



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

A thesis submitted to the School of Languages for the Degree of
LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Presented by:

GERARDO SÁNCHEZ VALDEZ

Thesis Director:

PH.D. NANCY SUSAN KERANEN



Puebla, Puebla.

May, 2015

**STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING SPANISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE**

This Thesis has been read by the members of the thesis committee of

Gerardo Sanchez Valdez

And is considered worthy of approval in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLES

Thesis director

Ph D. Nancy S. Keranen

Committee Member

Committee Member

Mtra. Guadalupe Salazar Blanco

Mtro. José Cesar Aquino García

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to understand the students' perspectives about teaching Spanish as a foreign language. This study was carried out at a public university in a faculty of modern languages which has an English language teaching program. The study is focused specifically on Spanish for foreigners' optional courses.

This thesis first analyzed statistical data given by LEI coordination. In a second stage questionnaires answered by students who are taking or had taken Spanish for foreigners' optional courses are presented in order to support the research questions related to their opinions. At the end of the process the information is evaluated, and results show us students' perspectives. Also, to know about some other perspectives on the same area that other students had when they took Spanish for foreigners' optional courses. Did they have the same perspective I had or different ones? This study set out to examine this factor.

The findings also included comments from participants when they were taking optional courses and their interest in teaching the Spanish language. Finally, the results and implications are described within this thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all those people who made this thesis possible and an unforgettable experience for me. It is with our deepest gratitude and warmest affection. It's my fortune to gratefully acknowledge the support of some special individuals. This journey would not have been possible without the support of God, professors, mentors, my family, my friends and participants. There are no proper words to convey my deep gratitude and respect.

First and foremost, I want to thank Almighty God for giving me strength and ability to understand, learn and complete this thesis research.

At this moment of accomplishment, I pay homage to my thesis director, Ph. D. Nancy Susan Keranen; under her guidance and encouragement I successfully overcame many difficulties and learned a lot, for her understanding, wisdom, patience, enthusiasm, and she was there for pushing me farther than I thought I could go. Words fail me to express my appreciation to her support.

I would like to give special thanks to my dissertation committee. I owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Maria Guadalupe Salazar Blanco, for her valuable advice in this work, spending her time to read this thesis and gave me her valuable suggestions. To Professor Jose Cesar Aquino Garcia, I thank him for his untiring support, guidance and careful attention to detail. Thank you all. It was a pleasure working with you all, and without your guidance and persistent help this dissertation would not have been possible.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the BUAP Languages Faculty for letting me fulfill my dream of being a student here. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor Roberto Criollo Avendaño, Principal of the college. In addition, I take this opportunity to sincerely acknowledge to LEI Coordination Department, Professor Marisol Guzman Cova, for

providing me the records necessary to carry out this research. Also, I thank all of professors whom I took classes over the last four years for showing me what it means to be dedicated, each in their own unique way. All of them have given me of your time, energy, and expertise. In addition, all people in different departments such as the library, and so on.

Immeasurable appreciation and deepest thankfulness to my family, parents, siblings and relatives, my mother Rosa, my father Juan, my siblings Juan Carlos, Oscar Arturo, Hector Javier, David Alberto, Areli, Joel and their families, for your unceasing encouragement, support, and give me the opportunity for education. They were who raised me with a love of wisdom and supported me in all my pursuits. I always knew that you believed in me and wanted the best for me. Thank you for teaching me that my job in life was to learn, to be happy, and to know and understand myself; only then I could know and understand others.

My time at BUAP was made enjoyable in large part due to the many friends that became a part of my life, and in order to ignore someone I wrote just the their first letter such as K, E, L, D, C, V, N, S, A, P, M, J, Y, F, S, T, H, B, G, I, R (some are repeated more than once). Also, a few people like brothers. Thanks for your help and lived time together.

It is a pleasure to express my thanks to all respondents from questionnaire for sparing their time to participate, and I deeply appreciate their helpfulness and willingness in providing the useful information for this study.

Last but not least, I would like to offer my sense of gratitude to one and all who, directly or indirectly, have lent helping hand in the successful completion of this project.

DEDICATIONS

This thesis work is dedicated to God,
my family, parents, siblings and relatives
who have been a constant
source of support and encouragement during the challenges of graduate
school and life. They have always loved me
unconditionally and whose good examples have taught me
to work hard for everything that I aspire to achieve!

I am truly thankful for having you in my life!

This work is also dedicated to my professors who always help me unconditionally!

To my friends who became like brothers and a part of my life!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedications	vi
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.0 Chapter Introduction	1
1.1 Study Justification	1
1.2 Study Significance	2
1.3 Research Context	2
1.4 Background of the researcher	3
1.5 Research Location	3
1.6 Study Aims	4
1.7 Research questions	4
1.8 Chapter summary and overview of thesis document	4
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.0 Introduction	5
2.1 Teaching Language	6
2.1.1 English language teaching	8
2.1.2 Spanish language teaching	9
2.1.3 Spanish Language for foreigners	9
2.2 SLT courses	10
2.2.1 The role of the teacher	10
2.2.2 Non-native English Speaking Teachers.	11
2.3 National context SLT	11
2.4 Language learning motivation	13
2.4.1 Motivational orientations	14
2.4.2 Attitudes in the students	15
2.5 Beliefs in language teaching and learning	15
2.5.1 The nature and origin of beliefs	16
2.6 Perspectives on Language Learning and Teaching	18
2.6.1 Definition and description on perspectives in language	19
2.7 Needs Analysis	19
2.7.1 Analysis needs: Classification	20
2.7.2 Expressing needs by learners	20
2.8 Conclusions	21
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	
3.0 Chapter introduction	22
3.1 Study participants	22
3.2 Study instruments	22
3.2.1 Structured record review	23
3.2.2 Questionnaires	23

3.3	Data collection procedures	23
3.4	Chapter conclusion	24
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS		
4.0	Introduction	25
4.1	Research questions	25
4.2	Results	25
4.3	Results from the structured record review for First and Second Research Questions	26
4.3.1	Results for First Research Question	26
4.3.2	Results for Second Research Question	30
4.4	Results from the questionnaire	30
4.4.1	Results for Third Research Question	30
4.4.2	Results for Fourth Research Question	43
4.5	Conclusion	47
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS		
5.0	Chapter overview	49
5.1	Findings and significance	50
5.2	Answers to the research questions	50
5.3	Research aims	52
5.3.1	Achievement of the research aims	52
5.4	The reflective account	53
5.5	Limitations of the research	55
5.6	Suggestions for further research	56
5.7	Conclusions	57
	References	58
 Appendices		
	Appendix A: Student's questionnaire	61

List of tables

4.1	Number of students who took each optional course area in spring and fall 2013.	28
-----	--	----

List of figures

4.1	Number of students who took optional courses areas in 2013.	29
4.2	Number of students who took optional courses area in 2013 in percentage.	29
4.3	Students' opinion about useful on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> .	31
4.4	Students' opinion about efficiency on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> in percentages.	31
4.5	Students' opinion about sufficiency on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> .	32
4.6	Students' opinion about sufficiency on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> in percentages.	33
4.7	Students' opinions about fundamentals for future spanish language teachers.	33
4.8	Students' opinions about fundamentals for future spanish language teachers in percentage.	34
4.9	<i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> help students to follow studying this area.	35
4.10	<i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> help students to follow studying this area in percentage.	35
4.11	Students' opinion on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> program and its design.	36
4.12	Students' opinion on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> program and its design in percentages.	36
4.13	Students' awareness on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> order.	37
4.14	Students' awareness on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> order in percentage.	38
4.15	Students' opinionon <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> programming.	38
4.16	Students' opinionon <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses</i> programming in percentage.	39
4.17	Students' opinion on <i>Spanish for foreigners' additional optional courses</i> .	40
4.18	Students' opinionon <i>Spanish for foreigners' additional optional courses</i> programming in percentage.	40
4.19	Students' awareness on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses and translation</i> diploma.	41

4.20	Students' awareness on <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional courses and translation diploma</i> in percentage.	41
4.21	Students' opinion on adding or removing any <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional course</i> .	42
4.22	Students' opinion on adding or removing any <i>Spanish for foreigners' optional course</i> in percentage.	43
4.23	Students' opinion on following studying Teaching Spanish as a foreign Language.	44
4.24	Students' opinion on following studying Teaching Spanish as a foreign Language in percentage.	44
4.25	Students' awareness on Teaching Spanish language schools.	45
4.26	Students' awareness on Teaching Spanish language schools in percentage.	45
4.27	Students' opinion on places where to teach <i>Spanish as foreign language</i> .	46
4.28	Students' opinion on places where to teach <i>Spanish as foreign language</i> in percentage.	46

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Introduction

A lot of students studying in higher education programs have their core subjects and a selection of optional subjects. Even before taking their optional subjects there are needs to be considered. Although they do not have to deal with planning their optional subjects, they have to be sure the subjects they are interested in. Then they need to request their optional subjects to the faculty in order to have the subjects offered for students. They may even think about optional courses which might have something to do with their majors such as linguistics or teaching and so on.

The situation continues when they take the optional classes. What happens in the students' choice depends on the characteristics of their needs. Students are more demanding in terms of the area. The student needs undeniably that the offering might be requested based on their expectations. Spanish language teaching for foreigners is quite different. Students sometimes do not have clear learning expectations. They want to complete the program to get a general idea.

Spanish Language Teaching can sometimes be more challenging for teachers working with foreigners because the topic is so hard for students.

This study tries to understand the students' perspectives about teaching Spanish as a foreign language. The study is focused specifically on Spanish language teaching for foreigners.

1.1 Study Justification

There are several reasons for this study. The first is based on my personal experience. When I was taking optional classes about Spanish language teaching for foreigners' area, I became conscious that I had a lot of interest in that. Since that moment,

I was convinced about the research that I was going to carry out. After that experience I became very interested in knowing about some other perspectives about the same area that other students had when they took Spanish for foreigners' courses. Did they have the same perspective I had or different ones? This study set out to examine this factor.

1.2 Study Significance

This study is needed because it is important to realize about available knowledge areas. This is especially true when teaching Spanish as Foreign Language. Knowing the different optional subjects which are offered in order to complete the program can help us understand what is likely to have a clear idea to get a specialization or simply how students can deal with the various areas.

Knowing about Spanish for foreigners is an excellent field to work. This study could also be useful for future teachers who are interested in teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language because they will know more about how they can visualize how Spanish language teaching could be. It is also useful students to understand the importance of teaching Spanish as a foreign language. Also, for knowing how students and teachers perceive Spanish for foreigners' area and knowing students' perspectives for teaching Spanish.

1.3 Research Context

This study fits into the wider context of teaching in several areas. The first theoretical area is teaching Spanish as a foreign language (SFL). There are many theories about teaching foreign language and teaching Spanish language teaching. Teaching foreigners Spanish also has its unique challenges and a lot of researchers have examined the special qualities of language instruction and foreigners.

And finally the study is about students and teachers. The characteristics of both form part of the framework to understand this study better.

1.4 Background of the researcher

At the time of this study I was a student in an English language teacher preparation program. My interest in the topic came because of Spanish Language Teaching Optional subjects. My classes were various. I had a lot of interests on Spanish Language Teaching area. Those perspectives were about courses. Because of these perspectives I was interested in investigating more about this topic. I wanted to know what students' perspectives about Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language. I also wanted to know how those perspectives take place to choose that area.

1.5 Research Location

The research location was primarily in a faculty of modern languages in a large Mexican university. At the time of the study the faculty had an English language teaching program. Also, taking account mainly the Spanish Language Teaching for foreigners optional subjects area. Students have to take as a requirement five established courses to get an internal diploma related to this area.

The methodological approach for the study was based on quantitative data collection approaches. A structured record review was made in the faculty. The analysis involved some students in training in the faculty as they took the classes. A questionnaire was also used to ask about their perspectives. Also the previous register in order to know the enrollment records was included.

1.6 Study Aims

This study had three aims. The first one was to identify what percentage of the students took the optional courses. The second aim was to identify how many students in the research site were interested in teaching Spanish in other countries and in the national context. The third and last one was to identify how many students in the research site were interested in teaching Spanish in other countries or in Mexico.

1.7 Research questions

The study had four research questions which guided the data collection and analysis.

RQ 1 How many students took optional courses in 2013?

RQ 2 How many students took courses in the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program in the year 2013?

RQ3 What are the students' opinions on Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program?

RQ4 How many students in the Spanish for foreigners' area want to teach Spanish in other countries or in Mexico?

1.8 Chapter summary and overview of thesis document

This chapter introduced the thesis study. The justification and the significance for the study were described. Then the participants, the location and I provided some information about me as the researcher. The overall topic of the thesis was to discuss the importance of knowing the students' perspectives for teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language.

The next chapter presents the review of the literature and the theoretical framework of the study specifically Spanish as a Foreign Language. This chapter is followed by the study methodology chapter, Chapter Three. Next the results are presented which is followed by the conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER II – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview concerning to the significance of Spanish language and its current status in the national system. Focusing on the approaches and methods in Spanish Language Teaching (SLT), different conceptions of curriculum are provided.

Nowadays Spanish language has taken an important place because it is one of the most spoken languages around the world. For this reason, it is important for many non-Spanish speakers to learn Spanish as a foreign language (FL). At university level, it is important that students have significant Spanish learning which can be used successfully in their daily lives, mainly in their professional lives. There is an area especially for Spanish for foreigners. This area is useful in language education for encouraging and consolidating learning. Both teachers and students should be aware that developing language skills is improved through practice.

