SOME TEACHERS AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES IN THE ENGLISH CLASSES

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Abstract: This study analyzed the perceptions about the strategies applied in 8th and 9th grades at a private high school during the first semester of 2019. Data were gathered through a semi-structured interview and a survey. The findings show that the school uses a guide book as the main academic material; however, students and teachers would like to use other materials that foster communication. The research evidences the importance of listening to teachers and students in order to find out aspects that help to improve EFL teaching and learning.

Key words: pedagogical strategies; teaching and learning English; materials; activities; students and teachers' perceptions.

ALGUNAS PERCEPCIONES DE LOS PROFESORES Y LOS ESTUDIANTES SOBRE LAS ESTRATEGIAS PEDAGÓGICAS EN LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS

Resumen: En este estudio se analizaron las percepciones sobre las estrategias implementadas en los grados octavo y noveno de un colegio privado de bachillerato durante el primer semestre de 2019. Los datos se obtuvieron a través de una entrevista semiestructurada y una encuesta. Los resultados muestran que el colegio utiliza un libro guía como material académico principal; sin embargo, a los estudiantes y profesores les gustaría usar otros recursos que fomenten la comunicación. Se evidencia la importancia de escuchar a profesores y estudiantes para identificar aspectos que ayuden a mejorar la enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: estrategias pedagógicas; enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés; materiales; actividades; percepciones de estudiantes y profesores.

1. Introduction

L earning English as a foreign language has lately become a relevant theme in Colombia; thus, schools and universities have being applying different strategies to improve students' language level. At the same time, the Ministry of Education of Colombia, through the *Basic Standards of Competencies in Foreign Languages: English* (2006) establishes English as a mandatory subject which provide students with communication skills to face the globalized world; besides, researchers like Vodopija-Krstanoviæ & Brala-Vukanoviæ (2012) declared «English has spread globally and there is no doubt that it is the most widely taught» (p. 2). So, this is a way to boost the globalization as well as the national economy, relevant factors for the development of the country.

The Colombian government ordered to improve students' English level because the national and international exams (for instance: PISA) showed low level of proficiency; hence, the Ministry of Education established the *Programa Nacional de Bilinguismo* (2018-2022) to promote teaching and learning in foreign languages as part of the integral education and contribute with the improvement of the students' communicative competences in order to face the globalization.

Some measures taken were the inclusion of native speakers to support the English classes, with economic stimulus and scholarships for students and teachers' education; additionally, some schools have increased the English weekly hours, and motivate teachers of other areas of knowledge (science, chemistry, philosophy, etc.) to include English texts or activities in their classes, in order to promote the use of the foreign language.

This study shows the students and teachers' opinions and perceptions about the English classes strategies and methodologies in two high school courses in order to evidence the achievements, difficulties, and problems that emerge in teaching and learning.

2. Problem Statement

The different methodologies and strategies implemented for teaching languages have been of great importance because they give the guidelines for learning in this field.

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Therefore, it is necessary to identify the strengths and aspects to be improved, taking into account the acceptance of the students and the teachers' perceptions, based on their own experiences and needs, in such a way teaching will be more efficient.

Having in mind the advances in technology, economy, education and the changes the globalization involves, the acquisition of a foreign language —English in this case—, has become not only a necessity for people, but also a skill that educational institutions should aim to develop in their students as a part of the integral education.

In Colombia, there is general concern about the low level of English required in the labor, educational and cultural contexts; it has consequences that affect directly the growth of the country. Studies done by Alesina & Farrera (2005) claimed that the dominance of a foreign language affects positively or negatively in the economy of a country. Cronquist & Fiszbein (2017), for sure, declared that this is a reality that affects the different regions of a country; it is important that the different educational entities conduct research studies in order to look for ways to improve education in the different areas of knowledge, in this case the teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

This is due to the fact that despite the efforts made by the government through the *Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo* (2018-2022) and the program *Colombia Bilingüe* (2014-2018) to improve the English learning levels, studies done by the Education Fists - EF (2019) evidence that Colombia is placed in the 68th position among 100 countries of the region, which is so low. Thus, this study is focused to identify and analyze the perceptions that students and teachers have in a specific academic context, in order to look for ways that contribute with arguments to improve the students' English level in high school.

