BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

Facultad de Lenguas

Students' beliefs about their EFL learning process at Mexican secondary school level: private vs public education

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages

For the degree of

Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés

Presented by

Ricardo Angel Camargo Zayas

Thesis Director:

Mtra. Sandra Juárez Pacheco

Puebla, México

August, 2023

“Students’ beliefs about their EFL learning process at Mexican secondary school level: private vs public education”

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

Ricardo Angel Camargo Zayas

And it is considered worthy of approval in partial fulfillment of

the requirement for the degree of

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Thesis Director

Mtra. Sandra Juárez Pacheco

_____

Committee Member

Dra. Maria Leticia Temoltzin Espejel

Committee Member

Mtro. Juan Alberto Amador Cruz

_____ _____

Puebla, México

August. 2023

DEDICATORY

I want to dedicate this work to my family and closest friends.

To my parents Ricardo and Angeles, to my sisters, Fernanda and Diana, to my dog and to the brand-new member of the family, my lovely nephew Santiago.

At the same time, to this very important person, Sofia Loreto.

It was a really hard job and a long process for me. Many times, I wanted to quit, but you guys gave me more than the enough motivation to rise and keep going until the end.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Just writing some words would not be enough to express my real gratitude and respect to this person. I really want to thank my dearest thesis director, Master Sandra Juárez Pacheco, for all her patience, guidance, dedication, and support, not only during this research but also throughout my academic lifetime. She had taught me and helped me too much, I just hope to keep working and learning from her in the future.

Secondly, I wanted to thank the students who were participants in this study. They shared with me some of their time and made this research possible by answering the surveys. Also, thanks to the principals of each school, they let me apply the instrument in the middle of students' scheduled activities.

Then, I must thank my favorite music band of all time, Foo Fighters, because, without their music, I would not have been able to work or even write a word. Their songs gave me the necessary focus to finish writing. At the same time, this band gave me the escape I needed when I felt frustrated, wasted and purposeless.

Finally, I wanted to thank my family for making no noise and disturbance when I was living with them and I was taking my thesis classes. It was very helpful and considered from them.

ABSTRACT

Teaching is one of the noblest professions because we, as teachers, are building the future of each country. Unfortunately, we are not always able to provide the correct guidance. Not because we are not prepared, or we do not know how to teach; perhaps. There are not many studies based on students' needs. It does not matter if they are in public or private schools, EFL teachers must take into account their ideas and needs.

Thus, this research aims to identify factors that increase or limit Private and Public Secondary School participants' EFL learning by taking into account students' perceptions. To be able to obtain this information, it was necessary to create and apply a survey as the research instrument. Main findings point that the lack of EFL courses around their town is a negative factor that affects their EFL learning. Also, participants from the public institution mentioned that they do not have as many hours of EFL subject as private students do; thus, this is making a huge negative impact in their learning process. Regarding the positive factors, minority of participants mentioned that studying is the only thing that can enhance their EFL learning process

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I ..... **1.**

1.1 Rationale ..... **2.**

1.2 Significance of the Study ..... **3.**

1.3 Context of the Research ..... **4.**

1.4 Aim/Purpose ..... **4.**

1.5 Objectives ..... **4.**

1.6 Research Questions ..... **4.**

1.7 Conclusion ..... **5.**

2.1 Historical Framework of EFL Teaching in Mexico ..... **6.**

2.1.1 English as a Foreign Language vs English as a Second Language Learning ..... **7.**

2.2 Teenagers' Learning Process ..... **9.**

2.3 Learning Environment ..... **10.**

2.3.1 Elements of the Learning Environment ..... **10.**

3.1 Methodology ..... **12.**

3.2 Context ..... **14.**

3.3 Participants ..... **15.**

3.4 Instrument ..... **18.**

3.5 Description of the overall research design .....**19.**

3.6 Data Analysis .....**21.**

3.7 Conclusion .....**21.**

4.1 Obtained Results.....**22.**

4.1.1 Secondary school, 1st Grade results - 12-13 years old .....**23.**

4.1.1.1 EFL Class (Private and Public context) .....**23.**

4.1.1.2 Language (Private and Public context) .....**27.**

4.1.1.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context).....**30.**

4.1.2 Secondary school: 2nd Grade - 13-14 years old .....**32.**

4.1.2.1 Class Section (Private and Public context).....**32.**

4.1.2.2 Language Section (Private and Public context).....**36.**

4.1.2.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context).....**39.**

4.1.3 Secondary school: 3rd Grade - 14-16 years old.....**41.**

4.1.3.1 Class Section (Private and Public context).....**41.**

4.1.3.2 Language Section (Private and Public context).....**44.**

4.1.3.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context).....**46.**

4.1.4 Factors that increase or limit Private and Public Secondary School participants' EFL learning……..**48.**

4.2 Research Questions' Answers.....**49.**

4.3 Discussion.....**52.**

4.4 Conclusion .....**53.**

5.1 Research Contribution .....**53.**

5.3 Suggestions for further research.....**55.**

5.4 Reflection.....**55.**

5.5 Conclusion .....**56.**

References.....**57.**

Appendix A.....**62.**

Instrument Survey.....**62.**

LIST OF GRAPHS AND TABLES

Graph 3.1 Public Secondary School students' age 16

Graph 3.2 Private Secondary School students' age 17

Graph 3.3 Public and Private Secondary School students' gender 18

Graph 4.1 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade 23

Graph 4.2 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade..... 24

Graph 4.3 EFL teacher's professionalism in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.... 25

Graph 4.4 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade..... 26

Graph 4.5 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 1st Grade related to how much time students are exposed to the language 27

Graph 4.6 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade 1

Graph 4.7 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade..... 29

Graph 4.8 Extra EFL classes, 1st grade 30

Graph 4.9 Future perception of EFL usage, 1st grade 31

Graph 4.10 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 1st Grade related to how they learn 31

Graph 4.11 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade..... 32

Graph 4.12 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade 33

Graph 4.13 EFL teacher's professionalism in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade34

Graph 4.14 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade..... 35

Graph 4.15 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 2nd Grade related to how much time they spend with the language..... 36

Graph 4.16 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade..... 37

Graph 4.17 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade..... 38

Graph 4.18 Extra EFL classes, 2nd grade..... 39

Graph 4.19 Future perception of EFL usage, 1st grade..... 40

Graph 4.20 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 2nd Grade related to how they learn..... 40

Graph 4.21 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade..... 41

Graph 4.22 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade..... 42

Graph 4.23 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to their EFL teacher's background..... 43

Graph 4.24 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade..... 43

Graph 4.25 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to how much time they spend with the language..... 44

Graph 4.26 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade..... 45

Graph 4.27 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade..... 45

Graph 4.28 Extra EFL classes, 3rd grade 46

Graph 4.29 Future perception of EFL usage, 3rd grade 47

Graph 4.30 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to how they learn 47

Graph 4.31 Private and Public Secondary School students' results related to the factors that increase of limit their EFL learning..... 48

Table 4.2.1 What are participants' beliefs about their EFL classes in the public and private contexts? 50

Graph 4.32 What is the main factor that affects or benefits participants' EFL learning process in both contexts? 51

Chapter I

Introduction

According to Wold (2006), learning a second language is a challenging process, not because it is impossible but because it requires focusing on several skills like speaking, listening, reading and writing. Nevertheless, these four abilities are just general points considering all the knowledge behind those skills aforementioned. At the same time, all of them need proper practice and guidance by a teacher or an expert. Unfortunately, not always this part of the language acquisition receives the right approach.

Here in Mexico, the educational system gives the opportunity to the students to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL), but this subject is quite different in both educational contexts, public and private. In fact, Mexico is in a constant change of educational structures or reforms. In the words of Narváes (2013), all of those reforms have the purpose of improving the quality of education, but those reforms fail when they talk about teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at secondary school level. For instance, taking into account an investigation made by EF English Proficiency Index (2012), Mexico was ranked number 38 in the Education First ranking. EFL proficiency surpassed only by Argentina and Costa Rica (Narváes, 2013). Currently, this result is getting worse because in 2017 the same organization carried out another study and, as a result, Mexico was ranked as the 44 out of 80 countries from Latin America. Unfortunately, it showed a low level of proficiency (Narváes, 2013). Particularly, this study wants to call secondary school students' perceptions about their EFL classes since these are important opinions to improve the EFL teaching practice in a micro context in Puebla-Mexico. In order to do so, this chapter is presenting the rationale of the topic selection that is followed by the significance of the study. Then, the context of this research is presented. Basically, these three subsections of chapter one describe the background of the

research and explain to the reader the importance of the topic. Later, the purpose of the study, its objectives and the research questions' subsection are explaining how this research will be managed and what is the information that the researcher hopes to find.

1.1 Rationale

The Mexican educational system is divided into three different sections or levels which are: basic education, upper-secondary education, and higher education. Every of these three levels count with two different options to study them: public and private. Normally, both options have the same study plan, but at the same time, they have different contexts and teaching methodologies. That is why this research will focus on the last level of the basic education which is secondary school level (Grades 7th–9th).

It is mandatory to say that this part of the school life is so important to the students because, according to Arrington (2013), here is when they start to discover their own identity, their abilities and their thoughts become more complex. Thus, here is the time when they started to create their own perspective about the school and how they learn anything. In the public school context, the students start to receive EFL classes in their secondary school level. Conversely, in the private sector EFL classes start from students' first grades of education, perhaps kinder-garden or elementary school. That could be a very important disadvantage to the students of a public context because when they face the world outside the school, they can experience their first failure losing a place in high school just because they fail the EFL section in their admission exam.

In 2009, the Secretaria de Educacion Publica (SEP) created a National English Program to Basic Education (PNIEB). PNIEB was created with the purpose of letting secondary school students to achieve an intermediate EFL level of proficiency (B1) in accordance with the

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFRL (EF Standard English Test, 2018). Currently, PNIEB changed into PRONI which is the same English program. According to Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad (IMCO, 2015), Mexico does not have an institution or a system to measure the EFL level of the students of this country. The lack of this system or institution could be a negative outcome of the Mexican government at the time of implementing PNIEB or PRONI programs. Therefore, this study pretends to describe students' beliefs about their EFL learning in order to realize what is going on in this EFL teaching practice.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is focused on the students' perspective, just with the purpose to help teachers to understand how their students learn and how they see their learning environment. Also, teachers may be aware of how to improve their EFL classes or if they have to implement any other teaching methodology. At the same time, this research is not trying to change the whole educational system, it is just trying to find answers regarding EFL students' learning process.

This research could be useful for both contexts: private and public. In both contexts, it is aimed to consider students' beliefs. Therefore, students' parents will be aware about the problems that every student faces in their EFL classes and learning environment. Besides, this information can help LEI students who are ready to do their professional practices or who are experiencing their pre-service in a secondary school. This study will give them the necessary information to design their lesson plans by focusing on their students' necessities and beliefs. In conclusion, it is important to know how students' brains work, because in that way, teachers could design their EFL lesson plans not regarding only the school or directors' necessities, but their pupils' development and thoughts.

1.3 Context of the Research

This study will be carried out in two different secondary schools, one private and the other one is public. Both are in the state of Puebla in Acatzingo. There are 25 students in the private secondary school, and 52 students in the public secondary school. More details about this context will be given in Chapter III.

1.4 Aim/Purpose

This research has the main purpose to explore the students' beliefs or thoughts about their EFL language classes. Later, this study pretends to contrast students´ beliefs from public vs private secondary schools in order to identify the factors that let them improve or fail their EFL classes.

1.5 Objectives

In order to achieve the aim of this study. it conveys the following objectives:

- To design an instrument that allows the collection of data regarding EFL classes in secondary schools.
- To apply the research instrument to secondary school students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades in both context: private and public.
- To analyze all collected information through the use of graphics and tables to facilitate the answers of the research questions.

1.6 Research Questions

In this section the research questions are presented in order to clarify what would be the main findings of this study:

RQ1: What are participants' beliefs about their EFL classes in the public and private contexts?

RQ2: What is the main factor that affects or benefits participants' EFL learning process in both contexts?

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents to the reader a wide perspective of what this research intends to analyze, at the same time, shows a brief introduction to the theoretical notions that give it a background of the study. Also, presents the context in which the study will be conducted as well as a short methodological overview of how data will be collected and analyzed. Having oriented the reader to the general aims and procedures of the current investigation.

The next chapter provides more useful information about the context of this research, and in that way, the reader could better understand the reason for this analysis and generate a point of discussion about how EFL teaching has been changing through the years and how those changes affect the students nowadays. It is important to point out that understanding students' learning process is an important part of the teaching practice.

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter will provide the reader with more specific and concrete information of relevant topics about the evolution of EFL teaching in the Mexican country and the learning process of the students during the secondary school level. Therefore, it has the purpose to discuss the theoretical issues that reinforce this research analysis and possible findings. The chapter will start with a brief description about the Historical Framework of EFL Teaching in Mexico where Recent Educational Reforms are stated.

2.1 Historical Framework of EFL Teaching in Mexico

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Mexico is a subject that was implemented in public schools during the mid-1800s at the secondary school level. In Galeana's words (2016), this level was considered the basis of all education because it was where students were prepared for the next educational levels, so-called 'major studies. On December 27 in 1865, during the rule of Maximiliano, the 'Law of Public Instruction' was created. According to Galeana (2016), the pointed document had 172 articles where article 8 explains all the educational context, curriculum and purpose of the secondary school level. This article considered language teaching as a fundamental subject. Thus, EFL was one of the most important subjects in that area.

De Saldaña (1993) said that around 1896, General Porfirio Díaz made English and French essential subjects from elementary school. Years later, De Saldaña (1993) mentioned that Carmen Krauze de Alvarez de la Rosa created a plan to complement Díaz's mandate by establishing that teachers were not able to say any words in Spanish in 1906. Consequently, students were forced to answer back only in English. According to the Secretaría de Educación

Pública (2015), by the year 1926, the teaching of English language became mandatory at the secondary level. And in 1992, the educational authorities of each state took the task of designing and implementing their own English programs at basic education levels by considering their regional needs. According to IMCO (2015), in 2009 SEP created the Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica (PNIEB). This program had as its main objective to certify the intermediate level of English (B1) in secondary school graduate students. At the same time, based on Moctezuma's report (2020), the Programa Nacional de Inglés (PRONI) started its pilot phase, to switch to its test phase in 2011 in secondary school level until 2015, in that year, this program started its expansion phase, including now since 3er grade of kindergarten to 3er grade of secondary school. Finally, in 2016 PRONI was included into the national budget and started to be considered as an important Educational Program, which has the purpose to strengthen the technical and pedagogical capacities for teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language in public schools (Moctezuma, 2020).

2.1.1 English as a Foreign Language vs English as a Second Language Learning

Currently, the importance of learning English has been growing in an exponential way. According to Qin (2021), almost 1.35 billion people speak English around the world, but just 360 million people speak English as a first language. This is how English is ranked as the third most spoken language in the world. In addition, it is important to mention that globalization has an important role in this increase, making English the recent lingua franca of this era. (Watson, 2016). Regarding English language learning, there exist two ways of learning English language: English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Both could sound like they have the same meaning, but they are completely different; so it is important to identify their main differences and uses.

According to Saville and Barto (2017), English as a Second Language (ESL) is used to communicate in a real-life context, like education, employment and many other examples of a daily routine. Also, this kind of English learning is typically used by immigrants, who learned the language because it is mandatory to survive. Unfortunately, this kind of learners could acquire the language with some phonetic and morphological mistakes. In the words of Verghese (1989), these language mistakes are due to the environment where ESL speakers were born and the lack of a proper exposition/guide in the language. On the other hand, people who learned English as a Foreign Language (EFL) have an academic background in the language, that is why these kinds of students can use the language in different contexts than the previous ones. For example, one of the main uses could be in a scholar context, as an English teacher, another important use is related to the business environment working as an ambassador, interpreter, moderator or tour guide (Saville and Barto, 2017). Additionally, as Gunderson et al. (2019) explains, EFL is commonly learned in places where English is not the official language or in environments where the language of the community is not English. That is how EFL teachers could face some problems finding the correct way to teach the language to their students. Also, students could have some difficulties to find any model to follow or to practice the language.

It is important to consider that EFL corresponds to the Expanding Circle theory of language by linguist Braj Kachru. In his theory the author tries to explain that there exist three concentric circles of World English: inner, outer, and expanding. Finding EFL in the expanding circle because this English approach just uses some of the language and is not widely spoken out of the school (Nordquist, R. 2020). In fact, EFL and ESL are different regarding how and why they are learned; nevertheless, both should improve the real understanding and use of the language.

2.2 Teenagers' Learning Process

According to Bordignon (2005), teenagers around 12 to 20 years old are humans who face the "identity versus role confusion stadium" (p.56). Also in this stage, adolescents start to discover their personal identity, their feelings manage many decisions through their daily life, and finally, their ideas of religion, cultural ideals and political ideals are created. Additionally, Harper (2018) mentions that adolescents are in an age of mental development. They face rapid physical, neurological and cognitive changes; thus, it makes the brain more specialized and efficient. Therefore, this affects how teenagers learn, also these changes could influence how educators should work with them in class. Regarding cognitive changes, it is important to mention that the brain acquires the capacity to be more interconnected during adolescence. An important reason for that is that teenagers are growing around new environmental influences and increasing their life experiences; consequently, their new mental abilities appear (Harper, 2018). In other words, young people are little by little more able to focus or participate in situations that need complex cognition, such as their newest social cognition environments and abstract reasoning. This is how teenagers spend more time gathering and reviewing additional information, besides this might lead them to assess their own learning eventually.

According to Harper (2018), the reason why teenagers are able to judge their own knowledge is due to the development of their abilities to perceive, interpret, categorize, and judge their own behavior in society. This gives teenagers more autonomy and the understanding of new social contexts and expectations. In order to understand what is happening in their minds, it is important to consider five fundamental concepts that Rafael (2009) explains in her research. These are based on Vygotsky's theories:

- **Mental functions:** lower are the ones that we are born with. Higher are acquired through the years with social interaction.

- **Psychological skills:** appear in two ambits, social and individual.
- **Zone of proximal development:** the functions that are not mature yet.
- **Thinking tools:** every symbol system (numbers, letters, words, etc.).
- **Mediation:** this concept is given to society because that regulates human behavior.

2.3 Learning Environment

In the words of Educause (2015), learning environments do not just encompass a place to work, it also includes technology that is used, resources to give proper classes, how the teachers identify each learning mode of their students and the way that teachers connect their classes with the global context. At the same time, it talks about the level of humanity of each participant in the classroom. This considers human behavior, cultural dimensions, and the role of their emotions in the learning process. Therefore, a learning environment is a fair combination of human practices and material systems. Additionally, it is important to mention that it is necessary to have a good balance between human practices and material systems. It is important to consider different factors like how different the operational characteristics of every instructor are the philosophy background and the previous knowledge of the students and how those factors affect their individual interaction (Martin, 2002).