Because of this importance of the Spanish language, this study explores teachers' and students' beliefs about Spanish language teaching as a foreign language. So to appreciate this study better, this chapter will discuss a number of background and theoretical issues related to the study. The literature review is divided into sections. First, I illustrate some information about curriculum including English language teaching. Second, I present some definitions and important aspects of theories of language and learning. Third, I also take into account Spanish as a foreign language (SFL). Likewise, I include some points about Spanish language learning for foreigners. Additionally, I provide some information about SLT courses such as the role of the teacher, the national context SLT. Also, I present information about language learning motivation, beliefs in

language teaching and learning, and perspectives on language learning and teaching. Finally, I provide information in relation to needs analysis.

2.1 Teaching Language

A main aspect that is closely related to this research project and that is presented through this section to help comprehend this study better is *language teaching programs* such as English and Spanish. These concepts are linked and they are relevant to understand certain parts of this project.

Spanish language program is related to how to teach a language. It is the framework to follow and it also contains the syllabus, methods, and the characteristics for each level. Also, it is related to the Curriculum Framework as a Program. It is the document that assembles the philosophical principles, foundations and focus of each study program, from basic level to the highest level. This document presents an integrated vision of a program's curriculum, and it includes the content of optional courses. It is a general document that serves as the reference frame for the curriculum design. It delineates in general terms the curriculum principles offered at each level and it outlines the theoretical foundations which support it. The curriculum viewed from an educational department's perspective consists of three dimensions:

- a) The content to be developed, which includes, in great measure, concepts and skills in the materials used;
- b) The methodology or methods, strategies and techniques of teaching that are developed and delivered in the context of modern theories of learning; and,
- c) The process of learning and assessment, which is outlined in the cognitive, humanistic and sociological theories of learning, as in recent neuroscience

findings. The latter positions the student as the center and constructor of knowledge.

(Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo curricular)

The term curriculum has no single exact definition which ultimately leads to emergence of some interpretations from different experts. “The curriculum field is by no means clear; as a discipline of study and as a field of practice, curriculum lacks clean boundaries...” (Olivia, 2001). While some experts define the concept of curriculum as subjects or subject matters, the others define it as experiences that a learner has under the guidance of the school.

Ornstein and Hunkins (2004, p. 45) provide five different definitions for the concept of curriculum which can be listed as follows: i) A curriculum can be defined as a plan for action or a written document that includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends. ii) A curriculum can be defined broadly as dealing with experiences of the learner. iii) Curriculum can be considered as a system for dealing with people and the processes or the organization of personnel and procedures to implement that system. iv) Curriculum can be viewed as a field of study. Also, v) curriculum can be considered in terms of subject matter or content.

Tanner and Tanner (1980, p. 108) on the other hand, define curriculum as “The cumulative tradition of organized knowledge, modes of thought, race experience, guided experience, planned learning environment, cognitive/affective content and progress, an instructional plan, instructional ends or outcomes, and a technological system of production”. A different approach to defining curriculum was taken by Gagné (1987) who wove together subject matter, the statement of ends, sequencing of content,

and pre-assessment of entry skills required of students when they begin the study of content.

There is also a group of educators who regard curriculum as a production system. To illustrate, Bobbitt (1923) defines curriculum as the series of things which children and youth must do and experience by way of developing ability to do the things well that make the affairs of adult life.

2.1.1 English language teaching

Teaching a foreign language is a practice that is currently acquiring a considerable importance nowadays due to the fact that, in this case English language can be used in every part of the world to communicate among people of different backgrounds. However, the ways in which the English language is taught varies from country to country, and from person to person.

English language teaching has a History which includes the English language origins and facts. The teaching of modern vernacular languages began in England towards the end of the middle ages when French died out as the second language of the kingdom and English was spoken again as a national language (Howatt, 1991). It explains how English got an important place as a language.

Also, the materials and resources used in those first ages were really useful how until now Howatt (1991, p. 6) says:

The first textbooks designed solely to teach English as a foreign language did not appear until the late sixteenth century after the arrival of large numbers of French Huguenot refugees in the 1570's and 1580's, but there are signs of an interest in learning the language among members of the mercantile community on the other side of the channel, particularly in Flanders, well before this.

It is possible to mention that there was a huge interest to learn any language. There were other signs of a growing interest in learning English in the early sixteen century (Howatt, 1991).

2.1.2 Spanish language teaching

Spanish is the most popular second language learned by native speakers of English. From the last decades of the 20th century, the study of Spanish as a foreign language has grown significantly, in part because of the growing populations and economies of many Spanish-speaking countries, and the growing international tourism in these countries.

Considering some aspects how the Spanish language origins Penny (2002, p. 3) says:

The history of Spanish is conceived as an account of the ‘internal’ development of the language, a discussion of the way in which its phonology, its morphosyntax, its vocabulary and the meanings of its words have evolved, and the reasons for these developments (insofar as they can be established).

Spanish is a member of the Indo-European family of languages, whose earliest reconstructible ancestor was spoken approximately 5,000 years ago in the area of Black Sea (Penny, 2002).

2.1.3 Spanish language for foreigners

This language teaching field is focused on Spanish language for speakers of other languages. It is especially aimed at non-native speakers from countries where Spanish is spoken. The Spanish language teaching for foreigners is a huge area to study in order to research.

2.2 SLT courses

This section follows on from the previous with a discussion of teaching Spanish to speakers of other languages and particularly focuses on the teacher of Spanish.

2.2.1 The role of the teacher

Teachers play an important role in the life of all the humans because they are one of the transmitters of human knowledge. To be most effective a positive attitude is needed because if she or he has a negative attitude when teaching classes, this could cause students to reject the particular subject matter. For example, there are many students who feel very frustrated and they do not want to learn English anymore because of their past bad experiences.

Thus, teachers play a crucial role in helping students develop the competencies in whatever they are learning. They are responsible for planning learning and evaluation situations that are complex and meaningful. They ensure that students use and reuse language, the processes, strategies and resources necessary for the development of competencies in varied situations. Teachers guide and support students' learning and the development of their competencies. Edge (1993, p. 74) says "Teachers success can be measured most obviously by how much their students learn." It implies that teachers have an important role in learning. However there are many other influential factors. For example, I consider that the lack of students' exposure to the real use of the target language has a significant impact in the foreign language learning process. Sometimes this situation can occur because the teacher is not a native speaker of the language they are trying to teach. While many teachers are able to master the foreign language, many others may struggle. When talking about foreign language teachers, then, it is relevant to discuss the situation of the non-native language teacher.

2.2.2 Non-native Speaking Teachers

Considering what I have just said about a non-native teacher we should also take into account that the influences that the teacher has, is also very important. Thus, another aspect that is really important is that of being a native or non-native teacher. Braine (1999, p. 136) gives a description of the differences found in his research of what a native speaker and a non-native speaker do when teaching.

Generally speaking, native language speaking teachers are informal, fluent, and accurate, use different techniques, methods, approaches, flexible, use conversational English, know the tangles of the language, use authentic English, and provide positive feedback. Non-native speaking teachers, rely on textbooks materials; apply differences between L1 and L2, use L1 as a medium, are aware of negative transfer, sensitive to the needs of students, more efficient in knowing students' backgrounds and the exam preparation.

I think this discussion is relevant to the study presented in this thesis for several reasons. The most important to me is that as a Spanish speaker, I have trained to be an English and German teacher. While I feel comfortable in those roles, I feel that if I could teach Spanish— my native language— with my knowledge and ability in teaching other languages, I could really help students to learn my language. This idea has been one of the central motivators for my studying SLT and for carrying out this project.

2.3 National context SLT

As the Spanish language gains importance, the more it becomes crucial to teach and learn the language more effectively. Because of this situation, Spanish language learning and teaching plays an important role in Mexican education program. It is an

obvious fact that, most young adults are exposed to Spanish in some way or another throughout their education.

In the national context there are a number of SLT programs. The most important is probably the CEPE UNAM – *Centro de Enseñanza para Extranjeros*. This program was founded in 1921 as part of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. Its mission was and is to teach the Spanish language and the culture of Mexico to people from other language groups and cultures. The school has campuses in Mexico, the United States and Canada. The school offers a variety of programs from intensive courses, certification in the language, cultural excursions, and special courses and diploma programs. Intensive courses are six weeks long and regular courses are 15 weeks and are open to foreigners as well as Mexican citizens.

In addition, a Google search for Spanish language courses in Mexico brings up a list of private language courses and Spanish medium universities. It is clear from this brief discussion that there are opportunities for SLT teachers both in the national context and in other countries. However, for most students the desire to learn another language comes from some sort of motivation. That motivation may be because they are interested in some aspect of the language like the music or some aspect of the culture. They might want to travel to a country where that language is spoken. Or as in the case of this study, language learners may want to become teachers of a language they feel is important – either to help others learn it or to find meaningful or rewarding jobs. Whatever the reason for learning a language *motivation* is a concept that underlies all learning. Because of the importance of this concept it is briefly discussed in the following section in relation to language learning.

2.4 Language learning motivation

According to Brown (1994, p.7) learning is “acquiring or getting knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience, or instruction”. It is important to mention that students have all kinds of reasons to want to learn another language. Those reasons are because of a good experience with some teachers in the past, the usage of different materials applied in class or activities proposed. Also, some students may feel that it is an excellent opportunity to travel abroad and earn more money. All of these are examples of being motivated.

Many studies have shown that motivation is classified in two levels and those levels are depending on students’ perceptions. Those levels are *goal oriented motivation* and *core motivation* (Louligiene & Metiuniene, 2006). Students’ motivation falls within a combination of those levels and influences. The interest of many is in becoming professionals in the language and for those reasons they prefer to study the major offered in the research site (see 1.5).

Motivation at the goal level is also closely associated with attitudes, previous motivation and how they were oriented or guided in order to take this program to study; while the core motivation is more psychologically focused because it describes the affect, the desire and the intensity to the language. There is a difference between them, and it is that motivation of the goal is more external like communication needs and orientation of others; on the other hand, the core motivation is reflected more in the interior and this motivation requires your own decision to study or not to study this major.

According to the study of Gardner, Louligiene and Metiuniene, (2006, p.1) they mentioned that motivation is considered as a goal-directed immediate goal because it shows the individual work and they mentioned that motivation is defined as “the extent to

which the individual works to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction and the experience in this activity”. In summary, motivation, in the case of this study, is reflected in a person’s own decisions, goals, purposes and experiences that are to learn and after teaching a language.

2.4.1 Motivational orientations

With the purpose of knowing more about those goals and so on, Louligiene and Metiuniene (2006) analyzed Gardner’s motivation components saying that he identified two different main orientations to learn a language and those orientations differ between our own will of learning and the need of learning. All of those components are referred as *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation.

Based on Louligiene and Metiuniene (2006), the integrative orientation is focused on the real will of learning the language because it is associated with the student’s own desires to learn a new language, wanting to know more on new cultural environments and the relationships between the target language and the first language.

On the other hand, the instrumental orientation is more utilitarian because is more intra-personal. For instance, a student who has not experienced the relationship in the outer world but this student before mentioned has taken language classes in their country but they are motivated as well because of how those teachers teach the language; although they are not native English speakers. Their primary goals to prefer to study a language are more oriented towards an external reward such as getting a good job or good grades. As it was mentioned before, both orientations have their advantages and disadvantages; for instance the integrative orientation is a characteristic of people who are very sociable but also for people who have had experiences with the language. If they have relatives in the foreign country, they could have the contact or communication with

foreign country native speakers. However, in the instrumental orientation it is usually a characteristic of people who are not very sociable but also for students who have been taking courses. In conclusion, both types of orientations are important and a student could learn with whatever motivation they have or both but both of them might lead to success or cause problems in the future.

2.4.2 Attitudes in the students

Another point very important that needs consideration in motivation is attitudes in students. Attitudes are considered what a student individually likes or dislikes about something. In this case, the variables that could be taken into consideration are the teacher, materials such as visual aids and the textbooks and the environment. Louligiene and Metiuniene (2006) quoted Gardner and concluded that attitudes of the learner can influence the learner's core orientation and the learner's more instrumental orientation as well. This is true, because it implements the desire and will of learning a new language and to be more motivated as well in order to become a language teacher.

Motivation is considered to be a factor that leads to do actions that are related with our likes and dislikes. Additionally, being motivated leads students to prefer this major to study and continue with Spanish language teaching. Previous studies have shown that motivation of students depend on attitudes, skills, experiences, needs, communication with others, orientations, expectations, interests, and conditions including students' goals.

2.5 Beliefs in language teaching and learning

As it was mentioned previously, students need to have different ideas when they choose the extended or additional area to study. The motivation was considered the first part of the reasons that students have in their goals but also another main important reason to students are what they think and believe to do and to gain. These are the beliefs,

and these could include skills and future plans, but this problem is not associated with necessities. It is reflected with improvement in the language including speaking fluency and speed, very well-corrected grammar, know new vocabulary, teaching methodologies and so on. As it was quoted before by Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005, p.1) “in the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring with them to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and the ultimate process”.

According to Lindsay (2000, p.7), teaching might be defined as “showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge and causing to know or understand....guiding and facilitating learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the conditions for learning”.

2.5.1 The nature and origin of beliefs

As it was mentioned before, beliefs are considered to be of the knowledge and learning acquisition of a second language but it is referred with psychological aspects of cognition of senses. I mean, the acquisition of a second language reflects what you believe to improve or what you expect to overcome. Borg (2001) claims a belief is a mental state which has as its content a proposition that is accepted as true by the individual holding it although the individual may recognize that alternative beliefs may held by others.

Some authors describe expectations as beliefs or perspectives. According to Clark and Peterson (Pajares, 1992) teachers’ perspectives are a combination of beliefs, intentions, interpretations, and behavior that interact continually.

In cognitive psychology, that is the science that studies the cognition among humans and what they perceive in the future, learners’ beliefs about the nature of

knowledge and learning have been a part of the metacognition. They said that beliefs about language learning are part of metacognitive knowledge which include that all individuals are cognitive about themselves including goals and needs.

