#### FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN PEDAGOGÍA EN INGLÉS



#### CREATION OF A CHECKLIST FOR PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS TO EVALUATE SPEAKING-FOCUSED MATERIALS

TESIS PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN

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Concepción, 2019

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The long path to get to this point could not have been completed without my beloved ones' support. I would like to specially thank my mother, my little sister and my best friend who were always remarking how capable I am of achieving every goal that has been set along this time.

Emy Aguayo Retamal

I would like to thank my family and friends, who always encourage me to be brave and persevering. If it weren't for you and your unconditional love and support I wouldn't have been able to do this.

Valentina Acuña Parada



#### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study was to design a realistic assessment tool that English teachers can use to evaluate ELT materials aimed to develop the speaking skill, based on the Principles of Effective Materials Development and the Communicative Language Teaching features. The assessment tool was designed based on the information collected in an initial survey implemented among the target group composed by in-service teachers of English, and it was piloted among pre-service teachers from the English teaching program at University of Concepción.

While conducting this research, information was drawn from the fields of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), material design, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), materials evaluation, the speaking skill, Principles and guidelines for material design and on the English study programmes provided by the Chilean Ministry of Education. Thus, this study intends to contribute to the evaluation of English teaching materials and speaking-focused materials among Chilean teachers of English.

Keywords: Material Design, Material Evaluation, Speaking Skill, Evaluation Checklist.

#### RESUMEN

El objetivo de este estudio fue diseñar un instrumento de evaluación realista para ser utilizado por profesores de inglés para evaluar materiales educativos creados para desarrollar la habilidad oral. Este instrumento fue diseñado en base a los Prinicipios del desarrollo de material efectivo y las características de la enseñanza comunicativa del lenguaje. La herramienta de evaluación fue creada en base a información recogida en una encuesta inicial implementada en un grupo de estudio compuesto por profesores de inglés en ejercicio en enseñanza media y básica. Luego fue piloteada entre alumnos de pregrado, quienes cursan quinto año en la carrera de Pedagogía en Inglés en la Universidad de Concepción.

Mientras este estudio fue llevado a cabo, la información fue extraída desde los campos de Adquisición de una Segunda Lengua, diseño de material, enseñanza comunicativa del lenguaje, evaluación de material, la producción oral, Principios y Pautas para el diseño de material y los programas de estudio proporcionados por el Ministerio de Educación chileno. Así, este estudio tiene la intención de contribuir a la evaluación de materiales para la enseñanza del inglés, y materiales enfocados en el desarrollo de la habilidad oral entre profesores chilenos del idioma inglés.

Palabras claves: Diseño de material, evaluación de material, producción oral, lista de verificación evaluativa.

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## CHAPTER 1 RESEARCH DESCRIPTION



#### 1.1 Introduction

Becoming a bilingual community is one of the educational and social goals of many developing countries' governments. Having individuals who can communicate in English, the language of globalization and lingua franca in many countries, is of great importance for a community that aims to be part of a developed country. This is not an unfamiliar topic in Chile, since the country's efforts to acquire English as a second language and the settlement of a pathway to make Chile a bilingual country by the year 2030 (Gobierno de Chile, 2014) have been made. Likewise, initiatives have been launched since the educational reform of 1996, which aimed to improve the quality of primary and secondary education in Chile. Under this policy, the English Opens Doors program in 2004 was created in order to reinforce the learning process of the language within the public institutions of the country.

Unfortunately, the results of the students' performance in English language standardized tests have not been very promising; according to the 2014 Simce results for 3rd year high school students (Agencia de Calidad de la Educación, 2014), only 25% reached the "Certified" category in English, which means that they are able to understand short simple texts and daily life conversations. Also, according to the results of the recent EF's English Proficiency Index (English First, 2018) the level of English language skills in Chile is stagnated, being placed in the low proficiency band again in number 46 out of 88 countries surveyed and it has been placed in around the same rank for 4 years. Although these results are better than the ones got in the previous years in which Chile was placed in the lowest band, the results of the research conducted by Blazquez and Tagle (2010) also show negative statistics. The research, which was conducted in 299 primary and secondary schools of the country with a total of 11.000 students, showed that only a 5% of them reached a B1-B2 level, 37% reached A2 level or elementary level, 45% reached A1 level, and 4% did not understand English at all. Even though 10% of the participants showed to have more competence in the language, their linguistic level does not meet the requirements to perform effectively and efficiently in the labor and educational market (Ministerio de Educación 2006).

Recently, pre-service and in-service teachers of English have discussed about some flaws in the alignment of the National English curriculum and the course books that the Chilean Ministry of Education provides to every public school to serve as the guide of every lesson. This information can be supported by research conducted in 2016 (Acosta et al, 2016). The results were very clear and they concluded that both instruments are barely aligned. This information can explain the fact that teachers of English who work in the public system of education tend – on the one hand - not to stick to the curriculum at the moment of planning and therefore they guide their lessons by the course book. On the other hand, some teachers tend to stick to the curriculum, which leads to leaving the corresponding course book and actual planning aside. Thus, new material is needed so they create their own or adapt instructional materials from the web and other sources.

There is not much research about the use of materials developed by Chilean teachers of English. Thus, it is hard to count on substantial evidence about teachers' practices in the material design area. However, according to Cadagán (2017) this may be a problematic area for teachers. The data collected in her research project conducted indicated that 82% of pre-service teachers did not receive enough assistance in the development of teaching materials, and 76% did not have enough knowledge about teaching materials. Taking into consideration the statistics presented, the quality of the materials developed can be questionable and – to some extent- detrimental for the teacher's performance and, as a consequence, the students' learning process.

Considering the contextual information mentioned above, this research project aims to identify possible problematic components in the area of materials development and evaluation among Chilean teachers of English and to propose a possible solution in the form of a checklist to evaluate their teaching materials paying special attention to communicative purposes. The checklist will be created based on principles, quidelines, evaluation models and previous research.

As previously mentioned, the level of English language skills of Chilean students has been proven not to be as high as it should be so that Chile becomes a bilingual nation in the near future. Because of this, it is essential to enhance the L2 teaching-

learning process and focus on developing and bettering students' skills through high-quality teaching materials. Therefore, this research project will not only contribute to tackle the specific problem of teachers in materials' development, but it will also contribute to broaden the limited data in this field in the Chilean educational context.



#### 1.2 Research problem

Within the Chilean educational context, being a proficient teacher demands achieving the goals of the four areas of the *Marco para la Buena Enseñanza* designed, published, and regulated by the Ministry of Education. These four areas comprise the teachers' knowledge, teachers' ability to create a comfortable learning environment for students, teachers' professional responsibilities and teachers' performance in the teaching-learning process. Each of these four domains contain a minimum of four criteria that specify different goals to be achieved. More specifically to the English pedagogy context, the Ministry of Education has created a document called "Estándares orientadores para carreras de Pedagogía en Inglés", which details standards that the future teacher must fulfill. The most important standard for this research is standard number 8 (*Estándares disciplinarios de Inglés*) which states that "the future teacher of English knows how to design, select and adapt either virtual or physical resources that are appropriate for the teaching and learning of the foreign language".

However, pedagogy programs have failed to properly train their students in the area of material design. According to data collected by Cadagán (2017) from a group of Chilean pre-service teachers at Universidad de Concepción, the majority of the group surveyed indicated that they did not receive assistance in the development of teaching materials, thus they did not feel confident about the material they developed. Unfortunately, out of the five universities that offer the English teaching program in Concepción, where this study is being carried out, none of them include a compulsory module in material design in their advertised curricula. This might lead us to think how neglected this area is, and backs up the insecurity that the pre-service teachers feel at the moment of developing their teaching materials. In addition, during teaching practicums served as pre-service teachers, we both realized our lack of knowledge and preparedness and difficulty when creating supplementary materials for the lessons that were appropriate to teach during our pre-practicums, as well as the complexity of creating material of high quality during the professional practicum without knowing if we were on the right track. Not only could we identify our weaknesses in the area but also realize that in spite of having several years of experience, some in-service teachers still struggle to develop their teaching materials and to assess them before being used, some of them even avoid doing it at all.

Regarding in-service teachers' materials development, it can be said that teachers are generally not aware that materials development and design is a field of study, thus, they are not familiar with the theoretical criteria that should be considered when selecting, creating or adapting material. According to data collected by Cadagán (2017), only 24% of Chilean English teachers reported to have enough knowledge on material design. Samuda (2005) concords with that information by stating that teachers will inevitably engage in "redesigning" work, and "tweaking, adjusting, and adapting material to suit particular needs" (p. 235). In this context, it is commonly assumed that teachers are equipped with the necessary ability to redesign material as a part of their professional competences; and it is seen as something essentially unproblematic (p. 236). Hence, it can be claimed that universities are overlooking the importance to train language teachers in the area of materials development resulting in ill-prepared teachers that do not have the knowledge or skills to develop and select materials. Samuda (2005) and Ball & Freiman-Nemser (1988) agree that material design must be studied and theorized, adding that formal training in the subject area should be incorporated into English pedagogy programs' curriculum. Given this, it is highly important to focus on offering help to Chilean language teachers regarding the rationale behind the decision-making process related to the use of materials in order to benefit the teaching-learning process, otherwise hampered by the lack of knowledge in this area.

In order to collect information about the perceptions and opinions about supplementary material designed by in-service teachers of English, a survey was developed and then applied to a group of practitioners who work in Concepción and surrounding small towns. The aim of the survey was to collect information about the criteria considered by teachers of English when adapting or creating material and to find out if they evaluate the instructional materials they use in class.

Regarding the results of the survey, they showed that none of the teachers had had a full module related to material design at university and that only two of them had been formally instructed about their use during their programs (see Figure 1). It was

also found that the criteria selected to develop their materials neglected some important principles such as meaningfulness, purposefulness, and comprehensibility (see Figure 2); that the evaluation of materials was completely absent in the stage previous to its implementation (see Figure 3), even though some of them thought this was one of the most appropriate stages to do it according to their experience and beliefs (as shown in Figure 4); and that most teachers' methods to evaluate their materials were *by feel* and by *modifying the materials* while *the use of a checklist* and *rubric* were less frequent (see Figure 5). Finally, an open question inquired teachers about the criteria they used to evaluate teaching materials and the results revealed that most of them pay attention to students' motivation, engagement, and goals' achievability.

Regarding the design of the instrument, the focus will be on materials used to develop the speaking skill. As discussed previously, the level of English of the country is quite poor and the speaking skill is the weakest one. It can be assumed that this occurs, to some extent, because of teachers' lack of awareness at the moment of selecting the right materials for specific contexts and not evaluating their use before their application. In addition, the survey's results showed that the variety of materials that the participants used to promote the speaking skill was narrow since it was dominated by flashcards and worksheets while the other type of material -such as prompts and visuals- was less frequent.

To summarize, the limited instruction and knowledge of a group of Chilean teachers of English in material design and evaluation might be explained by the lack of importance that English pedagogy programs give to this area. Additionally, there is no official existing tool in the field of teaching English as a second language which can be used by teachers to evaluate the teaching materials they develop or select for teaching and practicing the speaking skill resulting in possibly flawed materials to work with that can hamper the teaching-learning process as well as the achievement of the objectives set. In conclusion, the instrument of this thesis is key to raise awareness among teachers about the importance of evaluating materials before their use as well as improving students' speaking skill.

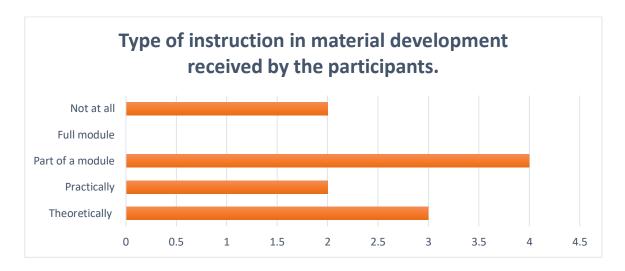


Figure 1. Type of Instruction in Material Development Received by the Participants.

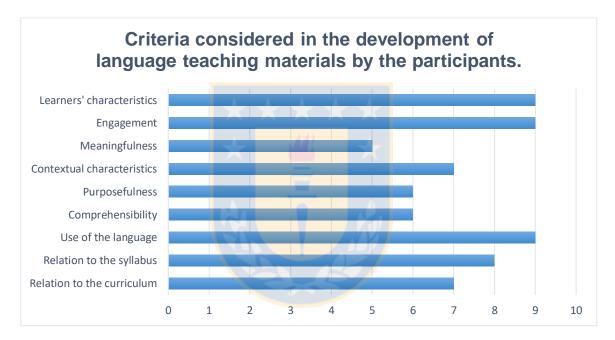


Figure 2. Criteria considered in the development of language teaching material by the participants.

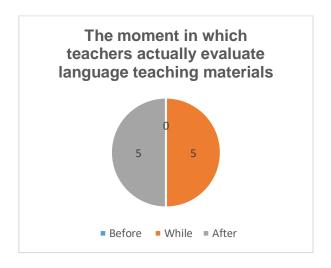


Figure 3. The moment when the participants evaluate language teaching materials.

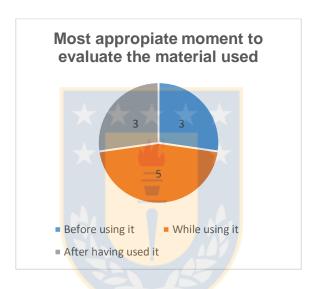


Figure 4. The moment when it is more appropriate to evaluate language teaching materials, according to the participants.

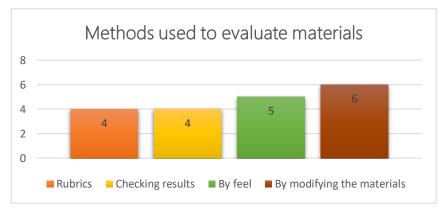


Figure 5. Methods used by a group of teachers of English to evaluate teaching materials.

#### 1.3 Research questions and research objectives.

#### 1.3.1 Research questions.

- What criteria do in-service English teachers use when selecting and/or developing teaching materials?
- When and how do teachers of English evaluate the material they develop?
- How can in-service and pre-service teachers make better and more informed decisions regarding the teaching materials to be used in their lessons to develop the speaking skill?

