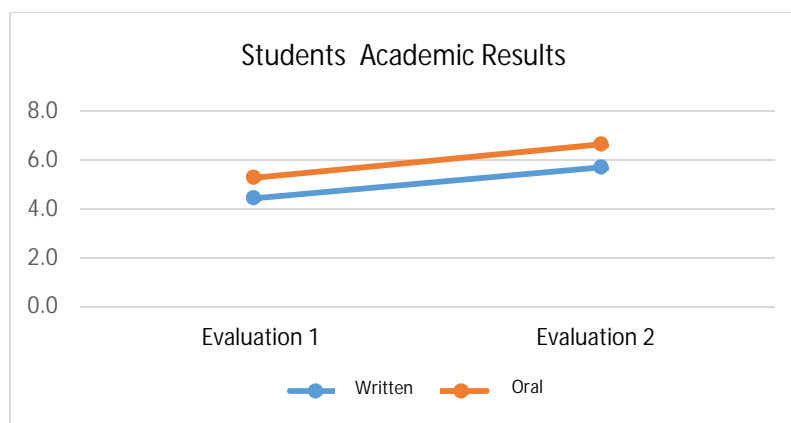
Graph 10: Average score of written and oral evaluations.

5.3.1 Discussion

This work concentrates on analysis of suitability of the syllabus according to context and not the quality of the syllabus or if it s convenient or not for increasing students levels of performance. What are analyzed are the students actual performances they are expected to achieve with the implementation of the syllabus, which is one of the elements that can tell whether or not the syllabus is suitable for this context. According to the surveys conducted by five key universities in 2005 in Vietnam (Van, 2008- 2010) the real level of the majority of students is just elementary. Therefore many universities have to seek to the language program for beginner (or false beginner) learners. As a result, after

240 hours of general English the college students level is lower-intermediate. Then with

from 60 to 90 hours of ESP at senior years their real level of English cannot be significantly

improved and is still very far from the requirements of their future jobs . According to the

CEFR Guide for Teachers and the Association of Language Testers of Europe (ALTE),

approximately 120 to 200 hours of study are required to complete the A2 level and 350 to

400 to achieve level B1 complete. Again the problem of time is evident here: the

comparison between the CEFR scales and the actual program and the assessment

instruments shows there is a significant reduction of the descriptors of the CEFR for the

level to make them fit into the 42 hours of the course. It is extraordinarily ambitious to aim

to reach level B2 in such a short timeframe even though with students who present more

favorable characteristics in comparison to students in Vietnam. One factor that is

significant is the fact the textbook (Four Corners 2 parts A and B created following the

CEFR standards) is considered as the syllabus, with no changes or modifications. The

program is built for one semester using the 12 units in the textbook which fit perfectly into

the timeframe given. The problem resides in a very important detail: this textbook in meant

to be used together with an activities online platform, videos and more additional material

that would require much more time to be suitably implemented. It relies on the fact that

students already achieved level A1 completely and are at least in the middle of the A2

level. This is not the reality for the complete group, therefore, to be able to give all students

the same opportunities without lowering the CEFR descriptors demanding nature, it would

be much better to focus on helping students to complete level A2 in a decent way.

5.4 RQ3: Students preferred topics that seem more relevant that would better suit the students' needs: analysis and discussion.

The actual topics present in the syllabus studied are the following:

Unit 1: My interests (Preferences)

Unit 3 (Unit 2 Descriptions was not included this year): Rain or shine (Weather)

Unidad 4: Life at home (Parts of the house, types of houses)

Unit 5: Health (illnesses, healthy habits)

Unit 6: What´s on TV? (TV and Cinema)

Unit 7: Shopping (Bargaining, shopping)

Unit 8: Fun in the city (free time activities)

Unit 9: People (biographies)

Unit 10: In a restaurant (food, ordering food, preferences)

Unit 11: Entertainment (favorite movies and music)

Unit 12: Time for a change (Dreams and hopes for the future)

In Graph 10 below, students preferred topics from the current syllabus are presented. The most preferred topic was Health and healthy habits and Dreams and hopes . The least relevant topic was Films and TV . Suggestions were made in comments such as dentistry related topics . This is congruent with the preference for health related

