

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA  
SISTEMA DE ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO

ENGLISH FOR CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE  
STUDENTS

Trabajo Final de investigación aplicada sometido a la consideración de la  
Comisión del Programa de Estudios de Posgrado en Enseñanza del Inglés como  
Lengua Extranjera para optar al grado y título de Maestría Profesional en la  
Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

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Ciudad Universitaria Rodrigo Facio, Costa Rica

2020

## **Dedication**

Tatiana

This is the culmination of a long and challenging academic and personal journey. I have grown a lot as a professional through all these years. I want to thank my parents, Deyanira and Asdrubal for always believing in me. To my brothers, Asdrúbal and Félix for being there for me. I thank all my professors in the major whose teachings I will treasure for the rest of my life. I thank them for their patience, specially Professor Patricia Córdoba who was always there for us. I thank Rebeca for her constant support and kind words. I thank the students who took the course with us because without them none of this would have been possible. In addition, I thank Vivian Licardié, the coordinator of the major for her help and support during the Practicum. Finally, I thank all my colleagues and friends who were there for me in one way or another. My eternal gratitude to you all.

Sofía

This journey was long, and it required me to be resilient, juggle various aspects of my life and find strength I did not know I had in me. Many were a part of this process and words will never be enough to show my appreciation. I want to acknowledge the quality work professor Canales, Kozicki and Chevez had in my professional, emotional and academic development. Their support and guidance throughout this process went beyond their work description and I will forever be thankful I had the pleasure of having them as my professors. I want to thank the best classroom partners I have ever know: Duff and Jek. She is one of the most positive, caring and uplifting people I have ever met in my life, and Duff may be the best person I have ever met. The difficult days were a blast around you. Lastly, I want to thank my family, who supported me with rides, late-night meals, pep-talks and all of their love. To my mom, you are my whole heart. This goes up to my dad,

who was always my biggest admirer. I know you are with me, proud and holding my hand every step of the way.

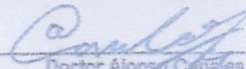
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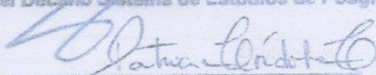
This research project was a hard but successful process. I thank God for giving me wisdom, patience, motivation and Faith. Moreover, thanks to my family, especially to my two daughters, Valeria and Jimena Hernández Ruiz. I saw them grow up through this process; they understood that their mommy had to do it. My husband Pedro Fernando Hernández López thanks for his understanding and support during this hard process. To my parents Lidiette and Jorge, my sisters Grimanesa and Marianela, to my brother Jose. In addition, I give special thanks to Yahaira Ocampo Monestel, my coworkers and friends for their genuine help. To my practicum partner Tatiana for all her support. Thank you dear professors and members of the committee at the Master's program for your excellent work, support and endless dedication, Thanks Mag. Patricia Cordoba Cubillo, you were an inspiration, Finally, thanks to my dear CAIT students at the practicum, you were a very special group of people that I will never forget. I close saying, thank God for all the angels you gave me in this journey, you were always with me.

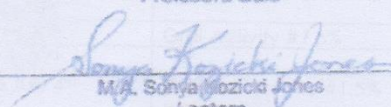
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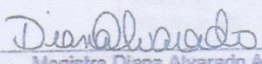
We want to thank all the professors from the major whose guidance and patience helped us to successfully complete this process. We especially want to thank Professor Patricia Cordoba for all her guidance and patience with us. We also thank all the committee members and readers for their guidance in the process of correcting this project. We especially thank our dear students from the practicum for taking the course because without them any of this would have been possible. We also thank the coordinator from the major Lic. Vivian Licardié for her help and support throughout the process. Moreover, we thank Vivian and Yahaira for their help and finally to the stakeholders who helped us as well.

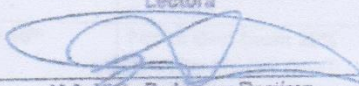
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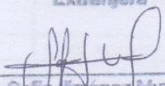
  
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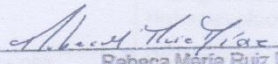
  
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Releído: July 25th, August 2nd and August 15th

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## Table of Contents

Cover page.....	i
Dedication and Acknowledgements .....	ii
Signature Page.....	iv
Table of contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Abbreviations.....	ix
Resumen.....	x
Abstract.....	xi
<b>Chapter I: Needs Analysis .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Methodology.....	5
Research Approach.....	5
Context.....	7
Participants.....	7
Instruments.....	7
Procedures.....	8
Results and Discussion.....	8
Interest of primary stakeholders.....	14
Employers from companies.....	14
Professors from the major.....	15
Current students from the major.....	16
Graduated students from the major.....	17

General group profile.....	19
Needs Analysis Part II: Diagnostic Test .....	22
Rationale behind the diagnostic test.....	22
Analysis of the results.....	30
Results from the diagnostic test per macro skills.....	31
Conclusions.....	34
<b>Chapter II: Syllabus Design.....</b>	<b>36</b>
Course Logo .....	36
Course Description.....	36
Statement of Goals and Objectives.....	37
Methodology.....	40
Assessment.....	43
Contents.....	48
Bibliography.....	54
Conclusion.....	55
<b>Chapter III: Research Report .....</b>	<b>56</b>
Research Question and sub-questions.....	57
Literature Review.....	58
Listening and its importance for communication.....	58
Teaching listening.....	59
Learning strategies.....	61
Types of listening strategies.....	63

Listening strategies in the English classroom.....	67
Methodology.....	70
Research Approach.....	70
Content and Participants.....	71
Instruments and Procedures.....	71
Results and Discussion.....	74
Instructional Instruments.....	79
Conclusions.....	87
Recommendations.....	89
Limitations.....	90
References.....	91
Appendices.....	93

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Activities that require the use of English at the workplace.....	9
Figure 2. Abilities that I want to improve.....	12
Figure 3. Participants' perceived proficiency level from the diagnostic test.....	31
Figure 4. Students' Pre-test Scores.....	78
Figure 5. Use of Images to Predict Information.....	79
Figure 6. Previous Knowledge Usage .....	80
Figure 7. Prediction Accuracy.....	81
Figure 8. Pre-Reading Questions.....	82
Figure 9. Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores.....	86



## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

CAIT: Customs Administration and International Trade

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

IN: Instructor

INCOTERMS: International Commercial Terms

L: Listening

L1: Mother Tongue/ Source Language

L2: Second Language

NA: Needs Analysis

NAQ: Needs Analysis Questionnaire

R: Reading

S: Speaking

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreigner Language

TL: Target Language

UL: Useful Language

W: Writing

## **Resumen**

La enseñanza del inglés con fines específicos (IFE), es altamente demandado por profesionales cuya área de trabajo les exige el conocer un segundo idioma. Costa Rica es un país de alto tráfico de exportaciones e importaciones con diversos países de todo el mundo. El uso del inglés como lingua franca ha venido a facilitar el crecimiento de estas en nuestro país. La formación de profesional integrales es una prioridad para la Universidad de Costa Rica. Es por esto, que los investigadores de acción deben brindar las herramientas adecuadas para que los estudiantes que requieren de este tipo de formación especializada cuenten con cursos de calidad para que puedan alcanzar sus objetivos. El curso fue diseñado para un grupo de estudiantes en el área de Administración de Aduanas y Comercio Exterior de la Universidad de Costa Rica una vez identificando sus interés, fortalezas y carencias con respecto al idioma inglés. El estudio se basó en un enfoque de métodos mixto. Primeramente, los instrumentos de recolección de datos incluyeron cuestionarios, entrevistas, entrevistas de seguimiento y un examen de diagnóstico para identificar las necesidades, expectativas y carencias de los estudiantes. Durante la segunda etapa del proceso, se realizó una prueba de diagnóstico con respecto al uso de estrategias en la habilidad auditiva, se implemento la enseñanza explícita durante seis semanas de las estrategias en la habilidad auditiva: predicción y escucha de detalles específicos donde se les brindó a los estudiantes herramientas para mejorar sus habilidades auditivas por medio de ejercicios de escucha, así como consejos para emplearlas en su diario vivir y mejorarlas. Finalmente, un examen final evaluando dichas estrategias en la habilidad auditiva fue implementado con el fin de determinar si la enseñanza de dichas estrategias tuvo algún efecto sobre las habilidades auditivas de los estudiantes. Los resultados arrojaron que la enseñanza de dichas estrategias ayudo a mejorar las habilidades auditivas de los estudiantes.

*Palabras claves:* Inglés para Propósitos Específicos, Administración de Aduanas y Comercio Exterior, estrategias de escucha, habilidades auditivas.

## **Abstract**

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is highly demanded by professionals whose job field demands the use of a second language. Costa Rica is a country with a high level of importations and exportations with different countries around the world. The use of English as a lingua franca has promoted the increasing number of importations and exportations in our country. The integral formation of professionals is a priority for the University of Costa Rica. Due to this, the action researchers should provide the adequate tools to the students who require this kind of specialized formation with courses of great quality that help them to achieve their objectives. This course was designed for a group of students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major from the University of Costa Rica after their interests, strengths and lacks regarding the English language were identified. This research was based on a mixed method approach. In the first part of the study, the instruments to collect data included questionnaires, interviews, follow-up interviews and a diagnostic test in order to identify the needs, expectations and lacks of the students. In the second part of the study, a pre-test on the use of listening strategies was applied to the students. Then, there was the implementation of a session of six weeks of the explicit teaching of two listening strategies: predicting and listening for specific details. During these sessions, students were provided with tools to enhance their listening skills through the use of these specific listening strategies as well and tips on how to use them in their daily work related tasks and tips on how to improve them. Finally, a post test was applied to evaluate if the teaching of these listening strategies had any impact of the listening skills of the students. The results from the study showed that the teaching of these listening strategies helped to improve the listening skills of the students.

*Key Words:* English for Specific Purposes, Customs Administration and International Trade, listening strategies, listening skills.



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The present project describes the stages followed for the elaboration of a course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a graduation requirement for students enrolled in Maestría Profesional en la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera. Let's Do CAIT Business is a course designed for a group of approximately 20 learners majoring in Customs Administration and International Trade at the University of Costa Rica (UCR) in Rodrigo Facio Campus and taught by Practicum students during the second semester of 2019.

Due to current international agreements and trade among countries, economies have grown worldwide, and the mastering of a foreign language such as English plays an important role in this setting. Most people in the CAIT field find the use of English relevant to get better jobs, to interpret the information provided in official documents, and to communicate in a written and oral form with English speakers. Therefore, the main reason to elaborate this project is to investigate the field of expertise thoroughly in order to design a course that fulfills the needs of the participants. This project contains four main sections: Needs Analysis, Syllabus Design, Assessment and Lesson Plans. The Needs Analysis section was the most crucial one to make decisions regarding the syllabus design, lesson plans, materials, and the assessment instruments for this ESP course addressed to CAIT professionals.

## **Chapter I: Needs Analysis**

As part of the graduation process from the master's program in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at the University of Costa Rica (UCR), it is required that students (researchers) carry out a teaching practicum with a specific population of students from UCR. The practicum consists of developing an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for a particular population. The researchers of this project will work with the students from the Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) major. This development of the ESP course includes two main parts: the designing of the course and then the actual teaching. During the designing part of the ESP course, there are three main stages that will take place: the needs analysis, then, the diagnostic test and finally, the syllabus design. This chapter will focus on the first stage which is the application and analysis of results of the Needs Analysis (NA).

As stated by Dudley-Evans (1998), "[the] needs analysis is the process of establishing the what, and how of a course" (p. 121). Therefore, the main purpose of the NA is to identify the three main aspects of the CAIT population which are the needs, wants and lacks of the participants. The establishment of those aspects will help us make suitable design decisions regarding the ESP course syllabus and material selection.

For the CAIT population, the use of English in their everyday work is constant since they work with customs agencies as well as with clients from other countries whose language is other than Spanish. Most of the documents that they work with are written in English; therefore, professionals in the CAIT field are



required to understand the information on those documents. In addition, these professionals have to write and reply emails written in English from clients or from other customs agents; consequently, it is important for them to communicate effectively in a written way. However, sometimes, they might be required to talk to foreign clients on the phone, and they may need to respond to requests, to explain processes or to report an issue about the merchandise to the client. Moreover, this field requires students to have strong reading and writing skills in the English language; additionally, speaking and listening skills are paramount as well.

As mentioned before, the Needs Analysis Questionnaire will be a fundamental aid for the instructors of the future ESP course to make proper decisions regarding the syllabus design, and the selection of the materials in order to fulfill the participants' needs.

## **B. The ESP population**

The target population for the designing and teaching of an ESP course was the Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) students from UCR. The main purpose of designing this ESP course, in the case of this specific population, is to develop a course that resembles the way in which they would employ the English language in their everyday activities at work.

Regarding their possible job field, students who graduate from CAIT can opt for different job positions as the Escuela de Administración Pública lists. The job positions are customs declarants, customs representatives, customs processors, air/sea cargo handling documentation clerks, bureau of customs employees, warehouse managers, transport planners, export office administrators, distribution

managers, customs brokerages, customs officials, logistics and distribution managers, shipping clerks, logistics officers, call center agents, administrative staff, freelancer working online or freelance consultants (Escuela de Administración Pública, 2019, p.2).

As stated by the Escuela de Administración Pública, a professional with a BA in Customs Administration and International Trade is able to work in public institutions and private companies in Costa Rica or overseas. This professional will be able to undertake technical responsibilities in customs operations, in international trade and in the logistics processes of importation and exportation of services and merchandise. Additionally, this professional is proficient in a second language (Escuela de Administración Pública, 2019, p.1).

Furthermore, according to Aurens Global (2019), other tasks that professionals from this field will have to carry out at work are to keep updated on global economic processes, to solve problems, to make decisions, to memorize laws, decrees and policies regarding customs processes, to classify, group and organize merchandise. Additionally, professionals in this field are required to demonstrate proficiency in certain soft skills such as leadership and teamwork. Moreover, some of the necessary hard skills are administrative abilities, computer skills and proficiency in English.

A & A Customs Brokers points out that the professionals in the customs field will have to carry out some tasks in English such as helping foreigner importers or exporters to meet national or international requirements by explaining processes, laws or regulations to be completed. In addition, they will have to prepare and submit necessary information and payments to the customs authorities on the

client's behalf in English, to assess commercial documents to evaluate if they comply with regulatory requirements such as invoices, certificates of origin and international invoices which are written in English, to assure by reading documents written in English that the client's goods are correctly classified, so duties and taxes can be properly determined. These tasks use the CAIT professionals expertise to help foreigner business owners to expand their businesses to new international markets and to provide personalized advice to small English speaking business owners for them to export/import goods to other countries or expand their businesses in Costa Rica; and finally, to interact and to discuss important information about laws, regulations, specific customs processes or problems with English speakers (A & A Customs Brokers, 2017, p. 1).

Thus, Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) professionals are required to be proficient in English since they do business with people who recognize this language as a lingua franca in order to communicate; therefore, taking an ESP course could fulfill that need and help CAIT participants to become more competitive and knowledgeable professionals.

## **C. Methodology**

### *c.1. Research Approach*

This research will apply the mixed method approach. According to Creswell (2009), “[the] mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms” (p.5). In addition, Creswell (2009) highlights that the combination of both approaches “...is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data; it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either

qualitative or quantitative research” (p.4). Therefore, the researchers will work with qualitative and quantitative data in order to obtain results which are valid and reliable. Regarding quantitative data, the Needs Analysis will provide the researchers with quantitative data in some of the closed-ended questions that will be represented in a visual format with graphs such as bar graphs or pie charts; however, there are some open-ended questions that will provide us with some qualitative data from the participants’ responses regarding their learning preferences.

As stated by Dörnyei (2007), some of the benefits of using such a mixed research approach include that “researchers can bring out the best of both paradigms, thereby combining quantitative and qualitative strengths” (p. 45). On the other hand, Dörnyei (2007), also stated that “[the] mixed methods research is particularly appropriate for such a multi-level analyses because it allows investigators to obtain data about both the individual and the broader societal context” (p. 45). Therefore, the results obtained from this type of research “...has the unique potential to produce evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of the findings” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). Thus, this integration and interaction of both qualitative and quantitative data will provide the researchers with more reliable and valid results reaching target audiences such as other researchers in the English as a Foreign Language field, university professors and future students of the TEFL program.

### *c.2. Context*

This research will take place at the University of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Facio Campus in San Pedro with undergraduate students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major. This major belongs to the Public Administration School.

### *c.3. Participants*

The Needs Analysis instrument (Appendix A) was applied to ten active undergraduate students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major. The majority of them (around six) are enrolled to the B.A program, and the remaining are taking the “licenciatura” program whose ages range from 20 to 28 years old. Regarding their previous background in English, most students have been in contact with the target language varying from taking a course, using a self-study program or learning the language in an informal way through conversations with friends, trips or exchange programs as well as receiving English classes in high school. Only one of the participants responded not having studied the language before.

### *c. 4 Instruments*

The Needs Analysis was applied by using Google forms (see Appendix A). The participants of the research were sent a link to access the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of five different parts. In the first part, participants had to mention their previous knowledge of the English language. In the second part, they had to identify the main tasks at work that require them to use the target language. In the third part, participants had to check their performance skills regarding listening, speaking, writing and reading. In the fourth part, the abilities that they

would like to improve had to be identified and in the last part, participants had to complete some statements regarding their learning preferences. After responding the Needs Analysis instrument, the researchers applied some follow up interviews (see Appendix B) to the participants in order to analyze more in detail some of the information provided in the questionnaire.

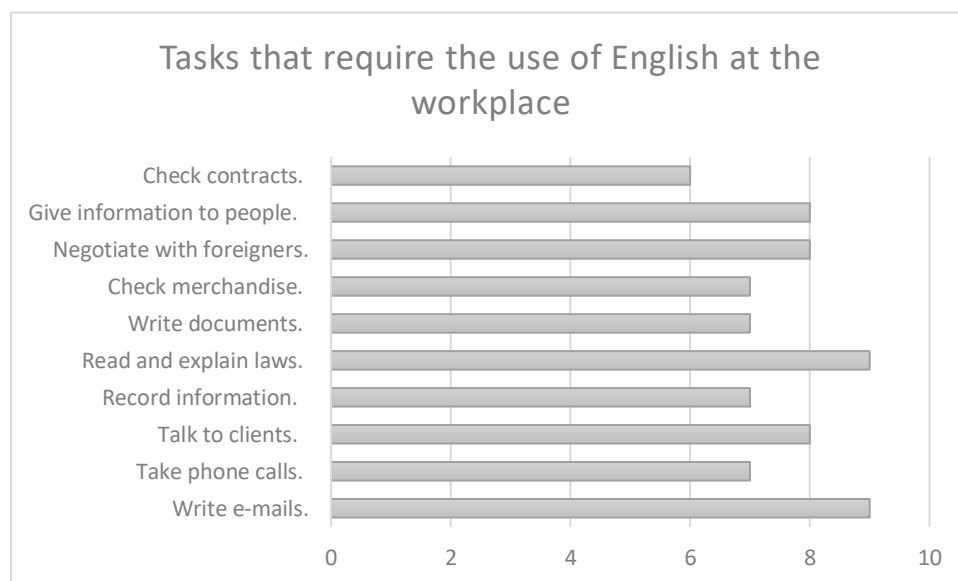
#### *c.5. Procedures*

The Needs Analysis instrument (see Appendix A) took around 20 minutes for the participants to respond, and the follow up interviews with some of the participants took around 10 to 15 minutes. The Needs Analysis instruments were responded by the participants online through the use of a google forms questionnaire; however, the follow up interviews (Appendix B) were carried out through video-calls at a time and at a day convenient for the participants.

### **D. Discussion and Results**

The Needs Analysis questionnaire provided the researchers with important information related to the participants' wants, needs and lacks. This instrument was responded by ten participants out of the twenty that were originally contacted despite the fact that the researchers sent several reminders to them to fill out the questionnaire. In this section, the most relevant results will be discussed. The first part of the Needs Analysis questionnaire showed that nine out of ten participants had studied the English language before; however, only seven of the participants had taken an English course. In addition, eight out of ten participants studied in a public high school, and only three of them studied in a bilingual, technical or private high school.

In part B of the Needs Analysis questionnaire, participants were asked to identify the most recurrent job tasks in which they have to use the English language as depicted in figure 1.



*Figure 1.* Tasks that require the use of English at the workplace

As can be seen, the participants were asked to choose the job tasks according to order of importance. Writing emails and reading and interpreting the information written in different documents were the highest. After those two, the participants chose talking to clients through video calls, negotiating with foreigners and giving information to English speakers in a written or oral form. Those represent the top five job tasks that the participants consider to be the most important ones to carry out using the target language. Interestingly, the option that got the lowest number of participants was checking contracts, and the remaining options were chosen by the participants in a similar number as shown in figure 1.

Part C of the Needs Analysis questionnaire was about the participants' abilities in the English language. The participants had some statements, and they had to choose the option that they considered described their abilities by checking ***always, many times, few times*** or ***never***. The abilities were classified into reading, writing, listening and oral communication. Regarding reading, six out of the ten participants stated that they are able to identify the main idea of a text written in English, but half of the participants consider that they are able to identify specific details in a text written in English. Regarding the part of identifying the meaning of unknown words in English using the context of the text, only two participants stated that they are always able to do it. Moreover, when asked if they could identify the different parts of a text in English (introduction, body and conclusion) and if they could identify the purpose of the author in a text in English, only three students in both cases responded that they could always do it.

