

THE CREATION OF
AN ENGLISH CURRICULAR UNIT FOR 10TH GRADERS IN A PUBLIC
SCHOOL IN WESTERN PR

by

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Abstract

The purpose of the thesis was to create a curricular unit for 10th grade students at a public high school in Puerto Rico using a needs assessment. The assessment included answering several questions: topics students would want included in the English class, language skills students do not master, materials their school provides and classroom dynamics. Students also participated in an interview which included direct questions about what they wanted included in their English class to make it motivating. The study allowed to develop a student profile. Students' needs and interests regarding the learning of English are described in detail and serve as the key information to developing the unit. The curricular unit created is titled: Career, Job and Future and contains 9 lesson plans and 20 different activities. Students fulfill the English 10th grade standards of the Department of Education at the same time that they are working in an interesting and necessary unit of their choice.

Resumen

El propósito de esta tesis fue crear una unidad curricular para estudiantes de décimo grado de una escuela superior en Hormigueros, Puerto Rico, utilizando una evaluación de necesidades. La evaluación de necesidades incluyó varias preguntas incluyendo: temas que los estudiantes quisieran incluir en la clase de inglés, destrezas en inglés que los estudiantes no dominan, materiales que la escuela provee y dinámicas en el salón de clases. Los estudiantes también participaron de una entrevista la cual incluyó preguntas directas sobre que ellos quisieran incluir en su clase de inglés para hacerla motivante. El estudio también permitió desarrollar un perfil de los estudiantes. Los intereses y necesidades de los estudiantes en la enseñanza del inglés son descritos en detalle sirviendo como información clave desarrollar la unidad curricular. La unidad curricular creada se llama: Carrera, Trabajo y Futuro. Esta unidad contiene 9 planes de clase y 20 diferentes actividades. Los estudiantes llenarán las expectativas de los estándares de décimo grado del Departamento de Educación a la vez que trabajan en una interesante y necesaria unidad de su elección.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the United States (US) occupied the island in 1898, English was imposed on PR (PR) and according to Pousada (1999) the resistance to the imposition of English continues to occur in PR. Several commissioners of education were appointed and each brought a different language policy (Algren, 1987). Practically every combination of language instruction was experimented in PR's educational system. This pattern continued until 1949 when Luis Muñoz Marín, the first elected governor of PR, appointed Mariano Villaronga as secretary of public instruction. Villaronga established Spanish as the medium of instruction at all levels with English taught as a second language. Today, this policy is still in effect.

Nowadays, the Department of Education of PR (DEPR) has an English Curriculum Framework (2003) which serves as a guide for English teachers at all levels: elementary, intermediate and high school. The curriculum starts with short term educational objectives and ends with long term plans for the students. The framework targets the different areas of teaching and learning, in this case, English.

The DEPR English Curriculum Framework (2003) aims for all students to develop communicative competence in the English language. It recognizes that successful Spanish literacy is the basis for the development of proficiency in a second language. Collaboration between Spanish and English programs is therefore necessary and crucial. The English program provides a comprehensive, challenging and enriching curriculum which takes into account students' social, economic, cultural and personal background including their knowledge and skills (Department of Education, 2003, p. 22).

The Curriculum Framework also states that:

ESL professionals have recognized the complexity of the L2 learning situation and student diversity in PR for years. The wide discrepancies among students learning English as a second language in PR is particularly obvious with regard to students' socio-economic status; their needs and attitudes towards learning English; the support they get at home in this particular subject; their interests and personal, as well as professional goals; and the opportunities for exposure to English outside the L2 classroom. Recognizing this diversity, the English program must be decentralized in order for each student, school and community to be studied in its own psycho and sociolinguistic as well as complexity and reality (p. 16).

This means that every English teacher should be aware of students' needs, interests, and social background when teaching. Each student is different and the acquisition of a second language, in this case English, depends on these factors.

In PR, the DEPR offers English as a mandatory subject from Elementary to High School, however, a study conducted by Torres (2002) shows that even when a subject is mandatory it may not have the results one might want. Many factors (e.g. teachers and training, motivation, resistance, among others) play a role in the teaching of English.

The purpose of this thesis was to create a curricular unit based on a needs assessment, which was created to identify the individual needs of two groups of 10th grade students at Ruiz Belvis High School in Hormigueros, PR. Such a unit can help, primarily the teacher, facilitate activities that may enhance the learning of English by taking into consideration the students' needs and interests.

The main objectives for this research were:

1. Through a needs assessment,
 - a. Develop a profile of the students' personal and educational backgrounds.
 - b. Develop a profile of students' needs and interests regarding their learning of English.
2. To take the results of the needs assessment and the information that the Curriculum Framework offers and create an English curricular unit for the 10th grade based on the students' needs and interests.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

History of the English Language in PR

In order to create an English curricular unit, it is very important to clarify the history of the English language in PR which will facilitate the understanding of the language issues that Puerto Ricans live every day. The inclusion of English as a Second Language (ESL) in PR has led to many political and social controversies through the years which are still present in our society, especially in our educational system. This historical overview will provide information about the issues and policies of the teaching and learning of English on the Island from the time of its occupation by the US to the present day. This chapter will also help develop a curricular unit that can help students to attain their goals considering several factors that enhance student learning such as: motivation, teacher and parental support, and the use of technology in education. The purpose and use of the DEPR English Curriculum Framework will be explained as well as the standards of English for the 10th grade, which is the focus of the study.

The English Controversy

The English language in PR has been a controversial issue since the island was ceded to the US by Spain in 1898 after the Spanish-American war under the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1783). The connection between politics and the teaching of ESL in PR created a lot of issues between the existing political parties since the Spanish language was seen as part of the country's identity and including English in schools was seen as a threat to the Puerto Rican identity. Political parties have used the language issue to form their platforms (Algren De Gutiérrez, 1987; Pousada,1999). Many policies were created by politicians and commissioners of education in PR in order to decide the best way to introduce and teach the English language to people

whose vernacular was Spanish (Algren De Gutiérrez, 1987). At the beginning of the 20th century, most Puerto Ricans did not know any language other than Spanish. Along with the introduction of this new language as part of Puerto Ricans' education, English was seen positively and negatively. Pousada (1999) stated that "English has long been viewed on the island as both a tool of liberation and an instrument of oppression" (p.1). Children are told from the earliest grades that English will be vital for their educational and professional advancement, while they are also cautioned that learning it too well may endanger their Puerto Rican identity (Pousada, 1999, p.3).

Brumbaugh and McCune Lindsay, who were the first Commissioners of Education of the island, recognized that the implementation of the English language in PR would not be an easy job because of the Puerto Rican's lack of knowledge and exposition to English (Pousada, 1999). The policy was to continue the teaching of Spanish while extending the English language until it became the commercial and domestic language of the island. Brumbaugh and Lindsay explained that the process in PR would take much less time than it had in earlier attainments of Spanish-speaking territories by the US. Following his beliefs, he hired many North American educators, encouraged the celebration of US holidays, named schools after American patriots, and instituted many other American customs in school. Falkner, who succeeded McCune Lindsay as Commissioner of Education, established a policy in the early 1900's in which Puerto Rican teachers were going to be trained in the English language in order to start teaching the language to Puerto Rican students. This mandatory policy established that teachers should take English classes and granted a raise of \$10.00 per month to educators who were qualified to teach in English (Pousada, 1999). An obligatory annual test of teachers in English was established and those who failed were suspended. Any teacher failing for more than

two years could lose their teaching license. This policy did not work for the teachers since they were not well prepared to teach ESL in public schools and the students' language ability was affected.

The creation of these first policies led to new ones. The mix between language and politics started to create problems of identity. People felt that if a second language was to be taught in PR, they would lose their identity as Puerto Ricans (Pousada, 1999). The introduction of ESL in PR made people believe that it was a rejection of the Spanish language. Along with these identity and language situations occurring among the Puerto Rican citizens, the Department of Education's curriculum was for decades going through constant changes in terms of the inclusion of English. Over the past 100 years, the government put all its effort and dedication in order to portray PR as a bilingual society (Pousada, 1999).

All of these issues mentioned above have created problems in the teaching and learning of ESL in PR. Nowadays, although the identity issues towards the English language are still part of the Puerto Rican society, the DEPR has included in its curriculum English as a mandatory subject to students from first to twelfth grade. This policy started in 1949, when Luis Muñoz Marín, former first elected governor of PR appointed Mariano Villaronga as secretary of public instruction. Villaronga established Spanish as the medium of instruction at all levels with English taught as a "preferred" second language (Algren De Gutierrez, 1987).

The constant change of policies and the insecurities these brought help explain all the language issues that PR has been through since the late 19th century. All the educational policies tested on the Island have brought us to what we have today in our public school system: Spanish, the medium of instruction in our public schools, and ESL beginning elementary school for 50 minutes every day.

The Language Reality in PR

Several studies conducted by Torres (2002) show that even when a subject is mandatory it may not have the results one might want. He studied and collected data in order to illustrate the variations of the use of English among Puerto Ricans from 1910 to 1990. The information provided by the US Census Bureau of 1953, 1963, 1973, 1984 and 1993 served as the basis for his study. When the respondents were asked if they spoke English, they answered affirmatively. Table 1.1 summarizes the data.

Table 1.1: Population Percentage-Self Rankings of Ability to Speak English in PR (1910-1990)

Year	Ten years and older	Population
1910	781,600	3.2%
1920	904,423	9.9%
1930	1,093,423	19.4%
1940	1,373,163	27.8%
1950	1,526,154	26.1%
1960	1,670,084	37.7%
1970	2,053,859	42.7%
1980	2,505,081	45.6%
1990	2,904,455	50.5%
	5 years and older	
1980	2,855,868	42.0%
1990	3,219,765	47.4%
	16 years and older	
1980	2,168,288	48.1%
1990	2,497,078	52.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1953, 1963, 1973, 1984, 1993, 1994)

Table 1.1 shows that although English was considered the official language of PR, English proficiency was lower from 1910 through 1950 in comparison with the following decades. Spanish was considered the language of instruction in 1948 and English was taught as a mandatory subject in the DEPR. Through the years, as the

table shows, the population ranked themselves higher, but half of the population did not consider themselves bilingual.

The information collected by the US Bureau of the Census for the years 1980 and 1990 (Table 1.2) shows the respondents' speaking abilities and how they ranked themselves, choosing between the following: "speak English with ease," "speak English with difficulty" or "do not speak English."

Table 1.2: Self Rankings of Ability to Speak English and Spanish in PR (1980 and 1990)

Population	1980	1990
5 Years and older	2,855,868	3,219,765
% speak Spanish	98.2	98.2
% speak English	42.0	47.4
% speak English with ease	19.3	23.6
% speak English with difficulty	22.6	23.8
Population 5 years and older who speak Spanish	2,805,444	3,162,310
% speak English	42.2	47.7
% speak English with ease	19.3	23.6
% speak English with difficulty	23.0	24.1
% do not speak English	57.8	52.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1984,1993).

The results shown in Table 1.2 were similar in both years. The table shows that more than 50% of the respondents reported that they do not speak English. The table only reflects the population's perception of speaking in English, not the listening, reading and writing skills.

The 2000 Census shows that the vast majority of the families, who speak Spanish in their home, do not speak English well (See appendix B- Self Ranking Ability to Speak English in 2000). These results are part of the general situation Puerto Ricans face daily. English has been part of our society and culture since the

beginning of the 20th century, but the majority of the Puerto Rican population still lack in English proficiency.

The lack of English ability has significantly affected Puerto Rican students from public schools. When students from the public schools on the island take the Puerto Rican Standardized Tests of Academic Performance, they show more difficulty and lack of skills in English every year (Morales, 2006). The number of academic excellent schools in the public system of PR which comply with the standards of academic excellence has lowered to less than a half in the year 2007. The Department of Education points to factors such as the impact of the economic crisis on the educational system, the lack of materials and personnel, and the lack of professional preparation of many teachers in the public system as contributors to the results of these tests. Furthermore, Blanes (2006) also explained that the percentage of students who mastered the subject of English lowered from a 55% to 50%. When analyzing these alarming results, together with what the Department of Education states in their Curricular Framework, one wonders if a needs assessment has ever been performed in the schools.

Studies performed by López (2007) show that students believe the most difficult skills to learn in English are speaking and writing. Fayer (2000) compared the data on reading and oral comprehension from 1976, 1987-88, and 1996 and showed that reading and oral comprehension self-evaluations are always higher than speaking and writing despite the respondents' improvement of self-rankings through the years. The main observation is that more than a third of the respondents do not feel competent in reading and comprehension areas (See appendix A- Self Ranking of Ability in English Skills in 1987-88 and 1996).

It is very important to consider students' needs and interests in order to catch their attention and maintain their interest in the classroom. According to Grant and Shank (2007), "Effective needs assessment is extremely important because ESL learners, especially adults, who feel that what they are learning is useless for them in the English class, are more likely to dropout than to express their discomfort and discontent (p.1)."

In order for students to fulfill all the requirements of the English curriculum framework, Puerto Ricans are supposed to master the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening by the end of high school. The Department of Education's English curriculum framework (2003) states that "The English program is committed to promoting and facilitating the development of critical and creative thinkers capable of communicating effectively to deal with high expectations and demands of a society which is immersed in a global interchange and collaboration" (p.12-13).

Bilingualism

As mentioned before, through the years many language policies were examined and tested in the DEPR with the purpose of turning the Island into a bilingual country. According to Bimer (2007), a bilingual person is someone who can speak two different languages. Bimer stated that "people may become bilingual either by acquiring two languages at the same time in childhood or by learning a second language sometime after acquiring their first language" (p.2).

Bimer (2007) also stated that in America, many people grow up speaking two languages. Immigrant children grow up speaking their parents' native language at home and speaking English at school. Basically any child can learn one or more languages easily as long as they use the languages regularly. A child does not have to be exceptional in order to become bilingual. As long as the child is exposed to two or

more languages throughout their childhood, they will acquire the languages fluently. However, the Puerto Rican population goes through a different experience since their language of origin is Spanish and their second language is English. Most Puerto Ricans are not bilingual because they have not had enough exposure to English (see Appendix B). The development of curricula that can be suited for the second language needs that Puerto Ricans have are necessary in our public school system where the exposure to English is relatively poor.

For many people, becoming bilingual can be seen as an issue of identity. According to Amselle (1997), Puerto Ricans greatest concern is maintaining their language and culture. Over 80% of the Puerto Rican population does not speak or understand English. "Puerto Rico may be officially bilingual now, but in reality it is a Spanish-speaking nation, and between 1990 and 1993 Spanish was the only official language. The attitude toward English on the island can be best described as hostile" (p.2).

According to Amselle (1997), when Victor Fajardo, former Puerto Rico's education secretary proposed that English be made the second language of instruction in 1997, teachers unions protested, calling it a "cultural suicide". One teacher, Digna Irizarry, told the *New York Times*, "I will refuse to teach in English." Amselle (1997) cites *New York Times* which stated that "fully 90 per cent of the island's 650,000 public-school students lack basic English skills by the time they graduate." The fact is that the top priority of Puerto Rican schools is to teach children Spanish, not English. Language is directly related to culture, and becoming bilingual can be a threatening situation to the nation's identity. This threat makes it difficult for students to be motivated to learn ESL. Nevertheless, it is imperative to get them involved in learning the language.

Motivation and Learning

In order to engage students into learning a second language it is important to take into consideration certain factors that will awake their interest in what is being taught in the classroom. Teachers need to be aware of those factors which will make a class interesting and appealing to the students; this way, students will find a meaning to what they are learning and will be driven to acquire more knowledge.

Motivation is one of the factors to catch the students' attention when it comes to learning a second language. According to Brown (1994), motivation is the most frequently used term to explain the success or failure of a complex task. The success in a task is directly related to the fact that someone is "motivated" to do it. Brown (1994) also stated that motivation is commonly thought of as an impulse, inner drive emotion or desire that moves a person to a certain action. Kellerman (1992) stated that motivation refers to "the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect" (p.389). There are several psychologists who define motivation in terms of needs and drives. Ausubel (1968) stated:

There are six needs underlying the construct of motivation: 1) the need for exploration, for seeing "the other side of the mountain", for probing the unknown; 2) the need for manipulation, for operating on the environment and causing change; 3) the need for activity, for movement and exercise, both physical and mental; 4) the need for stimulation, the need to be stimulated by the environment, by other people or by ideas, thoughts and feelings; 5) the need for knowledge, the need to process and internalize the results of exploration, manipulation, activity, and stimulation to resolve contradictions, to quest for solutions to problems and for self-consistent systems of

knowledge; 6) finally, the need for ego enhancement, for the self to be known and to be accepted and approved by others (p.368-369).

In terms of the learning of English, these needs can be seen in the personal and educational environment of the students. The personal language needs and interests of students can be met in the classroom. It is important for the teacher to recognize and suite these personal needs and interests to the class because it will motivate students to learn what the teacher wants to share and teach in the classroom.

According to Brown (1994), there are two types of motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to the acquisition of a language in order to obtain goals such as pursuing a career, reading technical material, translation, and so forth. Integrative motivation occurs when learners wish to become part of the second language culture group in order to identify themselves and become part of that society. In terms of second language acquisition (SLA), learners with both types of motivation seek language acquisition, but with different purposes; one with the purpose of improving professionally and personally and the other with the purpose of feeling accepted and becoming part of a certain group. Brown also stated that instrumental and integrative motivations are not necessarily exclusive in a specific situation. Second language learning is rarely motivated by exclusively instrumental or integrative attitudes. Most of the situations are influenced by a mixture between instrumental and integrative motivation. ESL students, in particular Puerto Ricans, need to be driven towards these motivations because as a Spanish speaking country, students are not constantly immersed in their second language and these motivations can encourage them to find a use and learn it.

When we speak about integrative and instrumental motivation in terms of SLA, there is another subdivision under each kind of motivation: intrinsic and

extrinsic. According to Bailey (1986), intrinsic motivation occurs when the learner desires to learn a language for personal reasons. Extrinsic motivation occurs when an external power moves a person to learn a second language. The following table shows examples of motivational dichotomies for both integrative and instrumental motivation as well (Quoted in Brown & Gonzo, 1995, p.156).

Motivational Dichotomies	
Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative- L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g., for immigration or marriage)	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g., Japanese parents send kids to Japanese-language School)
Instrumental-L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g., for a career)	External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g., corporation sends Japanese businessman to U.S. for language training)

As can be seen, motivation has several subdivisions, which can be influenced by the individual or by an external power to learn or do something. As teachers, it is important to motivate students to learn so the students can find a purpose for what is being taught in class. The motivation factor should be part of every curriculum because it is one of the most important keys to success and the driving force to reach the goals that we have for the future. In order to motivate students and enhance learning, there are other factors which will be explained in the following section.

Responsibilities of Parents, Schools and Teachers in Enhancing and Sharing Student Learning

Other factors that account for student success at school are the responsibilities of the parents, schools and teachers in student learning. The teaching and learning experience goes beyond the classroom, which is why researchers (e.g. Korkmaz, 2007; Phillip, 2007) believe it is of extreme importance for students to have support

from their parents, school and teachers. Students need people around them who can help and support them in their school life in order to reach success easily.

According to Korkmaz (2007), there are a variety of factors when it comes to the complex process of students' learning. Korkmaz administered a short survey composed of three open-ended questions to 148 teachers. The teachers were asked to write about their opinions concerning the responsibilities of the parents, schools and teachers in enhancing students' learning. In terms of the responsibilities of the parents, the general results showed that parents should: love, respect, and care about their children; be responsible with their children's education; take care of their children's basic needs as well as the school's needs; have a better communication with the school staff; not put a pressure on their children; provide a good atmosphere for their children to study at home; be aware about what their children are doing; serve as a role model for their children; get to know their children's capacity to learn and motivate them based on their interests and needs; and let their children play games and participate in social activities.

In terms of the responsibilities of the school, the general results showed that schools should: provide enough infrastructural capacity; provide necessary and important materials; emphasize athletics and social activities in the school curriculum; have a good communication with parents; provide individualized teaching, a democratic atmosphere and active counseling services; demonstrate a successful orientation; emphasize social rules; and monitor students' behaviors.

When referring to the teachers' responsibilities, the general results showed that teachers should know, respect, and care about students, use a variety of instructional strategies and materials, be aware of individual differences, interests and needs, motivate students to have a positive learning experience, be a role model for them,

prepare lesson plans, have good communication skills, use homework effectively, practice fairness, and let students gain responsibility.

In order for the school to have a better teaching-learning environment, a commitment from parents, teachers, administration and students has to exist. This commitment leads to acquiring responsibilities which are vital for the success of an educational program.

