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**Perceptions of English Language Teachers involving the influence of social factors in students of English as a Second Language classes in their achievement and development in 2022**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to my mother María Elena and father Alfredo who encouraged me to keep pushing my limits, challenge myself, and to grow every day through their love and support. To my brother Xavier, sister Sarah, my grandparents Fabián, Byron, Wilma and María Elena who have always been by my side during every step of my life, encouraging me to succeed. To my late great-grandparents Alberto and Sara, who saw me begin this process but are no longer with me. I know they would be proud, no matter where they are. To the rest of my family, aunts, uncles, cousins, classmates and friends who were present during this exciting new chapter of my academic life.

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## RESUMEN

Existe una creciente discrepancia en el desarrollo estudiantil basado en la influencia de clase social. Recientemente, el interés de observar el desarrollo y logros estudiantiles se ha enfocado en niveles de educación primaria y secundaria en Ecuador. Sin embargo, esta investigación está enfocada en la educación superior en la universidad privada con el ranking más alto del país. Esta investigación presenta las perspectivas de los docentes con un enfoque en las interacciones y desarrollo de los estudiantes. Esta investigación presenta temas como las formas en las que los docentes direccionan las diferencias en clases sociales, interacciones entre alumnos y docentes, finalmente se presenta una comparación entre niveles de educación superior dentro del área de inglés como segunda lengua con posibles diferencias basadas en niveles secundarios basados en experiencias de los docentes.

Palabras clave: Educación, clase social, percepciones, desarrollo, interacciones.

## **ABSTRACT**

There is a growing discrepancy in student achievement based on the influence of social class. Recently, the interest of observing student development and achievement has had a focus on Elementary and secondary education in Ecuador. However, this research is focused in higher education levels involving the highest-ranked university of the country. This research presents perspectives of teachers with a focus in student interactions and development. This research also presents themes such as the ways teachers address social class differences, interactions between students and teachers. Finally, this research presents a brief comparison between higher levels of English as a Second Language education with possible differences on secondary levels based on teacher experiences.

Key words: Education, social class, perceptions, achievement, interactions.

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## INTRODUCTION

In Ecuador, there is a noteworthy discrepancy in academic achievement and attainment between students from different social backgrounds. Standardized evaluations show that students' social class backgrounds remain the greatest predictor of academic achievement. One example of this is the "The Programme for International Student Assessment for Development" (PISA-D), a standardized exam that evaluates students' abilities on several disciplines (Novik, 2021). PISA-D measures the level of acquired abilities and knowledge in academic assignments such as sciences, reading and mathematics. However, PISA-D also includes an analytical framework including educative achievement, academic development, health, well-being, attitudes towards learning, resources, inclusive environments, time of learning, family or community support, and finally the quality of instruction (Arevalo & Guevara, 2018).

Recent results of PISA-D test scores show a common pattern involving social class. The results indicate that students from the lowest economic quartile are three times less likely to obtain high scores in this standardized exam than their wealthier counterparts (Novik, 2021). These differences, however, are not unique to Ecuador. Other countries that have partaken in PISA exams revealed similar patterns. In Ecuador, the persistence of social class differences remains, despite recent efforts aimed on addressing social difference in education.

Indeed, under Rafael Correa's administration policies were created to promote greater equality in opportunities amongst students of different social class backgrounds. (Bittencourt, 2021). One example of this is the promotion of the International Baccalaureate programme (IB) in public schools., The policy to include the International Baccalaureate programme in public schools aimed to improve the quality of public education and promote students' accessibility to universities worldwide (Secretaría General de Comunicación de la Presidencia, 2022). Other reforms such as Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural also

strived to improve access to education of low-income students by eliminating and prohibiting fees associated with enrolment, such as school uniforms and book purchases (Bittencourt, 2021). These policies were considered a priority in public education and they focused on improvement in the quality and accessibility of education.

They draw on a belief that existing difference in attainment result from connection between students' social class backgrounds and resource accessibility. Under this explanation, if students grow up in an environment where they have access to resources such as books, they will have a better chance at higher rates of academic achievement (Novik, 2021). While ample evidence suggests this is often the case, a growing strand in the academic literature has strived to disrupt these existing portrayals that reduces unequal outcomes to material conditions.

Other cultural factors beyond access to resources may inform social differences in academic achievement. Often referred to as the "cultural turn" in social class by authors such as Jessica Calarco, discusses how issues related to parental involvement and even student-teacher interactions may inform academic performance. Calarco (2011), for instance, examined the cultural dimensions of social class. Her research found the middle-class students are more likely to ask for help and try to bend the rules in their favor. This is the result of a process of socialization common amongst middle class families that is absent amongst low-income students.

Inspired by the cultural turn in class my study aims on better understanding issues of class culture by examining how teachers in an elite private higher education institution perceive the role of social class in their classrooms. It also aims to understand how the social context of an institution may inform teachers engagement with their students.

To address this question, I conducted a qualitative study involving four teachers that work in elite private higher education in an institution considered as the highest-ranked

university in Ecuador (Times Higher Education, 2022). I decided focus on higher education since interactions with teachers, the learning processes and student achievement can be different from the ones found at lower levels. Moreover, the literature is mostly focused on elementary and secondary levels. Therefore, I decided to conduct the study in an elite space because over the course of time I had found that high-ranking schools provided different perspectives over the performance of students compared to other schools.

To guide my thinking, I drew on the concept of sociolinguistics from John Ashmead which offers a direct criticism towards differences in educational systems with minority groups. Ashmead's work provides a starting point in understanding of the effects social classes have over educative processes such as grading, classrooms, and language use (Ashmead, 1971). Ashmead discusses social class and minority groups within schools and his portrayal of the benefits of interacting with teachers in classrooms, which shaped my thinking for this research. For instance, the interaction in open classrooms create benefits for minority and working-class students through a sympathetic guidance of a teacher (Ashmead, 1971). My use of an elite space, however, contrasts with Ashmead's, contribution from the perspective of a privileged counterpart. Previous research has been focused on underprivileged school settings but a contrasting perspective in higher private education in Ecuador provides an ample review of possible patterns that affect student development such as social class settings. The perceptions of inequality from spaces such as private schools with focus on higher education settings can show us how teachers address this in a different setting with other age groups.

Findings from this study can be organized under three overarching themes. First, there is an analysis on the tendencies from teachers to create safe and welcoming environments for students in classrooms to address socio-cultural differences. Second, teachers' perceptions influenced the students' performance in class. Third, teachers found that sociocultural

differences are not relevant in universities but are different in lower education levels. The responses became noteworthy to the study since interactions between students and teachers shaped their connections in the classroom. The perspectives towards the university setting from external individuals connected with the perceptions teachers had of social class.

Combined, these themes suggest that perceptions of student achievement and development are affected by discussed elements such as the cultural turn. This discussion can provide insightful information from higher education teachers in a private elite space. This information relates to previous experience in other spaces and challenges the claims that education is solely influenced by access to resources. Focusing on issues on class-based understandings and it agrees with the claim that material resource is important. This also includes the discussion that cultural capital also plays a role.

Before detailing my findings, I will provide a brief overview of the existing literature on education in Ecuador and the ongoing literature in education which foreground social class as its main analytic lens. This will be followed by an overview of my methodology. Here, I provide details on how the research was conducted, including the number of participants, the methods of collect data and my approach to analysis. In the findings sections I present the direct manifestations of perceptions coming from the teachers who participated in this research. Finally, the thesis will conclude with a discussion of the findings and the directions this research may lead to for future analysis.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Social Class and Education in Ecuador

Education in Ecuador is highly stratified in terms of social class. This occurs because of factors such as infrastructure, educative models, and social status which are a byproduct of historic conditions which include financial and political instability in the country. Indeed, during the late 1990s, Ecuador faced a financial crisis which included institutional weakness, fiscal rigidities, high inflation and dollarization (Jacome, 2004). This crisis changed the course of priorities in the State, focusing on solving this economic crisis and reducing attention to areas such as education. (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015) . Moreover, constant changes of authorities made policies difficult to execute. For example, Ecuador had four different presidents from the period of 1998 to 2006 (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015). Relatedly, during the period between 1998 and 2003, there were eleven national strikes related to labor issues with teachers (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015). As a result of these conditions, the quality of education in public schools was low, and Ecuador consistently ranked as one of the lowest countries in the region in standardized exams (Bittencourt, 2021). In response, parents from the middle-class moved their children to private schools, which caused a greater divide in social classes in educative spaces in Ecuador.

The negative effects of stratification most heavily affected female and rural students. As a consequence, students coming from urban environments had higher chances to access proper education than their rural counterparts (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015). In terms of illiteracy and access to resources, a significant number of the female population in Ecuador were affected, resulting in significant social stratification (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015).

After several changes in government, Ecuador promoted new policies that aimed to improve the conditions of public education. In 2012, Ecuador promoted the “Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural”, which focused in part on addressing inequality. This initiative

focused on improving the quality and education and inclusion in educative spaces through the elimination of fees for texts and uniforms (Bittencourt, 2021). These policies were committed to address social inequality and to promote a new approach to development. Rafael Correa's administration had popular support and increased financial resources that allowed him to promote relevant decrees, such as Plan Decenal de Educacion and Ley Orgánica de Educación intercultural which was briefly mentioned above (Bittencourt 2021).

Despite these efforts, differences in achievement amongst social classes still remains. For instance, in 2018 Ecuador participated in the evaluation process provided by PISA-D. The results of fifteen-year-old teenagers showed that students with higher socioeconomic levels had approximately a three-to-one ratio of success in areas such as mathematics than lower-income students (Arevalo & Guevara, 2018). The access to resource may not be the only factor informing student achievement. The cultural turn in social class analysis provides additional understandings of factors affecting student performance beyond economic resources.

### **Social Class and Achievement**

Social class and achievement involve more than just economic factors and access to resources. During the twentieth century, there has been a recurrent analysis of the features of achievement in classes such as English as a Second Language courses and also mainstream courses in the educational field. Underachievement is an individual phenomenon that focuses on students' abilities (Smith, 2005). Smith focused on the general concept of underachievement in schools, involving many possible features that informed practices in these environments. This concept of achievement ignites the idea of classroom performance and the influence teachers have through the process. Students may reflect the practices applied by teachers within classrooms (Smith, 2005). These assertions provide the roadmap to understanding the problems influenced by social class in elite spaces.

Previous research focused on achievement and social class. John Ashmead discussed the inclusion of class and race in humanities. This creates a connection with the constant change and revolutionary nature of educational elements, as mentioned in the introduction above (Ashmead, 1971). The cultural turn mentioned by Calarco discusses that there are more than just economic factors that inform achievement (Calarco, 2011). There is also a cultural turn in social class that departs from classical understanding as those promoted by Marx and Weber. In the case of Marx, the world is divided into two main groups, owners and workers (Vandrick, 2014). Marx focuses on social class divisions solely based in material conditions. This discussion focuses on the role of class and the reproduction of class differences stratify society; an important factor related to access to education in Ecuador. On the other hand, Weber represented social class as a phenomenon affected by more than just economic position, integrating politics and religion (Vandrick, 2014). The depiction of social class by Weber provides a different form of perceiving interactions in class. Even though social class is still considered as stratified, other factors affecting it have been included to understand interactions that go beyond the economic resource aspects. The cultural turn discussed in this study focuses on how the access of resources don't fully explain the reason of inequality in educative spaces. It also involves the divisions of class, accessibility to education, achievement, and development that affect how sociocultural differences are addressed in classrooms.

Social class can be defined as an economic category coming from different sources or variables. These sources can be based on income or the levels of wealth (DasGupta, 2015). Economic factors such as tuition fees influence the perceptions of the institutions and provides a categorization of educative spaces where social reproductions may take place. The relational determination of class emphasizes the relationship between having or not having resources from the means of production, which ultimately structures and reproduces

inequality (DasGupta, 2015). These economic factors can shape the idea of class based on the means of production and the ideas of ownership.

Inequality plays a major role in the discussion of social class and achievement in the field of education. Authors such as Jessica Calarco not only discuss socioeconomic factors or ethnicity but also address inequality (Calarco, 2011). Perceptions of inequality may project a different direction in this research. These forms of negotiation become relevant to this study to discuss achievement and power relations within classrooms.

The context of middle-class children reveals the differences in attitudes toward their progress in class. One example of this is middle-class children are more likely to ask for assistance instead of waiting for assistance from teachers (Calarco, 2011). The responsibility to advocate for their development relies on parents. Student-teacher interactions inform academic performance. The understanding of classrooms as social settings in this study is set under the claims of specific categories based on perceptions of the environment coming from teachers.

This research provided by other authors following a line of representation of social division based on economic factors. There has been a deep economic divide in most of the Western world and there is still a division between the rich and the poor (DasGupta, 2015). The gap between classes in Ecuador became evident in terms of education. If students come from familiar environments with access to education, they are more likely to have further access to resources of the same kind. Ecuadorian development in education is highly influenced by socioeconomic levels (Araujo & Bramwell, 2015).

Class reproduction is relevant to the analysis of this study, given the influence it has over class performance. The understanding of social class in institutions affects the decision-making processes and the perceptions teachers have toward their students. This relates to the strand in literature and discussion of higher-level educative spaces. Both teachers and students

face the educational consequences of social class differences within schools or institutions (Vandrick, 2014). Particularly in language-learning environments, English teaching is a class-based environment where all parts are involved (Vandrick, 2014).

There are many elements surrounding inequality found within student groups. An example portrayed by other authors, explain the case of lower-income immigrants. The attitude related to learning from students informs the perception of achievement from teachers in this research. Access to resources and the impact they promote generate debate and insights into the existing gap in the literature.

Other authors have addressed class performance results such as underachievement. For example, class performance has been described as a long history of working-class underachievement (Dunne & Gazeley, 2008). There is a connection between these assertions and the results of PISA-D presented in 2018 in Ecuador with students of lower income classes. Some aspects of this study involved the issues involving marginalization and social class inequality in the United Kingdom (Dunne & Gazeley, 2008). It can be compared and contrasted with the similar situation faced in Ecuador through the complex processes of implementing policies to improve education. The study of achievement and the factors influencing the development of students has been largely connected to teacher criteria when it comes to decision-making processes.

Social class and analysis can be defined as a construction where levels are created based on resource accessibility (Block, 2015). In educative environments social class is embedded in the perceptions of achievement and interaction. There is an influence coming from the connections between social class and language (Block, 2015). William Labov's study "The Social Stratification of English in New York City" provided an understanding of social class and the different speech patterns coming from one's social class position (Block, 2015). Labov showed the different patterns of language use in department stores, and showed

significant changes depending on the costs or economic features found in each store. This example is connected to this study, mostly because of the accessibility to economic resources showed different patterns of speech (Labov, 1964). Therefore, authors consider the influences of social class in more ways than just education from the point of view of stratification.

Such claims are also related to other authors mentioned in this study. In recent years, educational systems in Ecuador have been influenced by constant changes in authorities and policies. The subsequent influence of accessibility to resources to ensure an appropriate education. The concept of inequality can be identified through the different economic differences. Stratification shows different classification methods related to class, caste, and estate (Grusky, 2001). Inequality is a relevant element in this research process. The possible assertion coming from this states that different spaces can be perceived as elite spaces where inequality may inform the practices to do so. The focus also relates to assumptions of social interactions, achievement, and possible areas of interaction.

However, further research has revealed a deeper connection between social class and achievement in linguistics. This research project relates to the main features of achievement involving English as a second language students. However, discussions are focused on teacher performance, social spaces, and social capital, among other influencing factors. Most authors have included elements related to the factors affecting development in different social areas. Even though most research papers have had proper approaches to lower classes, there are less focused areas on elite spaces or upper middle classes. Most of the focus is on the ideas of the social class provided by Anthony Abraham Jack and the discussion of elite spaces (Jack, 2019).

Many publications have portrayed the role social class and education in terms of achievement. These intakes towards achievement are related to teacher backgrounds and the influence such backgrounds have on students. Most of the discussions in the English as a

Second Language field have a direct relationship with mediated pedagogical practices. Social backgrounds and spaces concentrate on pedagogical decisions such as curriculum, goals, assessment, and the perceptions they obtain from their students (Ajayi, 2011). These takeaways directly relate to teacher practice and their decision-making process within classrooms. Ethnic backgrounds and social roles inform the perceptions teachers have from their students. Personal beliefs, experiences, and identities shape the environments set in classrooms as well (Ajayi, 2011). Social backgrounds can influence teaching practices and lead to different forms of negotiation in achievement. These negotiations have a direct influence on achievement. Therefore, most of the discussions are not focused on teacher backgrounds or elite spaces. The growing concern is related to the increase of diverse teachers in the English as a Second Language field (Ajayi, 2011).

The elements discussed so far influence teaching, such as their behavior in class and how they integrate curriculum. Such behaviors include possible negotiation inside classrooms. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between power relations within classrooms connected to categories based on race, gender, social class, culture, knowledge, and education (Ajayi, 2011). The argument sets the first steps to discuss class performance and the decision-making processes made by teachers influenced by their personal stories (Ajayi, 2011).

Social class and its perceptions can be connected to social and cultural capital. It can also be argued that it is a conflicting topic because of the many definitions used to describe it (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). For example, social capital can be described as the expectations for action within a collectivity (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). It is a relevant issue in this research since English as Second Language courses require constant interaction. This occurs because class interactions help create social capital. This concept needs to be refined because of its alternative definitions that show a lack of precision (Robison, Schmid,

& Siles, 2002). Social capital can be defined as a way to describe resources associated with interpersonal relationships (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). These features are constant within classrooms, where there is an evident amount of interpersonal exchange. Another form of describing it is related to forms of negotiation between teachers and students, usually focused on results and achievement. Therefore, the definition of social capital is related to the results of interpersonal interactions and the way it affects students' achievement.

The definition of social capital is variable, it reflects an aspect of social structure and the ability to facilitate the actions of individuals that belong to the structure (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). However, one of the most relatable elements to the context of this particular literature review is Cultural Capital. Cultural capital involves language, linguistic style, values, definitions of basic knowledge, and assumptions (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). It is also relatable to this research since it describes how the characteristics of Cultural Capital are acquired. Robison, Schmid, and Siles argue that these characteristics are acquired through socialization processes and tend to create differences that distinguish one group from another (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002).

Classrooms can be defined as social structures where there are expectations, obligations, trust, and information flows (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). Teachers and students certainly have responsibilities and expectations throughout their time of involvement in a class. There is an exchange of trust between the members of a classroom, especially when it comes to expressing thoughts and sharing opinions.

The discussion on the role of social class in educative spaces and the influences over interaction in classrooms provided the directions set in this research. Interactions between teachers and students have influences from elements of association in areas such as elite spaces. There is a focus on the experiences found within classrooms. Student engagement relies on the openings teachers provide to interact with their students based on different

elements (Jack, 2016). Such opportunities provided by teachers are useful to understand how students tend to construct relationships with people in their common surroundings. The definition of social class informs some of the possible outcomes coming from interactions. Certain groups of students find socialization and interaction with teachers odd, intrusive, or terrifying (Jack, 2016). This affirmation explains how students tend to perceive interactions with teachers. In contrast, this research provides a perception from the side of teachers. Such claims shaped my perception of the processes of student-teacher interaction. It may have different outcomes depending on access to elite spaces or the responsibilities to advocate for themselves.

The relevance of discussing privilege and social class in places considered elite spaces also relates to the content of this research. The expression of privilege based on poor students is mostly focused on elements of race, gender, and, socioeconomic position (Jack, 2019). There is a predominant discussion in high school settings in Ecuador. Also, most of the focus on social class is relatively new in the field of educative topics. Such features take a relevant form when discussing advantages and disadvantages in the social environment.

The claims that environments may not be suitable or welcoming influenced the directions portrayed in this research. This supports the assertion arguing that environments may cause the issue of inequality and welcoming environments toward students. This connects to the perspectives of English as a Second. The relevance of these elements has a meaning to represent the construction of social capital through the observations of interactions.

While income is not a variable considered in this study, it is worth mentioning that class tends to be divided and classified. Some examples of the division informed by income are portrayed with denominations such as middle-class and working-class. These divisions of class are indeed influenced by external backgrounds, such as familiar settings, the

neighborhoods they live in, and the resources they have access to at school (Jack, 2016).

These affirmations connect with Ecuadorian school results in PISA-D evaluations. It directly relates to the three-to-one ratio of success of high-income students against low-income students (Arevalo & Guevara, 2018). Social circumstances set up the possible attitudes and results from interactions between teachers, students, and access to resources. The structure of possible levels of interaction may bring to attention the outcomes of academic resources.

The argument of class-based interactions and engagement strategies can shape possible structures of inequality. There is a tendency to try and homogenize student groups based on their income and social position. Culture and inequality can provide insights into how students engage with teachers (Jack, 2016).

The importance of analyzing an elite setting provides a better insight into the literature gap on achievement in private schools. Private schools may provide a different perception of how social capital affects achievement. Most of the literature considered elite settings and mixed settings. In terms of other types of research, the literature reviewed this research also referenced many settings focused on underprivileged areas. Therefore, a different perception may be useful to understand agency within classrooms and the consequent achievement results. Social capital may be exchanged between peers and teachers through the use of social skills.