#### **1.3.2** General objective.

 To use the Principles of Effective Material Development and the Communicative Language Teaching's features to design an assessment tool that can help in-service and pre-service English teachers to evaluate the use of materials to develop the speaking skill.

#### **1.3.3** Specific objectives.

- To collect information regarding the knowledge, experience and attitudes of inservice English teachers towards the design of materials that promote the use of the speaking skill.
- To collect information regarding the criteria that teachers of English use to evaluate language teaching materials.
- To design a checklist to evaluate teaching material to develop the speaking skill, considering the Principles of Effective Material Development.
- To validate the checklist by in-service teachers of English and experts in the area.
- To pilot the checklist among pre-service teachers enrolled in an elective course on material design.
- To collect information about the pre-service teachers' perceptions after using the checklist for evaluating their teaching material.

# CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2. Literature Review

It is commonly believed by teachers that the development and design of teaching materials is an atheoretical activity, which can be mastered by experience. However, material design in the area of language learning responds to a series of theories, methods and principles related to second language acquisition and language teaching. It is due to this fact that it is highly important to understand the theoretical framework behind materials development in order to comprehend the rationale supporting the process of decision-making in the selection of the criteria to be included in the proposed checklist. Theories of language acquisition have influenced methods and approaches for second language teaching that influence material development and evaluation principles and models. Therefore, the theoretical background for materials development will be reviewed in this chapter, focusing on those implemented by teachers to develop the speaking skill.

Firstly, the different theories, methods, and approaches that are part of language acquisition and teaching will be reviewed and summarized. Secondly, the field of material development and evaluation will be described, and its guiding principles for effective material development will be presented. After that, different perspectives and models for material evaluation will be reviewed, and following this, some aspects of pre-service teacher training will be studied as well as some features of the Chilean context regarding language teaching and materials will be analyzed.

All the previously mentioned areas and elements are fundamental components of second language teaching materials that need to be taken into account when studying their development and evaluation.

#### **2.1** Second Language Acquisition and Material Design.

#### **2.1.1** Second language Acquisition and language-teaching material.

Several authors have studied Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in the last fifty years, as they started to consider necessary to know more about the understanding, comprehension, and problems of communication when using a different language than their own, and mostly because of the need for interaction out of the limits of a society. It is for this reason that SLA is a major branch of the interdisciplinary field of Applied Linguistics, which is also composed by the academic fields of education, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and communication research that form part of the backbone of SLA.

According to Ellis (2000, p.3) Second Language Acquisition is "the systematic study of how people acquire a second language" and he defines it as "the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside the classroom". However, this definition ignores the distinction between language learning and language acquisition claimed by Krashen (1982, p. 10). Thus, during this research project the concept *Second Language Learning* will be mostly used, as it is the most suitable term to the educational focus of this project.

The study of second language acquisition has developed a series of theories explaining the process of how a language that is different from the mother tongue of individuals is learned and has provided valuable information to improve this process in the education field. The study of this field is very important at the moment of teaching as it involves a learning centered view of language pedagogy, giving teachers the opportunity to organize in a better way the methodological procedures they have chosen for their lessons and the requirements to achieve a successful teaching-learning process. Hence, SLA research has investigated how different language-teaching materials design features impact on the way a task is performed while being used and on the acquisitions' success (Ellis, 2010, p. 33). In other words, it is pointed out the importance that the practice of materials development has on the acquisition of a second language. He also explains that "the fact that most teacher education programs include a second language acquisition (SLA) component is

testimony to the conviction that it has relevance to language pedagogy" (2010, p.34)" establishing the connection between SLA and language materials. This means that both components are directly related and there is a need of studying them theoretically and practically together.

Unfortunately, it appears that ELT publishers have not linked second language acquisition research to materials development yet. As it was presented by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013, p. 233) in a survey review of adult course books by which they were "disturbed by the apparent disregard of the findings of second language acquisition research" and "disappointed that many of the main findings of SLA research were still being ignored." In fact, this is related to the constant need that some teachers have during their teaching practices to develop language-teaching materials to support and reinforce the process, many times leading them to avoid the use of the course books provided by the ministry of education. However, a possible restricted knowledge on material design may prevent them to develop high-quality teaching material.

#### 2.1.2 Material Design

Throughout this section, we will discuss the topic of material design, for this we will consider material as anything that presents or informs about the language being learned (Tomlinson, 1998). This includes any means used by teachers, for example flashcards, grids and charts, movies and videos, puzzles, slides, visuals, worksheets, etc.

As stated by Tomlinson (2010), "materials are often seen as being the core of a particular program and are often the most visible representation of what happens in the classroom". This proves how important it is that teachers are able to develop materials effectively, as it can reflect the way they teach and how their students respond to it.

As Richards (2010) posits "ELT materials draw on a wide variety of theoretical foundations, since they reflect particular assumptions about the nature of language". In spite of this, most of the time second language teaching education programs that prepare future teachers do not put enough emphasis on material design and evaluation, as the common belief is that it is not really necessary to have a theoretical

and practical preparation to create or adapt teaching materials. As proven by research carried out by Cadagán (2017), this leads to teachers graduating from those programs without enough knowledge and experience on the matter and, as a consequence, they are not able to apply this correctly when teaching students. According to Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988), most novice teachers have problems using, adapting and creating materials, and although a couple of years have passed since this study, it is still a reality that teachers need more preparation on the topic, and both practical and theoretical support is needed so they can develop their critical awareness and make informed decisions when creating or adapting materials.

As Samuda (2005) claims, "teachers will inevitably engage in redesigning work and tweaking, adjusting and adapting materials to suit particular needs", but this does not necessarily mean that teachers should not be able to create their own materials when required. According to Tomlinson (2010), "materials shouldn't be random recreations from repertoire nor crafty clones of previously successful materials". This means that teachers should be able to create effective materials on their own instead of just relying on using the ones created by other teachers that have proven to be successful in the past. Whether teachers are required to create their own materials or adapt materials previously used by other teachers, they must be capable of doing both, thereby they need to be prepared. According to Harwood (2010), "training teachers in this area will inevitably enhance their awareness of the pedagogical options available to them". Taking this into account, being able to create their own materials can even help teachers to improve in other areas of their job.

#### 2.2 Principles and Guidelines for Materials Design.

When developing their materials, teachers need a guide to help them organize and include characteristics that are necessary to create or adapt effective materials. Following this, several authors have created their own guides to develop materials effectively; throughout this section we will consider four of them:

- Principles for language development by Harwood (2010).
- Guidelines for material development by Howard and Major (2004).
- Principles of effective materials development by Tomlinson (1998).
- Framework for materials development by McDonough (2013).

Harwood (2010) states that materials should be coherent and principled applications of:

- 1. Theories of language acquisition and development.
- 2. Principles of teaching.
- 3. Our current knowledge of how the target language is actually used.
- **4.** The results of systematic observation and evaluation of materials in use.

Considering these criteria and the different guidelines created by the previously mentioned authors, adding others such as Hall (1995), Bell and Gower (1998) and Jolly and Bolitho (1998), Harwood proposed a series of principles of effective materials evaluation, which are summarized in the following tables.

**Table 1.** Principles of Effective Materials Development in relation to the Principles of Language Acquisition.

#### Principles of Language Acquisition **Principles of Material Development Number 1:** "A prerequisite for language 1. The materials should provide spoken and written acquisition is that the learners are exposed to content that is used to achieve outcomes considering a a rich, meaningful, and comprehensible input variety of text types and genres in order to make it of language in use" (Krashen and Long, as meaningful. 2. Materials should include authentic language to show cited in Harwood, 2010, p.87). students how language is typically used. 3. Language input should be contextualized. Number 2: "In order for the learners to 1. The materials and tasks should aim to achieve maximize their exposure to language in use, affective and cognitive engagement over a teaching they need to be engaged both affectively and point in a syllabus. cognitively in the language experience" 2. Materials should invite students to express their (Arnold and Tomlinson, as cited in Harwood, feelings and personal opinions on the topics. 3. The materials should make students think about the 2010, p.88) information presented before, during and after using the target language for communication. Number 3: "Language learners who achieve 1. The materials should be as interesting, relevant and enjoyable as possible. positive affect are much more likely to achieve communicative competence than those who 2. The challenges the materials set should be do not" (Arnold and Tomlinson, as cited in achievable for students so they can improve their selfesteem when success is accomplished. Harwood, 2010, p.89). 3. Materials should stimulate emotive responses through the use of music, songs, literature, art or controversial texts and so on to invite learners to articulate their feelings before completing the task.

<b>Number 4:</b> "L2 language learners can benefit from using those material resources that they typically utilize when acquiring and using their L1" (Harwood, 2010, p.90).	<ol> <li>Materials should encourage learners to use their inner speech before, during and after producing language.</li> <li>The materials should help students to reflect on their mental activity during a task to help them use such mental strategies for other similar tasks later on.</li> </ol>
<b>Number 5:</b> "Language learners can benefit from noticing salient features of the input" (Harwood, 2010, p.93).	<ol> <li>Materials should have an experimental approach so learners are engaged holistically, without focusing on any particular feature at the beginning. Then they can pay attention to achieve explicit learning.</li> <li>Materials should allow learners to make discoveries about language features on their own rather than giving them explicit information.</li> </ol>
<b>Number 6:</b> "Learners need opportunities to use the language to try to achieve communicative purposes" (Harwood, 2010, p.94)	<ol> <li>The materials should provide students plenty of opportunities to produce their own language and achieve the intended outcomes.</li> <li>Materials should promote the use of the language rather than just the practice and repetition of its features.</li> <li>Materials should ensure opportunities for feedback.</li> </ol>

Note: Adapted from "English language teaching materials, theory and practice" by Harwood, 2010.

**Table 2**. Principles of Effective Material Development in relation to the Principles of Language Teaching.

Principle of language teaching	Principles of material development
Number 1: "The content and methodology of the teaching should be consistent with the objectives of the course and should meet the needs and wants of the learners" (Harwood, 2010, p. 95).	<ol> <li>The majority of materials should be authentic, that is they should not have been created with language teaching purposes, as language the learners are exposed to must replicate the real context in which the target language is used.</li> <li>The materials should be a resource that helps students to develop their own language, and not be followed as if they were a script.</li> </ol>
Number 2: "The teaching should be designed to help learners to achieve language development and not just language acquisition" (Tomlinson, as cited in Harwood, 2010, p. 95).	<ol> <li>The tasks should encourage the students to imagines, make connections, predict, interpret, evaluate, and apply their knowledge, so they can achieve long-term learning.</li> <li>The tasks should provide learners with the opportunity to use the target language in a range of genres and text types so they can effectively develop fluency, accuracy, and appropriateness in the target language.</li> <li>The materials should aid the teacher into assessing the students providing constructive feedback.</li> </ol>

**Number 3:** "The teaching should be designed so as to provide the learners with learning opportunities that will help them to develop educationally in the sense that they become more mature, more critically astute, more creative, more constructive, more collaborative, more capable, and more confident as a result of the course" (Harwood, 2010, p. 96).

- **1.** The materials should be content-based to provide learners with the opportunity to gain knowledge about a particular area of interest or value to them.
- **2.** The materials should aid learners into developing skills that are transferable to real-life situations.

**Number 4:** "The teacher needs to be able to personalize and localize the materials and to relate them in different ways to the needs, wants, and learning-style preferences of individual learners" (McKay; Tomlinson; and Anderson, as cited in Harwood, 2010, p. 97).

- **1.** The materials should provide the teachers with ideas to personalize activities.
- **2.** The materials should aid the teacher into offering the students a space to make their own choices and work at their own speed.

Note: Adapted from "English language teaching materials, theory and practice" by Harwood, 2010.

Instead of creating a list of principles, Howard and Major (2004) developed a list of guidelines (which are flexible, as they are not rules) that can work as a framework for teachers when creating their own materials. Those guidelines are summarized in the following table.

**Table 3.** Guidelines for Designing Effective English Language Teaching Materials.

#### Guideline 1: English language teaching materials should be contextualized.

Materials should be contextualized to the curriculum they want to address, to the experiences, realities and first languages of the learners and to topics and themes that provide meaningful, purposeful uses for the target language.

Guideline 2: Materials should stimulate interaction and be generative in terms of language.

Ideally, language-teaching materials should provide real-life situations in which learners need to interact with each other as they would do it if they were outside the classroom.

Guideline 3: English language teaching materials should encourage learners to develop learning skills and strategies.

Besides teaching language skills, materials should also teach the learners how to learn, and that they help them to take advantage of language learning opportunities outside the classroom.

Guideline 4: English language teaching materials should allow for a focus on form as well as function.

To help develop active and independent language learners, materials need to encourage learner to take an

analytical approach to the language that surrounds them, and to form and test their own hypotheses about the way language works.

Guideline 5: English language teaching materials should offer opportunities for integrated language use.

Ideally, materials should give learners opportunities to integrate all the language skills in an authentic manner.

Guideline 6: English language teaching materials should be authentic.

Learners need to hear, see and read the way native speakers communicate with each other naturally.

Guideline 7: English language teaching materials should link to each other to develop a progression of skills, understandings and language items.

Clearly stated objectives at the outset of the design process will help ensure that the resultant materials have coherence, and that they clearly progress specific learning goals while also giving opportunities for repetition and reinforcement of earlier learning.

Guideline 8: English language teaching materials should be attractive.

Materials should have a good physical appearance, be user-friendly, durable and able to be reproduced.

Guideline 9: English language teaching materials should have appropriate instructions.

For instructions to be effective they should be written in language that is appropriate for the target learners and the use of the correct metalanguage can assist with making instructions more concise and efficient.

Guideline 10: English language teaching materials should be flexible.

Materials should allow teachers and students to make decisions and may offer flexibility in contents by providing a range of possible inputs from which teachers or even students can choose.

*Note:* Adapted from "Guidelines for Designing Effective English Language Teaching Materials" by Howard and Major, 2004.

The previously shown guidelines could be useful for teachers when creating language-teaching materials, but they may be too general as a result of this, might need some support from other frameworks created by different authors to be complemented, considering that depending on the material they could lack some features that teachers must include on their materials.

