

ESCUELA SUPERIOR POLITÉCNICA DEL LITORAL

Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y Humanísticas



**“IMPLEMENTATION OF A PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE FORMATIVE
PEER OBSERVATION FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS IN AN ECUADORIAN
STATE UNIVERISTY”**

PROYECTO DE TITULACIÓN

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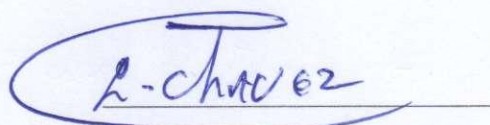
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DEDICATION

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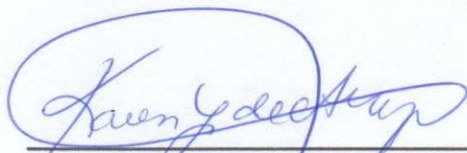
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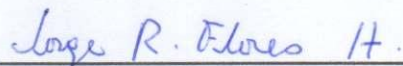
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	p.i
Dedication	p.ii
Thesis Examiners Committee	p.iii
Declaración Expresa	p.iv
List of Tables	p.v
List of Figures	p.vi
Definitions	p.viii
Abstract	p.1
Resumen	p.2
Chapter 1: Overview of a State University	p.3
Aims and Rationale.....	p.4
Research Questions.....	p.5
Thesis Overview.....	p.6
Chapter 2: Thesis Proposal	p.7
The Institution – Students – Instructors.....	p.8
The English Department (ED).....	p.9
SWOT Analysis.....	p.10
Student Assessment.....	p.13
The need for a pilot POT program.....	p.14
Content of Peer Observation for Teachers.....	p.15
Chapter 3: Literature Review	p.16
Theories Relating to Peer Observation for Teachers.....	p.16
The Aim of POT.....	p.16
Macro Analysis.....	p.18
Assessment and Evaluation for Teachers.....	p.21
Key Components of POT.....	p.27
Micro Analysis.....	p.36
Basic English Education Structure in Ecuador.....	p.38
English in Higher Education Institutions.....	p.40

POT in Ecuador.....	p.42
Legal Basis	p.43
Ecuadorian Universities	p.45
Chapter 4: Research Methodology	p.49
Methodological Stances.....	p.50
Research Tradition.....	p.53
Justification of the research.....	p.56
Method.....	p.57
Selection and Handling of Data.....	p.59
Participants.....	p.60
Chapter 5: Presentation of Findings	p.64
Acceptance of a new POT tool	p.64
Disposition of the teachers and non-English teachers to pilot the new POT.....	p.65
Level of satisfaction with the current POT tool.....	p.66
Obeying a POT schedule.....	p.69
The use of Peer Observation Results.....	p.70
Reasoning on feedback to help to teach methodology.....	P.71
Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings	p.73
Primary Research Question.....	p.73
Sub-Research Questions.....	p.74
Chapter 7: Conclusion	p.78
Limitations of the study.....	p.79
Future directions and further areas for research.....	p.79
References.....	p.81

TABLES

SWOT	p.11
Student Assessment	p.13
Budget for Education	p.40
University’s Teacher Staff	p.60
Teacher’ Demographic Data	p.61
New POT for the State University	p.76
Professors’ Satisfaction with current POT tool	P.77

FIGURES

New POT for the State University	p.76
Professors' Satisfaction with current POT tool	P.77

DEFINITION OF TERMS

ASSESSMENT: (Teacher assessment) Commonly includes reviews of qualifications, tests of teacher knowledge, observations of practice, and measurements of student learning gains.

Bachelor Degree: is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study lasting three to seven years (depending on institution and academic discipline).

CEAACES (Consejo de Evaluación, Acreditación y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior): Council for Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education

CES (Consejo de Educación Superior): Higher Council of Education

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): is an international standard for describing language ability. It is used around the world to describe learners' language skills. This framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, across Europe.

Curriculum: In education, a curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of student experiences that occur in the educational process. The term often refers specifically to a planned sequence of instruction, or to a view of the student's experiences in terms of the educator's or school's instructional goals.

ED: The English Department of the State University

ENES (Examen nacional para la educación superior): National Examination for Higher Education

English Language Teaching: The area of formal education that deals with the teaching and learning of the English language.

EVALUATION: Evaluation is the structured interpretation and giving of meaning to predict or actual impacts of proposals or results. It looks at original objectives, and what is either predicted or what was accomplished and how it was accomplished. So evaluation can be **formative**, that is taking place during the development of a school year or **summative**, that is an evaluation at the end of the school period.

FCE: (First Certificate in English) is an English language examination provided by *Cambridge* English Language Assessment (previously known as University of *Cambridge* ESOL Examinations).

FEEDBACK: Feedback is conceptualized as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. A teacher or parent can

provide corrective information, a peer can provide an alternative strategy, a book can provide information to clarify ideas, a parent can provide encouragement, and a learner can look up the answer to evaluate the correctness of a response. Feedback thus is a “consequence” of performance. **education.qld.gov.au**

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT (for Teachers): is a diagnostic peer to peer observation. It is a continuous learning process either formal or informal conducted by the institution during the teaching process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve teachers’ attainment.

Likert Scale: It is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research, such that the term (or more accurately the *Likert-type scale*) is often used interchangeably with rating *scale*. In Likert scales, people are asked to rate their degree of agreement with a series of statements, often on a scale of 1 to 5.

LOES (Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior): Organic Law of Higher Education

POT: Peer Observation for Teachers

POT tool: Instrument used by an institution to mark down activities such as methodologies, skills, class participation and many other items happening in a classroom during the teaching-learning process.

SENESCYT (Secretaria de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación): Secretary of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMNET (for Teachers): The goal of summative assessment is to *evaluate teachers’ teaching skills and pedagogical methods* at the end of an instructional semester or calendar year.

SWOT: (alternatively SWOT matrix) is an acronym for *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* and is a structured planning method that evaluates those four elements of an educational organization, project or business venture.

TOEFL: The Teaching of English as a Foreign English Is the most widely respected English-language test in the world, recognized by more than 10,000 colleges, universities and agencies in more than 130 countries, including Australia, Canada, the U.K. and the United States.

Abstract

The primary purpose of this study was to consider the possibility of implementing a Peer Observation for Teachers (POT) pilot program for the English Department (ED) from an Ecuadorian State University. The population for this study was all taken from the State University. There were 17 English teachers all from the ED and 40 professors from other faculties. The POT used by the institution is a generic tool where observers mechanically check items disregarding classroom conditions or student's comfort. This study performed a SWOT analysis for the ED and based on these findings, the researcher reasoning was that the teachers from the ED were dissatisfied with the evaluation procedures and with the observation tool executed by authorities. The POT tool used to observe teachers in their classrooms is in Spanish, and there is never a check box to tick off for pronunciation, fluency and neither vocabulary used by the English teachers.

Conclusions in this study revealed that professors from other faculties were satisfied with the POT procedures, but teachers from the ED were dissatisfied and the main reason for this discrepancy was the Peer Observation for Teachers Tool used by the State University was a template to make it fit to every major offered at the University. The State University should have a POT department crafting POT tools for every major offered because each major is a separate entity and its needs and reality are different from each other.

Resumen

El principal propósito de este estudio, entre otros, fue considerar la posibilidad de implementar un programa piloto para la mejora de la herramienta de Observación entre Pares para Profesores Universitarios (OPPU) del Centro de Idiomas (CDI) de una Universidad Estatal Ecuatoriana. La población considerada fue de 17 docentes de inglés del CDI y 40 docentes de las diferentes facultades.

La herramienta OPPU usada por la Universidad es una herramienta genérica, la misma que no se adapta a sus necesidades internas, donde el panel de observadores mecánicamente dan visto bueno en la hoja de observaciones sin considerar las condiciones de las aulas ni tampoco las condiciones del estudiante. En este estudio se realizó un análisis de Fortalezas y Debilidades (FODA) del Centro de Idiomas y se pudo observar que los docentes del CDI no estaban satisfechos con el actual proceso de OPPU. La herramienta de OPPU está diseñada en español donde las habilidades del docente de inglés tales como pronunciación, fluencia, y manejo de vocabulario no están presentes. Conclusiones de este estudio revelaron que docentes de otras facultades de la universidad estatal, si estaban satisfechos con el procedimiento actual de OPPU, pero los docentes del CDI no lo estaban. La razón principal para esta discrepancia es que la Universidad usa un mismo modelo de OPPU para todas las facultades. La Universidad Estatal debería crear un departamento de evaluación entre pares para profesores universitarios y debería crear una herramienta de OPPU para cada facultad.

CHAPTER I

1.1 Overview of a State University

One of the most important state universities in the Ecuadorian Coast opened its doors in 1998 and had been rendering bachelor's degrees since the year 2004. The university has an English Department (ED) which provides support to all faculties that require college credits in English as a foreign language in their regular curricula.

The institution has been formative and summative evaluating its staff with a tool that teachers do not consider appropriate and it does not provide feedback that could lead to optimize their teaching practice. Peer observation is the process of colleagues observing colleagues in their teaching environment, with the overall aim of improving teaching practices. (Hendry & Oliver, 2012)

This qualitative study will focus on the introduction of a Peer Observation for teachers (POT) tool and on the formative peer observation for English teachers at a Public State University. I have decided to focus my thesis in the framing of a peer observation pilot program for English teachers to promote their upgrade knowledge to perform their daily duties better. I will only focus on the Formative part of the Peer Observation Sessions, and I look forward to implementing a new POT tool and a new set of rubrics to have available when Peer Observation for English Teachers is taking place.

Ultimately, this research project aims to provide the observed teachers with assurance, support, and assistance from their colleagues, as when teachers are being observe, they see teaching from the students' perspective. According to Webb, the more we as teachers can share a common form of life and common experience with our colleagues in our institutions, the greater is the possibility that we will be able to extend our horizons to encompass a full understanding of what peer observation for teachers means. (Webb, 1996)

1.2 Aims and Rationale

This research aims to put in practice a pilot program on Peer Observation for Teachers at the State University's ED to support the POT process already used by the ED and to encourage teachers to actively participate in a POT session.

According to The Ecuadorian Higher Education Council (CES), acronym in Spanish for "*Consejo de Educación Superior*" in their Evaluation and Excellency of Academic Staff "*Evaluación y Perfeccionamiento del Personal Académico*" section requires that universities

evaluate teachers in three different scenarios: i) Self-evaluation, which is teachers evaluating their own performance, ii) Co-evaluation, which is the evaluation colleagues make on teacher's performance, and iii) Hetero-evaluation, which is the evaluation made by students on their teacher's performance. (ces.gob.ec, 2012)

The ED has a program for peer observation in teaching, and the instrument use generic standards brought from other institutions, that does not reflect the reality of the ED. As the Iowa State University from the USA writes: "A well-designed system of Peer Evaluation of Teaching can also give a department valuable tools for making the most of its faculty resources" (IASTATE, 2016); teachers from the ED, for the most part, do not know whether the evaluation is formative or summative and how the results are used. Besides, the ED does not have a regular peer observation schedule. Finally, teachers, most of the time, do not receive a proper feedback about the observation session.

1.3 Research Questions

For this research study, the author has explored to answer a primary research question and five sub-research questions.

1.3.1 Primary Research Question

Will English teachers from the State University comply with a new Peer Observation for Teachers tool?

1.3.2 Sub-Research Questions

- 1 – Will teachers from the ED accept the POT pilot program?
- 2 – Are teachers and professors from the State University satisfied with the current POT tool?
- 3 – Will teachers and professors comply with a regular POT schedule?
- 4 – How do teachers respond to the use of peer observation results?
- 5 – Can feedback from a Peer Observation session helps to change teacher's methodologies?

1.4 Overview

The organization of this research work is as follow:

Chapter I provides a broad idea on how Peer Observation for teachers is handled and used at the State University.

Chapter II states the context of the research paper with an introduction about the benefits of peer observation at the higher education spectrum. It also focuses on the target institution, its student population and teacher staff. However, the primary goal of Chapter II is to provide the need analysis that led the author to design a pilot program on peer observation for teachers.

Chapter III is designed to bring together all the data researched. The literature review is a backup tool for the researcher to demonstrate how and from where the researcher collected the data that in this case is related to Peer Observation for teachers.

Chapter IV focuses on the methodology the author chose to apply for the research project. This study is qualitative in nature and descriptive due to its characteristics. Also, Chapter IV will allow the reader to evaluate the project's validity and reliability.

Chapter V presents the results obtained from face to face interviews, surveys, class observations, and focus groups reasoning.

Chapter VI is designed to scientifically discuss the results from the data collected. It will serve as a bridge to link the information from Chapter IV and V in a coherent and comprehensible way.

Chapter VII gives the author the space to prove the conclusions of the study and how these are linked together with the initial research questions. It will also set the stage to present the limitations of this work and recommendations for future inquiries.

CHAPTER II

2.1 Thesis Proposal

A pilot program to implement a Peer Observation for Teachers tool for the English Department written in English is the central purpose of this research project. Teachers, for the most part, being those at a university or college level, high school or even grammar school, seldom think about their work being observed in the classroom by peers and even less, being evaluated and graded by peers of the same institution. The reason behind this, on many occasions, is because teachers feel comfortable with what they do within their classroom space and they also believe that observers and evaluators do not have to interfere with their teaching space. Teachers consider that their professional background, which is certified in the hiring process, teaching experience, and teaching methodology are sufficient skills and qualifications to perform a job in the classroom and observers cannot question such skills and qualifications. This research paper aims to pave the way to make teachers job inside the classroom a little more accessible to peers of higher rank or even novice teachers looking for new ideas on how to promote teaching-learning appealing to students. This study then constitutes a pilot program to advocate peer observation for teachers in one powerful tool that institutions could use to assess teachers' expertise inside the classroom and to provide proper training. (Lieberman, 1990)

Teachers most of the times do not talk about teaching strategies, neither work together on how to make a class enjoyable and fructiferous for learners, they seldom think about promoting, innovating or even creating a different way of how to make teaching-learning easier not only for students but also for themselves or their peers. A rationale for this way of thinking shifts away from the bureaucratic perspective on teaching work applied day in and day out in a classroom. (Lieberman, 1990)

The purpose of this work is to provide a true formative peer observation for English teachers' procedure, which is not only mentioned in the Ecuadorian Educational Law but it is also part of the internal process of the State University. A pilot program to monitor, to provide feedback, and to perform follow-up on teaching procedures with formative purpose might constitute a great tool to be used not only in the English Department but also in all faculties of the State University.