Learner aptitude, motivation and personality reflect the use of learning of a second language and improve the probabilities to believe in choosing this major to study. Wenden (2001, p.2) defined metacognitive knowledge as “a system of related ideas, some accepted without question and other validated by experience”. In other words, it is the relationship between what the people already know and how they self-direct their learning. For instance, some students prefer this career with the purpose to know more about their second language learning, to improve, to complete ideas, to overcome or to be better in the language but also they expect to be more qualified to help others.

Therefore, Pajares (1992) states that students’ beliefs and attitudes can and should become an important focus of educational inquiry but that this will require clear conceptualizations, careful examination of key assumptions, consistent understandings and adherence to precise meanings, and proper assessment and investigation of specific beliefs.

Studies have also shown that learner beliefs about language learning are specific context like learning grammar, new vocabulary, improving listening, speaking or writing skills, and so on. This approach maintains that students’ learning beliefs consist of having a better and more effective learning than their previous studies, so that is why many students chose this major to study in order to learn more or something new than previous courses.

Another aspect to consider is the metacognitive approach. This is related with personal knowledge, task knowledge and strategy knowledge. Goh (1997) revealed that

adult learners, for example, have a high metacognitive awareness and they are more conscious in their improvement. In sum, this approach is more related when the learners become aware of their learning styles, strategies and beliefs to improve their learning process in different contexts.

Beliefs are considered a very important part of the learners' reasons when learning a second language and the acquisition of a second language. Also, beliefs consist of different types of approaches and that those are related to the learners' perceptions and the different opinions that those learners are going to develop during the whole course. In my own words, I think beliefs are a very good advantage to reaching goals and also to have motivation to continue studying.

2.6 Perspectives on Language Learning and Teaching

As it was mentioned in the previous section, beliefs in learning a second language involve the students' perspectives in learning a foreign or second language. Perspectives are more or less the same as beliefs but the main difference between them is that beliefs are more related with the broader and general conception in the desires of learning a second language including approaches and interests. Perspectives are considered with psychological descriptions of the learners or students including which type of style and learning the students have. This section explains in detail this concept.

Learning is different among different individuals, with different methods, and surely it will be different if this learning takes place somewhere different from the place where the target language is spoken (Gebhard, 2000). It may have a big disadvantage because the input students receive is the only one they hear from their teachers.

2.6.1 Definition and description on perspectives in language

Perspective is defined as an outlook to the future. It is probable choice associated with future plans and probable successful accomplishments. In education of an additional language, the perspective or the direction to the future could be the improvement of language learning and also the application of the language as a kind of promise to society for teaching to new people who want to learn the language – in this case Spanish. Reid (1987) describes a brief and detailed conception about those perspectives with students and when students have the perception of learning another language, they are related with skills or styles of learning.

Perspectives are also considered to be part of newcomers' reasons to this faculty of languages. It was seen and observed in this section that perspectives are different from beliefs. Beliefs are related with wanting and they include relationship and experiences in certain time while perspectives are related with styles, skills and abilities of the learners

2.7 Needs Analysis

As it was concluded in the previous section, beliefs and perspectives are so much related and they tend to go together with needs. According to Berwick (1989, p. 52) a need is a “gap or a measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desire future state”. In other words, a need is what we tend to overcome or to get in order to survive in the future; for example, money. When we decide to learn a foreign language, we choose to study it because of several reasons such as traveling, working abroad, being more qualified in our studies.

As it was mentioned, needs are meant to be described as future desires and discrepancies. In the case of language learners, the future desires or needs are related with the study and development or improvement of a new language different than their L1.

Bowler and Parminter (2002, p.75) define needs analysis as “the logical starting point for the development of a language program which is responsive to the learner and learning needs”. In this case, needs analysis is related to how the students are connected with the program objectives.

2.7.1 Analysis needs: Classification

We have seen that needs analysis are very important when choosing a major in English and that the learners are sharing a variety of interests and needs. Nunan (1988, p.33) classified needs under two headings: *objective* and *subjective* needs. The first ones are related with the basis of the personal data of the learners and also teacher can select or plan a proper syllabus. In addition, those objectives are focused just in improving classroom features. The second ones are derived from the learners themselves and influence the teaching methodology of the syllabus. They are the learners’ perceptions, goals and priorities.

2.9.2 Expressing needs by learners

It was observed and analyzed before that the motivations of learners of a new language are located in different needs and that those needs reflect the purposes of learning another language. Alshumaimeri (2001) states that the aim of needs analysis of foreign language learning is to determine why a particular group of learners want to use the target language.

In light of this discussion so far then, in order to understand students’ actions, beliefs, perceptions and needs regarding the selection of additional study in SLT as part of their ELT language program, it is necessary to understand the theories behind these various constructs. Thus, the discussion presented here has attempted to create a

theoretical framework for understanding the methodological design of the study presented in this thesis.

2.10 Conclusions

This chapter provided the theoretical information associate with the topic and aims of this study. Relevant information was presented about teaching and learning English and Spanish language, perspectives, beliefs, needs and so on. These concepts are essential to clarify the purpose of this research.

In the following chapter, I will present the research methodology that I used in order to get data to answer the research questions for this research. I explain what I did step by step such as the participants, instruments and the data analysis.

CHAPTER III – RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 Chapter introduction

This study was about students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language. In this chapter I describe the research methodology. For this research it was necessary to ask students from a public university who were studying English language teaching. This chapter describes the participants and the procedures that were followed to obtain the results in order to answer the research questions.

3.1 Study participants

The study was carried out in the language faculty of a large Mexican public university. The students were enrolled in an undergraduate English language teaching program. The participants of this research were 70 students, 16 males and 54 females, and their ages ranged from 19 to 26 years old. All the participants have taken or were taking Spanish for foreigners' optional courses.

3.2 Study instruments

For this research, a questionnaire (Appendix A) was designed and a structured record review was carried out. The structured record review was used for my first and second research questions. The questionnaire was used to answer third and fourth research questions. For this reason, it was divided into two parts. The first part was intended to answer the third research question and had five multiple choice statement items and five closed-ended question items, and the second part was intended to answer the fourth one and had three yes/no question items. The questionnaire elicited some information on Spanish language teaching, the criteria followed for selecting optional courses, and the most common chosen. It consisted of 13 items written in Spanish:

multiple choice statement items and closed-ended question items. Participants were asked to express their opinions about the different issues involved.

3.2.1 Structured record review

A structured record review is a research instrument consisting of specific information providing certain statistical features, numbers, and percentages for the purpose of gathering information from those sources.

3.2.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. It has many advantages over some other types of surveys in that they are cheap, do not require as much effort from the questioner as verbal or telephone surveys, and often have standardized answers that make it simple to compile data. Also questionnaires have many problems relating to question construction and wording that exist in other types of opinion polls.

3.3 Data collection procedures

Once the instrument was finalized, it was administered to all 70 participants at different dates and schedules. The questionnaire was administered during the optional course sessions. Thus, it was necessary to ask the teachers who were giving these courses for permission for time before administering the questionnaire. In the case, teachers who were not teaching these classes, the administration of questionnaire was carried out during subjects' free-time. Participants answered the questionnaires and they were collected. Afterwards, the instrument was scored and the results were then analyzed and some conclusions drawn on students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language were made.

3.4 Chapter conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the research methodology of this study, explain the sample selection, describe the procedure used in designing the instrument and collecting the data, and provide an explanation of the statistical procedures used to analyze the data. The results are shown in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV - RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter I will present the findings from the instruments. As seen, in the previous chapter, I gave an explanation of them and the participants, and also the procedure description associated with the research methodology that I applied to collect data to provide an answer for each one of my research questions that were established in the previous chapter. Then, in order to show the results, I will illustrate and describe the data in graphs.

4.1 Research questions

The research questions are shown below since all the data with which they will be answered is presented in this chapter.

RQ1 How many students took optional courses in 2013?

RQ2 How many students took courses in the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program in the year 2013?

RQ3 What are the students' opinions on Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program?

RQ4 How many students on Spanish for foreigners' area want to teach Spanish in other countries or in Mexico?

4.2 Results

As it was explained in Chapter III, in order to answer my research questions, I used two instruments: the structured record review and a questionnaire. The structured record review was used for my first and second research questions. The questionnaire was used to answer third and fourth research questions, for that reason it was divided into two parts. The first part was intended to answer the third research question, and the

second part was intended to answer the fourth one. The results are presented below according to the research questions.

4.3. Results from the structured record review for First and Second Research

Questions

Firstly, these data were provided by the LEI coordination. The results obtained from the structured record review will be described. All the results are shown in tables and graphs: bar charts and pie charts using figures for representing them.

4.3.1. Results for First Research Question

For this first research question it is very important to take into account the whole optional program (see Table 4.1 below). There are six different areas about optional courses which students can take, and each optional course area has a set of subjects such as:

- **Traducción** (*Traducción y Teorías I, Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Área de la Salud, Traducción Literaria, Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Área de Ciencias Exactas, Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Área Sociales y Administrativas, Tecnologías en la Traducción, Traducción de la Literatura Infantil y Juvenil and Evaluación de la Traducción*).
- **Español para extranjeros** (*Redacción Académica Avanzada, Gramática I, Gramática II, Español de México, Literatura Mexicana, Seminario de Literatura Iberoamericana, Seminario de Didáctica del Español, Seminario de Cultura Mexicana, Fonética y Fonología del Español, and Pintores Mexicanos*).
- **Docencia** (*El teatro como Recurso Didáctico, Tecnología en el proceso A-E, Seminario de Temas Selectos de Docencia, Planeación Estratégica (Análisis FODA)*).
- **Lingüística** (*Inglés Hablado, Sociolingüística, Semántica, Bilingüismo, Seminario de Temas Selectos de Lingüística, Psicolingüística*), *Lengua Meta (Lectoescritura y el*

Aprendizaje de Lenguas, Desarrollo de Habilidades Lingüísticas en Inglés a través de la Enseñanza de Valores, Técnicas de Animación Grupal, Inglés para Negocios, Seminario de Temas Selectos de Lengua Meta), and

- **Cultura** (*Cultura de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa, Shakespeare, Seminario de Temas Selectos de Cultura Inglesa*).

The findings about the first research question (*How many students took optional courses in 2013?*) were the following:

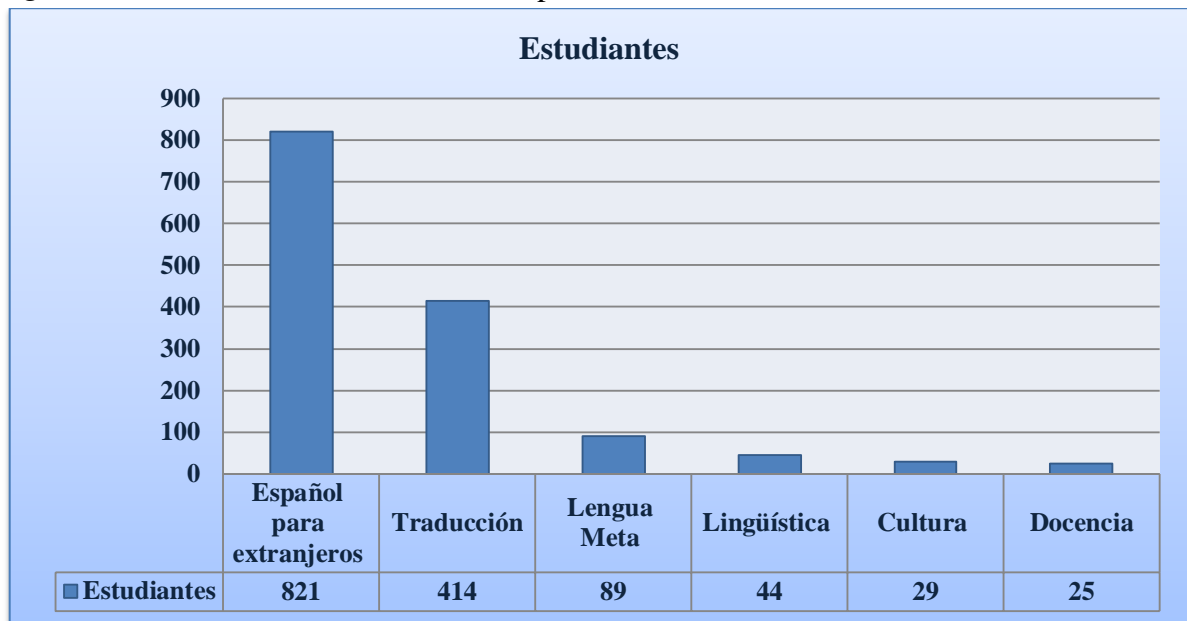
Table. 4.1 Number of students who took each optional course area in spring and fall 2013. Extended information.

