



PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL ECUADOR

ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES

**TRABAJO DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR PREVIO A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL
TÍTULO DE LICENCIADO EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL IDIOMA INGLÉS**

**“DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (DI) STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE
RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS IN MULTILEVEL ENGLISH CLASSROOMS
AT THE FIRST LEVEL OF THE PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN
LANGUAGES MAJOR”**

Srta. Melany Estefanía Pozo Galarza

TUTORA: Mgs. Fanny Viviana Torres Torres

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DEDICATORIA

Con todo mi corazón, dedico este trabajo a Dios, por ser mi guía en cada paso de este camino, por darme la fortaleza para levantarme en los momentos de incertidumbre y por recordarme que, con fe y perseverancia, todo esfuerzo tiene su recompensa.

A mis padres, Paola y Edison, quienes son el pilar más importante de mi vida. Gracias por cada sacrificio que hicieron para brindarme un mejor futuro, por creer en mí incluso cuando yo misma dudaba, por celebrar mis logros como si fueran propios y por sostenerme en los momentos en los que sentía que ya no podía más. Todo lo que soy y todo lo que he alcanzado lleva una parte de ustedes. Este logro también les pertenece, porque sin su amor, paciencia y apoyo incondicional jamás habría llegado hasta aquí.

A Noah, por estar presente en las largas noches de estudio, por regalarme calma en medio del cansancio y por recordarme, sin necesidad de palabras, que siempre existe un motivo para sonreír. Su compañía hizo que este camino fuera mucho más llevadero.

A todos ustedes, gracias por ser mi refugio, mi inspiración y mi fuerza. Este trabajo representa mucho más que la culminación de una carrera; representa el amor, el esfuerzo y la esperanza que compartimos durante todos estos años.

AGRADECIMIENTOS

Agradezco profundamente a Dios por acompañarme en cada etapa de este proceso, por darme la sabiduría para enfrentar los desafíos y la fortaleza para no rendirme cuando el camino parecía difícil. Cada logro alcanzado ha sido posible gracias a su infinita bondad.

Expreso mi sincero agradecimiento a mi asesora de tesis por su dedicación, paciencia y orientación durante el desarrollo de esta investigación. Sus conocimientos, observaciones y apoyo fueron esenciales para fortalecer este trabajo y para mi crecimiento académico.

Mi gratitud se extiende a la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, Ibarra, por abrirme sus puertas y brindarme una formación basada en el conocimiento, el compromiso y los valores que hoy me acompañan como futura profesional.

Finalmente, quiero agradecer de manera muy especial a mis mejores amigos, Andrea, Danilo y Diana. Gracias por caminar conmigo durante esta etapa, por escucharme cuando el cansancio y la frustración parecían ganar, por celebrar cada pequeño avance y por recordarme, una y otra vez, que era capaz de llegar hasta el final. Su amistad fue un refugio en los días difíciles y una de las mayores bendiciones que me dejó esta etapa de mi vida. Este logro también guarda un pedacito de ustedes, porque estuvieron presentes cuando más los necesité.

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1. RESUMEN

Este trabajo se enfocó en analizar la influencia de las estrategias de Instrucción Diferenciada en el desarrollo de las habilidades receptivas de Listening y Reading en aulas multinivel de inglés, correspondientes al primer nivel de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros en la PUCE-Ibarra. Con base en un estado del arte actualizado, que incorpora teorías de Differentiated Instruction, enfoques de Universal Design for Learning (UDL) y modelos cognitivos de procesamiento top-down y bottom-up, se observó la necesidad de implementar estrategias pedagógicas que respondan a la diversidad de niveles, intereses y ritmos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes.

El estudio tuvo como fin analizar el impacto de las estrategias adaptadas al contexto del aula. Los objetivos específicos incluyeron la revisión teórica y empírica de la instrucción diferenciada, el diagnóstico de las necesidades y desempeño de los estudiantes, el análisis de los resultados de la aplicación de estrategias diferenciadas. Para ello, se utilizó un diseño mixto, utilizando encuestas con preguntas cerradas y abiertas, así como fichas de observación estructuradas, aplicadas a 24 estudiantes en situaciones reales de aula.

Los resultados mostraron que los estudiantes reconocen la heterogeneidad del aula como un factor determinante en su aprendizaje y valoran positivamente las actividades adaptadas a su nivel. Las observaciones reflejaron fortalezas en la práctica docente en términos de evaluación y retroalimentación, pero indicaron limitaciones en la implementación sistemática de estrategias diferenciadas, especialmente en Listening. A partir de estos hallazgos, se diseñó una guía pedagógica con actividades diferenciadas por nivel, enfocadas en fortalecer la comprensión auditiva y lectora de los estudiantes con menor participación. Esta investigación aporta evidencia relevante sobre la eficacia de la Instrucción Diferenciada en aulas multinivel y establece bases para futuras investigaciones que exploren su impacto en otras habilidades del idioma inglés y en distintos contextos educativos.

Palabras claves: *Instrucción Diferenciada, destrezas receptivas, grupos multi-nivel, Listening, Reading.*

2. ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of Differentiated Instruction strategies for developing receptive listening and reading skills in multi-level English classrooms at the first level of the National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy program at PUCE-Ibarra. The study, based on an up-to-date review of the literature, including theories of Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and models of top-down and bottom-up cognitive processing, indicated a clear need for pedagogical strategies addressing different levels, interests, and learning paces of students.

The study aimed to analyze the impact of strategies adapted to the classroom context, according to three specific objectives. These practices included the analysis of theoretical and empirical literature on differentiated instruction, the diagnosis of students' needs and performance, and the analysis of the results of the application of differentiated strategies in the classroom. To reach these objectives the study employed a mixed methods design. The design included surveys with closed and open-ended questions, structured observation checklists and was applied to 24 students in real classroom settings.

The results show that students consider classroom heterogeneity as an important factor in their learning and appreciate activities adapted to their level. Classroom observations identified real strengths in assessment and feedback but also showed a lack of consistent application of differentiated strategies, particularly in listening. Taking these results into account, a pedagogical guide was prepared with level differentiated activities to enhance the listening and reading comprehension skills of the less participating students. Overall, this study provides relevant evidence about the effectiveness of Differentiated Instruction in multi-level classrooms and lays the foundation for future research on the effects of Differentiated Instruction on other skills of the English language and in other educational contexts.

Key words: *Differentiated Instruction, receptive skills, multi-level classrooms, listening, reading.*

3. INTRODUCTION

English learning in higher education Today, it is an academic, professional and social necessity to be competent in accessing scientific information, intercultural communication and integration in increasingly globalised work environments. However, there are still many challenges in teaching this language in the university, which impede the equal development of the students' language skills. One of the more visible problems is the existence of multilevel classrooms, where students with different levels of proficiency, learning speeds, prior experiences and ways of approaching knowledge come together. This reality demands more flexible and inclusive pedagogical practices that can adequately respond to diversity in the classroom.

This is particularly clear in the first year of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador, Ibarra campus, where students come from diverse educational backgrounds with various degrees of exposure to English. Some are from institutions with a better base in the language or have had supplementary courses. Others have only basic or limited knowledge. This first gap gives rise to inequalities in comprehension, participation and school achievement, especially in receptive skills such as listening and reading, which are essential for the subsequent development of oral and written production.

The topic was chosen because it is necessary to understand and solve a real problem within the university context, where traditional teaching methods are generally oriented towards the average student, who in practice does not represent the diversity of the group. Students with a weaker command of the language tend to fall behind when materials,

activities and planning do not take differences in proficiency into account, while more advanced students can become demotivated by a lack of academic challenge. In this sense, the approach of Differentiated Instruction is a relevant pedagogical perspective, since it intends to adapt content, processes, products and forms of support to the needs, interests and learning profiles of students.

This research, entitled “Differentiated Instruction (DI) Strategies to Improve Receptive Language Skills in Multilevel English Classrooms at the First Level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major,” analyzes how applying Differentiated Instruction strategies can help strengthen receptive language skills in multilevel English classrooms. It therefore seeks not only to describe the existing problem, but also to offer university professors practical, contextualized guidance for addressing the linguistic diversity present in their classrooms.

The research problem centers on the difficulty of adequately developing receptive skills in multilevel English classrooms when pedagogical strategies are not tailored to students' different proficiency levels. This leads to marked differences in academic performance, unequal participation, difficulties in listening and reading comprehension, and limited access to learning on equal terms. Based on this, the study poses the following research questions: How do Differentiated Instruction strategies influence the development of receptive skills in multilevel English classrooms? What are the main difficulties first-level students face in listening and reading in this context? And how can a proposal based on Differentiated Instruction help improve academic results in the first year of the National and Foreign Language Pedagogy program?

Within this framework, the research examines the relationship between the application of Differentiated Instruction strategies and the development of English receptive skills among first-year students of the National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy program. It aims to identify how teaching practices adapted to the group's diversity can foster listening and reading comprehension in a university context marked by heterogeneous academic levels. Thus, the research is oriented toward the analysis of a specific educational reality and the search for pedagogical alternatives that can improve it.

General objective. To analyze the impact of Differentiated Instruction strategies to improve receptive skills in multi-level English classrooms at the first level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree, with the purpose of proposing effective methods that respond to the different levels of linguistic competence.

Specific objectives.

- To review theoretical and empirical literature on differentiated instruction and academic achievement in multilevel English classrooms, so to build a solid theoretical basis for the research.
- To identify the challenges that teachers face and the academic performance of students in multilevel English classrooms, including the participant selection, data collection instruments and procedures, to ensure the validity and reliability of the research process.
- To analyze and interpret the results obtained from implementation of differentiated teaching strategies to evaluate their effectiveness on students' academic achievement.

- Design of a proposal of differentiated instruction adapted to the specific needs of the multilevel English classrooms, aimed at improving academic results in the first level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major.

The independent variable Differentiated Instruction is defined as the set of pedagogical strategies and methodological decisions that make it possible to adjust the instruction to students' readiness, interests, learning profiles and needs, according to the design of the study. The dependent variable is the receptive English language skills, i.e. listening and reading because these are the skills that are analyzed for their development in relation to the application of differentiated strategies. The relationship between these two variables enables us to study the effect of more flexible and inclusive teaching on the academic results of students in multi-level classrooms.

Due to the characteristics of the study, it does not establish a strict experimental hypothesis, but a working premise: the application of Differentiated Instruction strategies can favor the development of receptive skills and increase the possibilities of learning in heterogeneous university contexts. This premise is based on the need to provide pedagogical answers adapted to the diversity of the classroom, and on the importance of strengthening teaching practices that promote equity, participation and meaningful comprehension of language.

The relevance of the research is academic, pedagogical and contextual contributions. Academically, it contributes to the analysis of the teaching of the English language in the multi-level classrooms of the university, a field that requires further study in the Ecuadorian context. It provides a pedagogical foundation to implement more inclusive strategies adjusted to the student diversity. It is a response to a need detected in the first year of the National and

Foreign Languages Pedagogy program in which differences in linguistic competence affect the teaching and learning process and require specific methodological responses.

Concerning its organization, the thesis is divided into several sections which altogether allow a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The introduction presents the problem statement, the motivation, the research questions, the object of study, the objectives, and the variables. The state of the art and the theoretical framework review the main background and conceptual foundations related to Differentiated Instruction, multilevel classrooms and receptive skills. Then the chapter of materials and methods describes the approach, the design, the participants, the instruments and the procedures that were used. Finally the results are presented and analysed and interpreted. Finally, the thesis presents the pedagogical proposal derived from the study, as well as the conclusions and recommendations, in order to provide a theoretical and practical response to the problem addressed.

4. STATE OF THE ART

4.1 Foundational contributions to differentiated instruction

The most concrete conceptual basis for this research is constructed on the work of Carol Ann Tomlinson who defines differentiated instruction as a purposeful response to learner variability rather than a sporadic classroom adjustment. Tomlinson (2014) in *The Differentiated Classroom* contends that effective pedagogy cannot presume that students of the same age or course level learn the same way. Educators should recognize the differences in readiness, interests, and learning profiles and adjust content, process, product, and learning environment accordingly. This paradigm is very relevant to the present thesis, as it provides a simple interpretation of the independent variable, that is, differentiated instruction as a pedagogical approach aimed at dealing with academic difference while maintaining explicit learning goals.

In her next book, *How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms*, Tomlinson elaborates on this argument by highlighting the formative assessment, flexible grouping, and intentional planning as the daily practices that make differentiation visible in practice (Tomlinson, 2017). The text moves from philosophical rationale to specific pedagogical implementation. It points out that differentiation does not mean making a unique lesson for each student, but rather using evidence about learners to create diverse pathways to common learning objectives. This view argues that the problem with multilevel English classrooms is not diversity but the absence of adequate structured and systematic responses to diversity.