2.2 The Institution – Students – Instructors

This pilot program will be in practice at a State University in the Ecuadorian Coast Region. In a province where there are only two higher educational institutions. According to the latest census performed in 2010, the province has about 308,693 inhabitants. (inec.gob.ec, 2010). In addition, in the Accountability Report of the Ministry of Education, “*Informe de Rendición de Cuentas del Ministerio de Educación*” they mention that the number of students officially registered to graduate from high school for the academic school year of 2014-2015 is 2,898 from 12th grade, (Ministerio de Educacion, 2016). The state university, therefore, has an enormous responsibility to educate, to promote entrepreneurship, and to seed professionalism among the inhabitants of this province.

The target population for this research project is the Dean of the Science of Education and Language Faculty, the Director of the ED, thirteen full-time, and two part-time English teachers under the category of invitees. Six English teachers are tenured included the Dean and the Director, nine teachers serve on the year-to-year contract basis, and the two invitees are hired if they are required for a specific semester. All teachers have different pedagogical experiences, and a master degree in different fields such as engineering, accounting, architecture and education, held however in Spanish which is their mother tongue. The researcher for this study is not part of the target population, therefore, for the purpose of this study he will not be an active participator.

2.2.1 The English Department (ED)

The State University has its own English Department (ED). The ED is responsible for providing students with 32 credits of foreign language classes required by the Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance Council of Higher Education (CEAACES), acronym in Spanish for (*Consejo de Evaluación, Acreditación y Aseguramiento de la Calidad de la Educación Superior*) and by the Science, Technology, and Innovation of Higher Education Secretariat (SENESCYT), acronym in Spanish for (*Secretaria de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación*) to officially consider a university student graduated with any third level major degree.

To comply with this requirement, the English program consists of six levels, each one related to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Each English level is completed in 80 face-to-face hours. For certain majors such as Tourism, Engineering and Accounting, a component of Technical English class is added to their curriculum. Students

need to approve all English levels before their last two semesters of studies, but, exceptions and accelerated courses are available to facilitate left out students to fulfill this requirement.

The ED has only three English labs with an audio and overhead projector which are not enough physical resources for the number of students of the university. Due to this reason most of the time classes are held at different buildings where students belong too, so English teachers move around the campus to avoid students to go from one place to another.

The ED currently employs 16 full-time and two part-time English teachers. The ED director is part of the English teacher staff and therefore is also responsible for teaching time.

The Director calls for meetings once or twice a month to discuss academic related issues and asks teachers for input on how to improve teaching methodologies. In these meetings, the faculty focus on aspects that the ED is responsible for such as students' assessments, grade reports, syllabi revision and students' academic records; and, also discusses about issues that they are not responsible for such as scheduling Peer Observation sessions.

2.2.2 SWOT (English Department)

Even though the Director of the ED appeared to be ready for the POT pilot program, it was necessary to conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) analysis for the ED. Before implementing or even suggesting a change of the POT procedure it is necessary to socialize the motion with the whole ED department, including not only adjunct teachers, but also teachers under the "invitee" status, as well as tenure teachers and the support staff from the ED, such as secretaries and various service personnel. The whole ED personnel staff needs to know about the pilot program and its use. It is stated by Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011), that SWOT is a strategic analytical tool for assessing strengths and weaknesses of the business, analyzing opportunities available as well as, threats faced by the institution.

2.2.3 SWOT Analysis

Table 1: SWOT

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Qualified English Teachers ✓ Good internal and external relationship ✓ Responsible and respectable ✓ Ready to start POT sessions ✓ Competitive in training and finding teaching resources ✓ High level of techniques applied in classrooms 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Limited Training Opportunities ✓ Poor time management ✓ Overworked teachers ✓ Lack of teaching material ✓ POT sessions are never complete ✓ Resources required for implementation of POT are seldom available ✓ Expensive texts for students
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Development of teaching practice ✓ Experience with large classes ✓ Experience with POT sessions ✓ Opportunities for promotion ✓ Opportunities to travel abroad ✓ Opportunities to interact with English teachers nationally and internationally 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fear of loss of teaching contract ✓ Lack of trust for current POT procedure ✓ POT review might be used against teacher's overall performance ✓ Needs the support of leaders in regards to students low performance ✓ Increase in the price of new text books

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The ED has the collaboration of well prepared, not only academically, but also professionally English teachers. Two full-time under contract teachers are Ecuadorian natives but grow up in the United States since early teenage years, other English teachers are all college graduated and have English as a foreign language teaching background. All English teachers have highly scored in both TOEFL, and FCE English examination tests and they all have a master degree in various disciplines.

The downside of the ED is the long hours in the classrooms and a significant number of students per course. Also, the State University's lack of pedagogical resources sometimes truncates the teacher's abilities to transmit knowledge. Finally, they are all concerned about POT sessions because most of the times the observer panel lacks the understanding of the English language and as a result, the review reports are low in the overall grade.

The ED offers great opportunities to season novice teachers with populous classroom and many hours of work. The ED does have English seminars on schedule all the time and does

provide opportunities for teachers to enroll in international seminars. Teachers with five-year experience have the chance to apply for tenure ship as soon as opportunities offered by the government and by the State University are available. On the other hand, all under contract teachers have fears to lose their teaching spot due to political appointees, where knowledge, experience, and professionalism do not count.

2.2.4 Stakeholder (State University)

Taking into consideration that any modification in the regular ED's operation could cause a great impact to the overall teaching-learning operation of the State University, the researcher has an obligation to inform not only the Dean of the Science of Education and Languages Faculty, but also the president of the institution. The main component for a modification procedure to take place is that leaders not only need to be informed, but also they need to approve the idea. (Weadick, 2013)

The Stakeholders analysis facilitates the identification of all those who might be resistant to be observed and resistant to modify their teaching procedures. Resistance can occur for many reasons including a taste of loss of working hours, fear to be replaced or demoted, the uncertainty of contract renovation, and perhaps and even worst the sense of losing the job altogether. Weadick (2013) Teachers at the ED were considered primary stakeholders, the failure or success of this POT pilot program will mainly be based on their opinions and their willingness to actively participate in the program.

2.2.5 Student Assessment

The passing grade for English is 70 over 100. The ED allocates different weight to different aspects of the teaching-learning process and considers student's participation, assignments, quizzes, mid-term exam, final oral presentation, and a final written exam.

The following chart describes the above mention distribution.

Table 2: Student Assessment

Type of Examination	Description	Percentage
Class Participation	Class work, homework, and quizzes	30%
Oral Presentation	Talent Show	30%
Exams	Mid-term and Final written and oral Exams	40%
T O T A L		100%

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Source: Secretary of the English Department

All assessments are the teacher's responsibility. She or he is responsible for preparing, grading and uploading all grades to the University's platform. There is a five- working-day period to officially upload grades to the platform.

2.2.6 Current Situation

The English Department director, in addition to the Faculty's Dean, is in constant search for programs, seminars (national or international), English related workshops for English teachers. They provide the opportunity and the help with the expenses so teachers can attend these programs, due to departmental budget cuttings, the help just includes course registration fees and transportation expenses. All ED Teachers have a Master's degree related to education but not necessarily in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. All English teachers have international certifications such as the TOEFL and the FCE,

2.3 The need for a pilot POT Program

A research proposal to put into practice a pilot program on Peer Observation for teachers at the State University's English Department should encourage teachers to trust a POT session which results will advocate the optimization of their teaching practices through appropriate support and feedback. For these purposes the use of appropriate tools and procedures should be

designed, piloted and implemented. Designers of tool and process have to consider the characteristics and the contexts of the English department objectives and reality.

Teachers from the English Department, for the most part, do not know whether the evaluation is formative or summative or both, and what the results of the observation sessions are. Although the ED mission clearly states that “for the rewarding of recognition of excellence in teaching,” based on what standards the ED could call for excellence if there still exists the need of a procedure for an evaluation instruction that includes the appropriate tools and socialization of results, especially if such results play a decisive role in personnel decisions such as promotions, the granting of tenure, or just to ensure another yearly contract.

2.4 Content of Peer Observation for Teachers

A well-designed Peer Observation for teachers’ tool can give the ED a valuable tool to make the most of its faculty resources. Peer Observation for teachers has two possible functions: summative, to provide data to be used in personnel decisions or award nominations; and formative to improve teaching. (Brent & Felder, 2004). Teachers at the State University are, most of the times, reluctant to accept formative criticism on their teaching practices and methodologies inside the classroom. After all, English teachers at the ED meet the professional background and have the credential criteria to offer quality teaching methodologies.

The primary aim of this project is to bridge those individual qualifications with a convenient POT program that will facilitate knowledge sharing and acquisition of self-reflection to improve professional practice among all English teachers from the ED. An honest and ethical teacher should always ask her/himself whether she or he is performing a good job in the classroom and whether the students are learning. The teacher needs to consider that if she or he summative evaluates students to ensure their learning, a peer teacher can evaluate and observe the teacher’s performance to ensure quality teaching as well.

CHAPTER III

3.1 Theories Relating to Peer Observation for Teachers

Peer observation for teachers is relatively a new field of study in all three levels of education in Ecuador. The Board of Education has demonstrated interest in continuing training educators, and one of the best ways to train teachers is by doing an internal evaluation and assessment of staff to look and search for strengths and weakness in all educational institutions. Weadick (2013) clearly states that peer observation is by far the best way to evaluate not only teaching strategies but also teachers' knowledge.

According to Weadick (2013) teachers, for the most part, are more willing to be observed when observation is formative rather than summative. However, Martin and Double (1998) state that the use of formative observation raises issues of the power balance between the observer and the observed, even within a voluntary peer relationship. They also mention that trusting relationships between the observer and the observed are essential. (Martin & Double, 1998)

3.1.1 The Aim of POT

The aim of peer observation for teachers is to enhance teaching quality by encouraging reflection on practice. It is intended to help maintain and improve standards by spreading good practice, exchanging views and innovations and providing opportunities for teachers to learn about new or different teaching approaches, ensuring consistency of teaching standards. The process of observing teachers in their environment implanting knowledge to students at any educational level has four primary purposes. (Joyce & Showers, 2002)

- a – Attitude toward peer observation
- b – Appraisal or judgment of the observed
- c – Continuing professional development
- d – Constructive feedback (Joice & Showers, 2002:p73)

The researcher aims to frame the POT program is at a university level, keeping in mind that observed teachers hold at least a master's degree in education and other professional areas, many seminars with third and fourth level certifications that lawfully certify them to impart classes at a university level.

First, as reported by Joyce and Showers (2002), POT at a university level deals with the attitude that a teacher at this level is already a seasoned educator. A teacher at this level brings a professional curriculum and does not need coaching or observing. Universities often do not

support the intensive training efforts and workshops that occur between semesters; therefore most of the time teachers do not welcome observation teams in their classroom. Therefore, peer observation should not be a vehicle for the evaluation of others on the basis of the observer's assumptions, but a reassessment of those assumptions by their teaching. (Joyce & Showers, 2002)

Second, POT at a university level is often carried out with the purpose of appraising the work of an educator, and this can be detrimental both to teacher confidence and to a supportive teaching environment. Furthermore, this approach seems to have little value for active teacher development, since the focus of POT is to fulfill an institution procedure, rather than on the teacher's self-awareness and self-development. (Joyce & Showers, 2002)

Third, POT at a university level, according to Joyce and Showers (2002) is also called peer coaching, technical coaching, and cognitive coaching. Peer coaching refers to learning teaching strategies and how those strategies are performed in the classroom. Technical coaching also called clinical supervision focus on innovation in curriculums, syllabi, and lessons plans. Finally, cognitive coaching centers in the continuing of the professional development, the improvement of existing practices and the thinking of educators becoming better professionals beyond the classroom environment. (Joyce & Showers, 2002)

Fourth, Joyce and Showers (2002) state that POT at a university level encourages teachers to participate in peer observation actively and in peer evaluation with the ending purpose of providing feedback with the sole idea of benefiting students and the program teachers have signed in for. Educators must collectively agree to give one another feedback without slipping into the supervisory status. Educators must also agree to support one another in the planning of instructional objectives and the development of class material and lesson plans.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 Macro Analysis

The theoretical framework for this study has been guided by the work of Weadick Anne, "Implementing Peer Observation of Teaching – A formative Staff Development Initiative", which main idea is that peer observation of teaching is widely accepted as a mode of enhancing teaching practice and as a conduit for staff development. (Weadick, 2013).

She also claims:

“with the implementation of a pilot POT, the staff perceptions and experiences will provide valuable insight to the stakeholders and decision makers, with the same token, it encourages inhibitor teachers with a resistance to change that the process of POT favors not only staff members but also students.” (Weadick, 2013:p26)

In addition to the recognition of the work from Weadick in Ireland, the researcher also reviewed the report of the U.S. Institute of Education of Sciences (IES), titled “Redesigning teacher evaluation: Lessons from a Pilot Implementation.” IES states that many POT programs presented to higher education deans and directors to design and redesign POT programs to formative or summative evaluate teachers, only a few have documented their actual implementation (Riordan, Lacireno-Paquet, Shakman, Bocala, & Chang, 2015). IES argues that the growing momentum for state education agencies to develop frequent, rigorous, statewide teacher evaluation systems suggests a need for research that describes implementation.

The IES program studied the effectiveness, the reliability, and validity of a pilot POT implementation for teachers’ evaluation in various high educational institutes of the North Eastern USA. IES clearly states that during the process of POT, they faced substantial capacity challenges, including evaluators’ time and management of technology. Stakeholder support, as well as teacher trust and influence, may be essential for successful implementation. (Riordan, Lacireno-Paquet, Shakman, Bocala, & Chang, 2015:p11)

POT is a reciprocal process where a peer observes another’s teaching (physical or virtual classroom, on-line or even also teaching resources such as unit outlines or assignments). Peers then provide constructive feedback that would enable coaching professional development through the mirror of critical reflection by both the observer and the observed. (Brookfield, 2010)

Weadick (2013) as well as IES, suggest, however, that POT is a complicated process that will require support at all levels, starting from faculty Dean, the English Department Director, teachers and support office staff. The observable aspects considered in a POT program need recognition over other competing demands.

