RESEARCH PROJECT:
“Analysis of the Main Reasons why English Students Face a Decrease in their Academic Performance in the Second Year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador”

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ABSTRACT

The researchers will conduct the project “Analysis of the Main Reasons why Intermediate English II Students Face a Decrease in their Academic Performance in the Second Year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza at the WMC of the UES” precisely to know the reasons and the results of this phenomenon.

The main objective of the research is to find out the different factors affecting the academic performance of Intermediate English II students when reaching their second year of the career.

The researchers will conduct a causal-comparative and explanatory study under the quantitative paradigm in order to test the hypotheses, “(1) Intermediate English II students of the ED at the WMC of the UES struggle to keep the good academic performance they achieved during their first year of studies since they were not sufficiently exposed to subjects in English. (2) Intermediate English II students of the ED at the WMC of the UES struggle to keep the good academic performance they achieved during their first year of studies since they have not acquired the appropriate linguistic competence as to take three subjects in English during the first semester of the second year of their studies.”

To collect data, Intermediate English II students and teachers of the ED at the WMC of the UES will be given a questionnaire about the different elements of their academic performance. Furthermore, the researchers will interview some of them. Then, the information gathered will be organized in graphs so that the researchers have a clearer analysis of the phenomenon. The sample will be composed of 30 students of the mentioned subject plus students from English Pronunciation and English Grammar I. Finally, the researchers will make conclusions and recommendations to help such students stop lowering their academic performance.
INTRODUCTION

The present research project aims to study the reasons why Intermediate English II students lower their academic performance when reaching the second year of the major during Semester I-2014 at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador. The researchers attempt to look for the most remarkable information to portray the academic results of Intermediate English II students. This project is divided into four chapters.

In chapter I, the Statement of the Problem contains a detailed description of what the researchers will make to get reliable data to build the basis of this project. The Scope of the Work, Justification, and the Research Objectives are also part of this chapter. Chapter II, the Theoretical Framework, was based on theories related to foreign language acquisition, students’ responsibility, and motivation. In addition, Chapter III contains the Hypotheses and the Operationalization of the Variables. In this stage, the researchers state the hypotheses, the units of observation, the different variables, and the indicators that will help design instruments to gather data. Finally, Chapter IV describes the methodology to be used to carry out the project. The research team aims to give an exhaustive explanation of the ways and stages in which the study will be developed.

Indeed, this project aims to find the most important reasons why Intermediate English II students lower their academic performance when reaching the second year of the major during Semester I-2014 at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador. To conclude, this project is expected to be the basis for further research in the future in which students, teachers, or researchers of the Foreign Language Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador can find reliable and useful information to start building their own research projects.
CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the beginning of the first term of the second year of the English major at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus (WMC) of the University of El Salvador (UES), Intermediate English II students face different problems reflected in their academic performance. The majority of English students reaching such level has struggled with this phenomenon. Indeed, students take three subjects in Spanish and one in English in their first year; differently, in their third term of classes they take just one subject in Spanish and three in English. This transition plays an important role in the emergence of this phenomenon.

By means of observation and informal interviews, the researchers have found that the majority of Intermediate English II students of the Foreign Language Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2013, lowered their academic performance in the transition from first to second year.

1.1 Description of the Problem

In an informal talk carried out in October 2013 with some second year students, the research team found out that most English students who have already taken Intensive Intermediate English II and who are currently taking Intensive Advanced English I, indeed, lowered their grades when they faced the transition from first to second year.

A preliminary questionnaire administered to 15 students of Intensive Intermediate English I in October 2013 revealed that the average grade is around 7 to 8. They agreed that they are satisfied with their currently academic performance.
Moreover, by means of informal talk, the researchers found out that Intensive Advanced English I students’ average when taking Intensive Intermediate English II was from 6 to 7. After getting this information, the research team could notice that students struggle more during their second year of classes.

Therefore, the majority of Intensive Advanced English I students claimed that one of the main reasons why they lowered their grades during their second year of studies was that taking three or more subjects in English is much more complex than taking the same number of subjects in Spanish. Some of them argued that English students at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador should take more subjects during their first year of studies. Furthermore, during casual talks, some students declared that at the beginning they were eager to start their second year of studies. However, they were not aware of the complexity of taking three subjects in a foreign language. They also admitted that now they have a better understanding of the challenges to be faced to successfully accomplish such academic level. Another reason researchers found out was that the teaching and assessing used by some teachers of the Foreign Language Department is not appropriate to teach and grade second year English students since sometimes topics are explained so fast and teachers take for granted students have grasped the topics. Besides, students feel not confident enough to ask teachers to clarify their doubts because the teacher may make them feel ashamed.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to find a possible answer for the following question: Which difficulties English students of the Foreign Language Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2014 face during the transition from first to second year to lower their academic performance?
1.2 Scope of the Research

During the research process on the low academic performance students of Intermediate II face in the second year of their major, the researchers will focus the study just on two aspects which are involved in such a problem, the methodology used by some teachers and the transition from taking three subjects in Spanish and one in English each semester in the first year in the major and then doing practically the opposite. The researchers will not include any other aspect because of the availability of resources such as time and financial support. Besides, the population to be included in the study will be just one group per each of the following subjects: Intensive Intermediate English II, English Pronunciation, and Grammar I during the first semester of the year 2014 at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador; that is, other students taking such subjects in the other campuses of the University of El Salvador will not be included because of the availability and the long period of time it would require.

1.3 Justification

Most second-year students of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador experience a low in their academic performance. During their first year of classes, students have to get used to the university learning system which differs from the Salvadoran high school system. Consequently, students may get accustomed to the university learning system when they finish their second year. However, during the beginning of their second year of classes, they have to get used to a more complex learning system whose main characteristic is that it is taught in a foreign language. This transition triggers a
decrease in students’ academic performance. Therefore, the research team considers this phenomenon important enough to be analyzed.

In addition, this research aims to determine which reasons are related to the transition from first to second year of studies that causes poor academic performance in students. During their third term of classes, students study more complex subjects as English Pronunciation and English Grammar I. Evidently, the methodologies used to teach those subjects differ from the ones used to teach conversational English and the subjects that students take in Spanish. Furthermore, students may need a higher communicative competence to succeed in such areas.

Also with this study, the researchers aim to portray a better perspective for further studies in order to find a solution for this phenomenon. Finally, the investigation will provide some recommendations and ideas.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

To determine the difficulties Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester I-2014 face during the transition from first to second year and how this is reflected in their academic performance.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- To compare the teaching methodologies used during the second and third terms of classes of Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during semester II-2013 and semester I-2014.
To determine the differences between the evaluations of Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during their second and third terms of classes.

To identify which resources the university provides to the Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador.