According to Tomlinson (1998), there are some basic principles of Second Language Acquisition that can be relevant to the development of materials for the teaching of languages.

### **Table 4.** Basic principles of Second Language Acquisition that can be relevant to the development of materials for the teaching of languages.

#### Number 1: Materials should achieve impact.

They should have an effect on learners, which can be through novelty, variety, attractive presentation or appealing content, among others. To improve the chances to impact the learner, the writer needs to know their target learners and about what is more likely to draw their attention.

#### Number 2: Materials should help learners to feel at ease.

As stated by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) "The less anxious the learner, the better language acquisition proceeds". Materials can help learners to be more relaxed and comfortable by having more white space, illustrations and texts related to the learners' culture, by being more helpful instead of always testing students and through content and activities that encourage personal participation.

#### Number 3: Materials should help learners to develop confidence.

Through activities that try to push them beyond their level of proficiency, engaging them in tasks that are both stimulating and achievable.

#### Number 4: What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful.

Learners need to be aware of the potential relevance and utility of the language and skills they are being taught. This can be achieved by relating the teaching points to the learners' interests and real-life situations they might perform using the target language.

#### Number 5: Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment.

They should allow learners to make discoveries for themselves, as they profit more if they invest interest, effort and attention in the learning activity. Materials can help learners to achieve this by providing them with choices of focus and activity and engaging them in learner-centred discovery activities.

#### Number 6: Learners must be ready to acquire the points being taught.

Readiness can be achieved by materials which create situations requiring the use of features that haven't been taught, by materials which ensure that learners have gained enough mastery on a teaching point before moving to a new one and by materials that contain some features that are slightly above the learners' level of proficiency.

#### **Number 7:** Materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use.

Materials can provide exposure to authentic input through the advice they give, the instructions for their activities and the spoken and written texts they include.

#### **Number 8:** The learners' attention should be drawn to linguistic features of the input.

Helping learners to pay attention to linguistic features of authentic input can help them to eventually acquire some of those features.

**Number 9:** Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.

Learners should be given opportunities to use the language for actual communication instead of just practicing in teacher-controlled activities, as this can help them achieve a purpose in situations in which the main elements of the interaction are determined by the learners.

Number 10: Materials should take into account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed.

Language acquisition is a gradual process, not an instantaneous one, and because of this, learners cannot be expected to learn a new feature and use it immediately after. To make this process easier, materials should recycle instructions and provide exposure to the language in communicative contexts.

**Number 11:** Materials should take into account that learners differ in learning styles.

Activities should be variable to adjust to the learners' styles.

#### Number 12: Materials should take into account that learners differ in affective attitudes.

Each class of learners using the same set of materials will differ from each other in terms of motivation, feelings and attitudes towards the language, teachers, their fellow learners and their teaching materials.

#### **Number 13:** Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction.

This silent period can make easier for learners to develop an effective internalized grammar, which can help them achieve proficiency when they start to speak in the L2.

**Number 14:** <u>Materials should maximize learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement which stimulates both right and left brain activities.</u>

In order to achieve a deeper learning more easily, the content of the materials should stimulate thoughts and feelings in the learners instead of being trivial and banal.

#### **Number 15:** Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice.

Controlled practice does not seem to have enough long term effect on the learners' accuracy.

Note: Adapted from "Materials Development in Language Teaching" by Tomlinson, 1998.

#### 2.3 Evaluation of Materials.

Throughout his section evaluation of materials will be discussed, as this is the main focus of this research project. For this matter, we will consider Tomlinson's (2003) definition of materials evaluation, which states that this "is a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials". Besides, we will consider both McDonough's and Tomlinson's models for language teaching materials evaluation.

For McDonough, the evaluation of the teaching materials should be carried out in three stages, starting with a macro-evaluation that focuses on the external factors, meaning how the material has been organized, followed by a micro-evaluation of the internal factors and their relation to the external ones and finally by and overall evaluation which focuses on the materials as a whole. These three stages are summarized in the following table.

**Table 5.** McDonough's Model for Language Teaching Materials Evaluation

STAGE	FACTORS
Stage 1: External Evaluation	<ul> <li>Intended audience.</li> <li>Proficiency level.</li> <li>Context and presentation of language items.</li> <li>Role of the materials (core or supplementary).</li> <li>Role and availability of teacher's book.</li> <li>Inclusion of a vocabulary index.</li> <li>Table of contents.</li> <li>Use of visuals and presentation.</li> <li>Cultural specificity of the materials.</li> <li>Provision of digital materials.</li> <li>Inclusion of assessment.</li> </ul>

Stage 2: Internal Evaluation		<ul> <li>Treatment and presentation of the skills.</li> <li>Sequencing and grading of the materials.</li> <li>Type of materials according to the different skills.</li> <li>Appropriacy of tests and exercises.</li> <li>Self-study provision.</li> <li>Teacher-learner balance in use of materials.</li> </ul>
Stage 3: Overall Evaluation	* *	<ul> <li>How materials could be integrated into a particular syllabus.</li> <li>How the materials will be useful and for which proportion of learners.</li> <li>If the materials can be modified so they can adapt to different contexts.</li> <li>If materials are flexible enough.</li> </ul>

Note: Adapted from "Materials and Methods in ELT: "A teacher's Guide" by McDonough (2013).

This model for language teaching materials evaluation focuses on the elements contained in the materials and it is mainly designed to be used before actually using the materials.

In the case of Tomlinson, the model for materials evaluation focuses on the moment in which the evaluation process is carried out, as he also proposes that the evaluation is carried out in three stages, but this time divided into "Pre-use evaluation", "In-use evaluation" and finally a "Post-use evaluation". These stages are summarized in the following table.

Table 6. Tomlinson's Model for Language Teaching Materials Evaluation

Evaluation's stage	Description
Pre-use Evaluation	As this is the first stage, it requires making predictions about the potential suitability and effectiveness of the materials (Tomlinson 2003). The main aspects to be considered in this stage are whether the materials may be effective for a particular group of learners considering previous information about them.
In-use Evaluation	At this stage, the value of the materials is assessed while observing or using them. It is more reliable than pre-use evaluation since it assesses the suitability base on real observed evidence rather than predictions (Tomlinson 2003). Ellis (1997) considers that this stage helps teachers to determine if it is worthwhile using the materials again, what works and what does not, and how the materials might be modified to make them more effective for future use.
After-use Evaluation	For Tomlinson (2003) this one is the most important stage, as it helps teachers to measure the actual effects that the materials have on the learners and provides them with reliable information about them. Here, learners can be included by asking them to assess the materials and provide suggestions about how they can be improved.

Note: Adapted from "Developing materials for language teaching" by Tomlinson, 2003.

Even though the common belief is that, as Tomlinson (2003) says, the best moment to evaluate materials is after these have been used, we also have to consider that McDonough's model could help teachers avoid trying to use materials that would not

be suitable, considering that if the material cannot meet the basic requirements, using it could be a waste of time.

#### 2.4 The communicative language teaching approach.

Learning a second language can be hindered by several factors, such as acquisition barriers, age and affective factors. Despite all these obstacles for learners, the need for teaching other languages to students has led to a variety of educational approaches and methods aimed at fostering L2 learning that reflect different theoretical views on how an L2 might be best learned. From *Grammar-translation Method* which as stated in Yule (2016, p.217) consisted of treating L2 learning in the same way as another academic subject, with emphasis on learning the language's set of rules and vocabulary lists to *The Audiolingual Method*, "a very different one" as cited in Yule (2016, p.217), which emphasize the spoken language and the use of *drills* to achieve a fluent use of the language. Most recent revisions of the L2 learning experience can be best described as *Communicative Approaches* which can be described as "a partial reaction against artificiality of 'pattern-practice' and also against the belief that consciously learning the grammar rules of a language will result in an ability to use the language." (Yule, 2016, p. 218)

Accordingly, Richards (2007, p.2) in his book "Communicative language teaching today" claims that the *Communicative Language Teaching* Approach can be understood as "a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kind of classroom activities that best facilitate learning and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom". The principles of communicative language teaching have reached all the aspects of the modern understanding of language teaching, including material design. McDonough (2013) claims "Communicative design criteria permeate both general course books and material covering specific language skills as well as the methodology of the classroom".

Communicative language teaching (CLT) sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence, including language knowledge aspects such as knowing when to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, knowing when to use formal or informal speech, knowing how to produce different types of texts,

knowing how to maintain communication despite the limitations that the learner may have (Richards 2013, p.3). CLT proposes a change in the roles of the learner and the teacher in the classroom, moving from a teacher who used to be a model to one being a facilitator or monitor in the lesson and moving from a student who used to work in a individualistic approach to one working in a cooperative context with their peers and to one who can take on more responsibility of their own learning.

Another goal of CLT is to develop fluency in the language use. According to Richards (2013, p.14), fluency is "natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations on his or her communicative competence". On the one hand, this means that teachers have to stop teaching *form* over *meaning*, a fact that is still quite common in Chile. This can be evidenced in the names of their lessons, which tend to be grammar focused, for example, "Modal verbs" instead of choosing a more communicative and contextualized one that could be named as "Predictions for my future" and giving it a mysterious context, such as "students have to go to a Tarot house to get their cards read and know about their future" and create a fun communicative occasion full of meaning. This means that students should be able to continue communicating in English even though they make errors and that teachers should stop focusing on accuracy in order to allow learners to achieve a high-level fluency.

Finally, Richards (2013, p.10) revises the types of syllabuses that CLT proposes, such as *Notional Syllabus*, and *Task Syllabus*, and the most prominent ones that are *Skills-based Syllabus* and *Functional Syllabus*. On the one hand, the skills-based syllabus focuses on the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and the division of them into micro skills, however, advocates of CLT stress the importance of integrating these skills as they happen together in the real world. On the other hand, the Functional syllabus focuses on the functions that students should be able to learn of the language such as offering apologies, expressing likes and dislikes, and asking for things. In this type of syllabus, communicative competence is regarded as the mastery of the functions needed for communication in a wide range of situations by providing the necessary vocabulary and grammar to the learners. However, none of these syllabuses were complete and

did not include important components of the language teaching process such as topics, notions, functions, situations, as well as grammar and vocabulary. For this reason, the first widely adopted within the classic framework of communicative syllabus was termed as *Threshold Level* in 1980, which comprised all the components mentioned above. Besides syllabuses, methodologists on this approach have focused on the kind of classroom activities that best suit the communicative approach such as group work, task work, and information-gap activities.

#### 2.4.1 The speaking skill

The skill of speaking consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. As cited by Bailey (2005, p.2), speaking is "an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information" (Florez, 1999, p.1). It is "often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving" (ibid., p.1) but it is not completely unpredictable.

The most updated approach to speaking is the Communicative Language Approach, which aims to master the learners' communicative competence which is the ability of language learners to interact with other speakers to make meaningful communication despite their limitations in the language. Communicative competence is composed by some other elements, such as *linguistic competence*, which is the ability to use the language in different contexts (i.e. changing from formal to informal register); *strategic competence*, which is the learners' ability to use language strategies when the knowledge or skills are limited; and *discourse competence*, which is the ability to produce coherent and cohesive speech. (Bailey, 2005, p.3)

However, the Chilean situation regarding speaking is far from being ideal. In Chile, only 2% of the population is able to talk fluently and accurately in English, according to Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (2012). This means that the competences listed above are not mastered by most Chilean people, which is discouraging data for the Ministry of Education's aspirations to become a bilingual country. From our experience, during our teaching practicums a great part of the students were reluctant to participate in activities that required to communicate orally in English and highlighted *speaking* as their main problem in the subject. One of the reasons that prevents students from being able to communicate in the target

language is the fear to make errors and being the laughing stock of their classmates. This event can be supported by Krashen and his Affective Filter Theory (1988) in which he explains that students who present low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety during their learning processes create an affective barrier or "mental block" that prevents them from continuing this process positively. It is true to say that students' anxiety makes speaking in English a scary situation and a big challenge for others. For this reason, teachers need to create safe learning environments and emphasize that errors are an essential part of the learning process and create a wider and larger variety of motivating instances in which students can practice more frequently the language by interacting with their peers in a more natural way.

#### **2.5** English in Chile.

Over the last years, there have been several reforms on the Chilean curriculum of education and many of them have been focused on teaching English as a second language. Nowadays, teaching English in Chilean public schools is mandatory from fifth grade on, and in some public and private schools is taught even to younger learners. Although it seems common for students to study English, the road to achieve this has been long, as this subject used to be seen as useless and unrealistic for Chilean people until a couple of decades ago.

During the 1990s English started to be considered an essential skill to develop both professionally and personally in Chile, as it facilitated the access to information and international communication, among other benefits. Taking this into account, in 1998 the Chilean Ministry of Education considered that the language should be included in the national curriculum, as until then English learning was limited only to private schools. At first, the curriculum focused more on receptive skills rather than in the productive ones as 80% was devoted to reading and listening comprehension and only 20% to both speaking and writing. Then, in 2004, the English Opens Doors Program was created to *improve the level of English of students from 5th to 12th grade through the definition of national learning standards, a teacher training development strategy and the support of Chilean English teachers within the* 

classroom. This program aimed to make English language learning more accessible to all students in public schools and end with the perception that learning English is expensive and only achieved within the private sector of education.

To evaluate the level of English on a national level, students from different grades have been taking SIMCE tests since 2010. The purpose of this evaluation is to contribute to the improvement of the quality and equity of education, informing the Ministry of Education about the students' performance on the different areas of learning according to the National Curriculum and connecting these performances with both the learning and social contexts in which they develop. In spite of all the reforms and programs carried out by the Ministry, this standardized test results shows that the majority of students do not meet the level of English intended and the gap between public and private institutions is still very wide.

One of the reasons why Chilean students still cannot meet the level of proficiency intended is because a large number of English teachers in our country are not well prepared to teach. According to the results of the Evaluación Docente carried out by the MINEDUC in 2014 to in-service teachers of English, 34% of them do not have a B2 level following the Common European Framework of Reference, the minimum required to teach. When it comes to developing materials to teach the language, teachers do not feel prepared, according to a study carried out by Cadagán (2017) and following the results of this study: most of the teachers have not been trained to create or adapt materials, and some of them have not even had a module on this area during their English Teaching Training period. Following the disciplinary standards for English Language Teaching elaborated by the Ministry of Education, specifically number eight: "design, select or adapt physical or virtual materials that are appropriate for the teaching and learning of the English language", many of the Chilean English teachers, as stated before, do not meet this minimum standard, as English teaching programs at universities do not put enough emphasis on the matter.