Authorities must schedule the time to engage in POT in a meaningful way. Teachers participating in the observing status must dedicate a chance to prepare material to be used in the observation sessions and must devote time to arrange proper feedback. In addition, training on POT regarding the process itself giving and receiving feedback and staff development opportunities to complement the process will have to be established. If these elements are not

forthcoming, there is a risk that the process will become a ‘tick box’ exercise and may fail to get embedded as an institution-wide approach to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

Gosling (2002) and Blackmore (2005) agree on the fact that, broadly speaking, the literature suggests that POT uses are for two purposes, either summative or formative or both in the same POT session. Summative is concerned with making a judgment about a teacher’s teaching and is often management-led and linked to decisions related to promotion, tenure or accountability (Blackmore, 2005). On the other hand, (Gosling, 2002) states POT used for formative purposes aims to promote personal development, generate discussion and enhancement around teaching and learning. Experienced and novice teachers and professors can share in and out of the classroom real experiences, and forge collegial relationships among academics. (Gosling, 2002)

3.2.2 Assessment and Evaluation for Teachers

When define within educational setting, according to various authors, there are confusion over these two terms and their usage wonders, depending on context.

3.2.2.1 Assessment

According to Angelo and Cross (1993), they write that assessment for teachers focuses on learning, teaching, and outcomes. It provides information for improving learning and teaching. Assessment for teachers is an interactive process between teachers and Deans, Directors, Stakeholder that informs how well professors and teachers are performing what they teach. The information is used by the institution to make changes in the teaching-learning environment.

3.2.2.2 Evaluation

Angelo and Cross (1993) state that evaluation for teachers focuses on results and grades and may reflect classroom components other than course content and mastery level. These could include discussion, cooperation, attendance, and verbal ability. Evaluation for teachers is product-oriented; it answers the question on how well a teacher is developing as a knowledge transmitter. It is also judgmental; it is the process of observing and measuring skill and methodologies applied by teachers for the purpose of judging and determining its value either by comparison to similar performance or to a standard evaluation of teaching. Observers often make subjective decisions on teacher’s performance.

3.2.3 Summative Assessment

Summative evaluation according to various authors is a process executed by educational institutions at the end of a cycle to make a judgment on teaching performance. It is also called continue learning based on results. An assessment that focuses on summative means, measures teaching and learning procedures and it has the same purpose for students as well as for educators, to provide a pass-fail grade at the end of a semester. Deans and Directors at the end of a semester want to know if a particular teacher is using the proper methodologies to reach students' needs. Therefore, Deans and Directors will have to perform a class observation session and get a summative assessment of the teacher's performance. To carry out a proper summative assessment, authorities may have to perform the observation session more than once in a semester.

According to an article written by National Education Association (NEA) it states that summative assessment is a judgment about teaching procedures and it is used to make decisions about issue promotion, to render tenure, or, to even provide teaching awards. (NEA, 2005)

Garrison and Ehringhaus (2005) write that summative assessment is a procedure given periodically to determine at a particular point in time the teacher's knowledge and expertise in the classroom and its accountability, the assessment result, therefore, is used as part of the evaluation process prepared for the teacher's yearly review. (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2005)

A summative assessment of teaching, attempts to summarize the complex phenomena of teaching and from this point of view, for teachers whose teaching skills and methodologies are observed, the procedure might serve as a guide for personal, professional development or gather evidence of teaching excellence to support an application for promotion.

In conclusion, summative assessment is a tool to help evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher's knowledge and methodology, expertise, and skills inside the classroom. In addition, institutions could measure the effectiveness of a program and school's goals. The end result of summative assessment for teachers could help not only the personal and professional grow of the teacher, but also, could help Deans and Directors to make decisions on short and long term goals on teacher's availability.

3.2.4 Formative Assessment

Teaching, like very few professional careers, has its roots in the blind and unbiased ethics of transmitting knowledge the best way it can be done. With this in mind, Boston (2002) states

that teachers, educators, professors, tutors, or whoever is providing the cultivation of knowledge, has the duty of maintaining updating his/her knowledge at the same pace as technology and civilization grow. Educators need to ask three essential questions: Where am I going? Where I am now and how can I close the gap between the two of them? (Boston, 2002)

Since the goal of Formative Assessment is to have an understanding of what a teacher knows and how the teacher is using her/his knowledge, expertise, time, and methodologies in the classroom, the purpose of this project is to encourage teachers to be observed performing the task of teaching not just once per semester but twice or perhaps three times per semester.

According to Black and Wiliam (1998b) formative assessment broadly involves all the activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used diagnostically to alter, to improve, and to inform about teaching and learning. Under this definition, formative assessment encompasses teachers activities performed in the classroom and outside the classroom. Also, formative assessment is classroom discussion, office debate, peers and directors' argument and analysis of teachers and students work performed during a period in an educational institution. This work could include classroom participation, homework, assignments, research quizzes, and tests; therefore assessments become formative when the information is used to adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs. (Black & Wiliam, 1998)

3.2.5 What is Formative Assessment for Teachers?

The adjective formative according to dictionary.com, has many meanings, but it pertains to the formation or development of something. Assessment, on the other hand, defined by the same dictionary, is the act of appraising or evaluating something or somebody. Together form "Formative Assessment" (FA), which, conforming to edglossary.org, refers to a wide variety of methods that Deans and Directors use to conduct in-process evaluations of faculty staff, comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a POT session, a lesson plan presentation, a particular unit from a text, or course.

As stated by Wylie and Lyon (2012) "Formative for teacher's assessment is a process used by stake-holders during a POT session that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and to learn to improve teachers' achievement of intended instructional outcomes." Formative assessment is an integral part of the instruction that informs and guides Deans and Directors as they make instructional decisions. (Wylie & Lyon, 2012) Irons, citing Knight (2008) claim that "a good formative assessment means design learning sequence that afford plenty of opportunities

for good learning conversations arising from feedback on good tasks that are matched to course learning outcomes”

Irons (2008) states that formative assessment for teachers is a powerful and potentially constructive of continue learning tool; it is recognized however, that significant effort is required in the design of an effective FA document. (Irons A. , 2008)

Irons citing Black and Wiliam (1998) mentions that FA refers to “all those activities undertaking by teachers and by their observers in assessing themselves, which provide formative feedback to shape develop the teaching and learning activities in which both observers and observed are engage”. In addition, Irons states that FA activities and Formative Feedback should be aligned to module learning outcomes and where possible indicate where and how they contribute to program learning outcomes for teachers’ professional development. (Irons A. , 2008)

3.2.6 What is Formative Evaluation for teachers?

Good teaching is not the same as a good teacher, Boston (2002). Good teaching can be provided by an excellent teacher that has mastered the quality of teaching and does not intent to enhance his teaching knowledge or methodologies. A good teacher on the other hand, is a professional that day after day tries to build up his knowledge, teaching methodologies and teaching practices. Therefore, formative evaluation for teachers is an ongoing improvement of the teacher’s skills and knowledge based on the feedback provided by deans and directors.

3.2.7. What is feedback?

According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is conceptualized as information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding. A teacher or parent can provide corrective information, a peer can provide an alternative strategy, a book can provide information to clarify ideas, a parent can provide encouragement, and a learner can look up the answer to evaluate the correctness of a response. Feedback thus is a “consequence” of performance. (Hattie & Timperley, 2007)

Therefore, feedback is an important aspect to the working and survival of all regulatory mechanism found throughout to the life. In an educational setting; feedback, is an essential part of teachers and students development, it is the only way to let teachers know the outcome of a class observation. It provides valuable information about where teachers are in relation to their

professional formation goals, enabling them to evaluate their progress and to take remedial actions for their future.

Iron (2008) states that “feedback is any information, process or activity which affords or accelerates teacher’s developing based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities”.

There are many types of feedback in a scholarly setting. For instance, Deans and Directors can orally provide feedback to teachers after a class observation, or a written report can be presented for the teacher to sign as evidence. According to Irons (2008) the principal aim of feedback is to make correction on actions that are not according to the institution standards. The same way, feedback reinforces activities teachers are using in a classroom and students are making progress based on those activities. (Irons A. , 2008)

3.2.8 Formative Feedback for teachers?

Formative feedback for teachers are all related information given to a teacher by a peer observer, a dean or director to build on the suggestion given and used in an educational content. Iron citing Black and Wiliam (1998:p56) claim that Formative feedback provides “firm evidence that indicate clearly a direction for change which could improve standards of learning”

Feedback can only be effective when teachers understand the effect and are willing and able to act on it because the basic principles of formative feedback are the learning objective or goals that need to be clear to the teacher and should be used as a mean for closing the gap between the teacher developing state and the institution goals.

Iron states that any task or activity which creates feedback, which is information to help teachers to learn from formative activities or feed-forward, which is information that will help teachers amend or enhance activities in the future about their learning achievement, can be called formative feedback for teachers. (Irons, 2008:p3)

3.2.9 Key Components of POT

Danielson (2014) in his Framework for teaching defines four key domains for a successful Peer Observation session: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instructions, and Professional Responsibility. These four core areas of any inspection are responsibility of the observer performing the peer observation who seeks to define what teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession. (Danielson, 2014)

3.2.9.1 Planning and preparation

Effective teachers plan and prepare for lessons using their extensive knowledge of the content area, the relationships among different strands within the content and between the subject and other disciplines. The instructional design includes learning activities that are well sequenced and require all students to think, problem solve, inquire, and defend conjectures and opinions. Effective teachers design formative assessments to monitor learning, and they provide the information needed to differentiate instruction. (Danielson, 2014)

3.2.9.2 Classroom Environment

Effective teachers organize their classrooms so that all students can learn. They maximize instructional time and foster respectful interactions with and among students, ensuring that students find the classroom a safe place to take intellectual risks. Students and teachers work in ways that demonstrate their belief that hard work will result in higher levels of learning. Student behavior is consistently appropriate, and the teacher's handling of infractions is subtle, preventive, and respectful of students' dignity. (Danielson, 2014)

3.2.9.3 Instruction

In the classrooms of accomplished teachers, all students are highly engaged in learning. They make significant contributions to the success of the class through participation in high-level discussions and active involvement in their learning and the learning of others. The teacher's feedback is specific to learning goals, as a result, students understand their progress in learning the content and can explain the learning goals and what they need to do in order to improve. (Danielson, 2014)

3.2.9.4 Professional Responsibilities

Proficient teachers have high ethical standards and a deep sense of professionalism, focused on improving their own teaching and supporting the ongoing learning of colleagues. Accomplished teachers assume leadership roles and they engage in a wide range of professional development activities to strengthen their practice. Reflection on their own teaching results in ideas from POT session and feedback.

As Danielson (2014) suggests these four components mentioned above need to be present at all times to have a successful POT session; however, observers overlook these parts, especially in the Ecuadorian educational setting where POT sessions are considered as paper work procedure instead of a learning and building up operation. (Danielson, 2014)

3.2.10 Advantages of Peer Observation for Teachers

Peer observation of teaching is seen as a supportive and developmental process for improving the quality of teaching in universities. The process of peer observation for teachers can have great advantages and disadvantages. (Hendry & Oliver, 2012)

Experienced as well as novice teachers can benefit from POT sessions. Observers can determine in a POT session what standards the observed teacher already knows and applies, and what standards she or he is missing or overlooking. With their notes observers can decide on the feedback session identifying what minor modifications or significant adjustments teachers have to make in the classroom. Martin and Double (1998) state that some personal and professional competencies develop through peer observation for teachers, they also say that a POT session for English teachers does not end after the classroom observation is over. (Martin & Double, 1998)

Martin and Double (1998) suggest that novice teachers could develop the confidence to effectively employ a range of recommended teaching strategies appropriate to the teaching-learning needs of the educational institution they work for. (Martin & Double, 1998)

Experienced or novice teachers can develop a growing awareness of the importance of personal reflection on peer observation and could show a greater ability to actively collaborate in shared approach to classroom methodologies, pedagogy expertise, and class student control. They can also learn valuable lifelong skills such as self-evaluation and assessment and goal settings. Teachers can become users of POT sessions for professional growth and to mirror themselves on students' achievements. (Martin & Double, 1998)

Colleagues observing each other can be a very powerful learning experience, since there is an assumption that peers learn from each other (Hendry & Oliver, 2012). Teachers willing to be observed could see the process of POT more beneficial than the actual feedback they may get from directors and experienced teachers that have not actually observed them. Another key benefit of POT is the collaborative professional environment that teachers start feeling is exposed by Bell (2001). Those who participate in POT provide opportunities to discuss their teaching practice with their peers, share ideas and experiences, explore different methods and approaches to education and provide support to each other.

3.2.11 Disadvantages of Peer Observation for Teachers

Peer observation is the process of colleagues observing others in their teaching, with the overall aim of improving teaching practice; however, observers as well as observed feel

uncomfortable while performing POT for the simple reason that the process does not promote a positive relationship between the two parties. (Hendry & Oliver, 2012)

Weadick (2013) mentions that perhaps one of the most widely reported concerns from academics engaging in POT is the issue of bias. The observers most often lean towards the observed and may provide a gook report to avoid confrontation. Or an observer may impose his own beliefs about teaching on the teacher being observed. (Weadick, 2013) Participants reported that POT encouraged academic engagement, however, they also suggests that the procedure of POT is done once a year so there is no way to compare how the teacher has improved. Another disadvantage pointed by Weadick (2013) is the fact that some teachers claim that POT can be intrusive and a challenge to their academic freedom. Teachers once the hiring interview is over, they usually go to their classroom and do not expect to be watched or graded.

Conclusively, teachers often feel frightened by POT sessions because The observational method of teacher evaluation makes the assumption that the evaluator will get an accurate picture of the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom by observing the teacher during one or two hours in a POT session. Many teachers become nervous in a POT session and their performance may suffer. If the evaluator is the Dean or the Director, student behavior may also change, as they will not want to suffer the consequences of misbehaving in front of the authority. The result of these observations can often be distorted data.

