



**Pontificia Universidad
Católica del Ecuador**
Seréis mis testigos

ESMERALDAS

MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA
EXTRANJERA

MASTER'S PROGRAMME

PEDAGOGY OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

RESEARCH PROJECT

TITLE:

THE CONTRIBUTION OF A TRAINING COURSE TO IMPROVE RURAL ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHERS' METHODOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTIC SKILLS IN
ESMERALDAS, 2024

LINE OF INVESTIGATION:

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PRIOR TO
THE ACADEMIC DEGREE IN:

AUTHORS

MARIA CRISTINA CERVANTES INTRIAGO

JONATHAN MIGUEL QUINTERO MERLIN

ADVISOR

PHD. HAYDÉE RAMIREZ LOZADA

ESMERALDAS, 2024

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

As members of the Dissertation Committee at PUCE Esmeraldas, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by **JONATHAN MIGUEL QUINTERO MERLIN AND MARÍA CRISTINA CERVANTES INTRIAGO** entitled **THE CONTRIBUTION OF A TRAINING COURSE TO IMPROVE RURAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' METHODOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTIC SKILLS IN ESMERALDAS, 2024** and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Bachelor on Pedagogy of the English Language.

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3

School Director

Thesis Director

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College. I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Thesis Director

STATEMENT BY THE AUTHORS

We, Jonathan Miguel Quintero Merlin and María Cristina Cervantes Intriago affirm that the investigation in the present report research is totally unique, authentic, and personal.

The content of this research is a limited legal and academic responsibility of the author and PUCE Esmeraldas.

Jonathan Miguel Quintero Merlin

080346684-6

María Cristina Cervantes Intriago

080311824-9

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This project has been a labor of love, and we owe a great deal of appreciation to all people who have so kindly provided assistance, direction, and encouragement. We want to thank God for giving us the opportunity to be alive to live this amazing moment, to our families, for always believing in us and being our biggest supporters and inspiration and a huge shoutout to our friends and colleagues for their encouragement and camaraderie.

Also, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to PHD Haydee Ramirez Lozada, our supervisor, for her help during all this difficult process and her knowledgeable counsel at every turn during this project. The direction of this work has been greatly influenced by her mentorship.

We are incredibly thankful to the Master program's commitment to supporting academic achievement and for offering a dynamic atmosphere for us to do this study. Their advice and support have greatly influenced the direction of our academic career.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE	i
STATEMENT BY THE AUTHORS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
RESUMEN	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
Theme Presentation	1
Problem Statement	2
Justification	3
Objectives	5
General Objective	5
Specific Objectives	6
1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	7
1.1 SCIENTIFIC THEORETICAL FOUNDATION	7
1.1.1 The Importance of English Language Teaching in Rural Areas	7
1.1.2 Challenges in Rural English Language Teaching	8
1.1.3 Innovative Didactic Materials in Language Teaching	9
1.1.4 Collaborative learning	10
1.1.5 PRINCIPAL THEORIES	11
1.1.5.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Teacher Upgrading	11
1.1.5.2 Constructivism	12
1.1.5.3 Reflective Practice	12
1.1.5.4 Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	13
1.1.5.5 Transformational Learning	14
1.1.5.6 Theoretical Perspectives on Innovative Didactic Materials	14
1.1.5.7 Connectivism	15
1.1.5.8 The Sociocultural Approach	15
1.1.5.9 The Zone of Proximal Development	16
1.1.5.10 The Humanistic Approach	17

1.1.5.11 The critical Progressive Approach	18
1.1.5.12 The Learning by doing method	18
1.1.5.13 Diffusion of Innovations Theory	19
1.2 ANTECEDENTS	19
1.3 LEGAL BASES	22
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS	24
2.1 Context	24
2.2 Type of Investigation	24
2.3 Population and Sample	25
2.4 Hypothesis	25
2.5 Variables	25
2.6 Methods	26
2.7 Techniques	27
2.8 Instruments	27
2.9 Data Processing	28
3. RESULTS	29
3.1 OBSERVATION GUIDE	29
3.2 SURVEY	33
4. DISCUSSION	41
5. CONCLUSIONS	44
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	45
REFERENCES:	46
APPENDICES	49
Appendix 1	49
Appendix 2	50
Appendix 3	51
Appendix 4	53

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Curriculum and Content Relevance.....	30
Figure 2: Assessment of Teaching Methods	31
Figure 3: Evaluation of Trainers' Language Competency	31
Figure 4: Individual Teachers' Progress.....	32
Figure 5: Participation and Engagement in the Training Course	32
Figure 6: Main Methodological Deficiencies in Rural English Teaching in Esmeraldas	33
Figure 7: Level Participation in Previous Training Courses and Effectiveness Ratings	34
Figure 8: Improvement in Methodological and Linguistic Skills.....	35
Figure 9: Overall impact on the ability to carry out the teaching-learning process	36
Figure 10: Training course's diversity of teaching materials and resources for improving English language instruction.....	36
Figure 11: Introduction of efficient English language teaching methods for rural settings.....	37
Figure 12: Practical ELT strategies appropriate for rural English language schools .	38
Figure 13: Improvement of linguistic skills.....	38
Figure 14: Improvement of vocabulary knowledge for teaching and communication.	39
Figure 15: Pronunciation improvement	39
Figure 16: The contribution to developing fluency in spoken English	40

ABSTRACT

This research project focuses on the enhancement of rural English language education through the upgrading of teachers in Esmeraldas, Ecuador. The primary aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of an innovative didactic material-based training program in improving the methodological and linguistic skills of rural English language teachers. The study addresses the pressing challenges faced by educators in remote areas, such as limited access to resources, professional development opportunities, and resistance to change. By upgrading teachers and providing them with essential training and resources, this research seeks to enhance the quality of English language education in rural communities. The investigation employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The population consists of 20 teachers from various educational institutions in rural communities, with a sample of 10 teachers participating in the upgrading program. The research hypothesis states that implementing a training course based on innovative didactic material will contribute to improve rural English language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills. Data analysis involved techniques such as documentary review, surveys, and classroom observations, and data was processed using Google Forms and Microsoft Excel. This research finally concluded by finding a number of critical deficiencies including restricted access to instructional resources, subpar methods of teaching the language, imprecise English language usage, and a deficiency in the application of English Language Teaching (ELT) techniques.

Keywords: Rural English language teaching, Teacher upgrading program, Methodological skills, Linguistic skills, Innovative didactic material.

RESUMEN

Este proyecto de investigación se enfoca en el mejoramiento de la educación en inglés en áreas rurales a través de la capacitación de docentes en Esmeraldas, Ecuador. El objetivo principal es evaluar la efectividad de un programa de formación innovador basado en material didáctico en la mejora de las habilidades metodológicas y lingüísticas de los docentes de inglés en zonas rurales. El estudio aborda los desafíos urgentes enfrentados por los educadores en áreas remotas, como el acceso limitado a recursos, oportunidades de desarrollo profesional y resistencia al cambio. Al capacitar a los docentes y proporcionarles formación y recursos esenciales, esta investigación busca mejorar la calidad de la educación en inglés en las comunidades rurales. La investigación emplea un enfoque de métodos mixtos, combinando métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos para obtener una comprensión integral del tema de investigación. La población consiste en 20 docentes de diversas instituciones educativas en comunidades rurales, con una muestra de 10 docentes participantes en el programa de capacitación. La hipótesis de investigación establece que la implementación de un curso de capacitación basado en material didáctico innovador contribuirá a mejorar las habilidades metodológicas y lingüísticas de los docentes de inglés en áreas rurales. El análisis de datos involucró técnicas como la revisión documental, encuestas y observaciones en el aula, y los datos fueron procesados utilizando Google Forms y Microsoft Excel. Esta investigación concluyó encontrando una serie de deficiencias críticas, incluido el acceso restringido a recursos de instrucción, métodos de enseñanza del idioma deficientes, uso impreciso del idioma inglés y una deficiencia en la aplicación de técnicas de Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés (ELT, por sus siglas en inglés).

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de inglés en áreas rurales, Programa de capacitación docente, Habilidades metodológicas, Habilidades lingüísticas, Material didáctico innovador.

INTRODUCTION

Theme Presentation

English language proficiency has become increasingly important round the world because of its natural importance in communication in different regions. However, rural areas face significant challenges in providing quality English language education because of the lack of new teaching resources, strategies, and methodologies. One promising approach to address this issue is through the upgrading of teachers in rural areas, empowering them with the necessary skills and updated knowledge to improve English language teaching.

On the other hand, the upgrading of teachers involves a comprehensive process of professional development, aimed at enhancing their pedagogical techniques, language proficiency, and cultural understanding. By investing in the continuous training and support of teachers, rural communities can create a sustainable educational system that fosters English language proficiency among students.

Furthermore, it is vital to highlight that teachers should be provided with many opportunities to enhance their own English language skills, enabling them to deliver high-quality instruction and serve as effective language models for their students. As educators advance in their careers, they can encourage real-world language practice, oral communication, and self-assurance in rural students' ability to acquire English.

Beyond the classroom, improving instructors has a favorable effect on rural English language instruction. Communities show their dedication to delivering high-quality education and enhancing the opportunities for their students by investing in their professional development. Improved educators can also serve as a conduit for change in their communities

by imparting their knowledge and abilities to parents, neighbors, and other local stakeholders. This will have a positive knock-on effect on the community as a whole.

The main goal of this study is to demonstrate how well an upgrade program works to enhance rural English language instruction by using unique didactic materials with a novel methodological approach.

Problem Statement

It is highly denoted that the upgrading of teachers to improve rural English language teaching is a critical endeavor that aims to address the challenges faced by educators in remote areas. While it holds great potential for enhancing the quality of education, there are several pressing problems that must be acknowledged and addressed. These obstacles pose significant problems in the path towards improving English language instruction in rural communities. Understanding and tackling these issues is essential for developing effective strategies and ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their geographical location.

On the other hand, upgrading teachers is a multifaceted challenge that hinders the quality and effectiveness of education in rural areas. Limited access to resources, including educational materials and technology, restricts teachers' ability to upgrade their skills and deliver high-quality instruction. The lack of professional development opportunities and geographic isolation further exacerbate the issue, making it difficult for rural teachers to stay updated with current pedagogical practices.

Furthermore, addressing these problems requires concerted efforts to provide equitable access to resources, enhance professional development opportunities, improve infrastructure, promote language proficiency, allocate sufficient funding, foster a culture of

innovation, and establish support networks for rural teachers. Only by addressing these challenges we can work towards enhancing English language teaching and ensuring that all students in rural areas have equal opportunities to succeed. From this premise the following question arises.

How can a training course based on an innovative didactic material contribute to improve rural English Language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills in Esmeraldas?

Justification

It's common knowledge that improving teaching practices and techniques can benefit teachers in remote places. Give them access to resources and training on cutting-edge didactic materials, and they'll be more equipped to teach English language proficiency to their students. Moreover, access to high-quality English language instruction is sometimes lacking in rural locations. Increasing a teacher's competency in the English language can help pupils communicate more effectively in the language, which is a necessary ability for both higher education and career opportunities.