topics. According to these results, it is advisable to remove the least favored topic and include health related topics in this specific unit in the current syllabus.
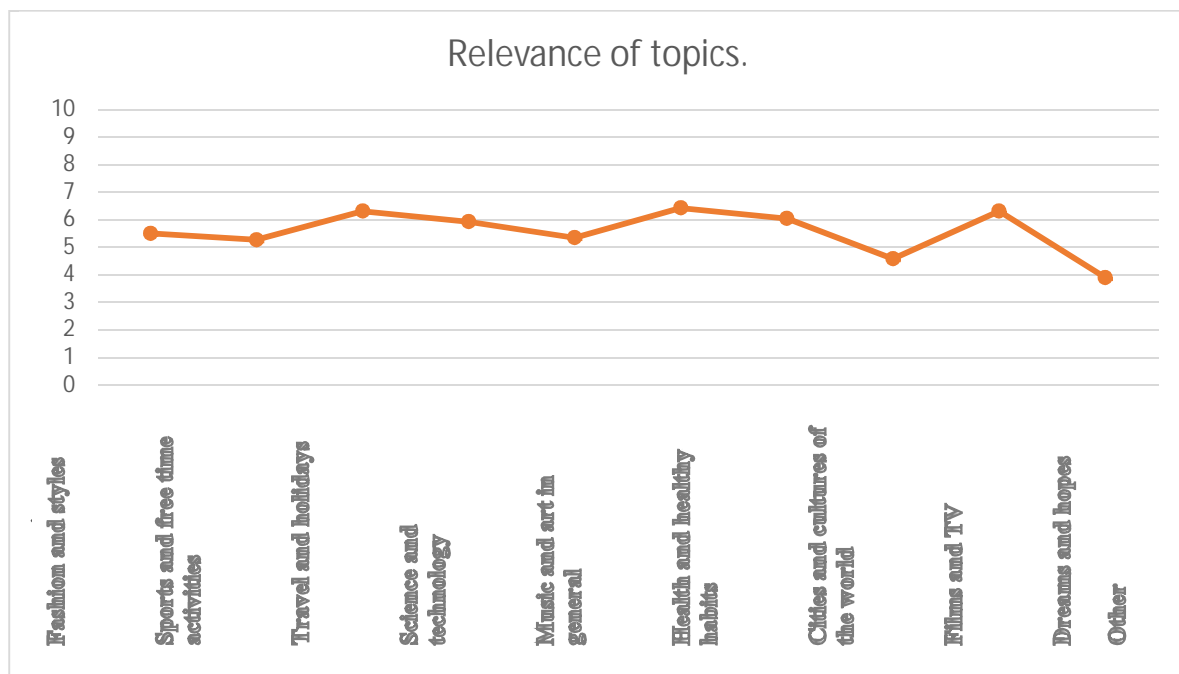
Graph 11: Relevance of topics according to students views.

The table below gives the detailed scores obtained in this section of the survey.

Table 23: Relevance of syllabus topics according to students views

	Average
Fashion and styles.	5,5
Sports and free time activities.	5,3
Travelling and vacations.	6,3
Science and technology.	5,9
Music and art in general.	5,3
Health and healthy habits.	6,4
Cities and cultures around the world.	6,0
Films and TV shows	4,6
Dreams and hopes for the future.	6,3
Other	3,9

In Table 23 we confirm what was previously pointed out in this section. Dreams and hopes for the future and travelling are the second most important topics for students, probably because of the fact they are studying to get their dreams come true. Cities and cultures around the world is the next topic and it might point out to an interest of students for travelling and seeing the world. Science and technology also seems a relevant topic for students. Fashion, sports and arts do not seem to be considered very relevant and films and TV shows is definitely not relevant for students. Even though the textbook suggests these topics it should not be compulsory for the teacher to work with them. A good idea would be to relate TV shows to health related topics.

5.4.1 Discussion

According to the results of a study conducted by Byrd in 2013 for the University of San Francisco at DUOC Plaza Vespucio in Santiago, Chile In addition to altering the message broadcasted throughout Chilean society [about the importance of English in Chile], Chilean universities   both public and private   must place more emphasis on English proficiency during both the admissions process and during a student s career as well. It is not enough for the government to assert that English is necessary for Chileans personal development; students must also have a more short-term, specific objective to work towards because only thinking that you might make more money one day is not sufficient. Right now because English is not required (and with most universities admissions requirements English is not even encouraged) Chilean students do not prioritize English class in relation to the rest of their core courses. Students cannot be expected to spend an equal amount of time studying English as they do in their math, Spanish language, science, and history classes when those other courses greatly impact their chances of

attending university and English does not   . This study presents results that aim to motivate students more through only listening to their requests in regards to topics of preference, which coincide with their interest in topics related to their major and their future. The present syllabus does not really foster topics related to students interests in a way that can be noticeable and relevant. A syllabus oriented to Dentistry students specifically would motivate students more to invest more time studying English, because they would find it useful for their careers and their future lives.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Limitations and Suggestions

6.0 Introduction

As has been claimed, the main objective of the present study is to uncover the suitability of the English language syllabus for Dentistry students. In order to fulfil this aim, three research questions were proposed related to three aspects that prove the syllabus is suitable or not. These three aspects are 1. Students perceptions on the demanding nature of contents and assessment; 2. The congruence between the CEFR scales for levels A2 and B1, the program and assessment instruments: and 3. Topics preferred by students according to their needs. The suitability of the studied syllabus for this specific context is determined through the analysis of these three elements. In this chapter, the conclusions and final remarks obtained from the results seen in the previous chapter are presented first. Then, the limitations for this study are stated. Finally, suggestions for further research are given.

6.1 Conclusions and final remarks

The present study is the result of hard work, dedication and commitment to improve, through a thorough examination of curriculum suitability and teaching standards at the context of study; in other words, the study aims to contribute to the process of teaching by analyzing students needs and interests, syllabus congruence with the CEFR and the objectives of the major s program and to discover whether or not the syllabus used is the best for Dentistry students to learn effectively. As Dörnyei (2011) suggests as main characteristics for a researcher, genuine curiosity, common sense and discipline have been key to the completion of this work.