To establish if the resources provided by the university are the appropriate ones for the students to face the new challenges if their third term of classes.
Terri Guillemets (1997) compared life with one long experiment in learning. “Who can be perfect all the time?” he declares. Each person needs to be aware that every day new challenges come to our lives; therefore, human beings never cease to learn. Despite hard work, there will always be something to be studied and improved; that is why, it is a need to keep a positive attitude and to be optimistic. In these regards, there have been several researches about second language acquisition and the problems learners usually face to develop fluency and accuracy in speaking a foreign language. Taking into account different second language acquisition theories, the research team declares that academic performance in second language acquisition is mainly determined by the learning environment, students' responsibility, and students' motivation.

2.1 Language Acquisition Hypotheses

In 1982, the famous linguist Stephen Krashen developed five hypotheses that aim to provide a clearer understanding of the learning a second language process. His proposals are derived from his extensive research on classroom settings. He contrasts those hypotheses with the process of acquiring a first language. Therefore, his theories focus on communicative forms of language rather than grammar focused approaches. Interestingly, he pays close attention to student’s emotions and how those take an important role in the process of acquiring a second language. He also focuses on the environment and the kind of input that can be used in the classroom. In the following chart, a summary of these hypothesis is presented.
Table 1: Explication of Krashen´s Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation of Hypothesis</th>
<th>Application for Teaching</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis</strong></td>
<td>According to this theory, the optimal way a language is learned is through natural communication. As a second language teacher, the ideal is to create a situation wherein language is used in order to fulfill authentic purposes. This is turn, will help students to ‘acquire’ the language instead of just ‘learning’ it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>According to Krashen, there are two ways of developing language ability. Acquisition involves the subconscious acceptance of knowledge where information is stored in the brain through the use of communication; this is the process used for developing native languages. Learning, on the other hand, is the conscious acceptance of knowledge ‘about’ a language (i.e. the grammar or form). Krashen states that this is often the product of formal language instruction.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Monitor hypothesis</strong></td>
<td>As an SL teacher it will always be a challenge to strike a balance between encouraging accuracy and fluency in your students. This balance will depend on numerous variables including the language level of the students, the context of language use and the personal goals of each student. This balance is also known as Communicative Competence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This hypothesis further explains how acquisition and learning are used; the acquisition system, initiates an utterance and the learning system ‘monitors’ the utterance to inspect and correct errors. Krashen states that monitoring can make some contribution to the accuracy of an utterance but its use should be limited. He suggests that the ‘monitor’ can sometimes act as a barrier as it forces the learner to slow down and focus more on accuracy as opposed to fluency.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Natural Order hypothesis</strong></td>
<td>According to this hypothesis, teachers should be aware that certain structures of a language are easier to acquire than others and therefore language structures should be taught in an order that is conducive to learning. Teachers should start by introducing language concepts that are relatively easy for learners to acquire and then use scaffolding to introduce more difficult concepts.</td>
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<td>According to Krashen, learners acquire parts of language in a predictable order. For any given language, certain grammatical structures are acquired early while others are acquired later in the process. This hypothesis suggests that this natural order of acquisition occurs independently of deliberate teaching and therefore teachers cannot change the order of a grammatical teaching sequence.</td>
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The Input hypothesis

This hypothesis suggests that language acquisition occurs when learners receive messages that they can understand a concept also known as comprehensible input. However, Krashen also suggests that this comprehensible input should be one step beyond the learner’s current language ability, represented as $i + 1$, in order to allow learners to continue to progress with their language development.

This hypothesis highlights the importance of using the Target Language in the classroom. The goal of any language program is for learners to be able to communicate effectively. By providing as much comprehensible input as possible, especially in situations when learners are not exposed to the TL outside of the classroom, the teacher is able to create a more effective opportunity for language acquisition.

The Affective Filter hypothesis

According to Krashen one obstacle that manifests itself during language acquisition is the affective filter; that is a 'screen' that is influenced by emotional variables that can prevent learning. This hypothetical filter does not impact acquisition directly but rather prevents input from reaching the language acquisition part of the brain. According to Krashen the affective filter can be prompted by many different variables including anxiety, self-confidence, motivation and stress.

In any aspect of education it is always important to create a safe, welcoming environment in which students can learn. In language education this may be especially important since in order to take in and produce language, learners need to feel that they are able to make mistakes and take risks. This relates to directly to Krashen’s hypothesis of the affective filter.


The analysis of these hypothesis leads to a better understanding of what the target students of this project are facing. As an example, taking into account Krashen’s input hypothesis, these students usually struggle to understand the second language on listening tasks since they have little exposure to such activities. Furthermore, this little exposure to the language leads to the lack of student’s self-evaluating skills, a problem described on Krashen’s monitoring hypothesis.

2.2 Factors that Affect Students’ Academic Performance in Second Language Acquisition
Many factors can affect a student’s academic performance when learning a second language, but in this opportunity, the research team will just analyze the most relevant in the list below.

2.2.1 Learning Environment

One factor that mainly affects students’ academic performance in second language acquisition is the learning environment students are exposed to. Conceptually speaking, the learning environment refers to the whole range of components and activities within which learning happens (Edutechwiki, n.d.). Indeed, Learning environment is constituted by four main elements: classroom management parameters, students’ talking time (STT) and teachers’ talking time (TTT), resources, and rapport.

2.2.1.1 Classroom Management Parameters

Sequeira (2010) defines parameters as the set of characteristics that are necessary for the group to feel physically safe and psychologically secure in the school environment. According to Brown (2008), seven principal classroom management parameters are necessary in any English as a foreign or second language classroom; nevertheless, the most remarkable among them are momentum, space, and time.

2.2.1.1.1 Momentum

Brown (2008) describes momentum as the smooth flow of events which are not necessarily noticeable when everything is working well, but are highly visible when the flow or momentum is interrupted or not working.

2.2.1.1.2 Space
Brown (2008) defines space as one of the most important parameters since good organization in the classroom will make learning easier. To develop a class, teachers must consider physical space arrangement. Good physical arrangement helps people to function more efficiently and feel more comfortable in the room.

2.2.1.1.3 Time

Since time is so valuable, teachers need to develop good time management skills. Then, this efficient use of time becomes an important variable in helping students achieve learning goals and making the classroom a pleasant place for both teachers and students.

Classroom parameters are key point in this research project, especially space since most classrooms in the UESFMOcc are not appropriately distributed. As a result, both teachers and students deal with either too little or too large classrooms. This provokes a negative effect in the second language learning process since the classroom environment becomes uncomfortable.

2.2.1.2 Teacher Talking Time (TTT) Vs. Student Talking Time (STT)

According to Cotter (2009), teacher talking time (TTT) refers to how much the teacher talks during a lesson. The teacher should roughly limit his speaking from 20% to 30% of the class time, and let students talk in the remaining time. On the other hand, Student Talking Time (STT) should be around 80% during the course of the lesson. Their use of the language should further promote qualitative thought. For example, choral drills, substitution drills, and other exercises remain important because students need these activities to become familiar with and absorb the target language.
Moreover, it is essential to mention some factors that affect STT; for example the number of students and their language skills. However, according to Cotter (2009), the advantages of STT in the classroom as a dominant factor are the following:

1. STT allows the teacher to restrict his speaking to vital areas of the lesson. When he then speaks, students know the information is important. They listen more attentively and work harder to successfully process the information.

