

HOW ARE WE PREPARING FUTURE ENGLISH TEACHERS?

**A STUDY OF THE CURRICULAR
VARIATIONS AMONG SELECTED
EFL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS.**



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INTRODUCTION

- The situation of English teaching in Ecuador.
- Currently, there are 9,737 in the public education system, low English proficiency (32% B2).
- Lack of EFL teachers (4,273).
- EFL pre-service teachers' formation.
 - Standardized curriculum for education undergraduate programs (CES 2015).
 - General curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the standardized curriculum

- a) pertinence to the teachers' formation,
- b) curriculum flexibility,
- c) the practice of action research as the main mechanism to structure the curriculum,
- d) a primary focus on students via an academic and personal tutoring system, e) emphasis on research and
- e) the use of innovative teaching methodologies as well as ICT integration
- f) This curriculum was not developed for EFL.

INTRODUCTION

HEIs offering PINE undergraduate programs

10 Universities in the Highlands

7 Universities in the coast

15 public universities -

2 private universities -

INTRODUCTION

Development of a curriculum

1. “Analyze the internal environment and culture”,
2. “Develop a strategy for change involving key stakeholders”
3. “Choose the right combination of approaches to change”,
4. “Plan for transition and loss of competence”
and 5. “Don’t underestimate the complexity”.

McKimm and Jones (2017)

INTRODUCTION

EFL Preservice Curriculum

1. “Content standards” which comprises “linguistics, language acquisition and development, and culture”.
2. “Pedagogical standards”, this refers to the development of student’s English teaching competency and “assessment”,
3. “Performance standards” which help check whether the previous standards have been met or not.

Kuhlman and Knežević (2014, p 7)

STUDY OBJECTIVE

To identify the challenges that HEIs' curriculum planners experienced in adapting the National Standardized Curriculum for education undergraduate programs to develop their English teaching curricula

METHODOLOGY

Participants:

- 8 HEIs (English Language Teaching undergraduate program)
- 4 Directors from participating HEIs

METHODOLOGY

A mixed method design;

In quantitative part, there was an analysis of the participating HEI's curricula in order to provide an overview of the current status of the undergraduate programs.

In the qualitative part, interviews were conducted to Directors of some participating universities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Three type of challenges were identified

a) Development of English language proficiency.

a) Combination of the standardized curriculum content and subjects with the English language teaching curriculum.

b) Adapting the structure of the pre-professional practicum to the English language teaching curriculum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

a) Development of English language proficiency

A Director referred to this aspect as follows:

“The standardized curriculum focuses only on general education, and do not provide a guide for English teaching programs. Preparing English teachers is different, they need to learn the language and the standardized curriculum does not consider this aspect”.

Curriculum planners ended up reducing to the minimum the English language input to their students in order to cope with the government demands.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

b) Combination of the standardized curriculum content and subjects with the English language teaching curriculum.

HEIs	Number of academic subjects	% of the use of English as the means of instruction*
HEI 1	47	93.6
HEI 2	59	37.3
HEI 3	52	57.7
HEI 4	42	66.7
HEI 5	53	17
HEI 6	50	66
HEI 7	53	53.8

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

b) Combination of the Standardized Curriculum content and subjects with the English language teaching curriculum

Standardized curriculum targeted general education and did not include any subject which could promote English proficiency development. A director referred to this in the following terms:

“The standardized curriculum had a predetermined set of subjects which are mandatory to include in the curriculum and due to the low entry English level of our students, it was difficult to use English as the means of instruction for these subjects. Thus, we decided to teach them in Spanish and reduce the English proficiency subjects”

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

c) Adapting the structure of the pre-professional practicum to the English language teaching curriculum

HEIs	Number of hours for assigned for pre-professional practicum
HEI 1	1,800
HEI 2	1,200
HEI 3	1,800
HEI 4	1,640
HEI 5	344
HEI 6	840
HEI 7	840
HEI 8	1,800

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

c) Adapting the structure of the pre-professional practicum to the English language teaching curriculum

A director talked about it as follows:

“In order to select the number of hours for practicum, we based our decision on the higher education law. We did not follow the standardized curriculum because it has too many practicum hours. When we submitted our proposal to CES for approval, the people in charge of checking our curriculum design, never questioned this type of organization”.

CONCLUSIONES

- Pre-service English language teachers' formation in the country is varied in terms of academic subjects, language proficiency development, English language input and pre-professional practicum.
- B2 level of English is common but language proficiency development is different in participating HEIs.
- Despite the government's intention to standardize the pre-service formation through a common curriculum, it had the opposite effect in English language teaching.
- In an attempt to adapt the education standardized curriculum, curriculum planners ended up designing different curriculum for the same undergraduate program.
- Trying to use the same curriculum for all education programs seems to be a difficult task, more when pre-service teachers need to develop different competencies, such as, English proficiency, in the case of English Language Teaching.

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