Table. 4.1 Number of students per optional course taken in Spring and Fall 2013	
Área de Traducción	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 600 Traducción y Teorías I	103
2 EINM 601 Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Área de la Salud	56
3 EINM 602 Traducción Literaria	58
4 EINM 603 Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Area de Ciencias Exactas	60
5 EINM 604 Traducción-Científico Técnica en el Area Sociales y Administrativas	61
6 EINM 605 Tecnologías en la Traducción	28
7 EINM 606 Traducción de la Literatura Infantil y Juvenil	28
8 EINM 607 Evaluación de la Traducción	20
Total	414
Área de Español para Extranjeros	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 608 Redacción Académica Avanzada	143
2 EINM 609 Gramática I	193
3 EINM 610 Gramática II	137
4 EINM 611 Español de México	155
5 EINM 612 Literatura Mexicana	90
6 EINM 613 Seminario de Literatura Iberoamericana	0
7 EINM 614 Seminario de Didáctica del Español	20
8 EINM 615 Seminario de Cultura Mexicana	63
9 EINM 616 Fonética y Fonología del Español	0
10 EINM 617 Pintores Mexicanos	20
Total	821
Área de Docencia	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 620 El teatro como Recurso Didáctico	25
2 EINM 618 Tecnología en el proceso A-E	0
3 EINM 621 Seminario de Temas Selectos de Docencia	0
4 EINM 619 Planeación Estratégica (Análisis FODA)	0
Total	25
Área de Lingüística	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 625 Inglés Hablado	25
2 EINM 622 Sociolingüística	5
3 EINM 623 Semántica	14
4 EINM 624 Bilingüismo	0
5 EINM 627 Seminario de Temas Selectos de Lingüística	0
6 EINM 626 Psicolingüística	0
Total	44
Área de Lengua Meta	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 629 Lectoescritura y el Aprendizaje de Lenguas	19
2 EINM 628 Desarrollo de Habilidades Lingüísticas en Inglés a través de la Enseñanza de Valores	4
3 EINM 630 Técnicas de Animación Grupal	28
4 EINM 631 Inglés para Negocios	38
5 EINM 634 Seminario de Temas Selectos de Lengua Meta	
Total	89
Área de Cultura	Número de estudiantes
1 EINM 633 Cultura de los Pueblos de Habla Inglesa	29
2 EINM 632 Shakespeare	0
3 EINM 635 Seminario de Temas Selectos de Cultura Inglesa	0
Total	29

SOURCE: LEI Coordination.

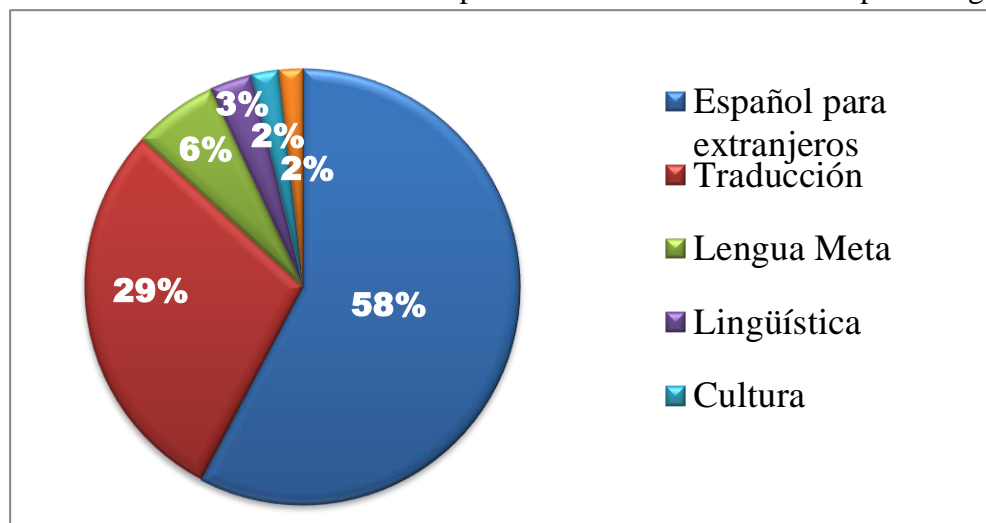
As shown Fig. 4.1 and Fig. 4.2, 414 students took “Translation area” that represents 29%. Most students took Spanish for foreigners’ area (58%); 25 students took Teaching area and 29 students took Culture area; it represents 2% each (see Fig. 4.1 and 4.2 below). Also, 89 students took Target Language area – 6% (see Fig. 4.1 and 4.2 below), and 44 students took “Linguistic area” 3% (see Fig. 4.1 and 4.2 below).

Figure. 4.1 Number of students who took optional courses areas in 2013.



SOURCE: LEI Coordination.

Figure 4.2 Number of students who took optional courses area in 2013 in percentage.



SOURCE: LEI Coordination.

4.3.2. Results for Second Research Question

The findings about the second research question (*How many students took courses in the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program in the year 2013?*) were very interesting.

This research question was focused only on the Spanish for foreigners' area. In Fig. 4.1 above it can be observed the following results: Most students took Spanish for foreigners' area; 821 students took this optional courses area that represents a percentage of 58 (see 4.2 above).

4.4. Results from the questionnaire

In order to answer third and fourth research questions I used one instrument which was a questionnaire. This questionnaire was the support I used to answer all of those research questions. So, the questionnaire items from 1 to 10 were related to *Spanish for foreigners' courses program*. Items from 11 to 13 were related to *Teaching Spanish as a foreign language*. All the results are shown in Graphs: bar charts and pie charts using figures for representing them.

4.4.1. Results for Third Research Question

The findings about the third research question (*What are the students' opinions on Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program?*) were very interesting. For this research question, the questionnaire had five multiple choice statement items and five closed-ended question items. The first item was intended to know the students' opinions if Spanish for foreigners' optional courses are useful for their academic training. Fig. 4.3 below shows that the option "Strongly agree" was chosen by ten students and this represents 14% (see Fig. 4.4 below). The option "Agree" was selected by 49 students which correspond to 70% while eleven students chose the option "Disagree" that

represents 16% (see Fig. 4.4below). The option “Strongly disagree” was not chosen by students. Then, as it can be seen, most of the students agreed that Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses are useful for their academic training.

Figure 4.3 Students’ opinion about useful on *Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses*.

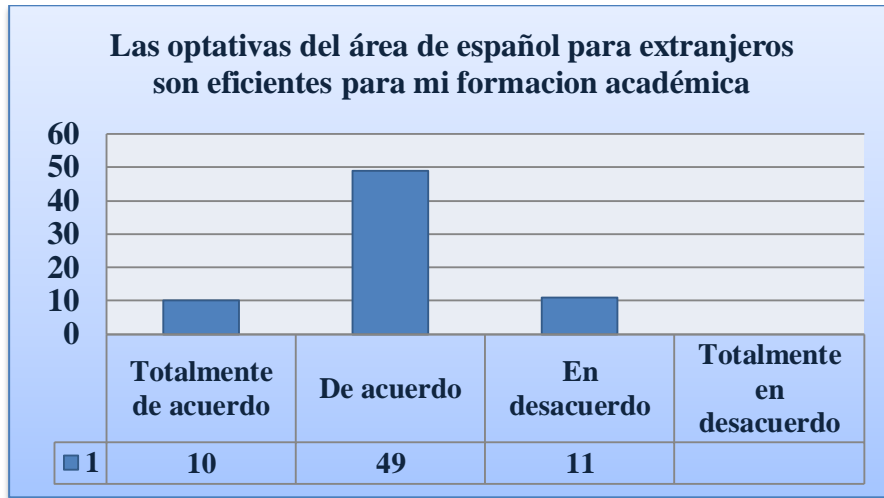
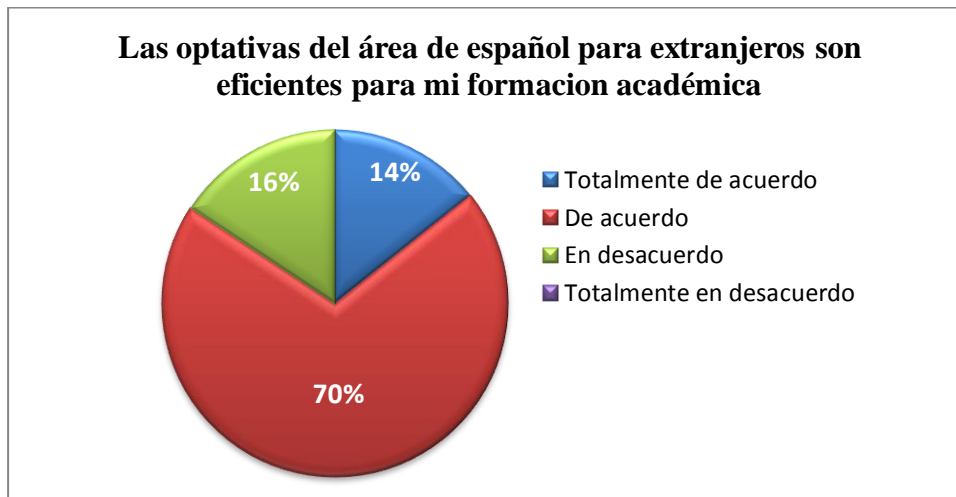


Figure 4.4 Students’ opinion about efficiency on *Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses* in percentages.



The second item intended to know the students’ opinions if Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses are enough for their academic training. The results of this statement are illustrated below in Fig. 4.5 and Fig. 4.6. These figures show that only four students answered “Strongly agree” which is equivalent to 3% (see Fig. 4.6below). Next, we can

see that 35 students chose the option “Agree” that represents the biggest percentage with 50 (see Fig. 4.6below). Regarding the option “Disagree”, it can be observed that 29 of the students selected it. That represents a percentage of 41(see Fig. 4.8 below). The option “Strongly disagree” was chosen by twostudents which is a 6% of students (see Fig. 4.6 above).

Then, as it can be seen, most of the students agreed that Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses are sufficient for their academic training. However, a large percentage – nearly half – of the students disagreed with this statement (47%).

Figure 4.5 Students’ opinion about sufficiency on *Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses*.

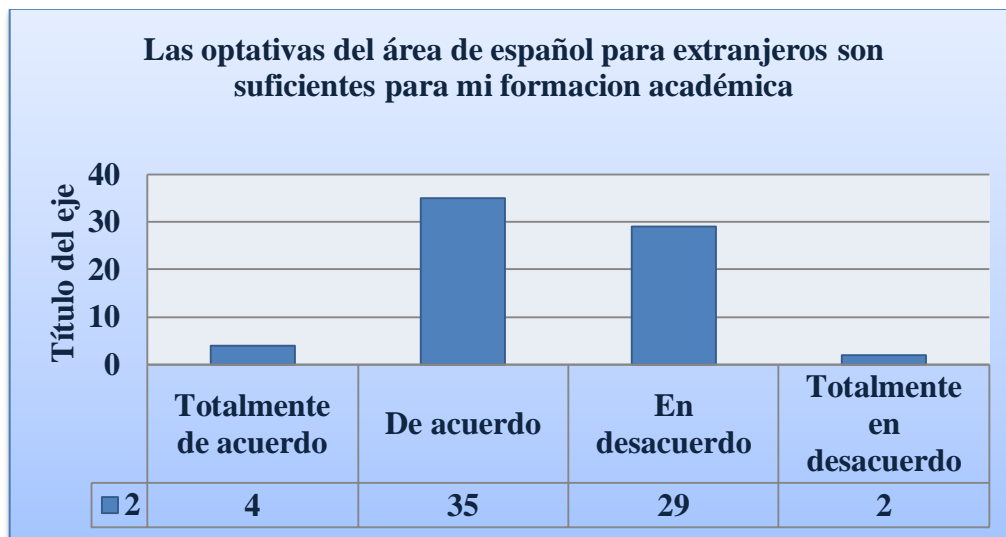
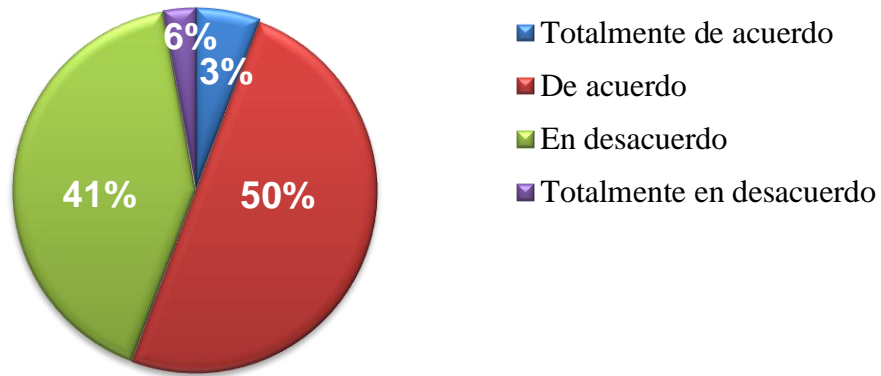


Figure 4.6 Students’ opinion about sufficiency on *Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses* in percentages.

Las optativas del área de español para extranjeros son suficientes para mi formación académica



The third item intended to know the students' opinions if Spanish for foreigners' optional courses provided fundamentals for future Spanish language teachers. The results of this statement are illustrated below in Fig. 4.7 and Fig. 4.8

Figure. 4.7 Students' opinions about fundamentals for future spanish language teachers.

