

State of the art of research on teaching and learning foreign languages in Bolivia from 2011 to 2021¹



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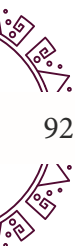
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Abstract: Research has become a fundamental aspect for any professional, not only to promote public awareness within any field of knowledge but also to understand it and be able to teach based on the results of that research. Therefore, the goal of this research was to identify and analyze the current status of research which focuses on the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Bolivia between 2011 and 2021. However, our focus was specifically limited to English as a foreign language because of its usefulness and popularity among individuals. In this context, information about foreign language programs in public schools, private institutions offering English instruction, English education in public universities, research on English teaching and learning, professional development for English educators, English teaching associations, and language-related events was presented to achieve contextualization. Our study focused on the population of English teachers in Bolivia, specifically targeting those who have published their research. The utilized method was the Transformative Paradigm, which aimed to generate an action agenda for reform and thereby have an impact on the country's educational policies. The research required a mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods. The instruments that were employed in this research, included online surveys with a questionnaire comprising nineteen open and closed questions, an online bibliographic search, and online interviews to gather data. The results are presented qualitatively as they encompass representative information. The conclusions provide us with the opportunity to make recommendations for the actions that should be taken to promote research in and on foreign languages.

Keywords: Bolivia, teaching, research (Thesaurus); foreign languages (authors' keywords).

Estado del arte de la investigación sobre enseñanza y aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras en Bolivia de 2011 a 2021

Resumen: La investigación se ha convertido en un aspecto fundamental para cualquier profesional no sólo con el propósito de facilitar la conciencia pública dentro de cualquier área del conocimiento sino también para entenderlo y ser capaces de enseñar con base en los resultados de esa investigación. Por lo tanto, la meta de esta investigación era identificar y analizar el estado de situación en cuanto a la investigación que se hace acerca de la enseñanza y aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras en el periodo comprendido entre 2011 y 2021 en Bolivia. Sin embargo, se delimitó nuestro enfoque sólo en el inglés como lengua extranjera por su utilidad y la preferencia que tiene entre las personas. En ese sentido, se desarrolló una contextualización a través de la presentación de información acerca de las lenguas extranjeras en las escuelas públicas, instituciones privadas que enseñan inglés, la enseñanza del inglés en universidades públicas, la investigación que se realiza acerca de la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés, la capacitación que reciben los profesionales en la enseñanza del inglés, las asociaciones existentes en relación a la enseñanza del inglés y los eventos relacionados a esta lengua. Nuestra población fueron los profesores de inglés en Bolivia, con la muestra específica de aquellos que publican en base a una investigación. El método utilizado fue el Paradigma Transformativo con la esperanza de generar una agenda de acción para la re-



forma y así tener impacto en las políticas educativas del país. La investigación requería un enfoque de método mixto como los métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Los instrumentos de investigación que se utilizaron fueron las encuestas online a través de un cuestionario de diecinueve preguntas abiertas y cerradas, una búsqueda bibliográfica online y entrevistas online para recolectar los datos. Los resultados se presentan de manera cualitativa por la información representativa que se encontró. Las conclusiones nos proporcionan la oportunidad de dar algunas sugerencias en cuanto a la acción que debería tomarse de aquí en adelante para promover la investigación en y sobre las lenguas extranjeras.

Palabras clave: Bolivia, enseñanza, investigación (Tesauros); lenguas extranjeras (palabras clave de los autores)

Estado da arte da pesquisa sobre ensino e aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras na Bolívia de 2011 a 2021

Resumo: A pesquisa tornou-se um aspecto fundamental para qualquer profissional não só com o propósito de facilitar a consciência pública dentro de qualquer área do conhecimento, mas também de compreendê-la e poder ensinar com base nos resultados dessa pesquisa. Portanto, o objetivo desta pesquisa foi identificar e analisar o estado da situação das pesquisas realizadas sobre o ensino e a aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras no período entre 2011 e 2021 na Bolívia. Porém, nosso foco limitou-se apenas ao inglês como língua estrangeira devido à sua utilidade e à preferência que tem entre as pessoas. Nesse sentido, foi desenvolvida uma contextualização através da apresentação de informações sobre línguas estrangeiras nas escolas públicas, nas instituições privadas que ensinam inglês, no ensino de inglês nas universidades públicas, nas pesquisas realizadas sobre o ensino e aprendizagem de inglês, na formação que os profissionais recebem no ensino de inglês, as associações existentes em relação ao ensino de inglês e os eventos relacionados a esse idioma. Nossa população foram professores de inglês na Bolívia, com a amostra específica daqueles que publicam com base a uma pesquisa. O método utilizado foi o Paradigma Transformativo com a esperança de gerar uma agenda de ação para a reforma e assim impactar as políticas educacionais do país. A pesquisa exigiu uma abordagem de método misto, como os métodos quantitativos e qualitativos. Os instrumentos de pesquisa utilizados foram questionários online de dezenove questões abertas e fechadas, pesquisa bibliográfica online e entrevistas online para coleta de dados. Os resultados são apresentados qualitativamente devido às informações representativas encontradas. As conclusões dão-nos a oportunidade de dar algumas sugestões sobre que medidas devem ser tomadas no futuro para promover a investigação em e sobre as línguas estrangeiras.

Palavras-chave: Bolívia, ensino, pesquisa (Tesauros); línguas estrangeiras (palavras-chave dos autores)

Introduction

Advances in technology and the quick production of knowledge has made life move faster than ever; consequently, this situation requires professionals, especially educators, to change their view of the way they face their professional area. They can no longer limit themselves to repeat what others have found out in their area of knowledge, they have to find it out by themselves. So, research has become imperative for professionals not only to facilitate public awareness within any specific area but also to understand it, so that innovation can take place and new policies can be designed to improve their practice. Consequently, this article has the objective of identifying and analyzing the state of research done in the area of teaching and learning foreign languages between 2011 and 2021 in Bolivia and the publication of academic articles in indexed journals based on the research done as a way to contribute to innovation in the teaching of foreign languages. To achieve this objective, in the first section of this article, a contextualization of the field of teaching and learning languages will be presented by looking at the educational offer in the institutions that teach languages, the panorama and the working conditions of the researchers, the existence of the organizations and associations, the specialized publications and the academic events related to English language teaching. In the second section, the research methods used to collect information will be described. The third section will present the results obtained from this research; then finally, in the last section, arrive at some conclusions and recommendations.

Context of the research

Bolivia is known as one of the most diverse nation-states linguistically and culturally in America. The 2009 Political Constitution recognizes 36 indigenous languages, as well as Spanish, as official languages in the country (Art. 5, I). It has also institutionalized Plurilingual, Intercultural and Intracultural Education (EIIP), formerly Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB for its initials in Spanish) (Art. 30, II.12). Framed in the *Sumaq Qamaña* principle (from Quechua: to live through well-being and according to principles), EIIP aims at promoting multicultural and intercultural relations while reinforcing cultural identities and linguistic diversity. Nevertheless, Spanish is still the main language of instruction nationwide (Haboud and Limerick, 2016).