Research question 1 aims to uncover the perceived degree of difficulty of the language contents and assessment procedures contained in the syllabus, as reported by the students under consideration. The syllabus analyzed is suitable for students in the aspects of vocabulary use, listening and reading in general because students do not find these contents too easy or too difficult during classes and assessment. Grammar explanations in classes are considered clear and sufficient by students, which may relate to the skill of the teacher when delivering grammar related contents. On the other hand, according to results and discussion students find it more challenging to speak in English and to write paragraphs with almost no mistakes during classes. This means the syllabus must pay special attention to the creation of more suitable speaking activities, provide more practice instances and more writing tasks so that students can feel comfortable developing these aspects of proficiency. Speaking is the aspect teachers must foster more according to institutional curriculum objectives and the needs and interests of students. The syllabus must be given enough flexibility to change according to context and must avoid being a synonym of the table of contents present in the textbook. The textbook needs to be more of a suggestion rather than a time constraint to measure the teacher s delivery of contents within the course s time frame. In regards to assessment, the most difficult aspect for students is grammar use, which coincides with the previously mentioned literature. The assessment of grammar must be more consistent with the idea that the present syllabus is communicative and needs to give less protagonism to the use of grammar. Assessing grammar use is important, but according to this research more grammar practice is needed for students to consider grammar exercises easier and more attention must be put on behalf of teachers when designing the written assessment instrument.

Research question 2 aims to unveil the degree of congruence between the specifications of the CEFR for the level studied and the students' actual performances. According to this research, when analyzing the specifications tables for the course s oral and written evaluations and comparing them with levels A2 and B1 that need to be reached, the contents of this syllabus include most of the A2 level can do statements of the CEFR and some of the ones present in level B1. According to Cambridge English Language Assessment, it is stated that level A2 is reached with 180 200 hours and B1 with 350 400 hours. The course under study has around 42 learning hours. This explains the degree of summarization observed within the actual level of performance given by the specifications table for the written assessment. In such short time it is not possible to tap into all of the items suggested by the CEFR for the level. For this reason the syllabus aims only to the minimum dominance of each item in levels A2 and B1. A good suggestion would be not to aim to pass from one level to another but deepen and practice more in level A2 only.

Research question 3 shows students preferred topics that seem more relevant that would better suit the students' needs compared with the topics present in the actual syllabus. The topic that must be fostered in future implementations of this syllabus is health and healthy habits. The participants are Dentistry students who are very aware of the need they have to manage health topics and vocabulary related to their field of expertise. If the institution in charge takes this into consideration, it would be a pioneer in the field of teaching English in academic and even at in-office contexts. As experienced by the researcher in her twelve years of experience in the context, none of the four institutions she has worked for in the city of Concepción change their syllabus topics according to context.

According to Byrd (2013) If [Chilean] universities include English proficiency in the admissions process   either by making it a requirement or including an English section on the PSU (Chile s standardized test, which is similar to the SAT reasoning test) - students in high school who plan on attending university will have greater incentive to devote more time to English and will thus improve their proficiency. Students must be motivated to learn English and the best way to motivate them is with incentives. For students who plan on attending university, making English mandatory to attend is the greatest incentive available. In this way, all students in the context of first year of university would arrive with a real elementary level, which would benefit the learning process for them. It would not be necessary to simplify and shorten the CEFR descriptors leading to the offer of a not very suitable syllabus according to international standards. However, this is a long term solution for the presented problem. The immediate solution suggested by this study is the destination of more teaching and practice hours for the program of study and a more realistic goal to achieve: the A2 level of students proficiency in the English language.

6.2 Limitations of this study

Time was the most evident difficulty during this study. Having more time to analyze results more thoroughly would have been an asset for this study. The other factors were related to the present literature: a lack of former research in the context of binational institutes in Chile was noticed when researching previously published works. It would have been of great help to find more works on the subject in the same context. To contribute with research in this matter is perceived by the researcher as a contribution for the field. As this is the first postgraduate work of the researcher, possibly there are details which are

missing or literature relations that have not been signaled. But this work has been

performed with responsibility and genuine interest in the topic.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

It is of vital importance to continue studies in the context of binational institutes and

their syllabuses. The existence of a complete and concise curriculum created by the

institution is vitally relevant for institutions to act in a suitable manner according to all the

contexts they serve. Using the textbooks as the curriculum and syllabus does not take into

account the interests and needs of the different contexts in which institutions provide

services; therefore the same material may not be suitable for all the contexts. More research

may continue showing the need for a type of curriculum and syllabus capable of adapting to

the needs and interests of students in tertiary education in a way that allows them to

develop their proficiency in the English language even more and much more effectively.

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Appendix

Appendix A; Authorization Letters

Universidad Andrés Bello

Concepción, Octubre de 2015

MS.ANDREA ARJONA
DIRECTORA ACADÉMICA
INSTITUTO CHILENO NORTEAMERICANO DE CULTURA
<u>PRESENTE.</u>

Por intermedio de la presente presentamos a usted a la alumna tesista del programa de "Magíster en Enseñanza del inglés como Lengua Extranjera", de la Universidad Andrés Bello, sede Concepción, perteneciente a la Facultad de Educación.