The creation of social capital between the members of a classroom can lead to certain negotiations and power. In the case of cultural capital, there are acquired behaviors and socially accepted norms (Robison, Schmid, & Siles, 2002). The interactions presented in this research directly informed the perceptions of patterns in classrooms for teachers. Therefore, these claims can be useful to distinguish learned and internalized behavioral norms from social capital. Socially accepted norms are reflected in the ground rules established within the classroom and how their participants engage in activities.

Experiences can be found as potential sites of learning. Social Change and pragmatist theory provide insight into the use of predominant ideas about education, knowledge, learning, and education (VanWynsberghe & Herman, 2015). However, education has been designed to implement social change, or at least attempt to do so. To conduct social change, there is a need for creating environments that help this occur. There is also a need for organized settings through the inclusion of other elements aside from knowledge and skills.

The concept of social movement examines the ways of perceiving the sites of learning and knowledge creation for participants and a movement constituency (VanWynsberghe & Herman, 2015). Taking elite spaces into account, there is more to interactions and changes than just socioeconomic aspects.

There is a focus on the individuals' experience as a learning outcome (VanWynsberghe & Herman, 2015). The perception of routines can provide relevant insights to the data collected in this study, particularly because pragmatism in classroom environments might be taking a relevant posture on patterns instead of knowledge. Routines affect every level of social action. We only escape habit and routine when the environment forces adaptation (VanWynsberghe & Herman, 2015). These conceptions of routine situate my thinking to perform observations that are further discussed on the methodology section.

Classroom dynamics can reveal several elements from the perceptions of social class. Therefore, there was a direct influence from these authors for three main reasons. The first way in which the authors situate my thinking is through the depictions of class environments. One example of this is the role of motivation and classroom settings, which comes across different observations conducted throughout this research. Other examples involve teachers and their styles when they aim to promote or their backgrounds such as whether they are native or non-native speakers. This study is based upon the perceptions coming from teachers

towards their students and how it derives a possible reflection on social class. Teacher-student interactions come up as a secondary element based on motivation and related to achievement.

Achievement and social class research represent fields that come with different sorts of challenges and effects through teacher performance. Discussing English as a Second Language and its instruction is relevant because of its constant changes in practices while teaching. Learning processes follow different patterns and they can have an impact on achievement. The research includes the perceptions of achievement, environments, class development, social class, and how some factors may influence those perceptions.

I narrowed down the features of this research to the objective of analyzing the perceptions of English as a Second Language teachers and the influence that external factors represent on the teachers' perceptions of student achievement. The main objective of the research is to analyze the perceptions of English as a Second Language teachers involving the influence of social factors on English as a Second Language students' achievement. This objective unfolds the description of social environments within classrooms.

The discussion surrounding grades connects to the main research question proposed in this study since teachers perceive the attitudes of students toward learning. The criticism towards grades provided by Ashmead was used as a starting point to address the discussion of data collected which involved student achievement and progress in class from the perceptions of teachers. Such systems are perceived within educative environments through the creation of preconceptions. This situates this research topic of discussion on Ecuadorian higher education settings. These higher education settings are set in the category of elite spaces and the access of resources. I found that the changes in social class do not necessarily involve economic aspects. This connects with the possible perceptions of teachers related to this research, this is further explained in the methodology to collect data.

## METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study focused on understanding teachers' perceptions of the role social class and its relation to ESL students' achievement and language development. The choice of a qualitative approach is premised on the understanding that qualitative research is best suited to explore human behaviors within the context of their natural occurrence (Hatch, 2002). This approach is appropriate in relation to this study because of my interest in understanding of the impact of social class on students' academic achievement by examining teachers' perceptions of the phenomenon and their pedagogical practices.

The study unfolded in Universidad San Francisco (USFQ). This space is considered a prestigious university in Ecuador. USFQ is known as the highest ranked university in the country because of its infrastructure, the background of its faculty members as well as international rankings (*Times Higher Education*, 2022). I chose to conduct this study in this space for two main reasons. First, the university has had an ongoing perception as a high-class space due to its history and tuition fees. Second, prior research has on the topic has predominantly focused on lower-class settings and underachievement. In contrast, this study focuses on an upper-middle-class environment that is presumed to be high-achieving.

To better understand teachers' perceptions, I conducted classroom observations which were followed by semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations focused on discerning the classroom setting, how students participated in class and, the interactions between teachers and students. I also hoped to see how students addressed their needs by advocating for themselves. Building on the insights gathered from the classroom observations, I conducted semi-structured interviews. The interviews aimed on obtaining insights on participants experiences as teachers including perceptions of their classroom environments and their perspectives on social class

In total, 4 teachers participated in this study. Teachers were selected on four main criteria. First, the teacher had to be at least 18 years old. Second, the teacher was a member of the ESL department in USFQ. Third, the teacher taught lower-intermediate or intermediate levels. Finally, the teacher needed to have at least one year of experience in teaching, not necessarily in English. These selection criteria allowed me to guide the research towards obtaining perceptions from teachers with diverse backgrounds that engaged in English as a Second Language teaching. This also connected with the research question which aimed to address how social class is addressed in private schools in higher education.

The selected teachers included two female teachers and two male teachers. I decided to consider this sample for demographic equality and to understand the possible differences between both groups. This selection of teachers included one native speaker per gender group. Each teacher was observed two times in the case of non-native teachers and three times in the case of native teachers. I decided to provide a greater focus on native faculty members to observe the exchanges with non-native students. I considered that students could engage with native teachers differently than the non-native teachers. This provides an additional insight on how students interacted with the teachers in class. After the observations I engaged in a semi-structured interview, which lasted a range of 45 to 80 minutes, depending on how the interview unfolded and which topics were discussed during that time. Only two questions changed with each interview with the teachers. The first question involved the identification of common patterns on their classrooms such as how they created the class environments. The second question aimed to obtain further details on the previous response to the first question. I included these questions because each class provided a different approach. The rest of the questions remained the same for all the participants.

Data collected through observations and semi-structured interviews were analyzed through an inductive approach. This research proposes to understand possible issues related to

perceptions of social class and achievement. Therefore, these issues may be considered as propositions and not hypotheses because I addressed the ideas about what occurs as part of the process instead of defining specific variables (Maxwell, 2013). This helped me to set up this research that provided better data on the topic based on real-life contexts. Table 1 provides an overview of the inducted codes that emerged through analysis. To analyze my data, I created investigation journals and created codebooks of the collected data. I created codebooks including all the relevant information I obtained from observations. First, I identified common patterns of the structure of each class. Second, I organized the information to provide a better explanation of the occurrence of events. Finally, I divided the data to provide a more detailed view of the events I observed with the participants. Qualitative coding is relevant for this study, as it is considered cyclical and not linear. Coding can be considered as a representation of that specific data (Rogers, 2018). I decided to connect the different variables I found during the observations with the responses from the teachers during the interviews. I also created a transcript of each recording of the interviews to provide resourceful information to connect with the observations. The transcripts helped me to review each participants' opinion in a more detailed way.

From this process of analysis, findings were organized under three overarching themes. The first theme focused on how teachers attempted to address socio-cultural differences in their classroom. This included an effort to create safe and welcoming spaces through sharing their personal experiences or using ice breakers to connect with students. The second theme is the perception of social class based on the teachers' previous experiences. This theme was framed after the teachers' provided insights on their perceptions of their experiences in spaces influenced by social class. Finally, the last theme focuses on teachers' perceptions of their students. The following section will detail these themes and consider their implications for the broader issue of social class and achievement in Ecuador.

These themes include the creation of safe and welcoming spaces in the classroom. The experiences of teachers in classrooms in private schools. Their previous experiences provided their insights on social class depending on how socio-cultural differences unfolded in classrooms. Finally, the perceptions of teachers of the interactions with their students. The following section will detail these themes and consider their implications for the broader issue of social class and achievement in Ecuador.

Data collected through observations and semi-structured interviews were analyzed through the use of coded information to summarize the events that unfolded during class.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Glossary of terms</b>
<b>G</b>	Gender
<b>LB</b>	Language Background
<b>SDB</b>	Student Different Backgrounds
<b>CF</b>	Class Format
<b>EU</b>	Electronic Usage
<b>TI</b>	Teacher Interaction (With Students)
<b>SP</b>	Student Participation
<b>GBL</b>	Grammar Based Lesson
<b>NS</b>	Negotiation to use Spanish
<b>SSC</b>	Student-Student Collaboration
<b>STC</b>	Student-Teacher Collaboration
<b>FT</b>	Female Teacher
<b>MT</b>	Male Teacher

*Table 1: Code names terminology for tables of each teacher*

The code terminology used in this data representation use abbreviations of each element selected on the observations conducted in classes with different teachers. The abbreviation of terminology represents a way to identify the processes of the different English as a Second Language classes I observed. Table 1 represents the terminology of the level observed, the gender of the participant, the student background information, the format of the class, and the many elements identified within the classroom. Some elements are represented as patterns since there were common elements during each observation.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Native Speaker</b>	<b>Teaching as First Career</b>	<b>Time Teaching</b>
<b>Female Teacher 1</b>	FT1	47	YES	NO	13 Years
<b>Female Teacher 2</b>	FT2	50	NO	YES	17 Years
<b>Male Teacher 1</b>	MT1	39	NO	NO	16 Years
<b>Male Teacher 2</b>	MT2	47	YES	NO	Not Specified

*Table 2: Showing Demographic background of the people involved in the interviews.*

From this process of analysis, three primary themes were identified. These themes include the creation of safe and welcoming spaces in the classroom, the experiences of teachers in classrooms and finally the perceptions of teachers of the interactions with their students. The following section will detail these themes and consider their implications for the broader issue of social class and achievement in Ecuador. Table 2 shows the representation of how each teacher addressed a welcoming environment and if it was discussed during the interview.

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Welcoming/Safe environment</b>	<b>Discussed the environment during interview</b>
<b>FT1</b>	Third	YES	YES
<b>FT2</b>	Fourth	YES	NO
<b>MT1</b>	Fourth	YES	YES
<b>MT2</b>	Second	YES	NO

*Table 3: Structure of discussions of the institution environment during interviews*

Data collection through the analysis of interviews is relevant to contrast the elements retrieved during observations. It became evident that teachers also promoted welcoming environments based on the institution setting, without mentioning this directly. The following table represents the codes used to represent data from the environments in observations.

In the case of FT2 and MT1, the entire classroom had access to technology in one way or another and I found this as a relevant feature from the observations because it affected the interactions between teachers, students and their peers. This assertion can be focused on the privileged positions and accessibility to resources made by Anthony Abraham Jack. Access to

resources is considered as external factors such as the elements involved in the background of each student (Jack, 2016). These elements were used during warm-up activities and the structure of observations. Table 4 codes best explained how the observations turned up with similar patterns in the class forma and if there were negotiations to use Spanish.

Observation	Level	G	LB	CF	EU	TI	SP	GBL	NS	SSC	STC
First	Third Level	FT1	Native	On Campus	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Second	Third Level	FT1	Native	On Campus	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Third	Third Level	FT1	Native	On Campus	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
First	Fourth Level	FT2	Non-Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Second	Fourth Level	FT2	Non-Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
First	Fourth Level	MT1	Non-Native	On Campus	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Second	Fourth Level	MT1	Non-Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
First	Second Level	MT2	Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	YES	Hybrid	YES
Second	Second Level	MT2	Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	YES	Hybrid	YES
Third	Second Level	MT2	Native	On Campus	Hybrid	YES	YES	YES	YES	Hybrid	YES

*Table 4: Common patterns found in the observations with all participants*

Table 4 shows the structures of all the classes observed including the use of technology, if the classes took place on campus, language negotiations and how students interacted with each other. Tables 5 and 6 show a more detailed perception of the educational backgrounds, the experiences with teaching, interaction and attitude towards learning from students, finally includes the discussion of social class.

Variable	Female Teacher 1 (FT1)	Female Teacher 2 (FT2)
<b>Educational background</b>	Not a specific major in education, however, the teacher acquired experience through teaching at different levels.	Has a specific major in education and had ongoing experience with teaching at different levels.
<b>Experiences with teaching</b>	Taught different levels in different countries. Mentions the economic background of students.	Focused on describing the age backgrounds of her students. Does not provide information

		on the economic background of students.
<b>Interaction with students</b>	Interacts with her students under the framework of the class.	Interacts with her students under the framework of the class and, if students require it, outside of class.
<b>Attitude towards learning from students</b>	Students tend to take ESL classes out of obligation.	Students tend to take ESL classes out of obligation.
<b>Roles of social class in education</b>	Perceives socioeconomic factors as determining elements in secondary education and in a lower level in college environments.	Did not mention social class as a determining factor, only focused on the possible uses of English as a Second Language after college

*Table 5: Summarized responses from female teachers based on elements found in ESL classes.*

Comments involving contact with teachers can be related to the assertions made by Jack in his research taking the perspectives of students such as interactions shaping the college experience with students (Jack, 2016). The socioeconomic perceptions provided insightful information that shaped the discussions of findings in the next section.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Male Teacher 1 (MT1)</b>	<b>Male Teacher 2 (MT2)</b>
<b>Educational background</b>	Not a specific major in education, however, the teacher acquired experience through teaching at different levels.	Not a specific major in education, however, the teacher acquired experience through teaching at different levels.
<b>Experiences with teaching</b>	Had experiences with specific courses aside from ESL courses. Mentioned experiences with economic backgrounds.	Had experiences with courses in schools, specifically with ESL courses. Does not provide economic background details.
<b>Interaction with students</b>	Students tend to take ESL classes out of obligation.	Students tend to take ESL classes out of obligation.
<b>Attitude towards learning from students</b>	Focuses on the relevance of social environments in the classroom, emphasizes on the relevance of ESL classes and acquiring English as a useful tool.	Did not mention social class as a determining factor, only focused on the possible uses of English as a Second Language after college, however focused on the common mistakes during the learning process.
<b>Roles of social class in education</b>	Perceives socioeconomic factors as determining elements in secondary education and in a lower level in college environments.	Did not mention social class as a determining factor, only focused on the possible uses of English as a Second Language after college

*Table 6: Summarized responses from male teachers based on elements found in ESL classes.*

## DATA AND FINDINGS

The first finding in this data involves the socio-cultural differences found in the classrooms. Teachers are aware of the existence of social-cultural differences and acknowledge the importance of addressing these in their classroom practices. All participants discussed the importance of creating a welcoming environment or a safe place which enables students to engage with the content of ESL classes and to promote interactions between the students and the teacher. For instance, during the observations of classes with FT1 I found she created a very welcoming environment for her students. She provided a personalized class in which she shared her personal stories during the class. Some examples of this involved her work experience when students were learning to build a CV or her family, when they were reading a fragment written by FT1's father. For example, during the interview she mentioned:

"Well, that's interesting. I don't talk about myself that much in class. Periodically, once in a while if it seems like, I think it's going to lighten the mood I do. The thing about my dad was, well he recently died, and I've been trying to somehow keep his spirit alive, so, that was that." (Female Teacher 1).

During the class observation the teacher discussed her ways to engage with students, she mentioned that she didn't share her personal stories regularly. In that particular case, she had a reason to include her personal stories and her material with one of her father's works. There was an evident exchange of personal experiences related to the content of the class. The teacher commented she had chosen the book which was written by her father. She also explained how it connected to her family (i.e., her daughter) and how it related to her father's life work. However, she did mention that she used similar things to make classes more welcoming. Also, she stated that before becoming a faculty member of the university, she had a different view of the environment.

Another example is found with the comments and the observations from MT1. He did not share many personal stories during the observations of his classes. The classes included mostly content and grammar-based lessons. However, the teacher mentioned a way to create a welcoming environment. He mentioned that he used other forms to engage with students such as using their names and wearing particular clothes to connect with them.

“Ok, so personally, I’m not good with names but I make a really big effort to learn my students’ names as soon as possible. This module is going to be super hard because I got four courses so that’s almost a hundred people that I have to (learn their names) and people that I only see an hour and a half each day. So, I try to do that because when you call someone by their name, in class they can’t help but be engaged. That helps engagement. Things that I do personally, I like to dress in cartoonish clothes like I will have a bunch of T-shirts with cartoon designs that I feel my students can relate to.”

Such details were not evident during the observations because the classes focused on content. However, he went deeper into this issue during the interview.

FT1 and MT1 claimed that although the USFQ is commonly perceived as an elite institution, it catered to a socio-culturally diverse student body. Teachers strived to create a classroom environment that was perceived as safe and welcoming to all by acknowledging the importance of socio-cultural differences. For instance, FT1 mentioned the following information about the spaces created within the institution. The teacher had the initial impressions of the university from the outside before becoming a part of the teaching community.

“This university surprised me, because it has a reputation that cultivates, I believe, of being of a certain level, you understand. But they give out so many ‘becas’ (scholarships) that it’s actually not. So, it is a lot more heterogeneous than they give it credit for, it is a lot more diverse than I gave credit for so, I’m very happy to report that. Took me a long time to realize that but it’s great.” (Female Teacher 1).

As the teacher mentioned, although the university is often perceived as elite, the student body is often comprised of individuals of diverse social-cultural backgrounds. This teacher also had a similar perception of the university as an elite space and it informed his

actions to address socio-cultural differences. He mentioned that during the interview with more detailed comments.

“At this institution (Renamed) I am very glad to have noticed that even though English might be the only class these students have in common, they are open enough with each other to create a group, right? To talk to each other probably kind of like befriend each other, and help each other out, especially when we have group activities, things like that. And, I was happily surprised at that because when I started, when I first applied to this institution (Renamed), most of the people that I talked of it about, always told me like, oh no this institution (Renamed) is full of snobs and the students are really like, what do you call it? ‘Pelucones’ (snobs) and things like that. And so, I had a preconceived notion of what I would expect to find in a classroom. But it really hasn’t been the case, in exception to a few little cases here and there throughout three years which is very small. So, in general, I would say this institutions’ (Renamed) students are friendly with each other and they do like to incorporate people who are willing to be incorporated, of course.” (Male Teacher 1).

I found that both teachers were surprised at the welcoming environment in this elite space. I could also discuss with the teacher that if students are willing to integrate themselves in a group, they are more than welcome to do so. These assertions are linked to the concepts made by Lasisi Ajayi. Understanding social backgrounds can be a crucial element in understanding the personalization of classrooms. The integration of personal beliefs, experiences, and identities is discussed in different settings (Ajayi, 2011). The insights found in the classrooms related mostly to creating connections. Engagement focused on the different experiences such as familiar stories or possible uses of resources linked to the teachers’ interests.

Another example of the creation of welcoming environments through content. In this case, FT2 had a similar view as FT1 since she also aimed to include entertaining elements into her classroom. This can relate to the different forms of interaction and participation. The teacher informed that most of her content developed in a virtual setting for her classes. This was described as a way to engage students into interacting with each other through a welcoming environment. Teachers strived to create a safe environment was through the course content. This included connecting to as many students as possible through interests

that were shared amongst the student body. FT2 accomplished this goal through the use of gaming.

“Ok it was like, I tried to follow all the rules, right? It was more like, I don’t know, what they just told me that I had to do, a set of rules, it was not like, even though I was teaching elementary school, they didn’t have a lot of games. Now, I’m engaged in, like, almost all the time, looking for more games and sometimes create more games for them. Now, because of the pandemic, recently, I just made some online games for them. So – at the beginning – even though I was teaching elementary school I didn’t have a lot of games for them, no. It was like, more focused on grammar, pronunciation, exercises on notebooks, like that. Yeah.” (Female Teacher 2).

I could observe that the teacher followed the established rules to structure her classes.

While the first element to be focused on is the fact that the private institutions promote a welcoming environment, another relevant element relates to the classroom resources used to motivate students. In this case FT2 used gaming to set up a more casual setting while relating grammar to interactions in class. The questions provided in this case, focused on ways to create innovative elements such as gaming in their lessons. It is a relevant feature because it creates a way to understand the welcoming environments within a private institution.

It is relevant to this study because teacher performance and perceptions of achievement informed the performance during class because students connected with the teachers through different forms creating a welcoming environment. These assumptions directed the entire interview to describe possible scenarios where experiences changed based on the teachers’ point of view and their engagement.

“When students are pretty engaged, I do a good job, but nobody’s ever like, you know, dropped everything to, you know, study English...and that did get me thinking about game design in English teaching...and it got me into games for education in general. So, when I went in for my masters, I knew already what I wanted to write my thesis about and I did. I wrote it on, I mean, it wasn’t a good thesis (I don’t think). Now I can see what I did wrong, but, let me down a whole rabbit hole of games in education and I started taking out my favorite parts. For example, yes, you can take a video game and put it in the classroom, yes, you can do that. But, I got, I found the most interesting thing that a lot of people love and they were games where you do pretty much nothing else but this, but designing your avatar.” (Female Teacher 1).

Nonetheless, teachers do not believe that socio-cultural differences directly inform students classroom behaviors, group interactions or achievement. As it was mentioned by MT1, students from different groups can integrate themselves if they choose to do so, and there is no exclusion. This affirmation debunked the perceptions of exclusive groups found within the institution. This completely changes the perception of social class in the university environment. Taking the first female teacher as an example, her experiences involving social class have had relevant roles in her teaching and she did not consider backgrounds as a relevant issue because of her previous experience.