Taking this into consideration, it would be necessary for English teachers to have access to an instrument that helps and guides them when developing materials for their English lessons, especially if they do not have time to constantly evaluate their materials through other methods.

#### **2.5.1** Pre-service teachers training and problems.

In Chile, there is a big number of institutions that train English language preservice teachers and highlight essential aspects in the educational and linguistic field that aim "to train students that assume a scientific attitude towards the phenomenon of knowledge, which is fundamental in any of the educational actions that aim to stimulate and facilitate the learning process" as Universidad de Concepción states in its website. However, many English teaching programs sometimes fail to include some key courses on their curriculum. It is for this reason that a significant number of teachers is ill-prepared in the Materials design area as proven by Cadagán (2017) whose survey to a group of pre-service teachers in their last year of education at Universidad de Concepción indicated that they did not consider themselves to be prepared in the area of material design yet. This fact is of much concern since materials are of great importance to carry out English-language lessons and this many times leads to pre-service teachers' frustration after experiencing some failures during their teaching practicums. This information can be backed-up by Wang and Odell (2002) who claim that pre-service teachers face problems that make their experience more complex than it should be.

According to Liu (2005), field experiences or practicum have long been a central part of pre-service EFL teacher development and they are crucial for implementing EFL education reform. These field experiences allow pre-service teachers to make the connection between current theoretical knowledge and school practices; yet understanding how to teach EFL effectively requires further investigation. From our experience, the progressive teaching practicums can be described as incomplete experiences in the teaching field compared to the one undertaken during the professional teaching practicum. Firstly, the four progressive practicums that are part of our program just require four classroom hours a week; while the professional teaching practicum requires twenty hours in the classroom and a minimum of nine school hours. Secondly, the four progressive teaching practicums are spent mainly observing the lessons and assisting the mentor teachers on their work and are just required to teach only one lesson that is usually very prepared and

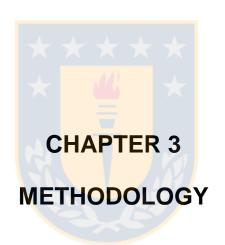
elaborated with the students since it is recorded by a non-official camera person, while on the other hand, during the professional teaching practicum pre-service teachers spend their hours being real teachers without having enough previous preparation and the three lessons that are assessed by the guide teachers are evaluated personally, which creates high stress levels on the pre-service teachers. Finally, it can be said that the progressive teaching practicums of the program are not well designed for the purpose of training pre-service teachers who possess the necessary abilities, competences and experience to undergo a successful professional teaching practicum from the beginning, which leads to emotional and psychological stress. This is backed up by Wang and Odell (2002) who state that these factors form one of the three types of problems that novice teachers can confront when learning to teach within school settings.

According to Knowles, Coles, & Presswood (1994, p.109), many pre-service teachers begin field experiences with hopes, exaggerated images, and expectations that are often shattered by the exposure to certain realities of schools, classrooms, and teaching. These realities are often the students' social background, students' misbehavior, and learners' reluctance to study English, which leads to frustration because of unpreparedness for classroom management and anxiety created by the self-pressure of creating very engaging lessons for disruptive students who may make the teaching-learning process more difficult. In this matter, a lack of support from the guide and mentor teacher in the right moment can include a "lack of instruction routines, procedures, skills, and techniques that are related to the context of teaching" (Wang & Odell, 2002, p. 515).

Lastly, during teaching practicums theoretical knowledge encounters practical knowledge and what pre-service teachers believe about effective teaching and learning may conflict with the reality of teaching in the school context. Liu's (2005) research indicates that pre-service EFL teachers have a tendency to follow their mentor teachers' English teaching methods, which focus on grammar-based methods rather than communicative language teaching approaches. It seems that learning to teach within the school context does not match the pre-service teachers' university education and current advocated practices. In conclusion, the connection between theoretical formation and practical knowledge needs to be more carefully linked, and

pre-service teachers need to be immersed more deeply in the school reality in order to master their abilities to teach based on their theoretical knowledge before their professional teaching practicum without the much-needed readiness or preparation to be an effective English language teacher of the twenty-first century.





# **Methodology**

This research project can be described as a survey-based, descriptive and experimental research study (Mackey & Gass, 2015).

For the sake of collecting information about the criteria considered by Chilean teachers of English when developing, selecting and evaluating language teaching materials a survey was carried out. The survey consisted of closed and open questions and it was validated by a "member-checking" technique, in which three professors from the English language department of Universidad de Concepción participated (See Appendix 4 for the Survey Validation instrument). After that, the survey was applied and the information analyzed and as a result a checklist to evaluate materials aimed to develop the speaking skill was proposed in response to the survey. The initial survey underwent a validation process. Based on the results, a final checklist proposal was designed.

The first part of this chapter aims to describe the results of the initial survey that was carried out in the first stage of this research project. Then, the second part describes the process of the creation of the initial checklist. This process includes the statement of the need to develop such checklist, the checklist organization, and the process to select the criteria for the checklist. Next, in the third part of this chapter, the validation process for the checklist is described including the methodology, participants and changes to the checklist as well as the final proposal. Finally, the description of the application of the checklist and the results are described, along with its participants and their reflections on the use of this tool.

# **3.1** Initial Survey.

## **3.1.1** Survey Description

For this research project, an initial survey (see Appendix 3) was developed to collect information about the practices and beliefs of Chilean teachers of English towards the creation/adaptation and evaluation of the material they use in their lessons. This survey was composed by four parts that aimed to collect different pieces of information. The first part aimed to know about the teaching context where they are immersed and the characteristics of the institutions. The second part was focused on

the teachers' background to their use of teaching material and their practices of the field of creating or adapting material together with the academic instruction they have received – or not – in the area. The third part focused on the use/adaptation or creation of the teachers' materials for their lessons. Finally, the fourth part of the survey aimed to collect information about how and when teachers evaluate the materials they utilize during their lessons and their beliefs on this practice.

Given that there is a group of teachers that are ill-prepared in the area of language materials development according to data collected by Cadagán (2017), the survey aimed to specifically identify how teachers were dealing with selecting and developing materials if they lacked theoretical and sometimes practical knowledge. As a result, counting on hard and clear data to further support the teachers' need of aid in selecting and developing materials that will allow their students to better develop their language skills, an assessment tool that will come to fill a real need can be proposed and implemented.

# **3.1.2** Survey participants.

Ten in-service teachers from different schools and teaching contexts were inquired about their teaching material's practices and beliefs.

The survey participants' age ranged from 25 to 59, from which 40 % were between 25 and 29, forming the first group. The second group ranged from 30 to 39, and was composed by 50% of the participants. Finally, the third group ranged from 50 to 59 years was composed by 10% of the number of the participants belongs to it. (See Figure 6).

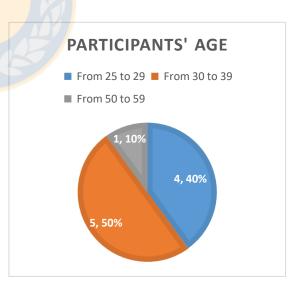


Figure 6. Participants' age.

Regarding the participants' gender, 80% of the participants are female, whereas 20% are male. These percentages show a predominance of female teachers. (See Figure 7).

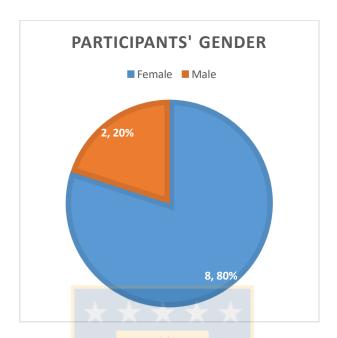


Figure 7. Participants' gender.

Regarding participants' teaching degree, 100% of them do possess one, in opposition to teachers who work actively in the field without having completed Higher Education studies as was shown by Evaluación Docente.

Regarding the participants' number of years teaching: The first range goes from 0 to 5 years and 60% of the participants are part of it, while 40% of them was within the second range which was from 6 to 10 years of experience.

# **3.1.3** Survey results.

A summary of the most relevant information collected will be presented in this subsection. As it was mentioned before, the survey was divided into four parts: I) Teaching context, II) Teacher's use of material background, III) Use / creation / and adaptation of materials and IV) Evaluation of material.

As the participants were part of different teaching contexts, the first part of the survey was designed to know specific characteristics.

# I. Teaching context.

Regarding the **type of school**, the results showed three groups: private, subsidized and public. Most of the teachers worked in public schools, as this option was chosen by 40% of the participants. Then, both private and subsidized schools were chosen by 30% each. Considering this, it can be said that for the participants of this survey is more common to work in a school that is part of the public system instead of a private one. (See *Figure 8*)

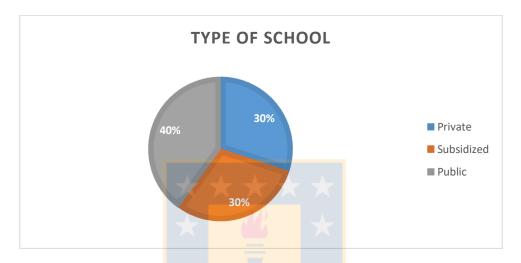


Figure 8. Type of school in which the participants work.

Regarding the **levels taught** at the schools where the participants of this survey work, the teachers had four options to select. The first option was "Pre-school", which none of the teachers selected (0%). The second option was "Pre-school and Elementary school", which 30% of the teachers selected. The third option was "Pre-school, Elementary school and High school", which 50% of the participants chose. Finally, the fourth option was "Adult school" which only 20% of the teachers selected. This means that most of the participants of this survey work with pre-school, elementary and high school students, thus they have to be prepared to create materials for students of varied ages and levels, approximately from four or five years old up to seventeen or eighteen. (See *Figure 9*)

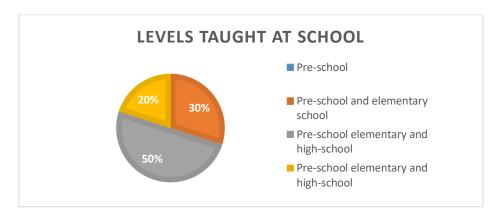


Figure 9. Levels taught at the schools in which the participants of the survey work.

Regarding the **socioeconomic background of the students** of the participants of this study, teachers had four options to answer. Most of the teachers, 40% of them, selected the option "Medium income". Then, 30% of them selected the option "Low income" and 20% selected "High income". Finally, only a 10% of them selected the option "Mixed income". (See *Figure 10*)

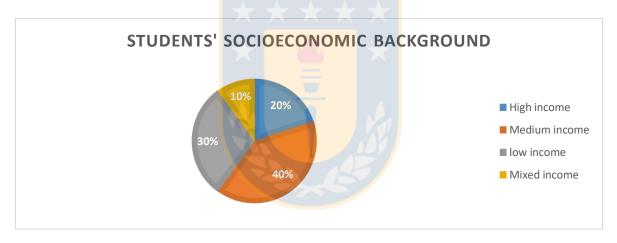


Figure 10. Socioeconomic background of the participants' students.

Regarding the **students' attitude towards English learning**, the participants of this study had three options to select: enthusiastic, indifferent and unenthusiastic. One of the teachers did not select any of the alternatives, the rest chose mainly enthusiastic (60%), then 20% chose indifferent and finally, a small portion of teachers chose unenthusiastic (10%). This shows that, contrary to common belief, students feel eager to learn English. This can be beneficial to teachers as it is easier to teach in a classroom where people actually want to learn. (See *Figure 11*)

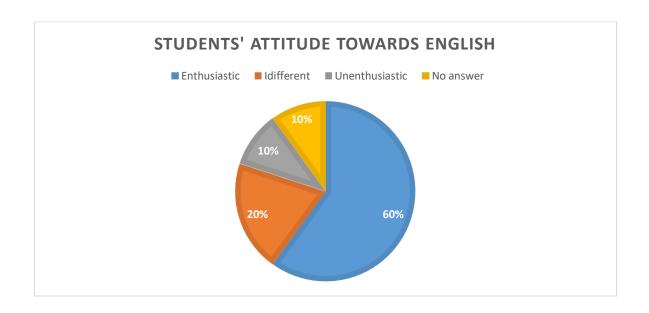


Figure 11. Attitude of the participants' students towards English learning.

Regarding the **emphasis given to the English subject** by the school, the participants had three alternatives to choose. Teachers mainly chose the alternative "Medium", as 60% of them selected this one. Then, 30% chose the alternative "Weak" and, finally, only a 10% of the teachers selected the alternative "Strong". This shows that, whether schools are private, subsidized or public, the emphasis given to the English subject is not mainly strong, but is not weak either. (See *Figure 12*)

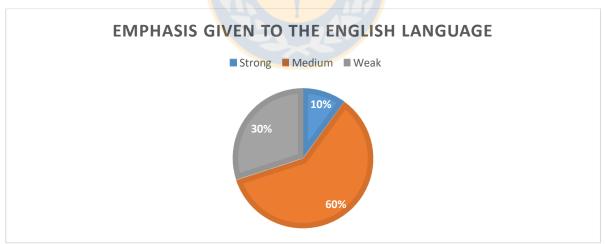


Figure 12. Emphasis given to the English subject by the schools in which the participants of the survey work.