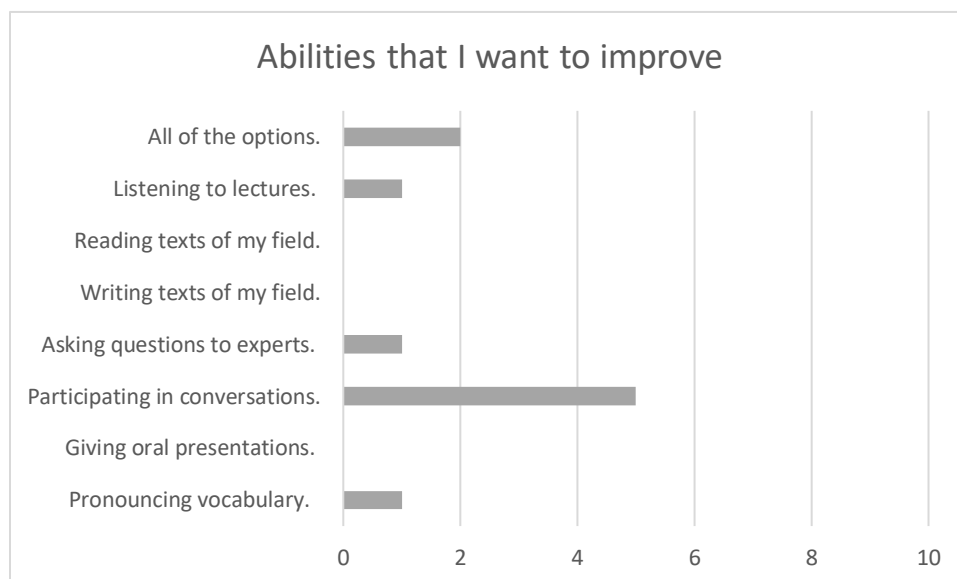
On the other hand, regarding writing, eight out of the ten participants consider that they are almost always able to spell a word in English correctly. Regarding punctuation, half of the participants stated that they can use punctuation correctly only a few times. In relation to writing sentences in English correctly, half of the participants recognize that they can do it many times. Moreover, four out of the ten participants considered that they use proper punctuation when writing in English just a few times. However, only one participant, out of ten, recognized that he is never able to express clearly what he needs in English, in a written form.

Additionally, regarding listening, three out of ten participants are always able to understand oral instructions in the target language, and the remaining seven are able to identify the main ideas during an oral presentation in English many times.



Half of the students stated that they are always able to understand videos in English using images as an aid. Finally, six out of ten participants stated that they are able to participate in a conversation a few times in English related to their profession. Moreover, half of the students stated that they are able to identify their own mistakes many times when they speak in English; however, when it is about identifying a person's mistakes when speaking English, the answers were tied to three. Only one of the participants responded that he is never able to identify them. This part included the identification of difficulties with the language. Half of the participants recognized that they always have difficulty to understand when a person speaks English fast. All of the participants consider that it is never difficult for them to understand when a speaker uses a soft tone of voice. Seven out of the ten participants stated it is many times difficult for them to understand when the speaker has a particular accent. However, only two out of the ten participants considered always difficult for them to understand when many people interact at the same time, and finally, only two out of the ten participants find it always difficult to understand when there are interruptions during a conversation.

Part E (see figure 2) deals with abilities that the participants would like to improve regarding the target language.



*Figure 2. Abilities that I want to improve*

As we can see in figure 2 above, half of the participants want to be able to participate in conversations in English related to their profession and two out of ten want to improve all of the options provided. For the rest of the options described in figure 2, only one out of ten participants is interested in improving the remaining options.

Finally, the last section of the Needs Analysis Questionnaire asked students to complete some statements about their learning preferences. The first one was “I think a class is enjoyable when...”, and some of the answers included students highlighted that classes are enjoyable when they include activities that resemble real-life job tasks, and when they include student interaction and technology. For the second statement, “I think a class is useful when...”, some of the recurring answers were that they find a class useful when they learn new things. Additionally, when they are able to practice what they learned, and finally when the class has a well-established purpose. For the last statement, “I learn better

when...”, the most frequent answer was that they learn better when they are able to practice the target language constantly. In addition, the participants also stated that they learn better when the examples provided are relevant to them.

In general terms, the participants that responded the Needs Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ) showed great differences among what they need to do in the target language and what they want to improve in the target language. In addition, the participants identified writing emails and reading documents in English as the main two tasks that they will have to do in English at work. Contrary to fact, what they want to improve in the target language is to be able to participate in conversations about their profession, and they also want to be able to speak to clients whose native language is English. Thus, the wants and needs of the participants do not match at all. Furthermore, one of the lacks that the participants have regarding the target language is to be able to understand what is said when people have a particular accent or when they speak fast. Also, they have problems with punctuation. Moreover, they have problems to participate in conversations in English related to their profession. Overall, it seems that the skills with major difficulty for students are listening and speaking. However, these two are not the skills that they would use the most at work. It may seem that the participants have a notion of what they want to improve; however, their wants are not linked directly to the tasks that they would carry out in real life at work, and this might be due to the fact that most of the participants do not work in their field yet.

## **a. Interest of Primary Stakeholders**

### *a.1 Employers from companies*

We interviewed employers from different companies before carrying out the Needs Analysis from the customs business such as Logitsa Cargo Service, CONVARCA, Grupo ALGISA and Red Logistic that are located in Alajuela and Heredia provinces. In general terms, the head of human resources and administrative managers expressed their need to have employees with a high command of the target language. Among some of the abilities that they require their employees to master are to take care of customers' needs, to solve problems, to answer questions about customs processes and regulations, to respond to emails, and to analyze official documents such as invoices, origin certificates, and contracts, among others. In addition, employers require employees, to provide explanations and translation of documents, in both, English and Spanish, to identify key concepts in both languages, and to make phone calls to find out information as well as to receive and to respond to questions during a phone call. Moreover, they require them to translate important documents of the variety of exporting and importing processes. Overall, employers require their employees to be flexible and adaptable to different work-related situations such as working hand in hand with people from other departments, solving problems by asking for help from co-workers as well as applying their knowledge in different positions such as customs declarants, customs representatives, customs processors, air/sea cargo handling documentation clerks, warehouse managers, transport planners, export office administrator, distribution managers, customs brokerage, customs officials, logistics or distribution managers in the company. In conclusion, companies are

looking for multi-task employees with knowledge of English, and even a third language such as Portuguese or Mandarin due to international commerce needs. Finally, they mentioned the importance of employees keeping up with global changes regarding international trade and commerce.

*a.2 English professors from the Customs Administration and International Trade major*

Several English professors from the Customs Administration and International Trade major who are currently teaching at different universities such as the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and the Universidad Técnica Nacional (UTN) were interviewed and they provided us with key information about the contents, topics, strategies and methodology used in their English classes for the CAIT students. During the interview, the instructors stated that the skills in which they focus the most are the speaking and listening ones, because when graduate or undergraduate pupils start working, they need to deal with foreigners in different occupational contexts, and the English language is fundamental due to the nature of their job tasks. However, it is important not to forget the other two skills (reading and writing) needed for certain job tasks depending on the field in which the learners develop as professionals because some of them will end up checking contracts (at management positions) and checking different official documents such as international trades' documents. Some professionals will have to check demands/suits from companies, and some will have to even know technical vocabulary about shipping, merchandise and the means of transportation used for specific job-related tasks. Moreover, they focus on nomenclature referred to the

field of customs and international trade. Furthermore, to become an attentive listener is fundamental since, most of the time, they have to negotiate with clients in different working contexts such as face to face or phone conversations. The interviewees also said that not all CAIT graduate students would end up working as customs service agents, but in Costa Rica, this is one of the jobs that they are more likely to find. Some of the theme axes suggested were working contacts, company information, information on trade management, organization of projects and events as well as themes concerning corporations and multinational subsidiaries, shareholders among other commercial initiatives, processes of planning, competitiveness, opportunities, resources and economic growth. In addition, some of the other theme axes include Developing Countries (MEDC and LDC) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), globalization and operating costs, communication, pressure groups, online commerce, information and logistics. Based on the information collected from the interviews, those are some of the most relevant contents that students of Customs Administration and International Trade need to deal with in different job contexts and positions.

### *a.3 Current students of the Customs Administration and International Trade Major at UCR*

We were able to interview four students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major at UCR, two from third year, one from fourth year and one from the “Licenciatura” program. During the interviews, current students of the CAIT major stated that they have to know specific technical vocabulary terms

for different documents in the target language such as the INCOTERMS, ARW (AirWay Bill) and the BL (Bill of Lading) just to name a few. Professionals in CAIT need to understand the law, processes and regulations related to imports and exports in Costa Rica and from other countries as well. Correspondingly, some of the interviewees also mentioned that the four skills are important to them since they will have to perform different tasks in their job such as communicating with clients, translating information about procedures, laws or other official documents from Spanish to English or vice versa, reading documents written in English and also requesting or asking for information from clients, mostly through emails. The students interviewed had some previous learning experience of the target language such as taking an English course or internships in companies in other English-speaking countries. They talked about filling out official documents in the target language as well as reading them and understanding the information they provide regarding the merchandise. However, all of them agreed on the importance of using the target language since English is considered the lingua franca for trade.

Moreover, they also agreed that the most important skills they need to develop while studying are listening and speaking. They are constantly listening to lectures, and workshops are usually part of their English classes. Additionally, speaking fluently is essential since the last courses of their major consist of internships in companies such as customs agencies, logistics or at the airport that require students to communicate with international agents, tourists, customers and companies which share one common language: English.

*a.4 Graduated students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major*

We also interviewed three students who graduated from the major and who are currently working in the CAIT field in order to collect the necessary information regarding the daily tasks they carry out at work using the target language. Part of those daily tasks include reading international invoices, responding to emails from clients mostly about complaining or requesting information of services, transaction statuses or any other inquiry. In addition, those professionals have to answer phone calls from clients, and most of those calls are about filing complaints, solving problems, requesting information or concerning with specific documents used in the field such as invoices, Air Waybills, Bill of lading among others. Moreover, during those phone calls or through emails, students have to explain Costa Rica's laws, regulations, company policies and processes of customs to clients. These laws are written in Spanish; therefore, students have to explain these laws and procedures to clients using their own words. Additionally, they are in charge of checking origin certificates of merchandise which are always written in English.

Furthermore, they work with computer systems that have specific terminology in English. There are some specific terms called INCOTERMS (International Commerce Terms). These international standardized rules are used worldwide in domestic and international contracts for the selling of goods. They provide well-stated rules of interpretation of the most common trade terms accepted internationally. There are other specific terms workers use to understand the information of international invoices which are always written in English. Thus,



current and graduated students from the CAIT major agreed on the job tasks that they have to carry out using the target language.

### *General group profile*

The information about the general group profile was gathered from the NAQ (Needs Analysis Questionnaire) from a group of ten students majoring in Customs Administration and International Trade at the University of Costa Rica, Sede Rodrigo Facio. As stated on part B (The ESP population), there are different job positions the students could potentially be hired for. It is expected that they perform different job tasks that involve using English. Therefore, in order to professionally carry out those tasks, the mastering of this foreign language is necessary. Based on the NA questionnaire, there are some commonalities among the needs, wants, lacks that were described by this CAIT students' population. Another important aspect illustrated in the NAQ was their English language needs. In their professional field (CAIT), they selected activities such as writing mails, writing documents, answering phone calls, and checking merchandise as the most salient ones (See Appendix A, NAQ *Figure 1*). Additionally, in part D of the NAQ, the participants were asked about their linguistic skills, and the majority indicated that most of the time they understand the main ideas of an English text, and half of them expressed that they have the ability to find specific information as well. Furthermore, only one participant indicated that context is not relevant for him when reading in English. More than half of the participants said they can correctly write in English, and half of them mentioned they could write using correct punctuation. Regarding listening skills, the answers were positive since they

indicated they can understand instructions in English and main ideas in oral presentations; most of them feel confident speaking in English and pronouncing vocabulary related to their field of study. Half of them expressed that they are able to monitor themselves and to identify their own mistakes when speaking. On the other hand, considering their lacks, some of the weaknesses they mentioned are problems with listening when talking to people whose English is their L1 (first language) or when talking to other English speakers, when English speakers use a low voice volume, or when they speak with a particular accent. In addition, some of them answered that they have difficulty to understand when listening to English speakers interacting simultaneously, and also when there are external sounds that interrupt the conversation. Considering their wants, the group shows special interest in improving some skills and they made suggestions regarding class activities they would like to have. Among these suggestions, they mentioned the use of technological tools, activities that simulate real life situations, and activities in which they could practice the English language to face a work-related situation. Considering all these aspects, students showed a salient preference on taking an ESP English course that could focus not only on their wants and likes, but mainly on their needs. The Needs Analysis Questionnaire revealed the necessity of the participants of this major to have a better understanding of the spoken language as well as to be able to carry out a conversation about topics related to their field of expertise in the target language, English in this particular case. However, the wants and needs of students are quite opposite. On one hand, in their daily job tasks, students mostly carry out tasks that involve reading and writing, but on the

other hand, participants stated as part of their wants to improve their listening and speaking skills.

Professionals from the CAIT major must have a high proficiency level of English in order to perform a variety of job tasks; however, their needs differ greatly from the wants of the participants. Their lacks include listening difficulties and poor punctuation and writing skills, which will affect directly their job performance; in contrast, as expressed above, the wants expressed by the participants differ greatly from their needs.

## **Needs Analysis Part II: Diagnostic Test**

### **Rationale behind the diagnostic test**

This second part of the Needs Analysis involves the application of a diagnostic test to the possible participants to the ESP course. This chapter will describe in detail its application.

First, regarding the administration circumstances of the diagnostic test, one of the biggest challenges for the instructors was to find a schedule time in which the students were available to take it. This issue is a concern when planning for the actual course since the CAIT major courses are usually scheduled at night. Therefore, the researchers had to arrange three different sessions in order to administer the test, and even some of the tests were applied virtually since part of the students could not attend any of the sessions. For this virtual session, the participants were sent the diagnostic test through email and were asked to send the answered test within an hour and a half. After submitting it, the situations for the oral exam were sent to them, so that they could choose two out of the four situations. The participants were given some minutes to organize their ideas. Then, the instructor in charge made a call to the participant through WhatsApp and recorded the conversation with a voice recorder app of the laptop. The instructor took the passive role in both oral situations and the participants were the ones having a more active interaction during the evaluation. On the other hand, the participants who attended one of the available test sessions were handed in a paper-based test. The test took place at a laboratory at the Modern Languages School at Rodrigo Facio UCR campus. This laboratory had the adequate

conditions to administer the test; therefore, it ensured a proper application of the test; in this sense, the test administration fulfilled the reliability assessment principle. This principle states the importance of timing; for this reason, the allotted time given to the participants was enough for them to take the test without feeling stressed by the time limit. In addition, this test fulfilled the testing assessment principle of reliability as it has careful specifications of an analytical scoring instrument; however, it can increase rater reliability (Brown, H.D. 2004). This test is consistent and dependable as it was administered to different raters and similar results were obtained. This test has achieved one of the most complex assessment principles which is validity. Validity is defined as “the extent to which inferences made from assessment are appropriate, meaningful, and useful in terms of the purpose of the assessment” (Gronlund as cited in Brown, H.D. 2004). In this diagnostic test, those principles are met since these inferences made from the assessments were adequate, meaningful and useful for the sake of this research purpose. The diagnostic test administration consisted of reading the general instructions of the test as well as giving a general review of the instructions in each of its parts. Then, the recordings of the listening part were played three times each. Next, they could work on the rest of the test and the instructor was available to respond to any questions from the participants. Additionally, the allotted time for the test was 120 minutes approximately. Most of the participants completed the test during the allotted time.

Moreover, all the four major macro skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) of the English language were targeted in the diagnostic test. First, the participants worked on the listening, reading and writing parts of the diagnostic

test; the speaking part of the test was applied at the end. The four major macro skills were assessed in the diagnostic test since CAIT students need to be prepared to perform proficiently in these four macro skills since they are required to communicate in a written and oral form with clients who might be English native speakers. Specifically, they are required to explain trade regulations, processes, or international requirements to those clients, as well as to read official documents such as international invoices, certificates of origin and tax, imports or exports declarations, among many others. In general, the CAIT population will use receptive and productive skills at the same time in order to perform different job tasks.

Several micro skills were assessed in the diagnostic test, in parallel selected with the job requirements and the job tasks that the participants will perform in the workplace. In the listening part of the diagnostic test, the participants were required to retain chunks of information in short-term memory and process speech at different rates of delivery. Then, in the reading part of the diagnostic test, reading skills such as reading quickly to skim for the gist, reading carefully for main ideas, interpreting word patterns, guessing meaning from context and drawing specific information were assessed. Moreover, in the writing part of the diagnostic test, the participants were assessed in writing for a specific task and purpose (applying for a job). They were expected to apply correct grammatical rules, to follow the structure of a formal email and its parts, and to use proper register by prioritizing the conveyed message. Lastly, in the speaking part of the diagnostic test, the participants had to respond to input spontaneously, correctly apply genre-specific

vocabulary, use proper register when addressing the listener and take sociolinguistic appropriateness into account for their interventions.

Regarding the constructs behind the test and the tasks selected to assess the students' language proficiency, the following were selected for some specifications. According to Hu (2012),

“these specifications serve as a generative blueprint with detailed information on the structure of the assessment, the target candidates, the types and topics of texts to be included, the task types to be employed, the language skills and elements to be assessed, the test techniques to be used, time allotment, the criteria of performance against which candidates are evaluated, the scoring procedures to be adopted, etc” (p. 125).

Therefore, these specifications will also consider the type of constructs to assess the different English macro skills in the diagnostic test. In it, the researchers combined the used of ability-focused and task-focused constructs. On one hand, ability-focused construct refers to the assessment of receptive skills, specifically listening and reading which include a variety of subskills (Coombe, C., Folse, K., & Hubble, N. 2007, p. 43). In the diagnostic test, some of these reading sub-skills were bottom-up and top-down processing of a text, skimming for gist, scanning for specific details, drawing conclusions from the text as well as guessing the meaning of words based on context and providing synonyms (see Appendix D). Regarding listening, some of the sub-skills assessed were related to general listening. These general skills were based on a communicative approach in which the listener must be able to comprehend the message and then apply the information based on context (Coombe, C., Folse, K., & Hubble, N. 2007, p. 92). Thus, in the listening part of the diagnostic test, the participants listened to a recording in order to

complete it with the missing words and later, they listened to a recording in order to respond to listening comprehension questions.

On the other hand, the researchers decided to implement the use of task-based assessment which is designed to test the real-world outcomes and use the actual tasks in authentic situations (Norris, J, Brown, J, Hudson, T & Yoshioka, J, 1998, p. 36). This type of assessment was used to assess the productive skills which are writing and speaking. In the diagnostic test, the researchers designed tasks which resembled CAIT professionals daily job tasks. In the case of writing, the task consisted of writing an email to apply for a job as a warehouse manager; and in the case of speaking, the researchers developed some situations that resembled real life tasks that professionals from CAIT face every day at work such as providing information about customs processes, requirements and limitations for clients, explaining information to clients on importation and exportation processes as well as explaining specific terms using their own words to clients. The main purpose of these tasks was to identify the participants' proficiency level in a written and oral form as well as to assess other aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary usage, content knowledge and task completion. To assess both productive skills, the researchers designed specific rubrics that will be explained in detail later in this chapter.

Consequently, a detailed analysis of the assessment will provide a better view of the constructs behind the diagnostic test. For the listening and reading parts, items such as multiple choice (receptive response) and short answer exercises (productive response) were chosen due to the nature of this research. In the short answer part, the participants were requested to draw meaning of words



from context since they were required to provide synonyms extracted from the text and given words. As a last remark, an open-ended question was included at the end of this part to assess the participants' capacity to identify the main idea of the text. In part A of the listening, participants were required to listen for specific words to complete the ideas of a piece of news; then, in part B, participants needed to listen for the main idea and supporting details of a recording about global trade and differentiate the correct answer from multiple choice options. For the writing part, the participants were asked to write an email to a hypothetical employer to apply for a job as a warehouse manager; the constructs consisted of task completion, use of appropriate register and employment of correct organization of the email (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2014). For the speaking part of the assessment, the participants were asked to perform a role-play of a real-life situation which assessed "elements of vocabulary and accuracy through an unplanned, unrehearsed oral production" (Dredetiano, 2013). The participants needed to demonstrate they could provide concrete information and reach the communicative outcome. Due to the nature of the item, role-playing is categorized as a productive task.

Lastly, regarding number of items, for the listening part, the participants had to fill in ten blank spaces to complete the piece of news; for the reading part, four types of questions were included such as multiple choice, fill in the blanks and an open-ended question. In the writing part, the participants had to write a complete email from around one hundred and fifty to two hundred words, and a rubric was used to assess the participants in six different criteria. Finally, in the speaking part, the participants were asked to perform two out of the four situations given and they

were assessed in six different criteria as well. Overall, the participants responded to a total of thirty different items.

In relation to the proficiency levels and how they shaped the design of the diagnostic test, the overall aim was to design tasks directed to participants whose proficiency level could be B1. In other words, they should have an intermediate language proficiency level. According to CEFR, overall, participants at B1 level are able to come across communication and are able to maintain focus on main points over extended discussions; they apply job-related language correctly and write letters of personal interest. Specifically, the participants that reach the desired level of proficiency must be able to understand the main points of clear texts written with a standard language level about familiar topics, can adapt to most spontaneous situations, are able to produce clear and coherent texts about the subject of discussion and are able to clearly communicate experiences with valid justifications.