“I’ve had a lot of very different experiences. I’ve taught all over the world. I mean, Korea, Nicaragua. I’ve taught rich people, I’ve taught poor people, I’ve taught refugees, I’ve taught kids, I’ve taught teens, I’ve taught adults. Here’s the one thing that changed my whole way of thinking about teaching. I think I was always a good teacher in the sense, of like, I knew...I mean I have a background in drama...So, I had that like entertainment background, you know, I could stand in front of a class and, you know, get people’s attention.” (Female Teacher 1).

Taking the element of engagement during the observations into consideration, the teacher focused on the creation of content that can promote engagement with English as a Second Language classes such as games. This process was evident during the observations of FT1 and FT2.

During the interview, MT1 showed a particular claim on how to address different backgrounds and circumstances of each student. The process of helping students and making them feel connected enough to ask for help was discussed with one of the teachers. MT1 shared his experiences with the difficulties to identify the extent to which a teacher can help students in private institutions. Such claims set up a finding with the ways in which negotiations can affect interaction.

“Sometimes you can help a student and sometimes you really, really can’t. And that’s something I think has molded my teaching to this day, and it’s helped me in the sense that I try to help my students, I really try to help my students but I have limits. That has sort of molded me as a teacher, as a professor. That sometimes a situation is literally impossible and so, that makes me better at when I have to make a judgment call on a

student, I don't second guess myself. I say, 'Ok, I've thought about it, I have thought of every angle I could help this student, to give this student an opportunity, if they're asking for an opportunity, a chance' And sometimes the answer is yes, but sometimes, because of this situation, the answer is no." (Male Teacher 1).

The comments made by MT1 show relevant perceptions on the extent to which a teacher can help a student. The usual element of producing judgement calls may appear as something complex to do. Such negotiations and interactions can be connected to the extent in which Anthony Abraham Jack focuses on the connections between students and teachers using resources (Jack, 2016). Therefore, the teacher focused on the experiences he found on the many opportunities given to the students depending on the situation. Judgement calls in different situations can create a barrier towards asking for help or negotiating with elements within the classrooms. MT2 mentioned that negotiations can influence the performance of students during class.

"Many times, because they're studying the same things. Of course, they sometimes they will distract into 'Oh, did you do the homework of these other thing?' Ok. So those are the things that sometimes you have to control or check. And on the other hand, I also like to be kind of flexible because if you are ready to finish what you had to do and you have some extra time and you want to finish the other activity that you were doing from somewhere else, I'm not going to sit there and not move, you know, I mean, use your time wisely, and that's it." (Male Teacher 2).

This was relevant during the observations from other teachers. There were negotiations with the use of Spanish between FT1 and MT1 and their students. Some examples of the phrases used in the classroom by FT1 involved common phrases to get students to pay attention to specific grammar elements such as "Mira bien" or "Ten cuidado" which informed their performance through the welcoming environments previously established. In the case of MT1 he used it to clarify some instructions. In the case of FT2 and MT2, Spanish negotiations were almost inexistent.

The discussion topics that caused interest in the classes showed an influence in the development of students during the observations. The relevance of education is related to

authors such as Jessica Calarco and the focus on the roles of social backgrounds in the classroom (Calarco, 2011). The features coming from this particular observation focused on the times in which students asked a question or asked for help from the observed teacher. In other words, how they advocate for themselves.

This does not mean teachers do not believe socio-cultural differences are not important. Rather that they are more salient in lower levels such as elementary and high school, and less relevant for higher education. It can be argued that some environments cannot be open or welcoming for everybody. Another argument made during the interview involved the level of economic resources. Such comments provide relevant insights on the perception of exclusive settings, and it is not the case of the institution. However, I could note the teacher perceived that this is not the case of other institutions, especially high schools. This sets a clear difference between levels, therefore, the idea of providing an additional scope of analysis that is relevant to this study.

“I know that there’s a school culture and to get that I don’t know I can generalize a huge amount, except that, and this is pretty ugly, what I’m about to say, in Ecuador, private schools are in it for the money. So, again, this is a huge generalization, but I’m talking about the tops. Not the teachers, teachers are teachers and we get paid the same no matter who our students are. But, at the top level, particularly in high schools, the principal level, right? They’re looking out at how many students they have, what’s the bottom line, how much money we are bringing in, right? And, so, I think there’s a tendency and a danger to bend over backwards to parents. At university, I like it much better, because in university I don’t answer to parents, whereas in high schools and in private schools, that requirement is because it’s about money, and sometimes to absolutely ridiculously stupid degrees. So, for example, I had some homeschooled kids, and this is how – I homeschool my own daughter and people always ask me what happens if I want to put her back on the system – If I pay enough, they’ll take her, right”” (Female Teacher 1).

Her perceptions on social class came up as a result of the discussion of social capital and the attitudes found from school members in levels such as high school. Even though high school perceptions step outside the scope of this research, it creates a contrast with the perceptions of the teachers at college levels. Taking generalized cases as an example, money and education can affect the development of students because some institutions tend to gain

or retain more students for tuition fees. As a fellow teacher in different levels, I found this argument valid since institutions tend to be more nurturing with younger students and the influence of economic resources play a role in this assertion.

“I usually don’t like to compare different groups because it’s, I mean, it’s not fair for them either. Ok? Different backgrounds, different situations. So, but I can tell you that, because of my experience with three different institutions and, of course, three different backgrounds. It is obvious that in certain institutions, the concept of meeting the language in the future is a lot higher than in others. Ok? The funny part is that usually those that think that they will not use it in the future, they end up coming back to study English, because then they realized that they need it.” (Male Teacher 2).

MT2 stressed the fact that his students could work in groups and did not establish any limits. During the observations of his classes, there were some groups that were already integrated and worked together. However, other students preferred working alone. The dangers of generalizing groups can be represented with the example provided by MT2, mostly due to the fact that the teacher acknowledges the differences and circumstances of each group. Therefore, it is important to focus on the issues and disadvantages created when a group is generalized. I saw it was important for the teacher to include every single aspect of the group and it stressed out the relevance of not comparing groups from a general point of view. Teachers claimed that students have a tendency of using English constantly because occasionally some people forgot what they learned. The interaction with MT2 is therefore shaped by factors external to the class.

Half of the interviewed subjects did reference their assumptions of social class directly. The other half focused on more content-based discussions during the interviews. Most of the classes’ development during observations resulted in constant participation since the teachers made this possible through activities that required cooperation between students. Therefore, students were connected with possible elements of social capital, where the interactions between students are highly relevant.

I conducted these observations and interviews to understand how teachers structured their strategies to develop classes. Taking the first observation from FT1 as an example, it shows a specific form of interaction between teachers and students. These interactions relate with the first theme discussed in this section with how teachers address sociocultural differences. This also shaped their perceptions of their students' attitudes towards language.

Using educational environments such as the ones presented in this section are mostly focused on creating social change (VanWynsberghe & Herman, 2015). The social change in this case, was represented on the attempts of generating a degree of confidence between students and the teacher to address sociocultural differences.

There is a degree of freedom and autonomy in the classrooms, but students still need reinforcement and reminders of each activity. Teachers also focused on their idea of getting their students to find ways to connect with them. Some of the teacher experiences were discussed during their classrooms, they could also argue that students take classes out of mere obligation. Having an opening to describe the possible role of social class, all teachers came up with similar perspectives towards the elite space and how their students' achievement is affected. Taking an overview of the interviews and observations, the teachers provided these safe environments that gave their students confidence to ask for assistance. The perceptions towards the institution where this research took place showed a focus on the external depictions of it before joining the faculty and experiencing the dynamics by themselves. Finally, the teachers saw different ways to perceive class and environments based on the level including the significant differences between universities and high schools.

## CONCLUSIONS

Social class can take many forms and many expressions throughout the learning process in English as a Second Language classes. These discussions are relevant for English as a Second Language teachers because these factors can affect class performance. I found that participants in this study contended that social class is not a determining factor in their classrooms. A common element in all four participants is that they create a welcoming and casual environment in one way or another in their classes to address social differences. This increased the relevance of creating these environments to direct participation to more inclusive environments by addressing sociocultural differences. Some teachers preferred to do this directly through the use of personalized features such as stories, experiences or common interests with students. In other cases, they provided a more informal setting through gaming or activities based on content. This perception on a higher-level educative environment showed the process of getting students to develop and achieve through encouragement.

The external descriptions of the institution directly informed the perceptions of two of the teachers involved. However, their classroom welcoming environments showed their perceptions of their students towards open to interactions without taking the economic levels into consideration. Additionally, there is an emphasis on the perceptions of the responsibility students have. By responsibility they meant students had to decide if they were willing to integrate in groups or to interact with teachers. I found that teachers also included their perspectives on their students' personalities.

The perspectives from half of the participants took class into a relevant level in terms of how they inform student motivation and development through their performance. This is also connected with the negotiations they have with their students to change deadlines or to use their native language such as Spanish. The relevance of this assertion for the study provided points of view involving issues such as the flexibility to interact and to change

structures of the class if students were advocating for themselves. I would say that tuition costs and socioeconomic positions did not make a difference in the interactions with students at the university level. As MT1 discussed, if they are willing to interact with their classmates, they are not excluded to do any sorts of activities with them, regardless of their background. However, tuition costs and socioeconomic positions have an opposite perception at high school levels. This assertion can be contrasted with the comments made by FT1 in terms of high school settings on a broader scope. These comments provided opposite perceptions of how the environments were handled in high schools on the one hand and universities on the other.

However, I found that these perceptions shaped how this teacher perceived social class at other levels. I identified this when she shared her perception of secondary or high school Ecuadorian education treated as a business at times. This is a great generalization and should not inform all the perspectives of education in Ecuador. However, it provided a premise on how people feel with certain educative spaces. There is a constant mention on the construction of social class in terms of interaction between teachers and students. It can be argued that class can become stratified in terms of educative environments based on elements such as economic perceptions. This finding involves the perceptions of elite spaces in different levels such as higher education and secondary education. The interactions are evidently different between these two levels, because the interactions are completely different.

Social class not only shaped the perspectives of half of the participants involved directly, it also informed certain practices throughout the process of observations. In the case of the other two teachers were indirect through the previously established casual setting in their classrooms. I found that this is relevant because the classroom setting influences achievement. In addition to these claims, two teachers involved in the observation and

interview process agreed that social class can be highly relevant in engagement, motivation and student development. However, it all depends on the type of environment they are involved with. The perception of the school environment played an important role on the perspective of their experiences as teachers. Most of these results related to the welcoming environments assertion based on the representations of the school where this research took place.

One of the most relevant issues in this case can be the distribution of perspectives based on content. The pattern identified in this case, focused on the goals of the two remaining teachers FT2 and MT2. This is not exclusive for the other teachers since they managed to combine the structures of the class with personalized features. These goals were related to the creation of new forms of knowledge after taking their classes. There is a certain focus on the intensity and relevance on social capital. The idea of social interactions and sharing skills are considered as highly relevant in spaces such as high schools and they also have less influence on universities. The idea of sharing skills can relate to the construction of social and cultural capital. Teachers argue that interactions may depend on the setting of the class they create and the circumstances of each student.

One example of this was reflected during the observations in every single classroom from the teachers who participated in this study. The objectives of understanding social class and the possible features influencing practices and perspectives in the classrooms can open a new road for the discussion of sociolinguistics in different academic levels. I would say that the external image of the institution representing a higher socioeconomic level can cover the internal welcoming environments in terms of an elite space leading to broader fields such as hidden curriculum in further discussions.

Such assumptions and generalizations can provide limitations in research projects such as this study. Preconceptions and judgement calls can shape the issue of social class in

superior educational environments. One final recommendation I would provide is to expand the scope of research towards high school and public institutions to create a comparative study on how practices in English as a Second Language classes may vary depending on the settings of each institution.

The settings could change related to similar practices in terms of social interactions and the degree of formality in the classrooms. These possible new scopes of research were also mentioned during the interview processes by half of the participants I interacted with. However, the perspective of this elite space could change if an analysis is done in other highly ranked schools in Ecuador. It is important to consider that some schools considered in this country ranking are public, therefore, the idea of considering socioeconomic factors could go on a different direction for further research. These findings are significant to understand the topics proposed in the research question of this project. For example, the strategies teachers use to address sociocultural differences influence the performance of their students in the classroom. The discussion of such strategies influences the performance of teachers and provides an understanding of how classes differ in university settings from high school settings.

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## ANNEXES

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### **ANNEX A: Interview transcripts with Female Teacher 1**

N- “All right, so we’re going to start with the basic questions, if you don’t mind sharing, of course. If you don’t want to, it’s fine...-”

I1- “...but don’t answer like you know but go ahead.”

N- “Yeah, sure. So, what is your age and your gender?”

I1- “I’m 47 and I believe I’m female. I identify as female.”

N- “Ok, thank you...um, ok so what is your academic background? What was your major when you studied, do you have any different title from teaching? Or you were a major in teaching in your undergrad?”

I1- “No. What happened was...um...I graduated from high school and realized everything I knew was from books and I was determined to travel, and um...I did it, I traveled for a year and went to college. (And) I thought the easiest way to travel was, at that time, to be an English teacher. The problem is...is that in Canada, if you get an education degree is only valid in that province, not even in the whole Canada, only exclusively in that province. (And) I just thought well, that doesn’t help me because I want to travel. So, I ended up doing just any undergraduate degree that would just get me a degree. So, I ended up doing drama, which was incredibly useful and English literature, which was immensely pleasurable but not useful at all. (Um) So, I did those two and then, um, then I started travelling again, and several years later I got my CELTA and DELTA and then in 2015 I got my masters and, again, I wanted to go as broad as possible so I got a masters in something called social and educational research. I’m not a researcher, I really don’t...I thought I would like it but I don’t...but, um, it was the widest possible avenue and so I actually learned a great deal.”

N- “Ok, so, um in terms of teaching, how long have you been a teacher?”

I1- “Oh, well, 14 I think...no, younger than that 13, I think. I was working in like summer camps, so I worked as a counselor and I taught dance and drama and stuff. And, my first English teaching job, I went to Israel when I was a nineteen and I taught English there, and, I’ve been teaching ever since.

N- “That’s pretty interesting. It’s a long career but it’s great, um...so, you already said things about your professional background and things you studied. So, what are some of your experiences in classrooms? What is an experience you remember the most?”

I1- “As a student or as a teacher?”

N- “As a teacher, um, what was a memorable experience to you? What changed the way you thought about teaching? Or it didn’t change? Do you have anything related to your experience as a teacher? Would you like to share anything like that?”

I1- “I’ve had a lot of very different experiences. I’ve taught all over the world. I mean, Korea, Nicaragua. I’ve taught rich people, I’ve taught poor people, I’ve taught refugees, I’ve taught kids, I’ve taught teens, I’ve taught adults. Here’s the one thing that actually changed my whole way of thinking about teaching. I think I was always a good teacher in the sense, of like, I knew...I mean I have a background in drama...So, I had that like entertainment background, you know, I could stand in front of a class and, you know, get people’s attention. But here’s what’s been really interesting. Have you ever seen The Big Bang Theory?”

N- “Yeah.”

I1- “There’s relevance, ok? Ha. In The Big Bang Theory, especially in the early seasons. Right?”

N- “Right.”

I1- There’s four geeks that play games, video games, a lot. Right. But, to the point where you think, ok, they are not making any money off it, they’re certainly not getting any girlfriends or any social status from playing, but they’re playing. Now, that got me thinking, how come I can’t get my students “that” engaged? I mean, when students are pretty engaged, I do a good job, but nobody’s ever like, you know, dropped everything to, you know, study English...and that did get me thinking about game design in English teaching...and it got me into games for education in general. So, when I went in for my masters, I knew already what I wanted to write my thesis about and I did. I wrote it on, I mean, it wasn’t a good thesis (I don’t think). Now I can see what I did wrong, but, let me down a whole rabbit hole of games in education and I started taking out my favorite parts. For example, yes, you can take a video game and put it in the classroom, yes, you can do that. But, I got, I found the most interesting thing that a lot of people love and they were games where you do pretty much nothing else but this, but designing your avatar. So, like, there’s games like second city, the half line, there’s games where basically the whole point is to design your avatar. At the time when I was studying, there was a really big game, it’s not – it’s not around anymore but it was called world of warcraft. And, the whole idea was, your, the reward for doing well on the game is that your – your character grows, your avatar gets bigger. So, that’s where I came up with the idea for using the avatar in the classroom and it had a lot of benefits. One was, it’s your game-like, you’re making up your story, right? You’re creating your own avatar with whatever language you’re being taught. The other advantage is, in math you talk about math, in history, you talk about history, in science you talk about science, in English, you talk about yourself and I structured it with particularly the pandemic and also because of my experience with refugees, and the poor, people who come from very difficult backgrounds, maybe they don’t want to talk about themselves in class, maybe they just don’t. So, the avatar, allows you to sidestep all of that. That’s a huge thing, so, like my kid is at the Alliance Française right now, and I was really shocked that her teacher had the class write – draw their family trees. My kid lost her grandfather, she lost her aunt in the pandemic, you know, kids have gone through divorce...you don’t want to talk about that in class. The avatar sidesteps all of that. If you want to talk about that, you can do it and say it’s your avatar. If you don’t want to talk about it, you can make your avatar to anything you want. And that’s why – where I got to developing that concept.

N- “Ok, so I see that you have a clear background from before and after you changed your mind – on how to do it.

I1- “Yeah”

N- “It’s really interesting, so, I think you already went over this, but what is your general classroom dynamic? Besides games, right? So, how do you usually structure your class?

I1- “I have something that I want the students to learn. Usually, like a grammar point. Let’s say I go with a grammar point. You have to learn, I don’t know, present perfect right? I go in, first few minutes, and I did this through zoom as well. On zoom as well is the same thing, I will teach for like 10 – 15 minutes, explain the grammar, right? Then, I go straight to the avatar, you’re either going to make a story, or you’re going to make a video, or something to do through avatar involving the present perfect. Having done that, then there’s going to be a communicative component, so, if you’ve written something, then your classmates have to respond in some way. Maybe by finding images that suit the story that you told, if it’s a speaking task, maybe they are going to have to respond, so for example, um, let’s say it’s a...oh I know, uh, clothes. Something we did a fun thing about clothes, this is really funny, you’re a grand...the avatar is a grandmother who is trying to tell you what to wear for your first job interview but she has no taste in clothes. Like, her taste is back in the, you know, ages ago, totally not fashionable, right? So, you have to respond to her, very delicately, are you going to agree or disagree with her? Or how are you going to go about that> That kind of thing, so, basically, the language I want them to know I have them do whatever part of their assignment it is, generally on their own, and then the response part. That worked on zoom, now that I’m back in the physical class, the writing and response can happen more simultaneously. On zoom it just could not happen simultaneously, so it happened sequentially.

N- “Ok, so...some of the things that were revolving around my head was achievement. So, students usually have a sense of achievement. (For example) Maybe I did really...really well in this class, maybe I didn’t do so well. So, what is your perception of that? What is your perception of achievement? What do you think students would gain from having their awareness of achievement?

I1- “A long time ago, where once grades really had a meaning. What is 7.1? What does it mean to say, I’ve mastered 80% of the material, what 20% am I missing? So, to me it’s a 100% or nothing. So, what does a 100 mean? It means you’ve done what we do in real life, which is, you’ve done it. If there were any corrections, you correct it. If you still have corrections, you correct it again until you completed it. That’s what achievement is, that’s all I’m looking for, and every student is going to have something different...I mean there are some general errors, that’s true, but by in large each student is going to need to work on something generally very specific. So, what you wrote here, that’s not quite the word you’re looking for, I’m going to give you the word you need, and it’s their asking for information on an absolute need to know basis. Because remember, I started the lesson, I’ve given them very – very little information, I’ve given them the absolute basis for what they need, maybe 10 minutes, 15 minutes, after that, they’re going...it’s not on their own, it’s that then they have to make sense of it themselves, so their questions are very much need to know in the moment to do what they want to do. And, once I’ve said, yes, this is correct English, and you said what you wanted to say, that’s achievement.

N- “Ok, so, yeah, that’s some of the central core elements that I’m trying to identify and see what’s the perception of that and to what extent it would be relevant. So, you say, it’s a 100 or nothing, so that’s an interesting point of view. Ok, so, another thing that I went over while writing these questions were the interactions of your students, right? So, have you ever heard of the term Social Capital?

I1- “I think I have but not in the context you mean. What do you mean?

N- “Ok, so pretty much the relationship they have with each other, how they build their own social space and they interact with each other and basically have some results. They gain

something out of it, they make friends, they make contacts, so, have you noticed that in your classroom? Taking it as if we're on a private institution, right? So, we have different types of classrooms, and each classroom is different. So, how do you perceive the social environment in your classes?

I1- "It's an interesting question, the question is better suited to high school than in university. Because, in university, it's too big for, like, cliques to form.

N- "Right."

I1- "There's no bullying, I mean, there may be. There may well be, but it will be more within a particular faculty, right?

N- "Right."

I1- "So, like all the dentistry students, all the math students or whatever. There may be like issues going on there. But a university is, generally, just a big place. So, if I make friends with somebody in my class, it's not like a huge thing. High school, you live and die on social capital.