Tomlinson et al. (2003) in their literature review provide support for the conceptual strength in defining differentiated instruction as a deliberate, research-based approach to

academically diverse classrooms. Their review extends the discussion to general education, showing that differentiation is not just for those at the top or bottom of the performance spectrum, but for all learners whose needs are not met by one-size-fits-all instruction. This view corroborates the notion that differentiation is a holistic approach to instruction founded upon the tenets of equity, responsiveness, and student growth, not upon the rigid categorization of learners.

A similar idea is introduced by Borja et al. (2015) in the context of EFL pedagogy and differentiated instruction. This is important because it connects Tomlinson's wide-ranging educational framework with the actual circumstances of English language classrooms, in which students may vary not only in terms of cognitive profiles or learning preferences but also in their prior exposure to the target language, vocabulary knowledge and willingness to engage. Borja et al. state that EFL teaching needs flexibility because access to meaningful input, opportunities for engagement and supportive mediation influence language learning a lot. This is relevant because the dependent variable of this thesis is the improvement of receptive skills and the changes in language proficiency influence students' reactions to listening and reading tests.

From the critical viewpoint these basic works offer a firm theoretical foundation but do not solve the main problem of the present study completely. Their contribution is mainly to shed light on the concept of varied teaching and its importance, while providing little clarity to the impact of differentiation on receptive skills in particular university-level multilevel contexts. The literature offers a strong case for the concept, but does not address how it is applied to teaching listening and reading to first-year university students with

significantly different levels of English proficiency. This gap is one of the reasons for the necessity of the current thesis.

4.2 Empirical evidence on the effects of differentiated instruction in EFL learning

Besides the theoretical underpinnings, differentiated instruction has been empirically researched in the context of English language teaching. Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014) conducted a major study on the effect of differentiated instruction on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners in single-gender educational environments and concluded that differentiated teaching was more effective than traditional instruction in achieving better reading outcomes. This finding is of particular relevance to the present thesis as it provides conclusive evidence that the adaptation of training to the learners' differences enhances a receptive skill and not only the general classroom environment. The context of the study is different from the context of the Ecuadorian universities where this study was conducted, therefore, the significance of the study is more to support the feasibility of the approach than to provide insights that can be directly applied.

Magableh and Abdullah (2020) provide empirical evidence for differentiated education by showing beneficial effects on the overall academic performance of Jordanian students. The study is valuable in that, although it covers more than receptive skills, it shows that differentiation can lead to measurable gains when used as a conscious instructional tactic. This thesis is important in that it proves that the benefits of differentiation are not just theoretical. However, the focus on achievement reveals a shared weakness in the literature: many studies declare the importance of differentiation in general, yet few explore its particular impact on the development of listening and reading in various EFL classrooms. AlHashmi and Elyas (2018) in their study on diversified teaching in grammar learning

confirmed that intentional adaptation can lead to better outcomes when learners present diverse profiles and needs. Although the study is more focused on grammar than receptive skills, it does support the notion that features of English language are more efficiently acquired when the teacher does not expect a consistent pace or level of readiness of learners.

The interconnectedness of grammar, vocabulary, listening and reading in language development means that evidence of differentiation improving one aspect strengthens the overall claim that flexible teaching approaches enhance English learning as a whole. Paredes (2017) is pertinent for the present thesis as it studies vocabulary, grammar and reading simultaneously. This integration is important because the performance of students in listening and reading is seldom dependent upon one aspect; receptive comprehension is influenced by vocabulary load, grammatical processing, prior knowledge, and the support provided before and during the task. Paredes ties different techniques to other dimensions, moving the conversation from a fragmented view of English education to a more holistic understanding of how differentiated instruction could enhance receptive learning. Meşe & Mede (2023) offer a contemporary view on digital differentiation in tertiary EFL contexts, showing progress in achievement and self-regulation. This study is about higher education and argues that technology can help personalized teaching in the form of digital tools to organize support flexibly. The implementation of the method in higher education makes it more relevant for the university context of the present thesis than many school-based studies. Yet its emphasis on digital difference highlights that technology assistance does not, by itself, solve complex classroom problems, but only when integrated into a pedagogically sensible framework.

Looking at these studies there is a consistent trend. Differentiated instruction is helpful when it is purposeful, structured and meets the individual needs of students. But they also have important limitations, too. Some of them concern general achievement, some grammar or reading, and only a minority are placed in tertiary EFL settings. Very few of them, indeed, actually investigate the intersection of individualized instruction, multilevel classrooms and receptive skills at the beginning of university education. But the empirical evidence, though it strongly points to the educational importance of differentiation, still leaves a significant gap, which this thesis intends to fill.

4.3 Differentiated instruction, Inclusion, and Universal Design for Learning

Much of the literature situates differentiated instruction within the larger philosophy of inclusion. Differentiated instruction and Universal Design for Learning are both designed to increase the flexibility of teaching to reduce barriers to participation (Hall et al., 2004). This relationship is significant because it redefines differentiation not simply as a technique to improve achievement, but as a part of a larger educational philosophy that is based on access and equity. From this perspective, classrooms should be designed to allow learners of different levels of readiness, backgrounds, and needs to connect meaningfully with the curriculum.

Meyer et al. (2014) and Rose and Meyer (2014) extend this argument within the framework of Universal Design for Learning, emphasizing the need to provide multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression so that learning is not constrained to one pathway that benefits some students and excludes others. This view is of great importance to this thesis as it supports the idea that a multilevel English classroom should not require all students to learn with the same materials, at the same pace and to the same degree of teachers' mediation.

But providing varied access and support isn't a concession, it's a core tenet of inclusive teaching.

The inclusive dimension of differentiation is made even more concrete in the study by Martínez Magaña and Valle Flórez (2023), who developed an inclusive multilevel model for reading instruction in a bilingual system, and observed improvements in reading performance when the support was structured at different levels of intensity. The study is particularly useful for the current thesis, in that it shows how differentiation and inclusion can meet around the development of a receptive skill. It also shows that multilevel support is not only good for learners with formally identified educational needs, but can help an entire class by structuring access more flexibly.

Another important perspective is given by Ismail and Al Allaq (2019) who examine the link between differentiated instruction and cooperative learning. The authors propose that flexible group configurations can support differentiated practice if tasks and responsibilities are purposefully planned (p. 10). This is important because multilevel classrooms are often described as difficult environments where teachers must divide their attention among a large number of students. Cooperative learning and differentiation can transform learner diversity from a problem to a resource, with more advanced students making a positive contribution and less confident students receiving meaningful interaction and support. The literature on inclusion and UDL also has limitations for the current study at the same time. Many of these works focus on broad access, participation, and universal planning principles, but they do not always analyze in detail how the differentiated support should be calibrated for specific language skills, such as listening and reading. In other words, they define the ethical and pedagogical logic of differentiation but are less clear about how support

should be organized in an English classroom in which receptive tasks offer different degrees of lexical, auditory, and cognitive challenge. This means that the inclusive literature enriches the framework of the thesis, but it is necessary to add to it studies that focus specifically on the receptive learning of EFL.

4.4 Teacher perceptions and implementation challenges

The literature repeatedly indicates that the effectiveness of differentiated instruction depends not only on its theoretical clarity but also on teacher perceptions, institutional conditions and classroom feasibility. For example, Oliver (2016) found that teachers in foreign language classrooms tend to value the principles of differentiation, but do not always feel sufficiently prepared to carry out their application over time. This undermines a naive account that classrooms are not yet differentiated because teachers do not adopt the approach; rather the evidence suggests that positive attitudes towards differentiation are not necessarily translated into consistent practice.

Also, mixed-skill classrooms create practical problems in terms of time, planning, materials and classroom management (Lunsford, 2017). These barriers help to explain why differentiation might be considered desirable but poorly developed in actual teaching practice. Teachers in multilingual or multilevel classrooms frequently have to cater to different proficiency levels simultaneously. It can be demanding to prepare tiered tasks, graded texts or varied supports without sufficient training or institutional support. Paone (2017) takes this issue further by showing how teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction are influenced by previous training, ideas of fairness, and the structural conditions in which they operate. If teachers have little methodological training or if the curriculum is

rigidly controlled, differentiation can remain superficial, nothing more than occasional changes in format and not a systematic pedagogical adaptation. This idea is compatible with the current study, which suggests that weak differentiation in the classroom should not be viewed as a teacher deficit, but as a result of a larger interaction among pedagogical knowledge, context and resources.

If we look at these studies with a critical eye, an important pattern emerges. They don't present teachers as being uncaring about student diversity; in fact, many teachers are aware of differences in readiness and understand that they have to adapt. The real tension is between pedagogical intention and pedagogical performance. That distinction is particularly useful for the present thesis as it helps to interpret why the observed classroom may be strong on feedback, explanation and support, but still show little evidence of systematic differentiation. Thus, the literature provides a nuanced explanation: implementation challenges can restrict differentiation even if there is widespread recognition of an educational need for it.

This strand of literature is also useful in that it implies that any proposal arising from the present research should be realistic, practical, and context-sensitive. In order to make differentiation more visible in teaching practice, the proposed guide should address the barriers reported in previous studies such as the lack of time, the uncertainty on how to group students, and the difficulty in designing tasks for more than one proficiency level. Thus, the studies on teacher-perception not only describe problems, but also inform the design logic of the pedagogical proposal.

4.5 Multilevel classrooms as a pedagogical reality

In the context of multilevel English classes, the importance of differentiated instruction becomes more apparent. Multilevel ESL classes are described as “educational situations in which students demonstrate a wide range of language competency, experience and rate of advancement” (Mathews-Aydinli & Van Horne, 2006, p. 4). Mathews-Aydinli and Van Horne (2006) describe the benefits and challenges of multilevel ESL classes. Multilevel classrooms may encourage interaction and peer support across levels but they complicate planning, pacing and teacher decision-making particularly when the same assignment is expected to serve all learners.

This view is supported by Banstola (2023) who describes multilevel classrooms as educational settings that require careful management, flexible teaching and continuous professional judgement. The study finds that the diversity of learners influences not only academic performance but also the level of engagement, noise levels in the classroom, and the teacher’s ability to maintain meaningful interaction with all students. This confirms that the multilevel classroom is not a trivial transformation of the conventional class, but a pedagogical context changing the whole framework of education.

Hernandez (2012) shows that multilevel EFL classrooms can become collaborative learning communities when students are encouraged to help each other. At the same time, Hernandez points out that these classrooms present serious challenges in the design of lessons, in the balancing of participation and the timing of curricula. This dual approach means that the current study does not portray multilevel classrooms as exclusively problematic: diversity can be pedagogically beneficial, provided that teaching practices are suitably adapted. Otherwise, it leads to unequal participation and unequal access to education.

For instance, Bulla Ibagon (2020) states that planned multilevel activities can increase motivation and interaction in English lessons. Her research emphasizes the positive sides of heterogeneity: multilevel classrooms should not only be seen as problems to be solved but they can also become environments that foster peer support, engagement and active involvement, when tasks are designed in a flexible and responsive way. This implies that the proposed guide should not only address classroom challenges but also seek to make the diversity of learners a pedagogical asset.

But, the literature on multilevel classrooms suffers from one major flaw. Most of it is related to school settings, adult ESL or general language classes rather than higher education EFL classrooms in the first year of university studies. Not all the material is concerned with receptive skills. The research clearly supports the statement that multilevel classrooms need flexible teaching, but it does not explain how such flexibility can be organized to improve listening and reading in a first level university context. This constraint goes directly into the research gap this thesis tries to fill.

4.6 Listening comprehension in EFL contexts

Listening is one of the two basic receptive abilities inherent in this approach. In the literature, it is often found to be a difficult part of the EFL acquisition. Bano (2017) asserts that listening is frequently disregarded in educational contexts, although it plays a crucial role in the language learning process. From this perspective, the typical problem that students have with listening is that they have to process pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, speed and the meaning of context all at the same time. The problem is even more complex in

multilevel classrooms, where students have different levels of exposure and confidence and the same audio input may be okay for some and overwhelming for others.

According to Al-Jawi (2010) listening should be seen as an active process supported by both top-down and bottom-up approaches. This perspective is helpful in understanding why listening support cannot be only equated to the repetition of audio material. Students need to be helped to activate previous knowledge, to make predictions of possible meanings and to identify relevant lexical and grammatical cues to understand spoken data. This is especially important in multilevel classrooms where students are at different stages of language development with some relying more on contextual predictions and some working on basic language components.