- Natalia Soledad Montero Vásquez; Rut 14.354.537-7

La alumna está llevando a cabo la investigación denominada" AN EXAMINATION OF THE SUITABILITY OF AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS INTENDED FOR DENTISTRY STUDENTS" dirigida por el Docente de nuestra facultad Phd. Mauricio Véliz Campos.

Agradeciendo su acogida por ser parte de esta investigación, nos comprometemos hacer llegar los resultados que permitan ser utilizadas para su desarrollo institucional.

Se despide atentamente,

ANA MARÍA BUCHHOLZ M.
Director del Programa
Magíster en Enseñanza del Inglés como lengua Extranjera.
Facultad de Educación.
Sede Concepción.

Universidad Andrés Bello
POSTGRADOS
Sede Concepción

FORMAR TRANSFORMAR

CAMPUS REPÚBLICA
Av. República 252 Santiago
Teléfono: 56 2 2661 8000

CAMPUS CASONA DE LAS CONDES
Fernández Concha 700 Las Condes
Teléfono: 56 2 2661 8000

CAMPUS BELLAVISTA
Av. Bellavista 0121 Providencia
Teléfono: 56 2 2770 3400/3465

CAMPUS VIÑA DEL MAR
Quillota 910
Teléfono: 56 32 264 5000

CAMPUS CONCEPCIÓN
Autopista Concepción Talcahuano 7100
Teléfono: 56 41 266 2000

Universidad
Andrés Bello

Concepción, Octubre de 2015

SRA. ANA MARÍA ZEIDÁN
COORDINADORA ACADÉMICA, FACULTAD DE ODONTOLOGÍA
UNIVERSIDAD DEL DESARROLLO.
PRESENTE.

Por intermedio de la presente presentamos a usted a la alumna tesista del programa de "Magíster en Enseñanza del inglés como Lengua Extranjera", de la Universidad Andrés Bello, sede Concepción, perteneciente a la Facultad de Educación.

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Magíster en Enseñanza del Inglés como lengua Extranjera.
Facultad de Educación.
Sede Concepción.

Universidad
Andrés Bello
POSTGRADOS
Sede Concepcion

FORMAR
TRANSFORMA

CAMPUS REPÚBLICA
Av. República 252 - Santiago
Teléfono: 56 2 2661 8000

CAMPUS CASONA DE LAS CONDES
Fernández Concha 700 - Las Condes
Teléfono: 56 2 2661 8500

CAMPUS BELLAVISTA
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Teléfono: 56 2 2770 3400/3166

CAMPUS VIÑA DEL MAR
Quillota 910
Teléfono: 56 32 2845900

CAMPUS CONCEPCIÓN
Autopista Concepción Talcahuano 7100
Teléfono: 56 41 266 2000

Appendix B: Survey Sanple and Validation Instrument

ENCUESTA DE IDONEIDAD DEL PROGRAMA DE INGLÉS 1 (EIPI1)

INFORMACIÓN GENERAL ACERCA DE LA ENCUESTA

La encuesta de idoneidad del programa de Inglés 1 (EIPI1) es un instrumento de recolección de datos usado como parte de un proyecto de investigación. Sus respuestas permanecerán confidenciales y serán usadas solamente para propósitos de investigación. El puntaje de esta encuesta no afectará las calificaciones en su programa de estudio. Tenga en cuenta que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas.

La encuesta de idoneidad consiste de tres secciones: La primera contiene datos biográficos, mientras la segunda trata de la exigencia de los contenidos y de los procedimientos evaluativos del programa de Inglés 1, según su propia experiencia. La tercera parte trata los temas que son más relevantes para incluir en el programa de inglés 1, según su opinión.

INSTRUCCIONES

Primero, complete la sección biográfica. Luego, lea las afirmaciones acerca del nivel de exigencia de los contenidos y de los procedimientos evaluativos, y marque la casilla correspondiente a su opinión con una equis (X). Finalmente, lea los temas propuestos y asigne un número a cada uno según su opinión, siendo 1 el menos relevante y 10 el más relevante.

INFORMACIÓN ADICIONAL

Gracias por su tiempo y disposición para responder esta encuesta. No dude en contactar a la investigadora, cuya información de contacto es provista al final de esta página si desea recibir información adicional acerca de la encuesta o un resumen de los resultados de esta investigación.

INVESTIGADORA

Natalia Montero Vásquez
Email: Natalia.monterov@gmail.com

SECCIÓN I: INFORMACIÓN BIOGRÁFICA

Instrucciones: Responda con su información personal.

1. Mi RUT: ....

2. Mi edad:

a) 18-19

b) 20-21

c) 22-23

d) 24-o más

3. Género:

a) Masculino

b) Femenino

4. He viajado a un país de habla inglesa.

a) Si

b) No

5. He vivido en un país de habla inglesa.

a) Si

b) No

6. Aprendí inglés por mí mismo/a.

a) Si

b) No

7. Estudié (o estudio) inglés en otra institución a parte de la universidad.

a) Si

b) No

SECCIÓN II:

Instrucciones: Marque con una equis (X) la casilla que mejor describa su opinión acerca de la afirmación correspondiente.