2.3.1 Elements of the Learning Environment

To develop a good Learning Environment, it is necessary to know which are the elements that create a nice atmosphere in the classroom. According to Waldman (2016), there exist four elements to create a positive learning environment thus the students could have academic success. These elements can also be associated with improved grades and test scores. The elements that Waldman (2016) touches in her research are:

1. **Safety:** this is an important element because if the students feel safe physically and mentally, they could be more participative. Also, they can have a good attitude in the classroom and behave nicely in every class. To cover this point, the students must feel welcomed, supported, and respected.

2. **Engagement:** as a teacher it is indispensable to pay attention to the students and know what they need to learn. In that way, they could feel engaged in their learning process. A good instructional approach to achieve that is personalized learning, that is possible if the teacher manages the class according to the main students' necessities. In this element it is possible to help students to improve the development of many skills like thinking critically, using new and previous knowledge to solve complex problems, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, and learning how to learn.

3. **Connectedness:** to ensure meaningful learning within the classroom it is mandatory that students have the feeling of connection with everyone in the school. Teachers are the ones that could take the responsibility to grow this feeling in the students. The best way to achieve that is with a proper guide about how the students manage their emotions; also, teachers can support them to succeed in class.

4. **Support:** support must come to the people that surround the students and everyone involved in their learning process including teachers, classmates, family, and community members. These people are the ones who have the responsibility of creating a positive climate at the school, working with conversations, meetings, surveys, and creating school-community partnerships. This is how they will know what the students need to feel their support.

Prasad (2016) presents motivation of the learner, right stimulus, opportunities to test the new learning, feedback, and rewards as significant elements for students. Any or all of these

elements would make the learning process more effective and enjoyable. In a classroom, the teacher/tutor is expected to provide most of these motivational characteristics into the educational context, and in that way, teachers could be seen as 'good' because they are proficient using these elements (Prasad, 2016).

2.4 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter recalled some important and historical events of education in Mexico as well as the learning environment which affects students' EFL acquisition. It was stated that it could motivate or affect them due to students at secondary school level facing different changes on their own. The following chapter will talk about the research methodology used in this inquiry.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

The main objective of this chapter is to describe the research methodology used to develop this study. Therefore, this chapter presents the approach and methodology used to achieve the data collection. Later, this chapter would provide a complete description of the research context and participants. Later, the research instrument and the research design to achieve the data collection procedure will be stated. Finally, the data analysis and the conclusion of this chapter are presented as well.

3.1 Methodology

This qualitative study aims to describe and analyze the main beliefs of secondary school students who are in two contexts, private and public schools. It also compares how each context

might affect these students' perspective about their learning process. Taking into account this purpose, this research has a qualitative approach.

According to Kothari (2004), any study that is deemed qualitative focuses on attitudes, opinions, and behavior, giving the researcher only subjective results. Thus, to achieve those results, the main tools that this method uses are surveys or interviews. Considering another perspective, in the words of Pathak, et al. (2013), qualitative research gives a humanistic or idealistic approach and focuses on understanding the feelings of the participants, but this approach has a little disadvantage related to its results, or what the researcher could achieve, because it has no certain about quantity of what has been found. On the other hand, quantitative studies manage systematic research of social problems, interests, or census, using only numerical data to show or share the obtained results. For that reason, this research also can measure and assume to fulfill these requirements. That situation allows the researcher to analyze data for trends and relationships; later, to verify the achieved measurements or results (Watson, 2015). In addition, quantitative methods are used to describe and analyze huge groups of people and at the same time, make it possible to generalize. Therefore, the results of this study will be explained through a mixed method approach. This method is a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, adopting strategies to manage both sides and the results of each one (Brannen, J., 2005). In addition, it is important to mention that this method also uses this mix of strategies to answer the main research questions and to create the instrument (Byrne and Humble, 2007). The researcher of this study believes that this mixed method would be useful because working with only one methodology could have many limitations, and having a mix method could erase almost any limitation and cover more information (Byrne and Humble, 2007), giving better results at the end of the project.

Taking into account the previous information, it is necessary to follow a descriptive methodology to complement the analysis, because this research is about secondary school

students' beliefs about their EFL learning process in the Mexican context, thus, according to Dulock (1993), it provides specific characteristics of a particular group. In this particular case, this study gives information about two different secondary school students and educational contexts, private and public sectors. Besides, it describes students' ideas about learning EFL. Specifically, descriptive research has the goal to summarize all the information collected, which came from a previous theory, it complements information or gives other topics to study, but almost never tries to solve a problem. (Lambert, et al.2012). Also, this kind of research does not question what was found, just looks to expose the results in a way to explain the reality in as few words as possible (Lans and Van der Voordt, 2002). Consequently, this research will describe the upcoming results, in a concrete, summarized and direct way. This methodology will allow us to answer the research questions properly, and in that way, it could be possible to know how the students realize the EFL learning process within their educational sectors.

3.2 Context

This research is carried out in two different secondary schools in the community of Acatzingo de Hidalgo into the state of Puebla, one of them is a private school and the second one is a public school, both of them are in secondary school level.

Regarding the private secondary school, its name is 'Colegio Benavente' which is one of the 11 venues around Mexico. This institution has a catholic approach and belongs to the congregation of *Misioneras del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y Santa María de Guadalupe* (2017). Its philosophy looks to create a critical awareness in the students from the educational system that is based on freedom grounded in truth, reinforcing human values; also, family is considered the center of everything. The school has four basic educational levels: kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school, and high school. Each level has no more than 20 to 25 students per classroom; additionally, each level has extracurricular classes such as music,

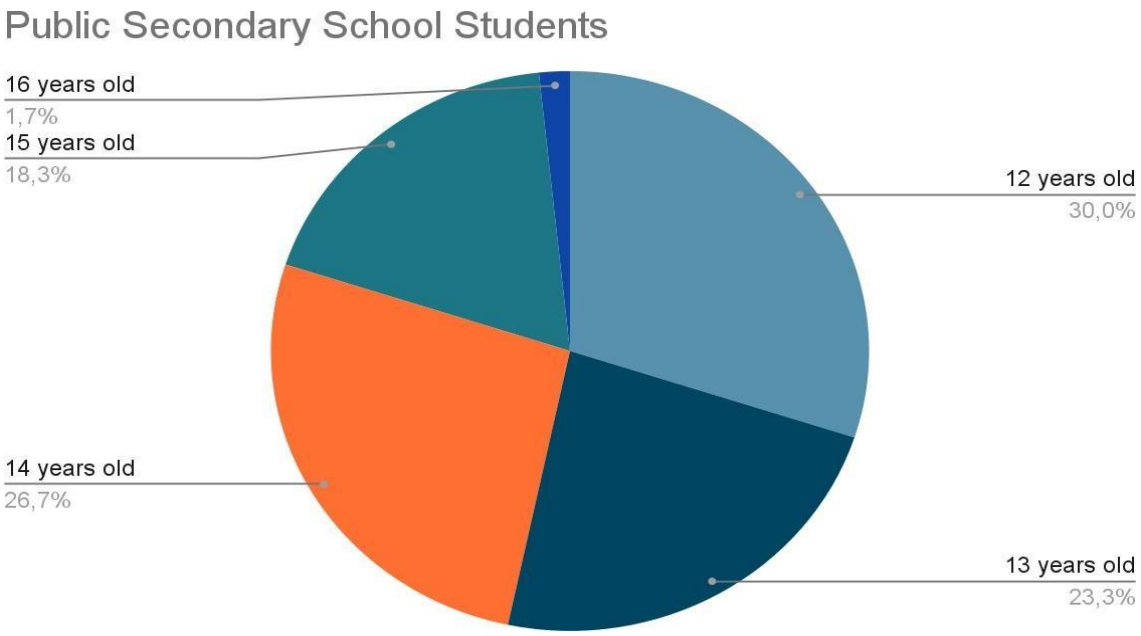
dance, religion class, sports, TICs, and crafts. The educational plan of this school is based on the national plan given by the Secretaria de Educacion Pública because it is an incorporated school, but at the same time, the school has its own institutional plan that allows students to have EFL classes since kindergarten, but in secondary school and high school, students could take basic or advance English classes according to their knowledge. Finally, this school has every one of the extracurricular classes (Misioneras del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y de Santa María de Guadalupe, 2017).

On the other hand, the public secondary school is called 'Centro Escolar General Rodolfo Sánchez Taboada'. This Centro Escolar is one of the four Centros in the 7th section of the state of Puebla and one of the 33 that exists in Puebla state. Since this is a public school, its philosophy changes a little in comparison to the previous institution, in other words, its main idea is to provide free education based on the third Mexican constitutional article. It gives the students a secular, formative, and integral education highlighting human values as well. This school also manages the four basic educational levels: kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school, and high school, with the main difference that it has around 50 students per classroom in each level. Occasionally, it has extracurricular classes such as music, dance, or marching band. Its educational plan is completely based on the SEP's program because it is a public school, and it has to follow what the state designs for every institute. Most of the time, students do not have EFL classes until the secondary school level (Dirección de Centros Escolares, n.d.). Concludingly, the socio-cultural diversity of students in both contexts offers an important dimension to overview the institutions where this study is carried out.

3.3 Participants

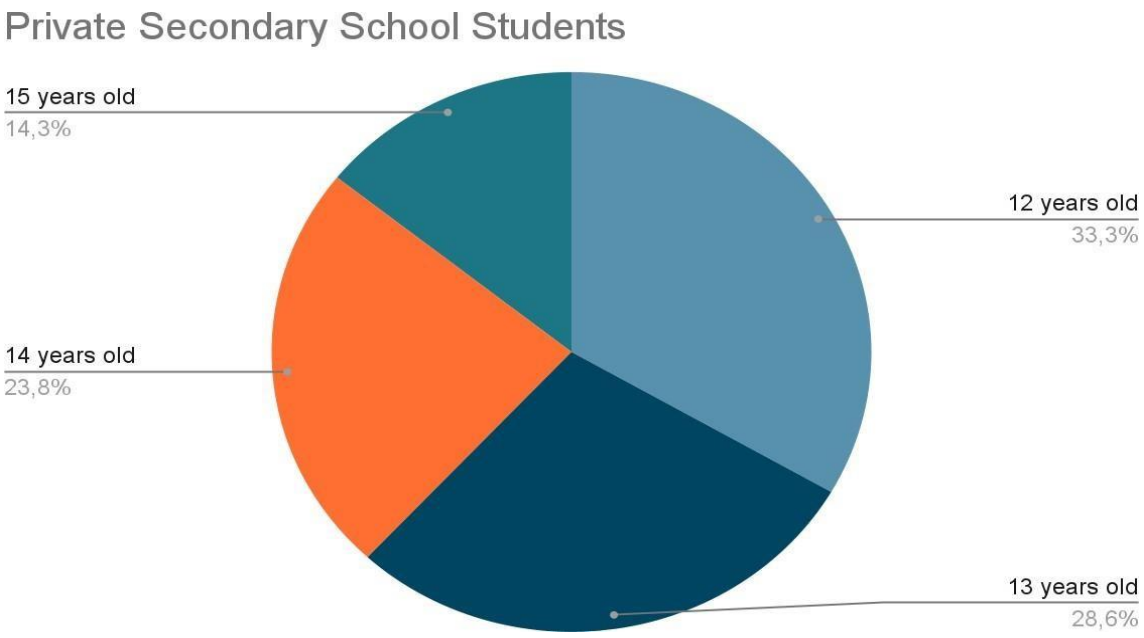
For this study, two groups of participants will be described, students from the private secondary school and students from the public secondary school. Firstly, the public secondary school has

a population of over 600 students, only 60 students between 12 and 16 years were surveyed. This data collection considered students from the first to the third year at that institution.



Graph 3.1 Public Secondary School students' age.

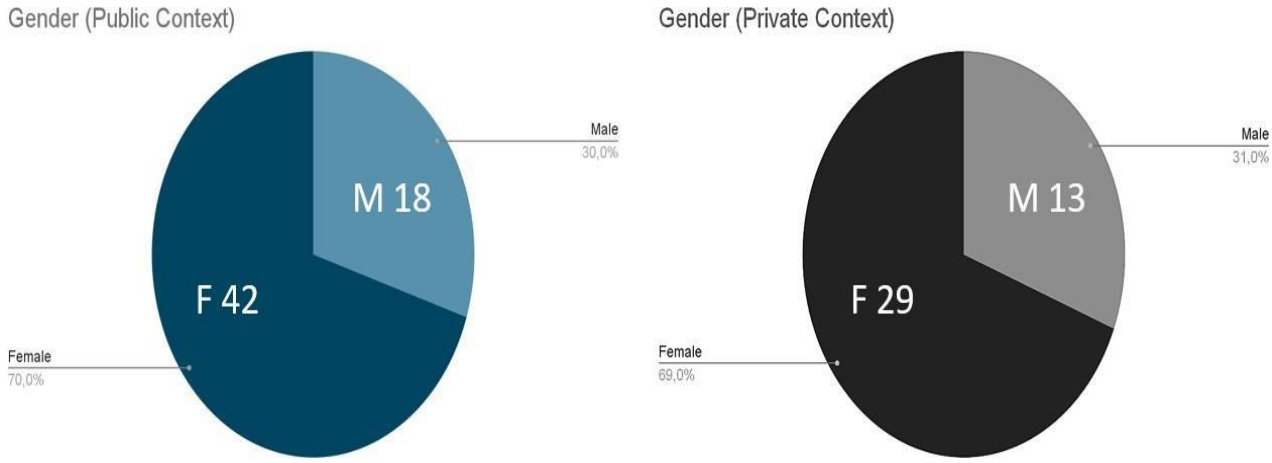
Graph 3.1 shows the percentages of how many *public secondary students* participated. In that way it is possible to notice that the lowest percentage belongs to the age of 16 years old which represents 1.7% of the population, it means that just one participant belongs to that age. The following group is 15 years old which represents 18,3% of the population, thus this group has only 11 students out of 60. The third group is 13 years old, which represents 23,3% of all the student population, it represents 14 students who are this age. Finally, the group of 14 years old represents 26.7% of the whole surveyed population, 16 students. Meanwhile, the 12 years old group represents 30% of students, in other words, this group has 18 students of this age.



Graph 3.2 Private Secondary School students' age

On the other hand, Graph 3.2 shows the percentages of how many *private secondary students* participated. Only 42 students out of 120 were surveyed, these students are between 12 to 15 years and represent almost 40% of the total population in that institute. Particularly, only 14.3% of 42 students are 15 years old, this is a total of 6 students of this age. The following group of participants is 14 years old; they represent 23,8% or 10 participants. The 13 years old group counts 28,6% of the selected population, that represents 12 students out of 42. Finally, the group of 12 years old represents 33,3% of students, which also means that this group has 14 surveyed participants.

Some information to contrast is that in the public secondary school the highest age is 16 years old, meanwhile the oldest students in the private sector are 15 years old. In both contexts, answering the survey was voluntary and both genders were considered in the results. Specifically, in the public secondary school out of the 60 participants 70% were women and 30% men; meanwhile, in the private secondary school out of the 42 students who answered the survey, 69% are female and 31% are male.



Graph 3.3 Public and Private Secondary School students' gender

According to Graph 3.3, it is observed that the female gender has more presence in this research. In the private context, 29 participants out of 42 students are women while in the public context 42 participants out of 60 are women as well. Correspondingly, just 13 male students are in the private sector while 18 men are in the public one.

3.4 Instrument

According to Burns (2009), a survey can be used to collect several people or big groups' answers. It is a better method than an interview, for that reason, the proper instrument for this inquiry is a survey. In Scheuren's words (2004), this instrument is a brief questionnaire used to gather information from a sample of individuals, where the sample is just a fraction of the population studied. A survey could be compared or even confused with a census, but they have a huge and important difference: censuses gather information from all members of the studied population, unlike surveys. That is how the researcher could achieve a measurable quantity of information and, in this way, the results could be projected from the sample to the larger population with huge certainty (Ferber, et al. 1980).

Taking into account the previous information, this instrument will be directed to students at secondary school in public and private sectors. These surveys have 10 questions,

which are divided into 3 groups: about the class, about EFL and about students' background. This survey presents multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions, just with the purpose of making students feel the freedom to answer whatever they really think and not to consider imposed options (See Appendix A).

The first part of this survey presents the personal data section which consists of the name, age, grade, group, and gender of the student. All this information is gathered with the purpose of having better control of the surveyed population, and then, have clearer results. Particularly, the very first section of questions has the purpose to know the EFL learning background of the students and if they take classes of this subject in their daily scholar schedule. Also, it asks about participants' EFL teacher background. Since the fifth question, the studies, practicing habits and beliefs of the students are required; the main purpose is to discover if students have contact with the language after school and for how long. Since the sixth question, the schools' learning environment is mentioned, meanwhile the seventh question is the first open question regarding the most difficult language that participants have to improve when learning EFL. The eighth question is about students' interest regarding EFL learning. The ninth question is about the usefulness of learning EFL while the tenth question is focused on the types of learning that students believe they have. Finally, this survey provides a space for students to write their point of view regarding what affects them in a positive or negative way within their EFL learning environment and process, both inside and outside the school.

3.5 Description of the overall research design

In order to carry out this research, it was mandatory to follow some steps to achieve data collection. First, it was required to design an instrument according to the necessities of this research and it needed to be appropriate for participants. Secondly, to be able to apply the

instrument in both contexts, public and private, it was necessary to request permission from the director or coordinator of both schools. In the case of the private secondary school, which is a Catholic school, it was necessary to ask for permission from the general director, or the Chief Nun. At the same time, it was necessary to ask if it was possible to have contact with her, just to talk in person with her and explain what the procedure of this study was, mainly to avoid misunderstandings. On the other hand, in the public context, it was almost the same situation. Here, a presentation letter was directed to the director of the secondary school level, not the general one. This letter had the same requirements as the one that was written for the private school, it was asking for permission to apply the survey and for a little interview to explain the aim of this study.

The following step was to apply the instrument. The first school surveyed was the private one because it was impossible to find the director of the public secondary school for a week, thus, the application started at this school. Applying the instrument on this private institution was very quick and easy because the dean gave all what was needed to work. For example, she facilitated access to the different classrooms and the necessary time for students to answer the survey. It was around 5 to 10 minutes per classroom. On the other hand, applying the instrument in the public context was completely different, finding the principal of this institution lasted 6 days. Later, it was necessary to return the next day to start the application. Neither the dean nor the principal organized the groups to apply the survey. They took a couple of hours to organize themselves and the students started to come to the principal's office, that was the place where they planned to carry out this instrument application. Unfortunately, the principal put the dean in charge of the application, and he forgot to bring more students to answer the survey, so those were the only participants that were answering the instrument in this study. The whole application in the public secondary school lasted around 5 hours in total.