3.2.12 Finding the Balance in Summative and Formative POT for Teachers

According to Garrison and Ehringhaus (2005), when a Dean or a Director is performing a POT session, how do they ensure that the information attained in the class observation provides a balanced picture of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses? The answer to this is to balance both summative and formative classroom assessment methodologies used by the observed teacher and the information gathered from peers inquire about the teacher's professional growth. (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2005)

Another study performed by Black and Wiliam states that “firm evidence shows that formative assessment is an essential component of classroom work and that its development can raise standards of attainment.” Summative assessment, on the other hand, is a proven tool for stakeholders to ensure teachers are performing their job semester after semester. (Black & Wiliam, 1998:p19)

The terms “formative” and “summative” do not have to be difficult, yet the definitions have become confusing in the past few years. This is especially true for formative assessment. In a balanced assessment system, both summative and formative assessments are an integral part of information gathering. Depending too much on one or the other and the reality of a true POT session becomes unclear. (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2005)

Teachers exposed to formative assessment are in constant knowledge upgrade and are always looking for better methodology strategies on how to perform their job not only to feel better about themselves but also on how to ensure that students are learning the material at hand. On the other hand, teachers exposed to summative assessment look forward to impress observers at the end of school year to ensure tenure or a long term contract. (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2005)

Garrison and Ehringhaus (2005), explain that when a comprehensive assessment POT session at the classroom level is performed and balances formative and summative teacher’s assessment, a clear picture emerges of where the observed is relative to improve the institution’s targets and standards. Observed teachers should be able to articulate the information from the POT session and take it for her/his learning and professional developing. When this happens, formative and summative assessments strategies are valid. The more we know about individual teachers as they engage in the teaching-learning process, the better institutions, Deans and Directors can adjust instructions to ensure that all teachers continue to achieve by moving forward in their professional development. (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2005)

3.2.13 Feedback after POT sessions

As reported by Irons (2008) on feedback after POT session, “Feedback is any information, process or activity which affords or accelerates teacher’s improvement based on comments produced by peers relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities”.

Feedback is crucial to improving outcomes detected in a POT session; it is a key component, and it is a powerful influence in teaching and learning. For this research project, the researcher will focus on English as a foreign language spectrum and the formative feedback provided by observers in an English class environment. Feedback, an essential component of POT sessions, has attracted considerable attention from researchers. A plethora of studies has been conducted to examine the effects of the characteristics of a particular POT observer,

feedback moves, feedback types or the characteristics of whole feedback episodes on a second language classroom (L2). (Gass & Selinker, 2008)

A formative POT is designed to provide useful feedback and foster collegial conversations among English teachers about real issues related to classroom pedagogical performance. It is a required component of the professional growth because it provides compelling formative support for reflection in own teaching styles mirroring the students' learning. The data collected from the POT will provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

Teachers after a POT session should be given activities to review, material to read, books, and magazine articles about class activities as suggestions to improve teaching methodologies. Given material to review is essential to ensure the quality of feedback. Research studies performed by Black and Wiliam (1998) have shown that if teachers are given only verbal feedback without the following material to review, it will not be as effective as the original observation purpose.

Teachers need constructive feedback on how to achieve targets, simply feedback on specific goals is not sufficient in a long semester period. It is essential to organize and analyze data gathered from POT sessions so that observers have the most accurate picture of what the observed already knows, does not know, and needs to work on for future observations.

In summary, feedback after a POT English session should be about the particular qualities of the teacher's work, with advice on what she or he can do to improve the classroom practices. Teachers should get personalize feedback not only on miscues class practices but also on well-performed sessions, and they should receive guidance on how to improve and given the opportunity to work on the improvement.

3.2.14 Observer qualifications

Many higher educational institutions, school districts, and Government Board of Education agencies are looking to reinvent the way they perform teacher evaluation and feedback (Gates & Gates, 2012). Most teachers and school leaders have in mind a system in which a single individual is watching a single lesson and providing feedback. In a system like that, Gates and Gates (2012, p17) states the only determinant of reliability is "inter-rater " reliability; they want a teacher's rating to be due to the quality of lesson and not the quality of the observer. But inter-rater reliability focuses on just one of the reasons, "the rater" for why a

single observation could be a misleading indicator of a teacher's actual practice. The only question is: Would a different observer, watching the same lesson, on the same day, with the same class, come to the same judgment? (Gates & Gates, 2012)

According to Gates and Gates (2012), POT for teachers, grading, and feedback is a long-term process in which Deans and Directors need to be firmly involved. A well-managed POT method is a credible tool to provide valid and reliable feedback to teachers for professional development and improvement. POT and feedback are ongoing tasks since education along with technology evolves. POT and feedback also need to consistently continue to look for better ways to assess teachers in their daily duties. Therefore, the team doing the class observation needs to have a special training and special qualifications for the POT process to hold authenticity in its procedure. Reliability is essential because without it classroom observations and feedback will paint an inaccurate portrait of teachers' practice (Gates & Gates, 2012).

POT observers need to have between 32 to 64 hours training. The focus of their training requires the highest degree of teaching experience attained with their teaching and most importantly, their desire to expend time getting trained, reading POT evaluations and feedback documentation to ensure a credibility of their reporting. The instrument criteria Gates and Gates (2012) recommended is Framework for Teaching (FFT), which is based on the actual level of teaching performed at school or university; and, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which based its instructions on how to score teachers' performance according to the POT session prepared. (Gates and Gates, 2012)

Finally, a qualified peer observer should maintain confidential records of her/his class observations. She or he needs to be a peer in the office and a peer a classroom. A qualified peer observer should have the ability to learn and to listen to his observed peers, she or he should be supportive and inquisitive with her/his workmates. A qualified peer observer should never act as supervisor, neither try to be an expert judgmental about what she or he sees in a POT session.

3.3 Micro Analysis

According to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education in its "National Curriculum Guidelines" (2014), English is unquestionably the world's lingua franca at present. The Ecuadorian Board of Education has been trying to raise teaching quality through the development of English teachers all across the three educational sectors: Primary (elementary

schools), Secondary (high schools), and tertiary (colleges and universities) since 2008. (Ministerio de Educación, 2014)

Education in Ecuador has taken a primary role in the “*Presupuesto General del Estado* (PGE)”. (Unicef.org, 2016) Teachers not only in the English department but also in research and technology are continually receiving training in their field of teaching. Higher educational agencies related to children formation, adolescents and young adults are seriously pursuing immense results in students’ examinations. And one main component to achieve this goal is to prepare the person who is talking in front of a classroom (British Council, 2015). As noted by Saroyan & Amundsen (2001), teaching has been described “as a complex, cognitive ability that is not innate but can be both learned and improved upon.” Therefore, initiatives to promote such development might include classroom analysis, where teaching and learning take place from the “double” perspective of being the observer and the observed, with examination comprising watching, listening and inferring. (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2001:p37)

As stated before, Peer Observation for Teachers (POT) is a relatively new field in the Ecuadorian educational system. It has become a feature of universities practice during the last decade. It is thought to involve peers observing each other’s teaching to enhance teaching quality through reflective practice, thereby aiding professional development (O’Neil & Pennington, 1992). POT is a reflection on teaching practices and supports professional learning and continuous improvement.

Every educational institution has learning goals that provide the direction for where learning heads. Ongoing formative assessment, including self and peer assessment, brings information about where students are in their learning process and closing the gap between intended and current learning through teacher-student feedback. (Wylie & Lyon, 2012)

3.3.1 Basic English Education Structure in Ecuador

The teaching of English as a second language in a non-English speaking country such as Ecuador always gives rise to difficulties in the presentation of the material to be learned. According to UNESCO, Ecuador spends an average of \$785 American Dollars per student enrolled in a primary or elementary educational institution and about \$1,615 in a secondary or Junior or Senior High school (British Council, 2015). The current government, headed by economist Rafael Correa, is prioritizing English language learning as a means of raising the

country's profile further on the international stage, and public sentiment towards English is confident linked to prosperity and better employment prospects. (British Council, 2015)

According to the British Council, Ecuador's English language policy in education currently aims to have English as an optional language from Grade 2 and a mandatory language from Grade 8, with the aim that all secondary graduates should be at B1 level; English will soon be compulsory from Grade 2. Also, Ecuador aims to increase the number of teachers with B2 English level; currently, supply does not meet demand. Both English learners and non-learners feel that English is a tool for increasing employability, and 59 percent of non-learners would study the language to improve their career prospects; English learners also emphasize the importance of English for communicating with others (British Council, 2015).

The 2008 Constitution states that "education is a public service for every Ecuadorian child. It uses public, mixed public and religious, and private school institutions to deliver its message."

Education in Ecuador is organized in three different levels:

- *Educación inicial* (pre-school education) from age three to five.
- *Educación general básica*, or EGB (Basic General Education) from age five to 15.
- *Educación bachillerato* (upper-secondary education) from age 15-18.

Basic education is mandatory, and most public schools run both, morning and afternoon shifts to accommodate the volume of students.

There are various types of schools:

- *Escuelas Públicas* (central government schools)
- *Escuelas Fisco- misionales* (schools run by the central government and religious orders)
- *Escuelas Particulares* (private schools)
- *Escuelas Religiosas* (schools run by religious orders with the support with of the central government)
- *Escuelas Laicos* (lay schools)
- *Escuelas Bi-nacionales* (bilingual schools) (British Council, 2015).

The Ecuadorian government has and is continuing investing a huge portion of its national gross domestic product income in education. According to the (British Council, 2015), the Ecuadorian government spent:

Table 3: Budget for Education

YEAR	CURRENCY IN AMERICAN DOLLARS
2012	4,075,739,860
2013	4,314,549,920
2014	4,165,699,960
2015	No data was reported
2016	No data was reported

Author: Leo A. Chávez

Source: (British Council, 2015)

3.3.2 English Teacher Training in Ecuador

As Haboud (2009) states, one of the goals of the recent English language reform in Ecuador is to increase the number of teachers at B2 level based on the CEFR and to ensure that teachers are skilled in a variety of teaching methods. Until 1986, the teaching of English as a subject was part of the general education program. However, from 1990, post-secondary programs were established that included English language and offered a two-year specialization for teachers to start off as a primary school Teacher's Assistant. Higher Pedagogical Institutes (*Institutos Superiores Pedagógicos*) were also established in 1990 to provide three-year teacher training programs that included the teaching of English as a foreign language. (Haboud, 2009).

As reported by The Economist (2009), the current government has implemented measures to improve general learning quality and the quality of English language teaching in particular. The Ten-Year Education Plan 2006-2015 mandated a transparent, merit-based process for English teachers training and recruitment and the 2008 Constitution stated that the government would provide professional development for public educators. One controversial measure has been the introduction of tests of reading and logic comprehension for existing English teachers, which were voluntary at first but became compulsory after-words. For those who fail, training was available and if repeated failure results, then the outcome was dismissal. (The Economist, 2009)

The English Teacher Standards established by the Ministry of Education outline five areas in which English teachers must excel:

- 1 – Language level; teachers must be proficient in English to a standard that allows them to teach the language effectively.
- 2 - Culture; teachers must understand cultural beliefs and sensitively apply them in

the classroom.

- 3 - Curriculum development; teachers must know how to use English language content, methods, and technology to achieve the standards set by the government.
- 4 - Assessment; teachers should understand issues surrounding evaluation and ensure that they implement standard-based lessons.
- 5 - Professionalism and ethical commitment; teachers must remain up to date regarding professional development and the application of what they learn. (The Economist', 2009)

The Ecuadorian government in its effort to excel Ecuadorian education has created standards for English teachers to follow and to abide. First and for most, The Ecuadorian President states that a university teacher must have a master's degree in the subject the teacher is about to impart. Therefore, a university English teacher, must, in addition to her/his standard master in education program must have a master in teaching English as a foreign language. To excel and comply to the Ministry of Education requirements a university English teacher must be proficient in the English language, in general English related to culture, in curriculum development in English, a university teacher must know how to assess not only students but also peers, and finally, a university teacher must be a professional educator always looking for seminars and courses related to English teaching.

3.3.3 English in Higher Education Institutions

According to the British Council (2015, p26), most universities are cluster in the major cities of Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. In these cities, some of the important and bigger universities have at least two operating campuses in each city, and there are only a handful of institutions in other areas distributed across the country. (British Council, 2015)

University applicants take a skill based entrance exam (ENES) that guides them towards a course of study. ENES does not test for English knowledge, however. Entry requirements are higher in the fields of medicine and teaching than in other fields as the government is striving to increase standards in these professions. There is currently no English language requirement for university entry, and while High School's students are required to graduate with at least a B1 level, there is uncertainty about how these institutions evaluate students. And anecdotal evidence suggests that students take insufficient class hours to reach this level.

3.3.4 POT in Ecuador

Peer Observation for teachers in Ecuador has been considered a requirement in educational institutions in the last few years. The activity of teachers observing teachers performing classes is not only noted in the latest Ecuadorian Constitution, but it is also mentioned as a requirement to be performed at least once a year by LOES and CES.

3.3.4.1 Legal Basis

Constitution of the republic of Ecuador 2008

Title VII, Chapter I, Article 351. The higher education system shall be articulated with the national education system and the National Development Plan to lawfully promote equality of opportunities, self-determination to engender thinking and knowledge, in the framework of a dialogue between different forms of knowledge, universal thinking, and global scientific and technological production.

Article 352, Mentions that the higher education system shall be comprised of universities and polytechnic schools, advanced vocational, technological and teaching institutions; and conservatories of music and arts, duly accredited and evaluated.

Higher Educational Council (CES) 2014

Title II, Chapter II, Article 19, states that planning, monitoring and evaluation of the organization of the learning. The organization of the learning should be included in the curricular design of majors and programs and in the corresponding academic portfolio. This curricular design will be subject to monitoring and evaluation processes by higher education institutions.

Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES) 2010

Title VIII, Chapter I, article 151, says that teachers will undergo periodic integral evaluations according to the present Law of University's Faculties and teachers hierarchical Regulation, in exercise of its autonomy responsibility, teachers will be observed among the parameters of peer and students evaluation.

Title VIII, Chapter 1, article 155, explains that assessment of academic performance, establishes that teachers from higher education institutions will be periodically evaluated in their academic performance. The regulation and evaluation system of universities will establish the evaluation criteria and the forms of student participation in this evaluation.

Title IV, Chapter 1, article 64, states that evaluation procedure will be applied to all academic staff of higher education institutions, public and private, with the exception of honorary academic staff. The integral evaluation of the performance covers the activities of teaching, research and academic management.

Title IV, Chapter 1, article 87, establishes as components of the integral evaluation, auto-evaluation, peer-evaluation and hetero-evaluation.