Bowu et al. (2023) further explore classroom practice and emphasize strategies such as brainstorming, summarizing, sentence completion, and the use of technology as tools for receptive tasks. The results suggest that the development of listening skills is promoted when learners are supported, before, during and after listening to audio resources, that is, successful listening instruction involves not only the audio input but also the quality of the mediating process that accompanies it. This is relevant to the present study because it raises the question of whether sufficient support is provided to students to help them understand spoken information, depending on their level of readiness.

Eshniyozova and Istamova (2023) highlight the importance of authentic materials, task-based activities, and metacognitive support. They believe that listening is important when it is linked to meaningful tasks and when students are encouraged to reflect on their listening strategies. Similarly, Solodka et al. (2021) show that structured support can be applied in digital environments to enhance differentiated listening via multimedia resources,

guided prompts and online scaffolding. This study is relevant to previous research showing that instructor explanation and thoughtful use of technology can enhance listening training. From a critical point of view, however, listening research has a weakness. While most people may be familiar with successful strategies and typical student challenges, they don't often specifically think about the context of multilevel university classrooms, where students with different levels of English proficiency are expected to work with the same general course content. Although the evidence strongly supports the effectiveness of scaffolding listening, it does not provide a complete picture of how such support should be adapted to different cohorts of first-year university students. The present thesis is focused on this unresolved issue, which is establishing a link between individualized instruction and the development of receptive skills in this context.

4.7 Reading comprehension and differentiated support

The second receptive skill that is important to this research is reading. From reading studies that have been examined, it shows that comprehension gets better when the learner gets structured and individual help. Gómez Torres and Ávila Constain (2025) indicate that reading strategies such as brainstorming, K-W-L charts, reciprocal teaching, and guided questioning improve comprehension and student engagement. This means that reading development is based on the text chosen and the pedagogical framework that accompanies the reading process. This supports the idea that in multilevel classrooms reading should be mediated by pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading activities rather than considered as a homogeneous activity for all children.

White and Vibulphol (2020) contribute to the field by examining tiered English instruction in mixed-ability EFL classes and demonstrating that reading comprehension improves when instruction is tailored to learner levels and students work with assignments according to readiness. This study is particularly relevant because it links differentiated teaching to a multilevel reading context, and, as such, is one of the most important empirical precedents for the argument put forward. It suggests that tiering is not simply about giving easier or harder assignments but about assisting all learners to progress from different starting points toward important understanding.

This idea is supported by Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014) who show that differentiated instruction has a positive effect on reading comprehension; thus confirming that the enhancement of reading is greater when teachers adjust their teaching methods according to the specific needs of students. Paredes (2017) supports this idea by associating the diversified techniques to the development of reading, vocabulary and grammar. This holistic approach recognizes that several linguistic factors are involved in reading comprehension in EFL settings: students often struggle with texts not because reading is inherently inaccessible, but because the vocabulary requirements, grammatical complexity or task construction is beyond their present level of proficiency.

The inclusive reading model proposed by Martínez Magaña and Valle Flórez (2023) brings another important aspect, which is that their research suggests that multilevel support can improve reading performance when instruction is organized with different levels of intensity and accessibility. This means that the best way to improve reading comprehension is not one uniform approach but a range of supports that are matched to children's varied

learning profiles and preparedness levels. Secondly, it highlights the close connection between differentiation and inclusion in the area of receptive skills.

Careful synthesis of this research suggests that reading is a receptive skill for which differential support is most clearly justified in the literature. Still, there are considerable limitations: a large proportion of the research is based on non-Ecuadorian settings, on schools rather than universities, or on intervention designs that focus on short-term gains. There is a large body of literature that suggests that differentiated strategies can enhance reading comprehension; however, it is unclear how best to organize these strategies in first-year university classrooms where learners are heterogeneous in competence and confidence. This limitation is the reason for the focus of the current research.

4.8 Vocabulary, scaffolding, and the development of receptive skills

Receptive skills development is mentioned repeatedly in the literature reviewed for this thesis as a mediating factor. According to Bano (2017), vocabulary knowledge is one of the factors that affect listening comprehension especially when students are given oral input at natural speed. This means that students might not understand an audio text not only because of pronunciation or speed but also because of the lexical load above their current level. This is especially critical in a multilevel classroom, where there can be a wide range of learners' vocabulary knowledge.

One can see this pattern in the reading literature, too. Gómez Torres and Ávila Constain (2025) demonstrate the positive effect of strategic support for students' reading comprehension, including linking texts and prior knowledge and identifying main ideas, while White and Vibulphol (2020) also show that mixed-ability learners benefit from differentiated reading support, often with lexical preparation prior to the task. These results

suggest that vocabulary should not be seen as a separate problem from receptive skills; lexical support is part of the scaffolding which enables students to comprehend written and oral input more successfully.

Paredes (2017) further elucidates this relationship by connecting differentiated instruction to vocabulary, grammar, and reading in the same pedagogical framework. This integrated perspective reflects the real complexity of language learning in EFL: students do not process reading or listening in isolation from other language components; therefore, differentiated instruction becomes more meaningful when it caters to the interconnectedness of language. This means that, for the present study, improvements in listening and reading may depend not only on changing the format of activities, but also on preparing the lexical and grammatical ground that students need to engage with those activities successfully.

These insights can be organized using the concept of scaffolding. Eshniyozova and Istamova (2023) argue that authentic materials are useful when supported by strategy. More broadly, the literature surrounding receptive skills suggests support in the form of guided vocabulary, visual aids, comprehension prompts, repetition, summaries and modelled strategies. The point is not simply to give help but to give the right kind and amount of help that matches a learner's needs at that particular moment—especially in multilevel classrooms, where learners differ in how much help they need, and giving the same kind of help to everyone may help some and leave others behind.

However, the literature does not always critically point out how scaffolding should be differentiated within a single classroom. Many studies acknowledge the importance of support, but fewer examine how teachers can identify which students require lexical preview, who benefits from visual organizers, or how tasks should be sequenced for groups with

varying proficiency levels. This imprecision is important for several reasons. Current research is not just concerned with the fact that scaffolding matters but with its relevance in a context where differentiation of planning is necessary due to substantial differences in support needs across the group.

4.9 Digital and contemporary extensions of differentiated instruction

There is a growing body of recent literature on the use of digital resources in supporting differentiated instruction. Meşe and Mede (2023) make a meaningful contribution by showing that digital differentiation can improve EFL achievement and learner self-regulation in higher education. This study is so relevant to the present thesis as it relates to higher education and shows that technology can be used to enable more manageable flexible support for educators. The digital platforms, multimedia resources and online assignments allow students to access content of varying difficulty and to review content as needed, which is helpful in multilevel classrooms.

Solodka et al. (2021) add to this perspective that digital teaching models can help EFL learners through organized and protected instructional design. They find that digital tools are not effective in and of themselves, but only as good as the underlying pedagogy. This finding is very important for the current study; in multilevel classrooms technology can support differentiation only when it is used intentionally to modify access, pace, and support and not simply to provide the same content in a digital format.

Digital differentiation is a key focus given the abundance of resources within the digital learning landscape that students enjoy, such as movies, subtitles, music, online reading materials, and interactive activities. In this sense the digital literature is connected to current practices, intersecting directly with listening, reading, scaffolding and student participation.

This can be paused and movies repeated and text can be enlarged and vocabulary looked up via hyperlinks. There are many ways of understanding that is especially helpful in heterogeneous groups.

However, this area of literature also requires a critical reading. The presence of digital tools does not eliminate the fundamental challenge of pedagogy. Even in technology-rich settings, the teacher remains responsible for deciding how much support is needed, which tasks suit which learners, and how to keep flexible access from becoming fragmented or disconnected learning. Therefore, the digital literature strengthens the argument that contemporary differentiation can be more versatile than before, while also reinforcing the idea that technology complements, rather than replaces, pedagogical judgment.

For the present thesis, this section is useful in two ways. First, it supports including audiovisual and digital resources in the proposal, especially because students expressed a preference for those kinds of materials. Second, it is a reminder that the proposal should not rely on technology as a solution in itself, but should use it as one possible vehicle for differentiated listening and reading support in the local university context.

4.10 Synthesis of the literature, critical balance, and research gap

Together, the reviewed literature provides a substantial basis for the present thesis. The conceptual works of Tomlinson (2014, 2017) and Tomlinson et al. (2003), complemented by Borja et al. (2015), set the differentiated instruction as a proactive and systematic response to learner diversity. This perspective is supported by inclusion-oriented literature such as Hall et al. (2004), Meyer et al. (2014), and Rose and Meyer (2014) that locate differentiation within a broader commitment to equitable access and meaningful

participation. Differentiated instruction, in this integrated sense, is an actionable approach and an educational principle that is based on responsiveness and equity.

The empirical literature also shows a consensus on the idea that differentiated instruction can help to improve EFL learning when it is purposefully planned and connected to student needs. (Aliakbari and Haghighi, 2014; AlHashmi and Elyas, 2018; Magableh and Abdullah, 2020; Meşe and Mede, 2023; Paredes, 2017; White and Vibulphol, 2020) have shown positive effects on reading, grammar, achievement and self-regulation. The focus and context of these studies vary, but they share one implication: learners benefit when instruction is differentiated, not standardized. At the same time, they also show a weakness of the literature, since many studies deal with isolated aspects of the learning of English or contexts different from the first-year university classroom analyzed in the present thesis. Research on multilevel classrooms contributes to this understanding by demonstrating that learner heterogeneity is not an occasional problem of classrooms, but a structural condition that affects participation, planning and access to learning. Mathews-Aydinli and Van Horne (2006), Banstola (2023), Hernandez (2012), and Bulla Ibagón (2020) all claim that the diversity of proficiency can be a challenge or pedagogical resource depending on how instruction is organized. This body of research helps to justify the present thesis as an investigation of differentiated instruction in general and as a study set in a specific multilevel EFL reality.

The literature on receptive skills adds additional precision to the framework. Bano (2017) and Al-Jawi (2010) help us to understand why listening is particularly complex and why learners need support which includes contextual preparation and strategic processing. Bowu et al. (2023), Eshniyozova and Istamova (2023) and Solodka et al. (2021) show that

listening skills can be improved with scaffolding, authentic materials, and structured support, including digital mediation. At the same time, Gómez Torres & Ávila Constain (2025), White & Vibulphol (2020), Aliakbari & Haghighi (2014), and Martínez Magaña & Valle Flórez (2023) point out that guided and differentiated support helps to improve reading. This body of literature supports, in general, the idea of focusing on listening and reading as the two receptive skills most directly connected to access to meaning in the learning of English. But a critical review of the literature shows that there is still an important gap. While there is a general agreement on the merits of differentiated instruction as a theoretical and pedagogical approach, there are fewer studies that explore its application to receptive skill enhancement in multilevel English language classrooms at the first university level. There is also a clear absence of studies located in the Ecuadorian higher education context. In contrast, some studies focus on teacher perceptions, others on inclusive design, and others on discrete language outcomes, but few integrate these dimensions in one analysis of how differentiated instruction can support listening and reading in a heterogeneous university classroom. The gap justifies the current research. The present thesis is a contribution to the field, as it investigates a real multilevel English classroom in the first level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major at PUCE-Ibarra. This is achieved by combining the theoretical ground, student's perception and classroom observation to understand the need for differentiation and the level of implementation. Therefore, the study goes beyond general affirmations about the value of differentiation and towards a more contextualized understanding of how differentiated strategies can strengthen receptive skills in a local university context. The proposal emerging from the research is therefore not an abstract

pedagogical recommendation, but a response to a need identified in a concrete educational reality.

4.11 Comparative analysis of convergences and divergences in previous studies

A comparative reading of the studies included in this chapter reveals a strong convergence on one central idea: learner diversity is a pedagogical reality that should not be ignored or minimized. The need for instructional flexibility is supported by authors working from conceptual positions such as Tomlinson (2014, 2017) and those working from classroom based empirical studies such as Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014), White and Vibulphol (2020), and Meşe and Mede (2023). Even where they may diverge in context, method or emphasis, they tend to agree with the difficulty of responding to students who do not start from the same place when faced with uniform tasks and common pacing. This convergence provides theoretical and empirical coherence to the present research.

The studies also differ in the aspects of language learning they focus on. Some, such as AlHashmi and Elyas (2018) and Magableh and Abdullah (2020), focus on either grammar or general academic achievement. Other researchers, like Gómez Torres and Ávila Constain (2025), White and Vibulphol (2020), and Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014), stress the importance of reading more. Another cluster, which includes Bano (2017), Al-Jawi (2010), Bowu et al. (2023) and Eshniyozova and Istamova (2023), focuses more generally on listening or receptive skills. This divergence indicates that the field has not yet found one dominant line of inquiry connecting differentiated instruction with multilevel classrooms and both receptive skills at the same time, a fragmentation that may explain the fact that the present thesis is designed to integrate these variables rather than investigating them

separately.