In relation to foreign languages, the one that people favor the most is English because of its utility regarding the academic courses offered abroad and the fact that most academic publications are in English. It is unsurprising then, that there are many more foreign-language courses in English than in French or German. The situation regarding Portuguese is different since a knowledge of the language is required by people who live on the borders of Brazil; that is to say, the departments of Santa Cruz, Beni and Pando. Although some other foreign languages such as German, Italian, Japanese and Mandarin are taught in private institutions on a very low scale; at university level, the languages that are taught after English are French and Portuguese. This is because those languages are part of the curriculum in some universities. For example, French is present in the curricula of three Bolivian universities: at UMSA in La Paz, French is another major, at UAGRM in Santa Cruz, it is an elective

subject that competes with Portuguese, and at UAJMS in Tarija, it is part of the degree given to students (Cortez, 2023; Barrero, 2023; Rodriguez Burgos, 2023). In the case of La Paz, where French is another major, the number of students that enroll is low compared to that of English; that is to say, 341 students enrolled in the English area this year while 103 students in French. The same happens for German in San Francisco Xavier university in Sucre. Although Portuguese is an elective language at UAGRM, in the other universities together with Italian, and Korean are taught in the language centers that universities have. This is due to the agreements with the embassies that support with those languages by providing teachers that do so. Therefore, the number of enrolled students makes these languages not to have any great impact on research. Consequently, in this work we are going to focus more specifically on English.

Based on that context, we are going to analyze the current state of foreign language teaching, more specifically the case of English Language Teaching (ELT), because of the reasons mentioned above, institutions in charge of teaching English, organizations and associations related to this foreign language; and, specialized publications and academic events related to ELT.

Foreign Languages at public schools

Regarding the Regular system of education; that is to say, the primary and secondary levels of education, since 1950 (Supreme Decree No 1879-2) have included foreign languages such as English and French in the curriculum. Looking back to our time in school, we remember how the English language was taught, just to fill out a requirement, by copying or repeating words without really understanding them or what we were doing while copying, a methodology which did not help learners to develop fluency nor use of the language. Nowadays, this same perception is also reflected in the complaints by parents who, whenever there is an event, mention their children at school are only taught the verb “to be” and after years of study they cannot really communicate.

As for the training of teachers, before and during the 1994 Educational Reform, the Department of Languages at the Teacher Training School was closed. Then, with the next Reform: Law 070, also called Avelino Siñani and Elizardo Pérez (ASEP) in 2010, concepts such as Intercultural and Intracultural Education, plus Plurilingualism were introduced in the curriculum (Gaceta Oficial del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, 2010). This meant that languages were the focus of the Ministry of Education again as the most practical part of ASEP, since plurilingualism is exemplified in the inter- and intra-cultural process: students would learn the native language local to their area, Spanish; and optionally, a foreign language, which is most often English. Also, besides reopening the Department of Languages at the Teacher’s Training School, a Complementary Training Program called PROFOCOM was opened (Yapu, 2013). This program had the objective of ensuring the training of teachers met the new law and that they obtained a Bachelor’s degree since the new law also had the goal of enabling teachers to continue their studies and get a Ph.D. in education so that they could do action research as part of their practice.



In 2013, the Minister of Education of that time, Roberto Iván Aguilar Gómez, announced that schools were going to become trilingual by the teaching of Spanish, a native language and a foreign language which could be English, French or Portuguese. This announcement put all the responsibility on school teachers at all levels of the national system of education. The Head of the Intercultural and Intracultural Unit of that time at the Ministry of Education added that they had already started a program to train teachers (BBC News, 2013). However, the training did not take into account the learning of those languages by the main level teachers if they were to teach the languages.

Until the present, in spite of the importance that educational policies and relevant authorities attempt to give to the learning of languages, the time assigned to the language classes does not reflect the real wish to enhance the learning of languages. Languages are given only eight periods per month (40 minutes twice a week) as opposed to mathematics which has 20 periods, which is translated into five times a week (Patiño, 2019). We attended some workshops with secondary school teachers where we learned that the two periods twice a week of 40 minutes each are combined into an 80-minute class once a week; that is, in order to have at least 60 full minutes discounting the 20 minutes for changing rooms and calling the class register. That is the reason why some teachers say that they cannot produce better results since they have only one class a week and sometimes students tend to forget whatever they have learned in the previous class after a break of a week (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).

Nowadays, after more than 10 years of the implementation of the Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Perez law, the Ministry of Education has recently presented (February, 2023) the Plans and Programs for the Law 070 curricula. Regarding those plans and programs for Foreign Languages, only English is taken into account, no other foreign language. According to the document, the approach to the teaching of this language is dialogic and textual. Furthermore, it has the goal of only “*exposing*” the students to the language so that they become acquainted with this language (Ministry of Education, 2023, p. 63). However, the whole program has received a lot of resistance regarding its implementation on the part of teachers and other professionals. Moreover, regarding the social sciences subject, some professionals believe that it is a way of indoctrination for children since some topics such as the social disturbance of 2019 in Bolivia when Evo Morales left the presidency of Bolivia is still under discussion with the followers of Evo saying it was a coup d’état while other groups defend the claim that it was a fraud. The curricula have also been rejected by the Christian church at the Supreme Court of Justice since they affirm that certain values that go against their own values are being introduced; meanwhile the Teachers’ Union also says that on the one hand there are not trained teachers in robotics or other knowledge areas; but above all, that these new subjects do not have a time allocation assigned by the government, which means that some other subjects will be reduced to give time to the new subjects (Channel 11 news, 2023).

English in private institutions

As for other institutions that teach English, we have to mention the Centro Boliviano Americano (CBA). The CBA started the teaching of English in 1946 as part of a binational agreement between Bolivia and the United States as a way of free exchange of ideas and ideals among different peoples (CBA, 2021). It is a Cultural and Educational Foundation that is widely recognized in Bolivia and Latin America. Nowadays, most people accept the importance of the CBA in the teaching of English nationwide as a means to obtain favorable results compared to the low outcomes of foreign language in the public sector. Something to point out is that many teachers at the CBA have graduated from the Linguistics and Languages Department at San Andrés University and there are even some former students from San Andrés who are in intermediate positions of authority.

English at public universities

Concerning the teaching of English at universities, from the nine departments in Bolivia, there are ten public universities subscribed to the Executive Committee of the Bolivian University (CEUB), one in each main city, but two in La Paz (La Paz and El Alto). From these higher education institutions, the first one to teach English in the country was San Francisco Xavier University in Sucre, Bolivia. So young people who wanted to become foreign language teachers had to go to the country's capital to get their teaching degree. As it happened with other universities, such as Universidad Técnica de Oruro and Universidad Mayor de San Andrés to mention two, the teaching of English started in an institute. In 1939, the president of San Francisco Xavier at that time, Dr. Aniceto Arce Llano, created the **Institute of Languages** that was in charge of teaching French, English and German. Later, in 1942, it became a **Language School** (Universidad Mayor de San Francisco Xavier, 2000). Then in 1972, it finally became the **Languages Department** and from that time on, this university has been teaching these three foreign languages with a bachelor's degree. However, English language has been favored the most by young people.