DIMENSIÓN 1: Nivel de exigencia de los contenidos.					
	Preguntas	a) Totalmente en desacuerdo.	b) En desacuerdo.	c) De acuerdo.	d) Totalmente de acuerdo.
1	Me resulta fácil leer y entender los extractos de textos escritos en inglés en la clase.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Los extractos de textos escritos en inglés de la clase son muy largos y complicados para mi.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Escucho las grabaciones en la clase y puedo entenderlas bien.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Es difícil para mi entender la clase en inglés.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Hablo en inglés durante la clase ya que no se me hace difícil	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Uso los momentos de práctica oral durante la clase para mejorar mi pronunciación en inglés porque se me hace difícil.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Escribo párrafos comprensibles en inglés sin dificultad.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Entiendo de inmediato cuando la profesora me corrige.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Entiendo en clases rápidamente el uso de las estructuras gramaticales del inglés	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Uso el vocabulario de las clases después de aprenderlo.	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIMENSIÓN 2: Nivel de exigencia de las evaluaciones.					
	Preguntas	a) Totalmente en desacuerdo.	b) En desacuerdo.	c) De acuerdo.	d) Totalmente de acuerdo.
11	En los certámenes, los extractos de textos escritos son difíciles para mi.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Los textos escritos en los certámenes son simples y suficientes.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	En los certámenes, entiendo muy poco lo que dicen las grabaciones.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	En los certámenes, las grabaciones son muy fáciles y cortas.	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Preguntas	a) Totalmente en desacuerdo.	b) En desacuerdo.	c) De acuerdo.	d) Totalmente de acuerdo.
15	En las interrogaciones orales, respondo las preguntas de mi compañero/a en el tiempo asignado.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	En las interrogaciones orales, tengo dificultad para saber lo que tengo que hacer y qué responder.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	En los certámenes, termino el o los párrafos que debo escribir con tiempo a favor.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	En los certámenes, es difícil para mí escribir párrafos de acuerdo a las instrucciones.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	En los certámenes y en las interrogaciones orales, me equivoco mucho en las estructuras gramaticales.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	En los certámenes y en las interrogaciones orales, uso correctamente el vocabulario estudiado en las clases.	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECCIÓN III:

Instrucciones: Lea los temas propuestos para un curso de inglés que usted tomaría y asigne un número a cada uno de ellos de acuerdo a su relevancia según su opinión, siendo 1 el menos relevante y 10 el más relevante.

_____ Moda y estilos.
_____ Deportes y actividades de tiempo libre.
_____ Viajes y vacaciones.
_____ Ciencia y tecnología.
_____ Música y arte en general.
_____ Salud y hábitos saludables.
_____ Ciudades y cultura del mundo.
_____ Cine y televisión.
_____ Sueños y aspiraciones.
_____ Otro (especificar: _____)

MUCHA GRACIAS POR SU PARTICIPACIÓN EN ESTA ENCUESTA.

Universidad
Andrés Bello

UNIVERSIDAD ANDRES BELLO
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES Y EDUCACION
MAGISTER EN ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Dear colleague,

In your capacity as expert, you have been selected to evaluate the congruency of the items of a survey.

The survey is designed to serve as a data-gathering instrument for a research project on English as a Foreign Language at Tertiary Education level. The purpose of the survey to be validated is to collect data regarding the demanding nature of the syllabus and assessment procedures and its topical suitability in one of the levels of the cross-curricular English program at a private university in Concepción. As the group of students corresponds to Elementary level, the survey has been designed in Spanish to avoid any misunderstanding. .

The instrument has been attached with all sections and items numbered. The first section includes biographical information to be completed by the students. The second section intends to determine the demanding nature of the syllabus by alluding to the complexity of the contents and assessment procedures according, to the students' views. The third section deals with the relevance of the topics studied in class –or viewed as desirable/useful, also according to the students' opinions.

Please feel free to contact the researcher to make any inquiries either about the instrument or the data collected with it afterwards.

Thank you for your valuable time to validate this instrument.

Ms. Natalia Montero
Natalia.monterov@gmail.com

VALIDATION INSTRUMENT

Below you will find the assessment rubric to evaluate the instrument "Suitability of the English 1 Program Syllabus". In section 1, you will find a chart with each criterion and corresponding operational definition followed by scores and their equivalence, from where you can choose the one that, in your opinion, corresponds to each criteria. Finally, there is a column where you can list the statements or sections that do not meet your standard. In Section 2, you can record any further recommendations for revision.

Validation Rubric for the survey "Suitability of the English 1 Program Syllabus"

SECTION 1: Instructions. Mark with an X on the space that best corresponds to the score you wish assign each criteria and corresponding definitions.