The level of education is also different. There are several school-based studies, some of which focus on adult ESL or tertiary EFL settings. This is important because the pedagogical meaning of diversity changes with the level of education. In school settings teachers may work within tighter curricular guidance and have longer contact time with the same learners; in university settings, by contrast, time is often more limited, classes may carry stronger academic demands and students may enter with wider differences in prior exposure to English. Thus, even highly relevant findings of school-based studies cannot be simply transferred to a first-level university classroom. The current study is a direct extension of these antecedents, while acknowledging the contextual boundaries of their applicability.

The second point of comparison is the role of the teacher. Some studies emphasize the teacher as a planner of flexible tasks. Others emphasize teacher mediation, feedback or classroom management. The present thesis proposes that all of these dimensions are needed in multilevel English classrooms. Differentiated instruction is not only a matter of preparing different materials, but also depends on how the teacher observes student needs, makes the decision of when and how to intervene, gives feedback and connects the evidence from assessment to future planning. This more integrated view helps explain how the research results in a practical guide that combines planning principles with receptive skill support and differentiated classroom procedures.

A final comparative issue concerns the degree of explicitness with which studies discuss equity. In some sources, differentiation is framed mainly as a method for increasing achievement. In others, especially those connected to inclusion and UDL, differentiation is presented as a question of educational justice, access, and participation. For the present thesis,

both perspectives are important. Listening and reading outcomes need to improve, but this must happen in a way that prevents lower-level students from being marginalized and higher-level students from disengaging. The literature therefore suggests that differentiated instruction should be understood both as an effectiveness strategy and as an equitable response to learner diversity.

4.12 Contextualization of the present research in higher education and the Ecuadorian setting

Although the literature reviewed in this chapter provides significant support for differentiated instruction, relatively little of it speaks directly to the specific conditions of Ecuadorian higher education. This contextual gap matters because the present research is not situated in a general EFL environment, but in the first level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major at PUCE-Ibarra. Students come into the program with varied educational backgrounds. Some have had more experience with English through previous schoolwork or extra classes, while others have less. Thus, learner diversity is not simply a methodological nuisance but an intrinsic characteristic of the classroom from the outset of the program.

This local reality bestows particular importance on the pedagogical value of differentiated instruction. In many university settings there is an implicit expectation that all students at the same course level should be able to work with the same materials in roughly the same way. However, the evidence reviewed in the literature and the educational reality of the current study point out the limitation of this assumption in multilevel groups. If teachers teach learners with different levels of vocabulary knowledge, reading confidence, listening comprehension, and previous exposure to English, teaching them all the same is not

likely to lead to equal learning opportunities. The Ecuadorian university context of this study, then, implies a perspective that recognizes diversity, not only in principle, but also in the daily planning of the classroom.

The context of teacher education adds another layer of importance. This research is not only about language learners but also about future teachers who are students. That means choices they make in their own classrooms could shape how they teach others in the future. For this reason, differentiated instruction is doubly relevant in this setting: it may enhance students' own receptive language development, and it may model a form of inclusive and responsive pedagogy that they can later replicate or adapt in their professional practice. The current research is particularly meaningful in its local academic context, because in the reviewed studies this broader formative dimension is not always present. Another contextual consideration relates to the role of receptive skills in the first level of university study. Listening and reading are basic since they provide access to input, instructions, course content, and future oral and written production. If students have difficulty understanding spoken explanations or written materials early in the program, these challenges can accumulate and affect broader academic progress. For this reason, the present thesis does not view listening and reading as isolated skills, but rather as central means of access to subsequent language development. This view is consistent with the literature reviewed, but it takes on greater urgency in the local context, as first-year students are still building the linguistic base necessary to succeed in the degree program.

Taken together, these contextual considerations underscore the need for the present study to go beyond the sole reliance on the general international findings. The literature reviewed is necessary and valuable, but the Ecuadorian university context brings local

conditions that deserve to be analyzed directly: heterogeneous entry levels, the formative nature of teacher education, the centrality of receptive skills in early academic adaptation and the need for pedagogical answers that are practical and realistic. The present thesis is thus situated as a contextualized contribution that links international knowledge about differentiated instruction and a particular local educational reality.

4.13 Implications of the reviewed literature for the design of the pedagogical proposal

One of the main purposes of a state of the art is not just to summarize previous studies, but to explain how that knowledge informs the design of the research product at hand. The logic of the pedagogical proposal in the present thesis is directly informed by the reviewed literature. Conceptual works on differentiated instruction emphasize that adaptation should be planned and not improvised; therefore, the guide proposed here cannot be limited to a list of isolated activities, but must organize activities around clear learning outcomes, learner needs and forms of support that vary according to readiness. This principle particularly originates from Tomlinson's work and is confirmed by later empirical studies showing better results when differentiation is purposeful and structured .

The proposal is also concretely informed by the literature on multilevel classrooms. Studies by Mathews-Aydinli and Van Horne (2006), Banstola (2023), Hernandez (2012) and Bulla Ibagón (2020) point out that heterogeneous groups require pedagogical flexibility in materials, grouping, task design and classroom organization. Therefore the proposal that

comes from this thesis has to contain proposals for whole-class work, pair work, small group support and different task formats. In short, the literature reviewed points towards a guide that is flexible enough to respond to the changing dynamics of a multi-level English classroom, rather than static or linear.

Similarly important in the design process is the literature in receptive skills. The proposal should be aligned with what previous research considers effective support since listening and reading are the two dependent variables of the study. Prediction, repetition, visual support, guided questions, authentic resources and attention to vocabulary before listening are suggested as important in listening literature. Reading literature emphasizes pre-reading techniques, graded reading materials, vocabulary preparation, scaffolding during the reading process, and post-reading tasks that are reflective or interactive. Therefore, the review not only justifies the need for a proposal, but also helps to define the methodological characteristics that the proposal should incorporate in order to respond both to the findings of previous research and to the needs observed in the local classroom. Another implication concerns the balance of accessibility and challenge. Many studies, especially those related to differentiated instruction and UDL, suggest that good teaching does not dumb down learning so that it lacks cognitive demand; it makes meaningful challenge accessible to more learners. This idea is relevant for the guide proposed in this study because it implies that differentiation should not be perceived as setting lower expectations for some students. Instead, the guide should help teachers maintain common goals while providing varied routes, supports, and levels of mediation, a principle that is pedagogically important in multilevel university classrooms, where both lower-level and higher-level students need appropriate challenge to move forward.

Finally, the literature suggests that the value of any differentiated proposal is contingent on its practicality. Research on teacher perceptions and implementation challenges shows that even when teachers value differentiation, they may not consistently implement it if it seems too time-consuming, abstract, or removed from classroom realities. The present thesis should therefore tackle the proposal not only as an ideal model but as a realistic teaching resource. The state of the art thus has an immediate applied consequence, as it informs the proposal toward clarity, flexibility, pedagogical coherence, and feasibility for actual use in the classroom.

4.14 Final critical reflection on the state of the art

The literature reviewed offers a sufficiently robust base for supporting the present research from a global perspective, but it also reveals the uneven development of the field. On the one hand, there is a strong conceptual tradition and increasing empirical support for differentiated instruction. On the other hand, many studies still focus on either general academic diversity or isolated aspects of EFL learning without integrating the whole complexity of multilevel classrooms, receptive skills and early university teaching. This imbalance matters because it means that the current thesis is not a rehash of a question already answered in the same terms; rather, it extends previous knowledge to a more specific and less explored intersection of variables.

Another relevant reflection is that the literature tends to support differentiation from positive evidence, but also indirectly shows the consequences of not differentiating. Studies showing students losing motivation due to lack of challenge, or learners falling behind due to instruction not being responsive to their level, show that uniform teaching can lead to

unequal outcomes, even if all students are taught the same lesson. This observation links differentiated instruction to the quality and fairness of the process of learning itself. In a multilevel classroom, sameness does not equal equality. Often it means that the needs of some of the group are not being met.

The state of the art also points out that differentiated instruction needs to be understood as an instructional and interpretive practice. Differentiation is not just about teachers creating different tasks. It is about teachers reading the classroom, understanding where students are in relation to the objectives and deciding the level of support, pacing, grouping or challenge that is needed at a particular time. This insight provides some clarity to the current thesis' synthesis of student survey data with classroom observation. To understand the value of differentiation, it is necessary not merely to know what the literature states in abstract terms, but to investigate how diversity is perceived and enacted in a real classroom setting.

For all these reasons, the state of the art justifies the present research from several points of view. It confirms the theoretical value of differentiated instruction, highlights the pedagogical complexity of multilevel classrooms, demonstrates the importance of listening and reading, and indicates the practical need for structured support. It also indicates that the specific combination of such concerns in a first-level classroom at an Ecuadorian university is underexplored. Thus, the present thesis is built on a solid academic basis and offers a necessary and original contribution in its local and disciplinary scope.

5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This stage describes the methodological design of the investigation on differentiated instruction strategies to improve receptive skills in multi-level English classrooms of the first level of the National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy program. It explains the method used, the sample selected, the instruments used, the procedure of data collection and the way the results were analyzed. The structure is based on the institutional guidelines for non-experimental studies and aims to justify the methodological choices made in accordance with the problem, objectives and research context.

5.1 METHOD

The methodology used was non-experimental, field, of descriptive-interpretative scope. It was non-experimental in that the variables were not manipulated under controlled conditions but were observed as they occurred in the real context of the classroom. Also, it was a field study because the data collection process was in the first-level classes of the program, where the coexistence of students with different levels of English proficiency was clear. The study used a mixed-method design. The quantitative part was the tabulation of the surveys and observation sheets, which allowed the organization of frequencies, scores and averages. The qualitative component was developed in the pedagogical interpretation of the results, in the review of the written conclusions on the sheets and in the analysis of the observed classroom dynamics. This combination was important due to the phenomenon under study, which required the combination of numerical data and analysis of participants' behavior and perceptions.

The independent variable was differentiated instruction strategies, understood as the pedagogical actions that aim to adapt planning, activity design, the support given to students and assessment. The dependent variable was receptive skills in English (listening and

reading). The method was chosen because the goals of the study were focused on diagnosing the classroom situation, describing the application of differentiated instruction strategies, and analyzing their relationship with the development of receptive skills, rather than testing an experimental hypothesis. This allowed the collection of descriptive and analytical data, which provided information on the real functioning of the classes and the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice in real educational contexts.

5.2 POPULATION

The population was made up of first-year students of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages career, at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador, Ibarra campus, for the 2026 academic year. This group consisted of university students with different levels because of their different educational backgrounds, inconsistent previous experiences with English and different learning speeds. In two classroom sessions, an observation sheet was developed and used and a survey was administered to the same set of students.

The observation sheets recorded an approximate age range of 18 to 26 years old. The sample was non-probabilistic and purposive, since the group was selected for its direct relationship with the research problem and its accessibility to the researcher. It was not necessary to calculate a sample size, since the total accessible population was small and manageable; the instruments were therefore applied to the whole group. For this reason, the study worked with the total population available — 24 students — and this same number was maintained both in the survey and in the two observation sessions.

The selection was not aimed at statistical representativeness, but at an in-depth analysis of a specific case that met the conditions needed to study differentiated instruction in a multi-level classroom. The features of the group confirmed the appropriateness of the

population. In the survey, students indicated approximate levels within A1, A2, B1 and the option of 'not sure', pointing to a linguistic diversity within the same course. This feature was important for the research because it confirmed the idea that the analyzed group was a proper environment for the study of the relationship between differentiated instruction and the development of receptive skills.

5.3 INSTRUMENTS

Two instruments were used for data gathering, the survey among students and the observation sheet during the class sessions. The designs were adapted to the specific objectives and characteristics of the study. The purpose was to gather information from two complementary perspectives: students' perceptions and observed teaching techniques in the classroom. The survey was diagnostic and included closed questions to assess the approximate level of English proficiency of the participants, their opinions on the disparities in level within the course, and the impact of this heterogeneity on the pace of learning. Its organization was well suited for group management and later tabulation. The test proved the students correct in their assessment of the observed group as a multi-tiered classroom.