In the same way, San Andrés University has started the teaching of languages as part of the Technological Institute, now Engineering School (Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, 2023). Then, later in 1972, it became the Languages Department thanks to the participation of a group of Language Teachers from the School of Education led by Dr. José G. Mendoza. The Department started with the teaching of English, French, and German. However, the foreign languages that stayed until now are English and French as part of the curriculum, with the English area being the most popular with the highest number of students. Later, in 1993, it became the Linguistics and Languages Department with a heavy emphasis on the study of Linguistics by virtue of the guidance of Dr. Mendoza (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023). The three main goals for professionals in this Department are: Teaching, research and translation. From these three main goals, teaching is mostly favored since neither research nor translation pay, according to some professors (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).



Then in the 1990s, the 'Centro de Enseñanza y Traducción de Idiomas' (CETI) was created as a proposal presented by Martha Ramallo, M.Sc., as part of the Linguistics and Languages Department (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023), not only to cover the demands inside the Department, but also to answer to the necessities of the same university and the society in La Paz. In 2000, the CETI started to provide services to a private school as a pilot program for building bridges between secondary schools and the university through the "CETI-SAN CALIXTO PROJECT" under the supervision of Mirka Rodríguez Burgos. This Project has had really positive results not only because of the skills that students acquired to use English and participate even in international events by using English, but also because it gave a model of how to organize the teaching of subjects through modules so that students achieve competencies. After two years of operating; that is to say, after the first students achieved the intermediate level, an evaluation of the English Program was done with the participation of stakeholders, students, parents and authorities at the school and at the university. The results gave more than 80% of favorable evaluation for the project. After the project had finished, the way of organizing module teaching in order to achieve competencies was later adopted at the school in other subjects. Unfortunately, this project closed because of political positions within the university and it has never been replicated again (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023). Nowadays, the CETI provides service to the students from the other 13 schools at San Andres university and also to school students outside the university as part of the interaction project of San Andres University. Although those students have to pay, the fees are relatively low and results are very positive (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).

Other universities in the rest of the main cities of Bolivia also set up language departments. Higher University of San Simón (UMSS) in Cochabamba started the Language Department in 1976. Nowadays, it offers a bachelor's degree in Applied Linguistics in Teaching Languages. It also has a center named "Centro de Interacción Lingüística" which was opened in 1985 and it is in charge of teaching, translating and examinations in foreign languages (ndumss.edu.bo). Similarly, Gabriel René Moreno Autonomous University (UAGRM) in Santa Cruz started the Modern Languages and the Hispanic Philology Department in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in English, French and Hispanic Philology. Nowadays, they train professionals in the fields of languages and literature. The Department also offers self-funded language courses to the general public with accessible fees (Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno, 2023). In Tarija, the Autonomous University Juan Misael Saracho was founded in 1946 and hosts the Language Department that is in charge of training professionals in the teaching of English and French, apart from training them in translation and tourism (UAJMS, 2021). Autonomous University Tomás Frías from Potosí has been educating people since 1892; however, the Linguistics and Languages Department was opened in the early 1990s by Dr. José G. Mendoza, so it follows the same curricular organization as the Linguistics and Languages Department in La Paz. Another Department that also follows the same curricular organization from the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA, La Paz, is the Linguistics and Languages Department at Public University of El Alto (UPEA), which is the youngest university in Bolivia (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).



The situation of the Technical University of Oruro (UTO) is different from any other language department since the English Program does not train teachers, it only teaches English; it is part of the Engineering School at UTO, and it offers ESP Courses to every department in the school, besides the self-paid courses in EGP for the general public society in general from 16 years old on (personal communication, Aida Mercado, February, 2023).

Finally, in the cities of Beni and Pando, the Autonomous University of Beni José Balivián and the Amazonian University of Pando respectively do not have any Languages Department nor a Language Center. However, secondary school teachers there have a branch of the Bolivian English Teachers' Association (BETA).

All these public universities are under the coordination of CEUB (Comité Ejecutivo de la Universidad Boliviana) and they follow the main goals in the university system: Teaching, Research and Social Interaction. However, most of them focus mainly on teaching. This is a parallelism with what the Teacher Training Schools do. While Languages Departments at the Teacher Training Schools were closed, professionals who graduated from the university were able to teach at public and private schools in the regular system of education. However, after they had opened them, the Teachers' Unions opposed this kind of work, so professionals from the universities could not continue working at schools, and if they did, they were not allowed to be part of the Promotion Ladder. Therefore, even though they had taken subjects related to pedagogy and didactics and they were already professionals by holding a bachelor's degree, they had to study three more years to get a Technical degree so they became school teachers. This fact obviously caused certain problems; for example, the professionals who graduated from Tarija complained about this fact and this was reported in the newspaper *El País* (2015; Cardona, 2018; Radio Luis Fuentes, 2018), because there were more than 700 professionals who had been unable to get a job since 2004 when the first promotion graduated. This was the concern of all university professionals, so they even organized a demonstration in Sucre when they were participating in a nationwide academic event in the 2000s.

Research in English at universities

The second main goal of public universities after teaching is research, which should be done as part of the annual appraisal of professors who have a tenure of a subject at the university. However, this work is most of the time heavily based on the writing of essays, which is not published, nor does it have pair review. So, this research stays on the shelves of the Department office until it is returned the next year. With respect to publications, many professors publish their own books by taking the responsibility of all the expenses of the publication or supposedly they publish in the different academic journals of the same departments where there is not a blind peer review tradition nor they are indexed. Lately though, at San Andrés University, the Vice-Chancellery is demanding that publications are more serious, and that professors at least obtain an ISBN. On the other hand, young teachers are starting to publish in well-known journals such as FORUM from the American Embassy,



where they publish about strategies or techniques for teaching they have tried out; that is to say, articles based on their teaching practice, though these articles are not necessarily based on research (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).

Finally, social interaction is said to be the link between the university and the wider society; this is usually executed through fairs, short term courses or some kind of action research in other institutions by teaching any macro element of each professor's appraisal every year at the university to keep the tenure of the subject they hold. Even though these works are reported in a written way, they are not published either.

Professional Development in English

Regarding continuing professional development, there were two memorable instances, which were not necessarily carried out by the institutions, but by two Embassies. The first was the scholarship scheme set up by the American government through USAID in 1989. These scholarships were originally offered to public school teachers and teachers from binational centers like CBA, and teachers who had been in service for at least three years. However, having seen that many young university professors took interest by taking the language exams to get the scholarships, the American Embassy decided to open the opportunity to young professionals from the public universities as well. This chance was given twice. Thanks to this scheme some professors at the UMSA university, for example, obtained a Master's degree (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023).