N- "So, what I realized is this communicative thing, where your work depends on mine and you're going to tell a story, right? I have to tell it well enough so you can illustrate and your illustration depends on your comprehension of what I've done. So, as that goes, we need each other. If the work is not, for example, tell each other about your summer vacation is a very bad task. Because, if you are talking, then I am talking, but we have no reason to listen to each other. But, find three things you both did this summer, we have to listen to each other because my response is dependent on yours and yours dependent on mine, that's communicative. That, I think, and I have some evidence to back it up, personal and research based, that reduces bullying, because at least within the classroom, my information depends upon – my grade my status, my social status depends upon yours. But in university, it's not quite the same. If I built a good lesson where (we) both improve our English. But I don't think that social status depends on that quite so much. Or social capital, not so much I don't feel it does.

N- "Ok, no, it's perfectly valid and I take the example of high school it's really – really interesting and that comes from your experience as a teacher, right?

I1- "Yeah, very cliquey."

N- "So, that – it's...that is a very interesting point of view. So, other things that I have noticed...do students socialize with you as a teacher? Constantly? Or not?

I1- "I'm not that person."

N- "Ok."

I1- "I'm very on when I'm in class, but I'm actually an introvert. So, I say hi to people on the corridors, yes, but there's two things that prevent it. One is my own personality, I'm very introverted. But the second thing is, I'm an English teacher, like I noticed like a history professor, students who are really interested in history will like go out their way to have coffee with that professor. But nobody wants to have coffee with the English teacher because they're afraid they're going to have to speak in English. So, basically that's two strikes against me. My masters' students, we socialize. But – but also when I talk undergraduate English teachers. Undergraduate English teachers socialize because they have that in common. But with my English language students, no.

N- "Ok."

I1- "Plus, I'm also just too old and I'm not into that anymore. I'm different.

N- "Ok, yeah, totally valid and that's really interesting as well, so, it depends on the levels and it depends on the things you have in common.

I1- "Yeah and also depends on the personality. I mean, I've been out with people but I'm just not that person anymore."

N- "Right."

I1- "I used to be a lot more, but (now) not so much."

N- "Ok, interesting. So, moving forward, do you find there's any types of negotiations or attempts to negotiate things in the classrooms. An example of it would be "teacher could you change the date of the deadline on a task?" Something like that, so, do students negotiate a lot? Or they just follow the rules, they follow the syllabus? Do you find – Have you ever– have you ever encountered something similar? Where someone comes up to you and says you and says, well I'm having this issue, probably could you change the deadline? Can I get something extra? Have you ever noticed that?"

I1- "I don't have that because for me, every assignment is done in class during class. That's it, there's no – like I said the masters is a little bit different or when I teach undergraduate teaching and graduate that's different. But when I teach English – English every class is pretty much self-contained. So, what I get are teacher I missed such and such class can I make up the assignment? And that, I don't. During the pandemic, I went overboard, bending over backwards – sure don't worry. And then, I realized, that they were missing the communicative part. So, if you post a video a week late, then, nobody is going to respond to it. So, the first part of the pandemic I felt so damn sorry for everybody I bent over backwards. But then shortly after that I started realizing, I got to go back to the original, during class I don't get homework, I don't get extended assignments or extended deadlines. What we do, we do in class, it's self-contained, if you miss it, let it go. If you missed too many, withdraw from the class, try the same level next term, that's it."

N- "Ok, so pretty much they try to make it up and it doesn't really make a difference if they want to because it's self-contained, like you said."

I1- "Yeah but I also found that if I let them do it later, there's no communicative aspect, and also like at one point during the pandemic it just started getting abusive, like, people hand in 15 assignments at the end of the term so, no – no, not going to happen. And I was trying so hard because of the pandemic and, so, I realized I have to set my own boundaries too. I was going through hell during the pandemic, like everybody, I had my own personal issues and to sit down and correct 15 papers at once...no – no...I got to respect myself too, not going to happen."

N- "Yeah, I think it's really interesting to see it that way, it happens."

I1- "But I also made a lot of mistakes."

N- "Yeah, well it happens, yeah. So, negotiation at some point, depending on the context, depending on the situation, you said, on the pandemic."

I1- "Now, looking back, it was a huge mistake. A class should be self-contained. If I plan my lesson right there should not be no homework unless I have one student who really needs something extra, but that's like very unusual. But generally, a class should be complete within itself, the next day it's something else."

N- "Ok, got it. Ok, so well, I think we already went over this, depending on the relationship with social capital and their development of the class, right? So, you said it's really 'cliquey'"

I1- "In high school, in college not so much."

N- "Yeah, in college, not so much. Would you argue that in high school my grade depends upon the information I get from the other person, right?"

I1- "I design it that way."

N- "So, you design it that way. And, in college levels, your English improves when we interact, right?"

I1- "Your work still depends on mine, but it doesn't have much to do with social capital."

N- "Right, so, yeah, I'll rephrase it. Is there a direct relationship between that interaction and their development in class? Or (is) it irrelevant?"

I1- “No, no, absolutely.”

N- “Ok.”

I1- “If you hand in a story to the teacher, like you write a story, right? If you know that only the teacher is going to read it, and give it back to you with corrections it’s not going to be interesting. If you write knowing you have an audience, it’s different. So, there was one lesson, I remember this it was pretty funny. You know when you have to do that thing about teaching sequences, first this, then next, after that, it’s a fairly boring lesson and most kids write fairly boring stuff about how to make a cup of coffee, whatever, right? Except that, because my students already knew, that like – this was somewhere in the term. They knew that their classmates were going to read whatever they wrote and I noticed my students made an extra effort to make it funny, or shocking, or interesting, or to elicit some kind of a response. So, one kid wrote, uh, how to graffiti. First, find an empty wall, in a rich neighborhood, then...(ha). Ok, and another kid wrote how to roll a joint, uh there was a couple of them did that, they thought it was shocking. But the point is that they made an effort to consider their audience, which is what real writing should be. If you only think your teacher is your only audience, then you’re going to write badly, you’re just going to write dead dull stuff, even though your English is correct, it’s not good writing.”

N- “Ok, thank you, I think that is really interesting. So, what are some patterns you may identify in your classrooms as a teacher? Do you find that your classes are similar at some point? Like, I get 15 students and all 15 students strive to get a Pass or is there anything related to their affinities? Kind of like, they have likes, dislikes, they find their groups or you don’t any patterns of those at all?

I1- “Do you mean within a class or among classes?”

N- “Within a class.”

I1- “Try that again. Ask me that again.”

N- “Ok, so, within a classroom, do you have any patterns of behavior? Kind of like, there’s a specific attitude, or your classes are all different? They interact the same or they get into cliques? Probably, when they get comfortable in a group, they tend to work in the same group? Something similar, something like that?”

I1- “That’s very interesting, yes and no. Ok, so if my class is, like, from all over the place, you get a law student, a design student, a med student. If they’re all like completely individuals in the class, then they all come in as new people together, right? However, I have had many cases, several classes, where there would be like a particular group. So, in last term – no, not last term – not summer term but the one before, I remember that there was like, 8 out of my 12 students were all dentistry students, and dentistry students by and large, not exclusively, but by and large tend to be indigenous kids. And the reason being, that it leads you directly to a very well-respected career, but it’s not medicine. You see what I mean? So, they tend to stick together because they’re generally 9 times out of 10 are from out of town, so they’re alone in the city, 9 times out of 10 they are first generation students, first ones in their family to go to university. So, that group kind of stuck together, but indigenous people have a great sense of solidarity, so they welcomed everybody else so, the group was very tightly knit and it was thanks to that particular – I don’t want to say clique, because clique sounds ugly – but whatever the positive form of clique is, right? However, that doesn’t actually happen quite that – it happens more often at the lower levels and the main reason is because indigenous students from out of town will come in at lower levels but because it’s their first year, they’re that much more nervous. So, they tend to glue themselves together, see? This term, I’m teaching level 6 and I don’t see anything like that. It’s either – like I do have indigenous students – but they’ve made their way up and they had their own social group, they’re much more confident. By the time you get to level 6, either you’ve come in

with a lot of confidence, with a good level of English, or you've made your way up and you're ok at the university now, you're more settled in, right? So, level 6 is a very different feeling than level 1 or level 2. Does that make sense to you?"

N- "Yeah, it completely does. I think it's interesting because, once again, I think there's some sort of social capital right there, right? Because, they're trying to stick together, and they try to socialize together as much as they can. Because they feel lonely, they are a bit lost, they don't live in the city, so it is really interesting."

I1- "Something beautiful, that I, this was one of the first times I've seen it with this particular class um, we were talking about clothes, and what kind of clothes would you wear on a first date, what kind of clothes would you wear for a business interview, what kind of clothes would you wear to a music concert, and it obviously depends on the kind of music you're going to listen to and this was a very new thing. I've been teaching in Ecuador for 20 years and this was the first time that students said I would go to an indigenous music concert. That surprised me, because in 20 years, I've never heard an indigenous person or an indigenous student come out and say as much. So, the fact that this kid said – I think because it was, they were in a group of indigenous kids – they felt confident enough to say that. That surprised me and I was very pleased.

N- "Would you say that the environment in general of the university, do you think it made it easier for students to act that way and to relate to their classmates differently? Do you think it has something to do with the environment the institution has?"

I1- "I don't know, because it's a really big university. I think it would depend more on the faculty. I've worked at other universities, where I've noticed that faculty – for example dentistry – that's what happens in that faculty. I don't know that I could say as much for law or medicine or design or whatever it is, I just, those students tend to not stand out to me. Dentistry students stand out to me, precisely because of that demographic. But I've never seen any other particular faculty stand out to me in the same way, with that same like somewhat homogenous demographic."

N- "Ok, interesting, so that question came up to me because, in some cases, the general environment of an institution makes it easier for some students to relate with each other in a different way. Probably in high school, as you said, they're with their cliques, they're with their own groups, their perception is pretty much within their single group, right? So that question came up because, when you come to a university, you tend to interact with bigger groups, and probably, the dynamic of social interaction changes.

I1- "I don't think you interact with bigger groups. Each group is still the same size, you interact with more groups."

N- "Yeah."

I1- "So my group in my English class is not at all the same as my group in my, I don't know, my philosophy class, or science class. So, it's not bigger size, it's more and each group is the same size. And how are you going to interact with them will be different because each group, if it's outside my faculty, will probably be more heterogeneous. Yeah, whereas you're right, in high school, your kind of like, going from room to room, but you're still on the same class more or less. You don't really interact with people outside your...and – and that's another thing. University is level segregated, I mean you have first year, second year in the faculty. But other classes, you have mixed ages, so I have, in English, for example, I have students who are 18, I have students who are 25. In high school that never happened, in high school it is rigidly segregated by age, and social class.

N- "Yes."

I1- "This university surprised me, because it has a reputation that cultivates, I believe, of being of a certain level, you understand. But they give out so many 'becas' (scholarships) that

it's actually not. So, it is a lot more heterogeneous than they give it credit for, it is a lot more diverse than I gave credit for. So, I'm very happy to report that, took me a long time to realize that but it's great."

N- "Great, yeah, and it is very interesting that you identified this, because, sometimes from an outsiders' perception, the institution may have one perspective, right? Where you get one specific group of social class and then, as you mention, you come across that it is not necessarily that way."

I1- "But it's a carefully hidden secret, I think. I think they try to cultivate this upper-class image, and I tell you, it intimidated the hell out of me. I didn't think I'd ever be able to work here so, it worked. But it may work against people, so in the masters' program, you're in...forgive me but...I...I think...no this is not what you're asking, so never mind."

N- "Ok, yeah, as long as you're comfortable..."

I1- "No, no it's just because I don't want...outside you should be intimidated by the university, so I don't know students are intimidated by the university, I know that English teachers are, a lot of English teachers want to get a degree, want to get a master's degree but wouldn't even think of (the institution) do you know what I mean? So, that could, to a certain extent work against the university in some ways, in my opinion, it's something to think about. Our students who come here are very happy to find that it's quite diverse I think."

N- "Yeah, so that's a really interesting point of view as well, so it can work both ways, right? So, it's pretty valid. Ok, so getting a little bit on the side of English classes again, what are some of your perceptions on your students' attitude towards English? Why do you think they get to learn English? Because in some cases, they take it because they want to and in other cases that might change, so what is your perception on that?"

I1- "(One of your classmates) Just finished their entire thesis on that very question. (Laughs)"

N- "Yeah?"

I1- "That's good, so students take English classes because they have to, otherwise they won't, right? Let's be clear about that. Again, it really depends on how they come in. So, if you've been in a good high school and you've learned English, and you're coming in at level 5, level 6, right? You're coming in with a great deal of confidence and you're ok. For the longest time, though, I was put on the very low levels which I've always generally, I've only got level 6 right now, but this is the first time in ages they've put me on high levels. Generally, I'm put on lower levels and if you're coming into university with a low level, either is because you've never had English or because you've had bad English. They come in, they are not confident and they are afraid, there's a lot, so for me, level 1 is, the whole level is spent getting them over their fear. Level 2 is what you teach in level 1, do you understand what I mean? By the time they get to level 2, I'm teaching what they should have learned on level 1 but just not could let the mental block down, the emotional...I think there was a term, there was a fancy term that teachers call it, basically for this brick wall that you come up. Anyway, they spend all of level 1 getting over it and then in level 2 they can learn what they learned in level 1 and then learn what they learn in level 2. There's a word for it, affective filter! So, in level 1, you spend lowering their affective filters, right? Level 2 they're finally ok and you teach them what they need to learn."

N- "Yeah, so I wanted to ask that, pretty much because in some cases it depends on the high school you come from, the level you have so, that's why it's really interesting and that's why I wanted to include a little bit of that because I think it's a huge topic, as you mentioned, someone made a huge topic about it, but, I think it's something so I can get a perception on how they feel within the classrooms, depending on the environment they're into and it sometimes can vary, depends from the place you come from and in which high school you

were enrolled and how it went down with your English levels, sometimes you have all those factors in confidence, so that's really interesting."

I1- "(Your classmate also discussed it and she is very right) Your family plays a huge role in it. Your family support. Some families, genuinely see education as a waste of time, and English is a waste of time to the waste of time. If you have to go and get a degree, they think of the degree as a waste of time to begin with, but, so if you're going to get that and English is kind of a part to it. That's one attitude. Another, is all learning is absolutely necessary and valuable and that's a whole other background to come from, so, people who come from backgrounds where even if my parents were not educated, but they really want me to be educated, that's a whole different thing from parents who don't give a damn, see what I mean? It changes your whole attitude.

N- "Yeah, so, external factors. Ok, I think that's pretty much covered, so the students' initial motivations to learn English, and how you identify it. So, you already covered some."

I1- "No, but, ok so one thing is their initial motivation is to come and pass the class, they need the credit, they get the credit. But, while they're in class, and they think this is the secret to teach primary and high school, college, everybody right? You work out with a student given that they have to be, so it's not like a video game, remember Big Bang Theory, right? They voluntarily take on all that, very few people voluntarily come to English class, right? But once you're in there, you would rather be engaged than not and once the teacher goes in, recognizing that all us being equal, I have to be here, I would rather be engaged than not then, you have won the battle and you are just engaging them.

N- "Thank you for that, yeah, I think that's pretty much covered. So, let's move on, to the next. We're almost there, actually. Getting back to the private school environment, so you had a lot of stories, kind of like the example of your dentistry students. Is there any other story involving your classrooms in a private school? In any private school, it could be this one, it could be another one. So, what can you tell me about those experiences? What did you find in private schools? What's the general environment?"

I1- "I don't know if I can generalize private schools."

N- "Right."

I1- "I know how the environment in my classroom was, I know that there's a school culture and to get that I don't know I can generalize a huge amount, except that, and this is pretty ugly, what I'm about to say, in Ecuador, private schools are in it for the money. So, again, this is a huge generalization, but I'm talking about the tops. Not the teachers, teachers are teachers and we get paid the same no matter who our students are. But, at the top level, particularly in high schools, the principal level, right? They're looking out at how many students they have, what's the bottom line, how much money we are bringing in, right? And, so, I think there's a tendency and a danger to bend over backwards to parents. At university, I like it much better, because in university I don't answer to parents, whereas in high schools and in private schools, that requirement is because it's about money, and sometimes to absolutely ridiculously stupid degrees. So, for example, I had some homeschooled kids, and this is how – I homeschool my own daughter and people always ask me what happens if I want to put her back on the system – If I pay enough, they'll take her, right? So, I had some kids that were homeschooled, they were American, Mormons from Utah, right? When they came in, they didn't speak Spanish and they were in – the oldest one was in 'primero de bachillerato' his sister was in "decimo" and they had a whole bunch of younger siblings. The younger kids were fine, because younger kids can learn Spanish as they grow along, but one you're at that level of high school and you don't speak the language of instruction, they should not have accepted those kids into this school. I think that was wrong, I think that was stealing their money. But they promised: No, no don't worry, we'll help your child, none other teacher

spoke English but me, it was just, that's not right you know? But I cannot say any teacher has ever looked it in kind of the bottom line because teachers get a salary, so inside the classroom, the teachers set the environment, but in the school culture, you know exactly who is who and that's a problem.

N- "Ok, yeah that is really interesting. That's a different perception and sometimes it can change, right? So, you say, in high school it's a little more complicated, in college, you don't respond to parents."

I1- "Parents are the bean of every teacher's existence. I know because I'm one, I'm a parent."

N- "Ok, you provided your comments on your own experience. So, now to finalize I have two questions that are related to the observations I conducted on your level 3 class. I noticed a very personalized touch in your classes during the observations I made. I really liked that, I think it was really, really interesting to see. So, could you give me a little bit more details on that element? Do you personalize all your classes or it depends on the level you're teaching? What would be your idea of having a personalized touch in class? So, does it make a difference in your class?"

I1- "I don't remember the exact class you saw but all my classes are the same. Every class is exactly the same structure and the same stuff, I talk briefly, I shut up and let them get to work, and then I walk around and I help them, yeah? So, yeah. What was the second part? What was a personalized structure something?"

N- "Yeah so, the personalized touch. I mean, I remember you shared some of your experience and your familiar background. For an instance, when you read the *Globo sapiens* book and you gave them a short story about your dad.

I1- "Yes."

N- "So do you think it makes a difference in your class? Do you think it engages your students a little bit better? Or, it depends?"

I1- "Well, that's interesting. I don't talk about myself that much in class. Periodically, once in a while if it seems like, I think it's going to lighten the mood I do. The thing about my dad was, well he recently died, and I've been trying to somehow keep his spirit alive, so, that was that. The main reason I use *Globo Sapiens*, yeah, I remember that class, the main reason I use that is there are very few books that I find have a good style of writing, but with short enough stories and vignettes I can share with my students and my dad was a novelist so I was able to...I like his style of writing. There's another guy called Joe Fiorino (and) he has that style of writing but it's really hard to find. I don't like giving them readings too much from the internet because they are just going to put the whole thing in Google Translate whereas (when) they have a text, a photo of a book, it's much harder to do that. Do I personalize my classes too much? My students all know I have a kid, they, most of them – I haven't done this with this term but – I did do my father's photos with my students because he had some amazing photos. So, I made an assignment with the photos. I don't talk about myself that much, no. I don't think so.

N- "OK interesting."

I1- "But I don't mind, students ask me and I'll answer, but I don't think so."

N- "OK so you would say it doesn't make a difference in your class or it does? In terms of engagement, so, what I noticed on your class was that during the reading, ok, from the book they were pretty engaged with the reading, right? Because it had a bit of a personalized touch. So..."

I1- "You think it was because it was personalized? Or because of the topic? Or because of the way I was reading it?"

N- “Well, I wanted to see if it was because it was personalized because sometimes you get to identify with a teacher, probably, students have similar stories, maybe they can engage (in) that way. That’s why I wanted to ask.

I1- “Ah, no I think – I don’t, I mean – yes, they were engaged, maybe it was because I told them it was personal, that’s part of it. But I have a degree in drama, I tell stories well. I have strengths and weaknesses. One of my strengths, I happen to know, is I tell stories well, so I told, uh, yesterday I was telling my students a story – nothing personal in any way, it was a Roald Dahl story about a tattoo. It was brilliant, but I rehearse it, I practice it, I deliver it, you know, I have fun with that. I have a degree in drama. So, that is partly how I engage students. The other aspect is, of course, is that they had a task to do. They could not be engaged. They couldn’t just tune out because they actually had very specific things to do with what I was telling them, so that’s important as well. So, whether it was the personal touch, I don’t know, it’s hard to tease that out.”

N- “Ok, thank you, and well, yeah so do you think that perspective may have an impact on achievement?”

I1- “Which perspective?”

N- “The ones where they engage through personalized touch or having a more personalized story, or a background. Do you think that would affect their sense of achievement or is there anything else you could say that could be affecting their achievement levels? Kind of like their a desire to accomplish the course, right? So, if they become engaged do you think their sense of achievement will change?

I1- “Interesting, it’s just hard to tease out an answer to that because if you – like I said – a student, all of us being equal would rather be engaged than bored. That in itself will already impact their achievement. My job is to make the classroom atmosphere as comfortable as possible so that there’s no barriers to engagement. That’s basically what I want. I want no barriers – the affective filters I was talking about – I want none of those to become a barrier to engagement. For example, one of the things (I do), I never call on individuals. I never say ‘Nicole what’s the answer to number three’ I never put people on the spot. I never put people in a situation of fear, I always tell them ‘Ok, this part is good, you have to fix this and then you will be fine.’ So, I tell them what they have to do to get that last bit, right? In other words – I try – I know I don’t know if I succeed, I’m sure some students are scared of me, but that’s not a feeling I attempt to foster. So, if they’re engaged and there are no barriers to that engagement, no fear no nervousness, no anxiety, then they will achieve.