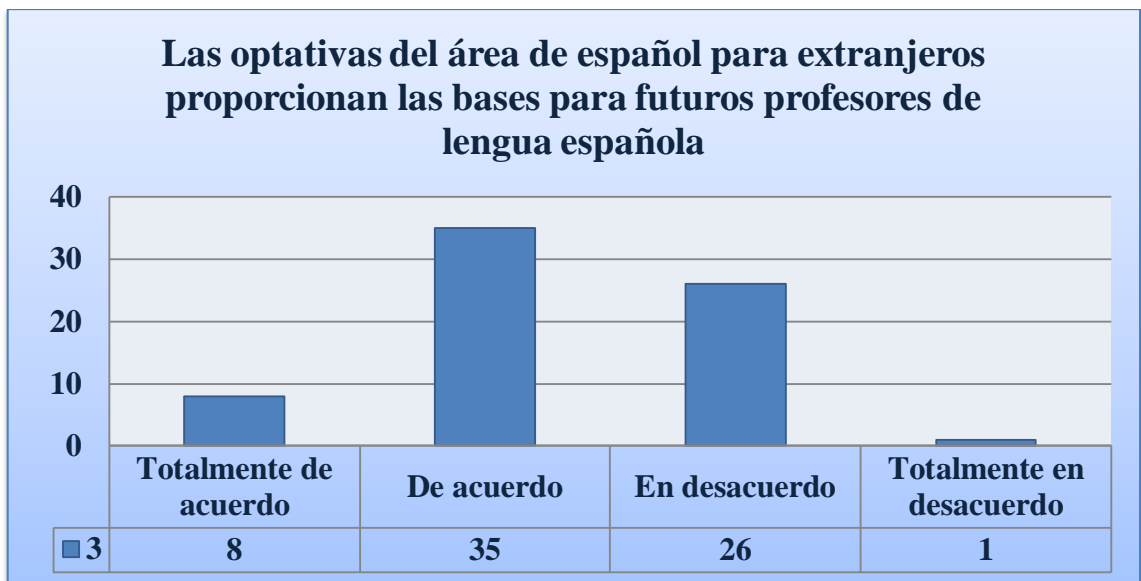
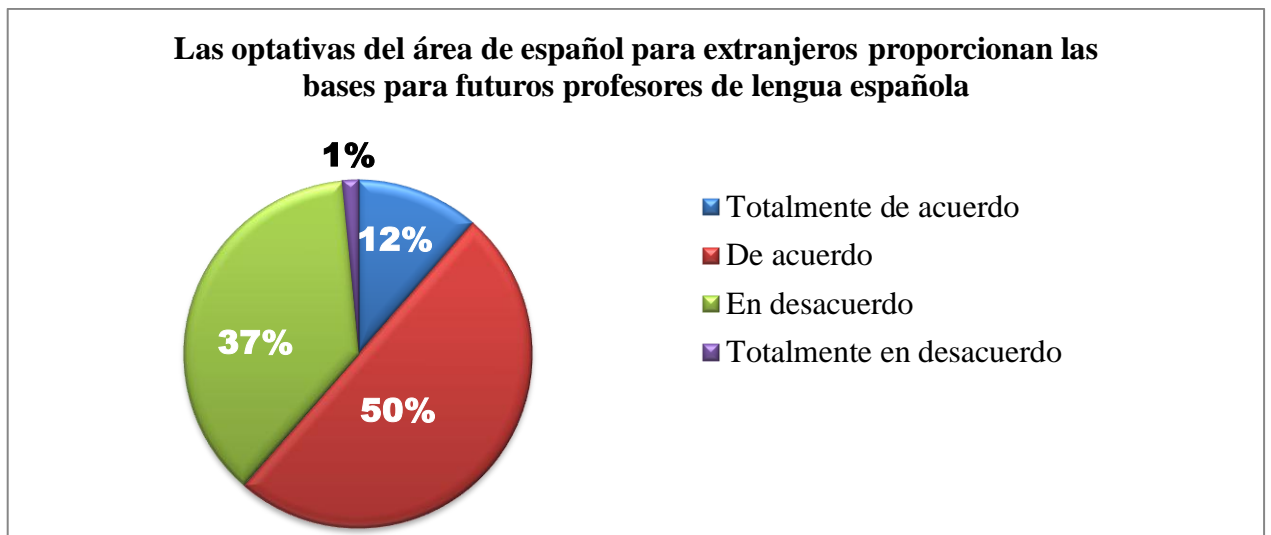


Figure 4.8 Students' opinions about fundamentals for future spanish language teachers in percentage.



The results obtained show that eight students (see Fig. 4.7 above) chose the option “Strongly agree” and this represents a percentage of 12 (see Fig. 4.8above). The option “Agree” was chosen by 35 students and this represents the biggest percentage of 50(see Fig. 4.8above). The option “Disagree” was selected by 26 students which correspond to 37% while only one student chose the option “Strongly disagree” that represents a percentage of 1 (see Fig. 4.8 above).Then, as it can be seen, most of the students agreed that Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses provide fundamentals for future Spanish language teachers. However, again like the previous item, there was a large percentage of students who disagreed with the statement (49%).

Figure 4.9Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses helps students to continue studying this area.

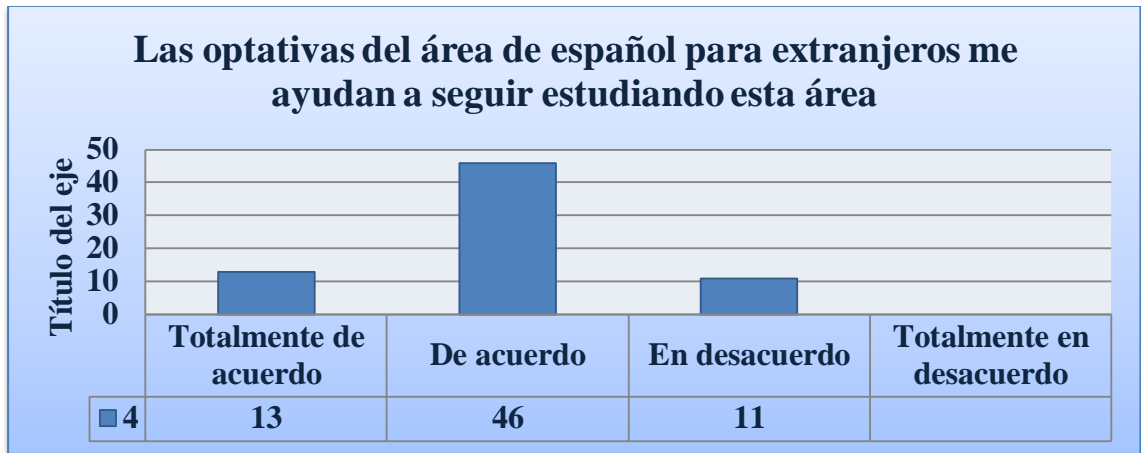
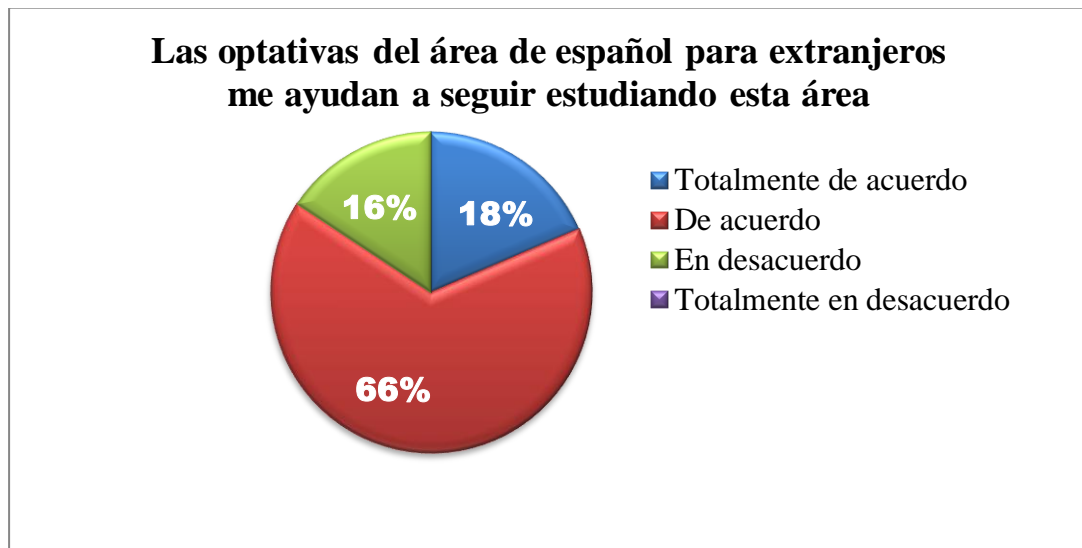


Figure 4.10 Spanish for foreigners' optional courses help students to follow studying this area in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.10 and 4.11 show that 13 students (see Fig. 4.10 above) chose the option “Strongly agree” and this represents a percentage of 18 (see Fig. 4.11above). The option “Agree” was chosen by 46 students and this represents the biggest percentage of 66 (see Fig. 4.11above). The option “Disagree” was selected by 11 students which correspond to 16% while no one chose the option “Strongly disagree”. Then, as it can be seen, most of the students agreed that Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses help them to follow studying this area.

Figure 4.11 Students' opinion on *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses* program and its design.

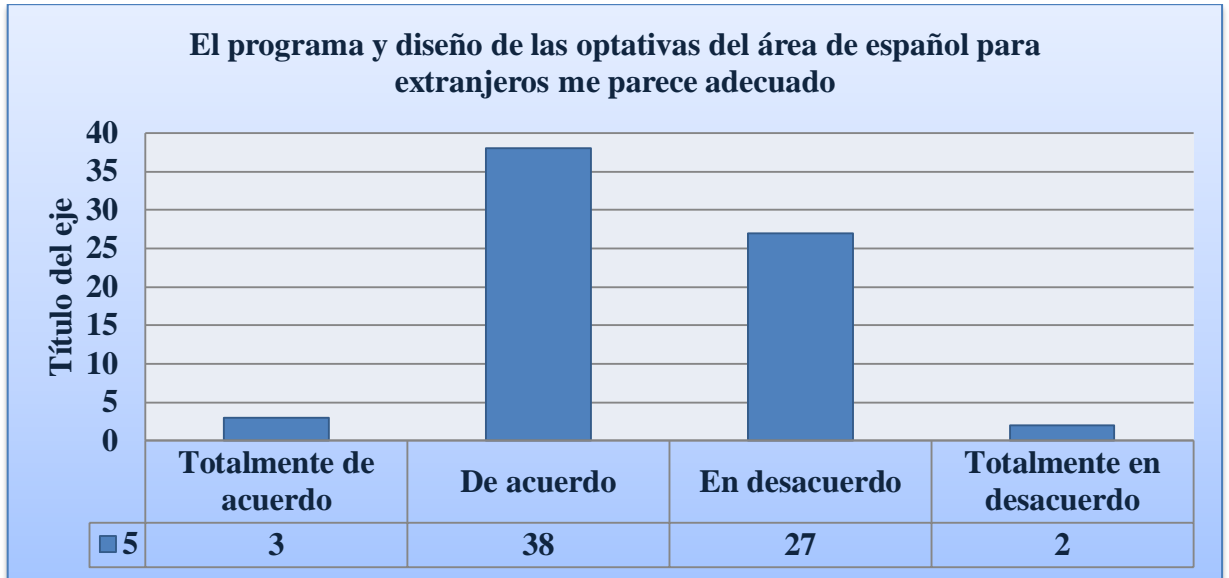


Figure 4.12 Students' opinion on *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses* program and its design in percentages.



As it can be seen in Fig. 4.11 and 4.12, the option “Strongly agree” was chosen by three students which represents 4% while 38 students decided the option “Agree” that is 54%

(see percentages in Fig. 4.12 above). The third option “Disagree” was ticked by 27 students. The option “Strongly disagree” was just selected by 2 students.

The percentage for the option “Disagree” was 39 and for the option “Strongly agree” was 4 (see Fig. 4.12 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students agreed on Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses design and program.

Figure 4.13 Students’ awareness on *Spanish for foreigners’ optional courses* order.

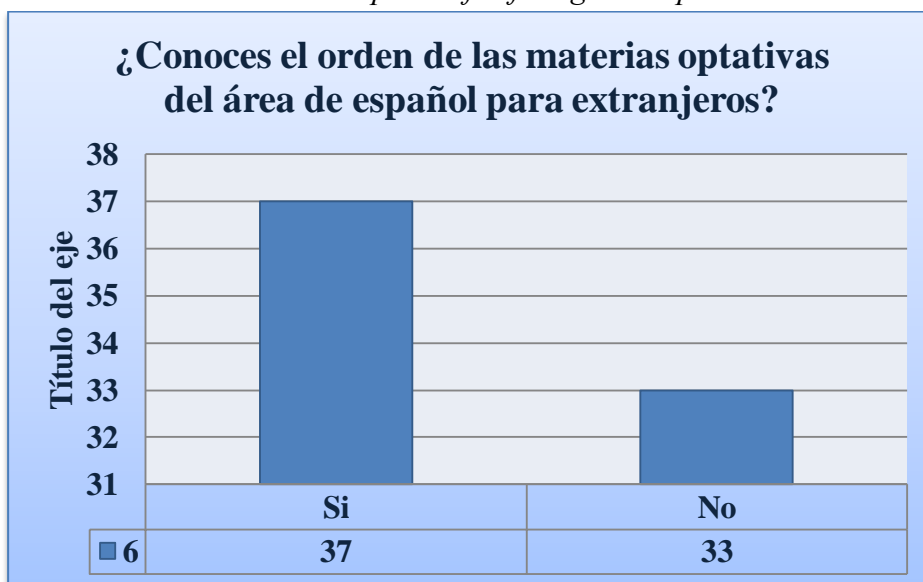
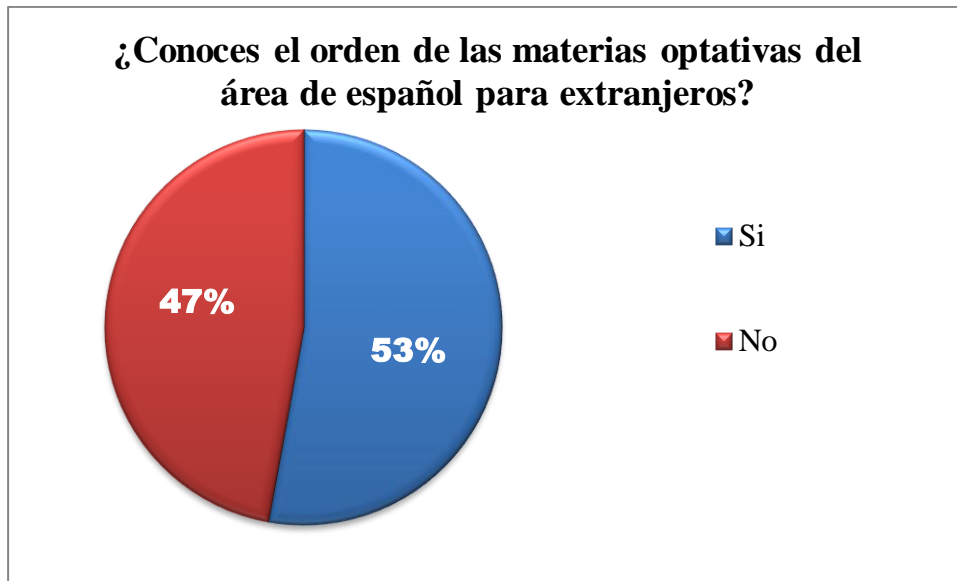


Figure 4.14 Students' awareness on *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses* order in percentage.