The Role of Parents in Students' Educational Performance

The role of parents in students' educational performance is another vital factor for reaching success. The teaching and learning experience does not end with the classroom rather, it continues at home, where the skills learned at school should be reinforced. The reinforcement of these skills at home will lead the student to have a better performance in class.

Every parent has a different way to guide and support their children in school. Parents' responsibilities in education lead to different styles of support. As cited in Phillip (2007), Lamborn stated that there are several parenting styles that influence adolescent development and behavior:

- a) Authoritative Style- parents are both firm and supportive.
 - b) Authoritarian-parents are firm and directive but relatively supportive.
 - c) Indulgent-parents are supportive but not directive.
 - d) Neglectful- parents are relatively low in both supportive and firm control
- (p.21)

Lamborn (1991) stated that “authoritatively reared adolescents, whose parents were firm and supportive, were the most competent and pro social, the lowest in internalizing problems, and among the lowest in drug use” (quoted in Phillip, 2007,

p.21). It seems that when parents maintain a balance between being firm and being supportive with their children, they will have a more balanced and healthy life.

Henderson and Berla (1994) conducted seminal work on parent involvement in terms of education. They found that the key ingredients that contribute to student academic achievement are:

- a) Parents who maintain high expectations.
- b) Parents who respond to and interact with their children frequently.
- c) Parents who see themselves as teachers of their children (quoted in Phillip 2007, pp.24-25).

Parents should be supportive, understanding, and helpful and at the same time should encourage them to be better students. Therefore, parents are a very important key to their children's academic achievement. The parents' positive reinforcement will make their children better professionals in the future.

Walberg, Fraser and Welch (1996) stated that the environment of the students' home is one of the main factors that predict achievements and attitudes in school (quoted in Phillip, 2007, p.25). The situations and experiences that students undergo at home can be reflected on the academic progress and behavior.

As mentioned before, parents' involvement in students' academic life is very important to reach success. A school that has an excellent curriculum suited to students' needs and interests cannot work properly if the skills taught in school are not reinforced at home by the parents. Parents should be aware of their children's academic performance and should serve as an additional tool for the teacher. If collaboration between the teacher and parents exists, the teaching and learning experience will be more successful.

The Use of Technology in Education

Another factor which should be taken into consideration when developing a curriculum for a class is technology because it is one of the most important needs that schools and students have to enhance learning. It can be used as a helpful source for students to find a use for learning and at the same time, it can help build new knowledge due to the great amount of information that they are exposed to. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1983) can be related to technology because those intelligences can be stimulated with all the different options offered by technology to reach a higher level of thinking and to help open access to new knowledge. Gardner (1983) stated that all human beings have the capacity to learn and every human has multiple intelligences and learns in different ways. He also stated that every person has the potential for succeeding in specific areas and others do not. Since the term intelligence is a difficult term to define and it is completely circumstantial, all human beings have it and it is developed individually. One example of those intelligences is the linguistic intelligence. Gardner (1983) stated:

Linguistic intelligence involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively use language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically; and language as a means to remember information. Writers, poets, lawyers and speakers are among those that Howard Gardner sees as having high linguistic intelligence (p.2).

Some people can be competent in everything that involves the use of a language. At the same time, there are people who are not competent with the use of languages, but are competent in other areas of learning such as music, interpersonal and intrapersonal

relations, math, etc. Teachers can use technology in order to offer a wide variety of activities that could help students develop their particular intelligences.

According to Winn (2002) the field of educational technology was taken into consideration when researchers and practitioners discovered that instruction was something that could be planned, designed, evaluated, and revised before it was ever used with students. Researchers also found that designing instruction using technology brought two major benefits. First, it was very useful to help students in their learning process. Second, it helped students to study on their own, and not be dependant of their teachers all the time. Winn also stated that technology-based instruction can bring students information that teachers cannot. TV, Internet and Video Games are the most used technological aids which are very helpful sources of information and students enjoy.

Overall, technology can be an excellent tool for the development of a curriculum. It helps make a more interesting and motivating class in which students can have access to valuable information. Traditional materials only offer a book to learning and when the book is not interesting, there is no other way to get students involved in the teaching-learning process.

TV and Education

TV is a very important technological aid that should also be taken into consideration when developing a curriculum. Houston and Wright (1998) explained that despite the recent evidence, which shows that exposition to TV can be very helpful to children in order for them to acquire and master the basic skills of a first and/or second language, there are still a great number of teachers and parents who believe that listening and watching TV can be very harmful for them. This last thought has been influenced by traditional ways of teaching that were taking place

before the integration of technology in schools. Nowadays, parents notice that supervised and controlled exposition to media and technology can be positive for their children's educational enrichment. Through TV they can be exposed to valuable information which can be attractive since they are learning it indirectly. Often, this kind of learning cannot be taught in school.

Parents and teachers should encourage students to use TV as a medium of learning. In class, there are an infinite number of activities that can be used by watching TV. At home, the teaching and learning experience can be continued by encouraging students to watch educational programming that can be useful in school as well as in their daily life. It is also important to have in mind that TV should be used properly because it can also offer information that can be harmful for the students' education as well as for their personal lives.

The Use of Internet in Schools

Internet is a technological aid that can offer a great amount of information which traditional materials cannot. According to Karchmer (2001), one of the most important technological aids, other than TV, is the Internet. Through Internet, students can access an infinite amount of valuable information that can help them develop their literacy skills. Karchmer (2001) found that the use of the internet has changed the definition of literacy by introducing and exposing students to electronic sources and information not found in books. He also stated that the ability to communicate through different technological methods such as video, animated graphics and digitalized pronunciations promotes the development of new literacy skills and creates new opportunities for literacy instruction in class. She has suggested that educators who currently use Internet to support teaching and learning provide important insights to how technology may effectively be used in the classroom.

Williams (2005) noticed the importance of including non-traditional materials in the classroom and how helpful they can be in order for the students to take their literacy skills to a level that traditional assessment cannot.

At home, the computer and the Internet have been important tools that have helped students to access valuable information for school and for their personal use. Williams (2005) explained that in the past students' out-of-class literacy practices would have been achieved through books and other print genres. Nowadays, the students' primary source of information is the Internet. Through it, the student can be exposed to large amounts of information and can exchange conversations and thoughts through chat rooms and e-mail. According to Subrahmanyam, Kraut, Greenfield, and Gross (2000), the rapid evolution of personal computers has changed the view that people had toward them. Before, they were seen as sources of entertainment, nowadays, they are seen as important tools for developing children's skills and motivation in academic areas such as math, science, language arts, and writing. They also stated that computers can also be an excellent source of easy access to information for students and teachers. By using this tool, students and educators can have easy access to an infinite amount of information not only at school, but also where the facilities are available.

Video Games and Education

Video games are also valuable for literacy instruction. According to Vargas (2005), they are an innovative and entertaining strategy to promote the use of English in the classroom. Students become actively involved with electronic games, lowering their anxiety levels and encouraging them to use English without noticing. Because students enjoy this type of activity, they will respond more rapidly and maintain

interest. If used properly, they can be a great source of information and learning.

Gunter (1998) stated:

Surely video games are considered by many of us as an excellent teaching tool because computers can adjust to the levels of difficulty of the game according to the user's preference or need. Not only do video games ensure the player to obtain higher scores after every try, thus creating infinite opportunities to learn and be challenged, but they allow students to load games, save, quit, use the mouse, and develop hand and eye coordination as well. Therefore, the brain speeds up decisions and may help a person achieve a higher intelligence quotient (IQ) (quoted in Vargas, 2005, p.26).

Video games are a very useful tool, not only for personal entertainment, but for indirect learning. Students can learn a variety of commands, vocabulary, and coordination without being consciously aware of their learning. Videogames can also improve their knowledge of computers and other electronic devices which can be useful in the teaching-learning process.

The Use of Music in ESL Classrooms

Music is another technological instrument that can have positive effects in second language learning. According to Bentley (2000), music can be used to develop language skills, to dissolve cross-cultural barriers and enhance specific knowledge with rhythms utilizing verbal and nonverbal communication (quoted in Kennedy, 2005, p.245-246). Teachers can attract students' attention through music because it can make the class different, interesting and can bring a variety of benefits. Bentley also stated that "The music therapy literature is rich in information that supports academic success, including expressive language ability, new vocabulary, reading improvement, and brain development through exposure to music making and active

music listening. Linguistics and psychologists support the use of music in theoretical design and practical application of ESL instruction” (quoted in Kennedy, 2005, pp.245-246). Therefore, music is a useful untraditional tool in an ESL classroom since it exposes students to their second language, developing new vocabulary, information and analysis.

The Department of Education of PR and the Inclusion of Technology in its Curriculum

Since technology is a new important instrument to use in class, it is important to know about the DEPR’s plans for schools as far as technology is concerned. The DEPR is undergoing a curricular revision in which the integration of technology will be used as a tool for the achievement of skills and academic standards. This revision will require the re-education of teachers about the use of technology as a complementary tool to develop learning activities in the classroom. It also generates the demand for a new focus on the strategies and methodologies of teaching, in which the teacher plays the role of a facilitator and the student can have the necessary resources to build his/her own knowledge.

According to DEPR (2003), the use of technology in the classroom encourages the teacher to design different motivating and pertinent teaching strategies for the students keeping in mind our highly technological society. At the same time, it stimulates the teachers to improve their teaching methods often in terms of the effective use of the emerging educational technology. The technology will help develop skills that can help teachers confront new dares in terms of designing and enriching knowledge, thinking about the current students’ needs.

The following projects encourage the creation of different learning environments according to the technological demands of the students of PR’s public school system:

- 1) **Multimedia: An Educational Perspective-** Helps the teacher to change traditional ways of teaching and focus on more constructivist practices in the classroom. This will help students to use and develop their critical thinking and express their opinions and points of view at the time that they are using technology.
- 2) **Innovation Centers for Teaching-** These centers will serve as places of technological support in which students and teachers will have access to all kinds of technological aids. This will help both teachers and students to fulfill the technological demands of today.
- 3) **Educational Television: An Alternative for Distance Education-** This project has a digital satellite net which will be the base of the communication between the school districts, the schools and the Innovation and Educational Technology Centers. This project will train teachers to integrate technology in their classroom and to establish the bases of a distance education culture in each school district.
- 4) **Electronic Editorial-** Produces educational materials in multimedia which will help teachers and schools to use and promote the use of technology in the classroom and administration. It will promote a constant change and update of all the technological materials provided for the schools (DEPR).

Needs Assessment in School Education

Just as technology is an essential and non-traditional tool for enhancing student learning, a needs assessment is an essential tool that can be used to determine what students want and need in their class and can help in the development of a curriculum. It is important to take into consideration what are the interests, needs and factors which can drive students to be motivated in school so the teaching and learning experience can be more effective.

Teachers should be aware of the needs that have to be met in order to fulfill educational expectations from schools and parents. According to Grant and Shank (2006), a needs assessment is a way to investigate the students' needs and interests before creating and teaching a class. They also stated that by performing a needs assessment, the teacher will know the students better and will target specific student learning needs. According to Grant and Shank (2006), there are several characteristics which help to ensure that a needs assessment is effective:

- 1) The needs assessment should be appropriate for a particular group of students. For example, if reading and understanding the language of a written questionnaire is very time-consuming or impossible for learners, then another type of assessment tool should be chosen.
- 2) It should serve a learning purpose as well as an information gathering purpose. It is of extreme importance that neither teacher nor learners perceive needs assessment as a waste of learning time. Effective and interesting activities can be incorporated into the class orientation or integrated into lessons. Learners should be actively practicing and using the target language while collecting and analyzing data.

- 3) The needs assessment activities should be practical in terms of time required and usefulness of the information collected. Many activities do not require a great deal of preparation or processing time.
- 4) They also should be processed with the group so that both teacher and learners become aware of the expectations of others in the class. When there are differences in the expression of needs and goals, then negotiation and compromise must occur (pp.2-3).

Grant and Shank (2006) explained that in order for learners to understand the real purpose and value of a needs assessment, the information gathered must be applied in obvious ways during the course so that learners feel that their needs are being met. Adults must feel that what they are learning is useful and valuable, this way they will be more likely to complete a course and continue to seek future educational opportunities.

Curriculum Purposes and Development

In order to create and develop a curriculum based on students' needs and interests, it is important to know its purpose. Apple (1990) and Posner (1992) stated:

A curriculum serves as an aid in order to help teachers organize and plan their daily lessons. It is an essential document for teachers because it defines the goals that a Department of Education (DE) hopes its students fulfill. Moreover, federal, state, and local boards of education use curricula to develop tests that can measure the levels of success students have attained in learning the projected material. Furthermore, teachers must be trained to use the curriculum for these goals to be obtained. For all of these reasons it is

essential to have a well-developed, organized and detailed curriculum (quoted in Carroll, 2005, p.1).

This tells us that a curriculum is an essential instrument that teachers should use as a guide. With it, teachers can establish the goals that students should attain and know if these goals were fulfilled.

Carroll (2005) explained that the Department of Education's Curriculum Framework takes a constructivist approach to teaching English in PR. The constructivist approach requires teachers to encourage students to build their own knowledge based on what they have learned and what they are learning at the moment. In this approach, the teacher serves as a guide, not as an emissary, who helps students to attain their respective goals. Students are required to use their critical thinking, reaching higher levels of thinking and analysis.

According to Carroll (2005), the sole purpose of the Curricular Framework is to:

Provide teachers, evaluators, technicians and university professors with a document that highlights the "parameters" of teaching English in the public schools of PR. In addition, the document offers a number of different rubrics and other documents that can be used for assessment purposes. Thus, the documents' focus is on creating a frame in which teachers and administrators will be able to develop "their own curriculum" inside the constructs provided by the document (Quoted in Carroll, 2005, pp.39-40).

Carroll (2005) highlights the four fundamental purposes of the curriculum framework:

A. To establish the mission, goals, focuses, objectives, contents, and

methods of the process of teaching and learning of the program studies.

B. To guide in the creation of investigations and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum and academic achievement.

C. To guide the processes of the teacher preparation and development of in-service training by subject.

D. To guide the elaboration of the curriculum in its diverse levels. (Quoted in Carroll, 2005, p. 40).

In other words, the curriculum is a general guide that teachers use to organize their courses. This tells us that educators can create their own curriculums taking into count the general purposes of the Curriculum Framework, and suit these curriculums to their particular students' needs and interests. When creating a curriculum it is also very important to take into count the Curriculum Framework's standards depending on the level the educator is teaching. Since this thesis is focused on the development of a curriculum for 10th grade, the educational standards for this level will be explained in the next section.

The Department of Education of PR: Educational Standards for 10th Grade

The Department of Education of PR has several standards that students should master according to their level. According to the DEPR's Curriculum Framework (2003), there are several skills students should master at the beginning of High School (10th Grade). The standards in which students will be evaluated are divided into Oral Communication, Written communication and Reading Communication. The standards also show the assessment methods that teachers should use with 10th graders (Department of Education, 2003, p. 36-38).

The DEPR's Curriculum Framework (2003) states that:

The English Program's curriculum at the high school level (10th, 11th, 12th grade) provides for the development of the language skills using Balanced Literacy. It includes the development of skills such as literary analysis, oral communication, written composition and investigation. There is an integration of the four language arts with emphasis in the conversational phase when using balanced literacy. To enrich and motivate independent reading, the students use supplementary classic readings for the purpose of developing individual projects in oral and written form (pp. 36-38).

The standards of the English Curriculum Framework serve as a guide to help students reach the educational goals that they should master depending on their level. The standards include:

Standard #1: Oral Communication

The student is supposed to use English and interact (verbally/nonverbally) effectively in different social and academic environments. The student should also speak freely about different topics and identify main ideas, details and sequences. The students should talk with confidence in front of others and learn from mistakes. Teachers should use different methods of evaluations such rubrics, student-teacher interviews, self assessment, peer assessment, oral presentations and anecdotal records.

Standard #2: Written Communication

Students should master the different kinds of essays: narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive. The student should demonstrate command of English through organization and the stages of the writing process. Through writing, the student should be able to organize ideas, discuss, create, interpret issues, narrate, and include an introduction, body and conclusion to each essay. Students should have willingness to use English and communicate effectively sharing ideas, thoughts and

experiences. Teachers should evaluate students using rubrics, comic strips, long journals, essays and graphic organizers.

Standard #3: Reading Comprehension/Literary Appreciation

Students should demonstrate confidence, independence and flexibility in reading simple and complex texts. Students should master reading strategies such as organizational structures, semantics, word meaning, figures of speech, summarizing, main ideas and supporting details, prediction of outcomes, etc. Students should also enjoy reading, appreciate literature to grow intellectually and emotionally and identify themselves with the literature pieces discussed in class. Teachers should evaluate students through rubrics, reading logs, individual recitations, comic strips, graphic organizers, self-assessment, teacher's observation and KWL charts (For complete tables, see Appendix I-K).

The DEPR's standards of English try to improve the basic skills to master the language in order for students to attain the goal of becoming bilingual. These standards should be taken into consideration when creating and developing a curriculum for any level since they will help teachers establish the educational goals that their students need to attain for each level.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with an overview of the history of the English language in PR. The constant changes of the educational policies regarding the imposition of English in PR were explained as well as the commissioners who created them. In order to understand how students can perform better in class, different kinds of motivations such as instrumental and integrative were presented and explained. Other important factors for the students' academic success such as technology, responsibilities of parents, schools and teachers in enhancing student learning were

also explained in this chapter as factors to consider when creating and developing a curriculum.

A definition of needs assessment and how it should be suited for specific students served as a guide to create one for this thesis. The inclusion of technology and music and how it can be an important part of the elaboration of a curriculum served also as part of the development of the thesis. Information taken from the DEPR's Framework was shown in this project as an important instrument for the development of the research. The technological plans that the department of Education of PR has for schools were presented to better understand what should be expected in a near future in our public school system.

Finally, the Department of Education's standards for high school English were discussed and explained together with the specific skills our students are supposed to master in high school. These standards will also serve as a guide to create a curricular unit for a 10th grade class, which is one of the objectives of this thesis.

The next chapter will explain the steps taken towards the elaboration of the investigation project done in a public school in Hormigueros P.R.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Site

The school used for the research was Segundo Ruiz Belvis High School, which is a public school in Hormigueros. This is the only high school in Hormigueros. The school has an enrollment of 675 students. In order to have access to the school, I went to the superintendent office in Hormigueros and asked for the necessary paperwork to do the investigation. Two consent forms were distributed to students and parents in order to have permission to perform the investigation. The research began after receiving the approval of students and parents. I decided to include this public school because according to the Census (2000), the learning of English in public schools is relatively poor and it was a convenient sample as well as an easy access.

Participants

The research focused on two 10th grade groups for a total of 48 students. Of the 48 students, 23 were males and 25 were females. Tenth graders were used in the investigation since they are moving into a new level which prepares them for higher education and to focus on the learning and expectations of English would be very interesting. As we can observe, 15 students were below average in the English class last semester. The students' grades for the English class for the August-December 2007 semester were as follows:

Grade	Number of Students
A	8
B	16
C	9
D	8
F	7

Data Collection

Qualitative and quantitative methods such as questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the necessary data. According to Bodgin and Biklen (2003), qualitative case studies are extremely useful in backing up quantitative studies by reemphasizing findings with the thoughts, beliefs and opinions of individuals in a particular context (quoted in Carroll, 2005, p.20). A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods were useful for this project because on the one hand, quantitative data provides numerical information; on the other hand, qualitative methods give voice to the participants and their ways of making meaning related to the learning of English.

Administration of Questionnaires: September-October 2007

There were a total of three questionnaires. The first questionnaire was administered in the first week of September (see appendix C). The other two questionnaires were distributed from the second week of September to the first week of October (see appendix C, D and E).

Interviews: November 2007

One on one interviews with the students (see appendix F), began the first week of November. A total of 16 students, 8 female and 8 male were chosen. Those students who answered the surveys in detail and followed instructions correctly were chosen for the interview. Each interview took approximately 30 minutes and 2 weeks to complete (see appendix F). These interviews supported the questions answered in the surveys and provided additional information not expressed in the questionnaires.

Educational Framework of the Study

The humanistic approach of education (Freire, 1970) served as the theoretical framework of the study in this thesis. This approach leads students to analyze

information by using their critical thinking skills. A humanist educator gives students the opportunity to reach higher levels of thinking and analysis and will find purposes and meanings to what they are studying in school. Freire (1970) contrasts the traditional type of education with the humanistic approach. Because traditional education does not allow students to think for themselves and to give rote responses,

Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the “banking” concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits (p.72).