N- “Ok.”

I1’ “I don’t know that my telling personal stories will help or hinder that, it’s not going to hurt but I don’t think that it really has a huge impact. It’s just you have to tease it all out.”

N- “Ok, all right well that’s the final question I had.”

## **ANNEX B: Interview transcript with Female Teacher 2**

N- “So we’re going to start and I’m going to ask a series of questions that you can feel free to answer (if) under any circumstance you’re feeling – not something you would feel comfortable sharing – it’s just for informative purposes and things that have to do with the development of the class in general.

I2- “Ok.”

N- “So, your students’ names are not going to be revealed your name is not going to be revealed as well, ok? So, let’s begin.

I2- “Ok.”

N- “All right, so my first question is what is your age and the gender you identify yourself with?”

I2- “50, female.”

N- “So, what is your academic background could you provide any additional information on your formation in your titles? What is your background what is your major?”

I2- “As an English teacher as a second language, I studied here, then I also studied post graduate studies, later also as a second language teacher. And, that was like, online in Spain and then after that I also studied something related to how to teach in general, another post graduate degree, yeah.”

N- “Ok, so, how long have you been a teacher?”

I2- “I’ve been a teacher for almost like 17 years, I think. I don’t remember.”

N- “Ok, so in general, your professional background, how would you describe your professional background? In which areas of teaching English as a Second Language, as you mentioned on the prior answer, what would be the areas that you have been focused on? For an instance, which types of ages have you taught the most?”

I2- “Ok. When I began, I went with elementary school many years ago, when I was very young. That was like 6-year-olds to 12-year-olds. Then, I stayed with teaching 12-year-olds, 11 to 12-year-old kids for a while. I would say like 4 or 5 years and then, I just sometimes would help some teachers in high school but I wasn’t teaching per se like students. It just was like kind of random, very random. When someone was absent and then I switched back to university. So, I’ve been teaching for university students around like 18 to 25-year-olds since 2014.”

N- “Ok, thank you. So, can you share your experiences in your classrooms? Is there anything that probably changed the way you think of teaching? Can you provide any experiences in your classrooms in general? What are some things that happened that you remember that you really, really liked?”

I2- “Ok, I don’t remember like a specific experience right now, but something that gets my attention all the time is that teaching has to be something fun for students. They have to feel like no pressure. If, also, they make mistakes as a teacher, obviously I think that I have to give them feedback and correction but without judging them, without making fun of them, without – not allowing other students make fun of them also, and having fun. Yes, I always try in the past and I still, I think that I do it. Try almost the time, give them something fun, like a game instead of giving them just exercises.”

N- “Ok, interesting. So, how was it at the beginning when you first started teaching? Do you have, kind of like, something that sets up (a) before and then after probably in your first years of teaching? What do you remember? What was it like and how is it right now that you have a lot more experience?”

I2- “Ok it was like, I tried to follow all the rules, right? It was more like, I don’t know, what they just told me that I had to do, a set of rules, it was not like, even though I was teaching elementary school, they didn’t have a lot of games. Now, I’m engaged in, like, almost all the time, looking for more games and sometimes create more games for them. Now, because of the pandemic, recently, I just made some online games for them. So – at the beginning – even though I was teaching elementary school I didn’t have a lot of games for them, no. It was like, more focused on grammar, pronunciation, exercises on notebooks, like that. Yeah.”

N- “Ok, all right, thank you for that. So, it does have a before and an after, so it is really interesting that you would share that.”

I2- “Yeah.”

N- “So, during the observations I did on your class, I noticed that it was structured in a hybrid setting. So, you were in the computer lab and you had the interactive board. So, could you tell

me more about this? What was it like to have a hybrid setting? So, did it change anything in your students? Did it make it a lot more difficult? Or probably it made it easier? So, what do you think?

I2- "I think that it was like – maybe it's a little bit easier for them to have everything, all the material just one like format. They don't have books. They access a platform. But now I can see that books and notebooks maybe didn't come with playing online games but, they in the past, that's when I tend to say that students paid more attention. They could concentrate better than now. Now, their period of concentration is very small, it's very short."

N- "So, you're telling me that basically with the hybrid setting, it makes it a lot easier for them to access the platform and exercises but their concentration period is a lot more reduced.

I2- "A lot, and the same thing happened when you're saying hybrid, I'm thinking about some classes that we used to have during the pandemic where you had like students in the classroom and then at the same time you had students in zoom. That was tough"

N- "Ok, yeah, I remember the settings."

I2- "It was tough for them and it was also (tough) for me. Because, if I wanted just to check how well were they doing, I mean students in the classroom I had to stand up, walk around the classroom, give them feedback in that moment but I couldn't do it at the same time with the students that were in zoom and vice versa. So, if I had to pay attention to students who were in zoom, the other ones were 'free'. I mean, even though I told them to do an activity, they did it, they'd finish and then they didn't have the feedback sometimes. I couldn't be at the same time in two different places, even though I was just in one if you know what I mean."

N- "Ok, so, that's really interesting that you would say that. Could you please describe some of the main characteristics of your classroom? What are some of the most common classroom dynamics that you usually have or do you use in your classes? What is your style within the classroom?"

I2- "Ok, it depends, it changes a lot. Sometimes if I feel that I have a lot of pressure, a lot of content, that I have to cover I see it depends on the group, also. I see that my students, they answer very fast, they get whatever they need to get very fast. I can't go beyond what I have to cover and add some extra material I can ask some extra questions that I didn't plan but I know that I can make them work those exercises, but that doesn't happen a lot. I have had recently some students, some groups, like for example right now, I have one – the first one – in the morning, yeah. Students there, do not participate a lot so I think that it is kind of difficult, the level, for them so I cannot go as fast as I would like and because I cannot go that fast, I cannot make some extra questions, warm up questions, like other questions just to get their attention at the beginning of the class. I usually like to begin with something else that is not related to class and then switch to, I don't know, a reading, a listening, ok, where I introduce the grammar structure and then from that I can also – that's what I would like – I can also get some vocabulary. Now, because we're not using books anymore, it has been a little bit difficult to find all the material that relates, you know? That I have been reading grammar and also some vocabulary that I can get from that reading. So, right now I can get something about grammar but (the) vocabulary (doesn't) is not related to that to do the reading or to the listening so they didn't have specific vocabulary so it has been kind of hard. Actually, you observed my first class without a book this summer, yeah. We worked without a book, yeah.

N- "Ok, yeah, so it has probably changed your classroom dynamics a lot so I do understand. Ok, moving on to the second topic from my research question. How would you describe achievement? In your own words, what would you expect from your students? What do you think about achievement? What is your idea of it?"

I2- “Improvement. If they can improve, their knowledge, if they can, like, learn a little bit more and just go one step at it. That’s it. I don’t expect them to be like experts, I just expect them to realize what they’ve been doing wrong and just try to do that correctly. That’s it.

N- “Ok, all right. OK, this one is just based on general knowledge, it’s ok if you can give any definition that you would like. Have you ever heard of the term social capital?”

I2- “Nope.”

N- “Ok, in very short words social capital is based on the interactions among the members of a group and how they share some of the skills, some of their abilities, so they can improve, as you said, in different ways, right? So, it’s kind of like the connections they make, kind of like the things they do while they interact with their classmates. So, would you consider that your classes might be having some of that? Having the bases of creating some connections? Like, making contacts, probably sharing some things some skills? So, do you think you can find that in in your classroom or not?

I2- “I would that yes, I would like also them to share those skills that they have, like using English, but that doesn’t happen very often. If I have to be very honest, the moment that I turn around, some of them switch to Spanish and I know that they share their skills they use in Spanish. So, I think that whenever people connect with others, they are sharing something and even though they don’t realize it sometimes, they also learn from their skills and they learn from each other, so I would say that yes. Maybe not that much, but I would say yes.”

N- “Ok, thank you. So, I think you already covered that maybe if you would like to expand that would be great. So how would you describe social interactions in your in your classroom? For an instance students socialize with you as a teacher? Or are there any types of negotiation based on their tasks? Probably kind of like the things they do (such) as homework? Do they ask you for extra time or changing the deadlines? Have you ever noticed something of that? How are those interactions like, in your classrooms?

I2- If they ask me to change the due date? OK for what was that? Classwork, yeah, classwork, especially classwork that they had to do like in groups. Yes. So, I say yes when they cannot – give 2 extra days or a week – but like some extra times, like yes, why not? I can understand that they have a lot of things to do and if they need more time to do something, like well done, why not?

N- “Ok, and for an instance, do your students socialize with you as a teacher? Do you think there is, kind of like, a connection and confidence between you and your students? Where they feel free to ask you something like changing the deadlines or something like that?

I2- “I’ve had like few students, yes interacting with me, not only about that but about other things or coming to me and tell me just how was their day or what they did (like) in the weekend, because they wanted not because I ask them, but very few. But, yeah.”

N- “Ok, all right, so do you think that those types of negotiations are linked with their own sense of achievement? Do you think it has something to do with that? Maybe if they ask for some extra time, they will have room for improvement? Or, do you think it doesn’t have anything to do with that?

I2- “I think that it has to do because they have a lot of things and assignments from other subjects and because, also, they were worried that they would do the assignment well. I believe that they know that I’m very like, I don’t know, I wouldn’t say like picky. I would say, I check for details, right? Always. So, when I have to give them like a grade or when I had in the past to assess them or something like that, I was in every single detail. Maybe that is not what it is the best sometimes, I wonder myself that, I ask myself (if) that’s too much. Sometimes when I’ve done like the opposite my students ask me, they have asked me: ‘I expect teachers to tell me what is wrong, what I’m doing wrong so I can improve, I can

change.’ So, yes, it could be because of, both of things, because they have a lot of things to do with other subjects and because, also, they want to do it well.”

N- “Ok, thank you. So, well I think we kind of covered this one as well, so do you think there is a direct relationship – with – between your students’ social capital and their development in class? So, probably, do you think there is an influence of external factors? Probably things that they are seeing from the outside and they use that as their social capital? Do you think it has a direct relationship between those ideas and their development in class? Or have you noticed something like that? I think we covered some of it on prior questions. But, do you remember anything similar that may have happened in your classrooms?”

I2- “If I understood you well, that would be only formation, ok, what they are living, what they are going through. Then maybe, they also would want to share. If they are worried about something, and I’ve had some students that have no idea of what’s going (on) around them, and some others like telling them: ‘Didn’t you see this? Didn’t you know this?’ So, yeah, I think that when they need (it) they do it. When they like share their experiences, they are like, again I’m saying, learning from each other. So, yeah, I’d say that sometimes it could be.

N- “Ok, so, what are some common patterns you may have identified in your classrooms? By this I mean, have you ever noticed anything related to how they behave in class? Do they have an influence of the environment in general? What is the – it has a lot to do with the environment, ok? – So, as you know, we are talking about a private institution, right? It’s a private school, so, what are some of the common patterns that you find in your students? Since, they are based on a private school? Maybe do you find specific groups? Some types of students might be focused on passing the subject only, or the ones that are having a little bit more room for improvement? Or, what are some of the patterns of behavior? What is the general attitude of your students? Taking into consideration that we are in a private school, right?”

I2- “Right, if you ask me, if they really want to learn, very few. Yeah, English is not something that they can choose. It’s something that they have to pass. So, I’ve had some students that, I think they have had bad experiences with English, learning English before in high school. Or, maybe some of them became to learning a second language very late, if I compare to other students who had the opportunity to begin like very early or young. So, also, that makes (it), for these students, very difficult so they are not in the same level. So, in a class I can have the students that understand very well, they can learn very fast, they manage in this very well. But others are like lost. Very lost.”

N- “Ok, so would you say that there are some other factors, like you said, they probably had bad experiences with language, others that might be having a higher level. So, do you think it has anything to do with external factors? Probably coming from different schools?”

I2- “From different schools. From private schools yes, so and as I was saying, they have to pass the level, they have to approve the six levels of English. So, some of them, like, they really don’t care if they just pass with the minimum. That has happened before, so, in some previous levels, some students passed with, I don’t know 60-71, ok? Yeah, but there are some students who do not know how to write. They don’t know how to speak and they are in level 5. So, I expect them to speak, to write and they don’t know. I mean, I don’t expect them to be like, affluent. But I expect them to be able to, you know, know the basics and they don’t.”

N- “Ok, so, yeah. That’s really valid there are some other external factors, I would agree with you on that. It’s really tough to get some students with different backgrounds and students that come from different situations. Probably, their school was a little bit stricter in languages than others, so it can vary so, it’s really interesting. Ok, I think that that was probably (already) answered, I’ll read if you want to add something else. What are some perceptions on

your students' attitudes towards English? So, do you think they aspire to use the acquired knowledge in the future? Or, probably, there are some other motivations on that?"

I2- "I have asked them, like, so many times and I received an answer from one of my students from summer and said 'I won't use English, I don't like English and I'm set to become a lawyer and if I want to continue with a master's degree or something like that, I will go to Spain.' Ok, so and he was one of the best students that I had. So, that was like, oh ok, what can I say? Some of them just, they don't know. I think that my perception is that they don't really realize that learning, not only English but another language, very well can open them a lot of opportunities. They don't realize that yet. I think that maybe it's because the fact they have been learning English, some of them, most of them, since they were six or seven years old. Why spending more than 12 years learning a language and not be able to master it yet. So, it's like mmm, I'm stuck there."

N- "Ok, so yeah, probably that leads me to my next question, we're almost there actually. So, how do you identify your students' initial motivations to learn English? Do you believe that, well you gave the example of your law student where he was aiming to have a master's degree or anything from graduate school based on a solely Spanish speaking country. But, do you believe that some students might learn English out of mere necessity? What do you think? What are some of the motivations that you have identified? Aside from the law student that you already mentioned?"

I2- "Few of them, they just want, I think to improve. Few of them. That would be their motivation. Improvement. Most of them, their motivation just to be able to graduate, to finish their career because they have to."

N- "Right, because they have to. Ok, next one, so can you share a story, briefly if you remember, any, right? Of course, involving your experience in classrooms in private schools. So, do you have any experience in your own background from private schools that you would like to share? How was it? How was the attitude of students in private schools? What do you think about that?"

I2- "Their attitude. I don't know, let me check."

N- "Only if you remember, that's fine."

I2- "Does it count when I was teaching elementary?"

N- "Sure, yeah, from your experience, your background, everything counts, yeah."

I2- "What I remember, ok, yes. Maybe it's not – but like in general, not a specific experience – kids, children, they are not afraid of speaking, using the language, of making mistakes. Now, the ones that are at a university, they don't want to speak. They are afraid of making mistakes. They are afraid of being judged, probably. So, I remember this (from) when I was teaching high school. I asked a question and I had a lot of hands up. Now, I ask a question and I don't have hands up. So, I have to learn their names very fast and all the classes like 'Mauricio' 'Juanito' 'Pepito', because otherwise they don't want to participate. And it's like...I don't know when that moment happens but it's not only in English but it's something general. Very few students participate in university. And I would say that they are the same students in most of the subjects. I would say that, yeah."

N- "Ok, interesting. So, you were telling me that your students in general, as they grow older, they become a lot more afraid to make mistakes. So, once again, do you think it has anything to do with the background? Not necessarily with the educational background, probably it has to do with a lot of different things, right? Probably it's a little bit more social, based on their interactions they have with their classmates, so do you think it has any other factor that might be affecting their ability to share their ideas or their knowledge? Something that might be creating that fear of answering a question?"

I2- “Maybe something happens in high school. Maybe the moment they are growing up, you know, they are teenagers, they are not self-confident of course and I don’t know, I think that in that moment they need someone to tell them it’s ok to make mistakes and if they make mistakes in front of the class it’s ok, we’re here to learn, all of us. I mean, we are human beings, we can make mistakes, and it’s normal, otherwise we wouldn’t be here. As a teacher I can also make mistakes, I’m not perfect, I’m not God, so maybe telling them also when they are growing up, if you want to learn, you have to ask. Otherwise, how can you learn? It’s like when kids are like three, four years old they ask: ‘Why? Why? Why’ It’s the same, ask. And they forget to ask, and maybe it can be also because the way most of classes are taught sometimes, are teacher-based instead of students. So, they expect the teacher to talk a lot, but not them.”

N- “Ok, I think it’s interesting because it has a lot to do with the way in which people conduct themselves probably, as you mentioned, probably something happens as they grow up. Maybe they come across with some attitudes, some experiences with other classmates, or something like that. That probably has changed the way in which they see participation and achievement and it does have a lot to do with the fact that they have a lot of expectations. Ok, so on the final two questions. I noticed that in your classes, you have mostly content-based lessons and that happened during the observations and I really liked that, I think it was really great. So, could you please help me elaborate on that element? Do you think it makes a difference in your classroom? Probably having a little bit more of content-based lessons than other styles? Could you comment on that? Do you think content-based lessons are more relevant elements? Or, what is your opinion on that?”

I2- “When you say content based, do you mean like, as I was saying before, ok here are the news and I would like to continue with everything instead of telling them, this is it and yeah.”

N- “Content probably with more resources things that have to do with that. Things that probably give them the idea of developing a little bit more on the exercise you are doing, you are also based on grammar, or probably you give them an extract and you make the connections with the uses of vocabulary, the text or something. I noticed that you used those types of elements in your classrooms, so, do you think it makes a difference in your class? Probably, your students feel more motivated? What is your intake on that?”

I2- “Sometimes, yes, I’ve seen that it’s because they, I really try to make them to engage, get engaged in the lesson of English and I produce some stories or something to get their attention, to make them like more interesting for them. It’s not easy, as I said before because I have to search for that, and I will strive to search for – to change – I’m also doing that, yes. Most of it, it’s because of motivation otherwise if you don’t motivate students, I think that they won’t care about that even if you are talking about what whatever is easy or not, they wouldn’t like that. They won’t pay attention and if they don’t pay attention there’s no learning process.”

N- “Right, so that is really interesting that you would say it. Because it takes me to the next question, and it’s that I also identified that your class is based on small enforcements. That involved a lot of their sense of achievement based on their performance. Because, whenever they get something right, something that is accurate to your lesson, you would give them small encouragements. It’s hard to remember all of them, but I remember some like ‘You’re excellent’, ‘great job’ So, why do you think it happens? Why do you think it’s necessary to do that?”

I2- “To make them feel that they are improving, to let them know that whatever they are doing, has been recognized. Also, that their effort has been recognized by someone, people, as human beings will like all the people to tell us, ‘Yeah, you are doing it right’ ‘I know that this is hard for you, I know that you’re tired but thank you so much because you are doing it well.’

'I recognize you as a human being I recognize that even though you are tired, ok you are working.' I think people like it, I like it. Especially if you are a student, I think that you expect it, also. You expect from your teacher, from someone to tell you, 'This is correct' and 'I'm sorry, this one is not correct, I know that you will do it better next time' 'I know that you can learn and you can apply this in context' yeah".

N- "Ok, well those are basically the questions that I had I think your intake on your classrooms is really, really interesting. I think that most of the things that you have mentioned on today's interview fits a lot on the things that as teachers we care about the most and we try to cover as much as we can so I think it has been a really interesting interview, your answers have been really interesting as well so, I would like to thank you a lot for participating on this with me from day one and right now I think it gives me a better insight on some of the things I have been researching on and I've been reading so, you have been really helpful and I thank you a lot for your time."

I2- "Thank you Nicole, I want to thank you from the other side because you were very patient, thank you so much and thank you for being there in my classes also. Yeah, thank you for that."

### **ANNEX C: Interview with Male Teacher 1**

N- "All right so, let's begin. Ok, I'm going to start with the first question, really basic, what's your age and the gender you identify with?"

I3- "Really? You're going to ask that? (Laughs) Why?"

N- "Yeah, it's more for demographic purposes, I'm trying to get an even number of participants both male and female and it's useful for me to see the approximate age. But, again, if you don't want to share your age it's fine."

I3- "No, that's ok, I'm 39 and I'm a man."

N- "Ok, thank you, it's just so I can code that on my register. Ok, well that's only the weird one, the rest are pretty basic. What is your academic background? Do you have – when you studied – you got a title, specific title for education? Or, it was from a different direction and it led you to teaching English?"

I3- "Sure, I'm a journalist, a social communicator, my university degree. My major was in audiovisual communication, I went out of those, I went through photography, that was my major audiovisual applied to photography and my master's degree is also in communication but specialized in semiotics. And that's actually what I used to teach back in Guayaquil, semiotics. Later, I – well, not later, actually – before I graduated university, I started to teach English. I've been teaching I think for sixteen years more or less."

N- "Ok, nice. Yeah, so you covered the third one, I was going to ask how long have you been a teacher but you already answered that, thank you."

I3- "Yeah, 2006, you can do the math."