The second milestone in professional development for university professors was related to the agreement between the governments of Bolivia and the United Kingdom under the name of "Proyecto Boliviano Británico" set up in October 1993. This project involved the Departments of Languages; Linguistics and Languages, Applied Linguistics and Modern Languages in seven out of the nine public universities, excluding Pando and Beni since they did not have a Foreign Language Department nor an English Program. The Project lasted from October 1993 to June 2000. It started with the contact that San Francisco Xavier University established with the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) in Britain, later Department for International Development (DFID). After an initial evaluation carried out by Bristol university in the universities of San Francisco Xavier, San Andrés University, San Simon University, and Gabriel René Moreno University, ODA appointed Mr. John Wood as the Director of the project and selected Thames Valley University in London (now West London University) as the partner organization. The objectives of the project were to enhance English teaching and the training of English teachers at public universities and through this to strengthen the teaching of English in public secondary schools. The project included scholarships in Master's Programs in Applied Linguistics according to the necessities of each university, short-term specialized courses and internships in the U.K. in English for Specific Purposes and materials design. The implementation also included specialized training courses, seminars on applied linguistics and workshops carried out by different professors from Thames Valley University in Bolivia. The workshops for school teachers



were also carried out by already trained national professors, going to each department supported financially in the organization by the project and evaluated by it (Hinojosa, 2019; Rodriguez Burgos, 2023).

After four years of the implementation of the project, three other universities joined: Tomás Frías University, Juan Misael Saracho University and Technical University of Oruro; and at this point the project was extended for another three years. 'It was extended following an evaluation from which I was part of and because of what had been achieved' (Rodriguez Burgos, 2023). The professors from those universities had the same kind of program as the previous four universities (Hinojosa, 2019).

The impact of the program can be summarized in the following outcomes: integration countrywide of university professors, integration of university professors and secondary school teachers, foundation of the Bolivian English Teachers Association (BETA), training courses and workshops conducted by the professors who obtained an M.A. , publication of an English Newsletter by each university in turn, annual academic meetings organized by the counter parts from each university, the organization of an annual ELT Conference for university professors, school teachers and last semester university students organized by each university in turn, the annual BETA Convention organized by BETA presidents who are secondary school teachers in each city with a participation of about 500 teachers and teachers- to-be, the updating of the curriculum in every university, materials designs in ESP for Tourism and Engineering, equipment of each English area in every university, endowment of applied linguistics material and opening of self-study centers with the corresponding material. In summary, the Bolivian British Project had an integral and significant approach to the enhancement of the teaching of English (Hinojosa, 2019; Rodriguez Burgos, 2023).

Organizations and Associations related to English

As for the organizations and associations related to the teaching of English, we can mention the Steering Committees at public universities and BETA at public schools in all the main cities in Bolivia. The Steering Committees were appointed with a representative in each university from the beginning of the Bolivian British Project by the Project Director to make the project sustainable once the project was finished. The national Steering Committee used to meet every year in the current host university. This university was elected as the host on the last day of the English Convention organized by each BETA, so the university and the BETA elected became the host for the year to come. Representatives from the Steering Committees were financed with the plane ticket or bus ticket depending on the distance of the host university until 2018. The last meeting was carried out in 2019. That year, universities decided not to pay any longer the plane tickets, so the representatives had to pay for them by themselves. BETA used to include both university professors and secondary school teachers at the beginning; however, there were some problems among certain representatives and the university professors distanced themselves from BETA for a while until the



American Embassy started participating as a main sponsor. The Embassy sponsored even the first online BETA Convention in 2020 by providing well known speakers from the USA (Rodriguez Burgos, 2023).

Academic events in English language

To conclude, we can mention ELT events organized on a periodical basis. These are the National Convention of English Teachers which is carried out the first weeks of January every year, the Steering Committees which used to be carried out together with the Convention until 2019, and the ELT Conference every year until 2018. From those events, only the National Convention continues to be convened thanks to the support of the American Embassy. Approximately 500 English teachers and teachers to be participate in this event. The speakers who participate in the short workshops are university professors while the plenaries are carried out by the main foreign speakers, sponsored by the American Embassy. Also, the participation of some editorial houses such Pearson, Richmond, National Geographic among others should be pointed out with presenters and offers on new textbooks.

After the British Project finished, the American Embassy took leadership in the organization and the sponsoring of certain Professional Development Programs for English Teachers such as the AEWebinars which are periodical online workshops presented by American language specialists and are carried out every other Wednesday early in the morning or at midday. These webinars are directed to university professors, secondary school teachers, and binational Center teachers. The Massive Open Online Courses offered by different American universities for university professors and professionals have to do with the presentations of innovative teaching techniques in English. Last year, 2022, a new Program was opened, The English Plus Program directed to school teachers, so that they are able to go back to the classroom to enhance the management of the English language. The instructors included Binational Center teachers and university professors (U.S. Embassy in Bolivia, 2021).

It is within this context that we have conducted our research to find out what research is being carried out by English professionals in Bolivia.

Methodology

The development of our research was based on the Transformative Paradigm which advocates specifically critical thinking-and-practice in order to avoid paradigms bias and to “provide an overarching framework for addressing issues of social justice and consequent methodological decisions” (Mertens, 2007, p. 212; Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). The choice of the Transformative Paradigm was also made in order to be able to generate an action agenda for reform (Creswell, 2003) throughout the whole process. Moreover, we take it as axiomatic that “inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda” (Creswell, 2003, p. 9) which expresses our hope that works like this could have some impact on the educational policy of the country.



Another reason for using the Transformative Paradigm and mixed method approach is that it is appropriate for the present research and it is contained in the proposal to utilize both qualitative and quantitative data collection to achieve a more complete and fuller panorama of the context (Somekh and Lewin, 2005, p. 275 cited in Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006, p. 196). We emphasize that our method is chosen to achieve the goal outlined above: “the transformative researcher structures for the development of ‘more complete and full portraits of our social world through the use of multiple perspectives and lenses’ allowing for an understanding of ‘greater diversity of values, stances and positions’” (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006, p. 196-197).

As stated before, the research needed a mixed method approach, especially due to the lack of information and also in view of one of our main implicit goals which is to take the first step to bridge this information gap in order to propose better and more influential research about the teaching of English as a foreign language in Bolivia. It follows that, both quantitative and qualitative data are vital for us just as Creswell (2003) underlines:

The researcher bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides an understanding of a research problem. The study begins with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population and then focuses, in a second phase, on detailed qualitative, open-ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants. (p. 21)

The data collection method used for this work is a combination of bibliographical research, mixed mode online survey and phone interviews.

