

“Application of the international exam KET (key English Test) to the Language Centre second cycle students at the Universidad Nacional del Santa and the communicative proficiency level, 2014”

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to describe the level of communicative proficiency English language level according to the Cambridge exam KET of the students in XIII basic cycle of the language centre at the National University of Santa.

This research arose from the concern to know whether students are prepared and have the necessary skills to be able to take a international exam from the prestigious Cambridge University.

The results obtained after applying the international exam KET from Cambridge University, were not encouraging at all because it was found a very low level of knowledge in students over this new language, many of them only had a good correct answer from five questions.

Keywords: communicative, proficiency, skills

1. Background of Study

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (2009), English is the official language of the globalized world where we are living. The main reason why it is important, is that every day is more used in almost all areas of knowledge and human development, this has several especially implications for the workplace, business, computer or other purposes, using well this tool as useful as it is the English language, so exposed, have a good English language level is very positive for a job resume or whatever the need, in our country and also abroad, because it is one of the most widely used worldwide languages. As it has been observed international validation of learning this language is essential for advancement in employment or professional

development; we need a certification of international value where we can show our communicative proficiency level in the English language and proved that our knowledge of this language is optimal.

English is a very useful tool for people around the world, this research wants to identify the level of knowledge of skills in the English language (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in basic level students from the language Centre of the National University of Santa.

This type of certification awarded by Cambridge University is considered the most solid and reliable evidence of English proficiency. In these tests the candidates are evaluated in the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. They include a wide variety of exercises that assess the candidate's ability to use English.

Thus, the candidate develops all the necessary skills to communicate proficiently in a variety of contexts.

In our country, according to an article published by Cambridge University (2008) mentions that certification plays a vital role in the Peruvian population and the world. To take an exam from this university is not necessary to travel abroad because it can be taken on any of the following departments of our country as Arequipa, Cajamarca, La Libertad, Lambayeque, Lima, Loreto, Moquegua, Piura, Tacna. The results of all centers are always evaluated in the own Cambridge University, in the UK, and the diploma is also issued by this prestigious university.

2. Objectives of Study

2.1. General Objective

-Describe the communicative proficiency level of the English language according to exam KET, in students of the XIII basic cycle of the language centre at the National University of Santa.

2.2. Specific Objectives

-Evaluate the communicative proficiency in speaking in the English language of the students after applying the international exam KET.

- Evaluate the communicative competence in oral understanding in the English language of the students after applying the international exam KET.

- Evaluate the communicative competence in comprehension and production of texts in the English language of the students after applying the international exam KET.

3. Literature review

3.1. Language centre

It is defined as a training centre in which the teachings of foreign languages are taught. Which they have trained teachers to deliver these courses. These courses are offered at various times mostly consist of three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. With a number of months for each level. The last of the courses varies according to each language centre and language. At the end of the study of a foreign language, each language centre has to offer to their students a certificate certifying the level of knowledge of its graduates.

3.2. Communicative proficiency

According to HymesD. (1971), communicative proficiency relates to know "when to speak, when not to, and talk about, with whom, when, where, in what form"; that is, it is the ability to form sentences that are not only grammatically correct but also socially appropriate

According to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of Spain (2002), for the realization of communicative intentions, users of the language or students exercise their general capabilities, along with a

more specific communicative proficiency related language. Communicative competence in this narrower sense has the following components:

- Language skills
- Sociolinguistic proficiency
- Pragmatic skills

3.3. English language:

Lewis (2009) states that "is designated by the term English language that is native from the European northwestern, which belongs to the Germanic branch and has reached a fabulous development in England, due to it has been released from its origin for all the British Isles and its old former colonies".

English Language Features

- American English is the English used in the United States (US).
- British English, is the English used in the UK and the rest of the British Isles. It includes all English dialects used in those Isles.

British English has a reasonable degree of uniformity in formal writing and, as taught in schools, like the rest of the English-speaking world (except North America). On the other hand, it used English spoken in the British Isles has significant differences compared to most English-speaking areas of the world, mainly in the United States that has a longer history in the development of the dialect. There are also differences in the English spoken by the socio-economic groups in each region.

3.4. Level of competition:

Douglas (2000), mentions that competition is a standardized guidelines through which describes the different degrees of communicative proficiency (basic, intermediate and advanced level) and that manifest themselves in the following set: oral comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and text production.

3.5. International exams - Cambridge

-Key English Test (KET)

The Cambridge Key English Test (KET) is the first level of the Cambridge exams in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It is an elementary level exam which recognizes the ability to manage oral and written at a basic level daily communications. KET is based on language used in real life situations and covers the four language skills-reading, writing, listening and speaking.

4. Methodology

Design: For this study design transactional or transversal descriptive research which allowed to know the communicative proficiency level in the English language by the Cambridge exam KET in students from the basic cycle of the Language Centre at the National University of Santa.

Sample: The sample consisted of 30 students of the basic cycle XIII of the language center at the National University of Santa.

Instruments: They had been modified to suit the purpose of study: International Cambridge exam KET, observation guides audio compact disc (CD), pictures and answer sheets.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics were used for the analysis and interpretation of the results.

5. Findings:

Table 01: Reading comprehension

Level	students	%
Fail	18	60
Basic level (A1)	12	40
TOTAL	30	100

In table 01, it can be seen that 60% of the students who are finishing the basic level of the English language failed the exam that evidenced a deficient level in reading comprehension, and 40% of them passed the exam but with a deficient level.

Table 02: Text production

Level	Students	%
Failed	18	80
Basic level (A1)	12	20
TOTAL	30	100

In table 02, it is showed that 80% of the students who are finishing the basic level of the English language have a very low level in text production so they failed the exam while 20% of them passed the exam but with a deficient level.

Table 03: Oral comprehension

Level	Students	%
Failed	9	30
Basic level (A1)	20	67
Passed	1	3
TOTAL	30	100

In table 03, it is showed that 30% of the students who are finishing the basic level of the English language have a very low level in oral comprehension so they failed the exam; and only 3% of them have a good level of the English level.

Table 04: Oral expression

Level	Students	%
Failed	15	50
Basic level (A1)	15	50
TOTAL	30	100

In table 03, 50% of the students who are finishing the basic level of the English language failed the exam because they have a very low level in oral expression and the other 50 % have a deficient level but they passed the exam.

Table 05: Communicative proficiency level in the English language

Level	Students	%
Failed	4	13
Basic level (A1)	26	87
TOTAL	30	100

In this table, 13% of the students who are finishing the basic level of the English language failed the exam, while the 87% have a deficient level, for that reasons these students do not have an optic communicative proficiency level in the English language to finish the basic level.

Conclusions

According to the results of the evaluation was determined that:

The application of International Cambridge exam KET allowed to know the communicative proficiency level of the English language in students who are about to finish the basic level in the language centre at the National University of Santa.

In oral production, the students have a very low knowledge of vocabulary and basic grammatical structures so 50% of them failed and the other 50% of the students have a deficient level but they passed the exam.

In Oral Comprehension 67% of students passed but with a very basic level, only 3% of the students managed to pass with a good level.

In text comprehension 60% of students failed the test, showing a very low level to understand what they read in the new language, while 40% of the students have a low basic level.

In text production, 80% of students failed which showed that many of them end the basic level without being able to write a text using appropriately for their level, while 20% of them managed a basic level for writing texts is evidence that uses basic grammatical structures and vocabulary to their level.

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