Ecuadorian Educational Law Interpretation

Peer Observation for teachers is not a new procedure in the Ecuadorian educational system. The judicial long with the executive branches have always kept mandatory articles relating to teacher's evaluation in the place, however most of these laws had been either overlooked or were politically driven.

Nonetheless, the government of President Rafael Correa has been making a remarkable effort in pursuance of improving the level of excellence of its teaching staff. Overseas training programs such as "GO Teachers since 2012," as well as onsite workshops from online Top Notch courses (2013), have emerged to improve EFL teachers' language and teaching skills. But these efforts are not enough if teachers do not reach out to peers for guidance and for training.

The Ecuadorian Constitution, the Higher Educational Council, and Organic Law of Higher Education, have articles stating that teachers of all level must be observed, evaluated, and must be remunerated for her/his dedication in school classrooms.

Ecuadorian Universities

The evaluation of teacher performance represents in the first instance a problematic, since to a great extent it has been considered as a form of control exerted by the educational institutions in which it is tried to compare the levels reached with those norms that govern the behavior of the teachers. According to Ardoino (2000), some of the identified problems include the difficulty assigned to the task of evaluating, the lack of explanations and the non-return of the information to the participants, the lack of self-evaluation activities and the consideration of the results alone (Santos Guerra, 2003).

In the search of professional development in the complex Ecuadorian private and public-school system, teacher peer training has been brought to light. The peer to peer training model permits educators of similar status to engage in a process of mutual cooperation and

interpersonal assistance, helping one another in reflecting on their own practices on a regular basis.

Here are examples of Peer Observation programs from some of the most respectable universities around Ecuador.

Escuela Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL)

According to the integral evaluation of the personnel academic performance document revised on January 2016, states that observations and evaluations are guided to find out the teacher's performance in the classroom and as a result from this activity to elaborate procedures to better this academic activity and to promote the professional development of the teachers. ESPOL legal basis are based on the Ecuadorian constitution and educational entities in addition to ESPOL's internal legal articles.

In Chapter IV, article 1, of the Integral Evaluation of the personnel academic performance, the main objective is "To provide a systematic and permanent methodology to perform the integral evaluation of academic staff performance through the use of computer platforms and evaluation tools."

With this objective ESPOL aims to cover the teacher's performance in class plus personal research, different activities related with society and academic management. These activities are set to be done by tenured and non-tenured teachers. The standard components to achieve the objective and goals are Auto-evaluation, which is performed by teachers based on their work load provided by ESPOL. Co-evaluation, which is performed by peers and directors of the institution, and finally, Hetero-evaluation, which is executed by students based on their learning and achievements throughout the academic period.

Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil (UCSG)

According to the teacher's assessment regulation, last reviewed in October, 2016, the teacher's observations and evaluation procedure is performed based on the Ecuadorian legal education system and UCSG's internal legal system.

UCSG's internal and legal system, Chapter 1, Article 1, declares that integral performance evaluation will apply to all academic staff of the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil with the exception of honorary academic staff, and covers the activities of teaching and management or academic management. To ensure validity of the evaluation procedure, all

teachers will be notified via the institutional web system, the starting and ending dates of the evaluation.

In chapter II, article 4, the institution states the components of the evaluation. The first is Auto-evaluation, which is done every semester and it is based on performance in and out of the classroom, but within the university's premises. Then is Co-evaluation, which is performed by Deans, Directors, and teachers from the institution, finally, hetero-evaluation, which is done by students from the institution. Teacher's evaluation at UCSG is graded with 10% auto-evaluation, 30% peer's co-evaluation, 20% director's co-evaluation and finally 40% hetero-evaluation.

Other Ecuadorian Universities

Among these universities, there are a few others, such as Universidad Tecnológica Particular de Loja (UTPL), Escuela Politécnica del Chimborazo (ESPOCH) and they all have basically the same procedures to observe and evaluate teachers. They all follow the Ecuadorian educational legal system and they all have their own internal legal procedures to evaluate and promote teachers.

3.4 Conclusion

Peer observation for teachers is a hard task, not only for the observer team but also for the observed performing in a classroom. There have been many books, articles, reviews on how to prepared and log a superb POT session, the same way; there are tons of material on how to prepare the perfect class to perform the ideal act as a teacher prior a class observation. There are also hundreds of literature reviews written on how to observe and grade a peer teacher and on how to deliver a feedback on her/his performance in front of the class. But it comes down to one single conclusion, there is not a perfect POT observation session, and there is not an impeccable lecture to prepare. Teachers had been, are at present, and will always be reluctant to accept a classroom evaluation session.

“...when a teacher observes a fellow teacher rather than a senior, the person who monitors then gives some feedback, which could be anywhere from a simple "Thanks, I thought it was great" to written feedback based on the observation task.”

(Mousavi, 2013)

The improvement of teaching practices traditionally is left to individual teachers working in isolation rarely follow up with peer observation or workshops or even feedback and support or

continued training. The observer, for the most part, is or was a teacher; therefore, she or he does know the feelings of being observed in an area where the observed is supposed to have mastered and more so in front of a group of students that perfectly know the evaluation procedure for teachers.

CHAPTER IV

Research methodology

4.1 Research paradigm

A pilot program to implement a Peer Observation for Teachers (POT) tool for a State University, is designed to change the teachers believe about POT sessions, the POT purposes and its uses. Teachers are reluctant to be observed performing classes. In the classroom peer observation can alter any teacher's nerves. But, teacher's sporadic monitoring serves as vehicles for professional growth, rather than performance evaluations. POT has multiple benefits for teachers, administrators, and for the institution.

According to the ED Director of the university, teacher's reluctance to be observed is caused by the fact that teachers do not trust the tool the University uses, as it does not resemble the reality of the teaching context and neither reflects the real purpose of the ED mission and vision and therefore its results would be far from reflecting the needs of the State University. Teachers, do not know the real use of a POT result; more so, no one informs teachers when and how a POT session is going to take place and seldom receive feedback from it.

4.1.1 Definition and rationale

Based on the nature of this research study where the researcher aim was to examine teachers' experiences with POT at the State University through descriptions provided by the same teachers, this qualitative study was designed on phenomenological concepts. According to Donalek (2004), in phenomenological research respondents are asked to describe their experiences as they perceive them. Respondents, in this case, teachers from the State University, may write about their experiences but information is generally obtained through face to face interviews; therefore, the researcher must take into account the teachers from the State University's own beliefs and feeling. The researcher must first identify what he expects to discover and then deliberately put aside these ideas. Only when the researcher puts aside his own ideas about the phenomenon it is possible to see the experience from the eyes of the person who has lived the experience. (Donalek, 2004)

I only focused on the Formative part of the Peer Evaluation Sessions, and my primary aim was to implement a set of rubrics to have available when Peer Observation for English Teachers took place.

4.1.2 Methodological stances

The nature of this study is entirely qualitative, which is a data collection method supported by the analysis approach. The significance of this qualitative study is unified by my fundamental research question: “Will English teachers from the State University comply with a new Peer Observation for Teachers tool?” The research technique used is then to isolate and define phenomena and categories during the process of the study in order to comprehend and learn the teachers’ attitude toward POT sessions.

(Fink, 2000)

The tools used for this study were face to face interviews, surveys, class observation or field work, focus groups, video-camera recording and note taking. According to Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011: p 76), qualitative research is a “form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live.” The author interviewed English and non-English teachers at the State University and analyzed teacher’s conceptions, not only about POT sessions but also about feedback. The descriptive approach, Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011), “aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables a researcher to describe the situation more completely than was possible without applying this approach”. (Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber, 2011),

I decided to focus my thesis in the framing of a peer observation pilot program for English teachers to see its feasibility to work as a tool to enhance teaching practices and to encourage ongoing teacher’s development. The population for this research was conveniently selected from the ED and from other faculties of the State University. The Dean of the Faculty, the Director and English teachers from the ED, and finally professors from the State University were asked to participate in this study on a voluntary basis. Three teachers from the ED decided not to participate in the class observation sessions and they did not wanted to be included in the focus group, but they did answer the survey.

There were nine class observations performed to five English teachers. All teachers were observed twice, and due to time restrictions one teacher was observed only once. There were two male and three female teachers. Among all five participant-teachers just one of them is considered a tenured teacher. The first English teacher, a professional male educated in the United States since he was 11 years old. He is not a teacher by trait, but he is well prepared with exuberant motivation to transmit to students. He brings lots of general English vocabulary,

personal examples, empirical English learning strategies and ways of living in an English speaking country.

The second English teacher is a male professional with a master degree in education with lots of experience in teaching. The other three female teachers, all hold a master degree in education, are educators by trait, have lots of experience teaching at a university level and bring lots of material to each and every class.

During the class observation sessions, teachers willing to participate were eager to be observed and showed readiness. They were told in advance the date and time of the observation and they were also informed that the observation aim was for formative purposes only. There was only one teacher from the ED that asked to change the date previously agreed for the observation session. He requested to be observed at a later time because he had a test examination scheduled for the English class period. Therefore, the observation session was performed on a later day with a different class group.

Due to the nature of this Peer Observation for Teachers research, my ontological position claims that previews POT reports from the State University were not entirely accurate. According to Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011), "Ontology can be defined as 'the science or study of being and it deals with the nature of reality'". Ontology is a system of beliefs that reflect an interpretation of an individual about what constitutes a fact. Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011, p81) The author of this research study believes that current POT sessions at the State University are paperwork driven to show that a procedure is complete, but the principal aim of a formative POT session, which is to provide feedback and developmental training is never achieved.

In qualitative studies, the role of the researcher is quite significant. Authors, such Denzin & Lincoln (2003) have considered researchers to be an instrument of data collection. What this means is the collected data is mediated through this human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003)

Denzin & Lincoln (2003), suggest that a qualitative researcher needs to explain before starting her/his research, if her/his role is emic, which indicates that she or he is an insider, who is a full participant in answering surveys, openly provide personal opinions in a POT session, or actively provide ideas in a focus group session, or the role is more etic, meaning, from an outside view, more of an objective viewer waiting for the data collection to be analyzed only and to provide suggestions after the research has been completed. My position in this project was the

latter, I created the survey questions, personally handed them out, but I never answered the survey, the same way, in all POT sessions, I was just an observer taking notes and video-camera recording. Finally, in the focus group session, I just gave out the questions and let participants argue or be accord to the ideas. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003)

The participants on the other hand, in a qualitative research were purposely and conveniently selected because they needed to be informed ahead of time what the researcher intentions were for the study. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2003), one of the most important tasks in the study design phase is to identify appropriate participants. Decisions regarding participant selection are based on the initial research questions before starting the study. In addition, the subjects sampled must be able to inform important facets and perspectives related to the phenomenon being studied. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003)

4.2 Research tradition

More and more, Administrators, Deans and Directors and most importantly teachers are viewing peer observation as a form of collaborative professional development. This kind of observation can yield its greatest benefits when used as a means of sharing instructional techniques and ideologies between and among teachers. One of the ways to share classroom experiences is throughout classroom's peer observations techniques. "The intention of teacher-to-teacher observation is a tool for professional development," (Meaney, 2003)

There has been an enormous number of data written about Peer Observation for Teachers; however, schools and universities, for the most part, do not have their POT tool to focus on the needs of, not only teachers, but also on the needs of the institution. The POT tool that the university uses is a generic copy from other institutions used as a model by whoever needs them. Regarding POT sessions, they are in most educational institutions a delicate matter. Deans and Directors are aware of the reality of teaching-learning procedures executed in classrooms. Not only that, the score results of students' evaluations also reflects this reality; however, and unfortunately, as long as educational institutions are not obliged to seriously undertake POT observations, Deans and Directors will not steer the waters to search further in the reality of POT procedures.

4.2.1 Definition and rationale

The researcher ran an initial survey to ensure the needs analysis for the possibility to establish a POT pilot program for the state university. The researcher requested, first, a written approval from the university's authorities: the President of the State University and the Dean of the Education Science and languages Faculty. Once granted the written authorization, the Faculty's Dean answered an initial survey. It is fair to mention that the Dean does not speak nor understand English; therefore, to ensure the reliability of the survey, it was translated into Spanish.

4.2.2 Design of the Research

The design of this qualitative research is Phenomenology. According to Donaleck (2004) Phenomenology studies examine human experiences through the descriptions provided by the people involved. These experiences are called "live experience". Donaleck, (2004, p516) In this research, teachers are asked to describe their experience in a POT session as they perceived them, and these experiences are generally obtained through interviews. (Donalek, 2004)

The nature of the study guided me to interview and to ask questions to participants. Author Donaleck (2004), states that the phenomenological method is to examine experiences carefully, without theoretical prejudice; discover the essentials of those experiences; and communicate what you discover to others for verification.

In Phenomenology terms, the idea is to describe the structure of experiences of teachers as they experienced faultiness and prejudice in class observations as the observing panel could not understand what the teacher was saying.

The researcher has done an extensive study of English and non-English teachers inclined to participate and be willing to stay on record about their experiences with POT sessions. Therefore, since I am not working to determine cause and affects, I applied the analysis approach to describe the teacher's situation at the state university by applying two basic described methods, the observational and the survey methods. As it is stated in (Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber, 2011), an analysis approach is a study designed to depict the collaborators in an accurate way.

The researcher concentrated with the observational analysis methodology performed in classrooms and the offices while teachers were preparing material for the class. Besides, the researcher conducted various surveys followed by Linkert Standards not only in a person to person interview but also in a paper inquiry methodology directed to non-English professors at

the State University. The survey for the English teachers and the Non-English Teachers was the same sample written in English for the ED teachers and in Spanish for Non-English.

4.2.3 Justification of the research

The need for a new Peer Observation for Teachers tool for the State University's English Department to encourage teachers to trust a POT session made the necessary justifications to continue with this study. The warrants requested to ascertain validity and reliability were proof with enough justifiable evidence. Teachers at the state university were frustrated about the POT tools used because they obtained neither positive nor negative feedback from the POT sessions. Also, the majority indicated that the questions stated in the POT utilized by the university did not have the correct questionnaire for the faculty that it was applied for.

In relation to the sub-research questions to be answered we have first if teachers from the ED could accept the POT pilot program. Then, we have the situation if teachers could comply with the new POT schedule. After that it was the scenario on how teachers could respond to the use of the peer observation results, and finally, if the feedback from POT sessions was going to help teachers in their attitude to improve methodologies employed in the classrooms.