As to the **resources available at the schools**, they had fourteen options to choose from and they had to select all the resources they had available. All ten teachers selected "Projector" and "Wi-fi access". Secondly, nine teachers selected the options "Board", "Printer" and "Dictionaries". Then, eight teachers selected the options

"Markers" and "Speakers" and seven selected "Lab" and "Laptop". Following this, only five teachers, that being 50% of the participants, chose the option "English classroom". Finally, only two participants had a smart board and just one teacher had prompts, a smart TV and a radio. Although some of these resources are available for a small amount of teachers, all of them had at least two. (See Figure 13)

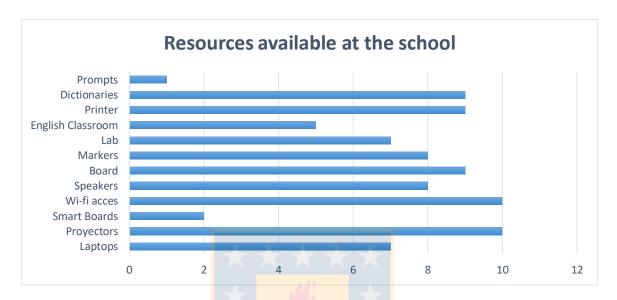


Figure 13. Resources available at the schools in which the participants of the survey work.

## II. Teachers' background on the use of instructional materials

In regard to the **creation or adaptation of materials**, 100% of the teachers indicated that they created or adapted materials for their lessons. This proves how necessary an instrument to evaluate those materials is, considering that, as shown before, some of these teachers did not receive enough instruction in material development.

Regarding the **assessment of the materials**, although all the surveyed teachers indicated that they created or adapted the materials they use, only 70% of them answered that they assess those materials. This means that three out of ten do not evaluate the materials they use in their EFL lessons at all. (See *Figure 14*).

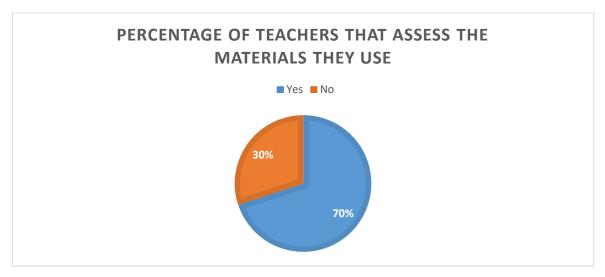


Figure 14. Teachers who assess the materials they create or adapt for their EFL lessons.

### III. Use/creation/adaptation of materials.

Regarding the **types of materials the participants of this survey use**, create or adapt, teachers had eleven options and they could select as many as they wanted. First, all of the participants chose the option "Flashcards". Secondly, nine participants selected the option "Visuals". Then, eight chose "Movies/Videos" as well as "Worksheets". Following this, four teachers selected "Grids/Charts" and "Slides". Then, only three chose "Whiteboard" and finally, only two teachers selected "Puzzles", "Classbook", and three other *Any other* option writing "Spelling bee contests" and "Oral Presentations". (See *Figure 15*).

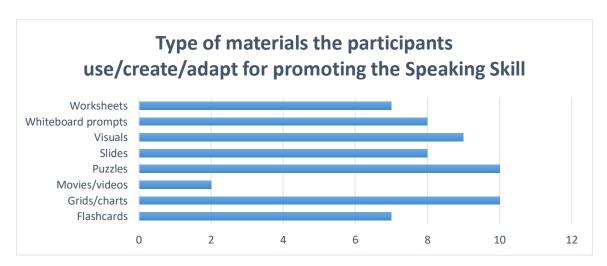


Figure 15. Type of materials the participants of this survey use.

# 3.2 Checklist design

To design the evaluation tool, three main factors were taken into account. First, the need for an evaluation instrument, to justify and support its creation. Then, the organization of the checklist, to make it as simple and manageable as possible. And finally, the criteria included, to make it suitable for the teachers and students' needs.

#### **3.2.1** The need for an evaluation instrument.

As discussed previously, the development of effective materials is a necessary skill among teachers of English, however, there is not enough emphasis on it. Especially in our country, where many of the English Teaching Programs do not have a compulsory module on material design, and as a result many of the teachers that enroll in these programs are not prepared enough on this area. Taking this into account, besides the studies on the matter carried out by Silva (2018) that proved the need for an instrument that could orientate teachers and aid them in the field, we considered that the creation of an instrument to evaluate the materials used, designed and adapted by teachers focused on teaching the speaking skill was fundamental.

Although there are some checklists to evaluate coursebooks, there are not enough to evaluate materials, especially the ones focused on the speaking skill. Because of this, this research project intends to provide a solution by developing a checklist that teachers can use to evaluate their materials before using them.

Considering the small amount of time Chilean teachers have, this checklist was developed to be as realistic as possible, organized in a way that could be easy for teachers to follow and including the most fundamental criteria, to avoid unnecessary length, as we hope that teachers actually use it.

# **3.2.2** Organisation of the checklist.

The checklist was organized to be as simple as possible, so teachers would not have major difficulties using it. First, the checklist includes a table in which teachers can write down some information related to the material, the topic of the lesson in which they are going to use it, the unit, the learning objective, type of material, date and grade. In this way, if they want to go back to the evaluation of the material or use it again, they can do it easily as the checklist contains the material's characteristics. Secondly, the checklist is divided into twelve dimensions: learners, communicative purpose, authenticity, cognitive development and engagement, intercultural competence, skills' integration, validity, social-affective development, classroom management, task completion, engagement and objectives. Following Tomlinson's model for language material evaluation (2003), these dimensions are organized in pre or before-use, while-use and post-use evaluation. The dimensions are followed by eighteen criteria, between one and four for each dimension. Next to these criteria there are three indicators in which teachers can check if their materials have each criterion present, fairly present but could be improved or if it is not present at all. Finally, there is a table in which teachers can write down some reflective comments about the evaluation of their materials.

# **3.2.3** Criteria selection process.

The criteria included in the checklist are based on the following sources:

- The principles for language development proposed by Harwood (2010).
- The guidelines for material development suggested by Howard and Major (2004).
- The principles of effective materials development by Tomlinson (1998).
- Adjustments made by teachers during the validation of the instrument.
- Checklist for Language Materials Evaluation by Silva (2018).

After analyzing the previously stated sources, the main elements (principles, guidelines, etc.) were selected and summarized to become the criteria present in the checklist, as this had to be short enough to be used by teachers.

## 3.3 Checklist Validation

#### **3.3.1** Validation process

In order to offer pre and in-service teachers an instrument to evaluate their teaching materials focused on speaking skill and ensure its quality, the checklist of this thesis completed a validation process. Firstly, some university professors of the English department at Universidad de Concepción were asked to analyze the criteria included in the initial checklist, called "Evaluation Checklist for Material to Develop the Speaking Skill". They had to verify that each criterion was understandable and accurate, aligned with the objective and its importance. These aspects were under three categories: Clarity, Coherence, and Relevance. Firstly, Clarity category evaluates if the statement can be easily understood and if the writing is clear and accurate. Secondly, Coherence category evaluates if the statement is aligned with the objective of the checklist. Thirdly, Relevance category evaluates the importance of the statement and if it should be included or not. The three categories had a scale ranging from 1 to 4, being 1 the lower score and 4 the higher. The full validation tool can be found in Appendix 2.

In order to make modifications to the checklist the results of the validation instruments were checked against two factors: 1) number of participants who assigned given value under a category, and 2) the comments, suggestions, and justification given by the participants to assign a value to the criteria.

#### **3.3.2** Participants.

The validation instrument was completed by four professors who have expertise on Material Design and Second Language Acquisition areas and have trained preservice teachers of English for at least 10 years.

After analyzing and condensing the results and information yielded by the respondents' answers, the checklist was improved and it can be seen in Appendix 1 and the table used to analyze the results in Appendix 5.

# **3.3.3** Modifications and improvements.

Taking into consideration the suggestions made by the professors who took part on the Checklist's validation process some changes were made which were the rewriting, combination and elimination of some criteria. In order to support the changes, a rationale for each of them was implemented. The rationale for the re-writing was the improvement of the criteria in order to clarify or delimit the considered idea while the rationale for the combination of two criteria was the improvement of the checklist as the criteria 1 and 2 in the Communicative Purpose dimension conveyed the same meaning and needed to be combined into only one criterion and eliminating one of them would not affect the overall objective of the checklist and would contribute to maintain the checklist as short and clear as possible. Finally, the rationale for the elimination of one of the criteria was to simplify the checklist as it was regarded as too complex for the type assessment and the elimination of it would not affect the objective of the evaluation tool.

# 3.4 Checklist's Piloting Process

A new process was part of this thesis, this process was a step beyond what had been done in the previous theses conducted on this topic and it is the piloting process of the checklist after being validated. The "Evaluation Checklist for Materials to Develop the Speaking Skill" was piloted in an elective course on Material Design at Universidad de Concepcion.

Firstly, it was asked for the permission of the professor in charge of the elective course to pilot the instrument in her class. After that, it was handed in to the preservice teachers who attended one lesson of their course and it was proposed to them to use it in order to evaluate the teaching material developed for an evaluated assignment that they had to present. Then, the students evaluated their materials and gave the checklist back to their professor.

## 3.4.1 Participants.

The participants of the piloting process were 11 pre-service teachers who are enrolled in an elective course on Material Design at Universidad de Concepcion. These students are on their third, fourth, and fifth year of the English Teaching Program at Universidad de Concepción. It can be inferred from this information that they have already experienced a teaching practicum so they have had to develop teaching material to teach English at schools. In addition, it needs to be mentioned that in the elective course that they are enrolled in, they had already been introduced to some principles on material design so they had previous knowledge on the matter.

#### **3.4.2** Results.

In this section, the results of the checklist's piloting process will be presented and described. The data will be presented in graphs which will show the results of each criterion according to its dimension.

In the first dimension called "Learners", which is focused on students' background on the English language, pre-service teachers were asked to identify if their materials complied with the two criteria presented. The first criterion was aimed to examine the materials' appropriateness for learners' age and interests and 9 out of 11 pre-service teachers indicated that this criterion was present on their work while only two of them indicated that this was fairly present. The second criterion was aimed to examine the materials' appropriateness for the learners' level of English and the eleven participants indicated that their material complied with this criterion. From these results, it can be inferred that the pre-service teachers are aware of developing materials that improve the chances to impact the learners by knowing their interests and what tasks can be engaging for them. At the same time, it seems that pre-service teachers are aware of the need of developing materials that are suitable for the students' level of English so the task can be seen as achievable by them and avoids possible frustration. (See Figure 16)

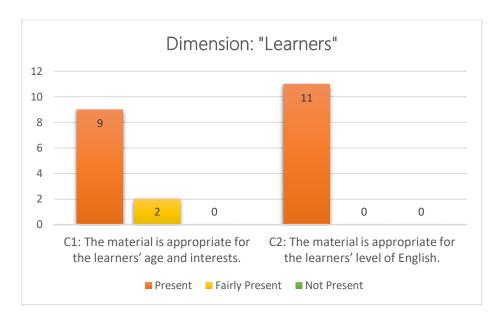


Figure 16: "Learners" dimension.

The second dimension called "Communicative Purpose", aims to check the presence of one criterion which is one of the most important principles of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. The criterion of this dimension aims to identify if the materials are able to draw the learners' attention to *meaning* and *fluency* rather than accuracy. Regarding the results (see figure 17), 9 out of eleven pre-service teachers indicated that the criterion is present, while only two indicated that is fairly present but could be improved. From these data, it can be deduced that the pre-service teachers inquired have knowledge about CLT and most of them are able to put into practice its tenets. Let us consider that it is sometimes difficult to create a paradigm shift from a grammar-based approach to Communicative Language teaching Approach, since it is the way that a considerable portion of older generations of pre-service teachers were taught when they were still studying at school and from our experience it is sometimes hard not to focus on grammar aspects in our teaching experiences.

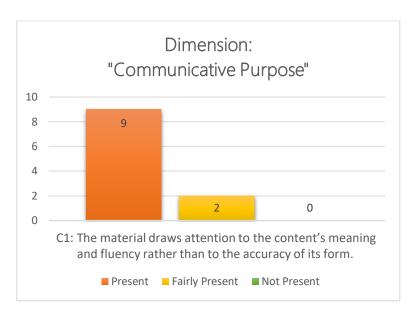


Figure 17: Communicative Purpose Dimension.

The third dimension called "Authenticity", which aims to check the authenticity of the materials, considers 2 criteria. The first criterion aims to identify if the material evaluated is authentic or adapted to students' reality and 10 out of 11 participants indicated that their material complied with this criterion while only one indicated that it was fairly present but could be improved. The second criterion aims to identify if the material provides a clear and real-life context in which the language will be used and 7 out of 11 participants indicated that this criterion was present while 2 that it was fairly present but could be improved and 2 that it was not present at all. The results may show that the participants are able to develop authentic material that is not originally created with language purposes and they are able to replicate the reality in which students are immersed and not an ideal one as it is commonly seen. On the contrary, even though the majority of pre-service teachers indicated that the second criterion was present in their materials, the results also show some weaknesses at the moment of developing materials that are able to provide a clear and real-life context so students can transfer the content learned during the lesson out of the classroom. (See figure 18)

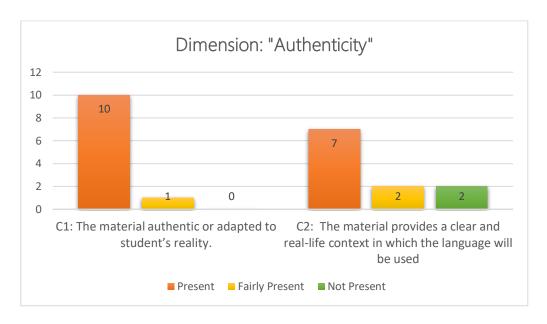


Figure 18: Authenticity dimension in the Checklist.

The dimension "Cognitive Development and engagement" is composed by two criteria. First criterion aims to check if the material developed allows learners to reflect on different levels of the language and only 5 out of the 11 pre-service teachers indicated that their materials had this criterion completely present while the same quantity of them indicated that this was fairly present and could be improved and 1 of them indicated that it was not present at all. From the results of this criterion, it can be deduced that even though pre-service teachers may know about the importance of educating learners who are able to reflect on their own knowledge, they are not prepared enough yet to develop materials that encourage reflection on different levels as part of the teaching-learning process. The second criterion aims to check if the material can encourage students to make connections with their own lives so the task can be memorable and keeps them engaged during the task and 6 out of 11 pre-service teachers, that it is slightly more than a half of them, indicated that their material had this criterion present while 4 and 1 of them indicated that the criterion was fairly present and not present at all respectively. These results suggest that a similar quantity and almost approximately half of the participants struggle to comply with the principles to develop materials that enhance students' cognitive development and that can keep them engaged. (See figure 19)

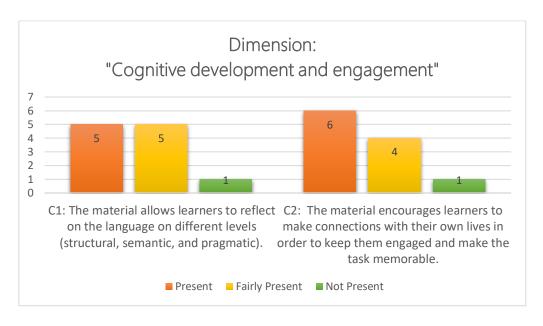


Figure 19: Cognitive development and engagement dimension.