The observation sheet consisted of 16 items measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = "never" and 5 = "always. The items were grouped into five dimensions namely planning, differentiated instruction, listening, reading and assessment. This form recorded the presence of practices associated with adapting instruction, using comprehension supports, altering materials, and aligning activities with assessments in the classroom. Apart from the numeric scale, it contained general statistics of sessions, used resources and descriptive conclusions. The use of both instruments was important because it enabled comparison of two complementary sources of information. The questionnaire gathered students' perceptions

about differences in levels, difficulties of learning and the need for activities adapted to the students. The observation sheet gathered direct evidence about classroom practices in terms of planning, differentiated instruction, listening, reading and evaluation. This complementarity improved the methodological process in that it helped to organize the material by way of tabulation and at the same time to put it into context from actual classroom observations.

5.4 PROCEDURE

The work was conducted in different stages. First, the problem was identified, objectives were formulated and a literature review was performed on differentiated instruction, multilevel classrooms and receptive skills. This phase permitted the definition of observation indicators and was the guiding line for the design of the data collection instruments. The second stage involved the development of the survey and observation sheet and checking each question and item for clarity, relevance and correspondence with the study variables. The selected sample was coordinated and the participants were informed of the academic purpose of the research and of the confidentiality and voluntary nature of their participation. The field work phase was started by giving the survey to 24 students of the selected course collectively. After that, two non-participant direct observations of the regular classes with the same group were conducted on the 22nd and 29th of January 2026. In each session an observation sheet was filled in, using a rating scale and descriptive notes on the class dynamics, resources used and the most relevant findings. The data collected were then tabulated and assembled into spreadsheets. The structure of the surveys was by question and frequency. The observation sheets were by item, dimension and average. The results were

interpreted according to this organization and methodological conclusions were drafted as the base for the final research proposal.

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis consisted of tabulation and interpretation. The responses to the survey were ordered by frequencies and totals so that trends in the group could be identified. 70.8% of the students strongly agreed that there were classmates with very different levels of English for example. 87.5% would like to receive activities adapted to their level to improve their listening and reading skills. In addition, 100% of the students agreed that differentiated instruction could help to improve their English comprehension. The results provided the first evidence of the multilevel nature of the course and students' positive perception of differentiated instruction. For the observation sheet, each marked option was converted into a numerical value according to the established scale, and the data were grouped by item and dimension to obtain partial averages and an overall average. The final tabulation showed an overall average of 3.53 out of 5 in the two observation sheets, which indicates a medium-high presence of practices related to differentiated instruction and the development of receptive skills. The analysis by dimension provided a more precise view of the teaching practice: listening reached an average of 4.00, reading 3.83 and assessment 4.33, showing positive results in these areas. On the other hand, the dimension of differentiated instruction obtained 2.50, mainly due to the item of adapting activities to the level, rhythm or learning needs obtained one of the lowest scores. This indicates that there are valuable pedagogical supports in the classroom, but systematic adaptation of tasks could be further improved. The results of the survey and observations led to the conclusion that the classroom studied needs more intentional differentiated strategies due to the heterogeneity of the group.

Simultaneously, the results presented important strengths in the clarity of explanations, use of resources for comprehension and teacher feedback. In this sense, data analysis was not only used to describe the current situation but as a basis for the pedagogical proposal that was going to be developed in the following parts of the thesis.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results of a survey given to 24 students and two observation forms created in the first year of the National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy program. First, the data analysis techniques are described in line with the methodological guidelines of the study, and then the results are presented in an objective and organized manner according to the instruments used. The chapter concludes with a discussion, which compares the findings with the theoretical framework and the background literature reviewed.

To ensure the clarity of the presentation, all the questions of the survey are analyzed, but more depth is given to those that are more directly related to the research problem, variables and objectives -especially the existence of the multilevel classroom, the need for adapted activities, the perceived usefulness of differentiated instruction and the difficulties encountered in listening and reading. Therefore, the chapter offers a comprehensive view of the data without losing sight of the most relevant findings for the study.

6.1.Data Analysis techniques

Data were analyzed using a mixed methods approach, largely descriptive and interpretative. Absolute frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the trends in responses. The closed-ended questions were processed with Microsoft Excel for the survey. Pie charts provided a better visualization of the distribution of each item, and allowed easier

comparisons between categories. The open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify recurrent themes, categories of meaning, and their relationship to the quantitative data.

The observation sheet was based on a rating scale of 1 to 5, 1- never, 2- rarely, 3- sometimes, 4- frequently, and 5- always. Averages were computed from this scale for each form, item and dimension as well as overall response frequencies. A qualitative review of the conclusions written on the forms was used to complement this quantitative result, in order to enrich the description of the teaching performance observed.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative procedures enabled a wider understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Percentages and averages reflected the general tendency of the students' responses and classroom observations while content analysis allowed for the identification of needs, perceptions and expectations that the numerical values could not have shown on their own. This triangulation strengthened the study and enabled a more informed discussion of the results.

The results are presented in the order of the employed instruments. The first results are the data of the student survey with the analysis of each graph and the open-ended questions. The next one is the results of the observation sheets. The description is objective and systematically arranged in order of importance: first the main objective of the study and then the additional results.

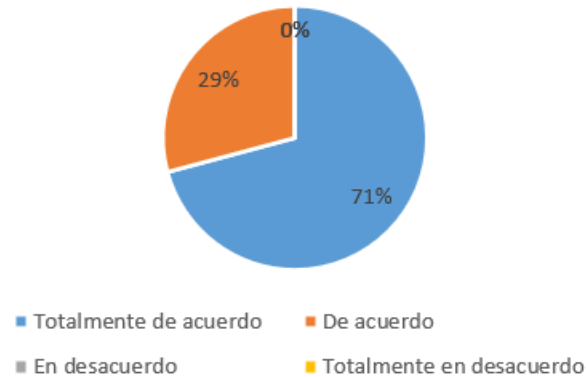
6.1.1. Results of the survey applied to students

The survey was distributed to 24 students and allowed the identification of the group's perceptions about the diversity of English proficiency levels, the development of listening and reading skills, and the relevance of differentiated instruction. This chapter examines the ten graphs that correspond to the closed-ended questions, and incorporates the open-ended responses.

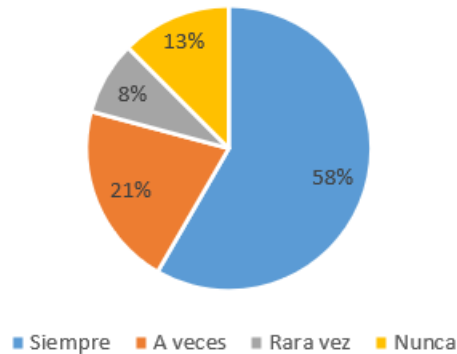
All items are relevant information, but graphs 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 are central to the research because they are directly related to the research problem, the independent variable, and the dependent variable.

The questions below show that students are aware that there are students with different levels of English in their class and that the teacher uses different activities depending on the level of the student.

2. En mi clase, existen estudiantes con niveles muy diferentes de Inglés



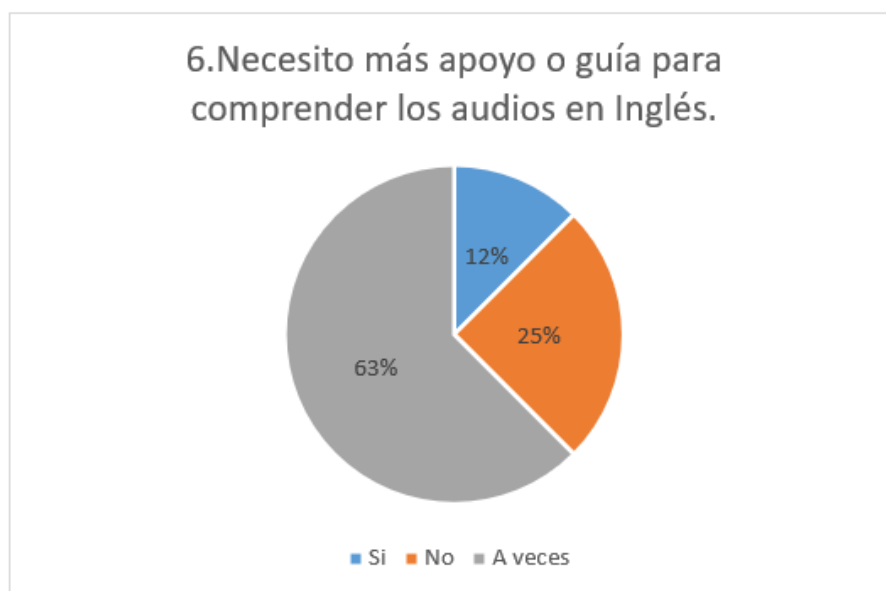
4.El docente utiliza actividades diferentes según el nivel de los estudiantes.



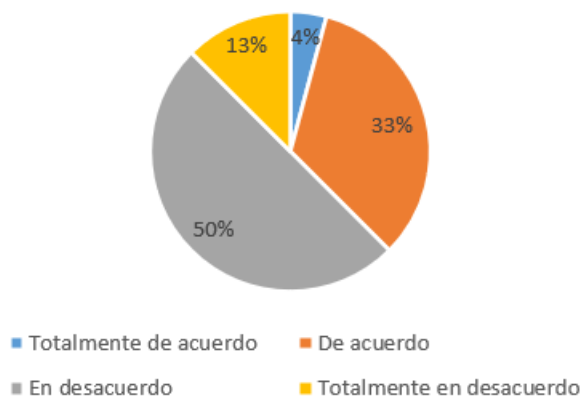
The second question is one of the survey's most important findings. Seventeen students (70.8%) answered “Strongly agree” and seven students (29.2%) answered “Agree”. “Disagree” was not selected. Descriptively, this means that 100% of the sample agrees that there are very different levels of English proficiency in the classroom. This result is a strong confirmation of the heterogeneity of the context and provides empirical evidence of the multilevel nature of the group. It is hard to find a more powerful rationale for the study than this graph, given its direct bearing on the research problem.

The fourth question is representative of a general positive yet not entirely unanimous evaluation of teaching practices. Fourteen students (58.3%) answered "Always," 5 (20.8%) "Sometimes," 2 (8.3%) "Rarely," and 3 (12.5%) "Never." The general tendency is positive, which means that from the students' point of view there are indeed attempts to adapt activities to their level. However, the existence of responses at lower frequency levels indicates that this practice is not consistently applied to all. This graph is important because, in relation to its direct relation with the independent variable, it shows that differentiation is already present in the teaching practice, but not yet fully systematic or consolidated.

The following questions were asked: do students need more support or guidance to understand audio in English? Does the amount of new vocabulary in a text make the readings more difficult to understand?



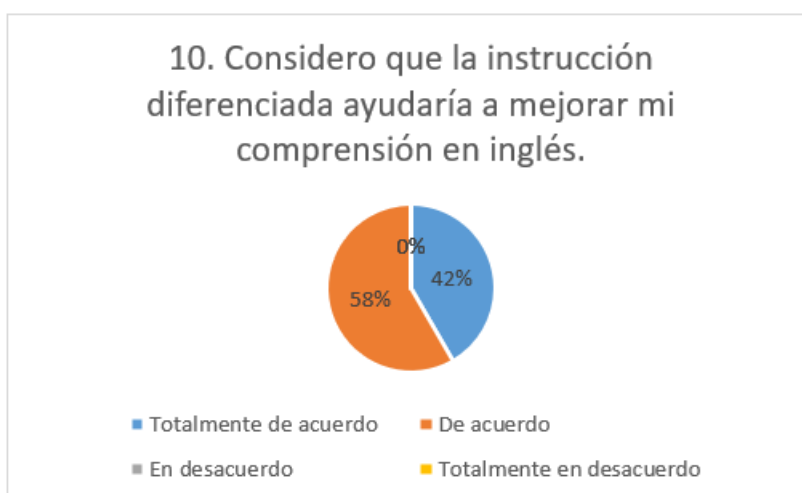
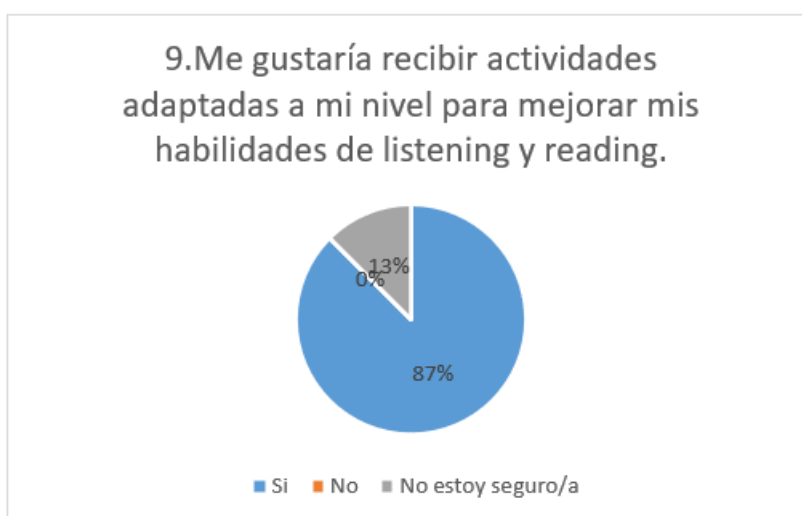
8. La cantidad de vocabulario nuevo en los textos dificulta mi comprensión lectora.