4.2.4 Ethical considerations

First and for most, all data obtained from books, magazines, journals, and Web pages was carefully cited based on the latest American Psychology Association (APA) version. Also, all personnel interviewed received a consent form to read and sign before accepting either the person to person interview or before agreeing to participate in a survey study. Finally, a signed authorization document was requested from the State University and from the Dean to allow me to observe teachers performing in classrooms and to allow me to ask them questions about the POT tool the State University used. All these documentation has been added at the end of the thesis book as annexes.

4.3 Method

The methodology applied in this research work was both qualitative and analytical, with the idea to have verbal communication with the majority if not all of participants. The idea behind this technique was to have access to the inner thoughts of teachers not only from the ED,

but also from the rest of the community of educators, professors, and support personnel from the State University.

The researcher presented this methodology at the beginning of the study in Chapter I; then, the type of this qualitative research is Phenomenology. In consequence, the methodology, type and technique were re-affirmed it in Chapter III and explained in chapter IV.

The research design was descriptive to firmly present participants' ideas and beliefs about the POT tool they were exposed to in the past and the new POT tool offered now. The descriptive approach provided three ways of data recollection, the face to face interviews, observational, and surveys. These methods were applied to honestly understand the meaning of words exposed in the face to face interviews and focus group.

4.3.1 Definition and characteristics

The definition of this research work was from the beginning both qualitative and descriptive. The nature of the study which implies the recompilation of data presented in a verbal manner guided me to decide for the qualitative and descriptive methods.

The primary focus of this work was to seek the possibility to implement a pilot program to monitor teachers in their environment transmitting knowledge to a group of students in a classroom. There are; however, many tools to peer observe teachers teaching, but the one applied at the state university was a universal tool brought from other institutions that did not reflect the reality of the State University.

4.3.2 Methods of data collection

The researcher for this qualitative study preferred to use a more open-ended, less structured data collection technique. It was based on direct observation, a survey with Likert standards with not too many questions and face to face interviews. There was an initial interview with the Dean of the Faculty of Science of Education and Languages to ensure reliability and validity to the study I was going to embark. Then a face to face interview with the director of the ED to cross-check the idea about a new POT tool for the ED and finally a focus group prepared for the teachers from the ED with two different sessions provided me the triangulation needed for this qualitative study.

4.3.3 Selection and handling of data

The actively selected participants were 17, a Dean, a Director, five full-time tenure English teachers, eight full-time adjunct teachers and two part-time English teachers, placed on the payroll as invitees. Finally, 40 randomly selected non-English professors denominated as inactive because they just cooperated with the survey and did not participate in the face to face interviews. The data collected is currently in custody of the researcher. This data includes all paperwork, surveys, notes, signed consent forms, and emails. My professionalism as researcher and colleague of all participants is giving me the power to maintain all records secure and confidential. Due to the ethical procedure, not all data collected is disclosed in this study. The researcher will concentrate on the POT pilot program issue and how it can best help teachers in their professional growth and at the same time to help students in getting the best English lectures at the State University.

4.3.4 Participants

All participants are active members of the State University’s staff. The English teachers were all from the ED, and the non-English professors were randomly selected to fill out a survey. It is fair to say that some teachers from the ED and some non-English professors declined to cooperate with this study, even though, the reasons and the objectives of the inquiry were for a research paper only.

State University’s Teacher’s Staff

Table 4: University’s Staff

English Department (ED)			Non-English professors			TOTAL
Employment Status	Availability	Number (n)	Employment Status	Availability	Number (n)	(N)
Tenure	Full Time	6	Tenure	Full Time	40	
Yearly Contract	Full Time	9				
Invitee Status	Part Time	2				
TOTAL		17			40	

Source: State University Secretary

Author: Leo A. Chavez

4.3.5 Selection and/or sampling

According to various authors, a sample is the number of people selected from an entire population for the purpose of performing a research study and chose by the researcher her/himself. And it is also an accurate representation of the whole population and the values driven out from that sample are held to be true for the entire population Soini, Kronqvist, & Huber (2011). Therefore, I do have the right to make my selection of participants from the ED.

According to the sample size I have available, I have conveniently chosen the teachers that gave me support from the beginning of this study. I am perfectly aware of their age, gender, and occupation. I also know their residence and their professional formation. As far as the professors from other faculties, I have decided to exercise the Simple Random Sampling (SRS), in which I can choose the participants based on the requirements and the nature of the study.

4.3.6 Participants' background

All participants are Ecuadorian native, but not necessarily from the province where the State University is located. From the 17 participants from the ED, there are twelve females and five males. Also, there are 40 colleagues professors from other faculties and in which twenty-six are females, and fourteen are males. To maintain the ethics and confidentiality of participants, I have just exposed a little background information in this study.

The focus group participants were hand-picked by the researcher. They are all English teachers from the ED, four females and three males and they will be named as Teacher 1 through Teacher 7 in their Focus Group participation.

Teachers' Demographic Data
Table 5: Teachers' Demographic

Demographics	English Department (ED)		Non-English professors	
Age	Between (32 and 58)		Between (27 and 66)	
Gender	Female 12	Male 5	Female 26	Male 14
Occupation	University Teacher		University Teacher	
Income	Classified		Classified	
Residence	Local 15	Out of town 2	Local 36	Out of town 4
Education	Masters 17	PhD 0	Masters 32	PhD 8
Participants (N)	57			

Source: State University Secretary

Author: Leo A. Chavez

The background and demographics of participants were separated by the target department ED and other faculties from the State University. The following information was taken from the survey handled, face to face interview, and from the State University Secretary. The age from ED teachers ranges from 32 and 58, whereas the age of all other participants is from 26 and 66 years old. Out of all 57 colleagues, there are 38 females compared to 19 males. All participants are University employees, and their occupation is stated as university teachers.

The question about their personal income was the question that no one was willing to share. Even though, the Ecuadorian Board of Education has a standard university teacher's salary, teacher's income tends to deviate based on tenure, seniority and educational background. As far as permanent residence, out of all 57 participants, 51 are considered residents living in the neighboring towns. Only six teachers from the State University commute from other places out of the province.

Finally, the professional education background is set in the following way: teachers from the ED all have master's degree in subjects such as Education, Engineering and Evaluation and Design of Educational Models from Ecuadorian institutions. Just one English teacher is in the process of obtaining a second Master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Professors from other faculties, the same, they all have master's degree in various subjects such as Education, Marine Biology, Tourism, Economy and Evaluation and Design of Educational Models. In addition, eight professors do have a Ph.D. preparation, six of them already have their official certification, and two professors are still in the process of obtaining it.

4.3.7 Conclusion

To implement a Peer Observation for Teachers tool for the State University is a complicated procedure. There are ethical as well as professional consequences while performing the POT sessions. The idea to implement a POT tool for the ED was born by personally being observed, evaluated, and graded by a panel that did not speak English, that nothing seems amiss in the classroom, and the rubrics on the evaluation sheet had nothing to do with teaching English at a college level.

This study is qualitative in nature; the researcher spent many hours on official and on un-official conversations with teachers from the State University. Many of them did not want to be on record, but a few of them did have some great ideas to share on how to make POT sessions better as well as how to provide formative feedback. Once the idea grew, I decided to fraternize with my immediate superiors to have a feel of cooperation or a sense of rejection. My ontological position on this study was from the very beginning that the POT procedure used at the State University was wrong, misused, and it was unrealistic to the different faculties needs. All participants know that confidentiality was the primary concern and all personal data obtained would be safe.

CHAPTER V

5.1 Presentation of findings

As mentioned in the methodology section of this document, information was obtained through the face-to-face interviews with the Dean of the Science of Education and Languages faculty and the Director of the English Department, the surveys applied to the English teachers and non-English teachers, finally the focus group with the teachers of the ED. The information provides the findings presented in this chapter.

5.2 Acceptance of a new POT tool

The first step in this research project was to obtain the acceptance of the Dean of the faculty about the use of the new POT tool for the ED. The Dean was asked about the POT tool used by the ED. The Dean stated: “.....*it is a great tool if it is used objectively, the observer panel as well as the teachers being observed need to have a high level of professionalism to provide information, collaborate and be prepared to give and receive feedback*”. In addition the Dean was asked if she was willing to experiment with a new POT tool for the ED. The Dean responded: “....*if a new POT tool truly shows teacher’s strengths and weakness data useful for the ED, then yes, go ahead and try*”. As a result of the interview, there was the need to make some clarifications on the purposes of the tool and how it was going to be applied. The Dean was satisfied with the idea of implementing the instrument but holding back at the same time due to the need of higher authorities’ approval.

The Director of the ED, on the other hand, stated: “*I have been looking for a new POT tool for the ED, my staff is not being graded by their knowledge nor by their ability to manage a class*” She also indicated that “... *that teachers have not been evaluated for their abilities as English teachers and therefore, the latest evaluation results show low markings for English teachers*”. Based on this initial interview it was concluded that the Director accepted the fact that the ED needs a new tool designed specifically for English teachers.

The opinion of the teachers was taken into consideration with two class observations and a survey. They all stated that a different POT tool is immediately required to have a fair class evaluation. They emphasized that English skills need to be observed in a class evaluation along with vocabulary use based on the daily class plan according to the chapter presented in the syllabus.

The non-English teachers were surveyed on these questions and contrary to the English teacher's opinions; the non-English teachers felt quite comfortable with the current POT tool. They believed that the current POT is not affecting them and the resulting marks are according to what they expect after a class observation.

5.3 Disposition of the teachers and non-English teachers to pilot the new POT

Teachers and non-English teachers were given a survey based on a Likert Scale asking them if they would like to experiment with a POT pilot program. About this question, the researcher found out that 82% (14 teachers) of the seventeen respondents strongly agree with the idea of piloting with a new POT tool for the ED. Two respondents agree, and just one teacher decided not to answer to this question, he or she just left the proposition unanswered.

On the other hand, when this question was presented to the non-English teachers, 62% (25 out of 40 non-English teachers) clearly stated that they did not agree with the idea of implementing a new POT pilot program for the university, whereas 20% (8 non-English teachers) agree, plus two more non-English teachers that strongly agreed with the notion of the pilot program for the whole university. However, 13% (5 non-English teachers) were not sure about this question and decided not to answer it.

The chart below graphically presents the results of the non-English teachers' response.

Table 6: New POT for the State University

A (Strongly Agree)	2	0.05
B (Agree)	8	0.20
C (Disagree)	25	0.62
D (Strongly Disagree)	0	0.00
E (Not sure)	5	0.13
	40	1.00

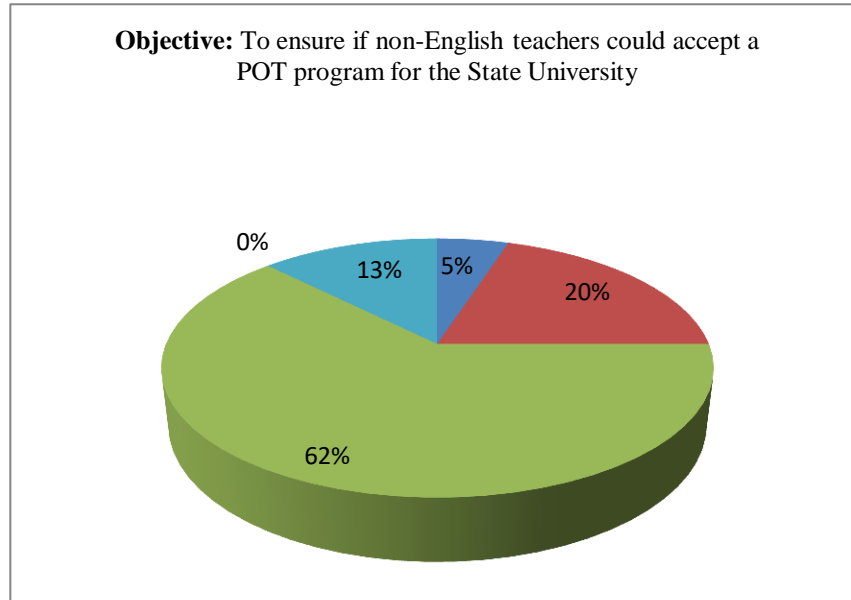


Figure 1: New POT for the State University

Concerning to this same question, the results of the survey were confirmed by the input obtained during the focus group session with the teachers from the ED. There are 17 English teachers at the ED, including the Director; however, just six teachers plus the director were invited, they were told that the conversation will be recorded and they were also mentioned that all information will be confidential and it will be used for the researcher’s study only. Teacher 1 on the focus group session stated: “A new POT for this department is well overdue and it needs to be written in English”. This response was not a surprise for the participants, they all liked the idea of having a POT pilot program for the ED, but they also mentioned that perhaps it would never be accepted.

5.4 Level of satisfaction with the current POT tool

The Dean was asked if she was aware that teachers were dissatisfied about the current POT tool. She stated: “I am well aware of it”, she also said: “the main reason is that the tool is

in Spanish and most of the time the observer panel in-class observations are non-English speakers, and this is due to lack of personnel resources at the time of running the class observations". The Dean backs up her replies on level of satisfaction on the current POT tool used at the English Department in personal resources and budget shortage.

The Director on this particular question stated: *"for a long time I had been trying to change the POT tool from Spanish to English, but internal rules and the Ecuadorian Education laws will never approve it"*. The director, showed great interest for a new POT and but she also holds back on authorities approval.

In relation to how satisfied were teachers and non-English teachers with the current POT tool, just 29% (5 teachers) stated that they felt satisfied with the current POT tool. However, 41% (7 teachers) stated that they feel neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current POT tool and 29% (5 teachers) said that they were not sure about the question and they opted to leave it blank.

Differently, non-English teachers on this question 57% (23 non-English teachers) said that they were satisfied, plus 22% (9 non-English teachers) that were very satisfied with the POT tool used by the State University making a total of 81% (31 non-English teachers) that were satisfied with the current POT tool. Also, the chart shows that there was a 10% (4 non-English teachers) that was dissatisfied with the current POT tool used by the State University. It is fair to mention that there were just three non-English teachers that were not sure about the question. These findings are presented in the following table.

