



Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla

Faculty of Languages

**Students' beliefs about Academic Failure in the
Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés at BUAP**

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**“STUDENTS’ BELIEFS ABOUT ACADEMIC FAILURE IN THE LICENCIATURA
EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS AT BUAP”**

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Dedications

“Failure is only the opportunity to begin again, only this time more wisely.”

Henry Ford

Before I start, I would like to give thanks and a special mention to one of the previous member of my thesis committee, Mtra. María del Rocío Vélez Tenorio. Even when she is not among us anymore, her memory will live in our hearts forever.

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Abstract

The Academic failure has been a phenomenon studied in all institutions of all levels, and mainly in higher education. That is the case of the Degree in English Language Teaching (ELT) on faculty of languages from the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, where at least the 55.45% of the students have failed a subject.

The purpose of the study is to know the most failed subjects on the ELT and the student's reasons why they fail a subject.

The information obtained was provided by the department of planning and academic evaluation (DEPEA in Spanish). The data was analyzed, and the most failed subjects in LEI were identified, a survey was applied to the failing students where they stated their beliefs about failing a subject and the aftermaths that it implies.

This kind of study had never been conducted before on the ELT, so that its importance of this. Furthermore, this study lays the foundation for future research on the area and provide information about a theme present in every school and institution.



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Chapter I – Introduction

1.1. Introduction:

A typical phenomenon in schools, and a constant that the teachers and authorities must keep watching over is the Academic failure. Sometimes, this phenomenon goes unnoticed until the consequences are seen, and when this occurs it is too late to do something to solve it. The problem of Academic failure has not been quite analyzed in depth, despite it has been part of the academic evaluation models of the university (Campos, 1992).

1.2. Problem

Every four-month period students fail one or more subjects in the different academic programs that the university offers (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015). This influences in many aspects of their academic development and sometimes in certain support that the university and the government give; such as economic supports, scholarships and other benefits that the institution has for the regular students (SEP, 2014).

Focusing on the degree in English language teaching (in spanish Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés, LEI) of the language faculty, from the entry into force of the Minerva University Model (MUM), most of the student population has failed at least one subject of the curricular program, particularly in the areas of Linguistic and Target Language; this trend is observed in the Kardex of the LEI students of the language faculty, that were issued by the SIGE (Sistema Integral de Gestión



Escolar) of the faculty of languages, which in turn, it obtains the information from the Registrar's Office of the university (DAE for its acronym in Spanish) (BUAP - Dirección de Administración Escolar, 2014).

Therefore, the dilemma of this investigation was: to what extent did the teachers, students and the institution influence the Academic failure in the MUM of LEI program? And, How to decrease the level of failed students, principally in the areas of Linguistic and Target Language, of the LEI degree of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla?

1.3. Research questions:

- How does Academic failure behave on the academic program of LEI?
- Which are the most failed subjects, generation and four-month period?
- How many students have failed a subject? And, why do the students fail that subject?
- Which implications arise from fail a subject in the curricular axis of LEI?
- How does the performance of the students influence in the phenomenon of Academic failure?
- Could Academic failure be reduced with the study and implementation of programs that attack the root of this phenomenon?



1.4. Purpose of the study

With the purpose of answering these questions it was essential the support of the coordinator of the DEPEA to have access to the academic records of the LEI students. In order to describe and analyze the information that the institution had provided, it was necessary to develop a control of Academic failure, in which the number of student failed in all the subjects offered by the LEI program was controlled and summarized. In addition, it was thoroughly investigated the phenomenon of Academic failure that, in a future, could help in later investigations and analysis, as a starting point for classmates and academic authorities.

Moreover, in the Faculty of Languages, there is no enough research about Academic failure; thus, this investigation was fundamental to know the student population; and in this manner, lay the foundations that might modify the planning and evaluation process of the academic program.

The reality is that more than a half of the students of the LEI have failed at least one subject during their stay in this career (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015), and teachers and authorities of this faculty must do something to decrease this constant. In order to develop this study, the following objectives were stated

Aim: To know, describe, and analyze the influence that the Academic failure has on the students, teachers and the institution, focusing on the areas of Linguistic and Target Language of the program of LEI belonging to the Faculty of Languages of the BUAP.



Objectives:

- Explain what Academic failure is, and its repercussions in the Academic performance of the student and in the institution.
- Determine the rate of Academic failure inside of the LEI program.
- Establish the motives why students fail a subject in the curricular axis of Linguistic and Target Language.
- Identify the internal and external factors that affect the student and could cause the increase of Academic failure in the Faculty of Languages.
- Find the issue that might cause the Academic failure and give raise to future investigations to modify the curricular program on English Language Teaching.

1.5. Justification

When a student fails a subject, it brings many trouble in his/her academic development, added to this, when a student of BUAP fails a course he loses his right to be graduated by “automatic graduation” (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2014). Moreover, students that study a subject for the second time lose the economic benefits that the faculty gives for the participation in academic events (transportation, cover of the event, accommodation, and others) (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla - Facultad de Lenguas, 2014).



1.6. Research context

For this study it was chosen the degree of English language teaching in the faculty of languages faculty of BUAP. The campus is located on 2003, 4 North street. Humboldt Neighborhood in Puebla City. The faculty has a control of the grade of all the students, so it would be necessary to have access to these data to develop a control of failed subjects and in this way create a program to decrease this.

1.7. Participants:

This study would involve both students and academic authorities. The students are considered as adults, they had been enrolled in a subject and, for any reason, they failed one or more subjects.

It is worth mentioning, that despite being a relatively short study, considering that involves the MUM cohorts of 2009 to 2013 of LEI, only it is only focused on the problematic that brings the Academic failure to all involved. All of this, regardless the number of credits taken, but just considering the four-month periods of Spring and Autumn; the period of Summer does not have the same number of offered programs and in consequence it does not have the same number of students that a four-month period has, so it could cause irregularities in the Graphics.



1.8. Key words:

Academic failure:

All the phenomena that occur when a student fails a subject. Academic failure influences on many aspects of students, teachers, and institutions. According to Dwyer & Wyn (2001) the stresses and strains of coping with multiple transitions and their crosscurrents impact adversely upon students, resulting in academic failure.

Fail:

It is when a student gets the lowest score in a subject, this score is equivalent to 5 that is considered in the Mexican evaluation system as failed. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2008), fail means to not succeed in what you are trying to achieve or are expected to do

Score:

The sum of all the points obtained that the teacher established in his/her evaluation criteria. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2016), score is the number of points, goals, runs, etc., that each player or team has in a game or contest. The number of points that someone gets for correct answers on a test, exam, etc.

1.9. Conclusion

This study had only the intention of diagnosing and evaluating the Academic failure, principally on the most failed subjects of the LEI program of the Faculty of Languages. The analysis consisted of the processing of the data provided by the DEPEA, and the design and the application of an instrument that permitted to



determine the main causes, influences and to know if the students were aware of the repercussions of failing a subject in the BUAP, particularly in the LEI program. In this manner, the investigation could serve as a starting point for other more specific investigations. For this, it is important to know the context where this investigation was developed; this will be described in the next chapter.



Chapter II - Literature review

2.1. The Higher education and the Academic failure

Academic failure, like dropouts, educational lagging and the graduation efficiency are issues that characterize most of the institutions of higher education in the country.

The Academic failure in higher education is consequence of many problems. In higher education, when the students begin to be independent people, sometimes it is not as noticeable as in basic levels of education.

In Mexico, the ANUIES (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior) states that "each institution must develop strategies and implement actions that aim to increase the quality of the whole educational process of the students, improve academic performance, reduce academic failure and dropout, and reach satisfactory levels of achievement and graduation efficiency" (ANUIES, 2014)

Likewise, it is mentioned that the phenomenon of Academic failure has a complex nature, which affects not only the performance of teachers and students, but the decisions of educational authorities, parents, legislators, and others (Definición.DE, 2014). For this it is necessary to examine each point of view that influence this phenomenon.



2.1.1. The education seen through the international organisms.

On the international context, the higher education is seen through different approaches that are based on the quality of the imparted contents, the extent of the investigation field and its impact on the society and the financing for the education. Another approach that many organizations consider is the level of knowledge on fundamental areas.

According with the PISA evaluation of the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), Mexico is failed in Mathematics, Reading and Science (OCDE, 2012). And the scene is not reassuring; in every evaluation Mexico is equal or worse than in previous evaluation (OCDE, 2012) (Vargas Hernández, 2012).

Even that this prove does not evaluate the dominium of a foreign language, the reality is that Mexico fails in English Language too. Despite the advantages to having a very good command of English language, Mexico is on the position 38th of 54 countries (Universia Mexico, 2013).

2.1.2. The higher education in Puebla

In the last decades, Puebla has grown exponentially in terms of higher education. The expansion of the higher education is explained, in first place, by the population development, which was accompanied with a process of industrialization and urbanization. Likewise, the inclusion of woman in the higher education increased considerably (Moreno, Kent, & Álvarez, 1992).



On the other hand, the government policies focused on the coverage of the basic education; which generate in the medium term, the demand of more institutions of middle and higher education (Moreno, Kent, & Álvarez, 1992).

It is to consider that from the colonial age until the middle XX century, the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, constituted the unique option to make higher education studies in the state of Puebla (Esparza, 2000). Also, the BUAP has represented one of the best options of the region, as it receives students from Oaxaca, Chiapas, Tlaxcala and Guerrero; besides, it is an attractive option for students from Central and South America (Moreno, Kent, & Álvarez, 1992).