However, it's crucial to emphasize that, even if training instructors to employ cutting-edge didactic materials to enhance English language instruction in rural areas might be advantageous, there are a number of obstacles and trouble spots that must be resolved. First of all, financing, infrastructure, and technology accessibility are only a few of the resource limitations that rural communities frequently confront. It might be important to make investments in training programs, provide the required teaching resources, and guarantee that technology is available in order to upgrade teachers and apply cutting-edge didactic materials. Overcoming these resource constraints can provide a big obstacle.

Furthermore, teachers require enough training and continual professional development opportunities in order to employ novel didactic resources effectively. However, there are often few options for professional growth and access to high-quality training programs in rural locations. It can be expensive and logistically difficult to provide teachers with thorough, ongoing training to enhance their teaching credentials.

In addition, teachers used to conventional methods may also be resistant to the introduction of new didactic materials and teaching strategies. Certain educators could be hesitant to implement novel methods, particularly if they are not sufficiently persuaded of their efficacy. Creating an innovative culture and getting past reluctance to change can be quite difficult. Furthermore, taking into account the cultural and linguistic background of the students is necessary while teaching English in rural locations. Creative educational resources ought to be attentive to the local environment and culturally appropriate. Creating resources that are inclusive and suitable for a range of rural communities can be difficult and need considerable thought.

A thorough and multifaceted strategy combining cooperation between educational authorities, teacher training programs, technology suppliers, and community stakeholders is needed to address these troublesome areas. It is vital to recognize the special needs and challenges of rural areas to support the successful upgrading of teachers and development of English language education in these contexts.

The enhancement of teaching strategies is the primary advantage of upgrading teachers. Teachers can create creative, student-centered ways to language instruction with the help of focused training programs, making sure that the curriculum is interesting, current, and catered to the unique requirements of rural students. Moreover, updated teachers have a broader awareness of language acquisition

theories and practices, allowing them to adapt their teaching strategies to varied learning styles and capacities.

Most education authorities know that teacher quality has a direct influence on the learning processes and thus student achievement. Yet, a prevailing challenge in some regions in the developing world is that schools accept under-qualified teachers because of the lack of resources to provide adequate remuneration for teachers. (Lie A., Mina S. & Gozali I. (2022) pg. 1)

Additionally, teacher upgrading programs generally incorporate cultural immersion experiences and exposure to actual English language situations. These components are particularly helpful for rural teachers, as they allow them to develop a better awareness of the English language and its cultural context. Through cultural immersion, teachers can bring real-life experiences into the classroom, encouraging cross-cultural understanding and helping students appreciate the worldwide significance of English as a lingua franca.

This research intends to prove the efficiency of an upgrade program to improve rural English language instruction through the use of a methodological creative didactic material in Esmeraldas.

Objectives

General Objective

To assess the contribution of a training course to improve rural English Language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills in Esmeraldas, 2023.

Specific Objectives

1.-To identify the main rural English language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills deficiencies for carrying out the teaching-learning process.

2.- To implement a training course based on an innovative didactic material to contribute to the improvement of rural English Language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills in Esmeraldas.

3.- To evaluate the methodological and linguistic improvement of the rural English language teaching learning process.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 SCIENTIFIC THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

1.1.1 The Importance of English Language Teaching in Rural Areas

English language teaching in rural areas plays a vital role in empowering individuals and communities by providing them with access to a global language and enhancing their educational and economic opportunities. “Teaching English Language is deemed challenging and arduous for English Language teachers, particularly when it is done in rural settings where students have minimal English Language exposure” (Shan & Abdul Aziz, 2022 pg.1).

In today's digital age, a vast amount of information is available in English. By having a good command of English, rural residents can access a wealth of knowledge, research, online courses, and global news, enabling them to stay informed and up to date with current developments. English proficiency also facilitates the use of technology, as many software applications, websites, and digital tools are predominantly available in English. “Learning English is definitely essential in order to explore knowledge globally and to improve one’s competencies in the globalizing world”. (Shan & Abdul Aziz, 2022 pg. 2)

To ensure effective English language teaching in rural areas, it is essential to provide access to qualified teachers, relevant teaching materials, and supportive learning environments. Teaching English in rural areas is a challenging activity. In fact, both the teacher and the taught are unaware of the effective pedagogical strategies (Shrikhande, (2017) pg.1).

Additionally, leveraging technology, such as online learning platforms or mobile applications, can help overcome geographical limitations and provide greater access to language learning resources.

1.1.2 Challenges in Rural English Language Teaching

Teaching English in rural areas presents unique challenges that need to be addressed to ensure effective language education. Firstly, one of the main challenges is the scarcity of qualified English language teachers in remote and rural locations. These areas often face difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled teachers due to limited resources, lack of infrastructure, and professional development opportunities.

Most of the students at the primary schools in rural areas are weak in English language due to lack of skilled and trained teachers who are familiar to the modern methods and approaches of teaching and lack of materials for teaching in the classroom (Hossain M. (2016) pg. 1).

This shortage of teachers can result in large class sizes, inadequate attention to individual student needs, and lower overall quality of instruction. Addressing this challenge requires initiatives to train and support local teachers, offer incentives to attract teachers to rural areas, and utilize technology to bridge the gap through online or distance learning programs. “Many educators, researchers, legislators and the general public believe that students from rural schools mostly receive an education that is inferior compared to the students that live in the urban areas”. (Hossain M. (2016) pg. 2)

Secondly, limited access to learning resources and infrastructure poses another challenge. Rural areas may lack well-equipped classrooms, libraries, or computer labs, making it difficult to provide students with essential language learning materials and technology-based resources.

Teaching English becomes significantly more difficult when children study English in a rural school setting. This is connected to both a shortage of resources and the learning environment. Rural schools do not have as many possibilities for students to learn English as metropolitan schools do (Risnawati, Afriani Z., Ernawati, Zuhijah A. (2022) pg. 2).

This limitation hinders students' exposure to authentic English language materials, interactive learning activities, and digital tools that can enhance their language skills. Overcoming this challenge involves investing in infrastructure development, providing schools with adequate learning resources, including textbooks, audiovisual materials, and internet connectivity. Additionally, mobile technology can be leveraged to provide access to online learning platforms and educational apps, even in areas with limited physical infrastructure.

1.1.3 Innovative Didactic Materials in Language Teaching

Innovative didactic materials in language teaching refer to creative and unconventional resources and tools used to facilitate language learning. These materials aim to engage learners, promote active participation, and enhance the learning experience. “Educational innovation refers to any attempt to bring about educational improvement by making changes that are perceived by implementers as requiring them to do something new or different” (Martin Wedell and Laura Grassick, (2020) pg. 1).

Incorporating innovative didactic materials into language teaching can make the learning process more engaging, interactive, and effective. Teachers should consider the learning objectives, learner preferences, and the suitability of the materials for their specific teaching context when selecting and implementing these resources.

1.1.4 Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is an instructional approach that involves students working together in small groups or teams to achieve shared learning goals. It emphasizes active participation, cooperation, and interaction among learners. In collaborative learning, students engage in discussions, problem-solving, and knowledge construction collectively, rather than solely relying on individual efforts or the teacher as the primary source of knowledge.

In the CL environment, the learners are challenged both socially and emotionally as they listen to different perspectives and are required to articulate and defend their ideas. In so doing, the learners begin to create their own unique conceptual frameworks and not rely solely on an expert's or a text's framework (Laal M., Laal M. (2011) pg. 2).

Collaborative learning promotes active engagement, deepens understanding, and encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It allows students to learn from their peers, gain diverse perspectives, and construct knowledge collectively. Also, Collaborative learning nurtures communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. Students learn to listen actively, articulate their thoughts, respect others' viewpoints, resolve conflicts, and collaborate effectively. “Well-organized collaborative learning puts students at the center of learning, constructing knowledge themselves and with others. This group dynamic can make learning more engaging and give students a sense of control over their learning” (Engelhardt K. (2018) pg. 1).

Moreover, by incorporating collaborative learning into the classroom, educators can foster an active and dynamic learning environment that promotes student engagement, deep learning, and the development of valuable social and cognitive skills.

1.1.5 PRINCIPAL THEORIES

1.1.5.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Teacher Upgrading

Teacher upgrading refers to the process of enhancing and expanding the knowledge, skills, and competencies of teachers. “Quality of teaching is the single most important factor which contributes to changes in student learning” (Galaczi E. , Nye A. , Poulter M. , Allen H. (2018) pg. 6). It is crucial for teachers to continuously upgrade themselves to keep up with changing educational paradigms, advancements in teaching methodologies, and the evolving needs of students.

On the other hand, teacher upgrading refers to the process of continuous professional development and improvement of teachers' knowledge, skills, and practices. Teacher upgrading, also known as teacher professional development or continuous professional learning, refers to the process of improving and enhancing teachers' knowledge, skills, and practices throughout their careers. It involves various activities and initiatives designed to support teachers' ongoing growth and development as educators.

Professional development needs to address the reality of teachers’ worlds and the actual needs of teachers to help them get to where they need to be in order to support learning. The consequence of not addressing this will have broader implications for equity and widening gaps in society (Galaczi E. , Nye A. , Poulter M. , Allen H. (2018) pg. 9).

Furthermore, it is vital to highlight that the primary goal of teacher upgrading is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, leading to better student outcomes and overall educational excellence. It is based on the understanding that effective and skilled teachers are crucial for fostering positive learning experiences and academic

achievement among students. “Professional development for teachers (both pre-service and in-service) typically aims to introduce new tools or skills or update existing skills. It is seen as an essential aspect of the teachers’ profession”. (Galaczi E. , Nye A. , Poulter M. , Allen H. (2018) pg. 9)

1.1.5.2 Constructivism

Constructivism emphasizes the active role of teachers in constructing knowledge and meaning for themselves. From this perspective, teacher upgrading involves engaging teachers in meaningful learning experiences that promote reflection, critical thinking, and problem-solving. “Constructivist pedagogy is strongly manifested in blended learning, also known as ‘blended teaching’, which is one of the pioneers of Information Communications Technology (ICT)- enhanced teaching methods”. (Szabóp F. & Csépes I. 2022, pg. 7)

Teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development activities that encourage collaboration, inquiry-based learning, and the construction of new knowledge through their interactions with colleagues, students, and resources. “Constructivism argues that a person’s brain is constantly trying to balance new given information with previously acquired knowledge and experiences”. (Alhabib L. 2022, par. 6)

1.1.5.3 Reflective Practice

Reflective practice theory, popularized by Donald Schön, emphasizes the importance of reflection in professional development. Teachers engage in critical reflection on their teaching practices, examining their beliefs, assumptions, and experiences to improve their instructional approaches. “The model of Technical Rationality has exerted as great an influence on scholarly writing about the professions as on critical exposés of the role of the professions in the larger society” (Schön D. 2016, pg. 22).