Banking education does not allow students to make choices and to express their own points of view and opinions about a certain subject.

In contrast to the banking concept, the humanist, revolutionary educators’ efforts coincide with those of the students in order to encourage them to use critical thinking and to quest for mutual humanization. The teacher trusts people and their creative power to build new knowledge. To achieve this, they must be partners of the students’ teaching-learning process. The teacher should focus on the students’ interests and needs. The educator sees the objects of study as a reflection of him/herself and the students. This way the teacher constantly re-forms his/her reflections in the reflection of the students. The students, who are no longer receptors and listeners, expose their thoughts and feelings using dialogue with the teacher. The role of the problem-posing educator is to create, along with the students, the

conditions under which knowledge at the level of the *doxa*¹ is superseded by true knowledge, and at the level of *logos* (Freire, 1970). Since humanist educators encourage analysis and critical thinking, it is also important for these teachers to motivate their students to reach these levels of thinking.

Creation of Curricular Unit

The results taken from the questionnaires were translated to graphs to visualize the data. Some of the interview results were also placed in tables or quoted in the text to enrich the results. In order to respond to each objective, tables were created and analyzed by objective. The quantitative results were expressed in percentages. The most outstanding results taken from the qualitative data (open ended questions and interviews) were also expressed in percentages. The curricular unit was created taking into account the most frequent and outstanding results from the data collected in the questionnaires and interviews (see appendix C, D, E, and F).

The students' results show that they are concerned about their future. This tells us that these students know that learning English is important to have a better future and to have better job opportunities. With ideas taken from several web pages, background knowledge and my own creativity, I created a curricular unit called "Career, Job and Future". This unit focuses on the three standards of the DEPR:

- #1- Oral Communication
- #2- Written Communication
- #3- Reading Comprehension

The focus of the unit includes the following topics and skills:

- goals for the future: professional and personal

¹ Doxa is a Greek word meaning common belief or popular opinion, from which are derived the modern terms of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Used by the Greek rhetoricians as a tool for the formation of argument by using common opinions, the *doxa* was often manipulated by sophists to persuade the people, leading to Plato's condemnation of Athenian democracy.

- resumes and job applications
- job interviews (oral communication)
- professional vocabulary

These topics include activities directly related to:

- analysis- literature
- reading comprehension
- writing narrative and compare and contrast essays

This unit will help educators as well as administrators of the DEPR to think about what their students really want and need. They will have a resource they can use in their 10th grade classrooms which will be of interest to students. By addressing these needs and interests through investigation, students will be motivated to learn and hopefully the teaching-learning experience will be more productive and successful.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

The purpose of the thesis was to create a Curricular Unit, which was based on a needs assessment to find out students' needs and interests regarding the learning of English in school. This section will discuss each objective of the study. The students' profile results (Objective #1a) will be presented using the survey questions. The findings of the needs assessment will first discuss the survey results, followed by the interview answers provided by 18 students (Objective #1b). Since 48 students answered the survey, the percentages reflect the total of answers divided by the total participants (N=48). Finally, Objective #2 (Curricular Unit) will be presented in the following Chapter.

Objective #1a: Through a needs assessment:

a. Develop a profile of the students' personal and educational backgrounds.

In order to satisfy objective #1a, a survey was created to investigate the students' educational background (See appendix C). Students were asked about their parents' monthly income and education, the importance, difficulty, and experience with the English language. There were a total of 48 students whose ages ranged from 14 and 15. The two classrooms had a total of 25 females and 23 males. The following describes more about the students' profile.

Table 4.1: Parents' Educational Background

<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Elementary School</u>	<u>Intermediate School</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
<u>Percentage-Father</u>	0%	0%	46%	44%	10%
<u>Percentage-Mother</u>	0%	6%	31%	63%	0%

Table 4.1, *Parents' educational background*, shows the highest and the lowest level of education of the parents. The students' father highest education ranged between High School (46%) and College (44%). The highest level of education of the students' mother was College (63%). The lowest for the mother was Intermediate School (6%). Most of the students' mothers have a higher level of education (college) compared with the father (High School). Although mothers have higher education, fathers do have adequate college backgrounds and given that 10% did not answer they may have fairly similar backgrounds as mothers. In general, the parents of the students in this study were educated people with some college background.

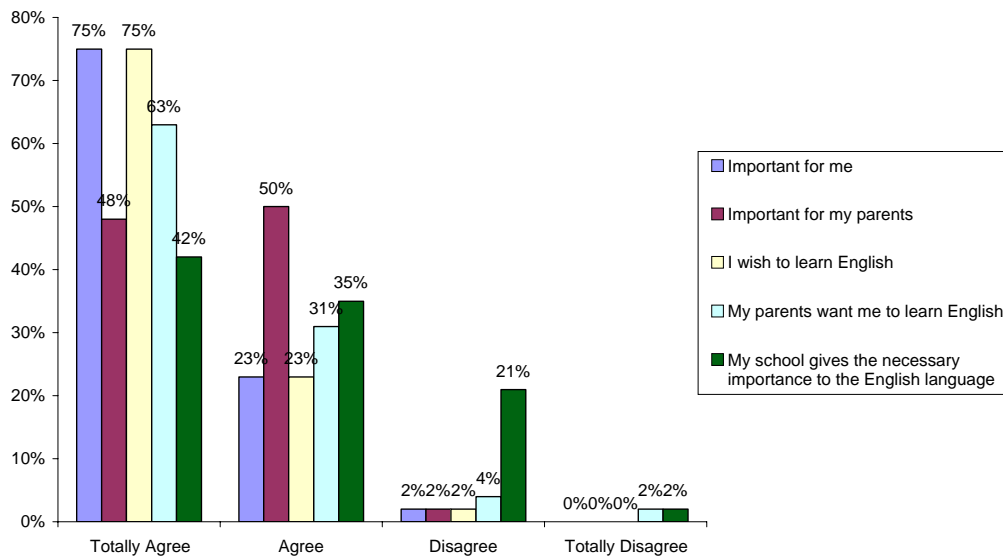
Parents Monthly Income

The vast majority of the students' parents earned \$1,001 to \$2,000 per month (33%). Twenty nine (29%) earned less than \$500.00 and up to \$1,000 and 25% earned from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Thirteen percent (13%) of the students did not respond. Most of the parents' monthly income is not that high which may be an indication that students are either low or middle-low class.

Students were also asked if they had traveled to the US or to any other English speaking country. Most students (54%) responded yes. Although they have been exposed to the English language by traveling to the US or other English speaking country, they claimed to have difficulties with speaking the language (See table 4.3). This might be because the exposure to English has not been frequent.

Students were also asked how important it was to know English. Table 4.2 shows the five categories from the questionnaire: “Important for me”, “Important for my parents”, “I wish to learn English”, “My parents want me to learn English” and “My school gives the necessary importance to the English language” and their degree of importance of English.

Table 4.2: Importance of English



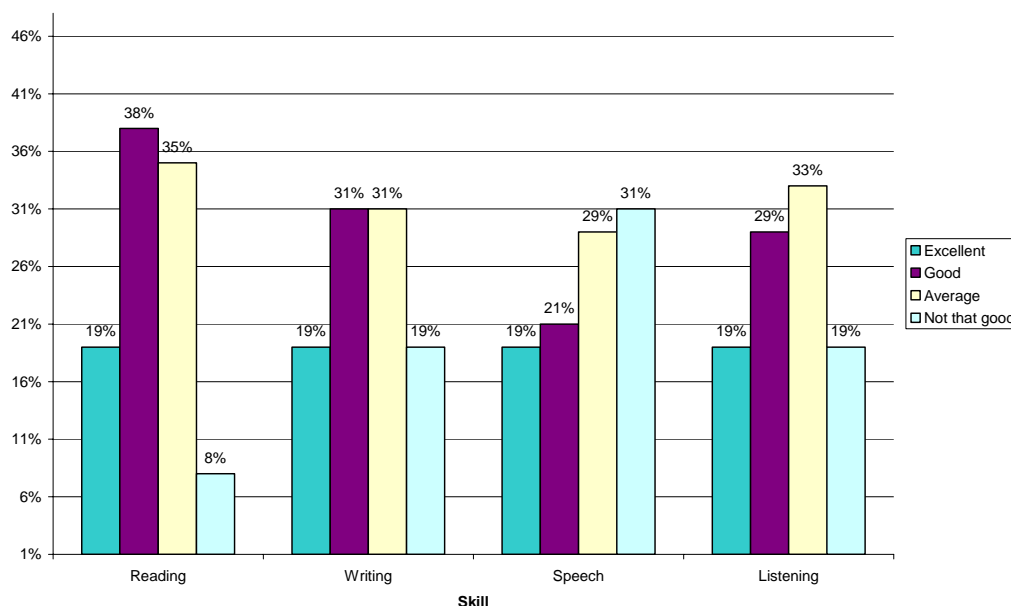
The highest percentage of students totally agreed that English is important for them (75%), that they wish to learn English, their parents want them to learn English (63%), and that their school gives the necessary importance to the English language (42%). The highest percentage of students agreed that English is important for their parents (50%). This table shows that English is important for the students, parents, and school. The students also responded to wanting to learn English and their parents also want them to learn it. As Korkmaz (2007) stated, the importance that schools, parents and teachers give to students’ education is vital for the success in the

academic world. Students should not be the only ones who are concerned about their education; they need support and care to help them reach their goals.

In order to find out more about the students, they were asked about their experience with English through their school life. The highest percentage of the students considered their experience with English through their school life as positive (54%). Thirty four percent (34%) did not have a positive or negative opinion, and the lowest amount of students (13%) considered their experience with English through their school life as negative. These results show that the majority of the students feel that the experience they have had with English through their school life has been positive. Crookes and Schmidt (as cited in Irizarry, 2005) suggested that second language teachers should provide meaningful activities and meet students' needs in order to help them to learn a second language (p. 13).

The following table (4.3) shows the students' perception of the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The students ranked their perception about the different skills using the words: "excellent", "good", "average" or "not that good".

Table 4.3: How do you consider you abilities in English?

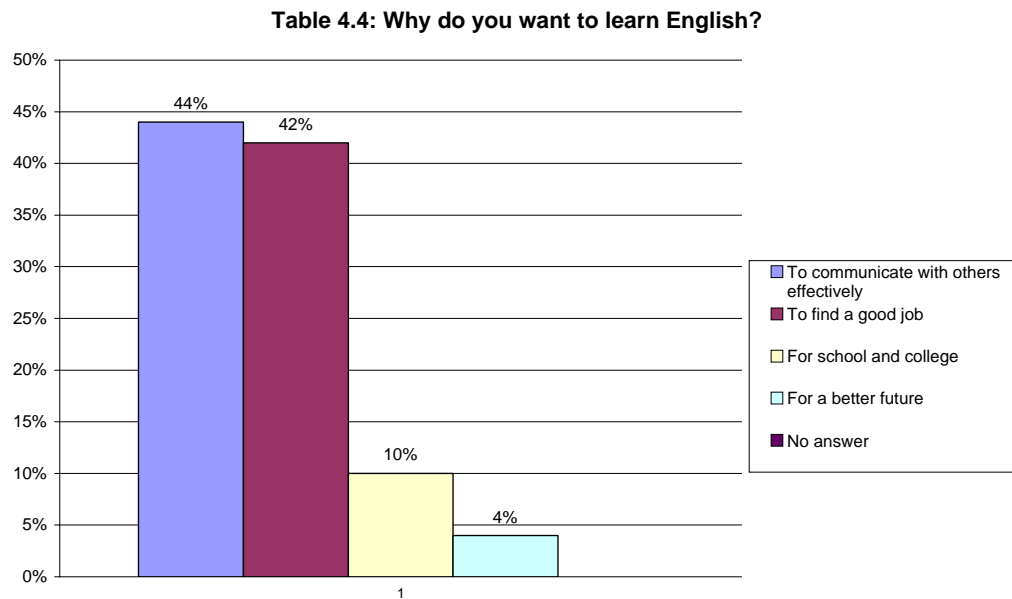


The majority of the students considered that their reading abilities were good (38%). In writing, the highest percentage of students considered their skills either good or average (31% for both). Few students considered their skills either excellent or not that good (19% respectively). In speech, the highest percentage of students considered their skills not that good (31%). The lowest percentage of students considered their skills excellent (19%). In listening, the highest percentage of students considered their skills average (33%). The lowest percentage of students considered their skills either "excellent" or "not that good" (19% respectively).

Overall, students believe they are not good speakers. According to the Department of Education’s standards for the 10th grade, students should be able to select a topic and talk freely about it. Students are also supposed to be able to listen to a short selection and identify details, main idea, or sequence (Department of Education, 2003, p. 36). The students’ perceptions about the English skills show a mis-match from the DEPR’s standards for 10th grade students. Students are probably

not practicing the use of speech in the classroom which challenges how comfortable they feel when speaking freely in English.

Table 4.4 illustrates the reasons why students want to learn English. Students gave several answers which included: “to communicate with others effectively,” “to find a good job,” “for school and college,” and “for a better future.”

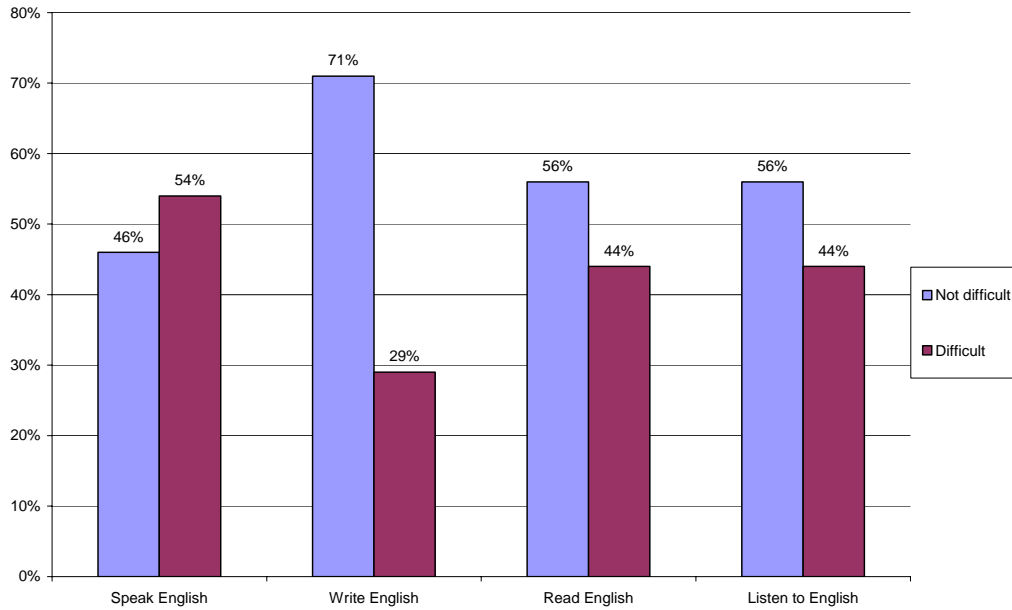


The highest percentage of students considered that English is important to communicate with others effectively (44%). The lowest percentage of students considered that English is important for a better future (4%). Students believe that English is important to have better communication with others, but it is not important for the future. These results are completely different from the school and parents’ expectations since both believe that English is the key to having a better professional future. Students do believe that English is important to find a better job, but there is a contradiction because few students (4%) answered that it is important to learn English to have a better future.

The next table (4.5) exemplifies the most difficult skills students perceive to have in English. The four basic skills given were: “speak English”, “write English”,

“read English”, and “listen to English”. Fifty four percent (54%) of students selected that speaking is difficult. The least difficult skill for students was writing (71%)

Table 4.5: Difficult Skills in English



According to the results of this table and table 4.3, most of the students have difficulties with speech. More than half of the students perceived the other skills as not difficult. Students were asked about the reasons why it is difficult for the students to speak English. Students openly answered a variety of answers, which included: “I don’t know how to express myself”, “I am not good at it”, and “I am scared of it”. The majority of them (58%) answered that they were scared of speaking English. Thirty eight percent (38%) answered they did not know how to express themselves, and 4% answered that they were not good at speaking the language.

As we can observe, most students are afraid of speaking English. The DEPR’s standards for oral communication in 10th grade clearly state that there has to be awareness of verbal and nonverbal communication, willingness to share experiences and ideas, willingness to talk in front of others, willingness to risk errors and

confidence in one's ability to communicate in English (p. 36). This shows that these students have not reached the level of competence to fulfill the educational standards for their level. They actually fear speaking English, therefore, it is difficult for them to freely speak the language as the Department of Education states they should.

The 10th grade students at this school clearly are students who belong mostly to a middle-low class. Most of them have difficulties with English due to the lack of exposure to the language and they are concerned about their future and being able to use English to find a job and reach professional success.

Objective #1b: Through a needs assessment:

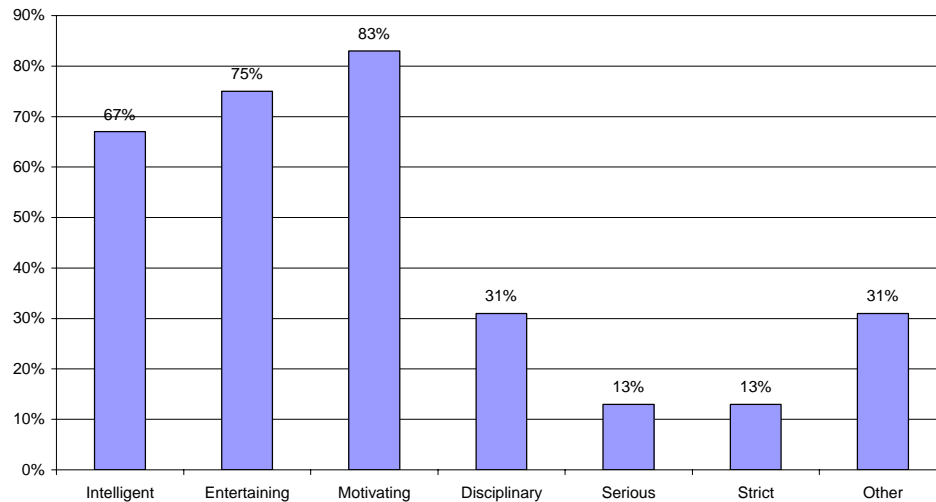
b. Develop a profile of students needs and interests regarding their learning of English

In order to satisfy Objective #1b, a profile of students' needs and interests was created. Two surveys and one interview were developed with the purpose of investigating the needs and interests of the students regarding the teaching and learning of English in their school (See appendix C, D and E). Students were asked what they wanted to learn in their English class, how they wanted their class to be, and what their teacher and school does to help them learn the language. They provided information about the materials that their school provides for the learning of English and the materials they would like their school to provide for them. They also gave information about the topics covered in the English class and the topics they would like their teacher to cover in class.

The next table (4.7) shows the opinions of the students related to how their English teacher should be in order for them to learn better. Students were given a variety of options, including: "intelligent", "entertaining", "motivating", "disciplinary", "serious", and "strict". Students were also given the "other" option in

which they could write other qualities. Students selected one or more answers. The majority of students answered that their teacher should be motivating (83%) and entertaining (75%), while few answered that their teacher should be strict or serious (13%).

Table 4.7: How should my English teacher be?