In the dimension Cultural and Intercultural Competence the results were varied (see figure 20). This dimension aims to check how apt the participants are to prepare the materials that comply with the cultural and intercultural requirements needed to communicate in today's society. The criterion that was more present in the material created by pre-service teachers was-criterion number 2, that aimed to check if the materials avoided gender stereotypes and raises social awareness in the topic, in which 8 out of 11 pre-service teachers indicated that it was present while the criterion less present in the materials was criterion number 4, The material helps students to develop their critical thinking about other cultures and their own with 4 assessed materials that did not have it present at all, 4 having it fairly present and only 3 having it completely present. As well as criterion number four, criterion number 1 was more or less balanced but on the opposite levels and with and more positive results, with 4 materials having the criterion present, 4 having it fairly present, and 3 not having it present at all. Lastly, criterion number 3 of this dimension has more positive results that the two mentioned before, predominating the level Fairly Present with 6 materials, followed by the level *Present* with 4 and with just 1 material on *Not Present* level. From the results, it can be assumed that the pre-service teachers' biggest strength in this dimension is their awareness of providing students with teaching materials that avoid gender stereotypes and raises social awareness which is a very

important issue in today's society and students from all levels need to be critical thinkers on this area. The results also provide evidence that not enough is known by pre-service students about the development of materials aimed to encourage students' critical thinking on Cultural and Intercultural competence. It also evidenced that this group of pre-service teachers are aware of the notion of developing materials that prepare learners to communicate with people from different cultures. However, this is not well applied to materials. Lastly, the findings demonstrated that pre-service teachers know the importance of providing students with materials that link their local culture in order to place them in a closer mental setting to communicate and not one that it may be out of the reach of some students.

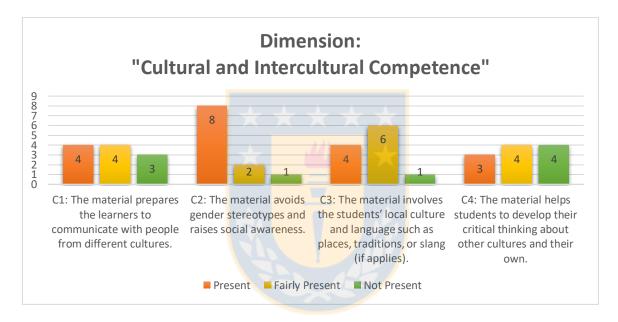


Figure 20: Cultural and Intercultural Competence Dimension in the checklist.

Skills integration dimension is composed by one criterion and it aims to evaluate if the material complies with integrating the four productive skills and not just focusing on the speaking skill in order to achieve higher level learning. The findings suggest (see figure 21) that pre-service teachers are well-prepared on this area but are not able to apply their knowledge fully yet since only 6 of the material assessed had the criterion present, while 3 and 2 had it fairly present and not present at all respectively.

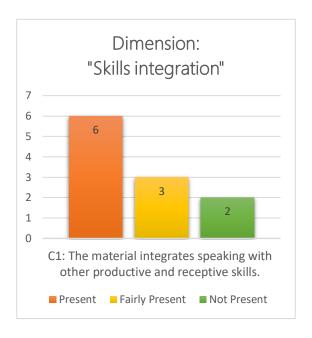


Figure 21: Skills integration dimension in the checklist.

The last dimension of the pre-use stage is Validity, and it is composed by one criterion that aims to check if the material is aligned with the learning objective and it is in accordance with what has been presented and practiced before. The results (see figure 22) were very positive and it can be assumed that the pre-service teachers that participated in the pilot process are skillful in the development of valid materials because 10 out 11 indicated that the criterion was present while only one indicated that the criterion was fairly present but could be improved.

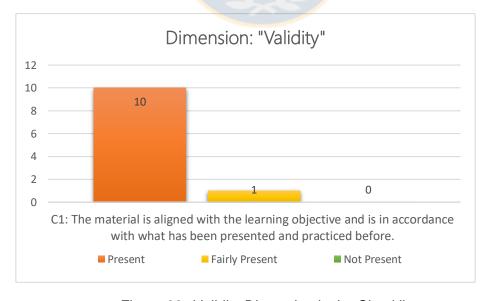


Figure 22: Validity Dimension in the Checklist.

After having analyzed *pre-use stage*, *while-use stage* will be analyzed in throughout this section. The first dimension of this stage is *Social Affective Development* and it is composed by one criterion that aims to check if the material provides students with a safe and constructive environment for speaking and interacting with their classmates while they were using it. It can be assumed that the pre-service teachers are partly prepared on this topic, which is key to enhance their speaking ability since it gives students confidence to practice it. As shown in figure 25, 7 out 11 materials achieved this criterion but 3 of them did not achieve it at all while in 1 of them was fairly present.

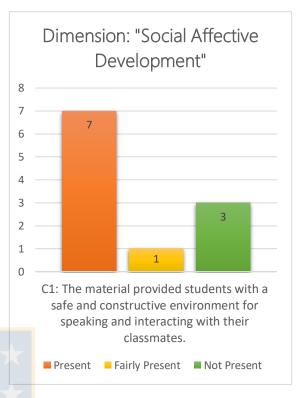


Figure 23: Social Affective Development Dimension in the checklist.

The second dimension of the while-use stage is Classroom Management and it is composed by one criterion which aims to check if the material assessed provided clear instructions which could be easily followed by the learners. The findings (see figure 24) were very positive since 10 out of 11 pre-service teachers indicated that their materials complied with this criterion.

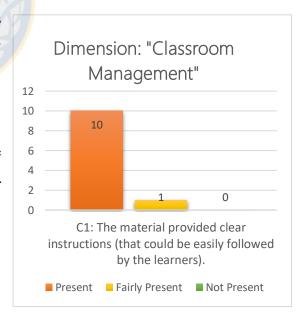


Figure 24: Classroom management dimension in the checklist.

The third dimension of this stage is *Task Completion* and it is composed by one criterion which aims to identify if the materials provided was successfully completed during the task without any inconvenience such as not being understood or too difficult for them. The results (see figure 25) show that out 11 participants 7 indicated that their materials had complied with this criterion while 4 of them had it fairly present.

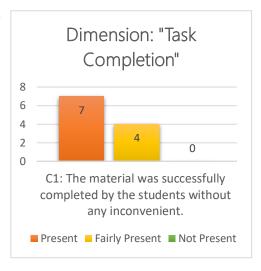


Figure 25: Task Completion Dimension

The last dimension of the while-use stage is *Engagement* and as well as the previous dimensions it is composed by one criterion. The criterion aimed to evaluate the materials' ability to encourage students to be engaged in the task and work actively and the results reveal that almost all of the materials (see figure 26) could achieve this and it can be assumed that the good results in the first dimension *Learners* are correlated with this one.

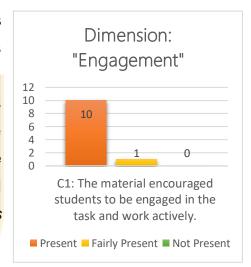


Figure 26: Engagement Dimension

Lastly, the last dimension belongs to the last stage which is *Post Use*. The criterion of this dimension called "Objectives" aims to check if the material was helpful for learners in order to achieve the learning objectives. The results showed that by having materials that are aligned with the learning objectives (see figure 27) is directly related to the achievement of them (see figure 27) since the results in the Validity dimension were exactly the same with 10 out of 11 materials having the criterion present

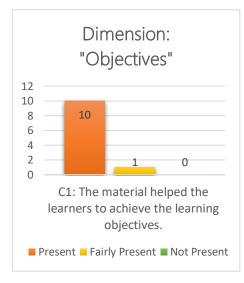


Figure 27: Objectives dimension

The Evaluation checklist for Materials to develop the speaking skill also counts with a "Reflective comments" section, which encouraged the pre-service teachers to reflect after having assessed the teaching material they had developed. The participants wrote comments about how to adapt the materials to other levels and how to adapt the ones that were not focused on developing the speaking skill so they could do it, the usefulness of the materials, and the importance of getting to know students' likes and dislikes in order to connect well with them and make their learning more meaningful. To conclude, it can be said that the pre-service teachers that were part of this pilot process are aware in Materials' Design field but not all of them are able to employ all of their knowledge to develop materials that comply with all the criteria suggested in the checklist provided.



# **3.5** Post Checklist's Use Survey.

# **3.5.1** Survey Description.

In order to collect conclusive data for this research project, a survey was conducted after the checklist "Evaluation Checklist for Material to Develop the Speaking Skill" was piloted. The survey aimed to identify the participants' perceptions after having used the mentioned assessing tool and their thoughts and opinions regarding some key issues on Materials Design field and Pre-Service Teachers' training. The survey collected information about their general training program and teaching experience, their experience in materials' evaluation, their opinions on the checklist employed, and their perceptions of Material Design and Evaluation.

Having this data to further support that the checklist developed along this process ensures the need of implementing it in teacher training programs and schools, in order to help both pre and in-service teachers to select and develop materials that will allow their students to better their language skills, with special focus on the productive speaking skill.

## **3.5.2** Survey participants.

The post-use survey was completed by 14 Pre-service teachers enrolled in an elective course on Materials' Design at Universidad de Concepción. Not all the participants of this sample had utilized the checklist but knew what it was about, however, only 11 participants that were part of the pilot process will be considered in the analysis of the third item *Pre-Service Teachers' Checklist Perceptions*. In order to know the pre-service teachers experience in teaching in real contexts they were asked about their years studying in the program and the number of teaching practicums they had completed. Figure 28 shows that the participants of the sample are 4<sup>th</sup> year students predominantly and a big portion of them have completed four teaching practicums (see figure 29), however a similar number have not completed any yet. This can be explained by students' failure in courses that are pre-requisite for enrolling in the teaching practicums' course.

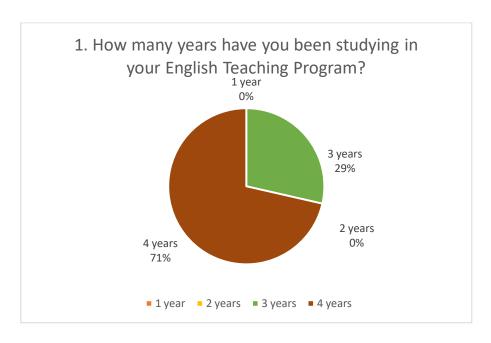


Figure 28: Number of years that the participants have been studying English teaching program.

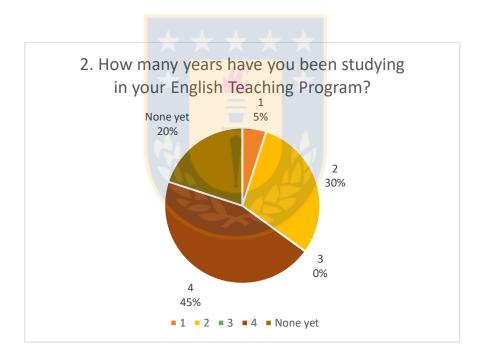


Figure 29: Number of teaching practicums that the participants have completed.

Subsequently, three more questions were then used to elicit further and important data. Firstly, as it can be seen in figure 30, 77% of the participants indicated not to have been instructed on how to evaluate their teaching materials before the use of the checklist. Secondly, figure 31 shows that 79% of the preservice teachers did not have knowledge about evaluation of material before. Lastly,

figure 32 shows that 86% of the participants had never used an assessment tool like the one that it was developed during this research project.

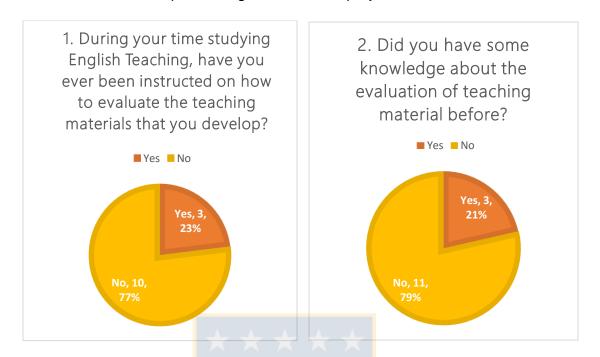


Figure 30: Participants' knowledge about the evaluation of materials. Figure 31: Participants knowledge about the evaluation of teaching materials.

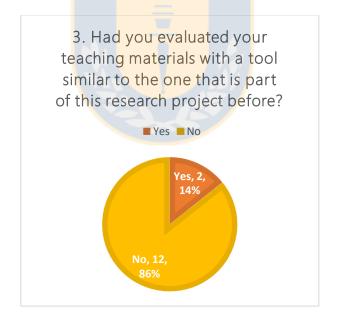


Figure 32: Participants' experience in the evaluation of teaching material with any similar tool.

These findings reinforce the information that pre-service teachers are not well prepared in materials evaluation since most of them indicated that they had neither been instructed or count with some knowledge of the area nor evaluated their teaching materials with a similar tool before.

# **3.5.3** Survey Results

Throughout this subsection the information collected by the Post Checklist's Use Survey will be presented. As the Items I and II were already presented, which were called *Academic and Teaching Information* and *Pre-Service Teacher's knowledge and experience in Material's Evaluation* respectively, for the sake of presenting participants and their characteristics, Items III and IV will be presented here.

Item III called *Pre-Service Teachers' Checklist Perceptions*, aims to collect information about the participant's opinions after they got familiarised and utilised the checklist to assess the materials they had developed. As not all the students that form part of the elective course on Material Design were part of the piloting process, only the sample that actually went through this process was considered part of the data analysis of this item.

