



REVISTA KRONOS

Classroom management influence on English acquisition in EFL A2 students

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ABSTRACT The aim of this article is to analyze how classroom management influences the acquisition of English language proficiency at the A2 level through a new academic management methodology. The relevance of the study lies in the number of students who fail to achieve certification of knowledge and skills through the application of the standardized A2 Key (KET) exam. The study utilizes a quasi-experimental research methodology involving the inclusion of two distinct groups: an experimental group and a control group, both of which were selected through a random process. Additionally, the Suggestopedia learning method has been used, which requires optimal and continuous communication between the educator and students. This set of techniques also allows for the implementation of various artistic components in the classroom, thus achieving greater interaction and better student performance. The study employs a quasi-experimental research methodology with the participation of two randomly selected groups: an experimental group and a control group. Finally, using a pre and post-test design, the difference in the development of skills achieved in each group is established, where the results indicate the need for a classroom management model with elements such as motivation, time management, and physical design.

KEY WORDS Motivation, time management, decision making, physical design.

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Influencia de la administración de aula en la adquisición del inglés con estudiantes EFL A2

RESUMEN El objetivo de este artículo es analizar cómo la administración de aula influye en la adquisición del nivel del idioma inglés A2 por medio de una nueva metodología de gestión académica. La pertinencia del estudio radica en el número de estudiantes que no alcanzan la certificación de conocimientos y destrezas a través de la aplicación de la prueba estandarizada A2 Key (KET). La presente investigación está realizada sobre una base constructivista que genera la reestructuración cognitiva, al integrar conocimientos nuevos y modificar los preexistentes. Asimismo, se ha utilizado el método de aprendizaje conocido como Suggestopedia, que demanda de una óptima y permanente comunicación entre el educador y los alumnos. Este conjunto de técnicas permite también la implementación de varios componentes artísticos en el aula, logrando de este modo mayor interacción y mejor desempeño de los estudiantes. El estudio posee una metodología de investigación cuasiexperimental con la participación de dos grupos seleccionados de manera aleatoria: uno experimental y otro de control. Finalmente, utilizando un diseño de pre y postest se establece la diferencia en el desarrollo de destrezas alcanzadas en cada grupo, donde los resultados apuntan a la necesidad de un modelo de gestión de aula con elementos como motivación, gerencia de tiempo y diseño físico.

PALABRAS CLAVE Motivación, gestión de tiempo, toma de decisiones, diseño físico.

INTRODUCTION

Social relationships and learning are integral parts of human development, which require the development of cognitive abilities as well as emotional capacities. Consequently, academic results will only be achieved if they are built upon a foundation of personal and affective competencies. It should be considered that individuals will only learn something if they are willing to acquire that knowledge. According to Herrera (2010), the sociocultural dimension reflects students' lives and those things that bring them love and laughter. In other terms, this dimension encompasses the things that matter most to students.

One of the mechanisms to achieve higher levels of interest and increase intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in students is the implementation of a Classroom Management model through various elements such as time management, timely decision-making, and optimizing physical design and environments. Iglesias (2012) suggests that the classroom management has four intimately related dimensions: physical dimension, functional dimension, temporal dimension, and relational dimension.

English language learning is certainly not exempt from the development of a Classroom Management model. Therefore, the present study aims to determine the degree of impact that the application of such a management mechanism has on the improvement of language skills in this language.

The application of classroom management methodologies to enhance educational standards has been extensively considered in various studies and research, where the relevance of implementing a classroom management model with different elements is evident. These elements range from student motivation to the organization of classroom furniture. Freeman & Freeman (2008) state that when educators use a variety of methods and techniques to give understandable input and generate an appropriate environment; pupils obtain a new language in a very similar way they acquired their first language.

The study conducted by Villalobos (2011) in the *Ibero-American Journal of Education for the Organization of American States for Education, Science, and Culture (OEI-CAEU)* suggests that designing activities using different strategies and efficiently managing classroom work to achieve higher levels of learning among students recognizes the role of the teacher as an agent of change and acknowledges the complexity of teaching and learning processes.