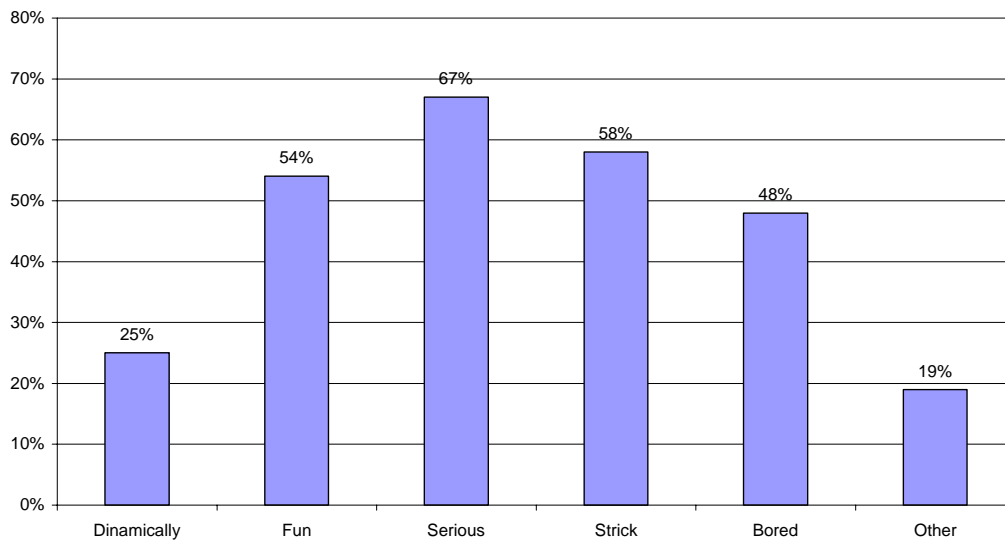


As shown in the previous table, most of the students believe that their English teacher should be motivating; this means that motivation is one of the most important characteristics for them to learn English. These results can be compared to what Brown (1994) stated about motivation being the most frequently used term that explains the success or failure of a complex task. The success in a task is directly related to the fact that someone is “motivated” to do it. Brown also stated that motivation is commonly thought as an impulse, inner drive emotion or desire that moves a person to a certain action (p. 156). Therefore, one can understand that students need to find a purpose for learning English as well as motivation from their teachers. If students feel motivated by their teachers, they will probably find a use to what they are learning in class, making the teaching-learning experience more

effective. Among the other responses, students also believed that their teacher should be “lovable”, “friendly” and “energetic.”

Table 4.8 shows the opinions of the students related to how their English teacher has taught the class. Students were given a variety of options which included: “dynamically”, “fun”, “serious”, “strict”, and “bored.” Students were also given the “other” option in which they could write other answers. Students selected one or more answers. The highest answer was “serious” (67%), followed by “strict” (58%) and “fun” (54%). The lowest answers were “bored” (48%), “dynamic” (25%), and “other” (10%). The other option included, “interesting depending on the teacher.”

Table 4.8: The way my English teacher has taught the class

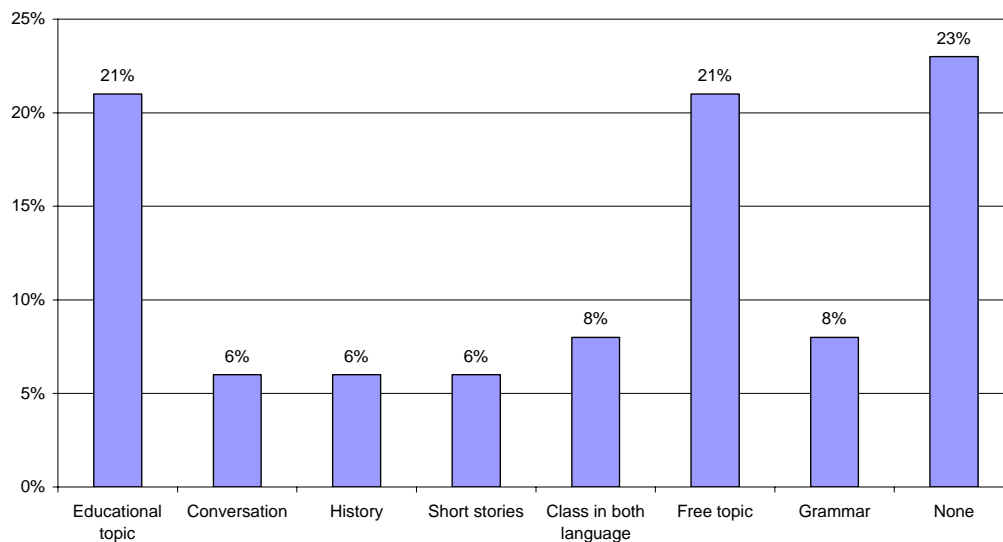


As illustrated, the students’ teacher seems more serious and strict than fun and dynamic. These results can be related to what Korkmaz (2007) found in an investigation about the parents, schools, and teachers responsibilities. According to the results, “Teachers should know, respect, and care about students, use a variety of instructional strategies, be aware of individual differences, motivate students very well, be a role model for them, prepare lesson plans, have good communication skills, use homework effectively, practice fairness, and let students gain responsibility”

(p.4). This denotes that the English teacher should take into account the students' particular needs and interests when teaching the class. It is important for the teacher to know the students' strengths and weaknesses before teaching a class in order to plan the course for them.

Table 4.9 gives us an idea of the topics that students would discuss in class if they were the English teacher. Students gave a variety of open responses which were summarized into: “educational topics”, “conversation”, “history”, short stories”, “class in both languages”, “free topics”, and grammar”. Most students (23%) stated they would not discuss any topics in the English class. This could be an indication of the students' motivation toward the English class. They are not interested in the English class so they do not want anything to be discussed in the class. “Educational topics” and “free topics” obtained the highest answers, both 21%, while the lowest ones were “conversation”, “history” and “short stories”, with 6% each. As we can observe, students would like their teacher to be more open with the topics discussed in class.

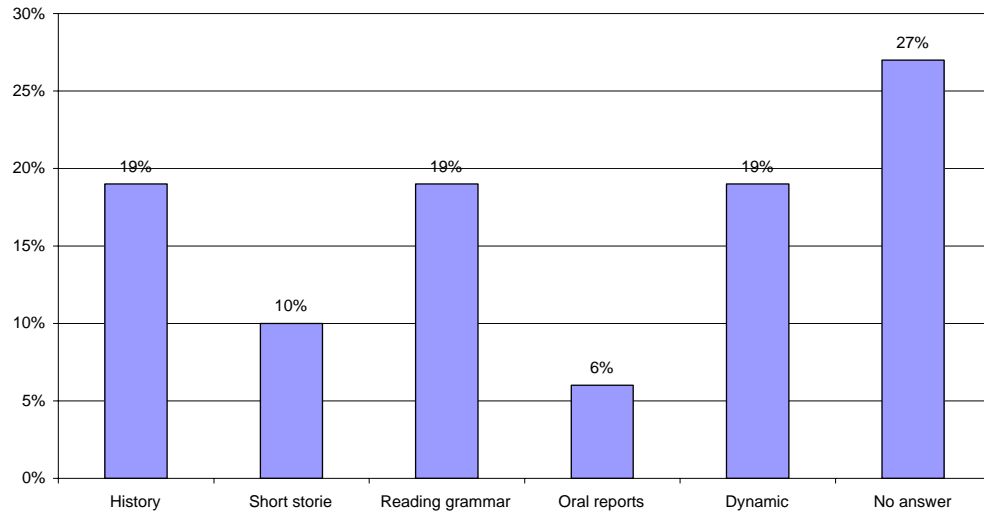
Table 4.9: If you were the English teacher, which topics would you discuss in class?



Of those who had specific ideas about what they wanted to be taught in their English class, many agreed to discuss either educational or free topics. Freire (1970) stated that the humanist, revolutionary educator's efforts coincide with those of the students in order to encourage them to use critical thinking and to quest for mutual humanization. The teacher trusts people and their creative power to build new knowledge. To achieve this, they must be their students' partners. The teacher should focus on the students' interests and needs. This tells us that it is important for the teacher to give choices to students and not to impose a material that students may not like or need. By giving students choices, they will be thinking critically and will reach higher levels of thinking and analysis.

Table 4.10 shows what the English class should be about. Students had the opportunity to write their answer and a variety of responses were provided. Again, many students (27%) did not reply showing some resistance to the English class and/or lack of motivation. The highest responses were "history", "reading/grammar", and "dynamic", each with a 19% respectively. The lowest was "oral reports" with a 6%.

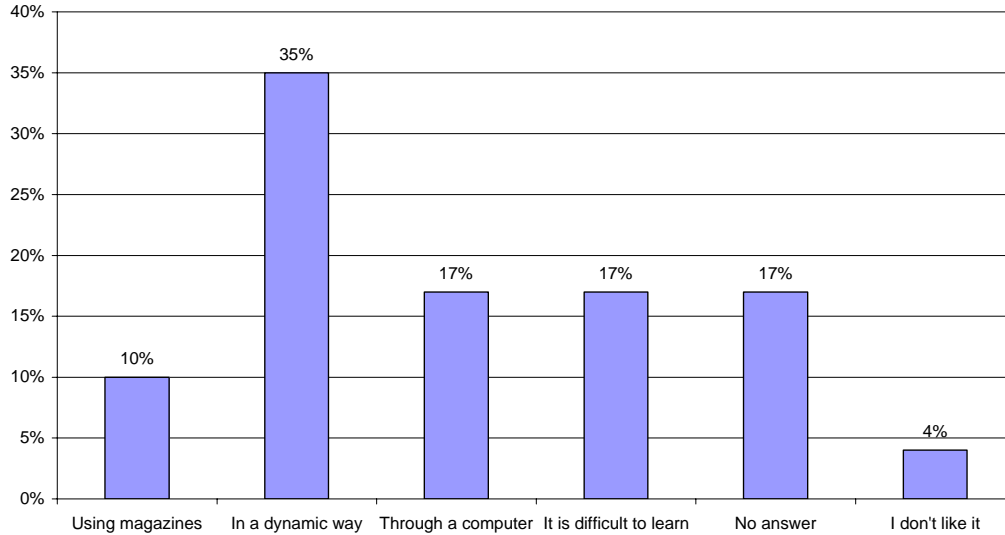
Table 4.10: If I were English teacher, I would like the class to be about



The results of this table tell us that most students prefer a dynamic class in which history, reading, and grammar can be included. Brown (1994) stated that in order for a class to be dynamic, students should be motivated to learn a complex task like grammar and history (as shown in this table). If students are motivated, they will find a use for what they are learning and the experience will be gratifying for them and for the teacher.

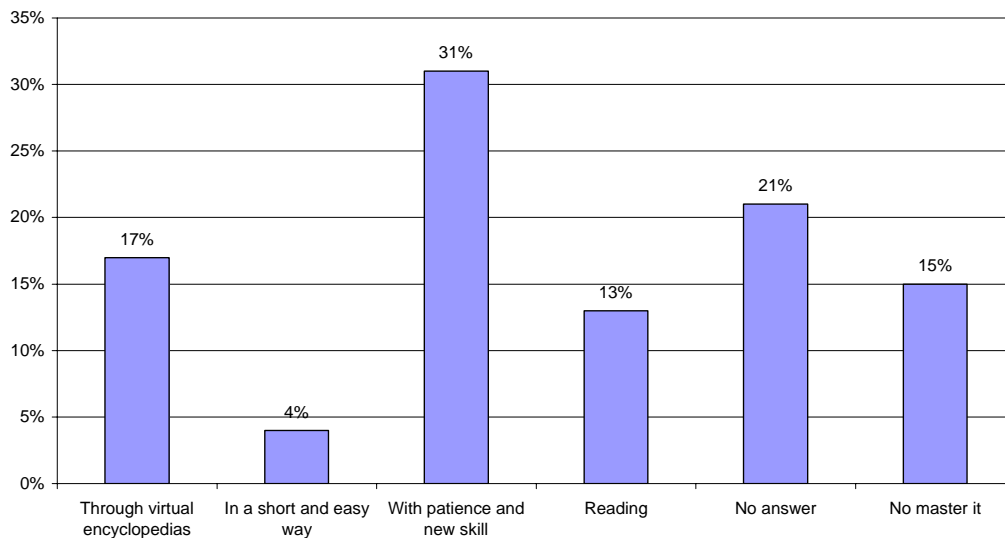
The next table (4.11) shows the way students would teach grammar if they were the English teacher. Students gave a variety of responses which were summarized into: “using magazines”, “in a dynamic way”, “through a computer”, “it is difficult to learn” and “I don’t like it”. The majority of the students (35%) answered that they would like the teacher to teach the class in a dynamic way so they can be motivated to learn it while few (4%) answered that they do not like grammar.

Table 4.11: If I were the English teacher, I would like to teach grammar



The next results shown in table 4.12, illustrate the way in which students would teach writing if they were the English teacher. Students gave a variety of responses which were summarized into: “through virtual encyclopedias”, “in a short and easy way”, “with patience and new skills”, “reading”, and “I don’t master it”. The majority of the students (31%) selected “with patience and new skills” while the minority (4%) selected “in a short and easy way”.

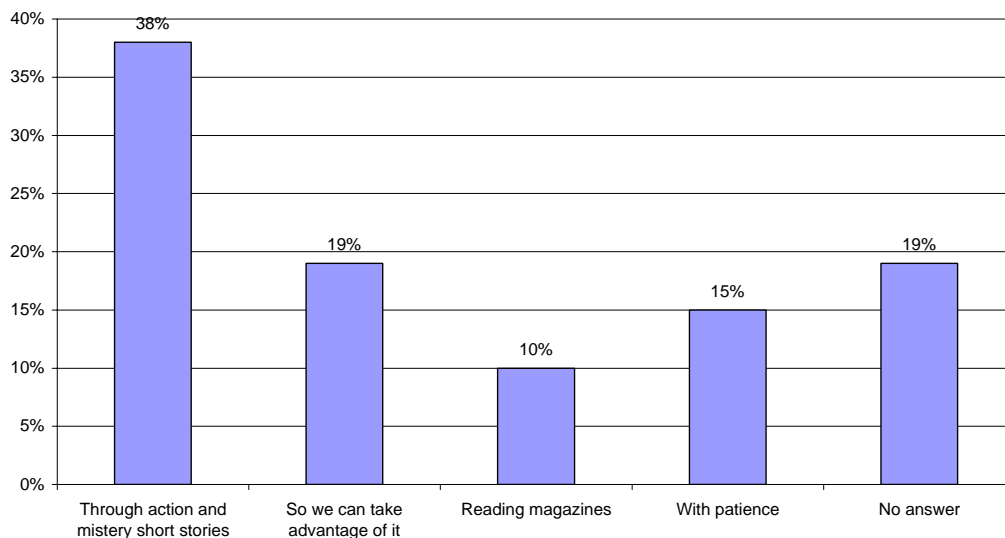
Table 4.12: If I were the English teacher, I would like to teach writing



The majority of students expressed that they want their teacher to have patience and to innovate the way of teaching writing. As cited before, Williams (2005) stated that it is very important to include non-traditional materials in the classroom since they can be very helpful in order for the students to take their literacy skills to a level that traditional assessment cannot. The teacher can use these non-traditional materials, such as technology, to catch the students' attention and motivate them to learn how to be better writers.

The following table (4.13) shows the way students would teach reading if they were the English teacher. Students gave a variety of responses which were summarized into: “through action and mystery stories”, “so we can take advantage of it”, “reading magazines”, and “with patience”. The majority of the students (38%) selected “through action and mystery stories” while the minority (10%) selected “reading magazines”.

Table 4.13: If I were the English teacher, I would like to teach reading?

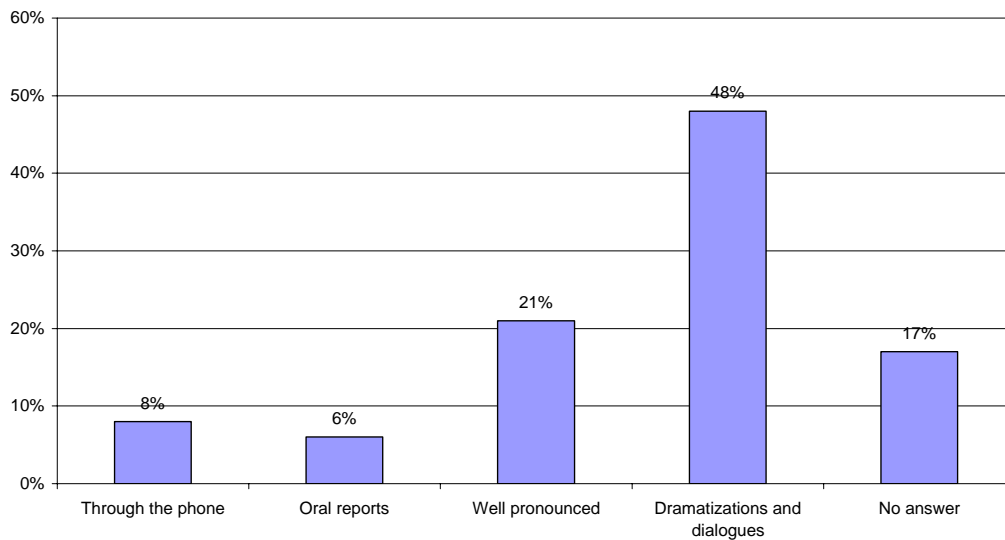


The majority of the students prefer to read action and mystery stories. It is important for the teacher to be aware of the material that students like to read and take advantage of that particular interest. Again, Freire (1970) stated that the humanist,

revolutionary educator’s efforts coincide with those of the students in order to encourage them to use critical thinking and to quest for mutual humanization. The teacher should believe in the creative power of the students in order to exploit their maximum potential, in this case, reading. By giving students choices, they could be motivated to use creativity and critical thinking because they like what they are reading.

Students expressed the way they would teach speech if they were the English teacher (Table 4.14). The majority of the students (48%) selected “dramatizations and dialogues” while the minority (6%) selected oral reports.

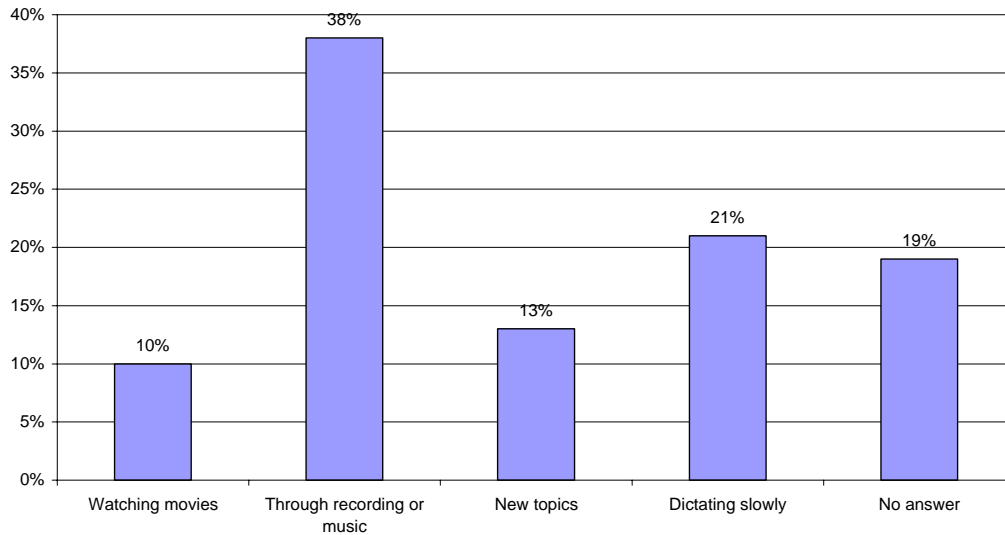
Table 4.14: If I were the teacher, I would like to teach conversation



As seen in tables 4.3 and 4.5, the results showed that the most difficult skill in English for these students is speech and in this table we can observe that the majority of the students believe that dramatizations and dialogues could be a good way to practice and learn this skill. As teachers, we have to take into account the ways in which students learn more effectively, that is why it is important to develop needs assessments before creating a class.

The next table (4.15) demonstrates the way students would teach listening if they were the English teacher. The majority of the students (38%) selected “through recordings and music” and the minority (10%) selected “movies”.

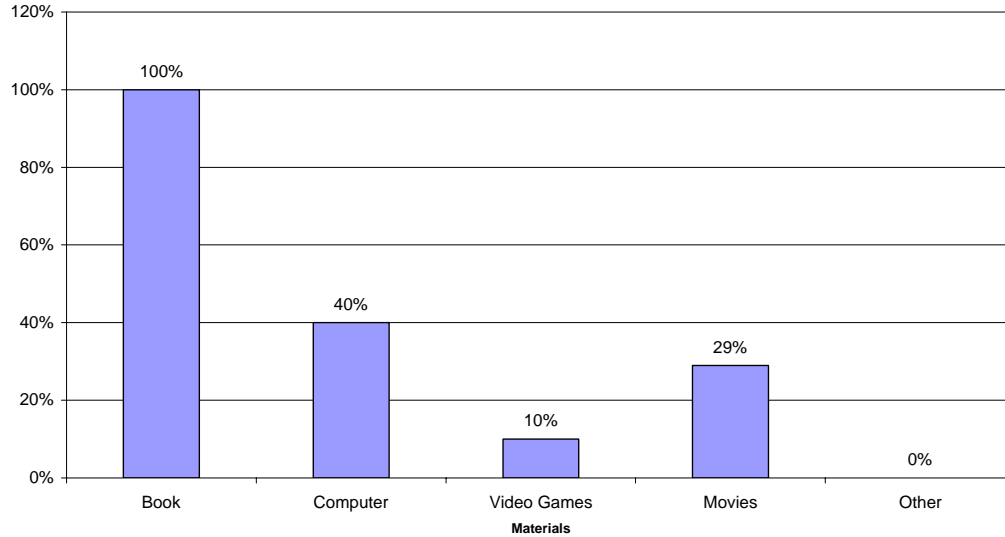
Table 4.15: If I were the English teacher, I would like to teach listening



According to the results in this table, the majority of the students believe that listening to music and recordings in English can be a good way of learning listening skills. Kennedy (2005) states how enriching music therapy can be and how it helps in acquiring the different skills when learning a language (p. 245). Students seem to enjoy music and they want to listen to it to learn ESL, therefore, the teacher could take advantage of all the benefits that it can bring to students that are interested in it.