3.6 Data Analysis

Taking into account the nature of this research, which is descriptive, it is necessary to categorize all the answers that the students provided. This categorization was possible by making excel tables because, in that way, it was easy to separate all the information into different sections. Excel was chosen to collect data because it is helpful to manage all that information and has many tools that could help to analyze it properly. After finishing the discrimination process, it was possible to make some graphics to show the results and demonstrate how students think about their EFL acquisition process.

Generally, all the answers will be written into 4 different sections that will contain information about the students' perspective of their EFL class, students' perspective about the English language, how students think that EFL will affect their life in a future; and finally, the last section is about things that help or harm the EFL students' language acquisition. It is important to highlight that to develop this analysis it will be necessary to consider both scholar contexts and make tables according to each one, just with the purpose of comparing the answers between both sectors: public and private. Additionally, graphs and tables will be helpful to show the results and compare both perspectives. Each table and graph will have the appropriate information about its section. For example: the first set of tables have the answers from 1st to 4th question, the second ones will have answers from 5th to 7th questions, the third section contains answers from 8th to 10th questions and the last graph will have the information about the opened question.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the research methodology was explained. Also, the context and participants of this investigation were described, just to have a better understanding of the current project. This

description was followed by the description of the overall research design section, which talked about the whole process of applying the instrument in both context: public and private. The following chapter presents the results of this inquiry, main findings and the answers of the research questions.

Chapter IV

Results

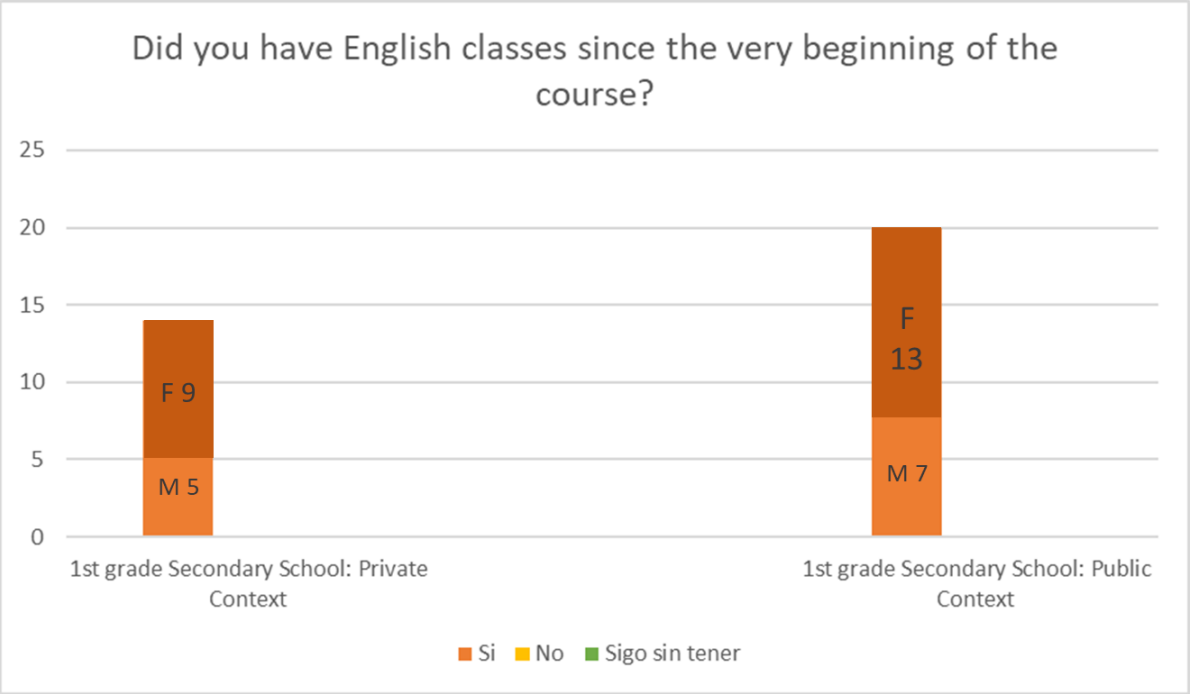
As previously mentioned, this study used a survey in order to collect data from secondary school students in a public and a private context. This chapter presents 102 participants' beliefs about their EFL learning process. Specifically, in the public context, there were 60 volunteer participants; only 20 students per grade and 5 per group were considered. On the other hand, within the private context there were 42 participants, specifically 14 per grade and 7 per group. Consequently, this chapter will provide an explicit explanation about the data analysis' results. In order to do so, the first section of this chapter is presenting the obtained results where the use of tables and graphs will help to explain them. Later, the answer to the research questions is given. Finally, a brief discussion of the results is given followed by the conclusion of this chapter.

4.1 Obtained Results

As it has already been set in Chapter three, this study is considering participants from different ages, genders and educational contexts. Therefore, during the data analysis it was indispensable to find and understand these students' beliefs about their EFL acquisition process. In order to understand the results, they will be displayed in the further sections that will present the information through graphs and its written explanation. This would help readers to observe participants' perceptions of EFL learning in Mexico and to compare both contexts of education.

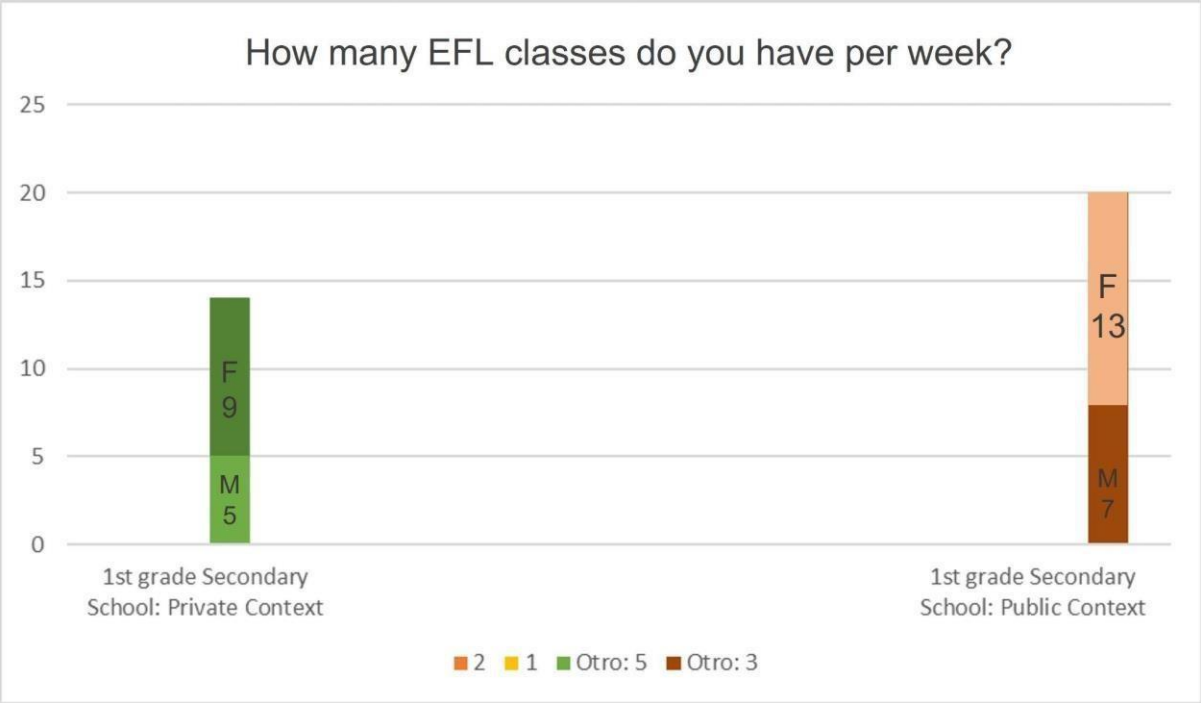
4.1.1 Secondary school, 1st Grade results - 12-13 years old

4.1.1.1 EFL Class (Private and Public context)



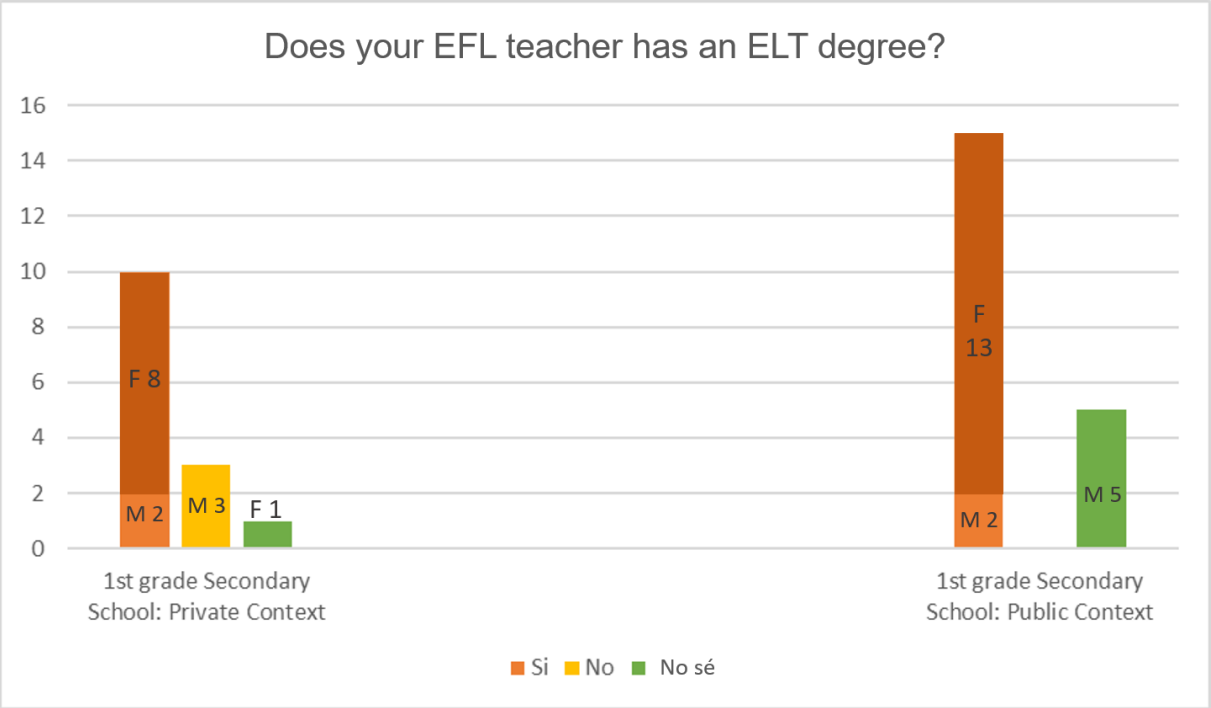
Graph 4.1 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade

Graph 4.1 shows the current context of these participants. Specifically, it is impressive to see that they started EFL classes on time from the very beginning of the course. The 20 participants from the public secondary school context and 14 participants from the private context answered that they started classes on time. Even though 34 out of 34 students affirm that they started on time their EFL classes, it is not possible to ensure the quality of the classes and the capability of the EFL teachers till this point. What we can ensure is that EFL professors in these private and public contexts are punctual regarding their course beginning.



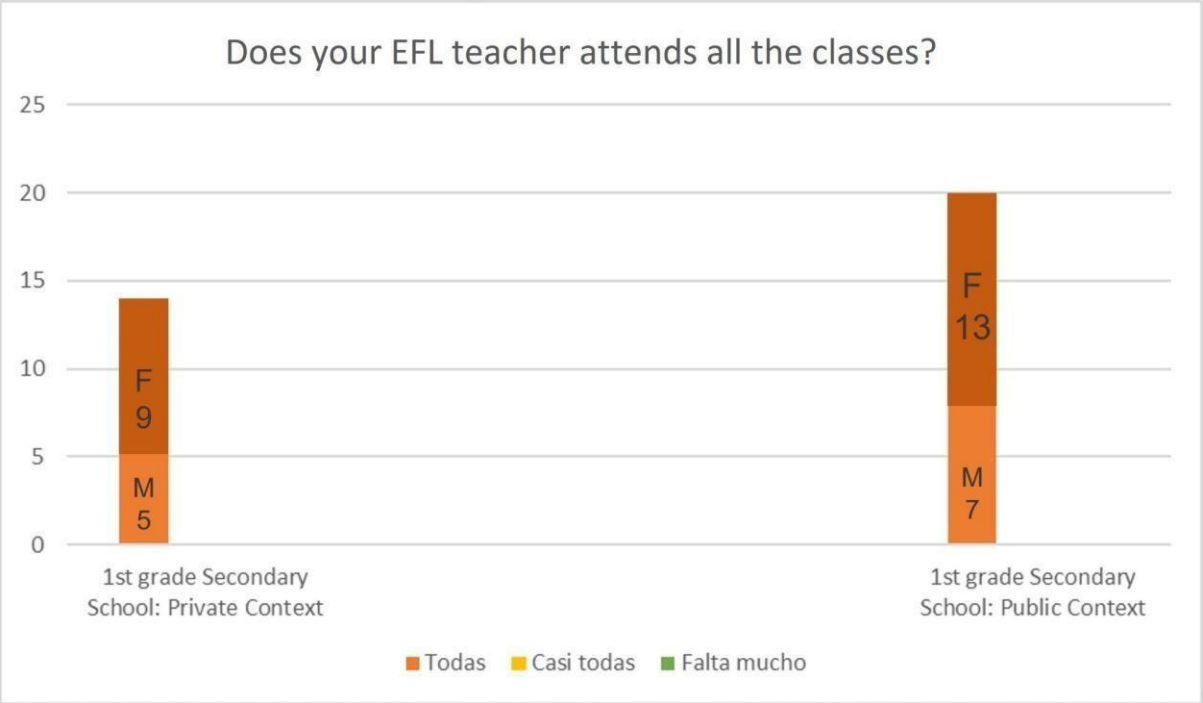
Graph 4.2 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.

Graph 4.2 presents how frequently participants have EFL classes throughout the week in their education context. For example, in the public secondary school, a total of 20 participants mention that they usually have EFL classes 3 days per week. Conversely, in the private secondary school, 14 participants confirm that they usually have more EFL classes than public ones.



Graph 4.3 EFL teacher's professionalism in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.

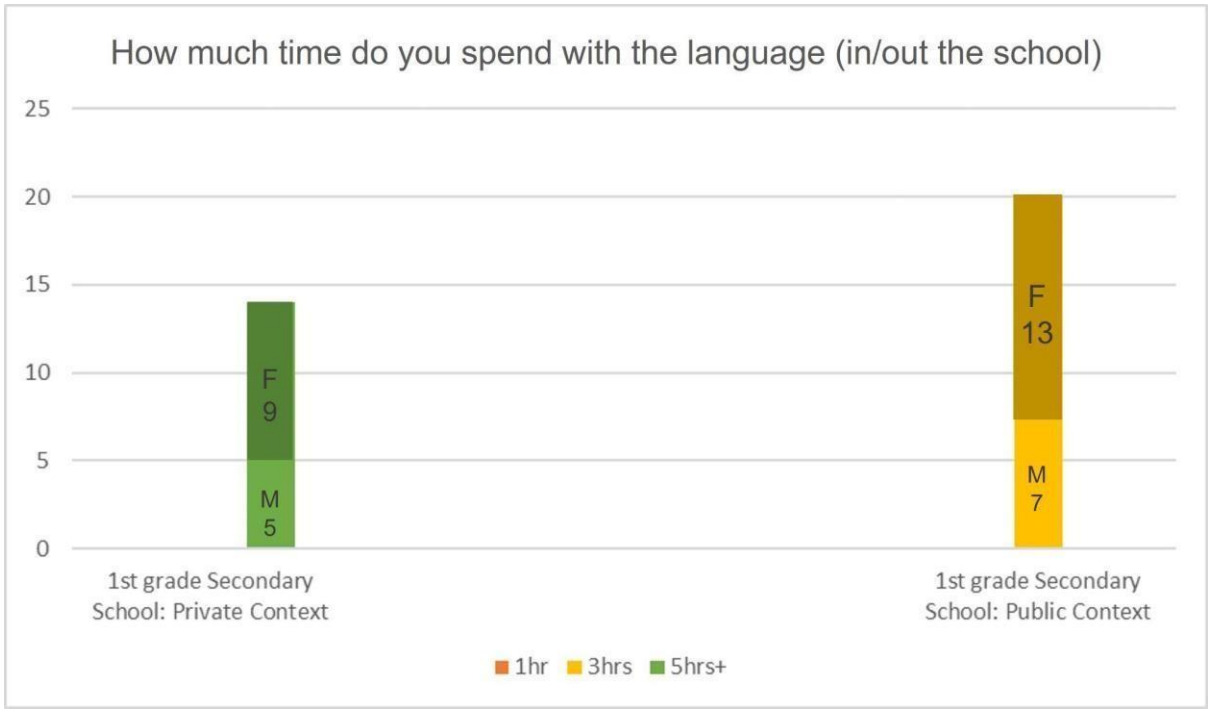
As we can observe in Graph 4.3, in the public context 15 students affirm that their EFL teacher had a degree meanwhile 5 of them said that they are not having an ELT degree. On the other hand, in the private context, 10 participants said that their professors are prepared to teach EFL while 3 participants said the opposite. One participant from the private school said that she does not know about it. Regarding the question, there exists a possibility that some participants decided to answer 'yes' even without being sure about it.



Graph 4.4 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.