2. Students get to speak more. When students speak more, they have increased opportunities to become familiar with the new material.

3. Students have more chances to experiment with and personalize the language. They can mix previous vocabulary and grammar structures with the target language of the lesson, as well as steer conversations towards their individual interests.

4. As students speak more, they must also rely on each other’s skills. For example, if two students fail to understand one another, they must work together to repair the miscomprehension. This better prepares the class for the real world, where they can’t only rely on the teacher for help.

5. As the teacher speaks less, students have added opportunity for interest and challenge.

Besides that, Cotter (2009) states that it is crucial to mention that TTT should be reduced for a number of reasons explained below.

1. Excessive TTT limits the amount of STT (student talking time). If the teacher talks for half the time in a 60 minute lesson with 15 students, each student gets only 2 minutes to speak.
2. A large amount of TTT results in long stretches of time in teacher-to-class (T/class) mode and a monotonous pace. Student under-involvement inevitably leads to loss of concentration, boredom and reduced learning.

3. TTT often means that the teacher is giving the students information that they could be finding out for themselves, such as grammar rules, the meanings of vocabulary items and corrections. Teacher explanations alone are often tedious, full of terminology and difficult to follow. There may be no indication of whether the students have understood.

4. If the teacher takes the dominant role in classroom discourse in terms of initiating the topic, allocating turns and evaluating comments, the student’s role is only that of respondent. Opportunities for developing the speaking skill are therefore severely limited.

5. If the teacher is constantly dominant and controlling, the learners take no responsibility for their own learning but learn what the teacher decides and when. Student autonomy is thus limited.

Shortly, it is important that teachers speak in the classroom, but it is most important that students speak even more to practice and master the language.

**2.2.1.3 Resources**

Since it is extremely important to know the resources teachers can use to effectively teach English to students learning a second language, according to the British Council (2011), the resources teachers can use are classified in the following ways.
Evidently, students have more time to explore the language with one another in the classroom. Students usually lack a person to practice a second language at home. Then, their main source of input comes from classmates.

2.2.1.3.1 Tools for Teachers

According to Business Dictionary (2000), a tool is an item or implement used for a specific purpose. A tool can be a physical object or a technical.

These tools will help not only teachers but also students inside and outside the classroom.
2.2.1.3.2 Teaching Resources

Audio English (2010) defines teaching resources as the materials and equipment used by teachers in teaching. Among these teaching resources are the following: Activities

- Lesson plans
- Tips
- Books
- Trainings
- Conferences
- Publications
- Research
- Seminars
- Webinars

2.2.1.3.3 Games and Activities

Despite the tools for teachers and the teaching resources, it is essential that teachers include games and funny activities to make students get involved in the learning process. The most appealing and meaningful way for students learn a new language is by playing games.

Undoubtedly, the use of different, varied, funny, and meaningful resources make learning take place easily since students are willing to learn a new language as well as get involved in the learning process.

2.2.1.4 Rapport

According to Microdot (2008), rapport is one of the most important features or characteristics of unconscious human interaction. It can be described as a state of mutual trust and responsiveness between individuals or groups of people.
House (2011) defines rapport as the ability to relate to others in a way that creates a level of trust and understanding. It is the process of responsiveness at the unconscious level.

According to William Buskist and Bryan K. Saville (2011), some strategies that can be used in order to help build rapport with students are the following.

- Getting to know the students both inside and outside of the classroom
- Learning student names as quickly as possible
- Considering non-verbal factors such as body language
- Developing a relationship built on trust
- Having a sense of humor and have fun with students.

Since learning students’ names is very important to build rapport among students and the teacher, it is important to know what activities and strategies teachers can use to develop rapport. William Buskist and Bryan K. Saville (2011) suggest the following strategies and activities.

- **Ice Breaker Activities**

  They are used at the beginning of the class to create a positive atmosphere in the class and between students and teacher. They can also be used to facilitate students (and teacher) getting to know each other.

- **Body Language Factors of which to be Aware**

  1. **Smile** - Teachers have to show the students they are happy to be there and to see them.
2. **Move around the classroom** – as students get used to teachers’ presence, they will feel less intimidated by them and will be more likely to interact with teachers voluntarily.

3. **Make eye contact** – this shows a sense openness, honesty and caring

4. **Gestures** – using lively and animated gestures demonstrates friendliness and that the teacher is involved in the material. It also helps keep the students alert and shows that the teacher isn’t afraid to make fun of his or herself from time to time.

5. **Be aware of student discomfort** – certain students will feel really uncomfortable with teacher proximity or excessive eye contact. Get to know who these students are so they can be given the space they require in order to feel safe and respected.

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**Using humor in the classroom**

1. Jokes and amusing behaviors are great as long as they are within reason. But teachers have to keep in mind what tone of voice is used so as not to give a mixed message to the students.

2. Use of sarcasm should depend on the classroom and what relationship the teacher has with the class; the teacher should know whether the students are going to understand it or whether it will cause resentments and problems later on down the line.

To sum up, building rapport between teachers and students is extremely important since by doing so, teachers can make the difference when teaching. Good students-teacher rapport can not only help to better understand the background of students but can also help with classroom management and instruction. With good students-teacher rapport, learning
will take place easily, and therefore, students` academic performance may grow even more for students.

A possible reason for students failing subject relates to poor rapport from teachers. This incredibly affects student`s affective filter. As a result, the teacher`s attitude may lead to low self-esteem in pupils.

2.4.2 Students` Responsibility

Students` learning a second language is not just a process that includes teachers` responsibility, but mostly students` responsibility. Indeed, when students go through a learning process, they need to be aware of the different responsibilities and duties such process requires. That`s why, the students` study habits and self-care play an important role in this process regarding their academic performance.