From the early 80's the higher education in Puebla has an increase among 1050% at the end of 1990 (Moreno, Kent, & Álvarez, 1992). Also, with the support of the government, the BUAP went through an expansion during the latest 90's; increasing its registration and regional campus in the state (Koriat, 2013).

Nowadays, the state of Puebla is an option for many young people to study a career. However, statistics said that among tenth of the population graduates; and among 70% of those ones gets a degree (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía [INEGI], 2013). The causes for this percentage are varied, one reason could be the academic failure and for this the importance of this investigation in one of the principal universities of Mexico, focusing on a career with over 1,400 students (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015).



2.1.2.1. Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla

One of the Institutions with a top prestige in Mexico is the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), located in the southeast of Mexico in Puebla City.

The BUAP has the objective to provide the best resources to teach and educate students and teachers to improve the development of the society, in this regard the BUAP states their mission and vision as follows:

Mission

We are an autonomous public university. We are a community of knowledge because we understand it as the center of human development and we are dedicated to studying, producing and transmitting this knowledge from generation to generation and use it in the ethical solution to the problems of national and regional development. True to our tradition of scientific, social, humanistic and technological research, it is our desire to sustain and increase the capacity and quality of our research.

Vision

The BUAP College is leader among institutions of higher education in the country, distinguished by integrating academic and management processes in an efficient, effective and transparent quality, making the student the center of attention, we make impact on the environment for human and social development. (BUAP, 2014)



Founded on 15 April 1587 as Colegio del Espíritu Santo, the school was sponsored by Society of Jesus during most of the Spanish colonial era before turning into a public college in 1825 and eventually into a public university in 1937 (BUAP, 2014).

2.1.2.1.1 Faculty of Languages of BUAP

Within the BUAP is located the Faculty of Languages, place of two bachelor programs, one is a full time program and the other one is partial time. Moreover, the faculty offers a Master in ELT and various languages courses.

This Faculty hosts a B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), whose name is Licenciatura en lenguas Modernas (LEMO) until 2008, from 2009 known as Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) and also the B.A. of Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Francés (LEF).

Today this faculty is focused on the initial education of languages teachers, and as other faculties, the academic failure is present too.

2.2. The academic failure

The academic failure is not exclusive of basic education and middle-higher education, it is present in higher education too. And this phenomenon sometimes goes unnoticed for many reasons. This, at the same time, causes problems in the student's academic performance, the global average of the institution that might derive on academic desertion. (Traver, 2000)



Moreover, the definition of academic failure in higher education implies more than the student's grades, it is necessary to know the teacher profile, the external factors that influence on it and the environment where the process of Teaching-Learning is developed.

2.2.1. Academic Failure; Problem or Symptom

Failing a subject is more common what we think. Most of students, parents and even teachers see academic failure as something normal in the school life of people. Academic failure has particular mechanisms and characteristics that distinguish it from other issues; like academic achievement, underachievement, dropout, and graduation efficiency. So it is easier to analyze it (Camarena & Gómez, 1986).

Talking about academic failure is not referring to students with learning disabilities, but capable students that do not reach an appropriate performance (González & Hidalgo, 2009). Despite efforts in the classroom by teachers and administrators, the phenomenon is repeated year after year.

But instead of taking matters into it, the government just recognizes the problem and tries to reduce it with more programs focused just on teachers, and it is just studied when the student has already failed a subject. It is common to think that the academic failure is the problem when it scarcely is the beginning of authentic problems like dropout.



It is preferable to see academic failure as a symptom, recognize it and attack the causes; rethink the academic programs, eliminate the obstacles, and detect when a student is failing to help him/her in an appropriate way.

So, when someone attacks the symptoms instead of waiting for the problems the benefits would be reflected in a better quality of life, in this case for students, teachers and of course in the society.

2.2.2. The relation of Academic failure with other obstacles of education

As it was said, academic failure is the inception of issues that affect the graduating efficiency of one institution. Talking about academic failure is the beginning of serial problems in the academic life of a student and of course of the institution too. As it was said, academic failure is a symptom, and the problems that this generates are the dropout and graduation problems. These problems seem more important to the institution and the authorities because they generate high social and private costs. Also this means for the national state a greater social cost to fund social programs, as institutions fail to generate their own resources. Another cost is the growth of social inequality and poverty and its negative impact on social integration, hindering the strengthening and deepening of democracy (Castillo, 2013).

The dropout has an internal origin, it means that it is managed by the students themselves. When a student shows little or no interest in academic activities, he gradually will decrease their academic level, the same thing happens if you do not



pay attention in class or start to miss them (Lira, 2002). When this happens, the graduating efficiency is affected too, because less students means less graduated students.

Today, it is very common that a percentage of those who enroll in schools do not complete their studies. So it is necessary to know their reasons and help them to decrease these problems, and for instance it is necessary to know the factors that lead in dropout, one of that is the academic failure.

2.3. The different points of view of the Academic failure

The study of academic failure allows to reconstruct and analyze this phenomenon along the different moments of the student's academic life. It is important to highlight that a study of academic failure is independent from the school success. The academic success is referred to the knowledge, abilities and values that a student acquired as result of his/her participation on the educative activities, while academic failure is the result of the evaluation process that the teachers carry out. (Solis, Bazán, Carillo, Esparza, & González, 1979)

There are different ways to define academic failure, depending on the approach that it was given, and what it wanted to be known. The academic failure could be explained by socioeconomic factors of the same students, and not just lack of capacities (Gonzalez, 1993). But some others consider that academic failure cannot be explained by just one cause, but the result of many variables, that could be individual and institutional. Referring the individual cause as the characteristics that



the students possess and that affect their developing in school, and the institutional ones as the characteristics of the educative institutions as teaching techniques, evaluating systems, organizational structure, etc. (Gonzalez, 1993).

It is possible to divide the causes of the academic failure for its study in students, teachers and institution (Noriega, 1982). Due to these three sectors, there are factors that affect the graduation efficiency. For this, the different points of view of the academic failure are described next.

2.3.1. The Student

Most people consider that the students who fail a subject are irresponsible, because these students show a lack of interest in their studies. But this idea is not so true, the lack of interest is not the only reason to fail.

Focusing on the student, there are many factors that influence the phenomenon of academic failure, that ranging from biological factors to sociological and moral factors. The principal factors could be the sociological, economical and psychological. The psychological approach is based on the theory that the academic performance has a direct relation with the intellectual quotient (IQ) of the student. So an individual with a high IQ will have less possibilities of failing a subject than a student with low IQ (Hernández, 2003). Instead of that this position was, for many years, the dominant approach, nowadays it is known that there are other situations that can be attributed the academic failure.



An important variable in the field of academic failure is the sociocultural approach. In this approach the Institution plays an important role in the society, so a student with a prestigious economic level will finish his/her studies with success. In contrast, students of a lower class are predestinated to the academic failure. Furthermore, the economic situation also affects the academic student life; it is common that a student with more sources has a better developing in school than a student who does not (Hernández, 2003).

The last variable to consider are the study habits. There are no enough studies focused on this topic, most of them are focused on the study environment, as the lack of a good environment and the overpopulation are considered conclusive causes of the academic failure (López, 1984). It should not be confused habits - constant practice of the same activities - with the techniques - methods or resources. On the one hand, the habit of studying is necessary if someone wants to progress in learning. On the other hand, students should take full advantage of the energy that requires a conscious and intensive studio practice through appropriate techniques (Pérez & Barberis, 2014).

Of course, there are cases that prove otherwise, but the lack of study habits and the unskillfulness in the elemental procedures of study increases the difficulties of the students (Solis, Bazán, Carillo, Esparza, & González, 1979).



2.3.1.1. The student parents

Parents are the ones that motivate children to strain studying. It is to remember that not only depends on teachers, parents also have to get involved in the academic life of their sons. The education begins from home, and parents have to educate with values and self-responsibility to make students dedicated and responsible of their own decisions.

Even when parental involvement continues to influence the performance and attitude of the student during high school (Pollard, 2004), in the case of university students, the parents do not have the same control over their children's academic life. In this stage, when the students have autonomy, it is common that a student fails a subject and does not inform their parents that has failed. Today, many universities are implementing programs to strengthen the relationship between university and family (UDLAP, 2014) (Pérez, Gadea, & Moreno, 2011), and there is greater participation in university life by parents, thanks to the availability of new media.

2.3.2. The teacher

The teacher has been and remains as a cornerstone in the education system. He/she must be in constant actualization on the pedagogic techniques and his/her own attitude to provide the student a good relation with the content imparted. The labor of the teachers affects day by day on their pupils; their work contributes greatly to the success or the academic failure of the student. This labor does not conclude when the classes finish, it goes beyond, the class is considered as an administrative



space created to organize the activities that promote learning (Valdez, 1989). The teacher has to give value to his/her own teaching activity and does not have to use the failing as a repression method (Chávez & Ramos, 1987).

"The qualities of teachers to present the subject clearly help to capture the interest, foment the reflection, the critical judgment of analysis and synthesis, to motivate the desire to learn; these are factors that positively or negatively influence the academic failure" (González, 1985).

Another issue, is the disposition and accessibility that a teacher has with his/her students, the strategy that the teacher uses to solve problems of academic failure. In this aspect, some students consider that teachers are not accessible, and in occasions they give more attention to students who have higher average and academic development than students who do not (Tapia, Tamez, & Tovar, 1994).

But, when we talk about academic failure, one of the main aspects to take into account is the teaching methodology. It is important that the teacher knows some pedagogic theories to establish a better teaching process that improves the student's achievement and in consequence decrease the academic failure (Lastra, Pastelón, & González, 1993). Likewise the teachers have a clear idea of what they want to teach and the goal of the course.