N- "Ok, great. A little bit more on your professional background, have you always been a university teacher? Or, you taught any other levels? Well then that would be two questions, right? Levels I taught and other jobs that I had? Ok, so, like I said, when I started teaching English I hadn't even graduated from university. When I graduated, I worked as an institutional journalist and photographer for a while. Then, I started teaching at the university level and during that I continued with photography. I was a freelance photographer, sometimes for institutions, sometimes for journals, then sometimes when people had like social events, weddings, baptisms, you name it. And, I did that on and off, I worked as a taxi driver once, and then I went back to teaching. And, I also in the middle of being a taxi driver,

I became a university professor again, I worked as a simultaneous interpreter on the phone, actually online and now I'm just teaching."

N- "Ok, great so, the age groups, or the levels, were they always adults? Did you ever work with kids?"

I3- "I worked with children only once, and I never wanted to do it again. Actually, one of the children, during one of my first classes, in my first children group – one of the children spit on my coat which was on my desk and I went to the coordinator and I never wanted to teach on a children's level ever again. After that, it was mostly teenagers, cause the institute where I worked at – the same institute JD used to work at, I don't know if you know JD – you know JD right?"

N- "Yeah"

I3- "JD did as well, he used to work at different branches at the same institute and then after that, university level, (with) mostly young adults."

N- "Ok, all right. Got it. Well, you shared one of your experiences already, with kids but, can you share any other experience in your classrooms? Is there anything that probably changed the way you think of teaching? Or, is there anything you would like to share from your experiences? Something that you may have enjoyed from being a teacher?"

I3- "I've always enjoyed being a teacher. It's actually what I wanted to do. My goal was to teach semiotics and I did that briefly. Actually, not briefly. Now that I think about it, it was for seven years so it wasn't brief. But throughout that I kept teaching English and I realized I like teaching that more. Most of my interactions with my students, I would say near a hundred percent are positive. The child incident, that was one in a lifetime happening or event, but it made me realize that if an adult did something like that you can do something about it, but what can you do when it's somebody else's child? Like, what? Are you going to spank the child? You can't. Are you going to scream at the child? You shouldn't. So, I decided I'm going to stick to older people who are more mature. A little bit more mature. Again, most of my teaching experiences have been positive. There are some times when I hear from students that I taught years ago. Actually, I used to teach in Guayaquil before I taught here in Quito and last month – the last time I taught in Guayaquil was two or three years ago – and one of my students that I had back then mentioned me in his thesis dedication and one of the teachers, one of the professors at Guayaquil sent it to me and I was so surprised cause I hadn't taught to those students in three years, but they still kept me in their hearts and in their mind. Experiences that made me rethink or reconsider teaching positively or negatively, let me think about that for a second. When I used to teach photography, because I've taught photography in the communications faculty, I had a blind student who wanted to enroll in my digital photography class. And, I think we're all for inclusion, we're all for acceptance, but that was literally impossible to do. She was completely blind. It's not like she had some visual impediment, she was completely blind. And, so, there is no computer software that can make up for your lack of sight. For your reading, there are some programs in the computer, you can do that. For, typing, there are software that can help you. But for photography, being blind, it really doesn't work. And, I had to talk to the faculty say, 'hey this is happening, I don't think this is right.' My subject, digital photography, is optional so it's not going to affect this student's graduation if they drop that subject. And, they agreed with me, they said, 'yeah well, it's really, I mean it's not an ideal situation at all that really a person who is completely blind can do this.' But that really made me think, like I felt bad after it happened and I thought about it for about at least a year. Like every day, when I went to my photography class I would think about that situation. And ultimately, I came to the decision that it was the right decision to make. There was no way around it. There was no way to justify her work. So, at the end of the day, what am I going to do? Just, give her a grade? It was a girl, that's

why I say her. I couldn't just give her a grade, like, oh I'm sorry you're blind here's your 'A' plus. I really couldn't do that and it made me realize that sometimes you can help a student and sometimes you really, really can't. And that's something I think has molded my teaching to this day, and it's helped me in the sense that I try to help my students, I really try to help my students but I have limits. That has sort of molded me as a teacher, as a professor. That sometimes a situation is literally impossible and so, that makes me better at when I have to make a judgment call on a student, I don't second guess myself. I say, 'Ok, I've thought about it, I have thought of every angle I could help this student, to give this student an opportunity, if they're asking for an opportunity, a chance' And sometimes the answer is yes, but sometimes, because of this situation, the answer is no."

N- "Ok, all right, that's an interesting point of view like, surrounding limitations and the extent that you want to help out a student or not. Ok, a little bit more on the side of your ESL experience, how was your teaching experience at the beginning?"

I3- "At the beginning, I was very nervous, I was very young when I started teaching English, I had no background in it, except that I spoke English and I had even done my master's degree which semiotics really helped me to explain to students in how languages worked. And, in that sense, I could understand languages from a different point of view and I still use it a little bit on my English classes every semester or every module. So, when I started, I started at this institute called 'Cevas' and it's probably the most famous English institute in the city where I lived and actually the whole state and they prepare you. They're like 'Can you speak English? Yes, Then, we'll take care of the rest'. And we had what was called 'curso propedeutico' which was like an introductory class to how to teach English, plus, most places where you teach English you have a specific book. And, the books, some people find them boring, some people find them whatever. But what we can't deny is that the books offer structure. So, if you're too young, if you're a green horn and you still don't know how to create your own structure for classes, you can rely on the book. And sometimes when you're just too tired you have a headache you can just basically go on auto pilot and use the book. That's how I started, we had a book and what the book was called at that time and I worked there for at least a year and then I went on to work as a journalist. So, I had a break from teaching English, for a year also and then I went to get a job teaching at a university. I taught a bunch of subjects, including English. I was also the English coordinator at that university, so that gave me experience on teaching at the university level but also at coordinating English courses and working with the students experience of English as a whole cause sometimes you see a student and you teach him a level and you never see them again. But when you are a coordinator you kind of keep track of their experience throughout the different English levels and so that helped me build a better understanding of how English classes should be structured. Not from the teacher-student point of view but from the institution point of view so students have a better experience of English. For example, at 'Universidad de Guayaquil' I wasn't the coordinator I just taught and students would see that at level one at one semester and then they will not see English for a year. And so, when they came back to level two, a lot of them had completely forgotten all of the basics they had learned in level one. There was no continuity. There was no continuity between one level and another and there was no continuity inside the semester because the they didn't see English every day like we do as USFQ, it would be from once a Monday and then once on Thursday and that's. So, there was no inter-continuity inside the semester and there was no continuity between the semesters. And you could notice that it really affected the previous material they had learned. I had a couple of other things but I can't recall them right now."

N- "Oh it's ok, totally fine. Well yeah, I think you provided a really nice timeline on how it went at the beginning and how it evolved after you gained some experience so it was nice.

Right now, going a little bit more on the classes I observed you were doing on campus classes. So, how was it like with when you returned to campus? When you had those classes without the virtual setting, can you tell me how was it after that?"

I3- "So, the return from online classes to on site classes, right?"

N- "Yeah."

I3- "Ok, the online classes it was for a really long time it was two years. Two years teaching that way. And you get really unaccustomed to things. When you are accustomed to, for example, taking the bus every day and walking, whatever, how many meters or miles you have to walk every day you have to walk every day to get to your job. And then suddenly that's taken away for two years and then you have to go back to that routine, it feels there's an adjustment curve. Like the first module that I taught presidential again felt a little weird but once I was in the classroom, I felt like I was at home. I think that the logistics of the on-site class after two years of online class was a little bit of a was a little bit of a shock. Shock might be excessive it was an adjustment once I was inside the classroom like seeing the students hearing them talk, hearing them asking questions, I felt very happy again because – I had – I did miss it. I hadn't realized how much I had missed person to person teaching. Because, the online class can be a little sterile. You know, people are tired they're in their home they're looking at the screen for two years, it was very tiring for them and for me."

N- "Ok, got it. Now, ever since you got back to on-site classes could you describe your classroom a little bit? What are some of the main what are the main characteristics in your classroom dynamics? How does your classroom work, usually?"

I3- "Ok, so personally, I'm not good with names but I make a really big effort to learn my students' names as soon as possible. This module is going to be super hard because I got four courses so that's almost a hundred people that I have to (learn their names) and people that I only see an hour and a half each day. So, I try to do that because when you call someone by their name, in class they can't help but be engaged. That helps engagement. Things that I do personally, I like to dress in cartoonish clothes like I will have a bunch of T-shirts with cartoon designs that I feel my students can relate to. That kind of breaks the ice specially for level one because they're very young so when they come into the classroom, they see this big guy with a T-shirt from their favorite anime or whatever they feel like excitement and they feel like oh I have something in common with this teacher. Like, I don't have to feel like scared or afraid in this class because he dresses like me so that helps a lot as a reference in my classes cause my previous generation of students that grew up with that the new ones not so much so I have I've had to change references. But I do reference pop culture a lot first of all because many of my students have learned a little bit of English through American Pop culture but also because, again, it gives us a frame of: hey, we're not so different you and me, we watch the same things we have a we have a thing in common. And if I give you an example of an abstract thing that you don't know about a movie you've never seen it feels unreal what if I told you Hey have you seen the episode of The Simpsons where this (happened) something (like) that. I want to say that it's specific to me I try to smile a lot like if you see me walking down the street, I look like a serious person but when I'm in the classroom with my students I consciously try to have an upbeat attitude and a happy face, unless you're doing something wrong. Like sometimes I get groups of students who like want to sabotage the class and that's a rule so I usually try to make jokes in class, smile you know get some to laugh a little bit so that they enjoy the class. Whenever I get my whole class to do to just laugh out loud that's good cause I feel like they are enjoying the class and there's less resistance to it. Again, I think I mentioned this when the audio cut off, a lot of our English students didn't choose to study English so, it's something that's kind of like forced upon them

and they have a little bit of a barrier towards it and so if I get them to enjoy the class to laugh in the class, I think it helps.

N- “Ok. All right so well that is something that I was going to ask towards the end of the interview, because I did notice that on your classroom, right? Where your students were feeling happy when you got a little bit more on the personal side trying to find things in common so we will get back to that on a bit. So, how do you think your students develop in class? So, how would you describe achievement in the terms of your students? Ok? So how did they perceive their development in class? Do you notice, like, they understand how they are developing in class? Or is it something that they realize at the end?”

I3- “All right, good so we have different levels of students inside of the same level of English like I taught a level one last module where I had really true native zero level students, like, genuinely zero level students and then I had a few quite few that they could’ve been easily level three but for some reason, they had landed in level one. So, with the ones that are really good there’s very little that you do for them. They do it for themselves, meaning that, they feel like what the teacher is teaching here, I already know. So, I can either tune out which is not good. Or, I could take this opportunity to ask the teacher about the things that I don’t know. And I had those students who were really good, that were maybe a at level three but were stuck in level one for some reason. They would ask me about things that were very specific. And it was usually very useful for them, but useless for the rest of the group but I would still answer them because they were at least engaged. At least they were not tuning out which is the worst thing that you can have a student do in a class, regardless of the subject. So, let’s see with that in mind. The ones that are...that should really be on level one you could see an evolution and a progress the ones that were misplaced I should say that I feel spoke really well for a level one, like amazingly for level one but were still there, their progress was a little less. Maybe they gained some vocabulary, they maybe they gained some experience which is important because a lot of my students don’t have the opportunity here in Ecuador to talk English with other people. So, they could talk English with me and it was a really good experience for them, but compared to the ones who knew zero their progress was smaller. The ones that knew zero at the end of the module their progress was quantifiably bigger. Because you know the biggest difference in the university is 0 to 1 that’s the biggest step, from one to two to three to one thousand or a million, it’s not as big as from going to zero to one. Nonexistent to something, and so for them the evolution of their English is more visible. Now, with other levels let’s say level three, level five, level six talking about the university USFQ system because there are other universities that have many, many more levels. Like “Cevas” where I used to teach was like eight levels and then after I left someone told me that they had upgraded up to twenty levels of English. You can imagine how much, that’s basically two years of learning English even if it’s intensive. All right, so, with my level six students for example most of the things that I teach them that are new are cultural and vocabulary things. Like, today I was talking to my level one student about how we can say something in English that technically sounds correct and if you say to an English-speaking person, they will understand it. But what you’re really saying is, what you would say in Spanish but with English words. Like ‘La hermana de mi jefe’ would be the sister of my boss, but that’s not really how you say it in English if I say that you will understand who I’m talking about but it would be more natural in this to say my boss’s sister. So, by level six this type of clarification is usually not needed, but in level one it’s super important. Now, in regards to any system at any institution that teaches a language, I’ve noticed this because I’ve studied Semiotics I’ve started journalism, communication. Social sciences like to make a big deal out of nothing. And so, there are all of these systems that...what they really do is that they give you a sense of that you’re doing something for the student. But at the end of the day

if the student learns or not really has to do with the fact that they are engaged in speaking English or not. So, this institution will have this system and will give it a name and this other system is given another name, but at the end of the day it's the same language. And the differences between one, two, three, four, five, six, different systems are minimal, right? You still – nobody is going to learn English in a week because there's this magic system of English teaching – it basically takes pretty much the same time, more or less, depending of each individual's personal experiences and talents. So, I try to stay away from what I call 'the car salesman strategy to teaching English' which is to make everything sound amazing but the end of the day you're just basically selling me an old car. It's the same old car. So, the unfortunate thing is you're teaching English right now, right?

N- "Yeah."

I3- "How long have you been teaching?"

N- "Well, I became a teacher in 2018 and, at the university level I have been teaching for a year. A little bit more, yeah. Let's say year."

I3- "All right, cool. If you stick with this career, every so often somebody's going to want to reinvent the wheel and they are going to want to convince you that the way that they invented the wheel is better than the way that the wheel had been done before. That's super common. Sometimes it's useful, because you get a couple of new ideas and oh, I'll try this in a classroom. To add variety, the most important contribution of those type of people is motivation. Those type of seminars keep many people motivated. They don't work on me but I see other people motivated and that's good but I don't like them at all. Whenever I work in an institution, I am kind of forced to go to those types of seminars eventually sometimes and I always hate it. I think it's a waste of time, for me, but I can appreciate how some people really like them. At least because they're sharing with other people, but that's not my cup of tea. So, regarding, getting back to your question. Regarding the progress of students within a course, or a semester, or a level, it really depends if the student is engaged, if they want to learn because they think talking English is cool, and they use it to play videogames and they talk to people from all over the world, they want to cuss them out, they want to tell them things, they want to sound like an American player or whatever. Those people will be engaged and they will learn a lot. The people who are kind of forced, and you kind of have to twist their arm to get them to do any single thing in class, they will learn but not as fast and not as well. Many of them will forget many things after they are done with Writing and Rhetoric. They will say, ok, no more English for me I don't have to think about it ever again and others will actually make a living out of it.

N- "Ok, well yeah. That is really interesting to see a new perspective on that. I have been conducting other interviews with other people, and yeah, it's a first where I see a connection between their sense of achievement and what they want to get or obtain after ending the level. So, it's a really interesting point of view as well."

I3- "Just to add one more thing. When I see a group that is unmotivated in my English class sometimes out of the twenty students sometimes you get maybe five and that's a lot. You have to address it, and I ask them like what do you want to do after you finish level six? You're investing a lot of time in this. Are you make it go to work for you afterwards? Are you going to get a masters – how do you call it – a scholarship in England? Are you going to go to Canada and work? This is a very useful tool, and I give them a lot of examples how their life would be better if they continue with English. So, the effectiveness of that little speech, I can't measure it but I feel like it's better than not saying at all. Maybe that it'll convince one out of the five and it's better than zero out of the five."

N- “Cool, yeah. That’s a really interesting point of view. Now, I want to move on a little bit on the side of the interactions you can observe between students. So, there’s this term. Have you ever heard about social capital? Have you ever heard of it?”

I3- “Not by that name, but because again, in humanitarian sciences or human sciences sometimes the same thing will have five different names depending on the writer of the article. Can you explain it? Maybe I’ll tell you if I’ve heard about it in a different context.”

N- “Sure, well basically, it’s the creation of networks or relationships between people that are – who are working, sorry – who are working in a particular environment, ok? In a particular society. So, they enable to work as a society and function effectively. So, basically, they create connections and they try to function in an effective way. And, I wanted to observe a little bit more on the side of classrooms. Have you ever noticed those connections? Do you see your students interact with themselves? Or they are very, well, self-absorbed...well, I don’t want to say self-absorbed because it’s ugly to say that, but let’s say a little bit yeah, a little bit more isolated, a little bit more individual on their sense of getting through the class or doing homework. Do you see they rely with each other or they are a little bit more individual in that sense?”

I3- “Right, so let’s see. Well, I have heard of that in the sense of networking and in the sense of synergy. Kind of like a similar, how do you call it? Idea. At the USFQ I am very glad to have noticed that even though English might be the only class these students have in common, they are open enough with each other to create a group, right? To talk to each other probably kind of like befriend each other, and help each other out, especially when we have group activities, things like that. And, I was happily surprised at that because when I started, when I first applied to USFQ, most of the people that I talked of it about, always told me like, oh no USFQ is full of snobs and the students are really like, what do you call it? ‘Pelucos’ and things like that. And so, I had a preconceived notion of what I would expect to find in a classroom. But it really hasn’t been the case, in exception to a few little cases here and there throughout three years which is very small. So, in general, I would say USFQ students are friendly with each other and they do like to incorporate people who are willing to be incorporated, of course. Sometimes you can see somebody who has the vibe that they don’t want to be part of the group and they’ll leave that person alone, and I’ll leave them alone as well because I don’t want to force them, unless we have specific group activities, I won’t force them to integrate. Maybe that’s their style, maybe they’re going through something in their lives. I don’t want to get into that with them, I don’t want to impose to them but I do feel that they do create some synergy, they do engage with each other, they create WhatsApp groups sometimes, and sometimes it will happen before my class. Sometimes, I had a group in a level where you could see that they’re friends from previous classes, and they make jokes, and they mess with each other, and they bully each other in a friendly way, you know, like they have camaraderie. That’s always nice to see but you have to learn how to control it because sometimes they do get out of hand. All they want to do then is mess with each other. So, you kind of have to take control before it gets out of hand, once it gets out of hand it’s really hard to get them to come back and respect you as a teacher again. So, yeah, sometimes something really weird happens which I’m always surprised to see, sometimes the girls and the boys will sort of divide. And the boys will hang out with the boys in the class, and the girls will hang out with the girls in the class. And except for group activities where I mix them, they’ll go back to boys and girls. Which, is always kind of funny to see it doesn’t happen in every group but whenever it happens in one group, I try to mix them but it is still weird. But happens, I think, I guess it’s natural if you’re comfortable with people that have something more in common, I guess. But again, that would be an exception not a rule. Usually they mix together well, with exceptions.

I3- “Ok, well that is really nice because you landed on a topic where, when you were talking about applying to this institution, people had this conception of a social class. So, it’s really nice that you mentioned that because that’s kind of like the direction we’re going to take this interview later. There, that, we’re actually, almost there we’re halfway there actually. Well, so going back to interactions in the classroom for a while, for a little bit. How would describe social interactions in the classroom? Not only between students, but also with you as a teacher. Do students socialize with you as a teacher? Let’s say, as at the beginning of the class, they have one specific attitude, how does it change towards the end? And, another thing I wanted to know is, do they try to make any sorts of negotiations with you based on their tasks for an instance? If they have a deadline, and for any reason they missed that deadline, they didn’t turn in their homework and what not. Do they come up to you? Do they try to get you to give them extra time to do a different activity? How is that like in the classroom with you and the students?

