Linking Teachers' Profiles to their Capability in Curriculum Implementation: Analysis of Factors that Shape and Influence EFL Classes

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Abstract. An analysis of teachers' profiles and their influence on the curriculum implementation of English taught as a foreign language (EFL) constitutes the crux of the study. Teachers' profiles provide a gauge of their capability in curriculum implementation. Policies have been conceptualised to facilitate the seamless and smooth interaction between the teacher's role and task, and to ensure that the curriculum is implemented according to its goals and objectives. However, when teachers' profiles do not meet the requirements, and the policies do not facilitate the teachers' task, challenges arise that impact the teaching–learning process. Thus, this study analysed teachers' profiles and the influence of these profiles on teachers' curriculum implementation. The survey design captured 57 EFL teachers' profiles and their beliefs and perceptions about implemented policies. The findings reveal that most of these teachers had an intermediate proficiency level and more than a decade of teaching experience, and most taught at high school level in urban areas. Pedagogically, teachers employed communication-driven activities; however, certain conditions, such as big classes, insufficient time, and limited resources, were factors that may have affected the effective facilitation of the implementation of the English component of the curriculum. Teachers' profiles and institutional support are key factors that influence the outcome of policy implementation. Having an appropriate professional profile in the teaching pool and providing the appropriate pedagogical and curriculum support is pivotal to curriculum implementation of teaching a foreign language such as English in a predominantly Spanish-speaking country such as Ecuador.

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1. Introduction

The profiles of teachers provide baseline information on their academic formation, skills, abilities, and experience. In most hiring processes, the profile serves as a sieve that allows those who meet the requirements to proceed to the next phase. In addition, capturing teachers' profiles in a specific subject or area provides information about their expertise and the areas for which they need professional updating. A continuous review of teachers' profiles enables school administrators to formulate programs for continuing professional development (CPD), improve classroom instruction and offer recommendations to school administrators when appointing teachers to teach English.

In Ecuador, the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) is deemed important and useful, so that citizens can participate in a globalized economy. The mandatory teaching of EFL from Year 2 until senior high school, sending public school teachers to selected universities in the United States for linguistic immersion, and a curriculum revision in 2016 are among the major policy decisions the government has implemented. An increase in the student population means the demand for EFL teachers has skyrocketed to unexpected proportions, and has led to a shortage of human capital of about 2,800 (Constante, 2016). Due to the shortage of teachers, particularly at rural schools, some teachers who have not been trained to teach English end up teaching English, despite them being unrepared to do the job.

The 2016 Curriculum (Ministry of Education, n.d.) poses pedagogical challenges to teachers who are unfamiliar with prioritised teaching approaches, unit plan writing techniques, and teaching resource utilisation. The communicative language teaching (CLT) method influences most of the methods that teachers are expected to employ in teaching English; however, not everybody possesses a thorough understanding of its core principles. The unit planning approach is another pedagogical intervention that changes the way lessons are planned, from daily lesson planning to thematic planning that covers more extended periods of lessons, and revolves around threads that consolidate key themes and grammar points. Teacher resources have also evolved – from using textbooks to using pedagogical modules – which poses more challenges for teachers when they implement their unit plans.

The marked changes in the 2016 Curriculum and the shortage of teachers at schools caused pedagogical challenges for both teachers and students in EFL classes. Because of the challenges the changes present for English teachers, the government has tried to respond through continuing professional development courses, such as the Go Teachers Programme (National Secretary of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation [SENESCYT], n.d.), and the scholarship opportunities to obtain Master's degrees from universities in the United States. Determining what factors facilitate or impede the teaching–learning process in EFL classes would provide the context for the way curriculum-

driven changes and human-capital-related problems influence student outcomes. Further, through analysis of teachers' profiles, the study hopes to provide data and information on how academic and professional formation influence teachers' performance in the teaching field.

In this study, the teachers' profiles comprise their socio-demographic profiles, perceptions, and valuation of English teaching, preferred teaching methods, techniques, activities, attendance of professional development training, and views about government policies. Specifically, the study aimed to answer a question relating to how teachers' profiles influence their teaching and implementation of EFL policies. Through the survey design, the factors that facilitate or impede the teaching–learning process were highlighted.

Currently, few studies in Ecuador have analysed the relationship between teachers' profiles, which reflect their academic formation and professional development, and how these acquired attributes facilitate or impede their pedagogy and implementation of the curriculum. It is hoped that this study will bring the facilitating or impeding factors, and the underlying reasons for doing so, to the fore.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Socio-demographic Profiles of EFL Teachers
In Ecuador, the profile of an EFL teacher is one of the major requirements for applying for a position at the Ministry of Education. One of the requirements of the Ministry of Education is the B2 proficiency level (Ministry of Education, 2018) – a competency-based level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020) – that requires every EFL teacher to provide evidence of their language proficiency before they are allowed to participate in a competition-like selection of teachers. Other documents they need to include are their diplomas for English teaching and other training, professional development, and workshop certificates earned through the years.