Regardless of the level of failing of the student, some techniques used by teachers like dictation, the excessive use of oral presentations and the type of



examples used, sometimes are disapproved by the students (Tapia, Tamez, & Tovar, 1994).

The teacher's preparation level also has an influence on the academic failure, it seems that the teacher's schooling is important only in certain subjects, although the post grade studies always have relevance in the curriculum, the lack of professionalism and pedagogic preparation also are causes of academic failure and low school achievement, despite the student efforts (Solis, Bazán, Carillo, Esparza, & González, 1979).

The evaluation is another factor that affects the academic failure, although it is established by the institution, the teacher is the one who interprets it (Camarena & Gómez, 1986). For a proper evaluation process, the teacher needs to establish certain criteria before starting his/her course. The teacher should make clear the evaluation procedure: if he/she will take into account the student's attendance, if he/she will evaluate for thematic units or with a final exam, if it will be considered class participation, the single work or presentations in teams. But as it was said, the evaluation is not only a factor established by the teacher, the institution has also responsibilities on it.

2.3.3. The institution

The school is the place where the teaching-learning process takes place, so an effective organization and correct running of the institution contributes on that



process too. Given the above, there are some characteristics from the institution that influence directly on the students' achievement.

On the students' academic life, it is important a special academic orientation and someone who monitors their academic performance; that person is the tutor. It is essential that a school has a tutoring program, and in this sense, creates procedures to facilitate the monitoring and support of students from admission until graduation (Vargas, Espinoza, & Núñez, 2013). The relation between the tutor and the student should constitute a social organization more accessible for the student. In the same way, the institution should contribute on the developing of these programs, facilitating places, schedules and providing competent teachers that give these tutorials (Ray & Álvarez, 1996).

The library is also another factor related to the academic failure. Specifically, the resources of the library, talking about the patrimony, it increases the difficulties for the students that want to read or do an investigation for their homework (Mendoza, Bazán, Carrillo, Esparza, & González, 1979). It is important that the institution has an extensive bibliographic information and wealth assortment of bibliographic cultural heritage to provide to more students the access to the information and, in this way, enable them for the preparation of exams or investigations which, in turn, achieve greater accreditation of a course (Morales, 1996).



2.4. Causes and consequences of failing a subject

Desertion, failure, low academic performance and repeating a course are considered as difficulties that become academic failure. In the process of learning, people face innumerable factors that affect their academic and personal development that could put at risk their permanence in a university institute.

2.4.1. Possible causes to fail subjects

There are many factors associated with the academic failure of university students (Zúñiga, 2008):

a) Personal Factors:

Low self-esteem or low perception of self-problem or esteem, the way of facing the demands, problems or personal disorders and the lack of goals.

b) Socio-economic Factors

Economic problems, influence of inadequate behavior patterns, influence of friends or partners' behavior.

c) Familiar Factors

Familiar disintegration, lack or poor communication between parents and children and / or siblings; a system of breeding so permissive or on the contrary inflexible.

d) Educational factors

Bad relation between teacher – student, negative relation between classmates (Bullying), repressive or strict educative systems.



When these factors are seen in an independent way, they could affect the performance and academic development of students in a greater or low intensity, depending on the strengths or resources of the students to face problems. But when it is integrated more than one of the previous factors, students could be in a risk situation to fail or desert (Universidad Autónoma de Baja California - Facultad de Pedagogía e Innovación Educativa, 2011).

Academic failure and desertion always have been part of the history of education institutions. According with Durán and Díaz (s.f), the Mexican education requires a transformation with a central core of a new vision through a new paradigm that impacts the education of students, where the personalized attention of students could help to decrease the failure rate and the academic straggling, decrease the rate of academic desertion and to improve the terminal efficiency (RIDE, 2013) (Durán & Díaz, n.d.).

2.4.2. Consequences of failing a subject in BUAP

In general numbers and as national average, for each 100 students that begin their degree studies, between fifty and sixty conclude all their subjects five years later, and just 20 of those get their degree (Díaz de Cossío, 1998). Moreover, approximately 25 of each 100 students that enroll in the university desert without studying the subjects of the first four-month period / semester (Chaín, 1999).

However, when a student fails a subject it has impact on his academic development and on his student life inside the university. For example, the Language



Faculty of the BUAP helps students with economic resources to travel to conventions, conferences, and a support to pay accommodation, meals and other expenses. But to be beneficiary with this help it is necessary to have no failed subjects (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla - Facultad de Lenguas, 2014). This could represent a problem to students because as it was seen, among 30% of students have failed a subject, so that students have no access to this economic support, and in consequence they could lose the opportunity to improve their knowledge with external information or simply do not attend to an important conference that could have a huge impact on his/her curriculum vitae.

Also the BUAP has an option to graduate by average, known as “automatic graduation”. This kind of graduation offered by the university results faster but more complicated than a graduation by thesis or professional exam. However, this graduation has two conditions; first the student is not allowed to fail a subject and second the student has to get at least an average of 8.5 (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2014). These conditions are similar to be candidate to a partial write off in the payment of enrollment and degree procedure. The university helps with a partial write off to students with high academic average; 33% of write off to students with 9.0 to 9.49, and 50 % of write off to students with 9.5 or more average (BUAP - Dirección de Administración Escolar, 2014), this support contemplates the payment of enrollment each four-month period and degree professional exam and social service procedures (BUAP - Secretaría General, 2014).



As a result, when a student fails a subject, the institution revokes him /her certain privileges. Moreover, a failed subject decreases the student's average, and this influences the students' enrollment schedule, and this could derive in the final schedule of the student, and in certain cases the student could lose the opportunity to request a scholarship.

2.5. The academic failure in the Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés of the BUAP

From 2009, the Faculty of Languages began to offer two B.A. focused on the teaching of languages. Both curriculum programs are divided into nine areas (Facultad de Lenguas - BUAP, 2014):

- Target Language
- Linguistic
- Investigation
- Teaching
- Culture
- University General Education
- Professional practice
- Integrative subjects
- Optional subjects

Focusing on the LEI program, the areas with more relevance during the career are the target language and linguistics areas, this in order to acquire the knowledge that the graduated student will teach as a professional. The issue is that some new students have the misconception that this career is just to learn English or being a translator, approaches that were the focus of the Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas (LEMO) program.



So that, many students fail in these areas and in consequence there are more failed students and dropouts. To study this phenomenon it is necessary to establish and explain some factors that will be considered during the next chapters.

2.5.1. Sistema Integral de Gestión Escolar (SIGE).

The Faculty of Languages has an internal control of data called Sistema Integral de Gestión Escolar (SIGE). On this system it can be found the personal student information, the subjects and teachers available on the four-month period, and the academic record obtained directly from the servers of the Dirección de Administración Escolar (DAE).

At the beginning of each four-month period, the system refreshes the data with the information from the DAE systems. Also the SIGE obtains the grades that the students got in the previous four-month period (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015).

2.5.2. Academic Failure Rate

The academic failure rate is the percentage obtained contrasting the number of failed students with the approved students in a four-month period. To calculate this rate it is necessary to select and count how many students failed at least one subject in the four-month period and the total number of students enrolled at the beginning of the four-month period. Failed students are all the ones who fail or dismiss a class and students who enrolled the subjects and do not attend to that one.



Chapter III - Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter the methodology used for this study is described. To develop the methodology, it was necessary having access to the information of the SIGE. Then an Excel book with graphs and data collected. At the same time, a questionnaire was developed to be applied to the students who have failed a subject in the LEI.

3.2. Research design

The principal method used in this methodology is the quantitative research, but also qualitative research is used too. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) Quantitative research is 'Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)'. Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Therefore, the quantitative approach is employed to analyze collected data from the multiple-choice questions of the survey; however, the qualitative approach is also used in order to explain open-ended questions.

When one examines and judges accomplishments and effectiveness, one is engaged in evaluation. When this examination of effectiveness is conducted systematically and empirically through careful data collection and thoughtful analysis, one is engaged in evaluation research (Quinn & Patton, 1990).



3.3. Participants.

During this research, according to the statistical formula for finite populations, 30 students participated in this study. They were current students in the Faculty of Languages of LEI and all of them were selected by asking if they had failed a subject.

In order to get a wide variety of participants, students from different generations were selected with the purpose of acquiring a wide point of view of the topic.

Gender and condition of student were not taken into account in this study. A confidential atmosphere was promoted by telling the students that their opinions would not be told to anyone else and to feel comfortable about what they expressed.

The total of subjects that have been failed since the first four-month of the MUM until the last period of Spring 2014, according to the Dirección de Planeación y Evaluación Académica and the Sistema Integral de Gestión Escolar (SIGE), is of 6858 failed scores (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015).

3.4. Data collection instruments

To collect the data, as it was explained, it is necessary the access to the data base of the SIGE at the DEPEA, the problem is that there is not a control of academic failure at the DEPEA, so first it is necessary to create a program where it can be shown all the subjects and how many students have failed, for this purpose, Excel is the appropriate program to this study. Also with that data it is possible to know the



academic failure rate, the academic failure behavior and the most failed subjects in every four-month period. Once developed and know the statistics of the academic failure of LEI, it is necessary to know the failed students' beliefs. For this study, the opinion and beliefs of 30 students from different generations were collected. They were asked about the implications of failing a subject and the reasons why they considered they failed a subject. In this survey, it was just selected the students who have failed a subject.