3. Literature Review

The main constructs that support this study from a theoretical perspective are pedagogical strategies for teaching English, communicative strategies and learning styles.

3.1. Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching English

Pedagogical strategies are all those steps that teachers use in the development of their classes, bearing in mind that these must be supported in theoretical concepts; Brown (2007) stated that «strategies are strategic methods of approaching a problem or task, models of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information» (p. 119). Although, teachers can contribute with their own strategies ranging from the teaching processes themselves to their mastery of the group and control of the discipline, especially because they can adopt them according to the needs of the context. Velazco & Mosquera (2012) claimed that a strategy is a planning system applied to an articulated set of actions, allows achieving goals, and serves to obtain certain results.

When applying pedagogical strategies, teachers have to be aware of some factors that include not only the students' age, but also their academic level, the type of learners, the resources available and the educational context. In short, teachers have to take into account the type of students they manage and the elements to teach that might involve books, magazines, readings, virtual tools, audiovisual material, among others. Besides, the teachers' experience and attitude can play an important role in order to guide students toward meaningful learning, which means that what they learn will be useful for their daily lives.

In addition, the teachers' quality is fundamental to guarantee a good education; the Ministry of Education establishes that the Teacher Training for Educational Quality (*Formación docente para la calidad educativa*), which is an educational policy focused to support teachers in their constant education in order to assure students' leaning. In the English language, schools and universities require that teachers not only have preparation in pedagogy but also in language proficiency, which is provided through the application of international exams such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), PET (Preliminary English Test), and IELTS (International English Language Testing System), among others.

Likewise, pedagogical strategies in English teaching can be supported through specialized courses, immersion programs abroad and also by facilitating the education in postgraduate programs, like specializations and master degrees; in this way, teachers are going to obtain knowledge and experience to identify the best strategies for motivating

students to acquire the language, provide the necessary and adequate activities for their practice, give personal or group explanations when needed, and provide tools for motivating autonomous work.

3.2. Communicative Strategies

It is very important to highlight the development of the communication strategies for learning English, because they train students for interacting in different contexts of daily life. Brown (2007) asserted that the communicative strategies are represented by the output, the way people express meaning through messages. Therefore, teachers must persuade students to acquire the language with the purpose to be able to get on to other people and try to improve it through practice. Lately, in labor market, the master of a foreign language has become a mandatory requirement, especially due to the internationalization and the increase of information. In fact, Ahmad (2016) argued that for employees, the ability to communicate is probably the most important skill because it requires listening and expressing the ideas effectively through writing and speaking; indeed, workers always need to respond to communicative situations.

Likewise, the English class is an appropriate context where students can obtain the necessary input and motivation to learn a foreign language. Besides, teachers have to build students' habits of autonomous work, thus, students can develop independent work that contributes with their language acquisition. Kárpáti (2017) declared that it is essential to offer students inside and outside methods and strategies where they can choose from, according to their personal interests; in this way, strategies proposed by teachers must provide tools to the students for encouraging the acquisition and use of the foreign language, unafraid of making mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, intonation, and so forth; hence, the most important aspect is that they should be able to improve their language level through practice. In fact, Tomková (2013) assured that «[…] a good language user is not one who completes drill exercises without an error, but rather someone who is able to communicate well. The main aim is not perfection, but comprehensibility» (p. 23). Likewise, it is essential that teachers create an atmosphere of confidence where students

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learn to overhead their difficulties, interact each other, develop cooperative relationships and improve their communication skills.

According to Lawler, Chen & Venso (2007), the teaching and learning processes of foreign languages, as well as the development of the communicative competences require the inclusion of technology, because this is the environment where students are immersed. Furthermore, the use of internet and learning platforms allow teachers presenting to the class a very good variety of resources and activities that promote direct communication between teachers and students. Charpentier (2014) asset that technology is a necessary tool to support students' language learning, since it facilitates the synchronic and asynchronic communication between students and teachers, and also stimulates independent and autonomous work which is really necessary in the acquisition of a foreign language.