In respect to Item III's results, in figure 33 it can be seen the excellent acceptance that the assessment tool had among the pre-service teachers since 10 of them agreed on the helpfulness that it had for assessing their materials before it was either implemented in a lesson or graded by their professor.

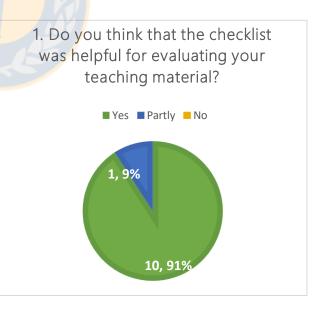


Figure 33: Perceptions on the helpfulness of the checklist.

In figure number 34 it can be seen that 91% of the pre-service teachers agreed on thinking that their teaching material is more valid after it was evaluated by the Evaluation Checklist for Materials to Develop the Speaking Skill.

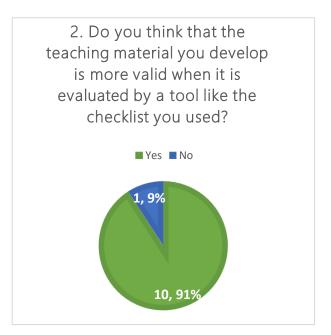


Figure 34: Perceptions on the Validity of the teaching materials after using the Evaluation Checklist

In figure number 35, the data shows 91% of the participants think that the Evaluation Checklist could be helpful for in-service teachers that lack enough time to develop their teaching materials and it is followed by a 9% that is equivalent to 1 participant that think that it could be partly helpful

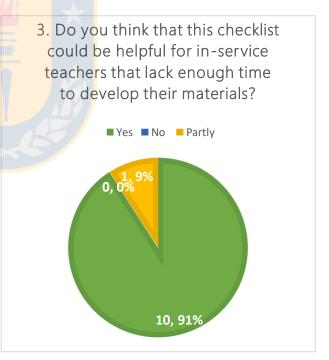


Figure 35: Perceptions on the Evaluation Checklist's Helpfulness for in-service teachers.

The fourth item of the survey was composed by 3 questions, two multiple choice questions and one open-ended question that encouraged participants to give

full answers using their knowledge and/or feelings. In figure 36, it can be seen that more than a half of the participants (64%) agree with Richards (2010) statement that teachers sometimes graduate from their programs with limited experience in materials design, evaluation, adaptation and implementation and it was followed by a 27% who partly agreed with it and just a 9% did not agree with it. In figure 37, it can be seen that a higher percentage of participants agree with the statement about the undervaluation of the status of materials design in graduate education, in which 73% of the surveyed pre-service teachers indicated that they thought it was true, followed by a 18% that thought it was partly true and a 9% who thought that it was not true at all.

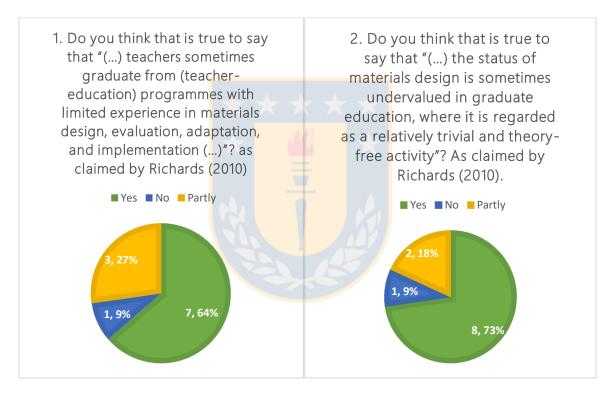


Figure 36: Perceptions on Richards' statement about graduate teachers' experience in materials design, evaluation, adaptation and implementation.

Figure 37: Perceptions on Richards' statement about the undervaluation of materials design status

Lastly, the surveyed participants were asked an open-ended question which said "Do you think that the elective course on Material Design you were enrolled in during this semester should be part of the core curriculum of your program? Why?" All the participants presented interest by answering this question with an emphatic

Yes, many times followed by an *absolutely* adverb. The comments that were more frequent were:

- "Because it is important to improve the teaching proficiency and be prepared to face the school realities."
- It is very helpful to develop our creativity and to place ourselves in a more realistic part of our future job.
- It is a neglected area of our training and not all of us are aware of the importance of it till the moment we realise that have problems with the effectiveness of our teaching materials.
- The course gives confidence to pre-service teachers by teaching the theory that is behind the development of materials.
- Every student of the program should have access to the tools and knowledge that are given in this course

## **3.5.4** Survey Inferences.

From the Surveys' findings it can be concluded that pre-service teachers are aware of the importance of being trained on Materials Design and how neglected this area of teaching is. Despite the knowledge that participants presented in the pilot process to develop materials they agreed that they had never been instructed on materials evaluation and they had never used a tool like the one developed in this research project. These results give insight of the importance of extending the Evaluation Checklist to more pre and in-service teachers in order to give them a valuable tool that can help them to identify their weaknesses and strengths in the Materials design field



### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### 4.1 General conclusions.

Identifying problems or flaws in the teaching-learning process and carrying out an investigation to propose solutions is key to make improvements in the ELT field, therefore this should be a common practice for all the professionals that pertain to the universe of education. During this study, a problem was researched and this was the lack of experience that teachers possess at the moment of evaluating materials especially the ones focused on practicing the speaking skill which is one the most neglected ones and with low-proven level in Chilean context.

During this thesis project there were results that gave us an insight of the current situation of the Materials Design and Evaluation field so that the problems and their respective causes could be understood. Based on that, the *Evaluation Checklist for Materials to Develop the Speaking Skill* was adapted and developed to meet the needs of Chilean pre and in-service teachers based on the theory in the materials development field. The evaluation instrument is the result of a dedicated process in which each one of the aspects covered were carefully selected, considering the context of the educational system in our country and different guidelines, principles and frameworks created by varied authors so we could have a wider perspective on the matter. In addition, taking into consideration how little time teachers possess to comply with the duties of their jobs, we thought that the provided checklist had to fulfill some design features such as simplicity and a well-organized layout.

The first instrument developed during this project was a survey that could give us information about in-service teachers' evaluation methods and experience in the field, the results were encouraging for us as pioneer researchers since they revealed both the problem and its root. On the one hand, the problem, as was mentioned, it was in the evaluation process of materials that were many times implemented without knowing if they would work in their respective contexts or not. Even though teachers were aware of the importance of it, it was not part of their teaching routines and this affected the teaching-learning process. On the other hand, the cause of the problem was identified through the data collected in the survey, and resulted to be situated back in the participants' teaching training program since a great number of them

indicated that had not received theoretical instruction about Materials design and evaluation and not many had had practical instruction. This fact brought us to do research on the websites of several universities that offer the English teaching program. After surfing the internet, it could be seen that the cause of the problem was still present since a mandatory course on Material Design and Evaluation is not offered by almost any of the Chilean English teaching programs. It was very discouraging to be informed of this unfavorable situation, since almost all teacher graduate without having a broad knowledge in the area. Through this research project, specifically in the pilot process and the post-use survey, the pre-service teachers could become aware of the existence of this problem, as it was shown in the results of the survey. The information obtained showed that more than a half of them considered that teachers graduate with limited instruction in the area and that material design and evaluation has an undervalued status in graduate education. With these records being exposed, it can be said that even though a great part of the survey's participants in-service teachers are not well prepared in the concerning area, a great part of the pre-service teachers, that are enrolled in the elective course on Materials Design at Universidad de Concepción and participated in this thesis, are becoming more aware of the importance of this area of study. We strongly believe that it is very probable that if universities that impart English teaching programs offer a compulsory course that provides their pre-service teachers with solid theoretical and practical knowledge in materials design and evaluation this will directly result in better trained teachers with a high-proficiency teaching performance.

After having studied the current situation of teachers, the development of a checklist that could be used by Chilean pre- and in-service teachers to evaluate the speaking-focused materials was implemented. Regarding the development of the product of this thesis project, it was a process in which a large quantity of information was studied in order to improve the existing evaluation tool. So even though this was an adapted instrument there was an important process to enhance it in order to make it more precise, Chilean-context aligned and teachers' time friendly. In addition, it needs to be mentioned that the instrument can be easily shortened since the chart containing the description of it can be taken out after having used for the first time so

the whole checklist can fit in just one page, what makes it even more concise and simple and teachers can see it as an easy and always ready-to-use tool.

All the processes that helped to the development of the checklist, such as surveys and validations, has lead us to conclude that more tools similar to this one are necessary in the Chilean context, especially if we take into consideration how little time teachers have to evaluate their materials and considering that according to the pre-service teachers who were able to participate in the pilot process of this checklist, the instrument was very helpful, and they felt that their materials were more valid after being evaluated. In addition, evaluating English teaching materials before using them with students could help teachers to avoid wasting time when trying to use materials that are not really helpful for students, and that in the long-run do not help them to improve their skills.

As proven during this research, both pre and in-service Chilean teachers of English are not well prepared in terms of materials development, as this is an undervalued topic in many institutions that prepare future teachers of English. Considering that this lack of preparation can be detrimental for both teachers and students, there must be a change. Hence, we believe that there is a need to raise awareness of this topic in our country, specifically in universities that offer English teaching programs. As one of our main conclusions, we believe that courses, or at least modules, on materials development should be mandatory in these programs, otherwise the quality of the English teaching materials used by the majority of Chilean teachers will never improve, and teachers will still graduate with limited knowledge and experience in materials development.

In education peer collaboration is key and we highly believe that the "Evaluation Checklist for Materials to develop the Speaking Skill" instrument has to be shared with as many pre and in-service teachers as possible. We think that the first way and fastest way of sharing this instrument, it is to send it to the e-mails of the in- and preservice teachers who participated in this thesis project once it is presented and evaluated by the evaluation committee, and encourage them to share it with their coworkers and/or classmates. The second way to share it is by presenting the information gathered and the evaluation instrument to the professors that teach the under-graduate courses that are linked to the teaching practicums of the English

Teaching Program at Universidad de Concepción and also to the ones of the post-graduate studies so all of them can incorporate it in their syllabi and provide it to their students. The third way to share is by presenting it in conferences, and we hope that we are able to be part of the speakers at this year's English Teaching Program's Conference at UdeC to present the information of this research in order to raise awareness among the participant teachers to be. Finally, we strongly believe that once all the recipients of the information and the tool become aware of the importance of assessing their speaking-focused teaching materials previous to their use and are able to integrate it in their daily teaching practice, a great impact will be generated on the students' oral performance resulting in avid readers and fluent speakers in the Chilean EFL classrooms. This impact would be demonstrated in future generations of students providing new data of the country's level of English in standardized tests such as EPI and TOEFL IBT.

Regarding the awareness on the proper use of materials, we strongly believe that university programs on English Teaching should have at least a mandatory module in which they can encourage students to become more aware of the materials they use and how they use it, as it was proven during this research project, many of the preservice teachers and in-service teachers lack training on the subject. Including a checklist like the one designed in this research project could help them choose more wisely the materials they use and apply them in the best moment.

Regarding the speaking skill, this research project can also help to raise awareness on the importance of this productive skill and how vital are the materials used to teach it. Besides it can support the idea that accuracy is not always the most important characteristic of oral production, considering that this is a topic that tends to make students uncomfortable, as they are scared of making mistakes.

In the case of in-service teachers, this research study proved that not all of them evaluate the materials they use, or do it just by feel instead of using an actual instrument. This is mainly caused by the lack of time teachers have, so implementing a checklist like the one designed in this research project could help them to actually evaluate their materials, as it was created to be as simple and manageable as possible, to meet teachers' necessities when it comes to their schedule.

Considering how important teachers' decisions are, having an evaluation instrument to support these decisions can benefit not only them but also their students, as it can help them choose the best alternative for their learners.

### **4.2** Answer to the research questions and objectives.

At the beginning of this research, three questions were stated to find out the criteria teachers use when selecting and/or developing teaching materials, when and how teachers of English evaluate the materials they develop and how teachers can make better and more informed decisions regarding the teaching materials they use in their lessons to develop the speaking skill.

Regarding the criteria teachers use when they create or adapt their materials, the information collected thanks to the initial survey shows that the main ones used by most of the participants were related to the learners' characteristics, engagement and use of the language. In addition, teachers also seem to put special attention to the relation to the syllabus and curriculum and the contextual characteristics of their teaching environments.

When discussing the evaluation of the materials, teachers stated that, although according to their beliefs and experiences, the best moment to evaluate the materials was while using them, they mainly did it after or while using them. Some of the participants stated that the best moment to evaluate the materials was before using them, but in spite of this, none of them actually did it during that stage.

In relation to how teachers could make better decisions concerning their teaching materials, the best alternative was to develop the checklist presented, as it can help them evaluate their materials in a simple way, without taking too much of their time, as this is a matter of concern among Chilean teachers of English.

The general objective of this research project was to use the Principles of Effective Material Development to design an assessment tool that aimed to evaluate ELT teaching material to develop the speaking skill, which was fully accomplished since a checklist to achieve this was not only created but also piloted among preservice teachers of English.

In regard to the six specific objectives of this survey, which were to collect information regarding the knowledge, experience and attitudes of in-service English teachers towards the design of materials that promote the use of the speaking skill, to collect information regarding the criteria that teachers use to evaluate ELT materials, to design a checklist to evaluate teaching material for the speaking skill considering the Principles of Effective Material Development, to validate this survey by in-service teachers and experts in the area, to pilot the checklist among pre-service teachers, and finally to collect information about the pre-service teachers' perceptions after using the checklist, all of them were fully developed and accomplished as it has been previously stated, thanks to the initial survey, the checklist and its validation and the post-use survey.

### **4.3** Limitations of the study.

During the development of this research study, we faced some limitations regarding the number of participants, the completion of some answers in both surveys and the full implementation of the checklist created. These were caused by the lack of willingness to participate that some of the teachers showed, mainly preservice teachers, and the lack of time to fully apply the evaluation tool designed.