Once applied the research instruments the data were collected and analyzed separately. The first instrument was applied inside of the DEPEA and with the data obtained, some graphs were developed to illustrate the behavior of the academic failure, the total of failed students per subject, the total of students registered at the beginning of each four-month period, the most failed subjects and the global rate of each four-month period, and at the end a general percentage of failed students on the LEI.

The second instrument was analyzed capturing the data and creating graphs and short explanations about the most relevant answers that the students gave. The questionnaire applied was of eleven question where the students put their opinions and beliefs about why they had failed that/those subjects and how to decrease this phenomenon.

To do that, it will be applied a questionnaire to know the students beliefs about the reasons to fail a subject, and the consequences to fail. No survey can achieve success without a well-designed questionnaire. The design of a questionnaire will



depend on whether the researcher wishes to collect exploratory information or quantitative information (Crawford, 1997). For a questionnaire to be effective and give the information looked for, it is needed to design a survey that is easy to understand and easy to complete. For this, it was necessary to figure out what information is trying to gather from the survey. Then the questions were ordered in a way that was meaningful and easy to follow. Easy questions help encourage your participants to want to finish answering the rest of the questions (Frery, 2015).

The term 'survey' is commonly applied to a research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and typically utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument (Robson, 1993). Questionnaires are used to obtain data from individuals about themselves, their households, or about larger social institutions (school boards). They are widely accepted as a key tool for conducting and applying basic social science research methodology (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 1983). Regarding the concept of interviews such as "an important data gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the subject" (Mathers & Fox, 1998). According to Opdenakker, face-to-face interviews are the best interview technique in the field of qualitative research (Opdenakker & Raymond, 2006).

The results of both instruments are presented in the next chapter.



3.4.1. Questions

With a total number of main questions of eleven, the questionnaire was developed with the purpose of knowing the opinion of the students of the faculty about the academic failure.

The questionnaire contains also open, closed and mixed questions, trying to offer certain level of freedom to answer to the participants.

Questions were in Spanish to have understandable and clear answers. In addition, there were added open questions to get more information from the interviewees.

Characteristics

- The questionnaire has an introductory paragraph which let the participants know about the research purpose of the investigation and explain the survey answer commands.
- It goes from general questions to specific points
- It requires no more than 7-10 minutes to complete it.

3.5. Data analysis

The first step is collect and organize the data, for this, once obtained the access to the data base of the SIGE it is necessary to order the number of failed grades by subjects and by four-month periods. Once this is done, it is necessary to create a graph that shows the behavior of failure of each subject. When the most failed subjects are identified and the number of students who have failed a subject, these



are averaged with the number of students registered during the four-month period to obtain the global rate of academic failure of that period.

When the first methodology is completed, the next step is know the reason why the students fail a subject. Thus, applying a questionnaire to failed students it is possible to know their reasons of the reasons about the academic failure.

The size of the total population of the students of the Faculty of Languages, according to the Dirección de Planeación y Evaluación Académica and the Direction of the Faculty of Languages (SIGE), is 1456 members approximately, registered on the most recent four-month period; Spring 2015 (DEPEA Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, 2015). To obtain the sample, it was used the statistical formula for finite populations [Figure 3.1] (Morillas, 2015).

$$n = \frac{k^2 * p * q * N}{(e^2 * (N-1)) + k^2 * p * q}$$

Figure 3.1

Where:

n: is the sample size (number of surveys that it will do).

k: is a constant that depends on the level of confidence we assign. The confidence level indicates the probability that the results of our research are true. The value is determined by the Confidence interval formula (Kendall & Stuart, 1973), the most used are:



K	1.15	1.28	1.44	1.65	1.96	2	2.58
Confidence level	75%	80%	85%	90%	95%	95.5%	99%

Figure 3.2

p: is the proportion of individuals in the population that possess the property of study.

This data is usually unknown and is usually assumed that $p = q = 0.5$ which is the safest option.

q: is the proportion of individuals who do not have that feature, that is $1-p$.

N: is the size of the population or universe (total number of possible interviewees).

e: is the desired sampling error.

With a population of 1174, a confidence level of 90% (1.65), an error percentage of 15% (0.15), and the proportion of individuals **p** and **q** of 0.5; the result of **n** is 30 surveys that it will be applied. It was considered that value of error because the academic failure has different characteristics depending of every student (Feedback Networks Technologies, 2015).

3.5.1. A program to know of the number of failed students and most failed subjects

The DEPEA, through the SIGE, has the access to the whole information about the academic development of all students of the languages faculty. Unfortunately, this just shows the grades obtained by the students during the last four-month periods, there is no information about the number of failed students or subjects.



Therefore, to have a panorama of the level of academic Failure and know what it is facing, the first methodology is an observation and synthesis of the academic failure behavior on LEI

Firstly, the scores lists of whole students enrolled in the four-month period were exported to a laptop, for this it had to be downloaded the scores of the four-month periods from Autumn 2009 until Autumn 2014, excluding summers, then with the use of Excel it is counted all the students failed in a subject. Each archive had the whole qualifications gotten for all the student enrolled in the four-month period, with this it is counted just the failed scores per subjects offered, and this data was managed to obtain the total of students failed on each subject, this process will be repeated for all the four-month period to make a table. Finally, at the end of the table it is counted the number of active students enrolled at the beginning of the four-month period, this data is divided into generations to have a better control, and then they are summarized. Under that, it is summarized the number of students who failed a subject(s), and it is identified the most failed subject in each four-month period. With all of this to make a graphic about the behavior academic failure, and in this way have a clear notion of academic failure behavior on the career.

After all the data is calculated and organized, a better control is created, dividing the Excel book into three sheets; Reprobados (Failed Students), Datos (Data) and I. Global (Reproval Rate). In the first page, there is an interactive table; in which by typing the NRC Code of the wanted subjects it could display the name of the subject



and the number of failed students in all four-month period of LEI. In addition, it will be added a graph where the behavior of academic failure is shown across the time.

The second page is organized to contain all the data of whole subjects of LEI; NRC Codes, Name of the subjects, number of failed students in all four-month period per subject, total of students enrolled at the beginning of each four-month period divided into generations, total number of students that failed at least one subject in the four-month period, and number of students of the most failed subjects in each four-month period.

And the third page is designated to subsume the previous pages and shows a brief explanation about the behavior of academic failure with a graph that compares the global rates of all four-month period.

3.5.2. Students' reasons to fail a subject

Knowing the most failed subjects and the behavior of academic failure is just one part, the next step is know the reason that influence in their academic development, also if they know the consequences of failing a subject and their suggestions to reduce the number of failed students.

For this, the students were asked about the factors that influenced them during the course and in consequence they resulted in a failed score.



Chapter IV – Results

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter the results obtained are discussed and described. Firstly, the results of the program of academic failure control, where it was known the behavior numbers of the academic failure, the most failed subjects and the number of failed students. Also the answers to the open and closed questions are examined, details about the questions are explained for a brief analysis of the graphs. The data were collected and then processed in response to the problems posed in chapter 1 of this research.

4.2. Results

Two instruments were used in this thesis. The results are shown and described as follows. The first one is the data obtained from the DEPEA. The second one is the results from the survey applied to the failed students.

4.2.1. Results of the DEPEA data

As it was explained in the chapter three, the data were collected and synthesized on an Excel Book. This instrument was made in Spanish because it was developed and delivered to the DEPEA for internal control. The Excel book has three sheets called: *Reprobados* (Failed Students), *Datos* (Data) and *I. Global* (Failure Rate). On



first sheet, an interactive table was made, with typing the NRC of the subject, the graph and the values of the table changes, showing the behavior of the failure of each subject. Taking the example of Target Language I (Lengua Meta I), this subject is more offered on the four-month periods of Autumn and it is taken principally by new students, it can be seen that the number of failed students since 2009 has decreased until Autumn 2013, but the last four-month period the number increased [Figure 4.1].

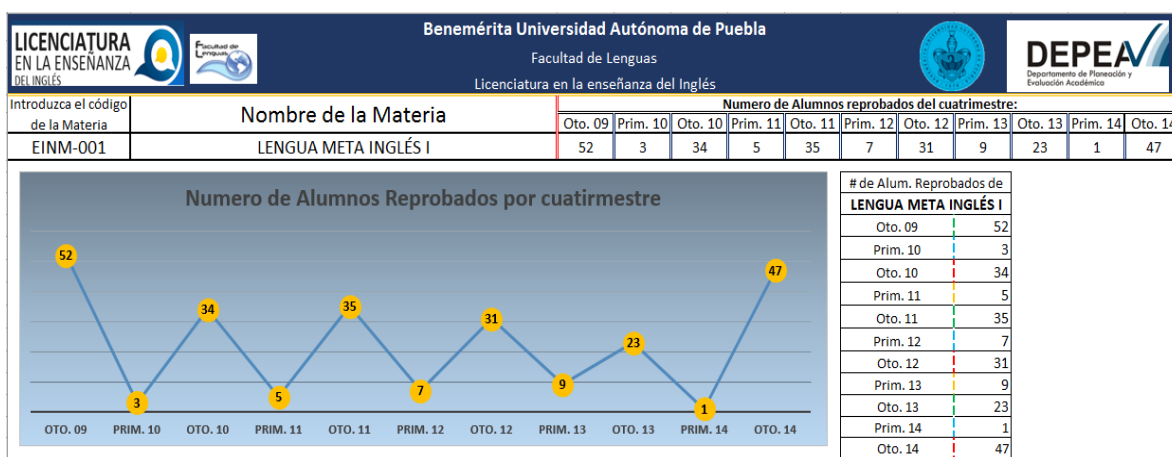


Figure 4.1

These numbers were obtained for the next sheet, *Datos*. On this sheet, all the data and number of failed students were organized per four-month period and by each subject offered in LEI. In table 4.1, the number of failed students are shown during the first four-month period, the six subjects that most of the new students take. As many students drop out their career, the number of failed students increases. The table shows the number of failed scores on that subject – number of failed students registered. Also, with a color scale it was indicated the level of failure; being color cream for the lowest values, yellow for the medium levels and red for the



highest levels. It is needed to take into account that one student could fail more than one subject per four-month period. On the four-month period of Autumn there was a considerable increase of new students failed, this is something that needs to be thoroughly investigated.



