



UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
SILVA HENRÍQUEZ

Facultad de Educación
Escuela de Pedagogía en Inglés

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ENGLAND AND LITHERLAND HIGH SCHOOL: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A
CHILEAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

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Seminar Director: Marco Castillo Tangol

Author: Pablo Sandoval Ayala

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Abstract

This seminar work is a research that aims to compare some aspects of the British and Chilean education systems, as well as, my experience when I was a foreign language assistant in "Litherland High School" located in Liverpool, England, with the one found in an assistant in a school in Santiago, Chile. For that, a big number of sources from internet were used such as the English government websites, books from the Liverpool's library and interviews of teachers in England and a teacher in Chile. In addition, a written interview was made by an ex foreign language assistant in Chile and another by the head of the foreign languages department in "Litherland High School". From the comparisons made, it was possible to stablish some critiques of both British and Chilean education systems on the basis of the use of language assistants and learning opportunities.

Este trabajo de seminario es una investigación que tiene por objetivos el comparar algunos aspectos del sistema educacional en Inglaterra y de Chile, así como también, mi experiencia cuando fui asistente de lengua extranjera en Litherland High School ubicado en Liverpool Inglaterra. Para recopilar la información necesaria, se han usado un gran número de recursos de internet como por ejemplo la paginas del Gobierno Inglés. Además, una entrevista escrita fue respondida por una asistente de idioma extranjero anterior en Chile y otra por la jefa de departamento de las lenguas extranjeras en Litherland High School. De las comparaciones hechas, fue posible establecer algunas descripciones y críticas tanto del sistema educacional en Inglaterra y en Chile acerca de la utilización de los asistentes de idioma extranjero y las oportunidades de aprendizaje.

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Introduction

In the 12th century a French cleric said “Rome was not built in a day”. Those are the words that reflect my progress in my university. I used to be an average student who did not have so many opportunities to practice English in my daily life. Then, I realized that learning a second language was in my hands and I started studying hard by myself. This fact made me improve my performance enormously. Therefore, the British Council in Chile and Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez awarded me, as a student of the English Teaching Training Programme, with the opportunity to travel abroad, to learn more English and to be able to witness a culture and a country which is on the other side of the world.

In this work, I am going to give some features of the education system in England by mentioning a brief description about the categorisation of schools. Additionally, I will present some relevant aspects of the national curriculum in England in topics like key stages and modern foreign language teaching, particularly because it is the area where I worked in England.

After that, In chapter two, there will be an induction to the place where I worked to get to know some important dates of Liverpool History that made the city to go from a really important port and a place of great trade to the city that is known today: the city of the well-known band, The Beatles, as well as one of the most difficult accents to understand in England: The Scouse.

To proceed, in the chapter three, I am going to describe the school I worked at “Litherland High School” to stand out the most important features that I was able to witness when I was there focused on the modern foreign languages teaching department.

Then, I am talking about my work in the school, as well as, my impressions from a critical perspective. Finally, I am going to compare 3 Spanish teachers with an English teacher in Chile in terms of promoting learning as well as a comparison of my experience with the experience of an English Assistant in Chile.

CHAPTER I

A quick look at the English Education System

1. EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ENGLAND

The English educational system is divided into primary, secondary and higher education. Children are required to start school at the age of five until sixteen years of age. Children enter school the September after their fourth birthday. Many children from age two and a half or three to four years of age attend a nursery school. There is no curriculum at this level, although there is a set of desirable learning objectives. Some nursery schools offer a limited number of free sessions while others are fee-based. After that, at the age of five, students start primary school in which they have to follow the national curriculum until turning eleven years when it is time to begin secondary school.

In secondary school, students start to prepare themselves for the General Certificate of Secondary Education or GCSE that validates students to move into a college or higher education.

1.1. The School year

The school year runs from September to July and is divided into three terms. The autumn term goes from September to the third week of December before Christmas depending on the school. The spring term goes from January to the first week of April before Easter and the summer term runs from April to July. Each term lasts approximately 12 weeks, and a mid-term holiday is given in the middle of each term, usually a weeks' duration. Mid-term holidays are usually held in October, February and May. The Christmas and Easter holidays are usually two weeks and the summer holiday is around 6 weeks but it will depend on the local authority of the school (School Holidays Europe, n.d.).

1.2. Brief description of school types in England

In England there are a number of different schools that make part of the current education system. Most of the schools follow the national curriculum since just 6, 5% of the population in England choose to pay for a private school and children in the UK have to legally attend primary and secondary education which runs from about the age of 5 years old until the student is 16 years old. (BBC,n.d.).

In England, there is an Office for Standards in Education or Ofsted which is in charge of inspecting schools in order to assess their quality. After inspections, schools receive feedback to improve their performance.

The schools in England can be divided mainly into two categories. They can be a state school or an independent school. In those categories it is possible to find sub categories as follows:

1.3. Schools type

1.3.1. State-funded or maintained schools

State schools are maintained and run by the local authority or the government and most of them have to follow the national curriculum as well as being inspected by the Ofsted to make sure that schools achieve the standards expected. In this category there are five groups of schools:

1.3.1.1. Community schools: These schools are run by the local authority which is in charge of staff employment, owns the land and buildings associated and establishes the entrance criteria for the schools.

1.3.1.2. Foundation and Trust schools: Foundation schools are run by the governing body which employs the staff and owns the land and sometimes the buildings but also can be owned by charitable foundations. In addition, the government also sets the entrance criteria to follow. Trust schools share the same features as foundation schools but they can also be run with an outside body that has formed an educational trust.

1.3.1.3. Voluntary-aided schools: Most of them are also known as faith schools. As the name suggests, they are religious institutions that are managed by the governing body which has the power to set selection criteria and staff recruiting. Buildings and lands are usually owned by a religious organization.

1.3.1.4. Voluntary-controlled schools: These schools have features of community schools and voluntary-aided schools. They are like community schools in that it is the local authority that decides the enrolment criteria and chooses the school staff but the buildings and lands are owned by a charity or church. (BBC, n.d.)

1.3.1.5. Grammar schools: Grammar schools are known for being excellent schools in terms of results. In those secondary schools, the students have to take an exam to be admitted according to academic results. They are normally run by a governing body, a trust or a council (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2013)

1.3.2. State-funded (independently managed)

These schools are funded by the state but do not have to follow the national curriculum.

1.3.2.1. Academies: Academies are independent schools funded by the state and receive money directly from the government. Furthermore, they are sponsored by universities, other schools or voluntary groups in agreement with the government. In addition, they are different from the previous schools because they do not have to follow the national curriculum but have to follow the same admission criteria like other state schools.

1.3.2.2.City technology colleges:They are secondary schools in urban areas completely free of charge. They are owned by companies and the central government. They are specialized in technologyscience and practical skills.

1.3.3.Private or independent schools

Private schools are independent from both local and national government in finance, administrations and admission. For that reason, they charge students fees to attend and do not have to follow the national curriculum. Normally they are run by foundations or companies.

Even when private schools are independent, they have to be registered with the government and are regularly inspected by the authorities of the corresponding area. (Government service and information, 2014)

1.4. Classification of schools according to age.

There are five types of schools related to students' age. They go from three to nineteen years old as follows:

1.4.1.Nursery schools:These are schools for students aged from three to four years old. Also, they can be private or state-funded and have their own head teacher and staff which give them a certain degree of autonomy.

1.4.2.Nursery classes:They are a type of nursery schools but they are attached to a primary school sharing the same staff and head teacher. They sometimes have a separated building.

1.4.3.Primary schools:These types of schools are for children aged from four to eleven. They can also be private or state-funded and children start with the foundation of the national curriculum.

1.4.4. Secondary schools:They are catered for students aged from eleven to sixteen. They can be private or state funded as well as having to cover most of the national curriculum and prepare students to take General Certificate of Secondary Education exams.

1.4.5. Sixth form colleges:These institutions are a mid-point between school and university. Students who attend Sixth form colleges are age from sixteen to nineteen. Here students can get qualifications such as BTEC national certificates that help them to find jobs.(BBC, n d.)

1.5. Admission criteria

The schools can have two types of admission criteria:

1.5.1. Comprehensive schools: They do not select students on academic skills.

1.5.2. Selective Schools: The criterion is the academic skills of students.

1.6. National curriculum in England

The national curriculum in England is a set of subjects and standards used to teach in primary and secondary school so that children have the opportunity to learn the same thing. It shows what subjects students have to go through and the standards pupils should achieve in each subject. Moreover, the national curriculum has to be followed by maintained schools but not by academies or public schools since they are allowed to follow their own curriculum. (National Curriculum in England, 2014)

The aim of the national curriculum is the following: *“The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement”* (National Curriculum in England, 2014,para.11). Furthermore, the national curriculum provides *“an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum”*.(National Curriculum in England 2014,para.12)

According to what has been quoted above, the national curriculum works as a framework for teachers to take into account not only contents but also skills and personal development. In addition, it works as an outline for parents and students since the national curriculum is available for them on internet or provided in the school where students are attending.

1.6.1. Year Grouping and Key Stages

The education system in England considers Nursery schools, primary schools, Secondary Schools, Colleges and Universities. Nevertheless, in this section there will be covered the first three ones since they are exclusively part of the school system. It is also relevant to note that in some secondary schools, they include Sixth Form which is part of the college system corresponding to year twelve and thirteen (see chart nº1).

The national curriculum is split into different stages that match the students' age and run through great part of the student's school process. In nursery school, which goes between three and four years old, they have to follow "The early years foundation stage" (EYFS) or Reception. This sets up standards for care and development of children until the age of five. In England it is optional to enrol children when they are three years old but it is compulsory when they are four years old. At this point, *"teaching is often done through play, where the child learns about subjects and other people through games"* (Government service and information, 2014, para. 8). After that, children go into "primary school", where they start "The Key Stages" beginning from "Key Stage one" which involves year grouping one (children aged five and six) and year grouping two (children aged six and seven) and then "Key Stage two" which is composed of year grouping three, four, five and six (children aged from seven to eleven). At this point students go through the following subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Design and Technology
- History
- Geography
- Art and Design
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
(Schools normally have the opportunity to create their own ICT curriculum)

- Religious Education (RE)
(Parents can take their children out of the lesson if they want.)

Schools can also offer:

- Personal, social and health education (PSHE)
- Citizenship
- Modern foreign languages
(From September 1st of 2004, it will be compulsory)

In these first two key stages, the emphasis is given to English, Mathematics and Science since they are compulsory assessed at the end of the stage one and two. These can be justified by the main goal of the primary school as quoted: “*The major goals of primary education are achieving basic literacy and numeracy amongst all pupils, as well as establishing foundations in science, mathematics and other subjects*” (Government service and information, 2013, para 8)

After students turn eleven, they go to secondary school and start the key stage three that covers from year seven to year nine (from eleven to thirteen years old). In this stage, the assessment it carried out by the teachers. In this stage students have to study the following subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Geography
- Modern foreign languages
- Design and Technology
- Art and Design
- Music
- Physical Education
- Citizenship
- Information and communication technology
(The same condition as the previous stages)
- Religious education
(The same condition as the previous stages)

The next stage is key stage four. In this stage students are aged fourteen and sixteen years old and belong to year grouping ten to eleven. In this stage, students are prepared to take the GCSE exams and they do a lot of practice until the day in which students take the GCSE exams.

The subjects to study here are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Information and communication technology
- Citizenship
- One of the following: Arts
 - Design and Technology
 - Humanities
 - Modern Foreign Language

(Government service and information, 2014)

In the following chart (chart n°1),it is possible to see the stages and the year grouping as explained above.

Chart 1: Stages and Grouping

Age	Year grouping	Curriculum stage	school
3-5	Reception	Foundation stage	Nursery school
5-6	Year 1	Key stage 1	Primary school
6-7	Year 2	Key stage 1	Primary school
7-8	Year 3	Key stage 2	Primary school
8-9	Year 4	Key stage 2	Primary school
9-10	Year 5	Key stage 2	Primary school
10-11	Year 6	Key stage 2	Primary school
11-12	Year 7	Key stage 3	Secondary school
12-13	Year 8	Key stage 3	Secondary school
13-14	Year 9	Key stage 3	Secondary school
14-15	Year 10	Key stage 4	Secondary school
15-16	Year 11	Key stage 4	Secondary school
16-17	Year 12	Sixth Form	Secondary school with sixth form
17-18	Year 13	Sixth Form	Secondary school with sixth form

1.6.2. Modern Foreign Languages in Secondary school (MLF)

In England, there are a number of languages that are taught at the moment. The curriculum (Department of Education, 2013) states the following: *“The study of languages may include major European or world languages, such as Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish and Urdu. Schools may choose which languages they teach”*.

However, the main languages taught are French, Spanish and German but some schools decide to offer the other languages. Learning a second language or even a third language is becoming more popular over the last few years according to the department of education of the United Kingdom: *“The number of children taking a modern foreign language (MFL) at GCSE was almost a third higher in 2013 than it was in 2011. This growth is forecast to continue to grow, so there is a real need for talented language teachers”* (Department of Education, 2014, para. 4).

According to the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2013) the importance of learning a new language is mainly because languages are part of the cultural richness of our society and the world in which we live and work. Learning languages contributes to mutual understanding, a sense of global citizenship and personal fulfilment. Pupils also learn to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people. By making comparisons, they learn more about their own culture and society. Therefore, the ability to understand and communicate in another language is a lifelong skill for education, employment and leisure in this country and throughout the world. Additionally, students have opportunities to develop their own skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing as well as express themselves in another language. It is important to notice that modern foreign languages are not compulsory in Primary school but will be compulsory from September, 2014. On the other hand, to learn a second language is compulsory in secondary school. (National Curriculum in England, 2013).

The Modern Foreign Language Programme of Study seeks to develop the next statements:

- Linguistic Competences: To develop and apply the skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing
- Creativity: To use familiar language and imagination for new purposes.
- Knowledge about language: To understand and recognize how language works.
- Intercultural Understanding: To appreciate the richness of other cultures.

In terms of developing, the programme promotes the development of:

- Learning language strategies and Linguisticskills.

1.6.3.Scheme of work

A scheme of work is a modifiable document that guides the overall understanding of teaching activities with a group of students. It contains all the information about a term related to contents, time and assessment. In England, every school has to have their own scheme of work and lesson plans to work with students.

The curriculum of Modern Foreign Languages in England and the majority of subjects are based on CGSE exams so they follow basically the same or a similar scheme of work. For instance in “Key Stage Three” students of all the maintained schools has to go throw the following Units as students go throw this stage:

- Unit 1: ¡HOLA!
- Unit 2: La familiar y amigos
- Unit 3: El Horario
- Unit 4: En casa
- Unit 5: En el pueblo
- Unit 6: Pasatiempos

The units mentioned above are all the themes of Spanish as a modern foreign language. Here, students at first stage of year seven (the beginning of stage three) have to go throw during the year and are assessed at the end of every unit. If one of the students does not achieve the goals, the student does not get stuck into the same level. Instead, the student is promote to the

next level but has mentors and help to level his or her knowledge and has more opportunities to take the exams in order to pass it.

1.6.4. Attainment targets

Attainment targets are the achievement levels that provide us information about where a student is at according to the description of each attainment target. They are normally divided into eight levels. In Modern Foreign Language teaching they are split into eight levels per every skill (listening, writing, speaking and reading). In appendix number one (see appendix N°1) , it is possible to see that there are eight levels with a complete description of every level; they go from one to eight. Number one corresponds to the lowest level and the level eight which is the maximum expected. However, there is also an exceptional performance that corresponds to an outstanding achievement in the assessment that goes beyond the expectations of the evaluator. It is important to mention that those levels are cross curricular to the whole process of learning from stage one to four. So, in secondary school, particularly in key stage three, students are expected to work at level five and six. Later, in key stage four, students are expected to archive a level six or higher.

The following chart explains the attainment target expectations (chart n° 2)

Chart 2: Key Stages and Expected Attainment.

Key Stage	Expected attainment at end of a key stage
Foundation stage	No expected attainment target
Stage 1	Level 2
Stage 2	Level 4
Stage 3	Level 5 or 6
Stage 4	From Level 6 to Level 8

1.6.5.Assessment:

In England there are a number of testing tools throughout the whole process depending on the school such as FCSE(Foundations Certificate of Secondary Education) for year 9; GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) in year 11 and GCE A. LEVEL (General Certificate of Education Advance Level) which is taken in Sixth form. As this work is focused on the school I worked, the only examination I dealt with was with GCSE for Spanish so I am going to focus on it specifically.

GCSE are normally sat by 15- to 18-year-olds in schools and colleges across England and other countries, they are available to anyone who would like to gain a qualification in a subject so it is not necessary to attend a school to take a GCSE examination. Students normally choose the subjects they wish to prepare a GCSE examination for in year 9 since they are available in more than 50 subjects around England.

Those examinations can be made by different examination boards depending on what a school chooses to offer. Examination boards are organizations responsible for setting standards and awarding level qualifications in secondary education. The most common in schools are Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) and Edexcel, which cover the same contents. However they may differ in difficulty and format. In fact, Litherland High School, which will be described later) uses both boards depending on the department. Especially for Spanish, the school uses Edexcel.

Those examinations test students in their language skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading) and the percent that is given to each ability also depends on the school but normally they are 60% for speaking and writing over the course and 40% for listening and reading.

CHAPTER II

This is Liverpool

2. What was the origin of Liverpool City?

There is not an exact date of the origin of Liverpool City but there is some information about the Liverpool area from thousands years ago. One of the first finding about Liverpool was in archaeology from the Iron Age (550 BC TO 43 DC) such as Celtic tools and in the first century AD sandstone head was dug up by the area of Mossley Hills (a district of Liverpool). By that time, Britain was receiving a huge invasion from different tribes such as Celts, Gauls and Phoenicians. They brought to Britain coinage, metalwork skills and systems of trade as well as gold, slaves and dogs. It was also the time when the Roman invasion came to Britain but as the northern Celts resisted the rules and influence of the Roman invaders, life outside the main settlements continued as it had been since Neolithic times.

Romans never settled in Liverpool itself but they did in Chester (a city next to Liverpool) by building a fort, called Deva. Romans stayed there for about twenty years and at that time they could move to the surroundings such as Wilderspool and Warrington. In addition, there was a Roman road found in Grassendale between Aigburth and Gaston (south of the city centre).

After the Romans, it was time for other to go to Britain, especially from the north of Europe. It was the case of the Saxon and Angles who have left their mark on the current Liverpool, especially in churches such as St Chard's in Kirkby and names of some places like Bootle(in the north of Liverpool), which comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "botl" that means village. Later, the Vikings arrived and settled in areas like Crosby, Kirkdale and Kirkby.

Crosby has a special meaning. It means "Old Norse for village of the cross" and was named by Norsemen coming from an island between Liverpool and Dublin, called Isle of Man and Ireland. At Crosby was found some coins from the reign of Saxon King Alfred and DanilGulfrith, King of Northumbria in 883.(McIntyre-Brown, 2002).

By the 1001 AD there is still no mention of Liverpool in records. McIntyre –Brown was based on a book, called Domesday Book (1086). This book does not talk about Liverpool but about most of the places that make up Liverpool today such as the river Mersey, Smithdown, Toxteth and West Derby which were clearly identified on maps.

The first time of Liverpool in a document was in 1190. In a deed signed by the prince John, by the name of Liuerpol "*The common consensus is that this is the city we now know as Liverpool and that this name can be roughly translated to mean pool or creek with muddy water, referring to the Mersey*"(History,n.d., para.3)and were also mention some other places in Liverpool like Litherland.Later, on 28thAugust 1207, now King, John signed a royal letter founding the town of Liverpool. After hundreds of years by 1880, the Queen Victoria recognized Liverpool as a city.

2.1.The importance of Liverpool in History

Liverpool as other cities in England has its own history. Some of the most important events throughout the history of this city will be described.

2.1.1.Liverpool as a port

The King John saw Liverpool as a good connection point with Ireland and he ordered the construction of The Liverpool castle. That is way Liverpool was originally used as a base for troops to invade Ireland but it began to be a more residential zone and there were built some churches and markets too. As time went by, Liverpool became afunctional fishing and farming town administered by burgesseswith a small population around hundreds of people and there was some costal trade among Liverpool, Isle of Man and Ireland through the Irish Sea and the river Mersey but the trade was not successful as expected due to the port of Chester was the main one in the northwest in the 14th century.

There had not been a good moment to Liverpool town until 17th century Liverpool started to improve its situation due to a new charter given by Charles I, improving the status of the sailors in the river Mersey as a mean to face the poverty. Apart from that, Liverpool has a natural and deep river. However, there was still no place to unload trade products, for that reason, a dock was built to solve that problem which increased incredibly the importance of Liverpool as a port

to start trades to America and the West Indies and become independent of The Port of Chester. In the further years, Liverpool was known by trading sugar and rum. (McIntyre-Brown, 2002)

2.1.2. Slave Port

Liverpool has its reputation for being a place where most of the slaves came to England. *“Liverpool was a major port for the transatlantic slave trade. Many local merchants and ships were involved in slavery from 1700 until its abolition in 1807. As a result much of the city's wealth in the 18th century came from the trade”* (L Burke, n.d., para.1).

The first ship to get slaves to Liverpool was “The Liverpool Merchant” that arrived from Barbados on 18 September, 1700 with a cargo of 220 enslaved Africans. One of the owners, Sir Thomas Johnson, is known as the founder of modern Liverpool. Moreover, by the end of the 18th Century, Liverpool was known by having over 80% of the British slavery trade and 40% of the whole European slavery trade. (L Burke, n.d)

2.1.3. Industrial Revolution

During the industrial revolution, Liverpool became the world's leader in the production of cotton supplying the textile mills of Lancashire and Manchester. The cotton production made Liverpool attract people from other cities to work and the population went up to 80 hundreds of inhabitants especially due to people from Wales and Lancashire.

As Liverpool was playing an important role in the trade, it was necessary to create connections between Liverpool and other important cities of England. It created routes to Manchester, Leeds and St Helens by canal. One of the most important moments to Liverpool was when in 1830, the worlds' first inter-city rail link to other cities was created in order to go to Manchester by railway.

2.1.4. Irish People

Liverpool has much Irish blood in its people's veins. This is so as there was a great emigration from Ireland to Liverpool during the Great Irish Famine (1845-1849) because the main food that most of Irish people had those days were potatoes but suddenly potatoes contracted a disease causing hunger and that a quarter of Irish population went to Liverpool to survive.

2.1.5. The World War II

The World War II (1939-1945) meant just one thing to Liverpool, the start of the disaster of Liverpool's successful economy. The docks in Liverpool provided the targeting centre for the Battle of the Atlantic and because of this, in 1941 Liverpool received a great amount of air raids that destroyed great part of the city, leaving over 11000 houses destroyed, more than a half of the buildings of the city really damaged and 70000 people homeless and over 2000 killed. The docks stopped to operate for some days. This almost left the city in ruins. (History, n.d)

2.1.6. After The World War II

After 1945 Liverpool had to start to rebuild itself. At the same time, a great part of the employers went out to other cities and people who found themselves unemployed decided to emigrate as well. Furthermore, more modern means of transport made the docks less important impeding to employ more people. After that Liverpool has slowly been recovering itself through tourism, football and music.

2.1.7. The Scouse

The term "scouse" can mean two things. The first one is referred to the typical dish of Liverpool which is a beef stew that was brought by the sailors from Northern European people when arriving in Liverpool to rest from long journeys.

The second meaning refers to Liverpool's particular accent and due to this, people refer to as Scouse or Scouser when they talk about someone from Liverpool, as Freethy (2007) mentions: "Liverpudlians are better known these days as Scouses and they are fiercely loyal to their roots" (p.11). Scouse is also one of the most distinctive British accents along with Mancunian, Geordie, and London posh accent among others. The origins of the accent are not clear but it is said that it emerged late in 19th century "*Speaking with a Scouse accent is a fairly recent trend, up until the mid-19th century Liverpudlians spoke pretty much the same as their Lancastrian*

neighbours, and traces of the warm Lancashire sound can still be heard in the accent of older residents". (Paul Coslett, 2008. Para. 2). From the 19th century onwards, Liverpool's accent has been changing because of the great influence of the new situation of the city as an important port, It made that the Lancaster accent started to mix with other accents such as Irish accent when a massive amount of people from Ireland came to Liverpool because of the Irish Famine, as well as, immigrants like Welsh people and sailors from Northern Europe such as Germans that came to the area also influenced the accent in a way giving shape to the original Scouse accent. The current Scouse accent is different in so many ways from the original since globalization, television and radio have been influencing the accent with some sounds from the south east.

The Scouse accent has also been spreading to the closest towns and cities around Merseyside but with some difference such as Wirral and Southport, where people have a more sophisticated version of the accent than in Liverpool itself. *(Paul Coslett, 2008)*

2.1.8.Liverpool's Heritage and Culture

Liverpool, as many cities around England, has many things to offer as a result of years of an active history as a port. The prove of this is that Liverpool was given the status of "World Heritage Site" in 2004 by UNESCO and was named as a "Maritime Mercantile City" that developed as one of the world's major trading centres in the 18th and 19th centuries. This status gives Liverpool a position within other internationally well-known historic cities such as Edinburgh, Bath, Vienna, Venice, Cuzco and Valparaiso. Liverpool had an important role in the development of the British Empire when transporting people and goods, as well as modern dock technology.(UNESCO, n.d.)

Liverpool is not only known for its history, it is also known for its music, especially for the Beatles, a band well-known around the whole world, the place where the Beatles used to play their music where in a pub called "The Cavern" which still exists in Liverpool as one of the most visited places of the city.

There are also a lot of buildings that shows the Liverpool heritage:

1)The Bluecoat which is the oldest building in the city centre built in the early 18th as a school. Nowadays is an Art gallery.

2) There is also The Royal Liver Building which was built in 1908 and was the first building in the world to be reinforced by concrete. The purpose of this is to be the place of the Royal Liver Insurance Company.

3) Queen Victoria Monument (1906) was built in the place the Liverpool Castle has been erected and was built to commemorate the importance of the Queen Victoria in the difficult moments to Liverpool.

4) Liverpool City Museum is the oldest museum in Liverpool that was built in 1850 through donations.

5) Liverpool City Libraries was built in 1857 and was the first public built Library in England and the biggest one in Liverpool.

6) The Anglican Cathedral was finished in 1978 and it was built in a gothic style. And it is one of the biggest cathedrals in the world. It's the place where most of the Anglicans go for a Service, it is also a really touristic place and it is the biggest cathedral in Liverpool.

7) The Catholic Cathedral was finished in 1967 but it is not famous for the built date. It is famous for its shape which is completely different from a traditional cathedral for being completely round and seems to be a crown outside.

8) Albert Dock was opened in 1846 and was a working dock until 1972. In some years later, it was reopened to be a touristic attraction and most of the merchant places became restaurants. As it suffered a lot of damaged It is known for being one of the most advanced docks in the world and played an important role when Liverpool succeeded for trading.

9) The Maritime Museum keeps a collection that reflects the international importance of Liverpool as a gateway to the world, including its role in the transatlantic slave trade and emigration, the merchant sailors and the Titanic. (Fagan G, 2004)

CHAPTER III

Litherland High School

3. My school

I worked in a school called Litherland High school, in Liverpool, England. The school will be described, especially, the modern foreign language teaching Department.

3.1. The area

Litherland High School is located in the border between Litherland and Bootle which is part of the Liverpool district. Litherland belongs to the district of Sefton, where the local authority is Sefton Council. The area is also five miles from the city centre. According to Sefton council Litherland ward profile (2013), the population in the area has been decreasing lately from 12,631 in 2001 to 11,964 in 2010. In addition, the area has a 51% of females and a 49% of males and most the people are in working age and children.

In terms of properties, the housing prices in Litherland fall as houses in Bootle do, for shearing the same area, where the houses price is £89,253, 43.7% lower than the average Sefton house price and 60.7% lower than the average United Kingdom house price.

Moreover, it is important to have a look at poverty in the local area. Children Poverty can be defined as children living in families where people in working age (from 20 to 65 years old) are not working or earn less than 60 percent of the median income. In Litherland, there are two areas affected by children poverty. In those two areas, more than 40 percent of children are living in poverty. Therefore, Litherland is classified as a deprived area of the region that has huge economic problems.

3.2.Overview

The head teacher in Litherand high school is Mr Jim Donnelly, who has been in the place since 1991. The school was established and built in 1984. This school is a comprehensive school in terms of admission and a foundation school in terms of type. The local authority of the area "Sefton Council" provides some funding for the school to work and it is in charge of a governing body. The school is also part of a trust which means that the school receives donations from organizations or people that wants to support its mission. The school is a mixed school which means that male and female pupils attend the school to receive lessons. The students who attend the school are from 11 to 16 years old with a total of 879 students. In the first term, winter term, of 2014, the percentage of students with learning difficulties or disabilities was above the national average. The school follows the national curriculum as it is a foundation school but since it is also a secondary school, it works with stage 3 and 4 only and does not include sixth form in its curriculum. However, it is specialised in teaching of languages. The school also has two main missions: Achieving by caring, placing great emphasis on providing for the educational needs of each individual pupil and to provide the best education in a learning global community.

The school has not always had the same building. In 2006, the local authority "Sefton Council" granted a government funding to build a new school. The school had a cost of 22.4 million pounds. The new school had to receive all the students from the Bottle high school which was closed the same year. Next year, in 2010 the school was awarded the title of "Instituto Español del año 2010" by the Consejería de Educación del Gobierno de España.

The school was inspected for the first time by the Ofsted in 1997 being rated as a low achievement school but in 2009 the school was judged as an outstanding school that had improved quite a lot in terms of behaviour and learning in class but still below the national average. (Ofsted Inspection report, 2009). In 2014 there was another Ofsted inspection which found several problems in the school and was ranked as Inadequate when inspecting three areas: the students' achievement, the quality of teaching, the leadership and management in comparison to the previous inspection.

3.3.Organization

The organization of the school starts from the top with the head teacher of the school, Mr Jim Donnelly. Who is in charge of the staff employment, marketing of the school, to review the curriculum, finance and is a link with governors, parents and community. Below the head teacher there are three acting Deputy Heads. They are:

Mrs. Maria Sharratt, her main functions are to review timetables, duty teams, to overview the curriculum in the areas of Art, English Maths, Science and Technology. She is also in charge of monitoring and reward students' progress, reporting to parents, to assign students' mentors, school's examinations and self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.

Mrs. Kelly McAnally, who is mainly in charge of developing new ways of learning in the school, learning assessment, school trips, languages' college, adult and community learning and to overview the curriculum in the areas of Modern Foreign Languages, Personal Development, Religious Education, History, Geography and Information and Communication Technology.

The last acting Deputy Head is Mrs. Loretta Roberts, her main missions are to check students' attendance, the management of the pastoral system, students with special needs and disabilities, in year admissions/ transfers, the school environment and health and safety in the school.

The acting Deputy Heads do not have an equivalent in the Chilean education system. However, their functions are performed in Chilean schools by jefes de UTP, Inspectores y orientadores.

Below the acting Deputy Heads there are the subject's leaders or heads of department who are the equivalent of "jefes de departamento" in Chile. The function of those entities is to revise the curriculum in detail of their respective area and make some changes to it within the possibilities allowed depending on the school type. As Litherland High School is a foundation school, the leaders of subjects can just modify the way of teaching some contents and topics but are not allowed to change them. They are also in charge of administering the school funding designated to the specific area as well as deciding members of the staff for the term. Basically, all the decisions taken in the department are taken by this entity. In this school there are nine subject leaders.

Below the subjects' leaders; there are second subjects' leaders in the most important subjects of the curriculum which are Mathematics, English and Sciences who are in charge when the subject leader is not in the school. After the subjects leaders and below in authority, there are the teachers of every subject. In Litherland High School there are 55 teaching staff including the subjects' leaders and including the head teacher and the acting Deputy Head, they are 59 members in total. In the Modern Foreign Language Department there are 8 teachers working with the students.

In addition, even below the teachers of every subject there are the non-teaching staff and part time teachers' assistants. The non-teaching staff can be defined as all the teaching assistant full time, secretaries, supervisors, mentors and administration personnel working in the school. In the school, they are 35 people. Part time teachers' assistants are people who are in charge of providing material for teachers before the lessons such as printouts, worksheets among other things and they sometimes work as mentors for the students who have difficulties in a particular subject or topic. They are 19 in the school.

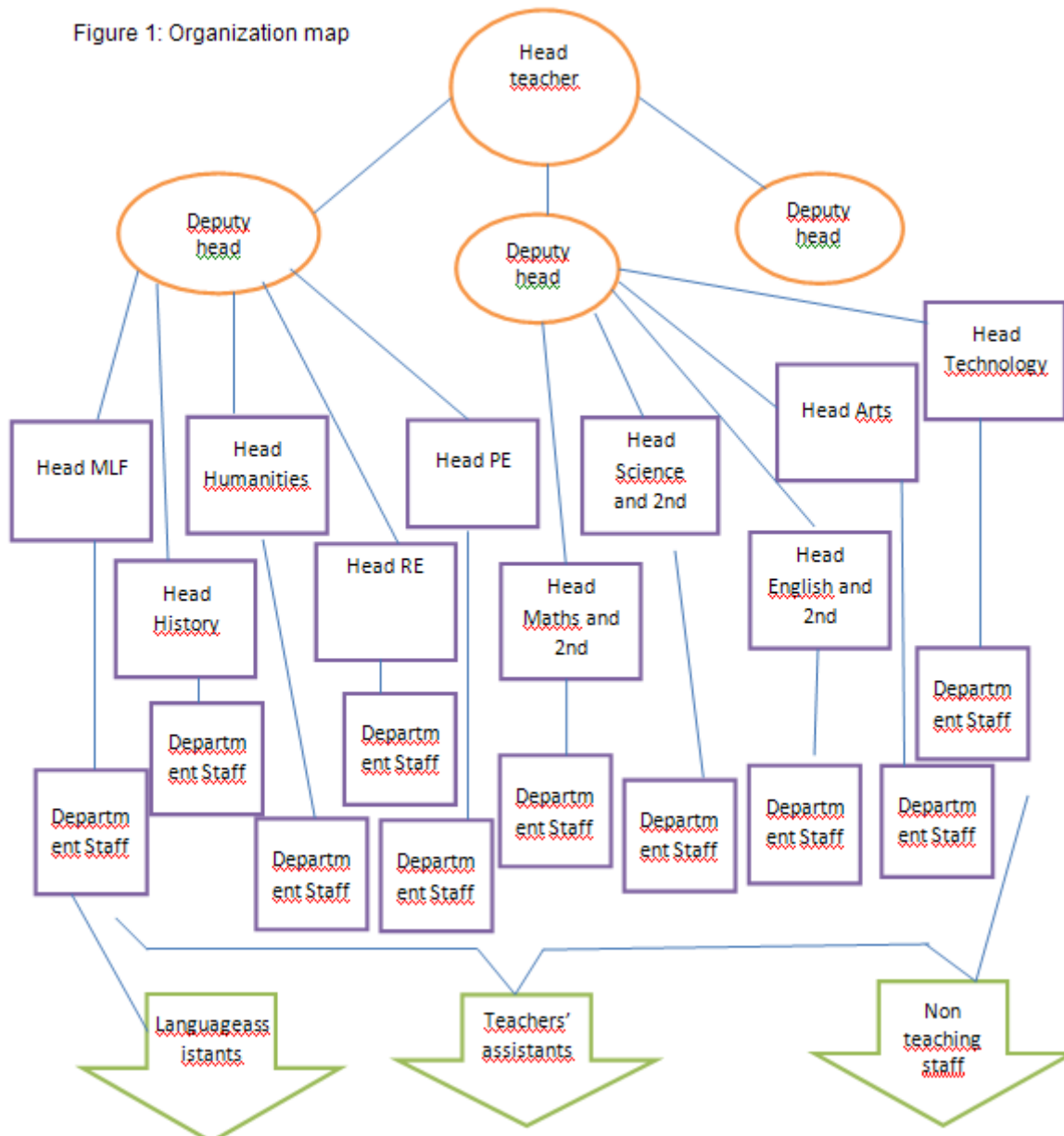
Finally, the least important in the school are the foreign language assistants. In the school they are contacted by the British Council to support the learning of the students in the different languages that are taught in the school.

In the school there were 6 foreign language assistants. There were two Chinese language assistants who started in October 2013 with me but their contract was longer. It was until July 2014 because the school just offers Spanish until students take their final exams in Spanish (the last week of every July). Then, the time spent on Spanish is transferred to Chinese during the month of July. There was also a French assistant who had to perform basically the same function I did but with the French teacher (only one) and the other modern foreign languages teachers who teach more than one language.

For Spanish there were two Spanish assistants apart from me. These two came from Spain (Andalucía) and were around my age. So, the amount of people working together who work in this building are 119. If we compare the number of people who work in a public school in Chile with the amount working in this state-funded school, there is more people who work in a public school in England than in Chile.

In the following organization map (Organization map n^o1) it is possible to appreciate how staff in Litherland High School is arranged.

Figure 1: Organization map



3.4. Uniform

In this school the use of uniform is compulsory because the Governing Body of the school ask the schools to do so. The reason why schools do this is to ensure that no student will be bullied during school time and nearby, as well, to build equality around the students and identity as students from Litherland High School. In Chile, to wear a uniform is not compulsory but most of the schools have a uniform dress code for the same reason as in England: to stop from bullying.(see appendix n°2)

3.5. What makes this schoolspecial?

The school places a great significance to construct and integrate individuals in a global learning community and the best way of being part ofthat is by speaking more than one language to communicate with people from around the world. In this school all pupils have to study at least three languages which are Spanish, French and Chinese but all students are expected to study Spanish until the GCSE level.

The school follows the national curriculum in Years 7 and 8. From Year 9 onwards students study for their GCSE exams in English, Maths, Spanish and Science with the aim of achieving excellent results in examinations at the end of Year 10. Students make decisions at the end of Year 9 in other subjects, for instance students have to choose one language to follow. Most of the students decide to study Spanish rather than French or Chinese. When students. When students start Years 10 and 11, each student has an individual timetable, which will include any additional support that is needed; which is normally focused on English and Mathematics.

The school has an exceptional global community and reach. This can be seen when people from other schools or from other parts of the world come to this school to observe how students learn, its teaching practice, facilities which are tremendous in comparison to any school I have seen in Chile.Students from Litherland High school also go to others schools and countries to see how others learn as a way of sharing knowledge and to be in touch with other cultures apart

from the English one. The school keeps strong links with schools in Spain, China, Czech Republic, Canada, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Sweden.

There were spent 2.2 million pounds on technology and learning resources for the school. It has got 700 computing devices for pupils. Moreover students have their own account on the computers and their own space on the social network of the school. This allows students to access from home as well. There are also two printers and copy-machines per Department completely free of charge both students and teachers. These ensure that every student can work with technology in the school. The classrooms are also fully- equipped with visual material for learning like computers for students, a computer for the teacher with a projector on the ceiling and interactive boards. The school also has a number oflpads with programmes for learning such as spelling bee that makes learning more appealing and updated for students and also for teachers. Additionally, there is an Information and Communication Centre (the ICC) that has 16,000 books, 30 computers and seats for 120 students. Additionally, the school is equipped with its own gym for sports, a salon for hairdressing and beauty and a theatre called “Starry Nights” where students go to perform different presentations. This theatre is quite famous around the north of Liverpool, so the school rent the theatre to others schools when they need it.

The school also has a music room with different instruments to be played when the students need them as well as a recording studio, a dancing room and a lift to be used by students with physical disabilities.

When it comes to eat, the school has a big dining room where both, students are teachers buy their food. In some cases children are eligible to apply for a meal scholarship when they prove they are poor enough to pay for their lunch.

The school is well-known in the area for working with students of a poor area but achieving quite good results through the use of ICT. For example, students work on their homework at home as the teachers verify their progress and give them feedback online and the school feel really proud of it as they state on their website *“we try to encourage this movement to self-supported learning by giving regular homework but by giving enough time for students to plan their own homework timetable. Experience shows that students who work in his way are far better equipped to do well at college and university”* (Litherland High School Prospectus, n.d.).

This school also provides a well-built student support system in which every student has a personal mentor to support them in the subjects they are struggling with and they are also given

a school planner, which is used as a direct way of keeping in touch with students' parents and contains the attendance, punctuality, the homework that should be done and recommendation on the student' progress. For this, it is really important that parents are fully aware of what to do and that is why they are required to sign the school planner every week. There are also three pastoral offices that are in charge of dealing with all the concerns that students and their parents may have about the school, teachers and other students. The school starts its lesson at 8:50 in the morning and finishes at 3:00 in the afternoon (see appendix n°3)

3.6. How does the school encourage learning?

In the case that, students are doing well. They have a merit or achievement system in which the school selects specific achievement days (usually four days in a year). They are normally in November, January, April and June. In this system, teachers assess the student progress according to students' academic goals. So, when students are doing well, every student can receive a maximum of one progress merit per subject. This progress merit is given to students who are on or above their personal target only. Additionally, when they receive a certain amount of progress merit in a year, they are given a financial reward. This system has been useful for the school since most of the students feel unmotivated for leaving in a poor area. Nevertheless, students who are rewarded feel that they can put a lot of effort in the school to succeed in life.

There is also a positive attitude system that works in the same way as the merit system but in this case they are given a merit for having a positive attitude towards the school, classmates and teachers. The school uses this information to report to the parents three times a year their children progress and well as to review the actions taken with the student and to reformulate the actions that are not giving good results with the students who are not achieving their targets. The students in this school are so used to receiving rewards since the school see that this practice is giving good results and encourage the students to set and overcome their own goals.

Other types of reward that students receive are to encourage their work and learning are:

- ✓ Notes in planner
- ✓ Informal one-to-one or small group comments

- ✓ Commendations from a variety of staff
- ✓ Recognition in assemblies
- ✓ Press releases
- ✓ School/press photographs
- ✓ Feedback from teachers
- ✓ Letters/phone calls home
- ✓ Subject certificates
- ✓ Planner stickers
- ✓ Reward trips/events

(Litherland High School Governing Body,2013)

Furthermore, the teachers in the school frequently say that the co-operation and communication among the school, teachers, parents and students is a key for the progress of the students' learning.

3.7. How does the school deal with problems?

In Litherland High School, students do not always behave in the way it is expected for learning. In fact, there are a lot of students who show several behaviour problems during the lessons. To face those issues, the school has a plan to deal with bad behaviour.

The rules are established at the beginning of the lesson and the teachers must promote to give and receive respect, to do so, there are a number of procedures to develop respect with the teacher, for instance students have to stand up behind their tables before and after the lesson, it is the teacher who says when students can leave the classroom, etc.

The normal procedure for badly-behaved students is to ask the student to behave properly in the lesson. Then, if it did not work, the teachers have the faculty to move the students to another place within the classroom. Normally, this sorts the problem out but when the student is still interrupting the lesson, they are sent out to stand next to the classroom door for five minutes or until the lesson is over as a sanction. There are also more sanctions that can be applied such as non-verbal warning (eye contact), verbal warning during and after the lesson, requirement to

make up work not done at home, break or at lunch time. There are some cases when students have to stay after lesson to make up some work or as punishment for bad behaviour during the day in the school. When a bad behaviour is repeated in time, teachers have to complete a slip with the issue and give it to the corresponding subject leader so that he or she can be aware of future problems.

If a student has bad behaviour in several subjects, that student should be monitored by the mentor for a period to take action according to the student's needs. It is also possible that the student may be transferred to another group and to another mentor.

In extreme cases a student can be excluded from a lesson or even from the school. The head teacher is the only one who has the right to take this decision and it can be for a term or permanently.

There have also been cases when students are suspected to carry items which are banned from the school rules. In this kind of situation, the head teacher and teachers authorized by the head teacher can search any item in the student's belongings without permission of the students such as alcohol, weapons, pornographic material among other items.

The use of physical force is prohibited for the staff and when it is needed, it can be applied but without harming the student and using a minimum degree of force but talking is the first mean of communication for any situation presented.(Litherland High School Governing Body, 2013). Parents have also responsibilities in students' learning. (In order to find more information about parents' responsibilities go to appendix n° 4)

3.8 Modern Foreign Languages at Litherland High School

This school is well known for teaching languages and offering more languages than other schools. Most of the school in Liverpool offer Spanish and French as options for the students but this school also offers Chinese from year 7 as a compulsory subject. And from year 9 they can choose other languages such as German and Italian. The Language department works as a unique entity that offers many languages but they share just one head teacher of modern foreign modern languages, named Ciara O'Connor, who has been working in the school for three years as a leader so far. As the leader, she has to show domain on the three compulsory languages taught in the school.

The language department has got 13 teachers. From those 13 teachers, 10 of them are full-time and 3 are part-time. Teachers normally teach at least 2 languages (Spanish and French or Spanish and Chinese) but in most of the cases they teach 3 languages since it increase their employability. To get a place in the language department the school follows the usual recruitment procedures.

The school has 3 language assistants, a French Assistant called Nawal(from France who is a translator)and 3 Spanish assistants called Sergio, Laura (both from Spain and translators) and me (from Chile and an English Teaching Student). They work in the school for a period of 8 months which is the amount of time the school offers Spanish and French every year.

The Function of the language assistants in the school is to work with small groups of students or on a one to one session with them to improve their fluency and cultural knowledge. The school applies for language assistants to the British Council that selects Modern Foreign Language every year. Apart from the language assistant, the language department has got a Comenius assistant, called Anna. She holds the degree of Doctor in Arabic Philosophy. The Comenius programme is unique in the European Union and it aims at the improvement of teaching and exchange of cultural aspects in the classroom when assisting the main teacher. In the school her function was to work across different departments to improve students' cultural knowledge of other countries as well as helping teachers to prepare material and monitoring students' work.

In the languages department it is possible to find 10 modern foreign languages classroom fully-equipped with interactive whiteboards and some computers inside the classroom or students and one for the teacher with an overhead projector and speakers. Also, in the language

department corridor, there are 30 dedicated computers for students with Spanish, French and Chinese programmes for learning.

The school and therefore the modern foreign languages department have 6 classes in year 7, 7 classes in year 8, 7 classes in year 9, 7 classes in year 10, 8 classes in year 11. The school does not follow the traditional setting. Instead, the school groups the students according to their needs and in the best class for them. The first two years, year 7 and 8 are in mentor groups to foster and improve learning. In year 9 the Head of Department splits the students into new classes based on ability, attitude and behaviour.

In terms of planning, the school has a scheme of work written by the Head of Department, in accordance with National Curriculum requirements as a general view of the year. That sets the content, units and assessments during the year. The teacher who gives the lesson is responsible for his or her own lesson plan class by class.

When a student is not achieving the target expected, teachers must offer extra support after classes. If the student needs a mentor, normally Amy Moon, who happens to be one in Spanish and French, takes students out of the lesson to work with her but when there are so many students who need a mentor, some part-time teachers are called to be mentors.

To promote learning, the language department organized clubs in all the languages the school offers. The clubs are meant to encourage learning Spanish through games, cooking and appealing activities in an environment with no pressure after lesson on Wednesdays. Another way that the department promotes learning is by organizing competitions and languages weeks where the students compete against their classmates.

The school also participates in the national competition of spelling bee for year 7 and in year 10 students go to Spain for 2 weeks where they meet Spanish families and people where they can use Spanish in real life situations with native speakers. At some point during the year, modern foreign language teachers take students to hotels and restaurants where the use of Spanish is needed to apply for a job and students can see potential job opportunities for the future.

Regarding the assessments in the department, they normally take place once a term (formal, summative assessment) and Informal (formative assessment) take place during each lesson. In year 11, students take GCSE exams in Spanish or French which are external exams agreed by the government. After having taken the exams, parents are informed about students' progress four times a year at the end of each term.

CHAPTER IV

My experience and impressions as a Foreign Language assistant

4. How was I given this opportunity?

All started two years ago when I applied for a scholarship offered by my former university and the British Council to travel to the United Kingdom to teach Spanish. People who applied had to prove their English level, have good grades, write a cover letter and have an interview. Days later, I received an e-mail saying that I had received one of the scholarships to go abroad to England.

As the time went by, I received an email from a school called Litherland High school to work with them in a City named Liverpool. At the very same moment I saw the name Liverpool, I felt happiness so I had heard of the place because of football teams and The Beatles.

After that, I started to watch on YouTube some videos about Liverpool and the first thing I found was a video about Liverpool people and their famous "Scouse accent" which until then, was unknown to me and I noticed that most of the video was not comprehensible and I also noticed some difference with the Queens accent (RP) taught in the university.

When I first landed in Manchester, England, I was collected by the head of the languages department in the school who took me to Liverpool and showed me the city. I did not have many problems to understand her since she is used to dealing with foreign language assistants but I still could notice a different accent in her voice because she is Irish.

My first impression of Liverpool was that all the houses have a ground and a first floor, in some cases even a second floor, so when you try to look for the sun or the sky, you still see either the first or the second floor of the houses. If I talk about the accent I can tell that most of people in the street speak like what I saw on YouTube.

4.1. The first day of lessons

I had to start my work at Litherland High School on October the 1st and I had the chance to observe the classes where I worked with the aim of getting to know the teachers and students as many other assistant around England.

The first day I met the other assistants in the school and we were given the school rules in a booklet. Later, we were introduced to the staff and were taken a picture to have our credential to prove that we were working in the school. Afterwards, I went to the lesson I have been assigned and I could observe that the students were not different in their behaviour between these students and those I could find in Chile. The only difference was that most of the students have blond hair and blue eyes. My first impression of the classrooms was that they were really well equipped so teachers can work by using technology in every single lesson.

4.2. As time went by

Once in the lessons, I could notice that all the teachers did not want me to be with them in their lessons. Maybe, they were feeling afraid of their language competences and the possibility of making a mistake and being corrected during the lesson. At first, the teachers allowed me to stay with them in the classroom to supervise students' progress and to contribute with my knowledge as a Spanish native speaker but after two weeks, they started to send students out the classroom to work with me in the corridors where I had tables and chairs. In the corridors I was able to witness how students worked with other teachers as well as the special behaviour that some of them had with the teachers. I used to see how students were sent out of the classrooms several times, some students showed to be very disrespectful with the teachers to the point to say swearing to the teachers or even to the head of the department when they were told off or when they felt they were not allowed to do what they wanted. On the other hand, I was able to witness how mentors and the others language assistants worked in the school since we all worked in the corridors. That fact was quite good since when a doubt came out, we were able to ask other assistants or mentors about it and I also learnt new games and some tips to work with pupils.

4.3. My teaching and learning time

In the school I had the chance to work with all year grouping, that is, from year 7 to year 11. I sometimes worked in the classroom when teachers asked me to do so but most of the time with small groups in the corridor. So the corridor became my classroom. There were some computers were available to use, as well as, two big tables and many chairs to practice with the students there. This was from year 7 to 10 only because with year 11 I had to book a classroom to give full lessons.

At first, I was told that I had to develop fluency with students but it was quite challenging since a big part of the students did not understand anything I said in Spanish when I first talked to them and in most cases their Spanish level were not good enough. However, I managed to help them develop their speaking skills and they were able to speak more and more.

After the first month, teachers stopped asking me to develop fluency and then stated to send me pupils who had problems with Spanish and did not feel motivated. So, in most lessons I was told to practice vocabulary and expressions with the students though games and material made by me and I often had to explain grammar to the students. This was particularly difficult for them, especially, the past tense and irregular verbs in Spanish, gender, conjugations of adjectives and the use of definite and indefinite articles mixed with gender. I understand this is difficult for them as their native language does not have the same conjugations as in Spanish.

As a student of English teaching, I have got some knowledge about how to teach a foreign language and one of the things I have learnt is that teachers have to try to use the target language as much as possible, but students complained quite a lot about the use of it and I was required to explain things in English, even when students were able to understand part of what I said in Spanish through gestures and movements. Then, I realized that students in the school are used to translating everything instead of thinking in the language they learn. I was also told by some teachers that they wanted that all the students in the classroom had the opportunity to practice with me so I was given 5 minutes to work with pairs, which made me feel frustrated since I was not given enough time to work with the students as I would have liked to.

In the language department, all the assistants shared a room called "Assistants room" which was quite small but we were able to leave our belongings there and we had enough space to

prepare our session with students. The room had 2 computers and different kinds of materials such as pens, different colour papers, and scissors among other things.

I used to use materials within the school or when it was needed, I prepared a number of different materials for learning for the school according to what students were learning and to the requirement of the teachers I worked with. The materials I used to use in the school were board games, cards, videos, PowerPoint presentations, role-plays and worksheets. As I was also allowed to use the computers with pupils, I also used some websites that the school is used to working with such as "Linguascope.com", YouTube and google maps when I had to work with countries. (see appendix n^o5)

As a Spanish language assistant, I had to modify my Chilean accent for two reasons. The first one was because I was required by the Head of the department to work with vocabulary and pronunciation from Spain since all the material, audios and the way they teach is focused on Spain. So, words like "auto" and "micro" had to be changed for words like "coche" and "autobús". The other reason was because both teachers and students are not used to the speed we talk in Chile. In fact, at the beginning, even the other Spanish assistants were not able to understand what I said so I was forced to change it by the environment where my Chilean accent was not very useful and did not allow me to communicate properly.

Teaching in this school also gave me the chance to learn more English and some Scouse as well, since I had to interact most of time in English with teachers and students. I learnt English with pupils when they asked me questions in English or gave their feedback and comments about a particular topic. I sometimes asked students some personal questions and doubts about how to say something they were learning in lessons as a way to contract my previous knowledge with everyday spoken English. In some occasions students were sent to work with me in a bad mood and as they were not working as expected I sometimes asked what was wrong with them. This triggered them to tell me all sort of problems they had in the school and at home. Moreover, in one of the year 9s I had in this school, I was usually sent students who were not interested in Spanish and who had some behavioural problems in several subjects. These students often tried to persuade me to talk about any topic instead of working in Spanish. In an attempt to solve this, I managed to tell them about my country and how people are in Chile as well as similarities we have in Chile in language such as "computador" which is closer to "computer" rather than "ordenador" which is the word used in Spain for it. This fact

made students get more engaged and interested in Spanish and they changed their behaviour when they worked with me in the corridor.

I also learnt English when I was in the assistants' room because Amy Moon, one of the teacher's assistants and mentor, was always there and we talked everyday about different. We ended up becoming good friends.

In year 11, I had a completely different role, because I had to be a teacher for them, not an assistant. I had to develop speaking and listening skills in my students. I had to go to a classroom previously booked and talk with them about topics such as "la comida saludable", "el botellón" among other topics. In my lessons I used to introduce the topic with videos or images to make them speak about the videos related to the topics and I also gave them vocabulary in context to use in their speech and any other support that I found useful for the lesson. Afterwards, I guided the conversation according to some questions that are part of their GCSE examination in Spanish. Those lessons were really challenging since there were 30 people at this level who were split into group A and B. The group had to come to GCSE lesson every other Wednesday and the same with group B. In other words, when a week I had to work with group A, the next week I worked with group B and so on and so forth. Apart from that as we were 3 Spanish assistants we were given 5 students each and in any order decided by the head of department.

The main problems here were that the students varied quite a lot in level of Spanish, for example some of them were able to understand me and participated very well but the majority was not able to follow the lesson since the lesson by teachers were mostly given in English and not Spanish. In addition, the other 2 assistants never had had training as teachers so they gave all the lessons in English. Therefore, the students found my lesson really demanding at the beginning but then they got used to it and felt like coming with me was a good challenge for them. At the end of the period, all students showed their progress but I noticed that the students who were with me in many lessons were more fluent and more creative when speaking in Spanish.

CHAPTER V

Comparison of experiences in England and Chile

5. Comparison of experiences

In an attempt to accomplish my research aims. Firstly, I am going to compare three interviews of modern foreign languages teachers in England with an interview of an English language teacher in Chile. Secondly, I am going to compare the experiences of an Anglo-Saxon assistant who worked in Chile with my own experience as a foreign language assistant in England.

5.1 Comparison between teaching a foreign Language in Chile and UK

In Litherland High school, I had the opportunity to observe teachers giving lessons and I can state the following:

- All the teachers in the language department teach Spanish through games and competitions.
- The teachers follow a fixed power point presentation which is shared by all the teachers in the department.
- The teachers overuse English in their Spanish lesson regardless the level of the students.
- In some lessons, teachers tell off the students during the lessons.
- The students in this school are used to participating when a game is used, when a teacher tries to do a worksheet or exercises, students talked too much in the lesson
- The students tend to translate everything into English and were not able to speak in Spanish, except for some fixed expression to answer specific question.
- In some lesson, students were very talkative to follow the lesson.
- Most of the lessons were teacher centred.

Three modern foreign language teachers of Litherland High School were interviewed to know how they promote Spanish learning. Here there is a summary of the interviews.

- 1) Caitriona McAuley: She teaches Spanish and Chinese and has been working 5 years in the school. She says that Spanish teaching has to be in a fun and interesting way. In addition, teaching about culture based on her experiences and to have a good sense of humour. She likes using technology, YouTube, song and games. She also uses twitter and Facebook when students have to translate because it is more interesting for students. She also prefers to get the students drawing the language for themselves instead of giving a list of vocabulary.
- 2) Jennifer Corcoran: She teaches Spanish, French and Italian and has been working for 2 and a half years in this school. She says that she provides personal experiences as a role model and persuades students that it is possible to travel and useful to learn other languages. She uses videos and personal photographs.
- 3) Karen Heath: She teaches Spanish and Chinese and has been working for 12 years in the school. She says that she uses the target language as much as possible to build routines and students can take ownership of the lesson. She also gives a Spanish name to the students when they speak in Spanish. She also uses the assistant as a motivation and a challenge for the students.

In order to contrast the previous ideas with those ones found with teachers who have worked with assistants in Chile, the following lines will be devoted to introducing the point of view of an English language teacher in Chile. Elizabeth Muñoz, English language teacher, who works at Santa Maria de la Cordillera in Puente alto, Santiago, was interviewed to know how she promotes English learning. The school is a semi-private school.

Elizabeth Muñoz: She has been working in this school for 8 years. She says that she takes advantage of what the ministry of education offers such as debates, spelling bee. In the school they prepare an English week. She focuses her work on productive skills and uses presentations “prezi” for her lessons as well as music, videos and movement. In addition, the school has an English language assistant and this year just 8 schools in Santiago have an assistant because the ministry is reducing resources for language assistants. She does not use games in class

because the assistant plays games with students. On the other hand, she has never been abroad and there are 3 English teachers in the department.

She splits the lesson in 2 parts so that a half of the lesson is for the teacher and a half for the assistant in another classroom. She states that having an assistant helps to engage the students and to have an expert on the language.

In this comparison and according to the data collected, it is possible to state some similarities about the teaching practice. First, the teachers in both schools use technology such as Prezi, videos and music during the lesson as a way to catch the attention of the students and to make the lesson more appealing for them. Secondly, the schools have the support of a language assistant as a way to improve learning in terms of motivation and having a real language resource in the classroom.

When it comes to talk about differences, the data shows the following. The first difference is that the School in Litherland, Liverpool is a state-funded school and the school in Puente Alto, Santiago is a semi-private one (particular subencionado).

In Litherland High school, one teacher uses games to teach but the other two also use games since they have to follow the same PowerPoint presentation during the lessons which include games and in Santa Maria de la Cordillera School, the teacher does not use games to teach but her assistant does.

Two teachers in Litherland High school, have been abroad in Spain and can share their experiences and motivate the students to travel and use Spanish for real purposes. However, in Santa Maria de la Cordillera, the teacher had never had the chance to travel abroad. Therefore, it is neither possible for her to share personal experiences nor encourage students to travel.

It is evident that even in both schools teachers use technology and language assistants. In England there are more opportunities and tools to learn than in Chile. Firstly, in England there are more resources to incorporate in teaching such as games and more than one assistant, whereas in Chile there is just one assistant in the school. Secondly, in the language department in Chile there are just 3 English teachers but in England they have 13 teachers teaching different languages, all of whom have to teach Spanish. So, that increases a lot the amount of

work that teachers have since there are just 30 students per lesson and even when there are 6, 8 or even 8 classes per level, there are more teachers than 3 teachers for 3 classes in Chile.

5.2. Comparison between two foreign language assistants' experiences

As a language assistant I had experiences in England that belonged to my particular places and moment in Liverpool and in the school. So I could not tell that this experience is the same the rest of the assistant had during their period of work. Additionally, I am going to compare it with an assistant who worked in Chile in 2009 in a public school in Maipú. (see appendix nº6). For the following comparison, four topics were chosen:

5.2.1. The school:

The school was located in a middle class area where people were very nice with her. The children in the school were very excited and interested in learning but some teenagers were too shy to speak. In the school there were 8 computers in the library for a class of 30 students and nothing else for learning. Katherine worked 32 hours a week

She says that " what lacked in the school as the motivation and the environment to learn English. Many of the students didn't see a reason to learn, the environments in which they were whether at home or at school didn't produce this motivation". In my case, the school was in a poor area but the environment was nice too. Some of the children were into learning but most of them preferred talking about their needs and lives.

In terms of tools for learning the story is completely different in my school since there were 30 computers available just for learning languages as well as different games to play with languages. Katherine worked more hours than me a week in the school. Probably, because in Litherland High School, there were 3 Spanish assistants and not only one as in the school in Puente Alto.

5.2.3. Methodologies:

Katherine had the function to assist the teachers in the lesson and to help the students with their work through games and had the autonomy to prepare any game. She was not told what the lessons were about until the lessons started but she told teachers in advance when she prepared games. She used to work in the class (45 minutes) with all the students or with a group of 5 or 6 pupils and one time had the opportunity to work with the students outside the classroom. For her the best methodology to work with the students was to play games because they were motivating. Moreover in one of the lesson she could teach about her culture and country (Canada).

In my case, some points were different from her, specially my function which was not to assist the teacher because the school had other members who were in charge of this. Instead, I worked just with students supported and taught them the contents of the lesson. I also used games during my sessions with students (5 to 10 minutes per pair) but students really enjoyed when they had to talk instead of writing. They also enjoyed movements quite a lot and to compete against the partner. In this school I also taught about my culture when I talked to students about my country and how we say certain things different than Spaniards. I also had to give a lesson about how we celebrate Christmas in Chile.

5.2.4. The programme.

Katherine assisted English language lessons in a school in Chile and to be part of it she just needed to want to join a group at "McGill University" (the university she was studying at) which recruited people for the programme every year.

In Chile she was given a place to stay at a host family and the family was given money by the ministry to pay for the assistant's expenses. She thinks that the teachers were not really prepared on how to use the assistants and they should have been trained on how to take advantage of her.

In Chile, the programme that took me to England was given by my University and the British council and you have to follow a selection criterion. The local authority was responsible to pay me for the job in Litherland High School. I was given no place to stay but with the payment it is possible to pay for a room in a house and expenses too. I think in my school there was a lack of communication between the teachers and the assistants since I was not informed properly about the topics and sometimes I did not know the topic before the lesson. Sometimes teachers

changed the plans completely before the lesson so I had to improvise. I think I was not given enough time to work properly with students.

5.2.5. Life in general

Katherine felt comfortable living in Chile and the only thing she missed from Canada was her family. In relation to the accent, she did not have problems with it because she knew Spanish before. What she liked the best from Chile was how nice were people and the least was not to have central heating as in Canada.

In my opinion, I felt good living in Liverpool but not as good as in Chile. I missed quite a lot my family, the food, prices and the timetables. In Liverpool you cannot find anything open after 6 in the afternoon so it made it quite boring sometimes. In terms of the accent I struggled so much with it. It took me 4 or 5 months to start to understand what people say in the street because most of people speak in Scouse. In the school, it was not difficult to understand because the environment makes the language more formal. What I liked the most from England was to learn English and to meet new people and what I liked the least was the weather.

Conclusion

This seminarwork has presented some aspects about my experiences in England as a general view of the education system in this cloudy and rainy country, as well as, telling us a bit about Liverpool, the city of the Beatles and language assistants' experiences too. It is important to stand out some of the features of the English education system that make the difference in terms of quality in contrast with the education system in Chile.

Stated funded schools in England have a big number of teaching staff to promote a good quality education. This aims at covering properly students' needs and learning difficulties. However, schools in Chile hire only a few numbers of teachers to work with numerous classes and large groups. Schools do not provide extra support for lesson. The number of teachers in the school I worked in England was 13 modern foreign language teachers in England vs 3 teachers in Chile which is an unfair proportion. When considering the number of students in a classroom in Chile, there are normally 45, in contrast with 30 students as maximum per class in England. Therefore, teachers in Chile have an excessive amount of lesson to prepare and give, hindering an optimal performance in their work.

Moreover, schools in England place students into different classes according to their skills. This plays an important role when teachers have to set goals and assessments for their lessons because they use their knowledge of their students to adapt their lessons in the best way possible. It is important to highlight that students who are placed in a class can move according to their performance throughout lessons. Whereas, school in Chile normally place students in a fixed order into lessons regardless their skills so it makes more difficult for teachers to consider learning styles and activities to suite students' needs.

The government and local authorities in England provide schools different resources such as computers, games and materials for both, teachers and students. It is incredible to think that in a semi-private school which receives money from parents and the government, the provision of computers could reach low rates such as 8 computers for a class of 30 people like in the school in Puente Alto. It is also important to point out that investment made in language assistants by the government in Chile has been decreasing every year to the extent that in 2014 only 8 schools in Santiago were given the opportunity to have an English language assistant.

Nevertheless, in England there were 34 modern foreign language assistants from Chile only. The British Council takes people from Spanish speaking countries from all over the world. In fact, in Liverpool I could meet 7 Spanish language assistants. This suggests that the number of Spanish language assistants in England is enormous in comparison to Chile. Additionally, it is interesting to point out what I consider a good action in England: Mentoring system is one of the best things the education system has since all the students have the opportunity to make up missed lessons as well as to catch up with their classmates if the lesson was not clear enough for students. Thereby, it is responsibility of the whole staff, not just of the teacher or students themselves.

In addition, students in England have more holidays since the academic year is divided in 3 terms and not in 2 as in Chile which allows students to recover from stress during the year. In Chile, students are stressed all the time and they lack of motivation. In this sense, I can tell teachers in England have better working conditions than in Chile.

In terms of motivation, there is an outstanding advantage in the British system because teachers can travel to Spain and learn more about the language they teach, as well as, living the experiences of taking part of the Spanish culture. This encourages teachers because they can use the language they teach in real life situations. Teachers, at the same, encourage students to learn Spanish by sharing their experience in Spain.

Unfortunately, in Chile the story is completely different as most of the teachers have not got the chance to travel abroad and therefore they cannot share their experiences and show that it is useful for students to learn English. In England, teachers show students how beneficial is to learn another language. For example in Litherland High School, teachers take the students to jobs in which a foreign language is used such as restaurants and hotels among others places. In Chile, I have never heard about a public or a semi-private school doing this. So, this is an action that schools in Chile should consider to take.

In my opinion, assessments in Chile show what students actually know because students answer an unknown test for them in comparison to English tests on Languages (more specifically, the GCSE on languages). In England, students have intensive GCSE practice. In my case I found students in the school learning a piece of paragraph or a text to say during oral tests but some of the students did not know what they were saying. Furthermore, students can

not repeat a year. This makes students in England unable to feel any pressure when studying for their test. In fact, in year 10 I had a student who gave me that response when I asked him the reason why he did not study. However in Chile, the situation is different from England because students can repeat a year and have a grade average to maintain. Otherwise students get stuck in their school process if they fail.

When it comes to talk about experiences in the schools, Katherine and I share in common some things. In Litherland High School, sometimes I felt that I was not being used properly by the school because I was often sent to work with the worst students to teach them grammar instead of developing speaking skills. I felt like a mentor rather than a language assistant in this regard. In the case of Katherine, she noticed that English language teachers did not know how to fully integrate her in lessons so she felt she was not being productive as she expected. Another similarity was that in both schools we were required to play games with students because it was more appealing for students to learn in this way.

Katherine did not have problems to understand the Chilean accent because she knew Spanish well before coming to Chile. In contrast to Katherine's experience, I had many problems with the accent in Liverpool. For instance, when I had to go to a supermarket or buy a train ticket, people spoke so fast that I was able to get a couple of words only. Thus, I got used to ask people to repeat what they said in order to understand them. I was not able to fully understand people because there were a number of differences between the Scouse and Received Pronunciation accent I could learn at university.

As I was paid for my work in England, I had the chance to travel around The United Kingdom and some countries around Europe. However, Katherine did not receive much money, so she was not able to travel around Chile or South America.

In relation to my teaching experience, I had the opportunity to work with students by using games and computer programmes and other resources with students. This was an opportunity that Katherine did not have since the school, where she worked, did not provide her computers or extra material for her lessons.

The worst thing about England was the weather as it rains every day. There were a number of times when I was in the street without an umbrella and it started to rain. Then, when I bought one, the rain had already stopped. Rainfall is unpredictable in England. On the other hand, the best thing about England was to have the opportunity to meet people of different nationalities.

There were people from all over the world. For instance, I could meet people from Spain, Germany, Italy, Egypt, and Africa among other countries. It was interesting to discuss different topics with people who were born in places completely different from Chile.

To sum up, this experience was successful for me but challenging at the same time. I had the chance to learn more about English, Scouse, to get in touch with a new culture, especially in Liverpool and picked up some teaching methodologies that were very useful. It is important to take into account some difficulties that any language assistant from Chile may have: People need enough money to pay for expenses and rent in The United Kingdom for the first month. In Chilean currency the amount of money needed is almost a million pesos. In addition, in the United Kingdom, there are as many accents as there are cities and towns. So it is very important to be prepared and willing to listen to new accents and expressions. Additionally, the weather throughout the United Kingdom is basically the same. It is cloudy and raining every day but not all the time. Therefore it is important to wear a lot of clothes when leaving a building. Furthermore, I have heard some language assistants that gave complete lessons as teachers, others worked with students in small groups as me. That is why a language assistant has to be prepared to play any role in teaching depending on the school.

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Appendices

Appendix n^o1

Attainment target 4: Writing

Level 1

Pupils write or copy simple words or symbols correctly. They label items and select appropriate words to complete short phrases or sentences.

Level 2

Pupils write one or two short sentences, following a model, and fill in the words on a simple form. They label items and write familiar short phrases correctly. When they write familiar words from memory, their spelling may be approximate.

Level 3

Pupils write a few short sentences, with support, using expressions that they have already learnt. They express personal responses. They write short phrases from memory and their spelling is readily understandable.

Level 4

Pupils write short texts on familiar topics, adapting language that they have already learnt. They draw largely on memorised language. They begin to use their knowledge of grammar to adapt and substitute individual words and set phrases. They begin to use dictionaries or glossaries to check words they have learnt.

Level 7

Pupils write articles or stories of varying lengths, conveying opinions and points of view. They write about real and imaginary subjects and use an appropriate register. They link sentences and paragraphs, structure ideas and adapt previously learnt language for their own purposes. They edit and redraft their work, using reference sources to improve their accuracy, precision and variety of expression. Although there may be occasional mistakes, the meaning is clear.

Level 8

Pupils produce formal and informal texts in an appropriate style on familiar topics. They express and justify ideas, opinions or personal points of view and seek the views of others. They develop the content of what they have read, seen or heard. Their spelling and grammar are generally accurate. They use reference materials to extend their range of language and improve their accuracy.

Exceptional performance

Pupils communicate ideas accurately and in an appropriate style over a range of familiar topics, both factual and imaginative. They write coherently and accurately. They use resources to help them vary the style and scope of their writing.

This is the attainment target to assess writing in the schools as an example to explain the attainment targets mentioned in the work.

Appendix n°2

Litherland High School, Students' dress code

In The school the dress code is the following:

Boys:

Plain navy blue v-necked, long sleeved jumper

Plain, light blue shirt

Navy blue and red LHS tie

Plain black sensible footwear (not boots)

Plain dark grey trousers

Girls:

Plain navy blue v-necked, long sleeved jumper or cardigan

Plain, light blue shirt

Navy blue and red LHS tie

Plain black sensible footwear (not boots)

Plain navy blue skirt or plain navy blue trousers

Neutral, navy or black tights or plain white or navy blue socks

Appendix n°3

The School Day in Litherland High School

Registration - 8.50- 9.10

Lesson 1 - 9.10 - 10.05

Break -10.05 - 10.20

Lesson 2 - 10.20 - 11.20

Lesson 3 - 11.20 - 12.20

Lunch - 12.20 - 12.55

Lesson 4 - 1.00 - 2.00

Lesson 5 2.00 - 3.00

School Finishes - 3.00

Assemblies take place daily.

Appendix n^o4

Parents' responsibilities

When a bad behaviour is repeated, is common to send a letter or to call the parents to come to the school to talk with the students mentor about the particular behaviour.

In this school the parents are fully-aware of the School's Behaviour Policy and have to ensure and contribute to the accomplishment of the student in the rules.

Parents are have a legal duty to ensure that their child (from 5 to16 years old) receives a suitable full-time education either at a school or by making other suitable arrangements such as being part of a house system

When talking about behaviour parents have the responsibility to ensure that the student is well behaved in the school by promoting values at home. If they fail to do that, the school ask parents to sign a parenting contract or can apply for a court-imposed parenting order. If this last measure is applied, the students have to be given to carers to ensure they are under responsible care. In fact, in this school there are 15 students who are classed as "Looked After Children", this classification which means that these 15 children live with a carer and not with a parent. (Litherland High School Governing Body, 2013)

Appendix nº5

These are some of the materials that I used to use with students



Appendix n°6

Katherine Couture's Interview.

THE SCHOOL

Do you remember the school name? if yes, what was it?

No

Where was the school located and how was the area it was situated?

The school was located in Maipu. The area was nice – middle class. I felt very safe and the people were very friendly.

How was the attitude of the pupils towards English learning?

The younger children were keen to learn. Some of them were shy to speak and say words in English but most were excited to learn. The older students – teenagers – were less keen. Many weren't interested but I felt when I was in the class their interest increased slightly and they became more attentive to the lessons.

What kind of tools did the school have for English teaching?

I can't remember there being many tools. There were the computers in the Library but there was only about 8 of them – not many for a class of over 30 students.

How many hours did you work a week?

I worked maybe 30 hrs/ week.

What do you think the school you worked in lacked to improve English teaching and learning?

I don't know if it lacked anything. I think what it did lack was the motivation and the environment to learn English. Many of the students didn't see a reason to learn, the environments in which they were whether at home or at school didn't produce this motivation. I could tell though near the end of my time there that some students did

have the urge to learn but I believe they found this motivation elsewhere – maybe from family – somewhere outside school. I was not there long enough to really find out more.

METHODOLOGIES AND TEACHING

What were your functions as a foreign language assistant?

I assisted the teacher with her lessons. I helped the students with their assignments or with their in class exercise. I also had the opportunity to put together my own lessons – usually just games that I had learnt from my short 3 days of training before starting my work as an assistant teacher.

How did you coordinate with the English teachers what to do?

I can't remember too much. I didn't know the lessons until the class started but I did tell the teacher in advance when I would be running my games/lessons.

Were you told what to do or you got some level of autonomy to give your lesson?

I had autonomy

How did you normally work with students (e.g always in class with all of them; only with some students; outdoors or indoors, etc) and how many students did you work with per lesson?

With all of them sometimes. Other times with a group when I would help with the students in class exercises. It would probably be a group of 5 or 6 students. I also coordinated a lesson outdoors for the students one time to make it more interesting – I believe it was a scavenger hunt I did.

What kind of tools were you provided to teach English (computers, printouts, etc) ?

A box of supplies from the ministry – Bristol board, colour paper, scissors, markers, pens, etc. I wasn't provided with anything at the school.

How long was every session with students?

I can't remember exactly – 45-60 min probably

What were the methodologies that worked the best with the students? (e.g. listen and repeat activities, group work presentations, etc)

Games – they were interested to take part in a game.

Could you teach the students aspects of your culture? How?

I did a lesson on my country. Showed them where it was on a map, showed them pictures of the city I was from.

THE PROGRAMME

What was the programme that took you to Chile about?

It was about teaching English in Chile

How did you manage to be part of the programme?

My University (McGill University) had a student group that recruited students every year for the program.

Were you provided a place to stay or did you arrange it on your own?

I was provided with a place to stay

Did you have any benefits from the programme to live in Chile?

The home I stayed in provided me with meals and I was given a little bit of money from the ministry of education as well. I think like \$150 for the entire two months.

If you had the change to change some features of the programme, what would you change of it to make it better?

I would say that the teachers were not really prepared on how to use the assistants (like myself) in their classrooms. They were given someone but didn't really understand how to fully integrate them and benefit from their presence in the classroom. The teachers should have had some kind of training on how to work with their assistants and put them to work in the class in a productive manner,

LIFE IN GENERAL

What was your first impression about Chile?

It wasn't like Mexico – I had only ever been to one other Spanish speaking country before and that was Mexico. Chile was so different – that's what I realized – the food, the culture, the music, the people. But of course it would be different – Canada is not like the USA.

Did you feel comfortable living in Chile? Why?

I certainly felt comfortable living in Chile. I never felt threatened, most people I talked to said it was safe. I used the same type of caution that I use here in Canada so I felt just as safe.

What were the things you missed the most from your country when staying in Chile?

I did not miss much as I love being in new places but one thing I couldn't help but miss was my parents.

Did you have problems with Chilean accent and how did you deal with it? Where people nice and willing to try to talk in English when there were misunderstandings?

There were no problems with the Chilean accent, I found it easy to understand when people spoke in English or in Spanish to me. People were more than nice so so hospitable. I didn't really talk to many people in English. I knew Spanish so I usually started speaking to people in Spanish. Most people I found didn't really know English.

What were the things you liked the most and the least from Chile?

There was so much I liked about Chile but one thing I really like was just how kind everyone was – how happy and willing to help in any way they could.

What I didn't like was that it was sooo cold. I'm not used to not having central heating. In Canada you can walk around in shorts in the house when it's the middle of winter and it's minus 20 degrees outside. You can't do that in Chile though in most homes especially all the ones I was in. It was something that shocked me but I loved my stay in Chile nonetheless.