Criteria	Operational Definitions	1=Not Acceptable (major modifications needed) 1	2=Below Expectations (some modifications needed) 2	3=Meets Expectations (no modifications needed but could be improved with minor changes) 3	4=Exceeds Expectations (no modifications needed) 4	Statements which DO NOT meet standard: Please, list page, statement number and write 'NR' (Needs Revision) Please use the comments and suggestions section to recommend revisions.
a) Clarity	• Only one direct, specific and easy to understand statement is presented at a time with no double-barreled statements (two statements in one).			x		
b) Wordiness	• Statements are concise with no unnecessary words.			x		
c) Negative Wording	• Statements are presented using the affirmative.				X	
d) Overlapping Responses	• No response corresponds to more than one choice without ambiguity.				X	
e) Balance	• Statements are asked using neutral tone, are unbiased and don't lead participants to a response.				X	
f) Use of Jargon	• The terms used are understandable by the target population with no clichés or hyperbole.			X		
g) Appropriateness of Responses Listed	• The choices listed allow participants to respond appropriately and apply to the situation.				X	
h) Use of Technical Language	• The use of technical language is minimal and appropriate. All acronyms are defined.				X	
i) Application to Praxis	• The statements relate to the daily practices or expertise of the potential participants.				X	
j) Relationship to Problem	• The statements are sufficient to achieve the purpose of the study.			X		
k) Measure of Construct Research questions 1, 2 and 3.	• The survey adequately measures the demanding nature of language contents, assessment procedures and suitability of topics present in the syllabus under analysis according to students' own views.			X		

SECTION 2: Further comments and suggestions. Please, write below your specific recommendations for further revision for each of the statements in the survey that don't meet your standards.

Survey Section.	Number of statement.	Recommendations.
Survey Introduction.	---------	
Biographical Data	---------	
Statement 1		
Statement 2		
Statement 3		
Statement 4		
Statement 5		Hablo en inglés durante la clase ya que no es difícil para mí. X NEGATIVES / ya que es fácil para mí.
Statement 6		Uso los momentos de práctica oral en clase para mejorar mi pronunciación porque este aspecto es difícil para mí. OK
Statement 7		Escribo párrafos comprensibles... (bien estructurado o sin errores gramaticales)??? OK
Statement 8		
Statement 9		Entiendo rápidamente el uso de las estructuras gramaticales aprendidas en clases. OK
Statement 10		
Statement 11		
Statement 12		Son simples y suficientes... ¿que quieres decir con suficientes? OK
Statement 13		
Statement 14		
Statement 15		
Statement 16		La instrucción del profesor no es clara o el estudiante no tiene la competencia lingüística para entenderlo?? ok
Statement 17		En los certámenes, termino el o los párrafos que debo escribir dentro del tiempo establecido. En los certámenes, termino el o los párrafos que debo escribir en un tiempo menor al establecido.ok
Statement 18		
Statement 19		
Statement 20		
Section III	Topics	

Further comments: _____ **THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.**

Appendix C: Assessment instruments

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UDD SECOND WRITTEN PROGRESS TEST / LEVEL 1. SECOND TERM. 2015.

Name: _____ Section: _____

Date: October 22nd   Score: _____ / 51 points   Grade: _____

I. LISTENING.-

1. LISTEN TO FOUR PEOPLE TALK TO A PHARMACIST.
A) CHECK (✔) EACH PERSON'S PROBLEM. *(0.5 EACH / 2 POINTS TOTAL)*

1.- ☐ The man's feet are sore   3.- ☐ The man has difficulty sleeping
    ☐ The man's feet are itchy   ☐ The man is sleeping too much.

2.- ☐ The woman can't eat   4.- ☐ The woman burned her hand
    ☐ The woman has an upset stomach   ☐ The woman has a bad sunburn.

B) CIRCLE THE CORRECT OPTION FOR THE PHARMACIST'S SUGGESTION IN EACH CASE: *(0.5 EACH / 2 POINTS TOTAL)*

1. a) ointment   b) bandage

2. a) milk   b) pills

3. a) sleeping pills b) herbal tea

4. a) cream   b) some pills

2. LISTEN TO THE CONVERSATION IN A STORE AND COMPLETE THE GAPS WITH THE WORDS IN THE BOX: *(0.5 POINT EACH / 10 POINTS TOTAL)*

PRICE – QUITE – SALE – 419 – T-SHIRTS – PET – TRY – BETTER – THINKS – BEST – WARMER – BIRD – CHEAP – LEATHER – SEND – 499 – TAKE – EXPENSIVE – THEY'RE – THERE – T-SHIRT – JACKETS – PREFER – MOST – PAY – THINGS – SPEND – MUCH – COLORS - MORE

Anne: Look! These_____ are really nice. Which one do you_____?

Sue: I like the wool one_____.

Anne: The wool one. Why?

Sue: It looks _____.

Anne: Well, I like the _____one better. It's _____ stylish than the wool one.

Sue: Hmm ... There's no_____tag.

Anne: Excuse me. How _____ is this jacket?

Clerk: It's $_____. Would you like to _____it on?

Anne: Uh ... No. that's OK! But thanks anyway.

Clerk: You're welcome.

Sue: Wow!! That jacket is really_____. I don't want to ____ _____that much money.

Anne: Oh, look!! There are some _____ on _____over_____ _____.

Sue: Oh, you're right. These _____ are really nice. And they are _____. too. I like this one with the _____on it.

Anne: That is nice, and the_____are really pretty.

Sue: Great!! I'll _____it.

II. GRAMMAR & VOCABULARY.-

1) CIRCLE A OR B FOR THE CORRECT OPTION: *(1 POINT EACH / 4 POINTS TOTAL)*

1. A) Apple computers are better than Windows-based computers
    B) Apple computers are best than Windows-based computers.

2. A) Volvos are very fast cars, but I believe that Ferraris are faster than.
    B) I believe that Ferraris are faster than Volvos.