 		BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA Facultad de Lenguas Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés											
CODIGO DE LA MATERIA	NOMBRE DE LA MATERIA	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '09	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '10	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '10	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '11	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '11	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '12	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '12	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '13	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '13	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '14	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '14	
EINM-001	LENGUA META INGLÉS I	52	3	34	5	35	7	31	9	23	1	47	
EINM-010	TALLER INGLÉS I	33	1	32	4	35	3	37	3	32	5	46	
EINM-011	TALLER INGLÉS II	35		27	3	31	5	30	8	25	5	43	
EINM-009	REDACCIÓN ACADÉMICA	42		26		28		36		34		54	
FGUM-002	DESA. HABILID. DEL PENSAMIENTO COMPLEJO	34		19		28		30		32		39	
FGUM-003	DESA. HABILID. USO DE TEC. INFO. Y COMU.	40		25	3	43		50		45		68	

Table 4.1

The number of registered students at the beginning of the four-month period was considered too. As it can be appreciated on the table 4.2, the number of registered students was divided by generations and, according to the DEPEA data, it was added the number of students that failed a subject on that four-month period.

	Otoño '09	Primavera '10	Otoño '10	Primavera '11	Otoño '11	Primavera '12	Otoño '12	Primavera '13	Otoño '13	Primavera '14	Otoño '14
Alumnos registrados al iniciar el cuatrimestre	327	296	628	596	908	882	1170	1144	1303	1246	1456
Alumnos generación 2009	327	296	268	262	243	244	241	232	129	100	53
Alumnos generación 2010			360	334	314	309	295	295	274	268	184
Alumnos generación 2011					351	329	297	294	277	274	252
Alumnos generación 2012							337	323	295	294	289
Alumnos generación 2013									328	310	296
Alumnos generación 2014											382
Alumnos que reprobados alguna materia en el cuatrimestre	73	78	122	181	248	274	361	360	365	419	475

Table 4.2



With all those data, a table was developed where all the data of the previous sheet is summarized. On this table [Table 4.3], it can be compared the number of registered students at the beginning of the four-month period, the number of student that failed at least one subject, the name of the most failed subject and the global rate of each four-month period.

The academic failure rate is the percentage obtained contrasting the number of failed students with the approved students in a four-month period. To calculate this rate, it was necessary to select and the number of students that failed at least one subject in the four-month period and the total number of students enrolled at the beginning of the four-month period. It was considered failed students to all students who fail or dismiss a class and students who registered the subjects and do not attend to that one.

Every four-month period there is a subject that is the most failed. This information was obtained summarizing all the student's failed subjects and comparing with previous scores. This study showed that Phonetics and Phonology is the most failed subject appearing four times in the table 4.3 – it appears in the periods of spring 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2014.





  Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla Facultad de Lenguas Licenciatura en la enseñanza del Inglés  											
Cuatrimestre	Otoño 2009	Primavera 2010	Otoño 2010	Primavera 2011	Otoño 2011	Primavera 2012	Otoño 2012	Primavera 2013	Otoño 2013	Primavera 2014	Otoño 2014
Alumnos inscritos al inicio del cuatrimestre	327	296	628	596	908	882	1170	1144	1303	1246	1456
Alumnos que reprobaron alguna materia	73	78	122	181	248	274	361	360	365	419	475
Materia con mayor número de reprobados	Lengua Meta Inglés I	Fonética y Fonología	Lengua Meta Inglés I	Lengua Meta Inglés IV	Lengua Meta Inglés III	Fonética y Fonología	Adquisición del Lenguaje	Fonética y Fonología	Morfología y Sintaxis	Fonética Y Fonología	D.H.T.I.C.
Índice global de reprobación del cuatrimestre	22.32%	26.35%	19.43%	30.37%	27.31%	31.07%	30.85%	31.47%	28.01%	33.63%	32.62%

Table 4.3



In addition, it was added a graph [Graph 4.1] where it is shown the behavior of the academic failure of the LEI program since 2009. It can be seen that the academic failure increases every spring, and decreases every Autumn. Also, the graphic shows that the highest percentage of failure has been in Spring 2014 with a value of 33.63%. In numbers it is 419 failed students of 1246 students registered in the four-month period. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of academic was in Autumn 2010 with a value of 19.43%; this means that 122 students failed a subject of the 628 registered at the beginning of the four-month period. Calculating the average of academic failure of the career, the global rate of the LEI is 28.49%.



Graph 4.1

As it can be observed on the table 4.4, in the LEI program, 65 subjects are offered— counting the curricular subjects and optional subjects offered. Throughout the MUM plan, 6859 failed scores have been registered, this number is so high because one student could fail more than one subject per four-month period, furthermore in this case the dropout is taken into account, as an example; if a student



had enrolled and then he dropped out his career, or he/she just dropped the four-month period, in consequence he fails all the subjects he/she had enrolled.

Alumnos registrados en SIGE*	2117
Materias ofertadas en LEI	65
Total de notas reprobatorias desde 2009	6859
Alunos que han reprobado al menos 1 materia	1174
Porcentaje de alumnos reprobados en la LEI	55.46%

Table 4.4

The total number of registered students is different according to the SIGE, the reason is that there are extra registers of students that revalidated their studies from other institutions, so the total number increases to 2117. From that number 1174 students have failed at least one subject during the career, this represents the 55.46% of the enrollment. In other words, it means that more than a half of the students of LEI have failed at least one subject during their academic formation.

These results were just the beginning, to have a better panorama of academic failure it was applied a questionnaire to know the students' beliefs about this phenomenon.

4.2.2. Student's questionnaire results

As it was mentioned before in this chapter, the second research instrument was designed as a research instrument. This one is focused on the students' opinions and beliefs about academic failure.



Details of the results of the student's questionnaire can be found below, also graphs were developed to show the number of students that chose certain answers:

Number of failed subjects

According to the results obtained, most of the students failed 5 or more subjects. Followed by students that failed 1 subject. This reveals that most students have a very high number of failed subjects, this matches with the results obtained with the previous instrument, which shows that there are more than 6,000 failed scores and the number of failed students is around 1100. See Graph 4.2



Graph 4.2



Reasons to fail a subject

Many students state that the main reason to fail a subject is because they stop going to classes. The second most chosen option was because of personal reasons such as the following:

- Illness
- Their schedules were incompatible with taking classes at school and teaching experiences.
- Familiar problems
- Economic problems
- And the English level

Many students blame the teacher of failing them, others considered the tests too difficult to pass, a minority of students failed because the subject was not of their interest. One answer that should be highlighted is that some students see the option to fail a subject as a second chance to repeat the subject and learn more.

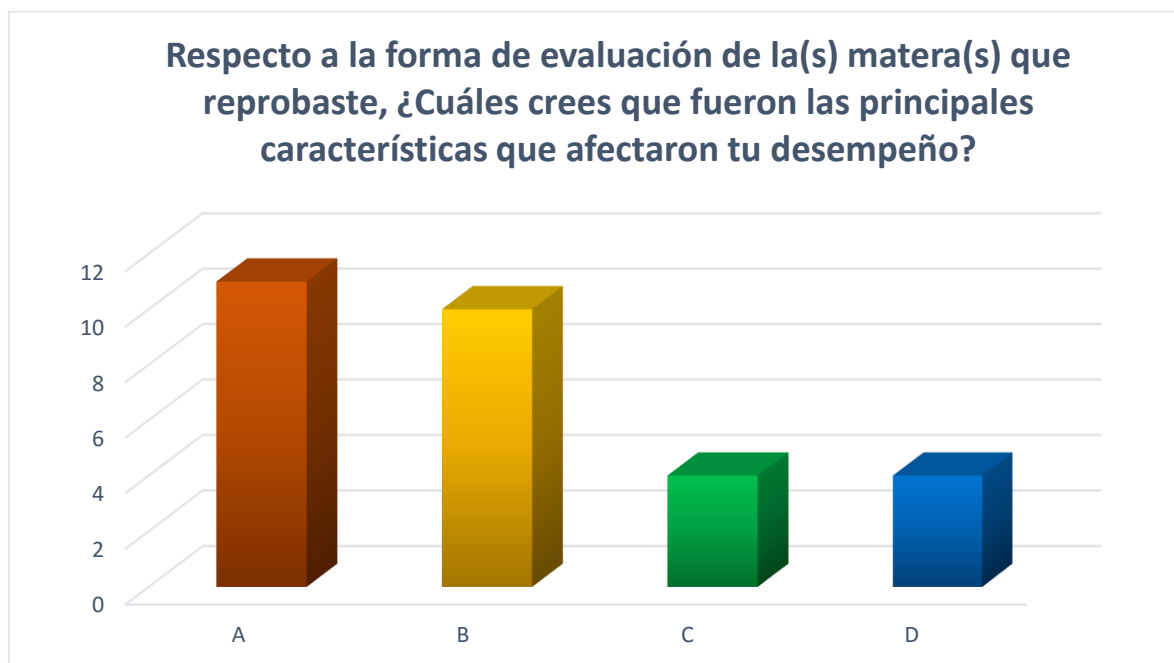


Graph 4.3



Evaluation criteria used in the subject

Students answered that the obligation to attend to the 80% of the sessions is their principal characteristic that affects their development. This coincides with the results of question 1a that shows that stop going to classes is their principal reason to fail the subject. See Graph 4.4