3.3. Learning Styles

The teachers and researchers' experience has demonstrated that each student learns in a different way. Mantiri (2019) argues that the learner usually shows individual skills, face problems from different perspectives, and solve obstacles according to their own experiences and background knowledge. Ngoc & Samad (2019) proposed that the teachers have to adapt their teaching styles in order to respond to the students' learning styles, trying to avoid stereotypes and understand students' needs. Moreover, it is important to understand what learning styles mean; According to Makarova (2014) a learning style is «a peculiar, individual manner of information perception in learning activity, steady methods of interaction between a student and educational environment, the part of which the student is» (p. 409). As a result, learning styles help students to learn new information, understand a topic or lesson and express their own thinking, and solve problems.

Gilakjani (2012) divided learning styles into three categories: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Visual students learn better through visual stimulations, like pictures, movies, posters, readings, diagrams, and charts. These sorts of learners are used to manipulating different colors and pencils, highlighting relevant information, and taking notes in class. On the other hand, auditory students prefer listening to lectures and discussions, and are used to

paying attention and taking notes in class in order to increase their understanding. Finally, kinesthetic students use their senses (taste, touch, smell, sight and hearing) to learn, and they are comfortable working with collages, flashcards, objects, machines, and activities that include movement. Hence, when students do not work according to their own styles, they could show boredom and tiredness; Moreover, teachers must take into account that learning styles change through time, especially for the use of technology and the nature of evolution.

Additionally, learning styles are linked to teaching and learning strategies, which are fundamental topics that teachers should know and recognize in the classroom in order to guide students' work in the best way. Zhou (2011) asserts that teachers can recognize their students' learning styles just looking at their behavior while working in class. Thus, they can make decisions about the strategies and methodologies required to guide learners in a meaningful way. In order to work with learning styles, teachers can plan a series of activities that include students' conversations, teacher's explanations, grammar activities, grammar teaching, and so forth, which have been articulated with students' needs and interests.

Likewise, it is necessary to recognize individual capacities and students' pace of work, especially during assessment and evaluation, in order to obtain personal improvement. Furthermore, students' learning styles are affected by external factors, such as the school's philosophy, the requirements of the community, as well as the way the teacher presents the strategies in the classroom; Donkoh, Eshun, & Acquare, (2015) highlighted that the teachers' role, with their capacities and personalities, is to lead and inspire their learners along their learning processes. Finally, the identification of learning styles in the classrooms helps teachers to understand the students' behavior in the classroom, how they learn, rather than what they learn.

In addition, taking into account that students and teachers interact in the same environment, their perceptions and opinions are meaningful in order to solve learning problems and encourage students' learning. Gedamu (2019) stated that teachers and students live in balance, because they interact around common aspects; for this reason, their

opinions and studies done in the academic context are meaningful to solve difficulties and improve pedagogical strategies in the field of education.

4. Methodology

A case study was implemented in this research, as it allowed to describe and analyze the particular behaviors, the class decisions, and the students and teachers' perceptions in the English classes. Baškarada (2013) also highlighted that case studies «provide an opportunity for the researcher to gain a deep holistic view of the research problem, and may facilitate describing, understanding and explaining a research problem or situation» (p. 1). Additionally, Merrian (1998) recommended such research method in education because it contributes to understand a specific phenomenon and helps the reader to extend their experience, discover new meaning, or confirm what is known. Likewise, this study enabled explaining the source of academic problems and it was used as a tool to draw conclusions that support the English teaching and learning processes in a private high school.

4.1. Setting and Participants

The 8th (25 students) and 9th (31 students) high school courses at a private school participated in this study. There were 15 women aged from 14 to 15; they were chosen because they are in intermediate education levels; thus, they are able to analyze and argue about their own English training process along their education; most of them have been studying in the school since Primary Education, while the rest come from different local schools from the city of Tunja. The school is private, female, and catholic, where English is taught K-11 (Kindergarten to Eleventh Grade), and teachers follow a guidebook. Students have an average of 6 hours per week. During the research, four teachers were interviewed —three women and a man—, all of them teach English in 8th and 9th grades and are part of the English teachers' staff at school.