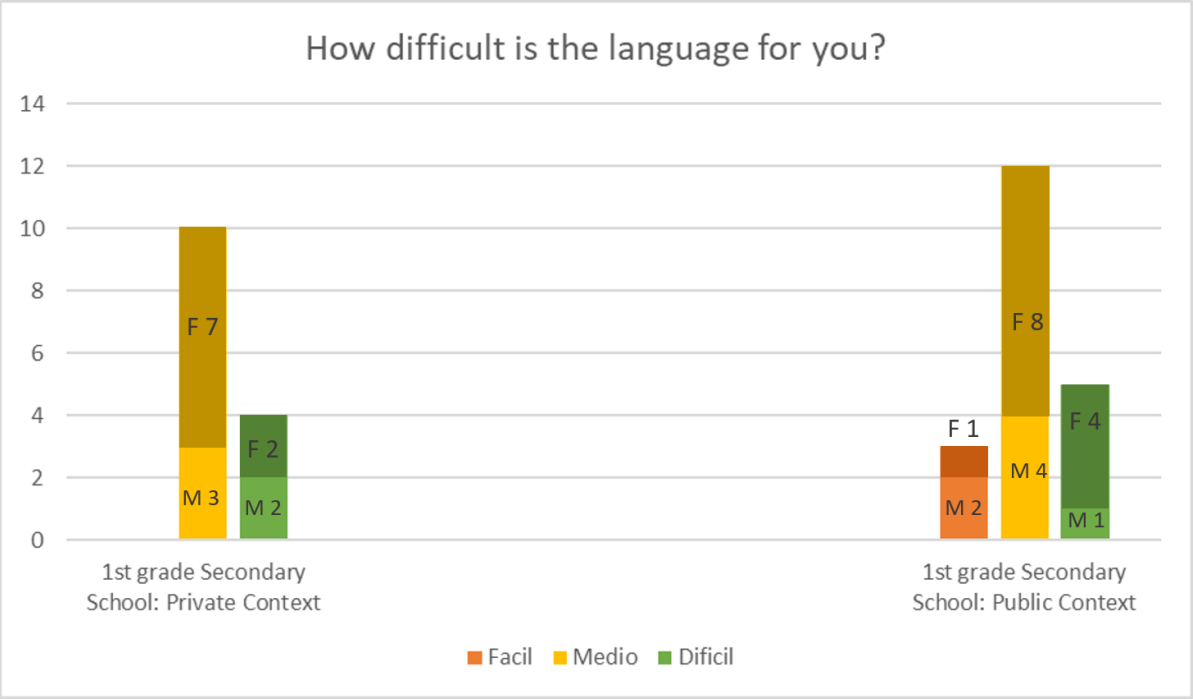
As is shown in Graph 4.4 all participants, in both contexts, mentioned that their EFL teachers had gone to every single class. However, we cannot ensure that having 100% of attendance means giving the actual EFL class.

4.1.1.2 Language (Private and Public context)



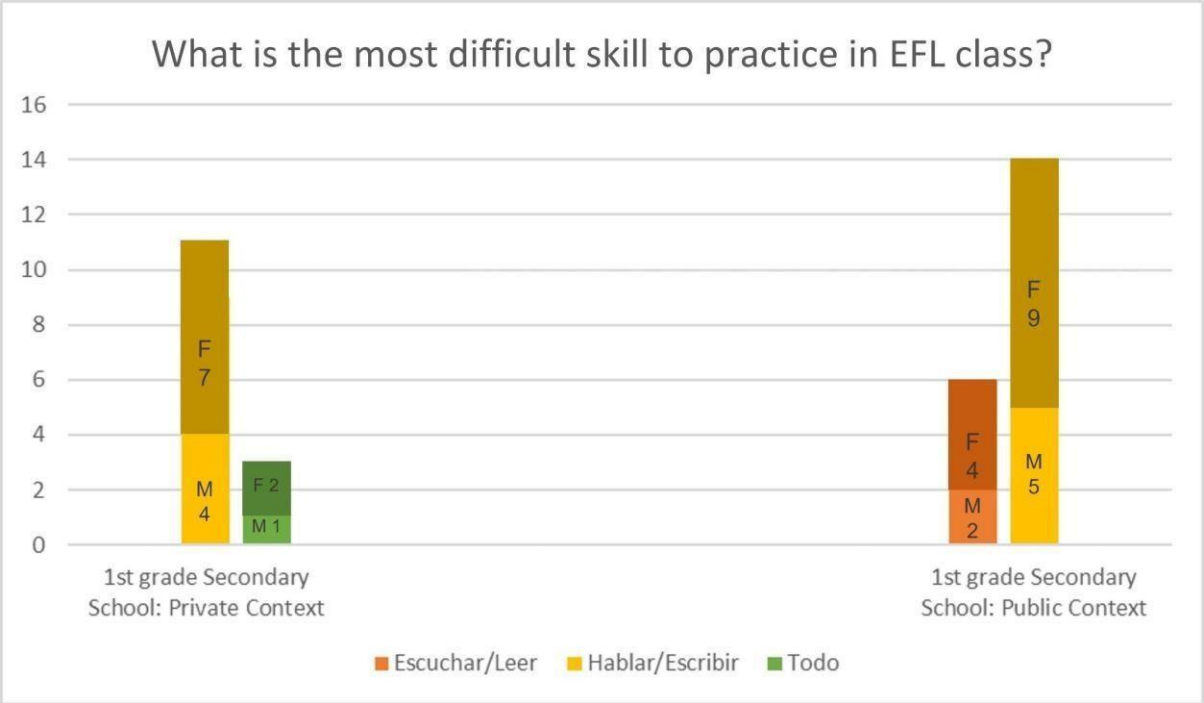
Graph 4.5 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 1st Grade related to how much time students are exposed to the language.

Here, graph 4.5 shows a very noticeable difference, between the public and private contexts, regarding the time that students are exposed to EFL language. According to this graph, we can see that 14 students from the private school have more contact with EFL than the public one. The private institution's students are exposed to language 5 or more hours per week, both inside and outside the school. Meanwhile, the public institution's students spend around 3 hours every week. It can be assumed that the time that 1st graders spend learning EFL is mostly due to their curricula at school.



Graph 4.6 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.

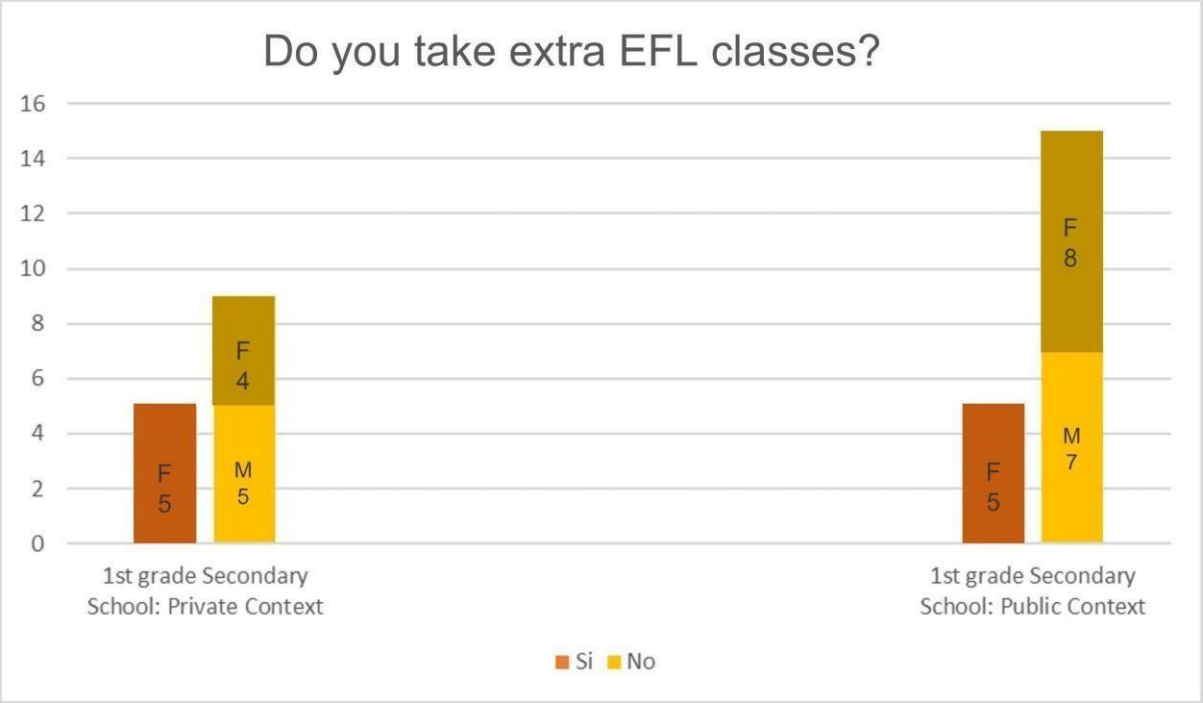
As we can see, in the public-school context, there are 3 students that consider learning EFL to be easy. Conversely, in the private school context, there is no one who thinks the same. In both contexts, 50% and more of the surveyed participants consider learning EFL as not too hard. Only 9 participants out of 34 in both contexts think that it is difficult to learn EFL.



Graph 4.7 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 1st grade.

Graph 4.7 shows the three possible results that were obtained in the survey, input skills, output skills or all of them. Once that is clear, the option with the highest rank is the *output skills* because most of the students said that learning EFL is difficult due to their no idea about how to express themselves. Eleven from the private secondary school and fourteen from the public secondary school agree on this. 3 out of 14 participants from the private context said that *all skills* are difficult to learn. Finally, 6 out of 20 students from public context believe that the most difficult skills to practice are the input ones.

4.1.1.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context)

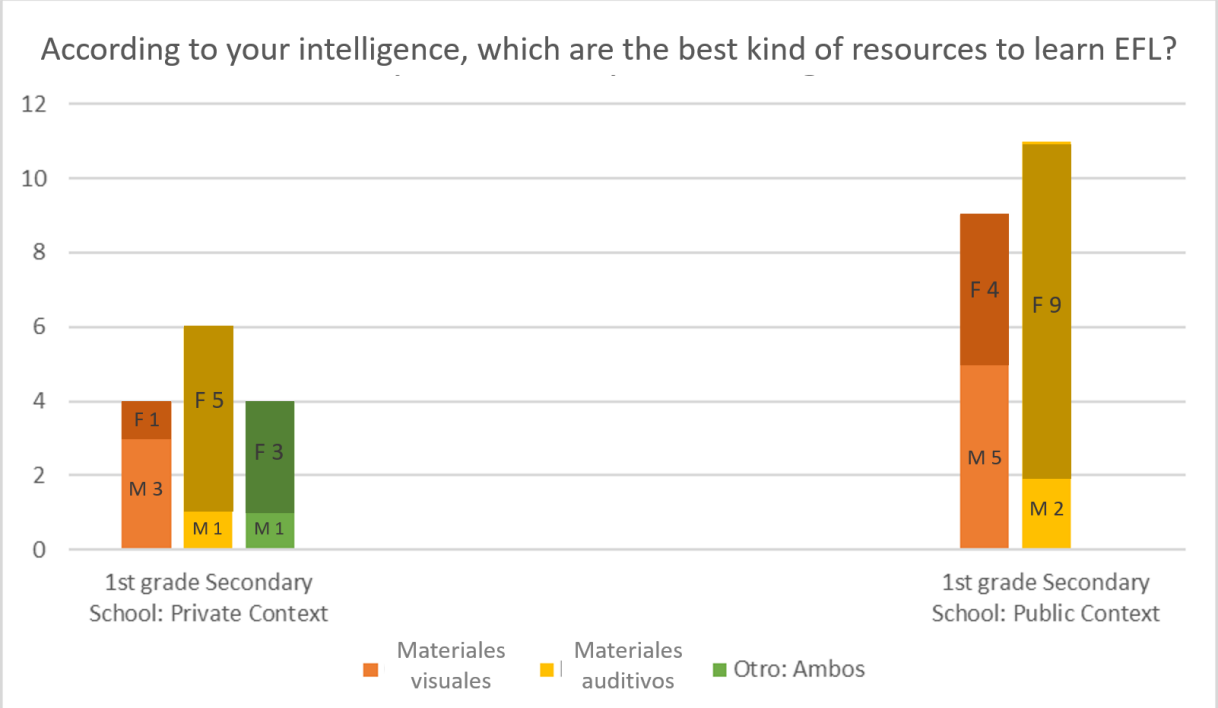


Graph 4.8 Extra EFL classes, 1st grade

According to this Graph, we can see that only 5 participants from each context have extra classes of EFL while the rest of them do not. This can mean that these participants either care about learning this foreign language or want to reinforce it for their courses at their actual secondary school.

Graph 4.9 Future perception of EFL usage, 1st grade.

As it is observed in Graph 4.9, 100% of the surveyed students answered that English will be very important for them in the future, thus they will use it.

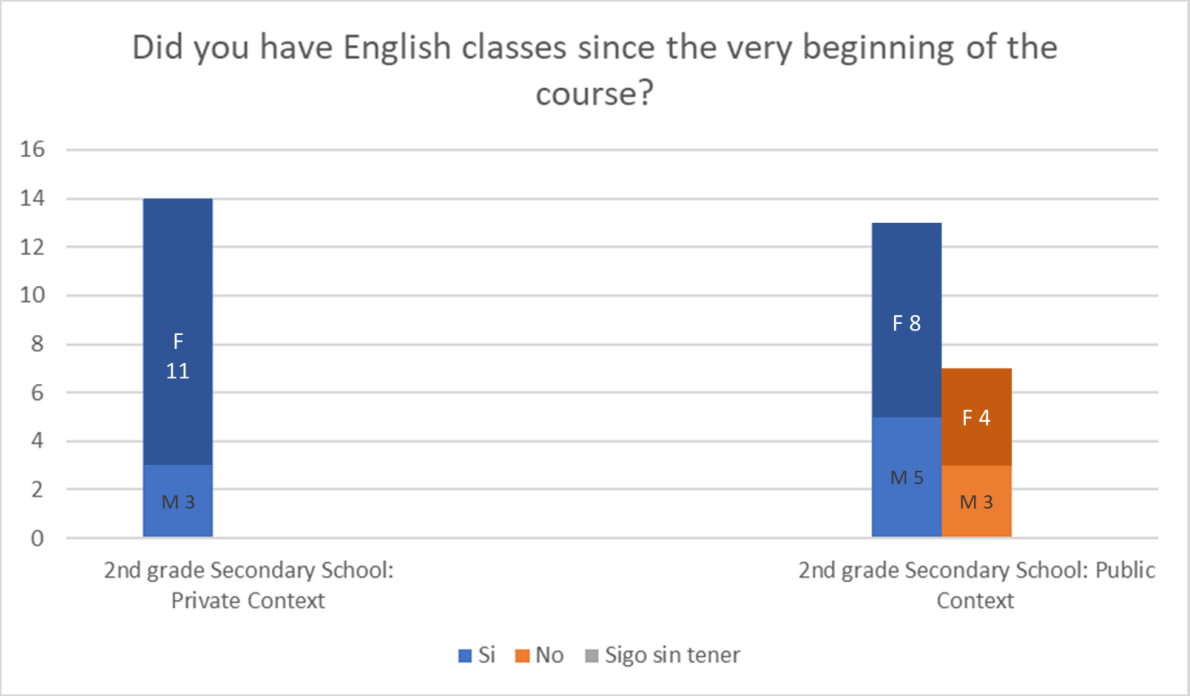


Graph 4.10 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 1st Grade related to how they learn.

Graph 4.10 shows us what the students consider a good kind of resource to learn EFL. In order to answer this question, it was necessary to give some examples of typical materials used in the classroom to exemplify resources that help to learn through different intelligences. For instance, exercises on the board, readings, flashcards, worksheets, visuals, audios, conversations, descriptions, daily situations, songs, and roleplays. Taking into account those examples, participants were able to discriminate the best option according to their type of intelligence. Regarding the private context, 4 participants out of 14 were considered visual, 6 participants out of 14 chose listening resources as their best option. Finally, 4 participants said that everything works for them at the time to learn EFL. On the other hand, in the public context, 9 students out of 20 mentioned that visual aids are better than listening, and 11 out of 20 participants thought that listening is better.

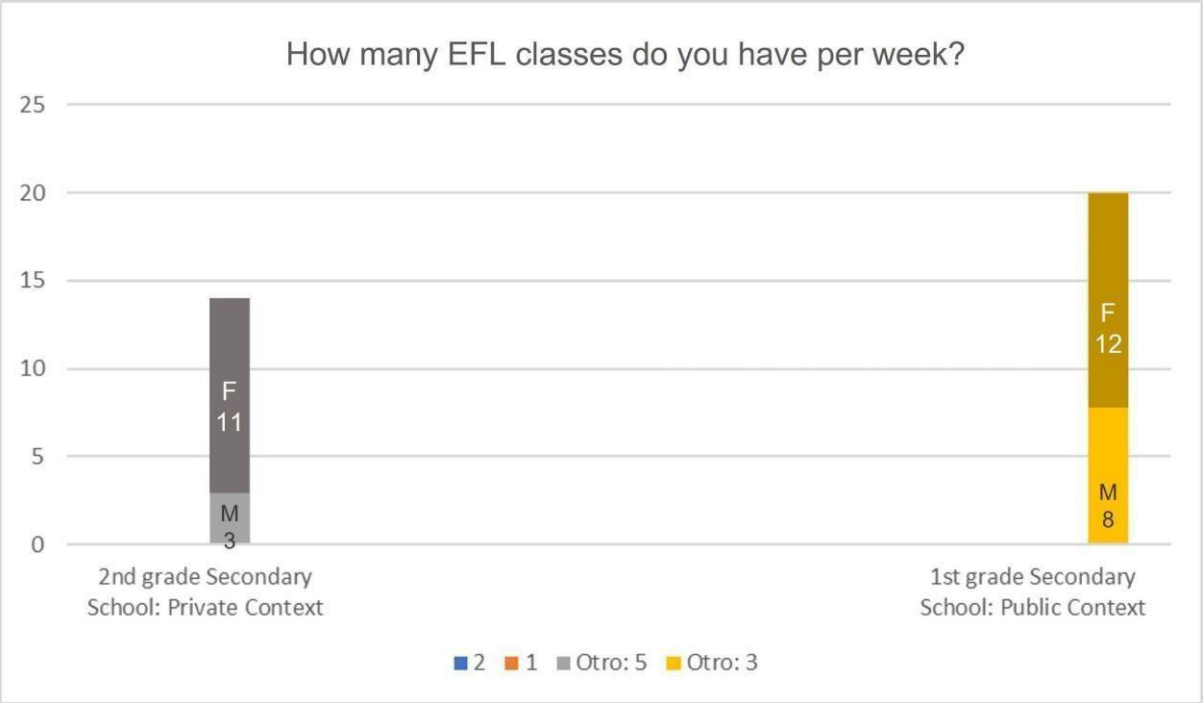
4.1.2 Secondary school: 2nd Grade - 13-14 years old

4.1.2.1 Class Section (Private and Public context)



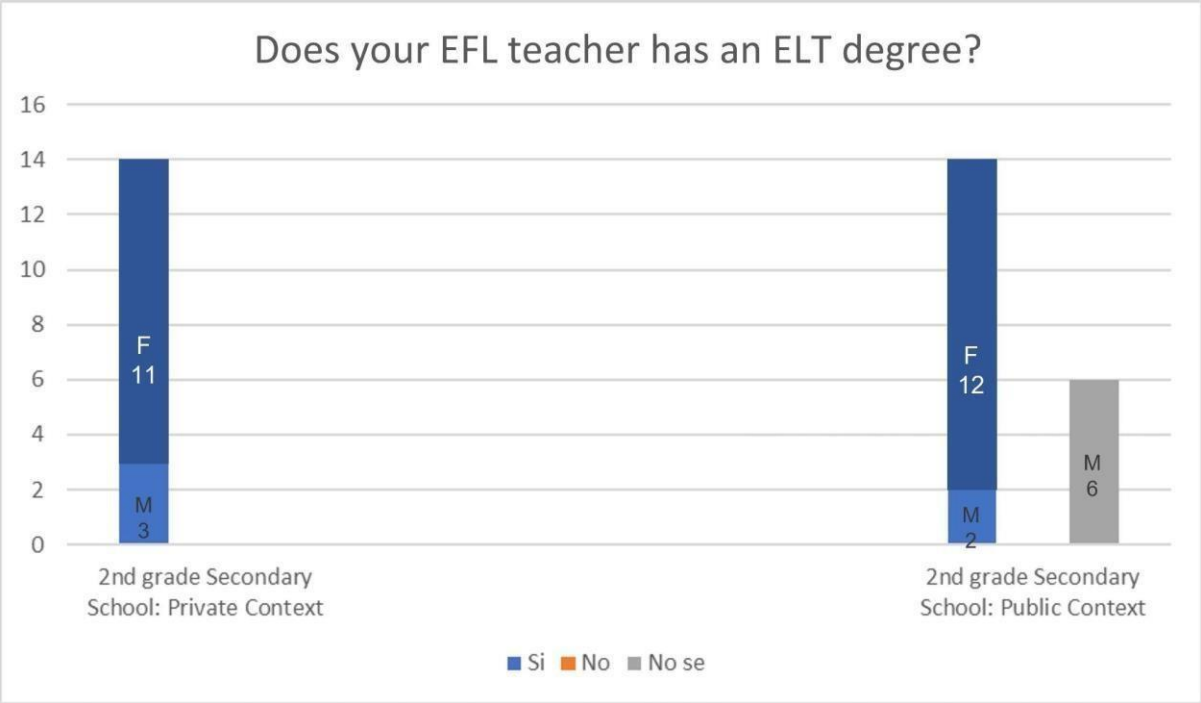
Graph 4.11 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

Graph 4.11 shows that in the private context, students from second grade had their EFL classes from the beginning. Conversely, in the public school, seven students barely had the complete course while thirteen said that they did have completed their classes so far.