I3- “Well, as I mentioned before, one of the things I like to focus on and make sure that I do is break the ice with my students. So, even after the first week I can notice that they feel more comfortable than what the first day. Then, once the ice has been broken, they do feel comfortable enough to ask me embarrassing questions about English, maybe? For example, something that they should’ve learned ages ago and they still don’t know, or about words that they’re too afraid to ask about in English but are part of the English language. That could be cuss words, or that could be words related to sex, or that could be words related to drinking. And, sometimes they feel like, oh we’re in this institution, we’re in this university, it should all be very academic. I tell them it’s ok, you’re learning English and if you’re going to learn English you should be able to apply it to all parts of your life, so if you have any questions about any type of words like that, feel free to ask. But I clarify that ok, we’re adults, we’re explaining this and you’re going to hear me use these words in English to explain them. But that doesn’t mean that you’re going to be sitting around class cussing for no reason or being disrespectful for no reason. And, sometimes they ask, sometimes I’ll go a whole module without them asking, but I want them to know that it’s not taboo or forbidden to ask that type of question. Now, regarding interactions with me or socializing with me, not outside the classroom. Sometimes they will see me on the hallways and I’ll ask something and all I ask something about the class. But I really like to keep my private life in private and my academic life at the university. For example, I never give my phone out if they want to communicate with me outside the classroom, they send an email because I’ve learned from experience especially in Guayaquil, that students will abuse your phone a lot. And I’ve gotten texts from students who missed the deadline at twelve at night, and of course I don’t respond but just the fact that they think it’s OK to text me at twelve o’clock at night, seems to be very disrespectful. I would have never done that. I would still never do that does to somebody who I only have a professional relationship with. I’m just your teacher, we’re not buds, we’re not buddies, you’re not my pal, you’re not my best friend. So, it’s not ok for you as a student to call me or text me at eleven fifty-nine PM. Even if you missed the most important test of the semester, it can wait till the morning. So, I make that clear sometimes they’ll ask me for my phone and I’ll explain why I don’t give it out but I’ll remind them ‘but you can always reach me at my email’. Once we finish with the semester, I’ll see all students in the USFQ halls and sometimes they’ll say hi sometimes they won’t. It depends on the person, it’s really weird, because in the classroom they’re super friendly they’re super nice but I guess a lot of them are just doing that because they want to be liked by the teacher because that’s something advantageous. That way if they ever miss an activity, ‘Oh, the teacher and I, we’re kind of friends, I can ask him to give me a deadline extension or something like that’ and once they finish with you, once they finish with your course it’s like ‘Eh, I don’t need a person in that

life anymore I won't even say hi to him in the hallway.' That happens sometimes, and I guess for some students, teachers are not real people just like this thing and it's in the classroom talking to them. That happens sometimes, and it kind of breaks your heart but after a while you'll get over it. Now let's see interactions between them, like I said, very nice usually. Interactions with me nice and respectful, if you make an effort to keep it respectful meaning that sometimes you get a student that will test the waters to see how edgy he or she can be with the teacher. Like, 'oh if I make the joke about sex will the teacher laugh? If I make a joke about drinking or getting drunk the teacher will play along?' And depending on the group, you kind of have to give them some slack to encourage them or get them to stop because otherwise it might get out of control. Especially, for example, I have noticed that if I have a class with a group of boys who are very close together, they're very tight, they're very good friends, they'll want to have a little inner party inside the class, every class. So, you have to control that, but at the same time if they do that, I know they at least feel relaxed in my class, now it's a matter of constraining that freedom, that relaxation that they feel in the class because otherwise you won't be able to teach them, it'll just be a classroom party for them. I had once heard a teacher say, 'many of my students tell me that English is the class where they relax, like English is kind of like the game class.' Where first of all it's very inconsequential, the consequences of failing English are not really harsh or bad. It doesn't affect your GPA, there's no 'tercera matricula', you can take English a million times, in theory if they wanted to. And so, they stress a lot more or they worry a lot more on what I call their career classes than language classes. And, as English teachers we have to realize that we are not a priority for most of our students, but that doesn't mean that we should allow them to not take the class seriously."

N- "OK well yeah that's also a different point of view because it's actually similar to the ones that I have seen so far. But, yeah, I do understand the extent to which a do you understand the extent to which students get to socialize with each other and the extent sometimes they might be trying to get on the side of the teachers, right? So, probably they will want to have a contact with them in other cases they don't so I do agree with you in the case that (they) it depends on the student and that's interesting. Now, well I think we already covered this (I think). Do you think there is a link with...let's say, some students worry a lot a lot on learning completing all the tasks on time. And, sometimes if they miss if they miss a deadline or something and they try to negotiate that, do you think it is linked with their own sense of achievement? For an instance if I don't complete this activity, or if I don't do this properly then probably, I'm not going to have a good result, or in the sense of achievement."

I3- "Again, in English because of the special situations that English classes occupy within the curriculum or pensum of students' career, only the ones that are really applied students in all their classes worry about English. And, the ones that feel they're going to fail, some of them know that they have their English skills or language skills (that) are not as good as other students. They can sense that, they can see that and they worry. 'Ok, I don't want to fail, because even if there are no harsh consequences, at least I'm wasting time here and I don't want to waste another module retaking level one if I can get over with it right now.' So, the ones that are afraid of failing because they are not good with English, they never had a contact with English, and the ones that are good students in any class, those too will worry about missing an assignment. The ones in the middle, they'll say something, right? Like, 'Teacher I missed this assignment, can I have? No. Ok' and that's it. They'll get over it really quick, the ones that are in danger of failing and the ones that take pride in being good students, they'll try to push. Like if for some reason they failed or missed an activity, they really campaign to try to get you to give them a second chance. And, depending on the situation, like, look, you missed one, for example in this new system where we have fifty

activities in order to get to the five exams, I tell them ‘If you missed one of the fifty activities, that’s fine, don’t even worry about it.’ I don’t want to tell them it’s meaningless, I tell them it’s something they shouldn’t sweat. That usually calms them down. I explain all of this at the beginning of my course, but I always have to explain to them once or twice or three times during the remainder of the course.”

N- “Yeah, well, yeah that happens they do tend to have issues with understanding the structure of the class sometimes. So, I do understand that at some point, they want to have a new explanation or two or three more times and that’s it. Well, that would cover the first half of it. Now, we have very short questions from now on. Do you think there is a direct relationship between your students’ social capital and the patterns that you identify in the classroom? For an instance – I think that you already mentioned some – like, the students who were afraid to fail and the students that are not that preoccupied on that side a little bit, all right? So, do you think is there a relationship with their social capital? Basically, if I rely on someone maybe I’ll get better? Or, that’s irrelevant?”

I3- “Ok, how it influences students in the class?”

N- “Yeah, correct.”

I3- “Now, if we talk about social status from the economical point of view, I do see a big difference. Students who you can tell come from families that are doing well, even if they’re not wealthy, they’re still doing, like, well, they’ve had maybe private classes, they went to a school that teaches English, a high school that teaches English. You can see a big difference. And then I see my students, especially students who come from small towns don’t have as many opportunities and so when they get to English, you can see in their lack of vocabulary and their lack of confidence to speak that they haven’t had as much contact with English previous to the university. So, that is a big difference, again as a teacher you can only encourage them, like, ‘Hey, that’s not a big deal, everybody is different, just because somebody seems to do well in this class doesn’t mean you won’t pass. Like, don’t compare yourself to the best student in the class cause that student is not the only one that is going to pass. Ok, you may not have that level of English yet, but that doesn’t mean you won’t be able to pass the level, it doesn’t mean that you won’t complete the goals that we have for this level.’ I mention that very clear, I actually had a very interesting experience last module because I had a big group of students from Otavalo and – I once – before the final speaking test I make mock speaking tests so they can prepare, so they lose their nervousness when they do the real thing. So, we had two, and in both situations, the Otavalo group was the one that lagged behind. Meaning, the students who knew and you could tell they had had a lot of contact with English in their lives, they want to be the first so they can get over with it and go out. That’s the only thing that we had that day. The ones from Otavalo, they kind of always staggered behind and they were reluctant, they were the last ones. So, one day, all the other students had left except the Otavalo group and I told them like ‘Hey, look around, what do you notice about all of you sitting here? I’ve noticed that the group that is here right now is the group that was always shy to participate, looked at the floor when I asked a question.’ And they started to chuckle and laugh and say ‘Yeah, we know, we don’t feel like we’re as good as the people that came before in the test.’ And, I had a real conversation with them, I explained to them again that ‘remember you can take English as many times as you want, it doesn’t affect your GPA, there’s no ‘tercera matricula’, I think that from this group a lot of you have the chance to pass, maybe a few of you don’t, but that’s ok, don’t compare yourselves with the students that came before. They probably had a million opportunities to practice English before this level.’ It was a level four. So, that kind of broke the ice with them in particular, a lot of them really did recognize – cause some of them wouldn’t even answer a question when I asked them directly, not because they were shy, or didn’t want to. They just

really didn't have the ability. Like they would try and just gibberish would come out. And, so with those students I kind of had to sit down and tell them 'Look, we're getting really close to the end of the level, do you feel that you have the ability to pass this course?' Some of them said 'Yeah, I'll try really hard, you know, I'm going to study, I'm going to practice' But others said 'You know what? No, I'm going to take this level again.' And that's very rare, to get a student to admit what they already know, regarding their English level. And, so, again it's a little sad to see because you always want all your students to pass, you always want your students to learn. But, as I mentioned with the blind student who wanted to take digital photography, sometimes we have to face the music, we have to face reality and it's not the end of the world. Like, you take English level four again, you'll be better for it than if I just help you and pass you to level five. If you feel bad here at level four now, you're going to feel terrible in level five, you are going to feel completely lost. And, I think a lot of them understood that. I think all of them understood it. At the end of the day, quite a few of them passed, they really like – sorry for the expression – got their shit together and really, really made a good effort at the end and they passed, but like maybe four or five out of the whole level ended up taking level four again. And I feel like they accepted it, I feel like there wasn't resentment towards me like 'oh this teacher failed me' I feel like they were at peace with their station regarding English at that moment.' I don't know if I answered your question completely, is there something you wanted me to comment on?"

N- "Well, no, I think that it was really complete because you are describing all the patterns that you see on the classroom. Maybe some students come from a specific high school where they got a decent level of English, and, when they took the placement test, they were placed on level four and already know a few things and they are a lot more fluent in comparison with other groups. So, I think that pretty much identifies a pattern, a common pattern right there, and it's interesting for you to mention that. Ok, well, I think that I mentioned this at the beginning of the interview and we're towards the end. So, you mentioned that at some point some of your students, not all of them but some of them, took English because they had to take English. So, what are your perceptions on your students' attitude towards English? Do you think there's a tendency where they only take English because they have to? Or, is there something else that motivates them to get that? Maybe they, you already mentioned that they sometimes aspire to use that English, that knowledge into something different like a master's program or to speak fluently when they play videogames, so, can you go a little bit deeper on that? I just want an extra comment, so your perceptions on students' attitude towards English."

I3- "The big three when I ask them, 'what do you want to use your English for in the future?' are working abroad, studying abroad and just travelling for recreational reasons. Those are the big three that always get mentioned. Playing videogames would be a very far off form but the ones that I feel are reluctant because – well, let me mention this, when I came to Ecuador a lot of people warned me that Ecuadorians didn't like to learn English. Of course, there are exceptions, right? They are generalizations but I heard things like Ecuador is one of those countries where people say I speak Spanish, why do I have to speak in English – Which is fine, I respect that pride in your native language, good. But we have to accept that learning a second language, may it be English, or may it be Chinese, is super useful. So, if I had several students in a group with that attitude, first of all, they still realize that, 'ok I'm in this university, maybe I have a scholarship to this university. I'm not going to throw that away because I don't want to learn English. Everybody has to go through this, I have to go through it as well.' It's like when you want to drive, like, getting your driver's license is annoying but you want to drive, so you do it. It's the same thing with English, now luckily there's always several students per course that do want to learn. And that's good because they set an example

for the ones that don't want to learn or are only learning out of obligation. And, at the end of the day, most of them, the ones that don't want to learn realize that being grumpy about it or like having a hissy fit because they are learning English is not going to have any sort of positive outcome, they are just going to waste their own time. I do try to give them certain words to explain why it might be important, like, giving them certain ideas, yeah, you're not the only person who has ever had to be forced to do something that they did not want to do but had a better outcome because of it. Like, ok you're going to have a university degree from USFQ in, I don't know, science, medicine, physics, whatever the area. And, you have to go through six levels of English to get that. It's still worth it, you're not going to throw that away because you have to learn English. Plus, I always make a point on telling them and many of them like when I say this, I'll see them, like, nodding their heads. If you've ever researched something in English and in Spanish, the same thing, the amount of information you have access to if it's in English is like ten times more than if you search for the same thing in Spanish. I tell them, it's a harsh reality but that's a reality, that's the reality. So, if you really want to be good in whatever career you chose, English is going to help you because you're going to have more access to information in your area: architecture, biology, whatever it is, and all of them say: 'yes, like, I study biology and most of the important papers that are published this year, each year, are published in English, not Spanish.' So, that makes them confront the reality of 'English something that I have to look, it's a tool.' Do I like it? Is it part of my tradition? No, but it's the reality. And again, I don't think I ever had a student who failed because of that attitude, of that negative attitude. All of them, if they failed, it's because they didn't reach the goals, not because they didn't try. So, at the end of the day it just washes out."

N- "Ok, all right. Well, I think that the final, the almost two final questions were answered already. Do you believe students learn English out of mere necessity? You already covered that, and your stories involving experience in classrooms in a private school, you already mentioned how it went down when you got to USFQ. So, to finish of this, aside from the personalized comments that you already did. The final question I'd have is: your class has a lot of content-based lessons, ok? When I was doing the class observations. Aside from the personalized touch where you commented on the things that you wear to create a connection with your students to make them feel a lot more comfortable. So, I noticed on your classes during the observations I did, you combined those. How well do students adapt to that? When you combine the content and maybe try to lead them to a more personalized area without disregarding the content of the class. Because I saw that even though you were speaking about different things, like, I remember there was this student who mentioned that had a pilot's license, ok? Aside, from that, you also focused a lot in the lesson, so, how do you think that works on your classroom?"

I3- "All right, once we had this meeting with Scott, I mentioned it to Scott, he was talking about, again, how to reinvent the wheel, how to get the students to engage with English, which is the ever-eternal battle of English, of lessons, of classes in general. And, I told him, I either use controversial topics that are not too controversial. I don't want to offend my students in my class. Or, I don't want to get, I don't want to touch subjects that could hurt somebody's feelings like really hurt their feelings, not tik-tok or twitter hurt their feelings but actually hurt their feelings. And, I use personal anecdotes. Why? Because both of those touch a nerve in a person that makes them react by wanting to communicate, if I tell you, for example. Some people say veganism is good for your health, other people say that it's only great for your morals. That's a subject that they'll want to talk about it. And like I mentioned to Scott, if somebody wants to talk about something, they'll find any way they can to do it. And, so even though they might use broken English to say it, they'll try to say it. And that

will give me an opportunity to help them improve what they want to say. Again, with the guy with the pilot's license, I mean if you had a pilot's license, wouldn't you want to talk about it? Like, it's one of the coolest things you could ever have. Who has a pilot's license? So, and then that also brings attention from other students like 'Oh, you have a pilot's license? That's cool.' And, they'll engage and so, yes, I have content on the board because, first of all it's part of the curriculum, but also because the students who are not at the same level as the others, they'll use that as backup. 'Ok I want to say this.' Well, it's written right there in the board how you can say it. So, whatever you wanted to say, you can use that as a clutch, you can use that as a guide. And, for the ones that know how to say it, they'll just ignore it. So, that way I mix, like, classic grammar lessons with interaction and speaking skills. Let's bring us something that something everybody wants to talk about because it's controversial or because it is very exciting and then, let's get everybody to talk and give them the opportunity to use the grammar that we're talking, we're discussing."

N- "Ok. All, right I think that's pretty much what I wanted to know, what I wanted to ask, because I really enjoyed your classes during the time I was observing, I think I did around two or three, I'm not really sure, I don't really remember, but those were on your level four classes and I saw those interactions, and I wanted to go a little bit deeper on that. So, I really, really want to thank you for taking the time to do this interview with me today, and I think you answered all of the questions very well, I think it was a really nice conversation to have and it is super useful for my capstone project that I'm trying to finish as fast as I can but, thank you so much for helping me out, for your opening to do this and I think that's it for now. So, thank you, thanks a lot David."

#### **ANNEX D: Interview with Male Teacher 2**

N- "So this is basically like a conversation, but the first two questions are mostly for demographic purposes and basically, what's your age and gender? I know."

I4- "Ok, age. It depends. It's going to be kind of complicated to frame. The thing is that I had a car accident in 1999, so I would say that in my first life, I'm 47, so that's the one that you are going to use. I think my second life, I'm twenty-four."

N- "Ok, cool. Ok, so what's your academic background? I know we talked about it a little bit between yesterday and today on your classes, but can you provide a little bit of background on your studies? What was your major?"

I4- "Sure, yeah. Well, I studied first in Colegio Americano here in Quito. Then when I graduated, I started working at San Francisco, sorry, studying at San Francisco University. My career is advertising and marketing, which, by the way, I loved. But all my life I knew that I loved even more teaching. So, while I was still studying, I was teaching computers, especially Word, Excel, PowerPoint. And after that, I started also working in marketing and advertising at a given point. I decided to try actually teaching English because someone called me and this person told me, well, why don't you teach English? And, you know, both languages, so you could probably do it? And you love teaching, so it's probably basically the same thing, which is not. But, I said, Well, yeah, why not? Right. So, I started, I was supposed to be hired to teach only like subbing or subbing for other teachers on Saturdays. And when I did all the tests and everything, they were like, ok, forget about Saturdays. Can you work Monday through Friday? Seven to nine? Nine to eleven? Yeah, sure. Why not? So, I started teaching like that. Then I realized that I really loved teaching English, so I decided to pursue my master's in English or teaching English as a foreign language. And then I started working at UDLA and then at San Francisco. So that's basically the story behind it. So, this

started, I mean, teaching English started give or take around eight years ago, and here I am now.”

N- “OK, thank you. Well, so you mentioned that you were from Florida, right? So, you're a native speaker, correct? Correct. OK, now I'm going to get into some of the experiences you've had throughout the time you where you have been teaching. Can you share any experiences in your classroom? Is there anything that probably changed the way you think of teaching?”

I4- “Well, I don't think that it actually tastes the way I think about it, but I think that there are a lot of examples of things that actually taught me how to be a better teacher because of what people were doing or how they were using the vocabulary and stuff like that. And sometimes it's really complicated to understand why they make certain mistakes. And when you try to analyze the language or the original language of the person like native language of the person, you probably get to understand those mistakes. And therefore, you know how to correct it. One of the of the examples that we actually talked about yesterday is with the word hotel. Usually, people will say ho-tel, and I had no idea why they would say ho-tel because it didn't make sense in Spanish it's hotel, so it should still be hotel, not ho-tel. Until one day, we were in one class and we started playing music, and the song that came up was Hotel California. And of course, in the song they say, ‘Welcome to the Ho-tel California’. And then I realized, oh, that's it, ok? That's why they're making this mistake. So, they were learning the words or that particular word from songs. And that was the mistake. But there are other cases, especially with the pronunciation of certain letters, that you will know that they're making that mistake because of the sound that comes from Spanish. Our typical case is the ‘the’ sound which is, I mean, for us, it's really natural to produce it. But for a person that speaks Spanish, that sound hasn't really sound, that doesn't really exist. So, it's really either a ‘de’, which is not ‘the’ or it is the sound of the “t”. So, yeah, those are the things that you have to know to or understand how to correct later on. So, but I still love teaching, and probably one other thing that I remember is that I had the opportunity to work with the same group in two different levels. But I'm not talking about like basic one, basic two. No, this was actually it was basic one and advanced two. Okay, so see the progress from the first classes to the last classes. It was, it was amazing because in a certain way it was like, ok, part of that is me. Not only other teachers, it's me. I did that. I was part of that. And that was totally awesome.”

N- “Cool. So, when you first started teaching, how was it like? Like, how was it at the beginning? And then how was it after you gained experience?”

I4- “Ok, we're talking about English, right?”

N- “Yeah.”

I4- “Ok. So, for English, the first time, it was totally different for me because yeah, one thing is knowing the language, another totally, totally different thing is actually knowing how to explain the language. So that was kind of frightening at the beginning. Probably if I wouldn't have if I wouldn't have had the books to do it, it would have been crazy. And I have seen that with other teachers that come from example where I'm volunteering. And they don't know how to teach. So, they start teaching. And I remember one thing that that really struck me is for me, understanding the difference between will and going to was obvious. But because for them, it was totally natural. They didn't actually realize what the differences were. So, trying to explain the differences to another person was really complicated. But probably one of the things that really that I really enjoyed when I was starting or when I started teaching is that I was able to see that I was part of the change of other people. And that was totally incredible. I mean, I really loved that part. And then after that, it's just something that you do naturally. I always say that there's a difference between a job and something that you really enjoy doing. And basically, I always tell my students, So, how do you know if what you're studying is

really what you want to do or not? And many times, they say, Well, yeah, it's because of these. It's because of how much you get paid, etc. And I tell them, no, it's simpler than that. If I tell you that you're going to do that job for free, would you do it? Most of them say no. So OK, that's not your passion. Forget about it and pursue whatever you really want to do. In my case, I can say that this is my passion, although I am glad that I get paid for it. But I would. I mean, it's something that I would do anyway.”

N- “Ok, that's interesting. Well, so I noticed that you're on an on-campus setting. Right, yes. So, can you describe a little bit on the main characteristics of your classroom dynamics? How do your classes work?”

I4- “Ok. Usually, we will start with some type of a warmer, usually with pictures or stuff like that that will actually evoke either vocabulary or something related to the topic that we're going to talk like the one yesterday that it was about questions. And of course, the topic was about questions. So, it was just making them think a little bit about the concept of questions, and then talk about how to make questions, right? Then we will have a part of explanation that I love using videos. And why do I love using videos? Not only because of the time, but also because videos are something that I can share with them later. And if for any reason they didn't understand something, they can watch it as many times as they want. We can just keep rewinding and rewinding, playing it and playing it. The thing is that usually the dynamic of any class or any student will be pretty much of: I will ask a question, but if I don't get it, then I don't ask again, why? Because I don't want to sound dumb. I don't want to be like, I don't want people laughing at me because I'm asking the same thing again. So, what will happen is that they will just they will still have the question, but they will not ask it. So, I like using videos because then I can share it with them and they can watch it as many times as they want. Once you finish with the explanation, we would go to a third stage with which is practice. As you probably noticed, I love using activities that are already online. Some were created by me, some by other teachers. And why do I like using that? Because it's easy for them to access, and especially because of the age of my students. Most of my students we're talking about right now, not even millennials already centennials and getting very close to alphas. So, because of the of the generations that they belong to, they're very well, let's say, tech savvy, and they're expecting to have technology in their lives. So, what I do is just use the activities that they will usually like to do and merge them to something that it's actually productive for them, which are this type of activities. On the other hand, yes, it is true that if you already have the activity done and you already have it graded, it's a lot easier for you as well because you don't have to start checking every single document for fifty minutes or so on just grading stuff. Except for writing, which is different. Writing, they have to produce a hundred percent and you have to check a hundred percent. So, it is different. And then you will have usually like kind of a conclusion that I do it in depending on what I'm teaching. For example, today, as you as you noticed, I went actually to the last part, the really the real last part, which is talking about what's going to happen tomorrow. So, in other words, getting them ready for the next day. In other cases, depending on the grammar or the activity that we were working, we would do kind of like a summary. That's what happened yesterday. Like, ok, so what type of questions do we have? How do you write them? What are the words that you use? And that's it. Yeah. So that will be basically the strategy that I use in general terms. Of course, there are certain activities that I will change eventually and make them a little bit different from time to time.”