Reflective practice encourages teachers to seek feedback, evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies, and make necessary adjustments. “Reflective practice also contributes to the enhancement of teacher quality” (Suphasri P. & Chinokul S. 2021, pg. 2). Teacher upgrading in this perspective involves creating opportunities for self-reflection, providing feedback mechanisms, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

1.1.5.4 Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

The concept of PLCs emphasizes collaboration, shared learning, and collective responsibility. Teachers work together in communities to share expertise, reflect on instructional practices, and collectively seek solutions to educational challenges. PLCs create a supportive environment where teachers engage in ongoing professional dialogue, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. Teacher upgrading within PLCs involves fostering a culture of collaboration, establishing structures for regular meetings, and providing resources and support to facilitate shared learning. “PLCs are a concept of teacher education within their working communities to enhance and develop effective learning methods and approaches” (NIKIČIĆ I. 2023, pg. 1).

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are collaborative groups of educators who come together to improve their teaching practices, enhance student learning outcomes, and foster a culture of continuous professional development within a school or educational institution. PLCs are based on the idea that teachers can learn from and support one another through collaborative efforts, leading to improved instructional strategies and increased student achievement. “A professional learning community (PLC) in schools involves collaboration, sharing and ongoing critical interrogation of teaching practices in line with professional standards. PLCs should be learning-oriented and promote the growth of teachers and students” (AITSL 2021, par. 2).

1.1.5.5 Transformational Learning

The Transformational Learning Theory focuses on the transformative nature of learning experiences. It suggests that meaningful learning occurs when individuals critically reflect on their assumptions, beliefs, and perspectives, leading to a transformative shift in their thinking and practice. Teacher upgrading, from this perspective, involves providing opportunities for teachers to engage in transformative learning experiences that challenge their existing beliefs, stimulate critical reflection, and foster personal and professional growth.

Transformative learning is rooted in the way human beings communicate and is a common learning experience not exclusively concerned with significant personal transformations. To facilitate transformative learning, educators must help learners become aware and critical of their own and others' assumptions (Mezirow J. 1997, pg. 10).

These theoretical perspectives provide valuable insights into the process of teacher upgrading and highlight the importance of active engagement, reflection, collaboration, and transformative experiences. A comprehensive approach to teacher upgrading should incorporate elements from these perspectives to support the continuous professional development of teachers.

1.1.5.6 Theoretical Perspectives on Innovative Didactic Materials

Theoretical perspectives on innovative didactic materials refer to the various frameworks or theories that guide the development and use of new teaching and learning materials. These perspectives provide insights into the underlying principles, pedagogical

approaches, and instructional strategies that inform the design and implementation of innovative didactic materials.

1.1.5.7 Connectivism

Connectivism is a learning theory that highlights the importance of networks, connections, and digital technologies in knowledge acquisition and learning. From a connectivist perspective, innovative didactic materials should leverage digital tools, online resources, and networked learning environments. They should enable learners to access and navigate information, make connections between different sources, and participate in online communities of practice. Examples of innovative didactic materials aligned with connectivism include online courses, educational apps, and social media platforms for learning.

It's important to note that these theoretical perspectives are not mutually exclusive, and educators often integrate elements from multiple perspectives when designing innovative didactic materials. The choice of theoretical framework depends on various factors, such as the learning goals, the target audience, and the educational context.

1.1.5.8 The Sociocultural Approach

The sociocultural approach, rooted in the work of Lev Vygotsky, emphasizes the role of social interaction, cultural context, and language in the development of cognition and learning. According to this approach, learning is seen as a socially mediated process, where individuals actively engage in collaborative activities and participate in cultural practices within their communities. The sociocultural approach has significant implications for the design and use of innovative didactic materials. “Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory views human development as a socially mediated process in which children acquire cultural values,

beliefs, and problem-solving strategies through collaborative dialogues with more knowledgeable members of society” (Mcleod S. 2023, par. 2).

In summary, the sociocultural approach to innovative didactic materials emphasizes the social and cultural aspects of learning. It emphasizes collaborative learning, scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development, the use of cultural tools and artifacts, and the importance of cultural and contextual relevance. By integrating these principles into the design of didactic materials, educators can create learning experiences that promote social interaction, knowledge construction, and the development of higher-order cognitive skills.

1.1.5.9 The Zone of Proximal Development

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a key concept in sociocultural theory, developed by Lev Vygotsky. It refers to the gap between a learner's current level of independent functioning and their potential level of development with the assistance and guidance of a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher, parent, or peer. The ZPD suggests that learning and cognitive development occur through social interaction and collaboration. Vygotsky defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peer” (Vygotsky,1978, cited by Shabani K., Khatib M., & Ebadi S. 2010, pg. 2)

Vygotsky argued that learners can achieve more with the support and guidance of others than they can on their own. The ZPD represents the range of tasks or activities that a learner can perform with assistance. “It is the level of a child’s development which displays itself in collaborative activity with an adult but not in the child’s individual activity”. (Bruner,1982, cited by Podolskij A. 2012 pg. 1). It is the space where new learning and

development take place. The assistance provided within the ZPD is tailored to the learner's specific needs and abilities, promoting their growth and learning.

In the context of innovative didactic materials, the ZPD can inform the design and implementation of learning resources. These materials should be appropriately structured and scaffolded to support learners within their ZPD, offering the necessary guidance and resources to facilitate their progression towards higher levels of competence and understanding. By leveraging the ZPD, educators can create effective learning experiences that promote active engagement, collaboration, and the construction of knowledge.

1.1.5.10 The Humanistic Approach

The Humanistic Approach is a psychological perspective that emphasizes the uniqueness, potential, and subjective experience of individuals. It focuses on human growth, self-actualization, and personal fulfillment. In the context of education and didactic materials, the humanistic approach places importance on the learner's autonomy, self-expression, and holistic development.

According to Freire (2008) the foundational elements of his "system" indicate an environment-focused teaching approach. As part of their learning process, Freire believes that students must comprehend their own world. Rather than being formed, he preferred the person to form themselves (pg. 2).

The Humanistic Approach to innovative didactic materials emphasizes the learner's autonomy, self-actualization, and holistic development. By integrating these principles into the design and implementation of educational resources, educators can create learning experiences that foster a sense of purpose, self-discovery, and personal growth among learners.

1.1.5.11 The critical Progressive Approach

The Critical Progressive Approach, also known as critical pedagogy, is an educational perspective that combines elements of critical theory and progressive education. It aims to empower learners to become critical thinkers, agents of change, and active participants in society. The critical progressive approach challenges oppressive structures and aims to foster social justice, equity, and democratic values. In the context of didactic materials, the critical progressive approach seeks to engage learners in critical analysis, social action, and transformative learning experiences.

Overall, the Critical Progressive Approach to didactic materials seeks to empower learners to become active, critically conscious agents of change. By engaging learners in critical analysis, promoting social justice, and fostering transformative learning experiences, educators can help cultivate a generation of learners who are equipped to challenge inequality, advocate for justice, and contribute to positive social transformation.

1.1.5.12 The Learning by doing method.

The Learning by Doing method, also known as experiential learning, is an educational approach that emphasizes active engagement and hands-on experiences as a means of acquiring knowledge, skills, and understanding. It is based on the idea that learners learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process and have the opportunity to apply what they have learned in practical, real-world contexts.

By implementing the Learning by Doing method, educators can create dynamic and engaging learning environments that promote active participation, critical thinking, and practical application of knowledge. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of

concepts, enhances problem-solving skills, and prepares learners for real-world challenges and situations.

1.1.5.13 Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The Diffusion of Innovations theory, developed by Everett Rogers, explains how new ideas, products, or practices spread and are adopted by individuals or groups over time. This theory provides insights into the factors that influence the adoption and diffusion of innovations within a social system. The diffusion process occurs through communication channels and is influenced by various factors, including the characteristics of the innovation and the individuals or groups involved.

The Diffusion of Innovations theory has been widely applied in various fields, including technology adoption, health promotion, education, and organizational change. It helps researchers and practitioners understand the factors that affect the adoption and diffusion of innovations and provides strategies for effectively promoting and implementing new ideas or practices within a social system.

1.2 ANTECEDENTS

Ramos B. and Aguirre J. (2016) conducted research on English Language Teaching in Rural Areas, with a focus on new problems for English Language Teachers in Colombia. According to the authors, most English teachers in Colombia are hesitant to work in rural schools due to the numerous problems that they may face. The goal of this post was to highlight some of the reasons why instructors do not choose to work in rural areas. It also provides some solutions to these problems. Finally, the authors go over some of the consequences for educators and stakeholders.

This investigation eventually determined that some of the major issues surrounding rural teachers' upgrading were isolation, cultural adaptation, and rural families' preconceptions about education, motivation, infrastructure, and violence. Because of the above concerns, the authors suggest that many urban teachers are unwilling to take on the challenge of teaching in rural areas.

Cruz F. (2019) also presented and conducted research on Rural English Language Teacher Identities. This article challenges the notion of professional achievement in English language teaching as it is defined in Colombian language policy. This is accomplished through investigating one of the field's most understudied socioeconomic diversities: rural schools. This analysis, which is based on a narrative study of how rural English language teachers configure their professional identities in relation to the situated circumstances of their work settings and external pressures, demonstrates that teachers' sense of professional success is negotiated in creative, complex, and multiple-though not always consistent-ways, representing alternative constructions of good teaching to those promulgated in policy. It is thus maintained that a reconfiguration of belief systems about what teachers should know and accomplish is required.

Mora A., Trejo P., and Roux R. (2014), on the other hand, analyze English language instructors' professional development and identities. The professional development of two English language teachers in a Mexican language center is examined in this article. It focuses on the interplay of professional development, identity, and agency, as well as the role of English language teaching certificates in all of these. The essay reveals the personal and deep connection between teachers' identities and their professional development through a case study technique that included three interviews and various qualitative data collection methods. The ramifications of education for policymakers and practitioners are examined.

Finally, this article concluded that the case study data call into question suggestions that institutional responses to PD are inadequate. As a result, the case study evidence reveals that the appropriateness of institutional methods to PD may differ greatly from teacher to teacher. Second, the findings have implications for teacher empowerment and the role that ELT credentials may play. Third, the findings have consequences for professional development advisors. The results provided here suggests that teachers may vary in their proactivity toward professional development. These levels of proactivity, however, are subject to change.

Furthermore, Gomathi B. (2014) conducted research about Enriching the Skills of Rural Students with Effective Methods of Teaching English Language using LSRW Skills. The purpose of learning any language is to communicate effectively and no communication is possible if one doesn't get a chance to communicate. It is natural that the demand for communication is high in this ever-changing world. Language plays a crucial role in communication and English is no doubt the foremost and most important tool of communication all over the world.

Language learning is a skill that can be perfected only through constant practice and continuous exposure to the target language, the available resources should be completely tapped so as to provide an encouraging atmosphere for learning and practicing the language. This paper deals with the effective methods which can be employed in teaching English to the rural students for their enhancement.

This author finally concluded that English teacher, especially those who teach rural students need to be very patient and systematic. They are expected to do a miraculous job under adverse conditions. This is a real challenge which may sound impractical, but it would be highly unjust on the part of the English teacher if he/she overlooks the seriousness behind the issue and it would deprive the students' opportunities which are mainly attained through communication skills and the specific purpose of teaching English as a communicative tool would get lost.