2.4.2.1 Students` Study Habits

Study habits are defined as the regular tendencies and practices that students depict during the process of gaining information through learning. Students` study habits play a big role in determining their success in the learning process (ask.com). According to the Maryland Community College`s S.O.A.R. Program (2002), good study habits include many different skills: time management, self-discipline, concentration, memorization, organization, and effort. However, the way students learn depends mostly on the type of intelligence they possess. There have been many theories of multiple intelligences, but the most common ones, like Howard Gardner`s theory (1943), present eight types of intelligences:
1) **Musical Intelligence:** This type of intelligence refers to those people who are good at learning by sounds, tones, rhythms, and music;

2) **Visual Intelligence:** Also found as spatial intelligence since deals with spatial judgment and the ability to visualize with the mind's eye;

3) **Linguistic Intelligence:** All those students who possess this type of intelligence are good at dealing with words and languages. These are the students who like to read, write, and tell stories as well as to learn words by relating them with specific dates or any other information that facilitates them the acquisition of new knowledge;

4) **Logical-Mathematical Intelligence:** This area has to do with logic, abstractions, reasoning, numbers and critical thinking;

5) **Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence:** According to Gardner (1995), students with this type of intelligence learn better by involving some kind of muscular movement. And they tend to be very good at sports or any other physical activities such as dancing, acting and making things;

6) **Naturalistic Intelligence:** As the word itself says, this type of intelligence has to do with relating information to the natural surroundings. They prefer to work in relation with nature;

7) **Interpersonal Intelligence:** Students with interpersonal intelligence feel more comfortable working with others. It means they tend to learn easily when they are surrounding by other people and having interaction with them; and
8) **Intrapersonal Intelligence:** In contrast to those students with interpersonal intelligence, students with intrapersonal intelligence feel more comfortable working alone. They tend to think better just by their own without the help of others. Actually, sometimes, it is annoying for them to work with others.

Certainly, these types of intelligences are not always isolated, which means that more than one type of the intelligences previously described can be found in a person, in this case a student. Consequently, the study habits of each student mostly depend on the type of intelligence they possess.

### 2.2.2.2 Students’ Self-Care

For students, it is extremely important not only to set a number of study habits to succeed in their academic performance. But they also need to take special care of themselves. Students’ health condition has much to do with their academic performance. According to Bellows (2006), caring for the body helps students’ mind to work better. She presents the following strategies to help the body work better.

- Getting into a good sleep routine
- Getting regular exercise
- Eating a properly
- Avoiding problematic activities such as using alcohol and drugs
- Visiting the doctor regularly

Undoubtedly, by taking into consideration this advice, students may succeed in their academic performance.

### 2.2.3 Motivation

Another really important aspect to be taken into consideration when referring to good or bad academic performance is motivation. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2012)
conceptually defines motivation as the willingness of a person to do a particular thing or learn a particular set of information. Motivation should not be confused with interest since they are very different terms. Motivation comes in two forms: intrinsic and extrinsic.

### 2.2.3.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation comes from inside the person, in this case the learner. It has personal value or meaning, and it is independent of rewards to the student. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, comes from sources outside the language learner. The main factors that can create extrinsic motivation in a person when learning or acquiring a new language can be job opportunities, parental support, and teachers´ methodology at the moment of teaching. Meanwhile, the most remarkable intrinsic factors that can affect a student´s performance are goals and self-interest. If there are no such motivations in students, then there are very few possibilities for them to achieve success. As an addition, it is also worthwhile to mention that intrinsic motivation is more applicable to adult learners than extrinsic motivation. Now, to know specifically how the factors above mentioned can affect the motivation and therefore the academic performances of students in language learning or language acquisition, an explanation of each is going to be well detailed below.

#### 2.2.3.1.1 Extrinsic Factors Affecting Motivation

The first of the main aspects that extrinsically affects students´ academic performance in language learning or language acquisition is parental support. Parental support plays a really important role in students´ academic performance since if students count with their parents´ economical and also moral support, it is less difficult, not easier, for them to continue having a good production in their studies. On the other hand, it has
been noticed that the majority of students who do not count with their parents support tend to have a minor production in their studies.

The reasons not to do well in studies are comprehensible for people who do not count with their parents´ economical support, but only if those people started their studies with their parents´ help and then, because of any reason, they could not be supported anymore. Nonetheless, if a student began his or her studies under such circumstances, not counting with his or her parents´ support, and he or she does not do well in his or her studies, such failure can be attributed to the fact of not having had clear goals at the moment of beginning such studies since in the majority of the cases when a person starts something under adverse circumstances, it is because such person is intrinsically motivated to finish or achieve certain goal or goals. Nevertheless, some students start their studies no matter if the circumstances are adverse or favorable, and then, they end dropping out of their studies or losing their interest on what they were doing. In the last two cases, academic performance is not being affected by extrinsic motivation but by intrinsic motivation.

In addition, in some cases, parents support their students to study, mostly majors, but the problem is that these parents state conditions to their children. For example, they ask their children to get scores of 9’s or 10’s only, and if they do not do that, then they are not going to continue supporting their children anymore. Another case is related to parents telling their children what they have to study, and if their children want to study something else, this kind of parents simply refuse to support them, obliging their children to choose a major they do not like. Obviously both cases are extremely incorrect, since parents must be comprehensive and understand that their children must decide what they want to study
since if their children are obliged to choose a major they do not like, it is obvious that the performance of these children will not be the desired one because they will not be motivated to get the grades their parents expect them to get. Unfortunately, this kind of parents still exists in our society, and that is an extrinsic factor that affects students’ academic performance.

The other main extrinsic factor affecting students’ motivation and their academic performance as well is teachers’ methodology when teaching. This is definitely one of the major facts that have made many students drop out their studies. Why? Well, the answer is simple. Since teachers always have to deal with many types of students, it is not an easy task because that demands them a lot of time and resources as mentioned in the previous aspects that influence students’ academic performance. Since this is a double edged situation, it is obvious that it has pros and cons as everything in life. On the one hand, if teachers use the adequate materials and didactic resources to make their activities more interesting and appealing, it is pretty obvious that students will like their teachers’ classes. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the problem would occur if teachers do not have or do not use the proper resources to teach their students because their students will simply not enjoy their classes and will not be motivated to learn, what at the same time will make students’ academic performance be reduced considerably.

Obviously didactic resources are not the only things included in this parameter but also teachers’ attitude when teaching. If teachers show a positive attitude when teaching, then students will feel likely to participate and therefore will be motivated to learn and endeavor to get good grades and maintain a good academic performance. Meanwhile if teachers show a negative attitude and do not give their students the chance to participate in
their classes, it is more than obvious that their students will simply not like their teacher’s classes and will not feel like continuing endeavoring to maintain or reach a good academic performance. The saddest part in this case is that many, if not all, teachers know that their attitude is really influential in their classes, and despite that, they simply do not care about it and let their students know that they teach because they have to and not because they like it. And that will for sure affect their academic performance at some point.

2.2.3.1.2 Intrinsic Factors Affecting Motivation

As mentioned at the very beginning, the two main intrinsic factors that motivate students are the goals they set at the beginning of any stage in their studies and also the interest they show in such studies. If a student, for example, has clear goals about what he or she wants to achieve after certain period of time and is constant in trying to achieve such goals, then it is more than probable that such student is going to reach all or at least the majority of those goals. However, if a student does not have clear goals or even worse, if a student does not set goals when exposing to language learning, such student is very likely to fail, or he or she can possibly triumph; nevertheless, it will not be the same since the satisfaction of having achieved his or her goals is not going to be present at the moment of reaching success.