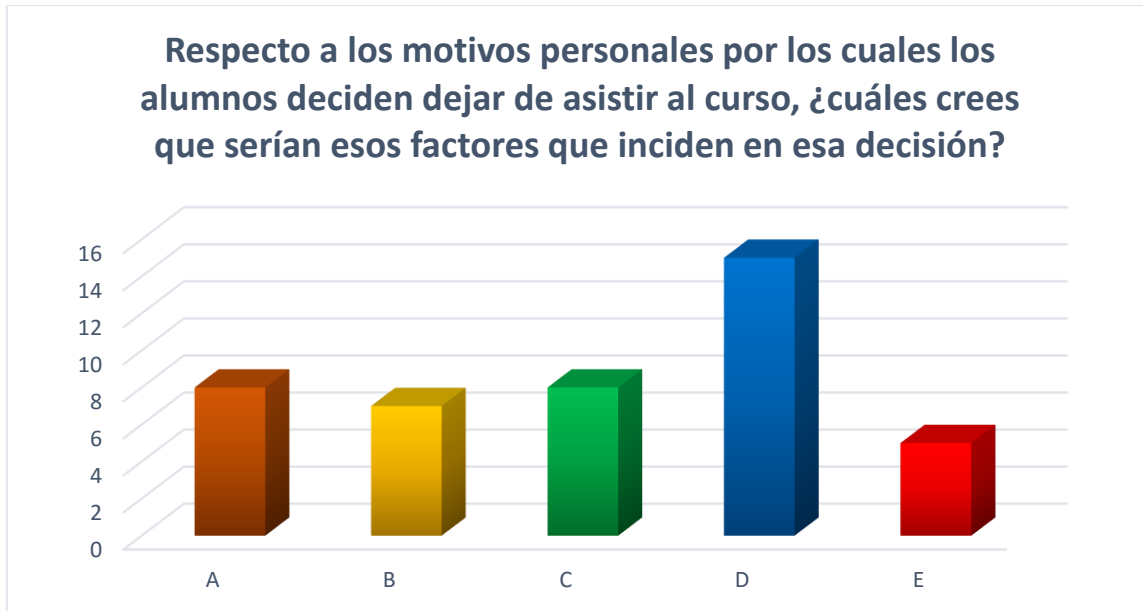
Graph 4.4

Reasons to stop going to classes

As students have the option to choose more than one letter. In graph 4.5, the results show that the principal reason to drop a course is because of the teacher. In the option E, students wrote some other factors that they consider important. Among



them, are considered the Teacher methodology, the lack of the professor information about the subjects and personal problems.



Graph 4.5

Actions taken to avoid failing a subject

In this open question the most common answers were:

- Study and strive more
- Ask for help to the teacher
- Drop a subject
- Attend to the last classes and evaluations

Most of the students opine that the solution to pass a subject when they are in risk to fail it, it is to make an effort in their studies; looking for help with other



classmates or studying by themselves. Certain students answered that when they are in troubles, it is necessary to talk with the teacher to ask for a special assignment, report or evaluation. These students often prefer to do it when they are really in a special situation, like problems with the schedules, work and health problems – pregnancy, surgery, illnesses. When they are on time, also the students drop the subject or even the whole course to avoid problem and for instance fail the subject. The last point refers to students who for any reason miss attendance to the classes and try to save the course attending to the last classes and/or doing the evaluations. Of course, this depends on the teacher and his/her evaluation criteria.

Institutional problems of failed 3 or more subject

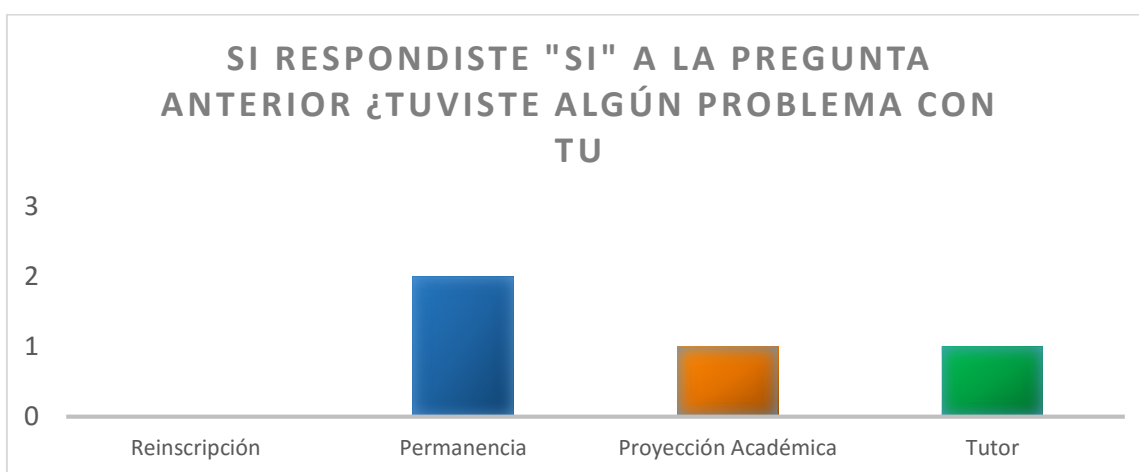
As we can see on the Graph 4.6, only one-eighth of the sample answered “yes” to that question.



Graph 4.6



From this, in the second part of the question required that students who answered “yes” on the first part marked if they presented some problems with the institution. As we can see on the graph 4.7, the main problems faced were with their permanence. On second place, there is a draw in the answers; one student had problems with his/her academic projection, the same number happened with problems the tutor.



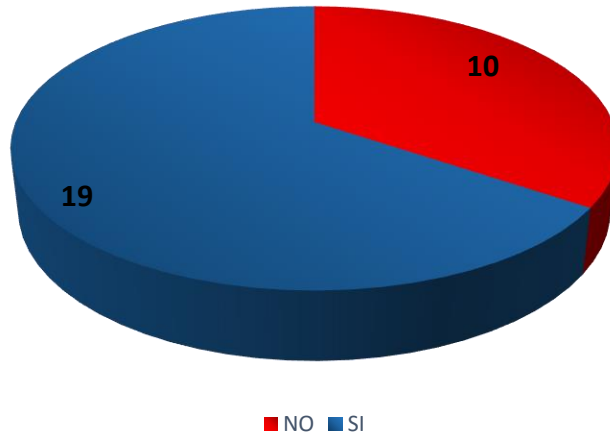
Graph 4.7

Knowing about the consequences of failing a subject

At least the two-third part of the interviewed sample know some consequences of failing a subject, but the rest does not know or does not care about the consequences. These consequences were reviewed in the chapter 2.



¿Conoces las consecuencias de reprobado una materia en la LEI?



Graph 4.8

This question also has a second part. In this open question, the students wrote the consequences that they have to face now that they have failed a subject. The principal consequence that the students know is the fact to defend a thesis, in other words, they lost the automatic graduation and as a result they have to look for another graduation option. Other repercussion that the students know is to lose economical supports - scholarships, payment condonations and support for congresses – that the institution and the government provide. Only a handful of students take into account the fact that failing a subject brings a decrease on the average and certain problems with the curricular program if the failed subject is prerequisite for other subjects.



The evaluation program of the SNIT in the BUAP

The evaluation program of another institution of higher public education was compared here. In Mexico, many institutes are incorporated to the Sistema Nacional de Institutos Tecnológicos (SNIT). On the rules, the student banned by all the institutions incorporated to the SNIT if they failed three times the same subject (SNIT, 2014).

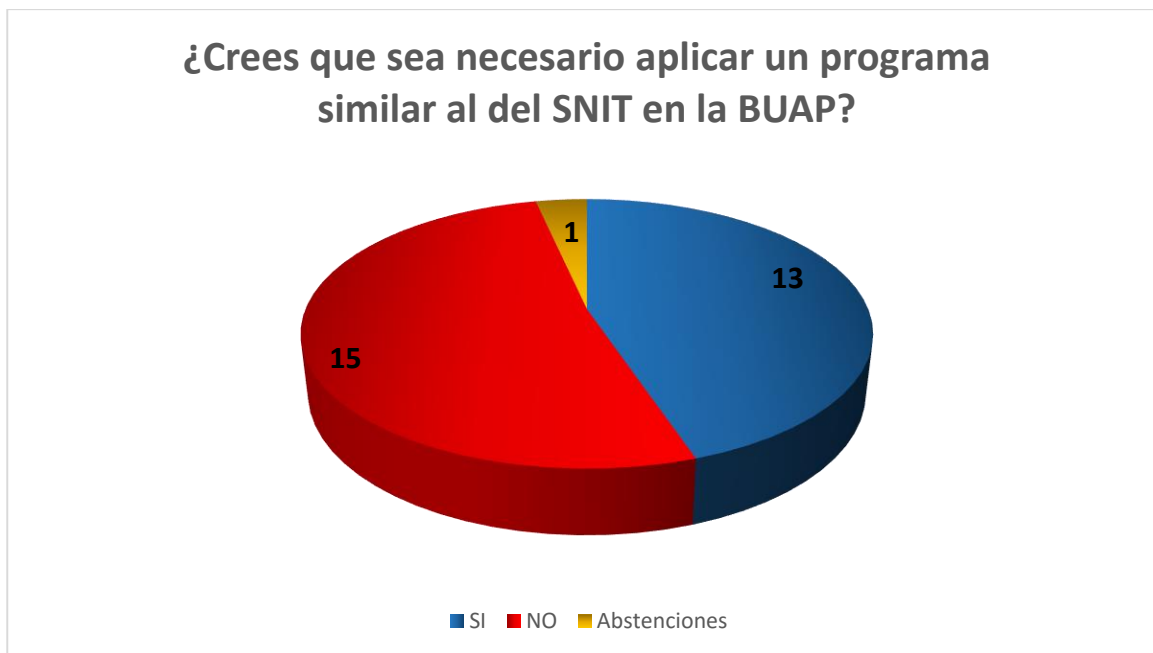
Most students do not consider this strict program a viable program to decrease the academic failure. The principal reasons are the fear to increase the desertion and the number of student that could leave the institution. Furthermore, the academic failure in LEI involves more than academic problems. Also, the students that answer “No” consider that most students do not necessarily fail a subject for lack of knowledge, and those students could be out of the university.