Moreover, Shan and Abdul Aziz (2022) investigated about a Systematic Review of Teaching English in Rural Settings. This investigation presented a systematic review of the challenges encountered by English Language teachers in teaching English in rural settings and the solutions to overcome the challenges. The findings revealed a myriad of issues and challenges in teaching English in rural settings which have thwarted the development of English Language education in rural settings. The lack of qualified English Language teachers, inadequate facilities, infrastructure and teaching materials, students' limited competence in English and their negative attitudes towards learning English as well as the lack of parental support are the identified challenges confronted by English Language teachers in teaching English in rural settings. Several pragmatic solutions are suggested to overcome the aforementioned challenges such as to provide proper trainings for English Language teachers, foster positive attitudes towards teaching English among English Language teachers, improve and upgrade the facilities, infrastructure and teaching aids as well as to promote effective communication between parents and teachers.

Furthermore, Quintero (2023) developed an investigation about the use of an innovative didactic material to improve the rural English language teaching learning process. The main objective of this investigation was to create an innovative material with creative methodologies that could help rural teacher to improve their teaching process and the same time to overcome the main problems around the teaching and learning process of the English language. This author finally concluded that this material is vital because it will provide rural areas and teachers with a new idea of how to teach English effectively and at the same time it will help to include all the learning community in the process.

1.3 LEGAL BASES

This research is based on the Ecuadorian Constitution and the Organic Law of Intercultural Education.

According to Article 1 of the Organic Law of Intercultural Education, this law guarantees the right to education, establishes the general principles and goals that guide Ecuadorian education within the framework of Good Living, interculturality, and plurinationality, and establishes the relationships between its actors. It develops and strengthens the rights, obligations, and constitutional guarantees in the educational area, as well as establishing the essential norms for the structure, levels, and modalities, management model, financing, and involvement of the National System of Education's actors.

On the other hand, it claims in Article 4 that education is a fundamental human right guaranteed by the Republic's Constitution and a prerequisite for the fulfilment of other human rights.

There are literals in the Organic Law of Intercultural Education that include English as part of intercultural education and attest to Ecuador being a multicultural country; this is why it stands out in literal bb. the principle of multilingualism, which states that the right of all persons, communes, communities, peoples, and nationalities to be trained in their own language and in the official languages of intercultural relations is recognized; as well as in others related to the international community.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Context

Creating a program to upgrade teachers and improve rural English language teaching can have a significant impact on the quality of education in those areas. Such a program should focus on enhancing teachers' English language proficiency, teaching methodologies, and cultural awareness. This investigation was carried out in Esmeraldas's province with 20 teachers of 4 important rural communities, such as Esmeraldas, Atacames, Quinindé, and San Lorenzo in Esmeraldas Province.

2.2 Type of Investigation

This research followed a mixed approach. This approach in investigation, also known as a mixed-methods approach, is a research methodology that combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study. It involves collecting and analyzing both numerical data (quantitative) and non-numerical data, such as words, images, and narratives (qualitative). By using a mixed approach, researchers aim to gain a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the research topic, as each method has its strengths and limitations, and they can complement each other.

Furthermore, it is vital to mention that mixed investigations are commonly used in different fields, including social sciences, education, health sciences, and business, among others. They are particularly valuable when dealing with complex research questions that require a deeper understanding of human behavior, attitudes, and experiences, while also seeking to establish generalizable patterns or trends. Moreover, by leveraging the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, researchers can enhance the validity, reliability,

and overall rigor of their investigations, leading to more comprehensive and impactful research outcomes.

2.3 Population and Sample

The population of this study was made up of 20 experienced teachers of different educational institutions in the rural communities of Esmeraldas Province and the sample was formed by 10 teachers who took part in the upgrading program. This sample provided valuable insights into the real necessities that rural teachers have in their teaching methodologies in their classrooms.

2.4 Hypothesis

The Hypothesis of this research is: The implementation of a training course based on an innovative didactic material will contribute to improve rural English language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills.

2.5 Variables

The variables that make up this research are:

- **Dependent Variable:** The Rural English Language methodological and linguistic skills.

The process and procedures of teaching and learning the English Language in a rural community considering the cognitive, affective, and methodological dimensions.

- **Independent Variable:** An upgrading program for rural English language teachers

An upgrading program for rural English language teachers is a structured and comprehensive initiative aimed at enhancing the professional skills, knowledge, and capabilities of teachers who are working in remote or underserved rural areas.

Operationalization of the Variables (Appendix 1)

2.6 Methods

During this investigation, a pre and post- survey were carried out in order to know the level of the teachers in terms of methodologies before and after the training course. The methods that were used to develop this research were:

Analysis and Synthesis: They were used by conducting a literature review to understand the existing research, studies, and best practices related to rural English language teacher upgrading programs. This provided a foundation for this investigation and helped to identify knowledge gaps and areas that require further exploration.

Hermeneutics: It was used to interpret the meaning, intention, and significance of a text, considering the historical, cultural, linguistic, and contextual factors that may influence its understanding. The process involved a deep engagement with the text, attempting to grasp the author's original intent and the cultural milieu in which the text was produced.

Descriptive Statistics: It was used to analyze the data collected from surveys, interviews, assessments, using appropriate statistical tools and qualitative analysis techniques. It helped to look for patterns, trends, and key findings.

2.7 Techniques

Documentary Review: For this research, previous investigations and theoretical studies were analyzed to make emphasis on developing the educational system in the different rural areas in Esmeraldas Province to make emphasis on the actual methodologies being used in the teaching learning process of the English language.

Survey: A survey was applied to rural English language teachers who participated in the training course. The surveys should gather data on their experiences, perceived benefits, challenges faced, and overall satisfaction with the program.

Classroom Observations: For this research there were organized classroom observations to see the upgraded teachers in action. This allowed us to assess the practical application of the program's teachings and its impact on teaching methods and student learning outcomes.

2.8 Instruments

To develop the technique of documentary review, studies, investigations, and theories were reviewed to find information related to the rural English language teaching-learning process in Esmeraldas rural areas, as well as to provide meaningful information for the design of methodologically innovative didactic material.

For the test technique, a questionnaire was used, and it was applied to 10 teachers in order to gather information about data on their experiences, perceived benefits, challenges faced, and overall satisfaction with the program.

Finally, for the classroom observation, an observation guide was used in order to allow this investigation to assess the practical application of the program's teachings and its impact on teaching methods and student learning outcomes.

2.9 Data Processing

The data was collected through the use of a survey, the major points from the observation guide, and it was processed automatically by the Google Forms system. The data was then examined, processed, and converted into figures using the Microsoft Excel application.

3. RESULTS

In order to get the following results, there was applied an innovative didactic material design by Quintero (2023) that was based on the idea to provide rural English Language teacher a useful resource with new strategies and ways of how to manage an English class. That material was design with the idea of giving English language instructors in remote areas of Esmeraldas creative resources to enhance the way they teach and learn this important language. The development of the four major language abilities and the learning of various communication functions are the foundations of this book, which will assist students in improving their English proficiency when they move from their rural communities to university.

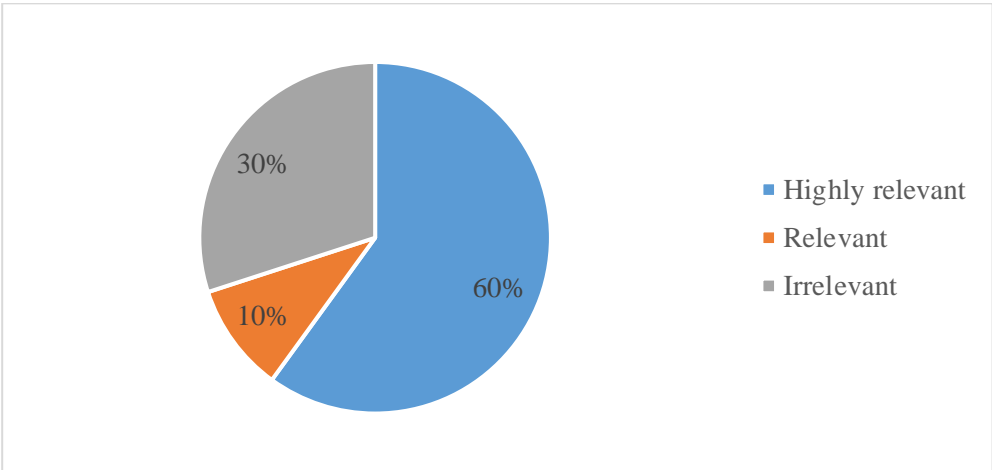
3.1 OBSERVATION GUIDE

In Esmeraldas, assessing the impact of a training course on rural English language instructors' methodological and linguistic skills necessitates a variety of observations. To begin, curriculum and content review examines the suitability of materials to meet the specific demands of these instructors. It seeks to match the course content with the objectives indicated, ensuring a direct link between the training and its intended outcomes. Observing educational methods is also important, stressing the effectiveness of teaching strategies used. The evaluation emphasizes on involvement through activities, discussions, and hands-on experiences, with the goal of encouraging active learning.

The results obtained by the application of the observation guide showed that language proficiency evaluation becomes critical, incorporating the examination of both trainers' English language skills as well as the inclusion of language enhancement exercises in the training.

According to the analysis of the observation guide, 70% of the observed rural English language teachers found the course materials and content relevant to their linguistic and methodological demands. However, only 60% thought the curriculum was completely aligned with the training objectives. Despite the overall relevancy of the content, some teachers voiced reservations about the degree to which it was aligned with the training objectives.

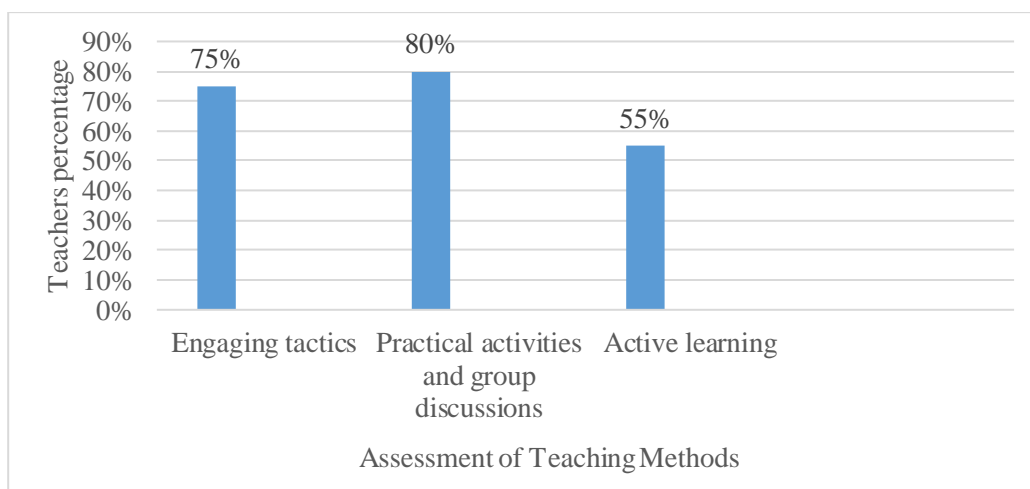
Figure 1: Curriculum and Content Relevance



Source: Observation Guide Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

According to the assessment of teaching methods, 75% of the trainers used engaging and effective tactics during the sessions. Practical activities and group discussions were common, with 80% of teachers agreeing that they were included in the training. While active learning was stressed, only 55% of the observed sessions actively pushed this method, indicating that there is still space for improvement in incorporating more varied active learning methodologies.