The sixth question is of particular importance to the analysis of listening skills. 15 (62.5%) students answered "Sometimes," 6 (25.0%) answered "No," and 3 (12.5%) answered "Yes." The higher concentration in the middle category implies that the need for support is not constant but occurs frequently at different points of the listening comprehension process. This confirms that for a large part of the group listening still needs pedagogical scaffolding. The data support adding support such as prior vocabulary, repetition, activation of prior knowledge, images and tiered prompts with respect to description. The distribution of the eighth question is split, but the disagreement is dominant. 50.0% (12) of the students were in the "Disagree" category, 12.5% (3) were in "Strongly Disagree," 33.3% (8) were in "Agree" and 4.2% (1) were in "Strongly Agree." Altogether, 15 students (62.5%) did not find new vocabulary to be a major obstacle in their reading comprehension, while 9 students (37.5%) encountered this problem. This graph is relevant because while most students do not see vocabulary as a major barrier, a sizable subgroup needs specific

vocabulary support. This suggests a differentiated reality in the same course, and points to the usefulness of graded vocabulary support.

The following questions were created to find out if students would want to receive activities according to their level to help them improve their listening and reading skills and if they believe that the use of differentiated instruction would help them improve their English comprehension.



One of the most important findings of the entire survey is the ninth question. Twenty-one students (87.5%) answered “Yes” and 3 students (12.5%) answered “Not sure.” No participant answered “No.” This graph describes in a very high acceptance level of activities adapted to the level of the student. This data point is central in view of the fact that it is directly related to the overall objective and the final proposal of the research, it shows that the students not only recognize the diversity of levels, but also express a desire to receive differentiated activities to strengthen their receptive skills.

The 10th question is also one of the main research findings. Fourteen students (58.3%) answered “Agree” and 10 (41.7%) answered “Strongly agree.” No answers were given in disagreement. This shows that 100% of the sample positively valued the usefulness of differentiated instruction in improving their English comprehension. The absolute absence of negative answers makes this graph an essential evidence of pedagogical viability, revealing openness, acceptance and positive expectations towards this methodological approach. From a descriptive point of view, the data show that differentiation is perceived by students as a relevant alternative to meet their real comprehension needs.

6.1.2. Results of the open-ended questions in the survey

The open ended questions allowed the researchers to elaborate on the information obtained from the graphs and to explore in depth two basic aspects: students’ understanding of differentiated instruction and the types of activities they find most useful to improve their listening and reading skills. Responses were analysed by thematic categorisation of recurring ideas due to their handwritten and short nature.

In question 11, most of the participants defined differentiated instruction as a teaching technique when the teacher changes explanations, activities or methods depending on the English level of each student. Expressions such as “the teacher adapts to my level”, “according to the students’ ability and English level” or “when the teacher adapts to each student” reflect that the concept was understood functionally. Four themes are used to describe the responses: adaptation to level; attention to pace of learning; consideration of individual needs; and use of varied strategies.

The most mentioned activities by the students were those that used audiovisual resources and materials related to their daily experiences for question 12. A common answer was to watch English movies or series, listen to music, work with videos, practice with subtitles, and use audio to improve pronunciation and comprehension. Other requests were for activities with graded vocabulary, short texts, short stories, leveled exercises and clearer explanations with preferences for games, group work and participatory activities. In general, the students’ responses indicate that they expect to have motivating activities, adapted to their level and supported by auditory, visual and lexical resources.

Overall, the open-ended questions serve as a useful complement to the quantitative results in highlighting what students mean by differentiation and what specific supports they find most helpful. The open-ended data are thus not replacements for the graphs, but complementary to them in order to show that students associate differentiated instruction with real adaptation, pedagogical support and contextualized activities.

6.2.Results of the observation sheets

Overall average of 3.53 out of 5 was obtained for the analysis of the two formats of observation used in the first level, which means that the observed practice is in a medium-high level. Form 1 had an average score of 3.56 while Form 2 had an average score of 3.50. This shows relative stability between the two sessions. Generally, these results show that the teacher does perform some actions concerning addressing diversity and development of reading and listening, but these are not evenly distributed among all dimensions.

Assessment had the highest average by dimension at 4.33. The coherence between the assessment and the activities developed, the clear and motivating feedback and the respect for the students' pace of learning characterized this area. Listening was on average 4.00, indicating that the audio material was appropriate, prior knowledge was activated and support was given to improve listening comprehension. Reading obtained 3.83, with positive results in text adaptation and pre-reading strategies, although less so in the specific gradation of tasks according to the student level.

The planning average is 3.33 which means that the answer was moderate to the group's diversity. The teacher partially considered the levels of competencies and set understandable objectives, but this dimension did not reach a high level. The lowest score was for differentiated instruction with mean of 2.50. The most important variable was the adaptation of activities to level, pace or learning needs, which averaged only 1.00. This confirms the pedagogical differentiation as the least consolidated component of the observed practice.

A frequency analysis confirmed this trend. The most repeated category was “Frequently” with 14 records out of 32 individual responses (43.75%), followed by “Sometimes” with 11 records (34.38%). “Always” recorded 4 times (12.50%). “Never” and “Rarely” were much less frequent. This distribution suggests a teaching practice somewhere between medium and high levels, with occasional absent sustained differentiation.

Qualitative comments in the records corroborated these findings. Both observations described the teacher’s clarity, use of technology, student engagement and activities that were understandable. But they also reported demotivating moments, sporadic individual support, and listening comprehension issues at the lower levels. The observation findings are thus characterized by strong assessment, reading and listening, but a clear weakness in the systematic adaptation of teaching.

6.3.Discussion

The findings support the conclusion that the classroom in question clearly operates as a multilevel English classroom. This was evident in the distribution of students’ self-reported proficiency (A1, A2, B1 and a sizeable group who were not sure of their level) and in the fact that all participants recognized the existence of classmates with very different levels of English. This finding is in line with the literature cited in the state of the art, where Mathews-Aydinli and Van Horne (2006), Banstola (2023) and Hernandez (2012) characterize multilevel classrooms as settings where diversity in proficiency is not accidental but structural, and where this heterogeneity influences decisions about participation, pacing, grouping and teacher planning. In the present study, students did not view level differences as a minor issue, but rather they understood that level differences influence the rhythm of learning at least at some moments in the process of the class. The findings thus confirm that

the research problem is grounded in a real, observable pedagogical condition and not just in a theoretical assumption.

Another important finding is that student perceptions and classroom observations are aligned on the value of differentiated instruction. According to the survey, most of the students want activities adapted to their level and all of them believe that differentiated instruction would help to improve their English comprehension. At the same time, the observation sheets showed that differentiated instruction was the weakest dimension of the observed practice, in particular the item on adjusting activities according to level, pace or learning needs. This comparison is important because it shows a discrepancy between the needs of the students and the consistent implementation in the classroom. This interpretation is consistent with Tomlinson (2014, 2017), Tomlinson et al. (2003), and Borja et al. (2015), who argue that differentiated instruction should not be limited to sporadic variation of activities, but should involve planned variation of content, process, product, and support in response to learners' readiness, interests, and profiles. Similarly, Hall et al. (2004) emphasize the greater effectiveness of flexible teaching when perceived as a deliberate response to learner diversity rather than as a spontaneous classroom reaction. The findings thus indicate good practices that are already in place in the classroom but which need to be more systematic and pedagogically intentional.

Regarding receptive skills, results indicate better performance in reading than in listening. Students usually reported that they could understand most of the texts used in class, but listening was more often associated with the need for support or guidance. This pattern was confirmed by the observation data, where listening was scored relatively high due to the use of appropriate audio, the activation of prior knowledge and some support from the

teacher, but where students still indicated that understanding oral input is not consistently easy. This is in line with Bano (2017) and Al-Jawi (2010) who explain that listening is one of the most demanding receptive skills in EFL contexts, especially when learners do not get enough scaffolding, vocabulary preparation, repetition or contextual support. It is also in line with Bowu et al. (2023) who highlight the improvement of listening when teachers use supportive strategies such as brainstorming, guided attention and multiple resources rather than only listening to audio. The need for help with listening in the present study, which recurs, shows that pedagogical mediation is already helpful but still not enough for a group with heterogeneous proficiency levels.

In contrast reading was a comparatively stronger skill, but not equally strong for all the students. The result in the observation sheets was also positive in the use of pre-reading strategies and text selection. Most of the participants stated that they understand the texts used in the class. Yet the survey also found that a sizeable number still see new vocabulary as a barrier to understanding. This means that reading should not be seen as a fully consolidated strength, but as an area with generally favorable conditions that nevertheless requires differentiated support. This interpretation is in line with Gómez Torres and Ávila Constain (2025), who highlight the relevance of strategies like activating prior knowledge, guided questioning, and structured reading support, and also with White and Vibulphol (2020) and Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014), who found that differentiated and tiered instruction can improve reading comprehension in mixed-ability EFL contexts. In addition, Martínez Magaña and Valle Flórez (2023) demonstrate that multilevel support and inclusive planning can improve reading achievement by tailoring instruction to learner differences. Thus, the results of the present study suggest that the reading instruction in this classroom is

already relatively supportive, but should be further graded in terms of lexical support and task complexity so that lower level learners will not be left behind.

The open-ended responses support this interpretation, as they show how students understand differentiated instruction from their own experiences. Instead of defining it in the abstract, participants linked it to teachers adapting explanations, tasks and difficulty levels to the actual needs of learners. They also showed a clear preference for motivating, contextualized resources such as videos, music, subtitles, short texts, and leveled activities. These preferences are significant because they reflect the literature supporting the use of authentic materials, scaffolding, and varied formats to improve receptive skills. According to Eshniyozova and Istamova (2023), students' listening and reading skills improve if they are exposed to meaningful content and use metacognitive and interactive strategies. Meşe and Mede (2023) and Solodka et al. (2021) found that differentiated and digital environments can increase engagement and self-regulation in language learning. In this sense, the students' answers go beyond complementary opinions, providing direct pedagogical guidance for the design of the proposal, identifying the types of support and materials that are most likely to address the multilevel reality of the group.

Another important thing is that assessment was the most powerful dimension in the observation process. Clear feedback was given by the teacher. There was coherence between activities and evaluation. The teacher respected the individual pace of learning. This is important because it shows that the classroom is not starting from a deficit in terms of pedagogical support, but that there is already a valuable base from which to improve in the future. The significance of this in terms of discussion is that differentiated instruction is more likely to succeed if it is informed by continuous feedback, formative guidance and close

observation of student progress. This is an idea that is compatible with Tomlinson's view of assessment as a guide for instructional decisions, and with the broader perspective of responsive teaching that is present throughout the reviewed literature. Practically speaking, the findings suggest that the problem is not to completely replace existing teaching practices, but rather to enhance the link between assessment data and differentiated planning for listening and reading tasks.

Overall, results are consistent with the state of the art as reviewed for this research. Earlier research has already pointed out that multilevel EFL classrooms require flexible teaching and differentiated support and tasks that are adapted to different levels of readiness. In this study, those claims are confirmed in a particular Ecuadorian university context and added localized evidence from the first level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major at PUCE-Ibarra. The main contribution of the results is to show that the need for differentiated instruction is perceived from three complementary angles: that of the heterogeneity perceived by the students, that of the pedagogical expectations that they explicitly express and that of the classroom practices observed during the sessions. The study also reveals a gap: while the classroom offers positive elements in assessment, reading support, and listening mediation, differentiated instruction as a systematic response to learner diversity is not yet well developed. For this reason, the discussion endorses the relevance of the proposed guide as a contextualized pedagogical reply to reinforce listening and reading in a multilevel English classroom.

PROPOSAL

This proposal is a guide of Differentiated Instruction based on the 12 units of Empower A1.1 integrating listening and reading activities adapted to different proficiency

levels. Designed especially for students with less oral proficiency, with visual and lexical supports, interactive activities and progressive scaffolding to encourage confident participation and effective learning in multi-level English classrooms.