As it can be seen in Fig. 4.13, the results obtained show that 37 students knew the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses order while 33 students did not know it. The percentage for the option "Yes" is 53 and for the option "No" is 47 (see Fig. 4.14 above). Then, as it can be seen, there is no significant difference among the students regarding this item.

Figure 4.15 Students' responses on whether they took the *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses* in the program order.

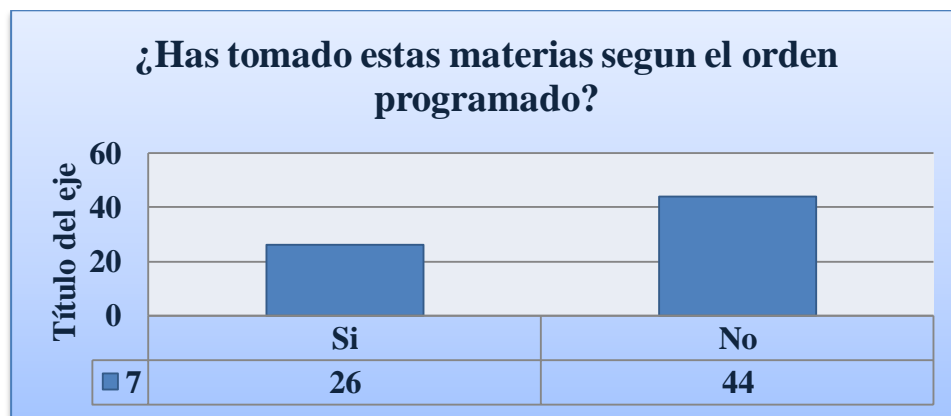
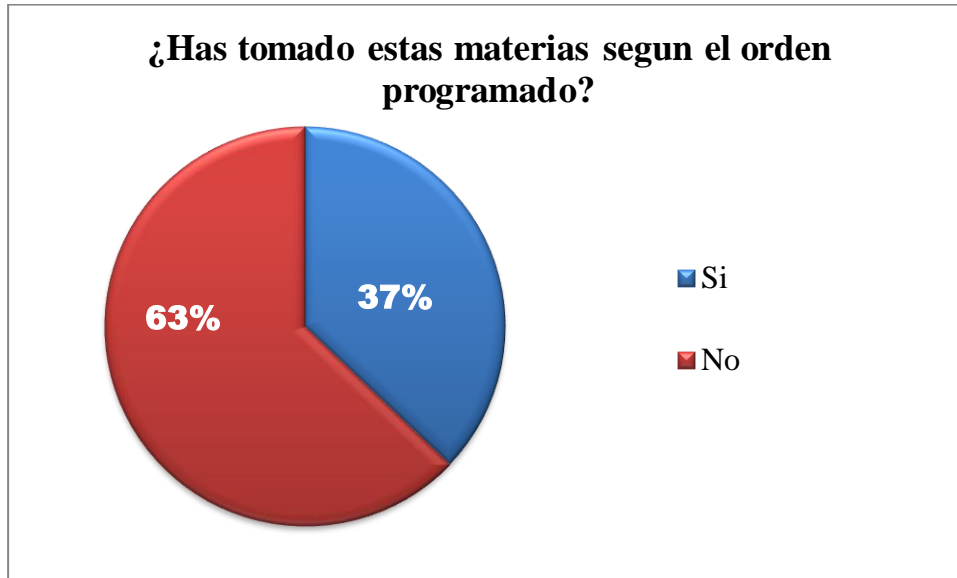


Figure 4.16 Students' responses on whether they took the *Spanish for foreigners'* optional courses in the program order.



As it can be seen in Fig. 4.15, the results obtained show that 26 students have taken the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses in the programming order while 44 students have not taken them in the program order. The percentage for the option "Yes" is 37 and for the option "No" is 63 (see Fig. 4.16 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students have not taken Spanish for foreigners' optional courses in the order set out in the program.

Figure 4.17 Students' responses on whether they have taken other courses in the area of Spanish for foreigners' additional optional courses.

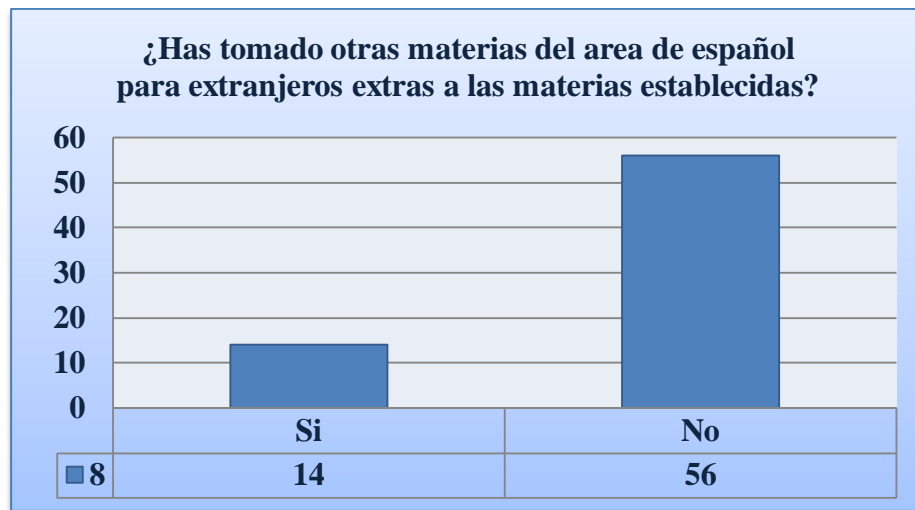
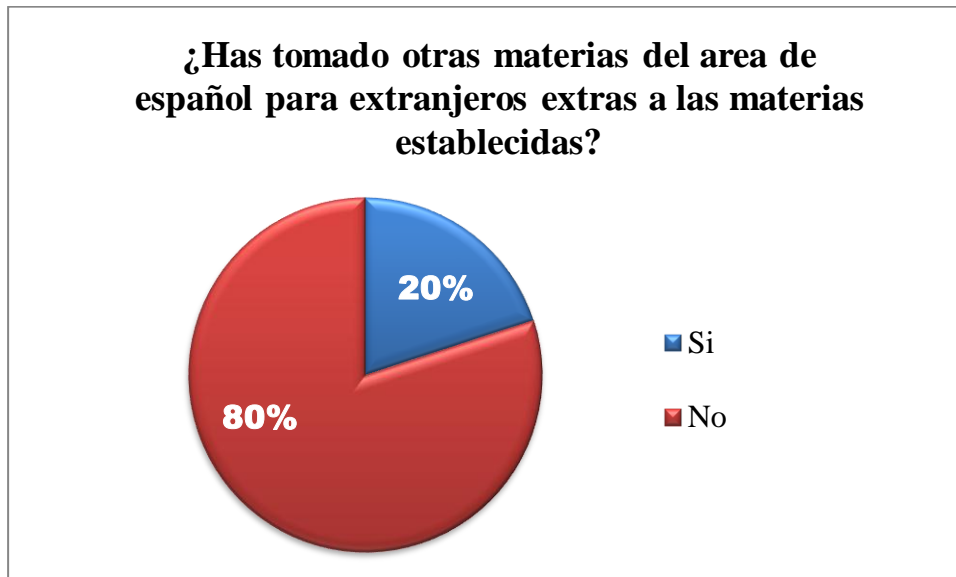


Figure 4.18 Students' responses on whether they have taken other courses in the area of Spanish for foreigners' additional optional courses



As shown Fig. 4.17, the results obtained show that 14 students have taken Spanish for foreigners' additional optional while 56 students have not taken anything. The percentage for the option "Yes" is 20 and for the option "No" is 80 (see Fig. 4.18 above). Then, as it

can be seen, most of the students have not taken Spanish for foreigners' additional optional courses.

Some of the courses mentioned by students were *Pintores mexicanos* and *Seminario de cultura mexicana*.

Figure 4.19 Students' awareness of the *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses and translation diploma*.

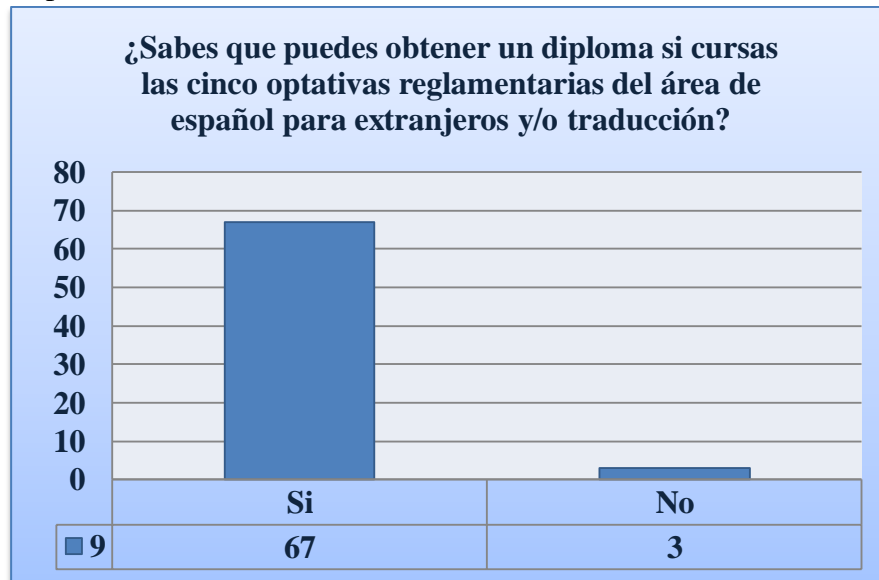


Figure 4.20 Students' awareness on *Spanish for foreigners' optional courses and translation diploma* in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.19, the results obtained show that 67 students knew that they could get a diploma of Spanish for foreigners or Translation if they take the five subjects as a requirement while 3 students did not know it. The percentage for the option “Yes” is 96 and for the option “No” is 4 (see Fig. 4.20 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students knew about the diploma given in the Spanish for foreigners’ area and/or Translation area.

Figure 4.21 Students’ opinion on adding or removing any Spanish for foreigners’ optional course in percentage.

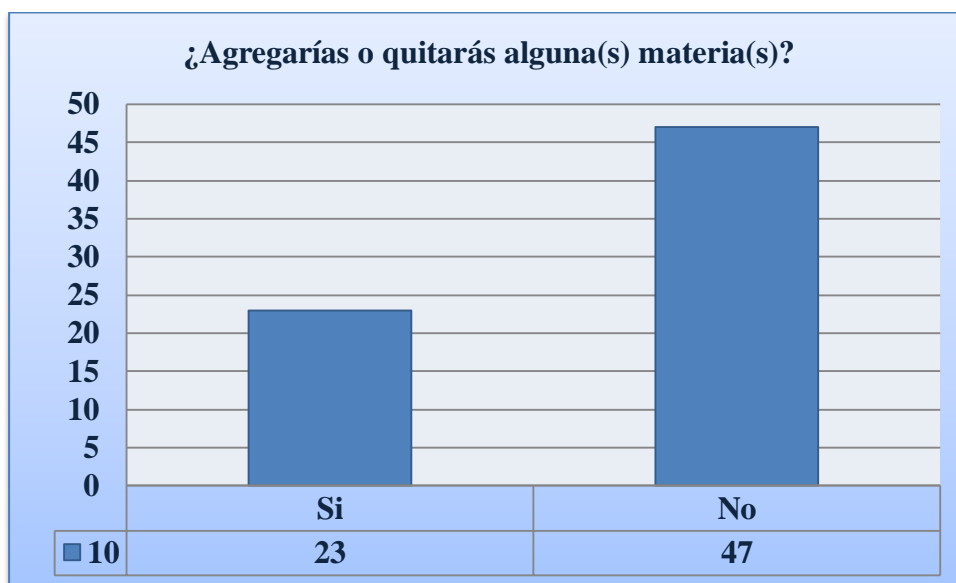
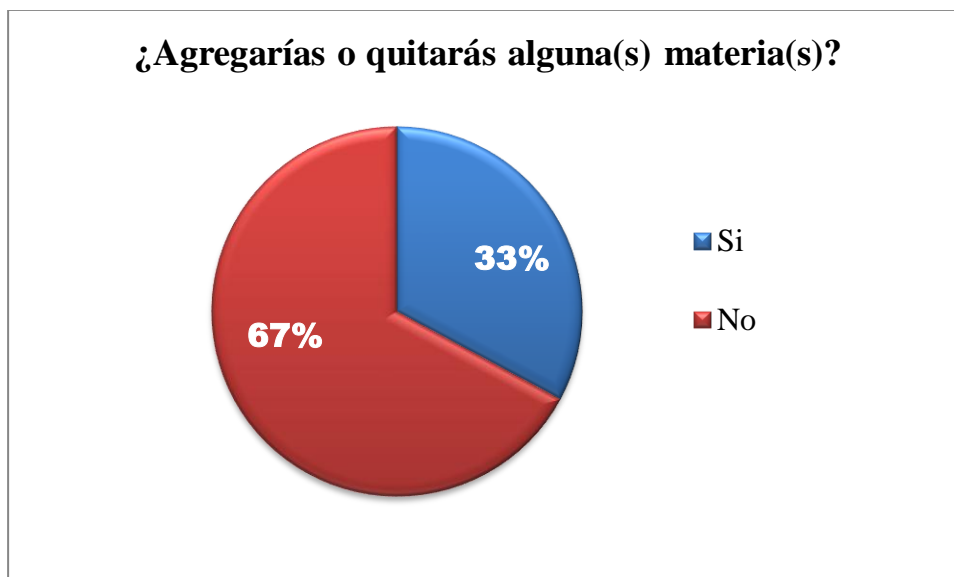


Figure 4.22 Students’ opinion on adding or removing any Spanish for foreigners’ optional course in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.21, the results obtained show that 23 students would suggest adding any Spanish for foreigners' courses while 47 students would not suggest adding or removing anything. The percentage for the option "Yes" is 33 and for the option "No" is 67 (see Fig. 4.22 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students would not add nor remove any Spanish for foreigners' course.