Table 7: To observe how satisfied non-English teachers feel with the current POT tool

Very Satisfied	9	0.22
Satisfied	23	0.57
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	1	0.03
Dissatisfied	4	0.10
Not Sure	3	0.08
	40	1.00

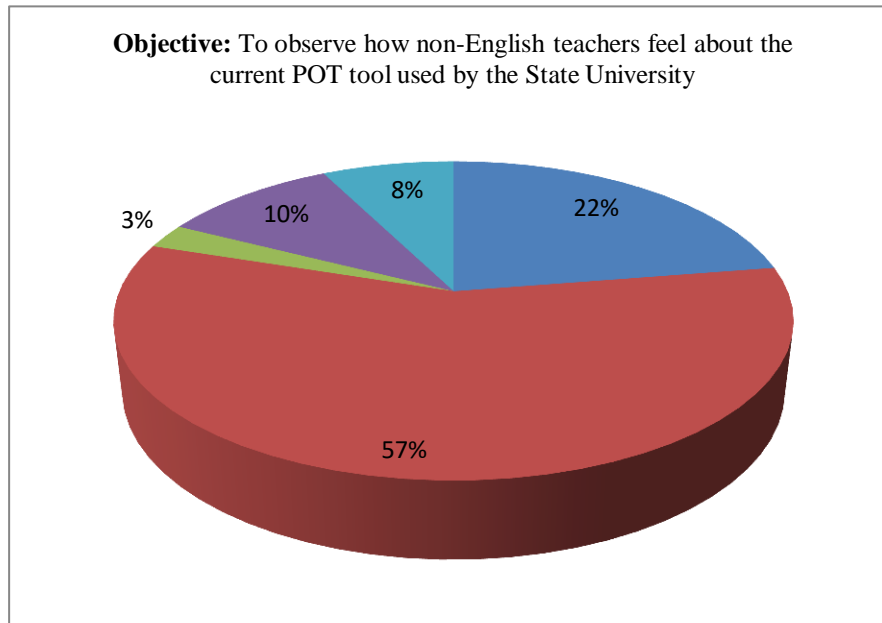


Figure 2: Professors' Satisfaction with current POT tool

On the focus group session, there were many different reasons for teachers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the current POT tool used by the university. Teacher 3 showed some dissatisfaction by stating the following: *“This is just a pilot program that it will never go beyond de ED, we are just thinking about ourselves, we are not thinking about the people that are actually coming to observe us”*. Teacher 7 also stated: *“...agreed most of the time, they do not understand English”*

The survey answered by the teachers and non-English teachers showed that teachers were dissatisfied because the tool was written in English and the observers were non-English speakers, on the other hand, non-English teachers were quite satisfied because the tool was in Spanish.

5.5 Obeying a POT schedule

The Dean and Director were asked about the implementation of a new POT schedule. Normally the university schedules POT sessions once a year, but they are irregularities following the procedure due to lack of control handling the class observations.

They were told about the new proposal of scheduling POT sessions twice per semester, at the beginning and the end of the semester. If the university schedules two semesters per calendar year, then an English teacher should be class-observed four times in one year. The Dean did not agree either disagree with the proposal; she stated: *“as a pilot program I am satisfied with the idea and I give you the authorization to run it, but I am not sure how you are going to get personnel to class observed a peer twice per semester”*. However the Director of the ED was completely on board with the idea of observing teachers teaching twice every semester. She mentioned: *“as far as personnel to perform the observations, all teachers from the ED could peer observe each other”*.

When teachers were surveyed about the new POT schedule, it showed that 41% (7 teachers) did not like the idea of being watched more than once a year. However, 29 % (5 teachers) did agree to be watched more than once per semester. On the other hand, 29% (5 teachers) left this question blank.

The non-English teachers responded in their survey that they did not want to be observed more than once a year.

5.6 The use of Peer Observation Results

The Dean and the Director both agree that the peer class observation results are paperwork procedure. The Director stated: *“Class observation results are seldom used to evaluate the performance of a teacher; however, the record on it stays for as long as the teacher works for the institution”*.

When teachers were asked for an opinion about the peer observation results, 82% of respondents, which means that 14 teachers agreed that the results are mismanaged by the university’s authorities, however, they stated, that it is politically used to promote tenure, extended contract and dismissals.

The same question was asked to the non-English teachers, and 90% (36 non-English teachers) considered that the results of a peer observation are well managed by authorities. They

agreed that results of any peer class observation result are deemed to promote tenure, contracts and in many cases job dismissals.

This discrepancy in opinions between teachers and non-English teachers was verified in the focus group session. Since the focus group participants were all English teachers, therefore, they restate the general belief that the results of a class observation session are neither logical nor beneficial for English teachers. Teacher 5 said: *“I do not agree the way the results of a peer observation session are used”*. Teacher 4 reaffirmed this notion stating: *“I am very sure that the results of a peer observation session are not handled correctly. First, results are seldom given back to the observed teachers, and second, results are for the most part unfavorable to English teachers”*. In addition to this comments teacher 7 added: *“the Dean does not even make an effort to request for clarification, neither for an explanation on the POT results”*.

5.7 Reasoning on feedback to help to teach methodology

In regards to POT feedback, the Dean stated: *“the same observer panel is scheduled to provide proper feedback to every teacher and non-English teacher after a class observation session”*. She also said: *“according to the university’s rules, feedback is supposed to be provided within three working days to let observed teachers and non-English teachers know what they are doing wright and what they are doing wrong in their classes”*.

The director on this question stated: *“feedback was never implemented. Lack of human and time resources have impeded to perform proper feedback”*. In addition, she said: *“for English teachers it is difficult to set an observing panel and to provide feedback at the same time, without proper resources is almost impossible to acquire extra and knowledgeable personnel to observe and to provide expert feedback to help teachers in their methodology practices”*.

The English teachers were surveyed on this question, and the findings were that 71% (12 teachers) stated that a class observation should be followed by a proper feedback to find out what is missing in the methodology applied in class and how they can make it better for their students. Nonetheless, 29% (5 teachers) left this key question unanswered.

The non-English teachers in their survey stated in a 45% (18 non-English teachers) that feedback should be followed by a class observation, to ensure if the proper methodology has been applying in the classroom and how that methodology can be improved. On the other hand, 55% (25 non-English teachers) stated that it was not necessary to have feedback after a class observation.

The focus group on this question, firmly argued that feedback has to be given after a class observation. Teacher 2 replied: *“The university’s rule on feedback state that after a POT session, there should be no more than three working days to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the observed teacher and this rule is not being implement”*.

Conclusion

The findings will leave us enough information to discuss, which will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

Discussion of Findings

6.1 Introduction

The implementation of a pilot program to Peer Observe Teachers in their environment was a complex task. It included work analysis, surveys and focus group sessions. The selected population for this study was two groups. The first group was formed by 17 English teachers from the English Department, and the second group was composed of 40 non-English teachers from other faculties around campus. All participants were carefully selected and are known by the researcher. Participants were willing to participate and openly express their feelings about class observations procedures. Also, all participants are current state employees and are performing teaching tasks at the state university. Many excellent responses fueled the study further, as well as weak responses that were more a reflection and anxiety of job protection than expressing true feelings. Chapter six in this study will bring to light many of these ideas and will also analyze all research questions presented back in chapter I.

6.2 Primary Research Question

“Will English teachers from the State University comply with a new Peer Observation for Teachers tool?”

There was a survey handed out to teachers from the ED and non-English teachers from the State University requesting their opinion on a new Peer Observation Tool for Teachers. The answers to these questions were different from the English teachers and the non-English teachers. 94% (16 teachers) agreed with the idea of implementing a new POT tool for the ED. However, the same question asked to the non-English teachers from different faculties of the same State University, and the answers were entirely different.

Non-English teachers on the research question stated with a 63% (25 professors) that they did not want a new POT tool. Further analyzing this query, only 20% (10 professors) did support the idea of a new POT for the State University. The reason for such differences between English teachers and non-English teachers is that the current POT used by the State University is a generic form written in Spanish, and does not reflect the reality nor the necessities of the ED as an English Teaching Center. This tool does not provide checkboxes for English knowledge, either for English teaching abilities as a foreign language.

Sub-Research Questions

1 - Will teachers from the ED accept the POT pilot program?

Based on the survey, plus the focus group analysis, English teachers agreed with the idea of a new POT pilot program for the department. Teachers wanted to have a change in the old POT format to have items related to English teaching, and they stated that fact in questions three and six in the survey.

Questions three and six were key questions in this study. In number three, 94% of teachers responded that they would accept a new POT tool and in number six teachers felt a bit uneasy answering this question. 41% (7 teachers) stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current POT tool used by the university. However, in the focus group analysis, teachers not only provided new ideas on how to make this new tool better but also they felt that a new POT tool just for the ED will benefit both, teachers and non-English teachers from the State University.

2 - Are teachers and non-English teachers from the State University satisfied with the current POT tool?

The answer to this query is in question 6 from the survey. Again, there were vast differences in response between teachers and non-English teachers. Teachers from the ED played safe with a 41% (7 teachers) describing that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current POT tool. On the other hand, non-English teachers stated with a 22% that were very satisfied, and 57% as satisfied added a total of 79% (31 professors) describing that they felt quite pleased with the current POT tool used by the State University.

Anew, the great discrepancies between teachers and non-English teachers are the language, and the items asked in the POT document written in Spanish. Observers, for the most part, are not bilingual and felt uneasy observing an English class. Whereas while performing the same task in a Spanish environment, observers feel quite within their elements to pay attention and to provide suggestions and even to give a grade to the class observation.

3 - Will teachers and non-English teachers comply with a regular POT schedule?

The answer for this query lays in question four from the survey. “New schedule” refers to as being subject to observation more than once per semester. Teachers in this inquiry stated in a 41% (7 teachers) that they did not like the idea of being observed more than once per semester. Just 29% (5 teachers) were onboard as far as being observed twice per semester. On the other hand, non-English teachers responded with a 72% (29 professors) that they disagree with the

idea of being evaluated more than once per semester. Teachers and non-English teachers do not like to be observed in their classroom while they are lecturing students. Educators are naturally trained to work on their own and claim the unique status of “my class,” my "rules," my "kingdom."

4 - How do teachers respond to the use of peer observation results?

Since the pilot program sought is destined to be employed in the ED, this question is for those English teachers that are working in the ED. The survey and the focus group elaborated for the ED gave light to different feelings about how the State University observes, evaluates, and promote educators based on POT results. They all feel completely dissatisfied on how the POT session outcome has impacted them, professionally and economically. The analysis of the survey and the focus group enlightened the researcher to question further the validity of previous POT sessions performed by the State University at the ED.

5 - Can feedback from a Peer Observation Session helps to change teacher’s methodologies?

Question number two of the survey for teachers and non-English teachers looked for the answer to this research question. The objective for this question was to figure it out if teachers and non-English teachers believe that POT findings could improve their teaching methodologies. 35% (6 teachers) surprisingly disagree with the idea that POT sessions could, in fact, enhance their teaching techniques. This response has the same number of teachers expressing the opposite, 35% (6 teachers) that did agree with this question. But, non-English teachers on the same question with an outstanding 66% (26 out of 40 professors) strongly agree that POT sessions did, in fact, help to improve their teaching methodologies.

Again, the difference in opinion between one group of teachers and another group of non-English teachers, all working for the same State University lays down to communication and understanding barriers between English and Spanish procedures.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

7.1 Summary of findings and relationship to the questions

The research questions initially stated in this study were all answered and analyzed. It concludes though that the State University has two different groups of educators. The first formed by English teachers from the ED and the second group by non-English teachers from all other faculties and educational programs. The data investigated and analyzed from inquiries, class observations, face to face interviews and focus group shows that there is a difference in opinions between both groups. For instance, the survey directed to 17 English teachers from the ED, and the same survey, translated to Spanish directed to 40 non-English teachers from different faculties of the State University. There were two key questions in the survey questions 3 and 6.

In question 3, which the main objective was to ensure if teachers could welcome a new POT tool, teachers from the ED responded with a 94% that they could accept a new POT tool. Non-English teachers from other faculties answered with a surprising 63% that they dissent the idea to have a new POT for the university.

In question 6, the main objective was to observe how teachers and non-English teachers felt with the current POT used by the university. Teachers from the ED were somehow divided with 41% stating that there were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current POT tool. But 29% did state that they were dissatisfied and another 29% did not respond to this question. In other words, from the 17 participants at the ED, no one said that was satisfied with the current POT used by the university. As a turnaround, non-English teachers from other faculties responded with a 79% satisfaction with the current POT tool, and just 10% stated that they were dissatisfied with the POT tool used by the State University.

As an overall, teachers from the ED would like to have a new POT tool implemented, but non-English teachers from other faculties, would not like to have a new POT procedure.

7.2 Limitations of the study

The project to implement a Peer Observation for Teachers pilot program for the ED English teachers has some operational and compromising limitations, based on the nature of the questions asked and how the participant's answers were going to be taken by the decision makers.

The survey presented to teachers and non-English teachers asked direct questions that based on the answers it could compromise the ED and the university's internal evaluation procedures; therefore, participants limited their answers, left it blank or answered positively to the university's system to maintain a job or to be promoted.

This research study was set to bring to light a POT tool that was not working for the ED's teachers; however, the tool was somehow accepted by the non-English teachers. Therefore, to promote a change of a POT tool for the English teachers, the researcher was looking for more honesty in the survey's questions.

7.3 Future directions and further areas for research

The Peer Observation for Teachers is a tool that has great potential to be implemented if handled correctly and accordingly with the standards set in it. Authorities from the State University should proactively consider the implementation of a Peer Observation for Teachers Department (POTD), which could work to provide not only formative observation standards but also summative observation norms.

From these initial steps, the POT in English could take off its grounds. The State University could start a training program and perhaps hire already trained personnel to handle the observation and evaluation of teachers and non-English teachers. Then if budgeting issues are on the way, the State University graduates hundreds of students on a yearly basis and the percentage of those students to be hired by the university are relatively low. Just graduated students are eager to find work; then, they could be the right staff to start the POT program.

As far as further areas for research, each faculty is a separate world; they have their curricula, syllabi and a set of specialized professors, which means that the POT tool for that particular faculty should work just for them. Every faculty should have its POT crafted with its rubrics and standards that will ask questions related to that particular environment and specialization based on the needs and based on the reality of the faculty educational standards for professional formation.