Table 4.16 illustrates the materials that the school provides for the learning of English in Segundo Ruiz Belvis High School according to the students’ responses. Students were given various options, which included “books”, “computers”, “video games”, and “movies”. Students were given the “other” option in which they could write other materials that may not be in the options given. All of the students (100%) selected that the school provides books. "Computers" obtained 40%. "Videogames" obtained 10%, and "Movies" obtained 29%.

Table 4.16: Materials that my school provides for the learning of English



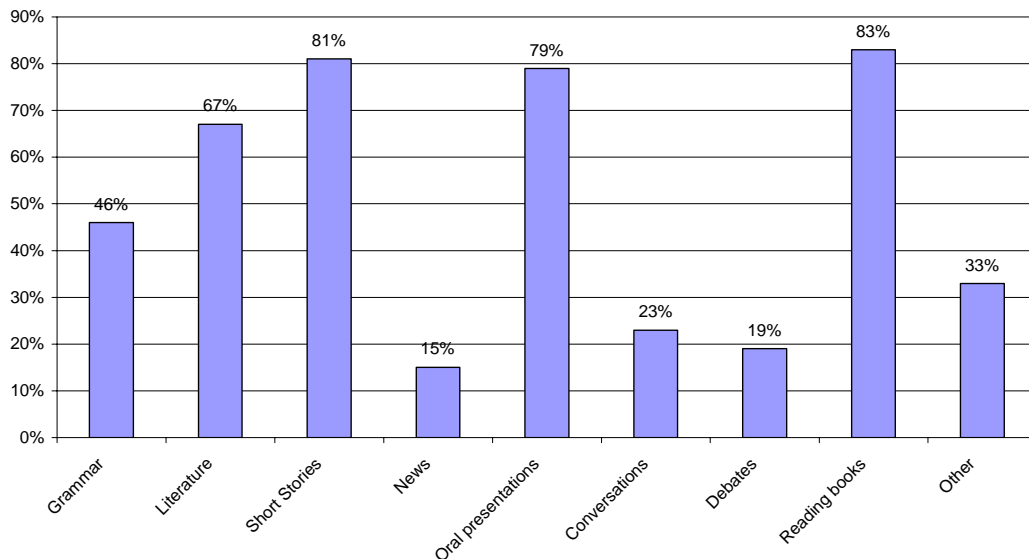
The results of this table show that the school mostly provides the traditional book as the material used in class. It seems that the technological aids such as computers, movies, and videogames are surely the least existent and used by the school. In terms of technology, Karchmer (2001) stated that through Internet, students can access an infinite amount of valuable information that can help them to develop their literacy skills. Karchmer found that the internet has changed the definition of literacy by introducing and exposing students to electronic sources and information not found in books. Houston and Wright (1998) explained that nowadays, parents have been noticing that supervised and controlled exposition to media and technology can be positive for their children's educational enrichment. According to the results, students do not have these useful materials in their schools which can help them acquire a better understanding of English through different ways of teaching and learning and which may be affecting their interest to learn the language.

The Department of Education of Puerto Rico is making a curricular revision in which the integration of technology will be used as a tool for the achievement of skills and academic standards. This revision will bring the need of computers and training to

educators about the use of technology as a complementary tool to develop learning activities in the classroom. Technology will also generate the demand of a new focus on the strategies and methodologies of teaching, in which the teacher plays the role of a facilitator and the student can have the necessary resources to build his (her) own knowledge.

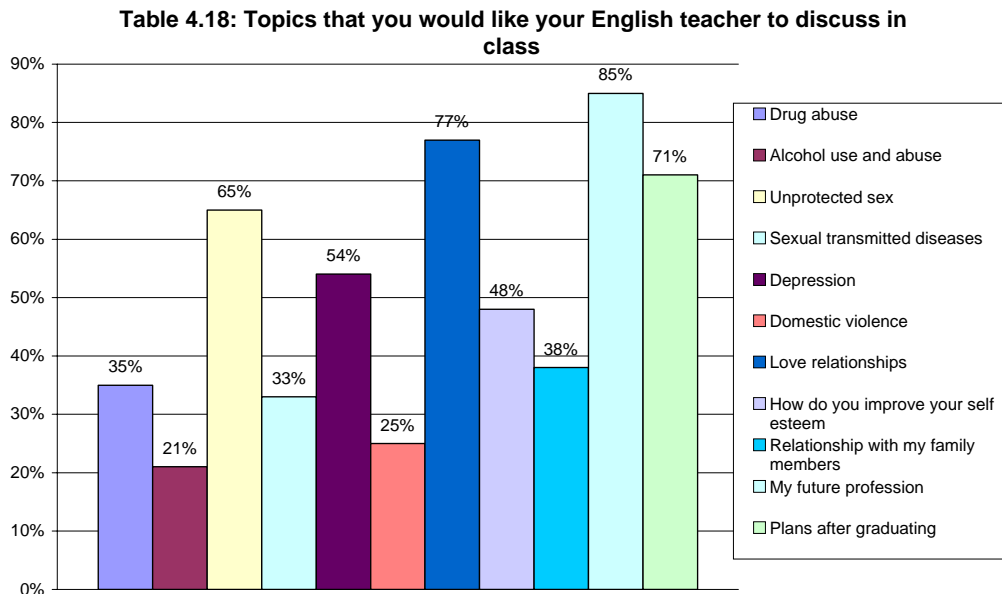
In table 4.17, students were asked about the material covered in the English class. Students were given several answers which included: “grammar”, “literature”, “short stories”, “news”, “oral presentations”, “conversations”, “debates”, and “reading books”. Students were given the “other” option in which they could write other material that may not be in the options given. The highest answer was "reading books", which obtained an 83% and the lowest was “news” with a 15%.

Table 4.17: Material covered in English class



The results in this table illustrate that students read in class. One of the least skills covered in class is conversation, which is one of the skills that students have most difficulty with (as shown in table 4.3, Abilities in English). These results tell us that the teacher should pay special attention to oral communication by allotting time to all skills equally.

Students expressed themselves about the topics they would like their teacher to discuss in class in table 4.18. Students were given a variety of choices which they could choose more than one. These topics have not been discussed in class before. The highest answer was “My future profession” (85%) followed by “Love Relationships” (77%). The lowest was “Alcohol use and abuse”, with a 21%.

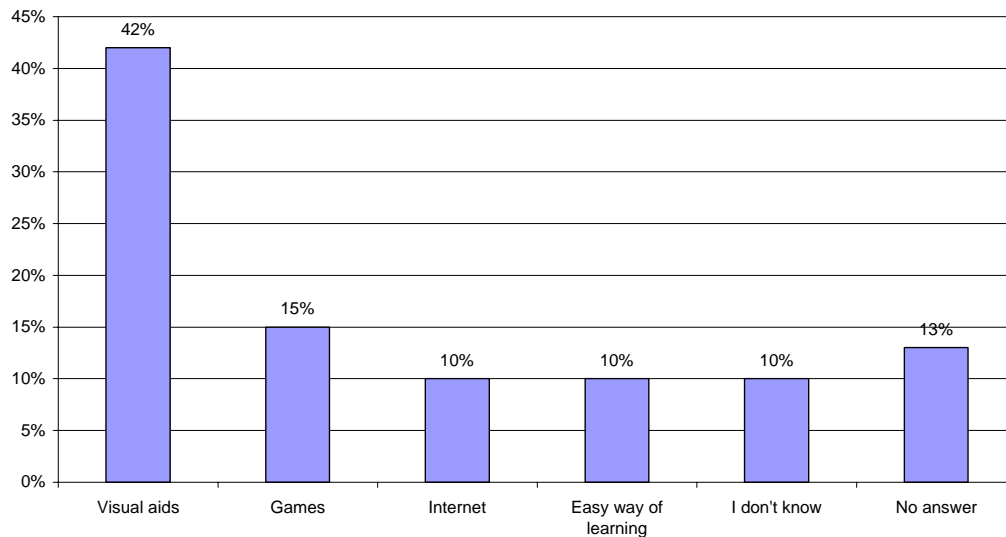


The majority of the students would like to discuss in class topics related with plans after graduating and love relationships. This question showed that these adolescents are concerned and would like to express their personal experiences in class as well as what the future has in store for them. This information serves as a needs assessment, a way to investigate the students’ needs and interests before creating and teaching a class. By performing a needs assessment, the teacher will know the students better and will target the students’ specific learning needs. The development of a needs assessment will also help the teacher know about specific topics that students will want to discuss in class. The topics shown in the table are the most frequent concerns that adolescent students have because they are still in a

transition between childhood and adulthood. Teachers should use these topics as the base of their instruction in order for students to be motivated to learn.

Table 4.19 illustrates the materials students would like used when learning English. Students gave a variety of responses which were summarized into: “visual aids”, “games”, “internet”, and “easy ways of learning”. The majority of students selected “visual aids” (42%). “Internet”, “easy ways of learning” and “I don’t know”, were the lowest (10%) respectively.

Table 4.19: I would like to be taught using



Most of students would like their teacher to use visual aids in class, which could include technology. Winn (2007) stated that researchers have found that designing instruction through technology has brought two major benefits. First, it is very useful to help students through their learning process. Second, it helps students study on their own and not depend on the teachers all the time. He also stated that technology-based instruction can bring information to students that teachers cannot. Students use TV, Internet and Video Games the most and they are very helpful sources of information. This table tells us that students would like to use technology in their class, but many of the schools do not count with these resources. Although the

Department of Education states they are transitioning into technology, it seems like this has not reached many schools.

Students also expressed several reasons why it is difficult for the students to write in English. The majority of them (43%) answered that they did not understand how to write in English. Thirty six percent (36%) answered that they did not know how to write it if someone is dictating and 21% answered that they lack vocabulary. Most students do not understand how to write in English. As cited before, the standards for writing in 10th grade state that students should be able to write an essay about a given topic including an introduction, body, and a conclusion (Department of Education, 2003, p. 38). According to these results, students do not feel they are able to fulfill the standards' requirements for their level in writing. The teacher should focus on students' writing practice by discussing vocabulary and written texts, which will serve as an example for writing.

Students were asked why it is difficult for them to read in English. Students openly stated a variety of answers: "I don't know how to pronounce it," "I don't understand," "I lack of vocabulary." The majority of students (57%) answered that they do not understand what they read. Thirty three percent (33%) did not know the pronunciation of the words and 10% lacked vocabulary to understand what they read. The results for reading and writing skills show the same reasons responses from the students. As cited before, the standards for reading in 10th grade state that students should recognize figures of speech organize the steps in a process, identify facts that support a conclusion, predict outcomes, and identify facts that support an opinion. According previous results, these students are also not able to fulfill the standards' requirements for their level in writing and reading. These two skills are usually used hand in hand when teaching ESL. Teachers usually focus on vocabulary and reading

as a preview to developing writing skills. According to Ferris & Hedgcock (2005), “The reciprocal relationships between reading and composing process have, in fact, become a focal point of L1 and L2 literacy research (p.36).” Ferris & Hedgcock (2005) also stated that many researchers have tried to account for how writing proficiency develops readers’ interactions with print. This clearly shows that there is a direct connection between these two skills, which should be of extreme importance in the teaching and learning of ESL.

Students expressed the reasons why it is difficult for students to listen to English. Students openly answered a variety of answers: “People don’t speak well,” and “I don’t understand.” The majority of the students (67%) do not understand when someone speaks in English. Fewer students (33%) answered that people do not speak well.

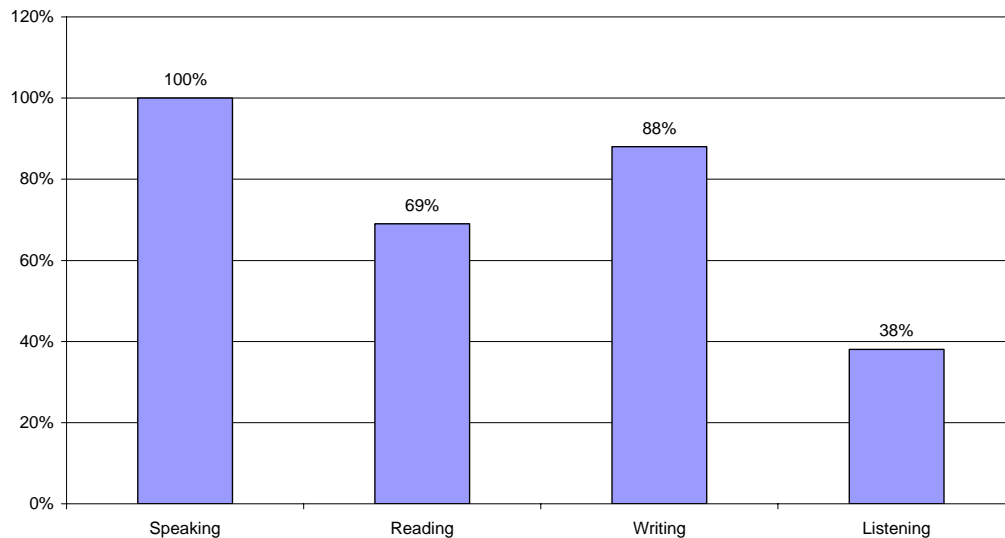
Students do not understand when someone is speaking English. This is a very important finding since students need to use listening to create all the other skills. The DEPR does not have any standards for listening, but this skill goes hand in hand with speech, reading and writing skills. The results shown in tables 4.3 and 4.21 clearly show that speaking, reading, writing and listening are not fulfilled by the majority of these 10th grade students, yet they are important in order to learn ESL. Listening comprehension is not being practiced enough in class. The teacher should be aware of this finding and give students more listening comprehension exercises so the students can start practicing their hearing and eventually lead to understanding words in a conversation.

Interviews

The following tables and discussions represent the results of the tape recorded interviews. Sixteen students, 8 males and 8 females, were chosen to participate in these interviews. These were open questions in which students had to talk about their experiences. The most outstanding tendencies were placed on tables and are presented herein. Qualitative results are also included in the form of direct quotes.

Table 4.21 illustrates the degree of difficulty students have with English. Students gave several answers which included: “speaking,” “reading,” “writing,” and “listening.” All of the students (100%) expressed that they have difficulty with speech. Sixty nine percent (69%) expressed that it was difficult for them to read while 88% expressed that it was difficult for them to write. Thirty eight percent (38%) expressed that it was difficult for them to listen.

Table 4.20: Difficulty with English



Students clearly stated they have difficulty with speech. As shown in table 4.3, speech is also shown as the most difficult skill for these students. Table 4.17 shows us that Speech (conversation) is the least skill covered in the English class. These tables

clearly tell us that the English class is not focusing on speech, which is one of the areas that the students feel they need.

Several students stated that:

- a) “Lo más difícil que se me hace es hablarlo por que no tengo con quien practicar y en la escuela nadie habla inglés mas que en la clase.” [The most difficult thing for me is speaking it because I don’t have anyone to practice with and in school; no one speaks English, only in class.]
- b) “Hablar es difícil por que por que aquí nadie habla inglés; solo lo escucho en la televisión.”[Speaking is difficult because nobody speaks English; I only listen to it on TV].
- c) “Hablar y escribir es difícil por que casi nunca lo hago.”[Speaking and writing is difficult because I almost never do it]

These results tell us that the majority of students do not have the opportunity to practice English on a daily basis. It appears that the classroom is the only place where they have contact with English. This can be an indication of the lack of ability these students have in English. If these students do not have enough practice in and out of school, their proficiency level will be low. What is also interesting is that when looking at their grades in the English class, 85% of the students pass their English class, yet they do not have the basic skills. There is definitely a mis-match of information in terms of the skills being taught and the grade they are receiving.

Students expressed the reasons why they have difficulties with English. Students gave a variety of answers: “I didn’t have a good teacher,” “My school wasn’t good in English,” “I am not good in English,” and “I don’t like English.” The majority of the students (75%) expressed that they did not have good teachers. Only a few

expressed either that they are not good in English or that they do not like English (6% for both answers).

Several students stated:

- a) “Mis maestros de inglés no eran muy buenos por que siempre hablaban en español y por eso no aprendí muy bien.”[My English teachers were not that good because they always spoke in Spanish and because of that, I did not learn very well.]
- b) “No daban casi clase, lo único que hacían era ponernos a escribir y a leer cosas aburridas que no entendíamos.”[They did not give much class, the only thing they did was to ask us to write and read boring things that we did not understand.]
- c) “En mi escuela se hablaba mas que español y no practicábamos hablar inglés.”[In my school only Spanish was spoken and we didn’t practice speaking English.]

With these responses, we can see that the 10th grade English course does not promote the practice of English and that teachers do not encourage students to practice the language often. Because of this, students do not master English as they should by their age.

Students also expressed their opinions towards the teaching of English in their school. The majority of the students expressed that their school does not help them to solve their difficulties with English. These expressions can be compared with table 4.19, which shows that the students would like to be taught using visual aids. The majority of the students expressed that their school does not provide them with the necessary tools, such as visual aids, to learn English. Table 4.16 shows all of the students answered that the school provides books for the learning of English, which is

a traditional tool. According to these results, students need innovative classes with non traditional materials so the class can be more attractive to them and the desire for learning can improve.

The majority of students also expressed that their school does not provide any technology for the learning of English. As mentioned above, these students believe that their school should provide them with the necessary tools to learn English

Several students said:

- a) “Nosotros no tenemos nada para aprender en la escuela, sólo libros.”[We don’t have anything to learn in school, only books.]
- b) “En la escuela usamos mas que libros y cuentos, es aburrido.”[In school we use only books and short stories, it’s boring.]
- c) “A mi no me gusta la clase por que solo escribimos en la pizarra.”[I don’t like the class because we only write on the board.]

Apparently, the school is not providing the materials necessary for the students. Students wish to have a more exciting class using non-traditional and creative materials other than books and the blackboard.

Students talked about the actions that the Department of Education can take to help students with difficulties learning English. Students gave a variety of answers: “To teach all the courses in English since Elementary School,” “To change the ways teachers give the class,” and “It will be difficult to change things because students don’t want to learn and the teachers are not interested in teaching.”

Fifty six percent (56%) of the students expressed that all the courses should be taught in English since Elementary School and 31% expressed that teachers should change the ways of teaching English. Thirteen percent of the students (13%) expressed that it will be difficult to change things because the students do not want to

learn English and the teachers are not interested in teaching. Clearly, students believe that all the courses should be taught in English since Elementary School. To be immersed in the English language at an early age can make the students more proficient in both English and Spanish. To be constantly exposed and to practice the language can help them to be more fluent. Several students said:

- a) “Las clases se deben de dar en inglés desde que uno esta en elemental para poderlo aprender desde chiquito.”[The courses should be taught in English since elementary school so we can learn it since we are little.]
- b) “Si las clases se dan en inglés desde que uno es pequeño, uno aprende mejor por que siempre estás practicando.”[If the courses are taught in English since you are little, one learns better because you are always practicing.]
- c) “Me hubiera gustado ser bilingüe desde chiquita pero todo era siempre en español.”[I would have liked to be bilingual since I was little, but everything was always in Spanish.]

According to these responses, students believe that English should be taught in a different way since elementary school. They believe that the Department of Education should change its curriculum to a bilingual one so the learning of English can be more effective.

Students spoke about the actions the students’ teachers take to help them learn English. These included: “She teaches a lot of grammar,” “She always speaks in English,” “She doesn’t allow us to speak Spanish,” and “She encourages us to read out loud.” The majority of students expressed (50%) that their teacher focuses on a lot of grammar while the minority (6%) expressed that she encourages them to read out loud.