Some of the courses mentioned by students to add or remove were *Gramática III*, *Didáctica del español*, *Ortografía*, *Pronunciación*, *Historia y evolución del español*, *lingüística*, *Fonética y Fonología*, *Redacción académica avanzada*.

4.4.2. Results for Fourth Research Question

The findings about the fourth research question (*How many students in the Spanish for foreigners' area want to teach Spanish in other countries or in Mexico?*) were very interesting.

For this research question, the questionnaire had three yes/no question items.

The first item was intended to know if students wanted to follow with any postgraduate study in this area.

Figure 4.23 Students' opinion on following studying Teaching Spanish as a foreign Language.

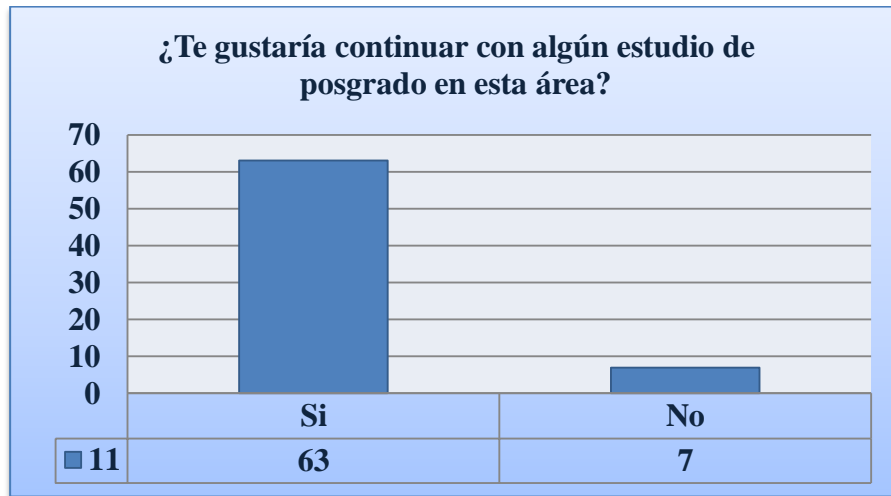


Figure 4.24 Students' opinion on following studying Teaching Spanish as a foreign Language in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.23, the results obtained show that 63 students would like to follow studying Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language while 7 students would not like to. The percentage for the option “Yes” is 90 and for the option “No” is 10 (see Fig. 4.24 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students would like to follow studying this area.

The second item was intended to know if students know schools which offer this kind of study.

Figure 4.25 Students' awareness on Teaching Spanish language schools.

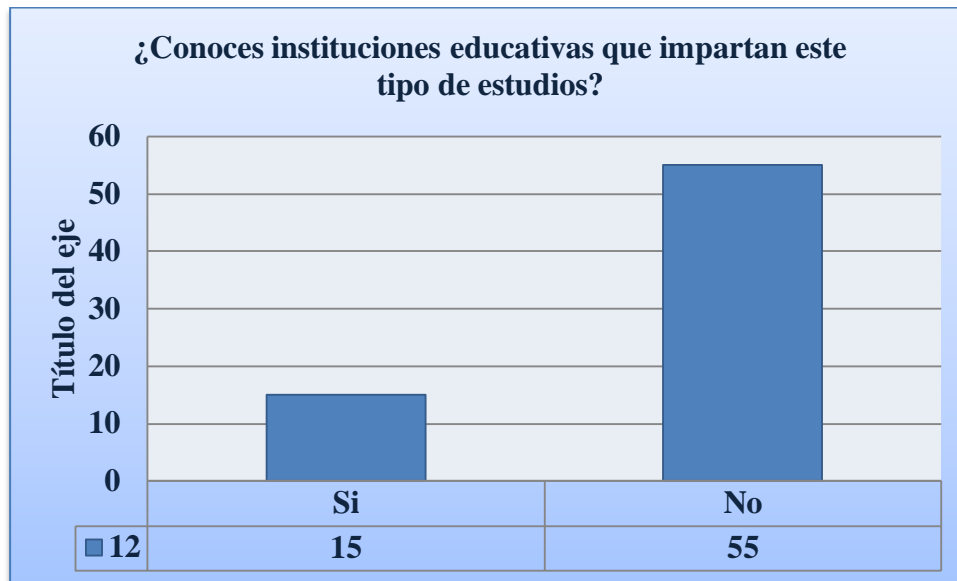
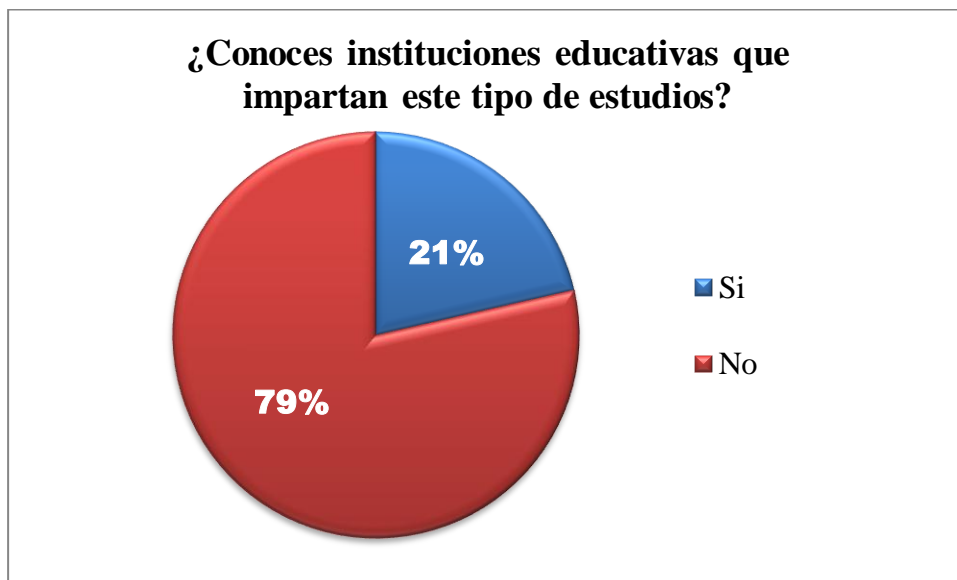


Figure 4.26 Students' awareness on Teaching Spanish language schools in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.25, the results obtained show that 15 students knew of Teaching Spanish language schools while 55 students did not know anything. The percentage for the option “Yes” is 21 and for the option “No” is 79 (see Fig. 4.26 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students did not know about Teaching Spanish language schools. Some

schools mentioned by students were UNAM, Centro Panamericano de Estudios Superiores, FUNIBER, BUAP, La Real Academia de la Lengua Española, Normal Superior, Ibero, and the UDLAP.

The last item was intended to know if the students wanted to teach Spanish abroad or in Mexico.

Figure 4.27 Students' opinion on whether they would like to teach *Spanish as foreign language*.

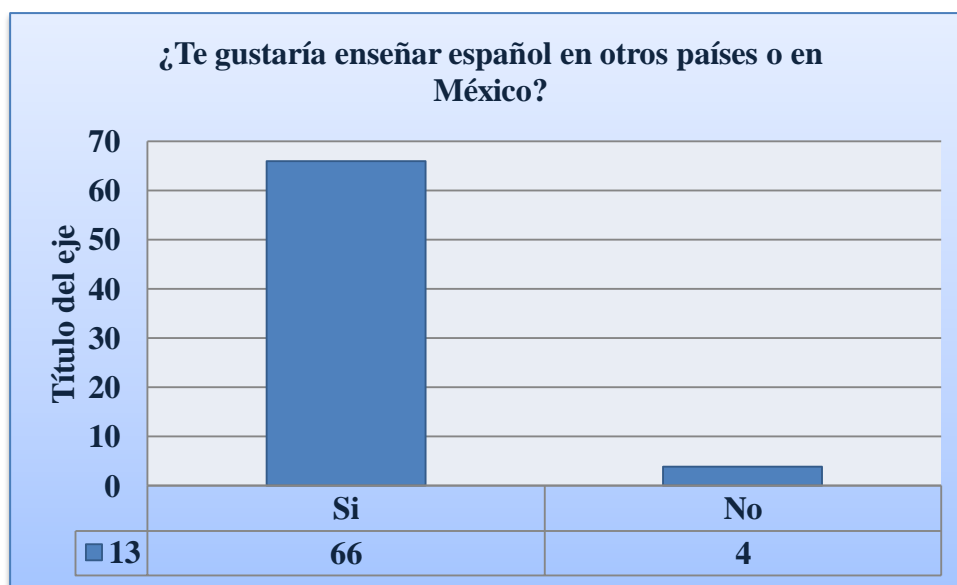
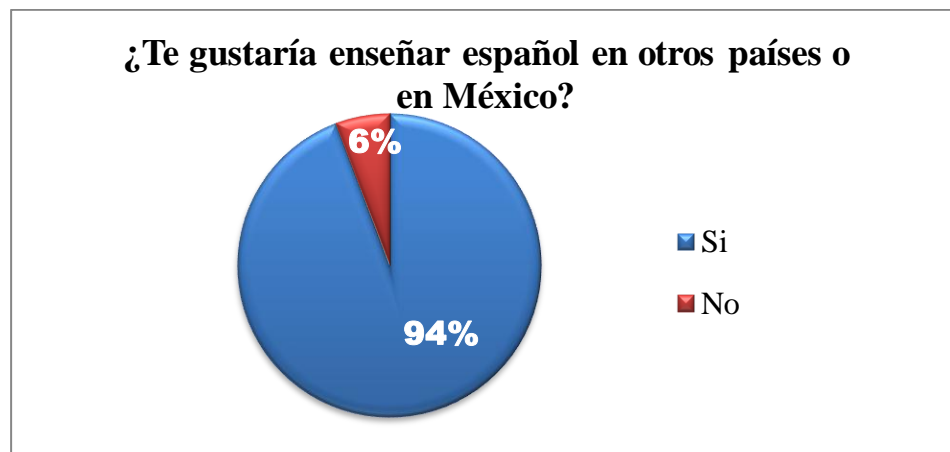


Figure 4.28 Students' opinion on whether they would like to teach *Spanish as foreign language* in percentage.



As shown Fig. 4.25, the results obtained show that 66 students would like to teach the Spanish language in other countries or even in Mexico while 4 students would not like to teach it anywhere. The percentage for the option “Yes” is 94 and for the option “No” is 6 (see Fig. 4.26 above). Then, as it can be seen, most of the students would like to teach Spanish language somewhere.

Some countries other than Mexico mentioned by students were *USA, Alemania/Austria, Inglaterra, Francia, E.U. Canada, and Italia.*

Some of the students’ comments on this item were the following:

- a) *Sí, pienso que en México puede haber oportunidades de enseñar español para extranjeros debido al número de personas de otras nacionalidades que visitan este país. Aquí en México y USA.*
- b) *Me gustaría Brasil o acá en mi país a extranjeros. USA. China, Italia, USA. Inglaterra, Italia, Estados Unidos. The university of Texas at S. A.*
- c) *Creo que Europa o Asia serían los mejores lugares y donde además la demanda es mayor*
- d) *Italia, Brasil. India, Emiratos árabes, china, Inglaterra. Alemania. Usa, Francia, usa, arabia saudita, Italia, Usa, México, Bélgica, Alemania, Inglaterra, Usa, Europa, Asia,*

Other open comments received on the questionnaire were:

- a) *-A mi parecer, el área de Español para extranjeros necesita más materias relacionadas para alcanzar porque el plan curricular solo abarca algunas de ellas, además para poder explicar a algún extranjero nuestra lengua se requiere de más temas o materias que les ayuden tanto a ellos como a nosotros a comprender nuestra lengua y cultura.*
- b) *-En particular es una buena rama que estudiar pero la institución necesita más preparación para elaborar las materias correspondientes y necesarias para tener un mejor conocimiento y manejo de español para extranjeros.*
- c) *-El español es un idioma difícil, pero muy bonito*
- d) *-Gracias por tu interés en esta área, a la cual le hace falta mayor importancia ya que es nuestra lengua materna. Creo que obtendrás información muy importante ¡Bien hecho! -Considero que las materias impartidas son buenas pero nos limitan a tomar solo las cinco requeridas, lo cual hace que nuestro conocimiento en cada área sea escaso e ineficiente.*

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I described and explained the results from the structured record review and the questionnaire applied to the participants previously described in chapter three. The results were shown in graphs to facilitate the interpretation of the collected data. This was done to answer each of the research questions that are part and fundamental focus for this research project. In the following chapter, I will draw general conclusions for this research and will discuss about the significance, the limitations and directions for further research.

CHAPTER V –CONCLUSION

5.0 Chapter overview

This research project was directed to identifying students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language considering the optional courses especially Spanish for foreigners' area offered in the research site. In the previous chapter, I showed and described in graphs the results obtained from the analysis of the instruments that I used to answer the research questions. In this final chapter, I will summarize the main findings and significance of the study provided from the data presented in Chapter IV. Specifically, I will present the answers to the research questions involved in this research project. Also, I will explain research aims. Finally, I will explain my reflective account, limitations and directions for further research.