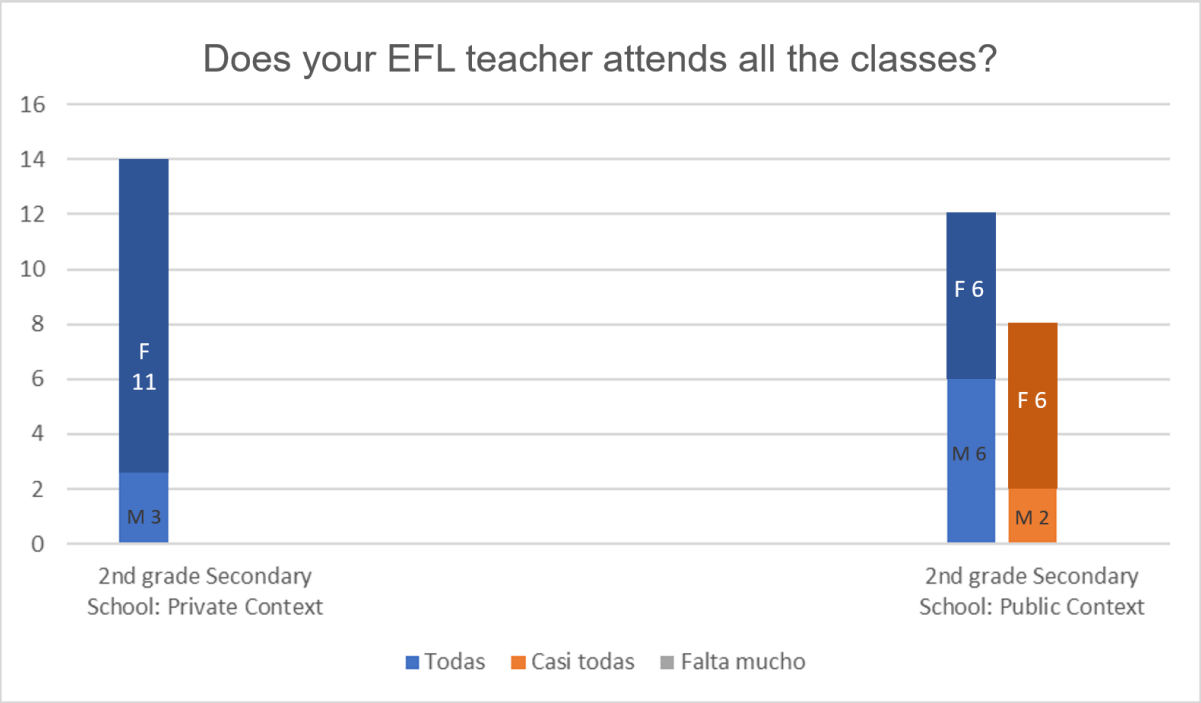
Graph 4.12 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

Graph 4.12 has the same results as Table 4.2 for first graders, students from the public context only have 3 EFL classes per week; meanwhile, students from the private context have 5 or more classes per week. One interesting point here is that in the public-school students have those 3 classes per week, however, no one knows since when (See Graph 4.11)



Graph 4.13 EFL teacher's professionalism in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

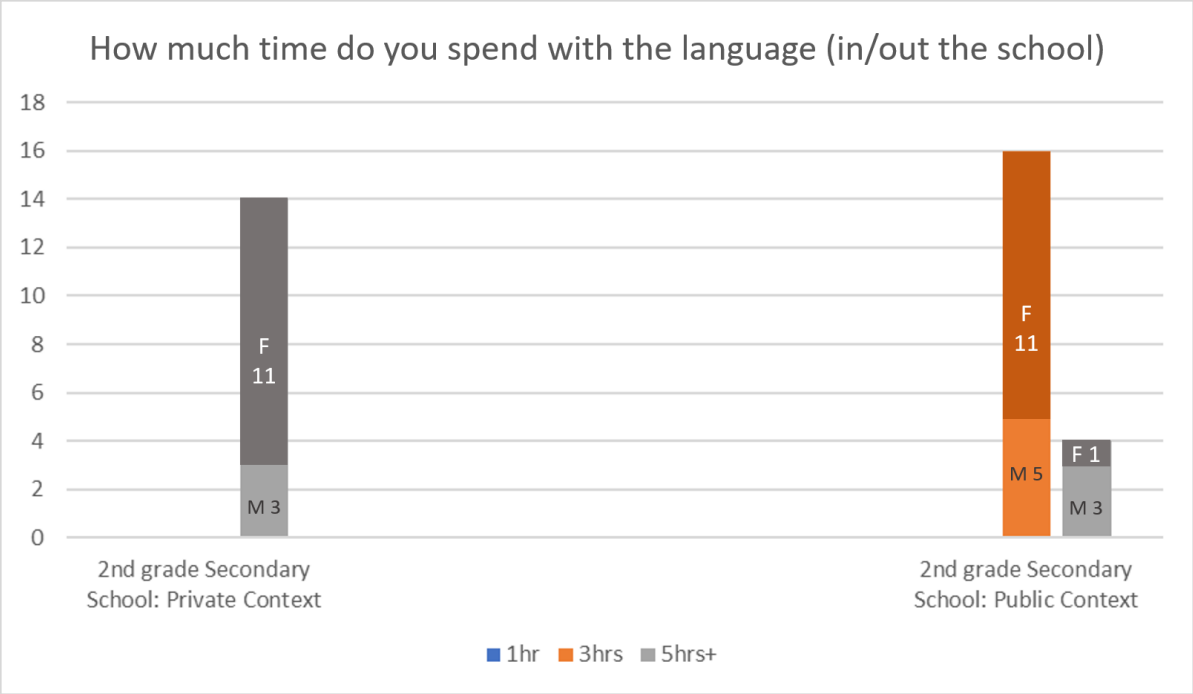
If we compare this one, graph 4.13 with 4.3, we can notice different answers between first graders and second graders. For example, private school's students of second grade are completely sure that their teacher has a degree. On the other hand, six students from the public context are not really sure about if their teacher studied to give the EFL classes properly. Also, it is important to mention that in this case, the teacher already missed some classes.



Graph 4.14 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

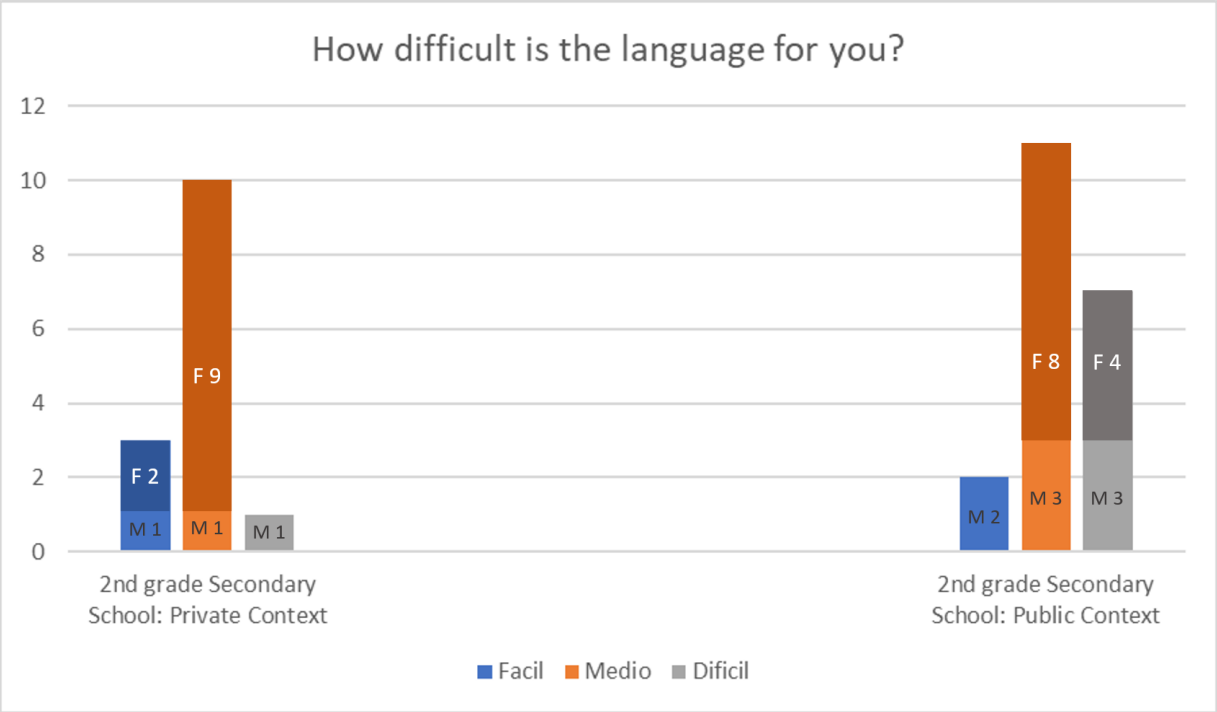
In Graph 4.14, it is possible to notice that public teachers are more flexible about their attendance. According to the participants, in this sector EFL teachers have more absences than in first grade, specifically eight of them mentioned that teachers miss classes. In the private context, EFL professors attend their complete sessions.

4.1.2.2 Language Section (Private and Public context)



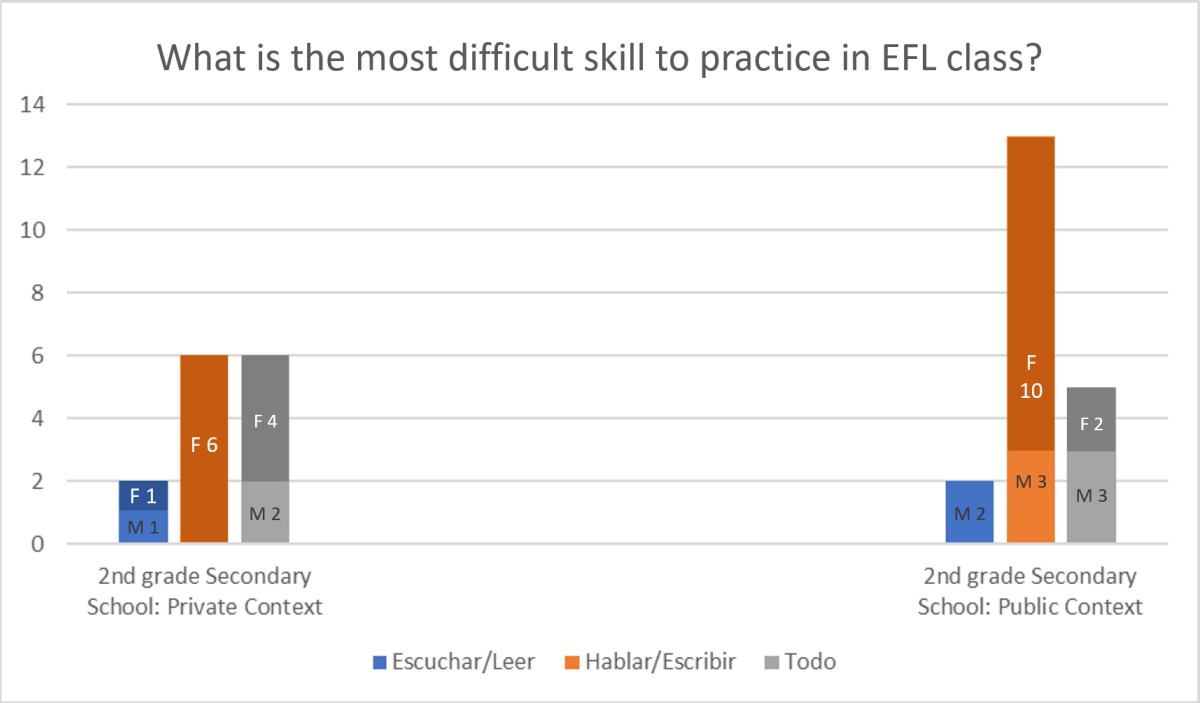
Graph 4.15 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 2nd Grade related to how much time they spend with the language.

According to this graph, 100% of private context's students have more touch with the language than the public context's students. Just a few participants from the public school, which is only three, spent almost the same time as the students in the other sector taking extra EFL classes. By considering this little percentage of students in this public context, it is possible to say that they are the real ones who really want to learn, because in the private context, students have more EFL classes per week (See Graph 4.15).



Graph 4.16 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

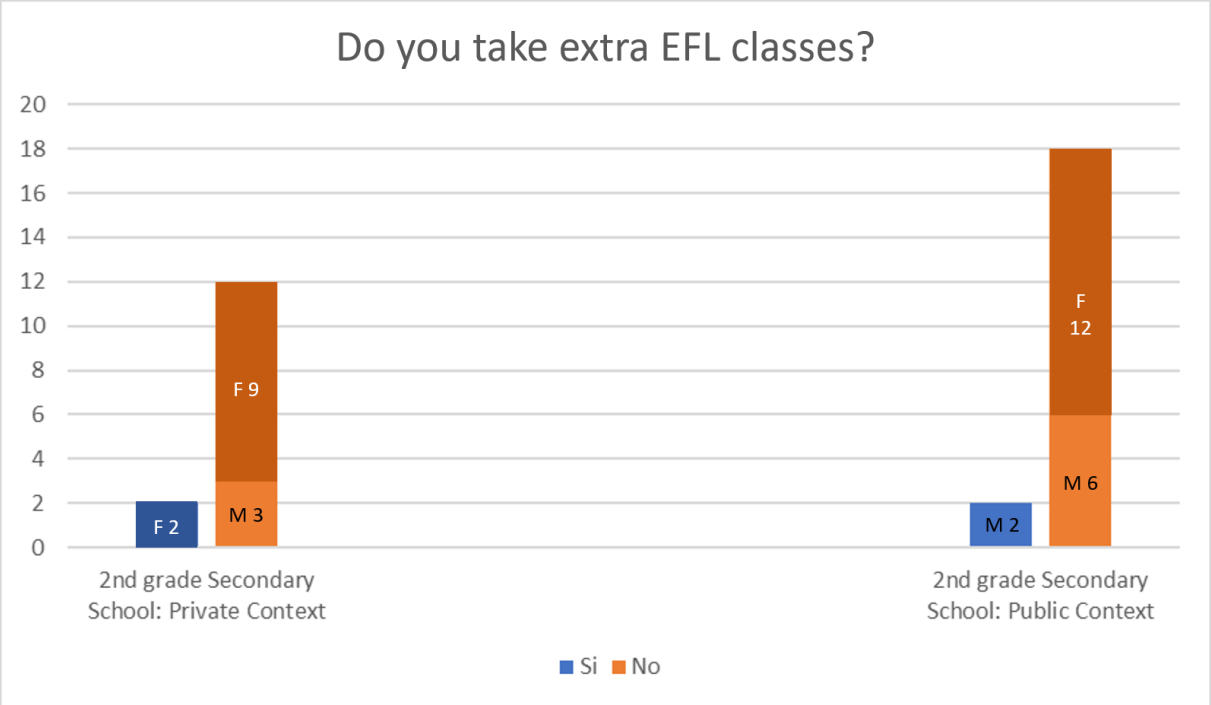
As we can see in Graph 4.16, in both contexts, just a few students thought that English is an easy language to learn. In the public section only 2 of the students have no issues learning the language and 3 students on the private side think it is easy. Meanwhile, the majority the participants in both sectors think it is more or less difficult to learn EFL; specifically, 11 from the public context and 10 from the private. No more than 7 in the public context and 1 from the private context believe it is difficult to learn EFL.



Graph 4.17 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 2nd grade.

Graph 4.17 shows really interesting results. Students from both contexts are having issues with their production skills (19) and a significant amount from private school is having issues with both kinds of skills (6). Only, 2 participants from the private context and 2 from the public context are having issues with their input skills.

4.1.2.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context)

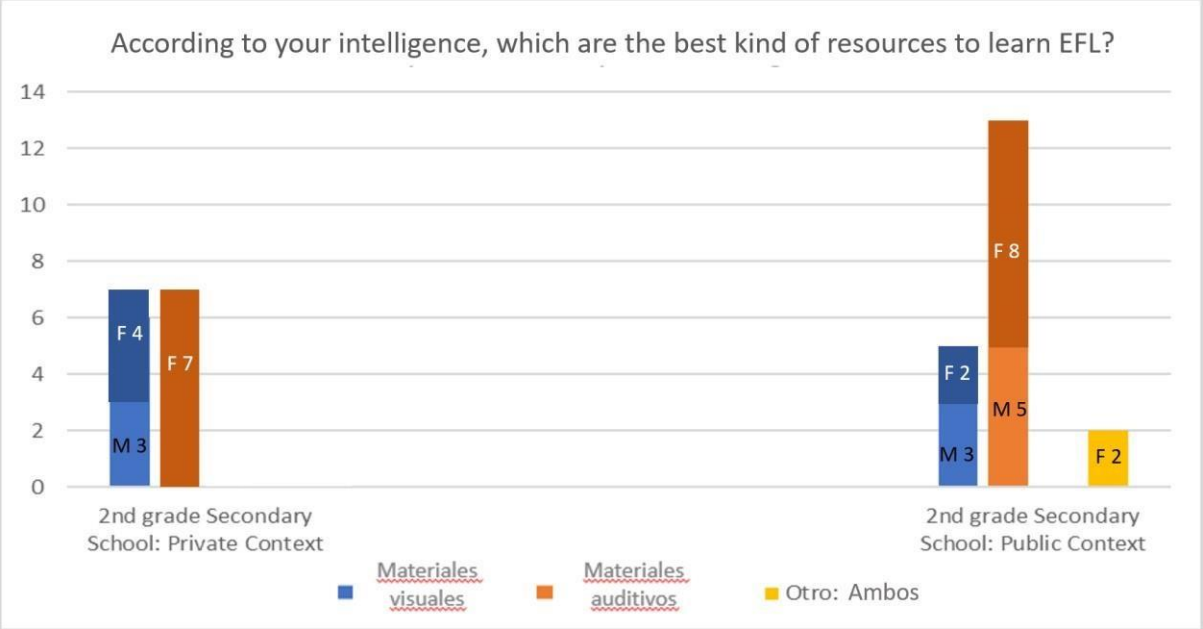


Graph 4.18 Extra EFL classes, 2nd grade.

Results in Graph 4.18 are fully related with Graphs 4.16 y 4.17 because they relate their exposure to the language and how difficult it could be for them to practice it. Particularly, in both contexts just a little quantity of students takes extra EFL classes. 2 participants from each sector take extra classes of EFL.

Graph 4.19 Future perception of EFL usage, 1st grade.

Graph 4.19 shows that 100% percent of them are conscious about the importance of EFL.



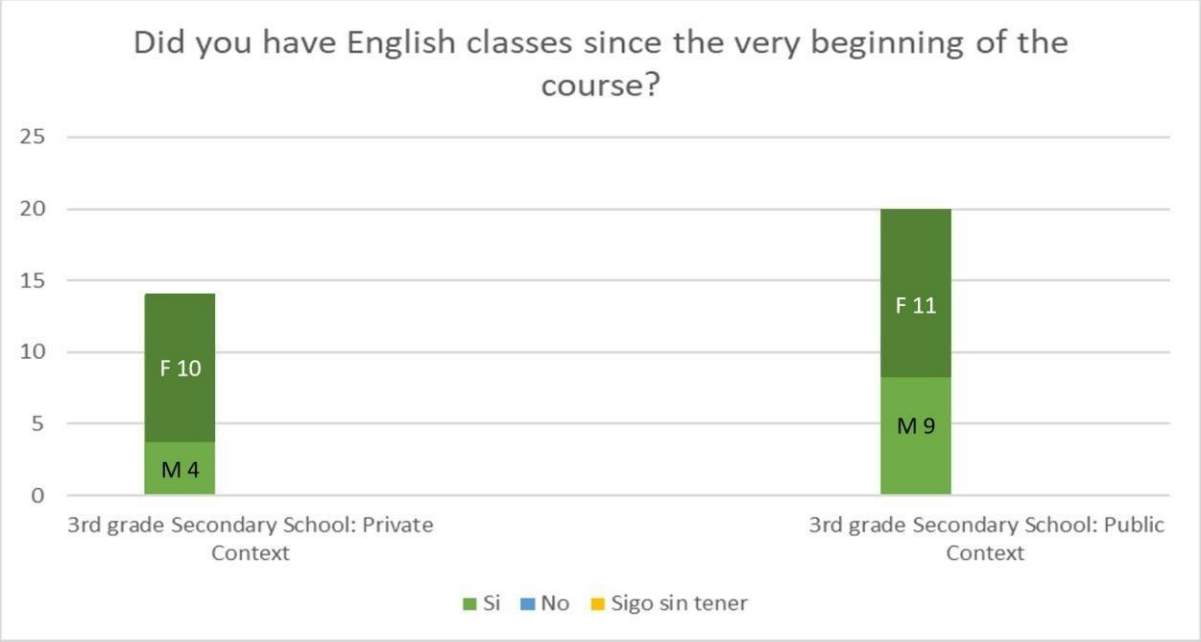
Graph 4.20 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 2nd Grade related to how they learn.

In order to answer this question, it was necessary to give some examples of typical materials used in the classroom to exemplify resources that help to learn through different

intelligences. For instance, exercises on the board, readings, flashcards, worksheets, visuals, audios, conversations, descriptions, daily situations, songs, and roleplays. According to Graph 4.20, in the private context 7 participants out of 14 considered that visual resources are the best option to learn EFL; meanwhile 7 participants out of 14 chose listening resources as the best option. Only a single participant considered just reading as the best option to learn EFL, but it is added to the visual material section. On the other hand, in the public context, 5 participants out of 20 mentioned that visuals are better than listening. Meanwhile, 13 out of 20 participants thought that listening helped them to learn EFL. Finally, 2 participants out of 20 considered both options as the best way to have a good EFL acquisition.

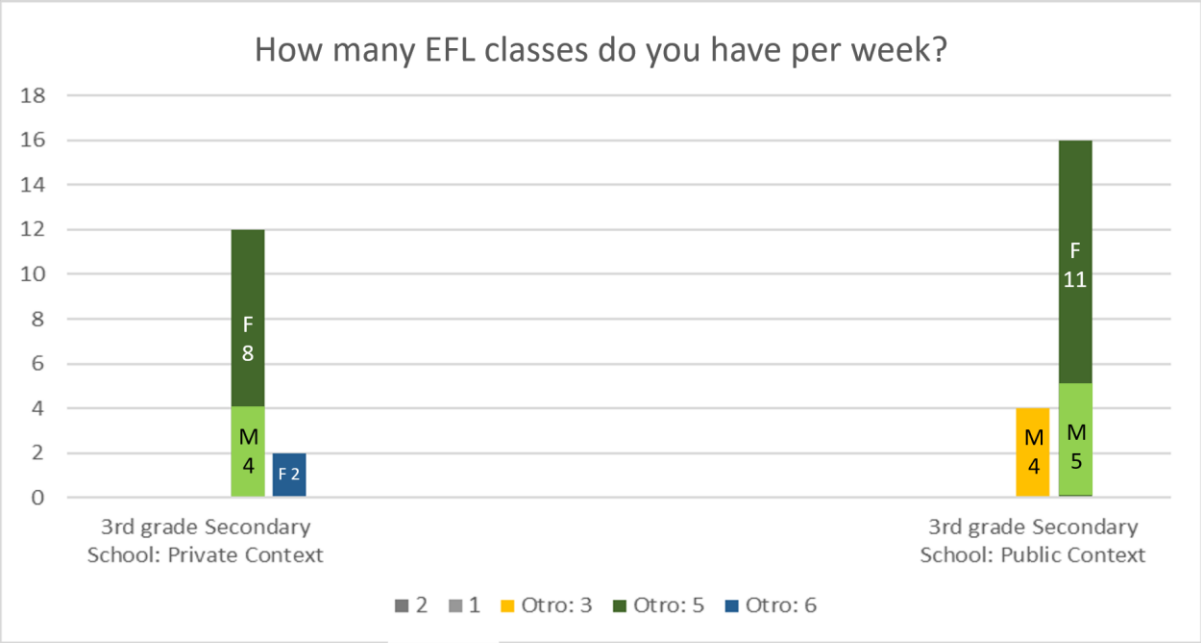
4.1.3 Secondary school: 3rd Grade - 14-16 years old

4.1.3.1 Class Section (Private and Public context)



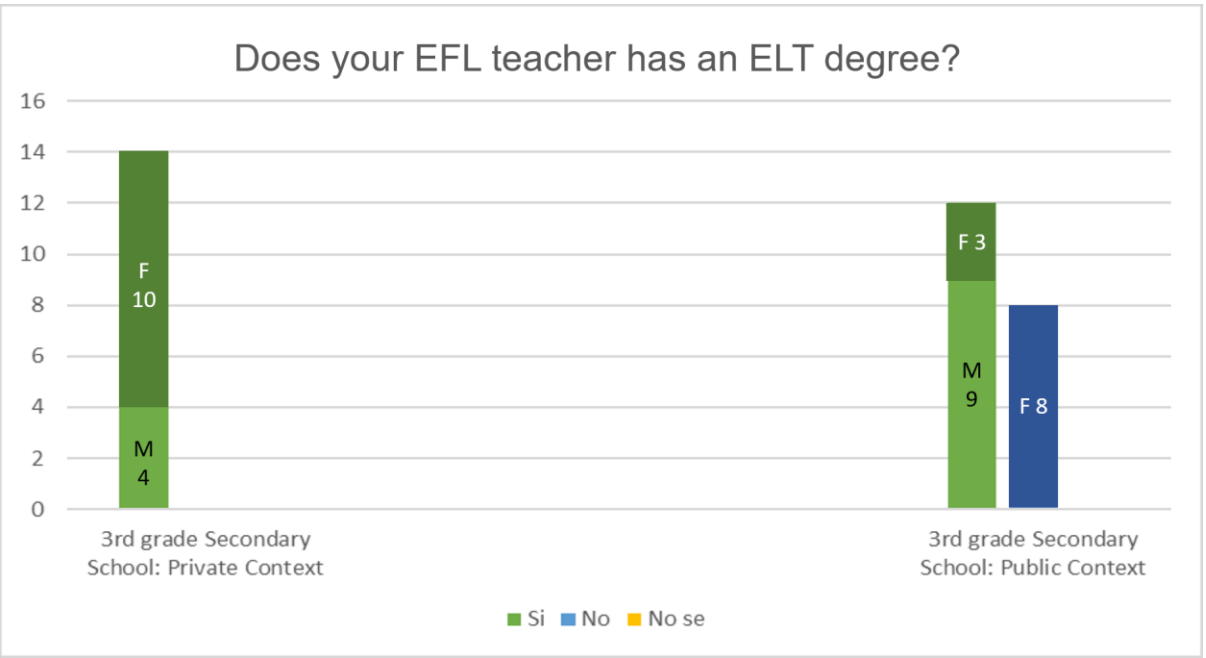
Graph 4.21 EFL class beginning in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade.

Graph 4.21 shows that in both contexts, all participants from public and private secondary schools have had EFL classes since the very beginning of the course. These results could give a good impression regarding attendance.



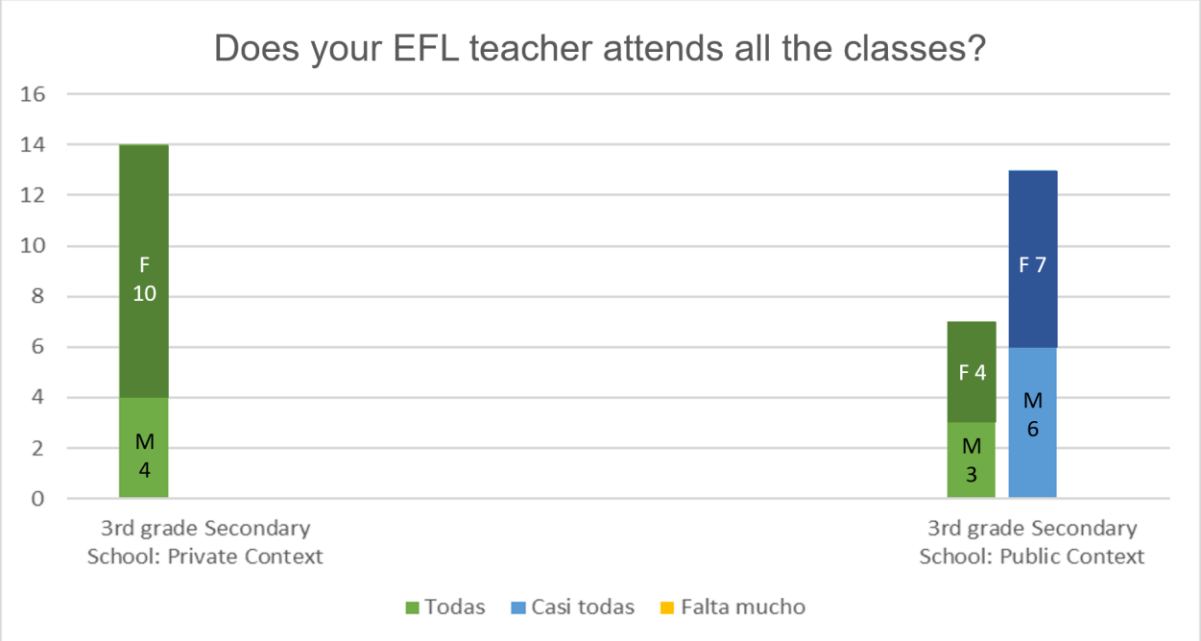
Graph 4.22 Amount of classes per week in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade.

Graph 4.22 has interesting results. Meanwhile 1st and 2nd graders in secondary only take EFL classes during their scholar day, the 3rd graders show more interest in taking extra classes of EFL. Regarding the private context, 14 participants have between 5 to 6 hours of EFL. On the other hand, in the public school 20 participants have between 3 to 5 hours. The official number of hours at school is 3 hours; thus, they take around 2 extra hours out of school courses. To sum up, at least 16 participants from the public school are taking extra EFL classes; conversely, only 2 students from the private school are taking extra classes.



Graph 4.23 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to their EFL teacher's background.

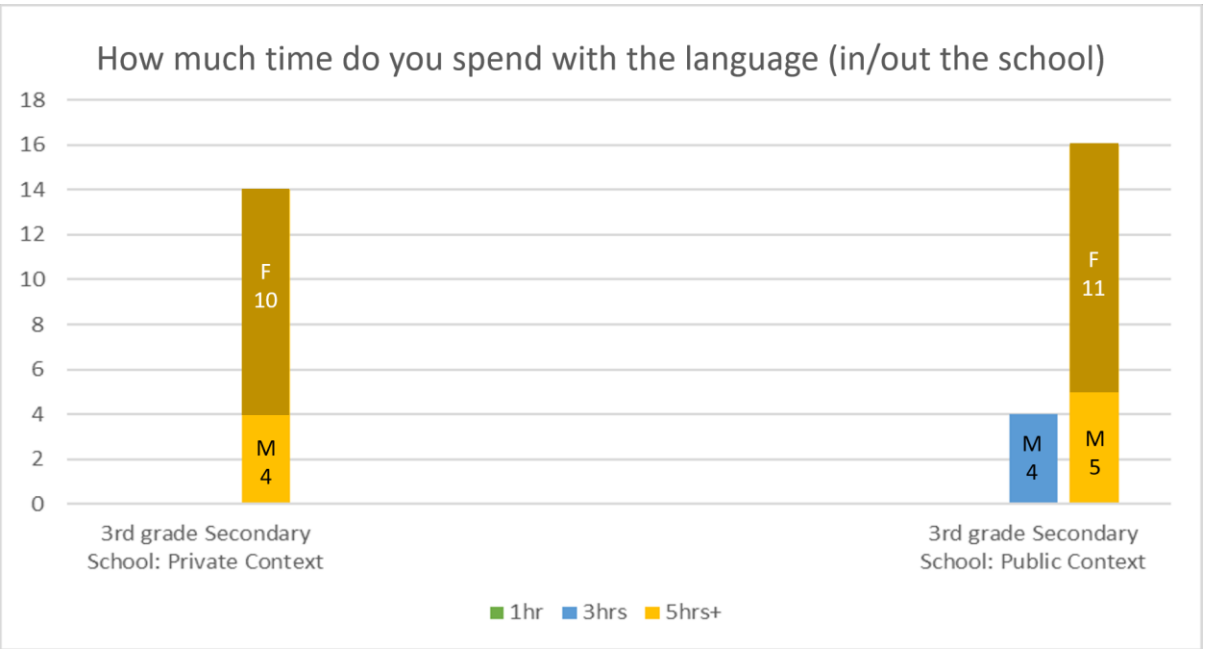
Graph 4.23 shows that in the private context, students are 100% sure that their teacher studied an ELT degree to give them this EFL class. However, 12 students from the public context affirm that their EFL teacher has a degree while 8 of them affirm that she/he does not have it.



Graph 4.24 EFL teacher's attendance in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade.

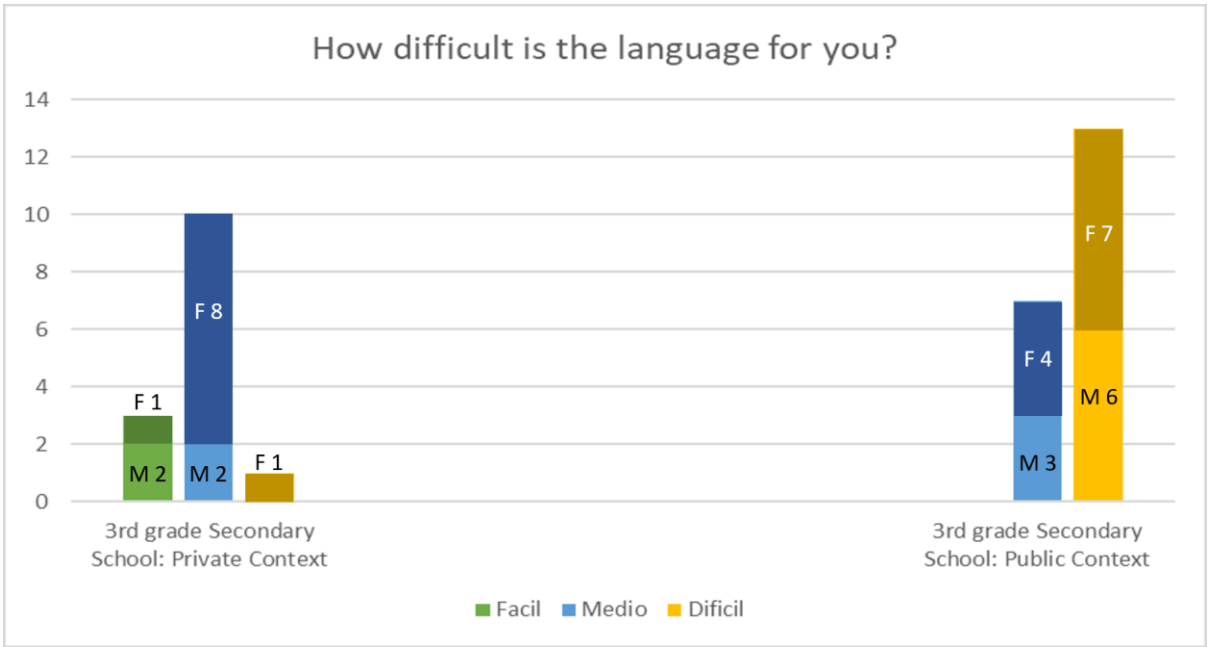
Regarding attendance, graph 4.24 demonstrates that 100% of participants from the private school mentioned their EFL teacher always comes to classes. On the other hand, most of the participants in the public school answered that their EFL teacher gives almost all his/her classes.