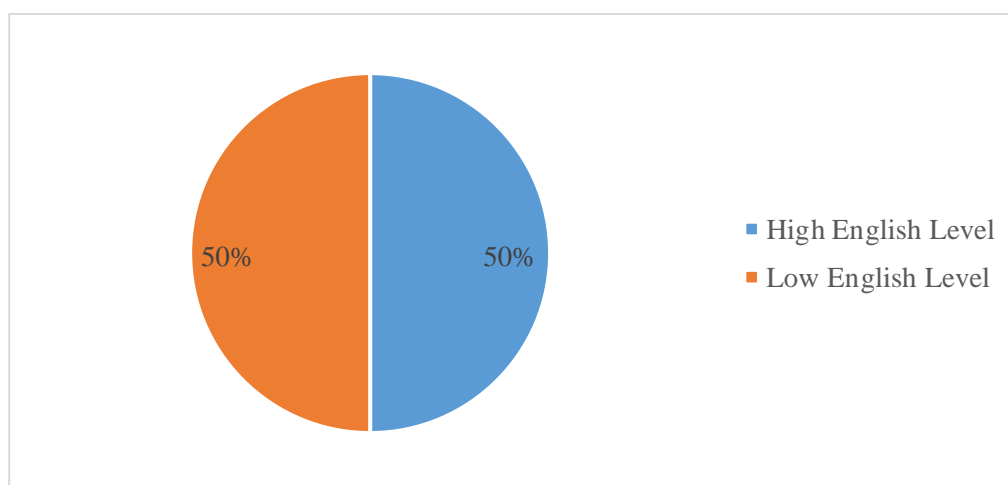
Figure 2: Assessment of Teaching Methods



Source: Observation Guide Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

The evaluation of trainers' language competency found that 50% demonstrated a high level of English proficiency, which the participating teachers praised. Despite the trainers' expertise, language improvement activities were only included in 40% of the training sessions, indicating a possible gap in utilizing the sessions for language enhancement.

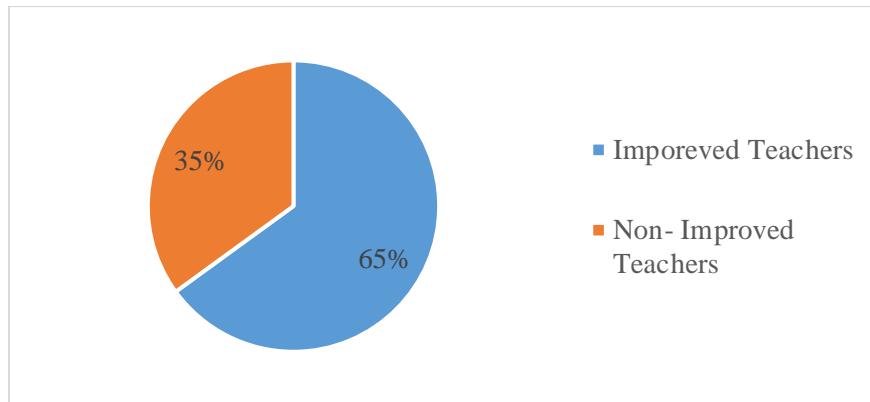
Figure 3: Evaluation of Trainers' Language Competency



Source: Observation Guide Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Individual progress observations revealed that 65% of participants made significant growth in both linguistic and methodological skills. However, the application of new knowledge and skills in the classroom differed, with only half of the teachers effectively applying their learnings, revealing a gap between theoretical grasp and practical implementation among some teachers.

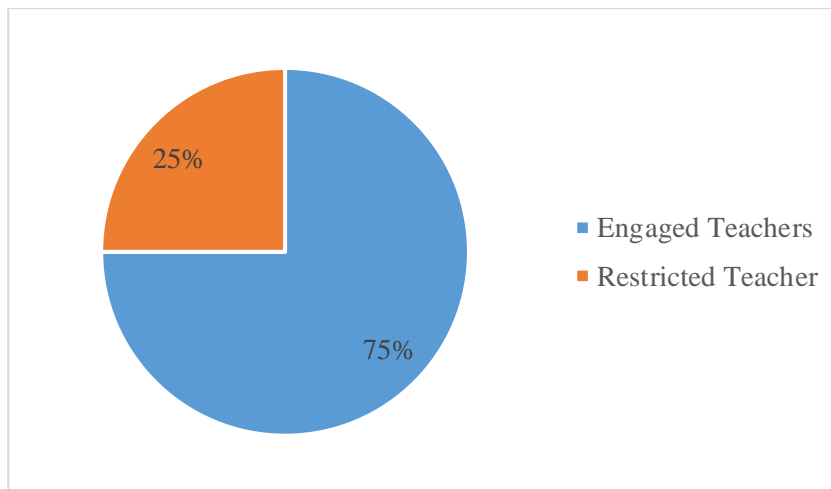
Figure 4: Individual Teachers' Progress



Source: Observation Guide Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

During the training sessions, there was a wide range of participation and engagement, with 75% actively contributing to discussions and activities. However, 25% of rural teachers engaged in restricted ways, affecting total interaction and depth of learning among peers.

Figure 5: Participation and Engagement in the Training Course



Source: Observation Guide Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

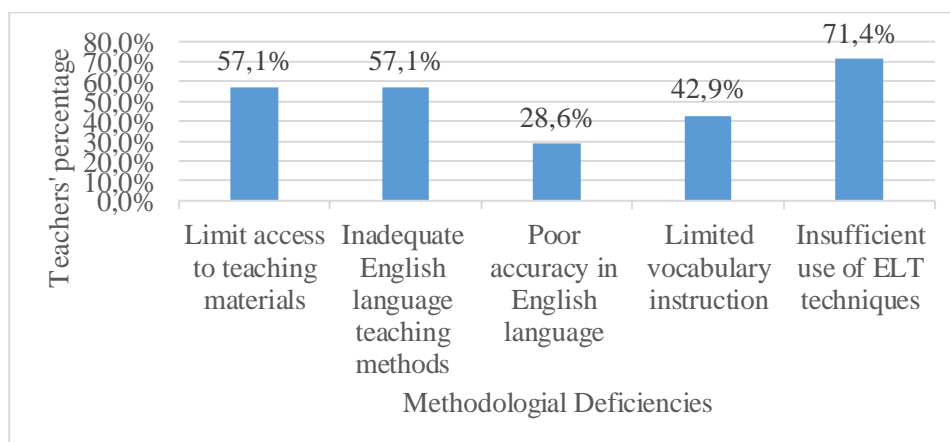
3.2 SURVEY

SURVEY PRE-TRAINING COURSE

Unfortunately, the survey highlighted several glaring issues in rural English language teaching in Esmeraldas. A staggering 57,1% of the teachers identified limited access to teaching materials as the primary stumbling block. This scarcity significantly hampers effective instruction, hindering the development of comprehensive lesson plans and engaging classroom activities. Furthermore, 57,1% of respondents flagged inadequate English language teaching methods as a substantial problem. This suggests a fundamental gap in the approach to teaching English, potentially leading to ineffective learning outcomes for students in rural areas.

Moreover, the survey indicated that 28,6% of the teachers recognized poor accuracy in the English language as a significant hurdle. This deficiency likely impedes the delivery of lessons, impacting students' language acquisition and overall proficiency. Limited vocabulary instruction was also acknowledged by 42,9% of respondents, signaling a challenge in effectively conveying proper pronunciation, which is vital for language learning. Such revelations underscore the urgent need for comprehensive improvements in methodological approaches to English language teaching in rural Esmeraldas. Finally, 71,4% of the teacher surveyed chose the insufficient use of ELT techniques as the most relevant deficiency in their rural area.

Figure 6: Main Methodological Deficiencies in Rural English Teaching in Esmeraldas

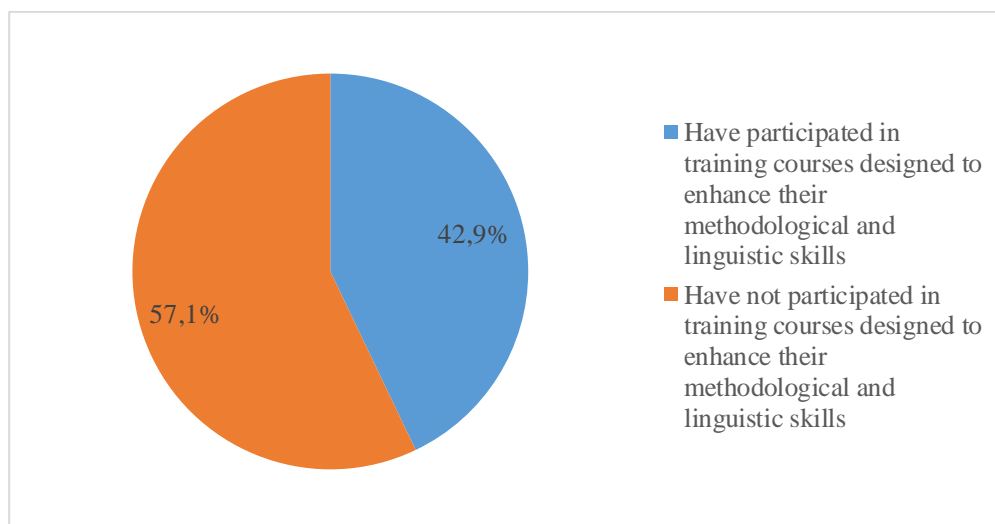


Source: Survey Pre-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Disappointingly, only 57,1% of the surveyed teachers reported that they haven't participated in training courses designed to enhance their methodological and linguistic skills. Among those who did attend these courses, the effectiveness ratings varied considerably. For instance, while 40% rated the use of teaching materials as moderately effective (3 on the scale), only 20% deemed it highly effective (5). Similarly, there was a notable discrepancy in the effectiveness ratings for English language teaching methods, with 35% giving a moderate effectiveness score and 15% rating it as highly effective.

Furthermore, the survey results revealed that 42,9% of the teacher involved in this training course said that they have participated in training courses designed to enhance their methodological and linguistic skills, however, most of them mentioned that the training might not have adequately addressed this crucial area. Similarly, vocabulary instruction and pronunciation improvement received mixed ratings, with only a minority of respondents perceiving notable enhancements. This suggests a pressing need for more comprehensive and targeted training programs to address the identified deficiencies effectively.