5.1 Findings and significance

Some conclusions were shown after analyzing the results from the instruments. I could observe several things that caught my attention, and I realized I could get useful and interesting information for this thesis project. As it was previously mentioned, the main purpose of this research was to know the students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a foreign language. Primarily, when I was doing the analysis of the statistical information on LEI Optional courses I found that the students had a number of choices especially in the Spanish for foreigners and Translation' areas. Also, after designing the questionnaire and analyzing the data from it I noticed that according to my participants, most of them had taken or are taking those optional subjects (As shown in Chapter VI, they could provide valuable information related to Spanish for foreigners optional courses).

With all these results, it can be observed with respect to the students' opinions, most of them agreed with the Spanish for foreigners' area – thought it was a useful and attractive option for them, which in turn leads us to important factors: knowing these results can be helpful by using this information to take into account in any other possible BA program in the language faculty. For example, extending the academic programs, and now with this study it can be observed a general idea on Spanish teaching, so this information according could be used for any purpose in curriculum design.

In addition, I could notice that students had some general ideas from these courses before taking them and also that for most of them those ideas were accomplished. The most important opinion from students for these courses was to get knowledge in the Spanish language area. That is one characteristic of these classes but I also realized that another very interesting finding was that many of the students said that they would like to teach Spanish language classes here and abroad.

It is also relevant to mention the aspects that students considered were missing or unnecessary for these classes. First, I could realize that a great number of the students believed that the practice in real contexts could have been necessary from the very first course of the program. Also, I found out that in this program the students needed to be taught about the rules and parts of a lesson plan. Students said that in a particular class the instruction of current methods and techniques for teaching was missing.

5.2 Answers to the research questions

All this research was focused on answering four research questions. Thus, they are shown and answered in this section.

RQ1 How many students took optional courses in 2013?

In order to answer this first question I used a structured record review that was to show which optional courses were taken. According to the source, 1422 students took optional courses, and it was also found that the most common area chosen was the Spanish for foreigners and followed by the Translation area. The other optional course areas such as Linguistics, Target Language, Culture and Teaching attracted less students.

RQ2 How many students took courses in the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program in the year 2013?

In the same way, it was already said that in order to answer this second research question, I used a structured record review. According to the statistical information provided by LEI Coordination, the results showed that 821 students took the Spanish for Foreigners' courses being this area the most common chosen by students.

RQ3 What are the students' opinions on Spanish for foreigners' optional courses program?

In order to answer this third research question according to the participants' responses I applied a questionnaire that was designed to elicit the students' opinions of these courses. It was found that most of the students agreed that Spanish for foreigners' optional courses are useful and sufficient for their academic training; however there was an almost equal amount of respondents to disagree. Also, this area provides fundamentals for future Spanish language teachers. In addition, most of the students agreed with its design and program. However they indicated they were not aware of its order and most of them had not taken the proposed sequence for those courses nor any other additional courses. In addition, students indicated they knew they could get a diploma in two areas which are Spanish for Foreigners and Translation. Additionally, most of the students

would not add nor remove any Spanish for foreigners' course although there were some suggestions for program revision.

RQ4 How many students on Spanish for foreigners' area want to teach Spanish in other countries or in Mexico?

In the same way, it was already said that in order to answer this fourth research question, according to participants' responses I applied a questionnaire that was focused on knowing how many students wanted to teach Spanish. The results were the following: most of the students would like to follow on studying this area – possibly in a graduate program, and most of them did not know about other Spanish language teaching schools although some were able to mention a few. Also, most of the students indicated they would like to teach Spanish language abroad such as United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and China among others.

5.3 Research aims

The aims established for this research project were the following:

- A) To identify what percentage of the students took the optional course areas.
- B) To identify what percentage of the students took the Spanish for Foreigners' optional courses.
- C) To identify how many students in the research group were interested in teaching Spanish in other countries or in Mexico.

5.3.1 Achievement of the research aims

One of the aims of this study was to identify what percentage of the students took the Spanish for Foreigners' optional courses. This aim was accomplished through the use and analysis of the structured record review (see Chapter III). Also, it is important mention in order to achieve this aim it would not have been possible without the help

from LEI Coordination (see Chapter IV) who provided all information related to statistical data to answer the first research question which is stated in section 5.2.

Another of the research aims was to identify what percentage of the students took the Spanish for Foreigners' optional courses. This was accomplished by analyzing the statistical data provided by LEI Coordination. This was completely accomplished because actually this was the answer to the second research question which is stated in section 5.2.

The last research aim was to identify how many students in the research site were interested in teaching Spanish in other countries or in Mexico. This aim was achieved by the analysis of my second instrument: a questionnaire (see chapter 3) applied to students. This was completely accomplished because actually this was the answer to the third and fourth research questions which are stated in section 5.2.

5.4 The reflective account

In this section, I will give a description regarding the different experiences that I faced while I was doing this research project. I will present a personal reflection from four different perspectives. First, I will mention about the beginnings of this research project. Then, I will describe about the project development period. After that, I will write about the ending period of the same. Finally, personal changes that I gained and experienced as a result of this process will be described.

First of all, having the idea of writing a thesis was one of the greatest goals during my major, and to be honest, I was happy and a little bit nervous at the same time. Also, the idea of getting a research topic was not terribly of hard for me because I almost had a possible purpose. When the period to take the Thesis Seminar I arrived, I had many expectations of that, and I think this is quite normal most of the time mainly when it is the first time someone is going to write a research project oneself.

Once, I had chosen my research topic “Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language” I could start with the first step which was writing about it. It was a huge goal to achieve. Fortunately, I did not have much trouble writing Chapter I, but I had some of them writing Chapter II because I could not find enough bibliography to cover the whole chapter. Eventually I found more sources to complement the missing chapter information. Then, the third chapter did not have many difficulties because it took time to look for and design the instruments to apply for this project, and the participants’ acceptance was also really good and nice. Similarly, the fourth chapter was easy to write because collecting data and converting them into graphs was also pleasing and enjoyable. Then, the last chapter which implies conclusions was heartwarming to write because at this stage results and all information can be seen together.

Something really important to mention during the project development period, a great person who really helped me the most was my thesis director. I say this because she always was careful about my classmates’ assignments and mine. She always showed all her support, guidance and patience for us all the time. She is a wonderful person, and also with the samples and feedback, I could do every single assignment more cheerfully during the whole process. Also, I cannot forget to mention that some teachers’ suggestions throughout this process helped me.

When I was finishing this research project, I really felt happy because I remembered everything I carried out from the beginning until this ending part such as experiences, difficulties, and every single task related to this. But I also felt cheerful, satisfied and glad when I saw all final work.

Some personal changes that I faced, experienced and gained as a result of all this wonderful and great process were confidence, responsibility, motivation, knowledge and

above all to be humble, thankful, and to admit my limits. So, I could see what I was able to do, even if it was new and I had never done anything like this before. Also, sharing the results with others who are working and have interest in the same area was encouraging and gratifying. I also felt proud of this work.

5.5 Limitations of the research

The main purpose of this study was to know students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language considering the optional courses especially Spanish for foreigners' area. Therefore, a structured record review was carried out and questionnaires were administered to students in order to get results. However, given the methodology, the procedures applied for this research and the results got, some limitations need to be pointed out.

First, the sample population was not as I would have wanted. A larger sample of participants would have been better, but I only applied the questionnaire to 70 participants when I had in mind to apply it to at least 300 participants which had already taken all courses in the last three years in order to have more appropriate results. But as the results were very satisfactory it can be said that the sample was enough for this study.

Another limitation is that the results are not generalizable. They are only from a local area: Puebla City. So it cannot be concluded that all students have this opinion on teaching Spanish. Also the results from the questionnaires were focused only on teaching Spanish. Another reason is that each optional course area has different objectives. For this reason the performance can be distinct. In spite of this, I could obtain valuable results and according to the structured record review and the questionnaire I can assure that the results obtained involve the true opinions.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

The main purpose for developing this research project was to know about the students' opinions on the optional area: Spanish Teaching as a Foreign Language. The attention was focused on Students' opinions who have taken or are taking Spanish for Foreigners area. Also, it was focused on students' opinions on teaching Spanish nationally or abroad. Consequently, from all this work some suggestions for doing further research emerge.

- ✓ Further research can be done in other optional courses' areas in order to know the results got from other courses and compare how many the results from areas such as Translation, and observing Translation Performance.
- ✓ It would be interesting to do a replica of this study but administering the questionnaire to a larger sample of participants including teachers' opinions and performance.
- ✓ This research was focused on Spanish teaching but it could be interesting to know about the other languages: Perspectives on teaching other languages different from the mother tongue and English. To carry out a similar project to this but taking into account teachers and students. In the same way instead of examining students' opinions, it would be interesting to know teachers' opinions on teaching other languages.
- ✓ It also would be useful to identify how the performance is carried out to take the optional courses. In other words, taking the Spanish for foreigners' optional courses in the program order could help students for a better performance.

5.7 Conclusions

In this final chapter, I described and explained the general results and conclusions from this research project. I summarized the main findings of the study provided from the data presented in the previous chapter. Also, I described the significance of the study, and answered each of the research questions involved in this research project. Finally, I explained details about my personal reflection, limitations and directions for further research.

Reference list

- Alshumaimeri, Y. (2001). *Needs Analysis*. Retrieved from
<http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/yousif/Master%20Dissertation/Chapter%203%20Needs%20Analysis.pdf>
- Bernat, E. & Gvozdenko, I. (2005). Beliefs about Language Learning: Current Knowledge, Pedagogical Implications, and New Research Directions. *TESLEJ* 9(1).
- Berwick, R. (1989). Needs Assessment in Language Programming: From Theory to Practice. In: Johnson, R. K. (Ed). *The Second Language Curriculum* (pp. 48-62). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bobbitt, F. (1923). *The Curriculum*. New York: Macmillan.
- Borg, M. (2001). *Key Concepts in ELT: Teacher's Beliefs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bowler, B. & Parminter, S. (2002). Mixed-level Teaching: Tiered tasks and Bias tasks. In Richards, J. C. & Renandya, W. A. *Methodology in Language Teaching. An Anthology of current practice*. (1st Ed. pp. 75). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Braine, G. (1999). *Non-native Educators in English Language Teaching*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. Publishers.
- Brown, D. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Edge, J. (1993). *Essentials of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman.

- Flemming, G. (2011). *Learning Styles: A Way to Distinguish the Perspectives of The Students To The Acquisition Of A Second Language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gagné, R. (1987). *Curriculum Research and The Promotion Of Learning: Perspectives of Curriculum Evaluation*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Gebhard, J. (2000). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language or Second Language: A Teacher Self-Development and Methodology Guide*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Goh, C. (1997). Metacognitive awareness and second language listeners. *ELT Journal*, 51(4).
- Howatt, A. P. R. (1991). *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo Curricular* (2003). Curricular Framework: English Program. Commonwealth Of Puerto Rico Department Of Education Office Of Undersecretary For Academic Affairs. Accessed 15 May 2014 from http://ponce.inter.edu/cai/bv/marcos_curriculares/English%20Program.PDF
- Lindsay, P. (2000). Teaching English Worldwide: A New Practical Guide to Teaching English. Retrieved from <http://www.tesl-ej.org/ej17/r15.html>
- Louligiene, A. & Metiuniene, R. (2006). *Second Language Learning Motivation*. Retrieved from <http://www.cpe.vgtu.lt/index.php/cpe/article/viewFile/coactivity.2006.24/pdf>
- Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus Design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Olivia, F. P. (2001). *Developing the Curriculum*. New York: Longman.

- Ornstein, A. C., & Hunkins F. P. (2004). *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles and Issues*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.
- Pajares, F. M. (1992). Teachers' Beliefs and Educational research, cleaning up a messy construct. Review of educational research. In Sikula. J. (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp.104). Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1170741>.
- Penny, R. (2002). *A History of the Spanish Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reid, J. (1987). *The Learning Style Preferences of ESL Students*. Retrieved from <http://old.fltrp.com/download/06071807.pdf>
- Tanner, D., & Tanner, L. N. (1980) *Curriculum Development: Theory into Practice*. New York: Macmillan.
- Wenden, A. (2001). Metacognitive knowledge. In Breen, M.P. (Ed.). *Learner Contributions to Language Learning. New Directions in Research* (pp. 44-46). Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Appendix A



**Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
Facultad de Lenguas
Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés
Seminario de Tesis II**



**Students' perspectives on teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language
Cuestionario**

Este cuestionario tiene como propósito conocer y recolectar información en cuanto a las perspectivas de los estudiantes respecto en la enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera. La información recolectada será usada con fines educativos para mi proyecto de tesis y la información que proporciones será completamente confidencial.

Edad: _____ Genero: Femenino/ Masculino Porcentaje de créditos cubiertos: _____

Instrucciones: Marca con una la opción que mejor exprese de opinión.

Sección I. Las materias ofertadas como optativas del área de español para extranjeros.

En mi opinión ...	Totalmente de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Endesacuerdo	Totalmenteendesacuerdo
son eficientes para mi formación académica				
son suficientes para mi formación académica				
proporcionan las bases para futuros profesores de la lengua española				
me ayudan a seguir estudiando esta área				
Su programa y diseño me parece adecuado				

	Si	No	Comentarios
¿Conoces el orden de las materias optativas de español para extranjeros?			
¿Has tomado estas materias según en el orden programado?			
¿Has tomado otras materias del área de español para extranjeros extras a las materias establecidas? ¿Cuál(es)?			
¿Sabes que puedes obtener un diploma si cursas las cinco optativas reglamentarias del área de español para extranjeros y/o traducción?			
¿Agregarías o quitarías alguna(s) materia(s)?¿Cuál (es)?			

Sección II. Enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera

	Si	No	comentarios
¿Te gustaría continuar con algún estudio de posgrado en esta área?			
¿Conoces instituciones educativas que impartan este tipo de estudios? ¿Cuál (es)?			
¿Te gustaría enseñar español en otros países o en México? ¿Cuál(es) país(es)?			

Notes:
