

Teaching Methods and Strategies in English Language Learning for Middle School Students at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit

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Abstract

This article examines the methods and strategies used in teaching English to middle school students at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. A survey was conducted among English teachers to assess their pedagogical approach and the practices used. The results reveal the predominance of communicative and task-based approaches, with a variety of strategies to encourage oral practice and the occasional use of technological resources. It explores the assessment of learning, accommodations for students with special needs, and the support offered to students with difficulties. The opinions and suggestions of the teachers highlight the importance of constant practice and the implementation of an English laboratory that favors the teaching process.

Keywords: *English Language, Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit.*

Introduction

The teaching of the English language in the context of higher basic education plays a highly determining role in the linguistic and cognitive preparation of students within the level (Mora, Pinza, López, & Alejo, 2023). In an increasingly globalized world interconnected by technological applications and the use of social networks, English language proficiency has become an essential skill for effective communication, access to information, and job opportunities and academic skills (Zambrano, Carrera, Williams, Venegas, & Bazurdo, 2019). In this sense, understanding and improving the methods and strategies used in English language teaching becomes crucial to optimize the educational process and provide students with the necessary tools for their personal and professional development (Mora et al, 2023).

In this sense, the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit, recognizing the importance and added value of English language teaching in its curriculum, is in a constant process of evaluating and adapting its pedagogical approaches to meet the changing needs required by students. In this context, this research aims to explore in depth the methods and strategies used in teaching English to intermediate level students at this institution (Miranda, Naula, Brito & Bravo, 2023).

The research will be based on the perspective of English teachers, who are key participants in the implementation of educational strategies. Their experiences, opinions, and practices are invaluable in understanding the dynamics that play out within the classroom and determining what approaches and methods are used to teach English

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foreign language skills (Loor & Hidalgo, 2023). Through an exhaustive survey, the aim is to analyse in detail the methods used, the teaching strategies applied, the preferred forms of assessment and the possible areas for improvement identified by the teachers themselves (Ochoa et al, 2021). This article will not only provide information on the current situation of English language teaching in the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit, but will also allow us to reflect on the effectiveness of current pedagogical approaches and provide valuable contributions for future improvements in the academic area (Zúñiga, 2020). By understanding teachers' perspectives and practices, we can promote a richer and more effective English language education that promotes not only language proficiency, but also students' communicative confidence and ability to function in a globalized environment (Di Virgilio, 2020). In short, this study aims to contribute to the dialogue in the educational community on how to optimize the teaching of the foreign language English in higher basic education, offering practical recommendations that can be implemented to improve the educational experience of students and effectively prepare them for the challenges of our time, in a society that faces increasing challenges in the area of communication (Ávila, 2023).

Methodology

This research uses a quantitative approach, because data from a survey were used, transformed into measurable elements through percentage data of the reality of the teachers of the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit, likewise, the level of depth was descriptive; which allows for an in-depth analysis of the existing reality (Hernández, 2018). The objective is to carry out a contextual analysis of the teaching methods and strategies used in the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit for the learning of the English language in secondary school students. This quantitative approach allows for a holistic and rich understanding of pedagogical practices, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the perspectives and experiences of the teachers involved (Hernández, 2018).

This methodological choice provides an appropriate framework for investigating a phenomenon in detail in its natural context. In this case, it is the Captain Giovanni Calles Educational Unit and its focus on teaching the English language. This research allowed immersion in the educational environment, facilitating the capture of nuances, dynamics, and details that are important to comprehensively understand educational realities (Hernández, 2018).

Data collection was carried out using an electronic survey designed specifically for this purpose, with eight closed questions under a three-dimensional Likert scaling (always, almost always, never) (Galarraga, 2023). On the other hand, the instrument was validated under the assessment of experts in the educational area according to the criteria of (coherence, relevance and clarity) (Roz et al., 2022, cited by Galarraga, 2023). This survey was distributed to the institution's English teachers, who play a central role in the implementation of the educational strategies (Falcón, 2019). The answers provided by teachers are considered a primary source of information, essential for an authentic understanding of classroom practices (Falcón, 2019).

The analysis stage focuses on quantitative data collected through the instrument. A content analysis approach was applied, which involved identifying and coding emerging patterns in teachers' responses. Through this process, we seek to discern recurrent trends and provide in-depth interpretations of pedagogical practices and teachers' perceptions of English language teaching (Hernández, 2018).

It is important to underline that ethical principles were strictly respected in the research process. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants is guaranteed, ensuring that the answers given in the survey cannot be attributed to any specific individual

(Falcón, 2019). In addition, informed consent was obtained from the professors prior to their participation in the study.

In short, this research, through its quantitative methodology, was carried out with the aim of obtaining a deep and academically sound knowledge about the methods and strategies used in the teaching of English in the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. Through this approach, it is intended to make a significant contribution to the fundamental understanding and improvement of language teaching in the contemporary global context.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained in the survey reveal a rich variety of opinions and perspectives on the part of the 10 English teachers at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. These voices provide a deeper picture of the approaches, strategies, and challenges inherent in teaching English at the middle level. Below are different voices and their points of view within the context of the discussion.

Table 1. Perspective of the task-based communicative approach to teaching English.

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Is the communicative, task-based approach useful for student learning?	8	80%	2	20%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Most teachers agree that the Communicative and Task-Based Approach allows for a high level of effectiveness within the teaching-learning processes in relation to the communicational processes; they highlighted the importance of developing practical communication skills and how this approach promotes English language participation and engagement in students (Serrano et al., 2023)

Table 2. Individualized learning and technological resources

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Do the use of individualized learning and technological resources contribute to improving English learning?	9	90%	1	10%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

It is evident that most teachers appreciate that the use of individualized learning and technological resources can favor and improve students' levels of English learning. The success of individualized learning can be highlighted, adapting activities to the unique needs of each student (Romero, Rosero, Estupiñán, Lemaico, & Alban, 2023). In addition, it can be seen how the occasional integration of technological resources, such as interactive applications and online platforms, has generated greater motivation and participation on the part of students for learning the English language (Pascuas, Garcia, & Mercado, 2020).

Table 3. Oral Practice and Balanced Assessment

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Is oral English practice encouraged in class and is assessment derived from its execution with students?	9	90%	1	10%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Most of the participating teachers point out that they always encourage the practice of oral English with their students. On the other hand, they may indicate the need to encourage oral practice, through strategies such as debates and role-playing (Martín, 2019). However, they expressed concern that progress assessment is heavily skewed towards written tests, without fully capturing students' oral communication skills (Roncancio, González, & Jornet, 2021). This is due to the habit that teachers have of carrying out tests that measure only mastery of grammar and not phonics.

Table 4. Curricular Adaptations and Support for Learning Diversity

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Do you implement specific adaptations to planning to support the learning of students with specific diversity?	10	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

All of the institution's teachers state that they make use of curricular adaptations to promote the learning of the English language in students with specific needs. In this vein, the importance of incorporating adaptations in the classroom to meet the needs of students with special educational requirements is highlighted (Castro, Casar, & García, 2019). On the other hand, providing specific resources and strategies is essential to ensure an inclusive and equitable educational experience for English language learning (Andrade, Jama, Mendoza, & Mendoza, 2022).

Table 5. Strategies for Oral English Practice

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Do you use debates, songs, games as strategies that promote the oral expression of English?	8	80%	2	20%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Most of the teachers at the institution specifically state that they use various strategies to promote the oral practice of English in classes, such as debates on topics of interest, games, songs, which are carried out in a structured way and presentations in small groups. These strategies contribute to increasing students' confidence in English expressions (Pascuas, Garcia, & Mercado, 2020). These strategies are simple to carry out in the classroom and build confidence in the students who participate so that they can appropriate everyday expressions in the English language.

Table 6. Support in technological resources

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Do you implement in classes the use of technological resources such as movies, applications to strengthen English learning?	9	90%	1	10%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

The vast majority of the teaching staff at the institution state that they always implement technological resources such as movies, series, applications, among other resources to strengthen the learning of the English language in their students. Technological resources, such as videos and educational apps, have enriched the teaching experience. In addition, the importance of providing individualized support to students facing challenges is highlighted, through additional tutoring and advice through different digital resources (Gálvez, Chalco, & Galarza, 2023).

Table 7. Fair and balanced assessment

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Is the assessment given in English fair and balanced?	8	80%	2	20%	0	0%

Source: Author's elaboration.

Most teachers report that their assessments in English are fair and balanced, while a small group say that is sometimes the case. The inference from these data makes it possible to point out the challenges involved in equitably assessing students' abilities; this is because some students excel in written tests, while others excel in oral activities, highlighting the importance of finding fair and balanced assessment methods (Intriago, & Salmon, 2023). Evaluation should be a continuous, formative process, not an isolated act at a certain point in the formative process or simply to have inputs for certain administrative processes (Carrillo & Camacho, 2021).

Table 8. Practice of the English language in a specialized laboratory.

Question	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Fa	%	Fa	%	Fa	%
Do you think that practicing the English language in a specialized	10	100%	0	0%	0	0%

laboratory will
improve student
learning?

Source: Author's elaboration.

The teachers of the institution believe that the practice of the English language in a specialized laboratory will improve their learning in the students, so constant practice outside the classroom is very important to improve fluency in the English language (Yaipén, Maquén, López, & Cornejo 2023). The implementation of an English lab, equipped with the necessary resources, could offer a conducive space for students to practice and hone their skills autonomously in the English foreign language (Zumba, 2022)

Taken together, this range of opinions provides a broad and diverse view of the approaches and strategies used by English teachers at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. By addressing both successful practices and challenges to be solved, these different perspectives contribute greatly to enriching the dialogue around how to optimize English education and provide students with foundations that favor the development of their linguistic and communicative skills in the English language.

Authors' Discussion:

The discussion on teaching methods and strategies in the learning of English for students at the secondary level of the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit finds support in the academic literature in the field of pedagogy and language teaching. Several authors have explored pedagogical approaches, strategies, and challenges in English language teaching, providing a theoretical framework that enriches the understanding of the results obtained in this research.

The teaching methods used by the teaching staff at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit for the subject of English are based on tasks and individualized teaching based on the needs of each student. (De la Vega, 2020). This is really decisive in the language learning process, because teachers emphasize the effectiveness of the communicative approach in language teaching. The experience of the teaching staff allows them to orient strategies to a relationship intrinsically with practical communication, encouraging interaction in real contexts. This perspective supports the results that indicate the use of communicative and task-based approaches as prevalent pedagogical practices in the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit.

On the other hand, the valuable relationship between technological resources in language teaching, especially English, generates an increase in student motivation and participation (Gálvez, Chalco, & Galarza, 2023). The teachers of this institution generally make pertinent use of the multiple digital tools to enrich the learning process, it is inferred that there is an agreement with this perspective. This suggests that the strategic incorporation of technology can be an effective response to address contemporary challenges in English language education.

Likewise, the challenges of assessment in language teaching, highlighting the importance of a balanced assessment that includes written and oral skills (Intriago, 2023). This concern is reflected in the opinions of teachers who highlight the gap in assessment skills, which underlines the need to rethink assessment methods to make them more inclusive and accurate in measuring communicative competence, many times a written test is not the appropriate instrument to measure the progress of student learning and especially in the English language.

Inclusion and adaptation in the educational process to meet the individual needs of students is a very important task that the teaching staff must carry out constantly, the initial diagnosis must address it (Brenes, 2023). The teachers in this institution under study are in favor of the curricular adaptation to students with special educational needs

and support their contribution to the psychopedagogical theory proposed by Piaget in constructivism, where each person generates their learning to the extent that they relate to their environment, so the learning style and the levels of cognitive development must be considered within the inclusive approaches in the teaching of the English Language (De la Vega, 2020).

A determining point within the discussion of this research work is oral practice in language learning, mainly English, arguing that oral communication is essential to develop fluency and confidence in the use of language (Olaya, 2023). The teaching staff of the institution usually implements activities such as debates and oral presentations that reinforce the idea that deliberate oral practice is essential to achieve an effective command of the English language.

Overall, the author's discussion enriches the understanding of the methods and strategies for teaching English to high school students at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. This theoretical perspective provides a strong and revealing foundation that contextualizes and supports teachers' opinions and findings, providing a foundation for addressing challenges and optimizing pedagogical practices in the classroom.

Conclusions:

The research carried out at the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit, which aimed to analyze the teaching methods and strategies in English language learning for middle school students, reveals a diversity of pedagogical approaches used by teachers, as well as challenges and areas that need to be improved in the educational process. From the opinions and perspectives collected from the 10 English teachers participating in the work, significant conclusions have been drawn that shed light on the educational reality in the institution:

1. Diversity of pedagogical approaches: The diversity of methods and approaches used in teaching English reflects the adaptability and flexibility of teachers to meet the needs and preferences of students. The combination of communicative, task-based, and individualized learning approaches highlights the importance of holistic teaching that encourages hands-on communication and personalized development.
2. Strategic Use of Technological Resources: The regular use of technological resources in English language teaching has proven to be a valuable tool for motivating students and enriching the learning process. Teachers realize the need to balance the use of technology with traditional methods, using the advantages of digital tools in the classroom in favor of English language learning in students.
3. Challenges in a Fair Assessment: Fair assessment of students' skills remains a challenge. The differences between written and oral assessment skills reflect the need to explore more comprehensive assessment methods that accurately capture language proficiency across all dimensions involved in learning English as a foreign language.
4. Inclusion and Diversity in the Classroom: Teachers recognize the importance of accommodations and supports for students with special educational needs. This inclusive approach helps to ensure that all students have the opportunity to actively participate in and benefit from the process of teaching English as a foreign language.
5. Commitment to Continuous Practice: The suggestion to implement the English Language Lab as a space dedicated to independent practice highlights the teachers' commitment to fostering continuous language learning. This ongoing practice is considered important to increase students' fluency and confidence in their ability to communicate in English.
6. Importance of Oral Practice: The importance of oral practice is an opinion held by several teachers. Strategies such as discussions, role-playing, and small group activities emerged as effective tools to encourage speaking and interaction in English. In short, this research highlights the complexity and richness of the English language teaching process in the Capitán Giovanni Calles Educational Unit. Teachers' opinions and perspectives contribute to a deeper understanding of

pedagogical practices and offer practical recommendations to improve the quality of English language learning education. These findings provide a solid foundation for future discussions and improvements in English language education in this special educational context.

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