Besides that, the second intrinsic factor that can affect students’ academic performance either for good or for bad is interest. According to the last edition of the online Merriam Webster Dictionary (2012) interest is defined as a concern for one’s own advantage and well-being. It is really noticeable when a person is interested in reaching his or her goals. In the case of students learning a new language, it is really easy to perceive if a student is interested in progressing in such a task or if such student is in the classroom just because he or she has been obliged by his or her parents to do so as mentioned above. If the latter is the case, what will
happen is that the student will simply not have a very good performance, whereas if a student does his or her best in order to achieve his or her goals and look for his or her interests when learning or acquiring a new language, then such student is likely to succeed.
2.3 Visualization of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Objectives</th>
<th>Specific Objectives</th>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Units of Observation</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Definition of Variables</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>To determine the difficulties Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador Semester I-2014 face during the transition from first to second year and how this is reflected in their academic performance.</td>
<td>To compare the teaching methodologies used during the second and third terms of classes of Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during semester II-2013 and semester I-2014. To analyze the differences between the evaluations of Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador during their second and third terms of classes. To identify which resources the university provides to the Intermediate English II students of the</td>
<td>Intermediate English II students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador struggle to keep the good academic performance they achieved during their first year of studies since they were not sufficiently exposed to subjects in English.</td>
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Table: Dependent Variables

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Table: Indicators

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<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Tools</th>
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<td>Observation Questionnaire Interview</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
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Table: Tools
students of the English Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador.

To establish if the resources provided by the university are the appropriate ones for the students to face the new challenges if their third term of classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Academic achievement or academic performance is the outcome of education — the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals.</th>
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<td>Grades</td>
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<td>Communicative abilities</td>
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<td>Student’s perception</td>
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CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Chapter Four of this study intends to exemplify the procedures used in order to carry out this research project “Analysis of the Main Reasons why English Students Face a Decrease in their Academic Performance in the Second Year of the Major at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador.” This chapter exemplifies the reasons that motivated the researchers to execute such a project; besides that, the researchers present the tools and the methods chosen to carry out the project and the way these instruments and methods will be applied when the project be carried out.

3.1 Paradigm and Design

To carry out the research project “Analysis of the Main Reasons why English Students Face a Decrease in their Academic Performance in the Second Year of the Major at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador,” the researchers will use the quantitative paradigm with the purpose of gathering data through consistent tests, and quantitative measurement instruments to have a clear idea about the participants’ perspectives according to the project. To carry out this project, the researchers will make use of the explanatory and the causal-comparative study types in order to establish the reasons and results that provoke students to have a decrease in their academic performance when taking the subjects taught in English from the second year of the major.

The explanatory study type will be used because the researchers consider important the fact of explaining each of the possible causes that may affect the performance of our subject students in the major since that would make even clearer the phenomenon being
described. Furthermore, the researchers will consider the causal-comparative study type in their project because of the nature of the investigation which is based on the comparison of the students’ academic performances from the first and the second year of the major.

3.2 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the procedure in which a small amount of people is taken from a whole population to study, collect, and analyze data for a research project. Being said that, the target population for this research study will be the approximately 30 students of the following three groups: a group of Intensive Intermediate English II, a group of English Pronunciation, and a group of English Grammar, all of them from the morning shift, during semester I-2014 at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador. Therefore, the researchers will use the “snowball” technique since they need students taking such subjects.

First, the researchers will approach a teacher from the English Department teaching one of the above mentioned subjects in order to know the name of one student who will be the intermediary of the sample population. Then, he or she will refer us to other students accomplishing the required qualities for this research.

Based on this, the researchers will elaborate a list of the thirty students needed to conduct this research project.

3.3 Preliminary Phase

This phase contains a thorough explanation of the reasons why the researchers decided to work on the topic and its branches. It also describes how the researchers
approached the study by stating the problem. Moreover, this preliminary phase provides the bases on which the researchers consummated and executed the diagnosis for establishing and outlining the main purposes and objectives of the research study. Finally, it presents a detailed description of the problem to obtain a clear understanding of the hypothesis under testing.

3.3.1 Approaching the Field of Study

During September 2013, the researchers decided to work on the analysis of the possible factors that affect English students´ grades when in the second year of the major. This is a problem that students at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador have been facing for a long time. From the researchers’ experiences, the decrease in students´ grades in second year is present since semester I-2009 until the current semester II-2013 at the WMC of the UES. It is not accurate to say that the problem started at that time, but at least it provides the researchers with a general knowledge of how expanded this problem has become.

The problem seemed to get worse as students do not only attribute such a decrease to their study habits but also to some other external factors. To get more information to understand what “external factors” the students referred to, an informal talk was carried out in October 2013. Because the research study covered only Intermediate English I students of the Semester II-2013, this informal talk involved some other students who had already taken the Intensive Intermediate English I and II courses --that is, students from third and fourth year specifically. It showed that these students’ reasons to decrease their academic performance in the second year of the major were similar to other students from higher
level’s experiences. This gave the researchers the perspective that the problem is as complex as expected.

To continue gathering information, the researchers chose to carry out an oral interview to some teachers of the Foreign Language Department at the WMC of the UES to know their points of view about the problem. Researchers asked in an informal way these teachers to collaborate with the research investigation. Curiously, they contrasted students’ answers —without knowing what the students previously interviewed had declared— stating that the main reasons why students decrease their academic performance in the second year of the major are each student’s study habits and also the lack of exposure they have to the language, in other words, lack of practicing the language.

Besides, a meeting with the chief of the Foreign Language Department at the WMC of the UES and a member of the research team was carried out in October, 2013. This member of the research project asked for the chief’s help in an oral way, and the chief kindly agreed to help the research team. This meeting helped the researchers to know the averages of some students’ grades when in the first and the second year of the major since 2009 up to now. Indeed, the researchers could notice that the vast majority of the students who had passed all the subjects in the first year of the major had a very good average, from 7.5 on approximately; nevertheless, such averages were considerably reduced in the second year —where the researchers could also notice that many of the students who had successfully passed all their subjects in the first year had failed one or two subjects in the second year. Hence, the question still remained intact. What made students decrease their academic performance in the second year of the major? In one side students stated that it was not only their fault but also some other “external factors” that had caused such a
phenomenon whereas some teachers of the Foreign Language Department stated that students do not have enough exposure to the language because of the little practice they have in and out of the classroom.

Therefore, to get a deeper knowledge of these “external factors” and to see if the students’ study habits were the appropriate ones, the researchers designed a preliminary diagnosis that was carried out in October 2013. Since the research project aims to study students of Intensive Intermediate English I Semester I-2013 only and the research topic covers two whole years, it was obvious that some other students who have already passed all the subjects from such years have been questioned for having a more complete and concrete diagnosis. Therefore, the researchers made the decision of applying the questionnaire to 20 students from Intermediate English I who undoubtedly are part of the target students under study this semester II-2013. However, the research team had to ask for permission to conduct the diagnosis. The researchers asked each of the teachers in charge of an IE I group –since the students randomly chosen were divided into four groups --to allow them to carry out the questionnaire during one of their classes. Researchers got the permission and could do their work successfully.