The teacher focuses on teaching grammar in class. As shown in tables 4.3 and 4.5, the students' most difficult skill is speech. Other skills, such as grammar, reading, and writing are also important in order to teach oral communication yet students seem to perceive none of these skills are being incorporated into the class. Several students said:

- a) “La maestra nos da muchas oraciones y vocabulario para escribir en la libreta.”[The teacher gives us a lot of sentences and vocabulary to write in our notebooks.]
- b) “Siempre estamos escribiendo en la clase y haciendo ejercicios de gramática.”[We are always writing in class and doing grammar exercises.]
- c) “La maestra siempre esta dándonos ejercicios para escribir en la pizarra y en la libreta. Nos da definiciones y muchas cosas de gramática.”[The teacher is always giving us exercises to write on the board and the notebook. She gives us definitions and a lot of grammar exercises.]

According to these responses, students expressed that the English class is not very dynamic. We can infer that students really want an interactive class in which other skills, other than grammar, are discussed in class.

In order to find out if the students perceive themselves as English speakers and moreover, as bilingual, they were asked if they considered themselves bilingual. The results showed that all of the students (100%) expressed that they do not consider themselves bilingual. Bimer (2007) stated that a bilingual person is someone who can speak two languages. These results contradict the purpose of the English Curriculum Framework, which is for the students to become bilingual and one can infer that the purpose of the English Curriculum Framework is not taking place.

Students were asked if they would like to speak English. The results showed that all of the students (100%) would like to speak English. As shown in tables 4.3 and 4.5, speaking is the most difficult skill for these students and these results tell us that they need and want to speak English better. This also tells us that teachers should give special attention to speech in class.

Students were asked if English is important. The results showed that all of the students (100%) expressed that English is important. The majority of students (88%) expressed that learning English is important because it will help them to obtain better job opportunities. Fewer considered either that it will help to have better communication with people from other countries or that it will prevent them from getting lost when traveling because everyone speaks English around the world (6% for each answer).

The majority of the students interviewed believed that learning English will give them better job opportunities. Instrumental motivation is directly related with this answer. Brown (1994) stated that instrumental motivation refers to motivation to acquire a language in order to obtain goals such as pursuing a career, reading technical material, translation, and so forth. In this case, instrumental motivation seeks to improve professionally by having better job opportunities in order to have a better future. The Department of Education also emphasizes this motivation. Several students said:

- a) “Saber inglés ayuda a uno a conseguir trabajo por que ya todo el mundo habla inglés.”[Knowing English helps one to find a job because nowadays everybody speaks English.]

- b) “El inglés es importante por que hace que consigas mejor trabajo y que tengas mas éxito en el futuro.”[English is important because it helps you to find a better job and to have a better future.]
- c) “En los trabajos te piden que hables inglés por que uno de los idiomas más importantes y que más se habla en el mundo.”[In every job, they ask you to speak English because it is one of the most important languages spoken in the World.]
- d) “Hay que aprender inglés por que así uno tendrá un mejor futuro.”[We have to learn English because that way one will have a better future.]
- e) “El inglés abre puertas para conseguir buenos trabajos aquí y afuera.”[English opens doors to find good jobs here and out.]

Students seem to be worried about the future that awaits them, and English seems to be an instrumental key for success.

Students were asked if they have had to speak English. The results showed that all (100%) have had to speak English. Many students (50%) expressed that they have had to speak with someone and it was difficult because they did not know how to. Thirty eight percent (38%) expressed that when they traveled to the US they were nervous because they had to speak English and they did not know how to. Thirteen percent (13%) expressed that they have friends and/or family members who speak English.

The results previously shown clearly illustrate there is a degree of deficiency in terms of speech. Several students stated:

- a) “Tuve que hablar inglés con una gente que vino a visitar a mi familia y se me hizo difícil por que no sabía como hablar bien.”[I had to speak English because some people came to visit my family and it was difficult because I didn’t know how to speak well.]
- b) “Tengo una prima que vive en Pennsylvania y cuando viene a visitar me habla inglés y la entiendo pero se me hace difícil hablar con ella por que no encuentro las palabras.”[I have a cousin who lives in Pennsylvania and when she comes to visit, she speaks to me in English and I understand her but it is difficult to speak with her because I can’t find the words.]
- c) “Una vez viajé a Chicago con mis papás y se me hizo difícil hablar inglés por que casi nadie habla español por allá y me puse nerviosa”. [I once traveled to Chicago with my parents and it was difficult to speak English because almost no one speaks Spanish there and I was nervous.]
- d) “Cuando viajé a Nueva York a ver a mi hermana casi no hablé inglés por que no sabía como y estaba bien nerviosa, pero ella me ayudó por que sabe más que yo.”[When I traveled to New York to see my sister, I almost didn’t speak because I didn’t know how to and I was very nervous, but she helped me because she knows more than I do.]

Again, these responses show that students have a lack of competence in terms of English speech.

Students expressed opinions of why English is important for Puerto Ricans. Students expressed a variety of different answers. All of the students (100%) expressed that English is important for Puerto Ricans. The majority of students (56%) expressed that it is important in order to find a good job. Fewer students (6%) answered that it is important because it is a language that everyone should know.

The majority of the students expressed that English is important for Puerto Ricans in order to find a good job. Bailey (1986) stated that intrinsic motivation occurs when the learner desires to learn a language for personal reasons. Extrinsic motivation occurs when an external power moves a person to learn a second language. According to the results of the table, the majority of the students believe that English is important for external powers that move them to learn it (extrinsic motivation), while fewer students believe that English is important for personal reasons (intrinsic motivation). Several students stated:

- a) “Se supone que los puertorriqueños sepamos inglés por que si vamos a Estados Unidos y no sabemos hablar, entonces no conseguiremos trabajo.”[Puerto Ricans are supposed to know English because if we go to the US and we don't know how to speak, we will not be able to find a job.]
- b) “Los puertorriqueños debemos de aprender inglés para demostrar que podemos trabajar igual que los americanos.”[Puerto Ricans should learn English to show the Americans that we can work like them.]
- c) “El inglés es bien importante para nosotros por que nos puede ayudar a tener un buen futuro.”[English is very important for us because it can help us to have a better future.]
- d) “Si sabemos dos idiomas es mejor por que así podemos hacer diferentes trabajos.”[It is better if we know two languages because that way we can do different jobs.]

Students talked about the benefits of speaking two languages. Students gave different answers. They expressed that it is important to have better job opportunities. Eight one percent (81%) expressed that it is important to have a better communication. Sixty three percent (63%) expressed that English is good for studying at the university

while 69% expressed that it helps people when they travel. Six percent (6%) expressed that all the TV programs are in English and 13% expressed that computers and Internet are in English.

Most students believe that the benefits of speaking two languages are to have a better job and a better future. As shown in previous tables, students see the importance of English through instrumental motivation. They believe that English is the key to be a better professional. Several students said:

- a) “Si hablamos más de un idioma podremos conseguir unos buenos trabajos que nos ayuden a tener un buen futuro.”[If we speak more than one language, we could find better jobs that can help us have a better future.]
- b) “Es bueno saber dos idiomas por que así nos podemos comunicar bien y conseguir trabajos buenos.”[It is good to know two languages because this way we can communicate well and find good jobs.]
- c) “Se hace más fácil estudiar en la universidad y trabajar después si sabemos inglés y español.”[It’s easier to study at the university and then work if we know English and Spanish.]
- d) “Se deben saber los dos idiomas para poder estudiar mejor y tener un mejor trabajo.”[We should know two languages so we can study and get a better job.]

Students are very concerned about their future. They believe that being bilingual has benefits that can help them reach their goals and have a better future.

Clearly, English is important for the students to attain a better profession. This overall finding justifies creating a unit which promotes the use of English in the pursuit of a professional career and a better future.

Objective#2: To take the results of the needs assessment and the information that the Curriculum Framework offers and create an English curricular unit for the 10th grade based on the students' needs and interests is described in the next chapter. The title of the unit is: Job, Career, and Future.

Chapter 5: Career, Job and Future Unit

Considering the history of the English language in Puerto Rico, the Department of Education's standards for 10th grade English, and the most important factors which contribute to enhance student learning, an English curricular unit based on the needs and interests of the students was created. After an extensive study, which included surveys and interviews given to two 10th grade groups of Segundo Ruiz Belvis High School in Hormigueros, significant data was collected which helped in the creation of the Curricular Unit. The recollection and analysis of data took me to create a unit called "Job, Career, and Future Unit", which is composed of 20 different activities. Students and teachers will be able to use technology in many of the activities created.

The unit has several purposes which include:

- To encourage students to think and analyze their goals and expectations for the future in terms of their profession.
- To encourage students to use technology as an instrument of learning.
- To prepare students with the necessary skills to search for a job which are:
 1. filling a job application
 2. elaborate a resume
 3. doing a job interview
- To encourage students to fulfill the expectations of the Department of Education's standards of 10th grade English at the time that they are working in an interesting, necessary and motivating unit of their choice.

Dear Teachers:

The following Curricular Unit focuses on students' career, job and future. This unit is one of many options that will help in getting students interested and motivated in learning ESL. There are nine lesson plans and 20 different activities which can engage students to participate actively in class using interesting topics. Some of the activities include: an action plan for the future, reading and responding to job advertisements, completing job applications, building a resume among others. The unit was created to help fulfill the Department of Education standards for the 10th grade. Since the framework implies teachers need to create curricula for the students, this unit facilitates such creation and serves as an example to get students involved in learning ESL.

The use of technology plays an important part in many of the activities of this unit because it is one of the most important educational aids that teachers can use with their students in order to prepare them for the demands of the future. Computers are a part of technology and the use of the internet gives access to many materials. Since many schools lack technology, as stated by the students in this study, the materials are easily accessible for you to download the materials and use it in your classroom. The unit is available online in PDF format at:

<http://grad.uprm.edu/oeg/TesisDisertacionesDigitales/Ingles/>.

Career, Job and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: My action plan for the future

Time: 1 or 2 days

Phase: Exploration

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard #2: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class period, the student will be able to:

1. discover career options for them
2. name different careers that exist
3. discuss their opinions about the different careers that exist
4. work in groups
5. participate in the response to different questions about the career they choose

II. Procedure:

1. The teacher will write up a 3 x 5 table on the board where the students are going to write different careers that they like.
2. The teacher will ask each student to describe and talk about the career of their choice and the reasons they have for choosing that career.
3. The students will answer 4 guide questions that will help them to explore and write about the career of their choice (see activity 1.1).
4. In groups of two, students will talk and discuss their career choice with their peer and will help each other to answer the questions.
5. In a large group discussion, the class will discuss the questions with the teacher.

Name: _____
Date: _____

Group: _____

Activity 1.1. Fill in the blanks about your action plan for the future.

1. My future job is going to be:

2. I need the following skills to become:

3. I can gain the skills for my future job in:

4. Now, I need to

to prepare for my future job.

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Comic Strip

Time: 2 or 3 days

Phase: Application

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard #3: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class, students will be able to:

1. use their artistic creativity by creating a comic strip
2. use the techniques learned in class and put them in practice
3. express themselves in English in front of an audience
4. use technology to create their comic strips
5. critique each other's work

II. Procedure:

1. In groups of two, students will create a story the form of a comic strip
2. Students are going to choose two topics:
 - A future without education
 - My preparation for my first job interview
3. The teacher is going to show an example of a comic strip and will answer students' questions if any (see activity 1.2).
4. In a Power Point presentation, students are going to show their work in front of the class.
5. After each presentation, students are going to express their opinions and discuss about them.

Activity 1.2. Choose one partner. In a Power Point Presentation, create a comic strip choosing one of the following topics:

- A future without education
- My preparation for my first job interview

Examples of different ways of creating comic strips:

I.



II.



Source: <http://www.comics.com>

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Job Advertisements

Time: 1 or 2 days

Phase: Conceptualization

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard #2: Reading Comprehension

I. Objectives: By the end of the class, the students will be able to:

1. examine and analyze different kinds job advertisements
2. discuss and analyze the job advertisements in class
3. work in groups
4. discuss and analyze people qualified for each job
5. relate the description of what the advertisements is asking with peoples' qualifications

II. Procedure:

1. The teacher will hand out a work sheet with job advertisements and the description (see activity 1.3).
2. Students will read out loud each job advertisement and discuss in large groups what they are asking for.
3. The teacher will hand out a second work sheet with peoples' qualifications for each position asked in the job advertisement (see continuation of activity 1.3).
4. In groups of two, the students will connect each job advertisement with the person qualified for each position.
5. The results will be discussed in a large group.

Name: _____

Group: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1.3. Read the following job advertisements. Answer the questions.

1. Needed: Full time secretary position available. Applicants should have at least 2 years experience and be able to type 60 words a minute. No computer skills required. Apply in person at University of Puerto Rico, 17 Post Street, Mayaguez, PR.
2. Are you looking for a part time job? We require 3 part time shop assistants to work during the evening. No experience required, applicants should be between 18 and 26. Call 787- 555-5555 for more information.
3. Computer trained secretaries: Do you have experience working with computers? Would you like a full time position working in an exciting new company? If your answer is yes, give us a call 787-888-8888
4. Teacher Needed: Pasito's Playschool needs 2 teacher/trainers to help with classes from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Applicants should have appropriate licenses. For more information visit Pasito's Playschool in Mayaguez Town.

5. Part Time work available: We are looking for retired adults who would like to work part time at the weekend. Responsibilities include answering the telephone and giving customer's information. For more information contact us by calling 787- 555-5555.

6. University positions open: The University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez is looking for 4 teaching assistants to help with homework correction. Applicants should have a degree in one of the following: Political Science, Religion, Economics or History. Please contact the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez for more information.

Adapted from:

<http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/adultesol/HighIntermediate/WorkforceDev/70.03.pdf>

Continuation of activity 1.3. Comprehension Questions

Which position is best for these people? Choose ONLY ONE position for each person.

José Rivera. José recently retired and is looking for a part time position. He would like to work with people and enjoys public relation work.

The best job for José is:

Marianne Izquierdo. Marianne graduated from the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras with a degree in Economics two years ago. She would like an academic position.

The best job for Marianne is:

Karissa Méndez. Karissa is 21 years old and would like a part time position to help her pay her university expenses. She can only work in the evenings.

The best job for Karssia is:

Alicia Rivera. Alicia was trained as a secretary and has six years of experience. She is an excellent typist but does not know how to use a computer. She is looking for a full time position.

The best job for Alicia is:

Joanne Mateo. Joanne went to business school and studied computer and secretarial skills. She is looking for his first job and would like a full time position.

The best job for Joanne is:

Vicente Ortíz. Vicente loves working with children and has an education license from the city of San Juan. He would like to work with young children.

The best job for Vcente is:

Adapted from:

<http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/adultesol/HighIntermediate/WorkforceDev/70.03.pdf>

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1
Level: 10th grade
Topic: Complete job applications and resume

Time: 2 or 3 days
Phase: Application
Standard # 3: Written Communication

- I. Objectives: By the end of the class, students are going to be able to:
- a. identify the different parts of a job application
 - b. write and complete a job application with the information discussed in class
 - c. identify the different parts of a resume
 - d. create their own resume with the information discussed in class
 - e. use technology to work on their job applications and resumes

II. Procedure

1. Using an overhead projector, the teacher is going to show a job application Activity Sheet “Practice Job Application” (see activity 1.4). The teacher is going to ask students to focus on the four parts: personal information, employment history, education and references. Familiarize students with each part.
2. Have students get in pairs to complete the activity the “Practice Job Application” activity sheet.
3. The teacher is going to discuss the purpose and components of a resume using an overhead projector, showing activity Sheet “Sample Resume Brad J. Waterman” (see activity 1.5). The teacher is going to review each section with the students and discuss the types of jobs that require resumes and jobs which do not.
4. Students are going to be requested to complete Activity Sheet “Writing a Resume” (see activity 1.6). Students are going to use the information from this form to complete their own resume.
5. If facilities allow, students are going to type their resume on a computer and print it out.
6. The teacher is going to discuss each resume with the group and students are going to express their opinions about them.
7. After the discussion, students are going to revise their job applications and resumes and will hand them in to the teacher for grading.

Name: _____
Date: _____

Group: _____

Activity 1.4. Complete the following job application.

Practice Job Application

Personal Section:

Name: Last First MI

House or Apartment Address: City / State Zip Code

Home phone number Message or Cell phone Number

Driver's License Number

Position Applying for: _____

Date you can start work: _____

Salary desired: \$ _____

Past Job Experience or Work

Job Title

Employer

Address City / State Zip Code

() _____
Telephone Number

Dates of employment: _____

Reasons for leaving:

Job Title

Employer

Address City / State Zip Code

() _____
Telephone Number

Dates of employment: _____

Reasons for leaving:

Formal Education: _____

School

City / State

Dates attended: _____

Degree earned: _____

School

City / State

Dates attended: _____

Degree earned: _____

Reference #1

Name

Address City / State Zip Code

Phone Number: () _____

Title: _____

Reference #2

Name

Address City / State Zip Code

Phone Number: () _____

Title: _____

Reference #3

Name

Address City / State Zip Code

Phone Number: () _____

Title: _____

Activity 1.5. Sample Resume

BRAD J. WATERMAN Page 2

1994 - 1998

Millennium Software, Boston, MA

AREA SALES MANAGER (1995 - 1998)

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE (1994 - 1995)

Built a territory spanning Maine to Pennsylvania for this \$5 billion provider of web development tools, web-based applications, and consulting services. Rapidly achieved goals and refocused to resolve challenging sales and personnel issues. Led a 10-person team generating \$15 million annually through sales of middleware and application server solutions in enterprise software space.

Key Achievements:

- ♦ Transformed an under-producing sales team, immediately resolving long-standing problems, and instituting incentives that elevated performance while building morale and motivation. Ramped area sales 550%+ in under 3 years.
- ♦ Surpassed personal quota, generating more than 200% of license sales goals and 175% of service sales goals. Overachieved area sales objectives every eligible year.
- ♦ Identified, pursued, and closed the largest license deal in company history, contributing millions of dollars through annually recurring revenue.
- ♦ Penetrated dozens of profitable B2B accounts, individually valued at up to \$2.5 million, with major Fortune 500 customers.
- ♦ Championed creative marketing initiatives, including seminar series with partners, sponsorship of national java user groups, and speaking engagements in Internet and e-commerce space.

1991 - 1994

Multimedia, Inc., Saddlebrook, NJ

EAST COAST TERRITORY MANAGER

Sold and marketed multimedia, computer-based training, graphics and 3-D design, photo-imaging, sound editing, and Web page development tools to key Fortune 500 and 1000 accounts. Supervised the sales force in all East Coast trade shows and industry events. Drove sales of more than \$8 million annually through consumer distribution channels; delivered an average 145% of channel quota.

1986 - 1991

Early career includes inside/outside sales experience with two large computer resellers targeting both consumer and business markets.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

B.S., Business Administration (1986)

University of California, Los Angeles

Extensive professional training in the areas of sales, relationship building, and leadership. Certified for IBM, Apple, and Compaq sales. Completed Novell Network sales training.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Skilled with MAC OS, Windows 3.11, 95, 98, NT, and NT Server, MS Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Project, and Outlook), Director, FreeHand, Authorware, Soundedit 16, Extreme 3D, Backstage Desktop Studio, CC:Mail, Lotus Notes, Novell GroupWise, ACT, MS FrontPage, and Vivo Active Producer. Advanced Internet skills.

From: <http://www.bestsampleresume.com/>

Name: _____

Group: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1.6. Build your own resume following the information given

Resume Worksheet

Heading:

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name

Street Address, Apt. Number, City, State, Zip

Area Code, Telephone Number

Objective (name the position that you are seeking):

Education:

Year completed, Award, School's Name, City, State

Also, list two or three courses which would impress an employer

Skills:

Name the first skill needed for your occupation and give an example of how you have used it.

Name the second skill needed for your occupation and give an example of how you have used it.

Work History:

Dates of employment, duration, title, employer, job description, three or four responsibilities

Honors & Awards:

Clubs & Organizations:

Hobbies:

Adapted from:
<http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/adultesol/HighIntermediate/WorkforceDev/69.03.pdf>

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Professional Candidate

Time: 2 or 3 days

Phase: Application

Standard#1: Oral Communication

Standard #3: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class, the students will be able to:

1. discuss in class the characteristics a professional candidate should have
2. distinguish vocabulary words related with a professional candidate for a job position
3. work in groups
4. write an essay about the characteristics a professional candidate should have
5. express ideas about the essay wrote in class

III. Procedure:

1. The teacher will encourage students to express several characteristics typical of a professional candidate applying for a job should have.
2. Using an overhead projector, the teacher is going to show several vocabulary words and phrases. Using the dictionary, students are going to find the meaning in English and Spanish of the words and phrases given and will relate them to the professional world (see activity 1.7).
3. The teacher is going to ask the students to write an essay in pairs, describing the characteristics a professional candidate applying for a job should have using the vocabulary words (see activity 1.8).
4. The students will talk in class about what they wrote and compare their essays with their peers.