Similarly, there are several manuals available for consistent classroom management. One of them was presented in July 2013 by the Dirección General de Currículo del Ministerio de Educación de Guatemala. It emphasizes once again the importance of classroom management aspects, including architectural design and environment decoration. It mentions that proper management and a harmonious atmosphere enhance the learning effect.

Regarding English language teaching, studies such as the doctoral thesis by Palenzuela (2012) can be mentioned. In this study, an Integrated Foreign Language Learning Program aims to achieve the A1 level and subsequently progress towards reaching the A2 level. The objective is to enhance language competencies as a second foreign language.

Rodríguez (2014) mentions the need to investigate the strategies that ESL students employ outside the classroom to improve their English proficiency. Through the findings of these studies, it is possible to determine the number of students who reach the A2 level of proficiency.

Therefore, it can be concluded that attempts to optimize classroom management processes vary depending on each nation, which considers them as a solution to different educational issues. Thus, it is affirmed that a harmonious context strengthens the development of skills, critical thinking, and the formation of values.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classroom management is a critical aspect of education that focuses on creating an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. To conduct research in this area, it is necessary to understand the underlying pedagogical principles that inform instructional practices and student engagement. Good classroom managers are teachers who recognize and use specific methods and techniques (Oliver & Reschly, 2007).

Constructivism asserts that the world is the result of human relationships, with the stimuli from nature and society being processed in the mind. Therefore, knowledge is not generated passively but actively constructed as the individual adapts to the environment (Vásquez, 2012). Therefore, from the constructivist approach, classroom management should be understood as a process in which its material and immaterial elements must be manipulable, dynamic, and useful for students to interact with them and engage in concrete operations.

Similarly, classroom management allows for the resolution of conflicts that arise during class in a way that does not cause dissatisfaction or hinder the normal progression of learning. It is important to understand that conflict is a natural process within human groups and should be addressed constructively by offering proposals that promote a warm and welcoming atmosphere, as well as a positive classroom environment that supports the learning of all students. According to Vaello (2003), conflict can be a wonderful opportunity to resolve a problem creatively and formatively through the collaborative effort of the teacher and students, as achieving a satisfactory solution produces gratifying effects for everyone.

However, to build an appropriate classroom climate, the elements that make up classroom management must be considered. These include motivation, time management, decision-making, and physical design, all of which should meet criteria of effectiveness, simplicity, and variety. Each element should be effective in the sense of preventing problems, simple to ensure ease of implementation, and varied to provide alternative options when a strategy does not yield the desired result (Vaello, 2003).

Additionally, it is imperative to free the learner from all negative suggestions that diminish the true potential of their abilities. To accomplish this, it is necessary to strengthen the individual's motivation by using a methodology that helps them to reduce the affective filter. Herrera & Murry (2015) state Suggestopedia was planned to place as much language teaching emphasis on learner personality and enthusiasm as that typically placed on understanding.

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), the main characteristics of Suggestopedia include decoration, furniture, music, classroom arrangement, and the primary objective of quickly achieving advanced conversational proficiency. Therefore, this is the most suitable method to reach a state of maximum relaxation of the mind, aiming to achieve better retention of knowledge.

MOTIVATION

Motivating means directing the student's interest towards meaningful learning, prioritizing the improvement of their skills over other activities that may distract their attention, as well as the development of student interest through the creation of a positive emotional climate within the classroom.

Intrinsic motivation is understood as the direct interest that a student has in the subject, without the need for any external stimulus to foster the desire to learn. This type of motivation can be achieved through the selection of content to be taught during lessons.

Similarly, extrinsic motivation is defined as any external factor that generates greater interest in the student to acquire new knowledge. There are various ways to awaken this type of motivation, such as creating diversified evaluation criteria that are not solely based on the textbook or written exams. Assessment elements such as collaborative groups, interactive groups, projects, portfolios, observation, dramatizations, etc., can be used to foster extrinsic motivation.

According to Kort & Reilly (2001), the new generation of educators should first train teachers to become experts in recognizing the emotional state of students and based on their observations, take actions that positively contribute to the educational framework. The feeling of satisfaction is a crucial factor when determining a student's academic success and motivation in the classroom. This will enable the learner to feel pleased with their academic progress.

The appropriate use of motivation strategies will enable students to achieve autonomy in their learning process, develop a healthy sense of self-esteem, and be self-critical of their performance inside and outside the classroom (Pizarro & Josephy, 2010). For example, to believe that making mistakes is risky when someone is learning a new language or that boys are not as good as girls in learning a second language (Rubin, 2005). These kinds of beliefs can significantly affect the learning process.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Effective time management helps individuals increase productivity, reduce stress, and achieve a better work-life balance. Some common techniques for managing time include creating to-do lists, setting deadlines, prioritizing tasks, eliminating, or delegating non-essential activities, and practicing good time estimation skills. Indeed, it is essential to have well-defined and formulated goals for each semester, particularly in higher education (Castro & López, 2009).

The design of learning units should be elaborated within the context of each academic period, as each semester has its own characteristics in terms of time distribution. To achieve this, it is necessary to designate a planning committee within educational institutions with defined roles for each member. By having a designated committee, the process of designing learning units can benefit from diverse perspectives, expertise, and collaboration. This collaborative approach helps to foster objectivity, consistency, and coherence in the design of the units, ultimately enhancing the quality of education provided within the institution.

DECISION-MAKING

When teachers make decisions about their instructional practices, they should consider the learning needs and goals of their students. This includes selecting appropriate teaching methods, materials, and assessments that align with the desired learning outcomes. By incorporating a variety of pedagogical strategies, such as active learning, cooperative learning, and differentiated instruction, teachers can engage students and enhance their understanding and retention of knowledge.

Teachers serve as guides and coordinators of educational decisions within a group or classroom setting. They become a point of reference for the children, adolescents, or young people under their care (Saumell, Alsina & Arroyo, 2011). Overall, the teacher's role extends beyond simply imparting knowledge. They have the responsibility to guide,

support, and inspire their students, playing a pivotal role in their educational journey and personal development.

PHYSICAL DESIGN

Upon entering the classroom, it's important to initiate the lesson in a manner that captures the students' attention and encourages their active participation. Whenever feasible and suitable, we will communicate to the students the tasks ahead or engage in conversations about the potential outcomes stemming from their upcoming activities.

Therefore, appropriate importance should be given to the distribution of environments and the architectural design of learning spaces at all levels of education, as they are fundamental elements for the execution, development, and achievement of educational purposes. It is also desirable to improve the classroom environment to increase the disposition of students to learn. When they arrive in the classroom, it is important to start the lesson in a way that the pupils' attention is stimulated, and they get engaged with their own learning (Harmer, 2009).

The workspace should be arranged according to the purposes pursued in each activity. Additionally, it should ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate democratically; likewise, it should contribute to the development of intrapersonal relationships. However, improving the classroom environment is not only the best exploitation of physical spaces, but also the creation of an ideal atmosphere. Vásconez & Verdezoto (2007) state that it is relevant to allow students to bring their own stories, anecdotes, and thoughts into the classroom. This provides them with the opportunities to work together, to learn from each other, and to respect each other's differences.

DIDACTIC MATERIALS

A didactic material is a tool that facilitates both the process of teaching and the process of learning. It is characterized by arousing the student's interest and sensory memory. The teacher should provide a varied and stimulating range of materials that offer multiple opportunities to manipulate concepts and vocabulary in their working memory. Then the students will be able to elaborate upon their connections through a balance of illustrations and words (Herrera, Kavimandan & Holmes, 2011).

In other words, language learners get linguistic structure by experiencing the environmental features, therefore they acquire a language incidentally and not in an intentional way (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1997).

For a didactic material to be effective and promote a successful learning situation, it requires more than just being a good material or the latest technology. It should have objective quality and be able to capture the students' interest. The proper selection of possible ways to use the material will allow the efficient design of learning activities and didactic methodologies that ensure effectiveness in achieving the intended learning outcomes. Nation (2001) remarks that task knowledge is very important because learners need to have sufficient comprehension of what is needed to achieve results. However, it is always necessary to state feasible objectives to avoid frustration among L2 learners.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study was a mixed-methods design because it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative because it involves the collection of numerical data, and qualitative because it seeks to understand a social phenomenon. According to the research design, the study is quasi-experimental since English language skills are complex and cannot be measured solely through a survey, but rather through practice. Additionally, the study involves two groups that are not randomly selected: an experimental group and a control group. In the qualitative part, an observation form was conducted, this form should be framed within the model of the pedagogical-didactic hexagon: objectives, content, methodology, resources, schedule, and evaluation. This instrument was also validated by three specialists, and it was only applied to the experimental group. In the quantitative part, the standardized test Cambridge English: Key (KET) was applied. It is important to mention that this instrument will be applied as a pre-test at the beginning of the research in both groups, and similarly as a post-test at the end of the study.

The research question that this study aimed to answer was: How classroom management influences in the A2 level (CEFR) acquisition of English students?

PARTICIPANTS

The group that participated in the study was made up of sixty-two A2 students who have approved prior level A1. Students are young adults, age range 18 to 23 years old. All students agreed to participate in the project. The sample used throughout the research was a non-random sample that considers the criteria of the investigator. There were thirty-one students that belong to the experimental group composed of 9 male students and 22 female students. The control group also consists of thirty-one students, with 10 being male and 21 being female. All participants completed the pretest and post-test stages and contributed to the classroom management intervention.

RESULTS

Quantitative results refer to pretest and post-test students' scores on the standardized test Cambridge English: Key (KET). The KET exam individually assesses each language skill, so bar graphs have been created, which facilitate the interpretation of the information and provide comparative data of the two groups in a simple form. The obtained data is displayed through graphs for each language skill, as well as an overall graph showing the consolidated results of the entire assessment. The total score of the instrument is 100 points, divided as follows: reading 35 points, writing 25 points, listening 25 points, and speaking 15 points (see Figures 1-5).

DATA ANALYSIS

Once the pre-test and post-test have been administered to the students in the control and experimental groups, the results are organized and tabulated for subsequent statistical analysis using frequency distribution, percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and variance (see Tables 1, 2).

Figure 1. Comparative chart of Reading results

	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	23,29	24,77
Post-test	26,58	27,58

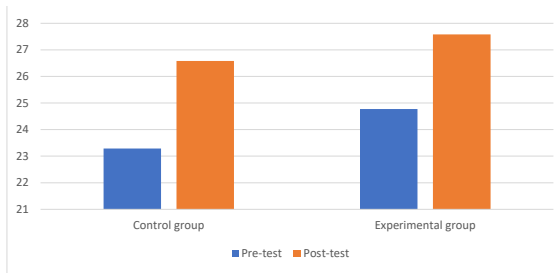


Figure 2. Comparative chart of Writing results

	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	10,45	11,83
Post-test	12,48	16,06

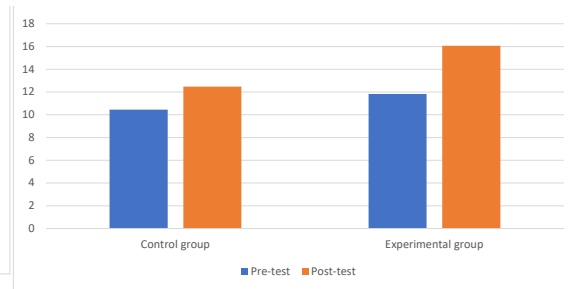


Figure 3. Comparative chart of Listening results

	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	10,25	11
Post-test	13,61	14,64

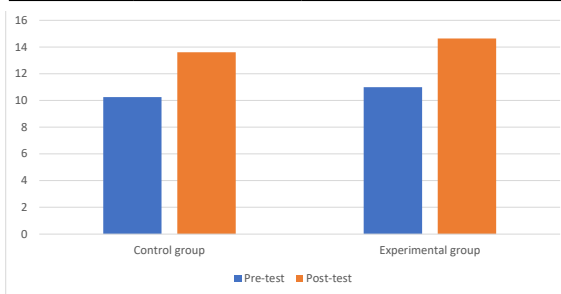


Figure 4. Comparative chart of Speaking results

	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	6,61	6,77
Post-test	7,06	11,09

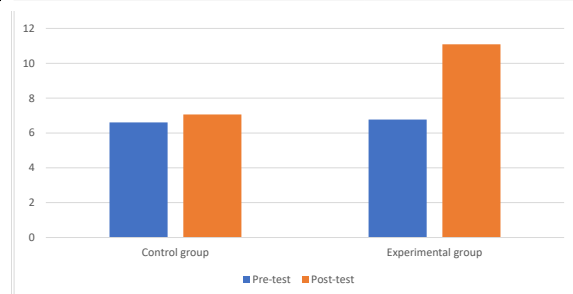


Figure 5. Comparative chart of overall results

	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	50,61	54,38
Post-test	59,74	69,38

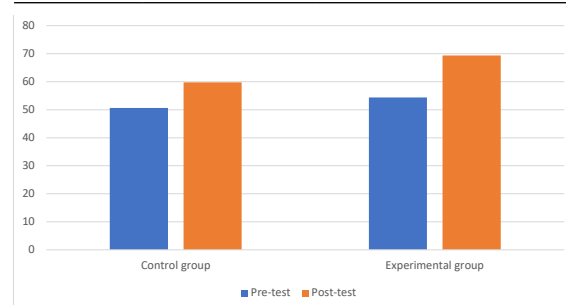


Table 1. Pretest statistical analysis

	CONTROL GROUP	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
Media	50.61	54.38
Variance	172.14	189.71
Standard deviation	13.12	13.77

Table 2. Post-test statistical analysis

	CONTROL GROUP	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
Media	59.74	69.38
Variance	181.45	150.77
Standard deviation	13.47	12.27

Next, critical values and rejection regions are determined, and the calculation of the z -score is performed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the independent variable. In the context of statistical hypothesis testing, critical values and regions of rejection are determined according to the selected level of significance (typically represented by α). The critical values are thresholds that determine whether the obtained test statistic falls within the rejection region or not. When the test statistic lies within the rejection region, the null hypothesis is discarded in favor of the alternative hypothesis. The z -score serves as a standardized measure indicating how many standard deviations a given data point or test statistic deviates from the mean. The calculation involves subtracting the mean from the observed value and then dividing the result by the standard deviation. Through this computation of the z -score, it becomes possible to contrast the observed outcomes of the pre-test and post-test against the anticipated outcomes as per the null hypothesis. If the z -score falls within the rejection region, it indicates that the independent variable had a significant effect on the dependent variable.

In the given context, Z_T represents the theoretical value of z (-1.96 or 1.96) for a significance level of 5%, where $\alpha = 0.05$. This means that the research will have a 95% confidence level for a two-tailed test. When the calculated z -score extends beyond the critical value in either tail of the distribution, the null hypothesis is dismissed in support of the alternative hypothesis. In this case, the alternative hypothesis would suggest that the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

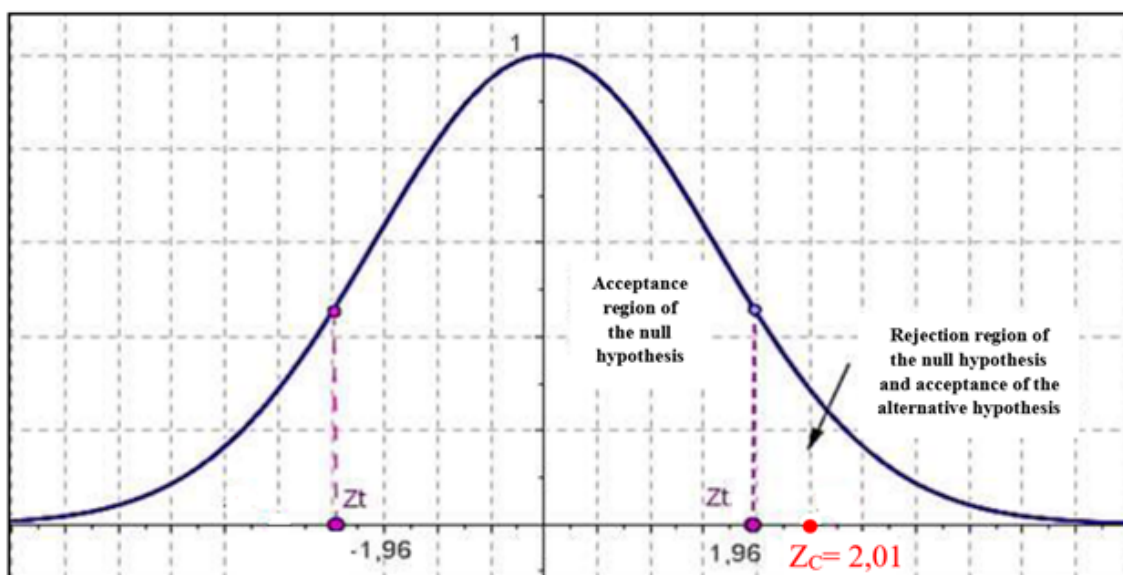
When comparing the calculated z -value and the theoretical z -value: $z_C = 2.01 > Z_T = 1.96$, it can be observed that z_C has a value of 2.01, which falls within the acceptance region of the alternative hypothesis. This outcome signifies the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis in the research, indicating a positive influence (see Figure 6).

DISCUSSION

Once the pre-test was administered to both groups, it was observed that the students had an insufficient level of proficiency in terms of their language skills. This level of proficiency did not meet the requirements for achieving a passing score on the standardized international test known as the A2 Key (KET).

On the other hand, when the methodology was completed and the post-test was administered, it was evident that both groups had made significant progress in terms of their language skills. However, only the experimental group managed to reach the passing

Figure 6. Z-score calculation



average score of seventy points required to obtain certification of proficiency at this level on the standardized evaluation. They had increased their average score by fifteen points between the pre-test and the post-test.

Even though the control group showed an increase of just over nine points between the pre-test and post-test, it remains far from reaching an acceptable average score for the standardized test. There is a gap of at least ten points separating them from the minimum score required for certification, with only eight students surpassing this minimum score.

Consequently, the obvious improvement in the control group is attributed to the teacher's work throughout the academic period, meanwhile, the accelerated progress achieved by the experimental group is evidently due to the implementation of the classroom management process maintained during the experimentation phase.

CONCLUSION

Classroom management could be an inspirational experience, as long as the objectives and purposes become a concrete reality. However, that is not always true if all the variables around the learning process are not considered. Aspects like motivation, discipline, and resources, among others, could influence the development of a lesson. Having enough space and the necessary graphic stimuli within a classroom could even influence the students' attitude toward the language. The great variety of visual material does not have limits and it can even be designed by the students. Resources like flip charts, maps, puppets, puzzle boards, costumes, etc. are precious visual aids that could be created during lessons while the scholars learn by doing.

According to the findings of statistical analysis, learners' abilities substantially improved between the pretest and post-test stages. The pretest results showed that students were not able to obtain the A2 certification. The post-test results confirmed that these conditions changed positively, and students learned the importance of graphic material, time management, and physical design. In addition, by means of classroom management implementation, the number of students passing the A2 level increases by 22.5%.

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