Doubtlessly, these students provided useful data for the researchers to analyze and reach a conclusion. This information helped diagnose the problem, but it did not stand for all the information needed. To diagnose the problem fully and completely, the students of the IIE I Semester II-2013 were observed and questioned as well.

3.3.2 Diagnostic Study

To continue with the development of the project, the researchers created a preliminary questionnaire (Appendix A). This diagnosis took place in October 2013 with a
sample of 20 students randomly chosen of Intensive Intermediate English I. The purpose of the diagnosis was to obtain further information that could show how the problem had started and increased and that could enhance the research development with insights so that the objectives were set along with the scope, the justification, and the possible limitations.

The design of the questionnaire helped participants to answer easily since it just contained two parts. First, it presented three questions to obtain general information about the selected students. Those generalities were age, sex, and status. The decision to use those three items was for measuring answers in a variety of ways. For instance, the information gathered could be explained based on responses made by men or women, single or married, or even ages.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 5 questions to study the problem and to detect the main reasons why students had decreased their grades in second year –this last tool was used only with some students from third and fourth year to compare the results from the ones taking subjects from the first year of the major in this current semester. Here, the questions were carefully selected and stated in order to facilitate both participants and researchers with understandable facts. In other words, the researchers intended to collect information by being specific with the questions. In that way, information would not be useless. Hence, the collected information served to describe not only the main cause for the phenomenon but also other external factors that cause a decrease in students’ performance when in second year. As an example, students who studied the IIE II course years before claimed during an informal talk that teachers’ methodologies were the main reason for them to decrease their performances in second year. This aspect became relevant for the research investigation and important to incorporate it in the analysis of the problem.
3.3.3 Definition of the Problem

After the administration of the questionnaire, researchers could obtain the results that helped them define the problem and scope. The results revealed that the 90% of the population questioned affirmed that the nature of subjects played an important role in their grades. That is, since methodologies used in subjects taught in a foreign language should be different because of their nature, it is the main reason why they do not get accustomed so easily and get lower grades than in subjects taught in Spanish, their mother tongue. As a matter of fact, the total of students from the sample provided more significant information to formulate the objectives of the research and to delimit the topic to the most important aspects, that is, the main problems.

The previous causes served to describe the problem with a profound analysis. More importantly, exemplifying and clarifying were important steps, so the researchers decided to perform a final non-participant observation to a certain number of IIE I students in semester II-2013 to gather even more facts for the investigation, to discover if those students’ study habits were the appropriate ones or if the teachers’ methodology is the main reason that causes students’ decrease in academic performance.

3.4 Planning Phase

After giving the proper definition of the problem and specifying the field of study, the researchers started the planning phase which includes all the necessary and reliable information to construct a theoretical framework to help the researchers define all the variables needed to be measured in the research. To do so, the investigators consulted
different sources to offer information about the students’ academic performance. By having collected such information, the researchers created the visualization of the study to analyze it so that they could start creating the most appropriate instruments taking into account their validity and reliability that will measure students’ academic performance.

3.4.1 Literature Review

The researchers considered the elaboration of the theoretical framework was the first step to be done since it helped the researchers get familiar with all the information regarding the different aspects involved in students’ academic performance while learning English. The investigators got the information by consulting some experts in the area, such as teachers. The researchers also looked for main resources in libraries (books and articles) and webpages (eBooks, articles, research reports among others). After having collected the necessary information, the researchers analyzed and reviewed it in order to keep only the most essential and useful information discarding the one that did not help the researchers fulfil the objectives already set.

The development of the theoretical framework consisted of four main parts. First, the researchers developed the theoretical framework taking into consideration data related to first and second language acquisition. The main point of this aspect was to find out the difficulties people face when learning a language that is not their native language. It was found out that there are different stages people have to go through to acquire a language, and the lack of some of these stages is what makes the learning of a second language difficult. This information made the researchers understand the reasons why it is so difficult for students of the Foreign Language Department at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus
of the University of El Salvador learn English. Second, the theoretical framework includes the different classroom management parameters a teacher has to take into account while teaching English since these parameters help teachers to create a good classroom atmosphere where learning takes place. By doing this, the researchers also found out that teacher talking time and student talking time is paramount with the learning of a second language. Besides, students-teacher rapport is a key to learn English successfully. Third, the information included in the theoretical framework was based on the students’ responsibility when going through a second language learning process. This also has to do with the different study habits students have. Some information about the multiple intelligences was included in order to have a clear understanding about the different study habits that may be found in a group of students.

Moreover, the researchers consider important to mention the importance of students’ self-care. Finally, the researchers pointed out the methodology used by teachers when teaching English since it is extremely important for students to get motivated in the learning process. This leads to the two types of motivation students have: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

In short, all the information collected from experts, books, websites, articles, and so on was analyzed and included in the theoretical framework by the researchers to facilitate the development of their research project.

3.4.2 Operationalization of Variables

What the researchers did first was to breakdown the variables into indicators. This was useful for the researchers to discard information that would not be necessary for the
advancement of the work. The researchers did not find that essential to compare the variables with other studies similar to this one since they tend to find out their own analysis and conclusions. To gather reliable information, the research team separated and studied the indicators before mentioned in the theoretical framework to analyze and measure the results without any problem. Those indicators are essential for the development of the work as they are essential to design the necessary tools for the research. In this regard, the researchers explained clearly all the indicators so that the information would not show results that are not important for the investigation.

**3.4.3 Data Collection Instruments**

To find out the reasons why students lower their academic performance when reaching their second year of studies, the researchers will carry out some observations to the Intermediate English II-2014 students’ classes in order to have a direct experience with the students’ performance during the class. For this reason, the researchers will bring an observation guide (Appendix B). Also, the researchers will have with them another observation guide (Appendix C) to observe the teacher’s performance during the class.

**3.4.4 Validation of Data Collection Instruments**

After having created the instruments to be used, the researchers will look for experts, such as professors, masters, and so forth in the field of education at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador to check and validate such instruments. Such instruments will undergo experts’ approval, and as soon as the experts validate them, they will be used in the investigation. To achieve this, researchers are planning to use a validation sheet (Appendix D) in which the professors and masters will
grade and comment the instruments. Furthermore, the researchers will carry out a second validation consisting in choosing a small sample of the population to be studied in order to know if the students will find any problem understanding the questions. By doing this, the researchers will also find out if the questionnaire will need any modification. This will be made in order to get positive critics to improve the quality of the tools and the whole project.

3.4.5 Validity and Reliability

Since each of the tools will need to be valid, the researchers will be focused on two main validity criteria. First, they will use construct validity and criterion-related validity because each of the tools to be used need representative constructs of the studied topic, and the scores measured interrelated items taken from the theoretical framework.

Reliability is a process which attempts to determine how reliable the information collected in a project is. In order to achieve reliability in the instruments’ results, the researchers will use the test-retest method which consists of administering the same sample on two different occasions.

3.4.6 Ethical Aspects

Since there are certain ethical principles to be taken into account while developing a research work, the researchers will respect each participant. For instance, if some of them do not want to be named in the project, for sure, they will not be mentioned. Moreover, each of the participants will be informed of the objectives for carrying out such study. Also, the researchers will take into consideration the principle of human dignity and the respectful treatment towards participants.
3.5 Execution Phase

To develop successfully this research project, the investigators first explain, in the execution phase, the strategies that will be used throughout this research to collect the necessary data to make a detailed analysis of the phenomenon under study. Furthermore, a clear explanation of the data processing techniques to be used in this quantitative study are included as well as the parameters that will be taken into account to precisely and accurately interpret the gathered data.

3.5.1 Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect reliable data, the research team will carefully design different instruments. It will be necessary to use the data collecting tools at least in one group of each of the subjects students of Intermediate English II will be taking during the first term of the year 2014. All the different instruments will be administered to both teachers and students on the subjects Intermediate English II, English pronunciation, and English Grammar I. It is necessary not only to analyze the teacher’s development but also student’s performance in the classroom in order to have a better understanding of this study. For that reason, both an observation guide for teacher’s development in class and an observation guide for student’s behavior have been prepared. People in charge of this study will enter the classes with a checklist to observe and analyze the development of classes. In these regards, each member will be assigned a specific role to be observed. That is either the teacher or the students.

The researchers will develop the observations two times in order to compare academic performance. The first time the observation will be developed during the second week of classes to identify and analyze how both teachers and students face the beginning
of a new course. Then, the first observation will be carried out from March 24 to March 28 of 2014. After that, two weeks later the second observation will be carried out to compare students’ behavior in class in regards to the first week of classes. So, the dates for the second observation will be from April 7 to April 11 of 2014.

Besides the observation guide, a questionnaire for students has been designed. It will be used to gather data about the student’s perception of the teaching system, their own performance, and the teacher’s performance. By using this tool, the researchers will have access to knowing not only what the teacher says but also what students think since their opinion is of vital importance to have a clearer understanding of the phenomenon under study. This questionnaire will be addressed to students in the eight week of the term so that they will be able to compare their experience from taking only one subject in English with taking three subjects in the target language.

Taking into account the teacher’s effort, the research team will design a special questionnaire for teachers to analyze the strategies and techniques each teacher applies to optimize learning on each subject. It is clear that the nature of each subject is different and each of them requires different methodologies to be taught. Besides, this data collection technique will let us know the challenges for students according to the teacher’s perception as well as the recommendations each teacher will offer to succeed in each different subject. These questionnaires will be administered on the ninth week of the semester since at that time teachers will have a clear perspective of the academic performance of their students.
3.5.2 Data Processing

After having collected the required data, the research team will organize the information in a comprehensible way. To do so, the researchers will use, for example, Microsoft Excel 2010 will be used to create precise and concise tables and graphs. Besides, the SPSS software will be used to organize the collected data. Also, it will be necessary through a formal request to ask the head of the Registration Office at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador to provide a report of the grades of students.

In order to process the observation guides, the team will analyze different aspects of the teaching learning process. Then, they will establish some relationships on both the teacher and the student’s behavior in the classroom. Through this, it will be possible at first glance to compare responsibility on both sides as well as the methodologies used and how they are accepted by students.

Regarding the questionnaires with open-ended questions that students will answer, they will be managed according to the Liker Scale. Then, the results will be analyzed with central tendencies measures. Furthermore, the results will be compared with the grades students will have gotten.

Also, the opinion that teachers will express through the questionnaires will be analyzed to determine the similarities and differences among the subjects. The research team will have a better perception through the analysis of what teachers in each different subject think.
3.5.3 Data Interpretation and Analysis

To interpret the collected data, the researchers will triangulate the information gathered from the class observation, teacher and student’s questionnaire. All these data will come from Intermediate English II students and their teachers. Also, teachers of the subjects English Grammar I and English Pronunciation will participate as sources of data. All this information will be gathered at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador in the first term of the year 2014. The analysis process will be carried out by the research team. They will compare the results obtained from both teachers and students.

In order to have a better analysis of student’s performance, the research team will compare the results of the questionnaires to the grades students will have gotten in the subject Intermediate English I. Also, the perception students will have of the major after almost one and a half year of studies will be determined. Besides, student’s opinion and grades will be compared to the results of the two class observations.

With the information gathered in the questionnaires, the researchers will analyze the results of such data through tables and graphs. It will be established the influence of teaching styles and the content of subjects. Besides, the research team will analyze the points in common between students and teachers as well as the relationship created in the groups. All this analysis will let the research team support their hypotheses and realize how the transition from first to second year affects students. Based on the objectives of the research and the theoretical background, the researchers will create the respective conclusions of the study.
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REFERENCES


APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

University of El Salvador
Western Multidisciplinary Campus
Foreign Language Department

Objective: To measure the academic performance of Intensive Intermediate English I students of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza at the Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador

Direction: Mark with “X” the answer that best describes you.

Gender:  F  □  M  □  Marital Status:__________  Age:_____

1. Specify the number of subjects you are taking.

1. Subjects in Spanish  2. Subjects in English
   a) 0 □   a) 0 □
   b) 1 □   b) 1 □
   c) 2 □   c) 2 □
   d) 3 □   d) 3 □

2. How much do you practice your English taking just one subject in English?

1) 10% - 30% □  2) 40% - 60% □  3) 70% - 90% □  4) 100% □

3. Would you like to take more subjects in English at this level of your major?

1) Yes □  2) No □

4. What is your average at this level of your major?

1) 1-2 □  2) 3-4 □  3) 5-6 □  4) 7-8 □  5) 9-10 □

5. Are you satisfied with the academic performance you are getting in this level?

1) Yes □  2) No □  3) A little bit □
Objective: to analyze student’s perception of the academic challenges found in the third term of the major Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza.

Directions: Read carefully each question and underline either Strongly agree, Somehow agree, or Disagree to answer each of the statements below.

1. Second year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza is more difficult than the first year.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

2. Teacher’s attitudes intimidate students and stop them from making academic progress.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

3. Teachers use varied resources to make classes understandable.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

4. Students can freely talk to teachers to ask for clarification about doubts.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

5. Teachers have enough knowledge about the subjects that they teach.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

6. Teachers do not show favoritism in class.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

7. English grammar I is the most difficult subject of second year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

8. English Pronunciation is the most difficult subject of second year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

9. Intensive Intermediate English II is the most difficult subject of second year of Lic. en Idioma Inglés.
1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

10. Learning English is fun and easy.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

11. I don’t have problems to understand what my teacher says when he or she speaks in English.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

12. I am good at writing in English
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

13. Students need to study more about English before taking Grammar and Pronunciation.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

14. Students learn enough English in their first year of studies to face the second year.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

15. Students in second year have good study habits.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

16. Exams are more difficult in second year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

17. Students have difficulties to get accustomed to the evaluation system in second year of their studies.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

18. Second-year students understand what they have to do in their tests.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree

19. Students accomplish all the tasks the teacher asks in order to acquire the necessary skills they need to face the subject.
   1. Strongly agree        2. Somehow agree        3. Disagree
APPENDIX C
UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
WESTERN MULTIDISCIPLINARY CAMPUS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Questionnaire for Intensive Intermediate English II, English Grammar I, and English Pronunciation teachers of the Foreign Language Department of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza, Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador

Objective: to analyze teacher’s perception of the academic challenges students find in the third term of the major Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza

Directions: Read carefully each question and underline either Strongly agree, Somehow agree, or Disagree to answer each of the statements below.

1. Second-year students are prepared to face Intensive Intermediate English II, English Grammar I, and English Pronunciation during the third term.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

2. Students have good communicative skills in their third term of classes, but they are afraid of speaking.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

3. Teachers use varied resources to make classes understandable.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

4. Students consider that teachers are willing to clarify doubts, but students never ask for help.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

5. Teachers are constantly updating their knowledge about the subjects they teach.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

6. Teachers constantly use various strategies to motivate students to work hard.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

7. Second-year students find English Grammar I as the most difficult subject.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree

8. Second-year students find English Pronunciation as the most difficult subject.
   1. Strongly agree      2. Somehow agree       3. Disagree
9 Second-year students find Intensive Intermediate English II as the most difficult subject.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

10. Students in second year have a positive attitude towards learning.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

11. Students understand what teachers say when they speak in English.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

12. Most students have problems with spelling and sentence coherence.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

13. Students need to study more about English before taking grammar and pronunciation.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

14. Students in second year of the major constantly look for strategies to improve their academic performance.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

15. Students in second year have good study habits.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

16. Exams are more difficult in second year of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opción Enseñanza.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

17. Teachers use the appropriate methods to evaluate student’s academic performance.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

18. Students have difficulties to get accustomed to new evaluation systems in second year of their studies.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

19. Students understand what they have to do in their tests.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

20. Students know the information to solve a test, but they forget it because of nervousness.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree

21. Students accomplish all the tasks the teacher asks in order to acquire the necessary skills they need to face the subject.
   1. Strongly agree  2. Somehow agree  3. Disagree
Observation guide for Intensive intermediate II English, English Grammar I, and English Pronunciation teachers of the Foreign Language Department of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opcion Enseñanza, Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador


Directions: Observe the teacher’s development of the class and thick the square for yes or no.

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<th>NO</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The teacher is right on time to start the class.</td>
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<td>3. The teacher has good manners to address to the students.</td>
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<td>4. The teacher is respectful while interacting with students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The teacher shows tolerance at the time of correcting student’s mistakes.</td>
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<td>6. The teacher avoids using inappropriate language.</td>
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<td>7. The teacher creates rapport with students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. The teacher models the activities and gives clear instructions.</td>
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<td>10. The teacher has good classroom management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. The teacher involves each student in the class.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The teacher uses didactic materials in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The teacher implements warm-ups to start the class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The teacher does not show preferences towards specifics students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Teacher methodology is oriented towards student’s needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The teacher develops his class according to a clear objective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The teacher uses varied and creative activities in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The teacher has good management of the topics developed in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The teacher encourages students to participate in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The teacher creates an appropriate learning atmosphere.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The teacher stimulates his students to learn.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. The teacher uses the language fluently.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. The teacher uses proper intonation and pronunciation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. The teacher uses grammar appropriately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The teacher uses the board neatly and appropriately.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. The teacher makes sure most students have understood the topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation guide for Intensive intermediate II English, English Grammar I, and English Pronunciation students of the Foreign Language Department of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opcion Enseñanza, Western Multidisciplinary Campus of the University of El Salvador


Directions: Observe the student's behavior of the class and thick the square for yes or no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Responsibility</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Students arrive at the class on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Students bring the necessary supplies (i.e. books, notebooks, etc.) to the class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Students leave the class earlier.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Students hand in homework when the teacher asks for it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Development</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Students are comfortable when working in groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Students call each other by nicknames.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Students get along with each other.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Students do teamwork when necessary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class performance</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 Students pay attention in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Students are eager to participate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Students seem afraid of asking the teacher to clarify doubts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Students show interest in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Students take notes in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Students show any kind of class disruption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Students crosstalk when the teacher is explaining a topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Students use their cellphones during class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Students seem to understand the teacher’s explanations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Students follow the teacher’s directions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Students use their native language in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Students ask each other when they have doubts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Students get distracted easily.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

EXPERT VALIDATION SHEET

Validator’s Name __________________________ Date of Validation: ________ Remarks ________

**Direction:** Please indicate the rating of the items found by checking the line of each corresponding items. The questionnaire’s rating will be based on the following scale:

- 5- Excellent (E)
- 4- Very Good (VG)
- 3- Good (G)
- 2- Needs Improvement (NI)
- 1- Poor (P)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Clarity of Instructions and Items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The instructions given were written in simple, specific, clear and comprehensible manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Questions in each item were written in a brief, concise and unambiguous way.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The words and concepts utilized in the questionnaire can be well understood by the respondents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Questions were written in an affirmative approach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Each item has avoided sentences with “double negatives” as well as “double-barrels”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations:
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
II. Accuracy and Suitability of Items

| a. The range of information to be provided included all significant aspects of the study. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| b. The number of item per area category is suitable and has represented enough questions. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| c. The questions were designed to measure what is supposed to be measured. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| d. Informed consent for the respondents/ proper authority was adequately provided. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| e. The researchers strictly follow the ethical standards of research such as respondent’s right to anonymity or confidentiality, right to data disclosure and protection from harm is guaranteed. | __ __ __ __ __ |

Observations:
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

III. Objectivity and Evaluation Rating System

| a. Each item questions require specific and measurable answer. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| b. Possible biases on the part of data collectors have been adequately controlled. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| c. Scoring and coding adapted for the questionnaire is appropriate and objective for the items. | __ __ __ __ __ |
| d. Responses options covered all significant alternatives | __ __ __ __ __ |

Observations:
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
### IV. over-all Presentation and Organization

| a. The questionnaire is neat and organized. |   |   |   |   |   |
| b. Questionnaire’s layout and format appeared to be in well-made draft. |   |   |   |   |   |
| c. Words and other items are free from clerical and grammatical errors. |   |   |   |   |   |

**Observations:**

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

### V. Attainment of Purpose

| a. The objectives of the study are congruent with the information needs of the intended respondents. |   |   |   |   |   |
| b. The instrument as a whole fulfills the objectives for which it was constructed. |   |   |   |   |   |

**Observation:**

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Over – all Remarks:

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

________________________

Validator’s Signature