Vocabulary words and phrases:

Activity 1.7. Find the meaning in Spanish and English of the following words and phrases and relate them with the professional world.

1. attitude-
2. positive-
3. dress-
4. grooming-
5. polished shoes-
6. clean nails-
7. clean hands-
8. no hats-
9. pleasant expression-
10. sit-up straight-
11. interest-
12. brushed teeth-
13. clothes cleaned and pressed-
14. clean and combed hair-
15. no gum chewing-
16. no t shirt or Jeans-
17. no slouching-
18. alert-
19. minimal make-up-
20. appropriate dress-
21. smell clean-
22. stand straight-
23. socks-
24. stockings-
25. punctuality-

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Job Interview

Time: 2 or 3 days

Phase: Application

Standard#1: Oral Communication

Standard #3: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class, the students are going to be able to:

1. analyze and think about questions that could be asked in a job interview
2. be familiarized with the most frequent questions asked in a job interview
3. have the opportunity to answer each question properly with the teacher's guidance
4. work in groups
5. dramatize a job interview
6. critique their classmates' answers to the interview

II. Procedure:

1. The teacher will ask the students to write a list of questions on the board that could be asked in a job interview.
2. The teacher will give the students a work sheet containing the most frequently asked questions in a job interview (see activity 1.9).
3. The students are going to answer the questions according to the profession they want to hold and the type of job they are seeking. Students can change the questions to fit the type of interview.
4. The teacher is going to split students in groups of two. In front of the class, each group is going to interview one another, using the guide questions they answered.
5. After each interview, the class is going to critique it, point out what was right and/or wrong about the answers.

Name: _____
Date: _____

Group: _____

Activity 1.9. Answer the following interview questions. Interview your partner using these questions.

Job Interview Questions Worksheet

Tell me something about yourself. (What do you really want to do?)

What subjects do you like the best? Why?

What jobs have you held? What were your duties and responsibilities?

What have you learned from some of the jobs you have held?

What jobs did you enjoy the most? Why? Least? Why?

Do you have any outside interests or activities that would prevent you from being on time and at work every day?

In what types of jobs are you most interested? What do you expect to be doing ten years from now?

What can you offer? What are your strengths? Weaknesses?

What have you done that shows initiative or willingness to work and learn?

What do you expect to earn on this job? How much do you expect to be earning in five years?

Why are you interested in this company?

What do you know about our company?

Adapted from: <http://www.jjc.edu/careers>

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: A Special Teacher

Time: 2 or 3 days

Phase: Conceptualization/Application

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard#2: Reading Comprehension

Standard #3: Written Communication

- I. Objectives: By the end of the class, the students will be able to:
 1. read a short story
 2. discuss the themes presented in the short story
 3. work in groups
 4. analyze and answer reading comprehension questions about the story
 5. write a narrative essay about the story analyzing the themes discussed in class

- II. Procedure:
 1. Students will read the short story “A Special teacher” aloud (see activity 1.10).
 2. Students will be paired and will be given time for to discuss the story among them.
 3. Students will establish a discussion about the short story aloud with the teacher expressing the themes.
 4. The teacher will give the students several reading comprehension questions which the students are going to answer individually (see activity 1.11).
 5. The questions will be discussed in class.
 6. The teacher will give the students an example of a narrative essay called “Michelle on Tape” (see activity 1.12).
 7. The teacher will discuss what is brainstorming and will give the students a conceptual map to organize ideas (see activity 1.13).
 8. The teacher will discuss what a narrative essay is, will give an example and discuss it with the students.
 9. Homework- Using the conceptual map, students will choose one of the themes discussed in class about the short story and will write a narrative essay (150 words) about how they can relate themselves with the theme chosen (see activity 1.14).

Activity 1.10. Short Story

A Special Teacher

Years ago a John Hopkin's professor gave a group of graduate students this assignment: Go to the slums. Take 200 boys, between the ages of 12 and 16, and investigate their background and environment. Then predict their chances for the future. The students, after consulting social statistics, talking to the boys, and compiling much data, concluded that 90 percent of the boys would spend some time in jail.

Twenty-five years later another group of graduate students was given the job of testing the prediction. They went back to the same area. Some of the boys - by then men - were still there, a few had died, some had moved away, but they got in touch with 180 of the original 200. They found that only four of the group had ever been sent to jail.

Why was it that these men, who had lived in a breeding place of crime, had such a surprisingly good record? The researchers were continually told: "Well, there was a teacher..." They pressed further, and found that in 75 percent of the cases it was the same woman. The researchers went to this teacher, now living in a home for retired teachers. How had she exerted this remarkable influence over that group of children? Could she give them any reason why these boys should have remembered her? "No," she said, "no I really couldn't." And then, thinking back over the years, she said amusingly, more to herself than to her questioners: "I loved those boys...."

Name: _____

Group: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1.11. Answer the following questions in complete sentences about the short story “A Special Teacher”.

1. What duty did the professor give to his (her) graduate students?

2. What did the students predict about the boys from the slums?

3. Why do you think they had those predictions?

4. What happened 20 years later?

5. What were the researchers continually told and what did they find?

6. When they went to the retirement home for teachers, what did they ask her? What did they answer?

7. Analyze the teacher’s answer with the final results of the research. Do you think that love had to do with the excellent record of the students? Why?

Activity 1.12. Sample essay: Narrating an event

Michelle on Tape

As I pulled into my parents' driveway, I realized how loud the radio was. I turned it down, peeled my legs off the blue vinyl seat, and lugged my pile of laundry up to the front door. The doorknob wouldn't turn and I still hadn't gotten around to making myself a duplicate key.

I rang the bell and waited. Nothing.

Leaving my basket of dirty clothes on the steps, I tramped through the bushes in front of the living room window. Pep was across the room sitting in his usual chair and reading the paper. He was a familiar sight in his plaid flannel shirt, striped clip-on bow tie, and tweed cabby hat.

I knocked on the window. He turned around, startled, and focused his eyes on me. I smiled and waved at him, but he just stared at me. I gestured toward the front door. His face had that hollow look, but something made him get up and let me in.

"Hi, Pep." I kissed him on the cheek. He made way for me and my laundry.

"Hello, how are you?"

I headed for the washing machine. Pep trailed closely behind.

"Kevin and Clare aren't home, but they should be here soon. Do you want to wait for them?"

"Yah, I'll be here." I began separating whites from darks.

"Do you want anything to eat? There's meat and bread in the ice box and some cookies in there."

"No thanks."

"I don't know where Kevin and Clare are. They took Katie out somewhere. Do you know Katie?"

I paused. Here we go. This was going to be one of those conversations. I should just say, "Why, yes, I know Katie." But perhaps if I venture a bit further, something might jog his memory and we wouldn't have to go through the whole routine. Dad says that Pep has a tape recorder in his brain, and bits and pieces keep getting erased.

I decided to give it a shot. "Pep, Katie is my sister."

It didn't work. Pep responded as though I hadn't said a word. "Yah. Well, they went down to . . ." He doubled his chin and scratched his chest with both hands.

"You know, down . . ."

"To the Donnellys'?"

"Yah, that's it. What did you say?"

I repeated, "Donnellys'," loud and clear. It was usually best to speak with as few words as possible. The name Donnelly had a vague significance in Pep's mind, but he had no idea that the Donnellys were my mother's sister and her family.

"Yes, that's right, they went to the Donnellys'. How did you know? What did you say your name was?"

"Michelle."

He smiled politely. "Oh, are you a friend of Clare's?"

"Pep! I'm her daughter."

"Yah, well, I just want to tell Kevin and Clare who was here in case you leave before they get back."

"I'm home for the weekend. I'm not going anywhere."

"Okay," he said, with an offended tone that left me feeling guilty. He turned around and headed for his chair. He truly did not know who I was. He had let a perfect stranger into our house to wash clothes.

When I was a child, Pep would spend hours with me, patiently teaching me all fifty

states and their capitals. When I had those down, we moved on to state flowers, birds, and slogans. He would read me his poetry and tell me never-ending bedtime stories about giants and fairies and magical castles. We would sit in front of the Christmas tree and try to guess which ornament the other was thinking of. On this day, though, I had more important things on my mind. Whites. Darks. Delicates.

Pep returned a few minutes later with a pen and his notebook.

"Here, write down your name so I can tell Kevin and Clare you were here." The prospect scared me. I was hoping he would realize who I was after a while and forget that he had forgotten me. But this was putting everything on the line. What if he saw my name and still couldn't recognize me? As he eagerly offered me the pen and paper, I couldn't say no. I wrote M-i-c-h-e-l-l-e in his notebook and gave it back to him.

He looked at it for a few seconds and then wrinkled his eyebrows and bit his lip. He looked at me with a hint of disbelief.

"Michelle."

He said it with the expression of a disappointed but amused parent. The name seemed to hang in space. I imagined what would come next. He might say, "You're not Michelle" or "Who in the world is Michelle?"

But he said, "All this time you were Michelle?"

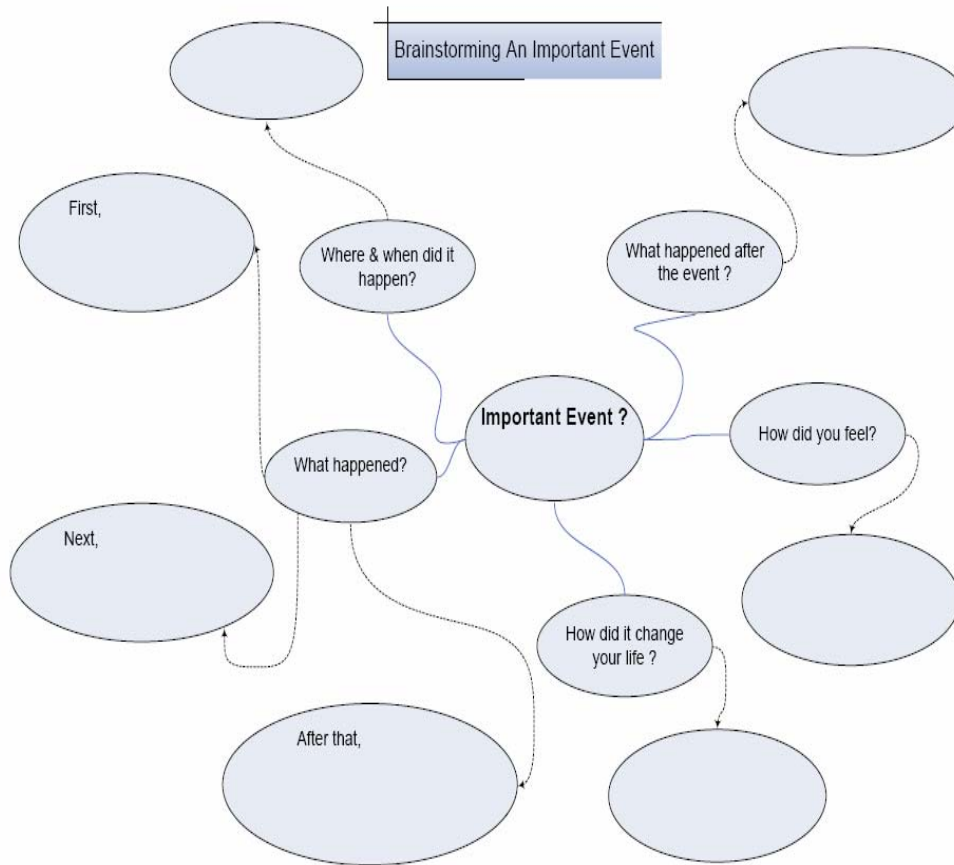
"Yes." That giant lump shot into my throat and tears crept into my eyes.

"Well, thank God for you."

I smiled. He patted me on the shoulder and walked away, shaking his head and chuckling. I was relieved. I did still exist in his mind, on his tape. But I was only a part-time visitor now, and I couldn't help wondering how long it would be before I was permanently erased.

Source: <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/hacker/narrating.htm>

Activity 1.13. Summarize the important events of the short story “A Special teacher” using this brainstorm conceptual map.



Source: http://www.eslflow.com/Brainstorming_an_important_event.pdf

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Everybody Has a Dream

Time: 3 to 4 days

Phase: Conceptualization/Application

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard#2: Reading Comprehension

Standard #3: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class, the students will be able to:

1. examine a short story
2. discuss the themes presented in the short story
3. answer and analyze reading comprehension questions about the story
4. use technology when doing their oral presentation
5. list and describe their goals and dreams
6. practice English speech in front of an audience
7. recognize that everybody can be self-sufficient and useful to the society

II. Procedure:

1. Students will read the short story “Everybody Has a Dream” out loud (see activity 1.15).
2. The teacher put students in groups of two and will give time for them to discuss the story among them.
3. The teacher will encourage the students to establish a discussion about the short story aloud with the teacher expressing the themes and interesting details they found in it.
4. The teacher will give the students an assignment where they are going to make a power point presentation, if the equipment is available, showing a list of the dreams they have for the future and how they are going to pursue them (see activity 1.16).
5. Students are going to show their presentation in class.

Activity 1.15. Short Story

Everybody Has a Dream

Some years ago I took on an assignment in a southern county to work with people on public welfare. What I wanted to do was show that everybody has the capacity to be self-sufficient, and all we have to do is to activate them. I asked the county to pick a group of people who were on public welfare, people from different racial groups and different family constellations. I would then see them as a group for three hours every Friday. I also asked for a little petty cash to work with as I needed it.

The first thing I said after I shook hands with everybody was, "I would like to know what your dreams are." Everyone looked at me as if I were kind of wacky. "Dreams? We don't have dreams." I said, "Well, when you were a kid what happened? Wasn't there something you wanted to do?"

One woman said to me, "I don't know what you can do with dreams. The rats are eating up my kids."

"Oh," I said.

"That's terrible. No, of course, you are very much involved with the rats and your kids. How can that be helped?"

"Well, I could use a new screen door because there are holes in my screen door."

I asked, "Is there anybody around here who knows how to fix a screen door?"

There was a man in the group, and he said, "A long time ago I used to do things like that, but now I have a terribly bad back, but I'll try."

I told him I had some money if he would go to the store, buy some screening, and go and fix the lady's screen door.

"Do you think you can do that?"

"Yes, I'll try."

The next week, when the group was seated, I said to the woman, "Well is your screen door fixed?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "Then we can start dreaming, can't we?" She sort of smiled at me.

I said to the man who did the work,

"How do you feel?"

He said, "Well, you know, it's a very funny thing. I'm beginning to feel a lot better."

That helped the group to begin to dream. These seemingly small successes allowed the group to see that dreams were not insane. These small steps began to get people to see and feel that something really could happen.

I began to ask other people about their dreams. One woman shared that she always wanted to be a secretary. I said, "Well, what stands in your way?" (That's always my next question).

She said, "I have six kids, and I don't have anyone to take care of them while I'm away."

"Let's find out," I said.

"Is there anybody in this group who would take care of six kids for a day or two a week while this woman gets some training here at the community college?"

One woman said, "I got kids, too, but I could do that."

"Let's do it," I said. A plan was created and the woman went to school.

Everyone found something. The man who put in the screen door became a handyman.

The woman who took in the children became a licensed foster care person. In 12 weeks I had all these people off public welfare. I've not only done that once, I've done it many times.

Source: <http://www.motivational-messages.com/inspirationalstories7.html> - Virginia Satir

Activity 1.16. In a Power Point presentation, make a list of your dreams for the future and how you are going to pursue them. Present and talk about your plans for the future. At the end of the presentation, explain why and how important are those plans for you.

Example:

Dream for my future

Plan for pursuing my dream

1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.

Job, Career and Future Unit

Unit 1

Level: 10th grade

Topic: Dangerous Minds

Time: 2 or 3 days

Phase: Application

Standard #1: Oral Communication

Standard #3: Written Communication

I. Objectives: By the end of the class the students are going to be able to:

1. analyze themes presented in the movie
2. analyze and answer questions about the movie
3. write about themes and characters of the movie
4. express their opinions about themes and characters presented in the movie

II. Procedure:

1. The teacher is going to show the movie “Dangerous Minds”.
2. The students are going to discuss the themes and characters presented in the movie.
3. The students are going to answer reading comprehension questions (see activity 1.17)
4. The teacher is going to give an example of a Venn Diagram and will discuss it with the students (see activity 1.18).
5. Students are going to complete a Venn Diagram according to the movie they have seen (see activity 1.19).
6. The teacher is going to explain what a compare and contrast essay is and will give examples.
7. The students are going to write a compare and contrast essay (see activity 1.20).

Name: _____

Group: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1.17. Answer the following questions about the movie “Dangerous Minds”.

1. What situation did Lou Anne Johnson confront when she started to work at the school?

2. What did the principal tell her when she begins to work?

3. What kinds of problems did the students have?

4. Why do you think they acted the way they did?

5. What techniques did Lou Anne Johnson use to catch the students' attention and interest?

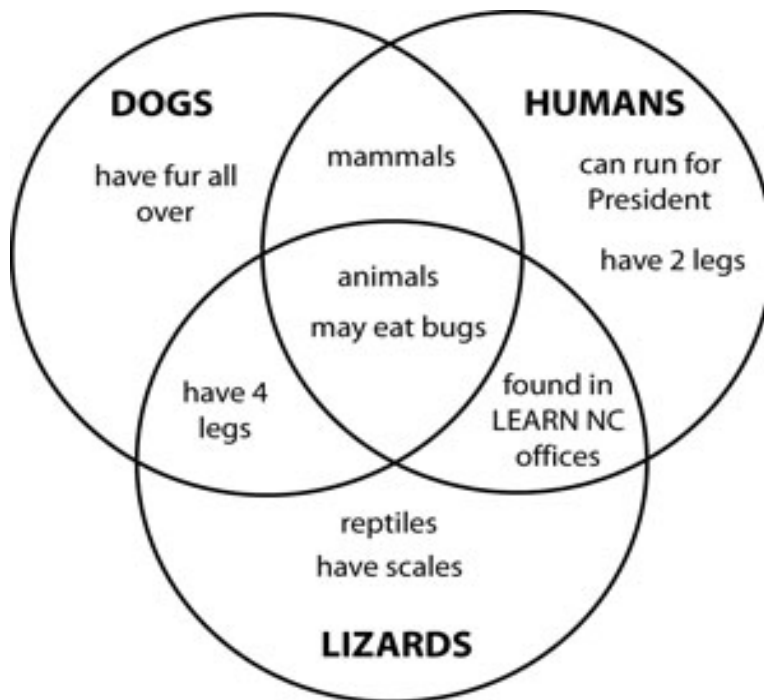
6. What was special about Raul?

7. How did the movie end?

8. Do you think that the problems and situations are similar in our school? Why?

9. Write an alternate ending for the movie

Activity 1.18. Venn Diagram Example



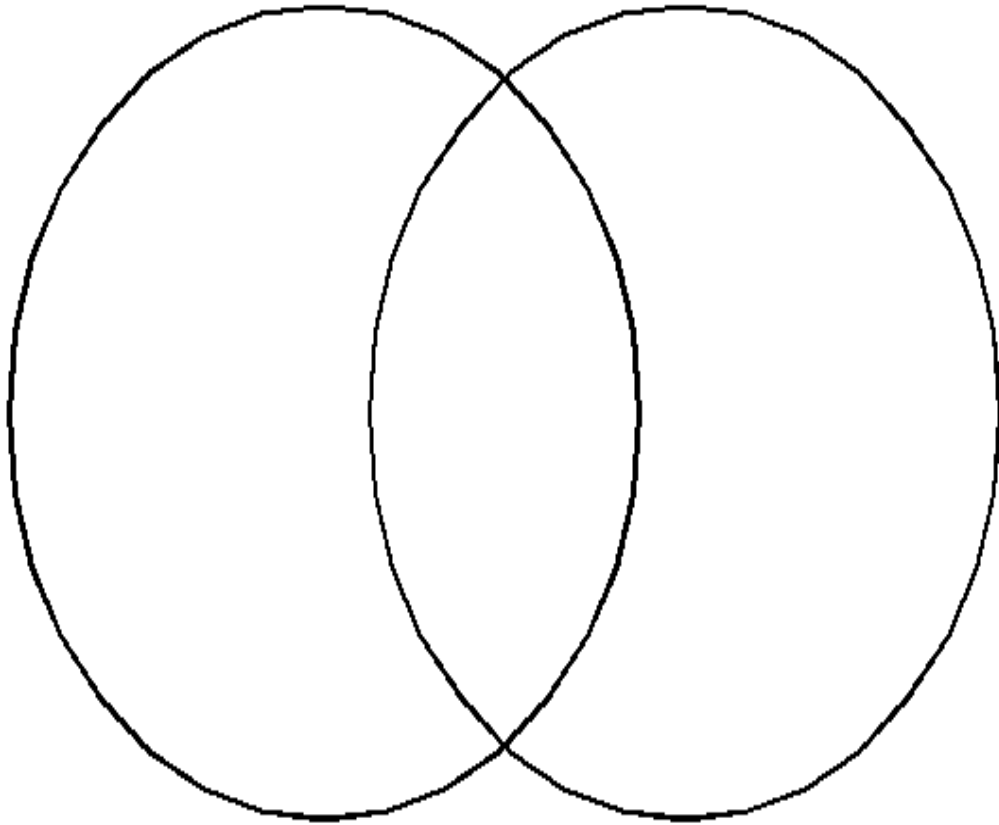
Source: <http://www.openc.k12.or.us/ccp/authors/images/venn01.gif>

Name: _____

Group: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1.19. Choose a character or situation presented in the movie. Compare the character or situation with yourself or your life using the Venn Diagram below.