4.1.3.2 Language Section (Private and Public context)



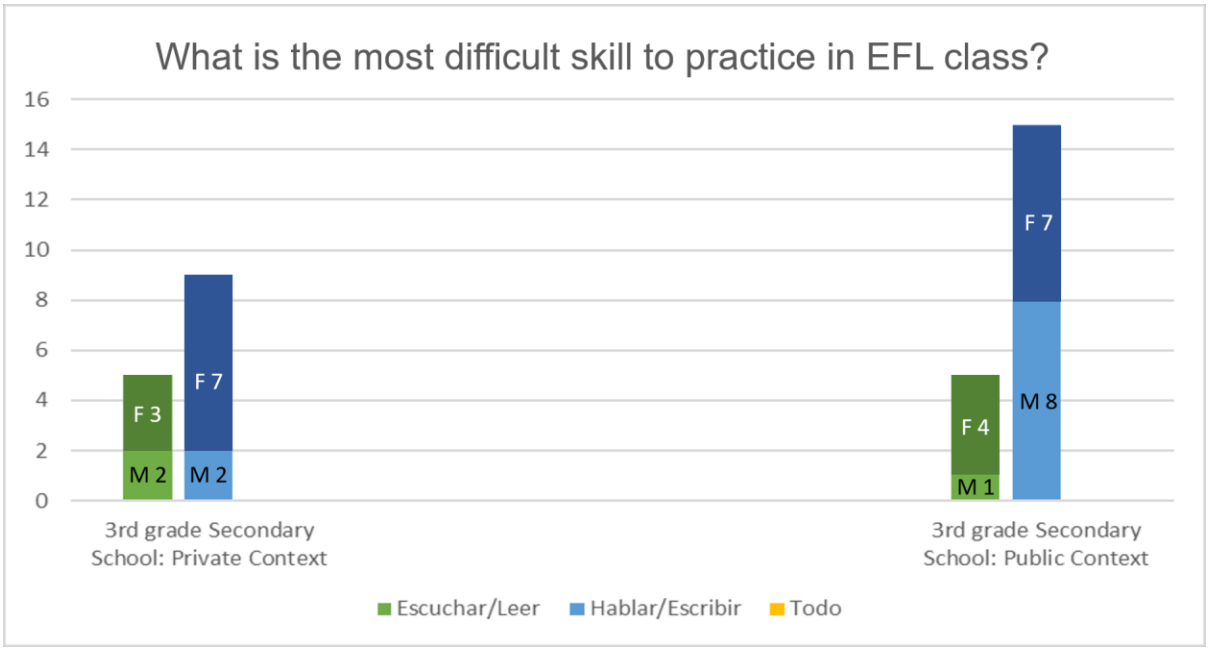
Graph 4.25 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to how much time they spend with the language.

Graph 4.25 shows that in the private context, participants have more interaction with the language due to the time at school or extra classes. In total, more than 5 hours is the time they spend in touch with it. On the other hand, in the public context, 4 participants spend less hours practicing the language. 16 of them say that they spend more than 5 hours in touch with it.



Graph 4.26 Participants' language learning difficulty in Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade

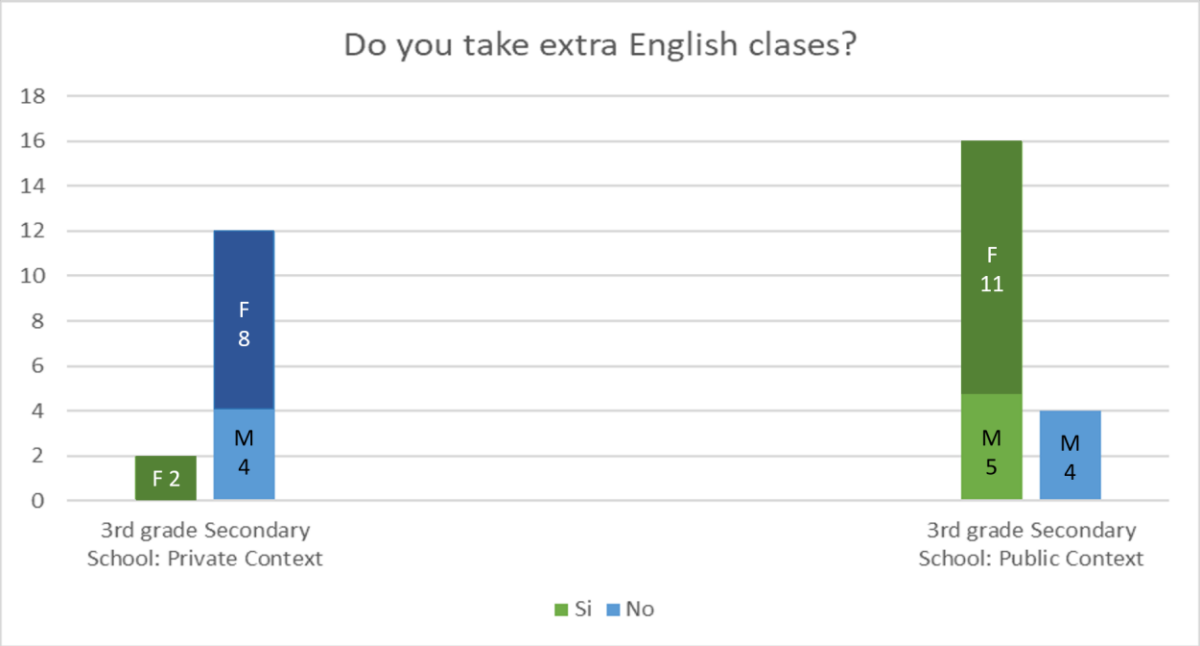
Graph 4.26 demonstrates how pupils from both contexts feel about EFL language. In the private secondary school, 1 of them think that it is difficult, 10 of them think that it is kind of difficult and 3 think that it is an easy subject. Nevertheless, in the public school, 13 students consider the EFL as a difficult subject and 7 of them think that it is kind of difficult.



Graph 4.27 The most difficult skill to develop in EFL class at Private and Public Secondary Schools, 3rd grade.

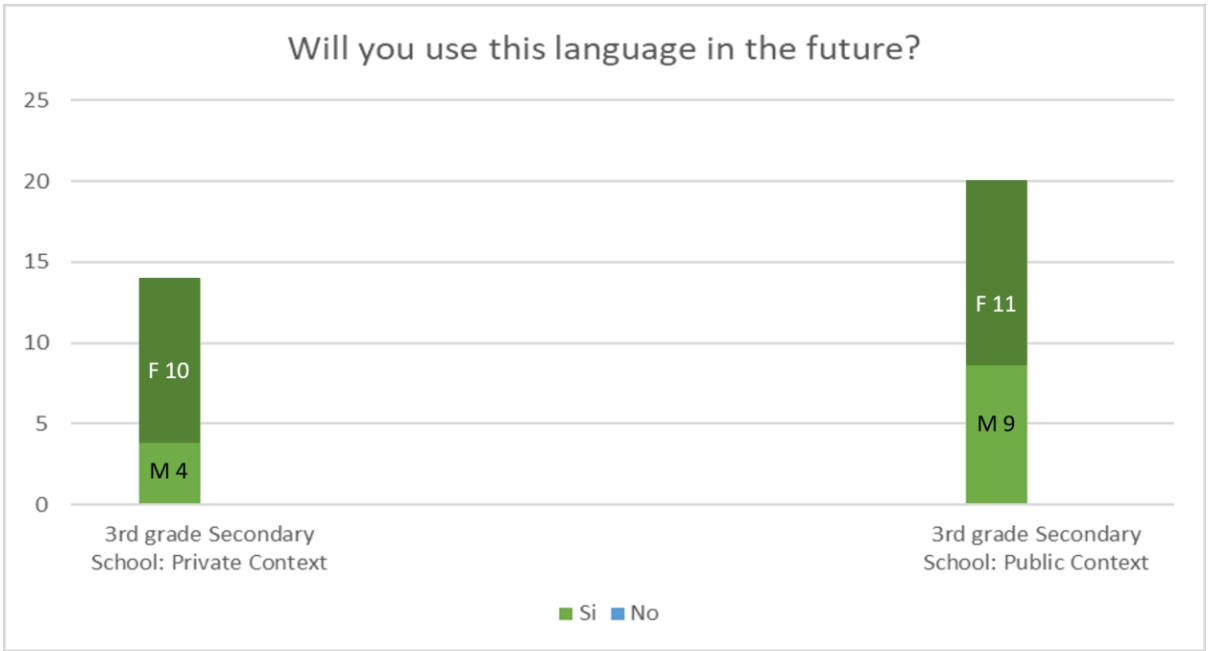
Just as Graphs 4.7 and 4.17, these results show that most of the participants in 3rd grade also consider the production skills as the most difficult. Specifically, in the private context, 9 students and 15 from the public agreed on the previous statement. However, 5 participants from the private school and 5 more from the public school think that input schools are difficult.

4.1.3.3 Personal Section (Private and Public context)



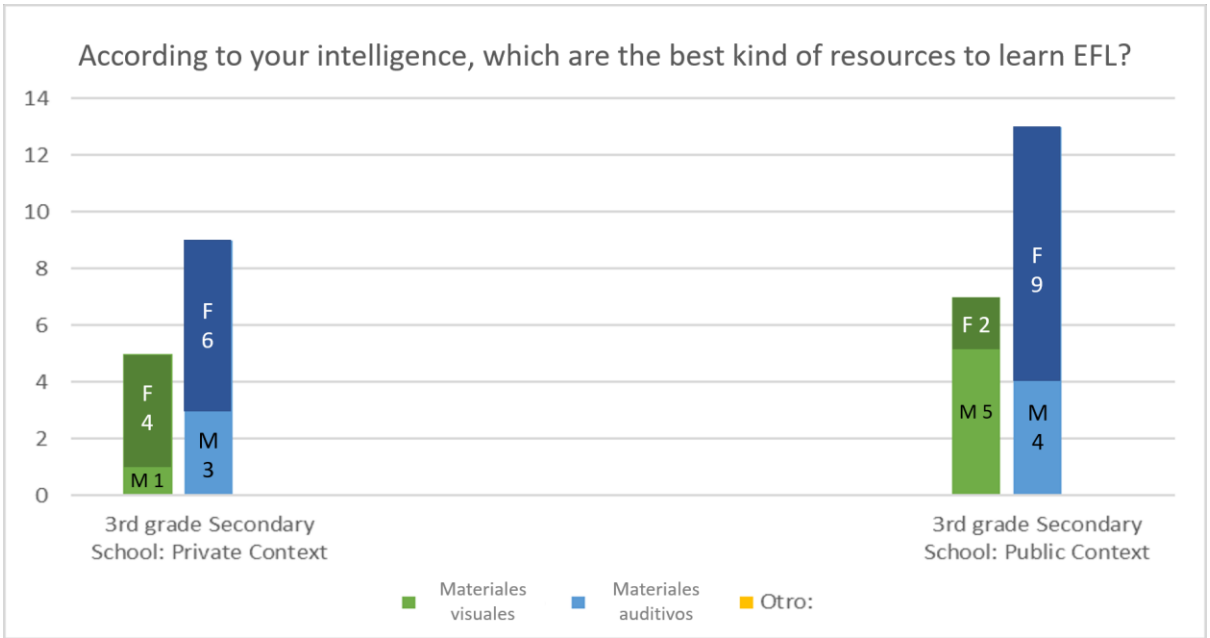
Graph 4.28 Extra EFL classes, 3rd grade.

In Graph 4.28 results confirm that most participants are taking extra EFL classes, two from private context and 16 in the public one.



Graph 4.29 Future perception of EFL usage, 3rd grade.

Graph 4.29 also shows that 100% percent of them are completely aware of the importance of EFL in their future.

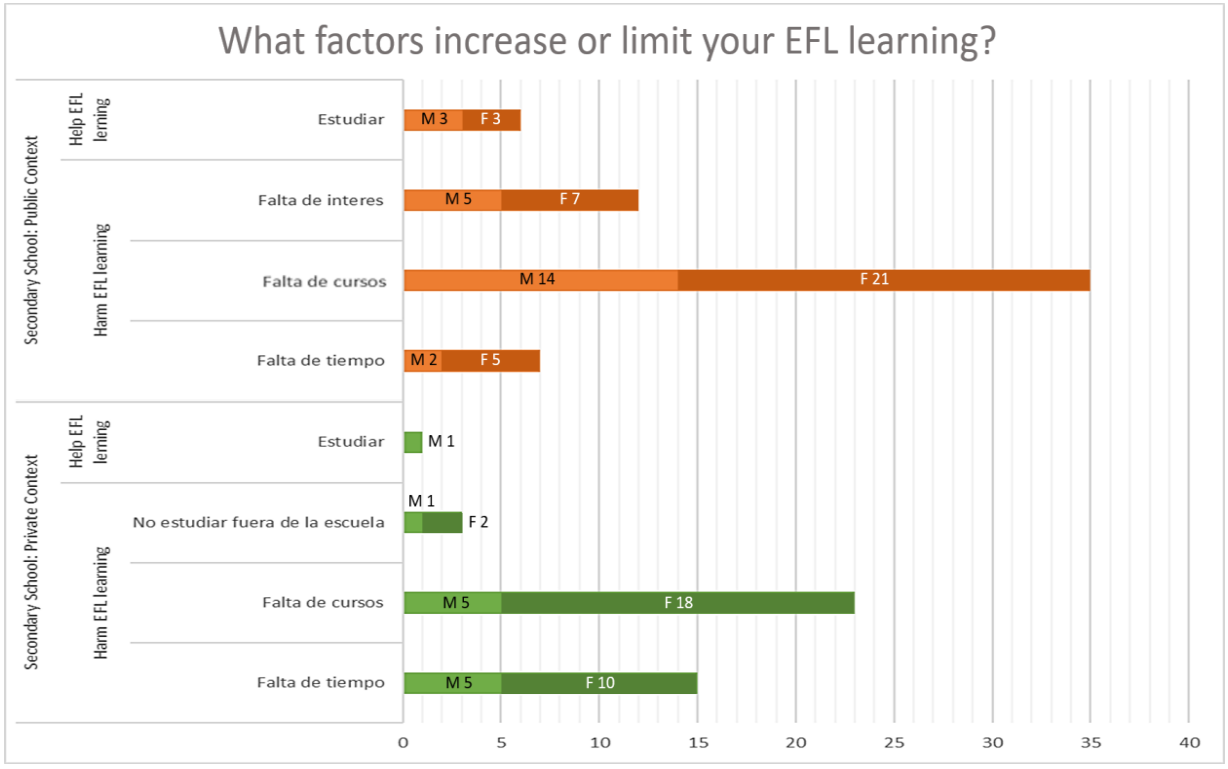


Graph 4.30 Private and Public Secondary School students' results of 3rd Grade related to how they learn.

To get the answers to this question, it was necessary to provide some examples of typical materials used in the classroom to exemplify resources that help to learn through different students' intelligences. For instance, exercises on the board, readings, flashcards,

worksheets, visuals, audios, conversations, descriptions, daily situations, songs, and roleplays. Thus, Graph 4.30 shows that 5 participants out of 14 from the private side considered that visual resources are the best option to learn EFL; and at the same time, 9 participants out of 14 chose listening resources as the best option. On the other side, in the public context, 7 participants out of 20 mentioned that visuals are better than listening. Meanwhile, 13 out of 20 participants thought that listening helped them to learn EFL.

4.1.4 Factors that increase or limit Private and Public Secondary School participants' EFL learning



Graph 4.31 Private and Public Secondary School students' results related to the factors that increase of limit their EFL learning

The last graphic, 4.31, is divided into two sections. The first one is in orange which is focused on the public students' perceptions and the green section is focused on the private students' perceptions.

In total, there were 42 surveyed participants in the private secondary school and 60 in the public secondary school. This last question in the survey was open because in that way we would be able to collect different opinions and perspectives from each student. In particular, there were 4 negative factors mentioned in both secondary schools. First, in the public secondary school, 35 students mentioned *the lack of EFL courses* as a negative factor. Meanwhile, 23 students from private contexts mentioned the same negative factor as well. In the second place, we have two different factors, in the private context the *lack of time to practice*. From the public context there are 7 students and 15 from the private school. The third element is the lack of interest that only 12 participants from the public context mentioned. Finally, the last negative factor is *not studying out of school;* 3 participants from the private school mentioned this. Additionally, the only positive factor that affects participants' EFL learning is *studying*; it was mentioned by 6 participants from the public school and 1 from the private school.

4.2 Research Questions' Answers

RQ1: *What are participants' beliefs about their EFL classes in the public and private contexts?*

EFL class' elements	*Private*	*Public*	*Private*	*Public*	*Private*	*Public*
	1st graders		*2nd graders*		*3rd graders*	
EFL teacher' degree	***10 - yes*** *3- No*	***15 - Yes***	***14- Yes***	***14- Yes***	***14- Yes***	***12-Yes*** *8-No*
Difficult language skills when learning	*4 input* ***11 output***	*6 input* ***14 output***	*2 input* ***6 output*** ***6 both***	*2 input* ***13 output*** *5 both*	*5 input* ***9 output***	*5 input* ***15 output***
EFL teaching material they prefer	*4 visual* ***6 auditive*** *4 both*	*9 visual* ***11 auditive***	***7 visual*** ***7 auditive***	*5 visual* ***13 auditive*** *2 both*	*5 visual* ***9 auditive***	*7 visual* ***13 auditive***

Table 4.2.1 What are participants' beliefs about their EFL classes in the public and private contexts?

This table describes participants' beliefs about their EFL classes. Within all data collection and analysis, there were set out three main elements of evaluation regarding their EFL classes. Those three elements are about their *teachers' degree*, *difficult skills when learning EFL* and which *material is better for them to learn EFL*.