Data were collected through the following instruments:

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—**Semi-structured interview**: This instrument was used to interview five English teachers who teach in 8th and 9th grades; all of them had experience in teaching English in high school and could provide valuable information for answering the research questions. Corbetta (2010) recommended such instrument, since it provides the environment for a fluid dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to delve into a topic. Besides, a script of specific questions was prepared to organize the information and also as a guide to go deeper into the subject according to the interviewer's criteria (See Appendix 1).

—**Survey**: This instrument was implemented to evidence the students' opinions about their perceptions of the pedagogical strategies used by teachers in the English classes. Aristizábal (2008) stated that a collection of questions focused in a specific topic can collect data to be measured and analyzed; questions have to be relevant and concise in order to obtain useful answers for the research procedures. Hence, it was a useful tool to understand the students' real thoughts about English teaching; they could argue, criticize and suggest ideas to improve education in this field (See Appendix 2).

The main research question that leads this study was: What are the teachers and students' perceptions about the English classes' strategies in 8th and 9th grades at a private high school during the first semester of 2019?

Data analysis was done by following the grounded theory approach; it supplies specific steps for analyzing data taken from different instruments. Glaser & Strauss (2006) asserted that grounded theory permits the researchers to construct theory from information gathered in a specific context. It provides modes of conceptualization that allow describing and explaining behaviors towards statistics. Hence, after collecting data, it was codified with the purpose to detect emerging patterns, issues and ideas; then, some preliminary categories were formulated; after that, research questions, theory, and categories were reviewed; based on the previous procedures, two main categories were established, since they represented the most important facts.

Additionally, triangulation was carried out with the purpose to validate findings; Yeasmin & Rahman (2012) stated: «Triangulation is a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating several viewpoints and methods» (p. 156). After collecting,

grouping, comparing, coding, labeling data, and establishing categories, the triangulation allowed the researcher to analyze, argue, confront and theorize data. New theories emerged in favor to support the receptivity of pedagogical strategies for English learning.

4.2. Results and discussion

Based on the main question, some of the perceptions emerged can be grouped into two main categories: I) Common pedagogical strategies used in the English classes and II), difficulties and advice in the teaching and learning procedures.

4.2.1. Common pedagogical strategies used in the English classes

The first perception is related with teachers' preparation. There are ten (10) teachers with Bachelor Degree in Language Teaching at this school (four of them are part of this study (those who teach in 8th and 9th grades) which is a strength, because they have pedagogical training in language teaching to guide students' language learning. Buendía & Macías (2019) as well as the Ministry of Education agree in the need for schools to have good teachers' quality, which is reflected in their professional development. Thus, it is assumed that they have the suitable knowledge, strategies and approaches required for their daily work.

Furthermore, the school follows the standards proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Teaching English as a Foreign Language - CEFR, from the Council of Europe (2001), because this is a law that rules from the Ministry of National Education (2006). It demonstrates the obligatory nature and rigor required for teaching this subject and the accomplishment with national and international standards, which are required to develop the students' intellectual communication in English as a foreign language at schools.

In this context, based on the question that involves the strategies used in class, from her experience, one of the teachers reported:

Well, I think that there are not good or bad strategies, it is difficult to assume a position like that. I consider that the strategies depend of the context, the students, the topic, the purposes of the class; it depend[s] of many circumstances, for example some strategies are favorable for one group but not for another, these are things to keep have in mind (Interview, teacher 1, May 2nd 2019).

Teachers also agree about the inclusion of strategies that involve the communicative skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking), as it is established by the Ministry of Education (2016) through the Educational Policies for the Teaching of English, as well as the CEFR (2001), having in mind that the goal of acquiring a language is the communication indifferent contexts. Hence, language teachers have to look for appropriate strategies that let them guide their students in meeting this purpose.

I consider that all the strategies are necessary because we have to work and emphasize in the four abilities: speaking, reading, writing and listening; hence, it is necessary to have a lot of material and develop lots of strategies; likewise, I think we could bring additional material that contain fun for students, I know, they would like it, but not always we have time to do it (Interview, teacher 2, May 2nd 2019).

Another perception deals with the constant use of the guide book. Data showed that among games, crosswords, videos, portfolios and stories, the guide book is used a 98 %. It is worth noting that the guide book usually contains the strategies required to teach English and it is usually organized in a coherent and structured way. It is also edited by professionals, but it is perceived as boring material, as student 7 claimed:

The principal material is the book, it is mandatory to work with this material and develop most of the activities; through time, it becomes boring and tedious. It is required that the teachers finish the book; thus, I think they have to change and include different strategies we like (Survey, student 7, May 4th, 2019).

The use of the appropriate material is fundamental to encourage students' learning; this should be varied and capture their attention and activate motivation. Apriyandini (2016) suggested that it is necessary to vary the materials in order to change the dynamic of the class, suitable and motivational strategies are required to support students' learning. Indeed, a teacher expresses his own view about the use of the English guidebook.

I think the guidebook is a great support in the English classes because teachers always have the contents and activities organized and ready for the class; the matter is that the books usually have similar activities and strategies along the units and it becomes boring for students and

teachers. I suggest including different materials that allow teachers to change the dynamic of the class, the problem is that there is not enough time to do extra activities because time is short to advance with the contents of the book (Interview, teacher 3, May 4th 2019).

It is important to consider different positions, especially from students and teachers, who are the principal participants of education, since they can speak properly about what happens in the classes, such as the problems and needs that emerge every day. According to data collected in this study, another perception emerged regarding to the interest and taste for learning with activities that include audiovisual material such as films, videos, or websites. Regarding with that, Ahmadi (2018) argued that technology has changed the teaching methods, because it supplies many alternatives which teachers and students can choose from, e.g., tutorials, tests, videos, reading, texts, and so forth. Likewise, one of the students thinks:

> Immersion practices are required, to train English as well as going to the languages laboratory with frequency to do exercises in specialized web pages. We need more hours a week in the lab because what we have are not good enough (Survey, student 1, May 18th, 2019).

Nowadays, teachers have to look for mediations between face-to-face classes and the use of virtual tools because this is the reality students live. Additionally, it is required the inclusion of playful activities that contribute to motivate students' learning and motivation. Talak-Kiryk (2010) recommended to provide students strategies that involve games because they facilitate free learning situations; thus, students not only acquire the language but also build social norms and grow culturally, which fosters students' knowledge construction and the development of communication skills in real contexts.

4.2.2. Difficulties and advice in the teaching and learning procedures

One of the perceptions involves low performance in tests. Teaching English in Colombia has been seriously criticized, due to the low results obtained in the different national and international exams presented by schools and universities; as it is shown in studies done by the EF English Proficiency Index - EF EPI (2014). Besides, Colombia has scored the last positions in relation to other Latin American countries, like Guatemala, Ecuador, Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, and Panama. Likewise, the results of the PISA tests

have also yielded low performance in this signature despite the efforts made by the government and teachers through the National Program of Bilingualism (2004-2019) and the Bilingual Colombian Program (2014-2022). One of the teachers expresses:

> The results of the PET tests, done in recent days at school, shows unsatisfactory results for most students, this is something that worries teachers and the school executives (Interview, teacher 2, April 24th, 2019).

In that sense, about the question *¿Cree usted que el sistema de enseñanza del inglés que se está manejando es efectivo para su aprendizaje?* one of the students answered that:

> The explanations are not clear enough, the teachers are always interested in finishing the contents of the book but they do not worry if we learn or not (Survey, student 11, May 12th, 2019).

These answers show that something is happening in the classrooms, and there are things to check in the English strategies, as well as the methods that schools implement in the classroom. Why are there bad results in the tests? Why do students disagree about the strategies that teachers are applying in the English classes?

Teachers and students are conscious about the problems in the improvement of English classes; so, schools have taken some decisions, such as asking teachers for test certificates in foreign language, implementing materials that contribute to boost students' learning and empower students' language skills. In spite of that, the problems continue, since teachers state that it is easily perceived in class when many students fail the quizzes, when they do not respond in the different activities, when they do not participate properly in the class activities. According to the information collected, a teacher perceived difficulty during her classes, as follows:

> I see that the performance of my students is not the best; I think that sometimes, the use of a book limits the possibility of doing variety of activities focused to teach English in a communicative way (Interview, teacher 3, May 7th, 2019).