On the contrary, although it was not necessary to give the reason, some of the students that answered “Yes” emphasized the reason to give an affirmative response. The reasons given were to motivate and encourage students to make a bigger effort on their career and that the best student may be on the university, and to help students not to delay their degree. See graph 4.9.

Of course, this kind of program could be considered so strict, principally the part of being banned of all the institutions incorporated to that system. Being banned of the BUAP could represent a big problem to students with low incomes, and to



students that fail subjects for personal reasons, like health or socio-economic problems.



Graph 4.9

Suggestions to decrease the academic failure

Most suggestions were related to the teacher and the methodology, others to the institution and evaluation program and just a few students consider that they have the responsibility to decrease the academic failure. The most outstanding answer provided by the students are the following ones:

- Teachers more prepared on the topic imparted
- More support to students with personal difficulties
- More interest to the topic and content from the students



- Other forms/criteria of evaluation
- Extraordinary exam on all the subjects
- Do not count attendance on the evaluation criteria or decrease a little the minimum of attendance to pass
- Flexible schedules
- Tutorials or regularization courses.

It is interesting that most students consider that to decrease the academic failure is necessary with paying more attention to the content of the subjects and the teacher's knowledge of the topic. Also, some students answered that the teacher has to give more opportunities and supports to them when they have personal problems, like economical, familiar or health problems, as in previous questions one of the reasons that make students fail a subject was the personal factors. On the other hand, some students consider that they are responsible of failing or passing a subject, by attending on time to class, making more effort to deliver all the assignments, and self-learning to improve the knowledge.

At the same time, some students consider that the academic failure could decrease improving some institutional programs and the evaluation criteria. One of the answers was related to the extraordinary exams. The application of extraordinary exams depends sometimes on the teacher, but in subjects like Target Language there is no extraordinary exam. Sometimes when a student fails the subject for the evaluation criteria, not for the lack of knowledge of the topic, so an extraordinary exam is like a second and last chance to pass the subject. Also most students feel



that the necessity to attend to the 80% of the classes is one of the reasons to fail a subject, so some of them consider that the attendance does not have to be part of the evaluation, or at least this percentage has to be less.

At last, some students suggest that some tutorials or regularization courses could be useful to decrease this phenomenon. This option might be studied and evaluated to verify the effectivity of this program.



Chapter V - Conclusions

5.1. Introduction

The final chapter presents a final interpretation and discussion of the described results in Chapter 4 in reference to the students' beliefs about academic failure and the implications of failing a subject in the BUAP. The current chapter also provides some suggestions regarding to the questionnaire as well as some suggestions for future research in this area.

5.2. Findings and their significance

The academic failure behavior in LEI varies every four-month period. There are many reasons that influence this phenomenon, the first one is that some subjects are not always offered or are just offered in a specific period; the second one is that the subjects are not always offered by the same teachers, as seen in chapter 2, teachers are one factor that influences the academic failure.

As it was seen on the graphs of chapter 4, most failed subjects are from the areas of Target Language and Linguistics, with the exception of one subject from the University General Education Area. The included subjects are; Target Languages I, III and IV, Phonetic and Phonology, Language Acquisition, Morphology and Syntax and Skills Development of Information and Communication Technologies (DHTIC's in Spanish).



According with the data, there is an increase in the academic failure rate every Spring periods, on the other hand there is a decrease of it on every Autumn periods. It could be thought that on the four-month periods of Autumn the academic failure might increase due to the increase of student, but it is the opposite; during this period the academic failure decreases, one possible reason for this might be the motivation.

At the same time, the results from the SIGE show a high percentage of failed students, 55.46% that correspond to more than half of the total population of LEI nevertheless this number could be compared with percentages from other careers of BUAP to identify issues on curricular programs, principally from the same area, Humanistic and Social Studies.

Some of the conclusions that were reached on this study is that many students feel influenced by the teacher methodology, the curricular program and the rules, moreover the student is also influenced by personal factors like socio-economic problems and illness that affect their optimum development. It is to consider that sometimes when a student has these kinds of problems, he/she prefers to request for a temporal permission or fail all the four-month period.

It is possible to decrease the academic failure with programs that attack the root of this phenomenon, as tutorials programs and with teachers and students better prepared for the topics. Also with a better organized subject schedule and flexibility of it could make that the students do not have to drop out the course for absence or even for personal problems.



5.3. limitations of the research

This research is focused on the academic failure on LEI, its behavior and its reasons, but it is necessary to know more detailed the implications that involve the academic failure. As every student is different, he/she acts, thinks and behaves in a different way, and as there are many factors that influence in every aspect of academic failure, it is difficult to know the exact reasons to fail a subject.

Another limitation is that this study is only focused on one degree offered in the Faculty of Languages, one of the 25 faculties of the BUAP. So this study only shows the behavior on one degree, and this behavior may not be the same in another one of different area.

Also, as this study was not focused on drop out and does not have an instrument to measure it, some of the numbers presented on the results might vary if the scores of the college dropouts are not counted.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

As in the BUAP there is no an academic failure control, students do not care at all about the act of failing. Giving the fact that the only consequence that they know is related to the graduation method and the economic support from the faculty. While this may be true there are some other consequences that students do not take into account such as re-enrollment problems, national and institutional scholarships, international exchanges etc.



It is necessary a program to decrease the academic failure, the institutions like the technological institutes have a strict program that only permit the students to fail a subject twice, and until three times to pass an extraordinary exam (SNIT, 2014). Many students interviewed do not consider that this program could work in a public university like the BUAP for many reasons, the principal is that, as the survey showed, and many students fail for personal factors. But there is still a certain number of students that unfortunately do not care their studies and see the failure as an easy exit to their responsibilities as students. It is necessary to pay more attention to all the students who fail a subject. An option is that the tutors identify their students that have failed at least three subjects and help them, so they do not fail more subjects or giving them some support to encourage to study or even for them not to drop out.

An option given by the student on the survey was the implementation of tutorials and regularization courses. Of course this program has to be planned properly and evaluated to verify the effectiveness of it. A possible use of this program might be when a student fails a subject when he / she does not pass the exams, so the teacher could sent him / her to the regularization course to present an extraordinary exam an in the case pass the course.

Also, when a student feels that he / she will not be able to complete with all the course expectations or for any reason he / she does not feel comfortable with the subject or teacher, the student often drops the subject. So another possible option might be the extension of the period of time to drop a subject in the DAE.



All the possible solutions to decrease the phenomenon of academic failure have to be investigated and tested to guarantee an effective program that finally takes into account all these results provided by the students.

5.5. General Overview

To have a better idea about what failed students think and know about these results, it was applied a survey to them. Some of the conclusions that were reached on this study is that many students feel influenced by the teacher methodology, the curricular program and the rules, moreover the student is also influenced by personal factors like socio-economic problems and illness that affect their optimum development. It is to consider that sometimes when a student has these kinds of problems, he/she prefers to request for a temporal permission or fail all the four-month period.

Whatever was the reason why the students fail a subject, it is necessary to take into account all points of view to devise a plan to reduce this phenomenon that affects all schools and educational institutions at all levels. And although it cannot be eliminated entirely, it can be reduced until a considerable level and the academic failure can be seen as a symptom and not as a problem.



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Appendix 1



**Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
Facultad de Lenguas
Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés
Students' beliefs about the reasons to fail a subject on LEI Program of Facultad de Lenguas
at BUAP.**



El objetivo de este cuestionario es conocer la opinión de los alumnos de la LEI acerca de las razones por la cual han reprobado alguna materia del plan curricular y las acciones que hay que tomar para reducir este fenómeno.

Instrucciones: Lea las preguntas cuidadosamente y conteste como se indica. Conteste con honestidad.