Regarding the scope, the subject area covered was applied linguistics, more specifically, the teaching and learning of the English language in Bolivia both in the regular system of education; that is, secondary public schools and higher education or tertiary level education represented by public universities.

Initially, there were four criteria that constituted the framework within which we have moved in the research:

- Publications that were based on the results of a research done
- Publications on Teaching English
- Publications made in indexed journals
- Publications in English language

The bibliographical research was carried out looking for academic articles in indexed sources of publication or online databases in the English language starting from a broad search to more specific exploration. The academic sources for bibliography were:

- Google Scholar (scholar.google.com)



- Scielo and Scielo Bolivia (scielo.org and scielo.org.bo)
- Sistema de Información Científica Red Latino América y Caribe (redalyc.org)
- Directory of Open Access Journal (doaj.org)

All these sources allow advanced research in order to filter by country of origin and by years of publication. For example, the search in Google Scholar in the time span from 2011 to 2021 resulted in 0 articles about the topic of Teaching English in Bolivia or Learning English in Bolivia. The very small number of articles somehow related to our research topic (3 articles) referred to general aspects of the teaching experience and technology in teaching in different areas, also including Bolivia. Due to these poor results, the bibliographic research was further extended in order to capture a broader time span in the hope to discover older works. However, as far as scholarly publications about teaching English in Bolivia, we could not find any in the indexed sources we ran through. Even more, in the Bolivia Top 1000 Scientists “AD Scientific Index 2023” World Scientist and University Rankings 2023, only one professor, who belongs to the native languages area at the Linguistics and Languages Department from San Andrés university, appears in this list (World Scientist and University Rankings: bolivia-top-scientists.pdf).

Due to the severe lack of information encountered, we decided to broaden our research in order to include any research about English teaching in Bolivia in the last decade, whether it was written in English or not, and also those who were not published in peer reviewed journals. The results were a little better, not astonishing though. Broadening the search parameters allowed us to find 3 theses (undergraduate level) dealing with some aspect of the English teaching process; nevertheless, they should not be considered for the scope of the present research.

Running through the former search engines, broadening our search in Spanish and without filtering for peer reviewed journals, we could collect four more records which we present and detail in section 4, below.

On the other hand, the mixed mode online survey was done by sending a letter through WhatsApp to the possible contacts in different institutions throughout Bolivia, explaining why we were asking for information about research they have done on teaching and learning English that was reported in published academic articles in English in indexed journals. The letter also included the link for the Google Form that contained 19 closed and open questions. The questions were about the institutions they belonged to; the title of the work; the author’s name; the year of publication; the level of education to which it was directed; the language in which it has been published; the type of indexed publication such as a book, an article, or a chapter; then an account of the research by giving information about the objective, an abstract, the theoretical approach; population studied; a short description of the methodological procedure; the results obtained; name of the publisher; whether the publication was printed physically or whether it was an online publication; and, in the case it was an online publication the link to access the publication.



The structured interviews were planned as a way to obtain more information about publications that university professors made in the academic journals that every language department supposedly has. So, we decided to interview heads of departments or university researchers that are in charge of the research institutes or are part of the editorial committees of the academic journals in every university. Therefore, we decided to obtain the contacts of those people and to plan a guide of questions that were directed to find out about the publications made by professors. In the structured guide for the interviews, 12 questions were asked.

Our population were English teachers in Bolivia both from the secondary level of education and higher education. As for the sample, teachers who have published online the results of their research by doing the search online, the survey was sent to different professionals who have to do with the English language in the country and are heads of groups of English teachers so our population could reach a higher number of professionals if those heads passed the information to the teachers they represent; finally, the interviews were done to heads of department at university and researchers or professors in charge of academic journals. Following these criteria, the letter was sent to:

- Authorities in the Executive Committee of the Bolivian System, so that they could make a formal requirement for the information to the corresponding universities in the system.
- A representative of the Ministry of Education in the Unit of Languages so that they could pass the information to the English teachers at public and private Secondary Schools in Bolivia
- Heads of Department in 8 out of 10 Public Universities that are part of the Bolivian System of Universities so that they could pass the information to the teachers in each institution.
- Two Coordinators of the English Area in the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA in La Paz so that they could pass on the information to the professors in the English Area in the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA in La Paz.
- A Coordinator of the Language Center in the Catholic University which is private but is part of the Bolivian System of Universities and it has a language center. The purpose was that the coordinator could pass the information to the teachers in their institution.
- Five Counterparts in different public universities; counterparts in other universities have retired and there were no other Steering Committees to appoint new ones since they have not organized any meeting since 2018 because of the Pandemic.
- The Representatives of BETA in the seven main cities in Bolivia. These representatives are coordinators of secondary English teachers in each department in Bolivia so they were able to ask for the information from their affiliates.



- A Representative of the Binational Center (CBA) in La Paz which is the best English Institute in the country.
- A Representative in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the American Embassy.

We also thought of the main private universities with strong language programs in Bolivia such as the following institution.

- A Coordinator of the Language Center at UPB (Private University of Bolivia) to get information from the teachers that work under his coordination.

Based on the first response which was 0% on the first deadline, we decided to send a reminder to all the people who received letters with the link included and also to call personally the heads of Department in each university to ask them to publish the letter and ask their teachers to answer the form. Another measure we took was to send the letter personally to professors whom we have identified and knew to be very active in their roles as English professionals: 7 Professors at different institutions whom we know write academic articles: 2 professors at UMSA, 1 professor at UAGRM, 1 professor at the Catholic university, 1 professor at UPEA, 1 professor coordinator at NUR university, and 1 teacher at CBA.

Regarding the interviews, only 80% of the people we have planned to contact were interviewed because of their time constraints. We started the interviews with the hypothesis that every language department in the different universities in the country had an academic journal, the same as it happens at UMSA. However, we found out that a 90 % of the interviewees affirmed that they did not have an academic journal at their department, only at the school they are part of. In addition, most of the publications come from other departments such as psychology, sociology or education, but not from the language department.

We should assume the sample is representative enough since all major public English teaching institutions were included, plus some of the major private institutions. It is impossible to have a complete and exhaustive list of all teaching institutions in the country since there is a plethora of small ones opening and closing quite frequently. Nevertheless, covering the major public universities, the 7 BETA Associations and the most well-known private institute should allow a fairly complete survey for our purpose.

In the following section, we analyze the data both from a quantitative and qualitative point of view.

Results

Quantitative Results

In regard to the bibliographical search, the online survey and the structured interview, it is impossible to develop any statistical analysis, due to the small sample size we obtained, more specifically zero. In spite of the fact that our findings were relatively limited in



relation to the bibliographical research, what we could observe is a comparison with other languages or countries. This is not to say that the consulted bibliography was lacking in quality, on the contrary. The problem seems to be that English teaching is barely mentioned in some of the reviewed literature as the most studied foreign language (Haboud and Limerick, 2016; Lopes Cardozo, 2012), but without much more information.