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7. CONCLUSIONS

- The research confirmed the analyzed context as a multi-level English classroom at the university level, given the diversity of language levels, learning speed and academic needs identified among the first-year students of the National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy program. This result achieved the diagnostic objective of the study and revealed that the heterogeneity of the group is a real condition of the teaching-learning process, which requires more flexible and contextualized pedagogical responses.
- From the theoretical and empirical review carried out in the state of the art, the study concluded that Differentiated Instruction is a relevant pedagogical approach to attend diversity in multi-level English classrooms, as it allows content, processes, products, and support to be tailored to students' levels, interests, and needs. This way, the study established a solid conceptual basis that supported the analysis of the research problem and clarified the relevance of this approach in the university context.
- The findings of the survey and observation sheets showed that the students have a positive attitude towards the application of differentiated strategies and they consider

them useful for improving English comprehension. The study also found that receptive skills do not develop uniformly across the group, with reading showing relatively more favourable results than listening, a skill with greater needs for support, guidance and pedagogical mediation. In this sense, the study allowed the relationship between the diversity present in the classroom and the difficulties in the development of receptive skills to be evaluated in a concrete way.

- With respect to observed teaching practice the study found that there are significant strengths in areas such as assessment, feedback, clarity of explanations and use of support resources. Nevertheless, the Differentiated Instruction dimension turned out to have the lowest scores, especially in the systematic adaptation of activities according to students' level, pace and needs. This demonstrates that even with valuable pedagogical efforts, differentiation is not yet applied in a structured, consistent and intentional way, limiting a more equitable attention in the multi-level classroom.
- As a result of the research, a pedagogical proposal was developed. It is a guide for Differentiated Instruction to improve receptive skills in English multi-level classrooms. The main applied contribution of this study is this proposal, which provides a contextualized answer to the research problem and responds directly to the needs identified in the results. The work also opens new possibilities for research, such as validating and implementing the guide in other university contexts, analyzing its impact on academic performance, and exploring the relationship between Differentiated Instruction and other language skills, such as speaking and writing.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers working in multi-level English classrooms are advised to incorporate Differentiated Instruction strategies more systematically into their lesson planning, taking into account students' different proficiency levels, learning paces, and interests, in order to promote more equitable and contextualized teaching.
- Strengthening the development of listening skills is especially important, through pedagogical supports such as activating prior knowledge, guided vocabulary, repetition, visual aids, subtitles, graded questions, and audio materials adapted to students' level, since this skill showed the greatest need for support.
- For reading, it is recommended to maintain and expand support strategies such as pre-reading, gradual text selection, lexical scaffolding, and differentiated activities according to student level, so that differences in language proficiency do not become barriers to reading comprehension.
- The National and Foreign Language Pedagogy program is encouraged to promote training, professional development, and pedagogical reflection opportunities on addressing diversity in university classrooms, which would give faculty stronger methodological tools to respond to multi-level contexts from an inclusive perspective.
- Finally, future researchers are encouraged to delve further into the study of Differentiated Instruction in Ecuadorian university contexts, and to conduct research that validates and implements the proposed guide, measures its impact on academic

performance, and extends the analysis to other English language skills, such as speaking and writing.

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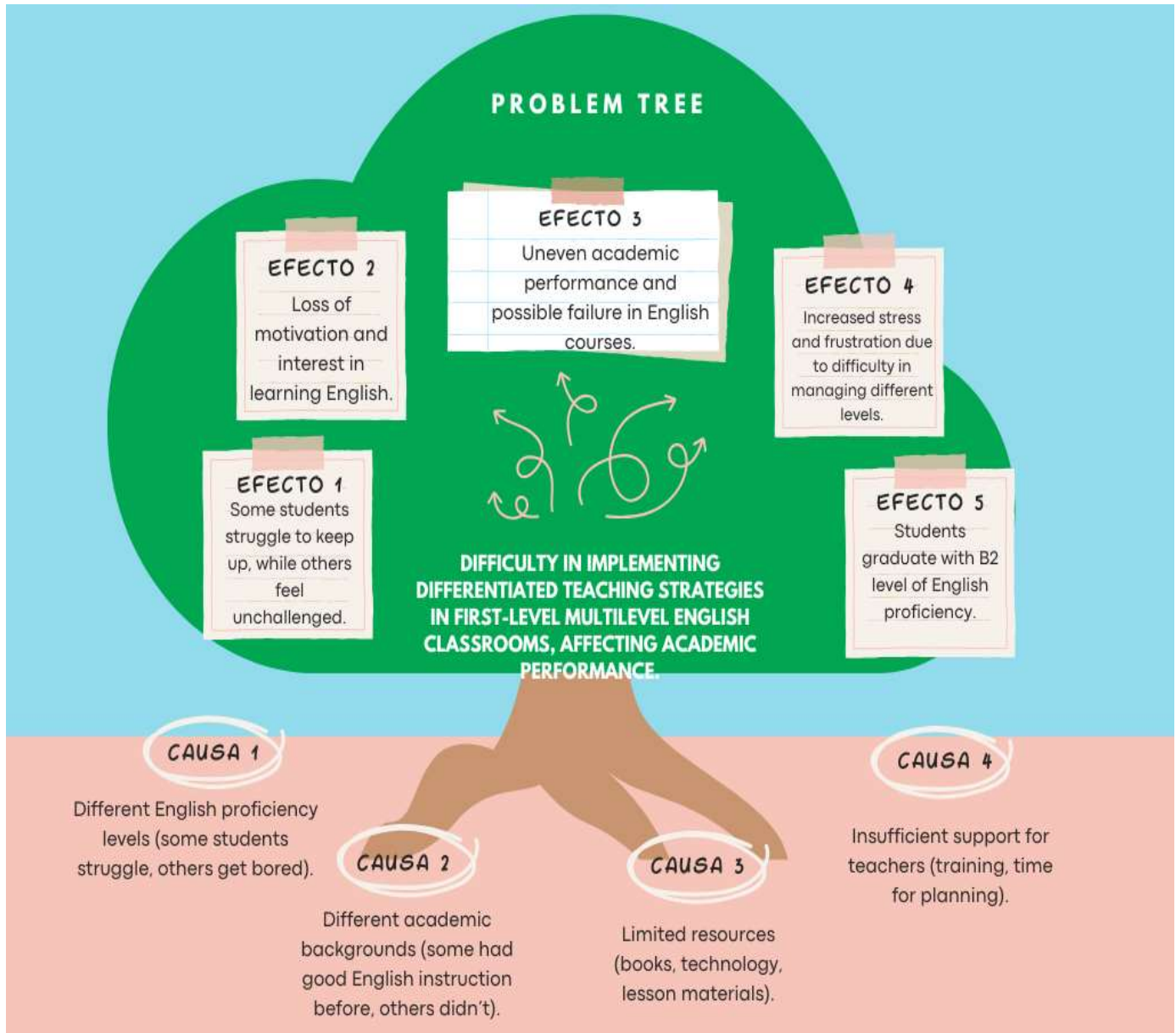
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7. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Problem Tree



Annex 2. Official Request Approved



Ibarra

ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Ibarra, 21 de enero de 2026

PhD.

Hugo Santacruz

DIRECTOR DE LA ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES

Presente.

De mi consideración:

Yo, Melany Estefanía Pozo Galarza, con C.I. N°1005217920, estudiante de séptimo nivel de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (PINE) de la PUCE Ibarra, me permito dirigirme a usted para expresarle un cordial saludo y desearle muchos éxitos en las funciones que dignamente desempeña.

El motivo de la presente es solicitar la autorización para aplicar las técnicas de investigación correspondientes a mi trabajo de investigación, titulado: **"Differentiated Instruction (DI) Strategies to Improve Receptive Language Skills in Multilevel English Classrooms at the First Level of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major."**

La investigación tiene como finalidad analizar y aplicar estrategias de Instrucción Diferenciada para mejorar las habilidades receptivas del idioma inglés en aulas multinivel. Para ello, se requiere aplicar una encuesta y una ficha de observación a los estudiantes de primer semestre de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, en el contexto académico de la institución. Cabe señalar que la información recolectada será utilizada exclusivamente con fines académicos, garantizando en todo momento la confidencialidad, el anonimato y el respeto hacia los participantes y la institución.

Agradezco de antemano la atención brindada a la presente solicitud y quedo a la espera de una respuesta favorable.

Sin otro particular, me suscribo de usted.

Atentamente,



Nombre: Estefanía Pozo Galarza
C.I. 1005217920
MELANY ESTEFANÍA POZO GALARZA

Melany Estefanía Pozo Galarza
ESTUDIANTE DE LA CARRERA PINE

Fanny Viviana
Torres Torres

Firmado digitalmente
por Fanny Viviana
Torres Torres
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ASESORA



Dirección: Av. Jorge Guzmán Rueda y Av. Aurelio Espinosa Pólit, Ciudadela "La Victoria"
Teléf: (593) 06 2994700 Ext. 1000 Cel. 099 236 2594 / 098 138 3498
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Annex 3. Instrument – Survey



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ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador sede Ibarra Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros

DATOS INFORMATIVOS:

Edad:

Nivel:

Sexo:

Estimado(a) Estudiante:

La presente encuesta tiene la finalidad de recopilar datos informativos sobre su experiencia y opinión en la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador sede Ibarra en la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros.

Sus respuestas serán de información exclusivamente para realizar el proyecto de investigación que se pretende aplicar en la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador sede Ibarra en el primer nivel de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros.

De la manera más comedida responder con sinceridad las preguntas establecidas, ya que se utilizarán con fines investigativos.

Muchas gracias

Estrategias de Instrucción Diferenciada (ID) para el mejoramiento de las habilidades receptivas del Lenguaje en aulas multinivel de inglés del primer nivel de la Licenciatura en Pedagogía de Lenguas Nacionales y Extranjeras.

1. ¿Cuál es su nivel aproximado de inglés?

☐ A1

☐ A2

☐ B1

☐ No estoy seguro/a

2. En mi clase, existen estudiantes con niveles muy diferentes de inglés.

☐ Totalmente de acuerdo

☐ De acuerdo

☐ En desacuerdo

☐ Totalmente en desacuerdo

3. La diferencia de niveles afecta el ritmo de aprendizaje de la clase.

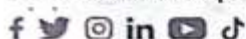
☐ Siempre

☐ A veces

☐ Rara vez

☐ Nunca

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4. El docente utiliza actividades diferentes según el nivel de los estudiantes.
☐ Siempre
☐ A veces
☐ Rara vez
☐ Nunca
5. Entiendo fácilmente los audios que se utilizan en clase.
☐ Siempre
☐ A veces
☐ Rara vez
☐ Nunca
6. Necesito más apoyo o guía para comprender los audios en inglés.
☐ Si
☐ No
☐ A veces
7. Entiendo la mayoría de los textos que se utilizan en clase.
☐ Siempre
☐ A veces
☐ Rara vez
☐ Nunca
8. La cantidad de vocabulario nuevo en los textos dificulta mi comprensión lectora.
☐ Totalmente de acuerdo
☐ De acuerdo
☐ En desacuerdo
☐ Totalmente en desacuerdo
9. Me gustaría recibir actividades adaptadas a mi nivel para mejorar mis habilidades de listening y reading.
☐ Si
☐ No
☐ No estoy seguro/a
10. Considero que la instrucción diferenciada ayudaría a mejorar mi comprensión en inglés.
☐ Totalmente de acuerdo
☐ De acuerdo
☐ En desacuerdo
☐ Totalmente en desacuerdo
11. Desde tu punto de vista, ¿qué significan las instrucciones diferenciadas?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
12. ¿Qué tipo de actividades según tu nivel de inglés consideras que te ayudarían más a mejorar tus habilidades de *listening* y *reading*? Explica tu respuesta.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Annex 4. Instrument – Observation sheet



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ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
PEDAGOGIA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador sede Ibarra

Ficha de Observación

Ficha N°:	Fecha:	Hora de inicio:	Hora final:
Edad:	Nivel:	Lugar:	Observador:
Población:	Asistentes:		

Objetivo de la Observación: Observar y registrar la aplicación de estrategias de Instrucción Diferenciada y su relación con el desarrollo de las habilidades receptivas (listening y reading) en un aula multinivel de inglés.