Likewise, the teachers' perceptions about the class are fundamental to make decisions that help students overcome their difficulties, e.g., doing timely feedback, clearing doubts in the learning process, including strategies that help improve students' learning procedures. Moreover, the students' learning styles (Makarova, 2014) are fundamental

aspects to have in mind in the moment to identify and solve learning problems in the classroom, as well as the context, because the conditions of each school are totally different even if it is private or public.

Another teacher pointed out that teaching English is mostly focused on grammar contents and the strategies do not involve the communicative practice, and it makes students hate the subject. An investigation done in Pakistan by Ahmad & Roa (2013) showed that the use of communicative strategies motivated students' learning. Teachers could perceive their students' progress in the use of the foreign language. Thus, it shows the necessity to include more communicative strategies (Brown, 2007) in the classroom, because they make students understand the real function of the language: communication. Hence, one of the teachers argued:

> I think it is not effective to teach only grammar or writing, this bores the girls, it is better to start with exercises that include communicative practice, then, we can teach the grammar rules only to correct the language production, which is also essential in teaching a language (Interview, teacher 2, May 2nd, 2019).

Katsos (2011) affirmed that teachers must give priority to the communicative aspects more than grammar, and the evaluation methods have to recognize the communication above the memory and grammar. Besides, the strategies teachers perform in the English classes must include communication as the main goal; therefore, students should perceive their progress in the language production through oral or written interaction. In fact, the voices of the following students support the previous idea:

> We lack dynamic exercises with speaking and listening because we only read and work with the book (Survey, student 3, May 12th, 2019).

> Teachers' explanations should be improved, not only theory, but also bring more activities that improve the quality of learning and practice of the language (Survey, student 14, May 18th, 2019).

The previous voices point out that students perceive many aspects in the development of the class, since they not only understand but also propose their own arguments; they show interest for learning the language and ask teachers for analyzing and improving the strategies they are using. It is necessary to find ways to capture the students' attention, satisfy their expectations and learning needs.

When students were asked about the strategies, activities or materials they would like teachers include in the English classes (question 6), they propose:

Implement better books, more didactic activities, use more free spaces outside the classroom, or use more the English laboratory (Survey, student 11, May 18th, 2019).

Another student just answered:

Go to the English laboratory (Survey, student 3, May 18th, 2019).

When students mention the laboratory, it means that they would like teachers take them to the computers room to use resources such as web pages, software, and virtual platforms. Li & Ni (2012) stated that their interest for English education makes them to include technological strategies and resources to support their teaching and learning procedures successfully. Moreover, Hubbard (2017) argued that the education in the 21st century lives a culture of constant change where different resources, tools and devices are available for teachers and students. At the moment, it is impossible to conceive education without technology, one is compatible with the other, because technology is synonym of education, so students live immersed in technology and education must be consistent with these conditions:

I think we can use the guidebook but also add extra materials and activities that involve technology and fun because the books often have repetitive activities, and in many cases, they become bored for students, the problem is that there is not enough time to do other activities (Interview, teacher 3, May 7th, 2019).

The results show that students and teachers show interest for the use technology but there are different obstacles such as lack of time, no disposition of hours to take students to the language laboratory and the priority to develop the content of the guidebook. These are aspects that must gradually change, as a way to advance in teaching strategies, respond to the demands of the globalized world, as well as the possibility to improve teaching processes, autonomy and collaborative work.

Additionally, there are different tasks teachers can implement as extra class work in order to motivate students' independent work, for instance, listening to music or watching

movies in English; therefore, it is a way to expose students to the foreign language and practice communicative skills. Talley (2014) suggested that teachers have to choose the best methods and techniques to guide and evaluate students' learning acquisition. Similarly, Brown (2002) stated that one of the goals of teaching is to enable students to become independent and autonomous. It shows the importance to have a dynamic class, as well as the students and teachers' involvement in the responsibility to look for ways that contribute to improve the teaching and learning English procedures.