Due to the small number of articles we were able to track down, it was not possible to develop any statistical analysis (Haboud and Limerick, 2016; Lopes Cardozo, 2012). The refereed articles we found did not deal specifically with our area of focus, from which we may conclude that the teaching and learning of English in Bolivia is an area yet to be studied by academics and reported in professional journals and publications.

Once facing the utter lack of information and after having decided to broaden the research to Spanish written publications and/or not peer reviewed materials, we got some better luck in the results. Even though there is still a great room for improvement, some results appeared. These results are reduced to four relevant findings which are discussed below.

Qualitative Results

The bibliographic research was pretty disappointing. The number of publications, in the last decade, indexed or not, referring to English teaching in Bolivia was surprisingly low: 4 publications were found, 2 of which are articles and 2 chapters of a book. The works listed below are the results of the broad research on education and English, in which, only some brief reference is made to Teaching English in Bolivia; nevertheless, they were the only ones we were able to find:

- Guillen Barja, L.A. (2015). Diagnóstico de los Estilos de Aprendizaje utilizados para la Adquisición del Inglés como Segunda Lengua en el Centro Boliviano Americano-Sucre. *Revista de Estilos de Aprendizaje*, 8 (16).
- Gluszek, A. & Hansen, K. (2012). Language Attitudes in the Americas. In Giles & Watson 2013, 26-44.
- Haboud, M. & Limerick, N. (2016). Language Policy and Education in the Andes. In: McCarty, T., May, S. (eds) *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer, Cham.
- Lopes Cardozo, M.T. (2012). Transforming pre-service teacher education in Bolivia: from indigenous denial to decolonization. *Compare: A Journal of comparative and international education*, 42(5), 751-772.

As far as the authors are concerned, there seems not to be a research or systematization of the actual English teaching situation in the research literature available online.

However, not to let anything aside, the research was furthermore broadened, including non-indexed or referred publications, in the hope to be able to include some more

possible publications. Thus, we included all possible sources, without filtering any, instead including also publications in Spanish and other languages. Nevertheless, the results only brought us researches very distantly referred to English teaching. Although we decided to comment on them, it must be taken into account that the aim of those results found was not the teaching and learning of English, they just mentioned the topic in some way.

Once again, the results are not directly related to the teaching and learning of English specifically, they are somehow related. Sichra (2009), for example, presents the Teaching of English as comparison for indigenous languages and a model to be followed. In this sense, even though we consider the research for Teaching English as a foreign language is still in great need for improvement in Bolivia, teachers of other languages look at its system as a reference.

On the other hand, Machaca Condori (2018) only underlines the need for better and more widespread Teaching of English in Bolivia, in order to improve the Internationalization of universities. His analysis focuses on the obstacles that scarce incidence of English Teaching in the Bolivian University as the cause for a low internationalization strategy; therefore, the diminished access to opportunities for both students and teaching staff. He concludes stating that “Por último, la importancia del idioma, como es de conocimiento general el hablar un idioma como es el inglés, pues esto lleva a grandes oportunidades, para todos, ya que es un idioma universal [...]” (Machaca Condori, 2018, s.p.).

Eventually, we could find some undergraduate level final works and theses related to the Teaching of English as a foreign language, mainly related to the study of some aspects of didactics. In some cases, students research on the difficulties of some groups of learners in the acquisition process of specific aspects of the languages, be it lexicon, syntax, etc.

As a matter of fact, it might be interesting to cite at least a couple of examples of those theses, such as Luque Yana et al. (2017) who have a broader treatment of the problem, since they present an analysis of the teaching situation and needs specifically for the Tourist Police officers with the following aim “To provide the members of the Tourist Police officers with the basic communication skills on the performance of English language with Specific Purposes, in order to improve their professional development related to tourism situations” (s.p.). The work does not analyze *per se* teaching, but it makes a teaching proposal in order to fill the gap of the detected need. On the same line, Rodríguez Fernández (2019) presents a teaching proposal for a Technical Institute.

These works are part of the repository of San Andrés university (<https://repositorio.umsa.bo/>) since students of the English area write their theses in English. However, there are other works such as the postgraduate theses which are not registered in an online database, so they do not appear in search engines.

The second strategy to obtain information was the online survey which was carried out through a Google form so that we were able to access English teachers all over the country. The main goal of the survey was to collect key information from the main actors that



work in the field, both at university, in secondary schools and in private centers in Bolivia. One of the most important characteristics needed for the survey was to use both open questions and closed questions.

The informative survey contained 19 questions, referring to the Institution where the respondent is currently working, the name of the research project or publication he or she wants to declare and the target of the publication itself. There were also some questions about the typology of the intellectual production; and finally, respondents were asked for a short summary.

The survey was accompanied by a presentation letter, broadly explaining the goals of the research and specifically the objective of the survey.

There could be three phases to the application of this survey: the first stage had to do with finding out the cell phone numbers of the key people to be contacted and names to send the letter through WhatsApp. The second stage was calling those people and telling them we were sending the letter which explained why we needed the information and asking them to share the letter with their subordinates who could just click on the link that was in the letter to complete the survey questions. And the third phase monitoring the answers and sending back again the letter to remind them to socialize the letter.

The evaluation of the answers was done in two phases: the first one had the purpose of making sure that the publication was done according to the four criteria identified at the moment of starting the research, so this served as a filter to continue evaluating the work or stop. The second phase was to evaluate the work according to terms of quality in the sense that whether the academic article followed the formal steps in a research.

After the first deadline had passed and we made direct contact with the heads of Departments, we received only two answers which are presented in Chart 1.

Chart 1

Publications

No	Research title	Publication based on research	Publication on Teaching English	Published in an indexed journal	Publication in English	Institution
1.	Trabajos Dirigidos, una modalidad de graduación en la Carrera de Lingüística e Idiomas	Yes	No	No	No	UMSA La Paz

2.	La enseñanza del idioma inglés para propósitos específicos en la Facultad Nacional de Ingeniería	No	Yes	No	No	UTO Oruro
	La enseñanza del idioma inglés para propósitos específicos en la Facultad Nacional de Ingeniería					

None of the publications followed the established criteria precisely, so they were not considered any further.

Given the fact that we received only two responses to the reminder and the extension of the deadline, we decided to monitor the process, so we called the heads of departments and some professionals who are very active on their field. Some of the answers given were the following:

Three Heads of Department expressed the following:

“We are in the middle of curriculum design, so we do not have time, but I will tell the teachers”.

“Nobody is interested in answering it or probably they do not have any publications after the pandemic”.

“We publish in our journals” (referring to the journals that each department has).

Some key professors mentioned the following:

“I have many things to do including my doctoral program so I will not be able to answer it”

“We have published, but only textbooks for secondary schools” They are not published in indexed journals.