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ANNEXES

English Department ED and English Faculty Pay Roll

Position	Name
Dean	Lic. Nelly Panchana González, MSc.
Dean	Lic. Aníbal Puya, MSc.
Director CDI	Lic. Sarita González, MSc.
Director EF	Lic Glenda Pinoargote Parra, MSc.
Tenure Professor	Arq. Gilda Rubira, MSc.
Tenure Professor	Lic. Tania Garcia, MSc.
Tenure Professor	Ing. Veronica Vera, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Xavier Almeida, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Jorge Cevallos, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Jannette Cevallos, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Sandra Caamaño, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Roberto Montalván, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Ab. Leo A. Chávez, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Tatiana Enríquez, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Byron Villacreses, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Lic. Klever Loor, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Ing. Alexandra Jara, MSc.
Adjunct Teacher	Ing. Roxana Vera, MSc.

Leo A. Chavez G.
Post Graduate Program: Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Phone: 278 – 5311 Cell: 099 – 654 – 3470

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project title:

IMPLEMENTATION OF A PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE FORMATIVE PEER OBSERVATION TO ENGLISH TEACHERS IN AN ECUADORIAN STATE UNIVERSITY.

Introduction:

You are invited to join in a research study for a Master's Graduation Thesis. The study is looking for a reliable and useful Peer Observation for Teachers (POT) procedure to be put in practice at the university. Please take whatever time you need to discuss the study the decision to join, or not to join is up to you.

If you decide to participate you will be asked to complete a survey with 12 questions. 4 of them will be closed ended questions with the typical "agree or disagree" answers and the final 8 questions will be open ended questions where it will require you to explain and provide information related to peer observation for teachers' procedures. You will receive via E-mail a question every two to three days. Read the question carefully and provide an answer.

This study will involve the risk of perhaps ask you to fill out another survey and based on your responses, the investigator will ask you to accept a person to person interview and to accept a class observation by the researcher.

It is reasonable to expect benefits from this research. If you participation is honest and without bias of any nature, you will be helping directors, administrative personal and senior tenure teachers to better perform POT, not only in the observation sessions, but also in the feed-back sessions. In addition, you will be helping senior and novice teachers to accept and trust POT sessions in a formative way. Finally, students from the state university may benefit from the information found in this study.

Confidentiality:

We will take the following steps to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damaging: First and for most, you will never sign your name nor place any type of signature on the surveys forms. If you are interviewed, you will never state your name and your name will never be shown nor printed on the actual document. The data obtained from surveys and face to face interviews, notes, and pictures will be locked protected at the researcher's home.

Your Rights as a Research Participant:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right not to participate at all or to leave the study at any time. Deciding not to participate or choosing to leave the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled, and it will not harm your relationship with the department you are working for, neither with the faculty you are part of.

Contacts for Questions or Problems:

Call me at 278 – 5311 or E-email me at ccoslac32@gmail.com if you have questions about the study, any problems, unexpected physical or psychological discomforts, any injuries, or think that something unusual or unexpected is happening.

Research Participant

Date

SURVEY TO ENGLISH TEACHERS FROM AN ECUADORIAN UNIVERSITY

Objective: To analyze the possibility to implement a Peer Observation Pilot Program for teachers (POT).

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mark with an **X** in the box of preference.

A – Strongly Agree **B** – Agree **C** – Disagree **D** – Strongly Disagree **E** – Not Sure

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Sex: M <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	Age: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	Faculty: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>	Tenure <input type="checkbox"/>	Adjunct <input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------------	----------------------------	--	---	---------------------------------	----------------------------------

No.	Questions	A	B	C	D	E
1	POT encourages open discussion of teaching and learning issues within the university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	POT will enhance the quality of my English teaching classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	To implement a new POT tool for the English Department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	To be evaluated twice per semester by Faculty Staff and peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 - Feed-back from a class observer should be:

- A – Summative
- B – Formative
- C – Both, summative and formative
- D – Neither summative nor formative
- E – Not sure

6 - Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the current POT procedure

- A – Very dissatisfied
- B – Dissatisfied
- C – Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- D – Very satisfied
- E – Not sure / Not applicable

ENCUESTA PARA DOCENTES DE UNA UNIVERSIDAD DEL LITORAL ECUATORIANO

Objetivo: Analizar la posibilidad de implementar un programa piloto de Observación Continua entre Pares para Docentes Universitarios (OCP)

INSTRUCCIONES: Marcar con una **X** en el box de preferencia.

A – Completamente de acuerdo

B – De acuerdo

C – En desacuerdo

D – Complemente en desacuerdo

E – No estoy seguro

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Sexo: H <input type="checkbox"/>	M <input type="checkbox"/>	Edad: <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/>	Facultad: <input style="width: 80px;" type="text"/>	Nombramiento <input type="checkbox"/>	Contrato <input type="checkbox"/>
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No.	Preguntas	A	B	C	D	E
1	OCP incentiva una discusión abierta en el tema de enseñanza-aprendizaje dentro de la Universidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	OCP mejorara la calidad de mi enseñanza en la clase	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Implementar una nueva herramienta de Observación Entre Pares para la universidad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Ser evaluado DOS veces por semestre por Docentes de la Facultad y personal Administrativo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 - Retroalimentación de un Observador Entre Pares de la clase debería ser:

A – Continua (Formativa)

B – Final (Sumativa)

C – Ambas, Continua y final

D – Ni Continua ni final

E – No estoy seguro

6 - Indicar cuanto satisfecho o insatisfecho esta con el proceso de observación entre pares de la universidad

A – Muy satisfecho

B – Satisfecho

C – Ni satisfecho ni insatisfecho

D – Muy insatisfecho

E – No estoy seguro / No me aplica

PEER FORMATIVE/SUMMATIVE OBERVATION FORM

Teachers Notification:

Was the English teacher notified about the Observation?

YES

NO

RESPONSIBLE SIGNATURE

INSTRUCTOR

Class: (English Level and Chapter number) _____	# of Students _____
Observer (s): _____	Date: _____

Lesson Plan: (Fill out by the instructor)

Objectives for today's lesson plan

.....

.....

Preparation:

Outstanding **Good** **Fair** **Poor**
(5) (3) (2) (1)

Understandable lesson plan				
Extra material and activities according to the chapter				
Comments:				

Language Use

Used English in the classroom appropriately (based on students' English knowledge)				
Exhibits knowledge and pronunciation of the English language				
Demonstrate fluency				
Keeps students motivated				
Comments:				

Lesson Presentation:

Objectives were explained and written				
New vocabulary was presented written and explained				
Used activities and dynamics				
Student's participation				
Instructor's feedback				
English for cultural use was provided				
Comments:				

Classroom Atmosphere:

Class temperature is pedagogical accepted				
Windows – air conditioner – fans, available and working				
Comments:				

Use of Technology:

Video – audio – web material, present				
English lab - regular classroom, pedagogical ready for class				
Comments:				

OBSERVER’S COMMENTS TO THE INSTRUCTOR

Strengths:	
Weakness:	
Suggestions for Improvement:	

OBSERVER’S COMMENTS TO THE STUDENTS

Cooperative:	
Lack of interest:	
Suggestions for Improvement:	

OBSERVER’S COMMENTS FOR THE CLASSROOM AND THE EQUIPMENT

Lab or classroom:	
Equipment:	
Suggestions for Improvement:	

OBSERVER’S COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Time and date:	
Methodology:	
Technique and room management:	
Suggestions for Improvement:	

SIGNATURES – (Full name and signature)

Observer (1) _____

Instructor: _____

Observer (2) _____

Observer (3) _____

FACE to FACE INTERVIEWS

First Interview with the Dean of the Education and Languages Faculty

Question 1: What is your opinion about the POT tool used for teachers at the ED?

Response: The POT tool is a great tool if used objectively. The observer panel as well as teachers being observed need to have a high level of professionalism to provide information, collaborate and be prepared to give and receive feedback. The POT tool used for the ED teachers has provided useful information about teaching strategies and students' progress.

Question 2: Will you be willing to experiment with a new POT tool for the ED teachers?

Response: I believe that a POT tool if well managed, it works. However, the final outcome of the POT session is the part that needs some work intervention. If a new POT truly shows teachers' strengths and weakness data useful for the department, then yes go ahead and try it.

Question 3: Is the current POT tool giving you the information you are expecting?

Response: Some of the POT sessions are useful and some others are not. Colleagues somehow feel reluctant to show their truly self in a POT session and they try to act out in the classroom causing not only the students to feel uncomfortable, but also the observer panel feel pressured to mark on the POT tool sheet items that were not present or activities that were not performed.

Second interview with Dean of the Education and Language Faculty

In the second meeting with the Dean, she was asked key questions in regards to the new POT tool. It was actually a series of questions with short answers. The main prepared questions were as follow:

Question 1: Did you have time to review the new POT tool for the ED?

Question 2: Did you compare the old and the new POT proposal?

Question 3: Will you allow the ED director to put the new POT tool in practice?

Question 4: Will you permit seminars to train teachers and supporting personal to know what to observe and how to grade a POT session?

First Interview with the Director of the English Department

Objective: To cross check the need of a new POT tool for the CDI to be written and to pinpoint English teaching items.

Question 1:

Have you ever participated in a POT session as an observer?

Response:

Yes, I have. In fact, it is part of my duties to oversee teachers in their classrooms.

Question 2:

Did the performer (the teacher) do what you expect for her/him to do?

Response:

Yes, indeed. Being a teacher myself, I sort of understand the preparation taking before class, during the class and the wrap up procedure.

Question 3:

Who provides the POT tool you were using to grade the teacher's performance?

Response: Well, POT sessions are the university's procedures. They normally supplied the tools and tentative schedules were all teachers needed to be observed, normally is a week.

Question 4:

Is the POT sheet prepared for the CDI's teachers?

Response: Well, it is the same POT tool used all across, I think.

Question 5:

Is the POT sheet written in English?

Response: No, it is not, and it has never being written in English.

Question 6:

Would you prefer a POT evaluation sheet written in English?

Response: Am not sure. Remember that the observation results are reviewed by secretaries and supporting staff that create an overall report, which in turn is presented in academic meetings headed by the vice-president of the institution.

Question 7:

Does the POT tool used, highlights items such as pronunciation, fluency, used of vocabulary according to the unit presented?

Response: NO, it is a standard POT tool used for the whole State University and in Spanish teaching faculties, it is not necessary to measure neither pronunciation nor fluency.

Question 8:

Would you like to have a unique POT tool, written in English and pointing scales to measure pronunciation, fluency and other English requirements needed in an English classroom?

Response:

Well. It is asking a lot, a tool with such requirements will need lots of work, director's approval, and training for the observer panel. However it will be beneficial for English teachers because they will be evaluated in English and more so, their expertise in the use of the English language.

Second Interview with the Director of the English Department

- Question 1:** Will you recommend and sign training time for the ED's teachers and supporting personnel to attend seminars on POT standards?
- Question 2:** What is your opinion about the presented POT tool for the ED?
- Question 3:** Has anybody ever written a POT tool for the State University before?
- Question 4:** Once a POT session has been done, will ideas and suggestions stated on the POT sheets from observers be respected and considered?

First Class Visit

There was just an observation class and note taking

Second class Visit

Teachers' reaction to new POT tool format

- ✓ At least the new format is in English; however, it will be a bit difficult for non-English speakers to understand the format and requirements.
- ✓ For the first time, we (teachers) will be evaluated based on our foreign language knowledge.
- ✓ We can finally mention how large in number (students) classes are and the fact that many classroom..... many classroom considered as English labs do not even have air conditioning nor have the necessary tools to lecture an English class.
- ✓ POT is a powerful tool to find out what teachers really do and what teachers need inside the classroom for an English class lecture.

FOCUS GROUP SESSION WITH ENGLISH TEACHERS

There were four main questions I wanted to focus on this meeting.

- ✓ If you are notified that your class will be observed, on what areas could you like to be observed?
- ✓ Think back over the past two observations on the check items that were missed.
- ✓ If you are invited to perform a class observation, how will you prepare yourself?
- ✓ What can each one of us do to make this new POT work?

Focus Group Intervention

- The first impression about the implementation of a new POT tool just for the ED was that it will never happen. In addition the same person stated that the tool has some fallacies in regards to legal procedures that the university must follow in order to implement a new evaluation-observation tool.
- This is just a pilot program that perhaps it will never go beyond the ED.
- We are just thinking about ourselves. We are not thinking about the people that are actually coming to observe us, must of the time they do not understand English.

- This document has good questions though. It really focuses on English teachers and English teaching. The good side is it could be used to observe pronunciation, fluency and other English skills. The bad side is that whoever is going to use it, he or she has to right down the classroom conditions and class size in student number.
- Agree, the university will never disclose such information.

Question 1:

- The objective of the first question was: if giving you the choice to request the rubrics for the observation, what areas will you choose? On the first question, all participants pretty much agree on the same topic. They all wanted to be observed in their fluency, pronunciation vocabulary use, and in their class preparation. They also mentioned that this type of rubrics was never set before. English teachers were all observed and evaluated with the same rubrics used for professors of the State University.

Question 2:

- The objective for question 2 was to bring teachers back in time and to reflect on how teachers were evaluated in the past. There were many opinions on this particular question, the group stated that English teachers have always being given the cold shoulder in evaluations and class observations and the main reason was [quote] “they hate us, because we speak in English and they think that we are talking about them” [end quote]. In addition to this comments, there were memories about observers being chatting on their cell phones while teachers were performing in front of the students. Basically, all participating teachers agreed that lack of knowledge was the main cause for observers to lose interest in the English class observations.

Question 3:

- The objective for question three was to have sense of responsibility for English teachers to prepare her/himself to be a class observer. English teachers as well as the Director have being invited to class observe a peers. As a general agreement, all teachers present stated that it is challenging. They are able to understand the teacher in from of the class, and the fact that they are able to follow the class, the procedure, the dynamics, and the vocabulary used; however, the grading sheet does not ask for such items. Teachers also stated that they could like to be better train in class observation and evaluation procedures to better assist not only the ED but also the State University.

Question 4:

- The objective for question 4 was to hear from teachers’ ideas on how they could support the notion of a new POT and what they can do to help out. First, they stated that time is a crucial factor to work on POT procedures, rubrics and field work. Then, some of them were whiling to move on and start

working on the idea already presented, but others decided to have office time available to work on the new POT design and rubrics. They all, however, support the idea to have a pilot program running in the ED, to work on achievement and results and to have a report ready for the authorities.