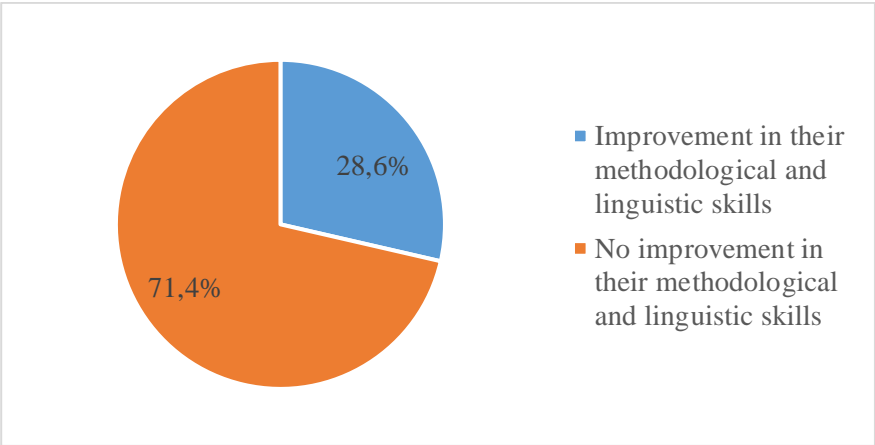
Figure 7: Level Participation in Previous Training Courses and Effectiveness Ratings



Source: Survey Pre-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Following the training courses, only 28.6% of teachers reported noticing any improvement in their methodological and linguistic skills as rural English language instructors. This relatively low percentage signifies a potential gap between the content or delivery of the training and its practical application in the classroom setting. The lack of substantial improvement across the board raises concerns about the training's effectiveness in addressing the specific challenges faced by educators in rural Esmeraldas.

Figure 8: Improvement in Methodological and Linguistic Skills

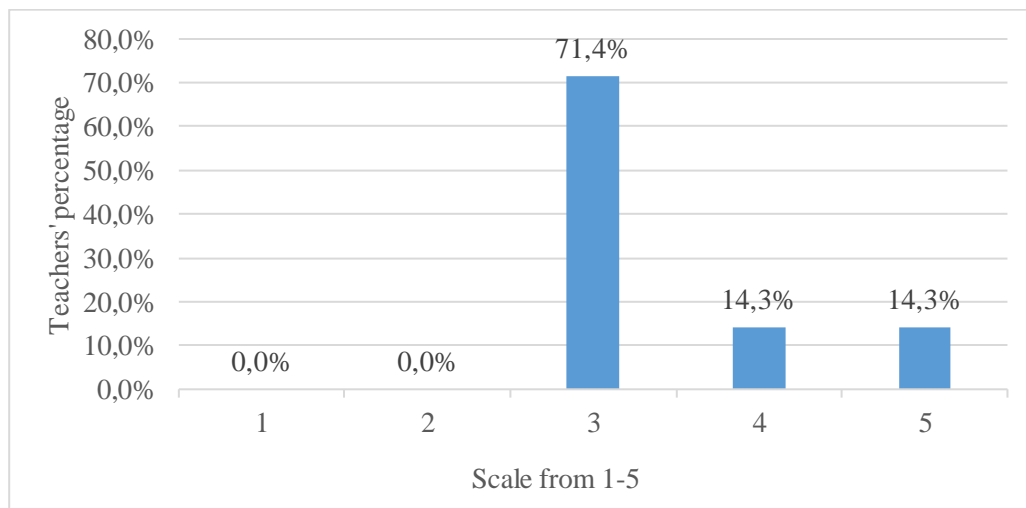


Source: Survey Pre-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Overall Impact on Teaching-Learning Process

Shockingly, the overall impact on the ability to carry out the teaching-learning process as a rural English language teacher in Esmeraldas received an average rating of 2.5 out of 5. This lukewarm assessment, based on the teachers' perception, indicates that the training courses might not have significantly bolstered their capabilities to navigate the challenges in English language instruction in rural settings. It emphasizes the pressing need for more tailored, comprehensive, and impactful training initiatives to uplift the standards of English language education in Esmeraldas.

Figure 9: Overall impact on the ability to carry out the teaching-learning process

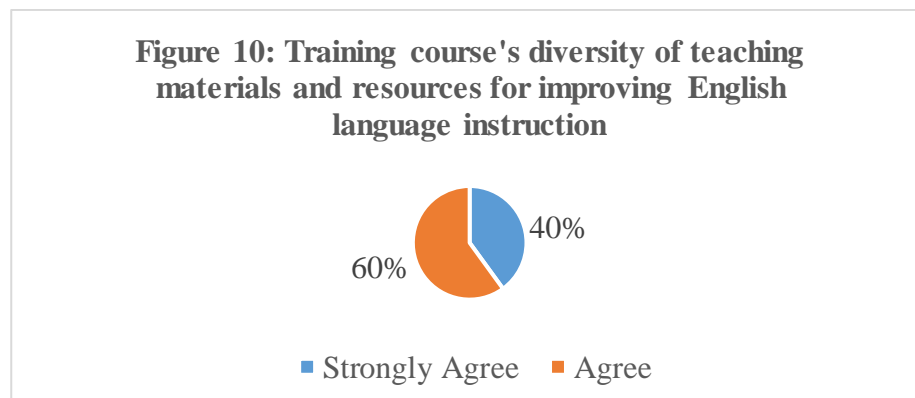


Source: Survey Pre-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

SURVEY POST-TRAINING COURSE

Opinions differed on the training course's diversity of teaching materials and resources for improving English language instruction. 40% of teachers strongly agreed that the course presented different materials, while 60% just agreed, showing a positive overall view of the resources supplied.

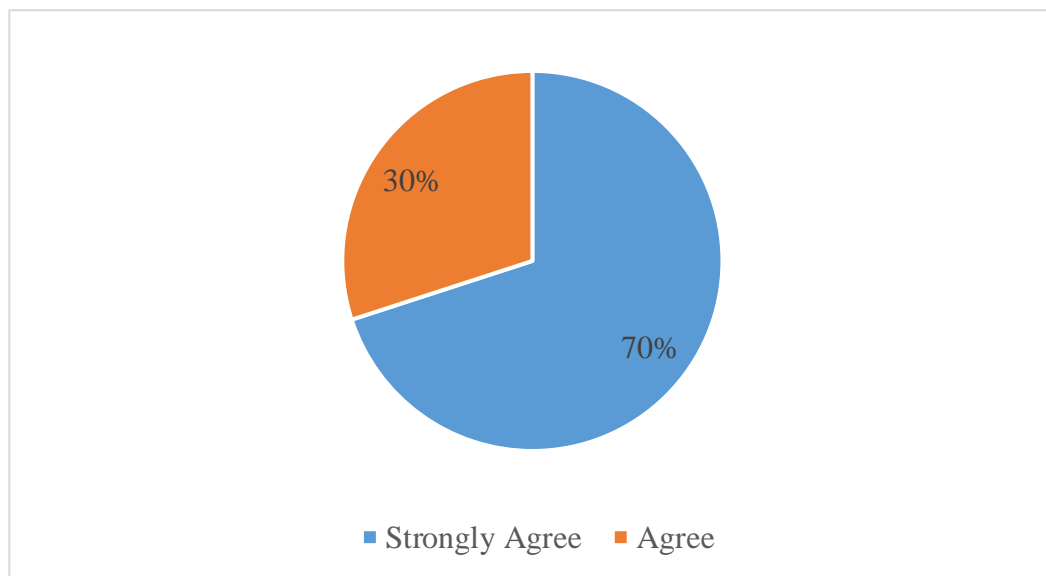
Figure 10: Training course's diversity of teaching materials and resources for improving English language instruction



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

In terms of introducing efficient English language teaching methods for rural settings, the majority of respondents (70%) strongly agreed that the course appropriately handled this topic. Meanwhile, 30% agreed with this remark, demonstrating a clear understanding of the course's emphasis on rural teaching environments.

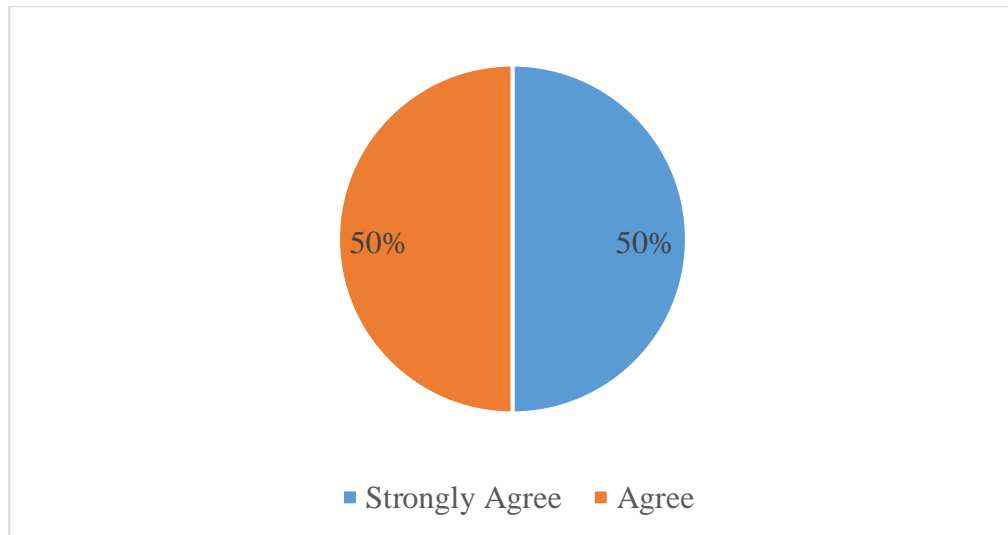
Figure 11: Introduction of efficient English language teaching methods for rural settings



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

When questioned about practical ELT strategies appropriate for rural English language schools, half of the respondents (50%) strongly agreed, with another 50% agreeing, indicating a solid consensus on the practicality and acceptability of the techniques taught in the course.

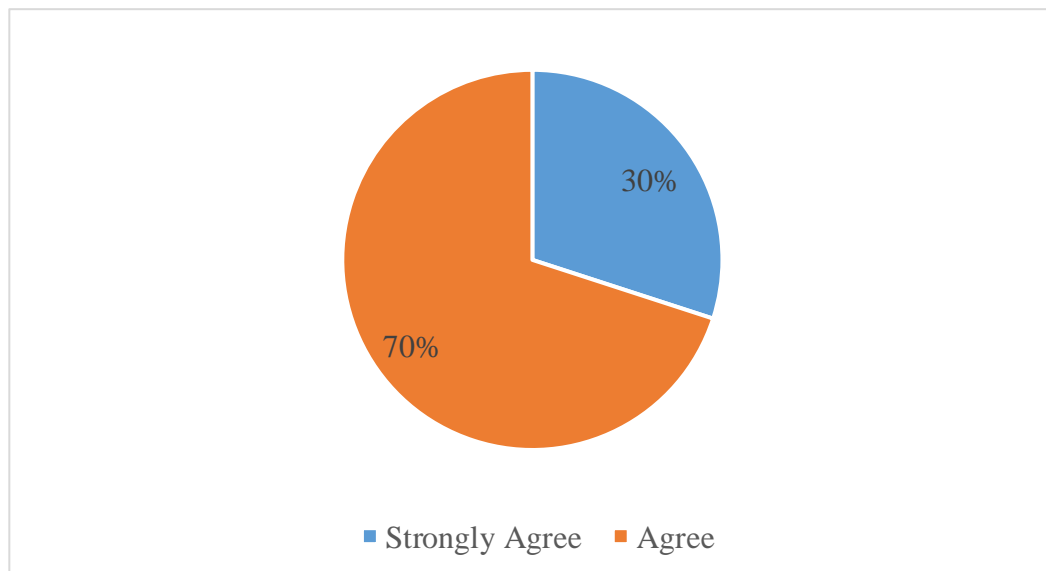
Figure 12: Practical ELT strategies appropriate for rural English language schools



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Most teachers saw favorable results when it came to improving linguistic skills. A considerable 70% agreed, with 30% strongly agreeing, that the training improved accuracy in English language usage, including grammar and syntax.

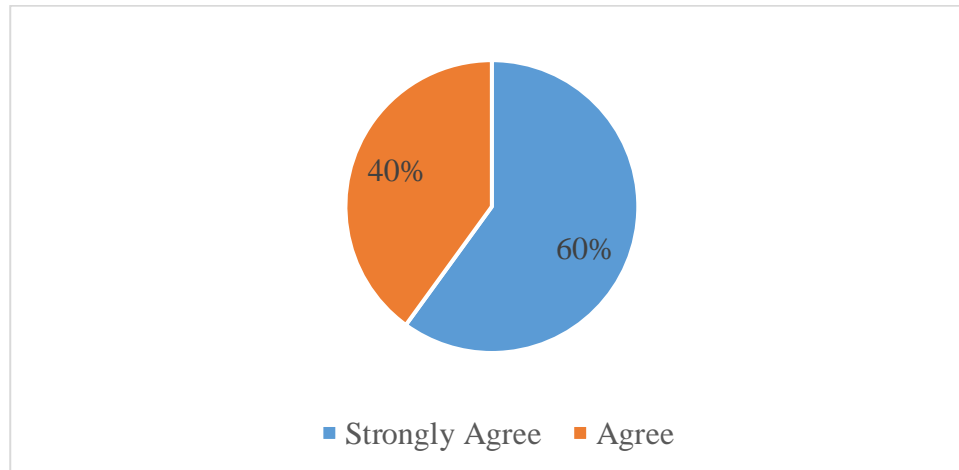
Figure 13: Improvement of linguistic skills.



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

In terms of improving vocabulary knowledge for teaching and communication, 60% strongly agreed, while 40% agreed, indicating that the course's vocabulary enhancement component was generally well-received.

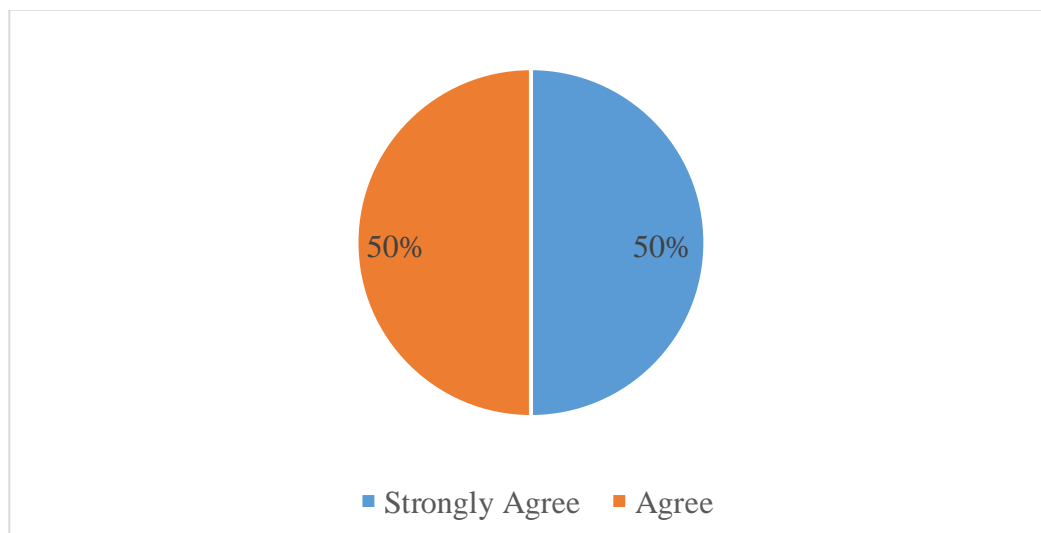
Figure 14: Improvement of vocabulary knowledge for teaching and communication.



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Similarly, when it came to guidance and practice for improving pronunciation, 50% of teachers strongly agreed, followed by 50% who agreed, demonstrating an even split but overall positive recognition of the course's success.

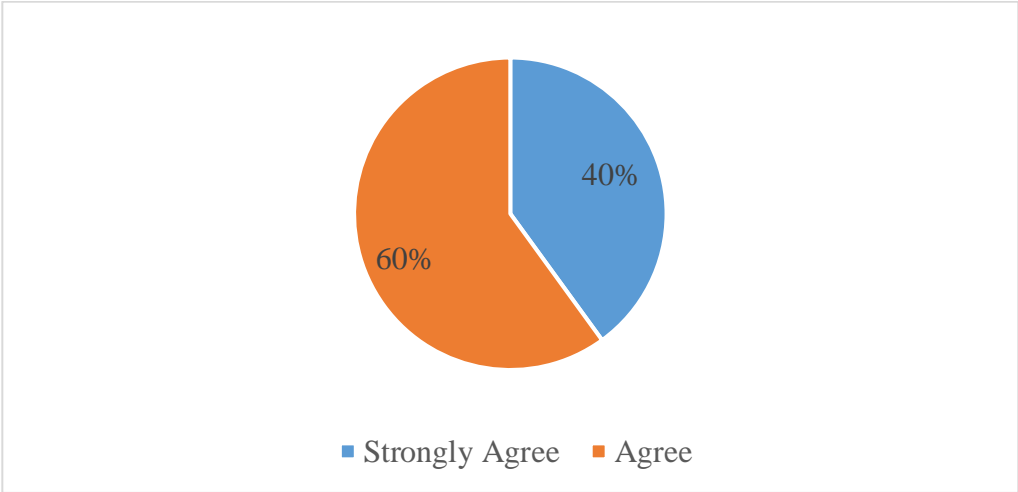
Figure 15: Pronunciation improvement



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Finally, when questioned about the contribution to developing fluency in spoken English, 40% strongly agreed and 60% agreed, indicating a solid awareness of the course's impact on improving fluency, which is critical for effective teaching and communication.

Figure 16: The contribution to developing fluency in spoken English



Source: Survey Post-training Course Applied to Rural English Language Teachers

Overall, the survey results show that the surveyed teachers have a generally positive view of the training course. The course appears to have successfully covered a wide range of teaching demands, including resource availability, methodological adaptation to rural contexts, and linguistic skill development. While there were differences in the amount of agreement across different areas, most replies indicated agreement or strong agreement, implying that the course was generally valuable and well-received by the teachers polled.

4. DISCUSSION

For both teachers and students, teaching English in rural locations offers special opportunities and problems. Many studies have shown that rural English language teachers have a wide range of challenges, from isolation and cultural adjustment to restricted access to infrastructure and resources.

The results obtained in this investigation focus on evaluating the impact of a training course on rural English language teachers' skills and methodologies in Esmeraldas. It assesses aspects like curriculum relevance, teaching methods, trainers' language competency, individual progress, and participation. On the other hand, the results obtained by Ramos B. and Aguirre J. (2016) provide a broader overview of challenges faced by English teachers in rural areas in Colombia. It emphasizes reasons why instructors hesitate to work in rural areas such as isolation, cultural adaptation, and infrastructure issues. The study proposes potential solutions to address these challenges.

Moreover, the results found on the present research highlight that English language teachers found the course materials and content relevant to their linguistic and methodological demands. They mentioned that focusing on evaluating how training interventions influence teachers' professional identities and teaching practices in Esmeraldas are the most important aspects to take into consideration if we want to improve the teaching-learning process in those forgotten areas. Most of them align the overall relevancy of the content, with the training objectives without a context that could permit the students to use the language naturally. However, Cruz F. (2019) explored broader notions of professional achievement and identity construction in rural settings. It challenges traditional definitions of success in English language teaching and examines how rural teachers negotiate their professional identities in relation to external pressures and contextual factors.

Furthermore, this study demonstrated that teacher growth and adaptation within the school's context was the main emphasis of professional development in an international school. By comprehending these relationships, honing their craft, and adjusting to new obstacles, they investigated how the school's policies, collaborative efforts, and mentoring impacted teachers' professional development and pedagogical approaches in various classroom

contexts, particularly in the English classes. On the other hand, Mora et al., (2014) focused on professional development in a Mexican language center and explores the interplay between professional development, identity, and teaching practices. It examines how language teaching certificates and broader professional development strategies impact teachers' identities and practices.

Besides, this investigation recognizes the value of both modern teaching approaches and old ways. It emphasizes how crucial it is to be patient, use methodical approaches, and employ creative teaching techniques in order to meet the various requirements of pupils in rural areas. It also acknowledges the difficulties faced by English teachers in rural locations, highlighting the significance of adaptability and inventiveness in teaching strategies. In the end, the study aims to improve rural students' English language learning outcomes by finding a middle ground between respecting traditional teaching methods and incorporating cutting-edge techniques. In the same way, Gomathi's Research explores effective methods of teaching English to rural students and emphasizes the importance of patience, systematic approaches, and innovative teaching strategies. It highlights the challenges faced by English teachers, especially those working with rural students, and underscores the necessity for creativity and adaptability in teaching practices.

Also, this research has overlooked the complex dynamics and particular situations within different rural settings, despite its thorough analysis of the difficulties faced by English language teachers in rural locations and its suggestions for remedies. Although, it makes an effort to offer workable answers, it might oversimplify the difficulties involved in dealing with problems like the lack of skilled teachers and subpar facilities. Moreover, it's possible that the suggested solutions don't take into enough account the various cultural and socioeconomic settings of rural areas, which could result in poor implementation techniques. Therefore, to really improve English language instruction in rural places, a more nuanced grasp of the complex issues and customized strategies may be required identities and teaching practices. On the contrary, Shan & Abdul Aziz's research presents a systematic review of challenges encountered by English language teachers in rural settings and suggests solutions to overcome these challenges. It emphasizes issues such as the lack of qualified teachers, inadequate facilities, and negative attitudes towards learning English, proposing pragmatic

solutions to address these issues and improve English language education in rural areas. They finally argued that it is complex to find a way to overcome these problems without taking into account the complexity of the rural context.

Finally, based on individual progress observations, this investigation revealed that most of participants significantly improved their methodological and language abilities. Only half of the teachers successfully applied their new knowledge and skills in the classroom, indicating a disconnect between some teachers' theoretical understanding and practical application. Following this, Quintero's Research focuses on the development of innovative didactic materials to improve the teaching and learning process of English language in rural areas. It emphasizes the importance of creative methodologies and inclusive approaches to teaching, aiming to enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction in rural communities. Quintero finally concluded that the effectiveness of using innovative strategies and consequently teaching methods adapted to the context, the teaching learning process of the English language will be highly improved.

5. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it is very important to highlight that this research has brought to light a number of critical deficiencies among English language instructors in rural areas in Esmeraldas, including restricted access to instructional resources, subpar methods of teaching the language, imprecise English language usage, and a deficiency in the application of English Language Teaching (ELT) techniques. The survey's findings highlight the critical necessity for relevant methodological advancements in the instruction of English in rural Esmeraldas.

On the other hand, this study found that rural English language instructors viewed the training course contents as being usually relevant to their methodological and linguistic needs. The content's perceived relevance and its compatibility with the stated training objectives, however, differ noticeably. Although 70% of educators thought the materials were pertinent, only 60% thought they perfectly matched the training goals. This indicates that in order to improve rural English language instruction, training materials should be designed with greater attention to detail and with a direct focus on addressing the stated goals.

Finally, the study showed that a great effort was made to use interesting and useful teaching strategies during the training sessions. Engaging strategies were employed by 75% of trainers, while practical activities and group discussions were incorporated in 80% of sessions. There is potential for improvement in promoting more diverse and consistent active learning approaches, as only 55% of respondents actively promoted active learning methodology. Improving active learning techniques can help create a more engaging and dynamic learning environment, which could increase the training program's overall efficacy.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To Government:

It is recommended to carry out a comprehensive requirements analysis to pinpoint specific weaknesses and modify the curriculum in order to rectify the identified mismatch between training objectives and content. In order to guarantee that the training materials specifically address the methodological and linguistic needs of educators, close collaboration with them is required. The curriculum can be updated and reviewed on a regular basis to improve overall efficacy and ensure that it remains in line with training objectives and changing educational trends.

To Teachers:

A deliberate effort should be made to support and include more varied and consistent active learning strategies into the training sessions, building on the foundation of engaging teaching approaches that are already in place. This can involve encouraging critical thinking and collaboration abilities among rural English language teachers through the use of problem-based learning, peer teaching, and experiential learning activities. Facilitating the adoption of active learning approaches in the classroom can be further enhanced by offering teachers training and materials on their effective application.

Given the limited progress that can be made in methodological and linguistic abilities after training, it is critical to set up systems for continued support and professional development for English language instructors in rural areas. This could entail setting up mentorship programs, follow-up workshops, and peer learning communities to offer ongoing support, constructive criticism, and chances to hone skills. In addition, utilizing technology-enabled platforms for resource sharing and remote learning can help get over geographic restrictions and make it easier to access support systems and educational materials. In rural Esmeraldas, investing in long-term professional development programs can help improve the caliber of English language instruction.

REFERENCES:

- Alhabib L. (2022). Jean Piaget's Constructivist Theory of Learning and Its Application in Teaching. *International Early Childhood Education*.
- Cruz F. (2019). Rural English Language Teacher Identities: Alternative Narratives of Professional Success. Universidad EAN, Colombia. Redalyc.org
- Engelhardt K. (2018). Integrating Collaborative Learning in Classrooms Across Europe. European Schoolnet (EUN Partnership AIBSL).
- Freire Paulo. (2008). Education as a Process: Pedagogical Correspondence with Guinea-Bissau Educators. Yogyakarta: Student Library.
- Galaczi E. , Nye A. , Poulter M. , Allen H. (2018). Teacher Professional Development. Cambridge Assessment English the Triangle Building Shaftesbury Road Cambridge CB2 8EA United Kingdom.
- Gomathi B. (2014). Enriching the Skills of Rural Students with Effective Methods of Teaching English Language using LSRW Skills. *International Journal of Education and Information Studies*. Research India Publications
- Hossain M. (2016). English Language Teaching in Rural Areas: A Scenario and Problems and Prospects in Context of Bangladesh. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*.
- Laal M. & Laal M. (2011). Collaborative learning: what is it? *SciVerse ScienceDirect*, Elsevier Ltd – Research Gate.

- Lie A., Mina S. & Gozali I. (2022). The Impact of a Teacher Professional Education Program on English Language Use. Indonesia. The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language.
- Martin Wedell and Laura Grassick, (2020). Innovation in Language Teaching and Learning. In book: The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics - Research Gate.
- Mcleod S. (2023). Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development. Simply Scholar, Ltd.
- Mezirow J. (1997). Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice. EW Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, No. 74, Jossey-Bass Publishers
- Mora A., Trejo P., & Roux R. (2014). English language teachers' professional development and identities. PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 16(1), 49-62.
- Podolskij A. (2012). Zone of Proximal Development. Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6.
- Ramos B. & Aguirre J. (2016). English Language Teaching in Rural Areas: A New Challenge for English Language Teachers in Colombia. Cuadernos de Lingüística Hispánica, (27), 209-222.
- Risnawati, Afriani Z., Ernawati, Zulhijah A. (2022). Teachers' Challenges in Teaching English at Rural Areas. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science.
- Schön D. (2016). The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action. Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa Business.

- Shabani K., Khatib M., & Ebadi S. (2010). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development: Instructional Implications and Teachers' Professional Development. *Canadian Center of Science and Education* 237
- Shan, L. W., & Abdul Aziz, A. (2022). A Systematic Review of Teaching English in Rural Settings: Challenges and Solutions. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(6), 1956 – 1977
- Shrikhande R. (2017). English Language Teaching in Indian Rural Areas: Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*.
- Suphasri P. & Chinokul S. (2021). Reflective Practice in Teacher Education: Issues, Challenges, and Considerations. *PASAA* Vol. 62
- Szabó F. & Csépes I. (2022). Constructivism in language pedagogy. *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*. Department of English Language Pedagogy, Institute of English and American Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Operationalization of the Variables

OBJECTIVES	VARIABLES	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	DIMENSIONS	INDICATORS	ITEMS	
1.- To identify the main rural English language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills deficiencies for carrying out the teaching-learning process.	DEPENDENT: Rural English Teachers' Methodological and Linguistic Skills	The process and procedures of teaching and learning the English language in a rural community.	The process and procedures of teaching and learning the English Language in a Rural community taking into account the cognitive, affective and methodological dimensions.	Methodological	The use of materials	1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6	
					English language teaching methods		
					ELT techniques		
				Linguistics	Accuracy		7 – 8 – 9 – 10
					Vocabulary		
					Pronunciation Fluency		

Appendix 2

OBSERVATION GUIDE

The Contribution of a Training Course to Improve Rural English Language Teachers' Methodological and Linguistic Skills

1.- General Objective

To assess the contribution of a training course to improve rural English Language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills in Esmeraldas, 2023.

Specific Objectives

- 1.- To identify the main rural English language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills deficiencies for carrying out the teaching-learning process.
- 2.- To implement a training course based on an innovative didactic material to contribute to the improvement of rural English Language teachers' methodological and linguistic skills in Esmeraldas.
- 3.- To evaluate the methodological and linguistic improvement of the rural English language teaching learning process.

2.- Observation Parameters:

Curriculum and Content

- Are the course materials and content relevant to the linguistic and methodological needs of rural English language teachers?
- Does the curriculum align with the objectives of the training?

Instructional Methods

- Observe the teaching methods used by the trainers. Are they engaging and effective?
- Assess the use of practical activities, group discussions, and hands-on experiences.
- Evaluate the extent to which active learning is promoted.

Language Proficiency

- Assess the trainers' proficiency in the English language.
- Observe if the training includes language improvement exercises for teachers.

Individual Progress

- Note the progress made by participants in their linguistic and methodological skills.
- Evaluate their ability to apply new knowledge and techniques in a classroom context.

Participation and Engagement

- Observe the level of participation and engagement of the rural English language teachers during the training.
- Determine whether they are actively contributing to discussions and activities.

Resources and Materials

- Evaluate the availability and appropriateness of training resources and materials.
- Assess whether these resources are accessible for rural teachers after the training.

Appendix 3

SURVEY PRE-TRAINING COURSE

Instructions: Please answer the following questions based on your experience and perception after completing the training course. Choose the option that best represents your views.

Demographic Information:

1. Name:
2. Location (Rural Area/City):
3. Years of Experience as an English Language Teacher:

Part A: Identifying Deficiencies

4. What do you consider to be the main methodological deficiencies in rural English language teaching in Esmeraldas?
 - a. Limited access to teaching materials
 - b. Inadequate English language teaching methods
 - c. Insufficient use of ELT techniques
 - d. Poor accuracy in English language instruction

- e. Limited vocabulary instruction
- f. Pronunciation issues
- g. Lack of fluency in English language teaching

5. Did you participate in a training course designed to improve your methodological and linguistic skills?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If you answered 'Yes' to the previous question, please rate the effectiveness of the training course on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not effective, 5 being highly effective) for each aspect:

- a. Use of teaching materials:
- b. English language teaching methods:
- c. Use of ELT techniques:
- d. Accuracy in teaching:
- e. Vocabulary instruction:
- f. Pronunciation improvement:
- g. Enhancing fluency:

6. Since participating in the training course, have you noticed any improvement in your methodological and linguistic skills as a rural English language teacher?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being strongly disagree, 5 being strongly agree), please rate the overall impact on your ability to carry out the teaching-learning process as a rural English language teacher in Esmeraldas.

Appendix 4

SURVEY POST-TRAINING COURSE

The Contribution of a Training Course to Improve Rural English Language Teachers' Methodological and Linguistic Skills.

Instructions: Please answer the following questions based on your experience and perception after completing the training course. Choose the option that best represents your views.

Demographic Information:

1. Name:
2. Location (Rural Area/City):
3. Years of Experience as an English Language Teacher:

Training Course Assessment:

4. Did the training course provide you with a variety of teaching materials and resources to enhance your English language lessons?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

5. Did the training course introduce you to effective English language teaching methods tailored for rural settings?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree

- [] Strongly Agree

6. Did the training course teach you practical ELT techniques suitable for your rural English language classroom?

- [] Strongly Disagree

- [] Disagree

- [] Neutral

- [] Agree

- [] Strongly Agree

Linguistic Skills:

7. Did the training course help improve your accuracy in using the English language, including grammar and syntax?

- [] Strongly Disagree

- [] Disagree

- [] Neutral

- [] Agree

- [] Strongly Agree

8. Did the training course enhance your vocabulary knowledge for teaching and communication?

- [] Strongly Disagree

- [] Disagree

- [] Neutral

- [] Agree

- [] Strongly Agree

9. Did the training course provide guidance and practice for improving your pronunciation as a teacher?

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree

- Neutral

- Agree

- Strongly Agree

10. Did the training course contribute to improving your fluency in spoken English, which is beneficial for your teaching and communication skills?

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree

- Neutral

- Agree

- Strongly Agree

11. Please share any specific comments or suggestions you have about the training course and its impact on your teaching and language skills.