“I have publications, but they are not based on research, only on classroom experiences, so they give strategies for teaching English”

This is what some private institutions answered:

“Our institution does not publish”

“Well, our institution only teaches English”

As we have already mentioned, based on the limited response, we decided to give people another two weeks to answer the Google Form, send them a reminder, call them personally and add another group of seven professionals who we know publish and are very active professionals.

Through this action, we obtained four more answers, set out in Chart 2.



Chart 2

More publications

No	Research title	Publication based on research	Publication on Teaching English	Published in an indexed journal	Publication in English	Institution
1.	Explicit Instruction - Cohesive Devices to Improve Reading Comprehension in Second Year EFL University Students at Gabriel René Moreno Autonomous University, Bolivia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	UAGRM Santa Cruz
2.	Building language meaning - an ESP method for petroleum engineering students	No	Yes	No	Yes	UMSA La Paz
3.	My journey with Experiential Learning in "Inside and Between" Reflections on 50 years on 50 years of the Masters of Arts in Teaching Program at the School for International Training	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	UCB La Paz
4.	Mindful Gratitude Exercise for the English Classroom	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	UCB La Paz

The first of these (Cortez, 2023) is a carefully designed action research project regarding the enhancement of reading comprehension carried out with second year students as her sample. She considers one of the problems that many students have which is reading comprehension not only at secondary but also at the tertiary level, and not only in English but also in Spanish. She took a very specific point in relation to reading, structuring her research so she could determine how far her intervention had any impact applying an international test such as the PET test reading section. The article was presented to Anglia Ruskin University at Cambridge, England for the publication. Through the Head of Department in her university, we found out that this project got a score of 100% in the evaluation in the academic fair that is carried out every year with the participation of all the public universities in Bolivia presenting their research projects.



The last two publications by Flores Rojas (2021, 2023) are not based on research, but on reflection and systematization of insights on personal experience. Both of them have been presented for publication in foreign journals such as Sandanona Press in Brattleboro, Vermont and a quarterly journal for English Teachers that belongs to the State Department of America, *English Teaching FORUM*. Something to be mentioned is that this journal expects advanced composition skills in English. Even though the articles are not based on a research project, they depict the reality in Bolivia, which is a personal attempt to publish and basically essays.

Something that called our attention was what one of the heads of department said:

“*We publish in our journals*” (referring to the journals that each department has)

Therefore, we decided to use another strategy, a phone interview, to get more information about the academic journals that every language department supposedly has. So, we identified the professionals that could provide us with the information, basically: heads of departments, researchers and professors who are in charge of the academic journals in each public university. We also planned a guide of twelve questions that asked about whether the department had an academic journal, the name of the journal, whether the journal was indexed, the date the journal started publishing, the number of publications they have made so far, the number of articles in each publication, the issues they address, whether the academic articles are based on research or are essays, the scope of the journal, whether it is sold or it is distributed for free, and if the journal is published online.

At UMSA in La Paz, every department has an academic journal, so we assumed that the same situation would be the case in the rest of language departments in Bolivia, but we made a surprising discovery, many language departments such as the ones in Potosi, Sucre, Santa Cruz, Oruro, Tarija do not have an academic journal for their department, except the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA in La Paz. They have a journal for the humanities school they belong to or the university journal, like in the case of Tarija and Santa Cruz. Those journals have started publishing recently, though. So, they are not indexed yet. However, according to the people in charge in the language departments there is not a culture for writing because language professors do not publish there either. In the case of Tarija, even though the university journal is not indexed, the ones who publish are the Ph.D. candidates because it is a requirement for their program to publish at least two articles; and sometimes, if the university decides to do so, the temporary professors are the ones who write to be published as a way of being appraised in their work (Céspedes, 2023; Barrero, 2023).

The case of the language department in Cochabamba is interesting, they do not have an academic journal; however, there is a professor, Patricia Alandia, who has been doing a personal effort to maintain the publication of 17 numbers so far of the academic journal “Páginas y Signos”. She has started the journal in 2007. It focuses on issues of linguistics, language planning, linguistic policies, literature, and discourse analysis. This journal is really important since recognized personalities in the field of Linguistics such as Cassani and Van

Dijk have collaborated in some numbers. Its main goal is to focus on the development of native languages, for this purpose, Mrs. Alandia has created a network of linguists from different countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, United States and France to develop native languages. Currently, she is working in a collaboration of a group of linguists on the edition of a book on “Introduction to Linguistics”, which she thinks is going to be very useful for the academic field in Bolivia, (Alandia, 2023). Although it is an important journal, it is not indexed because it does not have any support from the authorities in the UMSS, not even to provide research assistants in order to develop a webpage. Their audience is basically university students who need it to do their research assignments, so they print 400 copies and the cost is very accessible 15 Bs. The money collected serves to pay the printing of the next edition.

The Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA in La Paz has two academic journals for Spanish and foreign languages: one of them is “LENGUA” and the other “RILTA” which stands for “Revista de Investigación Lingüística, Teórica y Aplicada”. LENGUA started publishing at the beginning of the 90s under the leadership of Dr. Mendoza. His objective was to exchange ideas on every area of linguistics at a national and international level, also to empower young professionals at the department. He led the publication of 17 numbers until 2004; however, when he retired, there were some people who observed that a retired person was still in charge of a journal that belonged to the university, so he left it (Rodríguez Burgos, 2023). Because of that, there was a long gap in the publication of this journal until 2022 when it was relaunched and number 18 was edited, but it was released a year after. For this reason, number 19 is going to be published in June 2023 (Espinoza Centellas, 2023).

This year, Fernando Nelson Espinoza Centellas, Ph.D, is the coordinator of the editorial committee that was appointed ad-honorem at the department. There are four members in the committee who belong to the English area (3 members) and to the French area (1 member). The issues published are about all the areas of linguistics, forensic linguistics, education and other knowledge areas related to linguistics; that is to say, all the areas where language has a presence. The journal contains 10 to 11 articles which constitute approximately 180 pages. The release will take one number per year. For the number that is going to be released in June, the members of the committee have come with experienced professionals in the field to do the peer review. They are not really thinking about indexing the journal since their short-term goal is to first of all have quality in the contents; then, they are going to think about positioning it through the indexation. It has a circulation of 500 copies. From this number, two copies are given away to the authors and the rest is sold from 17 to 23 Bs per unit. The committee has been organizing presentations with the authors of the last number in order to provide information about the aspects treated in their articles and to answer any questions the audience may have. It is not published online, but this will be analyzed for the future (Espinoza Centellas, 2023).