5. Conclusions

This study addresses students and teachers' perceptions about the strategies that have been used in the English classes. It provides a variety of opinions that contribute to analyze strengths, difficulties or problems in language learning. It is perceived that there is an agreement among executives of schools, teachers, students, and the government in order to look for ways that help to improve the students' English level, which have been showing low results in national and international exams.

It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies that the books present. Asking teachers and students' perceptions about the use of this material helped to evidence and analyze some needs and problems that emerge about teaching and learning processes in high schools. It also demonstrates some reasons why Colombia continues getting a low proficiency level in English and why students show little interest and boredom in learning this language.

In that sense, both teachers and students argue that the exclusive use of the guidebook limits the creativity and inclusion of different strategies in the English classes; on the contrary, this material has routine activities that become boring for students. Both claim to be able to include other types of materials, such as audiovisual and games, as well as technology, since it would allow the change of the dynamic of the class with a variety of activities and resources that allow students to use the foreign language in different contexts and to foster independent and collaborative work.

On the other hand, it is important to keep a balance between the use of the guidebook and the adoption of variety of resources in the English classes, including technological tools. Besides, teachers' creativity and autonomy must be respected, because they are the persons who are in direct contact with students; they realize students' learning styles, problems, difficulties, and needs in order to make appropriate decisions to support their language improvement.

Finally, the management of strategies and materials should be constantly reviewed in schools as part of the improvement processes; since the success of education also depends on it. Schools should take into account the students and teachers' opinions as a mode to review and improve the academic procedures.

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Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview
ENTREVISTA SEMI-ESTRUCTURADA

La presente tiene como objetivo entrevistar a profesores del área de Inglés, con el fin de recolectar datos para el proyecto de investigación titulado *Receptividad de estrategias pedagógicas para el aprendizaje el inglés en las estudiantes de los grados octavo y noveno durante el primer semestre del año 2019.*

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva enseñando inglés en este colegio y en otros?

2. ¿En qué cursos dicta clases de inglés?

3. ¿Qué tipo de estrategias pedagógicas ha utilizado para la enseñanza del inglés?

4. ¿Cuáles estrategias considera usted no han sido efectivas para la enseñanza el inglés? ¿Por qué?

5. ¿Cuáles estrategias considera usted son efectivas para la enseñanza del inglés? ¿Por qué?

6. ¿Qué sugiere que se debe tener en cuenta para mejorar las estrategias pedagógicas para la enseñanza del inglés en este colegio?

Appendix 2: Survey
ENCUESTA

La presente encuesta se aplica a las estudiantes de octavo y noveno grado y tienen como objetivo recolectar datos para el proyecto titulado *Receptividad de estrategias pedagógicas para del aprendizaje el inglés en las estudiantes de los grados octavo y noveno durante el primer semestre del año 2019.*

1. ¿Cuántos años lleva estudiando en esta institución educativa?

1–3 años ☐

3–6 años ☐

6 o más ☐

160

2. ¿En qué curso está?

Octavo _____ Noveno _____

3. ¿Con cuáles de los siguientes materiales ha trabajado en las clases de inglés? Seleccione

Libros		Crucigrama	
Videos		Sopa de letras	
Canciones		Cuentos	
Películas		Juegos	
Dramatizaciones		Portafolios	

¿Otros? ¿Cuáles?_____

4. ¿Con cuáles de los anteriores materiales pedagógicos prefiere trabajar en la clase? Seleccione

Libros		Crucigrama	
Videos		Sopa de letras	
Canciones		Cuentos	
Películas		Juegos	
Dramatizaciones		Portafolios	

¿Otros? ¿Cuáles?_____

5. ¿Cree usted que el sistema de enseñanza del inglés que se está manejando es efectivo para su aprendizaje?

Sí _____ No_____

¿Por qué?

_____

_____

_____

6. ¿Qué estrategias, actividades o materiales cree que se deben incluir en las clases de inglés para mejorar el aprendizaje en esta área?

_____

_____

_____