[Handwritten signature]

Categoría de la Observación:

Descripción de la observación:

Recursos utilizados:

ESCALA DE VALORACIÓN

1 = Nunca | 2 = Rara vez | 3 = A veces | 4 = Frecuentemente | 5 = Siempre

N.º	Dimensión	Ítem de observación	1	2	3	4	5
1	Planificación	El docente considera los diferentes niveles de competencia en inglés presentes en el aula.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Planificación	Los objetivos de la clase son claros y comprensibles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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		para estudiantes de distintos niveles.						
3	Planificación	Las actividades están adecuadas al nivel inicial de los estudiantes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Instrucción Diferenciada	El docente utiliza diferentes estrategias para atender la diversidad de niveles de inglés.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Instrucción Diferenciada	Las actividades se diferencian según el nivel, ritmo o necesidades de aprendizaje.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Instrucción Diferenciada	El docente brinda apoyo adicional a los estudiantes con menor dominio del idioma.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Instrucción Diferenciada	Se promueve la participación de estudiantes con distintos niveles de inglés.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Listening	El docente utiliza audios adecuados al nivel de comprensión de los estudiantes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Listening	Se activan conocimientos previos antes de las actividades de listening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Listening	Se emplean apoyos visuales, gestuales o repetición para facilitar la comprensión auditiva.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11	Reading	Los textos de lectura están adaptados al nivel de los estudiantes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Reading	Se aplican estrategias previas a la lectura (predicción, vocabulario clave, imágenes).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	Reading	Las tareas de lectura se adaptan según el nivel de competencia del estudiante.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Evaluación	La evaluación es coherente con las actividades diferenciadas realizadas en clase.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	Evaluación	El docente proporciona retroalimentación clara, comprensible y motivadora.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	Evaluación	Se respeta el ritmo de aprendizaje de cada estudiante durante la clase.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Conclusiones:

Annex 5. Time Planning Chart

YEARS	2025																2026																			
MONTHS	<u>October</u>				<u>November</u>				<u>December</u>				<u>January</u>				<u>February</u>				<u>March</u>				<u>April</u>				<u>May</u>				<u>June</u>			
WEEKS	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
ACTIVITIES																																				
1. Preliminary pages (Resumen abstract, Introduction, objectives and Variables)	X	X	X	X																																
1.1 State of the Art					X	X	X	X	X																											
2. <u>Materials and Methods.</u>									X	X	X																									
2.1 <u>Design of Instruments.</u>												X	X	X																						
2.2 <u>Application of Instruments.</u>														X	X	X																				
2.3 <u>Interpretation and Analysis of Results.</u>																	X	X	X																	
3. Discussion.																			X			X	X													
4. <u>Proposal Development.</u>																										X										
5. <u>Conclusions and Recommendations</u>																											X			X	X					
6 <u>References and Anexes</u>																																	X			

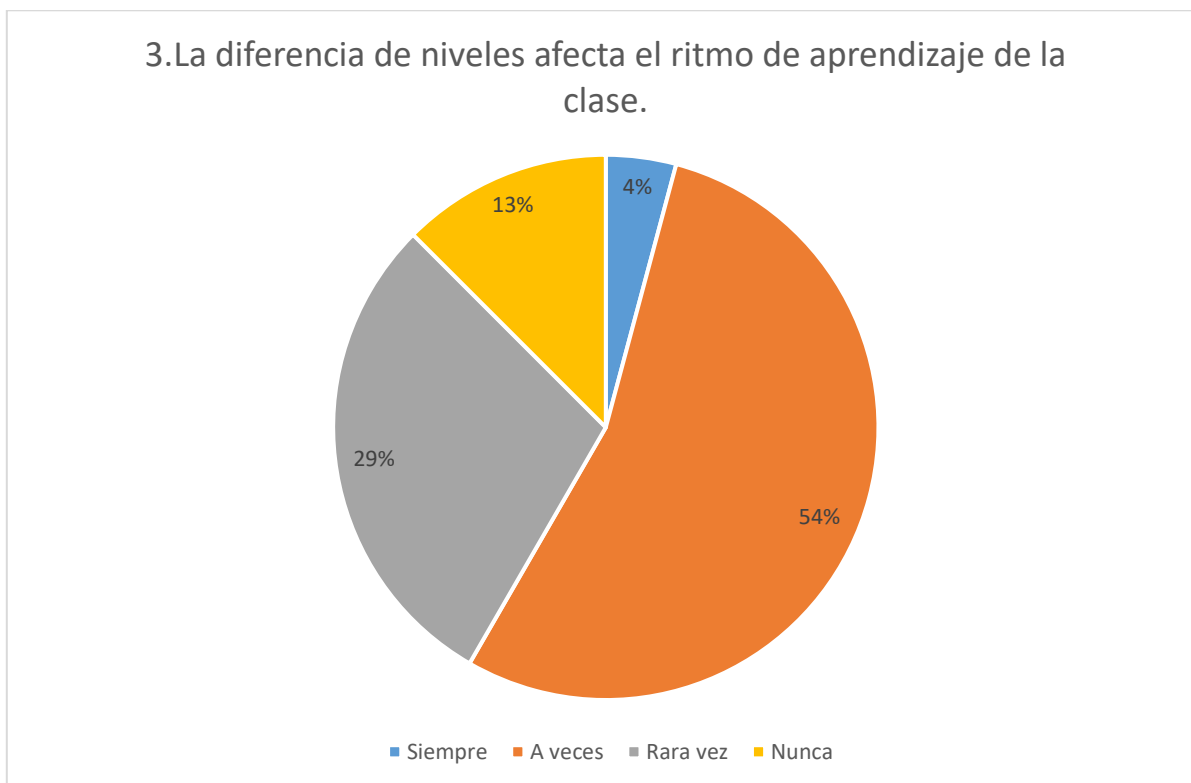
Annex 6. Survey Tabulation

Graphic 1



The group shows a heterogeneous distribution of the English proficiency levels (see Figure 1). For categories A1, B1, and “Not sure,” 7 students (29.2%) Each, and for A2, 3 students (12.5%). These findings show that there is no common language profile in the course, with students at a beginner level, some slightly more advanced and a large number of participants who cannot be easily classified according to their own level. This confirms the existence of a multi-level classroom and justifies the need to implement differentiated instruction strategies that meet diverse needs, learning paces and levels of language proficiency.

Graphic 3.



The difference in learning levels affects the speed of learning in the class as shown in the Figure 3. The most common answer was “Sometimes” with 13 responses (54.2%), followed by “Rarely” with 7 (29.2%), “Never” with 3 (12.5%) and “Always” with 1 (4.2%). Although not everyone feels the effect to be constant, most feel this situation affects the development of the classes at least occasionally. This demonstrates that the differences of the learning levels create moments of disruption in the constantly changing environment of the classroom, which can be expressed in uneven progress, different working times and a need for methodological adjustments.

Graphic 5.

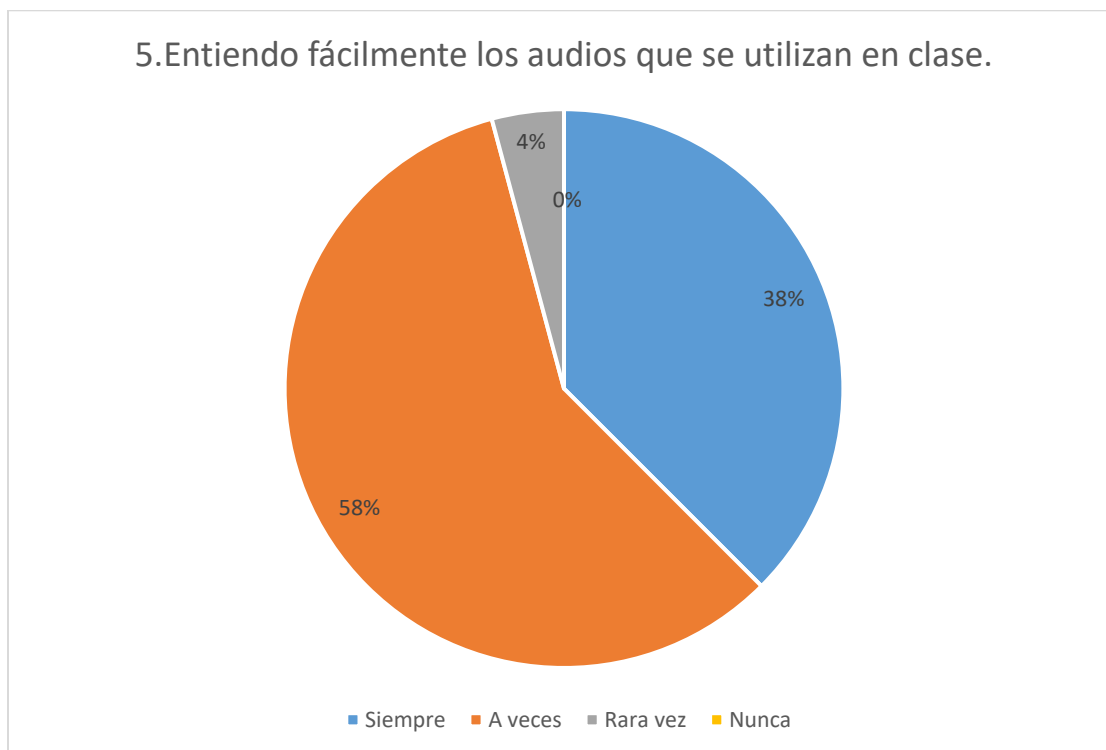


Figure 5 shows that the comprehension of audio is generally good. Most of the students said that they understand the audio recordings easily “Sometimes” (14 responses, 58.3%) or “Always” (9 responses, 37.5%) while only 1 student (4.2%) chose “Rarely” and no one chose “Never. This shows that a significant portion of the group understands the audio resources used in class, although not always in a homogeneous way. The dominance of the “Sometimes” response suggests that there are still a few isolated trouble spots with listening comprehension that could be addressed with differentiated support and graded activities.

Graphic 7.

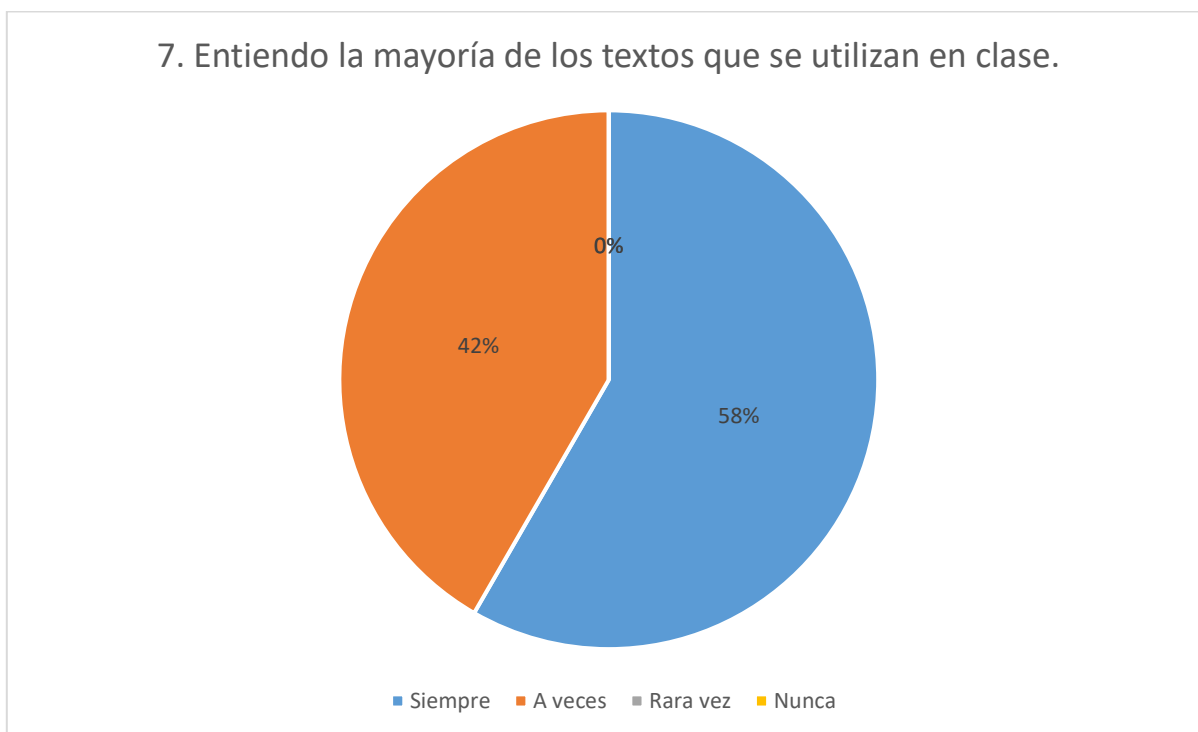


Figure 7. Positive perception of the comprehension of the texts studied in class. Fourteen students (58.3%) reported that they understand most of the texts “Always” and 10 (41.7%) “Sometimes” with no responses for “Rarely” or “Never.” This implies that reading is a comparative strength in the group as all the participants show a degree of understanding of the texts used. The fact that a large percentage falls into the “Sometimes” category points to the fact that there are still differences in the confidence and consistency with which learners comprehend the written material.