In 2010, RILTA started its publication as a way to fill the gap that LENGUA has left when Dr. Mendoza retired. It started publishing under the direction of Dr. Filomena Miran-



da, who was the coordinator of the research institute at the Linguistics and Languages Department, IILP (Instituto de Investigación Lingüística y Posgrado), at that time. She wanted the research results of native languages were published above all. After she died in 2015, there were many professors that belonged to the area of native languages who were in charge of the edition of the journal until 2020 (Rodriguez Burgos, 2023). Then there was a gap because of the pandemic, that is why number 5 was recently released even though it had already been edited in 2020. In 2022, it was taken up by professor Mirta Martinez, who belongs to the Spanish area, and was appointed coordinator of the research institute after a call in the department. RILTA deals with issues of linguistics, applied linguistics, linguistic planning, the collection of phonetic alphabets in native languages, linguistic revitalization, and the relationship of linguistics with other knowledge areas. The journal is sold at 15 Bs. It is not indexed because there has to be a periodical publication for at least two years to get the indexation. It has a web page but the contents of the journal are not published online (Martinez, 2023).

These two academic journals that belong to the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA focus their work on the research guidelines that have been worked at the department. According to professor Martinez (2023), there is a duplication of effort since the differences between the two journals are not clear. However, for Espinoza Centellas (2023) the main difference is that RILTA deals with issues inside the department of linguistics while LENGUA treats issues that have to do with globalization. Based on the interview to these two professionals, we could identify these differences (See Chart 3):

Chart 3

Differences between journals

INDICATORS	LENGUA	RILTA
Dependency	The Research Institute IILP	The Linguistics and Languages Department
Goal	To answer to the necessities of the society and exchange of knowledge	To follow the research guidelines of the Linguistics and Languages Department at UMSA
Issues treated	Linguistics, forensic linguistics, education and other knowledge areas related to linguistics	Linguistics, applied linguistics, linguistic planning, collection of phonetic alphabets in native languages, linguistic revitalization, and the relationship of linguistics with other knowledge areas
Staff	Not paid	Paid
Articles based on Research results	30%	70 %
Essays	70 %	30%
Price	25 Bs	15 Bs
Projection	To work in collaboration with other universities in Bolivia.	They are managing to have the collaboration of different universities UNAM from Mexico, Javeriana from Colombia, Alcalá de Linares from Spain, Chile, Argentina, and Peru.



There is a third new academic journal at the Linguistics and Languages Department in La Paz, which is a personal effort of a professor of the area of native languages. It was named ARU which means LENGUA (Language) in Aymara, it has the goal of publishing works in native languages from a branch of the Linguistics and Languages Department in Viacha, a rural area in La Paz (Rodriguez Burgos, 2023).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Crevels and Muysken (2009) identified Bolivia as one of the poorest countries in Latin America, but also with a really rich culture and linguistic diversity. However, outsider knowledge about those cultures and languages was very limited until not long ago. This situation happened because no systematic linguistic research tradition had developed nationally, and most of the research has been done by foreign linguists, making access to the results difficult because they are published in English and use many linguistic technical terms.

This is exactly what happens in the teaching and learning of English, too. Even further, there are some beliefs in Bolivia that there is no point in doing research about the teaching and learning of English since everything is already done by native speakers and recognized universities. However, there are also those professionals who think that research should be done and results should be published so that we start teaching from what we find out in our own context rather than just repeating whatever others found out in different circumstances and contexts.

The process of indexation is something new for the universities in Bolivia, that is probably the reason for the results we got in publication, but not for research. This work gave us an X-RAY of the reality in relation to research and publication, which gives us the opportunity to initiate the work in order to change that reality. We are starting a bit late, but there are already some attempts and the basis to change.

We cannot really affirm categorically that there is no research going on in Bolivia since in public universities one regulation is that those professors who have obtained tenure in a subject should present a research project and a social interaction project every year to be evaluated in order to maintain their tenure. However, this work should be guided with clear regulations and guidelines for the professors to have a framework within which they work. And above all, it should be centralized and published.

Although we are just initiating to work with peer reviews, it is urgent to construct unified strict publishing regulations, since every department and every school at universities has their own regulations and their own journals, many of which are not indexed. However, the demand to publish in indexed journals has just started approximately five years ago but universities should work on some regulations that demand professors to publish in indexed journals.

The university should provide unique regulations; perhaps by knowledge areas, since



some schools at universities produce a lot in alliance with other universities and institutions outside Bolivia. Recently, at UMSA, there has been an attempt to regulate this by carrying out two meetings of researchers, but there is no monitoring as to whether the ideas presented are being implemented.

Due to the surprising lack of publication of studies on English teaching praxis and material development in indexed journals in Bolivia, it is imperative to structure a program for the medium- and long-term period in order to be able to register, monitor, study and analyze the complete picture of results based on research. So, here comes the recommendations we would like to do.

It is urgent to restore the missing members of the Steering Committees by appointing the new members, but not for life but for a certain period of time so that they can work with innovative ideas in teaching, research, and social interaction projects or even with training or postgraduate courses. It is important that a meeting of all the language departments is organized at a national level with the objective of doing collaborative work among all the language departments in Bolivia to set common goals not only for teaching other foreign languages but also for establishing permanent professional development with the participation of professionals from different universities, work on common regulations regarding research and publications of results, establish shared research lines in which there could be collaborative work, start nets of researchers in the different universities according to the interests in certain research lines. Based on results of research, postgraduate courses can be proposed. Also, the journal English News which was founded by the British Bolivian Project can be restored with the collaboration of academic articles based on research.

Moreover, systematic monitoring of research results and their impact, as well as research innovations in the Bolivian context needs to be done so that the body in charge can register the information on developments in English teaching, considering that English language learning is really essential for the internationalization of an academic institution. This will also avoid improvisation in the development of language planning, curricula and materials design in the Bolivian system of education, as it is being done.

Although there is some financial support for research in universities, in relation to UMSA, the projects that are favored with a financial support are in natural sciences or health. In spite of being sponsored financially, those researchers who obtain the support complain that they spend more time fulfilling administrative requirements than doing research. Thus, most professors prefer to do research on their own rather than being sponsored by the institution and to pay for the publishing of their own books, even though they have not had a peer-review or had any impact on the teaching of languages.

So far, there has not been an obligation or requirement to follow the process of indexing the academic journals that each Department publishes. Most of the journals are not indexed, and the ones that are indexed have that status because of the personal commitment



of those researchers who want to do research according to academic regulations. Consequently, the recommendation is that each institution should accompany, monitor, and facilitate the process of indexation of those missing journals out of the 54 journals that belong to UMSA, for example. This will make it possible to publish the results of all the research carried out by the professors who investigate only for their works to be filed away until the following year when it is returned to the researcher. In addition, this will put an end to the pilgrimage of researchers to get published in certain foreign journals that have a waiting list that may take months or years before receiving a positive answer of acceptance.

Finally, there should be an institutionalization of establishing networks of researchers at all levels, starting in each Department between students and professors, senior and junior researchers, as well as interdisciplinary research bringing together researchers from different departments that have shared interest in the problem being investigated, schools within each university, university to university, universities and government and enterprises, and among universities from different countries in Latin America so we can first of all share financial support, exchange o diverse ideas on a problem that is common to us so that we construct a Latino world view, an identity and development .

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