3. A) No question, English is easier than German.
    B) No question, English is more easy than German.

4. A) Car-racing is more dangerous than soccer.
    B) Car-racing is most dangerous than soccer.

2) COMPLETE THE SENTENCES WITH THE CORRECT PRESENT CONTINUOUS FORM OF THE VERB IN PARENTHESIS: *(1 POINT EACH CORRECT VERB FORM / 10 POINTS TOTAL)*

Alice: So, Jack. What _____ you _____ (DO) next weekend?

Jack: I _____ (TRAVEL) with my folks to Santiago on Friday night. We _____(ATTEND) a family event. Actually, one of my nephews _____ (GET MARRIED) on Saturday, so we _____ (HAVE) a great party. However, he and his wife _____ (NOT – GO) on their honeymoon by now. My nephew is a movie director and he _____ (PRESENT) his new production in an Avant Premiere on Monday.

Alice: Oh, I see. _____ your nephew _____ (SHOW) his movie in Concepción?

Jack: I guess so. We _____ (ORGANIZE) a movie festival for next summer. I _____ (TELL) you about the date soon.

3) COMPLETE THE "HOW" QUESTIONS BASED ON THE INFORMATION IN PARENTHESIS
(1 POINT EACH CORRECT VERB FORM / 4 POINTS TOTAL)

A. _____ universities are there in the Concepción area?
    (There are about 10)

B. _____ do you play tennis?
    (I'm an excellent player. I just won the US Open this year)

C. _____ do you go supermarket shopping?
    (Once a week)

D. _____ coffee do you drink everyday?
    (Quite a bit)

4) CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD IN EACH SENTENCE:
(1 POINT EACH CORRECT ANSWER / 5 POINTS TOTAL)

A. I guess I ate some food in bad conditions.
    I have a terrible **backache / sore throat / stomachache / cough**

B. When I feel stressed, ...
    I breathe **deep / noisily / deeply / in depth**

C. If you do some yoga, you may stand on your ...
    ... **fingers / neck / toes / shoulders**.

D. Yesterday I saw a show on TV that I had recorded last week, but there were too many commercials in it, so ...
    ... I used the **satellite TV / remote control** to **rerun / skip** some of them.
    (2 answers)

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III.- **WRITING**.-

WRITE ABOUT A PLACE WHERE YOU GO / OR HAVE GONE SHOPPING (MARKET, STORE, SUPERMARKET, ETC.), TELLING ABOUT THE FOLLOWING: NAME OF THE PLACE, LOCATION, DAYS YOU CAN GO THERE, WHAT'S A GOOD TIME TO VISIT AND WHAT CAN YOU BUY THERE.

(50 words approx., 6 points total)

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV.- **READING**.-   *(1 POINT EACH / 8 POINTS TOTAL)*

READ THE *"TIMELINE"* ARTICLE ABOUT CHRISTINA AGUILERA'S CAREER:

CHRISTINA AGUILERA WAS BORN ON DECEMBER 18TH, 1980, AND SHE FIRST APPEARED ON TELEVISION IN *STAR SEARCH*, A TELEVISION TALENT SHOW IN THE YEAR 1988. THEN, IN 1992, CHRISTINA WAS AGAIN ON TV, IN DISNEY'S *NEW MICKEY MOUSE CLUB*, WITH BRITNEY SPEARS AND JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE. SHE RECORDED HER FIRST HIT IN 1994: *"ALL I WANNA DO"*, WITH KEIZO NAKANISHI, A JAPANESE POP STAR. SHE TOURED JAPAN. SOME YEARS LATER, IN 1998, CHRISTINA SANG A SONG FOR THE DISNEY'S MOVIE *MULAN*. ONE YEAR LATER, SHE HAD HER FIRST GREAT HIT: *"GENIE IN A BOTTLE"*. HE RECORDED THE SONG *"LADY MARMALADE"* FOR THE MOVIE *"MOULIN ROUGE"* IN THE YEAR 2001. CHRISTINA AGUILERA PERFORMED AT THE CLOSING CEREMONIES FOR THE 2002 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA. CHRISTINA WON THE GRAMMY AWARD FOR THE BEST FEMALE POP VOCAL FOR THE SONG *"BEAUTIFUL"*.

NUMBER THE SENTENCES FROM 1 TO 8, TO PUT THESE EVENTS IN THE CORRECT ORDER:

a.	She sang at the Winter Olympic Games	e.	She traveled around Japan
b.	She was born in New York	f.	She worked with Britney Spears
c.	She won the Grammy for "Beautiful"	g.	She was on TV for the first time
d.	She recorded a song for a Disney movie	f.	She had her first very successful song

Specifications Table

Units:	Certam 7-8-9-10 certam 2	Evaluation type		Written
Class:	Inglés 1		Section:	1
Teacher:	Natalia Montero		Date:	October 2015