As in many research projects, finding people that were willing to participate in this project was one of the biggest challenges. Although in the case of in-service teachers, most of them completed the surveys they were asked to, pre-service teachers were not so cooperative. This can be because as they are younger, they do not realize how important it is to do these research projects, thus they tend to ignore them or, in some cases, not to answer sincerely.

Regarding the answers given by both in and pre-service teachers, the most difficult part was that many of them did not answer open questions, and the ones who actually did gave very vague and incomplete answers that made it difficult to analyze and get a realistic sample that could represent the reality of most Chilean teachers of English.

In relation to the implementation of the checklist created, during this research project we were able to only do a pilot process in which a few students used the

checklist provided. Because of the lack of time and resources, a full implementation of the evaluation tool was not possible.

#### 4.4 Future research.

As the topic of English teaching materials has not been widely explored in our country, there is a lot of research that needs to be carried out in the future, especially in relation to the development of evaluation tools.

Considering that the instrument designed during this research project was focused on one skill, which was speaking, more evaluation checklists could be developed and be focused on the different skills that were not covered in this project that are as important as the one chosen in matters of materials' evaluation.

At the same time, an evaluation instrument could also be developed and be focused on evaluating the coursebooks provided by the Ministry of Education so teachers could take an active part on the choice of the book that is more suitable for their learners' needs and likes.

Finally, considering that the checklist designed in this project was only piloted, its full implementation among pre-service and in-service teachers could be the next step for a future project so the material can be incorporated and used to aid in the decision-making process of English practitioners.











## MATERIAL DESIGN EVALUATION SURVEY

Dear Teacher of English,

We are pre-service teachers of English who are carrying out a Thesis Project on "Material Design Evaluation" in order to obtain our degrees as teachers of English at Universidad de Concepción.

This survey aims to collect information about the criteria considered by Teachers of English when adapting or creating material and how to evaluate it. The main objective of this thesis is to design an assessment tool that will help teachers to evaluate teaching materials for the speaking skill in order to comply with the theoretical criteria that can help to develop effective material.

If you are a teacher who is actively working as a Teacher of English, please fill in this survey.

All your responses will be used for academic purposes. Anonymity and confidentiality are assured.

There are no good or bad answers, thus, the reliability of your answers will determine the success of this project.

Valentina Acuña Parada Emy Aguayo Retamal

If you agree to complete this survey, please continue:

in your agree to correptote trito our vey, produce	corruinae.
Age:	
Gender:	
Teaching degree:	Yes/No
Number of years teaching:	

If you are interested in receiving information about the results of this thesis project, please write your e-mail address below:

THANKS FOR BEING PART OF THIS PROJECT!







## MATERIAL DESIGN EVALUATION SURVEY

This survey is divided into 4 sections. Each section includes a set of questions about specific areas. For the purpose of this project, we will use Tomlinson's definition of "material": Materials are everything that is used to help language learners to learn. They can be in form of a textbook, a workbook, a CD-ROM, a paragraph written on the whiteboard; anything which presents or informs about the language being learned (1998).

1	Teac	hina	Cont	hovd
١.	Teac	mig	COH	LEXI

This part of the survey focuses on the teaching context you are currently part of. Please select one of the alternatives in question number 1, 2 and 5 and in questions 3 and 4 you can mark more than one.

1.	Type of school:  ☐ Private ☐ Subsidised ☐ Public		3.	backgı □ Hig	nts' socioeconomic round. gh income edium income
2.	Levels taught at the  Pre-school Pre-school and Elementary scho Pre-school, Elem School and High Adult School	ool nentary	<b>4</b> . <b>5</b> .	Studer English	w income  nts' attitude towards n learning. thusiastic different enthusiastic asis given to the English t by the school. ong edium
6.	Mark all the resourc	es that are available	at the	school <u>:</u>	you work in:
	☐ Laptops ☐ Projectors ☐ Smart Board ☐ Wi-Fi access ☐ Speakers ☐ Board ☐ Markers ☐ Lab				English classroom Printer Dictionaries Prompts Any other:







# II. Teacher's background on the use of materials

for lea	em focuses on the background that the teacher has regarding the use of materianding speaking activities. The option that best suits your experience and knowledge.
1.	Do you create or adapt material for your EFL lessons?     Yes No
2.	Do you assess the material used in your EFL lessons? Yes No
3.	Mark the criteria you consider when creating/adapting material (Mark as many as suits your experience)
	Learners' characteristics Engagement Meaningfulness Contextual characteristics Purposefulness Comprehensibility Use of the language Relation to the syllabus Relation to the curriculum Other
4.	Mark the methods you use to evaluate language-teaching materials.
	Rubrics Checking results By feel By modifying the materials Other
5.	Were you formally instructed in material development during the English Teaching Program at university?
	Theoretically Practically Part of a module Full module Not at all







# III. Use / creation / and adaptation of materials.

This	part focuses	s on the	material	that you	use	during	speaking	activities	in y	/our
clas	ses.									

1.	Mark all the types of materials you use/create/adapt for promoting speaking in your class.
	Flashcards Grids/Charts Movies/Videos Puzzles Slides Visuals Whiteboard prompts Worksheet Other
IV. Ev	aluation of material
This p dapte 1.	art of the survey focuses on the evaluation of the material used, created or ed.  According to your beliefs and experience: What is the most appropriate moment to evaluate the teaching material used in class?  Before using it  While using it  After having used it.
2.	When do you evaluate the effectiveness of the material used?  ☐ Before using it ☐ While using it ☐ After having used it.
3.	How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the material used? What criteria are your evaluation based on?







....

# Survey Validation Sheet

Dear Professor,

We are currently working on our thesis project on the subject of Material Design in collaboration with Professor Paola Fanta.

For the aforementioned, we are in need of academics who can validate a survey designed to collect information about the criteria used to create or adapt material and the evaluation of it by teachers of English.

After analysing the data and based on a theoretical framework, this project will result in the creation of a checklist to help teachers comply with the theoretical framework proposed to guarantee the effectiveness of the material used in the classroom to teach the speaking skill. The final goals is to help teachers of English to evaluate the effectiveness of the material they use, create, or adapt so they invest their time for material selection, creation, and adaptation efficiently.

Your help to this project will be highly invaluable, thanks in advance and best wishes,

Emy Aguayo R. and Valentina Acuña P. Pre-service Teachers of English Universidad de Concepción.







# Survey Validation Sheet

Please check the survey that is attached to this document and revise the questions that compose it, which are divided into four parts. In case of any comment or reword, please write them on the charts given.

## Part I. Teaching context.

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.	****	
Number 2.	* # *	
Number 3.	A TA	
Number 4.	EST RE	
Number 5.		
Number 6.		

# Part II. Teacher's use of material background.

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.		







Number 2.		
Number 3.		
Number 4.		
Number 5.		
Number 5.		
5		
Part III. Use / creation / and a	daptation of materials.	
Overation.	Commont	Davisand
Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.	X _ X	
	▼	
Part IV. Evaluation of materia	150	
Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.		
Number 2.		
Number 2.		
Number 2		
Number 3.		







#### EVALUATION CHECKLIST FOR MATERIALS TO DEVELOP THE SPEAKING SKILL

Lesson's topic:	Unit:	
Learning objective:		
Type of material:	Date:	Grade:

<u>Contextualization</u>: The following checklist aims to evaluate **the material** -to be used when working on the **speaking skill**- according to the principles for effective material development and the Communicative Approach. This tool has been designed to help pre and in-service Chilean teachers of English considering the constant need for designing or adapting pre-designed materials to develop the before-mentioned skill and also the importance of making knowledgeable decisions in order to achieve the communicative goals of the national curriculum.

<u>Instruction:</u> Please mark **③** if the criterion is **present**, **⑤** if it is **fairly present** but could improved, and **⑤** if it is **not present** at all.

STAGE	DIMENSION	CRITERIA (The material: )	$\odot$	$\odot$	(3)
JIAGL	DIMENSION		9		0
	LEARNERS	<ol> <li>Is appropriate for the learners' age and interests.</li> </ol>			
		2. Is appropriate for the learners' level of English.			
	COMMUNICATIVE	2. Draws attention to the content's meaning and fluency rather			
	PURPOSE	than to the accuracy of its form.			
		1. Is authentic or adapted to student's reality.			
	AUTHENTICITY	2. Prov <mark>i</mark> des a cl <mark>ear and real-life co</mark> ntext in which the language			
		will be used.			
р	COGNITIVE	1. Allows learners to reflect on the language on different levels			
۲	DEVELOPMENT	(structural, semantic, and pragmatic).			
R	& ENGAGEMENT	2. Encourages learners to make connections with their own lives			
Τ.		in order to keep them engaged and make the task memorable.			
Е		Prepares the learners to communicate with people from			
_		different cultures.			
	CULTURAL & INTERCULTURAL	Avoids gender stereotypes and raises social awareness.			
	COMPETENCE	3. Involves the students' local culture and language such as p			
	CONFETENCE	laces, traditions, or slang (if applies).			
		4. Helps students to develop their critical thinking about other			
		cultures and their own.			
	SKILLS'	Integrates speaking with other productive and receptive skills.			
	INTEGRATION				
	VALIDITY	1. Is aligned with the learning objective and it is in accordance			
		with what has been presented and practiced before.			







STAGE	DIMENSION	CRITERIA (The material/Activity: )	0	(2)	8
W	SOCIAL - AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT	Provided students with a safe and constructive environment for speaking and interacting with their classmates.			
L E	CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	Provided clear instructions (that could be easily followed by the learners).			
	TASK COMPLETION	Was successfully completed by the students without any inconvenient.			
	ENGAGEMENT	<ol> <li>Encouraged students to be engaged in the task and work actively.</li> </ol>			
POST	OBJECTIVES	Helped the learners to achieve the learning objectives.			

Reflective comments:				
		<b>.</b> .		
		4		







### POST EVALUATION CHECKLIST'S USE SURVEY

Dear Pre-Service Teacher of English,

First of all, we are very thankful for you participation in this research project on "Material design evaluation" by having evaluated your teaching material using the "Evaluation Checklist for Materials to Develop the Speaking Skill" that was provided to you during your class time. Secondly, we would like to ask for your participation in a post-use survey which aims to collect information about your thoughts and experience on material evaluation and your perceptions after having used the mentioned tool.

All your responses will be used for academic purposes. There are no good or bad answers, thus, the reliability of your answers will determine the success of this project.

Valentina Acuña Parada
Emy Aguayo Retamal
Pre-service English Teachers

Universidad de Concepción.







2. How many teaching practicums

□ 1 □ 2

□ 3

 $\Box$  4

have you already completed?

### POST EVALUATION CHECKLIST'S USE SURVEY

This survey is divided into 4 sections. Each section includes a set of questions about specific areas. For the purpose of this project, we will use Tomlinson's definition of "material": Materials are everything that is used to help language learners to learn. They can be in form of a textbook, a workbook, a CD-ROM, a paragraph written on the whiteboard; anything which presents or informs about the language being learned (1998).

## I. Academic and teaching information

1. How many years have you been

studying in your English

Teaching Program?

□ 1□ 2

 $\square$  3

This part of the survey focuses on your experience as a student of English teaching program and as a pre-service teacher. Please mark one of the alternatives.

	□ 4			None yet.
II. F	re-Service Teacher's kno	owledge <mark>and exper</mark> i	ence in Mate	erial's Evaluation.
	em focuses on the backg tion that best suits your	9		Material Evaluation. Mar
1.	Did you have some knobefore?  □ Yes □ No	owledge about the	evaluation of	teaching material
2.	During your time study how to evaluate the tea	5 5		ever been instructed on op?
3.	Had you evaluated you part of this research produced in the second of th	•	s with a tool	similar to the one that is







# III. Pre-Service Teachers' Checklist Perceptions

This p	part focuses on your perceptions of the checklist provide  . Do you think that the checklist was helpful for evaluati material?  □ Yes □ Partly □ No	
2.	<ul><li>2. Do you think that the teaching material you develop is mor by a tool like the checklist you used?</li><li>Yes</li><li>No</li></ul>	e valid when it is evaluated
3.	<ul><li>B. Do you think that this checklist could be helpful for in-servi enough time to develop their materials?</li><li>Yes</li><li>No</li><li>Not sure</li></ul>	ce teachers that lack
IV. P	Pre-service Teachers' per <mark>c</mark> eptions of Material Design and	Evaluation
	part of the survey focuse <mark>s</mark> on yo <mark>ur perception</mark> s of Materia	al Design and
1.	(teacher-education) programmes with limited experier evaluation, adaptation, and implementation ()"? As c (2010)  □ Yes □ No □ Partly	nce in materials design, laimed by Richards
	sometimes undervalued in graduate education, where relatively trivial and theory-free activity"? As claimed b  Ves  No Partly	•
Do yo	you think that the elective course on Material Design you	ı were enrolled in during
this s	semester should be part of the core curriculum o	f your program? Why?







# Survey Validation Sheet

Dear Professor,

We are currently working on the last stage of our thesis project on the subject of Material Design in collaboration with Professor Paola Fanta.

After analysing the data and based on a theoretical framework, this project's results were the creation of a checklist to help teachers comply with the theoretical framework proposed to guarantee the effectiveness of the material used in the classroom to teach the speaking skill. Therefore, the mentioned checklist was provided to the group of pre-service teachers enrolled in Professor Fanta's elective course on Material Design. After this, we have developed a post-use survey that aims to collect information about the participants' perceptions of the checklist and their thoughts on material evaluation. It is for this reason that your help validating this survey will be highly important to apply this last instrument of our research.

Thanks in advance,

Emy Aguayo R. and Valentina Acuña P. Pre-service English Teachers Universidad de Concepción.



Part I. Academic and teaching information





# Survey Validation Sheet

Please check the survey that is attached to this document and revise the questions that compose it, which are divided into four parts. In case of any comment or reword, please write them on the charts provided.

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.	* * * * *	
Number 2.		

## Part II. Pre-Service Teacher's knowledge and experience in Material's Evaluation.

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.		
Number 2.		
Number 3.		







# Part III. Pre-Service Teachers' Checklist Perceptions

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.		
Number 2.		
Number 3.	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *	

# Part IV. Pre-service Teachers' perceptions of Material Design and Evaluation

Question	Comment	Reword
Number 1.		
Number 2.		
Number 3.		







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