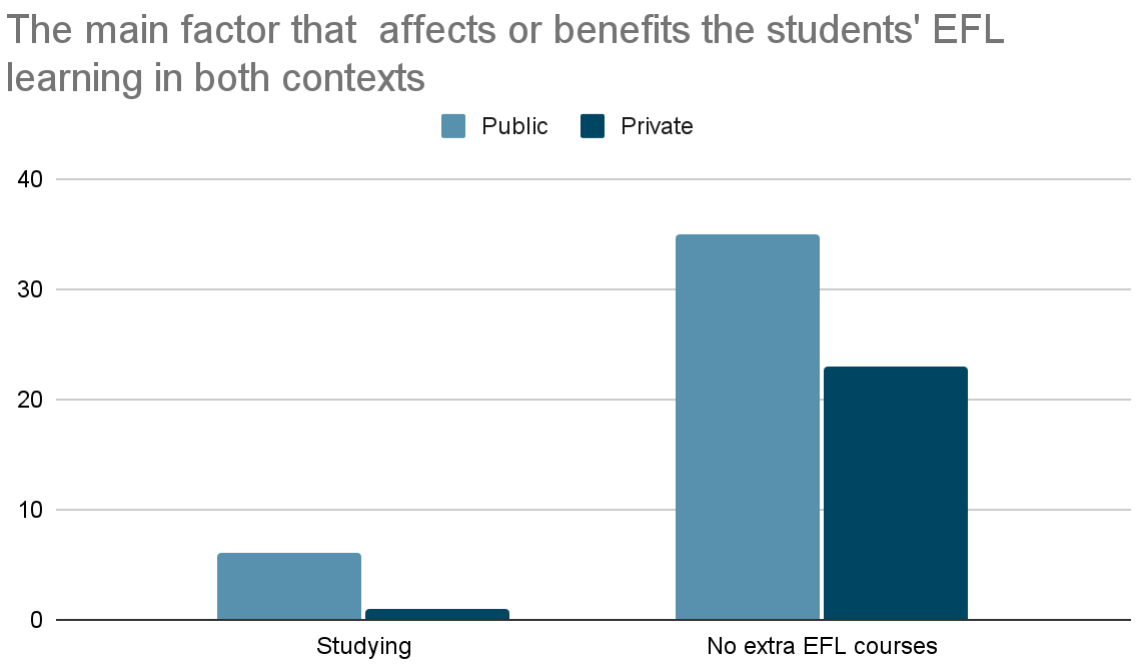
Generally, the majority of participants in all grades from secondary school, from private and public institutions, believe that their EFL teachers have a degree. In other words, these participants believe that their EFl teachers are professionals who are prepared to teach EFL subjects. This finding completely agrees with SEP (in Coppel, 2017), the main institution that rules public education, which has specific requirements to be an EFL teacher. According to Coppel (2017), these requirements are: first EFL knowledge (C1 certificate), second the enough didactic skills (EFL degree), and the ethical-professional responsibilities (Classroom control).

The second main finding is that most participants believe that the output skills are the most difficult to develop when learning EFL. According to Luna López et al. (2022), students do not like to express themselves by using language output skills because they do not feel comfortable using the language during classes. This author points out that this is because it is not their mother tongue, and they think that they do not have a proper level to speak or write anything in the target language.

Finally, the third important belief found in this research is that many participants prefer learning EFL through the auditive teaching material. Luna López et al. (2022) said that, in Mexico, students usually have EFL classes with only traditional strategies. This is to say that EFL Mexican teachers are mostly in front of the class, and they explain, correct and guide the session while the learning process is going on. As a matter of fact, if students try different

techniques or strategies to learn such as auditive materials, they could probably feel more engaged with the EFL class.

RQ2: *What is the main factor that affects or benefits participants' EFL learning process in both contexts?*



Graph 4.32 What is the main factor that affects or benefits participants' EFL learning process in both contexts?

Graph 4.32 demonstrates the main factors that benefit and negatively affect participants' EFL acquisition. On the negative side, 35 students from the public institution and 23 from the private institution considered that the lack of EFL courses around their town is not really helpful for them when learning EFL. Specifically, participants from the public institution mentioned that they do not have as many hours as private students have. Most of the participants in the public institution pointed out that this is having a huge negative impact on their learning process. Regarding the benefit, 1 student from the private and 6 students from the public institution think that studying is a factor that benefits their EFL learning process. This means that a total of 7 students are aware of the importance of studying the EFL language. Rhalmi (2019)

explains that learners must be pushed to produce, practice, and handle the language. This is the only way to improve their knowledge, shifting from low-level into higher-level use. Moreover, Swain (2005) did research which allowed him to develop the hypothesis to point out that, in order to improve students' EFL acquisition, language learners need to practice exhaustively their output skills. This would help them to use the language mechanically and fruitfully.

4.3 Discussion

In this section of the thesis, it is aimed to point out different implications that were found during the development of this study. Firstly, even though most participants in this study affirmed that they started their EFL classes on time, it is not possible to ensure the quality of the classes and the capability of the EFL teachers. There were three different types of EFL teachers that were identified by participants, first, the EFL teacher who is not a specialist of EFL. Second, the teacher who lived in the USA and speaks some English language; thus, the institutions hire them. And third, which is the EFL teacher who in reality studied an EFL teaching degree. Mateos Juárez & Hernández Maldonado (2021) mentioned that English teaching in Mexico and EFL teacher training was almost non-existent. Consequently, in most cases, EFL teaching positions were inherited from teachers' children without them having a vocation for teaching. This citation can, then, affirm that some of these participants' claims are true and it makes us doubt the quality of those EFL classes given by these types of EFL teachers. At the same time, we cannot ensure that having 100% attendance means giving the actual EFL class appropriately.

Finally, most of the students chose the auditive teaching material as their preferred material. According to Supiyati (2011), the use of audio-visual materials is a very recommended technique to develop students' speaking skills and provides many positive outcomes on their listening comprehension. By considering what this author points out, this

proposed teaching material can help participants to better the fact that output skills are the most difficult skills to develop for most of them. Additionally, SEP (2015) proposes to take extra EFL courses since that could be a factor that affects students' achievement of certain levels of proficiency in basic education. In other words, it is mandatory to consider how teachers could improve their teaching techniques, material, teaching methodology and teaching objectives, not only to cover topics from the EFL subject they teach, but to make students reach the basic level of proficiency that they require to have.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, there are presented the obtained results from the analysis of the information provided by the two different groups of participants. To have a better management and understanding of the results, it was necessary to put all the information into different tables and graphics, obviously, taking into account both contexts and all the participants' answers. In the further chapter, the conclusion of this study will be stated.

Chapter V

Conclusion

This study is focused on students' perception about their EFL acquisition. This chapter aims to address a brief description of the results contribution. Also, it aims to mention the limitations of the study, suggestions for further research and general conclusions are stated.

5.1 Research Contribution

This section of the chapter provides three main sections where this study is contributing within the EFL teaching field. First, the results of this study are contributing to current secondary school teachers or pre-service secondary school teachers because it provides a clear landscape

of what students need and feel regarding their EFL classes. EFL teachers should be able to help them to minimize some disadvantages and issues they face when taking their EFL classes. According to Hinchclif and Newberry (2021), if a teacher is able to get a social, physical, emotional, and cognitive connection with students, they would feel more comfortable in the classroom and be more engaged with the class. This is to say that EFL participants would achieve their classes goals easier and faster with an engaged EFL teacher.

Secondly, these results are also contributing to secondary school students from both public and private contexts. With these results, it is possible to understand what EFL students from secondary school level think about their EFL classes. Thus, they will compare their perception and they could feel the capability to think, plan and perform better in their EFL. By having this study's results, language students would feel supported and motivated by similar participants' outcomes in these findings. In other words, EFL students would feel more than enthusiastic and positive about the practice of studying and taking classes within a similar learning environment (Dexway Communication, 2017).

Thirdly, these results help institutions where EFL classes are provided because, since 1993 when EFL started to be taught in elementary and middle school in Mexico, not many things had been changed. According to Borjian (2015), public schools are still working with limited resources. Therefore, this study's outcomes will help institutions to update educational institutions and will provide some new ideas of what they need to improve in order to have better results on their EFL students' language acquisition.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The first main limitation of this study is that this study is considering only 2 secondary schools in Puebla, Mexico. One of them is private and the other one is public; therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized. It is not possible to claim that the results of this study can be

similar to the rest of the institution in the state or the whole Mexican country. Another important point is that, in the public context, teachers chose the students to answer the survey. Having the best students from this school could be a factor that affected the results of this inquiry. Thus, it is not possible to ensure 100% reliability from participants' answers.

Finally, in both secondary schools, teachers were persuading participants to answer the research instruments positively, so their answers do not affect teachers or schools' prestige or reputation. For the researcher of this study, it was a little bit hard and annoying to see this attitude from the EFL teachers; however, participants could show in their face the pressure on them. Specifically, the EFL teacher in the private context was around in the classroom. Meanwhile, in the public context, the EFL teacher was glancing at them from the outside of the class.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

For any further research, it is suggested to carry out a similar study but with different participants. Different levels of education, context, ages, and background can make variables that affect future findings. Secondly, applying instruments to more schools, groups can help to make quantitative and statistical studies which allow generalizations about these findings. At the same time, it would be important to do some interviews with EFL teachers in order to know about their background firsthand. Sometimes students are not completely aware of their situation; thus, they could provide their own version of it. All of these suggestions would help to cover the previous limitations that were faced with this research development.

5.4 Reflection

To achieve these research objectives, a lot of work was carried out such as applying the instrument, data analysis, understanding of results and interpretations. At the same time, this

research allowed me to perceive how the real educational context of the country is. It gave me more ideas about how to improve myself as an EFL teacher and how to give better classes. As a researcher, I had a good experience. It was tiring, but a good one. I also could learn a lot about how to develop a study with big amounts of information.

Finally, finishing this thesis took me some time. After setting ideas, paragraph by paragraph and chapter by chapter, I could say now that I feel satisfied about what I have done, what I have learned and what I could share and teach to my future EFL students.

5.5 Conclusion

This thesis focused on what secondary school students think about their EFL classes. Some important findings were that most of the students think that their EFL teacher has a degree to teach, output skills are more difficult to achieve in EFL classes and that auditive materials are better to learn EFL or at least students prefer them. Moreover, the main factors that affect or benefit participants' EFL learning were the lack of extra EFL courses and studying.

References

Arrington Sanders, R. (2013). Adolescent Psychosocial, Social, and Cognitive Development. *Pediatrics in Review, 34*(8 354–359). https://doi.org/10.1542/pir.34-8-354

de Saldaña, M. B. (1993). Historia de la educación durante el porfiriato. El colegio de México AC.

Bordignon, N. (2005). El desarrollo psicosocial de Eric Erikson. El diagrama epigenético del adulto. *Revista Lasallista de Investigación, 2*(1794–4449). https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=69520210

Borjian, A. (2015). Learning English in Mexico: Perspectives from Mexican Teachers of English. *The CATESOL Journal*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1111752.pdf

Brannen, J. (2005). Mixed methods research: A discussion paper. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods.

Burns, A. (2009). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners.* Routledge.

Byrne, J., & Humble, Á. M. (2007). An introduction to mixed method research. *Atlantic research center for family-work issues*, 1.

Coppel, E. (2017, August 31). *La SEP te explica cómo puedes ser un maestro de inglés en México y ganar 21.000 pesos al mes.* Verne. https://verne.elpais.com/verne/2017/08/30/mexico/1504107477_098483.html

Dexway Communication. (2017, November 28). *The Importance of Effective Support in Language Learning - Dexway*. Dexway. Retrieved July 3, 2023, from https://www.dexway.com/the-importance-of-effective-support-in-language-learning/

Dirección de Centros Escolares. (n.d.). *Quienes Somos*. Dirección de Centros Escolares Puebla. Retrieved August 31, 2021, from https://direcciondecentrosescolarespuebla.weebly.com/quienes-somos.html

Dulock, H. L. (1993). Research design: Descriptive research. *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, 10(4), 154-157.

Educause. (2015, January 15). *Learning Environments.* https://library.educause.edu/topics/teaching-and-learning/learning-environments

EF English Profiency Index. (2012). EF English Profiency Index 2012. *EF English Profiency Index*. https://www.ef.com.mx/epi/

Ferber, R., Sheatsley, P., Turner, A. G., & Waksberg, J. (1980). What is a Survey?. EMBRAPA-DMQ.

Galeana, P. (2016). La legislación del Segundo Imperio (1st ed., p. 529). *México: Secretaría de Cultura: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones de México.*

Gunderson, L., D'Silva, R. A., & Odo, D. M. (2019). *ESL (ELL) literacy instruction: A guidebook to theory and practice.* Routledge.

Harper, R. (2018, August). *Science of Adolescent Learning: How Body and Brain Development Affect Student Learning.* Alliance for Excellent Education. https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Science-of-Adolescent-Learning-How-Body-and-Brain-Development-Affect-Student-Learning.pdf

Hinchclif, E., & Newberry, M. (2021). Teacher Perceptions of Student Developmental Needs: It's all Emotional. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 46*(9), 4. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2021v46n9.4

Instituto Mexicano para la Competitividad. (2015). *Inglés es posible: Propuesta de una Agenda Nacional*. Imco.Org.Mx. https://imco.org.mx/competitividad/ingles-es-posible-propuesta-de-una-agenda-nacional/.

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques.* New Age International.

Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(4), 255-256.

Lans, W., & Van der Voordt, D. J. M. (2002). Descriptive research. *In Ways to study and research urban, architectural and technical design* (pp. 53-60). DUP Science.

Luna López, T., Narváez Trejo, O. M., & Alvarado Martínez, E. (2022). Peer-correction as a Strategy to Improve Teenagers' Speaking Skills in Foreign Language Learning. *CPU-*

e Revista De Investigación Educativa, *35*(1870–5308). https://doi.org/10.25009/cpue.v0i35.2819

Mateos Juárez, M. A., & Hernández Maldonado, R. A. (2021, February 17). LA ENSEÑANZA DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS, UN REZAGO DE LA EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA EN MÉXICO. Universidad De Oriente Poza Rica. https://pozarica.uo.edu.mx/blog/la-ense%C3%B1anza-del-idioma-ingl%C3%A9s-un-rezago-de-la-educaci%C3%B3n-b%C3%A1sica-en-m%C3%A9xico

Martin, S. H. (2002). The classroom environment and its effects on the practice of teachers. *Journal of Environmental Psychology,* 22(1-2), 139-156.

Misioneras del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y de Santa María de Guadalupe. (2017). *Modelo Educativo: Humanización, Libertad, Comunicación, Interioridad, Universalidad, Evangelización, Trascendencia* (2nd ed.). Misioneras del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús y de Santa María de Guadalupe.

Moctezuma, E. (2020, December 23). *Diario Oficial de la Federación.* dof.gob.mx. https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5609166&fecha=29/12/2020

Narváez Sierra, I. (2013). *¿Por qué nuestros alumnos no aprenden inglés? ¿Realidad o mito? ¿Fracaso o mediocridad? ¿Reto o indiferencia?* Universidad Pedagógica Nacional-Hidalgo. http://idiomas.mxl.uabc.mx/cii/cd/documentos/V_07.pdf

Nordquist, R. (2020, August 27). *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*. Retrieved from https://www.thoughtco.com/english-as-a-foreign-language-efl-1690597

Pathak, V., Jena, B., & Kalra, S. (2013). Qualitative research. Perspectives in clinical research, 4(3), 192.

Prasad, R. (2016, August 11). *Back to Basics: 5 Essential Elements of Effective E-Learning*. Association for Talent Development. https://www.td.org/insights/back-to-basics-5-essential-elements-of-effective-e-learning

Qin, K. (2021, May 28). *How many people speak English in the World?* Linkedin.Com. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-many-people-speak-english-world-kolina-qin

Rafael, A. (2009). *Desarrollo Cognitivo: Las Teorías de Piaget y de Vygotsky* [Slides]. Docplayer.Es. https://docplayer.es/6902229-Desarrollo-cognitivo-las-teorias-de-piaget-y-de-vygotsky.html.

Rhalmi, M. (2019, October 30). Input and output in second language acquisition - My English Pages. *My English Pages*. https://www.myenglishpages.com/blog/input-and-output-in-second-language-acquisition/#:~:text=The%20input%20refers%20to%20the,(i.e.%20The%20productive%20skills).

Saville-Troike, M., & Barto, K. (2017). Introducing second language acquisition. Cambridge University Press.

Scheuren, F. (2004, June). *What is a Survey?*. Alexandria: American Statistical Association.

Secretaria de Educación Pública. (2015, December). *Diagnóstico del programa S270: Programa Nacional de Inglés para Alumnos en Educación Básica.* Subsecretaría de Planeación y Evaluación de Políticas Educativas. https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/64151/Diagno_stico_del_programa.pdf

Secretaría de Educación. (n.d.). Servicios de Educación Secundaria. *Servicios Educativos Integrados al Estado de México.* Retrieved May 20, 2021, from http://www.seiem.edu.mx/web/Servicios%20Secundaria.

Supiyati, D. Y. A. H. (2011). *Improving Students' Speaking Skills by Using Audio-Visual Aids in Class IA RSBI SD N Cemara Dua* No. 13 Surakarta in 2009/2010 Academic Year. Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, Surakarta: Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Sebelas Maret University.

Swain, M. (2005). The output hypothesis: Theory and research. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 471-484). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Verghese, C. P. (1989). *Teaching English as a second language*. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

Waldman, C. (2016, November 7). *Four Elements for Creating a Positive Learning Environment*. Alliance For Excellent Education. https://all4ed.org/four-elements-for-creating-a-positive-learning-environment/

Watson, A. (2016). *Lingua Franca: An Analysis of Globalization and Language Evolution.* Bowling Green State University.

Watson, R. (2015). Quantitative research. *Nursing Standard* (2014+), 29(31), 44.

Wold, James B. (2006). *Difficulties in Learning English as a Second or Foreign Language.* All Regis University Theses. 333. https://epublications.regis.edu/theses/333.

Appendix A

Instrument Survey

ENCUESTA

El objetivo principal de esta encuesta es conocer el contexto educativo de la escuela con respecto a la materia de inglés y así, poder desarrollar una investigación basada en las creencias de los estudiantes acerca de su aprendizaje de la legua extranjera.

Edad:	**Grupo:**	**Genero:**	
¿Has tenido clase de inglés desde inicio de curso?	Si	Desde medio curso	Sigo sin tener
¿Cuantas veces a la semana tienes clase de inglés?	2	1	Otro:
¿El profesor estudió para enseñar inglés?	Si	No	No sé
¿Llega a todas sus clases?	Todas	Casi todas	Falta mucho
¿Cuantas horas al día tienes contacto con el inglés?	1	3	5+
¿Cómo consideras el idioma?	Fácil	Medio	Difícil
¿Qué es lo que más se te dificulta?	Escucharlo / Leerlo	Hablarlo / Escribirlo	Otro:
¿Tomas cursos fuera de la escuela?	Si/Porque?:		No/Porque?:
¿Crees necesitar el idioma en el futuro?	Si/Porque?:		No/Porque?:
¿Cuál crees que es tu forma de aprender?	Observando	Escuchando	Otro:

¿Cuál consideras que es otro factor que te ayude o limite en el aprendizaje del inglés?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____