The proficiency level of an applicant has always been considered the litmus test that confronts every English teacher when they want to enter the teaching force. Having good proficiency implies that one can teach a foreign language better, although this is not universally true. This view on proficiency reinforces Murdoch's idea (1994, cited by Butler, 2004, p. 246) that a high proficiency level is the most important asset or profile characteristic that non-native teachers need to possess to prove that they can teach a foreign language. A high regard for proficiency validation and certification dominates the EFL landscape in Ecuador; it has led to a pronounced demarcation between native-speaker teachers and teachers who are not native speakers of English. There have been cases where a native speaker has been selected for the job over someone who has a Bachelor's degree in English teaching, which emphasizes the value of proficiency in teaching a foreign language.

The proliferation of language institutes, examination centres, and online courses is proof that taking standardized, international tests is the norm that confronts

English teachers. Being certified at the required B2 level opens opportunities for teachers to be appointed at either private or public schools. Often, institutions consider the language proficiency level of teachers to be more important than their academic formation. This perception is due to the low English proficiency of teachers, even if they have acquired Bachelor's degrees in English teaching. Based on the country's nationwide examination administered to teachers, only 0.05% of English teachers in the country are at the C1 level, 28% are at B2 level and the majority have either the A2 level or lower (Primicias, 2019).

One crucial aspect of proficiency is the difference between teachers' perceived English proficiency level and the actual level as determined by international, standardized exams. Often, teachers assume that they are proficient when they can speak English fluently, without considering other, related skills, such as reading, writing, and listening; hence, the perceived proficiency may not correspond with the actual level as measured by examinations. Butler (2004, p. 245) conducted a similar study in Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. He discovered a gap between teachers' perceptions of their proficiency and the level they believe is necessary to teach the English language.

Most English teachers who are employed in the public school system are not proficient enough to facilitate teaching at high-school levels, which influences the proficiency that students develop from the beginning to the end of high school. The English curriculum expects students to graduate at a B1 level; however, after finishing a 12-year combined elementary and secondary education, students graduate with low proficiency. When their proficiency is a problem, teachers, especially novice teachers (Fraga-Cañadas, 2010), do not feel confident about teaching English. Their linguistic insecurity (Vold, 2017) becomes a stumbling block that serves as the impetus for them to resort to teaching methods that most educators define as "traditional" (Richards, 2010). When, due to proficiency-related limitations, teachers resort to methods or approaches based on convenience, the curriculum implementation of prioritized pedagogical practices for teaching English is not actualized.

2.2 Teacher Distribution and School Types

When the 2016 Curriculum was released, the government's intention was to provide English teachers for students in Year 2 until the last high school level; however, not all vacancies have been filled yet. The shortage of more than 2,800 teachers in 2016 (Constante, 2016) has led to problems with instruction, as students in different parts of the country do not receive the same inputs and exposure to English.

In addition to the shortage of teachers, there are discrepancies in teacher distribution in Ecuador. For example, there are more teachers at urban than at rural schools. Moreover, more teachers teach the upper levels (Year 8 to high school) than in the primary grades. A similar situation exists in Taiwan, where teachers with the most expertise are placed at schools in major cities (Butler, 2004, p. 250).

2.3 Pedagogical Approaches

The National Curriculum Guidelines for English as a Foreign Language (NCGEFL, 2016) operationalizes and outlines the English component of the 2016 curriculum. The guidelines emphasize CLT, a task-based approach, and content and language integrated learning (CLIL). Also, teachers need to integrate the threads of teaching English by incorporating themes, such as cultural awareness, interculturality, and communication.

The shift in pedagogical approach requires teachers to undergo professional development training as part of their preparation; however, isufficient training and courses were presented in Ecuador (Burgin & Daniel, 2017) before and during the early stages of curriculum implementation. Without adequate training, teachers often struggle with the demands of the curriculum, which influence their performance of the pedagogical approaches prescribed by the curriculum. Vold (2017) and Bunch (2013) emphasize the importance of enriching teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, so that they can face the challenges posed by curriculum change. Without adequate continuing professional education, teachers cannot implement the pedagogical approaches of the curriculum, which affects the attainment of the learning outcomes outlined in the unit plans.

In Ecuador, teachers consider the CLT as the 'teaching template' for English. Most teachers view CLT as the sole method for enabling learners to learn and acquire a foreign language. The widespread privileging of the CLT has its origins in the sequence and approach of most textbooks, which are produced overseas. Teachers often associate the CLT with the CEFR, without considering that the CEFR is a framework and a guide for planning curricula – it is not the curriculum itself. There are also misconceptions about CLT, ranging from the notion that, as long as students produce, they are learning, to beliefs that CLT is the best method for all circumstances and situations, regardless of the learning context.

Classroom activities reflect teachers' affinity for the CLT method. Since CLT prioritizes fluency over "linguistic accuracy" (Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999), teaching input devotes more time to speaking and listening than to reading and writing. In most EFL classes, competition-like activities and pair-and-share dynamics are considered effective for helping students learn the language; however, this approach has led to faulty grammar, weak register, and below-par competencies in reading and writing. The unequal proficiency levels in the four skills are understandable, considering that lessons aim to equip learners with the communicative tools to function well in English-speaking societies. Still, the case in Ecuador is different, as exposure to English language users is limited. Also, the CLT method alone may not be enough for students who intend to become English teachers and who will be expected to pass international and standardized examinations such as the TOEFL, IELTS, and CAE. International examinations are considered the most legitimate and widely accepted proof of proficiency in Ecuador; however, these examinations demand that both accuracy and fluency be demonstrated in the four skills tested.

2.4 Policies in EFL

The English component of the 2016 Ministry of Education Curriculum mandates that teachers need to be certified at least at B2 level to teach EFL in public schools. In turn, students have to graduate at B1 level at the end of the 12-year basic (elementary and high school) education.

In teaching a foreign language such as English, extra support is needed to facilitate students' learning of a foreign code. The support that students need varies, and may include equal distribution of proficient teachers across levels/grades, allocation of sufficient time, exposure to the target language (Jaekel et al., 2017), availability of resources, exposure to extracurricular activities in English, and recognition of the role of assessment in the teaching–learning process (Troudi et al., 2009 p. 546).

The shortage of English teachers in 2016 (Constante, 2016) was the main obstacle to implementing the curriculum. Not all grades or levels have English teachers; thus, lesson continuity is affected, and not all schools have teachers, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, not all teachers are proficient at the B2 level – most teachers have lower proficiency levels. The teacher's proficiency is the basic yet essential requisite for teaching a foreign language; and, students' learning is adversely affected if teachers are not fully proficient.

Class size is another factor that influences teaching, particularly teaching a foreign language. Locastro (2001) analysed the factors after undertaking a a survey. She highlights implications related to three aspects – pedagogical, management-related, and affective – that affect teachers' opportunity to provide feedback, and time to attend to learning-related concerns.

The availability of resources, such as teacher or student support materials, is equally important. Upon the release of the curriculum in 2016, the Ministry of Education provided textbooks and teacher guides to ensure that accompanying resources were available. Pedagogical modules replaced the textbooks in mid-2018. During the pandemic, schools used templates and worksheets to respond to the demands of virtual teaching. In Ecuador, a textbook-driven approach to English teaching is prevalent at all levels, and this approach has rendered teachers dependent on the contents of books. Although no sufficient studies emphasize the adverse effects of textbook dependence, conversations with teachers reveal that lesson planning, materials creation, introduction of innovation in classes, and creativity in teaching are influenced by reliance on texbooks.

Another vital aspect of foreign language teaching is assessment and evaluation. The only way to track and monitor a student's actual proficiency level is through appropriate and relevant assessment methods and techniques. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of local literature on how students are assessed. In most cases, teachers employ a combination of formative and summative assessment activities and tasks. Formative assessment activities include short quizzes, graded

worksheets, and oral participation. Summative activities include unit examinations, projects, and exit examinations at the end of the academic year.

A three-stage remediation system is one assessment process that is part of the public school system promotion policy. Students who fail at the end of the academic year have three chances to pass a subject. Pedagogically, remediation is intended to support and enrich students' knowledge, to facilitate learning of specific topics and skills that are not fixed or learned during the academic year. However, remediation may foster mediocrity among students when the remediation process is not well understood or does not have clear goals of what must be accomplished in the learning process.

3. Research Design and Methodology

A survey design was employed to describe the teachers' profiles and to capture perceptions and views through a questionnaire administered to all English teachers in the three selected provinces; 57 teachers voluntarily completed the survey using the Survey Monkey link. The survey questionnaire was the instrument administered to the respondents; it comprised 15 closed questions and one open-ended question on training teachers had attended. These questions are categorized into datasets: the socio-demographic profile, views of pedagogical practices, continuing professional development, and perceptions of policies in EFL.

The survey questionnaire went through a piloting phase to revise the items and ensure the questions were easy to understand. In the pilot, 10 teachers were requested to complete the survey, and Cronbach's Alpha was used to establish questionnaire reliability. After the piloting phase, the questionnaire was administered, through the Survey Monkey website, to selected teachers in the three provinces of Zone 6. The Statistical Analysis Software (SPSS) Version 28.0.1 was used to process the data that had been collected. Further, descriptive statistics – frequencies and measures of central tendency – were used in data analysis and interpretation.

In the socio-demographic profile set, the variables factored in the construction of questions are duration of experience, proficiency certification, educational attainment, grades/levels taught, and the type of school where they work. The questions about teachers' views on their pedagogical practices consist of items that refer to their knowledge of curriculum implementation, the methods and techniques they used in their lessons, and the continuing professional education courses and training they had attended. The third set captured teachers' perceptions of the policies on remedial exams, class size, learning resources, schedule, and infrastructure.

4. Results

4.1 Socio-demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic profile of the selected respondents. Attributes that relate do the professional qualifications that teachers had acquired during their academic formation are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile by duration of experience, proficiency, and degree obtained

English Proficiency Level (Percentage)						
Qualification	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	Total
No university degree	0	0	0	1.8	0	1.8
University degree in other fields (mathematics, engineering)	0	1.8	1.8	3.5	0	7
University degree in general education	1.8	0	1.8	1.8	0	5
University degree in English language teaching	7	8.8	14	49	7	85.9
TOTAL	8.8	10.5	17.5	56.1	7	100
Duration of Experience	**Percentage of Respondents**					
0–5 years	25					
6–10 years	36.8					
11–15 years	28.0					
More than 15 years	10.5					

Note. The survey was administered to 57 teachers.

Table 1 shows that over half the surveyed participants have achieved the B2 level of proficiency. A combined percentage of 24.8% of the teachers are proficient at the A1 and A2 levels, which are considered the entry or basic levels, which enable users to function in society and communicate on familiar topics (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 37). Very few teachers (7%) were proficient at the C1 or the advanced levels. The combined percentage of the B2 and the C1 levels is 63.1% – the levels considered sufficient for teaching a language.

Most teachers (85.9%) have formation and degrees in English language teaching, although only 49% were proficient at the B2 level. Few had a general education preparation (5%), or university degrees in other fields (7%). Concerning the number of years in teaching, combining the percentages for 6–10 and 11–15 years of experience indicates that more than half the respondents had worked in the field for six to 15 years (64.8%). There were fewer teachers with more than 15 years of experience than those considered new in the field (0–5 years). Table 2 presents the levels and grades teachers taught and their schools' geographical classification.

Table 2. Profile by school type and grade/levels taught

Geographical Location	
Rural	29.8%
Urban	68.4%
Inaccessible urban areas	1.8%
TOTAL	100%
Grade/Levels Taught	
Preschool	1.8%
Primary education, Grades 1–3	19.3%
Primary education, Grades 4–6	22.8%
Secondary education, Grades 7–9	54.4%
Secondary education, Grades 10–12	68.4%
TOTAL	100%

Note. The survey was administered to 57 teachers.

Table 2 shows that most teachers worked in urban areas (68.4%), and few were assigned to rural schools (29.8%). Most teachers taught at secondary schools that covered Grades/Levels 7–12. However, about 25% of the teachers taught primary grades. The data imply that there is an unequal distribution of teachers across urban–rural areas. Similarly, more teachers are placed in the upper levels than in intermediate and primary levels.

4.2 Pedagogical approaches of the curriculum
Another aspect that is influenced by teachers' profiles is the implementation of the pedagogical approaches of the curriculum.

Table 3. Implementation of the pedagogical approaches of the curriculum

Strategies	Mean (M)
Integration of content (arts, literature) and language (CLIL)	3.4
Exposure to other fields (biology, physics, etc.) in English reading texts	3.6
Incorporation of themes related to Ecuadorian culture	3.7
Interactive speaking activities	4
Task-based activities	4
Skills integration (speaking and writing)	4.2

Note. The survey was administered to 57 selected teachers, who responded using a Likert scale with values of (5) to a great extent, (4) to a certain extent, (3) to a minimal extent, (2) to a low extent, and (1) not at all. M denotes the mean of the computed values.

Teachers often integrate skills, as evident in Table 3, mainly speaking and writing. The communicative activity approach is also evident in two other strategies – interactive speaking activities (4) and task-based activities (4) – highlighting teachers familiarity with the approach.

In Table 4, activities and techniques that reflect the implementation of the pedagogical approaches are listed as percentages that signify usage frequency.

Table 4: Activities and techniques employed in EFL classes

Activities and Techniques	Percentage
Competition-like activities	87.7
Pair-and-share	77.1
Speaking activities	75.4
ICT of different tools for teaching	73.7
Audio for listening	71.9
Use of teacher-made resources	70.2
Inclusive activities	68.4
Book exercises	61.4
Grammar exercises	59.6
Audio activities for speaking	56.1

Note. The survey was administered to 57 teachers.

According to Table 4, most teachers employ active-oriented and communication-inclined techniques in their lessons. The use of competitive games (87.7%), pair-and-share activities (77.1%), and interactive ICT tools (73.7%) characterize the techniques they use to teach English.

The kinds of resources that teachers use vary. More than half the surveyed respondents usedresources they had created (70.2%) for teaching, some incorporated activities that promote inclusion (68.4%), and used exercises from books (61.4%). Two activities and techniques not as widely used as the others are grammar activities and exercises (59.6%) and audio activities for speaking.

4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of EFL Policies
Teachers' perceptions about infrastructure, assessment, school provision, and management-related policies are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Views on EFL policies

Policies	Mean
Influence of the class size of 30+ on the teaching quality	3.5
Sufficient weekly hours in the schedule	2.1
Students' accessibility to books for class use	2
School's support for collaborative unit planning	2
Teacher's preparedness for students with special needs	1.9
Appropriateness of classroom space	1.9
School support for English extra-curricular activities	1.8
Importance of follow-up activities	1.8
Importance of remediation exams	1.7

Note. The survey was administered to 57 selected teachers using a Likert scale with values of (5) to a great extent, (4) to a certain extent, (3) to a minimal extent, (2) to a low extent, and (1) not at all. M denotes the mean of the computed values.

Teachers considered a class size of more than 30 students (3.5) as a factor that influenced teaching to an extent. If they had to teach 30+ students in a limited classroom space, teachers considered the classroom space inappropriate (1.9). Concerning accessibility of resources, teachers were of the opinion that students cannot access books easily (2.0). They also claimed that the school does not facilitate teachers' efforts to prepare their unit plans for their English lessons.

Regarding policies on remediation, teachers rated the policies as helpful to a limited extent. As shown in Tale 5, teachers did not consider it necessary to offer students who miss activities due to absence from lessons a chance to make up for them (1.8). Similarly, teachers generally did not find the remedial system (1.7) in schools beneficial for helping students learn English effectively.

5. Discussion
In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education requires that EFL teachers present B2 certificates when they apply for appointment at schools – a level higher than the B1 level expected of students when they finish high school. However, as shown in Table 1, almost half (43.9%) the respondents have certification below the B2 level, which may not be enough to facilitate language teaching if students need to achieve the required level. Furthermore, inadequate proficiency possibly affects what Bunch (2013) refers to as pedagogical content, which is essential for teaching a foreign language.

Despite the diversity in teachers' proficiency levels found by this study, most have a background in English language teaching. At least a Bachelor's degree in ELT and being at the B2 proficiency level leads to the assumption that this profile is sufficient for teaching EFT in a predominantly Spanish-speaking country.

Not every school in the country has an English teacher. The shortage of human capital in the teaching force (Constante, 2016) continues to be a problem today. The unequal distribution and allocation of teachers, as evident in Table 2, to the two types of geographical locations is a chronic problem across the country. In some cases, there are no English teachers at rural schools; instead, physical education or computer studies teachers take over the English lessons, even though they do not possess the proficiency that the job requires. Furthermore, there is disparity in the number of teachers in different cities, as big cities, such as Quito and Guayaquil, have more English teachers than smaller cities, such as Azogues. The discrepancy in the number of teachers across geographical areas means students receive unequal input and exposure to English, despite a standardised curriculum being followed, regardless of the location of the school.

Another aspect uncovered by this study is the grade/level that teachers teach EFL to. Table 2 shows the disparity in teacher distribution across urban–rural and primary–secondary grades. The few teachers in the primary grades affirms that upper levels are prioritised when decisions are made regarding where to assign teachers, especially when there is not enough teachers to assign to every level. In addition, very few teachers teach the primary grades, where English input is introduced, and where students get early exposure to the target language.

Tables 3 and 4 show the strategies, techniques, and activities teachers employ in their lessons, and reflects the extent and nature of implementing the pedagogical approaches espoused in the 2016 curriculum. As shown in Table 3, prioritizing speaking and writing reflects teachers' orientation to the sequence of activities and the nature of the lessons in their books and pedagogical modules – two common resources used in schools – which reflect the privileging of the curriculum's communicative approach. The communicative approach is also evident in two other strategies – interactive speaking activities (4) and task-based activities (4) – which confirms their familiarity with the approach.

The 2016, the Ministry of Education curriculum started promoting intercultural education that integrates the teaching of themes and topics related to the diversity of the Ecuadorian culture. This curriculum expectation seems to be well understood, as teachers incorporate culture-related themes (3.7) in their EFL classes, as shown in Table 4. In contrast, CLIL (3.4) poses a pedagogical challenge, as respondents assigned it the lowest value on the scale. CLIL is one of the pedagogical approaches that the Ministry of Education promotes. Still, teachers need professional training about the implementation of CLIL in English lessons. When CLIL is implemented in lessons, English teachers must collaborate with colleagues from other subjects, such as arts, biology, chemistry, or mathematics, to maximise content teaching while teaching English content, grammar, and structure.

The use of textbooks is still prevalent among teachers (Table 4), which attests to the widespread use of textbooks as both the source of content and activities. Using textbooks saves time for teachers when they do lesson planning, construct tests, and prepare worksheets. Furthermore, when they use textbooks as a resource, teachers often omit input related to grammar – one of the lowest percentages in Table 4 – and this practice is attributed to the notion that grammar is not a priority in CLT (Rama & Agulló, 2012, p. 189). Also, devoting less time to speaking activities could be due to the tendency of teachers to employ direct teaching, where teacher talking time is more than students' production time.

According to Table 5, teachers consider a class size of 30+ as having an effect on teaching quality, particularly when it comes to giving student feedback. Giving feedback is challenging, and providing input based on students' needs is difficult. The degree of difficulty varies at different levels and grades. Teachers must spend sufficient time preparing lessons and designing activities to facilitate interaction and communication for young learners. Furthermore, the teacher needs time to score and grade papers and performance-based activities to provide student feedback.

At the higher levels, where students have a basic proficiency, teachers need time to prepare lessons that facilitate knowledge and understanding of language use. Since CLT is the method that the government promotes, with other approaches such as CLIL and the project-based learning approach, teachers must provide task-based feedback that necessitates time when it is given to students individually. However, with big classes, students do not receive individual feedback, as it is time-consuming. Locastro (1989, cited by Norton & Locastro, 2012, p. 494) found this concern in a teacher survey that investigated the relationship between class size and language learning.

In addition to class size, teachers find the time allotted to English lessons insufficient (2.1). The schedules of English lessons vary considerably between schools. Generally, an English course is allocated 40 minutes daily. In some cases, schools offer two consecutive lessons of 40 minutes each, which adds up to 80 minutes every other day. Limited exposure to the target language adversely impacts language learning. To compensate, Larson-Hall (2008) and Munoz (2008, both cited by Jaekal et al., 2017) believe that duration of exposure to the target language, such as English, should be in excess of two hours per week. Some urban schools have three English periods weekly, though not all levels or grades have English teachers. If a school has no English teacher, teachers of other subjects, such as physical education or science, teach English to students.

The English schedule is one of the policies that inadvertently influences students' exposure to the language. Due to the limited exposure to English and the shortage of English teachers at some levels, students do not receive the input necessary to perform at the expected B1 level at the end of their 12 years of basic education.

Since 2016, thematic planning has been the approach to designing lessons, which implies that teachers need to get together to plan the daily lesson plans for a period that may last for a week or a month. This type of planning reinforces the value of collaborative work among English teachers and minimizes the individualistic nature of designing lesson plans. However, this approach to planning needs logistics-related support from administration, to enable teachers to meet, discuss and plan the unit plans together.

Another pressing concern that has been raised is the availability of services and instruction that respond to students with special needs. Teachers feel unprepared to address the concerns of students with special needs. Teaching a foreign language to students adds to the challenge, as this situation necessitates a different set of pedagogical responses.

Remediation policies is another type of policy that teachers consider less than helpful in facilitating students' learning. The remedial system is a three-level process, which gives students three chances to pass a subject. Furthermore, teachers need to provide remediation classes during academic recess; thus, to avoid extending extra work, they tend to pass students in their English subject to prevent problems when they prepare promotional reports.

Pedagogically, remediation is provided to address learning needs or bridge gaps that previous instruction had not accomplished, and represents responsive assessment practices (Troudi et al., 2009, p. 546). However, teachers tend not to facilitate remediation sessions when logistics-related concerns prevent them from finishing academic responsibilities at the end of the academic year. Time extensions for preparing for materials during academic recess, or the school requiring more reports are concerns related to logistics in school activities. Contrary to its goal, the remedial system can foster laziness and mediocrity. Moreover, students do not exert the required effort during the academic year because they know they can take remedial exams that facilitate their promotion to the next level.

School support for extracurricular activities is another key policy for promoting exposure to English and raising awareness and appreciation of its value as a global language. Extracurricular activities are important because they support and widen students' exposure to the target language (Jaekel et al., 2017). However, teachers do not feel they get the administrative support (1.8) they need to promote the importance of English outside classrooms.

Regarding teachers' views on EFL policies (Table 5), teachers consider the support they receive from school as minimal, particularly in the classroom space, regarding the provision of resources such as books, and extra-curricular activities in their English classes. Also, teachers consider curricular aspects such as scheduling, lesson planning and class hours as factors that prevent them from carrying out their tasks effectively. On the other hand, teachers do not rate the value or importance of remedial or corrective procedures highly, due to the additional workload and tasks they need to comply with.

6. Conclusion

The teachers' formation and professional preparation had significant affect on their performance and sense of accomplishment. According to the survey data, most English teachers comply with the requirements of the policy when they carry out their tasks and responsibilities. More than half of teachers who were involved in this study had English proficiency at the B2 level (56.1%), and an appropriate undergraduate degree (85.9%). However, some teachers were at a basic proficiency level, which implies that some teachers may not have sufficient proficienty to teach a foreign language. This has adverse implications for the way the teaching of English is carried out. It means the essential requirement that enables the teacher to explain and impart knowledge and skills is the main obstacle that impedes their effectiveness.

Regarding distribution, few teachers were assigned to rural schools and primary and intermediate grades, so, not all schools and levels had English teachers. Concerning pedagogical approaches, teachers tended to use strategies – skills integration, interactive activities, and task-based approach – associated with CLT. This manner of teaching affirms the popularity and predominant use of the CLT method for teaching. In general, the characterisation of teachers' profiles, identification of their teaching methods and techniques, and their perception of EFL policies provide a comprehensive view of the factors that facilitate the teaching–learning process. Analyzing the factors that help them carry out their tasks also exposes the factors that prevent them from doing their job.

A survey questionnaire was the sole instrument used to capture teachers' socio-demographic profiles and their perceptions of pedagogical approaches and EFL policies that influence their role and function as EFL teachers. However, in-depth explanations about teachers' struggles and the challenges they face in implementing the curriculum were not explored; hence, a different design and methodology should to be employed to provide a more profound understanding of the connection between teachers' profiles and academic formation and their capability in implementing the curriculum and responding to pedagogical demands in EFL classes. Future studies should probe the processes that can shed light on how teachers' profiles impede and facilitate their roles, tasks, and duties as EFL teachers.

7. References

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Appendix 1

Identificación de Factores que Facilitan o Impiden la Enseñanza de Inglés   SurveyMonkey
en la Zona 6

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:43:13 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 6:51:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:45
IP Address: 157.100.91.136

Page 1

Q1	**11-15**
¿Cuántos años tiene de experiencia docente en la enseñanza del inglés	

Q2	**C1**
¿qué nivel de inglés cree que usted tiene?	

Q3	**Si**
¿Ha rendido un examen internacional oficial de inglés?	

Q4	**C1**
Si usted ha rendido un examen internacional de inglés, ¿qué nivel obtuvo?	

Q5	**Tengo un título universitario en la enseñanza de inglés**
Seleccione la opción que corresponda a su preparación académica	

Q6	**Bachillerato**
¿Con qué nivel de educación trabaja usted?	

Q7	**Urbana**
La ubicación geográfica de la institución donde usted labora es	

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Identificación de Factores que Facilitan o Impiden la Enseñanza de Inglés   SurveyMonkey
en la Zona 6

Q8

Los enunciados que se presentan a continuación están relacionados con el uso del español en las clases de inglés. Por favor, seleccione lo que aplique en su caso.

Uso español durante la presentación de mis clases	**A veces**
Uso español para dar instrucciones a mis estudiantes	**A veces**
Uso español cuando ayudo a mis estudiantes a producir actividades en inglés	**A veces**
Uso español cuando enseño la gramática del inglés	**Rara vez**
Uso español cuando enseño a niños	**A veces**
Uso español cuando enseño a adolescentes	**A veces**
Uso español cuando quiero que los estudiantes pongan atención a lo que les digo	**Rara vez**
Uso español cuando explico el contenido de la clase	**A veces**
Uso español para dar retroalimentación a los estudiantes	**A veces**
Uso español para motivar a mis estudiantes a participar en la clase	**A veces**
Uso español cuando tengo problemas para expresarme en inglés	**Rara vez**

Q9

Los enunciados que se presentan a continuación están relacionados con el uso que usted daba a los libros de inglés anteriores a los módulos que se usa actualmente. Por favor seleccione lo que aplique en su caso.

El nivel de inglés de los libros que usaba antes eran apropiados para el nivel de inglés de mis estudiantes	**Totalmente en desacuerdo**
El tipo de inglés que se usaba en los libros era fácil de entender y seguir cuando planificaba mis clases	**Totalmente en desacuerdo**
Mi PUD fue desarrollado de acuerdo a la secuencia de contenidos presentados en los libros	**De acuerdo**

Identificación de Factores que Facilitan o Impiden la Enseñanza de Inglés   SurveyMonkey
en la Zona 6

Q10

Los enunciados que se presentan a continuación están relacionados con las técnicas y metodología de la enseñanza
de inglés. Por favor, seleccione lo que aplique en su caso.

Enseño inglés a través del contenido de otras áreas, por ejemplo, Artes o Literatura	**Casi siempre**
Incorporo en mi clase temas relacionados con la cultura ecuatoriana	**Casi siempre**
Realizo ejercicios de speaking que fomentan la interacción entre mis estudiantes	**Casi siempre**
Uso lecturas con contenido de diferentes áreas del conocimiento, por ejemplo, Bilogía, Física, Geografía, etc, para desarrollar la lectura en inglés con mis estudiantes,	**Casi siempre**
Asigno a mis estudiantes tareas que promueven el trabajo autónomo	**Casi siempre**
Realizo actividades que requieren que mis estudiantes utilicen lo aprendido en las lecturas practicadas en clase	**Casi siempre**

Q11

Seleccione las actividades y técnicas que aplica en su
clase

Juegos y dinámicas,

Concursos,

Actividades que promueven speaking,

Uso audios pregrabados para ejercicios de listening,

Trabajos grupales,

Actividades orientadas a la enseñanza de gramática,

**Ejercicios que los estudiantes deben desarrollarlos en
el pizarrón**

,

Uso las TICs in my class

Q12

He recibido algún curso de capacitación por parte del
Mineduc sobre como implementar el currículo de Inglés

No

Q13

Si su respuesta es sí, ¿qué tipo de capacitación a
recibido?. Seleccione las opciones que apliquen a usted

Otro (por favor especifique):

No se ha recibido capacitacion alguna por parte del Mineduc

Identificación de Factores que Facilitan o Impiden la Enseñanza de Inglés en la Zona 6   SurveyMonkey

Q14

Qué tipo de instituciones han capacitado a los docentes de inglés. Seleccione un número del 1 (menor cantidad de capacitaciones) y 4 (mayor cantidad de capacitaciones)

Ministerio de Educación	**1**
Universidades	**3**
Instituciones privadas por ejemplo, EIL, CEN	**2**
Empresas editoriales de libros, ejemplo: Person, Cambridge	**4**

Q15

Los enunciados que se presentan a continuación están relacionados con las políticas educativas. Por favor, seleccione en qué medida está usted de acuerdo con los mismos

Los supletorios ayudan a que los estudiantes alcancen los objetivos de aprendizaje	**En desacuerdo**
Tener mas de 30 estudiantes por clase afecta la calidad de enseñanza de inglés	**Totalmente de acuerdo**
Estoy preparado para enseñar inglés a estudiantes con necesidades especiales	**En desacuerdo**
Los estudiantes pueden acceder fácilmente a libros para el aprendizaje de inglés	**En desacuerdo**
Las horas asignadas para inglés a la semana son suficientes para alcanzar el nivel de inglés deseado	**En desacuerdo**
El espacio físico de la clase es suficiente para el número de estudiantes que tengo	**En desacuerdo**
Las herramientas tecnológicas con las que cuenta mi institución ayudan a la enseñanza de inglés	**Totalmente en desacuerdo**
Mi institución facilita el desarrollo colaborativo del PUD	**En desacuerdo**
Las autoridades de mi institución apoyan a la organización de actividades extracurriculares en inglés	**Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo**
Permitir que los estudiantes realicen otras actividades para igualarse con pruebas atrasadas ayuda a que mis estudiantes alcancen los objetivos de aprendizaje	**En desacuerdo**

Identificación de Factores que Facilitan o Impiden la Enseñanza de Inglés   SurveyMonkey
en la Zona 6

Q16

Los enunciados que se presentan a continuación están relacionados con la importancia que le da la comunidad
educativa a la enseñanza de inglés. Por favor, seleccione la opción que aplique

Los estudiantes muestran interés en el aprendizaje de inglés	**Muy poco**
Los representantes apoyan a los estudiantes en el aprendizaje de inglés	**Muy poco**
Los estudiantes consideran inglés como una herramienta importante para acceder a oportunidades	**Muy poco**
Los profesores de otras materias motivan a los estudiantes a aprender inglés	**Nada en lo absoluto**
La institución donde laboro promueve oportunidades para que los estudiantes aprendan inglés fuera del aula de clase	**Nada en lo absoluto**

Q17

Si desea participar en una capacitación, complete los
siguentes datos.

Respondent skipped this question