Furthermore, the proficiency level of difficulty in the tasks relied on the outcomes intended for the participants to reach. In the case of the writing and speaking parts, the researchers focused on the task-based approach since “a task-based language methodology not only prepares them for academic achievement but also for real-life linguistic challenges (Herrera, 2012)”. In the case of the reading and listening parts, both task-based approach and abilities focused such as reading and listening for gist and details were used to develop the tasks since the items required the participants to apply genre-specific terminology along with basic communicative abilities.

Due to the nature of this English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course, analytical rubrics were used since they provide a detailed picture of the participants' strengths and weaknesses in the target language. For this research, the rubrics provided a clear picture of the aspects in which the participants need to improve. According to Coombe, Folse, & Hubley (2010), "a diagnostic test identifies weaknesses which need to be taught in a given course" (p.23). The main objective of this diagnostic test is to find out the needs based on the participants' lacks, since the course will be designed based on them. In addition, Harris and McCann (1994) explain that diagnostic tests are "based on failure and not on success" (p.29). Therefore, the analytical rubrics were the most accurate assessing tool to be implemented in order to figure out not only the needs, but also the perceived overall proficiency level of the participants based on the CEFR (Common European Frame of Reference).

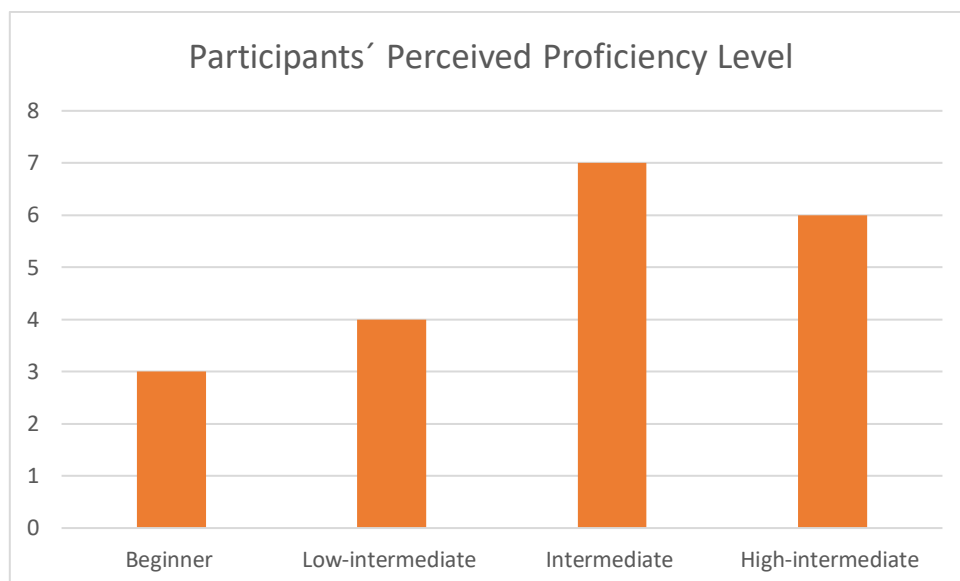
The constructs behind both rubrics (speaking and writing) were carefully selected and designed in order to evaluate the participants' performance on the these tasks of the test, but, at the same time, a scale was designed to evaluate each macro skill according to the CEFR (see Appendix E). The descriptors in both rubrics were designed in a proportional way to avoid overlapping of components and in order to have a proper balance among each criterion. The criteria in each scale ranged from CEFR's A1 (beginner) to B2 (high intermediate). Therefore, there is a match between the number of obtained points by the participant in each of the macro skills with the different CEFR's levels (see Appendix E).

The types of parameters selected for assessing reading and listening were designed using CEFR levels; however, the researchers made emphasis in the

learning outcomes that each participant should achieve in each level and included several micro skills. The descriptors include the learning outcomes that each participant should achieve in order to be placed in a determined proficiency level; they ranged from beginner to high intermediate proficiency levels (see Appendix E).

### **Analysis of the results**

The diagnostic test (see Appendix D) aimed at assessing the four English skills of the participants in order to identify their general proficiency level as well as their proficiency level for each of the macro skills that were assessed in the test (see Appendix E). Overall, the diagnostic test showed interesting results that will be discussed in this section. The diagnostic test was administered to a total of 20 participants who are currently taking courses of CAIT from 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year or even at the licenciatura level. As can be seen in figure 3 below, after having taken the exam, the majority of participants are placed at a perceived intermediate proficiency level. Therefore, later decisions regarding syllabus design, materials and activities development for the ESP course will be based on this overall English perceived proficiency level.



*Figure 3. Participants' perceived proficiency level from the diagnostic test*

*n=20*

## **Results from the diagnostic test per macro skills**

### **Listening**

Regarding listening, sixteen of the participants were placed as high intermediate while only four as intermediate. At this high intermediate level, CEFR establishes that students can understand standard speech spoken at a normal rate and follow even complex lines of argument provided in which the topic is reasonably familiar. In addition, they can understand the essentials of lectures and most TV news and current affairs programs and can understand the majority of films in standard dialect. The only difficulty few students had were spelling the words correctly, but they wrote words phonetically (spelled as they heard them). For example, some students wrote "in balance" or inbalance" instead of "imbalance". On the other hand, a strength the participants showed was that they were able to understand main ideas as well as specific details from both audios.

## **Reading**

In the second part of the diagnostic test related to reading, eleven out of twenty participants were placed in the intermediate level. Eight of the participants in the high intermediate level and only one as a low-intermediate. This participant was not able to complete some of the exercises such as providing synonyms. According to CEFR, at that intermediate level, students are able to understand factual texts on subjects related to their interests that consist mainly of high frequency every day or job-related language. Some of the strengths that the participants showed related to reading were that they could provide synonyms from the text to given words, identify the meaning of words from context and draw conclusions from the text provided and state them using their own words. On the other hand, some of the weaknesses that they showed were spelling problems when providing synonyms and some grammar mistakes when writing the conclusion from the reading. Some of them were subject omission, subject-verb agreement or incorrect use of verb tenses.

## **Writing**

The third part of the diagnostic test was a writing task in which the participants had to apply to a specific job by writing a formal email to the company including their personal information, educational background, previous job experience and hard and soft skills. In this part, thirteen of the participants were placed as high intermediate and seven as intermediate. At this high intermediate level, according to CEFR, the participants are able to write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to their field. In addition, they can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences. Some of the

strengths that participants showed related to writing were that they were able to provide most of the required information. They were also able to provide many details. However, some of the weakness that they showed were related to missing parts of a formal email such as the greeting, stating the purpose of the email, the closing sentence or the farewell. In addition, some of the participants had spelling mistakes. The participants also had difficulties with punctuation, particularly with the use of commas and, finally, they also used few transition words to link the ideas in the email such as but, because, also or so.

### **Speaking**

The last part of the diagnostic test consisted of a brief oral interview with the participants. First, they were asked a couple of personal questions and then, they had to perform two oral situations to show their knowledge on two particular work-related topics. Half of the participants were placed in the intermediate level. Eight of the participants were placed as high intermediate and only two were placed as beginners. In relation to spoken interaction, according to CEFR, at this intermediate level, students can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. They are able to take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts and can account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments and in regard to spoken production, they can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.

Some of the strengths that the participants showed were that most of them were able to complete the task, to participate spontaneously in the conversation

and to show proper knowledge of the topics described in the situations. However, some of their weaknesses were difficulties with fluency (fourteen out of twenty), using false cognates, some L1 interference and not applying self-monitoring techniques. In addition, the participants who are currently taking courses from the first year of their major (four of them) had some difficulties to express some ideas because they do not have enough background knowledge related to their field yet.

## **Conclusions**

In general, the diagnostic test showed that the participants of the research have some specific needs to take into consideration. Therefore, decisions regarding syllabus design, the materials and the activities to be developed in the course will take into account the results that the diagnostic test showed such as the participants' overall proficiency level as well as their proficiency level for each of the macro skills that were assessed. In the Needs Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ), the participants stated that they wanted to improve their listening and speaking skills. For listening, they want to be able to listen to interactions in which there are multiple participants talking and to understand speakers who have particular accents. In the diagnostic test, the listening skills were assessed using two recordings that only had one speaker which did not represent a challenge for the participants. In relation to reading, the participants mentioned difficulty to identify the parts of a text or the main purpose of a text. None of those aspects were assessed in the reading section; therefore, the participants did well identifying the main ideas and specific details in the text. However, some of the participants had difficulty to identify the correspondent synonym of a word using the text. Regarding writing, the participants stated in the NAQ difficulty to use punctuation in the target



language and they also mentioned having struggles with structuring sentences. The task on writing in the diagnostic test showed that those two aspects are the ones that represent a challenge for most of the participants. In addition, most of the participants need to improve writing a formal email and identifying what their parts are because some of them missed some of those parts when completing the task. Finally, regarding speaking, the participants stated in the NAQ that it is difficult for them to have a conversation on topics related to their work field. The section on speaking of the diagnostic test showed that the participants have real problems explaining topics related to their work field due to the lack of technical vocabulary or content related to their field. This affected their fluency while performing in the test as well as showing problems with L1 interference, use of false cognates and their lack of self-monitoring techniques.

Hence, this diagnostic test confirmed some of the information provided by the participants in the NAQ, and it also provided relevant data that will surely help the researchers to design an ESP course that properly addresses the participants' needs based on their lacks regarding the target language.

## Chapter II: Syllabus Design

This section describes the rationale behind the design of the course syllabus. In addition, a student-friendly version of the syllabus is provided in Appendix E. A course description as well as the methodology, goals and objectives, and content will be included.

### Course logo



The course logo includes the name of the course and basic elements to illustrate the focus of it. A truck, plane and a ship were chosen to show the means of transportation usually associated with the Customs and International Trade business. Lastly, the course's name "*Let's Do CAIT Business!*" invites participants to get engaged into this ESP course to learn how to perform efficiently in the CAIT business world while enhancing their English level.

**Course name** *Let's Do CAIT Business!* A Practical Guide to English in Customs and International Trade- course designed by Jiménez, S, Montero, T. & Ruiz, R.

### I. Course Description

The *Let's do CAIT Business!* is an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course that has the aim of providing the Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) students at UCR with the necessary tools in order to enhance their English skills through a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach at an intermediate level.

The course will be taught by three instructors, and it will take place at the Rodrigo Facio Campus at UCR. The course schedule will be Wednesdays from 4:30 to 7 pm approximately. The course will last 16 weeks with a total of 40 hours. The course will integrate all four major macro skills in English: reading, writing, listening and speaking, which will be enhanced through meaningful tasks, learning strategies, and materials. The course will include the use of authentic materials mainly as content carrier in order to provide students with useful technical-oriented language, content, and real-world situations necessary for their occupational performance. Moreover, the instructors will use adequate strategies in order to appropriately integrate beginner learners who represent the minority of the participants (only 4) in the CAIT ESP course.

## **II. Statement of Goals and Objectives**

### **Unit 1: Let's Get Into the CAIT Business!**

This first unit focuses on topics related to entering the CAIT business such as providing their personal information, describing their main job tasks, describing the company they work for by providing information of their head office, industry and main products or services, talking about job benefits and employment procedures as well as future plans at a job interview. In addition, a practical guide of Dos and Don'ts at a job interview will be discussed for students to put these tips into practice. This unit will encompass four sessions. The participants of the course do not have any working experience and; therefore, the instructors consider that it is important to provide them with certain overview of these topics related to the job interview process.

**Goal 1:** By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively describe their professional future CAIT life orally by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with possible employers and colleagues in their field.

**General Objectives:** By the end of the unit, the CAIT students will be able to:

1. properly describe their job, job tasks, company and company information related to CAIT in order to communicate with possible employers and colleagues in their field.
2. adequately describe job benefits and future plans at a CAIT job interview in order to communicate with possible employers or colleagues in their field.

## **Unit 2: Let's Do CAIT Business!**

The second unit focuses on common everyday business transactions that CAIT professionals will do as part of their job tasks using the English in an oral way such as making and receiving phone calls, making polite requests, asking questions to find out information about a subject, asking for repetition or clarification, responding to complaints by clients and talking about orders and deliveries by making arrangements. This unit will encompass six sessions. In addition, this unit will have two more sessions than the first unit since it is related to speaking and listening skills which require enough practice to be developed with the integration of new CAIT-related technical vocabulary and grammar structures.

**Goal 2:** By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively carry out common CAIT related tasks orally by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

**General Objectives:** By the end of the unit, the CAIT students will be able to:

1. properly make and receive phone calls on CAIT- related topics in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
2. effectively carry out a variety of simple everyday business transactions related to CAIT topics in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
3. adequately use customer service practices on CAIT related topics in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

### **Unit 3: Now, Let's Write about CAIT Business!**

The third unit focuses on common everyday CAIT tasks that professionals in this field will do as part of their job using English in a written and oral way, such as reading and explaining the information provided in formal CAIT documents, placing and handling orders related to CAIT business by explaining logistics, supply chains and importation and exportation processes, explaining Costa Rica's law, importation and exportation CAIT processes, identifying the main parts of an email and writing formal and informal emails in order to carry out CAIT businesses and writing different types of emails such as requesting information, follow-up, client satisfaction and complaints on CAIT-related topics. This unit will encompass six sessions. This unit will have the same number of sessions as the second unit since it is related to speaking and writing skills which require enough practice to be developed with the integration of new CAIT-related technical vocabulary and grammar structures.

**Goal 3:** By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively carry out common CAIT simple everyday tasks such as explaining information provided in formal CAIT documents and placing and handling orders, explaining Costa Rica's law, importation and exportation CAIT processes and identifying the parts of an email and writing different types of formal and informal emails such as requesting information, follow-up, client satisfaction and complaints orally and in a written form by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

**General Objectives:** By the end of the unit, the CAIT students will be able to:

1. properly explain the information contained in formal CAIT documents in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
2. effectively explain logistics, importation and exportation processes, laws and supply chains on CAIT-related conversations in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
3. adequately write different types of emails to carry out common CAIT related tasks in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

### **III. Methodology**

This CAIT ESP course has a Task-Based orientation methodology; it is not only based on the cognitive part of the learner, but it involves its social dimension. Task-Based Language Assessment (TBLA) is “the process of evaluating in relation of a set of explicitly stated criteria, the quality of the communicative performance elicited from learners as part of goal-directed, meaning-focused language use

requiring the integration of skills and knowledge” (Brindley, 1994, p.74). TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) methodology proposes the student as the center of the learning process since it is intended to enhance the student’s strengths and communicative competencies. The learning process will be carried out in the most meaningful way for the learners with the development of tasks that will activate and encourage their own learning experiences.

The Task-Based Instruction (TBI) follows a particular cycle. In it, the transitions smoothly direct learners into a scaffolding process taking into consideration a well-allotted time distribution. During a class, the warm-up is the first activity that CAIT students will work on. This one consists of a short activity to activate the students’ schemata. After that, the pre-tasks, which are the most important source of input in the cycle, will take place. Ellis (2003) describes the pre-task in the following way: a) performing a similar task, b) paying attention to a model, c) engaging in non-task preparation activities and/or strategic planning (pp.245-246). The instructors of this ESP course will decide on the number of tasks and the input required. Moreover, input is basic in the TBI cycle since it is the main source for the later production phases. Continuing with the cycle, the main task takes place, which is a real-life based situation that takes into consideration the productive speaking and writing skills. Furthermore, CAIT students will have time to perform the task, understand the instructions, and make decisions in their pair or groups; then, they will be given time to practice and the final outcome will be shared with the rest of the class members of the CAIT group. Finally, the post-task activities will provide students with the opportunity to analyze language use

features, to promote peer or self-assessment, and to give assignments if necessary. During the post-task, feedback from any phase of the cycle will be given by the CAIT ESP instructors.

The instructors of this CAIT ESP course will use authentic materials in order to familiarize students with real life situations in their jobs as CAIT professionals. Authentic materials will be used as content carriers in order to help students acquire useful language that they later on will need in their real job tasks. The motivation of the CAIT students is sought during the whole process in such a way that learning acquires a real meaning for each of the participants. The emphasis is on tasks that resemble real-life work ones. Furthermore, the course emphasizes the comprehension and production of the English language. The methodology selected promotes learner's centered learning and its ability to process the language gradually. The instructors have the role of experts and companions in the learning process. The learners participate actively, discover, build, take risks and take responsibility for their learning process. The use of technology in and out of the class is encouraged too. The course is evaluated in a manner that continues to measure achievements and performance in areas of improvement to guide the learning process

Finally, some of the specific activities carried out in the class are spontaneous oral activities, written quizzes, simulations of CAIT work-related situations such as phone calls, listening to audios, interviews or dialogues, watching videos of experts on specific CAIT topics, games, self-evaluation, peer assessment, writing and responding to emails, among others.



#### **IV. Assessment**

Assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a wider domain (Brown, 2014, p.4) which means that it is a process that takes place in any moment of the class. As Brown (2014) stated “a good teacher never ceases to assess students, whether assessment is incidental or intended” (p. 4). Therefore, this constant assessment will allow the instructor to identify if the students are reaching the goals established by the course and make any necessary changes in the teaching process in order to make sure that those goals will be achieved by the learners.

In addition, the evaluations during the sessions of the course will consist of varied activities and tests that involve two main types of assessment: summative and formal and formative and informal assessment. In the case of the formative informal tasks, they can take many forms in the classroom as instructors provide students with feedback regarding classwork, unplanned comments and responses, impromptu feedback and many other interactions that provide students with evaluations that are not intended to be recorded (Brown, 2004).

On the other hand, assessments of summative and formal nature aim to measure students’ performance and understanding by “looking back and taking stock of how well that student has accomplished the objectives (Brown, 2004). In this course, students will be assessed through three quizzes, three oral activities and two oral tests. Regarding the classwork criterion, students will work on a number of activities including writing tasks, reading comprehension exercises, impromptu conversations, among others. The instructors will provide feedback to

students and classwork will be graded based on a rubric (holistic or analytical) that will be designed by the instructors. Moreover, quizzes will be applied at different stages of the course to evaluate their writing skills competence. These will be written evaluations about the technical CAIT contents that the instructors intend students to learn throughout the course; those will also include production tasks such as writing emails which is a task necessary to know by CAIT professionals. Furthermore, oral activities will be evaluated through impromptu conversations regarding real-life CAIT tasks where the students will have to perform according to a specific CAIT related scenario. These activities will include conversations with stakeholders to apply for job positions, clients who require information about the country's regulations, tourists who have problems entering or taking away regulated products, managers that require a solution for a warehouse irregularity, transportation issues, among others.

Moreover, regarding the partial and oral exams, students will undergo an evaluation in week 8 that will encompass unit 1 and half of the contents of unit 2 and a final oral examination that will evaluate contents from all three units to ensure students' proficiency level in terms of technical terms and the objectives established for this CAIT ESP course.

Thus, developing the proper rubrics to assess the students' performance will be essential in order to provide them with the proper feedback for them to improve specific skills, and therefore, to identify weaknesses and strengths regarding the English language.

In the next section, some of the instruments to be used in the CAIT ESP course will be explained in detail.

#### **A. Rubric for Oral Activities (see Appendix F)**

This rubric is designed to evaluate a specific oral competence that students will perform in a conversation format in a spontaneous and non-memoristic way of a specific scenario provided to them by the instructors related to a particular learning outcome of the course. This rubric focuses on four main aspects which are task completion, language use, pronunciation and use of vocabulary in context.

#### **B. Course Evaluation Form (see Appendix G)**

Due to the need of feedback to properly adapt the course contents, materials and activities to students' needs and expectations, a form has been designed so that students can provide instructors with input regarding the course development. Important information such as course satisfaction, materials usefulness and course difficulty will be identified by means of this form. This form will be applied by week 8 of the course and then at the end of the course.

#### **C. Student-instructors' performance evaluation form (see Appendix H)**

This course evaluation form is a data collection instrument designed to be administered to the students at the end of the course. The main purpose of this course evaluation form is to evaluate the student teachers' performance, a teacher evaluation form for students to evaluate aspects such as evidence of planning, methodology, instructions, use of time, ability to engage students' attention, ability to promote student participation, ability to create a positive learning environment, and evaluation procedures, among others. It is intended to verify if the materials help the CAIT students in the achievement of the course objectives, and if they comply with the ESP and TBLT principles.

The learners will demonstrate their communicative abilities through the following evaluative activities:

Assessment Activities	Percentage
Classwork	10%
3 Written Quizzes of 5% each one	15%
3 Oral activities of 5% each one	15%
Partial oral exam	25%
Final oral exam	35%
Total	100%

#### **a. Classwork**

The use of the English language in class is essential to develop the linguistic skills that will allow the student to interact effectively in different social contexts. Class participation includes not only attendance and punctuality to the sessions, but active interaction in group activities and individual exercises in and out of class (tasks), therefore, a learner who participates actively in the class is the one that asks questions and responds voluntarily. Classwork will be assessed using a rubric which will involve a teacher-student assessment and self-assessment.

#### **b. Quizzes**

During the course, three quizzes will be carried out that will evaluate writing skills of the students.

**c. Oral Activities**

To be able to advance in the use of the English language, practice and constant interaction are required. Therefore, at least three individual or group spontaneous (non-memoristic) oral presentations will be carried out in such a way that the student will be able to offer information, describe situations, ask and answer questions, among others.

**c. Partial Oral Exam**

A partial oral exam is carried out in the middle of the semester with the aim of identifying areas of improvement for the students in the learning process. This oral partial test aims to assess the students' performance and learning outcomes achievement. The test will be carried out by two of the instructors.

**d. Final Oral Exam**

An oral exam will take place at the end of the semester in order to identify the scope of the competences by the student. To carry out this exam, you must have two evaluators who collaborate as a court to carry out the evaluation.

## V. Contents (See Appendix I for Lesson Plans Samples)

This ESP course for CAIT students will be developed into three units that are described in the chart provided below.

Abbreviations: L: Listening W: Writing S: Speaking R: Reading

<b>Unit 1: Let's Get Into the CAIT Business World!</b>					
<b>General Objective</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Language Focus</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Time allotted</b>
1	Introducing yourself and others and describing your main job tasks and responsibilities in the CAIT business.	S/L	Vocabulary: Personal information and job tasks related to a CAIT professional.  Simple Present	Social strategy: socializing	1 session
	Describing the company related to the CAIT industry you work for and asking and answering questions about its head office, industry and main products or services.	S/L	Vocabulary  Company information: industry, head offices, products and services  Simple Present  Simple Present continuous		1 session

2	<p>Talking about job benefits and employment procedures in CAIT businesses and discuss about them at a job interview.</p> <p>Talking about future plans at a CAIT job interview.</p> <p>Identifying and discussing the main do's and don'ts at a CAIT job interview.</p>	<p>S/L</p> <p>S/L</p>	<p>Vocabulary: job benefits and employment procedures</p> <p>Simple present</p> <p>Future tense</p>	<p>Social strategy: communicating effectively</p>	<p>1 session</p> <p>1 session</p>
<b>Unit 2: Let's do CAIT Business!</b>					
1	Making and receiving phone calls on CAIT work-related topics.	S/L	<p>Vocabulary: Fixed expressions related to phone calls.</p> <p>Simple Present</p>	Communication strategy: politeness	1 session

			Simple Present Continuous  Modal auxiliaries: Can, Could, May.		
2	Making polite requests, asking questions to find out information and asking for clarification or repetition on work-related topics in a phone or face to face conversation.  Responding to complaints from clients by showing understanding and making suggestions in order to solve a problem related to CAIT.  Talking about orders and deliveries by making arrangements on CAIT-related topics in a phone or face to face conversation.	S/L   S/L   S/L	Vocabulary: Fixed expressions related to requests and complaints  Modal auxiliaries: Can, Could, May  Wh-questions  Simple present  Past tense	Communication strategy: politeness   Cognitive strategy: word order in questions	1 session   1 session   1 session



3	Identifying and discussing proper customer service practices related to CAIT.	S/L	Vocabulary related to customer service practices at CAIT  Simple Present  Modal auxiliaries  Imperative forms	Communication strategy: effective communication skills	1 session
<b>Unit 3: Let's write about CAIT Business!</b>					
1	Reading and explaining the information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading, international invoices among others to clients.	R/L/S	Vocabulary related to the official documents of CAIT: international invoices, bill of lading, contracts and certificate of origin.  Grammar  Simple Present  Modal Auxiliaries  Transition Words such as in addition, moreover, first, second, lastly, finally, therefore, on the other hand, besides, however, among others.	Metacognitive strategy: providing details	1 session

2	Placing and handling orders related to CAIT business by explaining logistics, supply chains and importation and exportation processes to clients.	R/L/S	Vocabulary: logistics, supply chains, importation and exportation processes, Costa Rican law.	Cognitive strategy: paraphrasing and summarizing	1 session
	Explaining Costa Rica's law, importation and exportation CAIT processes to clients when problems arise by using proper translation from Spanish to English or vice versa.	R/L/S	Grammar Simple Present Modal auxiliaries: Can, May, Could. Imperative forms Future tense Transition words such as in addition, moreover, first, second, lastly, finally, therefore, on the other hand, besides, however, among others.	Cognitive strategy: translating.	1 session
3	Identifying the main parts of an email and write formal and informal ones in order to carry out CAIT businesses.	R/W	Vocabulary: part of an email Fixed expressions commonly used in emails	Cognitive strategy: writing skills	1 session
	Writing different types of emails such as requesting information, follow-up, client satisfaction and	R/W	Simple Present Past Tense Present Perfect		1 session

	complaints on CAIT-related topics.		Future Tense Transition words such as in addition, moreover, first, second, lastly, finally, therefore, on the other hand, besides, however, among others.		
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## Conclusion

Developing an ESP course exclusive for Customs Administration and International Trade professionals has represented a great challenge since designing a course of this sort requires patience, hard work and lots of research. From designing proper instruments to assess the participants' needs, wants and lacks to identifying their strengths and weaknesses in a test, this project aims to fulfill and respond to students' needs and wants, but also to their lacks in the target language.

However, it is important to highlight the necessity for students of CAIT to have real expectations regarding the use of the target language in the workplace because their expectations on what they want to improve seem to be deviated from the necessities that primary stakeholders stated in their interviews. Even though the participants were able to identify in the Needs Analysis questionnaire the main job tasks that require them to use the target language.

Overall, involving the students in the process of developing their own course is a valuable asset because if carried out properly, a needs analysis will provide the instructor with all the guidelines to make informed decisions regarding syllabus design, lesson plans and materials which will be aligned to the students' perceived proficiency level as well as their needs, wants and lacks in the target language. Students are the main source of information and applying proper ongoing evaluation forms at different stages of the course will guide the process to be a successful one.

As a conclusion, more work is ahead, but this process will be a success as long as its main participants are willing to take tasks and continue learning from each other in the process.

### **Chapter III: Research Report**

Learning the English language has become mandatory for most professionals in different areas of the business world. For the Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) students, learning English is not an exception since many trade agreements, laws and official documents are written in the English language, which is used as a lingua franca to communicate among nations and companies worldwide. Therefore, there is an increased demand for professionals who must be proficient in a second, and even in a third language in order to have a prominent professional career in the business world, particularly in the Customs Administration and International Trade field.

Mastering a foreign language such as English might represent a challenge for some learners. Learning the listening skill may be difficult for some learners, and at times, it makes them feel frustrated and helpless when they are not able to understand what they listen to. One reason for this is the teaching and learning methodology used in the EFL classroom. In class, some teachers only play the audio or video, ask the students to listen to it, play it twice or three times and give them listening exercises for them to answer. However, one of the most important aims of the learning process should be to provide learners with the proper listening strategies and skills in order to enhance their listening skills.

Thus, this research aimed to respond to the following research question and sub-questions:

### **Research Question**

How would the explicit teaching of listening strategies affect the CAIT students' listening skills?

### **Sub-questions**

What has been the effect, if any, of the explicit teaching of listening strategies such as predicting and listening for specific details on the CAIT students' listening skills?

Which listening strategy, from the ones taught throughout the course, proved to be the most helpful for CAIT students?

## **Literature Review**

### **Listening and Its Importance for Communication**

Listening is part of our everyday life. We listen for different purposes such as entertainment, academic purposes or obtaining information. Listening refers to the ability to understand spoken language. In addition, listening plays a vital role in communication as stated by Rara (2018), of the total spent on communication, listening takes up to 40%-50%" (p.139). Therefore, in order to be able to communicate, learners need to be good listeners as well. Also, Brown (2006) states that "some people are inherently better listeners than others" (p. 4). For some others, listening represents a difficult skill to master in the English language. Listening skills are important for learning since they enable the students to get information, and also to successfully communicate with others. When listening, the listener understands, translates, and assesses what they heard and decided how to respond to what they have listened to. Additionally, as Ellis (1999) explains, "the person speaking to the learner models specific linguistic forms and patterns which the learners internalize by imitating them" (p. 243). Therefore, it is necessary for learners to be exposed to as much input as possible in order to become both better listeners and communicators. However, as stated by Ellis (1999), it is necessary to point out that "although comprehensible input is necessary for acquisition to take place, it is not sufficient, as learners also need to be effectively disposed to 'let in' the input they comprehend" (p. 273). Moreover, Ellis goes on explaining that "input becomes comprehensible as a result of simplification and with the help of contextual and extralinguistic clues" (p. 273). As a result, it is vital that teachers



lead students to raise awareness of the importance of listening skills and to apply listening strategies as well as to make use of their prior knowledge in order to help them to comprehend better what they are listening to. Listening is a complex activity that involves a great deal of processing of information and an immediate response from the learners. Thus, teachers must provide the learners with sufficient practice to develop and to strengthen their listening skills.

### **Teaching Listening**

In most used teaching methodologies such as the communicative approach and audiolingual, listening and listening comprehension are considered synonyms. As Richards (2008) explains, this view of listening is based on the assumption that the main function of listening in second language learning is to facilitate understanding of spoken discourse (p. 3). This spoken discourse has specific characteristics that represent a challenge for learners since spoken discourse is usually unplanned, and often reflects the processes of construction such as hesitations, reduced forms, fillers and repetitions (Richards, 2008, p. 3). Therefore, in order for learners to listen for comprehension of a spoken discourse, it is necessary to discuss how listening is processed.

In listening, there are two main processes: bottom-up and top-down. Bottom up processing refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message (Richards, 2008, p. 4). Richards goes on explaining that comprehension begins with the received data that is analyzed as successive levels of organization as sounds, words, clauses, sentences, texts until meaning is derived. Comprehension is viewed as a process of decoding (p. 4). However, in order to be

able to process texts using bottom-up processing, learners need a large vocabulary and a good working knowledge of sentence structure. Consequently, it is necessary for teachers to develop exercises in the classroom that aid learners to decode processes such as retaining input while it is being processed; recognizing word and clause divisions, key words, key transitions in discourse and grammatical relationships between key elements in sentences, and using stress and intonation to identify word and sentence function (Richards, 2008, p. 5).

On the other hand, top down processing refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message (Richards, 2008, p. 7). Hence, this processing goes from meaning to language. It is important to point out that if the listener is not able to make use of top-down processing, an utterance or discourse may be incomprehensible because bottom-up processing alone often provides an insufficient basis for comprehension (Richards, 2008, p. 9). In the classroom, teachers can apply different exercises that require top-down processing which will enhance learners to do things such as use key words to construct the schema of discourse; infer the setting of a text, the role of the participants and their learning goals, causes and effects and unstated details of a situation, and anticipate questions related to the topic or situation (Richards, 2008, p. 9). In simple words, some of the exercises used in a classroom may include making a list of what they know about a topic, reading part of a conversation, predicting what the other person will say, listing key points and choosing the exercises they think they will hear, listening to part of a story and writing an ending, reading news headlines and guessing what will happen (Richards, 2008, p. 9). These exercises help to

activate the learners' prior background knowledge as well as to identify information that may aid them to comprehend better what they listen to.

In general, most traditional current teaching materials for listening involve a teaching cycle sequence of pre-listening, while listening and post-listening, and these sequences contain activities that link both bottom-up and top-down listening processes. Pre-listening activities trigger students' background knowledge (top-down). While listening activities depend on listening comprehension exercises (bottom-up), post-listening activities depend on reflecting and analyzing what the learner heard (top-down and bottom-up). In other words, to be able to connect all the information provided in a text, learners draw on the use of learning strategies to help them comprehend better what they listen to. In the next section, there will be a detailed discussion of learning strategies.

### **Learning strategies**

Many experts have carried out several studies regarding the use of learning strategies in second and foreign language acquisition. Ellis (2003) explains that learning strategies are "the particular approaches or techniques that learners employ to try to learn an L2" (p. 77). In addition, Oxford (1990) states that learning strategies are "steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" (p. 1). Moreover, O'Malley (1990) describes learning strategies as "the special thoughts and behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information" (p. 1). In other words, learning strategies enhance the learning process of learners. Most of the time, students are aware of the strategies they use, and when asked, they can explain what they did to try to learn something

(Ellis, 2003, p. 7). Some strategies can be classified as behavioral, for example, repeating out loud, or they can be mental, for example, inferring the meaning of words. In general, learners make use of learning strategies when they are faced with a problem as a way to compensate for their lack of knowledge on a specific topic.

A number of experts have highlighted that successful learners make use of different learning strategies at different stages of their development. Ellis (2003) explains that good language learners are also very active: they use strategies for taking charge of their own learning, show awareness of the learning process and their own learning styles, and above all, they are flexible and appropriate in their use of learning strategies (p. 77). In addition, Oxford (1990) continues explaining that learning strategies are “especially important for language learning because they are tools for active self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence (p. 1). As a result, there is great support that using learning strategies enhances learners to become better and more self-aware learners who can be more proficient and increase their self-confidence with the appropriate language learning strategies. Moreover, Oxford (1990) explains that some of the characteristics of the learning strategies can contribute to enhancing communicative competence. Learners become more self-directed. Learning strategies expand the role of teachers, and they are problem-solving oriented. Additionally, they are specific actions taken by the learners; they involve many aspects of the learner, not just cognitive ones. Learning strategies support learning both directly and indirectly. In addition, they are not always observable. They are

often conscious, and they can be taught. Finally, they are flexible, and they are influenced by a variety of factors (p. 9). Considering these characteristics, learning strategies are important for the learning process of any individual, and they represent a good opportunity for learners to take control over their learning process, but also to use them whenever they encounter a problem when trying to communicate with others. Among the factors that may affect the choice of strategies by learners are the degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, learning style, motivation level and purpose for learning the language (Oxford, 1990, p. 13). All of these factors influence the choice that a learner makes when employing a learning strategy. The learning strategies used by beginner students are different from the ones used by more advanced students. These characteristics make learning strategies flexible and adaptable aids for learners at any moment of their learning process.

### **Types of Learning Strategies**

In general terms, learning strategies are divided into two major classes: direct and indirect. The two classes are sub-divided into a total of six groups: memory, cognitive, and compensation which are considered direct ones, and metacognitive, affective and social which are within the indirect class. Oxford (1990) explains that direct strategies are used for dealing with new language, and on the other hand, indirect strategies are for general management of learning (p. 15). Cognitive strategies refer to the analysis, synthesis or transformation of learning materials. Metacognitive strategies are involved in planning, monitoring and evaluating learning, and social/affective strategies cover the ways in which

learners choose to interact with other speakers. It is also important to mention that strategies that involve formal practice (such as rehearsing a new word) contribute to the development of linguistic competence whereas strategies involving functional practice (like seeking native speakers to talk) aid the development of communicative skills (Ellis, 2003, p.78). Therefore, the idea of teaching these strategies becomes appealing to experts and teachers in the EFL field since they provide help for learners to become more autonomous. However, most experts agree there is a major problem related to not having enough information about which strategies and which combinations of them work best for learners to acquire L2. In the next section, each type of learning strategy will be discussed in detail.

### *Cognitive strategies*

These refer to “mental activities related to comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory for later retrieval” (Buck, 2001. P. 104). In addition, Richards (2008) explains all the processes involved in cognitive strategies, and they include:

Comprehension processes: associated with the processing of linguistic and nonlinguistic input.

Storing and memory processes: associated with the storing of linguistic and nonlinguistic input in working memory or long-term memory.

Using and retrieval processes: associated with accessing memory, to be readied for output. (p. 11)

As mentioned before, cognitive strategies are essential in learning a new language, and they are unified by a common function. They can be used freely or transformed by the language learner in order to enhance their learning. Some examples of cognitive strategies include practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing, recognizing and creating structure for input and output (Oxford, 1990, p. 44). Thus, cognitive strategies include both processing the information received, but also producing something with it. Some other activities related to cognitive strategies may include creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, receiving and using information.

### *Metacognitive Strategies*

Richards (2008) explains that metacognitive strategies refer to “those conscious or unconscious mental activities that perform an executive function in the management of cognitive strategies” (p. 11). In addition, he describes some of the processes related to metacognitive strategies, and they include:

Assessing the situation: taking stock of conditions surrounding a language task by assessing one's own knowledge, one's available internal and external resources, and the constraints of the situation before engaging in a task.

Monitoring: determining the effectiveness of one's own or another's performance while engaged in a task.

Self-evaluating: Determining the effectiveness of one's own and other's performance after engaging in the activity.

Self-testing: testing oneself to determine the effectiveness of one's own language use of the lack of. (p. 11)

Thus, in the EFL classroom, learners need to take part in activities that require them to try out and experiment with using noticed language forms received in the input so that new learning items can become incorporated into their linguistic repertoire and; therefore, be used in oral production.

### *Compensation Strategies*

According to Oxford (1990), compensation strategies “enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge” (p. 47). These may also include making guesses and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. Learners may use a synonym when they do not know how to pronounce a specific word. In addition, they may try to guess how to pronounce a word based on what they already know about the language.

### *Social/Affective Strategies*

According to Oxford (1990), social/affective strategies help students learn through interactions with other, and they help to regulate emotions, motivations and attitudes (p.135). Some of the examples of social strategies include asking questions, cooperating with others and empathizing with others. On the other hand, affective strategies can also include lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself and taking one's emotional temperature. Learning a language is a stressful process for some learners and applying social and affective strategies will help learners to take



control of their emotions and find ways to reduce anxiety and stress in situations where they have to use the target language.

Overall, different researchers have shown that students do apply learning strategies while learning a foreign language, and that these strategies are used by highly effective language learners who transfer at least some strategies they have learned earlier on similar tasks in the classroom, or combine several learning strategies to maximize their language learning process. The interest in learner strategies grew with the development of the communicative language teaching (CLT) because with its emphasis on functional language use, on the importance of target language input and the much greater emphasis on oral activities, it gave the impression that competence in learning will occur automatically (Maraco, 2001, p. 27). CLT enhances learners' independence, and it is an opportunity for learners to experiment with the language and incorporate what they have learned in the L2 in their oral production.

### **Listening Strategies in the English Classroom**

As stated before, listening strategies can be thought of as the ways in which a learner approaches and manages a task, and learners can be taught effective ways of approaching and managing their listening (Richards, 2008, p. 11). Nevertheless, teaching listening strategies will allow students to be more efficient listeners and learners in general. In addition, tasks employed in classroom materials enable listeners to recognize and act on the general, specific, or implied meaning of utterances. However, it is important that teachers first distinguish between situations where comprehension is only an appropriate instructional goal

and those where comprehension plus acquisition is a relevant focus (Richards, 2008, p. 16). On the other hand, there are several problems that learners may encounter when listening in English. Among them, listeners cannot control the speed of delivery. Listeners cannot always have words repeated. Listeners have limited vocabulary. Unknown words may cause them to stop and think about the meaning of that word and cause them to miss the next utterance or part of the speech. Listeners may fail to recognize the signals which indicate that the speaker is moving from one point to another. In addition, listeners may lack contextual knowledge. Sharing mutual knowledge and common context makes communication easier. It can be difficult for listeners to concentrate in a foreign language, and students may have established certain learning habits like trying to understand everything (Osada, 2004, p. 62). The teaching of listening learning strategies is necessary in order for learners to overcome these types of problems when learning the language, and as a result, become more proficient learners able to apply variety of learning strategies that would help them to be more effective learners.

To sum up, the first researchers on this field started back in 1975 with Joan Rubin and have continued since then because there is a concern to learn about learning strategies which came from the need to identify the characteristics of effective learners. As has been mentioned throughout this literature review, effective students make use of learning strategies in order to become better learners and overcome difficulties throughout their target language learning process. As stated before, there are many variables that suggest why a learner uses learning strategies in his learning process, and some of these independent

variables include motivation for learning the language, or gender. According to research, women tend to make use of more learning strategies than men. In addition, age is considered a variable as well as background and cultural differences and finally, aptitude, learning styles and beliefs about language learning (Macaro, 2001, p. 29). All of these variables will play an important role in applying some learning strategies over others since all learners have different abilities, learning styles and motivation to learn the target language. Therefore, it is important that language teachers pay attention to the teaching of learning strategies. They should identify the ones that can be applied in listening so that learners can overcome different types of difficulties that they may encounter when listening to a text. The main purpose of a language learning process should be to raise the learners' awareness about the importance of taking control of their own learning process as well as having access to learning strategies that will facilitate their English learning process.

## **Methodology**

### *Research Approach*

This research applied the mixed method approach, which according to Creswell (2009), “[it] is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms” (p.5). In addition, Creswell (2009) highlights that the combination of both approaches “is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data; it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research” (p.4). Therefore, the researchers worked with qualitative and quantitative data in order to obtain as much as possible reliable results. Regarding quantitative data, the instruments provided the researchers with quantitative data in some of the closed-ended questions; however, there are some open-ended questions that will provide some qualitative data from the participants’ responses regarding the way in which they applied the different listening techniques learned during the course.

In addition, as stated by Dörnyei (2007), some of the benefits of using a mixed research approach include that “researchers can bring out the best of both paradigms, thereby combining quantitative and qualitative strengths” (p. 45). He also stated that “[the] mixed methods research is particularly appropriate for such a multi-level analyses because it allows investigators to obtain data about both the individual and the broader societal context” (p. 45). Therefore, the results obtained from this type of research “have the unique potential to produce evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of the findings” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). Thus, this integration and interaction of both

qualitative and quantitative data will provide the researchers with more reliable and valid results reaching target audiences such as other researchers in the English as a Foreign Language field, university professors and future students of the TEFL program.

### *Context and Participants*

This research study took place at the University of Costa Rica in Rodrigo Facio Campus and included undergraduate and graduate students in the Customs Administration and International Trade major, which is part of the Public Administration Department.

This research was carried out with a total of eight undergraduate and graduate students from the Customs Administration and International Trade major. Half of them were enrolled in the B.A program; two were taking the *licenciatura* program, and two of them have graduated. The students' ages ranged from 20 to 28 years old. Regarding their previous background in English, most students had been in contact with the target language varying from taking English courses which are part of their major, using self-study programs, or learning the language in an informal way through conversations with friends, trips or exchange programs, as well as taking high school English classes.

### *Instruments and Procedures*

This research consisted of the administration of a pre-test and a post test. The pre-test helped the researchers to determine if the students were able to apply the following listening strategies: predicting and listening for details. These listening

strategies were selected because in the needs analysis, students from this field stated that they check different kinds of official documents such as invoices, bills of lading, airwaybills, certificates of origin, contracts and emails in which they will read and predict specific information and details (usually used in these documents) that they will use in video calls, phone calls with clients, customs agencies, negotiation of trades with international clients among other work tasks that will demand the use of listening strategies skills. Therefore, sharpening these will be of great help for students in order to enhance their listening skills, but at the same time, to help them to feel more confident as English for Specific Purpose (ESP) language learners. However, there was a methodological flaw since the pre-test did not include content related to the students Customs Administration and International Trade major which made it not ESP oriented. At that stage of the investigation, the researchers made the decision of not including content related to the students' major since some of the students did not take the diagnostic test applied at the beginning of the course enrollment process, and later the researchers found out that some of the students who actually enrolled in the course had not taken any courses of the major itself yet. Based on the previous information, the researchers made the decision of using general English in the pre-test to focus on the application of listening strategies skills rather than on the ESP content. This decision was made with the intention of giving all students equal chances to demonstrate the use of listening strategies when responding to the pre-test with content that the learners could easily relate to.

The pre-test instrument (see Appendix J) took around 40 minutes for the students to respond. This instrument consisted of two parts. The first part consisted

of two listening exercises about the predicting strategy and the second part consisted of two listening exercises about the listening for details strategy. After the data from the pre-test was collected, the researchers designed a research schedule in which the explicit teaching of these two listening strategies took place. The explicit teaching of two listening strategies took place for six weeks. Each strategy was taught individually for three weeks. In addition, the explicit teaching of the listening strategies was part of one of the pre-tasks carried out during the class for six weeks (three weeks each strategy), and it took around 15 to 20 minutes. Once the students finished the listening activity, they responded to a questionnaire, and they identified the way in which they applied the listening strategy during the exercise (see Appendix K).

In each of the lessons, the researchers developed a specific listening activity that would require the students to apply one of these listening strategies (see Appendix M). Additionally, students were given an explicit explanation about what the listening strategy consisted of as well as its benefits when applied correctly, and tips on how to use it in real life. After applying for the six weeks the explicit teaching of these two listening strategies, a post-test (see Appendix L) was administered in order to determine if the explicit teaching of predicting and listening for specific details listening strategies had any effect on their listening skills.

The post-test included two parts, the first one, evaluating the predicting listening strategy and the second one, evaluating the listening for details strategy. Since the post-test took place at the end of the course, the researchers made the decision that the contents of this test were related to topics of the Customs Administration and International Trade area for the learners to be able to

demonstrate if the teaching of these explicit listening strategies had some effect on their listening skills.

## **Results and Discussion**

Based on the research questions, the aims of this research study are to determine a) How would the explicit teaching of listening strategies affect the CAIT students' listening skills? b) What has been the effect, if any, of the explicit teaching of listening strategies such as predicting and listening for specific details on the CAIT students' listening skills? and c) Which listening strategy, from the ones taught throughout the course, proved to be the most helpful for CAIT students? Each of the data collection instruments and instructional instruments will be described in detail.

### *Pre-test*

The pre-test was the first data collection instrument applied to the students in order to determine if they were able to apply the two listening strategies of predicting and listening for details (see Appendix J). It was responded by six students, and as it was mentioned before, the researchers decided to include general topics of English in the pre-test since only two of the eight students took the diagnostic test corresponding to the design part of the course and the researchers later found out that the remaining students had not taken any of the course of the major yet. Therefore, the researchers wanted to give students the same opportunities to rely on their previous knowledge of English in order to apply the listening strategies and not their knowledge related to their major and as a result, to obtain more reliable results.



This test consisted of two sections. The first section had two exercises related to the listening strategy of predicting. In this exercise, the researchers considered correct all the predictions that were related to the content of the recording. Exercise One required students to make predictions before listening to the recording based on two pictures previously shown. Students had to write different predictions on what the recording would be about. The recording was about how hip-hop music helps cheese to mature in a better way. Some of the results from this instrument were that half of the students were able to write five predictions; one student wrote four, and the remaining three wrote three predictions. Interestingly, some of the common predictions that students provided were “why people like cheese and hip-hop”, “why cheese and hip-hop are popular” and “what the favorite cheese of hip-hop singers is?” Only one of the students’ guesses was close enough to the actual information provided in the recording “how cheese factories play hip-hop music”. As a result, the pictures helped to have a general idea of the recording, but they were not able to connect properly how the hip hop and the cheese were related.

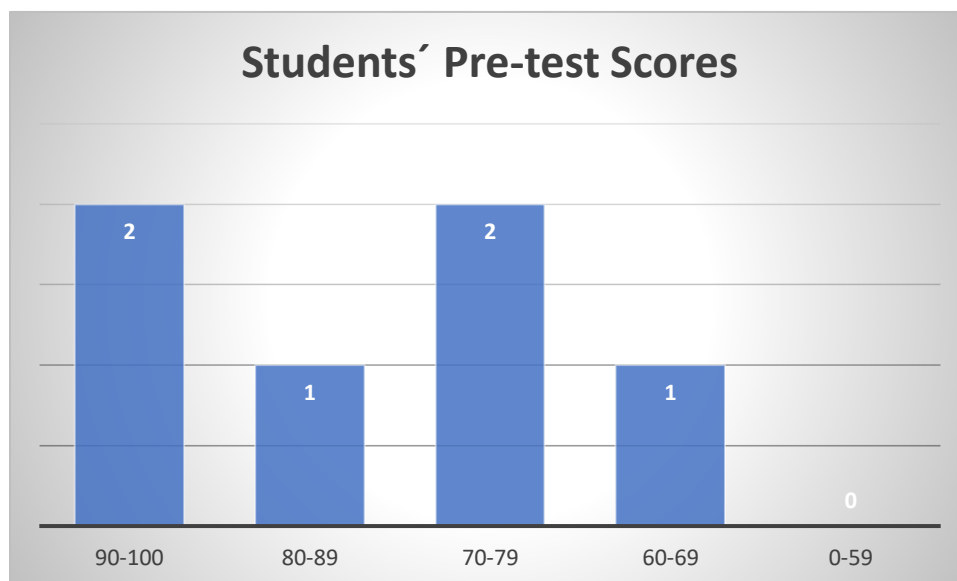
The second exercise consisted of giving students a news headline which read “University to replace clapping with hand-waving,” and they had to write at least three different predictions based on it; however, none of the students were able to write the three predictions. Only two of them were able to write two predictions, and the remaining four students only wrote one prediction. It looked like students only took into consideration the literal meaning of the news headline to make their predictions and they seemed not to use some other possible hidden

meaning to make more possible predictions. Half of the students were able to provide a correct prediction from the news headline which was related to the inclusion of people with a special condition such as deaf impairment or autism to not applaud at the end of conferences or speeches in order to consider their special condition. This shows that the literal meaning of the headline helped students to predict the content of the recording. This proves what Ellis (1999) states that input becomes comprehensible for learners as a result of simplification and with the help of contextual and extralinguistic clues (p. 273) as in this case, making use of the learners' previous knowledge in order to help them to comprehend better the recording that they will listen to. In addition, students were able to incorporate the use of top down processing of listening which include the use of exercises such as making a list of what they know about a topic or guessing what will happen (Richards, 2008, p. 9) which was what the students did in the pre-test.

The second section of the pre-test included two listening exercises that required students to listen for specific details. The first exercise was a multiple-choice one based on a recording about a conversation of two people talking about the importance of listening. Half of the students got all of the six answers correct. Two of them got five answers correct and one of them got four answers correct. As a result, most students got question five incorrect in the test because the options given were similar in meaning and the students were not able to distinguish the difference between "share", "debate" and "solve" based on the context of the sentence. The other listening exercise was a short answer one in which students

had to provide the answer based on a conversation between some counselors at a university. Four out of the six students got the five answers correct. One student got four answers correct and one student got three answers correct. However, question number two was confusing since students had to deduct the break time through a simple math operation in order to get the starting time of the meeting and interestingly, in question three, one of the students provided the wrong break time by confusing it with a different detail from the recording. This showed that students were able to use cognitive strategies which helped them analyze, synthesize or transform the information provided on the learning materials (Oxford, 1990, p.5) and therefore, to be able to make their own conclusion based on what they listened to.

Figure 4 below shows the overall score obtained by students on the pre-test. As can be seen, all of the students' final scores were above sixty, which shows that the pre-test was challenging enough for some of the students. Therefore, it was possible for the researchers to identify some possible weaknesses and strengths of the use of these listening strategies among the students who enrolled in the course.



*Figure 4.* Students' Pre-test Scores  
n=6

## Instructional Instruments

### *Predicting*

For three weeks, students did a listening exercise that required them to predict information of some sort related to the topic being studied in class during that week. After completing the exercise, students were given a short instrument to collect data on the application of this listening strategy (see Appendix K). This instrument had three questions. The first question asked the students about the use of images to prediction information from a video or recording. Figure 5 below shows the answers provided by the students during the three weeks of teaching the listening strategy of predicting. As can be seen, for the first week, the majority of students responded somewhat, but during weeks two and three, most of the students were able to use the images shown to them before listening to the audio or video in order to predict information.

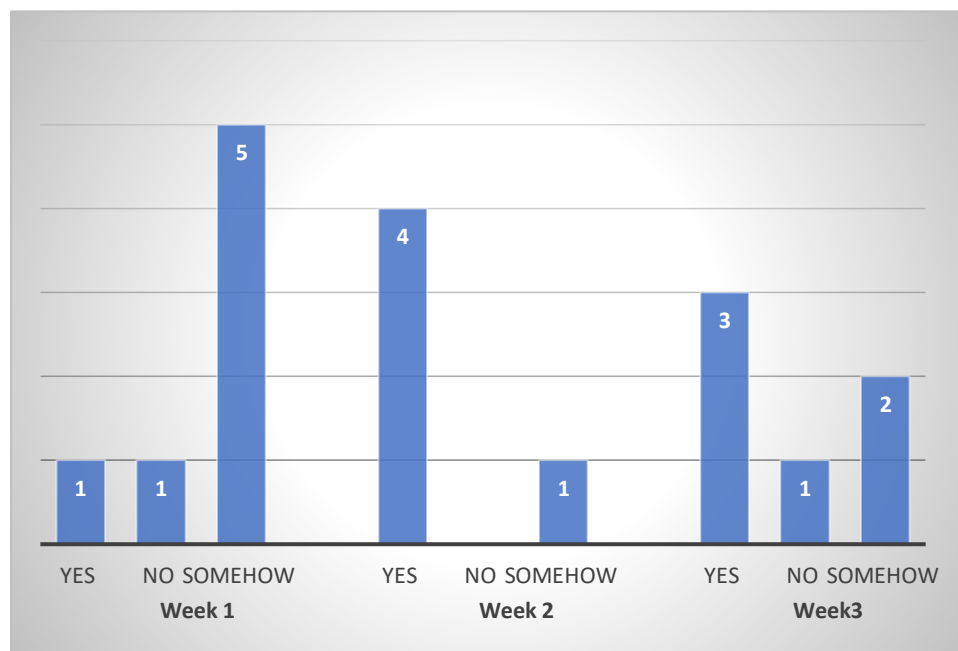
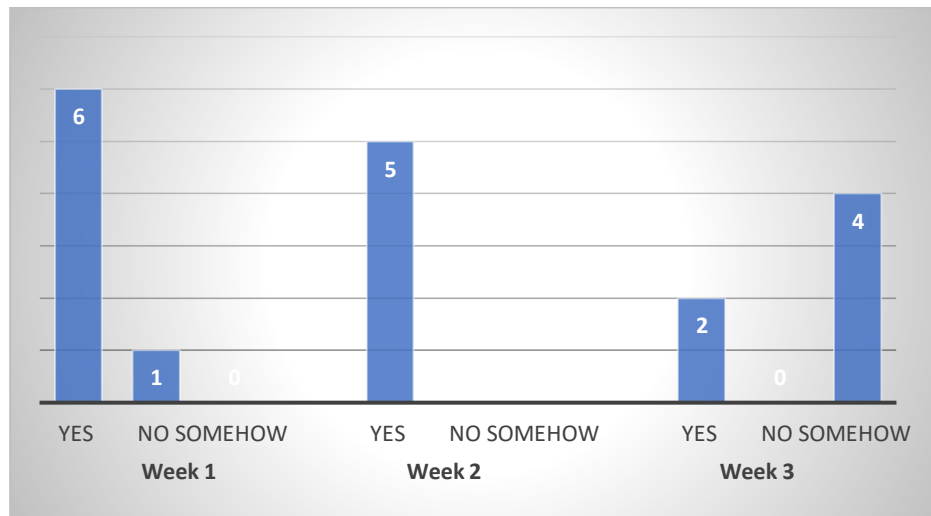


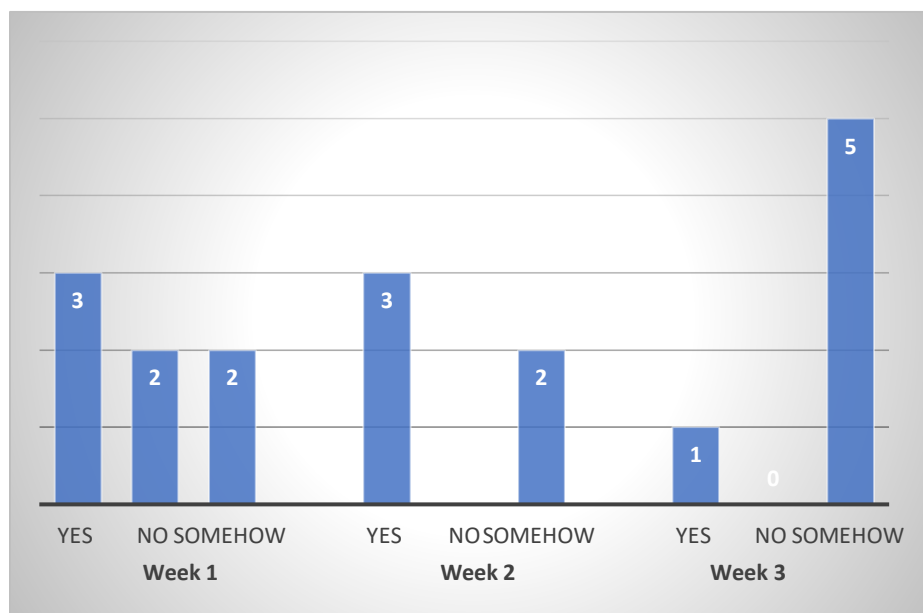
Figure 5. Use of Images to Predict Information

Question Number Two asked students if their previous knowledge on the topic (related to CAIT) helped them to understand the video or audio better. Figure 6 below shows that for weeks one and two, most of the students were able to rely on their previous knowledge of the topic to have a better understanding of the audio or video. However, during week three, the students reported that they somewhat used their previous knowledge in the class. This might be due to the level of difficult of the content of that specific week.



*Figure 6. Previous Knowledge Usage*

Finally, Question Three asked students if after listening to the audio or the video, the information that they predicted was confirmed. As can be seen in Figure 7 below, most of the students considered that their predictions were to a certain extent confirmed in weeks one and two; however, for week three, most students stated that their predictions were somewhat confirmed. This might be due to the level of difficulty of the content studied during that specific week.



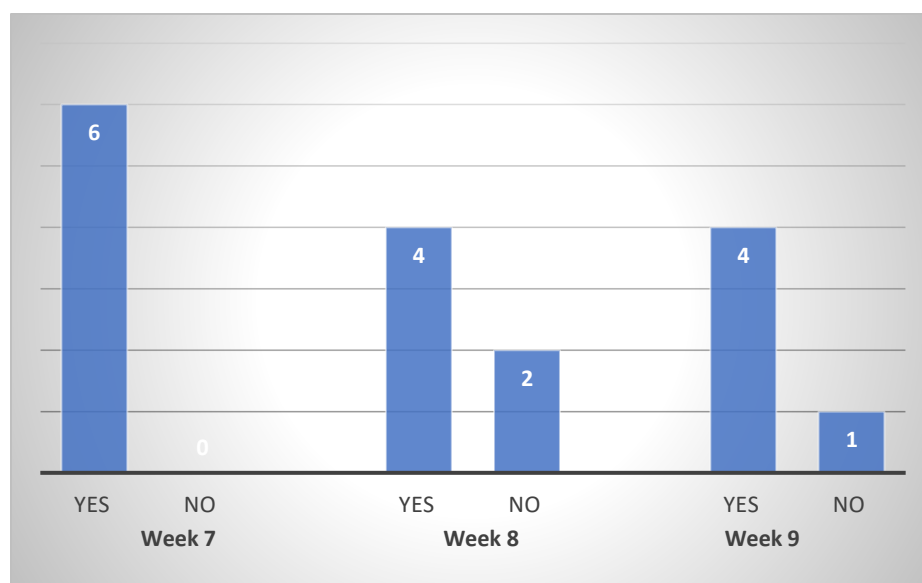
*Figure 7. Prediction Accuracy*

However, in general, it is possible to state that the students were able to comprehend the input received in the exercises and apply the predicting listening strategy that would enhance their comprehension of the recording. As Ellis (1999) explains “with the help of contextual and extralinguistic clues” (p. 273), students were able to connect all the information provided in the text and therefore, to use learning strategies to help them comprehend better what they listen to. In addition, the use of cognitive strategies includes both processing the information and doing something with it and in this particular learning scenario, predicting information.

At this point of the research study, the results obtained during those weeks of teaching the listening strategies varied due to students’ irregular class attendance.

### *Listening for Specific Details*

During weeks 7, 8 and 9 of the *Let's Do CAIT Business!* course, the students were taught about the listening strategy that involves listening for details. However, it is important to point out that at this point of the course, two students dropped out; therefore, some of the results varied. The researchers developed an activity in each class as a pre-task that required students to apply this specific listening strategy. After completing the exercise, students were given the instrument to collect data (see Appendix K). This instrument consisted of two questions. The first one asked students if they read the questions or exercise(s) before listening to the recording or video. It is important to clarify that during the first week, we did not ask students to read the exercise before listening to the audio. Most of them did it on their own. As can be seen in Figure 8 below, most of the students did read the exercise or questions before listening during the three weeks.



*Figure 8. Pre-Reading Questions*



As a result, it is possible to highlight the fact that students were able to apply a listening strategy, and as Oxford (1990) explains there are many factors that may affect the choice of strategies by learners such as the degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, learning style, motivation level and purpose for learning the language (p. 13). This showed that students at that point started to increase their degree of awareness of applying the listening strategies.

The second question provided students with some statements describing the use of listening strategies during the three weeks, and they had to select the ones that they applied during the exercise (see Appendix K). During the three weeks, most of the students stated that it helped them to read the questions before listening to the recording, that they answered the questions at the same time as they were listening, and that they preferred taking notes while listening and then writing the complete answer. None of the students provided a different option in the “other” space provided in the instructional instrument.

Generally, this showed that students drew on the use of learning strategies (Richards, 2008, p.9) to help them to comprehend better what they listen to. In addition, there are many factors that influence the choice that a learner makes when employing a learning strategy such as the degree of awareness of the existence of these types of learning strategies, the learners’ stage of learning, the task requirements, their own learning style, motivation level and purpose for learning the language (Oxford, 1990, p. 13). Therefore, each of the learners made their choices based on their raising degree of awareness regarding the use of the listening strategies.

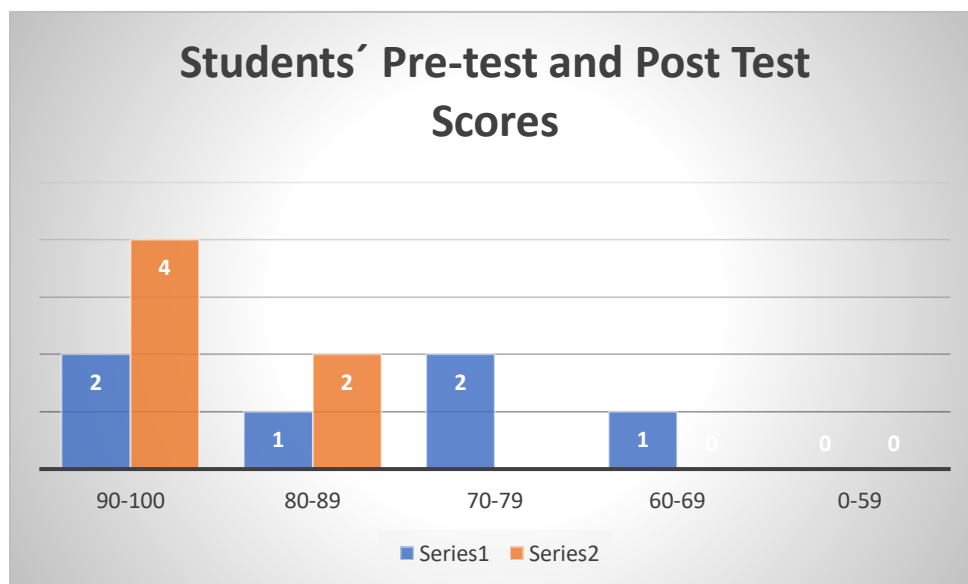
### *Post Test*

This last data collection instrument was answered by six students. This test also consisted of two parts (see Appendix L). The first one consisted of predicting exercises and the second to listening for details. The predicting section had two exercises. The first one about predicting what the audio or video was about based on some pictures. Students were required to write at least four different predictions. Only one student was able to provide the four predictions and the remaining five students provided only three predictions. Most of their predictions were closely related to the possible correct answers. This audio was about the trade war between the US and China. The pictures showed the flags of the two countries and a picture of a world showing arrows around it representing trading among these countries. It seems that the students were able to make correct predictions since the pictures were clear, and also because of the content of the recording, which was related to their major and therefore, they were able to relate to their prior knowledge. The second exercise required that students write four predictions based on the headline of a news item which read, "Canada's International Trade Challenges". Similarly, as with the first exercise, only one of the students was able to write the four predictions, and the remaining five were able to write three predictions. Most of these predictions were closely related to the correct answers, and half of the students were able to predict some of the specific trade challenges that Canada was facing, such as tax increase or changes in the international trade agreements' conditions.

The second part of the post-test was related to listening for specific details, and it had two exercises. The first one was a multiple-choice exercise with questions based on a conversation involving a person going through customs at the airport. All of the students got all the answers right. It seemed that the content of the audio was easy for them. For the second exercise, students had to listen to an explanation of what a customs broker does, and they had to respond some specific questions. As a result, four out of the six students got all the answers correct, and two students had question Number Three wrong. It seemed that students did not know or remember what the meaning of the word quote was since their answers were not related to the information provided in the quote mentioned in the recording.

#### *Pre-test and Post-test*

Comparing the scores obtained from the pre-test and the scores from the post-test, which were answered by six students, it seemed that students were able to improve their listening skills after the explicit teaching of the listening strategies: predicting and listening for specific details, as can be seen in Figure 9 below. Overall, it suggested that the students were able to apply both listening strategies throughout the course and improve them and; therefore, the students were able to apply predicting and listening for specific details in exercises that contained content related to their major, which made it easier for them to apply these two listening strategies as the post-test results showed since their scores improved. The use of ESP related content seemed to help even more students in order to obtain a higher score in the post-test.



*Figure 9.* Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

$n=6$

## **Conclusions**

Having finished the course and its corresponding research study process, the researchers found useful insights that are summarized as follows. First, students were able to apply the use of direct learning strategies, specifically the use of cognitive strategies during the listening exercises developed throughout the course. Second, students became aware of the use of learning strategies and how they can help them comprehend better what they listen to. Third, students chose using different learning strategies based on a variety of factors such as degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, their learning style, motivation level and purpose for learning the language. In addition, some learners were more inclined to use the learning strategies more than other students based on all of the factors previously described. Additionally, students were able to improve their listening skills and therefore, the teaching of explicit listening strategies increased their awareness on how they could improve their own language skills by relying on a variety of learning strategies specifically in this case to improve their listening skills. Moreover, students were able to identify their personal choices to deal with the listening skill using learning strategies and how these can be used to their advantage in order to become more independent learners in charge of their own language learning process. Besides, the explicit teaching of these two listening strategies (predicting and listening for details) showed an effect on the improvement of the students listening skills as showed in the results of the pre-test and post-test. Finally, it seemed that the listening for specific details strategy was

the most helpful for the CAIT students since all six students got more correct answers on both the pre-test and the post-test.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations for future student teachers and researchers are the following:

- To select a group of students as homogeneous as possible in terms of the English proficiency level with the purpose of not interfering with more advanced students and achieving objectives more easily.
- To design instruments for collecting data for the research by using the same item format and content in all of them in order not to affect validity and reliability in the results.
- To consider including the explicit teaching of more listening strategies in order to help students in different aspects of their listening skills based on their language needs in further research on learning strategies.
- To apply the teaching of explicit listening strategies to a larger group of students so that they can take advantage of the use of these listening strategies and apply them in their future CAIT related job tasks.
- To look for more experts and stakeholders on the CAIT field that can lead the student teachers to select appropriate topics, texts and language according to students' needs and up to date.

### **Limitations**

During the development of this research study, there were three factors that affected its application. The first one was the limited time to collect more data for the research because of the length of the course. Due to this, the researchers had to eliminate the third listening strategy of note taking, from the original research plan. In addition, there was a methodological flaw since the pre-test did not include content related to the students' major which made it not ESP oriented. At the time, the researchers made the decision of not including such Customs Administration and International Trade content since some of the students did not take the diagnostic test at the beginning of the enrollment process, and the researchers found out that some of the students who enrolled in the course had not taken any courses of the major itself, so the pre-test was more focused on the use of these listening strategies rather than on the ESP content. The second factor was the students' irregular class attendance, which limited the data collection during the research and finally, having a mixed level group of students made difficult for researchers to apply a pre-test with content related to the Customs Administration and Internal Trade field since they did not know the students English level because the students enrolled in the course after the course had already started.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A



University of Costa Rica  
PF-0309 Course Design  
Students: S.Jiménez, T.Montero & R.Ruiz  
I Semester, 2019



### Needs Analysis

The following questionnaire is intended to collect information for the Practicum Design course addressed to students of Customs Administration and International Trade of the University of Costa Rica. This project is part of the Master's Program in English Teaching as a Foreign Language. The information collected will be strictly confidential. Thus, please answer as sincerely as possible. Completing this questionnaire will take you approximately 20 minutes.

#### Part A. Personal Information

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B. Previous Language Knowledge.** Respond to the following questions or statements (You can choose more than one option)\*

a) Have you studied English before?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (select from the options below) No \_\_\_\_\_ (go to Section C)

b) Have you ever taken an English course?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ for how long? \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

c) Have you received private tutorials?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

d) Have you studied with a self-learning program?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

e) Have you learned English informally? (With friends, in trips, exchange programs, etc.)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

f) Have you taken regular English classes at a public high school?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

g) Have you studied at a bilingual, private or technical high school?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

### Part C. English Usage

1. In order of importance, number the activities that require you to use English at your workplace (use numbers from 1-10 in which 1 is the most relevant and 10 is the least important).

\_\_\_\_\_ Write e-mails.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take phone calls.

\_\_\_\_\_ Talk to clients through video calls.

\_\_\_\_\_ Record information in different systems.

\_\_\_\_\_ Read and interpret the information written in different documents.

\_\_\_\_\_ Write documents such as emails, order, invoices, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check merchandise.

\_\_\_\_\_ Negotiate with foreigners.

\_\_\_\_\_ Give information to people who speak English in a written or oral form.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check contracts.

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

### Part D. Language Skills

This section is designed to collect information about your English language skills at your workplace. Please read each item and mark with an X the option that applies for you.

#### D.1 Reading

	Always	Many times	Few times	Never
I can read documents in English at my workplace without using the dictionary very frequently.				
I can find the main idea of documents in English at my workplace.				
I can find specific information in a text in English.				
I can find out the meaning of an unknown word in English using the context of the reading.				

I can identify the different parts of a text in English (introduction, body, and conclusion.)				
I can perceive the purpose of an author in a text in English.				

## D.2 Writing

	Always	Many times	Few times	Never
I can write words in English with correct spelling.				
I can use English punctuation correctly.				
I can write sentences in English correctly.				
I use punctuation correctly in my pieces of writing.				
I can clearly express what I want to say in a piece of writing.				

## D.3 Auditory Communication

	Always	Many times	Few times	Never
I can understand oral instructions in English.				
I can understand the main ideas of an oral presentation in English.				
I can understand videos in English using the images as an aid.				

I have difficulty understanding oral English when:

	Always	Many times	Few times	Never
People talk very fast.				
People talk with a very soft tone of voice.				
People have a particular accent.				
People interact at the same time (more than one person is talking).				
There are interruptions (external sounds, voices, noise, other).				

## D.4 Oral Communication

	Always	Many times	Few times	Never
I can participate in an English conversation about topics related to my profession.				

I can accurately pronounce English vocabulary related to my profession.				
I can perceive my mistakes when speaking in English with clients.				
I can perceive other people's mistakes when speaking in English.				

### Part E. Abilities I want to improve

Read the following statements. Mark with an ( X ) every statement that reflects skills that you want to perform better at your workplace.

1. Pronouncing vocabulary related to my profession \_\_\_\_\_
2. Giving oral presentations in English \_\_\_\_\_
3. Participating spontaneously in conversations in English related to my profession \_\_\_\_\_
4. Asking questions in English addressed to an expert \_\_\_\_\_
5. Writing texts related to my profession in English \_\_\_\_\_
6. Reading texts related to my profession in English \_\_\_\_\_
7. Listening to lectures related to my profession in English \_\_\_\_\_

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

### Part F. Learning Preferences

Read each item and complete it according to your opinion.

1. I think a class is enjoyable when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. I think a class is useful when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. I learn better when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your time!*

## Appendix B



University of Costa Rica

PF-0309 Course Design

Students: S.Jiménez, T.Montero & R.Ruiz

I Semester, 2019



### Follow-up Questionnaire

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#### Cuestionario de Seguimiento

Estimado estudiante: La siguiente entrevista tiene como objetivo darnos una mejor visión y retroalimentación para elaborar el curso basado en sus necesidades del uso idioma inglés en su campo de estudio y a nivel laboral. La información brindada será única y exclusivamente para ayudarnos a diseñar el curso y darles el enfoque según sus necesidades. Para lograr dicho objetivo le agradeceríamos responda las siguientes preguntas.

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**Indicaciones:** Responda a las siguientes preguntas a la entrevistadora de la forma más clara y completa posible.

1. ¿En la actualidad, está usted trabajando?

( ) Sí            ( ) No

Si la respuesta es negativa, pase a la sección.

1.     ¿Cuál es su lugar de trabajo?

2.     ¿Qué puesto(s) desempeña?

3.     ¿Qué labores debe realizar utilizando el idioma inglés?

4.     ¿Cuál es la frecuencia con que utiliza el idioma inglés? Estime un aproximado semanal.

5. ¿Cuáles destrezas emplea más en su trabajo en el idioma inglés? Indique de uno a cuatro de acuerdo a su nivel de relevancia.

- a. ( ) Lectura
- b. ( ) Escritura
- c. ( ) Escucha
- d. ( ) Habla

6. ¿Cuáles son sus preferencias de aprendizaje y en qué áreas le gustaría mejorar según su necesidad del Idioma inglés como estudiante o a nivel laboral?

7. ¿Cuáles áreas o temas le gustaría se tomen en cuenta en el curso para mejorar su nivel según sus necesidades profesionales o laborales?

8. ¿Cuáles recomendaciones nos puede dar para que tomemos en cuenta a la hora de diseñar el curso tomando en cuenta sus necesidades, sus preferencias y sus debilidades de conocimiento del Idioma según sus necesidades?

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¡Gracias por su valiosa colaboración!





University of Costa Rica

Master's Program in TEFL

Course: PF-0309 Course Design

Instructors: S. Jimenez, T. Montero & R. Ruiz.

I Semester, 2019



## Appendix C

### Diagnostic Test for Customs Administration and International Trade

Allotted time: 120 minutes

Total of Points: 75

Obtained Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Student's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### General Instructions

1. Read all the exam instructions carefully.
2. Your exam consists of 8 pages.
3. Use only black or blue ink to complete it.
4. The use of electronic devices or dictionary is not allowed during the exam.
5. Don't forget to write your full name.
6. Doubts regarding the test may be clarified at any point.
7. To correct the test, you may either cross out errors or use a correction pen.

## I. Listening (15 points)

- A. Listen to the audio and filling in the piece of news with the missing words. You will listen to the recording three times. Spelling will not be penalized. (10 points, 1 point each correct answer).

Adapted from: <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1803/180325-trade-war.html>

The world is waiting to see if a trade war **(1) breaks** out between the USA and China. Stock markets in Asia did badly in Friday's trading because investors are worried about U.S. President Donald Trump's plans to hit Chinese companies with trade tariffs. A tariff is a tax a country puts on goods and services coming in from other countries. President Trump has warned China he will issue tariffs on up to \$60 billion of Chinese **(2) \_\_\_\_\_**. China said it would issue its own tariffs in reply to Mr Trump. Tokyo's Nikkei share **(3) \_\_\_\_\_** fell by more than 4 per cent on Friday, Shanghai's market was down more than 3 per cent, and stocks and **(4) \_\_\_\_\_** in Seoul fell by 3 per cent. There was also a fall on New York's Wall Street stock **(5) \_\_\_\_\_**.

Experts on world trade are worried that the import tariffs could be the start of a global trade war. Trade researcher Robert Carnell said: "If the tariffs go **(6) \_\_\_\_\_** as planned, then we believe China will retaliate. It is impossible to imagine that they cannot. And then we expect the U.S. to **(7) \_\_\_\_\_** further. This can turn ugly on a global scale very quickly." President Trump says he wants to **(8) \_\_\_\_\_** U.S. workers and companies. Mr Trump is not happy with the trade **(9) \_\_\_\_\_** between the USA and China. Experts believe that the USA buys \$385 billion more goods from China than China buys from the USA. Trump wants to try and **(10) \_\_\_\_\_** this imbalance by at least \$100 billion with his **(11) \_\_\_\_\_**.

B. Listen to the audio on “Global Trade”. Answer the questions below. Circle the letter that stands for the correct answer. You will listen to the recording twice (5 points, 1 point each correct answer).

Adapted from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8GxX9uTEng>

1. What organizations have encouraged free trade among nations?
  - a. World Bank and Amazon
  - b. World Bank and the World Trade Organization
  - c. World Trade Organization and Alibaba
  
2. Which business tool has been accepted as a business tool in the last decade?
  - a. E-mail
  - b. Blogs
  - c. Internet
  
3. In what other way can people use technology to make trades?
  - a. Write an email
  - b. Make constant phone calls
  - c. Use GPS to track their shipments
  
4. Which country has tripled the number of annual exports from 2005 to 2015?
  - a. USA
  - b. China
  - c. Brazil
  
5. What are the global value chains? They refer to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the costs of shipments
  - b. all the activities involved to bring a product to market
  - c. the cost of all the activities to export a product to another country

## II. Reading (12 points).

Read the following text and answer the exercises provided below.

### ***Why Economists Are Worried About International Trade***

**By N. Gregory Mankiw**

Feb. 16, 2018

When President Trump imposed tariffs on imported solar panels and washing machines, I was reminded of a line from George Orwell: “We have now sunk to a depth at which the restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.”

The place to start is 18th-century Scotland. Adam Smith’s book “An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations” is often credited as the beginning of economics. The case for free trade is one of its major themes.

Smith argued that trade among nations is like trade among people. No one feels compelled to sew his own clothes and grow his own food simply to keep busy. Instead, we find employment doing what we do best and rely on other people for most goods and services. Similarly, nations should specialize in producing what they do best and freely trade with other nations to satisfy their consumption needs.

This argument was expanded by David Ricardo in the 19th century. Ricardo addressed the question: What if one nation does everything better than another? His answer was that trade depends on comparative advantage — how good a nation is at producing one thing relative to how good it is at producing another.

Ricardo used England and Portugal as an example. Even if Portugal was better than England at producing both wine and cloth, if Portugal had a larger advantage in wine production, Portugal should export wine and import cloth. Both nations would end up **better off**.

The same principle applies to people. Given his athletic prowess, Roger Federer may be able to mow his lawn faster than anyone else. But that does not mean he should mow his own lawn. The advantage he has playing tennis is far greater than he has mowing lawns. So, according to Ricardo (and common sense), Mr. Federer should hire a lawn service and spend more time on the court.

By the way, Ricardo was not merely a theorist. He was also a successful stock trader and a member of Parliament. During his political career, he fought for free trade, notably, by opposing the Corn Laws, which imposed **tariffs** on grain imports.

- More recently, economists have emphasized how trade affects productivity. In a model **pioneered** by my Harvard colleague Marc Melitz, when a nation opens up to international trade, the most productive firms expand their markets, while the least productive are forced out by increased competition. As resources move from the least to the most productive firms, overall productivity rises.

A skeptic might say that all this is just theory. Where's the evidence?

One approach to answering this question is to examine whether countries that are open to trade enjoy greater prosperity. In a 1995 paper, the economists Jeffrey D. Sachs and Andrew Warner studied a large sample of nations and found that open economies grew significantly faster than closed ones.

A second approach is to look at what happens when closed economies remove their trade restrictions. Again, **free trade fares** well. Throughout history, when nations have opened themselves up to the world economy, the typical result has been an increase in their growth rates. This occurred in Japan in the 1850s, South Korea in the 1960s and Vietnam in the 1990s.

These results, while suggestive, come with a caveat. Trade restrictions often accompany other government policies that interfere with markets. Perhaps these other policies, rather than trade restrictions, impede growth.

Adapted from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/16/business/trump-economists-trade-tariffs.html>

1. What is the main idea of the news report? (1 point).
  - a) We must rely on other people for goods and services
  - b) Trade restrictions impede growth
  - c) Least productive countries are affected by the productive ones.
  
2. Find a synonym in the reading for each of the words in parenthesis.
  - a) (Commerce) \_\_\_\_\_ of wine between Sicily and France has increased both countries income.
  - b) Dr. Kors (developed) \_\_\_\_\_ on the issue surrounding pineapple exports.
  - c) Countries that hope to produce many good usually (frustrate) \_\_\_\_\_ with the well-being of international trade.
  - d) Custom agent's (job) \_\_\_\_\_ consists of preventing the flow of illegal products through international borders.
  - e) Growth rates usually take place when Belgium decides to (eliminate) \_\_\_\_\_ regulation laws.
  - f) In this way, countries are propelled to (boost) \_\_\_\_\_ their overall economy.

3. Choose the option that represents a synonym for the bolded words in the text based on the context.

The meaning of the expression **better off** probably is

- a) in a preferable position
- b) performing better than someone else
- c) improving rapidly

The meaning of the expression **tariffs** probably is

- a) increasing level
- b) political implications
- c) tax or duty to be paid

The meaning of the expression **pioneered** probably is

- a) directed
- b) started
- c) be the first to

The meaning of the expression **free trade fares** probably is

- a) exchange expense
- b) unpaid exchange tariff
- c) paid exchange expense

4. As a conclusion from the article, what is the main problem with trade restrictions? (1 point).

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### III. Writing (24 points)

Read the following job description. Write an email applying to the job by including the following:

- personal information (name, last name, address, phone number, email)
- education (degrees and courses)
- working experience (internships are acceptable)
- main tasks in your last job (mention at least 5)
- soft and hard skills (mention at least 3 of each).

<b>Job Title:</b> Logistics Manager	<b>Department:</b> Logistics
<b>Classification:</b> Exempt/Salary	<b>Reports to:</b> Logistics Director
<p><b>Job Summary:</b> Responsible for management of company logistics including shipping of finished product to customer and company storage facilities globally, receipt of purchased products internationally, and efficient movement of products internally.</p>	
<p><b>Job Duties:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for shipping to warehouses located in Belgium, Hong Kong and China.</li> <li>Keep a running account of the foreign markets.</li> <li>Communicate on a regular basis (via phone conference, email or phone) with foreign sales offices to address any priority products or shipments.</li> <li>Negotiate good pricing for quality products.</li> <li>Maintain sanitary and safe work environment.</li> <li>Examine documents, materials, and products and monitor work processes to assess completeness, accuracy and conformance to standards and specifications.</li> <li>Periodically review inventory needs.</li> <li>Perform all other duties as assigned by Manager and/or designee.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Job Qualifications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A bachelor's degree in Customs Administration and International Trade or equivalent.</li> <li>Minimum of three (3) years of experience is desired.</li> <li>High Degree of accuracy and attention to detail is required</li> <li>Strong organizational and work management skills required.</li> <li>Excellent written, verbal, communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>Strong customer focus, problem-solving, and analytical capabilities are a must</li> <li>Extensive experience of international shipping documentation.</li> <li>Extensive knowledge of merchandise and goods classification</li> <li>Broad knowledge of import/export Costa Rica regulations</li> </ul>	

- Extensive knowledge of INCOTERMS
- Significant computer experience including MS Office products and other systems.
- Demonstrates ability to analyze and interpret regulations and explain information appropriately.

Candidates can send their resume to Linda Cyrus at [linda.cyrus@intercomex.com](mailto:linda.cyrus@intercomex.com)

Taken and adapted from: <https://www.indeed.com/q-Customs-Broker-jobs.html?vjk=bfdaeea74ba1e5a9>

Email Template

TITLE \*

Required

☐ Personal ☐ Shared

SUB

**B**

*I*

U

**A**

**T**

Add attachment

Cancel

Save



### Writing rubric

Approximate English level student seems to be: \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Accomplished	Competent	Developing	Needs Improvement
<b>Task completion</b>	The student completes the task satisfactorily. The email resembles a formal one with all its main parts. The student follows all instructions provided.	The student completes the task mostly satisfactorily. The email resembles a formal one with most of its main parts.  The student follows most of the instructions provided.	The student completes the task somewhat satisfactorily. The email resembles a formal one missing some of its main parts. The student follows somewhat the instructions provided.	The student does not complete the task satisfactorily. The email resembles a formal one missing most of its main parts. The student does not follow the instructions provided.
<b>Organization</b>	The organization of the email is excellent. There is a proper subject line, a greeting, clearly stated purpose, details, closing and farewell. The email included the 12 required sentences.	The organization of the email is good. There are one or two elements missing. The email included between 10 to 11 sentences.	The organization of the email is somewhat adequate. There are three elements missing. The email included between 8 to 10 sentences.	The organization of the email is incomplete. There are more than four elements missing. The email included less than 8 sentences.
<b>Content</b>	Enough information given to convey the purpose of the email.	Almost enough information given to convey the purpose of the email.	Somewhat enough information given to convey the purpose of the email.	Not enough information given to convey the purpose of the email.
<b>Development of ideas</b>	All of the ideas were presented smoothly and coherently. The student uses transition words to make a proper transition between the ideas presented.	Some of the ideas were presented smoothly and coherently. The student uses some transition words to make a proper transition between the ideas presented.	Few of the ideas were presented smoothly and coherently. The student uses less than three transition words to make a proper transition between the ideas presented.	A few of the ideas were presented smoothly and coherently. The student uses one or two transition words to make a proper transition between the ideas presented.
<b>Grammar</b>	Student had minor grammar mistakes. There were no comprehension problems of the ideas written in the email.	Student had some grammar mistakes, but they did not affect the ideas' comprehension written in the email.	Student had great amount of grammar mistakes that limited the clarity of ideas' comprehension written in the email	Student had significant grammar mistakes that affected understanding the ideas written in the email.
<b>Punctuation</b>	Student had minor punctuation mistakes (1 or 2).	Student had some punctuation mistakes (3 to 5).	Student had great amount of punctuation mistakes. (6 to 8).	Student had significant punctuation mistakes. More than 8.

Accomplished (4)	Competent (3)	Developing (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
The student's written performance is accurate in this category. He/she demonstrates a solid development of the required aspect. She/he manages to skip any difficulties in developing the message. The student's written performance is quite consistent and shows plenty of preparation from the student.	The student's written performance is nearly accurate in this category. He/she demonstrates a regular development of the required aspect. She/he manages to overcome most difficulties developing the message. The student's written performance is consistent and shows fair preparation from the student.	The student's written performance is somewhat accurate in this category. He/she manages to overcome some difficulties in developing the message. The student's written performance lack consistency and shows some preparation from the student.	The student's written performance lacks accuracy in this category. The required aspect lacks development. She/he has a lot of difficulties developing the message. The student's written performance shows minimal consistency and shows little preparation from the student.

#### IV. Speaking (24 points)

Work in pairs and choose two of the following situations in order to evaluate your oral performance in the target language. Each student takes one of the roles.

##### Situation#1: At the airport

**Student A:** You are a customs agent and you have to inform and explain to a tourist the custom procedures and regulations in Costa Rica.

**Student B:** You are a tourist in Costa Rica and you go to talk to a customs agent at the airport looking for information about the customs procedures and regulations of the country.

##### Situation #2: Customs Agent - Inquiring information

**Student A:** You are an experienced customs agent in a company in Costa Rica. A person from the US is calling you to inquire about the importation process to Costa Rica. Explain

to the importer the steps that she/he has to follow in order to import their merchandise to the country.

**Student B:** You want to import some merchandise to Costa Rica and you do not know anything about the process of doing it. Talk to a customs agent about this process. Ask at least three questions.

### **Situation #3: Talking to clients**

**Student A:** There is a problem with the origin certificate that a customer sent you of some products that he wants to import to Costa Rica (the description of the product does not include quantity and there is no invoice number registered). Explain to the customer the problems with it and what you need him to do to solve it.

**Student B:** You are a customer and someone from the customs agency is calling to tell you about a problem with the certificate of origin that you sent in an email. Ask all the necessary questions.

### **Situation #4: Interpreting customs terms**

**Student A:** You are a businessman wants to import some merchandise to Costa Rica. You do not understand anything regarding Costa Rica's customs regulations, laws or policies. Ask for help to a customs agent at a logistics company.

**Student B:** A businessman from South Africa wants to import merchandise to Costa Rica. He has been reading some documents about it, but he does not understand the following terms. Explain to him what they are about. Be as clear as possible.

Partida Arancelaria

Arancel de Aduanas

Certificado de Importación Temporal

Registro de Exportador

## Speaking Rubric

**Approximate English level student seems to be:** \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Accomplished	Competent	Developing	Needs Improvement
<b>Task completion</b>	Student follows the indications provided and completed the task satisfactorily.	Student follows most of the indications provided and completed the task mostly satisfactorily.	Student follows some of the indications provided and completed the task somewhat satisfactorily.	Student follows few of the indications provided and did not complete the task satisfactorily.
<b>Knowledge of content</b>	Student shows a high level of knowledge of the topics discussed during the conversation.	Student shows a proper level of knowledge of the topics discussed during the conversation.	Student shows an adequate level of knowledge of the topics discussed during the conversation.	Student shows a low level of knowledge of the topics discussed during the conversation.
<b>Structures</b>	Student shows proper command of conjugation of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, subject deletion and word order. No major mistakes were made.	Student shows adequate command of conjugation of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, subject deletion and word order. Few mistakes were made.	Student shows somewhat command of conjugation of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, subject deletion and word order. Some mistakes were made.	Student does not show command of conjugation of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, subject deletion and word order. Lots of mistakes were made.
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Student shows proper word choice, use of phrases and collocations. The placement of words seems accurate and natural.	Student shows adequate word choice, use of phrases and collocations. The placement of words seems adequate and quiet natural.	Student shows somewhat proper word choice, use of phrases and collocations. The placement of words seems mostly adequate and somewhat natural.	Student shows inadequate word choice, use of phrases and collocations. The placement of words seems forced and not natural.
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Student shows proper pronunciation of vowel and consonant sounds as well as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and articulation.	Student shows adequate pronunciation of vowel and consonant sounds as well as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and articulation.	Student shows a somewhat proper pronunciation of vowel and consonant sounds as well as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and articulation.	Student shows a deficient pronunciation of vowel and consonant sounds as well as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, rhythm and articulation.
<b>Fluency</b>	Student shows fluency while communicating with little or no	Student shows some fluency while communicating with little hesitation or	Student shows somewhat fluency while communicating with some hesitation or	Student shows little fluency while communicating with a lot of hesitation or

	hesitation or repetition of words or ideas.	repetition of words or ideas.	repetition of words or ideas.	repetition of words or ideas.
<b>Accomplished (4)</b>	<b>Competent (3)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>		<b>Needs Improvement (1)</b>
The student's oral performance is accurate in this category. He/she demonstrates a solid development of the required aspect. She/he manages to skip any difficulties in developing the message. The student's written performance is quite consistent and shows plenty of preparation from the student.	The student's oral performance is nearly accurate in this category. He/she demonstrates a regular development of the required aspect. She/he manages to overcome most difficulties developing the message. The student's written performance is consistent and shows fair preparation from the student.	The student's oral performance is somewhat accurate in this category. He/she manages to overcome some difficulties in developing the message. The student's written performance lack consistency and shows some preparation from the student.		The student's oral performance lacks accuracy in this category. The required aspect lacks development. She/he has a lot of difficulties developing the message. The student's written performance shows minimal consistency and shows little preparation from the student.



University of Costa Rica

Master's Program in TEFL

Course: PF-0309 Course Design

Instructors: S. Jimenez, T. Montero & R. Ruiz.

I Semester, 2019



## Appendix D

### Scales for Assessing Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking in the Diagnostic Test

Level	Descriptors to Assess Listening Skills
High intermediate (12 to 15 points)	Students can understand standard speech spoken at a normal rate and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. They can understand the essentials of lectures and most TV news and current affairs programs and can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.
Intermediate (9 -11 points)	They are able to understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. They can understand the main point of many radio or TV programs on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
Low-Intermediate (6 - 8 points)	They can understand clear, slow, standard speech related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography and employment) and can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.
Beginner (1 –5 points)	Students are able to understand simple, standard speech which is very slow and is carefully articulated and can recognize familiar words and very basic phrases concerning themselves, their family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.

Level	Descriptors to Assess Reading Skills
High intermediate (10 –12 points)	At this level, students can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. They can understand contemporary literary prose and can adapt style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, using appropriate reference-sources selectively.
Intermediate (7 - 9 points)	Students are able to understand factual texts on subjects related to their interests that consist mainly of high frequency every day or job-related language. They can recognize significant points in straightforward newspaper articles on familiar subjects and can understand the description of events feelings and wishes.
Low-Intermediate (4 to 6 points)	Students are able to understand short, simple texts containing high frequency vocabulary and shared international expressions. They can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses and timetables
Beginner (1 - 3 points)	Students can understand very short, simple texts, for example on notices and posters, picking up familiar names and basic phrases one at a time and rereading as required.

Level	Descriptors to Assess Writing Skills
High intermediate (21 to 24 points)	Students are able to write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to their interests. They can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. They can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.
Intermediate (16 to 20 points)	Students at this level can write simple texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence. They can write personal letters describing events, experiences and impressions.
Low-Intermediate (13 to 15 points)	They can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need, linking a series of simple phrases and sentences with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'. They can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something
Beginner (1 to 12 points)	At this level, students can write a short, simple message or postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. They can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.



Level	Descriptors to Assess Speaking Skills
High intermediate (21- 24 points)	<p><b>Spoken interaction</b> Students can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. They are able to take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts and can account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.</p> <p><b>Spoken production</b> They can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples. They can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p>
Intermediate (16 to 20 points)	<p><b>Spoken interaction</b> Students at this level can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling. They can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).</p> <p><b>Spoken Production</b> They can keep going comprehensible in order to describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. They are able to narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe reactions.</p>

<p>Low-Intermediate (13 to 15 points)</p>	<p><b>Spoken Interaction</b> At A2 level, students can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. They can handle very short social exchanges, even though they cannot usually keep the conversation going of their own accord.</p> <p><b>Spoken Production</b> Students are able to use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms family and other people, living conditions, educational background and present or most recent job.</p>
<p>Beginner (1 to 12 points)</p>	<p><b>Spoken Interaction</b> They can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help with formulation. They can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.</p> <p><b>Spoken Production</b> Students at this level can use simple phrases and sentences to describe what they do, where they live and people they know.</p>

**Taken and Adapted from:** St Giles International. (2019). *English Language Descriptors*. Retrieved from: <https://www.stgiles-international.com/student-services/level-descriptors>

## Appendix E



**University of Costa Rica**

**Master's program in TEFL**

**Instructors: S. Jiménez, T. Montero & R. Ruíz**

**Schedule: Wednesdays 4:30 to 7 pm**

**Economics Faculty, Rodrigo Facio Campus, Room 302**



### I. Course Description

The *Let's do CAIT Business!* is an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course that has the aim of providing the Customs Administration and International Trade (CAIT) students at UCR Rodrigo Facio campus the necessary tools in order to enhance their English skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) through a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach at an intermediate level. This class meets two hours and a half per week during the second semester of 2019 with the guidance of three instructors. This course aims to fulfill the students' needs regarding the use of the English language through the implementation of meaningful tasks using authentic materials in order to resemble real-life tasks that the students will carry out in their CAIT-related jobs.

### II. General Objectives

By the end of the course, the CAIT students will be able to:

- properly describe their future jobs, job tasks, company and company information related to CAIT in order to communicate with possible employers and colleagues in their field.

- adequately describe job benefits and future plans at a CAIT job interview in order to communicate with possible employers and colleagues in their field.
- properly make and receive phone calls on CAIT- related topics in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
- effectively carry out a variety of simple everyday tasks related to CAIT topics in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
- adequately use customer service practices on CAIT related job tasks in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
- properly explain the information provided in formal CAIT documents in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
- effectively explain logistics, importation and exportation processes, laws and supply chains on CAIT-related conversations in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.
- adequately write different types of emails to carry out common CAIT tasks in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

### **III. Methodology**

This course has a Task-Based language teaching orientation. This methodology proposes the student as the center of the learning process. Its main objective is to work on student's strengths and communicative competencies. The learning process will be carried out in the most meaningful way for the learners with the development of definite pieces of work (tasks) that will activate and encourage their own real-life experience. Instructors will use authentic materials (everyday real-life materials) in order to familiarize students with real life situations in their jobs as CAIT (Custom Administration and International Trade) professionals. Authentic materials help students acquire useful language for their

future real job tasks. The emphasis is on actions similar to real world work duties. In addition, the course emphasizes the comprehension and production of the English language. The methodology focuses in a step by step learning process around tasks that resemble real life job related situations. The facilitators have the role of experts and companions in the learning process. The learners actively participate and are responsible for their progress. In addition, the application of communication and information technologies will be promoted, and student's motivation is fundamental in the learning process. Some of the specific activities to be carry out in the class are spontaneous written and oral activities, simulations of work situations, role plays, listening exercises (multimedia), games, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, among others.

#### **IV. Assessment**

The learners will demonstrate their communicative abilities through the following evaluative activities:

<b>Assessment Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Classwork	10%
3 Quizzes of 5% each one	15%
3 Oral activities of 5% each one	15%
Partial oral exam	25%
Final oral exam	35%
Total	100%

**a. Classwork**

The use of the English language in class is essential to develop the linguistic skills that will allow the students to interact effectively in different social contexts. Class participation includes not only attendance and punctuality to the sessions, but active interaction in group activities and individual exercises in and out of class (tasks), therefore, a learner who participates actively in the class is the one that asks questions and responds voluntarily. Classwork will be assessed using a rubric which will involve a teacher-student assessment and self-assessment.

**b. Quizzes**

During the course, three quizzes will be carried out that will evaluate writing skills of the students.

**c. Oral Activities**

To be able to advance in the use of the English language, practice and constant interaction are required. Therefore, at least three spontaneous (non-memoristic) oral activities will be carried out in such a way that the student will be able to offer information, describe situations, ask and answer questions, ask for help, explain information, among others.

**c. Partial Oral Exam**

Test that is carried out in the middle of the semester with the aim of identifying areas of improvement for the students in the learning process. This oral partial test aims to assess the students' performance and learning outcomes achievement. The test will be carried out by two of the instructors.

#### **d. Final Oral Exam**

An oral exam will take place at the end of the semester in order to identify the scope of the competences by the students. To carry out this exam, you must have two evaluators who collaborate as a court to carry out the evaluation.

#### **V. Contents**

1. Introducing yourself and others and describe your main job tasks and responsibilities.
2. Describing the company you work for.
3. Talking about job benefits and employment procedures.
4. Talking about future plans at a CAIT job interview.
5. Making and receiving phone calls on CAIT work-related topics.
6. Carryout different CAIT business transactions.
7. Discuss proper customer service practices.
- 8 Reading and explaining formal CAIT documents.
9. Explaining Costa Rica's law, imports and exports CAIT processes to clients.
10. Identifying the main parts of an email and write formal and informal ones on CAIT-related topics.

#### **VI. Bibliography**

Brindley, G. (1994). *Task-centred assessment in language learning: the promise and the challenge*. International Language in Education Conference. Hong Kong.

Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practices*. NY: Pearson Education.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.



University of Costa Rica

M.A. Program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Course: English for Customs and International Trade

Instructors: Jiménez. S, Montero. T & Ruiz. R.



## Appendix F

## Rubric Oral Activities – *Let's do CAIT Business!*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Total of Points: 20      Obtained Points _____      Obtained Percentage _____ %      Grade _____					
Total Percentage 5%					
Criteria	Very Good (90-100)	Good (80-89)	Fair (70-79)	Needs improvement (60-69)	
<b>Vocabulary (5 pts)</b>	(5) Uses most of the studied and/ or varied new vocabulary and expressions correctly according to the context.	(4) Uses many of the studied and/ or new vocabulary and expressions correctly according to the context	(3) Uses some known, simple words and expressions and does not incorporate what has been studied in class.	(2) Uses a few vocabulary to communicate his/her ideas completely. No vocabulary studied in class was used.	
<b>Pronunciation (5 pts)</b>	(5) Pronounces most words correctly and makes very few mistakes. Fluent and with almost no hesitation which does not interfere with communication.	(4) Some pronunciation mistakes present; s/he uses some fillers or repetition. Little hesitation that hinders fluency.	(3) Several pronunciation mistakes present; s/he uses many fillers or repetition. Some hesitation that hinders fluency. There are some pauses.	(2) Many words are mispronounced. Language is mostly produced in chunks; there is much repetition and/or hesitation. There are long unnatural pauses.	
<b>Language use (5 pts)</b>	(5) Language is mostly used accurately. Sentence or question structures are correct.	(4) A few structures are used incorrectly, but ideas are mostly correct and clear.	(3) Many fragmented ideas are present and many language structures are used incorrectly.	(2) Speech is mainly phrases or words. Several language structures are used incorrectly.	
<b>Task Completion (5 pts)</b>	(5) Task requested is completed satisfactorily, showing full command of the competence.	(4) Task is completed, but not satisfactorily. Student does not show full command of the competence.	(3) Student carries out just half of the task that is requested.	(2) Student has much difficulty trying to carry out the task.	(1) The task assessed is evidently under development.

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from: O'Malley, J.M., & Valdez Pierce, L. (1996). *Authentic assessment for English learners*. Addison Wesley Publishing Company.





University of Costa Rica

M.A. Program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Course: English for Customs and International Trade



Instructors: Jiménez. S, Montero. T & Ruiz. R.

## Appendix G

### Course Evaluation – *Let's do CAIT Business!*

Instructions: The following evaluation collects the students' opinions about the development of the course in order to make improvements. The information will be used to evaluate the course. Use a check (✓) to signal your answer.

#### I. Overall organization and materials

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
The organization of the lessons followed a logical order.				
The structure of the lessons is according to the course objectives.				
The contents of the course are related to my future profession tasks.				
The activities perform in class are similar to my future work-related tasks.				
Materials used in class are authentic.				

#### II. Course difficulty

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
The course workload is easy for me.				
The contents of the course are challenging for me according to my English level.				
The course can be more challenging.				

### III. *Class Activities*

	<b>Always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
Class activities are interesting.				
Class activities are attractive.				
Class activities are carefully planned.				

### IV. *Course satisfaction*

	<b>Always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
I feel satisfied with what I have learned so far.				
The course contents and dynamics are enjoyable.				
Lessons are entertaining.				
Contents are useful for my future work tasks.				

*Adapted from:* National University of Sciences & Technology. (2019). Self-Assessment Proforma [Website]. Retrieved from [http://www.nust.edu.pk/pages/Download\\_Details.aspx?DocID=20&category=Self%20Assessment%20Proforma](http://www.nust.edu.pk/pages/Download_Details.aspx?DocID=20&category=Self%20Assessment%20Proforma)

*Thank you for your participation!*



University of Costa Rica

M.A. Program in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Course: CAIT

Instructors: Jiménez. S, Montero. T & Ruiz. R.



## Appendix H

### Student – Instructor Performance Evaluation – *Let's do CAIT Business!*

**Instructor's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: This instrument has been designed to collect information about the performance of your English teachers in order to evaluate this English course. Be as objective as possible.

#### Part I. Instructor's Performance:

##### Instructions:

Choose the option(s) that you consider best describes your teacher's performance in the classroom and write an (X) indicating the frequency in which the teacher performs these actions.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
The instructor _____.				
<b>a.</b> <i>evidences the planning of the class</i>				
<b>b.</b> <i>plans activities related to the course objectives</i>				
<b>c.</b> <i>seems to be prepared to teach every class</i>				
<b>d.</b> <i>teaches learning strategies to improve students' language and communication in the CAIT field</i>				
<b>e.</b> <i>the way of teaching the class is appropriate</i>				
<b>f.</b> <i>models the activities to help you understand better</i>				
<b>g.</b> <i>gives instructions in a clear, friendly like way</i>				

<i><b>h.</b> gives time effectively depending on the activity assigned</i>				
<i><b>i.</b> gives enough time to students to reflect about the tasks and make decisions</i>				
<i><b>j.</b> uses different activities, materials and group dynamics</i>				
<i><b>k.</b> promotes the students' spontaneous participation</i>				
<i><b>l.</b> accepts the students' suggestions to improve the class dynamic</i>				
<i><b>m.</b> motivates the students to actively participate in the classroom</i>				
<i><b>n.</b> creates a positive learning environment</i>				
<i><b>o.</b> provides feedback about the students' performance and how to improve their work</i>				

## Part II. Use of materials of the course

Select the statements that apply to the instructor. Write an (X) inside the parenthesis.

3. The use the instructor gives to the texts, handouts, and materials in class is \_\_\_\_\_. (More than one option is possible).

( ) appropriate. ( ) somehow appropriate ( ) inappropriate

*Thank you for your participation!*

## Appendix I

### Lesson Plans



University of Costa Rica

Master's Program in TEFL

Jiménez S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.

II Semester, 2019



### Unit #1: Let's get into the CAIT Business World!

**Teacher:**

**Unit 1, Lesson Plan #1**

**Assistants:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit Goal:**

By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively describe their professional future CAIT life orally by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with possible employers and coworkers in their field.

**General Objective:**

At the end of the lesson, the students will be able to properly use CAIT vocabulary to formally introduce themselves and describe their company's future job tasks and responsibilities in order to communicate with possible employers and colleagues of the CAIT field.

**Specific Objectives:** At the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize formal vocabulary related to the CAIT job field, in order to orally describe their main future job tasks as CAIT professionals.
2. Use technical CAIT vocabulary and expressions in order to orally interact with CAIT colleagues, or superiors in formal conversations.
3. Interact and orally exchange the necessary personal information in order to introduce themselves to possible employers or colleagues from the CAIT field.
4. Identify and practice common mistakes when pronouncing key CAIT vocabulary when carrying out a conversation with employers or colleagues from the CAIT field.

**Abbreviations:** IN: Instructor, s: student, ss: students, G: group, P: pair, L: listening, S: speaking, W: writing, R: reading UL: Useful Language, CAIT Customs Administration and international Trade

Objectives	Procedures	Macro Skills	Language (vocabulary, expressions, useful language, grammatical or phonetic features)	Strategies	Time
	<b>Introduction to the course:</b> Read and discuss the program Check the chronogram Give specific information: Room Schedule Contact information				25 min

1	<p><b>Schema Activation: Formal Informal greetings.</b></p> <p>Ss will watch a short video about formal vs informal greetings and they will write a check next to the expressions that correspond to formal greetings.</p> <p><b>Video 1 :</b>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrUneJwHKrg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrUneJwHKrg</a></p> <p>Materials: Handout #1 (see Appendix I).</p>	L S R	<p>Simple present/Questions  Welcome to...  Modal auxiliaries:  May  Useful Language:  It is a pleasure to...  May I introduce...  My name is ...  I work for ...  This is Mr., Miss...  Nice to meet you.  Please let me know if...  Here is my business card.  Call me if you have any questions.  Thank you. Here is mine.  I would like you to meet ...  She/he is the...he , she works for... company  They represent...They work for...</p>	<p>Previewing information  Recognizing different levels of formality (formal vs informal language)</p>	10 min
1	<p><b>Pre-task #1: Identify vocabulary related to CAIT professional duties (Going through customs.)</b></p> <p>Ss sit in P and work on a handout with scrambled sentences about a CAIT job situation at the airport. Each P has to agree and organize the word(s) in order to create coherent questions.</p> <p>Materials: Handout #2 (see Appendix I).</p>	R L S W	<p>I think this word goes here.  What do you think?  This word means...  Do you agree?  Do you think this is correct?  I agree/I disagree.  You are right!  Let's put this word here.  Now, put this one here.  Good job!</p>	<p>Key words</p> <p>vocabulary in context</p> <p>Sentence structures</p>	15 min

2	<p><b>Pre-task #2: Practicing a dialogue about a short CAIT Jobs situation.</b></p> <p>The IN models the dialogue to the class, so that Ss listen to the correct pronunciation of key CAIT vocabulary.</p> <p>Ss get in P. Each one receives a handout with a dialogue. Students check key vocabulary that is in boldface, then they take turns in order to play the different roles given in the dialogue.</p> <p>Materials: Handout #3 (see Appendix I).</p>	R L S	<p>Expressions: Now, it is your turn.</p> <p>I'll play the role of...</p> <p>Thanks!</p>	<p>Social skills Interacting Taking turns Exchanging roles</p> <p>Identifying vocabulary</p> <p>Practicing pronunciation &amp; intonation in questions.</p>	15 min
2	<p><b>Pre-task #3: Explaining CAIT jobs and duties</b></p> <p>Ss will watch a video about the different CAIT vocabulary and professional duties.</p> <p>Ss take notes about the INCOTERMS and different CAIT professional job positions and fill in a chart with the vocabulary CAIT professionals use and about their duties. Then, they sit in P and practice the vocabulary. Finally, the teacher will give the feedback to them about their performance.</p>	S R L	<p>.</p> <p>Interaction Look for specific information(details)</p>	Identifying Key vocabulary	20 min



	Materials: video and copies of handout #4 (see Appendix I). Video #2 Link <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqQSfEzUqxo&amp;t=1s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqQSfEzUqxo&amp;t=1s</a>				
3	<b>Main Task: Role play</b> Ss will work in P and will role play a situation provided by the IN. IN goes around the class taking notes of ss mistakes. Then, IN provides a feedback session on those mistakes. Materials: copies of handout #5 (see Appendix I).	R S L	Vocabulary of CAIT (same as previous) UL: Asking for help: Can you...? Could you...? <b>Asking for clarification:</b> What does ... means? What is the meaning of....? Can you repeat that please? So, if I understand you want to...So, what is it that you do? Could you please describe your duties? My duties are... <b>Showing understanding:</b> I see. Ok. Follow-up questions: So, what can we do? So, what do I do now? Asking for information: Can you tell me...? Do you know ...? What is the....?	Interaction skills Vocabulary in context	30 min
4	<b>Post Task: Commonly mispronounced words and troublesome vocabulary.</b> IN will provide ss a worksheet (Handout #6) with key CAIT vocabulary and expressions such as questions and exclamations studied in the class. Ss will read and review key words (cognates) or	R S L	Word order in questions Grammar structures Word stress and intonation	Pronunciation Check word stress and intonation	15 min

	expressions' meaning. Then, the IN provides feedback on the vocabulary and will clarify any doubts from the ss. Materials: Copies of handout #6 (see Appendix I).				
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University of Costa Rica  
 Master's Program in TEFL  
 Jiménez.S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.  
 II Semester, 2019



## Unit #2: Let's do CAIT Business!

**Teacher:** Tatiana Montero

### Unit 2, Lesson Plan #1

**Assistants:** Rebeca R. and Sofía J.

Date: September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Unit Goal:** By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively carry out common CAIT related tasks orally by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

**General Objective:** By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to make and receive phone calls using proper fixed expressions in order to communicate with clients, supervisors or colleagues in the CAIT field.

**Specific Objectives:** The students will be able to:

- Adequately identify expressions used when carrying out CAIT-related business phone call in order to communicate with clients, supervisors and colleagues.
- Properly classify expressions used when carrying out CAIT-related business phone call in order to communicate with clients, supervisors and colleagues.
- Correctly respond to questions in a CAIT-related business phone call in order to communicate with clients, supervisors and colleagues.
- Adequately predict information from a CAIT related audio in order to respond a short questionnaire to demonstrate the application of this listening strategy.
- Properly change basic English expressions into formal business English expressions when carrying out a CAIT-related business phone call in order to communicate with clients, supervisors and colleagues.
- Successfully carry out a CAIT-related business phone call requiring specific information in order to communicate with clients, supervisors and colleagues.

-Adequately correct common mistakes made about word choices, vocabulary or expressions used in a CAIT-related business phone call when communicating with clients, superiors or colleagues.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Macro Skills</b>	<b>Language (vocabulary, expressions, useful language, grammatical or phonetic features)</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Time</b>
1	<b>Schema Activation: Hot Potato</b> Ss are in a circle. IN gives a ball to pass around. When the music is stopped, the Ss with the ball have to tell an expression to be used in a phone call. Material: Ball/Music	S L		Brainstorming	10 mins
2	<b>Pre-task #1: Word Mapping</b> Ss will work in P and they will be given a list of phone calls expressions that they will classified. IN will be available to answer any questions. Later, the exercise will be checked orally with different volunteers providing the answers. Material: Handout #1	R W L S	<b>Useful Language</b> The expression... is used for... To... I can say... I can say.... to.... People say.. when they.... In a phone call, .... is used to...	Classifying information	15 mins
3,4	<b>Pre-task #2: Listening exercise</b> Ss will listen to a conversation regarding a CAIT transaction and respond the questions provided on the handout. Then, Ss will check the answers in P. Lastly, IN will ask volunteers to respond to the questions. Material: Handout #2 <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qK4ziePjpK4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qK4ziePjpK4</a>	L R W	Useful vocabulary: packing slip, bill of lading, commercial invoice, certificate of origin, notification of shipping, bill of entry, import license.  <b>Useful Language</b> In the phone conversation, they mentioned... It was mentioned that...	Listening for comprehension	15 mins

			<p>One of the women said...</p> <p>One of the women mentioned...</p> <p>I agree.</p> <p>I disagree because...</p> <p>That was not mentioned in the conversation.</p>		
2	<p><b>Pre-task #3: Basic phone-call business vocabulary and expressions</b></p> <p>In P, Ss will read the text on handout #3 and answer the questions provided at the end. A group discussion will be carried out after ss respond to the exercise.</p> <p>Material: Handout #3</p>	<p>R</p> <p>S</p> <p>L</p> <p>W</p>	<p><b>Useful Language</b></p> <p>In the text, it is mentioned that....</p> <p>I read that...</p> <p>In a phone call, it is important to...</p> <p>In a CAIT related conversation, we should/shouldn't...</p> <p>During the conversation, it is necessary to...</p> <p>The text explains.....</p> <p>Useful vocabulary: received, require, discuss, contact, ensure, provide itinerary, inform, explain, elaborate, solve, thereafter, agreement, immediately.</p>		15 mins
5	<p><b>Pre-task #4: Changing basic English for formal business English</b></p> <p>Ss watch the video. Then, they get in P and answer the exercise on handout #4. Then, a class discussion will be carried out to discuss the answers.</p> <p>Materials: Handout #4</p>	<p>L</p> <p>S</p> <p>W</p>	<p><b>Useful Language</b></p> <p>It is more formal to say.... than....</p> <p>It is more adequate to say...</p> <p>In a business- related conversation, we can say...</p> <p>A more formal expression is...</p> <p>That is a formal/informal expression in a conversation.</p>		15 mins

	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 2ZDNqtAsbw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 2ZDNqtAsbw</a>		I think it would be better to say...		
6	<b>Main Task: Phone call role play</b> Ss work in P and they will sit down on each other's back. Ss will role play a conversation with a situation given by the IN. They will be required to record specific information (phone numbers, form numbers, document information) in order to complete the task. Then, each couple will present their conversation in front of the class. IN will provide delayed feedback at the end of the activity. Material: Handout #5	S L	Phone call expressions Inquiring information: How much...? How many...? What is the ____ number? How much is the subtotal/total? What is the total weight? What is the invoice number? Where is the merchandise going to? What is the name of the notify party/ seaport of discharge? Where is the final delivery?	Role-playing	30 mins
7	<b>Post Task: Error correction</b> Ss will work in P and they will make changes in an informal conversation in order to make it more formal using the expressions and vocabulary studied in the class. IN will ask a pair of volunteers to role play the conversation. The answers will be discussed by the whole group. Material: Handout #6	R W	<b>Useful Language</b> A more proper form is.... A better business expression is.... A more formal expression is.... This one is not correct/proper because.... In a business call, it is better to say...		15 mins

Abbreviations: IN: instructor, s: student, ss: students, G: group, P: pair, L: listening, S: speaking, W: writing, R: reading UL: Useful Language  
 CAIT: Customs Administration and International Trade



University of Costa Rica  
Master's Program in TEFL  
Jiménez.S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.  
II Semester, 2019



### Unit #3: Let's write about CAIT Business!

**Teacher:** Rebeca Ruiz Díaz

**Unit 3, Lesson Plan #1**

**Assistants:** Sofía Jiménez & Tatiana Montero

**Date:** October 9th, 2019

**Unit Goal:** By the end of the unit, the students will be able to effectively carry out common CAIT business transactions such as explaining information provided in formal CAIT documents and placing and handling orders, explaining Costa Rica's law, importation and exportation CAIT processes and identifying the parts of an email and writing different types of formal and informal emails such as requesting information, follow-up, client satisfaction and complaints orally and in a written form by using appropriate structures and vocabulary in order to communicate with clients and superiors and colleagues in their field.

**General Objective:** At the end of the lesson, the students will be able to properly explain the information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading, AirWay Bill and international invoices in order to communicate with clients, superiors and colleagues in their field.

**Specific Objectives:** The students will be able to:

- Identify relevant vocabulary related to formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices in order to explain the contents of these documents to clients or superiors orally.
- Retrieve key information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices by applying proper scanning and skimming techniques in order to explain the contents of these documents to clients or superiors orally.

- Explain the information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices by using translating techniques in order to explain the contents of these documents to clients or superiors orally.
- Discuss the information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices in order to explain the contents of these documents to clients or superiors orally.
- Identify common mistakes made when translating the information provided in formal CAIT documents such as certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices when explaining the contents of these documents to clients or superiors orally.

Objectives	Procedures	Macro Skills	Language (vocabulary, expressions, useful language, grammatical or phonetic features)	Strategies	Time
1	<b>Schema Activation: CAIT documents</b> Ss classify the documents according to its correct name. (Handout #1).  Materials: Handout #1	R S	CAIT Documents: Certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices.  UL: This is a _____. I think/believe this is a _____. What do you think is this?	Scanning	10 mins
1	<b>Pre-task #1: Vocabulary related to CAIT Documents</b> Ss get in G of 3. Ss receive an envelope with different pieces of information that are part of certificates of origin, international invoices and bills of lading. Ss match information to the document (see Handout #2). T shows the proper answer on the board and responds any questions from the ss.	R S L	CAIT Documents: Certificate of origin, bill of lading and international invoices.  UL: I think this one goes here. The _____ goes here/there. Do you agree? What do you think? I agree/I disagree. I think the _____ goes here on the top/bottom/on the left/right.	Scanning	15 mins



	Materials: Handout #2 and envelopes.				
2	<p><b>Pre-task #2: Reading CAIT documents</b></p> <p>Ss work in P. Each P receives a copy of a CAIT document (bill of lading, international invoice or certificate of origin) and they respond to some questions (Handout #3) by scanning and skimming the information provided in the CAIT documents. Ss work in a new P with the same CAIT document to discuss and check the answers to the questions.</p> <p>Materials: Handout #3</p>	R L S W	<p>Wh-questions Yes/No questions</p> <p>UL: Answer ____ is.... The correct answer of number ____ is.... Question ____ is.... and the correct answer is....</p>	Scanning and Skimming	20 mins
3	<p><b>Pre-task #3: Explaining and translating the information in CAIT documents</b></p> <p>Ss identify key info to be translated, then they have the chance to see the different translations found through each of the techniques on a ppp. T will present to ss a ppp in which she will explain different</p>	S R L	<p><b>Bill of Lading vocabulary:</b> shipper, consignee, zip, carrier, freight counted, trailer loaded, quantity, type, packages, commodity description, weight, freight charge terms, order number, grand total, shipper signature, fee terms, special instructions, ship to ship from, trailer number, seal number, remit to, etc.</p>	Translating	25 mins

	<p>translating techniques that they can use in order to explain the information presented in CAIT documents.</p> <p>Now, in P, Ss will practice orally translating the information provided in the three documents. Ss will provide feedback to each other on their performance. T will go around the class responding to ss questions. (see Handout #4).</p> <p>Materials: PPP on translating techniques and copies of handout #4.</p> <p>Translation techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Borrowing</li> <li>-Calque</li> <li>-Literal Translation</li> <li>-Equivalence or reformulation</li> </ul>		<p><b>International invoices vocabulary:</b> invoice number, sold to, ship to, shipping term, container number, export date, description, quantity, unit cost, total, sub-total, freight allowance, payment terms, port of lading, delivery date, port of entry, type of packaging, country of origin, reason for export, country of export, exporter, importer, consignee, currency, total invoice value, unit of measure, payment method, F.O.B, C &amp; F and C.I.F.</p> <p><b>Certificate of origin vocabulary:</b> shipper, consignee, forwarding agent, quantity, net weight, description of merchandize, commercial invoice number, country of origin, net cost, producer, customs form, number of packages, issued in, declaration by exporter.</p> <p>UL: I think the word in Spanish is _____.</p> <p>The word in Spanish for that is _____.</p> <p>How can we say ____ in Spanish?</p> <p>The translation is _____.</p> <p>What does _____ mean?</p>	
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4	<p><b>Main Task: Role play</b>  Ss will work in P and role play a situation provided by the T in which they will read and explain the information provided in a CAIT document in order to explain some of its information to a client orally in order to solve a problem (see Handout #5). Then, ss will switch roles. T goes around the class taking notes of ss mistakes.  Then, t provides a general feedback session on those mistakes.</p> <p>Materials: copies of handout #5</p>	R S L	<p>Vocabulary of CAIT documents (same as previous)</p> <p>Asking for help: Can you...? Could you...?</p> <p>Asking for clarification: What does.... mean? What is the meaning of....? Can you repeat that please? So if I understand you want to....</p> <p>Showing understanding: I see. Ok.</p> <p>Follow-up questions: So what can we do? So what do I have to do now?</p> <p>Asking for information: Can you tell me...? Do you know....? What is the....?</p>	Translating	30 mins
5	<p><b>Post Task: Common mistakes when translating</b>  T will provide ss a worksheet (Handout #6) with some statements that contain mistakes made during the translation of words. Ss will identify and correct them. Then, different volunteers will write the correct answers on the board and the T will provide</p>	W R S	<p>Translation techniques</p> <p>UL: The correct answer of number ____ is....</p> <p>The mistake in sentence number ____ is _____.</p>		15 mins

	<p>general feedback on the answers and clarify any doubts from the ss.</p> <p>Materials: Handout #6</p>				
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Abbreviations: T: teacher, S: student, Ss: students, G: group, P: pair, L: listening, S: speaking, W: writing, R: reading UL: Useful Language

## Appendix J



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Master's Program in TEFL

Jiménez S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.

II Semester, 2019



### Pre-test

Total of points 19

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Points Obtained \_\_\_\_\_

### I Part. Predicting (8 points)

- A. Look at the following pictures and predict what the audio is about. Write all your predictions in the space provided below (5 points).

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1904/190409-hip-hop-cheese-4l.html>



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Now, read the following heading of a news item. What do you think is the audio going to be about? Write your ideas on the lines provided below. (3 points). <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/1810/181006-clapping-4l.html>

<b>University to replace clapping with hand-waving</b>
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**Part II. Listening for Specific Details (11 points)**

- A. You will listen to a recording of a conversation. Mark the best option to complete the statements below. The recording will be played twice (6 points). <https://www.esl-lab.com/difficult/listening-skills/>
1. The company where the woman works is going to \_\_\_\_\_.
    - a. close stores
    - b. cut salaries
    - c. fire workers
  
  2. The woman \_\_\_\_\_ to help her husband learn the art of listening.
    - a. found a few Web sites
    - b. watched a TV program
    - c. picked up a book
  
  3. The first skill of listening that the woman points out is to \_\_\_\_\_.
    - a. make meaningful comments
    - b. not cut in on a conversation
    - c. watch a person's body language

4. The second point is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. put aside distractions
  - b. smile and nod politely
  - c. bring up similar concerns
5. According to the final point, some people who are experiencing issues in their lives don't want others to \_\_\_\_\_ their problems.
- a. share
  - b. debate
  - c. solve
6. This couple is going to \_\_\_\_\_ to improve their relationship.
- a. discuss the information in the book
  - b. go on a trip in a couple of days
  - c. seek marital counseling

B. Listen to the conversation and answer the questions below. The recording will be played twice. (5 points).

<https://www.esl-lab.com/academic-english/esl-program-meeting/>

1. When is the orientation meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What time does the woman want to end the meeting?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How long would the break for lunch be?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What places can students see during the campus tour?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why will it be difficult to find a pen on Randall's desk?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix K



University of Costa Rica  
 Master's Program in TEFL  
 Jiménez S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.  
 II Semester, 2019



### Instruments to collect data

#### Listening Strategy: Predicting

1. Did the images that were shown help you to predict the information of the audio or video that you were going to listen to?

( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Somewhat

2. Did your previous knowledge on the topic help you to understand the video or audio better?

( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Somewhat

3. After listening to the audio or watching the video, was the information that you predicted confirmed?

( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Somewhat

If not, what could be a possible reason?

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**Listening Strategy: Listening for Specific Details**

1. Did you read the questions before the audio or video started?

(   ) Yes   (   ) No

Mark the statement that is true for you to complete the listening exercise,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ It helped me to read the questions before listening to the audio.

\_\_\_\_\_ I focused on listening first and then I read the questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I answered the questions at the same time as I was listening.

\_\_\_\_\_ I prefer to take notes while listening, and then I write a complete answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Appendix L



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 Master's Program in TEFL  
 Jiménez S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.  
 II Semester, 2019



### Post Test

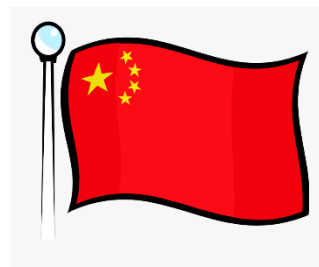
Total of Points: 17

Points Obtained \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### I Part. Predicting (8 points)

- A. Look at the following pictures and predict what the audio is about. Write 4 predictions on the lines provided below (4 points). Video taken from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/45242012/could-this-be-the-end-of-global-trade>




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- B. Now, read the following heading of a news item. What do you think the audio is going to be about? What could be some of the challenges that Canada will face? Write at least 4 ideas on the lines provided below. Then, listen to the recording (4 points).

Audio taken from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLztZ4BVfc0>

<b>Canada's international trade challenges</b>
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**Part II. Listening for Specific Details (9 points)**

- A. You will listen to a recording of a conversation. Answer the questions below by circling the best option. The recording will be played twice (4 points).

Audio taken from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yy\\_lkwQq2wc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yy_lkwQq2wc)

1. Where is the man going?
  - a. US.
  - b. UK.
  - c. Africa.
2. Does the customs agent ask the man for a visa?
  - a. Yes, she does.
  - b. No, she doesn't.
  - c. She doesn't ask.
3. How long is the man going to stay?
  - a. Three days.
  - b. One week.
  - c. Two weeks.

4. Does the man have anything to declare?
  - a. No, he doesn't.
  - b. Yes, he does.
  - c. He doesn't say.

B. Listen to the explanation and answer the questions below. The recording will be played twice (5 points).

Audio taken from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWx7X4POV20>

1. What does a customs broker do?

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2. Who does a customs broker work with?

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3. What is the quote based on?

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4. What does the customs broker do after receiving the payment from the client?

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5. What does the customs broker do once the shipment has entered the country?

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## Appendix M



University of Costa Rica

Master's Program in TEFL

Jiménez S, Montero. T & Ruiz, R.

II Semester, 2019



### Exercise #1- Predicting Strategy

1. Look at the image shown in the video. Predict what the video is about and write your ideas below.

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2. Now, think of three possible questions that you will hear during the conversation.

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