N- “Ok, nice. Thank you. So, there's this thing that has always been around courses and everything, and its achievement. So, what would you describe -- What would be your description of achievement? What do you expect from your students to have in terms of achievement?”

I4- “Ok. Basically, what I expect from them is to learn something new. That is my main goal. Ok? How much and what? That depends, because not every student will be going at the same pace and achievement will actually vary from student to student. Ok? When you compare different students, you will notice that probably for one specific student, being able, for example, to produce the -ed sound is like crazily good. For another one, it’s probably not that good because you already knew it. So, you have to challenge that one a little bit more and try to see something that it's a little bit more complicated. Once, I was teaching a reading class and I had that issue. I had people from different levels, so how do I teach them how to read if they are at different levels, right? On those days, I found a web page that actually has the same type of writing, but in different levels. So, it was really nice because then you can assign like the people who are in lower levels, you assign activity one for the ones that are like middle levels, you assign activity two and the ones that are in higher levels, you assign activity three, which is more complicated. Eventually, it would take them like all the group, it will take them at the same time to finish it. But with different degrees of complexity.”

N- “OK. All right. So well, in terms of an additional topic that I wanted to include. Have you ever heard of the term social capital?”

I4- “I have heard it. I'm not really familiar, but...”

N- “Well, yeah. So basically, it's focused on social interactions within the groups and how they work with each other to reach a particular goal, right? So, would you describe the social interactions in your classroom? Do you see those types of interactions there or how do you see they talk to each other, they work with each other?”

I4- “Oh, yeah, definitely they do. Now, basically, the thing is that it depends also on the level. As you probably noticed in the classes in these two classes that we that we had between yesterday and today, there were work groups on the first one. I actually assigned them like, ok, ‘twos’ (pairs) and one group of three. And the second one, I told them, OK. Work together or alone, whatever you want. Most of the people actually went into groups. There was actually only one person that wanted to do it on his own. That's fine. That's also important because sometimes you have to respect the personality of each of each student. So, I don't really mind if they don't work together as long as they do the work. There are other cases where they have to work together, especially when we have like speaking practices, they will have to work together. There's no other way in levels like this one, which is a lower level. You will (you will) still see a lot of interaction between them in Spanish using translation. Like crazy? Yes. You have to try to control that. But at a certain given point, if as long as they are learning, I don't really mind if they're using Spanish or not, ok? Eventually, you will continue correcting that, and when you see students, for example, the advanced levels like level five, level six, you will see something that is totally different. Their interaction is mostly in English. They use very, very few translations and very few Spanish in the classes. And they, of course, can produce a lot more. Many times, the problem of using Spanish is because of the amount of production that they can actually do because of the vocabulary, they still have a limited vocabulary, so they will probably have issues with that yet.”

N- “OK. Now, in terms of interaction with you as a teacher, do students socialize with you as a teacher? Like, they ask you things about yourself, about your background? Stuff like that?”

I4- “Yeah. Well, actually, I would have loved you to come to the first, to my first class because that's basically what I do at the beginning of the class. Like the first day, I will always do this introduction exercise. So, they will tell me some things about them, and I will basically be an open book for the first, the first class. So, what I tell them is, OK, now it's your turn to ask questions. Ask whatever you want, ok? And usually the first questions are like, What's your name? Where are you from? What's your age? Things like that. But

eventually, when they start going in, it's like, what type of hobbies do you have? And when we coincide in the hobby, for example, with my...with my advanced class, we had this this girl who was also learning how to box, and I do boxing. So, we had this in common. And then we would be like, like bugging the others like we're going to team up to beat the others, right? And it was just fun it and everything. And I think that that's really important because when they get to know you, they feel more confident and therefore they're eager to ask questions. Not as much as if they don't know you. If you are this this code block in front of the class, it's like, I'm not asking you anything. I don't know how he's going to answer. I don't know if he's going to take it correctly or not, you know? So, I think that it's really important for them to know me and of course, for me to know them. I have had a lot of cases where students will actually open up and tell me parts of their lives that are just for like asking for or some kind of support or guidance. And that's I think that as a teacher, that is like the top that you can get because if you get to that to that place or to that amount of confidence from your students that they will actually talk to you about their personal things. It's really interesting because you get to find yourself in a position where you're not only the teacher you, they see you as a friend. So that is really, really good.”

N- “That's a really interesting thought, actually. Now coming a little bit on getting back a little bit on the on the class structure for an instance, how do you handle deadlines? Do you think that students negotiate with you based on their tasks? Like probably if they didn't have time to complete a task on the established deadline, how do you work with that?”

I4- “Usually what I try to do to avoid that is to start working with them from a lot earlier. So basically, I will tell them, ok, this is your deadline, and I will try to remind them every day like, don't forget to do this. Don't forget to do this. Don't forget to do this. That way, they're like, always conscious. What happens is that if you have deadlines that are too far away, usually what happens is they will forget, OK, because yes, you are not the only subject that they're taking. And of course, if you have to compare English versus, for example, physics when they are studying physics, which one is more important for them, specifically? That is why usually what I try to do is have like short activities that will be able to be done like the same day maximum two days. This one, for example, the one of the videos that you saw today, they were already working on it. They were already practicing. They will probably do it today, although the deadline is on Sunday, but I never mentioned the deadline for that. I just told them, upload it. And that was it. Why? Because if you'd tell them something like, oh, yeah, this is for like next week, they will forget. Right? And then it's just a matter of trying to organize the time in such a way that you are not a burden for them as well. Now, have I had the case where they will try to negotiate dates? Yes, sometimes I would just accept to change the dates. So, for example, if they to me, well, the thing is that right now we're in exams and we have to do your video and your video takes long. Yes, I know a video can't take long because we're not teaching video classes. We're teaching English. So actually, learning how to make a video, although it should be easy for them because they have been doing it, sometimes it's not that easy. Ok, so yeah, sometimes we negotiate. But usually, it would be like one or two days. Not more than that.”

N- “Ok. All right. So, if they miss a deadline or if they are really, really trying to accomplish their activities within the deadlines, do you think that has something to do with their own sense of achievement or it's just because they have to do that?”

I4- “Ok, I can actually answer that question with an example. I have this group of students that had to finish certain (number) of activities by the end of the of the cycle, talking about my previous group. Basically, everyone already passed before presenting the last project, ok? And they knew they passed. Nevertheless, they finished it. Why? Exactly because of that. Because they, the same time they feel like...How can I say this? Probably because of the

relationship that we have a teacher-student relationship I mean that we have. They feel responsible to have to finish everything that they started. Ok, so they will still do it. I have seen students that will go like: 'Oh yeah, I know I already passed, but I still want you to present it.' Sure, send it. Ok. And I will still grade it, and that will probably give them a better grade? Yes. I think the teaching and of course, learning is not a matter of grades. Ok? You can learn a lot with zero grades. You can learn nothing having the best grades of all. Ok. First, personally my perception about exams, for example, is that an exam will test your ability to take the test. It will not test your ability on the knowledge, per se. Why? Because you can probably memorize everything. Two days later, you will not remember anything and you passed with one hundred or a ten if it's over ten, right? On the other hand, there are other types of activities that will help you a lot more when you are just doing them like together. One activity that I usually do as a as an evaluation, and I love it because it's really practical. What I would do is ask my students to write one question and one answer in a paper. Ok? Of any of the topics that we covered. Ok? And then I would just select the questions. So, you give me your question and answer. I will take your question. I will check an answer. Of course, I know that. You know that topic. That's what you're choosing it, right? And if it is correct, that one will go to a pile of questions. Ok? If I have similar questions, I will just give one. Not all of them together. And then what we will do is with those questions, I will give one question to each person. Ok? And what they do is they will ask the question to the other person. OK. So, for example, you have the paper and you will ask the question to me. I will have to give the answer. If I don't know the answer, you will give me the answer. Ok? And then I go to the next person and so on and so forth. Eventually, what happens is that, you know, because you have been listening to the answers and the questions, basically during the whole class with 10 15 people. Ok? And then you already know that that's not by memory, but because you actually understand the concept because the other person was explaining and it is easy to evaluate because as a teacher, you just listen to the answers, you know? Ok. Five Correct, two wrong. OK, ready. That's it. I don't really have to tell them that there have been tested, and yet you can still evaluate. So, it's really interesting, a very interesting way of doing it."

N- "Ok. Nice. So, do you think there is a direct relationship between your students, social capital, the way they interact in class and their development in class? Do you think that maybe if they collaborate, they do better or it doesn't have anything to do at all?"

I4- "Totally. My personal way of seeing things is that collaboration is 100 percent times better. Sorry, 100 times better than the competition. Competition simply doesn't work, OK? And the proof of that is actually a phrase that we always use, right? One plus one equals three. OK. If you have two people working together, you will have a lot better results that if you have individuals working. If you have four or five people together, they will come with ideas that you can't even imagine. And that collaboration is not competition. The problem is that society has shown us that the way to do things is by competing with each other, which is not. If you are a teacher, you will probably notice that the best way to have cover the material and have everything ready is how? By talking to other teachers. You ask another teacher: 'Hey, do you have a worksheet for this or do you know something about this?' And you share information. That's it. You have. Have a good class, the other person has a good class. The material is basically the same. So, students have a good class and that's a lot better than: 'Oh no, I have to be a better teacher than you. So, I will never tell you what I'm doing.' No, it doesn't make any sense. The same thing happens with students. If you think that you are competing for the best grade in the class. Well, here at least the best way to show that that doesn't. The fact is that we're not talking about grades. We're talking about parsing fail. Ok? And pass or fail is basically a matter of did you do the activities and did you do them well

versus you didn't do anything, period. Ok, so that's just a matter of how you did it. But because you don't have this thing of, oh, I'm going to be graded right? You are going to try to do your best. And how you do you? Or how can you do your best? Either alone or in collaboration. And you know, that collaboration is always going to be easier because what you don't know, someone else knows and you can you can take that from the other person.”

N- “OK, well, that's an interesting thought. Yeah, I haven't seen it that way. That's actually a new one. So, in your classroom, what are some common – I think you already covered this a little bit because you said that on the lower levels, they speak Spanish – But what are some other common patterns that you may identify in your classroom? Like, how do students behave with each other? How do they how's their attitude on the class?”

I4- “Ok, yeah, that will depend on the level of confidence they have to each other. Some of them study the same career, so some of them are studying other things together. I remember I when I was studying, it was so funny because we were not studying the same career yet. I had a classmate from the five classes that I had. She was with me in four and we were studying totally different things. So, it was really, really funny. And probably the funniest thing about it is that she was the daughter of a very good friend of my mother's, but we didn't know that we were going to study together. So, it was quite interesting. It just happened. Now what happens with the students in the classroom? Many times, because they're studying the same things. Of course, they sometimes they will distract into ‘Oh, did you do the homework of these other thing?’ Ok. So those are the things that sometimes you have to control or check. And on the other hand, I also like to be kind of flexible because if you are ready to finish what you had to do and you have some extra time and you want to finish the other activity that you were doing from somewhere else, I'm not going to sit there and not move, you know, I mean, use your time wisely, and that's it. As long as you finish what you have to do, that's OK. So that will be one type of interaction that you usually have with students or among students. Of course, that leads to something else when there are really friends, real friends. Many times, they will bug each other. So, you have to control a little bit that because sometimes it can gain a little bit out of hand and it can make other people feel uncomfortable, not because of them, because they know that they're joking. But there are certain jokes that some other people will consider offensive or something. So, like, ok, relax, take it easy. I have to admit I haven't seen it in this university, at least, but I know it can happen. Eventually, it can happen. So, you have to be as a teacher, you have to be very careful that that doesn't happen in your class and if it does try to solve it and make everyone comfortable again.”

N- “Ok. All right. So, we're almost there. I have a few more questions to go through. This one. What are your perceptions? I think we already covered a little bit of this, but what are some perceptions on your student's attitude towards English, for an instance in this particular level? Do they aspire to use the knowledge in the future, or how do you see it?”

I4- “Oh, ok. I usually don't like to compare different groups because it's, I mean, it's not fair for them either. Ok? Different backgrounds, different situations. So, but I can tell you that because of my experience with three different institutions. And, of course, three different backgrounds. It is obvious that in certain in certain institutions, the concept of meeting the language in the future is a lot higher than in others. Ok? The funny part is that usually those that think that they will not use it in the future, they end up coming back to study English, because then they realized that they need it. But yeah, in general, I would – because we're talking about this particular case – I think that everyone sees the need because of course, most of the students here are thinking of either want to go to study outside or I want to go work outside or I expect to work in a multinational company. So, I need the language. And that makes it a big difference because people see the need. Therefore, they see why they're doing it. And compared to other people that will say, like: ‘Ok, this is just a requisite for the career.

I just want to finish it and leave' Right? And then they still have to come because they never learned anything."

N- "So, ok, well, I think this was this one was already covered like the initial motivations, as he said, to maybe use it in a multinational company or something. So, yeah, I think that was already covered. Ok, so can you share a story, if you remember any, involving your experience in classrooms, in a private school specifically? It could be the school, another school. How is the environment and private schools?"

I4- "Ok. That will depend, of course, on the grades that you're teaching. But in general terms, most of the private schools have this, let's say institutional environment that will allow you to have a lot more confidence with the teacher. Personally, I don't like when they call me teacher and I hate when they call me Mr. Fassett. Mr. Fassett was my dad, that not me. Ok? So, I prefer to go, especially here. They will usually call me Bernie, and that's something that I make very clear. Like, the first day of the Please call me Bernie. If you don't want to call me Bernie and or you don't feel comfortable, just call me Bernard. And that's it. I don't really like the last names and in certain schools that I'm in, like private schools, that also happens. Many of the students that are here come from private schools. And you notice that because they are using the same way that they speak here and what they used before, my experience in schools is very limited. I have subbed a couple of weeks, basically, but I have always focused more on universities, so it. But of course, when you have students, it just came out of school. You can see the behavior that they had in the school, so it's pretty much the same. And I think that with private schools, it is really important for them to also, how should I say, support this concept of having this type of relationship between the teacher and the student? Yes. Respect, but not fear."

N- "Ok. All right, so well, the comments, you already did that. Ok, now I have two more questions about your classes that I observed so far. And then we will be done. So, I noticed that the two classes that I observed were basically content based. Ok? So do you usually do that only content based, grammar based or do you use something different?"

I4- "No, it will depend. Right now, yes, we're basically in the first weeks. So, I need a lot of contexts for them to be able to work on another type of types of activities. But of course, especially on lower levels, you're going to have a lot, a lot of things to cover. Usually by halfway through or by the end of the of the of the course, you will start working or I will start asking them to do presentations on projects and investigations. So, it's more like hands on things. But right now, the problem is that I still need a lot of vocabulary and stuff to be built so they can they can work on the other material later on. So, it's kind of a mixture of everything."

N- "Ok, and do you think it makes a difference like structuring grammar first and then hands on activities? Like, do you think it could be working backwards? Or is it only (being) a pattern that you usually follow?"

I4- "It would depend on the level. Again, the thing is that sometimes, for example, with higher levels, what I try to do is exactly the opposite. So, they will do like they will have to do some type of activity. And then I will ask them to infer the rule, for example, which is exactly the opposite. But right now, it's basically mostly a matter of either sound planning or the sound production or vocabulary. Ok. So those are the things that you cannot. I mean, it would be very complicated to do the opposite because of what I told you. Not everyone will ask the questions and therefore there will be a lot of voice. So that's why I prefer in lower levels to start doing the vocabulary in sounds first, then going to production and on higher levels I will actually do kind of the opposite. It's more like, ok, investigate about this. Tell me you tell me, for example, in level six. One activity that I love to do is like, ok, this is going to be the grammar point. I am not going to teach it. You are going to teach it to me. So, they will have

to figure out the way to explain it to their classmates. Ok? So, it's kind of like reversing the process.”

N- “Ok. And the final thing that I wanted to ask, do you – Well, aside from the first class – Do you tend to include a little bit more facts about yourself during the course? Over the course of the level? Or it's just strictly for the first few weeks or the first class?”

I4- “No, I have no issues with it, basically with sharing information with students. It will depend on the circumstance. So, for example, they usually don't know about my car accident. And they will never ask about that because they have no idea about it. So then when the moment is right, I will probably tell them like to use it as an example of something else. But somehow, you know that this happened to me. I almost died, etcetera, etcetera. So that's like, let's hear. Let's listen to this. This is an interesting story, right? So, it is important because again, this is like kind of like a reminder of I'm also human and you can talk to me.”

N- “Ok, all right. So well, that's basically all the only questions that I had, and I wanted to thank you so much for taking the time to do this and for helping me out and for allowing me to observe your classes. And well, I think it has been really interesting and you provided additional things that I thought probably weren't going to happen or to be included. But yeah, thanks a lot. I think it's been a great time to chat.”

## ANNEX E: Authorization letter signed by the head of the ESL Department

Jose David Ramirez

ESL Program Coordinator

Request to obtain authorization to conduct research

Dear Jose David Ramirez, my name is Nicole Alejandra Cevallos Ortiz, a graduate student from the Master in Teaching English as a Second Language program at USFQ. I'm currently on my last semester and I'm planning to conduct research with some teachers from the ESL program at USFQ. The title of my research project is "*Perceptions of English Language Teachers involving the influence of social factors in students of English as a Second Language in their achievement and development*". The purpose of this is to observe the social environment of classrooms and the perceptions towards achievement in ESL classrooms. I would like to request approval to formally interview six teachers who work at intermediate levels. In order to do so, your authorization would be very valuable to continue with this process. It is important to mention that all of these processes are under the bioethical standards at USFQ and all sorts of participation will be voluntary, subjects may abstain to participate or withdraw from the research at any time.

If your response is positive, please let me know with a signature below.

I, José David Ramirez authorize the student Nicole Alejandra Cevallos Ortiz to contact teachers from the ESL program at USFQ to conduct class observations and interview teachers for the research under the name "*Perceptions of English Language Teachers involving the influence of social factors in students of English as a Second Language in their achievement and development*". The interviews and participation of each subject will be completely voluntary and must follow all the bioethical standards required by the CEISH committee at USFQ.

Nicole Cevallos Ortiz

Student

José D. Ramirez

ESL Program Coordinator at USFQ

## **ANNEX F: Interview protocol**

### **Interview questions:**

1. What is your age and gender?
2. What is your academic background? Could you provide additional information on your titles?
3. How long have you been a teacher?
4. What is your professional background?
5. Can you share your experiences in your classrooms is there anything that probably changed the way you think of teaching?
6. How was it in the beginning? How was it after gaining experience?
7. I noticed that your class was structured in a on campus setting could you tell me more about this?
8. Please describe your classroom, what are some of the main characteristics on your classroom dynamics?
9. How would you describe achievement from your students?
10. Have you ever heard of the term social capital? [If the answer was positive, please ask the participant to provide a brief description in their own words]
11. How would you describe social interactions in your classroom? Do students socialize with you as a teacher? Are there any types of negotiation based on their tasks? For example, have they ever asked you for a change in dates or additional time to complete a task? Do you think it is linked with their own sense of achievement? If so, how?
12. Do you think there is a direct relationship between your students' social capital such as and their development in class?
13. What are some common patterns you may identify in your classroom?
14. What are some perceptions on your student's attitude towards English? Do they aspire to use the acquired knowledge in the future?
15. How do you identify your student's initial motivations to learn English? Do you believe students learn English out of mere necessity?
16. Can you share a story involving your experience in classrooms in a private school? How could you describe your student's background?
17. Are there any comments on your experience you would like to provide?

### **Additional questions:**

1. I noticed that your class has mostly content-based lessons during class observations. Could you please help me elaborate on that element? Does it make a difference in your class?
2. I could identify that your class is based on strictly grammar-content based elements in your classroom involving the students' personal interests in some cases. Why do you think it happens?
3. I noticed that your class has mostly content-based lessons during class observations. Could you please help me elaborate on that element? Does it make a difference in your class?

4. I could identify that your class is based on personalized elements in your classroom involving the students' personal interests in some cases. Why do you think it happens?
5. I noticed a very personalized touch during class observations. Could you please help me elaborate on that element? Does it make a difference in your class?
6. I could identify an increased interest in your classroom involving their sense of achievement. Why do you think it happens?
7. I noticed that your class has mostly content-based lessons during class observations. Could you please help me elaborate on that element? Does it make a difference in your class?
8. I could identify that your class is based on small enforcements in your classroom involving their sense of achievement based on their performance. Why do you think it happens?