Skills to develop / Can do statements	Understand (Vocabulary use)	Apply (Grammar use)	Analyse (Reading and listening comprehension)	Create (Writing)	Score	%
Vocabulary: Can use the correct word according to the context.	1 (5p)	-	-	-	5	9.8%
Grammar: Can identify the sentence which is grammatically correct in context. Can use correct structure (2)	-	1 (4p) 2 (10 and 4p)	-	-	18	35.2%
Reading: Can read and understand a timeline about a famous character's life and put a time sequence in order according to the text. Listening: Can listen and understand people's medical problems and given suggestions. Can listen and complete with the correct word which is missing.	-		1 (8p) 3 (14p)	-	22	43.1%
Writing: Can write about a place where usually goes / or has gone shopping (market, store, supermarket, etc.), telling about the following: name of the place, location, days you can go there, what's a good time to visit and what can be bought there) Correct syntax, content, form and word choice.	-	-	-	1 (6p)	6	11.7%
PUNTAJE	5	18	22	6	51	100%
%	9.8%	35.2%	43.1%	11.7%	100%	

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CP2 PROFICIENCY RATING FORM 2015-2
INGLÉS 1

NOMBRE ALUMNO: _____

FECHA: _____

PROFESOR: _____

FLUENCY   6

6.0	EXCELLENT	Flow of speech is fluent. Student acted as a facilitator helping the conversation flow and develop.
5.0	VERY GOOD	Flow of speech is fluent most of the time. Some minor difficulties but do not interfere with the flow of the conversation.
4.5	GOOD	Flow of speech shows a minor tendency to slow down/hesitate. Some unnatural pauses are evident.
3.5	FAIR	Flow of speech alternates between normal and static. Many stops and starts. Difficulties in maintaining the conversation are evident.
2.0	BASIC	Irregular speech flow makes it somewhat difficult for you to understand the student. Much effort was required to maintain the conversation.
1.0	POOR	Student's speech doesn't flow naturally at all, stumbles and hesitates which make the conversation almost impossible to maintain.

PRONUNCIATION (Including Word Accent and Sentence Pitch)   8

8.0	EXCELLENT	Sounds are similar to those of a native speaker. Shows superlative intonation patterns and stress.
7.0	VERY GOOD	Very good pronunciation, intonation & stress. Rarely makes errors. Pronunciation errors, rhythm or intonation problems do not create misunderstanding.
6.0	GOOD	Good pronunciation, intonation and stress with some minor Spanish interference.
4.5	FAIR	Pronunciation, intonation and stress are not consistent, but adequately comprehensible. Pronunciation errors, rhythm or intonation problems may create misunderstandings.
3.0	BASIC	Pronunciation, intonation and stress are very inconsistent, and difficult to comprehend.
1.0	POOR	Incorrect, at times comprehensible pronunciation of English sounds and intonation.

STRUCTURE (Grammar Accuracy)   8

8.0	EXCELLENT	Correctly uses nearly all grammatical structures corresponding to the level.
7.0	VERY GOOD	Uses most grammatical structures learned in the level, with minor errors, which do not interfere with meaning.
6.0	GOOD	Uses about 80% of the grammatical structures from the level, with very few serious usage errors. Some inaccuracies may affect comprehensibility.
5.0	FAIR	Uses some, but not many, of the grammatical structures from the level. Some usage errors are serious.
3.0	BASIC	Uses few of the grammatical structures from the level. Serious usage errors are committed.
1.0	POOR	Uses almost none of the grammatical structures from the level. Most usage errors are serious except for a few memorized patterns.

VOCABULARY   8

8.0	EXCELLENT	Uses most words/phrases from the level appropriately
7.0	VERY GOOD	Uses many words/phrases learned in the level. Minor errors, hesitation or circumlocutions may occur.
6.0	GOOD	Uses some words/phrases from the level, almost always appropriately.
5.0	FAIR	Uses few words/phrases from the level, and/or sometimes inappropriately. Speech is limited to simple vocabulary. Inaccuracies or repetition may be frequent.
3.0	BASIC	Uses very few of the words/phrases corresponding to the level and/or inadequate for most basic aspects of the task.
1.0	POOR	Uses practically no words/phrases from the level, and/or almost always inappropriately.

COMMUNICATIVE ABILITY   10

10.0	EXCELLENT	Natural, confident delivery that does not just convey the message but enhances it. Excellent use of volume, pace, etc. Adequate level of detail.
9.0	VERY GOOD	Clear voice, generally effective delivery, minimal distracting gestures, etc. Message may lack some detail.
7.5	GOOD	Somehow low voice and monotone, occasionally difficult to understand; some distracting filler words and gestures. Message mostly articulated but not always clear. Lacks some information.
6.0	FAIR	Low voice, difficult to understand; many distracting filler words and gestures. Message lacks some important information.
3.0	BASIC	Mumbles the words, audience members seem not to hear very much; too many filler words and/or distracting gestures. Provides very basic information.
1.0	POOR	Voice almost inaudible. Message contains little or no information.

TOTAL SCORE TO ASSIGN: 40 POINTS

OBSERVACIONES:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix D: CEFR scales for levels A2 and B1.

1 Common Reference Levels

1.1 Global scale

Independent User	**B1**	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	**A2**	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

1.2 Self-assessment grid

		Reception		Interaction		Production	
		Listening	Reading	Spoken Interaction	Written Interaction	Spoken Production	Written Production
B1		I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambition. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can write straightforward connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest.
A2		I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job	I can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like „and", „but" and „because".