Source: <http://www.openc.k12.or.us/ccp/authors/images/venn02.gif>

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Throughout history, Puerto Rican English teachers have had to face many obstacles and changes when teaching class in public schools. The lack of knowledge and exposition and the fear of English, shown in research performed by the U.S. Census (2007), have brought many challenges to teachers who are engaged in student learning. The Department of Education contributes to the learning of English by creating a Curriculum Framework which establishes three major standards for the teaching and learning of English: Oral Communication, Written Communication and Reading Comprehension/Literary Appreciation. According to Apple (1990), and Posner (1992), “A curriculum serves as an aid in order to help teachers organize and plan their daily lessons. It is an essential document for teachers because it defines the goals that a Department of Education (DE) hopes its students fulfill” (Quoted in Carroll, 2005, p.39-40). The DEPR standards represent the goals that teachers should help students to attain according to their level. The English Curriculum Framework should be an instrument used to help teachers and should encourage them to create their own curriculums according to the students they have and the class they are teaching.

In order for the educators to create curriculums that help students to attain the goals expected from teachers, schools and parents, there are several factors that should be taken into account which help to enhance student learning. Motivation is one of the factors which help capture the students’ attention when it comes to learning a second language. Without motivation, students will not find a purpose and use for what they are learning and will lose interest in their education (Brown, 1994).

Another important factor that helps to enhance student learning is the responsibilities that parents, schools and teachers have towards education. The

support that the educational community can offer to students is vital for their academic growth because they will feel supported and motivated by other people who want the best for them. It is also important to know that parents should have the commitment to reinforce at the home the language skills learned in school. They should also encourage their youngsters to apply these skills in their daily life. This commitment should always exist for the success of any academic program, curriculum, and the students themselves.

The use of technology in school has become another alternative factor when it comes to creating a curriculum and enhancing student learning. According to Puerto Rico's Department of Education (2003), the use of technology in the classroom encourages the teacher to design different motivating and pertinent teaching strategies for the students, keeping in mind our highly technological society. At the same time, technology stimulates the teachers to improve their teaching methods and use effective skills which can help them to confront new challenges in terms of designing and enriching knowledge with the students' needs in mind.

Technology can be also used as a helpful source for students to find a motive for learning and at the same time, it can help build new knowledge due to the great amount of information that they are exposed to. Technology can be a great aid to help students develop their multiple intelligences by discovering new ways of learning. By creating curriculums that include technological aids such as TV, Internet, videogames, and music, students will be exposed to valuable information that teachers and books cannot offer.

The development of a needs assessment is another essential factor to know what students want and need in their class that can help in the development of a curriculum. It is important to take into consideration the needs, interests and factors

which can drive students to be motivated in school so the teaching and learning experience can be more effective. Young adults must feel that what they are learning is useful and valuable, because in this way they will be more likely to complete a course and continue to seek future educational opportunities. Although the DEPR has standards which students have to fulfill for each academic level, the study shows that:

- Students do not seem to practice speaking much English in the classroom, consequently, they feel uncomfortable speaking in class and outside of the classroom.
- Eighty five percent (85%) of the students are passing the English class, yet they do not feel they are receiving the basic skills.
- Students' lack exposure to English in and out of school.
- The school does not provide students with non- traditional materials for the teaching and learning of English such as technology.

Curricular Unit

An English curricular unit was created based on the students' needs and interests. Using surveys and interviews given to two 10th grade groups of Segundo Ruiz Belvis High School in Hormigueros, valuable data was collected which helped to the creation of the Curricular Unit. The collection and analysis of data led to the creation of a unit called "Job, Career, and Future Unit", which is composed of 20 different activities. This unit is intended to help all teachers interested in motivating their students to learn ESL. Teachers can use this unit to engage their students in interesting, motivating and necessary activities with the purpose of helping them reach their future goals and enhance their English learning. The DEPR places responsibility on the teacher to create curricular material for the students yet, they do not provide practical examples. This unit is an aid in the creation of such curricula.

Pedagogical Implications

In order to create effective learning environments in which teachers and students can feel motivated, it is important for the DEPR to invest in non-traditional materials for schools. Non-traditional materials such as technology and all its variants are important tools that will help students and teachers to exceed teaching and learning expectations because of all its benefits. Activities that can motivate students to learn English, such as the “Job, Career, and Future Unit”, can have a very positive outcome but the necessary resources and materials are needed to achieve learning ESL. The unit provides materials for teachers to use in the classroom and its particularity is that it is a handy set of activities which teachers can download and provide to students in case technology does not exist at the school.

According to Freire (1970) it is important for an educator to be a humanistic and to encourage his (her) students to use their critical thinking and personal opinions in order to reach higher levels of thinking and analysis and feel motivated to learn. The teacher should serve as a guide to the students instead of a source of information. Different from humanist educators, banking teachers see their students as recipients of information that they have to memorize, with little or no time to internalize and analyze. The curricular unit was created using the humanistic approach of education in order to give students the opportunity of participating actively in class by expressing their creativity, feelings and opinions about the subjects to discuss.

Future Research

The curricular unit serves as an important instrument which teachers and students can use in order to enhance the teaching and learning experience. The limitation of this study was that the curricular unit was not implemented in the classroom. Researching the use of the curricular unit with the students to see how

motivated and receptive they are to the activities and if learning actually occurs is a possible future study. Another interesting future study would be to use two groups of 10th grade students; one group would be taught using the unit and the other group would be taught using traditional methods. The researcher could observe both groups and compare them to see if there are differences in learning ESL. Future research could also include expanding this research to all high school levels (from 10th to 12th grade) and to see the results.

Limitations

The lack of technology that most of the public schools have can be a limitation of this curriculum since it encourages the constant use of technology from the teachers as well as the students. Another limitation is that these results cannot be generalized since it considered only one school within the hundreds of public schools existing in Puerto Rico. The fact that this curriculum needs to be placed in the classroom to pilot and see if it works can also be a limitation for this curricular unit.

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Appendix A

Table 3: Self-Rankings of Ability in English Skills (1967,1987-88 and 1996)

ENGLISH SKILL	1976: %	1987-88:%	1996:%
Speaking			
Excellent	08	14	16
Good	29	30	26
Average	39	30	31
Poor	11	19	21
no ability	14	08	06
Reading			
Excellent	14	19	26
Good	39	37	43
Average	30	25	24
Poor	06	13	07
no ability	11		01
Comprehension			
Excellent	20	20	26
Good	37	36	38
Average	30	26	26
Poor	03	13	10
no ability	10	06	01
Writing			
Excellent	13	11	19
Good	30	33	34
Average	32	31	32
Poor	11	15	12
no ability	14	09	03

Appendix B

Table 4: Self-Ranking Ability to Speak English (2000)

POPULATION SEGMENT BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND

ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH

	Number of respondents	
Population 5 years and over	3,515,228	Percentage: %100.0
Speak only English	506,661	14.4
Speak a language other than English	3,008,567	85.6
Spanish	3,001,286	100.0
Speak English "very well"	477,611	15.9
Speak English "well"	538,000	17.9
Speak English "not well"	629,911	21.0
Speak English "not at all"	1,355,764	45.2
Ability to speak English		
Population 5 years and over	3,515,228	100.0
Speak a language other than English	3,008,567	85.6
5 to 17 years	682,217	19.4
18 to 64 years	1,968,160	56.0
65 years and over	358,190	10.2
Speak English less than "very well"	2,527,156	71.9
5 to 17 years	609,733	17.3
18 to 64 years	1,604,458	45.6
65 years and over	312,965	8.9

Appendix C

Survey #1

Nombre: _____ Género M F

Grupo: _____

Marque con una X la mejor contestación. En algunas ocasiones puede marcar más de una.

1. Mi padre o encargado estudio hasta:

- Escuela elemental
- Escuela intermedia
- Escuela superior
- Universidad

2. Mi madre o encargado estudio hasta:

- Escuela elemental
- Escuela intermedia
- Escuela superior
- Universidad

3. Mis padres mensualmente se ganan:

- Mas de \$4,000.00
- \$3,001.-\$4,000
- \$2,001.-\$3,000
- \$1,001.-\$2,000
- \$501.-\$1,000
- \$500.- o menos

4. ¿Cómo consideras tus habilidades en el inglés?

Lectura Excelente Bueno Normal No muy bueno

Escritura Excelente Bueno Normal No muy bueno

Comunicación oral Excelente Bueno Normal No muy bueno

Comprensión al escuchar Excelente Bueno Normal No muy bueno

5. ¿Qué persona(s) conoce usted fuera de la escuela que habla(n) inglés?
Padres

Familiares
Amigos
Conocidos
Ninguno

6. ¿Has viajado y/o vivido alguna vez en los Estados Unidos u otro país en el que hablen inglés?

Si
No

7. El inglés es importante para mí

Totalmente desacuerdo
Desacuerdo
En desacuerdo
Totalmente en desacuerdo

8. El inglés es importante para mis padres

Totalmente de acuerdo
Desacuerdo
En desacuerdo
Totalmente en desacuerdo

9. Deseo aprender inglés

Totalmente de acuerdo
Desacuerdo
En desacuerdo
Totalmente en desacuerdo

10. Mis padres quieren que aprenda inglés

Totalmente de acuerdo
Desacuerdo
En desacuerdo
Totalmente en desacuerdo

11. Entiendo que mi escuela le da la importancia necesaria al inglés

Totalmente de acuerdo
Desacuerdo
En desacuerdo
Totalmente en desacuerdo

12. ¿Por qué quieres aprender inglés? ¿Por qué es importante el inglés?

Comunicarme mejor con otros

Conseguir un buen trabajo

Para la escuela

Mejor futuro

No contestaron

¡Gracias por su participación!

Appendix E

Nombre: _____
Grupo: _____

Género: M F

Survey #3

- 1) Escoge el tipo de material que se cubre en su salón de clase de inglés.
(Marque con una X, puede ser más de una)

gramática
literatura
cuentos
noticias
presentaciones orales
conversaciones
debates
leer libros
temas escogidos por los estudiantes. Explique:

- 2) Sus maestros de inglés han discutido la clase de forma:

dinámica
entretenida
seria
estricta
aburrida
otro, explique:

- 3) Marque los temas que degustaría que su maestro (a) de inglés discutiera en su clase:

El uso y abuso de las drogas
El uso y abuso del alcohol
El sexo sin protección
Enfermedades venéreas (SIDA, Hepatitis, etc.)
La depresión
Violencia doméstica
Relaciones de pareja
Cómo mejorar tu autoestima
La relación con los miembros de mi familia
Mi profesión u oficio futuro
Planes después de graduarme

C) Si yo fuera maestro(a) de inglés, me gustaría que me enseñaran gramática:

D) Si yo fuera maestro (a) de inglés, me gustaría que me enseñaran escritura:

E) Si yo fuera maestro (a) de inglés, me gustaría que me enseñaran lectura:

F) Si yo fuera maestro (a) de inglés, me gustaría que me enseñaran conversación:

G) Si yo fuera maestro (a) de inglés, me gustaría que me enseñaran a escuchar:

¡Gracias por su participación

Appendix F

Interview

Esta entrevista trata sobre los intereses y necesidades que usted como estudiante y ciudadano puertorriqueño tiene respecto al idioma inglés. El mismo es de forma anónima.

I. Esta primera parte de la entrevista va dirigida a usted como estudiante del sistema público del país.

- 1) ¿Tiene usted alguna dificultad con el inglés? ¿Cuál?
- 2) ¿Por que cree que tiene esta dificultad?
- 3) ¿Su escuela ayuda a resolver la dificultad con el inglés?
- 4) ¿Su escuela provee alguna tecnología para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés?
- 5) ¿Que puede hacer el Departamento de Educación para ayudar a resolver esta dificultad?
- 6) ¿Como enseña la clase su maestra de inglés?
- 7) ¿Que hace su maestra para ayudarlo (a) a aprender inglés?

II. Esta segunda parte trata sobre la importancia del inglés y su opinión en general sobre el idioma.

- 1) ¿Se considera usted una persona bilingüe?
- 2) ¿Le gustaría aprender inglés fácilmente?
- 3) ¿Considera usted que aprender inglés es importante? Por que?
- 4) ¿Ha tenido usted que hablar inglés? Describa su experiencia.
- 5) ¿Es el inglés importante para los puertorriqueños? Por que?
- 6) ¿Que beneficios tiene el aprender dos lenguajes?

Appendix G

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez
Departamento de Inglés
Hoja de Consentimiento a Padres

The Elaboration of an English Curricular Unit According to Students' Needs and Interests
in a Public School in Hormigueros

A: Padres y Estudiantes de la Escuela Superior Segundo Ruiz Belvis

De: Francis Acevedo
Estudiante Graduado

Saludos:

Mi nombre es Francis Acevedo Biaggi y soy estudiante de maestría en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Mayagüez. Me dirijo a ustedes ya que conduciré un estudio en la Escuela Superior Segundo Ruiz Belvis. El estudio se basará en investigar las necesidades e intereses de los estudiantes de décimo grado hacia la clase de inglés y hacia el idioma inglés. El estudio incluirá cuestionarios y entrevistas grabadas anónimas para recopilar información con el fin de completar los objetivos del mismo.

Como profesional de la educación interesado en el aprendizaje del inglés en la Isla, espero que lo que aprenda a través de mi estudio me enseñe a mí y a otros educadores a alcanzar los conocimientos y habilidades idóneas para satisfacer las necesidades e intereses de nuestros estudiantes, futuro de Puerto Rico.

Durante el proceso de investigación, protegeré la privacidad y el anonimato de los estudiantes participantes en este estudio, ya que ningún nombre se revelará a la luz pública y será este servidor el único que tendrá poder de los documentos que se utilicen para recolectar la data, los cuales se destruirán una vez culmine y se apruebe la investigación. Este proceso es uno totalmente voluntario y el estudiante no incurrirá en ningún tipo de penalidad personal ni académica de no desear participar del mismo. Gustosamente contestaré cualquier pregunta que surja después de recibir esta carta.

Gracias anticipadas por su cooperación y atención.

Atentamente,

Francis Acevedo Biaggi

Padre:

Acepto que mi hijo (a) participe de este estudio Firma: _____ Fecha: _____
 No acepto que mi hijo (a) participe de este estudio Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

*Se releva al Departamento de Educación de toda responsabilidad por cualquier reclamación que pueda surgir como consecuencia de la administración de los cuestionarios y/o entrevistas y de la información que se solicita y provea a través de los mismos.

Appendix H

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez
Departamento de Inglés
Hoja de Consentimiento a Estudiantes

The Elaboration of an English Curricular Unit According to Students' Needs and Interests
in a Public School in Hormigueros

A: Padres y Estudiantes de la Escuela Superior Segundo Ruiz Belvis

De: Francis Acevedo
Estudiante Graduado

Saludos:

Mi nombre es Francis Acevedo Biaggi y soy estudiante de maestría en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Mayagüez. Me dirijo a ustedes ya que conduciré un estudio en la Escuela Superior Segundo Ruiz Belvis. El estudio se basará en investigar las necesidades e intereses de los estudiantes de décimo grado hacia la clase de inglés y hacia el idioma inglés. El estudio incluirá cuestionarios y entrevistas grabadas anónimas para recopilar información con el fin de completar los objetivos del mismo.

Como profesional de la educación interesado en el aprendizaje del inglés en la Isla, espero que lo que aprenda a través de mi estudio me enseñe a mí y a otros educadores a alcanzar los conocimientos y habilidades idóneas para satisfacer las necesidades e intereses de nuestros estudiantes, futuro de Puerto Rico.

Durante el proceso de investigación, protegeré la privacidad y el anonimato de los estudiantes participantes en este estudio, ya que ningún nombre se revelará a la luz pública y será este servidor el único que tendrá poder de los documentos que se utilicen para recolectar la data, los cuales se destruirán una vez culmine y se apruebe la investigación. Este proceso es uno totalmente voluntario y el estudiante no incurrirá en ningún tipo de penalidad personal ni académica de no desear participar del mismo. Gustosamente contestaré cualquier pregunta que surja después de recibir esta carta.

Gracias anticipadas por su cooperación y atención.

Atentamente,

Francis Acevedo Biaggi

Estudiante:

Acepto participar de este estudio

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

No acepto participar de este estudio

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

*Se releva al Departamento de Educación de toda responsabilidad por cualquier reclamación que pueda surgir como consecuencia de la administración de los cuestionarios y/o entrevistas y de la información que se solicita y provee a través de los mismos.

Appendix I

Department of Education Standards for 10th Grade English Oral Communication

Content Standard #1	Concepts	Skills	Attitudes and Values	Assessment
<p>- The student listens to and uses language effectively to interact verbally/nonverbally in different academic and social environments, using different learning strategies and critical thinking skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication - ideas - thought - thinking process - oral language - expression - non-verbal cues - writing - feelings - planning - details - sequence of events - main idea - questions - topic - talk freely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listens to a short selection and identifies details, main idea or sequence - Selects a topic and talks freely about it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness of verbal and nonverbal communication - Willingness to share experiences and ideas - Willingness to talk in front of others - Willingness to risk errors - Confidence in one's ability to communicate in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation (rubric or checklist) - Recording of conversations and discussions (rubric or checklist) - Student-teacher interview (rubric) - Self assessment (checklist) - Peer assessment (checklist) - Oral presentations (rubrics, checklist) - Anecdotal records

Appendix J

Written Communication

Content Standard #2	Concepts	Skills	Attitudes and Values	Assessment
- The student writes narrative, expository, persuasive and descriptive text demonstrating command of Standard English, using research and organizational strategies and the stages of the writing process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thinking process - organize - ideas - discussion - messages - interpretation - experience - knowledge - content - learning - imagination - creativity - issues - narratives - hypothesis - research - poems - songs - skits - essay - introduction - body - conclusion - outlining 	- Writes an essay about a given topic including an introduction, body and a conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willingness to use English to communicate - Desire to share ideas and thoughts - Desire to share personal experiences - Willingness to edit and rewrite to improve - Satisfaction and pride in the results obtained from efforts - Willingness to do research using different library sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comic Strips (checklist, rubric) - Writing Log - Journals - Anecdotal Records - Graphic Organizers - Essays (rubrics)

Appendix K

Reading Comprehension

Content Standard #3	Concepts	Skills	Attitudes and Values	Assessment
<p>- The student demonstrates confidence, independence and flexibility in the strategic use of reading skills, critical thinking and the conventions of language for reading a range of simple to complex texts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reading - reading strategies - organizational structures - semantics - word meaning (origin, derivations, idioms, analogies) - figures of speech: metaphors, similes, hyperboles, personifications - denotations - connotation - syntax - sustained reading - details - summarizing - main ideas and supporting details - inferences - prediction of outcomes - fact and opinion - author's conclusion - sequence of events - author's purpose, facts that support a conclusion - summarizing - graphic information - rhythm - flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizes figures of speech - Organizes the steps in a process - Identifies facts that support a conclusion - Predicts outcomes - Identifies facts that support an opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enjoy reading as a lifelong pursuit - Understand that literature reflects and illuminates human experiences, motives, conflicts and values - Link personal experience to those presented in the reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Log (checklist) - Individual recitations (rubric) - Comic Strips (checklist) - Graphic Organizers - Self assessment (checklist) - Teacher's observation (checklist) - KWL Chart