Matricula: _____ Cuatrimestre: _____ Materia(s) Reprobada(s): _____

1.- ¿A lo largo de tu carrera cuántas materias has reprobado? [Marca con una X]

A) 1 Materia B) 2 Materias C) 3 Materias D) 4 Materias E) 5 o más Materias

1a.- ¿Cuáles son las razones por las cuales reprobaste esa(s) materia(s)?

a) Deje de asistir a clases.

b) No cumplí en tiempo y forma con los criterios de Evaluación.

c) No cumplí con el reglamento.

d) Razones personales. Explicar: _____

e) El profesor me reprobó. Explicar: _____

f) Otra: _____

2.- Respecto a la forma de evaluación de la(s) materia(s) que reprobaste, ¿Cuáles crees que fueron las principales características que afectaron tu desempeño?

a) La necesidad de asistir al 80% de sesiones de clase

b) La ambigüedad de los criterios usados por el profesor

c) La cantidad de trabajos/tareas solicitados por el profesor.

d) Otro: _____

3.- Respecto a los motivos personales por los cuales los alumnos deciden dejar de asistir al curso, ¿Cuáles crees que serían esos factores que inciden en esa decisión?

a) Factores Económicos

b) Decidía

c) El contenido de la materia resulto no ser de su interés

d) El profesor no les agrado

e) Otro: _____

4.- ¿Qué has hecho para evitar reprobado una materia?



5.- ¿Has reprobado una misma materia más de 3 veces? SI ___ No___

5a.- Si respondiste SI a la pregunta anterior ¿Tuviste algún problema con tu:

Reinscripción	SI ___ No___
Permanencia en la carrera	SI ___ No___
Proyección Académica	SI ___ No___
Tutor	SI ___ No___

6.- ¿Conoces las consecuencias de reprobado alguna materia en la LEI?

a) Si ___

b) No ___

6a.- En caso de contestar **SI** a la pregunta anterior ¿Cuáles son las consecuencias que conoces?

7.- En Instituciones de Educación Superior, como los incorporados al Sistema Nacional de Institutos Tecnológicos (SNIT), cuando un alumno reprueba una materia por segunda vez se presenta un examen extraordinario, de reprobado se presenta un segundo examen y en caso de reprobado este segundo examen se presenta un tercer y último examen de regularización en otra institución estatal del SNIT. De reprobado esta última oportunidad se procede a dar de baja definitiva al alumno y se le prohíbe la reinscripción en cualquier Institución del SNIT. ¿Crees que sea necesario un programa similar en la BUAP?

- Si ___

-No ___ ¿Porque?

8.- ¿Cuáles son tus sugerencias para la reducción del número de alumnos reprobados cada cuatrimestre?

a.- _____

b.- _____

c.- _____

d.- _____

Gracias por tu participación.



Appendix 2

CODIGO DE LA MATERIA	NOMBRE DE LA MATERIA	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos	Alumnos
		reprobados Oto. '09	reprobados Prim. '10	reprobados Oto. '10	reprobados Prim. '11	reprobados Oto. '11	reprobados Prim. '12	reprobados Oto. '12	reprobados Prim. '13	reprobados Oto. '13	reprobados Prim. '14	reprobados Oto. '14	
EINM-001	LENGUA META INGLÉS I	52	3	34	5	35	7	31	9	23	1	47	
EINM-010	TALLER INGLÉS I	33	1	32	4	35	3	37	3	32	5	46	
EINM-011	TALLER INGLÉS II	35		27	3	31	5	30	8	25	5	43	
EINM-009	REDACCIÓN ACADÉMICA	42		26		28		36		34		54	
FGUM-002	DESA. HABILID. DEL PENSAMIENTO COMPLEJO	34		19		28		30		32		39	
FGUM-003	DESA. HABILID. USO DE TEC. INFO. Y COMU.	40		25	3	43		50		45		68	
EINM-002	LENGUA META INGLÉS II		29		31		33	8	31	4	31	5	
EINM-005	TALLER INGLÉS III		18		35		29		34	6	25	13	
EINM-006	TALLER INGLÉS IV		20		20		34	4	55	14	36	15	
EINM-007	PEDAGOGÍA		30		32		44		42	8	46	8	
EINM-008	FONÉTICA Y FONOLOGÍA		37		50		62		83		65	10	
FGUM-001	FORMACIÓN HUMANA Y SOCIAL		26		15		24		31		46	3	
EINM-250	LENGUA META INGLÉS III		1	33	7	57	11	48	18	36	34	53	
EINM-252	TALLER INGLÉS V			9	2	14	8	23	19	40	22	32	
EINM-254	DIDÁCTICA GENERAL			20		29		39		48		41	
EINM-259	ADQUISICIÓN DEL LENGUAJE			28		46		66		52		36	
EINM-260	MORFOLOGÍA Y SINTAXIS			19	6	43	15	45	25	59	31	44	
EINM-251	LENGUA META INGLÉS IV			3	55	19	35	19	20	12	25	18	
EINM-255	MÉTODOS DE ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS			3	20	15	28	16	32	14	30	18	
EINM-256	DESARROLLO DE HABILIDADES			3	15	8	24	10	27	14	30	30	
EINM-261	PRAGMÁTICA				19		52		36	13	62	21	
EINM-253	LENGUA META INGLÉS V			5	5	16	6	27	29	33	22	10	
EINM-264	LITERATURA INGLESA I				1	32	10	33	17	23	22	24	
EINM-258	EVALUACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE					10		13	11	20	23	25	
EINM-257	TALLER DE MATERIALES				1	4	7	6	5	13	17	17	
IDEI-203	ANÁLISIS DEL DISCURSO					15		37		23	9	36	
EINM-262	METODOLOGÍA DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN						12		32	7	37	17	
EINM-265	LITERATURA INGLESA II					1	14	12	20	11	31	12	
IDEI-200	DISEÑO CURRICULAR						9	12	8	3	14	16	
IDEI-202	EXP. DOCENTE ADOL/ADULT						19		21	8	23	17	
EINM-263	SEMINARIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN I							28	2	34	10	35	
EINM-266	EVOLUCIÓN HISTÓRICA DE LA LENGUA INGLESA						4	13	6	30	14	21	
IDEI-201	EXP. DOCENTE NIÑOS							9		13	11	16	
IDEI-204	SEMINARIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN II PROY.							2	10	9	16	24	
EINM-600	TRADUCCIÓN Y TEORÍAS I			2	7		6	5	1	10	17	13	
EINM-601	TRADUCCIÓN-CIENTÍFICO TÉCNICA EN EL A. DE LA SAL.				1	6		4	3	6		12	
EINM-602	TRADUCCIÓN LITERARIA						6		10			2	
EINM-603	TRADUCCIÓN-CIENTÍFICO TÉCNICA EN EL A. DE LAS CS. EXAC.					4		3		6		9	
EINM-604	TRADUCCIÓN-CIENTÍFICO TÉCNICA EN EL A. SOC. Y ADMIN.						5	1	3		15	6	
EINM-605	TECNOLOGÍAS EN LA TRADUCCIÓN							3					
EINM-606	TRADUCCIÓN DE LA LITERATURA INFANTIL Y JUVENIL								1		3		
EINM-607	EVALUACIÓN DE LA TRADUCCIÓN								8				
EINM-608	REDACCIÓN ACADÉMICA AVANZADA			1	6		7	8	8	5	28	26	
EINM-609	GRAMÁTICA I						2		6	5	12	8	
EINM-610	GRAMÁTICA II							5	3	7	8	9	
EINM-611	ESPAÑOL DE MÉXICO						1		4		5	11	
EINM-612	LITERATURA MEXICANA							5	2	5	5	6	
EINM-614	SEMINARIO DE DIDÁCTICA DEL ESPAÑOL									5			
EINM-615	SEMINARIO DE CULTURA MEXICANA				3					6	2		
EINM-618	TECNOLOGÍA EN EL PROCESO A-E				1			6					
EINM-620	EL TEATRO COMO RECURSO DIDÁCTICO				1			5		9	7	2	
EINM-621	SEMINARIO DE TEMAS SELECTOS DE DOCENCIA								1				
EINM-622	SOCIOLINGÜÍSTICA						11		7		1	8	
EINM-623	SEMÁNTICA									7			
EINM-624	BILINGÜISMO								5				
EINM-625	INGLÉS HABLADO				2			2		2		6	
EINM-627	SEMINARIO DE TEMAS SELECTOS DE LINGÜÍSTICA						1		3				
EINM-628	DESA. HAB. LIN. EN INGLÉS A TRAVÉS DE LA ENSEÑANZA DE VAL.								1				
EINM-629	LECTOESCRITURA Y EL APRENDIZAJE DE LENGUAS							5		4			
EINM-630	TÉCNICAS DE ANIMACIÓN GRUPAL							2			2		
EINM-631	INGLÉS PARA NEGOCIOS									7	4	4	
EINM-632	SHAKESPEARE							1				3	



EINM-633	CULTURA DE LOS PUEBLOS DE HABLA INGLESA							2		3		2
EINM-634	SEMINARIO DE TEMAS SELECTOS DE LENGUA META									3		
EINM-635	SEMINARIO DE TEMAS SELECTOS DE CULTURA INGLESA											
CODIGO DE LA MATERIA	NOMBRE DE LA MATERIA	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '09	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '10	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '10	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '11	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '11	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '12	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '12	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '13	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '13	Alumnos reprobados Prim. '14	Alumnos reprobados Oto. '14
Alumnos registrados al iniciar el cuatrimestre		327	296	628	596	908	882	1170	1144	1303	1246	1456
	Alumnos generación 2009	327	296	268	262	243	244	241	232	129	100	53
	Alumnos generación 2010			360	334	314	309	295	295	274	268	184
	Alumnos generación 2011					351	329	297	294	277	274	252
	Alumnos generación 2012							337	323	295	294	289
	Alumnos generación 2013									328	310	296
	Alumnos generación 2014											382
Alumnos que reprobados alguna materia en el cuatrimestre		73	78	122	181	248	274	361	360	365	419	475
Mayor numero de alumnos reprobados en una materia		52	37	34	55	57	62	66	83	59	65	68

